

SKYLINE VIEW

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1. VEA Retirement Workshop

April 14, 2010 there will be a VEA Retirement Workshop from 5-7 pm at the Wingate Inn in Winchester, VA. The Wingate Inn is located at 150 Wingate Drive off of Pleasant Valley Road.

2. Employee Provided E-mail Is Not Private

Clearly, e-mail's time saving tool is a giant advantage for teachers and school staff who must communicate with many in a very limited amount of time each day. Used professionally, it is a valuable communications tool that can eliminate phone tag, quickly answer questions or clear up misunderstanding, and provide easy access to employees who previously could be hard to reach. Used carelessly, it can spell trouble.

Before you click send....

- Know that employer provided e-mail is not private. Neither Congress nor state legislatures have weighed in on the employee privacy issues associated with e-mail monitoring.
- Keep in mind that e-mail is fundamentally different than phone or personal conversations. Remarks spoken with inflection can be easily misconstrued when written and quickly forwarded to a multitude. If you are using sarcasm, humor, or a "play on words," think first about how your message may be inferred. Use these techniques only with those you know very well.
- Double check e-mail addresses especially if you downloaded the address from a directory of addresses. Many names and e-mail addresses are similar, and your message can easily go to the wrong Jane or John Smith. Remember that clicking on a Reply to All Feature may send your responses to someone who does not wish to hear from you or may be offended by your remarks!
- E-mail is almost immediate and, once sent, cannot be retrieved. Take time to count to ten before firing off a message in anger or dismay.
- Use discretion with all of your messages, personal and job-related.
- Just because you delete a message does not mean it has been permanently deleted from the system. Only the name and path to the message disappear. In most cases, the file remains and can be fairly easily retrieved, manipulated and/or forwarded to others by savvy users.

- Check your e-mail daily, especially if this is an expectation of your employer.
- Always assume your e-mail is being read by someone else. Those with system privileges are able to read and access your mail, so do not maintain anything private in your disk storage area.
- Never send or keep anything that you would not want to see on *60 Minutes*.
- Never have a conversation on the internet that you would not want recorded. Assume the line is “tapped”.
- To prevent the spread of a virus, routinely and frequently virus-scan your system, especially when receiving or downloading files from another system.
- Never give your User ID or password to another person. System administrators who may need access to your account for maintenance or to correct problems will already have full privileges to your account and won’t have to ask you for it.
- Capitalize words only to highlight an important point or to distinguish a title or heading. Capitalizing whole words that are not titles is generally termed as SHOUTING!
- Never send chain letters through the internet. Sending them can cause the loss of internet access.
- Follow the chain of command procedures for corresponding with superiors. For example, don’t send a complaint via e-mail directly to the “top” just because you can.
- Cite all quotes, references and sources and respect copyright and license agreements.

3. NEA Member Benefits

NEA members save 20%* at 1-800-FLOWERS.COM

1-800-FLOWERS.COM has extraordinary gifts for:

- Birthdays
- Weddings
- Holidays and special occasions
- Baby gifts
- Just because
- And much more

Members can order over the phone or online at 1-800-FLOWERS.COM. Sales and Service Specialists are available to assist you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week!

NEA Home Financing Program: Home Equity Loans & Lines of Credit

NEA makes it easy to get a competitive rate on a home equity loan or line of credit

Many homeowners use the equity in their homes to finance home improvements, consolidate bills or make large purchases. The NEA is here to help with NEA Home Financing Program offered through Wells Fargo Home Mortgage.

- Competitive rates and fees
- Wide variety of home equity loans and lines available to meet your needs, including no fee options
- Knowledgeable representatives who can help you through the process
- Your interest may be tax-deductible¹

Our Home Mortgage Consultants can provide you with the information you need to choose the right financing solution. Please call 1-800-632-4968 to get started.

Special Q2 Phone Promotions and Discounts with T-Mobile for VEA

Switch to T-Mobile Today- and Join the MILLIONS from other national carriers who've saved! Save hundreds yearly, over other carriers, with VEA discounts.

VEA Discounts include:

- **12% on qualifying monthly recurring charges** for new and existing customers (includes voice, text & e-mail services)*exclusions apply
- **Waived Activation Fees** (\$35 savings per line)
- **Free 2 Day Shipping**
- **FREE Bluetooth Headset or FREE car charger** with selected device through 866# only
- **FREE and/or Discount Devices with new activation promotions including**
 - **HTC HD2- \$149.99 and FREE Bluetooth headset-** with voice and data activation *expires 6/30/10
 - **Blackberry Bold -\$79.99 and FREE Bluetooth headset-** with voice and data activation *expires 6/30/10
 - **MyTouch- \$99.99 and FREE Bluetooth headset-** with voice and data activation *expires 6/30/10
 - **Motorola Cliq-\$99.99 and FREE Bluetooth headset-** with voice and data activation *expires 6/30/10

Switch to T-Mobile Today:

Click here to find out more (link to the T-mobile/VEA Site) or

NEW T-Mobile Subscriber or existing T-Mobile subscribers adding another line of service? This VEA offer is available by calling 1-866-464-8662 option 3 reference promo code **12831TMOFAV** and ask for the Virginia Education Association Discounts.

Existing T-Mobile subscriber? Contact 877-453-8824 please state you are a member of the Virginia Education Association and provide promo code **12831TMOFAV** and your member ID#. ***Please note a contract extension will apply if you are signing up for the discount***

*Requires new activation on a qualifying rate plan with a two-year service agreement. Not all devices are free. May require mail-in rebate. Limited-time offer; subject to change without notice. Additional restrictions apply.

† Free Bluetooth headset and car charger offering is NOT available on extranet purchases and is limited to availability. Please call 1-866-464-8664 (Option 3) to find out which handsets include a free accessory with a new activation*. Maximum value of the free accessory is \$59.99. Limited-time offer; subject to change without notice. Additional restrictions apply. Subject to credit approval; per line activation fee and other upfront and monthly charges and fees may apply – see representative for details. \$200/line early cancellation fee and Regulatory Programs Fee (not a tax or government-mandated charge) of 86¢ per line/month apply. Taxes approx. 6-18% of your monthly bill. See Pricing, Services and Devices brochures and T-Mobile's Terms and Conditions (including mandatory arbitration) at www.T-Mobile.com, for rate plan information, charges for features and services and restrictions and details. Service not available everywhere; for details see Coverage Maps at www.T-mobile.com or visit a T-Mobile store. Rebate/Discounted Phone Offers: Discounted phone limited to specific model shown. Supplies may be limited and offer available only from a T-Mobile business sales representative or online orders through a corporate extranet; not available through retail outlets or independent dealers. T-Mobile reserves right to substitute different phone models of equal or greater value. Customer must remain on qualifying rate plan at time mail-in rebate is processed. Rebate takes up to eight weeks. Visit store, see rebate form or contact T-Mobile Customer Care at 1-800-937-8997 with questions. T-Mobile and the magenta color are federally registered trademarks of Deutsche Telekom AG. Stick together is a federally registered trademark of T-Mobile USA, Inc. ©2008 T-Mobile USA, Inc.

4. Virginia Department of Education News

Virginia Students Again Rank Among Strongest Readers on National Reading Tests

Results from national reading tests taken last year show that Virginia elementary and middle school students continue to outperform their peers nationwide and are among the nation's strongest readers.

The average reading scores of Virginia students on the 2009 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) - also known as "The Nation's Report Card" - were significantly higher than the average scores of their national and regional peers:

- Virginia's average grade-four score in reading of 227 was seven points higher than the average score of 220 for the South and the nation.
- Students in only one state - Massachusetts - performed at what the national testing program described as a statistically higher level on the fourth-grade reading test.
- Virginia's average grade-eight score in reading of 266 was five points higher than the average for the South and three points higher than the average for the nation.
- Fourth-grade African-American students in Virginia again outperformed their national and regional peers, and in no state did black students perform at a statistically higher level in either grade. Achievement gaps between black and white students at both tested grade levels were statistically unchanged from 2007, when the national reading tests were previously administered.

NAEP reading tests are taken by samples of students selected to be representative of each state and the country as a whole. Tests in reading have been administered every two years since 2003.

"NAEP sets rigorous goals for reading proficiency and provides an objective means of comparing student achievement from state to state," said Superintendent of Public Instruction Patricia I. Wright. "And by analyzing data from administration to administration, educators and policymakers can identify trends and make informed decisions about instruction and accountability."

While Virginia students again ranked among the nation's highest achievers, the 2009 NAEP results for the commonwealth show that overall achievement among Virginia fourth graders is similar to achievement in 2002, while the overall average reading score for eighth graders has declined.

"Our challenge is to build on the progress Virginia students have already made under the Standards of Learning program - especially in middle school and among minority students," Board of Education President Eleanor B. Saslaw said.

The Board of Education has taken several actions in the last year to enhance the rigor of the commonwealth's reading standards and accountability program. Revised English Standards of Learning (SOL) approved by the board in January 2010 include more rigorous objectives for reading, especially in the middle school grades. For example, the new standards place additional emphasis on building vocabulary through informational reading and the use of roots, affixes, cognates, synonyms and antonyms to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words.

Full implementation of the new English SOL is anticipated in 2012-2013. Reviews by the College Board and ACHIEVE found strong alignment between Virginia's revised English standards and the knowledge and skills students must possess to be college and career ready.

"The development and introduction of SOL tests aligned with the revised English standards will include an opportunity for the Board of Education to review the current definition of what constitutes a minimum level of acceptable proficiency," said Wright.

The board's accreditation regulations call for an increase in the reading pass rates required for middle and high schools to earn state accreditation to 75 percent. The 2010 General Assembly approved legislation to delay implementation of the higher benchmarks until the calculation of accreditation ratings for the 2012-2013 school year in response to requests from school divisions.

NAEP reading assessments were administered in Virginia during January and February 2009. Approximately 3,000 fourth-grade students from 130 elementary schools and 2,800 eighth graders from 108 middle schools were included in the Virginia sample.

The inclusion of larger percentages of students with disabilities - 11 percent in both grades in 2009 compared with eight percent in 2007 - did not impact overall achievement as average scores and proficiency levels for the commonwealth's fourth and eighth graders were similar to 2007.

The average reading score of non-disabled fourth-grade students in Virginia increased one point to 230, a statistically significant four-point increase since 2005. The average score of 269 for non-disabled students in grade eight differs little from the average score of 270 for 2007 and 2005.

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