## Commonwealth of Virginia
## Virginia Department of Education
Superintendent's Memo #231-22

*MANUAL*
*BLENDA*
*PRINCIPALS*

DATE:        September 30, 2022

TO:          Division Superintendents

FROM:        Jillian Balow, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT:     **Disability History and Awareness Month**

More than a decade ago, a group of youth with disabilities requested that Virginia officially recognize October as **Disability History and Awareness Month** (DHAM). These dedicated youth also developed a credo:

> *"Disability history education and awareness will promote positive attitudes in schools creating a culture of mutual respect, understanding, and equal opportunities for all."*

This month, Virginians across the Commonwealth will join with others nationwide to increase awareness, respect, and acceptance for students with disabilities. To facilitate this important effort, youth with disabilities, their parents, and teachers, as well as staff members from the Virginia Department of Education and other partnering agencies and organizations continue to collaborate and develop a variety of resources that can be used to help school divisions highlight DHAM across the state.

**Attachment A** includes some of these resources aimed to support community conversations and events among school and neighborhood partners, the local and/or state Special Education Advisory Committee, and local Parent Resource Centers about the importance and value of inclusive practices for youth with disabilities.

## For more information

For more information or if you have questions, contact Marianne Moore, Secondary Transition Specialist, by telephone at (804) 225-2700, or by email at Marianne.Moore@doe.virginia.gov; or Dr. Richard Chapman, Assistant Director for Disability Leadership at the Partnership for People with Disabilities, by telephone at (804) 828-8244, or by email at chapmanra@vcu.edu.

JB/MM/sp

A. Attachment: Resources for Disability History and Awareness Month (DOCX)