

PRESS RELEASE



October 24, 2022

Contact: Robert Nomberg

Robert@virginialearns.org

VIRGINIA LEARNS RESPONDS TO NEWLY RELEASED NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS REPORT

The organization underscores the importance of programs like Accelerate Virginia, its high-impact tutoring program to improve students' mathematics and literacy skills.

RICHMOND, VA – The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) released on Monday, October 24th its first report since the Covid-19 pandemic began. The report found that, compared to the last assessment conducted in 2019, the average Virginia fourth-grade math score dropped by 11 points, and the average fourth-grade reading score dropped by 10 points. At the eighth grade level in Virginia, the average math score dropped by 8 points, and the average reading score dropped by 2 points. These findings demonstrate the crucial need for the Commonwealth to strengthen and enhance its learning supports for K-12 students.

“The latest findings by The Nation’s Report Card could not be a clearer distress signal: our Commonwealth’s students have experienced immense setbacks to their learning progress and are among the most impacted in the nation,” said **Robert Nomberg, president and CEO of Virginia Learns**. “It is paramount that everyone – from elected officials to businesses, educators, and local communities – come together as a united front to increase supports and resources for students to alleviate the learning chasm that the pandemic only served to exacerbate.”

Earlier this year, Virginia Learns announced the launch of a pilot for its new, high-impact tutoring program *Accelerate Virginia*. Funded by federal CARES Act ESSR allocations, the pilot involves 50 middle school students from Cumberland County Public Schools, who will receive tutoring in literacy and math with qualified tutor volunteers. The *Accelerate Virginia* pilot will

involve at least 25 highly committed volunteer tutors who will work with the participating middle school students who need additional assistance in literacy and math. Tutors will also serve as mentors and foster lasting connections with the students involved.

“The only way we can solve this learning crisis is by working together to support our students and ensure these setbacks do not cause lifelong and generational impacts. Through programs like *Accelerate Virginia*, we have a real opportunity to recover what was lost and ensure students are prepared with the skillsets and knowledge they need to succeed in life,” **said Robert Nomberg.**

Virginia Learns is actively recruiting tutor volunteers to participate in this initial phase, with a specific focus on college students who may pursue a future career in public education. Through *Accelerate Virginia*, tutor volunteers will gain unique insight into the teaching profession and gain skillsets that will prepare them for a future in education. If you or someone you know is interested in participating in this program, visit virginialearns.org/acceleratevirginia to apply as a volunteer tutor today.

About Virginia Learns

Virginia Learns is a nonpartisan nonprofit and statewide education operating foundation. Through aligned leadership, we inform and influence local and state decision makers; amplify the voices of those most impacted by education policy decisions; and advance state and local partnerships that bring needed change and positive results. Virginia Learns is the only business group whose sole mission is to strengthen education. We accomplish this goal by creating a trusting and collaborative relationship with businesses, educators, and policymakers so we can create the workforce Virginia needs and set students up for success in school, work, and life. VirginiaLearns.org

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