

State Superintendent Announces Launch of “VA TV Classroom” by Va. Public TV Stations

RICHMOND — Superintendent of Public Instruction James Lane announced today that four Virginia public media stations will broadcast teacher-led classroom instruction aligned with the commonwealth’s academic standards into homes across the state beginning Monday, April 13.

Blue Ridge PBS, VPM, WETA and WHRO Public Media worked closely with the Virginia Department of Education to create “VA TV Classroom” to provide instruction to students in grades K-10 who are unable to access other distance learning options due to a lack of high-speed internet.

“VA TV Classroom” will air instructional content from 1-3 p.m., Monday through Friday.

“I would like to thank Blue Ridge PBS, VPM, WETA and WHRO Public Media for providing this resource for students while schools are closed as part of the commonwealth’s strategy to slow the spread of the coronavirus and protect public health,” Lane said. “It is nothing short of amazing that these public media stations were able to create ‘VA TV Classroom’ and schedule its launch within a month of the governor’s initial order to close schools.”

The “VA TV Classroom” on-air schedule is as follows:

- K-3 instruction airs from 1-2 p.m. with Standards of Learning-aligned content provided by WHRO Public Media. “Learn to Grow with WHRO” segments will be 15 minutes in length and led by teachers.
- Grades 7-10 instruction airs from 2-3 p.m. with SOL-aligned content provided by WHRO Public Media focusing on Earth Science and Algebra 1.
- During the week of April 27, “VA TV Classroom” will add a special hour from 3-4 p.m. called “AP Prep Week,” with content provided by Virtual Virginia — in collaboration with WHRO — focusing on a different AP subject each day. The hour will include two 30-minute segments.

“WHRO is proud to be a part of ‘VA TV Classroom.’ WHRO actually stands for Home Room One,” WHRO President and CEO Bert Schmidt said. “WHRO was created nearly 60 years ago as a way to bring the classroom into homes via the TV. Much of our educational instruction is now created digitally, but knowing so many students now don’t have access to our online resources, we were thrilled to bring this important instruction back to our air.”

“At a time when all of Virginia’s students are out of school, public media is a valuable, trusted resource our communities can rely on to deliver high-quality educational content for all ages. VPM is honored to partner with Virginia’s public television stations and the state Department of Education to give students and their families a way to continue their learning at home,” said Jayme Swain, President of VPM and CEO of the Virginia Foundation for Public Media.

“WETA is proud to serve Virginia communities with accessible educational programming and resources that meet the academic needs of students,” said Sharon Percy Rockefeller, President and CEO of WETA. “Public media has a vital role to play during this unprecedented time, and we have much to offer educators, parents and caregivers as they seek trusted, enriching content for young learners.”

“Blue Ridge PBS is committed to our community and helping our children and families during this unprecedented time,” said Will Anderson, President and CEO of Blue Ridge PBS. “We will continue to use our broadcast and online resources to provide meaningful educational content to Southwest Virginia.”

“VA TV Classroom” can be seen throughout the commonwealth on the following channels:

- WHRO – WHRO World: via antenna 15.2, Cox 107 and Verizon FiOS 460
- VPM – VPM Plus
 - Richmond area: via antenna 57.1, Verizon FiOS 24 and 524 (HD), Comcast 24 & 797 (HD), DIRECTV 57, DISH 57 and 9392 (HD)
 - Charlottesville area: via antenna 41.2, Comcast 265 (HD) and 1146 (HD)
 - Shenandoah Valley: via antenna 51.2, Comcast 9, 798 (HD) and 1042 (HD)

- WETA – WETA PBS Kids: via antenna 26.3, Comcast 266, Cox 801, Verizon FiOS 472 and RCN 38
- Blue Ridge PBS – SWVAPTV: via antenna 15.2, streaming services Blue Ridge Streaming and Project Southwest on YouTube, Citizens Cable 82, Cox 107, Comcast/Xfinity 264 and Lumos 17 (Shentel, Bedford, Covington, Glade Hill, Radford, Rocky Mount, Rustburg and Wytheville: 157)

“I believe that ‘VA TV Classroom’ will make a tremendous difference this spring as schools endeavor to provide continuity of learning for students, especially in communities where online learning is a challenge,” Lane said. “This programming builds on the long-standing partnership between VDOE and public television to support teaching and learning across the state.”

About WHRO Public Media

Owned by 21 Eastern Virginia school divisions, WHRO Public Media also delivers online educational and new media services to 286,000 students and 25,000 educators per month. WHRO’s digital course offerings and resources including eMediaVA are available free to all: <https://digitallearning.whro.org/>. Since its founding in 1961 to support education, WHRO Public Media has employed creativity and technology to serve the residents of Eastern Virginia in its mission to educate, inform and entertain viewers and listeners of WHRO’s four public television and six public radio stations. “VA TV Classroom” can be viewed on WHRO World which broadcasts to all homes in Eastern Virginia and is available over-the-air at Channel 15.2. It is also available on Cox 107 and Verizon FiOS 460. More information, visit whro.org.

About VPM

VPM provides the best of public media to Central Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley. Through national PBS and NPR programs, local productions and community engagement initiatives and events, VPM uses the power of media to educate, entertain and inspire. Each week, VPM is accessible to nearly 2 million people across the region. VPM broadcasts on television channels VPM PBS, VPM Plus, VPM PBS KIDS, VPM Create and VPM WORLD. VPM also includes VPM News (88.9 FM) and VPM Music (107.3 FM, 93.1 FM and 88.9-HD2) in Richmond, and VPM News & Music in the Northern Neck (89.1 FM) and Southside Virginia (90.1 FM). “VA TV Classroom” can be found on VPM Plus. More information can be found at VPM.org.

About WETA

WETA is the leading public broadcasting company in the nation’s capital, serving Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia with educational initiatives and with high-quality programming on public television stations nationwide, WETA Television and Classical WETA 90.9 FM. Classical WETA 90.9 FM brings classical music, concerts and specials to Greater Washington. As the largest PBS station serving Greater Washington, WETA Television broadcasts on WETA PBS, WETA UK and WETA PBS Kids. Local programming created by WETA Television includes WETA Arts, WETA Around Town, and documentaries such as Washington in the 2000s, Bygone DC, and Neighborhood Eats. National programs include PBS NewsHour and Washington Week, documentary films by Ken Burns and Henry Louis Gates, Jr., and performance specials from renowned venues. WETA also serves the community with digital content that highlights WETA programming and the rich history of our region; creates leading public service websites such as www.ReadingRockets.org, www.LDOnline.org, www.ColorinColorado.org, www.AdLit.org, and www.Brainline.org; and develops community outreach programs to engage people of all ages in the joy of lifelong learning. More information at weta.org.

About Blue Ridge PBS

Founded in 1967, Blue Ridge PBS is the sole public multimedia enterprise serving 4 million individuals in portions of four states. The station’s coverage area includes southwestern Virginia and bordering counties in Tennessee, West Virginia and North Carolina. Based in Roanoke, Va., Blue Ridge PBS is comprised of four channels: WBRA-TV 15.1, Southwest Virginia PTV 15.2, BRPBS Kids 15.3, Create 15.4, and Blue Ridge Streaming.

CONTACT

Amy Houck
 WHRO Public Media
 757.889.9491
amy.houck@whro.org