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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VEA: Students, Public Schools the Real Winners in Northam Victory

Statement from VEA President Jim Livingston on Election Night

The voters have spoken: Dr. Ralph Northam is the right person to lead our state as the 73rd governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia. This is a tremendous victory for Virginia children and all who care about our public schools.

Dr. Northam will seize this opportunity to strengthen our Commonwealth's public schools and expand opportunities for our students. He knows that our great state, the 11th wealthiest in the country, ranks a lowly 39th in the state share of per-pupil funding of our public schools. He knows that our teachers rank only 32nd in the country in salary. And he knows that every child deserves the opportunity to attend a great public school, with manageable class sizes, up-to-date technology and instructional materials, and committed, highly-qualified teachers.

The VEA Fund for Children and Public Education endorsed Dr. Northam before the Democratic Primary, and Association members volunteered tirelessly to get friends of public education elected. Our members volunteered for over 200 canvass shifts and 100 phone bank shifts, and sent thousands of hand-written postcards sent from members to members. We advertised on television, radio, and online to make sure Virginians knew how the candidates differed on public education. And we ran workshops and training events all over the Commonwealth to get out the message about the importance of this election and why we knew Ralph Northam was the best candidate to support our public schools. Our members are not in a position to donate big bucks, but they sure played a big role as volunteers.

Governor-Elect Northam credited VEA as a key partner, as he stated:

“This election was about standing up for the values and principles we as Virginians care about – and a quality public education for every child is certainly one of them. As we rejected tonight the policies of Donald Trump and Ed Gillespie, it was not without the help of the countless educators across the Commonwealth and the Virginia Education Association. I not only thank them for their support in this election, but more importantly, for the work they do every day serving our children.”

—Lt. Gov. Ralph Northam

The Virginia public stands squarely behind Dr. Northam. Virginians have repeatedly expressed their confidence in our schools and stated that our schools deserve more support. In the latest Commonwealth Education Poll, for example, two of three citizens said that public schools do not have the resources they need. Working with the General Assembly, Governor-Elect Northam will work to ensure that students receive the world-class education they so rightly deserve. VEA looks forward to continuing our close partnership with Dr. Northam as he works to expand opportunities for ALL Virginia students.

For further information, contact

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