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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Virginia Teacher Salaries Continue Slide

Virginia public school teachers earn nearly \$6,100 less than the average of teachers nationwide—and that gap is growing—a new analysis shows.

The findings, contained in the National Education Association’s new “Rankings & Estimates” research study, show that:

- Virginia teachers in 2006-07 earned \$44,727—far below the national average salary of \$50,816. The NEA’s annual reports show that the gap between Virginia teacher salaries has more than doubled from about \$3,111 in 2002-03 to \$6,089 in 2006-07.
- The Commonwealth’s rank on teacher pay is falling among Southern states and the nation as a whole. Among the 16 states comprising the Southern Regional Education Board, Virginia teacher salaries ranked 7th, behind Maryland (\$56,927), Delaware (\$54,680), Georgia (\$49,905), North Carolina (\$46,410), Florida (\$45,308), and Texas (\$44,897). As recently as 2004, Virginia ranked 4th among SREB states. Nationally, Virginia teacher pay now ranks 31st.
- In constant (inflation-adjusted) dollars, Virginia teacher salaries actually declined 2 percent from 1995-96 to 2005-06. Nationally, salaries gained 1.5 percent over that time.

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“The numbers don’t lie,” VEA President Princess Moss said about the findings. “At a time when every state is raising standards for teachers and trying to attract top candidates, Virginia is losing ground.” Virginia public school students score in the top 10 among states in reading and math scores as well as on SAT scores, Moss noted. “Virginia teachers are producing top results, so it’s discouraging that their commitment is not being matched by the elected officials who make the decisions on school funding,”

Among the report’s other findings

- Compared to other states, Virginia ranks near the bottom on the percentage of male teachers. Only 18.8 percent of Virginia public school teachers are men—ranking the state 47th in the nation. Nationwide, 24.4 percent of public school teachers are men.
- The percentage of Virginians 65 years and older is growing much faster than the national average. From 1994 to 2004, the percentage of seniors grew 9.5 percent nationally. But in Virginia, it grew 16.8 percent—the 14th highest increase among states.
- The number of students in Virginia public elementary and secondary schools continues to rise. Average Virginia daily attendance is estimated to be 1.125 million.

Rankings and Estimates has presented selected education statistics since the 1960s. The complete report can be found at <http://www.nea.org/edstats/images/07rankings.pdf>