



**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

March 3, 2017

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: 2017 Statewide Tornado Drill

The annual Statewide Tornado Drill will take place **Tuesday, March 21, 2017, at 9:45 a.m.** The *Code of Virginia* in § 22.1-137.1 requires all public schools to participate in at least one tornado drill each year. Participation in the March 21 statewide drill will fulfill that requirement. If widespread severe weather threatens the Commonwealth on that date, then the drill will be rescheduled for Wednesday, March 22, at 9:45 a.m. *Schools may choose an alternate date or time if this is not convenient.*

March 21, 2017, is observed as Tornado Preparedness Day. For information on planning a drill and registering for the Statewide Tornado Drill, go to <http://www.vaemergency.gov/event/statewide-tornado-drill/> and click on Register Now. It is encouraged that individual schools register for the drill in order to track participation across the Commonwealth.

In 2016, Virginia was hit by the deadliest tornado event since 1959, resulting in five fatalities and more than 45 injuries. A tornado touched down on the Town of Waverly in Sussex County, Appomattox County and another hit the Middle Peninsula and Northern Neck region. The National Weather Service (NWS) verified that a total of eight tornadoes struck Virginia during that one storm.

If you have questions about Tornado Preparedness Day or the statewide drill, please contact:

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