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# FINAL REPORT 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR

## OVERVIEW

Diversity Dialogue Day is a one-day forum open to all high school students and educators in each of VCIC's chapter locations. The program is designed to guide students through a process of awareness to action and gives youth an opportunity to develop solutions to create a more inclusive environment at their school.

## GOAL

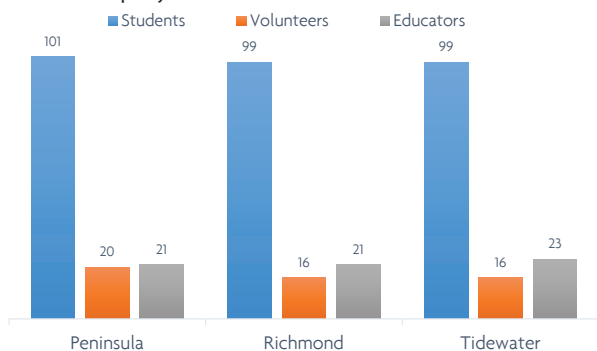
To increase high school youth's sensitivity to and awareness of diversity issues so that they can create school and community environments free from the distractions of prejudice, stereotypes, and bigotry.

## OBJECTIVES

- Increase understanding of what prejudice is, decrease stereotypic attitudes, and develop an expanded awareness of discrimination and the harmful effects on individuals, groups, and communities.
- Be exposed to diverse perspectives.
- Create connections with peers from a similar geographic area.
- Develop an increased sense of personal empowerment and recognize the positive impact they, as individuals and as groups of students, can have on their own schools and communities.

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

In total, 416 students, volunteers, and educators came together across three regions to increase their capacity to combat prejudice in their schools.



## WHERE

Dominion Energy sponsored three Diversity Dialogue Day forums during the 2025-2026 school year (Peninsula, Richmond, and Tidewater). The Peninsula program took place at Christopher Newport University and was attended by public and independent schools representing Gloucester, Hampton, Newport News, Poquoson, Surry, and Williamsburg-James City County. The Richmond program took place at the University of Richmond and was attended by public and independent schools representing Goochland, Henrico, Powhatan, and Richmond. The Tidewater program (originally scheduled to be held at Old Dominion University) was moved on short notice to Virginia Wesleyan University. It was attended by schools representing Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth, and Virginia Beach.



## STUDENT EXPERIENCE

The Diversity Dialogue Day program kicked off with an interactive large-group workshop. Students learned about the impacts of stereotypes on them and their school community. They then broke out into intentionally diverse small-group discussions to reflect on ways and times that they observed or experienced stereotypes. In addition, they considered real-life situations and brainstormed ideas to respond to those situations as upstanders and allies. At the end of the day, students created personal commitments to share with their classmates from their sending school.



# EVALUATION HIGHLIGHTS

## In the Richmond region:

**95%** of students agree they are more motivated to make their school a place where people of different identities can feel welcome.

## In the Peninsula region:

**91%** of students agree that they have an increased awareness of the experiences of people who are different than them.

## EDUCATOR SPOTLIGHT

Educators participated in a VCIC professional development session while students were in their breakout groups. By connecting with colleagues from schools across their region, educators broadened their perspectives on meaningful youth engagement and considered new approaches to fostering inclusion in their learning communities. Through interactive activities and small-group brainstorming, participants explored stereotypes and the impact on issues of diversity and inclusion in their schools. Educators also received frameworks and resources to help continue the conversation throughout the remainder of the school year.

**“All teachers need this training.”**

## In the Tidewater region:

**92%** of students agree that they learned new skills to help make their school a more inclusive place.



## THANK YOU TO DDD COALITION PARTNERS

Hampton Roads Committee of 200+ Men, Inc.	Virginia Wesleyan University
Higher Achievement Richmond	YMCA of the Virginia Peninsulas
Langley Federal Credit Union	YWCA Richmond

## THANK YOU TO DDD VOLUNTEERS

Jacque Allen	Kevin Grant	Shatea Ortiz
Carlton Ashby	Shenise Guy	Leta Parham
Chloe Bailey	Katrina Hamilton Lawal	Mary Lloyd Parks
Ann Mary Bettenson	Rosemary Hayden	Sunny Peoples
Zee Booker	Erica Holmes	Bea Pitts
Patrice Bradley	Pat Hopkins	Iyana Powell
Steven Britton	Kristina Johnson	Daniella Reed
Terrian Brown	Mike Johnson	Betsy Robinson
C.J. Bruce, Jr.	Delores Kimbrough	Ken Royster
Goddess Clark	ClauDean Kizart	Megan Seranni
Emma Contreras Mejia	Elizabeth Leggett	Arin Shatto
Ronee Davis	Cierra Lewis	Kay Sumner
Andrew DeVault	Iris Lundy	Meeran Thekudalai
Kyle Garton-Gundling	Alex Marten	Valeria Venegas-Salazar
Gilbrith Gogel	Alex McDonough	Kwame Walker
	Daniel Ogunyemi	

## STUDENTS SAID:

- ▶ “It was a super educational and interesting experience that allowed me to realize what small and large stereotypes affect different people.”
- ▶ “I enjoyed being able to have in-depth and honest conversations with my peers, and I am now equipped with new tools to help and lead those around me.”
- ▶ “My experience has given me knowledge and has prepared me to be able to be a voice for those who can’t speak up and to put these steps into motion in public.”
- ▶ “I learned that open, honest, and respectful environments and discussions can lead to real change and deep understanding and respect between people.”
- ▶ “I spoke to many different people and learned their schools have problems as well and that if we come together, we can be the change.”
- ▶ “[Diversity Dialogue Day was] life-changing.”



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**INCLUSIVE**  
COMMUNITIES