



**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: April 6, 2018
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: Steven M. Constantino, Ed.D., Acting Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: Teaching Science in the Co-Taught Classroom: Physics Science and Earth Science

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) is pleased to announce that the Office of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics and Office of Special Education Instructional Services, in partnership with James Madison University, will again sponsor a collaborative science-inclusion special education institute at the University's summer 2018 Content Teaching Academy (CTA). The science sessions focus on Physical Science and Earth Science content and are designed for science and special educator school teams working together to enhance all student outcomes. The program will focus on improved content understanding, integration of science skills and processes, pedagogical strategies, collaboration strategies, and networking. The CTA Teaching Science in the Co-Taught Classroom program will run from June 27-28, 2018.

Middle and high school science and special educator co-teaching teams are the primary audience for this program. VDOE is seeking two-member teams from individual middle and high schools. Priority will be given to teachers who teach in schools that have not met the state benchmarks on the Grade 8 Science or Earth Science Standards of Learning assessments. The two-day program will include discipline content, strategies for implementing inquiry laboratory opportunity in science classrooms, and combined pedagogy sessions with opportunities to model effective instructional strategies and co-teaching practices. Time will be structured on a daily basis to support school team planning and coordination.

Each of the two concurrent, discipline-based sections is designed to:

- **Improve** teacher knowledge of either physical or earth science;
- **Expand** teacher understanding of effective special education pedagogy using tangible materials, models, technology, "minds-on" lesson plans, and targeted inquiry methods;
- **Enhance** practical experiences with high-quality teaching resources teachers can integrate into their lesson plans;
- **Reinforce** techniques for literacy and vocabulary development among all students; and
- **Establish** an electronic network of support and a learning community among participants.

VDOE will assume the cost of registration, stipend (\$200), lodging, and meals for all public school participants accepted into the program. Teachers from schools not meeting the state benchmark for accreditation in science will be given priority. School divisions are strongly encouraged to cover travel expenses for division participants as this cost is not assumed by the Department; however, this is not a requirement of the program.

For more detailed information regarding this program and how to register, please visit the [CTA Website](#) ➔. If you have additional questions about the program, please contact Dr. Anne Petersen, Science Instructional Coordinator, Office of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, at anne.petersen@doe.virginia.gov ✉ or by telephone at (804) 225-2676; or Dr. Teresa Lee, Instructional Coordinator, Office of Special Education and Instructional Services, at Teresa.Lee@doe.virginia.gov ✉ or by telephone at (804) 371-8283.

SMC/TL/tc

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