# Superintendent’s Memo #269-20

[](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/index.shtml)  
**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA   
Department of Education**

DATE: October 9, 2020

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction

## SUBJECT: 2020-2021 National ESEA Distinguished Schools Recognition Program

Virginia has received information regarding the application process for the 2020-2021 National ESEA Distinguished Schools Recognition Program. This project, sponsored by the National Association of ESEA State Program Administrators, recognizes qualifying schools from each state for their outstanding achievements in education. Only two schools per state are selected as National ESEA Distinguished Schools.

In order for a school to qualify for the National ESEA Distinguished School award, the school must have:

1. A poverty rate of at least 35 percent for each of the two most current consecutive school years;
2. Demonstrated exceptional academic achievement for two or more of the most current consecutive school years; and
3. Met full state accreditation for two or more consecutive years.

A school may be nominated to represent one of the following categories:

* *Category 1*: Exceptional student performance for two consecutive years;
* *Category 2*: Closing the achievement gap between student groups; or
* *Category 3*: Excellence in serving special populations of students (e.g., homeless, migrant, English learners, etc.).

School divisions are invited to nominate one school to represent one of the three categories indicated above. For the 2020-2021 application process, divisions should include Standards of Learning (SOL) test data based on the 2019-2020 accountability year (2018-2019 school year). If a division submitted an application for the 2019-2020 National ESEA Distinguished Schools Recognition Program, the division may resubmit the 2019-2020 application for reconsideration this year. The 2020-2021 National ESEA Distinguished Schools Recognition Program intent to apply form, instructions for developing the application, and school participation form are attached.

School divisions wishing to nominate a school must submit an Intent to Apply Form (Attachment A) by email to [ESSA@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:ESSA@doe.virginia.gov) by Friday, October 16, 2020. *Divisions that wish to resubmit a 2019-2020 application for consideration must indicate this on the Intent to Apply form.* All new applications must be submitted electronically to [ESSA@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:ESSA@doe.virginia.gov) by 3:00 p.m. on Friday, October 30, 2020 (Attachment B). On the email subject line, indicate the school division’s name and the category. Each application must be accompanied by the School Participation Form (Attachment C).

Recipients of the 2020-2021 National ESEA Distinguished School award will be notified by letter in November 2020. The selected schools will be honored during the 2021 National ESEA Virtual Conference, February 8-11, 2021.

For questions regarding this program, please contact Latonia Anderson, Title I Specialist, at (804) 225-2907 or [Latonia.Anderson@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Shyla.Vesitis@doe.virginia.gov).

JFL/la

### Attachments:

### [National ESEA Distinguished Schools Recognition Program – 2020-2021 School Intent to Apply Form (Word)](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2020/269-20a.doc)

### [National ESEA Distinguished Schools Recognition Program – 2020-2021 Instructions for Developing the Application (Word)](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2020/269-20b.doc)

### [National ESEA Distinguished Schools Recognition Program – 2020-2021 School Participation Form (Word)](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2020/269-20c.doc)