



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DATE: December 16, 2022

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Jillian Balow, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Seeking Nominations for Board of Education's Innovative Practice Recognition Award for the Exemplar School Recognition Program

The Virginia Board of Education seeks to recognize schools, school divisions, and local school boards for implementing effective, innovative practices that are aligned with the Commonwealth's goals for public education. Per the *Code of Virginia* § 22.1-253.13:9 and the guidelines for the Exemplar School Recognition Program adopted by the Board of Education, the Board is seeking nominations for the Innovative Practice Recognition Award.

All applications should be completed locally and then forwarded to the school or division's associated Superintendents' Regional Study Group. Each of the eight Superintendents' Regional Study Groups is asked to select up to three applicants (schools, divisions, or school boards) for consideration from their region.

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) will host a webinar to review the nomination process and to answer questions on Wednesday, January 18, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. Please register for the [Innovative Practice Award webinar](#). A confirmation email will be sent after registration is complete.

Eligibility for the Innovative Practice Recognition Award

Eligibility for the Innovative Practice Recognition Award is open to all accreditation-eligible schools, any school division, and any local school board based upon the following criteria:

- School- or division-wide implementation of a new or creative evidence-based alternative to existing instructional or administrative practices in a defined student population;
- Practice must be implemented for at least two full academic years;
- Goals and objectives for practice must align with one of the following priority areas:

- Closing achievement gaps among vulnerable and/or minority student groups;
- Developing an integrated STEM approach to learning;
- Building genuine relationships with families to support overall family well-being and children's healthy development;
- Elevating the quality and character of the school environment and supporting norms, goals, and values of the community;
- Retaining high-quality teachers; and
- Developing life-ready students through implementation of the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate*.

Data provided by the school or division must demonstrate that the practice, strategy or program is meeting its objectives and is having a significant impact on outcomes for the targeted student population.

Overview of Nomination Process

- Schools, school divisions, or local school boards should complete the attached *Innovative Practice Award Nomination Form* and submit it to their Division Superintendent/Designee. Forms collected at the division will then be forwarded to the Superintendents' Regional Study Group Chair or designee for further consideration. A February 22, 2022 deadline for regional submissions is recommended.
- Each Superintendents' Regional Study Group should establish its own process for selecting up to three applicants from the region based on the award eligibility and evaluation criteria. A description of the process used must be submitted with the regional nominee applications.
- Applications from regional nominees must be submitted to the Office of Accountability at the Virginia Department of Education by email at accountability@doe.virginia.gov no later than the close of business on **March 17, 2023**.
- Applications from all regional nominees will be reviewed and rated against an established rubric based on the following evaluation criteria:
 - Strength of evidence presented to support the selected practice, strategy, or program's use
 - Extent to which practice, strategy, or program meets the definition and intent of innovative
 - Alignment of practice, strategy, or program's goals and objectives to selected priority area
 - Demonstrated success of practice, strategy, or program, evidenced by summarized data collected on its impact
- Those scoring above a predetermined range will be recognized by the Board of Education and identified in the Superintendent's Annual Report and on the Virginia Department of Education website.

For information regarding the Innovative Practice Award Program contact Amy Siepka, Director, Office of Accountability at Amy.Siepka@doe.virginia.gov for (804) 225-2102.

JB/ABS/abs

Attachment:

- A. [Innovative Practice Award Nomination Form](#) (DOCX)