



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DATE: January 13, 2023

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Jillian Balow, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Call for Proposals: New Cycle of Recruitment and Retention Support Grant

As part of Virginia's American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) funding, over \$1,000,000 in grant funding is available to assist public school divisions with recruitment and retention of educators. Following the successful implementation of the Recruitment and Retention Support Grant (RARS), originally announced on June 2, 2022 ([Superintendent's Memo #115-22](#)), the next cycle of the RARS grant is designed to offer **retention and/or recruitment bonuses** to current educators and/or prospective educators, and/or to provide **tuition assistance** to division employees seeking licensure, with an emphasis on high-need areas. Depending on enrollment figures, as indicated in the [Fall Membership Report](#) for the 2022-23 school year, divisions may submit a proposal for either up to \$30,000 or up to \$50,000 over the course of one year (2023-2024).

All Virginia public school divisions are eligible to apply for this funding. In submitting a proposal, divisions will identify the individuals to whom they wish to offer retention bonuses and/or the new positions for which they'd like to offer hiring incentives, and/or the amount planned for tuition support, along with an estimate of the total amount to be spent. Division employees eligible for retention bonuses include teachers who are currently teaching in a 2022-2023 critical teaching shortage area as identified by the VDOE *or* who are teaching in a hard-to-staff division, as defined in **Attachment A**. Divisions may also choose to use the funds towards hiring bonuses for critical teaching shortage positions or for those accepting any teaching position in a hard-to-staff division. Further, hard-to-staff divisions may also offer *hiring bonuses* to other professional positions that the division identifies as high-need areas, including counselors, school psychologists, reading specialists, etc. In order to be eligible for hiring incentives, new employees' hire date (written offer) must be **June 30, 2023** or prior.

Furthermore, the grant funding may be used for tuition support for division employees seeking licensure. Specific eligibility requirements are included in **Attachment A**.

Proposals are due by **4 p.m. on Friday, February 3, 2023**, and should be submitted via email to Dr. Meg Homer: Meghan.Homer@doe.virginia.gov. Divisions applying for funding will be notified of their award status by the end of February 2023 and will receive additional details on seeking reimbursement.

An information session will be held via Zoom on **Tuesday, January 17 at 4:30 p.m.** Please [register for the information session here](#). A second information session will be held via Zoom on **Wednesday, January 25 at 4:30pm**; [register here](#). Please contact Meghan.Homer@doe.virginia.gov for more information.

JB/BJ/mkh

Attachment:

- A. [Recruitment and Retention Support Grant Proposal](#) (Word)