



**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

August 12, 2016

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Alternative Teacher Compensation Competitive Planning Grants Request for Proposals

The Virginia Department of Education is pleased to announce a new competitive grant opportunity for school divisions to explore alternative teacher compensation approaches that move away from tenure-based step increases toward compensation systems based on teacher performance and student progress. The 2016 Appropriation Act provides funding for up to ten competitive planning grants to be awarded, each not to exceed \$5,000. School divisions are eligible to submit proposals meeting the intent of the attached Request for Proposals.

Priority for the FY 2017 planning grants will be given to school divisions that have not previously explored alternative compensation approaches and have schools not achieving full accreditation, or that have high numbers of at-risk students needing qualified teachers in hard-to-staff subjects. The Department of Education may consider the geographic distribution of school divisions in making the competitive planning grant awards.

In the second year of the biennium (FY 2018), \$2,075,000 is appropriated for the first year of five-year competitive grants to school divisions to implement performance-based teacher compensation systems. Priority for FY 2018 funding will be given to school divisions with high numbers of at-risk students needing qualified teachers in hard-to-staff subjects. Grantees should combine teacher improvement programs with performance-based compensation systems that consider teacher performance through gains in individual student academic achievement. The approved compensation programs should provide teachers with incentives to take on additional training and responsibilities. The compensation program must include an effective evaluation system.

The FY 2017 funds are appropriated for school divisions to apply for planning grants to explore alternative teacher compensation approaches. Such school divisions may subsequently apply for funds in FY 2018 to implement performance-based teacher compensation systems.

This is an exciting opportunity for school divisions to be creative in exploring alternative teacher compensation approaches. Competitive planning grant proposals must be submitted to the Department of Education no later than September 16, 2016, by 4 p.m. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Mrs. Patty S. Pitts, assistant superintendent for teacher education and licensure, Division of Teacher Education and Licensure, by e-mail at Patty.Pitts@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 371-2522.

SRS/psp

Attachments:

- A. [Alternative Teacher Compensation Competitive Planning Grants Request for Proposals](#) (Word)

