



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA  
Department of Education

March 27, 2015

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT: High School Program Innovation Planning Grant Request for Proposals**

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) is pleased to announce a new opportunity for school divisions in their efforts to improve student achievement and postsecondary readiness, the **High School Program Innovation (HSPI)** request for proposals (RFP). The 2015 Appropriation Act has provided funding for up to five (5) competitive planning grants to be awarded, each not to exceed \$50,000. Individual school divisions or consortia of school divisions are eligible to submit proposals meeting the intent of the RFP, Attachment A of this memorandum. Proposals may target one or more high schools in each participating school division. It is anticipated that awards will be made on or about July 1, 2015.

For the purposes of this proposal, essential elements of high school innovation include: a) student centered learning, with progress based on student demonstrated proficiency; b) “real-world” connections that promote alignment with community work force needs and emphasize transition to college and/or career; and c) varying models for educator supports and staffing. The availability of planning grant funding, along with the opportunity for flexibility or exemption from certain administrative regulations, is intended to encourage new models of high school organization and instruction and to identify promising practices for scaling across Virginia in the future.

This is an exciting opportunity for school divisions to be creative in how their systems of instructional delivery and organization can be significantly improved, including new ways to look at personalized learning, progress based on demonstrated proficiency and competency-based learning, and embedded connections with postsecondary education and the business community. **School divisions awarded planning grants must be prepared to implement their innovative reform models over two years beginning with the 2016-2017 school year.**

Completed HSPI proposals must be received electronically by the VDOE no later than 4 p.m. on **June 1, 2015**. The deadline for submission of the required Intent-to-Submit form is **April 17, 2015**. For additional information, please contact John W. "Billy" Haun, Ed.D., chief academic officer, Division of Instruction, by e-mail at [Billy.Haun@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Billy.Haun@doe.virginia.gov) or by telephone at (804) 225-2034.

SRS/JWH/rt

Attachment:

- A. [High School Program Innovation Planning Grant Request for Proposals](#) (Word)

