



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

July 10, 2015

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Virginia's State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators

In July 2014, United States Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced the *Excellent Educators for All* initiative, which included the requirement for each state educational agency (SEA) to submit to the U.S. Department of Education (USED) a State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators (State Plan). Under Section 1111(b)(8)(C) of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA), as amended, the State Plan must describe the steps the state will take to ensure that "...poor and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers."

Virginia's State Plan to ensure teacher equity was initially developed in 2006. To revise the State Plan as intended under the *Excellent Educators for All* initiative, Virginia collaborated with staff from the *Center on Great Teachers and Leaders* at the American Institutes for Research. The first step was to conduct a data analysis to identify teacher equity gaps. Next, a diverse group of stakeholders was invited to participate in a root cause analysis for the teacher equity gaps identified during the data analysis and determine possible strategies to address the gaps.

As a result of stakeholder discussions and recommendations, Virginia will focus teacher equity efforts on preparing, supporting and increasing the number of: 1) mathematics teachers in high-minority schools; 2) teachers endorsed in English as a Second Language (ESL) in high-poverty schools; and 3) special education teachers in high-poverty schools. Further details about these efforts are described in the State Plan. Virginia will work with stakeholders, school divisions, and institutions of higher education to implement strategies to address the three teacher equity gaps, while also continuing to review data, engage stakeholders, and update the State Plan biannually.

Virginia submitted its State Plan to USED on June 1, 2015. The State Plan is available at:
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/federal_programs/esea/title2/part_a/index.shtml.

Questions about the State Plan may be directed to Carol Sylvester, Title II, Part A, specialist, at (804) 371-0908 or Carol.Sylvester@doe.virginia.gov; or Tiffany Frierson, Title II/IV specialist, at (804) 371-2682 or Tiffany.Frierson@doe.virginia.gov.

SRS/ccs

