



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

August 29, 2014

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: 2014-2015 Green Ribbon Schools

The Department of Education is pleased to announce that Virginia will participate for the fourth year in the United States Department of Education's (USED) Green Ribbon Schools (GRS) award program. Beginning this year, the competition is open to individual schools and public school divisions. The program is intended to recognize schools and school divisions that are integrating environmental learning with goals for 1) healthy students and employees and 2) school and office facilities with a positive environmental impact. The applications are intended to focus on measurable and verifiable results wherever possible, and Virginia's applications, though based on the national criteria, provide ample opportunities for schools and school divisions in the Commonwealth to highlight Virginia-specific emphases and initiatives. Over the last three years, Virginia has had four public schools recognized by the national selection committee as achieving this prestigious award.

The GRS award process consists of two steps. The first step is to complete and electronically submit either the state school application or the state school division application to the state review committee. Virginia is permitted up to five PreK-12 school or school division state nominations. Of these five total nominees, at least one must be a private school and one must be a school or school division with schools that have at least 40 percent of students from disadvantaged backgrounds (either Title I or Title I eligible).

After a national selection committee has reviewed states' nominees, USED will recognize 50 or more GRS awardees. Of Virginia's five state nominees, potentially all may be designated as GRS awardees. The 2014-2015 GRS recipients will be invited to an awards ceremony in Washington, D.C. in July 2015.

For a school or a school division to be nominated for the USED Green Ribbon Schools award program by Virginia, the nonbinding GRS Intent to Submit form included in the applications should be submitted by October 24, 2014.

A Virginia GRS informational session will be conducted via webinar on Wednesday, September 24, 2014, at 4 p.m., and a follow-up webinar will be conducted on Wednesday, October 15, 2014, at 4 p.m. The first webinar (September 24, 2014) will focus on suggestions for completing the application for the 2014-2015 USED GRS recipients. The second webinar (October 15, 2014) will be an open question and answer session to offer technical assistance. Information about the USED Green Ribbon Schools program may be found on the Virginia Department of Education [Green Ribbon Schools](#) Web site. Schools and school divisions interested in participating in the webinars may find information on the Virginia Green Ribbon Schools Web page.

The GRS applications must be completed and received by the Virginia Department of Education by December 15, 2014, no later than 4 p.m. For additional information, please contact Barbara P. Young, science specialist,

Office of Science and Health Education, by e-mail at Barbara.Young@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-2676.

SRS/BPY/rt

Attachments:

- A. [2014-2015 Virginia Green Ribbon Schools Application for Schools](#) (Word)
- B. [2014-2015 Virginia Green Ribbon Schools Application for School Divisions](#) (Word)