



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

November 21, 2014

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Virginia Digital Textbook Marketplace Pilot

Starting in January 2015, Virginia will be the first state in the nation to pilot a statewide digital textbook marketplace using a technology portal where divisions can go to purchase Virginia-approved digital textbooks and other digital learning resources. The VITA contractor who will create the Virginia-specific portal is Copia (<http://www.copiaedu.com/>), who has created a somewhat similar system in Australia. Copia is currently working with textbook publishers on agreements that would allow divisions to purchase specific parts of a variety of textbooks rather than the whole, providing an easier method for teachers to personalize learning for students. The use of the marketplace is voluntary, and divisions will not pay a fee to use it.

The Virginia digital textbook marketplace portal will allow teachers:

- to choose pieces of several different textbooks or other resources and assign these to his/her class, group within a class, or individual student;
- to add in-class discussions, quizzes, and activities within the text of the materials themselves and push those out to their students;
- to allow communication of questions, thoughts, ideas between and among teachers and students;
- to differentiate instruction through the use of different levels and styles of presentation; and,
- to track student usage and achievement through data collected by the system in order to make modifications.

The interfaces for students, teachers, and division personnel are all device-agnostic. Special features to enhance the digital materials and provide compliance with accessibility have been developed for IOS, Android, Windows8, and are currently being developed for Chromebooks. The system stores student work on their own space in the Cloud, though students can work both online and off-line.

This project is still in the developmental stage. If your division is interested in participating in the small pilot, which will focus on World Languages and Advanced Placement texts, please contact Jean Weller via e-mail at jean.weller@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at 804-225-2825.

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