



**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA**  
**Department of Education**

November 1, 2013

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Patricia I. Wright, Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT: Opportunity for Division Training and Technical Assistance in Autism**

The Virginia Commonwealth University Autism Center for Excellence (VCU-ACE) is a collaborative partnership between the Department of Education; the VCU School of Education, Department of Special Education and Disability Policy; the VCU School of Medicine, Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation; and the VCU Research Rehabilitation and Training Center. VCU-ACE is dedicated to improving outcomes for students with autism by providing long-term training and technical assistance options for school divisions across the Commonwealth.

VCU-ACE is seeking applications from school divisions to receive direct technical assistance and embedded professional development from VCU-ACE faculty. Up to six selected sites will receive intensive support that will focus on improving the division's ability to provide high quality research-based programming and support services for students with autism. The technical assistance model, process and benefits of participation in the ACE initiative are described in the attached application. Divisions not selected for participation this year as VCU-ACE Technical Assistance sites will be able to access training and technical assistance from VCU-ACE through a variety of options. These opportunities will be advertised on the VCU-ACE Web site.

The application is attached. It is also available on the Department of Education Web site at [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special\\_ed/disabilities/autism/](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/disabilities/autism/). Applications must be received by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, January 15, 2014. The selection of the final VCU-ACE Technical Assistance sites will be through a competitive process.

Applications should be mailed to:

Bonnie McCarthy  
Virginia Commonwealth University  
Autism Center for Excellence  
1314 West Main Street  
P.O. Box 842011  
Richmond, Virginia 23284-2011

If you have any questions or need assistance with the submission of the application or the above information, please contact Erin Smydra, education specialist for Autism, Assistive Technology, and Intellectual Disabilities at the Virginia Department of Education, at (804) 371-7421 or via e-mail at [erin.smydra@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:erin.smydra@doe.virginia.gov) or Carol Schall, Virginia Commonwealth University Autism Center for Excellence, at (804) 828-4523 or via e-mail at [cmschall@vcu.edu](mailto:cmschall@vcu.edu).

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Attachment:

- a. [ACE Application](#) (PDF)