



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA  
Department of Education

November 15, 2013

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Patricia I. Wright, Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT: 2014-2015 Application for the Virginia Middle School Teacher Corps**

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) is pleased to announce a revised process for the 2014-2015 Virginia Middle School Teacher Corps (MSTC) program. The MSTC program continues to focus on reinforcing the quality of mathematics instruction in middle schools and ensuring that at-risk students receive a solid foundation in mathematics as they prepare to enter high school. However, the revised process will substantially simplify how school divisions with eligible schools access and use MSTC funds to **recruit** effective middle grades mathematics teachers. Completed *MSTC Program Applications* are due to VDOE by 4 p.m., March 3, 2014.

A list of middle grades schools eligible to participate in the MSTC program in 2014-2015, is located on the VDOE Web site at [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching/career\\_resources/middle\\_teacher\\_corps/eligible\\_schools.pdf](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching/career_resources/middle_teacher_corps/eligible_schools.pdf). These are schools that are: 1) "Warned in Mathematics" under the state's school accreditation process; 2) did not meet mathematics "Annual Measurable Objectives" (AMOs) under the federal *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA), as amended by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB); and/or 3) are identified as Priority Schools, where mathematics is an area identified for improvement.

School divisions with eligible middle grades schools will use the MSTC program to help fill mathematics teacher vacancies with qualified mathematics teachers. Qualified MSTC teachers must:

1. hold an active, five-year Virginia teaching license;
2. hold an appropriate teaching endorsement to teach middle school mathematics;
3. have at least three years experience in full-time teaching of middle or high school mathematics;
4. have a major or minor in mathematics (a minimum of 18 semester hours of mathematics coursework);  
and
5. have demonstrated success in improving students' academic achievement in mathematics.

The school division may apply for funding to provide an annual salary differential of \$5,000 for each of three years for qualified teachers recruited to fill mathematics vacancies at eligible middle schools. Please note that years two and three for the three-year school and teacher eligibility are contingent upon: 1) continued funding each year from the Virginia General Assembly; and 2) continued annual performance evaluation of proficient or above by the MSTC teacher.

The VDOE will notify all divisions of their MSTC applications' status (non approval or approval and the number of MSTC positions) by **March 31, 2014**. This notice of intent will **precede** final approval of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 state budget. Around mid-May 2014, pending final approval of the FY 2015 state budget, final

confirmation will be made with school divisions of the awarded MSTC positions. At that point, those school divisions with MSTC awards will be able to begin using the MSTC salary differential as an incentive to recruit mathematics teachers for the 2014-2015 school year. The VDOE will make official, hardcopy **Notices of Grant Award** to approved school divisions on or around **July 1, 2014**.

School divisions may include the MSTC teacher salary differential as creditable compensation for improved teacher retirement benefits under the Virginia Retirement System. The salary differential incentive payment is taxable to the recipient, and the school division assumes responsibility for ensuring that all taxes and/or Virginia Retirement System match are remitted.

Additional information about the program may be found in the *MSTC Program Application*, Attachment A to this memorandum, and on the VDOE Web site at [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching/career\\_resources/middle\\_teacher\\_corps/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching/career_resources/middle_teacher_corps/index.shtml).

If you need additional information or have questions about the MSTC program, please contact Mrs. Kim Powell, grants manager, Office of Science and Health Education, by e-mail at [Kim.Powell@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Kim.Powell@doe.virginia.gov) or by telephone at (804) 225-3609; or Mr. Jim Firebaugh, science and mathematics specialist, by e-mail at [Jim.Firebaugh@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Jim.Firebaugh@doe.virginia.gov) or by telephone at (804) 225-3688.

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Attachment:

- a. [The Virginia Middle School Teacher Corps Program Application](#) (Word)