



#037-21

Commonwealth of Virginia
Virginia Department of Education
Superintendent's Memo

DATE: February 5, 2021
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **Seeking Applications for the Grow Your Own Teacher Pilot Program from Fiscal Year 2021 Funding**

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) is seeking applications for a pilot program that provides grants to low-income high school graduates who attended an institution of higher education in the Commonwealth and subsequently teach in a high-need public school in the school division in which they graduated from high school.

The General Assembly is projected to provide a final fiscal year 2021 appropriation of \$240,000 to provide grants of \$7,500 per academic year for up to four years to selected teachers. Grant awards are subject to available funding.

Selection Process:

- School division Human Resources Directors must submit completed Grow Your Own Teacher Application Forms to their division superintendent/designee for certification. Forms collected at the Division level will then be forwarded to the Superintendent's Region for further consideration.
- Each Superintendent's Region should establish its own process to select up to four individuals for the Grow Your Own Teacher pilot program based on the criteria identified below:
 - the teacher graduated from a public high school in the school division in which they are currently employed;

- the teacher was eligible for free lunch during the applicant's attendance at a public high school in the local school division; and
- the teacher is teaching, within one year of graduating from an institution of higher education in the Commonwealth, with a commitment to teach for a period of at least four years at a public school at which at least 50 percent of students qualify for free lunch, in the school division in which such individual graduated from high school.
- Regions should give priority to teachers who hold a renewable five- or ten-year teaching license and to those who fill a critical teacher shortage areas when submitting teachers' names recommended to receive a grant award.
- *Please note: Teachers may not apply individually to the Grow Your Own Teacher pilot program outside of the above process.*
- Each Superintendent's Region may submit up to four individuals recommended to receive a grant award.
- Regional selections must be submitted to the Office of Licensure and School Leadership no later than close of business on April 9, 2021. Once the Office of Licensure and School Leadership selects award recipients, the State Council of Higher Education will contact the school division and award recipients and ensure award disbursement.

The Application for the Grow Your Own Teacher Pilot Program and the VDOE Grow Your Own Teacher Form are attached.

For more information

For additional information, please contact Mrs. Maggie M. Clemmons, Director of the Office of Licensure and School Leadership, by email at Maggie.Clemmons@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 371-2476.

- A. Attachment: [Fiscal Year 2021 Application for the Grow Your Own Teacher Pilot Program](#) (DOCX)
- B. Attachment: [VDOE Grow Your Own Teacher Application Form](#) (DOCX)