



#123-21

**Commonwealth of Virginia
Virginia Department of Education
Superintendent's Memo #123-21**

DATE: May 7, 2021
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **2021-2022 Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)
Teacher Recruitment and Retention Incentive**

The 2021 General Assembly appropriated funding to attract, recruit, and retain high-quality diverse individuals to teach science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) subjects in Virginia middle and high schools experiencing difficulty in recruiting qualified teachers. School divisions interested in this funding must submit to the Virginia Department of Education a STEM Teacher Recruitment and Retention Initiatives (TRRI) Application on the [Single Sign-on for Web Systems](#) (SSWS) portal. The submitted application should include the number of Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, Mathematics, Mathematics-Algebra I, Middle Education 6-8: Mathematics, Middle Education 6-8: Science, Physics, Engineering, or Technology Education anticipated vacancies for the 2021-2022 school year by school. Priority for distribution of these incentives shall be to school divisions experiencing the most acute difficulties in recruiting qualified teachers, defined for this initiative as the overall free and reduced lunch rate of 40 percent on the [2019-2020 Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility Report](#).

Please note the national school lunch program did not operate during the 2020-2021 school year, resulting in no free and reduced eligibility data. The STEM TRRI application will use the **2019-2020** free and reduced eligibility data as proxy data for the 2021-2022 school year.

Eligible teachers must be employed full-time in a Virginia school division or school with more than 40 percent of the students eligible for free or reduced price lunch as reported on the 2019-2020 Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility Report; be entering their first, second, or third year of teaching experience; and hold a five- or ten-year valid Virginia teaching license with an endorsement in one the following endorsements and assigned to a teaching position in a corresponding STEM subject area:

- Biology;
- Chemistry;
- Earth Science;
- Mathematics;
- Mathematics-Algebra I;
- Middle Education 6-8: Mathematics;
- Middle Education 6-8: Science;
- Physics;
- Engineering; or
- Technology Education.

An eligible teacher will receive a \$5,000 incentive award after the completion of the first, second, and third years of teaching STEM at a hard-to-staff school with a satisfactory performance evaluation and a written commitment to return to the same school division for the following school year.

The maximum incentive award for each eligible teacher is \$15,000. The incentive awards are taxable to the recipient, and the school division is responsible for ensuring all taxes are remitted. **The STEM Teacher Recruitment and Retention Incentives anticipated vacancy data for school year 2021-2022 must be submitted by Monday, August 2, 2021, on the SSWS portal.** Each school division has an SSWS account manager who can provide your staff member, designated to serve as your STEM Teacher Recruitment and Retention Incentives contact, access to the TRRI application. Instructions for entering and submitting the anticipated vacancies are available online as part of the TRRI STEM Grant Application.

Please note, for the purpose of the award for individuals who received funds under this program prior to July 1, 2020, the criteria provided in Chapter 836 of the 2019 Acts of Assembly, will continue to apply. All incentive awards are contingent upon available funding.

For more information

Questions related to the STEM Teacher Recruitment and Retention Incentives may be directed to Maggie M. Clemmons, Director of Licensure and School Leadership, at (804) 371-2471 or Maggie.Clemmons@doe.virginia.gov.

JFL/MMC