



**#227-21**

**Commonwealth of Virginia  
Virginia Department of Education  
Superintendent's Memo #227-21**

DATE: August 13, 2021  
TO: Division Superintendents  
FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction  
SUBJECT: **Recruitment Incentive for Public Education (RIPE)**

The 2021 Special Session II of the General Assembly appropriated funding to support recruitment efforts for school divisions hiring to fill instructional positions between August 15, 2021, and November 15, 2021. School divisions interested in this funding must submit data to the Virginia Department of Education via the Recruitment Incentive for Public Education (RIPE) Application on the [Single Sign-on for Web Systems \(SSWS\) portal](#). The submitted application should include the number of hard-to-staff vacancies defined by the [Critical Teaching Shortage Areas](#) list and non-hard-to-staff 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 or greater on the [2020-2021 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 RIPE application will use the 2019-2020 free and reduced eligibility data as proxy data for the 2021-2022 school year.

Eligible teachers must be hired in an instructional position in a Virginia public school division between August 15, 2021 and November 15, 2021. Individuals who are employed by a local school division in Virginia as of July 1, 2021, who accept an otherwise qualifying position in

another local school division are not eligible for this incentive. Individuals employed by a local school division as of July 1, 2021, who transfer from a non-hard-to-staff school to a hard-to-staff school within the same division, are eligible for this incentive.

An eligible teacher will receive a \$2,500 incentive award for filling a non-hard-to-staff position, or an incentive award of \$5,000 for a hard-to-staff position. School divisions will provide half of the incentive payment to the individual no later than January 1, 2022 and provide the balance of the full amount to the individual no earlier than May 1, 2022, provided the individual receive a satisfactory performance evaluation and provides a written commitment to return to the same school for the 2022-2023 school year.

School divisions awarded RIPE funds will be provided funding on a cost reimbursement basis. Budget transfer requests and reimbursement requests will be processed through the Virginia Department of Education's Online Management of Education Grant Awards system, OMEGA. The incentive awards are taxable to the recipient, and the school division is responsible for ensuring all taxes are remitted. The RIPE vacancy data for school year 2021-2022 must be submitted between Monday, August 16, 2021 and Tuesday, August 31, 2021, on the SSWS portal. Each school division has an SSWS account manager who can provide the school division staff member, designated to serve as the division RIPE contact, access to the RIPE Application. Instructions for entering and submitting the vacancies data are available online as part of the RIPE Application.

### For more information

Questions related to the Recruitment Incentive for Public Education may be directed to Maggie M. Clemmons, Director of Licensure and School Leadership, at (804) 371-2471 or [Maggie.Clemmons@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Maggie.Clemmons@doe.virginia.gov).

JFL/mmc