



#257-21

**Commonwealth of Virginia
Virginia Department of Education
Superintendent's Memo #257-21**

DATE: September 10, 2021
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **New Teachers Program Data Collection for the Mentor Teacher Program and Career Switcher Program**

The New Teachers Program Data Collection (NTPDC) consolidated application will be used to collect data from school divisions applying for state funds for the Mentor Teacher Program or Career Switcher Program. The NTPDC consolidated application window, which is accessible from the Department of Education's [Single Sign-on for Web Systems \(SSWS\)](#) portal, will be open to divisions **Monday, September 27, 2021 through Friday, October 29, 2021.**

The NTPDC application will be used to collect data from school divisions on new teachers with zero years of teaching experience who qualify for one of these two programs. Funds for school divisions will be allocated on a per-teacher basis that will be determined based on the requests for new teacher grants submitted by each school division. Grant funds will be retroactive to July 1, 2021, and will be awarded subject to available state funding. Please note that a new teacher's name can be submitted for only one of the two new teacher programs. At the end of the school year, divisions will be required to complete a report through SSWS for the Mentor Teacher Program (additional information will be provided at that time).

Participation in these funding opportunities is voluntary. However, please note that § 22.1-303 of the *Code of Virginia* requires that, "School boards shall provide each probationary

teacher except probationary teachers who have prior successful teaching experience, as determined by the local school board in a school division, a mentor teacher, as described by Board guidelines developed pursuant to Section 22.1-305.1, during the first year of the probationary period, to assist such probationary teacher in achieving excellence in instruction.”

Mentor Teacher Program

Contingent upon availability of funds, the 2021-2022 Mentor Teacher Program is funded from the Lottery Proceeds Fund and payments from this fund will begin in January 2022. Funds were allocated by the General Assembly to provide grants to school divisions providing mentors for new teachers to the teaching profession with zero years of teaching experience (this does NOT include teachers who are new to a division with previous years of experience). One million dollars in funding is available statewide for this program. In past years, these funds have been distributed to school divisions on a fixed amount per position based on divisions' reported number of first-year teachers with no experience. Pursuant to the JLARC recommendation, effective with the fiscal year 2022 funding distribution to school divisions, VDOE will distribute the \$1.0 million in state teacher mentorship funds in a manner that provides a higher amount per first year teacher by weighting the per teacher amount for the severity of divisions' percentage of unfilled teaching positions. This new funding methodology will use a calculation similar to that used in distributing state At-risk Add-on funding, in which the per pupil add-on funding for each estimated at-risk student increases in proportion to the severity of divisions' free lunch eligibility percentage. Using similar weighting calculations, in fiscal year 2022, the amount of teacher mentorship funds per new teacher in each division will be weighted using a factor of between 1.0 and 10.0. Divisions with the lowest percentage of unfilled teaching positions will have their per new teacher funding amount weighted closer to 1.0, while divisions with the highest percentage of unfilled teaching positions will have their per position amount weighted closer to 10.0, providing a higher per position amount. Divisions with a percentage of unfilled positions in between will have their per position amount weighted between 1.0 and 10.0 on a sliding scale in proportion to their percentage of unfilled positions.

Career Switcher Program (Mentor Support)

Funding will be made available from the general fund to provide grants to school divisions to support mentor teacher programs for new teachers entering the profession through the Career Switcher Program. Contingent upon the availability of funding, school divisions may request support for the Career Switcher Program mentors assigned to individuals who have completed Level I of a Career Switcher Program and who have zero years of teaching experience. These teachers are completing Level II of their program during the 2021-2022 school year. If funds remain available for mentors for the Career Switcher Program after the fall data collection and distribution of funds, a second data collection will be disseminated in the spring of the school year for the Career Switcher Program only, and the school divisions will be advised accordingly.

Superintendent's Data Collection Approvals (SDCA) Application

Similar to previous years, the verification report for the NTPDC will be electronically approved and certified by the division superintendent through the SDCA application in SSWS. If a superintendent designee will be certifying the NTPDC, access will need to be granted by the school division's local SSWS administrator. A successful submission and division superintendent's electronic approval must be completed by **Friday, October 29, 2021**.

The individual incentive awards are taxable to the recipient, and the school division is responsible for ensuring all taxes are remitted. The school divisions' local SSWS account manager can provide the designated program coordinator access to this application. Instructions for entering and submitting the data are available online as part of the SSWS-NTPDC application.

For more information

If you have questions about the Mentor Teacher Program and the Career Switcher Program, please contact Ms. Maggie Clemmons, Director of Licensure and School Leadership, at Maggie.Clemmons@doe.virginia.gov or (804) 371-2476 or Elena Dremova, Licensure and Career Switcher Specialist, at Elena.Dremova@doe.virginia.gov or (804) 371-0904.