



**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

February 24, 2017

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Environmental Literacy: Implementing and Assessing Meaningful Watershed Experiences

The Virginia Department of Education's (VDOE) Office of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics and the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries are pleased to announce Environmental Literacy: Implementing and Assessing Meaningful Watershed Experiences workshop. This standard based professional development will provide participants with lessons and experience through Project Aquatic WILD, a nationally recognized supplementary curriculum, and will demonstrate how performance based assessments can be used to determine student learning and increase science and environmental literacy K-12. The professional development will last 3 days and will include lesson plans to be used within the schools. The Environmental Literacy workshop supports Governor McAuliffe's commitment of engaging students in meaningful outdoor education by supporting teacher and administrator professional learning.

The Environmental Literacy workshop is a three-day professional development opportunity that will be held from June 26-28, 2017, at Matthews State Forest near Galax, Virginia. The Environmental Literacy: Implementing and Assessing Meaningful Watershed Education is designed to meet the following goals for science teachers:

- Teach basic stream, river, and estuarine science by guiding students in classroom and field activities;
- Explain the current environmental impacts on Virginia's watersheds including its western and southern rivers and the Chesapeake Bay and other bodies of water;
- Lead students in learning activities that improve their abilities to use science in environmental stewardship decisions;
- Integrate content and science skills in the field through Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) with the goal of increasing student environmental literacy;
- Design and implement MWEEs that are applicable to the regions where they teach; and
- Assess student performance in the field and related content Standards of Learning through using a teacher-designed, performance-based assessments.

The VDOE will assume the cost of registration, lodging, and meals for all participants. School divisions are encouraged to cover mileage expenses for the sessions for division participants as this cost is not assumed by the VDOE; however, this is not a requirement of the program.

Enrollment for the Environmental Literacy: Implementing and Assessing Meaningful Watershed Experiences workshop is limited to 25 teachers from across the state; although priority will be given to teachers outside of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed region. Priority will also be given to those teams from schools not meeting the state benchmark for accreditation in science. Participation selection will be made to provide representation from each Superintendents' region. Final selection of participants will also be based on the order in which applications are received.

Registration for teachers can be completed online at [Environmental Literacy MWEE Workshop Registration](#) . Registration for the Environmental Literacy: Implementing and Assessing Meaningful Watershed Experiences workshop will be open from February 24-May 1, 2017. Notifications of acceptance will be provided to applicants and the applicants' school principals by email on or before May 26, 2017.

Questions regarding the Environmental Literacy: Implementing and Assessing Meaningful Watershed Experiences workshop should be directed to Anne Petersen, Science Specialist, by email at anne.petersen@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-2676.

SRS/TMM/rt

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