COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

March 25, 2016

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Updated Information Related to State Funding Allocation for Information Technology Industry Certifications and Related Testing Preparation Resources for School Year (SY) 2015-2016

As initially stated in Superintendent's Memo #190-15, the 2015 General Assembly appropriated $1.5 million from the general fund to support students and teachers pursuing the Virginia Board of Education-approved information technology (IT) industry certifications for fiscal year 2016 (SY 2015-2016). Due to concerns of the increased cost for purchasing the Microsoft IT Program site licenses individually rather than by one statewide purchase, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) presented to divisions an alternative "**opt out**" option.

In response to divisions, the VDOE negotiated the group purchase for 365 high schools and career and technical centers. All three site licenses have the same expiration date, November 30, 2016, which allow access to instructional and testing materials throughout the summer and fall.

The group purchase includes the following Microsoft IT Academy products and services:

- 12-month site license for digital curriculum and instructional resources;
- 12-month site license for unlimited certification testing for the Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Access, OneNote, and SharePoint);
- 12-month MOS 2010/2013 practice test license (delivered on the GMetrix operating platform); and
- Five regional (one-day) workshops on how to access and use the digital curriculum, instructional resources, and the new features of the GMetrix operating platform (to be announced under a separate cover).

VDOE also purchased a limited number of exam vouchers for the Microsoft Technology Associate certifications that are available to high schools and CTE centers upon request, as needed.

Based on the actions described above Superintendent's Memo #190-15 is rescinded, effective immediately. Do not submit any reimbursements for the Microsoft tests listed above. All expenditures for Microsoft IT Academy test materials are covered under the "opt out" provision.

If you have questions, please contact W. Terry Dougherty, CTE grants administrator, at Terry.Dougherty@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-3349.

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