



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

April 22, 2016

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT: High School Program Innovation Planning Grant Request for Proposals –
Fiscal Year 2017**

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) is pleased to announce a new opportunity for school divisions in their efforts to improve student achievement and postsecondary readiness, the **High School Program Innovation (HSPI)** request for proposals (RFP). The 2016 Appropriation Act (pending final signature by the Governor) has provided funding for up to five (5) competitive planning grants to be awarded in fiscal year 2017, each not to exceed \$50,000. Individual school divisions or consortia of school divisions are eligible to submit proposals meeting the intent of the RFP document, available as Attachment A of this memorandum. Proposals may target one or more high schools in each participating school division. It is anticipated that awards will be made on or about July 1, 2016.

For the purposes of this proposal, essential elements of high school innovation include: a) student centered learning, with progress based on student demonstrated proficiency; b) “real-world” connections that promote alignment with community work force needs and emphasize transition to college and/or career; and c) varying models for educator supports and staffing. The availability of planning grant funding, along with the opportunity for flexibility or exemption from certain administrative regulations, is intended to encourage new models of high school organization and instruction and to identify promising practices for scaling across Virginia in the future.

This is an exciting opportunity for school divisions to be creative in how their systems of instructional delivery and organization can be significantly improved, including new ways to look at personalized learning, progress based on demonstrated proficiency and competency-based learning, and embedded connections with postsecondary education and the business community. The HSPI grant program also encourages alternative pathways to achieving a high school diploma, which address demonstrated competencies, giving due consideration to critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship. **School divisions awarded planning grants must be prepared to implement their innovative reform models over two years beginning with the 2017-2018 school year.**

Completed HSPI proposals must be received electronically by the VDOE no later than 4 p.m. on **June 1, 2016**. The deadline for submission of the required Intent-to-Submit e-mail message is **May 2, 2016**. For additional information, please contact John W. "Billy" Haun, Ed.D., chief academic officer, Division of Instruction, by e-mail at Billy.Haun@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-2034.

SRS/JWH/rt

Attachment:

A. [High School Program Innovation Planning Grant Request for Proposals](#) (Word)