



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

May 15, 2015

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Governor's Youth Development Academies

The purpose of this memo is to invite your school division, or a consortium of school divisions within your region, to apply for funds to implement a Governor's Youth Development Academy for rising ninth- and tenth-grade students within your region during fiscal year (FY) 2016 (July 2015 through June 2016). The General Assembly appropriated state funding to support three pilot Academies in the summer of FY 13, eight sites in FY 14, and eight sites in FY 15 (during the 2015 – 2016 school year, or during the summer 2016, prior to June 30, 2016). Up to \$67,897 in state funding is available per site. Funds will support only one Academy within a superintendents' planning region and priority will be given to applications submitted by a collaboration of divisions within a region.

The objectives of the Academies are to prepare students with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in school, at home, and in the workplace and to build personal strengths and school engagement. The ninth and tenth graders selected to attend must represent a cross section of the divisions' student body(ies), including those at-risk of disengagement and dropping out.

Responsibilities of the school division(s) include selection of the student participants, identification of the Academy location, and support of the Academy's staffing and logistics. The above-referenced funding is available to support staff, staff training, materials, food, student transportation, and other program costs.

The school division(s) selected to receive funding will create the Academies, focusing on civics education, financial literacy, community service, preventive health, personal character development, and leadership.

Students will learn from community leaders and professionals from varying sectors through active participatory experiences. To take advantage of resources in the region, the implementing division(s) will form partnerships with community organizations such as 4-H, the YMCA, local governments, and civic organizations.

Additional Information on Youth Development Academies

Goals for Students include:

- developing personal life skills to positively affect success at home, school, and work;
- building relationships with peers;
- identifying mentors to support students throughout the school year;
- providing leadership opportunities; and
- informing students about postsecondary opportunities and careers.

Number and Selection of Participants:

- A maximum of 50 rising ninth- and tenth-grade students may be selected per Academy site.
- Participants will be selected by participating school divisions within a region.
- Participants will be representative of the characteristics and diversity of student bodies, including those students identified through early warning indicators (e.g., at risk of losing academic progress, becoming disengaged from school).

Program Duration and Content:

- Academies may be held during the school year or as a one or two week program during the summer (prior to June 30, 2016).
- Example curriculum components include:
 - *Youth as Engaged Citizens*, including civics and community service;
 - *Personal Development and Responsibility*, including interpersonal relationships, problem solving, character development, and healthy lifestyles;
 - *College and Career Preparation*, including interest and skill inventories, goal setting, and finding employment; and
 - *Financial Well-being*, including budgeting and understanding money and credit management.

School Division Staffing:

- Funding will be provided to support five counselors, an on-site director, and administrative support for each site. Up to \$67,897 in state funding is available per site for staffing and other costs.
- Each counselor will lead a group of ten students.
- Staff may be drawn from teachers, school counselors, administrators, and student activity directors.
- Staff will form partnerships with community leaders, professionals, and organizations to provide active learning experiences for student attendees.

School divisions within a region that are interested in implementing a Youth Development Academy should complete the attached application and submit it no later than Friday, June 19, 2015, to:

Mr. Joseph Wharff
 Student Assistance Systems Coordinator/School Counseling Specialist
 Virginia Department of Education
 P.O. Box 2120, 20th Floor
 Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120

Collaborations of school divisions submitting applications should designate a fiscal agent.

Additional information regarding [Youth Development Academies](#), including End-of-Year reports from previous Academies, is available on the Virginia Department of Education Web site. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Joseph Wharff at (804) 225-3370, or by e-mail at Joseph.Wharff@doe.virginia.gov.

SRS/JW/rt

Attachment:

- [Youth Development Academy FY 16 Application](#) (Word)