



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

September 25, 2015

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Consolidated Data Collection to Apply for State Funding to Support Mentors for New Teachers with No Teaching Experience

The Virginia Department of Education has consolidated the collection of new teacher information for school divisions applying for state funds for the following two programs: Mentor Teacher Program and the Career Switcher Program. The 2015-2016 Mentor Teacher Program is now funded from the Lottery Proceeds Fund as provided in the Chapter 2 budget, adopted by the 2015 General Assembly. Full funding for grants are dependent on available revenues from the Lottery Proceeds Fund and payments from this fund will begin in January 2016. Funding will be made available from the general fund to provide grants to school divisions that employ mentor teachers for new teachers entering the profession through the Career Switcher Program.

For 2015-2016, 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, 2015, and will be awarded subject to available state funding. The grant funds will be awarded directly to school divisions applying for and meeting the requirements of the following two programs:

Mentor Teacher Program

Funds were allocated by the General Assembly to provide grants to school divisions providing mentors for new teachers with zero years of teaching experience. One million dollars in funding is available statewide for this program.

Career Switcher Program (Mentor Support)

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 2015-2016 school year.

Participation in these funding opportunities is voluntary. However, please note that Section 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.*" The Board of Education's [Guidelines for Mentor Teacher Programs for Beginning and Experienced Teachers](#) provide technical assistance for school divisions in the implementation of effective mentor teacher programs. School divisions should collaborate with institutions of higher education in the continued development and implementation of mentor teacher programs. Participating divisions should implement projects that reflect scientific, evidence-based research and best practices.

For the 2015-2016 school year, the **New Teachers Program Data Collection (NTPDC)** application, accessible from the Department of Education's [Single Sign-on for Web Systems](#) (SSWS) portal, 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.

Each school division has an SSWS account manager who 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.

Each school year, a single data collection is conducted in the fall to submit the names of new teachers with zero years of teaching experience who are mentored through one of the two programs. 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.

Please note that a new teacher's name can be submitted for only one of the two new teacher programs. For the 2015-2016 fall data collection, data may be submitted via the SSWS-NTPDC application from September 25, 2015 through October 23, 2015. Once you have completed and verified your data submission, print the New Teachers Program Verification Report and **fax the signed verification report** to Ms. Elena Dremova at (804) 530-4510, **no later than Friday, October 23, 2015**. It is imperative that all divisions meet this deadline as calculations for the distribution of funds will be based on this data. At the end of the school year, divisions will be required to complete a report through the SSWS for the Mentor Teacher Program.

If you have questions about the Mentor Teacher Program, please contact Dr. Joan Johnson, director of teacher education, joan.johnson@doe.virginia.gov or (804) 371-2475. Questions regarding the mentor support for the Career Switcher Program please contact Dr. Kendra A. Crump, director of licensure and school leadership, kendra.crump@doe.virginia.gov or (804) 371-2471.

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