



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

October 2, 2015

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: 2015-2016 National Title I Distinguished Schools Recognition Program

Virginia has received information regarding the application process for the 2015-2016 National Title I Distinguished Schools Recognition Program. This project, sponsored by the National Title I Association, recognizes qualifying Title I schools from each state for their outstanding achievements in education. Only two schools per state are selected each year as National Title I Distinguished Schools. Virginia's State Title I Distinguished School recipients will be identified through a separate process and awarded in the near future.

In order for a school to qualify for the National Title I Distinguished School award it must have:

1. A poverty rate of at least 35 percent for each of the two most current consecutive school years;
2. Demonstrated high academic achievement for two or more of the most current consecutive school years;
3. Met or exceeded federal Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) for two or more of the most current consecutive school years;
4. Obtained full state accreditation for the same two or more consecutive years; and
5. Achieved a mean score at the 60th percentile for both reading and mathematics.

A school may be nominated to represent one of the following categories:

- *Category 1:* A school that has exceeded AMOs for the current and previous years (accountability years 2014-2015 and 2015-2016); or
- *Category 2:* A school that has significantly closed the achievement gap for student subgroups as evident by performance toward AMOs in the current and previous years (accountability years 2014-2015 and 2015-2016).

School divisions are invited to nominate **one** Title I school to represent **either** of the two categories indicated above. A review process will be used to select two Virginia schools for national recognition. A 2015-2016 National Title I Distinguished Schools Recognition Program intent to submit form, instructions for developing the application, and school participation form are attached.

The Office of Program Administration and Accountability will host an informational webinar session for division Title I coordinators and school principals interested in the National Title I Distinguished Schools application process on Tuesday, October 20, 2015, at 10:00 a.m. Please use the following information to join the webinar.

- At the scheduled time, click on the following link: <https://connect20.uc.att.com/vait/meet/?ExEventID=82858490&CT=M>

- After connecting to the webinar, follow the directions on the screen to join the audio portion of the conference. You will be prompted to either:
 - Enter your phone number and allow the webinar system to call you; or
 - Dial the toll-free number (888) 398-2342 and enter the Meeting Access Code 2858490#.

School divisions wishing to nominate a school should submit an intent-to-apply form (Attachment A) by e-mail to NationalTitleDistinguishedSchools@doe.virginia.gov by **Monday, October 26, 2015**. Upon receipt of the intent form and following the release of state accreditation rating and federal accountability reports, the Office of Program Administration and Accountability will verify the applicant's eligibility for the award under criteria 3-5. The application must be submitted electronically to the referenced e-mail address by **3 p.m. on Friday, November 13, 2015** (Attachment B). On the e-mail subject line, please indicate the school division's name and the category (example: Richmond City, Category 1). Each application must be accompanied by the School Participation Form (Attachment C).

Recipients of National Title I Distinguished Schools awards will be announced by letter in December. These two schools will be honored during the 2016 National Title I Conference, January 28-31, 2016 in Houston, Texas. For questions regarding the national recognition program, please contact Gabie Frazier, Title I specialist, at (804) 225-2907 or Gabie.Frazier@doe.virginia.gov.

SRS/GF/getb

Attachments:

- A. [National Title I Distinguished Schools Recognition Program – 2015-2016 School Intent-to-Apply Form](#)
(Word)
- B. [National Title I Distinguished Schools Recognition Program – 2015-2016 Instructions for Developing the Application](#) (PDF)
- C. [National Title I Distinguished Schools Recognition Program – 2015-2016 School Participation Form](#)
(Word)