



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

May 24, 2013

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Patricia I. Wright, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Virginia Public School Authority (VPSA) Educational Technology Notes Series XIV and the Virginia e-Learning Backpack Initiative Supplemental Grants

Beginning in fiscal year 2014 (spring 2014 issuance), the 2013 Appropriation Act provides supplemental grants, funded as part of the Virginia Public School Authority (VPSA) Educational Technology Notes program, to support the Virginia e-Learning Backpack Initiative.

Eligibility for the Virginia e-Learning Backpack Initiative Supplemental Grants

Schools with a ninth grade that administer Standards of Learning (SOL) tests in spring 2013 and are not fully accredited based on school accreditation ratings in effect for fiscal year 2014 will qualify to participate in the Virginia e-Learning Backpack Initiative in fiscal year 2014 and receive: (1) a supplemental grant of \$400 per student reported in ninth grade fall membership for the purchase of a tablet computer device for that student and (2) a supplemental grant of \$2,400 per qualifying school to purchase two content creation packages for teachers.

Schools eligible to receive this supplemental grant in fiscal year 2014 shall continue to receive the grant for the number of subsequent years equaling the number of grades 9 through 12 in the qualifying school up to a maximum of four years. Schools eligible to receive these grants for a period of up to four years beginning fiscal year 2014 shall not be eligible to receive a separate award in the future once the original award period has concluded. Schools that are fully accredited or that are new schools with conditional accreditation in their first year shall not be eligible to receive this supplemental grant.

Use of funds

School divisions will be eligible to receive supplementary grants for the Virginia e-Learning Backpack Initiative in fiscal year 2014 from notes Series XIV – spring 2014 issuance. These supplemental grants must be used in qualifying schools for the purchase of tablet computer devices for ninth grade students reported in fall membership and content creation packages for teachers. Participating school divisions will be required to select a core set of textbooks, applications, and online services for productivity, learning management, collaboration, practice, and assessment to be included on all devices. In addition, participating school divisions will assume recurring costs for electronic textbook purchases and maintenance.

Local Match Requirements

School divisions that receive these supplemental grants must use the 20 percent required local match of funds in qualifying schools to purchase tablet computer devices for ninth grade students reported in fall membership and content creation packages for teachers.

Reimbursement Process

The VPSA plans to sell the spring 2014 Educational Technology Notes, Series XIV, during May 2014 and close on the notes transaction in early June 2014. Proceeds of the Series XIV notes will be made available to divisions for reimbursement of qualifying expenditures following the planned closing in early June 2014.

There are a limited number of business days between the notes issuance date and the end of fiscal year 2014 on June 30, 2014. Therefore, to ensure sufficient time to process the school division reimbursement requests that need to be received by June 30, 2014, such reimbursement requests must be received by the Department of Education (DOE) electronically as well as the original signature page mailed to the Department by June 20, 2014. Please note that no requests for reimbursement may be processed until the note proceeds have officially been issued and closed.

Consistent with previous VPSA notes, payments to school divisions and regional programs will be on a reimbursement basis only. Reimbursements will be processed through the State Non-Arbitrage Program (SNAP) account established to hold the notes proceeds granted to the school divisions. School divisions must first complete payments for the qualifying equipment purchased and then file a Series XIV reimbursement request with the Department of Education. School divisions that will adopt a reimbursement resolution and make expenditures prior to the issuance of the Series XIV notes are required to certify that all reimbursements are qualifying reimbursements. School divisions may not be reimbursed for qualifying expenditures incurred more than 60 days prior to the adoption of a reimbursement resolution. Adopting a reimbursement resolution for reimbursement of qualifying expenditures once the Series XIV notes are issued is a mechanism for beginning the Virginia e-Learning Backpack Initiative during the 2013-14 school year prior to the issuance of the notes. However, this will require a local source of funding to pay expenditures pending reimbursement from the Series XIV proceeds at your end. The Series XIV reimbursement request form will be a downloadable Excel template located on the DOE Web site once the Series XIV notes are announced.

The Series XIV reimbursement form includes certification provisions that incorporate federal and state requirements regarding capital expenditures that qualify for reimbursement. School divisions are primarily responsible for determining whether requests for reimbursement are permissible under federal and state requirements. School division officials should carefully read and initial the certification provisions to ensure that none of their reimbursement requests violate any of the stated provisions.

Summer Institute

A summer institute is planned for August 12-13, 2013, at the Richmond Marriott Hotel to assist school divisions as they transition to tablet computers and digital content. This event will be open to all school divisions. Companies will display cutting-edge technologies that include tablet computers, peripheral devices, content, and applications. There will be sessions on relevant topics such as infrastructure, device management, content, acceptable use and policy issues, professional development, and parent and community engagement. Additional details will be available soon on the Department of Education Web site.

If you have questions, please contact Richard Schley, hardware and network solutions specialist, at (804) 371-6882 or via e-mail at richard.schley@doe.virginia.gov.

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