**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA**
**Department of Education**

August 23, 2013

TO:  Division Superintendents

FROM:  Patricia I. Wright, Superintendent of Public Instruction

## SUBJECT:  Virginia Science Activities, Models, and Simulations

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) is pleased to announce the availability of a new Web site called the Virginia Science Activities, Models, and Simulations (SAMS). The SAMS Web site is a result of a partnership between VDOE, Longwood University's Institute for Teaching Technology through Innovative Practices (ITTIP), and the Concord Consortium.  The activities, models, and simulations were developed by teachers participating in the InnovativeTechnology inScience Inquiry Scale Up (ITSI-SU) project funded by the National Science Foundation.

The Virginia SAMS Web site provides sixth-grade science through physics teachers with correlations to open-source science activities, models, and simulations.  These science activities, models, and simulations engage students in middle and high school in practices that are essential for learning science through inquiry.  The activities involve asking questions or defining problems, using models or sensors, collecting data, interpreting results, using mathematics, technology and computational thinking, constructing explanations, and designing solutions based on evidence.

The Virginia SAMS Web site offers the following:

1. Resources by Grade – These are the correlations of activities to the 2010 *Science Standards of Learning* and a list of supporting models and simulations by standard.
2. Getting Started and Help Contents – A variety of supports to assist in the use of the ITSI-SU portal.  The video tutorials and help contents will help maximize the use of these instructional resources.

If you have questions regarding the Virginia Science Activities, Models, and Simulations, please contact Eric Rhoades, director, Office of Science and Health Education, by e-mail at Eric.Rhoades@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 786-2481.

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