



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

December 6, 2013

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Patricia I. Wright, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Announcement of Virginia's Microsoft IT Academy Certification Program

Through funding provided by the General Assembly, the Virginia Department of Education is pleased to announce continuation of the [Microsoft Information Technology \(IT\) Academy Program](#) partnership for the second year. The Academy provides access to engaging content that students need to expand their life skills and enhance their employment opportunities.

The Microsoft IT Academy certification program includes a twelve month site license for unlimited certification testing at each high school and career and technical education (CTE) center at no cost to school divisions. The certification examinations will be available to students for the Microsoft Office Suite (MOS) (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and Access); and Certiprep practice exams for all of the MOS applications. Additionally, the Microsoft Technology Associate (MTA) certification exams will be available to all schools/centers but distributed as needed.

The Microsoft IT Academy program offers many unique 21st century education benefits and fully prepares students to obtain internationally recognized IT industry certifications. More than 50 percent of today's jobs require proficiency with related IT skills. That number will increase to 77 percent within 10 years. Some of the other benefits schools can look forward to are:

- Face-to-face, hands-on training during summer conferences;
- Monthly webinars through June 2014 for teachers and administrators; and
- Support for the registration and administration of certification testing with inclusion on a hosted collaboration secure site.

Most academic and CTE courses use Microsoft software products in their classes and all students can benefit from the Academy resources and certifications. All high school students, including those enrolled in any CTE or academic class may access the virtual modules and upon completion take the appropriate MOS exam to earn one or more certifications. Under a separate cover, the CTE administrators and high school principals will receive detailed information for implementation of the Academy resources and certification exams.

If you have any questions, please contact Anne Rowe, curriculum and instruction coordinator, Office of Career and Technical Education Services, at cte@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at 804-225-3119.

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