

Virginia Department of Education
Instructions for Application for a Planning Grant for School Divisions Pursuing the
Development of New Year-Round School Programs for
School Divisions or Individual Schools

Background

Section [22.1-79.1](#) of the *Code of Virginia* provides that each local school board shall set the school calendar so that the first day students are required to attend school shall be after Labor Day. The Board of Education may waive this requirement based on a school board self-certifying that it meets one of the “good cause” requirements of § [22.1-79.1.B](#), including Option 3 where a school division is providing its students, in the school year for which the waiver is sought, with an experimental or innovative program which requires an earlier opening date. For the purposes of this subdivision, experimental or innovative programs include instructional programs that are offered on a year-round basis by the school division in one or more of its elementary, middle, or high schools.

The 2012 Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) report, [Review of Year-Round Schools](#), was issued in October 2012. It found that the Standards of Learning (SOL) test scores for the general student population were similar at year-round schools and traditional calendar schools. However, certain student subgroups, in particular black students, were more likely to improve their SOL test scores at a faster rate at year-round schools. The General Assembly included funding for planning grants in the 2014 Appropriation Act to assist interested school divisions in planning for the establishment of year-round school programs. During 2014 Special Session I, \$613,312 was included for both fiscal year 2015 and 2016 for planning grants of no more than \$50,000 each for school divisions pursuing the creation of new year-round school programs for divisions or individual schools in support of the findings from the 2012 JLARC review. (See [Item 135.R](#), of the 2014 Appropriation Act)

Application Deadline and Implementation Time Frame

Any school divisions interested in pursuing a planning grant to establish year-round schools must submit a completed PDF version of the application and related materials to the Virginia Department of Education, Office of Policy, at policy@doe.virginia.gov by 5 p.m., August 1, 2014. If the application is not received by that timeline, it may not be considered.

Each application must indicate a commitment that the interested school division plans to implement the year-round program in its division or in individual schools by the 2015-2016 school year. Once applications are approved, current year-round programs may be eligible to apply for any remaining funds. In order to be considered for selection, applicants must submit a complete response which addresses all of the application requirements.

Grant Award

The funding awarded to any applicant will be no more than \$50,000.00. Total maximum amount of funding available to all applicants in fiscal year 2015 is \$613,312. A local match of funds is not required.

Each application will be evaluated based on the criteria identified in the application instructions. Applications that meet the submission criteria will be reviewed by department staff. Decisions about award amounts will take into consideration a number of factors including the amount of available funds, the number of applications recommended for funding, and the amounts requested in the recommended applications. Priority shall be given to schools based on need, based on state accreditation ratings or similar federal designations. If the total amount requested in the applications recommended for funding exceeds the total amount of available funding, awards may be adjusted to accommodate the difference.

All applicants must provide assurances that they will adhere to state laws and regulations governing public schools, including the *Virginia Standards of Quality*, the *Virginia Standards of Learning*, and the Virginia Board of Education's *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*. Consequently, the planning grants will only be awarded to applicants whose proposals contemplate schools that maintain adherence to the aforementioned laws, regulations, requirements, and standards. It is incumbent upon applicants to ensure that all elements of the proposed school, including, but not limited to, school location and school year calendars, comport with state laws and regulations.

Grant Period and Progress Reports

Once an executed grant award agreement is in place, the Virginia Department of Education will issue payment for one-third of the award amount. A second payment installment of one-third of the award amount will be made approximately midway during the grant period after the first progress report is received. The first progress report is due January 30, 2015. This report shall provide a brief description of the work performed, related activities, milestones achieved, any accomplishments during the reporting period, any problems encountered, and any proposed changes in the budget or program. These changes must be approved by the department. A report summary and a detailed expense report by line item must be submitted by May 15, 2015. The final payment installment will be made by June 1, 2015. A final report discussing the results of the planning project will be due no later than 90 days after June 1, 2014. The grant period will have no renewal opportunities available.

Applicant's Proposal

The application must include an application table of contents, an assurances and signatures page, and an executive summary. In addition, the applicant's proposal must provide a comprehensive description of the proposed planning project to include the following:

1. The name of the school division and any proposed participating schools, as well as their physical locations.
2. The name and contact information for the grant coordinator.
3. Names and descriptions of any committees involved in the planning process.
4. The purpose of the program and its goals and objectives. Include the proposed title of the program or activity, a program description, including any intersession remediation or enrichment program to be provided, the rationale for the proposal, expected benefits, the names and roles of any other organizations, including colleges, universities, and other postsecondary organizations and community organizations that may be involved in the program, the proposed grades to be served, the names of any other school divisions involved in the program and their roles, and other relevant information.
5. An explanation as to why this particular school division or school wishes to pursue a year-round program and any necessity for opening prior to Labor Day, including the proposed school year calendar's opening and closing dates as well as a copy of the proposed school calendar and duration of the waiver. This explanation must show that this request is expected to meet the "good cause" requirements of § [22.1-79.1.B.3](#), *Code of Virginia*, related to year-round schools, if applicable.
6. Logistics for transportation and other support services affected by a year-round school.
7. Anticipated outcomes, including an explanation as to why it is believed the program will be a success.
8. Number of proposed student participants, including demographic information describing the students who will be attending and the community the school serves.
9. A description of proposed activities that will involve teacher, parental, and community involvement in the development, and implementation of the program and build partnerships in the business community.
10. Evaluation procedures including mechanisms for measuring goals and objectives, and analysis of data, to determine how this program will support an expected increase in proficiency in student academic achievement and address any achievement gap.
11. A timeline and description of the initiatives and tasks involved in the planning process.

Budget

Each applicant must submit a budget (including a budget narrative) to include at least the following information.

Direct Costs: The applicant must clearly list the direct costs associated with executing the project activities and evaluation. Program costs must be categorized using the following headings and guidance:

- **Salaries and Wages.** Please include the role of key personnel and their responsibilities, qualifications, and compensation. Entries should identify project staff positions; names of individuals; the base rate of pay per hour, day, week, month, or year; and the total amount or percent of their work time to be charged to the project. Include wages and contract or consultant staff costs in this section.
- **Employee Benefits.** Please note by name and amount and percentage any employee benefits associated with program personnel positions.
- **Travel.** Transportation, lodging, meals, and other appropriate travel expenses of project staff and consultants should be budgeted in accordance with institutional policies and regulations, based on the Commonwealth of Virginia's current travel regulations. All project travel must be directly related to the proposed grant activities.
- **Materials and Supplies.** Supplies, materials, and services directly consumed in the course of the project may be budgeted. This category includes: office supplies; educational materials; books and audiovisual materials; communications (postage, local and long-distance telephone charges, etc.); printing, publication, and photocopying services; and computer services.
- **Amount and source of other financial contributions.**
- **Amount of planning grant funding requested.**

Please note that funds made available under the planning grant must relate directly to the planning activities to be conducted. The grant proposal should not include indirect costs.

NOTE: Any amounts authorized pursuant to the planning grant which are unused by the applicant shall be reimbursed to the Virginia Department of Education upon submission of the final detailed expense report. In addition, after having received the detailed expense report, if it is determined by the department that any amounts of the planning grant were used to pay for items outside the scope of the planning grant award agreement, the applicant shall reimburse to the Virginia Department of Education such funds by check payable to the "Treasurer of Virginia" within 15 days of such notification.

General Instructions

1. Proposals shall be signed by the school superintendent and the chairman of the local school board.
2. Proposals should be prepared simply and economically, providing a concise description of capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the planning grant application. Emphasis should be placed on completeness and clarity of content.
3. All pages should be numbered.
4. The applicant should use a standard 12-point Arial font for the proposal and any additional materials.
5. Each proposal should contain an executive summary, a table of contents, and a completed application. The application is located on the Department's Web site at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/year-round/index.shtml> under Additional Information. Any additional material provided with the application should be clearly referenced in the table of contents as an appendix in the order in which it is referenced in the application.
6. Proposals which are incomplete may be rejected by the department.

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Contact Information

Please contact the Office of Policy at the Department of Education by e-mail at policy@doe.virginia.gov or at 804-225-2092 if you have any questions about this process.