



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Six Virginia School Divisions Receive Federal Teaching American History Grants**

The U.S. Department of Education is awarding Teaching American History grants totaling \$5,708,501 to six Virginia school divisions to improve American history instruction by expanding the content knowledge of teachers and promoting effective teaching strategies.

"I commend each of these school divisions — and their partners — for their commitment to improving instruction in this vital subject area," Superintendent of Public Instruction Patricia I. Wright said. "The interest among Virginia school divisions in this grant program over the years reflects the premium the Standards of Learning (SOL) program places on effective instruction in American history."

In applying for funding from the Teaching American History grant program, school divisions must partner with one or more public or private institutions with expertise in American history, such as universities, museums, libraries, historical societies and foundations. The Virginia school divisions receiving grants are as follows:

- Bedford County Public Schools — \$743,397 to support workshops and summer institutes to increase the content knowledge of grade 5-12 history teachers. The program is being developed in partnership with the Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library and educators from Alleghany County, Bath County, Craig County, Giles County, Highland County and Pulaski County will also participate.
- Charlottesville Public Schools — \$980,191 to develop a "global perspective" among teachers on key events and periods in American history. The Virginia Center for Digital History at the University of Virginia (UVA) is the program partner. Educators from Albemarle County, Greene County, Madison County and Orange County will also participate.
- Newport News Public Schools — \$990,235 for workshops, seminars, field trips and other activities for teachers in grades 4-12 to raise student achievement on SOL history tests and increase enrollment in Advanced Placement United States History. The partners are the College of William and Mary, Hampton History Museum, National Council for History Education, Organization of American Historians (OAH), Smithsonian American Art Museum and the Virginia Historical Society.
- Norton City Public Schools — \$1 million for training a cohort of elementary history specialists to provide leadership for history instruction throughout Southwest Virginia. The partners are the UVA Center for Liberal Arts and the Southwest Virginia Public Education Consortium.
- Richmond Public Schools — \$996,724 to increase content knowledge of 45 teachers in grades K-12, including a three-year program for 15 teachers to earn master's degrees from the University of Richmond (UR). Partners are American Civil War Center at Historic Tredegar, Colonial Williamsburg, Library of Virginia, OAH, U.S. Department of State, UR, Virginia Historical Society, Virginia Union University and the Virginia Holocaust Museum.
- Virginia Beach Public Schools — \$997,954 to increase content knowledge of teachers in grades 4-5 through historical investigation using biographies and primary source documents. The partners are the Chrysler Museum, Colonial Williamsburg, Jamestown/Yorktown Foundation, Library of Virginia, Pamplin Historical Park, Virginia Center for Digital History at UVA and the Virginia Historical Society.

Nationwide, 123 school districts in 38 states were selected to receive 2009 Teaching American History awards totaling \$116 million. Virginia school divisions have received about \$36.9 million since the Teaching American History grant program began in 2002.

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