

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**  
*Office of the Governor*

Timothy M. Kaine  
Governor

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**GOVERNOR KAINE ORDERS STUDY OF GIFTED  
EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

*~ Study hopes to address disparities in gifted education ~*

**RICHMOND** – Governor Timothy M. Kaine announced today that, at his direction, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) has initiated a study to analyze disproportionately low representation of minority students in gifted education. The study – which is being conducted with technical assistance from the Regional Educational Laboratory Appalachia – will be completed by Spring 2010.

"Virginia is proud of both the high standards of our educational system and the wealth of diversity in our communities," Governor Kaine said. "As we continue to improve on our gifted education programs in particular, it's critical we assess any disproportionate barriers to enrollment so we can ensure students of all backgrounds have the opportunity to participate."

Data reported by school divisions to VDOE show that while African-Americans make up 26 percent of the statewide student population, only 12 percent of students identified as gifted are black. Hispanics make up nine percent of the student population and five percent of students identified as gifted.

The analysis will include a review of recent literature to determine best practices for identifying gifted and talented students, and an alignment of these best practices with Virginia's regulations and procedures for gifted education.

The analysis will compare school divisions' percentage of minority students to the rate of participation of their minority students in gifted education. This analysis will build a sample of school divisions with varying degrees of minority representation in gifted identification, and allow for examination of their respective local plans for gifted education. The results of the study will be used to assist divisions that are experiencing disproportionate representation.

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