TO: Contact Name, Title (Dean)  
College, University

FROM: Joan Johnson, Director of Teacher Education  
Division of Teacher Education and Licensure

SUBJECT: 2015-2016 Virginia Teaching Scholarship Loan Program

The Virginia General Assembly funds the Virginia Teaching Scholarship Loan Program (VTSLP) as an incentive for students interested in pursuing a teaching career in a critical shortage teaching endorsement area. Subject to available funding, these scholarship loans are for teacher candidates, including graduate students and paraprofessionals from Virginia school divisions at an accredited public or private four-year institution of higher education in the Commonwealth. Undergraduates at or beyond the sophomore year in college must have been in the top 10 percent of their high school class or identified through an alternative measure of achievement (such as high school grade point average equivalent to an A average) as selected by the institution. Documentation must be included with the application.

Candidates must (i) be enrolled full-time or part-time in an approved teacher education program or are participants in another approved teacher education program; (ii) have maintained a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.7 on a 4.0 scale or its equivalent; and (iii) be nominated for such scholarship by the institution where they are enrolled. In addition, the candidates must meet one or more of the following criteria: (a) be enrolled in a program leading to an endorsement in a critical shortage area as established by the Board of Education; (b) be a male teacher candidate in an elementary or middle school education program; (c) be a minority teacher candidate enrolled in any teacher endorsement area; or (d) be a student in an approved teacher education program leading to an endorsement in career and technical education. Candidates who previously received funding through the Virginia Teaching Scholarship Loan Program are not eligible.

Pursuant to 8VAC 20-650-10 of the Regulations Governing the Determination of Critical Shortage Teaching Areas, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) conducts an annual survey of instructional personnel to determine critical shortage teaching areas in Virginia. The identified areas to be used for the 2015-2016 Virginia Teaching Scholarship Loan Program are as follows:

1. Special Education
2. Elementary Education PreK-6
3. Middle Education Grades 6-8
For the 2015-2016 academic year the General Assembly has appropriated $708,000 in support of the VTSLP. Scholarships are based on $10,000 per year for full-time students and must be prorated for part-time students based on the number of credit hours. Each institution of higher education may nominate up to three candidates for consideration of the scholarship.

The application packet for the 2015-2016 Virginia Teaching Scholarship Loan Program is enclosed. The packet includes the institutional nomination form for listing nominees from your institution in rank order, the 2015-2016 Application Form, and a sample Promissory Note. Please submit the nomination form listing all nominees and the 2015-2016 Application Form for each candidate. Please note that the Promissory Note (to be completed by the nominee) will be forwarded to selected nominees, along with the Virginia Department of Education award notification letter. The institutional nomination form must be completed by the dean, chair, or director of the professional education program and submitted with the candidates’ application forms in the enclosed addressed envelope. **Nominations must be received by the Virginia Department of Education no later than Friday, July 24, 2015.** Incomplete applications may not be considered. Also, please contact your institution’s tax professional for assistance regarding tax implications related to the scholarship loan.

Recipients of the Virginia Teaching Scholarship Loan are expected to teach in the public schools of Virginia in the first full academic year after becoming eligible for a teaching license and fulfill the teaching obligation in accordance with the Promissory Note by teaching continuously full-time under contract in Virginia for the same number of years that the recipient was the beneficiary of such scholarship. Students are expected to notify the Office of Teacher Education, Virginia Department of Education, in writing of any change in enrollment status and any change of address, date of program completion, military service, and the name of the schools in which teaching service is rendered until the total obligation is satisfied.

Thank you for supporting this important educator recruitment initiative. If you need additional information or have questions regarding the Virginia Teaching Scholarship Loan Program, please contact Ms. Johnelle M. Torbert, specialist, special education human resources development, at (804) 371-0471 or Johnelle.Torbert@doe.virginia.gov.

JJ/jmt

Enclosures

c: Office of Student Financial Aid
   Teacher Education Contact(s)
   Mrs. Patty S. Pitts
   Ms. Johnelle M. Torbert