



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**BRIEFING**

# **VIRGINIA GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL PROGRAM**

**PRESENTED TO**

**THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE  
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## I. OVERVIEW OF THE VIRGINIA GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL PROGRAM

- Standard 1 of the *Standards of Quality* requires that local school boards implement the early identification of gifted students and enrollment of such students in appropriately differentiated instructional programs [§22.11-253.13:1D.5].
- The Virginia Board of Education has promulgated regulations addressing services for gifted students entitled, *Regulations Governing Educational Services for Gifted Students* [ 8 VAC 20-40-10 through 8 VAC 20-40-70].

These regulations currently define gifted students as

...students in public elementary and secondary schools beginning with kindergarten through graduation whose abilities and potential for accomplishment are so outstanding that they require special programs to meet their educational needs.

- The Virginia Department of Education administers funds that are appropriated by the General Assembly for Governor's Schools.
- Three types of programs comprise the Virginia Governor's School Program for gifted students:
  - Academic-Year Governor's Schools
  - Summer Residential Governor's Schools
  - Summer Regional Governor's Schools
- During 2007-2008 forty-five (45) Governor's Schools operated across the Commonwealth and served 8,300 students:
  - 5,757 students in eighteen (18) Academic-Year Governor's Schools
  - 1,845 students in twenty (20) Summer Regional Governor's Schools
  - 698 students in seven (7) Summer Residential Governor's Schools
- Governor's Schools provide challenging educational opportunities in agriculture, humanities, mathematics, science, technical arts, and visual and performing arts that are not available to the participants in their regular school programs.

- Governor’s Schools are evaluated by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to determine the extent to which they are fulfilling their missions and what, if any, modifications need to be made to ensure their continued success.
- The Department of Education maintains a Web site that contains information related to the Virginia Governor’s School Program. Current listings of the schools are provided along with links to the Web sites for individual schools. Electronic versions of administrative forms as well as information and applications for the Summer Residential Governor’s Schools are available for public use at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/Govschools>

## II. ACADEMIC-YEAR GOVERNOR’S SCHOOL PROGRAM

- The first five Governor’s Schools opened in September 1985. Those schools, with their initial enrollment, participating school divisions, and location are indicated in Table 1.

**TABLE 1: Original Academic-Year Governor’s Schools (1985)**

SCHOOL NAME	INITIAL ENROLLMENT	PARTICIPATING DIVISIONS	LOCATION (FISCAL AGENT)
Central Virginia Governor’s School	48 (ninth graders only)	Amherst County, Appomattox County, Bedford County, Campbell County, Lynchburg City	Heritage High School (Lynchburg City)
New Horizons Governor’s School	95	Hampton City, Poquoson City, Newport News City, Williamsburg-James City County, York County	New Horizons Regional Education Center (Hampton City)
Roanoke Valley Governor’s School	200	Botetourt County, Franklin County, Roanoke County, Roanoke City, Salem City	Patrick Henry High School (Roanoke City)
Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology	393	Falls Church City, Manassas City, Manassas Park City, Fairfax County, Loudoun County, Prince William County	Thomas Jefferson High School (Fairfax County)
<b>Total</b>	<b>736</b>	<b>21 localities</b>	

- In 2007-2008, 18 Academic-Year Governor's Schools served 5,757 high school students from 125 school divisions.
- In 2007-2008, students from eighteen (18) school divisions had access to more than one Academic-Year Governor's School. Maps of the sites and participating school divisions operating in 2007-2008 are provided as Appendix A.
- The newest program is at Mountain Vista Governor's School, which opened in September 2006. Serving Clarke, Culpeper, Fauquier, Frederick, Rappahannock, and Warren counties and the City of Winchester on the Warrenton and Middletown sites of Lord Fairfax Community College, the program was approved by the Virginia Board of Education in January 2006.
- In April 2008, the General Assembly approved a \$100,000 appropriation for a planning grant for the development of an Academic Year Governor's School serving the area of Manassas City, Manassas Park City, and Prince William County. This school would become the 19<sup>th</sup> Academic Year Governor's School in the Commonwealth.
- Table 2 provides information about the 2007-2008 and the 2008-2009 Academic-Year Governor's Schools.

**TABLE 2: 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 Academic-Year Governor's Schools Information**

NAME (Fiscal Agent)	GRADES	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT 2007-2008	PROJECTED ENROLLMENT 2008-2009	NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING DIVISIONS IN 2008-2009
A. Linwood Holton Governor's School (Washington County)	11 – 12	244	300	13
Appomattox Regional Governor's School (Chesterfield County)	9 – 12	345	352	14
Blue Ridge Governor's School (Fluvanna County)	11 – 12	306	340	7
Central Virginia Governor's School (Lynchburg City)	11 – 12	111	110	5
Chesapeake Bay Governor's School (Essex County)	10 – 12	184	197	13
Commonwealth Governor's School (Spotsylvania County)	9 – 12	477	495	3
Governor's School of Southside Virginia (Charlotte County)	11 – 12	156	159	11
Governor's School for the Arts (Norfolk City)	9 – 12	345	345	8
Jackson River Governor's School (Alleghany County)	11 – 12	21	38	6
Maggie L. Walker Governor's School for Government and International Studies (Richmond City)	9 – 12	700	708	12
Massanutten Governor's School for Inte- grated Environmental Science and Technology (Shenandoah County)	11 – 12	74	70	4
Mountain Vista Governor's School (Fauquier County)	11 – 12	115	115	7
New Horizons Governor's School (Hampton City)	11 – 12	96	147	7
Piedmont Governor's School (Henry County)	11 – 12	135	123	5
Roanoke Valley Governor's School (Roanoke City)	9 – 12	269	275	7
Shenandoah Valley Governor's School (Augusta County)	11 – 12	171	179	3
Southwest Virginia Governor's School (Pulaski County)	11 – 12	153	170	8
Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (Fairfax County)	9 – 12	1,855	1839	6
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,757</b>	<b>5,962</b>	

NOTE: The following eighteen (18) school divisions will participate in more than one Academic-Year Governor's School for the 2008-2009 school year: Amelia, Bedford, Botetourt, Carroll, Charles City, Chesterfield, Gloucester, Goochland, Isle of Wight, King and Queen, King George, Petersburg, Powhatan, Prince George, Richmond City, Smyth, Southampton, and West Point.

### III. FUNDING HISTORY OF ACADEMIC-YEAR GOVERNOR'S SCHOOLS

- FY 2009 state funding = \$11.6 million
- Funding for the Academic-Year Governor's Schools is provided to the fiscal agents of each program based on a funding formula using the certified number of students enrolled from each division and the funded per pupil amount. The state payment allocated to each participating division is adjusted for the division's composite index. Funding is further adjusted based on the portion of the day the program is in operation. Schools receive funds allocated in Item 140, Paragraph B. 30.a (Chapter 879, 2008 Acts of the Assembly). The Appropriation Act states that:

*a. Out of the amounts for Governor's School Payments, the Board of Education shall provide assistance for the state share of the incremental cost of regular school year Governor's Schools based on each participating locality's composite index of local ability-to-pay. Participating school divisions must certify that no tuition is assessed students for participation in this program.*

- The 2008 Appropriation Act, Chapter 879, Item 140.e(1) includes language from earlier biennia stating that "local school divisions are encouraged to provide the appropriate portion of basic aid per pupil funding to the Governor's Schools for students attending these programs, adjusted for cost incurred by the school division for transportation, administration, and any portion of the day that the student does not attend a Governor's School." In the 2008 Appropriation Act, the program membership cap for funding was increased to 1,600 students beginning in FY 2010, up from the 1,500-student limit that currently exists:

*Regular school year Governor's Schools are funded through this Item based on the state's share of the incremental per pupil cost for providing such programs for each student attending a Governor's School up to a cap of 1,500 students per Governor's School the first year and a cap of 1,600 students per Governor's School beginning with fiscal year 2010. This incremental per pupil payment shall be adjusted for the composite index of the school division that counts such students attending an Academic Year Governor's School in their March 31 Average Daily Membership.*

- Table 3 depicts historical information regarding funds available to support the academic-year programs. The individual Governor’s School Regional Governing Board makes all budgetary decisions for each program, such as the establishment of the local share of the cost that is paid by the participating school divisions. School divisions must certify annually that no tuition is charged to students or their parents.

**TABLE 3: Academic-Year Governor’s School Funding**

<b>FISCAL YEAR</b>	<b>GOVERNOR’S SCHOOL ADD-ON PER PUPIL AMOUNT*</b>
1987	\$1,000
1988	1,000
1989	2,250
1990	2,250
1991	2,593
1992	2,765
1993	2,765
1994	2,765
1995	2,765
1996	2,765
1997	2,765
1998	2,765
1999	2,900
2000	2,900
2001	3,185
2002	3,185
2003	3,410
2004	3,412
2005	3,541
2006	3,543
2007	3,933
2008	3,933
2009	4,479

\* These are the total per pupil amounts that apply only to the Academic Year Governor’s School. Governor’s School per pupil funding amounts are increased at the same percentage that Basic Aid per pupil amounts increase.

NOTE: All per pupil figures reflect the total per pupil cost before application of the composite index of local ability-to-pay.

## **IV. SUMMER RESIDENTIAL GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL PROGRAM**

- FY 2009 state funding = \$723,327
- The Virginia Governor's School Program began in 1973, when Governor Linwood Holton established the first summer residential programs for 400 gifted students from across the Commonwealth.
  - These Governor's Schools offer a rigorous program that cannot be provided through local schools to high school juniors and seniors from divisions. Home-schooled as well as accredited private school students are also eligible to participate in these programs.
  - For four weeks each summer, students have the opportunity to pursue academic or artistic challenges on a college or university campus in an atmosphere that fosters hard work, creativity, and respect for others.
- Historically, the Virginia Department of Education receives more than 1,500 applications for the 700 slots available across the seven programs. In 2008, nominations were received from 96 school divisions and from 31 accredited private schools.
- Table 4 displays information about the 2008 Summer Residential Governor's School program, indicating the dates, focus, membership, and sites.

**TABLE 4: 2008 Summer Residential Governor’s Schools (SRsGS)**

<b>NAME (LOCATION)</b>	<b>DATES</b>	<b>NUMBER OF STUDENTS</b>
Summer Residential Governor’s School for Agriculture (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University)	June 29 – July 26	98
Summer Residential Governor’s School for Humanities (University of Richmond)	June 29 – July 26	198
Summer Residential Governor’s School for Life Sciences and Medicine (Virginia Commonwealth University)	June 22 – July 18	29
Summer Residential Governor’s School for Mathematics, Science, and Technology (Lynchburg College)	July 6 – August 2	153
Summer Residential Governor’s School Mentorship in Engineering (NASA Langley)	June 22 – July 19	12
Summer Residential Governor’s School Mentorship in Marine Science (Virginia Institute of Marine Science at Gloucester Point)	June 22 – July 19	6
Summer Residential Governor’s School for Visual and Performing Arts (University of Richmond)	June 29 – July 26	202
<b>Total</b>		<b>698</b>

## V. SUMMER REGIONAL GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL PROGRAM

- FY 2009 state funding = \$396,232
- The first Summer Regional Governor's Schools were established in 1982. The last two schools opened in 1988. In 2008, twenty (20) Summer Regional Governor's Schools served more than 1,845 students, grades 3-12, from 131 school divisions. Home-school students, as well as those who attend local private schools, may attend these programs, depending on local school board policies.
- Funds are distributed by the Virginia Department of Education based on the proposed needs and resources of each program.
- All schools offer professional development opportunities for their faculties related to effective instructional methods and appropriate use of technology for gifted learners.
- Several of these schools are conducted on community college or university campuses and serve students in Southwest Virginia. Cooperative agreements exist with the following institutions of higher education:
  - Dabney S. Lancaster Community College
  - Mountain Empire Community College
  - Southwest Virginia Community College
  - Virginia Highlands Community College
  - Wytheville Community College
  - University of Virginia's College at Wise
- Three Summer Regional Governor's Schools offer extended programs of more than three weeks and students live on-site during the term of the program:
  - Valley Ridge Summer Regional Governor's School at James Madison University
  - Southside Summer Regional Governor's School at False Cape State Park in Virginia Beach
  - University of Virginia's College at Wise Summer Regional Governor's School at the Wise campus

- Table 5 provides information about the individual Summer Regional Governor’s Schools operating in 2008, indicating its fiscal agent, focus, number of students, grades served, and number of participating school divisions.

**TABLE 5: 2008 Summer Regional Governor’s School Programs (SRgGS)**

NAME (FISCAL AGENT)	FOCUS (GRADES)	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	NUMBER OF DIVISIONS
Appalachian SRgGS Wytheville CC (Wythe County)	Arts, Science, and Technology (10 – 12)	42	6
Blue Ridge SRgGS (Page County)	Environmental Studies (5 – 8)	60	5
Eastern Shore SRgGS (Accomack County)	Science and Robotics (5 – 8)	19	2
Field Ecology SRgGS (D.S. Lancaster CC)	Field Ecology (8 – 9)	17	8
Fredericksburg SRgGS (Fredericksburg City)	Science, Technology, and Mentorships (6 – 11)	284	5
Meherrin SRgGS (Greensville County)	Science and Technology (4 – 7)	60	5
Middle Peninsula SRgGS (Charles City County)	Touching Tomorrow Today: Issues and Trends – A Problem- Based Program (3 – 7)	139	9
Mountain Empire CC SRgGS (Wise County)	Creative Writing, Publishing, Computer Graphics, Multimedia, Design, Rocketry, Law, and Art (9 – 10)	78	5
Northern Neck SRgGS (Colonial Beach)	Humanities and Art (4 – 7)	95	5
Performing and Visual Arts Northwest (PAVAN) SRgGS (Loudoun County)	Visual Arts (9 – 12)	199	8
Piedmont SRgGS (Pittsylvania County)	Arts, Humanities, and Science (4 – 7)	362	8
Reflections SRgGS (Charlottesville City)	Visual Arts (6 – 8)	40	4
Richmond Math and Science SRgGS (Richmond City)	Science and Mathematics (6 – 8)	150	13
Southside SRgGS (Prince Edward County)	Environmental Science (8 – 10)	30	7
Southwest Virginia CC SRgGS (Buchanan County)	Science and Technology (11 – 12)	50	4
SummerQuest! SRgGS (Fauquier County)	Problem-Based Learning (5 – 7)	77	4

**TABLE 5: 2008 Summer Regional Governor’s School Program (SRgGS),  
continued**

<b>NAME (FISCAL AGENT)</b>	<b>FOCUS (GRADES)</b>	<b>NUMBER OF STUDENTS</b>	<b>NUMBER OF DIVISIONS</b>
Tidewater SRgGS for Science and Technology (Isle of Wight County)	Science and Technology (4 – 6)	59	4
University of Virginia at Wise SRgGS (Wise County)	Environmental Studies (10 – 11)	30	21
Valley/Ridge SRgGS (Rockingham County)	Environmental Studies (9 – 11)	24	11
Virginia Highlands CC SRgGS (Virginia Highlands CC)	Science, Mathematical Modeling, Play Analysis and Production (9 – 11)	30	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,845</b>	

