



## COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

Gerard Robinson  
Secretary of Education

April 30, 2010

Dr. Donna R. Sterling  
Science Education Leadership Program  
College of Education and Human Development  
George Mason University  
4400 University Drive, MS 4B3  
Fairfax, VA 22030

Dear Dr. Sterling:

I was pleased to learn more about the VISTA (Virginia Initiative for Science Teaching and Achievement) proposal at our meeting today and its partnership among the Virginia Department of Education, universities, and school districts in Virginia to provide a community of support for sustained, intensive science teacher professional development to increase student performance. This is a very ambitious initiative that could make a substantial difference in the way that science is taught in Virginia schools. The grant through its work with science teachers, principals, school district science coordinators, and university science education faculty will add to the infrastructure that would result in achievement gains in science for Virginia students.

Our state's high technology jobs require employees that have strong backgrounds in the sciences. The best way to ensure this is to make sure that our students receive the best possible instruction in science from an early age. By increasing the skills of our teachers, students in Virginia will benefit for many years.

I am further pleased that this project is based on the strong empirical evidence that you have amassed in your research on science teaching and learning. Please contact me if I can provide assistance on this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gerard Robinson".

Gerard Robinson