



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Patricia I. Wright, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Public Instruction

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2120
Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120

Office: (804) 225-2023
Fax: (804) 371-2099

May 7, 2010

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

Dear Dr. Sterling:

The Virginia Department of Education fully supports George Mason University's Virginia Initiative for Science Teaching and Achievement (VISTA) proposal for the Investing in Innovation Fund grant program. The VISTA program will provide Virginia science teachers at all levels statewide the opportunity for sustained, intensive science teacher professional development while also integrating technology, engineering, and mathematics. We anticipate that this proposal, when fully implemented, will lead to increased student performance in science.

The Department is committed to innovative programs, such as VISTA, that build on the current state initiatives to increase academic rigor and bring relevance into classrooms in order to maximize students' preparation for postsecondary education and careers. Additionally, this program will conduct research that builds on past research efforts to determine what makes the greatest impact in increasing student performance in science.

If the proposal is funded, the Virginia Department of Education will assist the VISTA program with communicating to Virginia's school division personnel regarding the details of the grant and establishing key contacts in the school divisions. The Department will also assist in providing school, teacher, and student level data to the program for evaluation purposes.

We are excited about the potential for this project to build teacher and student interest in science. I look forward to the VISTA team implementing this innovative program in Virginia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patricia I. Wright".

Patricia I. Wright

PIW/PJK/pjk