



May 3, 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 am writing on behalf of the Virginia Mathematics and Science Coalition in support of the Virginia Initiative for Science Teaching and Achievement (VISTA). George Mason University is leading this multi-year program focusing on providing the support needed by teachers to conduct effective science teaching in their classes.

We fully support VISTA's primary objectives to:

1. Increase student learning in science at all levels,
2. Enhance the quality of teaching of elementary school teachers to include inquiry-based teaching,
3. Enhance the quality of teaching of underprepared beginning middle and high school science teachers including having students conduct inquiry-based laboratory activities,
4. Increase the number of certified middle school and high school science teachers,
5. Build the state infrastructure to support effective science teaching and learning,
6. Conduct research to determine what makes the most significant difference in helping teachers to help students learn.

Please be assured that the Virginia Mathematics and Science Coalition is prepared to work with the Virginia Department of Education, George Mason University, and all the VISTA partners to improve science teaching and thereby student learning of science throughout Virginia. The Virginia Mathematics and Science Coalition will distribute information about the program to support recruiting of teachers, provide science expertise, disseminate the findings of the program via website and other publications and advocate for policy change that enhances effective science teaching.

Sincerely,

Patrick J. Dexter  
President

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