



April 22, 2010

Dr. Donna R. Sterling  
George Mason University  
College of Education and Human Development  
4400 University Drive  
Fairfax, VA 22030

Dear Dr. Sterling:

The Virginia Science Education Leadership Association is a partner with George Mason University in the Virginia Initiative for Science Teaching and Achievement (VISTA) proposal. This program is designed to increase students' achievement in science. The program provides intensive professional development for science teachers, amplifies the science education infrastructure within Virginia, and conducts research on science instruction and student learning.

We agree that supporting teachers and leaders through effective professional learning opportunities are the most effective method of increasing student achievement in science. The VISTA project will support our organization through two levels of support for science leaders. The first supporting new science leaders in honing the science leadership skills and secondly by providing sustained support of our veteran science leaders in further developing their inquiry-based science programs. We will work with George Mason University to develop and implement the leadership institutes and extended VSELA meetings and participate in required data collection by the U.S. Department of Education for evaluation. We look forward to participating in collaborative efforts with university faculty and school leaders to improve science teaching and science leadership, and ultimately student learning throughout Virginia.

We believe that this innovative opportunity will enhance science instruction and increase student learning. The investment this project will make in both teachers and science leaders, using research-based methods, will have a significant impact on teaching and learning in Virginia. The Virginia Science Education Leadership Association is pleased to participate in this exciting program which will benefit our teachers, students, and community.

Sincerely,

Eric M. Rhoades  
President