

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 1998 RECONVENED SESSION

CHAPTER 903

An Act to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 22.1-199.3, relating to the Virginia Educational Excellence Incentive Reward Program and Fund.

[H 653]

Approved May 20, 1998

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 22.1-199.3 as follows:

§ 22.1-199.3. Virginia Educational Excellence Incentive Reward Program and Fund.

A. From such funds as may be appropriated for such purpose and from such gifts, donations, grants, bequests, and other funds as may be received on its behalf, there is hereby established the Virginia Educational Excellence Incentive Reward Program, to be administered by the Board of Education, and a special nonreverting fund within the Department of the Treasury known as the Virginia Educational Excellence Incentive Reward Fund, hereafter referred to as the "Fund." The Fund shall be established on the books of the Comptroller, and any moneys remaining in such Fund at the end of the biennium shall not revert to the general fund but shall remain in the Fund. Interest earned on such funds shall remain in the Fund and be credited to it.

The Department of the Treasury shall administer and manage the Virginia Educational Excellence Incentive Reward Fund, subject to the authority of the Board of Education to provide for its disbursement. The Fund shall be disbursed to award incentive grants to public schools meeting certain performance criteria established by the Board and to support nonmonetary awards recognizing exemplary performance by teachers, administrators, and students across the Commonwealth.

B. The Board shall establish performance criteria for determining eligibility of public schools to receive incentive grants from the Fund. Such criteria shall include annual performance benchmarks for individual public schools developed with the assistance of the relevant division superintendents and shall recognize improved and exceptional educational performance in the Commonwealth's public schools. The criteria may be based upon, but shall not be limited to, various school and pupil performance indicators, such as:

- 1. Pupil academic performance;*
- 2. Standards of Learning end-of-course assessment scores;*
- 3. Student and teacher attendance rates;*
- 4. Graduation rates, including minority graduation rates; and*
- 5. Parental and community involvement.*

In establishing such awards criteria, the Board may consider school population information, such as the percentage of students speaking English as a second language, community education and income levels, local ability-to-pay for public education, and schoolwide and divisionwide enrollments.

C. The Board shall establish procedures for determining amounts for incentive grants to public schools. The incentive grants shall be calculated on a per teacher basis and may be used for salary bonuses, professional development, school improvement funds, or other educational initiatives or expenses approved by the Board.

D. The Board shall also establish within the Program a system of nonmonetary awards to recognize exemplary performance by teachers, administrators, and students in the public schools. Teachers, administrators, and students meeting performance criteria established by the Board shall be recognized annually at the regional and state level.

For the purposes of this section, "administrators" shall include principals, assistant principals, and supervisors.

E. The Board may issue guidelines governing the Program as it deems necessary and appropriate.