

Winter, 1998

**Virginia Department of Education
Procedures for Initiating An Academic-Year Governor's School**

Developing and implementing the program and administrative arrangements for an Academic-Year Governor's School involves extensive planning and discussions among the participating school divisions. It is recommended that these take place over the course of six to twelve months. The procedure includes the following steps:

1. School divisions desiring to implement an Academic-Year Governor's School shall provide the Department of Education with documentation of the following:
 - The existence of an active, on-going Governor's School Planning Committee of superintendents or their designees from the participating school divisions. The committee should also include some school board members and parents. The planning committee shall design a Governor's School program, which is beyond the scope and sequence of the regular schools' program for gifted students, and shall determine the initial location and fiscal agent.
 - A statement, which demonstrates the need/rationale for the school. This statement should be concise and state the important reasons to have a Governor's School, separate and unique from the existing program offerings for secondary gifted students. A statement of assurance that all school divisions in the region have been invited to participate.
 - A brief description of the proposed program, including site location, number of students, grade levels, and general curriculum design.
 - A written memorandum of agreement with local businesses, industries, and institutions of higher learning. This agreement will suggest ways in which community resources will contribute to the Governor's School to broaden the scope of the students' educational experiences.
 - A statement of assurance that the Governor's School Planning Committee has reviewed provisions of the *Administrative Procedures Guide for the Establishment of Academic-Year Governor's Schools* and agrees to follow the guidelines set forth in the document.
2. A statement of assurance that an on-going Governing Board will be established to reflect current Board of Education regulations relative to jointly operated schools and programs.
3. A statement of assurance that all divisions listed in the proposal, at the time it is approved by the Board of Education, intend to participate for a minimum of three years in the program.
4. The Department of Education will review the proposal and documentation and make a report to the Board of Education with a recommendation.

5. The Board of Education will determine if the proposed program is approved as a joint school (Section 22.1-26 of the Code of Virginia), and is to be recommended to the Governor to be designated, with appropriate funding, as a Governor's School.
6. The Department of Education may issue a contract involving the fiscal agent, the Governing Board, and the Department of Education.
7. The Department of Education will assist the planning committee in developing the Administrative Procedures and will evaluate the program on a regular basis.

OUTLINE OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ROLE

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Revised January 8, 1998

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES GUIDE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ACADEMIC-YEAR GOVERNOR'S SCHOOLS

Introduction

The Academic-Year Governor's School Programs shall provide educational options not available in home schools for students identified as gifted or eligible to be so designated. These programs will provide students with the following opportunities:

- to develop their own separate identity as a community of learners,
- to learn and grow in an environment that nurtures the unique abilities and needs of gifted learners,
- to develop a positive and realistic concept of self and others,
- to belong to a community of learners who share interests and abilities,
- to learn about subjects of interest to them,
- to be risk-takers and decision-makers in a non-threatening environment,
- to provide career exploration and/or advanced classes which may help students as they prepare for college or other post-secondary opportunities, and
- to expand their knowledge of and interest in science and technology, the humanities, and the arts by providing interaction with community, industry, professionals, and higher education.

The Role of the Department of Education

The Department of Education will act as a resource for these programs, providing training and technical assistance, including program and curriculum design, instructional strategies, and evaluation. The Department also will provide guidelines for program implementation, issue the agreement between participants, and approve program plans annually. In addition, it will establish the criteria for and conduct an external evaluation of each program at least once every six years.

Program Description

- I. Each Regional Governor's School planning committee appointed by the Governing Board shall develop cooperatively with local school divisions, and have available for review and dissemination, a program description that includes the following:
 - A. Statement of program goals

B. Statement of program objectives

C. Course descriptions

- If college credit is to be awarded, courses selected should be carefully scrutinized to assess the likelihood of acceptance of credit by recognized two- and four-year institutions. If a new course description is needed, it should be prepared and submitted through the appropriate college channels for approval.
- If an academic credit is awarded, appropriate criteria for passing the course must be specified.

D. Description of relationship between Regional Governor's School programs and local plans for the education of the gifted

- Local gifted coordinators should actively participate in program planning and implementation and work with the program director.

E. Length of program and daily schedule

- Upon approval of program design, a detailed schedule of classes, activities, and assignment of personnel must be developed.

F. Facilities to be provided to accomplish program goals and objectives

- Assurance from the fiscal agent that permanent facilities are available, are supportive of the need for a separate identity as a Governor's School, and are adequate to meet the needs of the program.

G. Materials and equipment to be provided to accomplish program goals and objectives

H. Internal program evaluation procedures including the following:

- What is to be evaluated.
- What process will be used, and
- How data will be used for program improvement.

I. Program administration

Assurance from the Governing Board that the Governor's School program, consistent with Department of Education Administrative Procedures, will be administered by the program director with approval by the Governing Board.

Administrative Procedures

- II. Each regional Governor's School director will maintain, for review and dissemination, procedures developed cooperatively with participating school divisions which address the following topics:
- A. Student recruitment, selection, and admissions criteria; including a statement that ensures that all eligible gifted students, including underachievers and/or culturally disadvantaged, have an equal opportunity to apply;
 - Students' abilities and interests shall be consistent with program offerings.
 - B. Code of student conduct and attendance
 - C. Transportation arrangements which are in compliance with all applicable federal and state regulations
 - D. Staff recruitment, selection, and assignment
 - The Governor's School shall hire a qualified director and staff with training and/or experience in gifted education and have their vitae on file.
 - To the extent possible, staff should be balanced as to race and gender and hired from participating school divisions.
 - E. Staff development
 - The program will provide appropriate staff training in addition to staff planning time.
 - When any staff person(s), including a college or university instructor, is (are) employed without training or successful experience in gifted education, instructional supervision shall be provided to ensure the use of proper instructional strategies and techniques for gifted learners.
 - F. Staff evaluation
 - The director should complete an evaluation report based on personal observations of each instructor. Instruments and procedures for evaluation shall be identified as part of staff development training and shall be a part of any workshop training.
 - G. Parent/community involvement
 - In addition to opening/closing day ceremonies, parents should be considered as program resources, perhaps as mentors, or as resources for other activities which complement the educational experience. A PTA/PTO should be established and

meetings should be held at least four times each academic year.

- H. Business, industry, higher education, and arts involvement
- I. Documentation that insurance and other fiscal information will be provided

Department of Education Evaluation Procedures

- III. The Department of Education will conduct periodically, at least once every six years, an evaluation of each Governor's School program. A Governor's School proposal must include a statement of assurance that the Governor's School Director will work with the Department of Education to conduct an evaluation that includes the following:
 - A. Examination of the program's policies, procedures, and outcomes
 - B. Use of criteria addressing program design, delivery of instruction, and evaluation of the program
 - C. Interviews with program directors, staff, students, and parents
 - D. Review of documents
 - E. Observations
 - F. Follow up

Revised Winter 1995

Cooperative Agreement Contract

Concerning the Establishment and Operation of

the _____ Governor's School
between _____ School Board
and The Governing Board of the _____ Governor's School and the
Virginia Department of Education.

Whereas, the _____ has requested that the Board
of Education designate _____ High School as a Governor's School;

Whereas, the Board of Education has designated _____ as the Governor's School for
_____.

Whereas, the Department of Education requires that the fiscal agent for the Governor's School
abide by the regulations set forth in the Administrative Procedures Guide for Establishing a
Governor's School;

Whereas, the Department of Education requires that the fiscal agent provide facilities to the
Department of Education, the Governor's School, and the participating school divisions.

THE PARTIES HEREBY AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

1. That _____ Governor's School is an institution of the Virginia
Department of Education, with _____ Schools serving as Fiscal Agent.
2. The Governing Board shall be established and maintained as required by Board of
Education regulations on jointly operated schools and programs. [§22,1-26]
3. The Governing Board shall be responsible for and shall abide by procedures and
regulations consistent with the Department of Education's *Administrative Procedures
and Guidelines*. The Governing Board shall call and conduct meetings as it deems
appropriate.
4. The Governing Board shall serve as an Advisory Board to the _____ School Board
on all matters related to fiscal responsibility.
5. The _____ School Board shall be responsible for and abide by Department of
Education policies and guidelines regarding fiscal responsibility.
6. The _____ School Board and the Governing Board shall abide by the
specifications set forth in the proposal to the Board of Education and the guidelines from
the Department of Education regarding the establishment, purpose, and administration of
the _____ Governor's School.
7. Schools, serving as fiscal agent, shall provide permanent facilities that are adequate to
meet the needs of the program.

8. Transportation of students is the responsibility of the participating school division.
9. This Cooperative Agreement is effective from the date of execution
this _____ day of _____, 199_.

Signature School Board Chair

Signature Governor's School Governing Board
Chair

Print Name

Print Name

Signature Division Superintendent

Signature Superintendent of Public Instruction

Print Name

Print Name

Academic-Year Governor's Schools

The Department of Education sponsors regional Governor's Schools, which serve gifted high school students during the academic year. These schools create special educational opportunities for gifted students in science, mathematics, technology, social sciences, the humanities, and the arts. Students at each of these schools concentrate on their specific areas of interest while obtaining well-balanced instruction in other areas of study, either through the Governor's School or at their base school.

Academic-Year Governor's Schools are established through the organizational concept of creating a *Community of Learners*. Each Governor's School provides a community of learners whereby close, trusting relationships among faculty and students give rise to a climate that stimulates growth and intellectual development. In such communities, gifted students can rely on a small, caring group of specially trained adults who work closely with each other to provide coordinated, meaningful, and challenging educational experiences that match the unique needs and characteristics of the gifted learner. A Governor's School community of learners is created by bringing together gifted students, from three or more adjoining school divisions, to interact with and provide mutual support for their intellectual peers in the pursuit of academic and/or artistic growth and development commensurate with their needs and abilities.

Students use computers and other current technology in laboratory activities, conduct in-depth research, work with other students to develop special projects and performances, and work alongside mentors in business, industry, government, and universities gaining career experiences.

Each academic-year school has its own admissions process. For more information, contact the local director of the Governor's School in your area, or the local gifted program administrator in your school division. In addition, information may be obtained from the Department of Education.

References

Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, (1989, June). Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century. Washington, DC: USDOE.

Virginia Governor's Schools. (1995). Richmond, VA: Virginia Department of Education