



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Steven R. Staples, 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 10, 2016

The Honorable Thomas K. Norment, Jr.
Co-Chairman, Senate Finance Committee
Virginia General Assembly
P.O. Box 6205
Williamsburg, Virginia 23188

The Honorable S. Chris Jones
Chairman, House Appropriations Committee
Virginia General Assembly
P. O. Box 5053
Suffolk, Virginia 23435

The Honorable Emmett W. Hanger, Jr.
Co-Chairman, Senate Finance Committee
Virginia General Assembly
P.O. Box 2
Mount Solon, Virginia 22843-0002

Dear Senators Norment and Hanger and Delegate Jones:

Section 22.1-98.2, *Code of Virginia*, provides additional state funding to school divisions serving fewer than 1,100 students in the prior school year, in a locality that has a local composite index of 0.6000 or greater, and has 65 percent or more of its local taxes coming from real estate taxes, if they enter into a cost-saving or service-sharing agreement with a contiguous school division that meets criteria established by the Board of Education. A copy of the current criteria approved by the Board of Education is attached. Section 22.1-98.2, *Code of Virginia*, further authorizes the Department of Education to provide the additional state funding to the qualifying school division by calculating its state Basic Aid entitlement using the lowest composite index of the contiguous school divisions involved in the agreement. The statute also requires the Governor to approve any adjusted Basic Aid payments before they are distributed to the qualifying school division and the Department of Education to report annually to the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees the cost-savings agreements made and the adjusted state shares so approved.

For fiscal year 2015, Highland County Public Schools and Rappahannock County Public Schools met the criteria established in Section 22.1-98.2. Highland County submitted a cost sharing agreement made with Augusta County Public Schools and Rappahannock County submitted a cost sharing agreement made with Madison County Public Schools. Copies of both agreements provided by the school divisions, pursuant to the Board of Education's criteria and

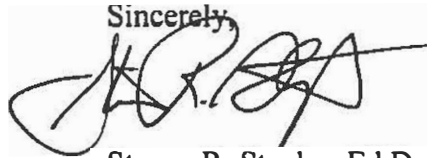
The Honorable Thomas K. Norment, Jr.
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Section 22.1-98.2, are attached. The submitted agreements were reviewed by the Department of Education and found to meet the criteria established by the Board of Education.

Governor McAuliffe approved Highland County's and Rappahannock County's requests for the adjusted Basic Aid payment. Consequently, Highland County received a supplemental state Basic Aid payment in fiscal year 2015 in the amount of \$675,291. This payment was based on Augusta County's fiscal year 2015 composite index of 0.3545 in lieu of Highland County's composite index of 0.8000. Rappahannock County received a supplemental state Basic Aid payment in fiscal year 2015 in the amount of \$236,340. This payment was based on Madison County's fiscal year 2015 composite index of 0.4471 in lieu of Rappahannock County's composite index of 0.7916. Funding for these payments was included in the fiscal year 2015 appropriations for Direct Aid to Public Education.

If you have questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Kent C. Dickey, deputy superintendent for finance and operations, at (804) 225-2025 or kent.dickey@doe.virginia.gov.

Sincerely,



Steven R. Staples, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Public Instruction



SRS/eml

Attachments

Eligibility Criteria and Procedures for Supplemental Funding for School Divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia That Enter Into Cost-Saving or Service-Sharing Agreements

Purpose

Section 22.1-98.2, *Code of Virginia*, directs the Board of Education to develop eligibility criteria for cost-saving and service-sharing agreements for school divisions that enter into such agreements with contiguous school divisions. School divisions serving fewer than 1,100 students in the prior school year, having a local composite index of .6000 or greater, and having 65 percent or more of their local taxes coming from real estate taxes that enter into such an agreement with a contiguous school division are eligible to receive the state share for basic aid computed on the basis of the composite index of the contiguous school division, calculated annually, for 15 years.

The Governor must approve the adjustment to the state share for basic aid prior to the disbursement of funds. The Department of Education must annually report to the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and the Senate Finance Committees the cost saving arrangements made, and the adjusted state shares of basic aid approved by the Governor.

Definitions

Eligible school divisions: School divisions that served less than 1,100 students in the prior school year, have a local composite index of .6000 or greater, and have 65 percent or more of their local taxes coming from real estate taxes. Chapter 705 (2008 Acts of Assembly) allowed that school divisions that were receiving funds appropriated pursuant to Section 22.1-98.2, *Code of Virginia*, prior to adoption of the revised criteria in Chapter 705 shall continue receiving such funds on the same basis as prior to July 1, 2008. To this end, Highland County Public Schools may qualify to receive these funds so long as it serves fewer than 350 students.

Cost-saving or service-sharing agreements: A formal agreement executed between the eligible school division and one or more contiguous school divisions. This agreement must be evidenced by a written document that bears the original signatures of the superintendents of the participating school divisions. The agreement must contain sufficient information to demonstrate how the agreement meets the eligibility criteria.

Additional State Share of Basic Aid: The difference between the Basic Aid entitlement the eligible school division would normally receive and that which it would receive using the lowest composite index of a contiguous school division participating in the agreement.

Eligibility Criteria

Agreements submitted by an eligible school division to the Department of Education must be made with a contiguous school division and must demonstrate how the agreement meets the following criteria:

- evidence of one or more shared services with another school division; or

- evidence of the savings or cost increases avoided as a result of shared services or a cooperative agreement for purchasing or other administrative practice; or
- evidence that a savings has been achieved by contracting services with another school division.

The agreement must include a statement of assurance that it complies with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

Examples of agreements that may meet these criteria include, but are not limited to those that:

1. provide for the consolidation or sharing of specialized educational services or educational support services;
2. provide for the consolidation or sharing of specialized educational facilities in instructional areas such as career and technical education;
3. identify administrative or support services that are duplicative and establish a process for the consolidation or sharing of administrative or support services;
4. provide for joint professional development services;
5. provide for the consolidation or sharing of technology applications and support;
6. provide for the consolidation or sharing of operations and maintenance and custodial services;
7. provide for shared, bulk, or volume purchasing; and
8. provide for privatization or outsourcing of support services with a contiguous school division.

Procedures

To be considered for adjusted Basic Aid funding under Section 22.1-98.2, *Code of Virginia*, a school division must submit to the Department of Education a cost or service-sharing plan with a contiguous division prior to September 1 of each fiscal year.

The content of the submitted cost saving or service-sharing plan must meet the above listed criteria.

Receipt of adjusted Basic Aid funding will begin after approval of the plan by the Department of Education and approval of the adjusted payment by the Governor of Virginia.

The additional Basic Aid payments will be computed for the eligible school division on the basis of full year funding using the lowest composite index of a contiguous school division participating in the agreement.

All payments of additional Basic Aid pursuant to these procedures are subject to appropriation of state funds for this purpose.

State funding of additional Basic Aid does not reduce the required local effort of the eligible school division.

References

- Section 22.1-98.2, *Code of Virginia*
- Chapter 890, 2011 Acts of Assembly

**Service-Sharing/Cost Sharing Agreement
Between
Augusta County Public Schools
And
Highland County Public Schools**

This agreement is between August County Public Schools and Highland County Public Schools for the period of July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015.

General Agreement

It is the agreement between Augusta County Public Schools and Highland County Public Schools to work cooperatively together to provide such services that will assist Highland County Public Schools in providing educational services to its population at a cost savings. Highland County Public Schools have less than 250 students. Such services may include but are not limited to:

Head Start

Highland County Public Schools, as part of the Shenandoah Valley Head Start Consortium of with Augusta County Public Schools is the fiscal agent, will service as a site for a Head Start class. This program will allow preschool children in Highland County the opportunity to participate in an educational program at a savings to Highland County Public Schools. The cost savings is estimated at \$84,000.

Shared School Psychologist

A school psychologist, employed by Augusta County Public Schools, serves the students of Highland County Public Schools. This position is a part time position for Highland County Public Schools and payment is on a per diem basis. The cost savings is estimated at \$60,000.

Collegial Partnership Program

Since Highland County Public Schools is the smallest school division in the state, we only have one teacher per grade level at the elementary grades, three middle school teachers and normally one teacher for different content areas at the high school level. We do not employ content specialists and there is little opportunity to participate in collegial partnerships. This is a significant limitation in developing services and programs to meet the needs of our school population. Augusta County Public Schools, as a service to Highland County Public Schools, has agreed to participate in a collegial partnership.

Highland Elementary School will partner with Craigsville Elementary School. The principal of Craigsville Elementary School will partner with Teresa Blum, principal of Highland Elementary School. Both faculties will interact as we develop our curriculum offerings and continue to meet AMO and standards for SOL scores.

Augusta County Schools instructional specialists will form collegial partnerships with our school library media specialists and our middle school science teacher.

The Language Arts K-12, Foreign Language and ESL Supervisor will partner with our high school foreign language teacher and provide professional development opportunities for our Language Arts teachers.

The Technology Department will partner with our Coordinator of Administrative Technology, Gary Lane. Highland County Public Schools, due to our small size, has an extremely difficult time getting even one company to submit bids. Therefore this partnership is invaluable in purchasing servers and related hardware and software.

The high school will partner with similar content area teachers.

The cost savings in the above areas are estimated to be \$50,000 due to Highland County not having to pay for consultants in key curricular areas.

Transportation

We are investigating the shared services of partnering with Augusta County Public Schools in some repairs and maintenance. We anticipate a cost savings of approximately \$3,000.

These agreements comply with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations.



Dr. Eric Bond, Superintendent
Augusta County Public Schools

8-8-14

Date



Dr. Thomas J. Schott, Superintendent
Highland County Public Schools

8/8/14

Date



RAPPAHANNOCK COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Office
6 Schoolhouse Road
Washington, Virginia 22747

Telephone (540) 227-0023
Fax (540) 987-8896
www.rappahannockschools.us

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April 30, 2014

Mr. Kent C. Dickey
Deputy Superintendent of Finance & Operations
Department of Education
P.O. Box 2120
Richmond, VA 23218-2120

Dear Mr. Dickey:

Attached is the renewed cost-sharing/cost-saving agreement between Rappahannock and Madison counties.

Rappahannock County Public Schools agree to report this agreement annually to the Department of Education, in order to receive the state share for basic aid computed on the basis of the composite index of local ability-to-pay of the contiguous school division as permitted by State Board of Education regulations and Virginia Code § 22.1-98.2.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 540-227-0242 or by email at dmatthews@rappahannockschools.us.

Sincerely,

Donna O. Matthews, Ed. D.
Division Superintendent

Attachment



RAPPAHANNOCK COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Office
6 Schoolhouse Road
Washington, Virginia 22747

05-05-14 11:54 AM

Telephone (540) 227-0023
Fax (540) 987-8896
www.rappahannockschools.us

Contract Between the Madison County School Board and The Rappahannock County School Board

Introduction:

The School Boards of Madison and Rappahannock Counties agree to enter into this "cost-sharing/cost-savings" agreement as permitted by State Board of Education regulations and Virginia Code §22.1-98.2 – *Certain agreements; adjustment of state share for basic aid.*

A. Any school board of a school division in which fewer than 1,100 students were included in average daily membership for the preceding school year, in a locality that has a local composite index of .6000 or greater, and has 65 percent or more of its local taxes coming from real estate taxes, as calculated by the Auditor of Public Accounts and reported annually to the Department of Education, upon entering into certain cost-savings agreements with a contiguous school division for the consolidation or sharing of educational, administrative, or support services, shall receive the state share for basic aid computed on the basis of the composite index of local ability-to-pay of the contiguous school division, calculated annually, for a period of 15 years.

The School Boards of Madison and Rappahannock Counties agree to share certain services as follows:

- Do cooperative purchasing in selected areas (custodial supplies, duplicating paper, computers, food, etc.) to be determined through consultation between the school divisions' finance offices and administrative staff.
- HS students may enroll in certain classes in the other school division at no cost. Rappahannock will reserve up to two slots in each of the following classes for Madison students through the second day of the semester: Web Design, Latin, and Culinary Arts. Madison will reserve up to two slots in each of the following classes for Rappahannock students through the second day of the semester: Cosmetology/Barbering and other classes to be determined. The school divisions may add courses to or delete courses from these lists by mutual agreement.
- Prior to putting surplus school buses up for auction Rappahannock will offer buses to Madison at no cost.
- Employees of both school divisions may attend on-site staff development on a space available basis at no cost.
- Rappahannock will send its Latin teacher to Madison during the spring semester, first block, to teach one section of Latin at no cost to the Madison Schools.
- Rappahannock will send its Visiting Teacher to Madison to complete approximately 40 written Social Histories annually as part of the Special Education evaluation process at no cost to the Madison Schools.

This agreement shall be in effect from July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015. This agreement complies with all Federal, State, and Local laws. For the purpose of renewing the agreement, the school divisions agree to consider revisions to this agreement by December 31 of each contract year. If either party wishes to terminate the agreement, written notice must be given to the other party at least 90 days in advance of the proposed date of termination.



Dr. Matthew J. Eberhardt, Superintendent, Madison County Public Schools

4/14/14
Date



Mrs. Donna O. Matthews, Superintendent, Rappahannock County Public Schools

3/14/14
Date