

## INVITATION TO SUBMIT NO-COST, NO-OBLIGATION RESOURCES FOR PILOT TESTING AS PART OF VIRGINIA'S e-LEARNING BACKPACK INITIATIVE

In 2010, the Virginia Department of Education was authorized to solicit assistance from interested parties in the form of donated time, services, supplies, equipment, and general input to implement a small-scale pilot program to explore and test technical, social, and policy implications of textbook alternatives. Textbook publishers, other instructional content providers, and technology companies were invited to participate in this initiative. Phase I of the project is nearly complete, and the results demonstrate that multipurpose portable devices can be powerful learning tools when loaded with engaging high-quality content and applications. Based on these findings, the Department of Education is once again inviting interested parties to donate items or services as part of Phase II of the pilot project.

Phase II will focus on the design and development of model e-Learning Backpacks that include digital textbooks delivered on wireless, handheld, multipurpose computers with supporting resources, tools, and applications. This phase will emphasize STEM areas (mathematics and its real-world applications specifically). For example, an e-Learning Backpack could include a digital mathematics textbook, apps that teach the application of content, graphing applications, rich media that illustrate key concepts, real-time data sets, games that teach engineering design principles, or tools that facilitate easy access to material in the public domain (e.g., NASA resources). The resulting models will help Virginia develop a strategic plan that could be used to take this e-learning initiative to scale.

The Virginia Department of Education contact for this initiative is Dr. Tammy McGraw, Director of Educational Technology. She can be reached by e-mail at [tammy.mcgraw@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:tammy.mcgraw@doe.virginia.gov) or by phone at 804-692-0334. Interested parties should provide the following information:

- Contact name, phone number, e-mail address, company affiliation (if any)
- Level of interest in the program and experience in developing, promoting, and/or utilizing the technology in business and/or classroom
- Description of what will be donated and its potential use for the pilot
- Written understanding from the donor acknowledging that the Department of Education will not be required to sign any agreement that would bind the agency other than to confirm receipt of the donated items or services

It is not necessary to submit a lengthy document to satisfy these requirements. The Department of Education will select the ideas that align best with agency priorities and interests and will contact the individual or organization for more information if needed.

**DISCLAIMER:** Any product or service voluntarily submitted for pilot testing will be considered by the Virginia Department of Education as a no-cost, no-obligation donated item. Entities submitting nonconsumable items may retain rights to the item so that it is returned to the entity at the completion of the pilot testing. The Virginia Department of Education and its employees cannot promote, endorse, or advertise any product or service donated or selected for the e-Learning Backpack pilot testing program and cannot guarantee that such products or services will benefit from any future commercial endeavor or public procurement. Additionally, it should be understood that any future purchases of products or services developed as a result of the pilot must be made via a method of procurement proscribed by the Virginia Public Procurement Act, unless otherwise authorized by law.