

Abstract  
Professional Learning by Choice Community

Virginia Advanced Study Strategies, Inc. (VASS), a 501c(3) nonprofit organization doing business as Virginia Ed Strategies, in partnership with the Virginia Department of Education (VDE) (*Competitive Preference Priority 2*), in collaboration with the Coalition of Small and Rural Schools of Virginia and 7 partnering rural LEAs, seek an *Early Phase* grant as a *rural applicant* to form the Professional Learning Choice Community (PLCC) to address *Absolute Priority 3: Teacher-Directed Professional Learning (CFDA 84.411C)*. Additional LEAs among the state's 88 rural-eligible will join in year 1 for the project to include 2,100 high school teachers of mathematics, science and computer science.

The project goal is to build sustainable effectiveness capacity of these STEM teachers through systematic, teacher-directed selection of professional learning experiences that increase collective teacher efficacy within a community of practice (CoP). Three core objectives include: (1) all teachers self-evaluate individual learning needs for selecting professional learning experiences, (2) professional learning options are made available for teachers to self-select experiences that align with individual learning needs, and (3) teachers participate in a CoP that creates collective efficacy to sustain implementation of the professional learning. Key outcomes include teacher self-efficacy increases and access to rigorous/engaging learning increases across learning environments for high-need students. High-need students are defined as students enrolled in an LEA eligible for the USED federal Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP), and/or districts with NCES locale code of 32, 33, 41, 42, or 43 where one or more of the contextual challenges of rurality influences the teaching and learning environment.

Special project features include a dashboard that facilitates teacher selection of desired professional learning options, a custom self-assessment tool, teacher coaches/mentors, the CoP for teachers and administrators, extensive statewide collaboration, and a strong external evaluation to inform project implementation and impact. Partnering organizations include: Virginia Department of Education, James Madison University, Virginia Association of School Superintendents, Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals, the Coalition of Small and Rural Schools of Virginia, Virginia ASCD, Virginia School Consortium for Learning, The Commonwealth Learning Partnership, and Code Virginia.