

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Veronica Tate, Virginia Advanced Study Strategies, Inc., President/CEO

Phone: (757) 289-6192; E-mail: veronicatate@vaadvstudies.org

VASS, INC. RECEIVES \$2.99 MILLION GRANT FROM US DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FOR RURAL MATH INNOVATION NETWORK

South Boston, VA. (January 30, 2017) – Virginia Advanced Study Strategies, Inc. (VASS, Inc.) is pleased to announce it has received a \$2.99 million Investing in Innovation (i3) grant from the United States Department of Education. These funds will support the Rural Math Innovation Network (RMIN) for eligible rural school divisions that are in the Tobacco Commission region of Southside and Southwest Virginia. The following school divisions are eligible to participate in RMIN:

Southside Virginia: Appomattox County; Brunswick County; Buchanan County; Buckingham County; Charlotte County; Cumberland County; Greenville County; Halifax County; Henry County; Lunenburg County; Martinsville City; Mecklenburg County; Nottoway County; Patrick County; Prince Edward County; Sussex County

Southwest Virginia: Carroll County; Dickenson County; Galax City; Grayson County; Lee County; Norton City; Russell County; Smyth County; Tazewell County; Wise County; Wythe County

A total of 40 innovation-minded pre-Algebra and Algebra 1 teachers are being selected for the four-year RMIN project. The teachers will work in a virtual network to create lessons that increase student motivation for mastery of math skills and concepts needed for pursuing STEM and health postsecondary technician programs and career credentials. Student success on the math assessment of the National Career Readiness Certificate is one outcome of project.

Participation is limited to 2 teachers for up to 20 of the eligible rural school divisions. The superintendent or designee of interested school divisions should plan to participate in one of two webinars that will outline how to nominate teachers for the RMIN. Information to access the webinars scheduled for Feb. 6 and 7 is available at: [RMIN School Division Eligibility and Information Sessions](#).

RMIN is funded because of its potential to support workforce development for students, schools and communities across rural America, according to Dr. Hobart Harmon, one of the nation's leading experts on rural education and RMIN project director. Veronica Tate, VASS, Inc. President and CEO stated, "It is one of only 15 grants awarded from the 385 applications submitted nationally, and only one of two "development" projects focused on an education innovation specifically for rural areas."

Jack Reasor, VASS, Inc. Board Chair and President and CEO of Old Dominion Electric Cooperative, notes, “It is indeed an honor for the organization to win this highly competitive grant. It reinforces our mission to support educational and business partners in preparing tomorrow’s workforce.” RMIN is the second i3 grant awarded to VASS, Inc. from the United States Department of Education. The first was the \$2.7 million Rural Math Excel Partnership (RMEP). Highlights of that project, which is in its last year, are found in the RMEP newsletter at <http://www.vaadvstudies.org/rmep>.

###

About Virginia Advanced Study Strategies, Inc.

Virginia Advanced Study Strategies, Inc. (VASS, Inc.) is a nonprofit education organization that forms partnerships and networks to address important educational issues. VASS, Inc. was founded in 2007 to implement a STEM-focused Advanced Placement (AP) program funded by the National Math & Science Initiative and strategic partners. During the six-year project period, VASS, Inc. provided extensive teacher training and student supports to achieve dramatic increases in AP enrollment and exam scores in over 75 Virginia schools. In its ten-year history, VASS, Inc. has garnered over \$27 million in public and private funds, including two U.S. Department of Education Investing in Innovation (i3) grants, to advance strategies that foster college and career preparation and workforce development. Visit the VASS, Inc. website at www.vaadvstudies.org for more information, or email vassinfo@vaadvstudies.org.