

Following are programmatic highlights of the Governor's introduced biennial budget

Education

- **Department of Education:** Increase by \$315,923 GF FY 2015 and \$330,137 GF in FY 2016 for support of the full implementation of the Virginia Center for Excellence in Teaching.
- **Department of Education:** For each year, increase by \$309,680 (GF) for the academic reviews by the department of underperforming schools that are not fully accredited.
- **Department of Education:** For each year, increases by \$1.4 million (GF) for the update of the sales tax distribution for the school age population estimate for the new biennium.
- **Department of Education:** For each year decreases by \$38 million (GF) to eliminate non-personal services (i.e., utilities, textbooks) inflation factors used to calculate costs during rebenchmarking of the Standards of Quality program.
- **Department of Education:** For biennium a total general fund increase of \$575.2 million (\$277.3 million in FY 2015 and \$297.9 million in FY 2016) to update the Standards of Quality (SOQ) to reflect changes in enrollment, funded instructional salaries, school instructional and support expenditures, and other technical factors.
- **Department of Education:** Increase of \$18.2 million in FY 2015 and \$18.9 million in FY 2016 (GF) to adjust funds to support the employer rate change from 11.66 percent to 14.5 percent for the state share of contributions paid on behalf of public school teachers for retirement. This adjustment also includes a reduction in the employer rate from 10.23 percent to 9.4 percent for the state share of contributions paid on behalf of non-professional support positions for retirement.
- **Department of Education:** For FY 2015 an increase of \$18.2 million (GF) and for FY 2016 an increase of \$18.5 million (GF) to update the composite index, a measure of local ability to pay when distributing state funds to local school divisions.
- **Department of Education:** At \$500,000 For each year of the biennium increases by \$500,000 (GF) grants to localities that have signed contracts with Teach for America, a nationwide nonprofit organization focused on placing teachers in low-income areas.

- **Opportunity Educational Institution (OEI):** Provides \$600,000 each year in GF to annualize funding for the Opportunity Education Institution and establishes OEI as a separate agency in the budget.
- **Virginia Community College System:** Increases by \$500,000 each year (GF) to support the Rural Virginia Horseshoe Initiative (RVHI), a joint project between fourteen community colleges in rural areas.