



Date: March 6, 2006

To: Superintendents and Elementary Principals, Curriculum Coordinators and Elementary Science Teachers

From: Nancy McIntire, Coordinator for Quality Learning
Sandi Campie, Quality Learning Science & Math Consultant

RE: V.A.S.T. (Van Allen Science Teaching Center) Collaborative Project

Science literacy is at the forefront and the Mississippi Bend AEA9 is gearing up with an exciting collaborative pilot project between Grant Wood AEA and the Van Allen Science Teaching Center. The project goal is to provide leadership and support for exemplary science teaching to ensure success for all learners through collaboration. Grant Wood AEA has operated a Science Materials Center since 1992. The Center provides ready-to-use kits that provide a “**Hand-on / Minds-on**” science approach to learning. These kits include all necessary materials for 30 students at an elementary level, necessary training for teachers, management techniques for active science instruction, literacy connections, and much more. The V.A.S.T. Center currently has over 1200 kits and provides five core services:

- **Research-based curriculum**
- **Comprehensive Professional Development**
- **K-12 Materials Support**
- **Assessment Literacy**
- **Administrative and Community Support**

LEA Requirements

- Pilot schools will commit to a maximum of one kit per grade level (i.e.3, 4, and 5) or one kit per grade span (i.e. K- 2).
- Participating teacher will allocate at least 45 minutes a day for science instruction during kit use.
- Participating teachers will attend training at AEA10 for each kit they teach, regardless of kit teaching experience. Kit training will be for one day.
- Participating teachers and the building administrator will attend an informal meeting with AEA10 via videoconferencing sometime the last week of April or first week of May to discuss pilot project.
- Pilot schools will commit to data collection and evaluation of the project.

AEA Details:

- This pilot is between AEA (1, 267, 9, 15, and 16).
- Each AEA will select a maximum of 2 two elementary schools to participate in a one-year pilot project for 2006-2007.
- Each AEA will commit to sending science consultants to AEA10 for training. This will include kit training and possible meetings to discuss effective ways of providing consultative support to schools.
- Each AEA will agree to pay the cost of the kit for participating schools for 2006-2007 only.
- Each AEA science consultant will work with participating LEAs to review and possibly shift grade level benchmarks in science.
- Each AEA science consultant will work with participating LEAs to collect implementation and assessment data.
- AEA 10 will provide delivery of kits directly to and from each participating school.

If you are **interested in participating in the V.A.S.T. pilot project**, please email Sandi Campie at scampie@aea9.k12.ja.us or fax to 563-359-5967 by **March 24th**. Please complete the attached application to be considered for this opportunity!