

VIRGINIA AHPERD

2026 Convention Justification Toolkit

Everything you need to make the case to your administrator

October 24 and 25, 2026

E.C. Glass High School | Lynchburg, Virginia



Two days with the people who do what you do.

Your professional learning is worth asking for.

Health and physical education teachers are often the last to get funded. That is not because the learning matters less. It is usually because no one asked in a way that made it easy to say yes.

This toolkit does that part for you. Inside you will find what to say, where the money can come from, a cost worksheet, a letter you can copy and send today, and a plan for sharing what you learn when you get back.

Fill in the highlighted parts, cut what does not apply to you, and send it.

What is inside

- What to say to your principal or supervisor
- A table that links the convention to what your school already cares about
- Where the money can come from, including federal funds your division already gets
- A cost worksheet you can hand over
- A letter you can copy and send
- A plan for sharing what you learn with everyone else

How to use this toolkit

Three steps. About 30 minutes.

1. Read the tips below so you walk in prepared.
2. Pick two or three rows from the needs and benefits table that match what your school is working on this year. The more specific you are, the better.
3. Fill in the letter, attach the cost worksheet, and ask for a few minutes in person. Email is easy to put off.

Tips for the conversation with your administrator

- Ask for a meeting instead of sending a request into the void. A ten minute conversation gets a decision. An email gets forwarded.
- Lead with their problem, not your request. Start with the school goal, the wellness push, or the data point you can help move. Then explain how the convention helps.
- Name specific sessions. Once the program is posted, pick three and say what you will do with each one. "I am going to a session on fitness plans for Grades 6 through 8" sounds very different from "there are good sessions."
- Use your last evaluation. If your evaluator named something to work on, show them a session about it. You are answering feedback they already gave you.
- Have the money answer ready. Title II, Part A and Title IV, Part A can both pay for this, because the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) counts health and physical education as part of a well-rounded education.
- Talk to your city/country supervisor. Many have professional development funds and can send individuals or groups to conventions. They understand the value so you are not starting from scratch the way you might with a Principal.
- Check with your PTA or PTO! Parent groups fund teacher learning more often than teachers expect, and they do not hear from health and physical education staff very often.
- Offer to share! Say you will lead a department share out when you get back. One registration then serves your whole building.
- Mention licensure. The convention earns professional development points toward renewal, so you stay current and your school gets the benefit.
- Ask about coverage early. Subs are usually the real problem, not money. Bring a coverage plan before your principal has to make one.

One more thing. If the answer is no this year, ask what would make it a yes next year. Write down what they say. That turns a no into a plan.

Needs and benefits

Match what your school is already working on to what you will bring back. Pick two or three rows, not all nine. A short, specific case is stronger than a long one.

What your school or division needs	What you bring back
Students meet the Virginia SOL in health and physical education	✓ Work with all five physical education SOL strands: motor skills, anatomy, fitness planning, social and emotional development, and energy balance ✓ Strengthen health instruction across all three health SOL strands ✓ See how other Virginia teachers line their curriculum up with the SOL and the 2024 SHAPE America standards ✓ Come back with lessons and assessments already matched to grade level standards ✓ Learn how to assess standards with big classes and not enough equipment
Support the Profile of a Virginia Graduate	✓ Build communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and civic responsibility through movement and health ✓ Teach the workplace skills the Profile asks for, like self management, handling stress, and working with others ✓ Show how health and physical education help meet division graduation goals ✓ Introduce students to careers in health science, exercise science, coaching, and recreation
Reach every student, including students with disabilities	✓ Attend adapted physical education sessions on both days ✓ Learn how to change activities so students take part instead of sitting out ✓ Work better with special education staff, aides, and families ✓ Assess students on their own growth instead of against each other
Do fitness testing the right way	✓ Learn fitness assessment that focuses on personal goals, not on who came in last ✓ Get real methods for helping students build and update a personal fitness plan, which the SOL requires starting in middle school ✓ Use fitness data to guide your teaching and show growth to your principal and families ✓ Find free and low cost tools for tracking student activity

What your school or division needs	What you bring back
Support student mental health and school climate	✓ Teach the mental wellness and social and emotional content that runs all through the health SOL ✓ Build belonging and motivation in the gym and the health classroom ✓ Learn trauma informed practices that actually fit a gym and a locker room ✓ Connect movement during the school day to attendance and behavior
Support a teacher who works alone	✓ Meet Virginia teachers who teach the same grades and the same standards you do ✓ Get answers no one in your building can give you, from equipment to scheduling to Family Life Education ✓ Find a mentor, or become one ✓ Leave with people you can email in November when something goes wrong
Keep good health and physical education teachers	✓ Come back motivated, in a job where working alone wears people down ✓ Learn how other teachers manage the workload and stay in the field ✓ Find leadership opportunities at the region, state, and national level ✓ Get recognized through Virginia AHPERD awards, which reflects well on the school too
Speak up for the program	✓ Learn how to show what your program does using student data and student stories ✓ Make the case for equipment, facilities, staffing, and class time ✓ Build partnerships with community groups ✓ Use Virginia AHPERD position statements to back you up
Meet licensure renewal requirements	✓ Earn professional development points toward renewal ✓ Do renewal work that fits your endorsement instead of generic training ✓ Get two full days of training for far less than a national convention or a graduate course ✓ Show your evaluator a clear professional learning plan

How to pay for it

Do not walk in asking where the money will come from. Walk in with the answer.

Funding source	How it applies
Title II, Part A	Pays for teacher professional development. Health and physical education teachers qualify, because ESSA counts both as part of a well-rounded education.
Title IV, Part A	The Student Support and Academic Enrichment grant pays for well-rounded learning, safe and healthy students, and technology. Health and physical education fit all three.
City / County Supervisor	If your division has a health and physical education supervisor, start there. Supervisors often hold division level professional development funds, can send several teachers at once, and already know why this convention matters.
School or division professional development funds	Ask what is left in the building or department budget. This money often goes unspent, and health and physical education staff rarely ask for it.
PTA or PTO	Parent groups often have money set aside and care about teacher quality. Ask in person at a meeting, bring the cost worksheet, and offer to report back to them afterward.
Wellness, school health advisory board, or booster funds	These groups usually have small amounts of money to spend and tend to say yes to a specific, low cost request.
Your own three year membership	A three year membership is \$185, a little over \$60 a year, and it locks in the member registration rate for three conventions.

Cost worksheet

Fill this in and send it with your letter. It is easier to say yes to a number you can see.

Item	Cost	Notes
Convention registration (member rate)	[insert rate]	Register before September 15. Rates go up after that.
Virginia AHPERD membership, if not current	[insert rate]	A three year membership is \$185 and is the best deal if you plan to come back.
Lodging	\$139 per night	Hampton Inn and Suites Lynchburg. Breakfast and parking included. Book by October 8, 2026.
Travel	[miles x division rate]	Lynchburg is a reasonable drive from most of Virginia.
Meals	[per diem or actual]	Lunch is covered with registration on Saturday and Sunday.
Substitute coverage	[division rate x 2 days]	Bring your coverage plan to the same conversation, not after.
Total request	\$	Divide by the number of colleagues who will benefit when you share what you learned. That is the real cost per teacher.

Registration rates and included meals are posted at virginiaahperd.org. Check current numbers before you send your request.

Justification letter

Copy the text below into an email or a memo. Fill in every highlighted part. Cut any bullet that does not fit you, and add one that names a goal your school is actually working on. A letter that mentions your building by name works much better than a template.

[Date]

Dear [Principal or supervisor name],

I am writing to ask for approval and funding to attend the 2026 Virginia AHPERD convention on October 24 and 25, 2026, at E.C. Glass High School in Lynchburg, VA.

Virginia AHPERD is the statewide professional association for health, physical education, recreation, and dance educators. The convention offers ~50 sessions led by Virginia teachers, university faculty, and state and national award winners. The sessions are built around the Virginia Standards of Learning for health and physical education, so what I learn applies directly to what I already teach at [school name].

Attending will help me:

- Teach and assess the SOL strands I am responsible for
- Bring back lessons and resources I can use right away and share with others
- Include every student, including students with disabilities
- Support student wellness and school climate through activity during the school day
- Work on [a goal from your evaluation or your school improvement plan]

The total cost is [total]. The attached worksheet has the breakdown. This is an allowable expense under Title II, Part A and Title IV, Part A, because the Every Student Succeeds Act includes health and physical education in a well-rounded education. If the division budget is tight, I am happy to ask our PTA or another building source instead. The convention also earns professional development points toward my license renewal.

So this helps more than just my classroom, I will share what I learn with [department, grade level team, or full faculty] by [date], along with a written summary and copies of the resources I bring back.

I would like to talk this through with you in person. Thank you for considering it.

Sincerely,

[Your name]

[Your title and school]

Your bring it back plan

It is easier to get a yes next year if you delivered this year. Fill in the left side before you go, show it to your principal, and fill in the right side when you get back.

Before the convention	After the convention
Three sessions I plan to attend, and why	What I actually learned in each
One problem in my teaching I want to solve	What I am going to try, and when
One resource or piece of equipment to check out	What I recommend, and what it costs
Who else will benefit from what I bring back	Date and format of my share out
A school goal this connects to	How I will show it worked

Key dates

Now	Ask for your meeting. Approvals and purchase orders take longer than you think.
September 16, 2026	Register before rates go up on September 16. Check virginiaahperd.org for other deadlines.
October 8, 2026	Last day to book the hotel block at the Hampton Inn and Suites Lynchburg at the \$139 rate.
October 24 and 25, 2026	Convention at E.C. Glass High School, Lynchburg.
Within two weeks of returning	Share what you learned, while it is still fresh and your principal still remembers approving it.



Future educators, Teachers of the Year, and the hallway conversations that keep people in this profession.

We want you there.

Ask your supervisor, ask your PTA, and ask your Principal. If you get turned down, we want to know. Cost? Coverage? Timing? Whatever it was, that information shapes how we plan future conventions.

virginiaahperd.org | info@virginiaahperd.org