OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD

Strengthening early childhood systems

ACCESS • QUALITY • FAMILY ENGAGEMENT • COLLABORATION
Why?

- All Virginia children are capable of and deserve to enter school ready. Yet more than 38,000 children entered Virginia kindergarten classrooms this fall not ready to fulfil their potential.

- According to the 2019 Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP), 44% of Virginia children started school without the key literacy, math, and social-emotional skills needed to be successful in school. Most concerning is that 55% of children from economically disadvantaged families and 66% of children with special needs did not enter school fully prepared for success.

- Virginia ranks 33rd nationally in preschool funding; as a result, 1 in 4 economically disadvantaged four-year-olds and 3 out of 4 economically disadvantaged three-year-olds lack access to quality preschool.

- 75% of Virginia’s early childhood programs that receive public funding do not participate in the state’s voluntary quality measurement system; vulnerable families as well as policymakers, practitioners and community leaders do not have uniform information on quality.

- Virginia ranks 37th nationally in early childhood governance and lacks a uniform oversight and regulatory framework, making it difficult for communities to strengthen their local systems.
Opportunities Ahead

• Virginia awarded federal PDG B-5 Renewal Grant of ~$11 million/yr. over 3 yrs.
  – Expand beyond original 10 pilots; new communities invited to join
    • Build Relationships across B-5 ECCE providers
    • Increase Access
    • Improve Quality
    • Engage Families
    • Educator Incentives

• Governor Northam proposed $94.8 million in strategic new investments in early childhood including*
  – $68.5 million over biennium for expansion & enhancements to VPI incl. increased per pupil amount, Community Provider Add-On, Seat Reallocation, Increased Class Ratio option, pilot to serve at-risk 3-year-olds (1500 over biennium)
  – $10 million per year for Mixed Delivery Program to serve 1000 3- and 4-yr-olds/yr.

Both rely on and foster strong local early childhood systems/partnerships.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>Mixed Delivery*</th>
<th>VPI Expansion*</th>
<th>PDG B-5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Population Served/Engaged       | -At risk (<200% FPL + local criteria) 3s & 4s in private/community-based (non-school) settings.  
- Families who choose for their children to be in a community-based setting.  
- Families who count on child care arrangements to support their work/life needs/schedules (full day, full year). | -At risk (<200% FPL + local criteria) 4s unserved by Head Start.  
- Limited Pilot of 3s.  
- Most families who choose for their children to be in a school setting although more slots are being offered in community-based settings, especially if limited school space is available.  
- Families interested in a school day/school year of instruction for preschool aged children. | -All program sites with classrooms serving children 0-5 and receiving public funds within a defined jurisdiction/region. (Including Head Start/Early Head Start, VPI, Title I, Parts B/C of IDEA, subsidized child care). |
| Primary Purpose                 | Service/Seats Access +1000 students per year                                    | Services/Seats Access + students each year to ~21,000 served                  | -Infrastructure with goal of providing funding to all Virginia communities to measure and improve access, quality and family engagement by 2022-Accountability – Data Collection |
| Fiscal Agency/Lead Agency at local level | -Fiscal agency and administrator will vary – school division, United Ways, Smart Beginnings, Community Action, universities, city/county, etc.  
- Aim for grantees (~10) to run a 2-year term. | -Fiscal agency will likely be school division.  
- Feasible for VPI Expansion divisions to also participate in either MD or PDG grant. | Fiscal agency and administrator will vary – school division, UW, SB, univ., CA, etc.  
- Current MD grantees may apply.  
- Current PDG grantees may indicate intent to expand footprint. |
| Footprint                       | Footprint will vary – single to multiple jurisdictions.                        | Footprint will likely be single jurisdiction.                                  | Footprint will vary – single to multiple jurisdictions.                 |
| Service Providers               | Regulated child care in FDH, centers; preschools; community-based Head Start.  | Public schools; regulated child care in FDH, centers; preschools; Head Start | All publicly-funded providers must participate including Head Start/Early Head Start, VPI, Title I, Parts B/C of IDEA, all child care and family day home providers that are registered for the child care subsidy program. |
| Funding                         | -Grants to cover costs of coordination and services/slots.                    | - State-determined allocation per slot, increasing each year by 10%; add-ons for community providers; reallocation funds available. | -Grants to cover costs of coordination, quality improvements, teacher and site incentives (in child care, FDH settings). |
| Proposals/Deadlines             | LOI required by 3/20/20.  
Reallocation completed 7/1/20.                                           | LOI required by 3/20/20.  
Proposal due 5/20/20.                                                      |
| Considerations                  | -To reach 1000 children/yr, need to ID communities that are fairly populous or regions broad enough to add minimum of 50 children/slots per year.  
- Focus on communities that have left VPI $ on table due to lack of school space or lack of local match, or have full Head Start programs/wait lists.  
- Waiver eliminating requirement of bachelor degree/teacher license. | -5000 children are currently on VPI waitlists  
- In order to reach these children, need to ID communities with best capacity to serve 4s in schools, that can expand partnerships in community-based settings where there is limited classroom space, that have reached their max with VPI spending but still have wait lists/4s to serve, or that have shown an interest/will to serve 3s. | -Helps build the foundation for a new, required uniform measurement and improvement system for all publicly-funded programs currently proposed in legislation  
- All Virginia communities will ultimately be expected to build this infrastructure so PDG enables ready communities to start this important work now  
- PDG cannot be used to pay for slots. |

**FOCUS: SLOTS**

**FOCUS: INFRASTRUCTURE**

*Pending legislative/budget session decisions*
PDG B-5

Virginia will expand and strengthen local capacity and infrastructure through the Preschool Development Grant Birth-Five (PDG B-5) Renewal Grant 2020-22.

• Virginia was one of 20 states that won PDG B-5 and will receive three years of ~$11 million to expand the work of the initial pilots.
• Much of the funding will go to Virginia communities as they will be invited to join to:
  1. Build relationships across Birth-5 early care and education providers;
  2. Increase access for Birth-5 children in their community;
  3. Improve quality through local CLASS observations and professional development; and
• This effort provides the foundation for the uniform measurement and improvement system (e.g., start-up costs) without requiring additional general funds.
• Grant will also fund and measure impact of financial incentives for vulnerable educators (e.g., child care, family day home), along with matching state funds from Governor’s Budget.
PDG B-5

Accomplishments to Date

Since 2019, PDG B-5 partners including communities, VDOE, VECF, and UVA:

• Completed a needs assessment and final draft of a strategic plan
• Recruited new partners and built new relationships in all of our pilots
• Registered more than 575 sites and 2,500 teachers across family day home, child care, Head Start and schools in 27 jurisdictions
• Collected more than 2,000 survey responses from teachers
• Conducted self-assessments in all pilots to determine how families learn about, apply and enroll in early childhood programs
• Distributed nearly $4 million in incentive funds to teachers and sites
• Collaborated to design, build and launch a new data portal (LinkB5) with information entered by publicly-funded sites

*Pilots are not only strengthening their own systems but building models to be scaled to other communities. Lessons learned from these efforts are informing policymaking and practice at the state level.*
PDG B-5 – Key Responsibilities

- **Build Relationships:** communicating with and coordinating PDG activities with all publicly funded ECCE partners
- **Increase Access:** assessing current program enrollment practices, analyzing needs data, and beginning to implement coordinated enrollment activities
- **Improve Quality:** providing CLASS observations and related quality improvement support in all publicly funded classrooms
- **Engage Families:** in communications and decision making
Why Implement Mixed Delivery?

• **Problem:** Chronic underutilization of VPI due to challenges with the funding formula and structure, leaving thousands of eligible children unserved

• **Potential Solution:** Community-level design of public/private preschool systems that address unique local barriers and meet families’ needs and preferences
Does Mixed Delivery work?

• Children in mixed delivery classrooms achieved outcomes comparable to those of pupils in VPI classrooms (language, literacy, math, and self-regulation).

• The majority of children in both VPI and mixed delivery classrooms achieved outcomes that met or exceeded outcomes typical for their age group (language, literacy, and math).

• Teacher credentials varied across mixed delivery and VPI classrooms, yet children achieved similar outcomes across different settings.

• Mixed delivery communities produced essential systems-level changes, including improved quality in mixed delivery classrooms and observable improvements in public-private collaboration needed to support the expansion of mixed delivery.
Mixed Delivery*

• Opportunity to promote more public-private ECCE partnerships and enhance community-driven decision making.

• Support a public-private system of preschool delivery with a focus on expanding the number of at-risk 3- and 4-year-olds served in high-quality private/community-based (non-school) ECCE settings.
Mixed Delivery*
Key Responsibilities

**Build Relationships** to ensure coordinated community decision-making and effective use of resources

**Increase Access** to high-quality ECCE in private/community-based (non-school-based) settings for at-risk 3s and 4s

**Improve Quality** including through providing CLASS observations and related quality improvement support in publicly funded classrooms

**Engage Families** in communications and decision making
Application Process

- **Required** Letter of Intent (LOI)
  - Released on Feb. 21
  - Due on March 20 by 5pm

- May apply for
  - PDG only
  - Mixed Delivery only
  - Both PDG and Mixed Delivery
Applicant Eligibility

• Applicants may represent:
  – School divisions
  – Local government
  – Human service agencies
  – United Way agencies
  – Community Action Agencies
  – Smart Beginnings
  – Chambers of Commerce
  – Community-based organizations or associations

• Applying entities and fiscal agents must:
  – have proven experience and capacity to administer grants of complex nature
  – represent coalitions of community partners committed to success of initiative
Important Dates

Feb. 21, 2020  LOI Released
Feb. 24, 2020 at 2pm  LOI Informational Webinar
Feb. 28 - May 15  PDG/MD Weekly Q&A Sessions
(Fridays at 9am)
March 2 – 11, 2020  Individual TA sessions by phone
March 4, 2020 at 3pm  TA Session
TBD  Additional TA opportunities, as needed
March 20, 2020  LOIs due by 5pm
March 20 - 31, 2020  LOI Evaluation Process
March 31, 2020  Notification of Invitation to Apply
April 1, 2020  Applications Released
May 15, 2020  VPI Application, plan for additional funding due
May 20, 2020  PDG and MDG applications due by 5pm
First week of June  PDG and MDG grants announced
July 1, 2020  PDG and MDG funding begins
July 1, 2020  VPI Notification of grants, reallocations
VPI

- Communication with division superintendents
- VDOE will host biweekly webinars to assist divisions in planning for the proposed revisions to VPI. Each webinar will include new information on specific topics as well as offer general Q&A:

  February 6 at 11:00 a.m. (Enrollment and Eligibility)
  February 21 at 11:00 a.m. (Community Partner Add-On)
  March 5 at 11:00 a.m. (Three-Year-Old Pilot)
  March 20 at 11:00 a.m.
  April 2 at 11:00 a.m.
  April 17 at 11:00 a.m.
  May 1 at 11:00 a.m.

VECF will post recordings and slides from these webinars on our Opportunities Ahead webpage.
What Can Communities Do to Get Ready for Opportunities Ahead?

• Start/restart community conversations
• Communicate the “Why” to key stakeholders
• Consider local decision-making structure
• Gather data to describe community need
  – Local Head Start Needs Assessments
  – Head Start, LDSS Child Care Subsidy, and VPI Wait Lists
  – Kids Count
  – VDOE Locality Data Sheets
Where to Go for More Information

• VECF’s “Opportunities Ahead” Webpage
• Follow VECF on social media channels for most up-to-date announcements and information
  – www.facebook.com/SmartBeginnings
  – Twitter: @SB_VECF
• Email questions to info@vecf.org
• VDOE Early Childhood Webpage
QUESTIONS