

Smart Beginnings Greater Prince William

Strategic Plan

2016 - 2021



Vision Statement:

All children in Greater Prince William enter kindergarten healthy and with the readiness skills necessary to succeed in school and in life.

Mission Statement:

To engage and partner with the Greater Prince William community to ensure access for all young children birth to five to appropriate and on-going health services and high-quality early learning experiences that support kindergarten readiness.

The following is a revision of the 2016-2020 Smart Beginnings Greater Prince William Strategic Plan approved by the Board of Directors on September 25, 2020.

Smart Beginnings Greater Prince William Executive Committee

Chairman: Kathy Channell, PWCS Supervisor of Early Childhood Education Program, retired

Vice-Chairman: Debi Stepien, TTAC Early Childhood Coordinator, Education Advisor, retired

Secretary: Gina Parr, SBGPW Outreach Liaison; PWCS Early Childhood Teacher, retired

Treasurer: Lucy S. Beauchamp, former PWCS School Board Chairman At-Large

Executive Director: Tawnya Soltis, PWCS Elementary School Principal, retired

Executive Director of SPARK: Dawn Davis, PWCS Director of Community Outreach, Business Partnerships, and Philanthropy

Smart Beginnings Greater Prince William Board of Directors

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Alison Nourse-Miller, Associate Superintendent of Schools PWCS, retired

Donna Patton, Human Services Manager, PWC Department of Social Services, retired

Olaun Simmons, Esq. Vanderpool, Frostick, Nishanian, P.C.

Priority I: Increase the number of children who have adequate pre-literacy skills by the time they enter Kindergarten.

Measures:

- The percentage of children that do not indicate proficiency as measured by the fall PALS-K. *The PALS-K is an assessment of young children's knowledge of important literacy fundamentals that are predictive of future reading success. This assessment is given to all children entering public Kindergarten.*

Baseline:

- In 2014, 15.8% of children in Greater Prince William did not indicate proficiency on the Fall PALS-K test. In that same year, below proficiency rates ranged from 14.5% to 29.5%, all of which, lag behind the average Virginia rate of 12.7%.

Target:

- PALS-K proficiency scores in Greater Prince William exceed the state proficiency rate by 2021.

Strategies:

- Support early reading programs in the region.
 - Continue to provide the Books 4 Babies program.
 - Support local coalitions and community groups that operate reading programs.
 - Help promote programs to parents.
 - Advocate for additional funding for programs.
- Develop media messages about the importance of reading to children and other early literacy activities.
- Support the use of the PALS-PreK screening assessment in preschool.
- Support Pre-K to Kindergarten transition programs.
- Track and highlight improvements in PALS-K scores.
- Advocate for additional funding for Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI).

Priority II: Increase the number of families who have access to high-quality childcare and child development programs.

Measures:

- The percentage of utilization of full-time Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) slots. *The legislature has established high-quality preschool for at-risk three and four-year-olds. State funds are available to serve children not served by Head Start, provided there is a local match. Allocated slot criteria include children that are; 1) at or below 200% of poverty, 2) homeless, 3) parents or guardians are school dropouts, and 4) students with special needs or disabilities whose family income is less than 350% of federal poverty guidelines.*
- The number of childcare programs that reach levels 3, 4, or 5 in the Virginia Quality system (Virginia's voluntary Quality Rating and Improvement System). *The quality of childcare has been shown to be a strong factor in preparing children for success in school. Childcare programs that participate in Virginia Quality recognize the importance of quality care and are making an effort to improve their program. Childcare programs that reach levels 3,4, or 5 are recognized as leaders in quality.*

Baseline:

- In September 2015, there were 427 (22%) utilized the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) slots in Greater Prince William. Utilization rates within Greater Prince William ranged from 11.25% to 90%. The state utilization rate of allocated slots in 2015 was 69.5%.
- Virginia Quality began a 5 level-quality assessment program in 2016. In that same year, SBGPW began collecting annual data on the number of centers at each level of the program.

Target:

- Increase utilization of the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI slots in Greater Prince William to exceed state utilization rate by 2021.
- 60% of programs participating in Virginia Quality will achieve levels of 3 or higher by 2021.

Strategies:

- Support Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI).
 - Communicate grant and additional funding opportunities.
 - Assist with coordination of resources and grant applications.
 - Advocate for additional funding.
 - Support Public-Private partnerships.
 - Support the Virginia Quality Program.

- Assist with grant applications to VA DSS, local DSS, and other funders.
 - Support professional development opportunities and career pathways (advancement in career).
 - Support programs with a range of resources and support for continuous quality improvement.
 - Collect, analyze, and disseminate program quality and child outcome data.
 - Distribute/provide information to help families understand and make informed decisions about quality child development programs.
 - Communicate best practices for high-quality early learning.
- Support early childhood professionals in advancing their careers.
 - Support local collaborations that increase licensed childcare and seek funding to support the startup of new programs.
 - Track and highlight quality improvements of programs.

Priority III: Improve access to programs that benefit the health and well-being of young children.

Measures:

- The level of concern of Child Care Providers, Schools and Families during the COVID-19 pandemic about the impact of the virus on the health and wellbeing of children from birth to five.
- The extent of outreach to the Greater Prince William community to increase knowledge of the developmental stages of children. *This knowledge is important as a tool for accessing additional services when needed.*

Baseline:

- All adults dealing with COVID-19 are struggling to meet the needs of children.
- Developmental Wheels containing information regarding developmental milestones from birth to age 5 have been distributed to 7,217 parents since the inception of the Books4Babies program in 2013.

Target:

- SBGPW will provide information, at least monthly, to daycare providers, parents and community members regarding current regulations and best practices to navigate the pandemic both in terms of the risk of COVID-19 and in dealing with underlying physical and mental health concerns.
- Developmental Wheels will be distributed to an additional 2,000 families by June 2021.

Strategies:

- Include frequent articles in SBGPW social media platforms regarding ways to provide effective services during the COVID crisis.
- Support educational opportunities for early childhood providers both in general and specific to the COVID-19 crisis (e.g. Director's Connection).
- Support community parent education efforts involving parents from all income levels and ethnicities.
- Participate in and collaborate with local organizations whose primary focus is the health and well-being of children.
- Continue distribution of Developmental Milestone Wheels at all Greater Prince William hospitals by an SBGPW volunteer or a hospital nurse before baby/parent is discharged.

Priority IV: Increase the community's understanding of the importance of investing in early childhood and promote actions that change policies and procedures that benefit young children.

Measures:

- The number of organizations that collaborate with Smart Beginnings Greater Prince William.
- The number of persons registered on SBGPW marketing distribution list.
- The use of various social platforms to outreach /educate/inform members of our community about the need for early childhood investment.
- The number of individual meetings and sessions with organizations to educate and inform community partners of the importance of early childhood education.

Baseline:

- In 2015, 26 organizations were collaborating with Smart Beginnings Greater Prince William.
- In 2015, a marketing distribution list did not exist.
- In 2020 various social and print media are used to communicate with the community. (In July 2020, for example, there were 727 Facebook followers. Also, the SBGPW website has been significantly improved with additional resources and linkage to community organizations/schools and services.).
- In 2019-2020 meetings were held with the three school divisions, presentations were made to nine community organizations/foundations.

Target:

- Increase the number of organizations collaborating with SBGPW to 75 by 2021.
- Increase the reach of SBGPW email marketing distribution list to 500 persons by 2021.
- Increase Facebook followers to 1000 and continue to improve the website with additional linkages and resources for families and the community.
- Continue to meet with the school divisions and make presentations to foundations and community organizations. Meet with city and county government individuals as well as agencies and businesses.

Strategies:

- Develop a public awareness campaign using a variety of media, including social and print media.
- Promote increased access to quality early childhood programs, and to activities that promote early learning as well as a healthy development.
- Encourage messaging that engages families from all income and literacy levels.
- Support partner agencies and programs through promotional messaging.
- Build an advocacy agenda to influence public policy and community agencies to improve services to children.
- Collect and use data that highlights improvements in reaching Smart Beginnings Greater Prince William goals.
- Convene stakeholders in Greater Prince William County to discuss issues regarding early childhood development in our area (in cooperation with the Virginia Secretary of Education).
- Plan a workforce development event for stakeholders in Greater Prince William County in Spring 2021.