

Virginia Preschool Initiatives

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House Appropriations

Elementary and Secondary Education Subcommittee

January 20, 2015



Child Participation in Preschool Programs

- Head Start, for four year olds, 2012-2013: 7,420
- IDEA funded programs, for four year olds: 5,000
- Title I preschool programs, 2013-2014: 4,805



Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI)

State Funded Program



Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI)

VPI Purpose

- The purpose of the state funded VPI program is to provide quality preschool programs for at-risk four-year-olds who are unserved by Head Start.

FY2015 Participation

- Calculated Number of VPI slots: 25,746
- Actual Number of VPI slots used: 18,250
- Total Actual State Share of VPI cost: \$68.3 million
- State funds are paid directly to school divisions or local governments, which have responsibility for the programs.



Program Components

- Collaboration with community agencies and groups
- Develop selection criteria based on the community's definition of at-risk
- A curriculum aligned with Virginia's *Foundation Blocks for Early Learning* and administer the PK Phonological Literacy Awareness Screening (PALS) Assessment
- A group size limit of 18 and a child/staff ratio of 9:1
- Highly qualified staff
- Parent support and training opportunities
- Wrap around services including health services, social services for families and transportation services



Challenges

Divisions/localities reasons for partial use of allocation or nonparticipation include:

- Difficulty or inability to meet the required local match
- Insufficient space to house additional preschool classrooms in school facilities
- Minimal number of students eligible for the program by state allocation formula



Importance of VPI

Differential Effects of Preschool: Curry School of Education (2011)

- VPI participation is associated with a reduced likelihood of repeating kindergarten.
- Literacy effect is maintained through first grade for African American and Hispanic students and students with disabilities.

Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (2007)

- Analysis showed strong association between VPI participation and PALS (literacy) scores.
- More than 91 percent of principals surveyed cited positive effects of students' participation in preschool continuing through at least first grade.



Phonological Literacy Awareness Screening (PALS)

- The impact of participation in the VPI program can be seen in results of the fall 2014 PALS that was administered to kindergarten students.
- 93 percent of the students who participated in a VPI program did NOT need intervention services in kindergarten the next school year.
- Conversely, 71.8 percent of the students who did not participate in any PK program did NOT need intervention services in kindergarten the next school year.



Fall 2014 Kindergarten PALS

Preschool Program in which Student Participated	Total Number of Students Screened	Kindergarten Students Identified as Not Needing Intervention Services		Kindergarten Students Identified as Needing Intervention Services	
		Number of Students	Percent of Total Number of Students	Number of Students	Percent of Total Number of Students
VPI	11,702	10,878	93%	824	7%
Coordinated VPI Programs,	5,531	5,069	91.6%	462	8.4%
Other PreK	32,655	29,800	91.3%	2,855	8.7%
Students' PreK Status Unknown	15,522	13,455	86.7%	2,067	13.3%
No PreK	13,622	9,775	71.8%	3,847	28.2%
Total	79,032	68,977	87.3%	10,055	12.7%



VPI Language Proposal in HB 1400 as Introduced



VPI Language Proposal for FY16 - HB 1400

- A number of divisions have waiting lists of at-risk four-year-olds they cannot serve, since they have no more state-funded VPI slots available, while other divisions do not fully use their state-funded slots each year.
- Proposed language would allow any appropriated but unused VPI funds to be used by divisions using all of their state-funded slots, and also having waiting lists, to serve children on their waiting lists.



VPI Language Proposal for FY16 - HB 1400

- Wait list slots would be funded from the appropriation balance remaining after actual VPI participation for FY16 is determined based on the final number of slots - both regular formula and hold harmless slots - divisions apply for by May 15.
- Divisions with unused slots in FY16 would not permanently transfer or lose those slots – in subsequent years, the number of slots available to them is determined each year from the formula.



VPI Language Proposal for FY16 - HB 1400

- Determining in May the amount of funding available for wait list slots would allow divisions receiving the funding time to plan in advance of the 2015-2016 school year.
- In FY15, 45 divisions used 100 percent of their state-funded slots and had waiting lists of over 1,700 children.



Virginia Preschool Initiative Plus (VPI+)

**US Department of Education
Federal Preschool Grant
Program**



U.S. Department of Education

Preschool Grants

Two types of grants:

- **Development Grants** are for states that currently serve less than 10 percent of four-year-olds and have not received a Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant.
- **Expansion Grants** are for states that currently serve 10 percent or more of four-year-olds or have received an RTT-ELC grant. (*Virginia*)



VPI Plus (VPI+) Model

VPI+ builds from the successful Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) that has supported the school readiness of at-risk four-year-olds since 1996.

VPI+ model:

- Highly qualified teachers
- Research-tested professional development and curriculum
- Community partnerships
- Comprehensive services and pathways to fully engage parents and families



VPI+ Selection

- **Criteria for Division Selection**
 1. Poverty Concentration: Percentage of students eligible for free/reduced lunch
 2. Poverty Magnitude: Number of Title I schools
 3. Unmet Need: Number of unused VPI slots
 4. Unmet Need: Percentage of students not meeting the PALS-K benchmark
- **Participating Divisions:** *Brunswick, Chesterfield, Fairfax, Giles, Henrico, Norfolk, Petersburg, Prince William, Richmond, Sussex, Winchester*



VPI+ Overview

Year 1 Federal Award Amount

- \$ 17,500,000 (*3 additional years*)
- January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2018

Lead Agency

- Virginia Department of Education

Partnerships & Support

- Eleven Divisions & local public-private partnerships
- Virginia Department of Social Services
- Virginia Early Childhood Foundation/Smart Beginnings
- UVA Center for the Adv. Study of Teaching and Learning
- Commonwealth Council on Childhood Success



VPI+ Classrooms

- 96 existing classrooms serving 1,470 students
- 100 new classrooms increasing to 1,669 students
- Over 3,100 four-year-olds at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Line will be served by the end of the grant through VPI+ in eleven local school divisions

