

# Upskilling Virginia's Early Education Workforce

Presentation to the Joint Subcommittee on VPI

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# The Tough Questions

- What is the state's role in providing pre K?
- Which children should be the focus of state-funded preschool?
- What is the most effective way to target services to children that can best benefit?
- What is the most efficient delivery mechanism for pre K services?
- How do we ensure quality programs and quality teachers?
- How can we best measure results and evaluate the program's performance to understand: Is the investment worthwhile?
- Are there adjustments we can make to get a better return on the state's investment?



## VECF Assistance and Priorities

- Learning from other states
  - Mixed delivery system
  - Quality and accountability
- Focusing on the early education workforce
  - Competency-based career pathway

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## Learning from Other States

Promoting mixed delivery – key levers

- Viewing/ approaching in a broader context
- Cross sector advisory at state/local levels
- Visible commitment from leadership of administering agency
- Statutory percentage
- State level infrastructure/dedicated staffing

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# Learning from Other States

## Quality and Accountability

- Funding for rigorous ongoing evaluation
- Quality assurance strategies
- Targeted, quality workforce supports

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## Upskilling the Early Education Workforce

- For durable gains for pre K children and results from state's pre K investment, focus on the competencies of the teacher.
- We know a great deal more now about what makes an effective teacher of young children.
- Our standards, structures, and systems for teacher qualifications have been established over decades, and don't well match what we now know about specific competencies needed for optimal teaching and learning.
- Debate over education requirements for pre K teachers. Baccalaureate degree and teacher license may not be best predictor of effective teaching skills and may not be a realistic or practical goal for teachers in private programs.

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## Upskilling the Early Education Workforce: Next Steps

- A potential next step is to better utilize the existing resources and structure (required annual training hours and CEUs) to ensure access to high quality skill-building for the current workforce.
- Quarterly solutions-oriented discussions to discern best strategies for supporting this valuable and important workforce.
- Regular updates about findings and recommendations from these discussions.

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