

DISCUSSION

Presentation to the 2015 Joint Subcommittee

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Friday, July 24, 2015

Joint Subcommittee's Legislative Charge

Goals and Objectives

- “The goals and objectives of the Joint Subcommittee will be to consider increasing **accountability, flexibility, innovation, clarification of the state's role and policy relating to providing a preschool for economically disadvantaged children**, and to further develop the facilitation of **partnerships between school divisions and private providers** for the Virginia Preschool Initiative.
- The Subcommittee will also review and consider possible recommendations regarding the development of a **competency-based professional development framework for early childhood teachers in public schools and early learning practitioners in private early learning settings.**”

Proposed Work Plan and Future Meetings

Toward Preliminary Findings & Recommendations on November 1, 2015

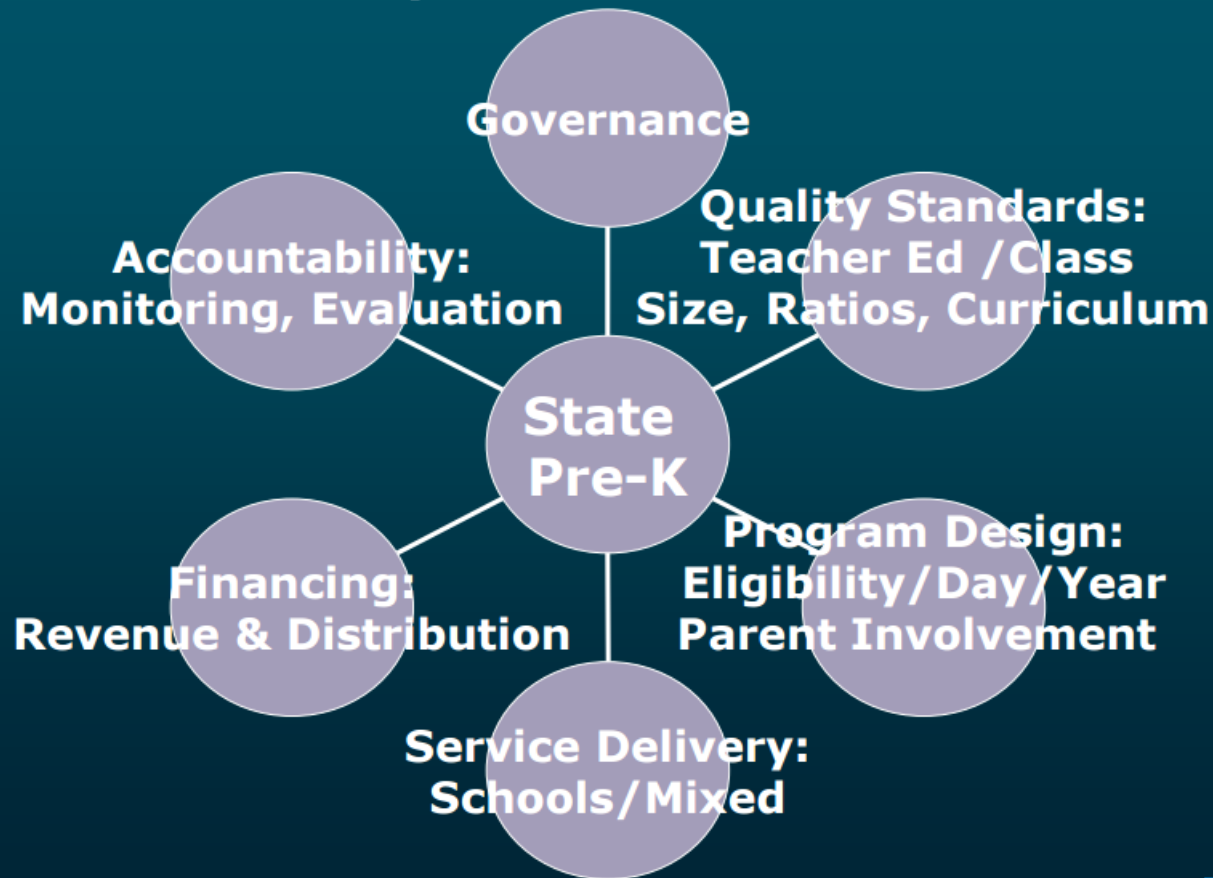
- ☑ **June 11**
 - VPI State PreK Program Overview
 - Review of 2007 JLARC Study
 - Approaches to State PreK Eligibility Policies: High Need Children
 - First Virginia-specific Longitudinal Study: Predicting On-Time Promotions
 - Review of Federal VPI+ Expansion Grant

- ☑ **July 24**
 - Current Status of Mixed Delivery in Virginia
 - Other Updates and Stakeholder Input

- **August 25 - Preliminary**
 - More National Perspectives and Highlights of Other States' Experiences, Related to Mixed Delivery, Teacher Qualifications/Quality, Student Eligibility, and Longitudinal Evaluation
 - Steve Barnett of National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER)
 - Southern Regional Education Board's (SREB) 2014-15 Early Childhood Commission
 - Economics/ROI (e.g. Federal Reserve's Jim Heckman, Cato/GMU's David Armor, VT's Craig Ramey, others)
 - Child Development & Brain Research, Parental Involvement
 - Summary of selected states (e.g. North Carolina, Michigan, Georgia, Connecticut)
 - Additional Virginia-Specific Information
 - VPI Program Detail from VDOE
 - Department of Social Services
 - Current Education and Training, including Community College Early Childhood Education Program
 - Kindergarten Readiness Assessment
 - Any Additional Stakeholder Perspectives (e.g. Business/Chamber, Kindergarten Teachers, other)

- **First Week in October**
 - Possible Findings, Recommendations, Areas of Further Study (Recommend Extending Group an Additional Year?)

Pre-K Policy Decisions for States



Current , Stated Legislative Intent of VPI:

“to provide quality preschool programs for at-risk four-year-olds...to be ready to successfully enter kindergarten...”

Quality Standards

- What is quality, and what is the right balance with cost and access?
- What are the current program standards and why? How did the current licensure landscape evolve? Are current teacher qualifications, class size standards, and other requirements appropriate?

Program Design

- What does/should at-risk mean in terms of student eligibility?

Service Delivery

- What are the barriers to more mixed delivery than we have right now? (inertia, Lottery funding, cost?) What can the subcommittee do to promote a stronger partnership between the public and private sector Pre-K programs?

Current , Stated Legislative Intent of VPI:

“to provide quality preschool programs for at-risk four-year-olds...to be ready to successfully enter kindergarten...” (continued)

Financing, Accountability, and Governance

- Is the current formula a good match for local need? What are the barriers to some localities using all slots while others have wait lists?
- Are refinements needed/desired to the intent statement (such as inserting “access to affordable” quality programs, specifically reference varied settings?) and/or to funding and/or accountability requirements in order to enhance confidence in fidelity to those goals?
- What are the next steps for research?
- Does increased kindergarten readiness also benefit non-VPI students by raising the skills and behavior of entering children to allow teachers to instruct all students in the classroom to a higher standard?
- What is kindergarten readiness today? And why aren’t children ready?
 - Although previous generations may not have attended preK (or kindergarten), globalization/technology and brain research (along with standardized testing) have contributed to increased expectations, now balanced with increasing re-emphasis on developmentally appropriate approaches. At the same time, gaps start even earlier than age four.

To Successfully Enter Kindergarten and... Graduate College and Career Ready

- What should be the balance/priority amongst such preK-related components as:
 - Outreach to locate harder to find/enroll income-eligible families and students,
 - Program evaluation, research/data, assessment,
 - State technical assistance to local programs and private settings,
 - Improving quality via support for early childhood educators' professional development and workforce skills,
 - Access (students served),
 - Summer bridge or other programs (community-based drop-in) to reach remaining students entering kindergarten with no formal preK,
 - Funded per pupil cost and/or state's share (currently minimum of 50%)?
- Or, are there related early childhood programs the subcommittee should also consider, such as reducing teen pregnancy, home visiting, post-secondary savings incentives (match family contributions to 529 accounts), family reading programs, music instruction, elementary school foreign language, etc.?
- Should the Commonwealth consider ways to re-align 12th grade (dual enrollment, industry/career certification) to allow more front-loading of educational investments?
- Should we consider/encourage earlier kindergarten entry age if appropriate to minimize gaps?
- What else?