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**Early Childhood Special Education Update**

**September 2024**

[**Readiness Connection Newsletter Sign-Up**](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/VADOE/signup/14327) **– Office of Early Childhood monthly enews**

**Mission**

* VDOE Mission
  + The mission of the Virginia Department of Education is to lead and facilitate the development and implementation of a quality public education system that meets the needs of students and assists them in becoming educated, productive, and responsible citizens.
* Virginia State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR)
  + The Virginia Department of Education intends to improve the statewide rate of graduation for students with disabilities identified with an Emotional Disability (ED), Intellectual Disability (ID), Other Health Impairment (OHI), or a Specific Learning Disability (SLD) receiving a regular high school diploma (Standard and Advanced Studies Diplomas).

**Early Childhood Special Education**

Virginia serves approximately 14,500 children ages 2-5 in schools across Virginia.

**Creating Connections to Shining Stars Conference**

VDOE and EI collaborated to provide the Creating Connections to Shining Stars Conference in July 2024. Over 500 participated in person or remotely.

**Connect for Success Symposium**

The Connect for Success Symposium was held the last week of August. The symposium is for Parent Resource Centers and family engagement agencies/organizations. The primary questions agencies receive regarding preschool aged children include the topics 1) transition from C to B and 2) how to write an IEP. VDOE will continue to develop resources to assist families with the transition and with knowledge of IEP development and implementation.

**VQB5**

VQB5 launched in August, 2023 and we just moved to year 2. Quality Profiles will be available in the fall depicting ratings for all participating Early Childhood Care and Education sites.

Virginia’s early childhood system must ensure that all children have quality teaching and learning experiences that meet their unique needs. To do this, Virginia has developed the Unified Virginia Quality Birth to Five System (VQB5) which recognizes the impact of every classroom, provides feedback to every educator, and supports all publicly funded birth-to-five programs to improve.

VQB5 is a measurement and improvement system that focuses on the quality of all publicly-funded birth-five classrooms and supports families to choose quality programming across different program types. VQB5 sets shared expectations for measuring quality and supporting teachers for all birth to five programs. Through VQB5, teachers and leaders will receive the feedback and support they need to help young children learn.

There are 2 primary nationally recognized components to VQB5. 1) Teacher-child interactions. Teacher-child interactions will be measured using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) twice a year and providing individualized professional development to those who need it the most. 2) Vetted curriculum implementation. VDOE has a list of vetted curricula based on specific guidelines for quality curricula that can be implemented in ECCE programs.

**Inclusive Practices**

VDOE continues to work to improve EC inclusive practices. Our percent of inclusion increased by three percent for the third year in a row.

**IPOP**

Inclusive Placement Opportunities for Preschoolers is a systems change initiative to improve inclusive practices in public school programs. VDOE’s Training and Technical Assistance Centers are providing technical assistance to approximately 20 school divisions this year.

**Itinerant Model of Instruction Community of Learning**

DOE will provide a community of learning to approximately 40 teachers this fall on using the itinerant model of instruction.

**Project PASS with the VCU Autism Center for Education**

Project PASS (Preparing for Academic and Social Success) is an intensive TA model being implemented in 3 school divisions to improve the quality of inclusive settings.

**TRAC-IT**

VDOE is working with EI to update and improve the system to notify the state of referrals to LEAs with the change to the EI data system.