

Successful Children and Youth Policy Team

February 3, 2016

Update on School Readiness Plan

In December 2013, the SCYPT endorsed a multi-year plan to increase access to quality services that promote school readiness.

School Readiness = Quality + Access

A mixed-delivery system ensures the availability of many options to support the diversity of the county, including center-based and family child care programs.

Plan and Updates:

1. Create a learning network of quality early care and education programs that promotes school readiness through alignment of curricula to the *Virginia Foundation Blocks for Early Learning* in order to build knowledge and awareness of shared kindergarten expectations.

Expand the Neighborhood School Readiness Teams throughout Fairfax County to develop school, county, community partnerships: [Eight new Title 1 schools joined the Neighborhood School Readiness Project. Twenty four schools now participate on 12 Neighborhood School Readiness Teams.](#)

Provide on-site coaching for early childhood professionals: [Three new Institute for Early Learning trainers were hired in FY2015. These trainers provide professional development and on-site coaching to early childhood professionals.](#)

[On-site mentoring services have supported 220 early childhood professionals and 3,052 children in center-based and family child care homes.](#)

2. Support children living in poverty to reach fall kindergarten benchmarks as reported on a universal screener.

Increase access to quality programming through expansion of Virginia Preschool Initiative and other programs.

Additional children are being served in both public school and community programs:

- Three hundred forty-seven Pre-K children are being served by FCPS using a combination of local, state VPI and federal funds.
- Forty four-year-olds are being served in community-based VPI classrooms.
- Seventy four-year-olds are being served in VPI+, the state's federal Preschool Expansion Grant program. Thirty-four children are served in two FCPS classrooms and 36 children are served in two community classrooms.
- Fifty-six children, birth to three years old, are being served by the county through a federal Early Head Start Expansion grant.
- In summer 2015, FCPS served 1,315 children in Bridge to Kindergarten.

Expand Virginia Quality Rating and Improvement System in order to support quality in more early childhood programs. Thirty one additional programs have enrolled in VQ for a total of 39 center-based programs and 20 family child care homes.

Provide additional access to affordable, quality child care through the Child Care Assistance and Referral program. Additional funding has enabled the program to implement contract rate increases and maintain service levels.

3. Improve accountability and opportunities for data-driven decision making through a comprehensive early childhood data system.

Establish a joint county/FCPS work group to develop recommendations for identifying and implementing an integrated early childhood longitudinal data system that connects existing program data and provides the county and FCPS with the ability to analyze and strategically support positive school readiness outcomes for children and families. Link the early childhood longitudinal data system to the FCPS data system.

4. Provide place-based coordinated services (early care and education, health, mental health, nutrition, social services, dental) for children and their families in locations near their work or home.

Establish a joint county/FCPS early childhood education capital improvement task force in coordination with the *Capital Facilities and Debt Management Committee* to strategically plan for future development of space for place-based early childhood programs co-located with coordinated services that support children and their families.

Year Three Recommendations

1. Create a learning network of quality early care and education programs that promotes school readiness through alignment of curricula to the *Virginia Foundation Blocks for Early Learning* in order to build knowledge and awareness of shared kindergarten expectations.

Expand the Neighborhood School Readiness Teams throughout Fairfax County to develop school, county, community partnerships: **Expand NSRTs to include six new neighborhood schools.**

Provide on-site coaching for early childhood professionals: **Increase coaching and professional development opportunities for early childhood educators by adding three coaches/trainers to the Institute for Early Learning staff.**

2. Support children living in poverty to reach fall kindergarten benchmarks as reported on a universal screener.

Increase access to quality programming through expansion of Virginia Preschool Initiative and other programs: **Serve additional children.**

Expand Virginia Quality Rating and Improvement System in order to support quality in more early childhood programs: **Recruit 30 new programs to participate in VQ.**

New School Readiness Projects

National Academy of Medicine and National Research Council

In 2015, the National Academy of Medicine and National Research Council released *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*, a report recommending ways to transform the early childhood workforce. The recommendations are directed to stakeholders at federal, state and local levels and require collaboration.

The National Academy is leading a network of four states, one region, and a national team striving to implement recommendations from the report. Fairfax County will participate as a member of The Washington Regional Early Care And Education Workforce Network (Washington, D.C., Fairfax County, Arlington County, City of Alexandria, Montgomery County and Prince George's County.)

Our region will focus on competencies, quality, and compensation.

Pre-K through Third Grade Research Network, University of Virginia

The U.S. Department of Education recently funded a network of research teams, including one at University of Virginia, to partner with communities that have developed unique and comprehensive models for providing effective early childhood education services (from Pre-K through 3rd grade.) UVA has chosen Fairfax County (FCPS and OFC) as their partner in this research.

- The UVA team includes leaders in early childhood education – experts in child development, childcare quality, and policy.
- The project involves following the 2016-2017 cohort of children in Fairfax County Pre-K as they transition into kindergarten and through third grade.
- UVA will assess children's social-emotional, behavioral, and academic skills each year, as well as classroom climate, transition practices, family engagement, and instructional content.
- The results of this study will help Fairfax, UVA, and early childhood practitioners across the U.S. to better understand how to support diverse families and their children.

Moving Forward

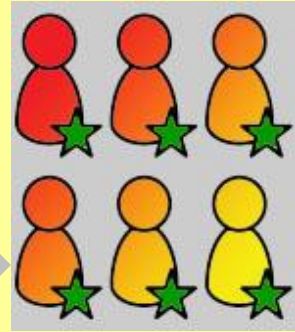
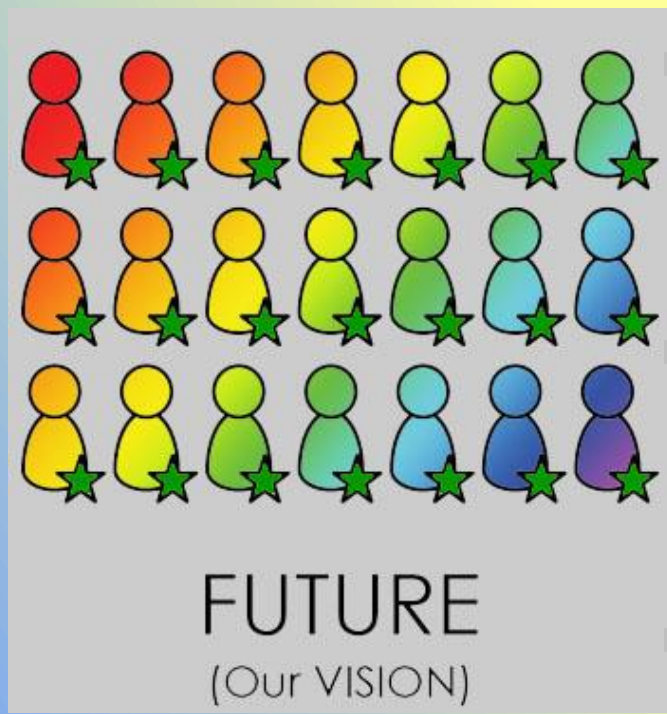
Development of School Readiness Strategic Plan

In partnership with the *School Readiness Community Collaborative Council*, convene county, schools and community partners for next phase of School Readiness strategic planning. Will include focus areas of early care and education, kindergarten transition, home visitation, screening and assessment of developmental delays, health and mental health, partnering with families.



School Readiness

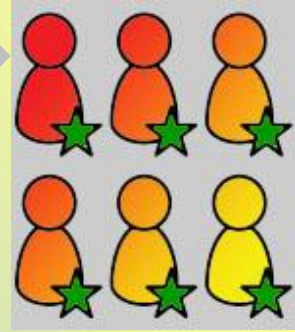
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Center-Based



Family Child Care



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