

A BETTER START FOR LITTLE LEARNERS: REFORM EARLY EDUCATION IN VIRGINIA

HEALTHY BABIES & HEALTHY MOMS



- Provide \$13M in state funding and the authority to submit a state plan amendment to create a home visiting service for high-risk pregnant women and new mothers funded by Medicaid.
- Provide additional funding to extend FAMIS MOMS coverage for low-income pregnant women to 12 months postpartum.
- Study a Medicaid benefit for doula care.



REQUEST: Support the Governor's \$22 million budget package to reduce maternal mortality and ensure healthy births.



Early childhood home visiting programs provide support to pregnant women and families with children ages 0 to 5 but only reach less than 10% of families in need.

CLOSE THE OPPORTUNITY GAPS FOR DISADVANTAGED 3 & 4 YEAR-OLDS TO ATTEND PRESCHOOL



Children who start school behind tend to stay behind in school. Children of color are more likely to be economically disadvantaged and lack access to preschool.

Help disadvantaged children attend preschool in public & private classrooms by:

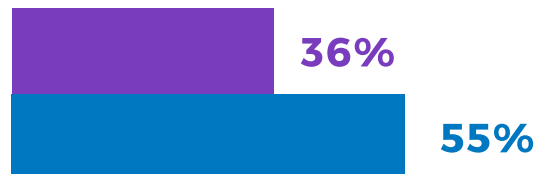
- Increasing the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) per pupil amount by 10% each year to better reflect actual costs;
- Providing an \$2,500 incentive per child to help private providers participate in the mixed-delivery of preschool;
- Funding increased VPI class sizes and teacher to student ratios;
- Creating a set-aside to serve children in localities that having waiting lists for preschool;
- Allocating funds and establishing a pilot process to serve additional 3 year-olds; and
- Adding an additional \$10M per year for mixed-delivery grants administered by VECF and expanding those grants to serve 3 year-olds.



REQUEST: Support the Governor's \$59.5 million proposal to enhance VPI and \$26 million request to expand access for 3 & 4 year-olds.

3 & 4 YEAR OLDS ATTENDING PRESCHOOL

The opportunity gap that begins before children enter school contributes to the achievement gap.



IMPROVE EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS



VIRGINIA CONTRIBUTES ABOUT 77% OF THE NATIONAL AVERAGE FOR PER PUPIL PRESCHOOL COSTS AND RANKS 37TH IN EARLY CHILDHOOD GOVERNANCE.

NEARLY 50% OF ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN ENTER KINDERGARTEN WITHOUT THE SKILLS THEY NEED TO SUCCEED.

Improve our systems to support early childhood educators and maximize federal resources by:

- Providing additional \$8 million to increase the Early Childhood Educator incentive;
- Increase funding VPI classroom observations and professional development;
- Transferring the responsibility of the federal Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) grant from the Department of Social Services to the Department of Education and consolidate state oversight.
- Increase funding for Part C - Early Intervention services to ensure that infants and toddlers can catch up to their peers.



REQUEST: Support \$9.3 million in quality improvement and educator incentives to ensure all children can benefit from high quality ECE. Support legislation to consolidate early learning programs within the Dept. of Education.

EVERYONE BENEFITS FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD INVESTMENTS



PARENTS

The average child care cost is more expensive than college tuition. For nearly every family high-quality early education is expensive but for low-income families it is astronomical.



BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Investments in early childhood provide a 13% ROI and help to prepare the future workforce. And providing early care helps the current workforce.



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

Additional resources are necessary to raise the compensation and professional skills of early childhood educators. These teachers are often paid wages so low that many qualify for public assistance. Additional resources for professional development will help educators along their career pathways.



SCHOOL SYSTEMS & TEACHERS

Teachers can do their jobs better when the children in their classrooms are prepared to learn. When children are better prepared, school divisions will save money on more costly interventions later on.



Little learners need healthy and supportive families, prepared educators, and opportunities to learn and thrive. Virginia must make this investment.