



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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November 30, 2020

The Honorable Luke E. Torian
Chairman, House of Appropriations
Virginia General Assembly
4222 Fortuna Plaza, Suite 659
Dumfries, Virginia 22025

The Honorable Janet D. Howell
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
Virginia General Assembly
P.O. Box 2068
Reston, Virginia 20195 -0608

Dear Sir and Madam:

We are pleased to submit the enclosed copy of the Plan to Implement Comprehensive Early Childhood Reporting as required by [Item 145.L.5 of the Appropriation Act](#).

The plan describes the Virginia Department of Education's (VDOE) approach to implement comprehensive early childhood reporting with respect to expenditures, enrollment, program quality, and child outcomes across the state's out-of-the-home early childhood care and education programs. The plan also describes how such reporting will evolve as Virginia achieves key changes to early childhood care and education system. Finally, the plan identifies several barriers that could impede this reporting.

Please direct questions to Eric Ekholm, Associate Director of Early Childhood Data and Analytics, by email at Eric.Ekholm@doe.virginia.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James F. Lane".

James F. Lane

JFL/JC/lh

Enclosure

Plan to Implement Comprehensive Early Childhood Reporting

December 1, 2020

Introduction and Background

Chapter 1289 of the 2020 Acts of Assembly, Item 145 L.5, directs the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to develop a plan for comprehensive early childhood reporting. The specific language of the mandate is as follows:

5.) The Department shall develop a plan for comprehensive public reporting on early childhood expenditures, outcomes, and program quality to replace this reporting requirement. Such plan shall consider the components included in this reporting requirement, and include all publicly-funded providers as defined in House Bill 1012 and Senate Bill 578. The plan shall identify any fiscal, legislative, or regulatory barriers to implementing such public reporting, and shall consider integration with the Department's School Quality Profiles. Such plan shall be submitted to the Chairs of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees by December 1, 2020.

According to Virginia's Birth - 5 Needs Assessment¹ conducted as part of the Preschool Development Grant Birth - 5 (PDG B5), approximately 510,000 children under the age of five live in Virginia. Of these children, 182,325 (36%) live in low-income households and 33,699 (7%) have been identified as eligible for supports through Early Intervention or Early Childhood Special Education. Additionally, approximately 24% come from an immigrant family². Virginia has made a commitment to support its most vulnerable children through a variety of state- and federally-funded programs. Ultimately, Virginia's goal is to provide high-quality educational experiences to its youngest learners -- regardless of what type of program they attend -- and to fully serve those eligible for public supports, resulting in improved school readiness and longer-term trajectories for Virginia's children. In pursuit of this goal, Virginia has taken several key steps in the recent years, including passing legislation to unify early childhood care and education (ECCE) oversight under the Board of Education, expanding state funding dedicated to ECCE programs, and winning a multi-year PDG B5 grant to further support systemic early childhood improvements.

¹ Commonwealth of Virginia. (2019). *Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Needs Assessment*. https://www.vecf.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Needs_Assessment_with_Appendicesv10.pdf?_ga=2.225037594.1247438984.1605810559-897076843.1605810559

² Migration Policy Institute (2018). *State Immigration Data Profiles*. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/state-profiles/state/demographics/VA>

Currently, Virginia offers out-of-the-home ECCE through a variety of programs. Each of these programs differs in its scope, the services provided to children/families, its target population, and the data it collects. Table 1 provides a high-level overview of each program.

Table 1. Out-of-the-home ECCE Program Summaries

Program	Target Population	Number of Children Served (SFY20)	State & Federal Funding Allocated (FY20)*	Typically has Waitlist?
Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI)	At-risk 4 year olds unserved by other programs (piloting 3 year olds in SFY21)	18,537	\$73, 242,430 (state funds)	Yes (some localities)
Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP)	Children under age 13 with low household incomes whose parents are working	29,650 total, 23,153 ages 5 and younger, not yet in Kindergarten	\$303,113,413 (state and federal funds)	Yes
Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)	Children age 2-5 identified as having a disability	9,033**	\$9,202,642 (federal funds)	No (any child identified is legally entitled to services)
Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS)***	Children under age 5 from low-income families	16,591 (12,863 3- and 4-year-olds; 3,728 infants and toddlers)	\$141,690,923 (federal funds)	Yes
Mixed Delivery Program	At-risk 4-year-old children in selected pilot communities	246	\$1,500,000 (state funds)	Yes
<p>*CCSP and HS/EHS reported on federal fiscal year; other programs reported on state fiscal year. **Includes children funded through IDEA Part B, Section 619 funds who attend at least half-day programs. ***Data from FY19. Data from FY20 was not collected due to COVID-19.</p>				

Overall, more than 3,500 early childhood sites (e.g. schools, private centers) comprising more than 8,200 classrooms participate in these programs. Additionally, at least 3,000 more private sites/family day homes comprising more than 4,700 classrooms could participate in CCSP, meaning that there could be over 12,900 classrooms in 7,000 sites participating in publicly-funded ECCE programs. This vast scale, and the diversity of the sites included in it, has

implications on the timeline for successfully implementing new data collection and reporting practices.

The variety of public ECCE programs provided to families in Virginia allows programs to develop specialized profiles of services and also allows families to choose a program that best meets their needs and preferences. For instance, families participating in the Child Care Subsidy Program can choose to enroll children in any site participating in the program, allowing them the option of selecting programs that are geographically convenient, provide care that matches the family's work schedule, or are more aligned with the family's culture. Similarly, families choosing to enroll children in VPI receive many of the benefits of the K-12 system, including transportation, nutrition, and health services.

As a result of their historically different functions and funding streams, these ECCE programs have developed data collection practices that meet their specific program needs. This has led to a landscape where Virginia has rich data *within* any given ECCE program, but the ability to connect data *between* programs has been severely limited. This limited compatibility of data across programs has prevented Virginia from understanding gaps in access among eligible children and families, since programs have been unable to coordinate knowledge to sufficiently meet demand across the state.

Similarly, another critical limitation of Virginia's current ECCE data collections is the state's lack of comprehensive child-level data. For children enrolled in public school programs (e.g. VPI, ECSE), the state is able to connect children with their classroom experiences and conduct longer-term research investigating the relationships between early education experiences and later outcomes. However, this granularity of data is not available for children served outside of public schools, such as through the Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP), community-based Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS), or the Mixed Delivery (MD) program. This lack of child-level data in these programs not only hinders the state's ability to rigorously evaluate and understand these individual programs, it also precludes useful statewide analyses such as the production of an unduplicated count of children served across all programs or a comparison of the effectiveness of different programs.

However, as a result of several key systemic changes to ECCE in Virginia, the state is well-positioned to implement a more comprehensive approach to reporting on early childhood expenditures, enrollment, quality, and outcomes. Several of these key changes are described here in order to provide context for the reporting plan described thereafter.

Passage of House Bill 1012 and Senate Bill 578. The passage of HB 1012 and SB 578 requires multiple changes that reconfigure ECCE oversight in Virginia, all of which contribute to a unified public-private system for early childhood care and education throughout the Commonwealth. These changes include:

- Transferring the authority to license and regulate child day programs from the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) to VDOE by July 1, 2021.

- Transferring Lead Agency authority over the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and oversight of the Child Care Subsidy Program by July 1, 2021.
- Requiring the VDOE to establish a uniform measurement and improvement system for all publicly-funded early childhood programs by July 1, 2021.
- Requiring the VDOE to fully implement and publish ratings awarded to programs by the uniform measurement and improvement system by fall 2024³.

Increased state investments in ECCE. Over the past few years, Virginia has appropriated more state funds to early childhood education, with the dual goals of expanding access to programs and increasing the quality of these programs. For instance, in the 2020-2022 biennial budget, the General Assembly allocated new or additional funding to:

- Pilot a VPI program for 3-year-olds,
- Provide “add-on” grants to support the delivery of VPI in private settings,
- Serve more at-risk 3- and 4-year-olds through the Mixed Delivery program (administered by the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation),
- Flexibly reallocate VPI slots to localities with demonstrated need,
- Support early childhood teachers with a financial incentive designed to retain quality child care teachers,
- Expand the Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP) assessments statewide in kindergarten,
- Develop VKRP assessments appropriate for preschool-aged children, and
- Ensure all preschool classrooms are observed and teachers receive targeted professional development based on these observations⁴.

Not only do these investments demonstrate a firm commitment to expanding and improving early childhood care and education across the state, but they also require new data collection and reporting activities, many of which are considered in the proposal described below.

Award of Preschool Development Grants. In December 2018, Virginia was awarded a 1-year \$9.9 million grant to support systemic ECCE improvements, including conducting a statewide needs assessment and developing a multi-year strategic plan. In December 2019, Virginia was awarded a 3-year, \$33 million grant to continue the activities begun as part of the initial 2018 Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five (PDG B5). Virginia has used, and will continue to use, these funds to:

- Fund locally-conducted classroom observations and professional development for teachers using these observation results,
- Build and test LinkB5, a new ECCE data system designed to uniformly capture data from various provider types (e.g. schools, centers participating in CCSP),
- Support local coordination of ECCE program enrollment practices,
- Provide and rigorously study the effects of a financial incentive on teacher retention and wellbeing, and

³ Pending approved extension necessary as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

⁴ Many of these investments were initially made in FY21 and were unallotted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. VDOE is requesting a restoration of these funds based on demonstrated need in communities.

- Survey families, teachers, and administrators to better understand the landscape of early childhood programs in Virginia over time

The activities supported through PDG B5 funding were carefully chosen to align with established state priorities, such as those outlined in the state strategic plan.

Summary of Virginia ECCE Landscape

Virginia serves at-risk birth-5 children across the commonwealth through a variety of out-of-the-home ECCE programs. As described previously, these programs differ in many respects, including their target populations, how they are funded, and how they collect/report data, among others. Spurred by several key initiatives, Virginia is undertaking multiple systems-level changes intended to more closely align early childhood care and education programs over the next few years. Through these initiatives, Virginia is poised to more comprehensively collect and report on data pertaining to early childhood, including expenditures, enrollment, outcomes, and program quality. The remainder of this plan outlines the VDOE's proposal to implement such comprehensive reporting.

Plan for Comprehensive Reporting

To fulfill the comprehensive reporting requirement established in Chapter 1289, the VDOE proposes to submit a report to the General Assembly by December 31st of each year that includes data on early childhood expenditures, enrollment, outcomes, and program quality. This report will include data from VPI, the Mixed Delivery program, CCSP, Early Childhood Special Education, and Head Start/Early Head Start. Expenditure data will be reported using actual expenditures from the previous fiscal year, and enrollment data will be timestamped as of September 30th of the current year, in accordance with VDOE data collection standards. Outcome and quality data will be reported for the previous academic year. All data will be aggregated up to the state and locality levels. All reporting will follow VDOE data suppression rules to protect children's privacy

One important consideration is that Virginia is in the midst of enacting many changes to its ECCE systems and programs. Although these changes are off to a strong start, many will not be fully realized for several more years. Therefore, the plans described in the subsequent sections take into account how the VDOE will currently implement more comprehensive ECCE reporting as well as how the VDOE plans to implement this reporting in the future as key changes come online. Most notably, the VDOE anticipates a considerable shift in its reporting when the uniform quality measurement and improvement system reaches statewide scale and its associated reporting platform comes online in 2024.

Expenditures

The VDOE will report on the funding allocated to and expended by each locality during the previous fiscal year in support of out-of-the-home early childhood programs. This will include:

- Funding for VPI, disaggregated to show funding allocated for and expended by the 4-year-old VPI program as well as for the 3-year-old program (where applicable),

- CCSP expenditures for children birth-5,
- Head Start/Early Head Start allocations,
- (Where applicable) funding allocated to and expended by the VECF Mixed Delivery program, disaggregated to show funding by child age, and
- ECSE funding provided through Part B, Section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA).

All expenditure reporting will also be summarized at the state level.

Enrollment

The VDOE will report on the enrollment in ECCE programs within each locality as of September 30th of the current academic year. This reporting will include, for each locality, the number of children enrolled in the following programs, disaggregated by child age:

- VPI,
- ECSE,
- VECF Mixed Delivery,
- CCSP
- Head Start/Early Head Start

Additionally, enrollment will be disaggregated by whether or not a child is experiencing economic disadvantage, which the VDOE defines as: eligible for free/reduced meals, receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Family (TANF), or eligible for Medicaid.

One caveat of the reporting proposed above is that it is not currently possible for Virginia to obtain an unduplicated count of children served across all of these programs due to limitations in how child-level data is collected. For instance, if a child were to receive services through VPI and CCSP (e.g. for before/after school care), the child could be represented in both counts. Enrollment counts could also be affected by children transitioning between programs as well as by families moving into different localities. The VDOE is currently building capacity through the LinkB5 system to obtain an unduplicated count of children enrolled in publicly-funded programs, with the initial rollout of the “class list” feature scheduled for December 2020. Fully implementing this feature and ensuring high-quality data will take several years. However, in the future, the VDOE will rely on LinkB5 and its capacity to capture child-level data to produce a count of children served across programs once this reporting becomes feasible and the VDOE is confident in the quality of the data.

In the future, the VDOE will also report the number of children birth-5 served by setting type (i.e. public school, private center, family day home) as this reporting becomes feasible through LinkB5. The VDOE will also report the number of children birth-5 served who speak a language other than English at home as this reporting becomes feasible through LinkB5.

All enrollment reporting will also be summarized at the state level.

Quality

As mandated by Chapters 860 and 861 of the 2020 Acts of Assembly, the VDOE is currently working to establish a uniform measurement and improvement system for all publicly-funded ECCE providers. The VDOE is committed to building a rigorous and equitable system that provides consistent quality standards and incentives for programs and is informed by research, stakeholder feedback, and extensive analysis of Virginia data. To fully honor this dynamic process and ensure the system realizes the state's goals, as well as to comply with the enactment established in the legislation, the VDOE will refrain from publicly sharing information related to program quality until 2024. Once the uniform measurement and improvement system is fully established in 2024, the VDOE will publicly release quality profiles associated with each participating provider. The VDOE will also produce a report aggregating profile information up to the locality and state levels.

Outcomes

The VDOE proposes that reporting on outcomes for young children is accomplished through the Virginia Kindergarten Readiness (VKRP) report, which is submitted to the General Assembly on October 1 of each year, documenting the results of the previous year's assessments. This report disaggregates VKRP results at multiple levels that provide indications of the effect of participating in public preschool programs on children's kindergarten readiness. However, the current VKRP is limited in that it only reports information on children once they have entered kindergarten, allowing only inferences to be made about their prior experiences.

To more fully understand children's development over time, as well as to understand the influence of participating in various programs on children's development, the VDOE also proposes to expand key data collection activities. First, to provide a more comprehensive baseline of children's development and to facilitate more statistically robust analyses of developmental trajectories, the VDOE proposes to explore expanding VKRP to include an assessment for 4-year-olds. The General Assembly already requires student evaluation as a component of VPI, and the development of a comprehensive fall and spring assessment for 4-year-olds is an essential addition to better understanding children's growth over time. The VDOE has proposed the addition of VKRP for 4-year-olds in public-school pre-K as part of the FY22 Virginia State Budget. If implemented, the VKRP report will begin including statewide data on assessed 4-year-olds in fall 2022.

Second, to investigate how children's classroom experiences in publicly-funded programs relate to student outcomes (such as VKRP scores), the VDOE needs to expand its capacity and procedures for uniformly collecting child-level data across all program types. As described previously, the VDOE is currently developing this capacity into the LinkB5 data system through the class list feature; however, fully implementing this feature and ensuring it yields high-quality data will take several years as well as dedicated funding.

Consideration of Integration with School Quality Profiles (SQPs)

Chapter 1289 of the 2020 Acts of Assembly also indicates that the VDOE should consider integrating this comprehensive reporting with the VDOE's SQPs. This section of the plan briefly summarizes the SQPs, including their purpose and some of the data elements represented in

them. It then describes why the VDOE proposes not to integrate its comprehensive ECCE reporting into the SQPs and instead outlines an alternative reporting mechanism aligned with the legislatively required uniform quality measurement and improvement system.

Virginia's School Quality Profiles provide information to families and the general public about the state's schools and school divisions. On the SQP website, each school and school division has an associated quality profile that displays annual metrics across several data categories, including Assessments, Enrollment, Finance, and Learning Climate, among others. Although the exact reporting differs for each metric, the SQPs generally allow for longitudinal comparisons, comparisons of individual schools against division and state performance, and comparisons across sub-populations of students (e.g. by race/ethnicity, gender). The SQPs currently include a School Readiness category; however, this only reports on kindergarten students and does not capture children in other birth-five settings.

For several reasons, the VDOE proposes that the comprehensive early childhood reporting should not be immediately integrated into the SQPs and should instead be reported through the uniform measurement and improvement system's reporting public reporting platform. First, Chapters 860 and 861 of the 2020 Acts of Assembly direct the VDOE to establish a discrete system for measuring (and improving) the quality of early childhood care and education programs. As a result of this legislation, beginning in fall 2024, the VDOE will be reporting quality profiles for each site participating in the program. The uniform measurement and improvement system, along with its associated profile reporting, is statutorily separate from the accreditation system and others that measure and report on the quality of schools in the K-12 system and will be better-suited to report on ECCE data. Second, families may prioritize different data when considering care and education for their youngest children than they do when considering the K-12 system, particularly given that families have more choice over where (and if) to enroll their children in ECCE programs. For example, families might value student-teacher ratios more for young children than for adolescents.

Third, the governance and support structures of the ECCE system and the K-12 system differ considerably. Whereas public schools are, for the most part, governed by the school divisions in which they are located, this same governance structure does not apply to most ECCE programs. For example, Head Start/Early Head Start grantees may operate sites across multiple counties/cities, and though private childcare sites must comply with licensing (and potentially subsidy) regulations established by the VDSS, they are not necessarily governed by any overarching entity. As a result, the "nesting" structure of the SQPs -- where each school is nested within a school division -- is not universally appropriate for ECCE sites. Due to these differences, the VDOE believes that forcing immediate integration between the uniform measurement system's reporting and the SQPs could jeopardize the interpretability of both reporting tools.

Fourth, the VDOE is considering how its comprehensive early childhood reporting can most effectively present data that is currently presented through several existing sources in addition to the SQPs. These include the new child care licensing system currently under development,

the child care consumer education website (through which families can search for and learn about child care options), the Virginia Quality website, Child Care Aware's website (which provides information to families, providers, and the community), and Head Start's Grantee Profiles, among others. The VDOE believes that developing a new ECCE reporting platform -- rather than integrating with any existing platform -- will better allow the agency to fully provide this wealth of valuable information to families.

In summary, the VDOE acknowledges the importance and value of the SQPs as a tool for families and the general public to access information about the state's schools and school divisions but also seeks flexibility as it develops the reporting mechanism for the new uniform measurement and improvement system. When designing the platform through which comprehensive early childhood data will be reported, the VDOE will strive to ensure sufficient integration so that users can easily find the information they need.

Summary of Proposed Reporting Plan

The VDOE proposes to submit a comprehensive early childhood report to the General Assembly by December 31st of each year. This report will integrate data from several state systems and will report on expenditures, enrollment, quality, and outcomes for the state as well as for individual localities. Where pertinent and possible, the VDOE will disaggregate the reported data by subpopulations of children.

Since Virginia is in the midst of multiple systems-level changes to its early childhood landscape, the VDOE proposes to modify how specific elements described here are reported to the public as key changes are implemented. Most notably, when the uniform measurement and improvement system reaches statewide scale and enacts its legislatively-mandated public reporting in 2024, several components described in the current plan will be reported through the measurement and improvement system's public website. Furthermore, rather than integrating this public reporting into Virginia's SQPs, the VDOE believes the measurement and improvement system's public website will provide a better medium for public reporting.

Barriers to Implementing Comprehensive Reporting

The impending unification of ECCE in Virginia under the Board of Education marks further progress toward creating a system that is more navigable for families, educators, and stakeholders at all levels. However, barriers to implementing comprehensive public reporting still exist. Several of these barriers are described here, as required in Chapter 1289 of the 2020 Acts of Assembly.

Because many of the systems-level changes to ECCE in Virginia are ongoing and will not be fully realized for several years, the VDOE proposes that, in addition to the current plan, it will submit a brief to the General Assembly annually on December 31 until 2025. Through this brief, the VDOE will:

1. Identify any new barriers arising during the year, and
2. Describe the reconciliation or persistence of barriers identified in previous briefs.

This iterative annual process will allow the VDOE to keep the General Assembly informed of new barriers as they develop as well as of the resolution of previously identified barriers.

Potential Fiscal Barriers

The VDOE has identified the following fiscal barriers that could impede the implementation of the reporting described previously:

- *Sustained/expanded funding to develop a unified reporting system.* Currently, Virginia is using PDG B5 funding to build LinkB5, which will serve as the data system for the revised quality measurement and improvement system. This funding is time-limited to the dedicated three-year-grant, which began January 2020. As the unified system grows and sustains, Virginia will need to dedicate other funding sources to expand this system, including some state funding. This will include funding to develop and maintain the public-facing website, to maintain the implement key changes in the LinkB5 system, to provide technical assistance and support for users of the LinkB5 system, and to ensure connectivity with the Virginia Longitudinal Data System (VLDS), the child care licensing system, and other state systems.
- *Expand funding for assessments of 4-year-olds.* Currently, Virginia assesses 4-year-olds enrolled in VPI using the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) assessment. The VDOE proposes to expand the VKRP assessment -- which assesses all kindergarten students in the domains of literacy, math, social skills, and self-regulation -- to 4-year-olds. Expanding the assessment of 4-year-olds to include domains other than literacy is essential to understanding children's development in their early years and how their classroom experiences influence this development. Further, these assessments are necessary for the VDOE to fully comply with Chapters 860 and 861 of the 2020 Acts of Assembly, which requires the uniform measurement and improvement system to connect to child outcomes. In conjunction with the data collected and reported by the uniform measurement system, expanding VKRP assessments to 4-year-olds will enable Virginia to equitably target its resources to children most in need, potentially reducing gaps in school readiness. The VDOE has requested funding for this expansion in the FY2021 state budget.

Potential Legislative Barriers

The VDOE has identified the following legislative barriers that could impede the implementation of the reporting described previously:

- *Authority for the VDOE to capture sufficient child-level data.* Currently, children served through educational programs offered through local education agencies (LEAs) are required to be assigned state testing identifiers (STIs). STIs are unique identifiers that follow students throughout their educational careers and allow for longitudinal tracking of individual students and, by extension, analyses of the efficacy of the programs they participate in. Children who participate in ECCE programs not administered by LEAs -- notably the Child Care Subsidy Program and community-based Head Start/Early Head Start programs -- will not have STIs, and the VDOE will not be able to reliably connect their early childhood experiences with later development. Providing the VDOE with the

authority to assign STIs to children participating in any publicly-funded ECCE program will greatly increase the state's ability to evaluate the effectiveness of its programs as well as to provide targeted supports to its most vulnerable children. The VDOE has included language clarifying this data collection in requests for the FY2021 state budget.

Potential regulatory and systems barriers

The VDOE has identified the following regulatory and systemic barriers that could impede the implementation of the reporting described previously. These barriers may include explicit regulations as well as the norms and capacity of state agencies as well as of personnel in the field.

- *Facilitating data sharing.* As presented in Appendix B, data that will be included in this comprehensive reporting is currently housed across several different data systems. Efficiently sharing data across these systems -- and between personnel responsible for these systems -- could be hindered by multiple barriers. First, sharing data between state agencies (or between state agencies and other organizations) may require the participating agencies to establish data sharing agreements. Although these agreements play an important role in protecting data privacy, they can stall data reporting and analysis, particularly if they need to be revised as data needs evolve. Second, agency data staff may have limited capacity to create new reports that meet the necessary parameters for this reporting requirement, particularly if the parameters of these reports change over time.
- *Successfully scaling new data collections.* As mentioned previously, the VDOE estimates there over 7,000 ECCE sites comprising over 12,000 classrooms that could participate in the uniform quality measurement and improvement system and thereby contribute data toward this reporting requirement. To fulfill this comprehensive reporting requirement, the VDOE must scale new and existing data collections to these programs, which differ in their previous experience reporting data to state agencies, their infrastructure, and their comfort using the requisite technology. Although the VDOE is confident it can accomplish this task, implementing system protocols and providing supports to the field that result in high-quality data will take multiple years.
- *Reconciling different data collection practices.* The various data systems that will contribute data to fulfill this reporting requirement collect data for different purposes and at different frequencies. Where possible, the VDOE will need to work with owners of this data to establish business rules and agreed-upon practices that provide the best, most comparable representations of this data moving forward. Fully vetting these processes to produce reports that are most useful for the public and most accurately represent the data may take multiple iterations. To address this barrier, the VDOE proposes to establish an early childhood data governance committee to set best practices in line with this reporting requirement.

Summary of Potential Barriers

The VDOE acknowledges that it may face several barriers in implementing comprehensive reporting of early childhood care and education. Two such barriers seem particularly salient. First, the VDOE needs explicit authority to assign STIs to children participating in any publicly-

funded ECCE programs, not only those administered by LEAs. This would allow the VDOE to gain a more nuanced understanding of patterns of access across the state, which will be particularly useful in targeting supports for the most vulnerable children. It would further allow the VDOE to more effectively evaluate its ECCE programs by using long-term student outcome data.

Second, the VDOE needs dedicated funding to sustain and expand the LinkB5 early childhood data system. Currently, the system is being developed using funds from the Preschool Development Grant; however, these funds will expire at the end of the PDG. Since LinkB5 is one of the central pieces that facilitates this comprehensive reporting -- as well as other critical functions for ECCE in Virginia -- sustaining funding for the system should be a priority for the state.

Finally, since Virginia is in the midst of implementing multiple systems-level changes to early childhood care and education, the VDOE proposes to submit a brief to the General Assembly by December 31 each year through 2025. Through this brief, the VDOE will identify any new barriers arising during the previous year and describe the reconciliation or persistence of barriers identified in previous briefs. This process will allow the VDOE to keep the General Assembly apprised of key factors in the system's evolution.

Appendix A. Acronym Glossary

Acronym	Description
CCDBG	Child Care Development Block Grant
CCSP	Child Care Subsidy Program
ECCE	Early childhood care and education
ECSE	Early Childhood Special Education
EHS	Early Head Start
HS	Head Start
LEA	Local Education Agency
MD	Mixed Delivery Program
PALS	Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening
PDG B5	Preschool Development Grant Birth - 5
SFY	State fiscal year
SQP	School Quality Profile
STI	State Testing Identifier
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
VDOE	Virginia Department of Education
VDSS	Virginia Department of Social Services
VKRP	Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program
VLDS	Virginia Longitudinal Data System
VPI	Virginia Preschool Initiative

Appendix B. Data Sources for Reporting Categories

Data Source	Reporting Category
HS/EHS Program Information Reports	Enrollment
HS/EHS Summary Reports	Expenditures; Enrollment
IDEA Part B, Section 619 Budget Data	Expenditures
LinkB5	Enrollment; Quality
VDOE Student Records	Enrollment; Outcomes
VDOE Vendor Data	Outcomes
VECF MD Budgetary Data	Expenditures
Virginia Case Management System	Expenditures; Enrollment
Virginia State Budget	Expenditures
VPI Budget Table	Expenditures