



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Louise Lucas, Chair Senate Finance and Appropriations
The Honorable Luke Torian, Chair House Appropriations

FROM: Scott Fleming

DATE: 11/05/2025

SUBJECT: Virginia Military Survivors and Dependent Education Program – Annual Report

Pursuant to state law, SCHEV provides the following data collection on 2025-26 usage of the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependent Education Program (VMSDEP) and report summarizing the findings.

[Chapter 371](#) requires the following:

1. § 1. *That the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia shall, in coordination with the Department of Veterans Services, submit to the Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations and the House Committee on Appropriations by November 1 of each year a report on (i) the number of individuals who are qualified survivors and dependents, as that term is defined in § 23.1-608 of the Code of Virginia, and have been certified as eligible for participation in the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (the Program) but are not yet admitted to a public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth and (ii) the best available estimate of the total number of qualified survivors and dependents, as that term is defined in § 23.1-608 of the Code of Virginia, who are participating in the Program and enrolled in the fall semester at each public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth.*

In compliance with the above requirement, the Department of Veteran's Services (DVS) reports a total of 7,293 qualified beneficiaries not enrolled in Fall 2025. Of this total, 6,783 who were enrolled previously but are not enrolled in Fall 2025 and 510 who have never used the VMSDEP benefits and are not enrolled in Fall 2025. SCHEV surveyed the public institutions which report a total of 10,784 VMSDEP recipients in Fall 2025.

Prior to 2018-19, the VMSDEP Tuition Waiver program was relatively stable as it provided full tuition and required fee waivers to dependents of qualifying service veterans. In 2019, the eligibility requirements for VMSDEP requirements changed with the passage of SB1173 and the value of the tuition waivers grew from \$12.0 million in 2018-19 to \$19.4 million in 2019-20. Following another change to the program in the 2020 session of the General Assembly (SB768), the value of the waivers increased again in 2020-21 to \$31.3 million.

2019 – [SB1173](#): Expanded program eligibility to include those whose injuries were work-related though not combat-related.
2020 – [SB768](#): Expanded program eligibility to include step-children of qualifying deceased military service member and DVS authority to consider dependents of qualifying military members who passed prior to fulfilling the five year residency.

While there were no further legislative changes after 2020, there are anecdotal reports of increased program awareness provided by various veteran service providers and a suggestion of an increase in eligible recipients stemming from the Global War on Terror (GWOT) and related actions that began 19 years prior. Finally, as tuition and fee charges increase, the total value of these waivers also continues to grow.

Table 1 provides the incremental usage and growth of the program since 2018-19. The annual values represent the final official number of unique recipients and the total value of the tuition and fee waivers for years 2018-19 through 2023-24. The values for 2024-25 represent the preliminary end of year numbers provided by the institutions. These numbers become final after SCHEV completes its end-of-year data collections for 2024-25, scheduled to be completed by January 2026 and expected to provide minimal changes to this report. The 2025-26 values reflect data available as of November 1, 2025, as submitted by the institutions. These numbers are subject to change since student applications can be approved throughout the year and Fall awards can be made retroactively. The institutions used point-in-time data for Fall 2025 to estimate program usage for the year. An update will be collected at end of the year.

During the program's seven-year growth period, the percentage of growth has declined steadily; however, this is primarily due to the increasing base as we measure changes year-over-year. More informatively, the program's incremental growth increased each year for six years, as demonstrated by Table 2 and Chart 1 below. Even

if incremental growth continues to fall each year, the program could exceed \$200 million by the end of the biennium.

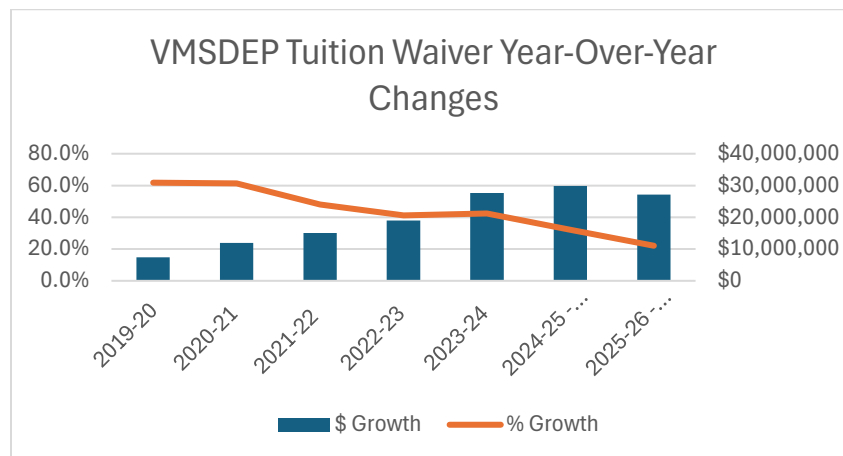
It is not known how long the growth pattern will continue. The program may experience a modicum of regression in the future, but each year of growth represents a possible new floor. Growth factors include, but are not limited to, an increase in eligible families, increase in the percentage of these families having a student enrolled in a Virginia public institution and increases in covered costs. The Commonwealth has a commitment to continue to be an attractive destination for veteran families. To the extent that program awareness is a factor, the VMSDEP-related events of 2024 have ensured widespread awareness of the program within the Commonwealth.

Table 1

VMSDEP - Unique Students (#) and Total Value (\$)				
	Fall 2025 - Preliminary		2025- 2026 - Estimates	
	#	\$	#	\$
Christopher Newport University	351	3,073,813	356	6,191,412
William & Mary	296	3,681,660	296	7,363,320
George Mason University	1,246	9,533,857	1,487	20,506,377
James Madison University	826	5,829,269	838	11,994,468
Longwood University	191	1,355,852	218	2,709,700
Norfolk State University	181	985,510	269	2,552,318
Old Dominion University / EVMS	1,527	9,841,293	1,811	21,494,386
Radford University	273	1,677,532	293	3,484,584
University of Mary Washington	274	2,025,100	308	4,210,200
University of Virginia	387	4,961,333	392	10,037,019
University of Virginia - College at Wise	28	142,406	32	299,705
Virginia Commonwealth University	1,439	13,568,596	1,537	28,667,408
Virginia Military Institute	81	865,323	81	1,730,643
Virginia State University	207	1,137,018	435	2,386,674
Virginia Tech	916	8,167,218	923	17,173,604
Richard Bland College	57	217,449	113	447,873
Virginia's Community Colleges	2,504	4,208,271	3,873	8,676,847
System Totals	10,784	\$71,271,500	13,262	\$149,926,539

Table 2**Virginia Military Survivors and Dependent Education Program - Tuition Waivers**

Institution	2018-19		2020-21		2022-23		*2024-25 - Preliminary		* 2025-26 - Estimated	
	#	\$	#	\$	#	\$	#	\$	#	\$
Christopher Newport University	21	286,468	66	\$954,374	163	\$2,299,363	303	\$4,846,828	356	\$6,191,412
William & Mary	25	\$554,555	67	\$1,509,484	180	\$3,674,336	316	\$7,612,009	296	\$7,363,320
George Mason University	110	\$1,012,307	284	\$3,723,529	634	\$7,963,501	1,231	\$16,650,212	1,487	\$20,506,377
James Madison University	63	\$673,618	169	\$1,935,384	363	\$4,255,848	663	\$8,743,517	838	\$11,994,468
Longwood University	25	\$298,720	54	\$632,070	127	\$1,438,619	179	\$2,308,769	218	\$2,709,700
Norfolk State University	41	\$364,619	112	\$1,025,747	209	\$1,874,444	310	\$2,855,547	269	\$2,552,318
Old Dominion University	229	\$2,025,338	500	\$4,780,146	964	\$9,108,706	1,547	\$16,556,086	1,811	\$21,494,386
Radford University	60	\$570,221	111	\$1,255,580	175	\$2,014,146	285	\$3,217,426	293	\$3,484,584
University of Mary Washington	30	\$331,335	66	\$783,628	130	\$1,588,246	238	\$3,006,580	308	\$4,210,200
University of Virginia	35	\$579,552	97	\$1,896,311	196	\$4,232,459	374	\$8,861,162	392	\$10,037,019
Univ. of Virginia - College at Wise	7	\$59,738	15	\$132,535	21	\$180,409	24	\$240,123	32	\$299,705
Virginia Commonwealth University	194	\$2,582,823	438	\$6,046,927	777	\$11,737,719	1,300	\$21,731,056	1,537	\$28,667,408
Virginia Military Institute	12	\$210,856	31	\$539,192	58	\$1,088,609	76	\$1,516,516	81	\$1,730,643
Virginia State University	47	\$357,949	78	\$656,629	140	\$1,235,444	579	\$1,990,186	435	\$2,386,674
Virginia Tech	53	\$702,899	216	\$3,032,072	530	\$7,753,135	865	\$14,060,883	923	\$17,173,604
Subtotal	952	\$10,610,997	2,304	\$28,903,607	4,667	\$60,444,985	8,290	\$114,196,900	9,276	\$140,801,819
 Eastern Virginia Medical School	 2	 \$60,479	 5	 \$74,720	 18	 \$490,864	 34	 \$847,588	 combined with ODU	
Richard Bland College	12	\$88,364	21	\$115,302	24	\$155,517	64	\$441,262	113	\$447,873
Virginia's Community Colleges	421	\$1,228,761	733	\$2,191,165	1,416	\$4,239,528	2,393	\$7,320,651	3,873	\$8,676,847
System Totals	1,387	\$11,988,601	3,063	\$31,284,794	6,125	\$65,330,894	10,781	\$122,806,401	13,262	\$149,926,539

Chart 1

Any questions about this report or the tables contained therein can be directed to Mr. Lee Andes, Director of Finance Policy at leeandes@schev.edu or 804-640-7253.

cc: The Honorable Aimee Guidera, Secretary of Education
The Honorable Craig Crenshaw, Secretary Veterans and Defense Affairs
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