



Early Care and Education Progress Report

Date: March 28, 2022

System Alignment - Promote our collective early care and education vision through collaborative strategic planning, data-driven decision making, sustainable funding, and policy.

Project	Progress
<p>Develop a data system and data sharing agreements with key partners to capture how children are being served by and benefiting from the early care and education system.</p>	<p>Continuing the work started in 2021, Kids' First Years is developing the early care and education evaluation system. To date, we have collectively agreed upon key indicators, identified data sources, and selected the Clear Impact Scorecard, used for the Children and Youth Community Plan, to serve as our progress monitoring and measurement tool.</p> <p>We are currently developing data governance policies and working with partners to establish data sharing agreements.</p>
<p>Implement a longitudinal data tracking system to track children as they move to and through the early care and education system.</p>	<p>Virginia Department of Education, through Virginia Early Childhood Foundation, has selected BridgeCare to develop the state's centralized data tracking system. The system will be used for coordinated enrollment of children across publicly funded programs, tracking of funding streams, and reporting and monitoring student performance data.</p> <p>Greater Roanoke will begin piloting the new system in July 2022. Alexandria is currently participating as a "Community of Practice" to provide feedback during the system's development, though no timeline for when it will be introduced here has been decided.</p>
<p>Better understand the gaps and opportunities related to existing funding streams and capacity, including how to better</p>	<p>Continuing with the local funding process developed for FY20 to arrive at our FY23 plan for how best to utilize local funding and</p>



<p>combine and optimize funding for a more equitable, sustainable, and family and child- centric system.</p>	<p>other grant opportunities to support our work, and to start longer term planning.</p> <p>Landscape Analysis underway with final report available Summer 2022.</p>
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Access - Foster a coordinated system of equitable access, capacity, enrollment, and funding.	
Project	Progress
<p>Create an annual preschool delivery strategy and optimize funding streams supporting it.</p>	<p>Utilizing the data of the Landscape Analysis, beginning in April 2022, partners will convene to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on how needs have changed as a result of the events of these past few years, demographics, and positive movement at the state level to make preschool more accessible and coordinated • Use this information to evolve Alexandria’s vision for a coordinated preschool enrollment and funding system to best serves families. <p>The expected completion of the delivery strategy is December 2022. The funding plan will continue to be reviewed annually.</p>
<p>Continue to refine enrollment processes to enable families to have a more transparent understanding of their eligibility for various programs.</p>	<p>Revised eligibility criteria checklist and will provide training to support enrollment coordinators in assisting families with understanding what makes them eligible for various child care and publicly funded options.</p>
<p>Develop a coordinated enrollment process with one point of entry.</p>	<p>Enrollment Coordinators from the publicly funded programs continue to meet bi-monthly to share information regarding enrollment, referrals, and community outreach.</p>



Family Connections - Establish meaningful partnerships and channels of information sharing with families to support families as their child's first teacher.

Project	Progress
<p>Develop stronger feedback mechanisms for families to engage with providers in a culturally and geographically accessible way.</p>	<p>Kids' First Years is coordinating the Family Connections Pilot, a community-facing initiative focused on supporting children living in the West End neighborhoods of Alexandria. The goal of the pilot is to determine effective ways of engaging with and meeting the needs of families with children ages 0-3</p> <p>Community partners are engaging with a hired consultant to distill insights on outcomes of the initiative.</p>
<p>Ensure stronger transitions between pre-K and grades K-3, with greater information sharing across early learning pathways.</p>	<p>Publicly funded pre-K programs are required to assess four-year old students using the Phonological Literacy Screening (PALS-PreK) and the Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP). Plans are to share this data with teachers who will be instructing students next year in kindergarten.</p>
<p>The Basics Awareness Campaign</p>	<p>The Basics Insights messaging program launched in September 2021. Basics Insights provides science-based developmentally appropriate guidance for children from birth to three. Each week, families will receive two messages. The first is a fact about child development or the adult's role as a caregiver and the second is a suggested activity connected to the fact. There is no cost to families who participate.</p> <p>Messages also address the caregiver's own wellbeing and social-emotional needs.</p>
<p>Forge connections among health and education providers, particularly in the prenatal to 3-year-old space, in order to identify specific ways to support comprehensive prenatal care,</p>	<p>Continued the ASQ3- ASQ-SE Universal Screening Initiative for the 2020-21 school/program year with all the private + public programs.</p>



<p>a comprehensive medical home approach, and more referral conduits between health-focused and other programs.</p>	<p>Children scoring below the cutoff (45%) – which indicates a need for further assessment and possible SE goals/supports.</p>
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Quality - Develop and coordinate professional learning opportunities for all early care and education providers to ensure equitable high-quality, culturally responsive learning experiences for young children.

Project	Progress
<p>Increase the number of childcare centers, preschools, and family childcare homes that are accredited, maintaining accreditation status annually, and/or participating in the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS).</p>	<p>Virginia Quality Birth-5 (VQB5), Virginia’s Unified Measurement and Improvement System</p> <p>Alexandria is one of three community cohorts participating in the two pilot years of the VQB5 through the Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five (PDG B-5).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Significantly expands requirements for quality measurement and support for teachers in all birth to five publicly funded programs, including center-based classrooms and family day homes. •All publicly funded programs will be required to participate in VQB5 in Fall 2023 with ratings shared publicly in Fall 2024. •VQB5 will measure the quality of infant, toddler and preschool teaching and learning based on two nationally recognized quality indicators, Interactions (CLASS) and Curriculum. •As this mandate is not accompanied by funding, Alexandria must leverage existing resources and secure additional funds to build out needed capacity to fulfill the state requirements. Expand from 123 classrooms participating in VQB5 to 218.
<p>Develop a professional learning continuum that is based on provider professional goals, licensure requirements, and observational data.</p>	<p>The Professional Learning Council (PLC) developed a 3-year plan to support professional learning and development for direct care staff, administrative staff/Directors across center-based and family day homes, publicly funded programs (ACPS VPI,</p>



	ACPS ECSE, Head Start, VPI Community Partners) and families of young children.
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Workforce Development – Stabilize Child Care Workforce

<p>Explore personnel trends and needs related to compensation, quality and retention.</p>	<p>The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated staffing problems in child care settings. Nationwide, recent estimates show there are now 10% fewer workers in child care than pre-pandemic.</p> <p>DCHS and the Emergency Child Care Collaborative held a series of Job Fairs targeting recruitment of early childhood personnel.</p> <p>Programs have made use of federal relief dollars to provide compensation supports and bonuses for early educators.</p> <p>Exploring partnerships with NOVA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey on professional development. • G3 (Get skilled, Get a job, Give back) which makes tuition-free community college available to low- and middle-income students who pursue jobs in high-demand fields. • Articulation Agreements- to help students transfer into 4-year institutions.
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