



## Early Care and Education Progress Report

June 27, 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
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>KFY has contracted with a data consultant to help scale up and fully operationalize its commitment to performance measurement and outcome tracking. The consultant will provide data management, data facilitation, early childhood, and research and evaluation expertise.</p> <p>Data governance policies and sharing agreements will be developed with partners and KFY data will be tracked using the city's Clear Impact Scorecard</p>
Better understand the gaps and opportunities related to existing funding streams and capacity, including how to better combine and optimize funding for a more equitable, sustainable, and family and child- centric system.	<p>KFY has completed the landscape analysis. As a result of the analysis, the work group has identified the following next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Connections -engage with the community (particularly 0-3) so they are aware of what resources are available and we understand families' needs.</li> <li>• Access - Rebuild our preschool coalition ensuring we have a clear philosophy and adequate capacity.</li> <li>• Quality - Reimagine our early childhood workforce to improve stability and increase quality.</li> </ul>



**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>Through a series of interviews and facilitated meetings, partners are currently working with a consultant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop our collective philosophy for coordinated enrollment and funding to best serve families</li> <li>• Reflect on how needs have changed as a result of the events of the past few years, demographics, and positive movement at the state level to make preschool more accessible and coordinated</li> <li>• Use this information to develop a coordinated preschool enrollment and funding system and the criteria that will be used to make decisions based on our collective philosophy</li> </ul> <p>Provide more access to child care assistance by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing the eligibility for families with children under five up to 85% of the state median income</li> <li>• Allowing a family to become eligible while looking for a job</li> <li>• Reducing the parent co-pays</li> <li>• Eliminating the 72-month time limit to receive assistance</li> </ul> <p>Provide more access to preschool programs by strengthening and innovating the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing the per-pupil allocation to reflect the true cost of quality early education</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide flexibility to serve more students with disabilities and 3-year-olds and 5-year-olds;</li><li>• Expand public/private options for state-aligned preschool through the VECF mixed-delivery program</li></ul> <p>Support Early Childhood Wellness with 0-3 population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accommodate the increase in referrals to Part C (PIE Program) Early Intervention Services</li><li>• Continue universal developmental screening pilot with public and private partners</li></ul> <p>Reduce staff turnover in early childhood classrooms and recruit new professionals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expanding teacher incentives offered under the Early Childhood Educator Grant Program</li><li>• Supporting early childhood education degree programs and professional development</li><li>• Allow for provisional employment after an FBI background check is complete and before the Central Registry check is complete</li></ul>



**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>As more in-person engagements return, KFY has focused on community outreach events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Baby Shower – held May 6<sup>th</sup> at Casa Chirilagua and attended by 25 expectant/new moms. We are looking to host them quarterly throughout the city. The next one will be in August at William Ramsay Recreation Center.</li> <li>• Family Fun Day sponsored by Amazon and hosted by The Center for Alexandria's Children, KFY, ACPS, and RPCA. Attended by 350 adults and 400 children.</li> <li>• Family Engagement Webinar was held on June 7th "Empowering Your Interactions Over the Summer with Your Children" led by a panel of Alexandria's early childhood agencies and programs (City of Alexandria, ACPS, Kids' First Years, Campagna Center, The Child and Family Network Center)</li> <li>• Kids' First Years and ACPS created Summer Learning Choice Boards offering families hands-on activities to engage their children over the summer.</li> </ul>



**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. Create an annual preschool delivery strategy and optimize funding streams supporting it.</p>	<p><b>Unified Virginia Quality Birth to Five System (VQB5)</b>, the state’s new quality and measurement improvement system, will measure the quality of teacher-child interactions and the use of a state-approved curriculum.</p> <p>By fall 2023, all publicly funded programs will be required to participate in VQB5 with ratings shared publicly in fall 2024. In Alexandria, this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI)</li> <li>● Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)</li> <li>● Head Start/Early Head Start</li> <li>● Child Care Centers and Family Day Homes that participate in the child care subsidy program.</li> <li>● Other public funds that support child enrollment (DoD programs).</li> </ul> <p>2022 -2023 is the final practice year before required participation. Alexandria has 218 publicly funded classrooms and has set a target of having at least 160 participate in this year.</p>