

BOARD BRIEF

Date: February 21, 2020

BOARD INFORMATION: X

MEETING PREPARATION: _____

FROM: Terri H. Mozingo, Ed. D., Chief Academic Officer
Dominic Turner, Chief Financial Officer

THROUGH: Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Cindy Anderson, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI)

ACPS 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:

Goal 1: Academic Excellence and Educational Equity

Goal 2: Family and Community Engagement

Goal 6: Effective and Efficient Operations

SY 2019-2020 FOCUS AREA:

Focus Area 1: Educational Equity

Focus Area 2: Budget Process

FY 2020 BUDGET PRIORITY:

Academics

Leadership and Professional Development

Optimal and Equitable Learning Environments

SUMMARY:

As of the FY 2020 Final Budget, ACPS' VPI Program funding is approximately \$2.22 million. According to the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), the Commonwealth awards ACPS funding based on a calculated full-day rate per child at \$6,326. Of that amount, the Commonwealth funds 50% or \$3,163 per child. ACPS is required to match the amount and provide for any additional funding necessary to operate the program. The VDOE funding for FY 2020 is budgeted at \$607,296, while the ACPS Operating Fund transfers the remaining funding of \$1,613,613 to fully fund the ACPS VPI Program. An increase in VPI funding totaling to \$157,800 for FY 2021 is from the operating funds contribution to VPI. The operating match funds are to cover the increase in salary and benefits of the staff on the VPI program.

BACKGROUND:

The Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) is the state's public prekindergarten program for four-year-olds. In most school divisions across the state of Virginia, the VPI program is administered solely in the public schools. Alexandria City is unique in the scale of its mixed-delivery model whereby VPI students are in both the public schools and community-based childcare centers.

ACPS serves as the lead fiscal agent of VPI for the City of Alexandria. ACPS is responsible for all state reporting, monitoring, and issuance of funds. ACPS serves 192 VPI students in 12 classrooms at William

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Ramsay Elementary School, Jefferson-Houston School, and the Early Childhood Center. For the 2019-2020 school year, 375 students are being served between ACPS and community-partners.

The VPI teaching staff includes 12 licensed teachers and 12 paraprofessionals. The Early Childhood office staff is comprised of a Citywide Early Childhood Coordinator, a part-time administrative assistant, and a part-time registrar.

Registration and Enrollment Process

To qualify for the VPI program, a child must live within city limits, be four years old by September 30, and meet income and other risk factors. Student risk factors are identified during the registration process and a point system has been assigned to the state risk factors listed below. Students with the greatest number of risk factors are provided priority. A wait list is maintained and students are placed into classrooms if and when space becomes available. ACPS is kept abreast of enrollment at community-based VPI programs throughout the school year. Staff is able to facilitate contact between families and other programs. The table below includes the eligibility criteria.

VPI Student Eligibility Criteria	
• Family income at or below 200% of federal poverty level	• Foster care
• Family income less than 350% of the federal poverty level for a student with special needs or disabilities	• Family instability (i.e. food insecurity, immigration or refugee status, unresolved crisis)
• Homelessness	• Incarceration of a parent
• Student's parent or legal guardian did not complete high school	• English Language Learner (EL)
• Teen Parenthood	• Domestic violence
• Family income at 201% - 250% of federal poverty level	• Military family
• Chronic physical/mental problems	• Unstable employment
• Substance abuse	• Socio-emotional behavior issues

RECOMMENDATION:

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the information within this Board Brief.

IMPACT:

ACPS successfully manages the VPI program, which provides free, high-quality education to preschool-aged children residing in Alexandria City in alignment with goals set by the Virginia Department of Education.

ATTACHMENTS:

VPI Community Flyer (Published in English, Spanish, Amharic, and Arabic)

CONTACT:

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