

Virginia Board of Education Agenda Item



Agenda Item: P

Date: September 22, 2016

Title	Report on the Virginia Federal Preschool Expansion Grant (VPI+)		
Presenter	Dr. Mark Allan, Federal Preschool Development Grant Coordinator, Division of Instruction; Dr. Bridget Hamre, Research Associate Professor and Associate Director of Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning, University of Virginia		
E-mail	Mark.Allan@doe.virginia.gov	Phone	804-225-3665

Purpose of Presentation:

For information only. No action required.

Previous Review or Action:

No previous review or action.

Action Requested:

No action requested.

Alignment with Board of Education Goals: Please indicate (X) all that apply:

	Goal 1: Accountability for Student Learning
	Goal 2: Rigorous Standards to Promote College and Career Readiness
	Goal 3: Expanded Opportunities to Learn
X	Goal 4: Nurturing Young Learners
	Goal 5: Highly Qualified and Effective Educators
	Goal 6: Sound Policies for Student Success
	Goal 7: Safe and Secure Schools
	Other Priority or Initiative. Specify:

Background Information and Statutory Authority:

Goal 4: The Board of Education will work cooperatively with partners to promote new and innovative partnerships that help to ensure that all children enter kindergarten with the skills they need for success in school.

On December 10, 2014, Governor Terry McAuliffe announced that the United States Department of Education had awarded Virginia a \$17.5 million federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG) that will allow the Commonwealth to serve additional at-risk four-year-olds in new, high-quality preschool classes and will fund enhanced services to children in existing preschool classes. The Preschool Expansion Grant, called VPI Plus (VPI+), will build on the success of the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) that has supported school readiness of at-risk four-year-olds since 1996. The federal performance period for the VPI+ grant is January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2018.

The VPI+ will meet and exceed every element of the VPI program. The VPI+ model includes use of

evidenced-based curriculum and formative assessments, summative assessments, professional development and coaching for teachers, classroom-level evaluations, and community partnerships to provide comprehensive services. Eleven school divisions will participate in VPI+ allowing an opportunity to field test and refine VPI+ innovations throughout Virginia to ensure high-quality programs, appropriate flexibility tailored to local circumstances, and broad replicability.

By the end of the grant period, approximately 13,000 four-year-olds at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level will be served in new VPI+ classrooms or in existing VPI classrooms where increased services (e.g., community partnerships to provide systematic comprehensive services, family engagement for hard-to-reach and culturally and linguistically diverse families, professional development and coaching for staff) will be supported with grant funds.

The participating school divisions are as follows:

- Brunswick County Public Schools
- Chesterfield County Public Schools
- Fairfax County Public Schools
- Giles County Public Schools
- Henrico County Public Schools
- Norfolk City Public Schools
- Petersburg City Public Schools
- Prince William County Public Schools
- Richmond City Public Schools
- Sussex County Public Schools
- Winchester City Public Schools

The Virginia Department of Education is the lead agency in VPI+; however, other partners include the Virginia Department of Social Services, the Virginia Health Department, the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation, University of Virginia's Center for the Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL), the Commonwealth Council on Childhood Success, and other key stakeholders across the Commonwealth that have an interest in improving learning experiences for young children.

Summary of Important Issues:

As a result of the PDG, Virginia has been successful in increasing the number of eligible children served in high-quality preschool programs. Since VPI+ augments VPI, the number of additional slots available for at-risk four-year-olds in a preschool setting has increased by 1,230 *new* slots across 65 newly-opened high-quality preschool classrooms for Year 1 of the grant (2015-2016). One hundred thirty-five (135) VPI classrooms with 1,574 eligible children have been *improved* by providing additional comprehensive services to children and families and by providing high-quality professional development to teachers and assistants. The total 2,804 new and improved preschool slots served by PDG funds represents an increase of 5 percent over Virginia's original goal of 2,683 new and improved preschool slots.

In addition to the focus on increasing preschool enrollment, the most significant efforts and accomplishments in the implementation of VPI+ occurred largely in the development of a statewide infrastructure that will ensure implementation of a high-quality preschool program in Virginia's VPI+ classrooms, with options for school divisions to use many of the features (professional development, curriculum, etc.) in their non-VPI+ preschool programs as well. Thus the stage is set for enhancing the quality of all early childhood programs in the Commonwealth. Significant elements of this infrastructure are described below.

- **Development of the VPI+ Implementation Team**
 An integrated management team to oversee Virginia’s preschool program has been established. The VPI+ Implementation Team consists of agency partners, both public and private and state and local, to intentionally integrate the components of high-quality preschool programs to provide supports and services for Virginia’s at-risk children.
- **Provision of Professional Development Opportunities**
 Virginia has provided broad technical assistance and professional development to VPI+ subgrantees in a number of ways. The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) has conducted a series of webinars and meetings on numerous topics related to early childhood development and education. The Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) at the University of Virginia has provided technical assistance to subgrantees in the development of an individualized professional development plan for each VPI+ teacher, and teachers will record the professional development they received in a professional development registry maintained by the Virginia Department of Social Services. Additionally, through a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process, Virginia established a menu of approved professional development opportunities on a number of topics related to early childhood education that subgrantees may purchase for use in the individualized professional development plans being developed for each VPI+ teacher.
- **Selection of an Early Childhood Curriculum**
 Through a competitive RFP process, Virginia selected a curriculum and formative assessment system to be implemented in its VPI+ classrooms. *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool* is a comprehensive set of resources that assists teachers as they plan content-rich programs for children with diverse backgrounds and developmental levels. Accompanying *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool* is *Teaching Strategies GOLD*, an observation-based system for assessing the development and learning of children from birth through kindergarten.
- **Procurement of a Rigorous Program Evaluation (Including Formative Measures, Summative Assessments, and Cost-Effectiveness)**
 Through a competitive RFP process, Virginia selected SRI International (SRI) to provide evaluation services that will support the implementation of VPI+. SRI has subcontracted with School Readiness Consulting (SRC) to assist with this work. SRI and SRC will collect and use formative program measures, summative child assessments, and cost-effectiveness data to provide feedback for continuous improvement of instruction and program implementation, administer predictive tests and analyze results to answer pressing questions, and communicate results with VDOE, school divisions, and teachers. Additionally, new VPI+ classrooms were rated with the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) in fall 2015 as a baseline measure for future improvement.
- **Additional Positive Outcomes of VPI+ Implementation**
 In addition to major organizational and procurement accomplishments associated with Virginia’s PDG grant, other successes have occurred:

 - *Increased Interest in the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)* The implementation of VPI+ has expanded awareness and understanding of Virginia’s QRIS with a variety of partners and stakeholders. For example, some subgrantees have asked to have their state VPI programs rated as participants in QRIS.
 - *Expanded Comprehensive Services – Subgrantees are identifying more ways to provide services to children with disabilities, English learners, and others in need as they identify Family Engagement Coordinators and develop strategies for family engagement in their annual plans to serve these children and families.*

Impact on Fiscal and Human Resources:

There are significant requirements of the federal Preschool Expansion Grant that must be implemented by the Virginia Department of Education and participating school divisions. Federal grant funds are being used at the state and local levels for VPI+ staffing and for other necessary resources to meet grant requirements.

Timetable for Further Review/Action:

Staff will provide further reports to the Board as the grant progresses.

Superintendent's Recommendation:

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education receive the Report on the Virginia Federal Preschool Development Grant (VPI+).



Virginia Preschool Initiative-**PLUS**

Virginia Board of Education
September 22, 2016



Presentation Overview

- Comparison: VPI+ Federal Grant and Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI)
- Improving VPI Slots Using Grant Funds in School Year (SY) 2015-2016
- Enrollment Data from SY 2015-2016
- Preliminary Measures in VPI+ New Classrooms from SY 2015-2016
- VPI+ Looking Ahead: SY 2016-2017

VPI+ Grant Overview

Year 1 (2015) and Year 2 (2016) Federal Award Amounts

- \$ 17,500,000 each year (2 additional years to be awarded)

Lead Agency

Virginia Department of Education (VDOE)

Partnerships and Support

- 11 Divisions and local public-private partnerships
- Virginia Department of Social Services
- Virginia Early Childhood Foundation/Smart Beginnings
- University of Virginia's Center for the Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL)
- Virginia Department of Health
- Commonwealth Council on Childhood Success

VPI+ Implementation Team



Sussex County
Public Schools

Prince William County
Public Schools

Chesterfield County
Public Schools



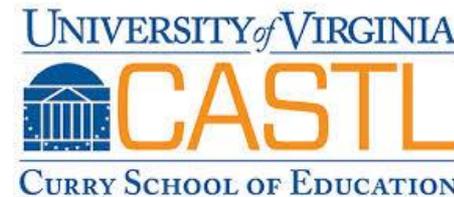
Winchester
Public Schools

Richmond City
Public Schools



Norfolk Public Schools

Henrico County
Public Schools



Fairfax County
Public Schools

Petersburg City
Public Schools

Giles County
Public Schools

Brunswick County
Public Schools



**Comparison:
VPI+ Federal Grant and
Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI)**

Requirements for a High-Quality Preschool Program

Federal Element	VPI+ New	VPI State
Full-day program	Full-day (5.5 hours)	Half-day (3 hours) or full-day (5.5 hours)
Licensed teachers	Required	Required when paid with public funds
Instructional staff salaries comparable to salaries of K-12	Required in both public and private settings	No requirement related to salaries in private settings
Child-to-instructional staff ratio of no more than 10 to 1	No more than 9 to 1	No more than 9 to 1
Class size of no more than 20	No more than 18	No more than 18

Requirements for a High-Quality Preschool Program

Federal Element	VPI+ New	VPI State
Developmentally-appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive, evidence-based curricula and formative assessments	<p>Creative Curriculum, or other approved curriculum aligned to Foundation Blocks for Early Learning</p> <p>PALS-PreK</p> <p>GOLD formative assessment</p>	<p>Selected by locality, aligned to Foundation Blocks for Early Learning</p> <p>PALS-PreK</p>
High-quality professional development (PD) for staff	<p>30 hours of early childhood PD/year</p> <p>Individualized PD plans for teachers</p> <p>VPI+ Coach provides up to 40 hours of coaching</p>	<p>15 hours PD/year</p>

Requirements for a High-Quality Preschool Program

Federal Element	VPI+ New	VPI State
<p>Program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement</p>	<p>Outside evaluation team conducting comprehensive evaluation (SRI International)</p> <p>Summative assessments (preK and fall of kindergarten)</p> <p>Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) in Years 1 and 3</p>	<p>No requirement</p>

Requirements for a High-Quality Preschool Program

Federal Element	VPI+ New	VPI State
<p>On-site or accessible comprehensive services provided</p>	<p>Nutrition services (daily snacks and meals provided free to students)</p> <p>Screenings/referrals and coordinated support for obtaining services (e.g., vision, dental, health)</p> <p>Family Engagement Coordinator to facilitate comprehensive services and family engagement opportunities</p>	<p>No meal required</p> <p>Screenings/referrals and coordinated support for obtaining services (e.g., vision, dental, health)</p>

Requirements for a High-Quality Preschool Program

Federal Element	VPI+ New	VPI State
Inclusion of children with disabilities to ensure access to and full participation in all opportunities	The percentage of eligible children with disabilities served by VPI+ is not less than either the percentage of four-year-old children served statewide through Part B, Section 619 of IDEA (5.4%), or the current national average (6.4%), whichever is greater	No inclusion percentage requirement
Evidence-based health and safety standards	School health and safety standards or Standards for Licensed Child Day Centers	School health and safety standards

Improving VPI Slots Using Grant Funds in School Year (SY) 2015-2016

Model for Improved PreK Slots

(9 out of 11 divisions improved VPI slots)

An “improved” state preschool program slot is a slot that already existed at the time of Virginia’s grant application and that will be improved by any of the following allowable improvements using grant funds:

- providing comprehensive services (*9 divisions*);
- providing evidence-based professional development and coaching (*9 divisions*);
- extending programs from half-day to full-day (*1 division*);
- decreasing child-to-staff ratios (*1 division moved to 6:1*); or
- employing and compensating a teacher with a bachelor’s degree (*already in place in all 9 divisions improving VPI slots*).

Enrollment Data from School Year 2015-2016

1,230 VPI+ new students
+1,574 VPI improved
2,804 students served in high-quality PreK classrooms

VPI+ New as of December 2015

School Division	Classrooms	Sites	Children Enrolled
Brunswick County	1	1	11
Chesterfield County	9	9	143
Fairfax County	4	4	68
Giles County	2	2	33
Henrico County	10 (54)*	27	364
Norfolk City	9	9	141
Petersburg City	5	1	69
Prince William County	8	8	143
Richmond City	9	6	136
Sussex County	2	1	20
Winchester City	6	4	102
TOTAL	65 (109)	72	1,230

*Note: Henrico opened 10 new classrooms to accommodate 180 new children as well as brought 44 existing VPI classrooms up to VPI+ standards, for a total of 54 VPI+ classrooms. Children in these classes are coded by funding source. The 364 VPI+ children are composed of 180 children coded as VPI+ only, 23 coded as VPI+/Title I, and 161 coded as VPI+/Head Start.

VPI Improved as of December 2015

School Division	Classrooms	Sites	Children Enrolled
Brunswick County	3	2	42
Chesterfield County	7	7	99
Fairfax County	0	0	0
Giles County	2	2	26
Henrico County	10(54)*	27	389
Norfolk City	14	12	221
Petersburg City	11	1	152
Prince William County	1	1	16
Richmond City	51	17	600
Sussex County	0	0	0
Winchester City	2	2	29
TOTAL	135	71	1,574

*Note: Henrico opened 10 new classrooms to accommodate 180 new children as well as brought 44 existing VPI classrooms up to VPI+ standards.

Race/Ethnicity

	All 11 VPI+ Divisions			
	VPI+		VPI Improved	
	n	Percent	n	Percent
Black or African American	656	53%	1,102	70%
Hispanic	293	24%	199	13%
White	149	12%	159	10%
Asian/Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	37	3%	37	2%
Two or more races	44	4%	23	1%
American Indian/Alaska Native	< 10	--	< 10	--
Not specified	50	4%	48	3%

Home Language

	All 11 VPI+ Divisions			
	VPI+		VPI Improved	
	n	Percent	n	Percent
English	908	74%	1,347	86%
Spanish	231	19%	154	10%
Arabic	24	2%	18	1%
Other language	52	4%	32	2%
Not specified	15	1%	23	1%

Note: Other languages specified include Amharic, Bengali or Bangla, Bulgarian, Cambodian, Dari, Farsi, French, Kazakh, Malay, Nepali, Pashto, Somali, Swahili, Turkish, and Twi

Poverty/Family Income

	All 11 VPI+ Divisions			
	VPI+		VPI Improved	
	n	Percent	n	Percent
≤100% FPL	818	67%	879	56%
101 to 130% FPL	175	14%	347	22%
131 to 200% FPL	237	19%	348	22%

Public/Private Partnerships

	All 11 VPI+ Divisions			
	VPI+		VPI Improved	
	n	Percent	n	Percent
Public	1,163	95%	1,574	100%
Private	67	5%	0	0%

VPI+ private, nonprofit partnerships are located in:

- Fairfax – Main Street Developmental Center; Creative Learning Center (1 classroom in each)
- Norfolk – Norfolk State University Child Development Lab (1 classroom)
- Richmond – VCU Health System Child Care at Northside; YMCA of Richmond Child Development Center (1 classroom in each)

**Preliminary Measures
in VPI+ New Classrooms
School Year 2015-2016**

Enrollment/Recruitment

- Continuous efforts in locating and connecting with eligible families in some communities
- Determining eligibility and best placement across programs with various eligibility requirements (e.g., Head Start, VPI, VPI+)
- Use of a single point of entry across programs in a community (e.g., Head Start, VPI, VPI+)
- Increase service to students with identified disabilities

VPI+ Formative Assessment: GOLD®

- Naturalistic, observational, authentic assessment from Teaching Strategies, LLC
- Aligned with Creative Curriculum® and intended to provide ongoing feedback on student progress to inform instruction
- Children rated by objectives across 5 areas of development based on Widely Held Expectations (WHE)
- WHE are:
“research based standards detailing what is expected of a child of a particular age [PreK for VPI+]...WHE have a top and bottom range for each area of learning. A child whose raw score falls within this range is demonstrating their skills and knowledge within the widely held expectations”

VPI+ Formative Assessment: GOLD®

School Year 2015-2016

Percentage VPI+ Students across 11 Divisions
Meeting or Exceeding WHE

Area	Fall	Spring	Growth
Social Emotional	14.2	68	+ 53.8
Physical	30.7	72.4	+ 41.7
Language	20.3	72.3	+ 52
Cognitive	21.4	81.3	+ 59.9
Math	11.1	76.5	+ 65.4

VPI+ Summative Assessment

Academic Skills: Literacy

measured by Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) PreK

School Year 2015-2016

Statistically significant gains from fall to spring on all 6 literacy skills:

- alphabet recognition
- beginning sound awareness
- name writing
- print/word awareness
- rhyme awareness
- nursery rhyme awareness

Considered important foundational skills for later reading

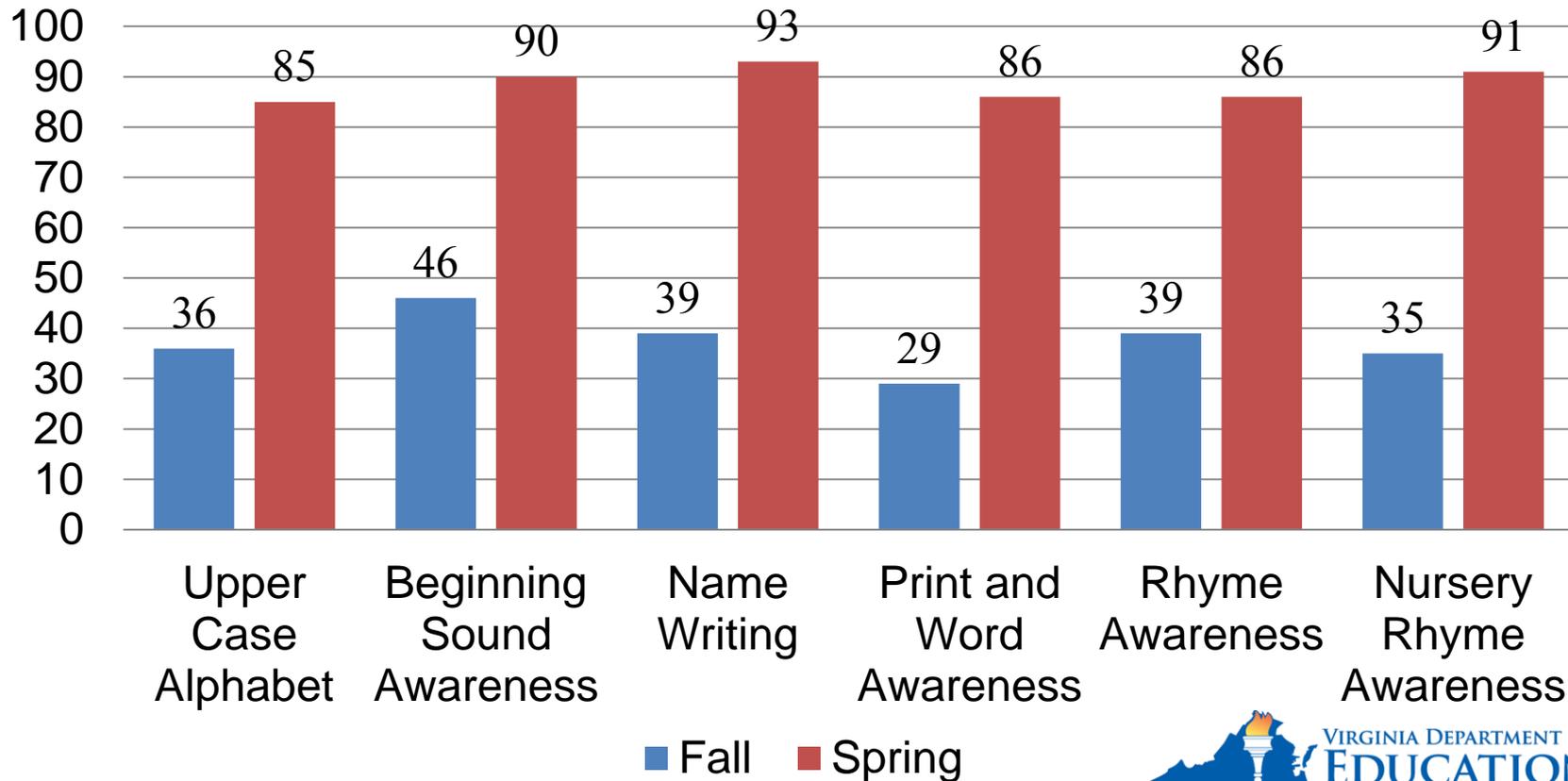
VPI+ Summative Assessment

Academic Skills: Literacy

measured by PALS PreK

School Year 2015-2016

Percentage VPI+ Students across 11 divisions
Meeting or Exceeding Developmental Ranges



VPI+ Summative Assessment:

Academic Skills: Early Math

as measured by Woodcock Johnson – Applied Problems subtest
School Year 2015-2016

Significant gains from fall to spring on early math skills
(number sense and counting).

- Small, but statistically significant gains, in raw scores. On average, children's scores increased 1.5 points.
- VPI+ children's average standard scores were about average in the fall and spring of their preschool year.
 - About half of the participating children (52%) scored at or above the mean in the fall.
 - Slightly more (55%) children scored at or above the mean in the spring.

Year 1 Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) Levels

Grant Goal

Year 1: 60% of VPI+ programs will be at a quality level 3

Year 3: 80% of VPI+ programs will be at a quality level 4 or 5



 **Fast-Track**
Advance to Level 3

Year 1 Quality Rating and Improvement System Levels

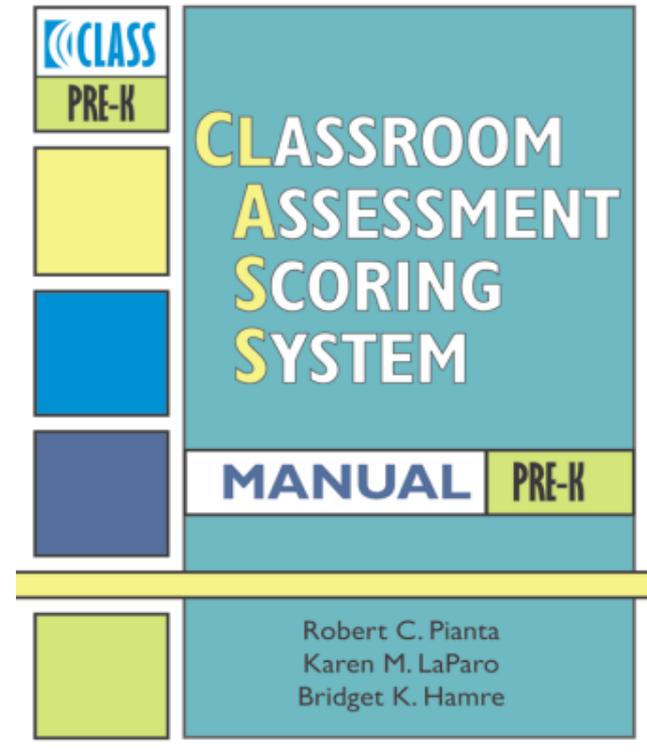
School Year 2015-2016

Virginia Early Childhood Foundation sent raters to 53 schools/sites

All VPI+ Divisions	
Quality Level 1	0
Quality Level 2	0
Quality Level 3	33 (62%)
Quality Level 4	19 (36%)
Quality Level 5	1 (2%)

VPI+ Teacher-Child Interactions:

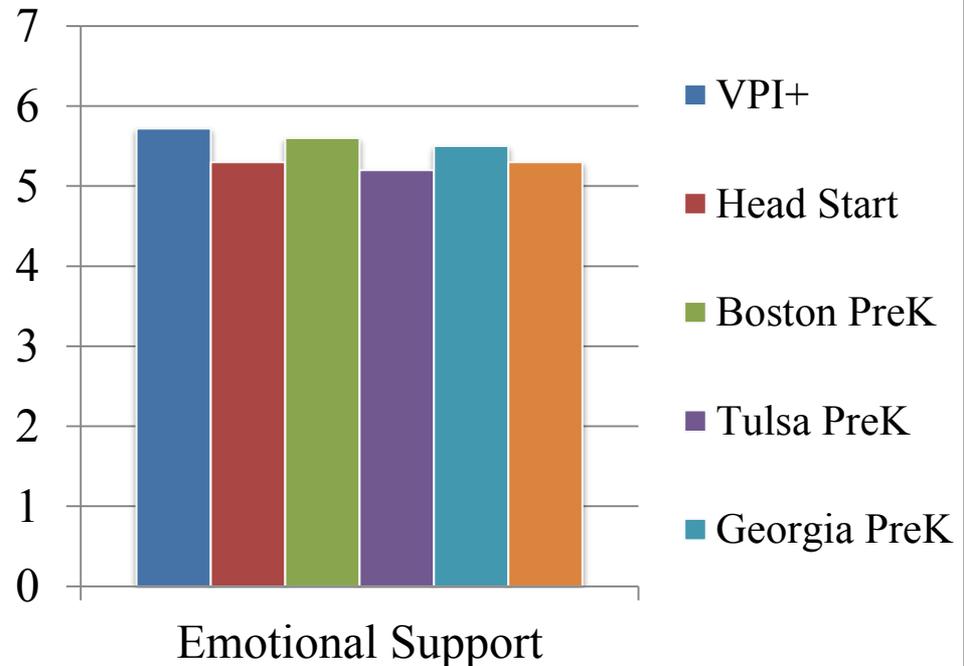
- **Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)**
- **Developed over last 15 years by Robert Pianta and colleagues based on educational & development research**
- **Assesses:**
 - Emotional Support
 - Classroom Organization
 - Instructional Support



Emotional Support: Comparison to other PreK Programs

How do teachers help students develop...

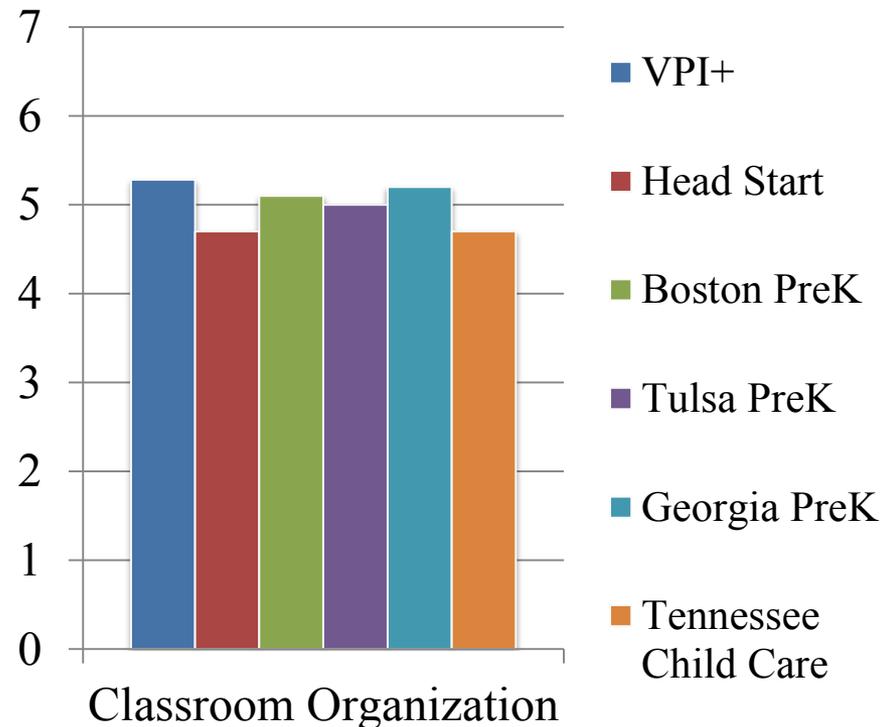
- Warm, supportive relationships with teachers and peers
- Enjoyment of and excitement about learning
- Feelings of comfort in the classroom
- Appropriate levels of autonomy



Classroom Organization: Comparison to other PreK Programs

How do teachers help students...

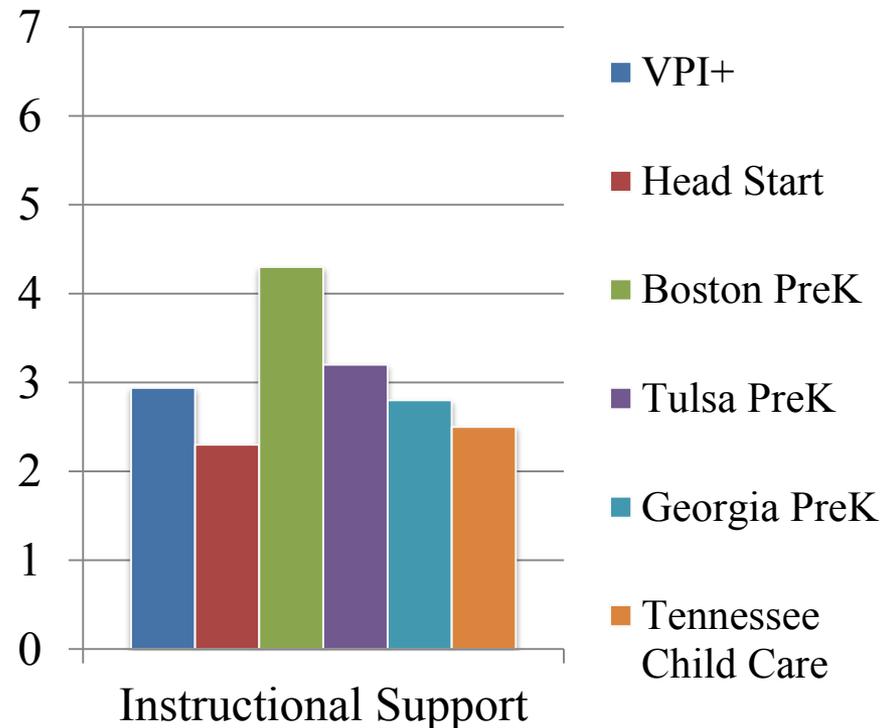
- Develop skills to help them regulate their own behavior
- Get the most learning out of each school day
- Maintain interest in learning activities



Instructional Support: Comparison to other PreK Programs

How do teachers help students:

- Learn to solve problems and think creatively
- Get individualized feedback about their learning
- Develop more complex language abilities



VPI+ Family Surveys

Spring of School Year 2015-2016

“I was worried my child may be delayed, but with the tips and tools they have given me, he’s all ready for Kindergarten.”

“[Teacher] made such a positive impact and a wonderful introduction to the world of learning for my daughter.”

- Data collected uniformly via online tool via text message with paper option available
- Return rate near 54%
- High levels of satisfaction – near 95% *(see Appendix)*
- Improvement noted by 85-95%, depending on domain *(see Appendix)*

“I had to learn to trust people. Once I did, they helped me with my son, got him help and a full evaluation...”

“I can’t explain how thankful I am for the journey we have been on and will continue to see positive results.”

We cried real tears together, [Coordinator] and me.”

VPI+ Family Surveys

I have noticed improvement in my child's:

persistence	over 85%
health, movement, and coordination	over 85%
thinking skills and problem solving	over 92%
making friends, sharing, playing w/others	over 92%
pre-reading skills and letter names	over 93%
vocabulary and communication skills	over 95%

Involvement and satisfaction:

I learned a new way to help my child learn	over 88%
My child is ready for K because of VPI+	over 94%
I would recommend VPI+ to other families	over 95%

VPI+ Looking Ahead: School Year 2016-2017

VPI+ Enrollment Targets for Year 2

School Year 2016-2017

	VPI+ New	VPI Improved
Brunswick	36	37
Chesterfield	160	112
Fairfax	87	190
Giles	36	27
Henrico	364	500
Norfolk	198	252
Petersburg	90	180
Prince William	192	34
Richmond City	216	600
Sussex	27	0
Winchester	108	36
Totals	1,514	1,968
Combined Total	3,482	

Divisions Planning to Open New VPI+ Classrooms

School Year 2016-2017

- Brunswick County Public Schools – 1 (partnership with Head Start)
- Chesterfield County Public Schools – 1
- Fairfax County Public Schools – 1
- Prince William County Public Schools – 3
- Richmond City Public Schools – 3



By the end of the grant, over 13,000 preschool students will be served in VPI+ or VPI Improved high-quality preschool slots.

Estimated Enrollment Targets*			
Year	New	Improved	Yearly Total
1 (SY 15-16)	1,230	1,574	2,804
2 (SY 16-17)	1,514	1,968	3,482
3 (SY 17-18)	1,584	2,018	3,602
4 (SY 18-19)	1,584	2,068	3,652
Total	5,912	7,628	13,540

*Year 1 equals actual enrollment numbers

VDOE Early Childhood Education

Dr. Steven Constantino, Chief Academic Officer
Steven.Constantino@doe.virginia.gov

Dr. Christine Harris, Director, Office of Humanities & Early Childhood
Christine.Harris@doe.virginia.gov

Mrs. Cheryl Strobel, Associate Director, VPI State Program
Cheryl.Strobel@doe.virginia.gov

Dr. Mark Allan, Coordinator, VPI+ Coordinator
Mark.Allan@doe.virginia.gov

Dr. Laura Kassner, Sr. Data Analyst, VPI+
Laura.Kassner@doe.virginia.gov