[](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/index.shtml)  
**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA   
Department of Education**

DATE: February 21, 2020

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction

## SUBJECT: Virginia Preschool Initiative Waiver to Increase Use of Local Eligibility Criteria

Governor Northam’s proposed budget includes a historic investment in early childhood care and education. The majority of the proposed funds and program changes will increase access to preschool for three and four-year-old children who are economically disadvantaged or have identified disabilities through the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI). If approved, the proposed revisions will be in effect for the 2020-21 school year.

The proposed revisions would allow localities to seek a waiver to increase the percentage of at-risk children served through local eligibility criteria to be greater than 15 percent. Localities must demonstrate that more than 15 percent of slots are needed to meet the needs of at-risk children in their community. Localities must ensure that expanding eligibility will enable the maximization of federal funds and will not have a negative impact on access for other individuals currently served.

There is not a limited set of rationales for local eligibility criteria. School divisions should consider the unique needs of their community. Considerations may include:

* Does the community have a unique population of families and children whose needs are not being met?
* Is the community currently using the full 15 percent of local eligibility criteria slots?
* Does the school division typically have VPI slots that are not being filled? Are there families who would benefit from VPI based on the needs of their children?
* Divisions seeking this waiver must complete the [*Waiver to Increase Local Eligibility Criteria for the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) Form* (Attachment A)](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2020/041-20a.docx). Divisions are encouraged to submit the waiver form by March 31, 2010. Waivers will be reviewed as they are received.

Additional information regarding the Waiver to Increase Use of Local Eligibility Criteria was provided during a February 6 [webinar](https://zoom.us/rec/share/pv15Loqvp2VOAZGOs0XUSKwhDpjJT6a81XIX-vZbnUfj7xqEqkQLbeMHAILpdI4c?startTime=1581000338000) for Pre-K Coordinators.

If you have additional questions regarding the waiver process, please contact Dr. Mark Allan, Early Childhood Project Manager by phone at (804) 225-3665 or by email at [Mark.Allan@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Mark.Allan@doe.virginia.gov).

JFL/MRA/lh

**Attachment:**

1. [Waiver to Increase Local Eligibility Criteria for VPI Form (Word)](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2020/041-20a.docx)