
**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: May 1, 2020

TO: Division Superintendents

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

**SUBJECT: Building Local Capacity to Support High-quality Teacher-Child Interactions in Classrooms with Children with Individualized Education Programs**

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) is supporting school divisions in building capacity to use the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS™) in all PreK classrooms. School divisions must be building capacity for local, trained, reliable observers to conduct CLASS™ observations, which are required twice a year in all Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) classrooms beginning in 2020-2021. This includes VPI classrooms serving children with Individualized Education Programs (IEP). All PreK children benefit from the components of high-quality instruction that are measured by the CLASS™ tool. As a result of COVID-19 causing many school closures, supporting high quality interactions and instruction will be vital as children return to their classrooms. While local CLASS™ observations are not required for early childhood special education (ECSE) classrooms in 2020-2021, they are encouraged to be conducted in order to give actionable feedback to early childhood special education teachers.

To support these goals, the VDOE is pleased to announce CLASS™ trainings for the purpose of building local capacity to implement CLASS™ observations in classrooms with children with IEPs. Training is available for school division leaders who have administrative responsibilities in local ECSE programs. Since each division is different, this may include directors, coordinators, specialists, lead teachers, or others serving in this capacity. Individuals going through the training are to conduct CLASS™ observations twice a year in classrooms with children with IEPs. Results of the observations are to be used to provide individualized feedback and professional development.

There will be four virtual training opportunities offered in summer, 2020. Virtual CLASS™ observer training results in the same certification as in-person CLASS™ observer training. Opportunities for school division participants to attend CLASS™ training this summer include: 1) PreK CLASS™ Observer Training, and 2) Toddler CLASS™ Observer Training. Each training is two days in length. During training, participants will build an in-depth understanding of the CLASS™ observation methodology and prepare to reliably assess quality of teaching teacher-child interactions. Participants are to take the online reliability test after the training to become eligible to conduct local CLASS™ observations. Participants must attend both days of training to be eligible to receive a certificate of completion and to take the reliability test.

**Requirements**: The CLASS™ trainings will be held virtually. To participate, users will need:

* Access to high-speed internet. The minimum speed is 600 kbps, however 1.5 mbps is recommended.
* A computer. A tablet may also be used. Training over a phone is not allowed.
* A camera for video and a more interactive experience.
* A microphone.

**Registration**: Space for each training session is limited and will be filled on a first come basis. Registration is limited to two individuals from a school division unless additional space is available. A person may register for only one Observer Training (PreK or Toddler).

There is not a registration or material fee for trainings. Materials will be mailed to participants prior to the training date.

**PreK CLASS™ Observer Training**: The Prek CLASS™ is to be used in classrooms with children ages three to five. Each training is two days in length, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each day. **The deadline to register is May 26, 2020**

* [June 16-17, 2020 – Register Here](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050E49A8A82DA7F94-class)
* [June 25-26, 2020 – Register Here](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050E49A8A82DA7F94-class)

**Toddler CLASS™ Observer Training**: The Toddler CLASS™ is to be used in classrooms with children ages 15-36 months. Each training is two days in length, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each day. **The deadline to register is May 26, 2020**

* [June 15-16, 2020 – Register Here](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050E49A8A82DA7F94-class)
* [June 24-25, 2020 – Register Here](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050E49A8A82DA7F94-class)

If you have questions, please contact Dr. Dawn Hendricks, Early Childhood Special Education Coordinator, by email at Dawn.Hendricks@doe.virginia.gov.

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