# Superintendent’s Memo #185-20


**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: July 24, 2020

TO: Division Superintendents

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

## SUBJECT: Changes to Virginia Preschool Initiative Monitoring for 2020-2021 and Program Information for School Based Early Childhood Programs

As school divisions and localities plan for the reopening of Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI), Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE), and Title I early childhood classrooms in accordance with Virginia Department of Education’s (VDOE) updated [*Recover, Redesign, Restart*](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health_medical/covid-19/recover-redesign-restart-2020.pdf) guidance document updates, it is important to make your division’s youngest learners a priority for mandated new instruction in 2020-2021. In order to provide differentiated technical assistance to all school-based PreK programs, the VDOE’s VPI monitoring process has been updated to respond to COVID 19 and the altered school schedules for 2020-21.

The following is being implemented for all school divisions: 1) revision to VPI monitoring protocol and process for 2020-2021, 2) inclusion of gathering program information related to ECSE and Title I early childhood classrooms, and 3) survey of all school divisions/localities to gain an understanding of how new instruction for VPI, ECSE, and Title I children will be provided.

1. VPI Monitoring

Previously scheduled monitoring for VPI programs assigned to participate in desk review monitoring or an onsite visit is cancelled for 2020-2021 and will be rescheduled for 2021-2022 (see Attachment A). In place of regular VPI monitoring, all VPI programs will participate in virtual monitoring to include gathering information on the following topics:

1. **Instructional Time** – hours of instruction involving active student engagement with adult facilitated learning.
2. **Curriculum Implementation** – vetted curriculum is followed for both in person and remote instruction.
3. **Teacher-Child Interactions** – division is continuing efforts to improve the quality of teacher-child interactions as measured by the CLASS® observation tool.
4. **Ongoing Assessment** – ongoing assessments (e.g., curriculum embedded, Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS PreK) are being used to provide differentiated instruction to meet individual needs.
5. **Support for Student with a Disability (SWD) and Dual Language Learners (DLLs)** – SWD and DLLs are included and their needs are accommodated in both in person and remote delivery methods.
6. **Family Engagement** – family/care giver schedules and needs are considered when instruction is delivered remotely.
7. **Professional Development** – teachers and instructional assistants are participating in at least 15 hours of professional development focused on early childhood education.

The purpose for virtual monitoring of all VPI programs in 2020-2021 is to gain a better understanding of how divisions are responding to the unique needs and circumstances resulting from the COVID 19 crisis.

1. Program Information for ECSE and Title I Early Childhood Classrooms

To gain an understanding of how school divisions are providing quality preschool services to children and families in all school based PreK (ECSE, Title I, VPI), VPI virtual monitoring will include general questions related to ECSE and Title I for 2020-2021. This is an opportunity for program leaders to share how early childhood services are being implemented during a year impacted by COVID 19. It will be important for program leaders of all school-based early childhood programs to be involved in the virtual VPI monitoring.

[A VPI Virtual Monitoring and EC Program Information Webinar](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ZKp4q1tiT1KCK-QnvmI35w) will be provided at 11 a.m. on September 9, 2020 to provide specific details about 2020-2021 monitoring. Coordinators and leaders for all school-based early childhood programs should attend (ECSE, Title I, VPI).

[**Registration for the webinar is required**](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ZKp4q1tiT1KCK-QnvmI35w). Upon registration, you will receive a confirmation email including the secure link and password to join. Please keep this email for webinar admittance on September 9. If you do not receive a confirmation email within 24 hours, be sure to check your spam folder/junk mail. The webinar will be recorded and made available. For questions or assistance with registration, please contact Laura.Heath@doe.virginia.gov.

Reopening School-based Early Childhood Programs Survey – To Be Completed by September 4

All school divisions are required to complete and submit the [Reopening Early Childhood Programs Survey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/R2LforEC) to VDOE Office of Early Childhood by Friday, September 4, 2020. Results of this survey will help the Office of Early Childhood staff, Training and Technical Assistance Centers (TTAC), and partners at the University of Virginia’s (UVA) Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) as they provide technical assistance to early childhood programs. Each school division needs to submit one survey response as a unified voice for the early childhood program. Please share this survey link with the appropriate early childhood leaders within your division and ask them to collaborate on providing one survey response. The survey will cover the following topics:

1. Early Childhood Instructional Delivery Models (VPI, ECSE, Title I and K-2)
2. Family Engagement for Remote Instructional Delivery
3. Number of classrooms expecting to open for 2020-2021 (VPI, ECSE, Title I)

The virtual monitoring process described here will provide the VDOE with the information that will be necessary to provide state supports to school-based PreK programs during the 2020-2021 school year. We appreciate your ongoing commitment to serving and prioritizing your youngest learners during these unprecedented times.

If you need additional information or have questions about the early childhood program monitoring or the early childhood survey, please contact Dr. Mark R. Allan, Associate Director of PreK Programs by email at Mark.Allan@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-3665.

JFL/MRA/lh

**Attachment**

1. [2020-2021 VPI Monitoring Schedule](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2020/185-20a.docx)