



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

February 10, 2017

TO: Division Superintendents




FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program

The Virginia General Assembly appropriates funds for the voluntary Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP). Virginia school divisions are invited to join in this important initiative to expand a common kindergarten entry assessment in Virginia. During the 2016-2017 school year, 45 school divisions participated in VKRP. Participation in VKRP is being expanded to additional interested school divisions for the 2017-2018 school year. The number of participating school divisions is limited and school divisions committing to participation earliest will be considered first.

The purpose of VKRP is to develop a more comprehensive understanding of how Virginia's students arrive at kindergarten with regard to critical school readiness skills. Teachers use individual student information to meet children's needs. Understanding and addressing skill differences are critical in preparing children for school success. Schools, divisions, and state leaders can use readiness data to prioritize targeted professional development opportunities, programs, and resources to be implemented.

VKRP complements the existing assessment of students' literacy skills, using the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS), with common assessments of students' early math, self-regulation, and social skills. VKRP is being implemented by the University of Virginia (UVA), that provides assessment materials and training at no cost to participating school divisions. Students' math skills are assessed through a teacher-administered, direct assessment called the Early Mathematics Assessment System (EMAS) and their self-regulation and social skills are assessed through a teacher rating called the Child Behavior Rating Scale (CBRS).

VKRP team members will be hosting informational webinars on Wednesday, March 8, 2017, at noon, and Tuesday, March 21, 2017, at 2:30 p.m. You may register for one of the webinars by completing the [VKRP Webinar Sign-Up Form](#) . To learn more about VKRP visit the website at <http://www.vkrponline.org/>  and complete a [Participation Interest Form](#) .

For additional information, please contact Ms. Wanda Weaver, VKRP Project Coordinator, by email at vkpr@virginia.edu or by telephone at (866) 301-8278 (extension 1); or Dr. Mark R. Allan, Early Childhood Education Project Manager, by email at mark.allan@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-3665.

SRS/MRA/vdg