



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

August 21, 2015

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) Web-based Data Collection and Fall Verification Reporting Requirements for Fiscal Year 2016 (July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016) DUE: October 1, 2015

The Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) provides programs for at-risk four-year-old children that include quality preschool education, health services, social services, parental involvement, and transportation. Programs must provide services for the entire school year and must operate on a half-day or full-day schedule. Programs operating half-day will receive state funds prorated at 50 percent. For a new program in the first year of implementation only, a program operating less than a full school year will receive state funds on a fractional basis determined by the pro rata portion of the school year the program is provided.

The program guidelines are available at the following Web site:

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/early_childhood/preschool_initiative/guidelines.pdf.

Fall Verification Report and Data Submission

All eligible school divisions, regardless of participation, are required to submit the data through the Virginia Department of Education's Single Sign-On for Web Systems (SSWS) portal and the division superintendent must certify electronically in SSWS that the data are correct by October 1, 2015. Attachment A lists the school divisions eligible to participate in VPI for fiscal year 2016 (2015-2016 school year).

Access to the VPI application in the SSWS portal should be requested through the school division's SSWS account manager. Instructions are available in Attachment B. School divisions that are eligible and choose to participate will also submit eligibility, budget, and program summary information.

Funding

It is anticipated that state funds for the program will be distributed in fiscal year 2016 based on an allocation formula providing the state share (based on each division's composite index capped at 0.5000) of \$6,000 per child for 100 percent of the estimated unserved at-risk four-year-olds in each locality as projected by the Virginia Department of Education.

The projected local distribution of state funds for each locality for school year 2015-2016 is included in the "Budget Calculator" section of the application. This section provides the estimated formula-driven entitlement available to each locality. If the locality chooses to serve fewer children than the total number allocated by formula, insert the local projected number of children to be served in the calculator in the "Local Projection" fields. The projected state and local shares of cost will automatically be recomputed for your information.

The cost for Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) materials and access to the PALS Online Score Entry and Reporting System became a local responsibility in 2012. This is an allowable expense in the local VPI budget. If the locality already purchased a PALS-PreK Teacher Set for the classroom, the per pupil cost would be about \$5. If in the future the locality starts a new program, the Teacher Set would need to be purchased; then the per pupil cost would be about \$9. These figures are based on an average class size of 15. The PALS office Web site can be found at: <http://pals.virginia.edu>.

Start-up/Expansion Grants

There is the potential for additional VPI funds to be used in fiscal year 2016 for start-up/expansion grants that may be used for one-time expenses, other than capital, specifically related to start-up or expansion of VPI programs. Priority will be given to school divisions that expand the use of partnerships with either nonprofit or for-profit providers. The availability and amount of the funds for start-up/expansion grants will be known after the October 1 verification reports are submitted. If funds are available for start-up/expansion grants, a separate application process will be made available for this purpose. The application for start-up/expansion grants will be released in the November-December time frame.

If you have program questions, please contact Cheryl Strobel, associate director, early childhood education, by e-mail at Cheryl.Strobel@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 371-7578. Budget questions should be directed to Kent Dickey, deputy superintendent for finance and operations, by e-mail at Kent.Dickey@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-2025.

SRS/CPS/vdg

Attachments:

- A. [List of School Divisions Eligible to Participate in VPI in FY16](#) (PDF)
- B. [Instructions for Virginia Preschool Initiative \(VPI\) Data Collection and Application Requirements for 2015-2016](#) (PDF)