# Superintendent’s Memo #008-21


**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: January 15, 2021

TO: Division Superintendents

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

**SUBJECT: Preschool Development Grant Community Networks – Application
for Cohort 3**

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) is pleased to announce the release of information related to the Cohort 3 application process for the [Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five (PDG B-5)](https://www.vecf.org/federal-preschool-development-grant-b-5/). PDG B-5 is a multi-year federal grant awarded to the VDOE that is accelerating Virginia’s development of an equitable early childhood system that delivers stable, affordable, and quality early care and education to prepare more children for kindergarten. PDG B-5 serves to strengthen and unify publicly funded birth-to-five programs, including Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI), Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE), Head Start, child care centers and family day homes. This effort is supported by a partnership between the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF), and the University of Virginia (UVA).

The work of the PDG B-5 grant is led by a set of local community pilots which aim to execute the following objectives:

1. Build relationships to foster rich cross-sector and cross-systems partnerships
2. Increase access for children by maximizing family choice and information
3. Strengthen quality to ensure optimal experiences for children and support an effective early childhood workforce
4. Engage families through clear communication as partners in designing the system

PDG B-5 Community Pilots are provided with funding and support (technical assistance) to achieve these goals and work collaborative across all publicly-funded birth-to-five programs within their region. Since 2019, [Cohort 1 and Cohort 2](https://www.vecf.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/PDG-B-5-Pilot-Communities-Cohorts-1-2-7.23.2020.pdf) of the PDG B-5 Community Pilots have engaged 60% of Virginia’s birth-to-five communities. Through the addition of Cohort 3, Virginia will expand to 75% of communities in 2021, and fully to 100% of the state’s communities by 2022, with funding and resources to sustain cohorts over time.

The 2021-2022 PDG B-5 Cohort 3 Community Pilot application process will open February 1, 2021. The process will begin with a Letter of Intent, which will be due on March 15, 2021. All interested school divisions and community agencies are encouraged to learn more by visiting the [VECF Opportunities Ahead Webpage](https://www.vecf.org/opportunities-ahead/), [Information Session Webinar Recording](https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/1337208861200632579) and [Webinar Slides](https://www.vecf.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/PDG-Overview-Info-Session-12.14.2020-FINAL.pdf).

Questions regarding the PDG B-5 Grant and Cohort 3 Community Pilot Application process may be addressed to Kris Meyers, Associate Director for Quality Measurement and Improvement by email at Kris.Meyers@doe.virginia.gov.

JFL/KM/lh