



#249-21

Commonwealth of Virginia
Virginia Department of Education
Superintendent's Memo #249-21

DATE: September 3, 2021
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **Update on Virginia's Early Childhood Unified Measurement and Improvement System - VQB5 Practice Year 1**

Virginia's early childhood system must ensure that all children have quality teaching and learning experiences that help prepare them for kindergarten. To support this goal, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) has been charged to build a unified system that recognizes the impact of every classroom, provides feedback to every teacher, and supports system-wide improvement through a [Unified Measurement and Improvement System](#), called VQB5. VQB5 will measure the quality of teaching and learning based on two nationally-recognized quality indicators: Teacher-Child Interactions and Curriculum. This memo provides information on the expectations for school divisions participating in Practice Year 1 (July 2021-June 2022), as well as information for preparing for future years of required participation.

Participation in VQB5 will be **required** for every [early childhood site](#) that takes public funding by fall 2023, including public schools (those who have Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI), Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE), Head Start, or fund preschool classrooms through Title I), with measurement information shared publicly by fall 2024. In advance of this requirement, VQB5 will have two practice years to provide teachers and administrators the opportunity to practice receiving and providing feedback, and provide insights on implementation to the VDOE:

- **Practice Year 1** began on July 1, 2021 and will conclude on June 30, 2022. Over 85% of early childhood programs have been invited to participate through joining the [Preschool Development Grant \(PDG\)](#).
- **Practice Year 2** will take place from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. All publicly-funded programs, including all public schools, will have the opportunity to participate in Practice Year 2. Participation in Practice Year 2 is strongly encouraged for all programs.

School divisions can confirm if they are eligible for Practice Year 1 of VQB5 by reviewing the [PDG map](#). School divisions that are eligible and participating in Practice Year 1 of VQB5 should keep in mind the following timelines for the school year:

- **Registration Deadline September 17** - Registration for PDG and Practice Year 1 is underway. Early Childhood Coordinators should work with their [PDG Community Lead Contact](#) to ensure all teachers and school leaders have registered in the [LinkB5 data system](#).
- Classroom observations and LinkB5 data collection will take place twice a year.
 - Fall Observations will occur between **August 23 - December 17**
 - Spring Observations will occur between **January 17 - June 10**.
- Feedback on progress in Practice Year 1 will be communicated to early childhood coordinators throughout the year.
- Practice Year rating results will be shared with programs in the **Fall of 2022** for informational purposes only.

School divisions that are not eligible to participate in Practice Year 1 of VQB5 will be invited to join Practice Year 2. Information about this opportunity will be communicated via future Superintendent communications.

For more information

Additional information about VQB5 can be found on the VDOE [Building a Unified Early Childhood System webpage](#), with the recent addition of a VQB5 Implementation Guide and Video for Program Leaders. Questions regarding VQB5 and PDG participation can be directed to Kris Meyers, Associate Director of Quality Measurement and Improvement, at Kris.Meyers@doe.virginia.gov.

JFL/JC