

School Readiness Committee: Pathways Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes

VECF Office, Suite 110

1703 North Parham Road, Richmond VA 23229

June 30th 2017 – 9am

Attendees

Present Subcommittee Members: Kathy Glazer, Henry Light (by phone), Sara Miller, Christine Schull, Navine Fortune

Agenda

- Welcome and Intros
- Reflections on the May 17th Full Committee Meeting
- Discussion of Barriers and Solutions Document
- Next Steps and Adjournment

Welcome

Deputy Secretary Holly Coy began the meeting, thanked all of the Subcommittee members for the hard work they did in preparation for the full Committee meeting in May, and reviewed the agenda and goals for the morning.

Reflections on May 17th Full Committee Meeting

The Subcommittee members discussed the May 17th Full Committee Meeting. In general, they felt the committee was supportive of all their recommendations, and really only need to tweak a few things.

Discussion of Barriers and Solutions Document

The Subcommittee members discussed the identified barriers, the identified barriers are as follows:

- 1.) Few early childhood education practitioners have the skills and competencies that research demonstrates improve student outcomes of young children. Additionally, the cost of pursuing academic credentials is prohibitively expensive and time consuming for individuals working for minimal wages.
- 2.) There are few baccalaureate programs in Virginia that are specific to preparing teachers with the skills needed to support the development of children ages birth to 5, and none of these lead to teacher licensure.
- 3.) Few early childhood education practitioners have the means to pursue a baccalaureate degree.
- 4.) While there is availability of PK-3 and PK-6 teacher licensure in Virginia, historically, these programs have focused heavily on elementary – aged children, and licenses do not ensure that candidates receive specialized early childhood

development preparation and field practice or demonstrate competencies aligned with nationally accepted standards for the early childhood profession.

- The potential solutions are as follows:
 - A) Virginia's Community College System is well-positioned to provide affordable, targeted, and stackable experiences for early childhood practitioners. Recommend certificate and AAS programs be expanded to every community college.
 - B) Virginia should provide support to community colleges to pursue NAEYC higher education accreditation as an external quality assurance process.
 - C) Virginia should continue to support the Pathfinders scholarship program, as well as innovative approaches through apprenticeships and workforce systems to support individuals and providers whose staff attain higher level credentials and degrees.
 - D) Virginia should continue to take steps to ensure that community college credentials articulate seamlessly to the baccalaureate level.
 - E) Virginia universities should increase availability of Early Childhood Education- specific baccalaureate programs.
 - F) Virginia's Pathfinders grant program should be expanded to provide resources to individuals pursuing BA in early childhood (via pilot program) after attaining their AAS.
 - G) The SRC should support pilot programs by Virginia universities to expand early childhood specific coursework for those seeking PK-3 licensure.
 - H) Virginia universities should ensure that baccalaureate programs leading to teacher licensure prepare teachers with emphasized content and practice mastery specific to ages birth to five years old.
- Subcommittee members discussed which solutions they should recommend to the full Committee on the May 17th, 2017 meeting.
- Members also discussed how they could improve the potential solutions as well as the identified barriers. After this discussion, the Subcommittee members discussed which barriers and solutions were the most important to them and why.
- The subcommittee decided to keep the following barriers:
 - 1.) Not all early childhood education practitioners have the skills and competencies that research demonstrates improve student outcomes of young children.
 - 2.) Virginia's Community College System is well-positioned to provide affordable, targeted, and stackable experiences for early childhood practitioners; but barriers still exist for students trying to access programs statewide and translate CDA experience into community college coursework.
 - 3.) There are few baccalaureate programs in Virginia that are specific to preparing teachers with the skills needed to support the development of children ages birth to 5, and few of these lead to teacher licensure.

4.) The cost of pursuing academic credentials is prohibitively expensive and time consuming for individuals working for minimal wages. Few early childhood education practitioners have the means to pursue higher levels of education.

- The Subcommittee decided to recommend the following solutions:
 - A) Virginia should set as an aspirational goal that by 2025 all lead teachers, in settings receiving public funds serving children from birth – age 5, should have at least an early childhood associate degree.
 - B) To the extent feasible, Virginia should ensure that professional development requirements from state and federal programs are incorporated into college-level course content.
 - C) Virginia should expand and promote early childhood education dual enrollment programs at the high school level.
 - D) Virginia should provide support to community colleges to pursue NAEYC higher education accreditation as an external quality assurance process.
 - E) Virginia should ensure that students receive 3 college credit hours for their CDA when continuing on the pathway at any Virginia community college.
 - F) Virginia should explore expansion of the early childhood certificates and early childhood associate degree programs to every community college or region.
 - G) Virginia higher education partners should continue to take steps to ensure that the community college AAS in Early Childhood articulates seamlessly to baccalaureate programs in early childhood.
 - H) Virginia universities should increase availability of early/primary education PK-3, and early childhood special education undergraduate teacher preparation programs.
 - I) Additionally, universities should be encouraged to increase competencies specific to early childhood with in preparation programs for PK-3 teaching license.
 - J) Virginia should explore grants or other financial supports for institutions participating in this process.
 - K) Virginia should provide financial support for practitioners to cover the costs of additional education attainment. Virginia should continue to provide financial assistance, like the VDSS and the Project Pathfinders Scholarship programs, as well as innovative approaches through apprenticeships and workforce systems to support individuals and providers whose staffs attain higher level credentials and degrees.
 - L) Steps should be taken to ensure students transferring from AAS into BA programs are aware of the Two-Year College Transfer Grant program.
 - M) Virginia should ensure that financial aid is available for students on this career pathway for whom English is not their first language.
 - N) Virginia's Pathfinders grant program should be expanded to provide resources to individuals pursuing undergraduate degrees in early childhood after attaining their AAS in early childhood.

Next Steps

- Subcommittee members talked about what they needed to do in order to prepare for the next full Committee meeting, which is on May 17th, 2017.
- Next Subcommittee meeting dates:
 - June 30th, 2017 9:00am