

Commonwealth Council on Childhood Success
October 6, 2014 Meeting Agenda

- I. Introductions and swearing in of members
- II. Overview of purpose and Executive Order
- III. Presentation on federal preschool expansion grant
- IV. Presentation on early childhood work by the Commission on Youth
- V. Small group discussion on early childhood priorities
- VI. Discussion on workgroup structure
- VII. Meeting schedule and other logistics

COMMONWEALTH COUNCIL ON CHILDHOOD SUCCESS

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Monday October 6, 2014

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Overview of Purpose and Responsibilities of the CCCS

Goals:

- Promote workforce development
- Encourage health and well-being of children
- Combat poverty in our Commonwealth

“The Commonwealth Council on Childhood Success shall regularly report to the Governor and the Children’s Cabinet. It will conduct a comprehensive, statewide assessment of current programs, services, and local, state, and federal public resources that serve Virginia’s children ages 0-8. In coordination with the Children’s Cabinet and relevant state agencies, it will serve as a central coordinating entity to identify opportunities and develop recommendations for improvement including, but not limited to: 1) funding for preschool; 2) kindergarten readiness; 3) strategies to close the achievement gap in early elementary years; 4) the quality and accountability of child care programs and providers; and 5) coordination of services for at-risk families.”

Federal Preschool Expansion Grant

Presentation by Kathy Glazer, President, Virginia Early Childhood Foundation

- Under new Federal Preschool Development Grant, VA is eligible (along with 34 other states) for up to \$17.5 million per year for up to 4 years to build, develop, and expand high quality preschool and serve additional high needs students
- These will be high quality programs targeted at high needs divisions, which were defined as “Top 5” in any of the following categories: Percentage of students eligible for free/reduced lunch; Number of Title 1 Schools; Number of unused Virginia Preschool Initiative Slots; Percentage of students not meeting PALS-K benchmark . Among 17 eligible districts, 11 are participating in this grant. This will translate into roughly 1200 new students accessing high quality preschool programs
- Classrooms participating will administer “VPI+” program with ambitious goals for children's educational and developmental outcomes . Classrooms will participate in QRIS to monitor quality, CASTL teams will provide coaching to teachers, and all will receive extensive professional development services
- Comprehensive, wrap around services will be coordinated with participating families

Commission on Youth Early Childhood Initiative

Presentation by Delegate Chris Peace, Chair, Commission on Youth

- The Commission is comprised of nine members of the General Assembly (6 Delegates and 3 Senators) and three citizens appointed by the Governor. It was enacted by the General Assembly in 1989 to study issues, track federal legislation, and make recommendations on state policies affecting children and families.
- In June 2014 the Commission hosted a workgroup on Quality in Early Childhood Education to gather information on what components are present in high quality early childhood education programs and make recommendations for improvement. Participants included members of the legislative and executive branches, along with a variety of service providers, interested members of the business community, and others.
- Draft recommendations were presented last month to the full Commission, which is currently accepting public comment on those. The Commission will vote on the final recommendations next month. The recommendations include: better coordination among stakeholders and providers; improving access and quality of VPI; working with DOE to improve teacher interactions and quality in the classroom, etc.

Small Group Discussion on Priorities and Workgroups

With a few other Council members sitting near you, brainstorm both the priority issues you think this Council should focus on, and how those issues might be organized into workgroups.

Record your ideas on the butcher paper provided, and select a spokesperson to present your ideas to the full group.

Discussion on Workgroups

- Workgroups will meet in between full Council meetings to develop recommendations for the consideration by the full Council in Spring 2015
- Workgroups will include interested Council members, their staff, and outside stakeholders with additional expertise
- Each workgroup should consider relevant recommendations related to data collection; professional development and workforce development; state policy changes (legislative and regulatory); and financing of programs and services

Discussion on Workgroups Cont'd

PROPOSED GROUPS

Preschool and School Success: Better train and resource parents and educators to ensure every child is ready for kindergarten; improve how we define and measure quality- particularly as it relates to preschool curriculum; align with kindergarten assessments; improve the Virginia Preschool Initiative; close the achievement gap in early elementary years

Health and Well-Being: Improve health, mental health and home visiting services for children, particularly for those with special needs; improve coordination of services for at risk families

Child Care Quality and Affordability: Better define and measure quality; promote QRIS; address changes in regulations and professional development

Proposed Meeting Schedule

October: Organizational Meeting, Determine Workgroup Structure

Workgroups to begin meeting, discussing and drafting recommendations

Winter Council Meeting: Receive Preliminary Workgroup Recommendations

Workgroups to continue their work, refine recommendations

Early Spring: Regional town halls for local input on recommendations

Workgroups to finalize recommendations to be presented to the full Council

Spring Council Meeting: Vote on final recommendations

June 2015: Provide final report to Governor McAuliffe

Additional Info

- www.ltgov.virginia.gov/ini_childhoodsuccess.htm
- Public comment:
childhoodsuccess@ltgov.virginia.gov
- To be added to the Listserv and receive email updates:
 - contact Holly Coy (holly.coy@ltgov.virginia.gov)
 - or
 - Add your email address to the sign in sheet at the door

Commonwealth Council on Childhood Success
October 6, 2014 1:00PM – 3:00 PM
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: The Honorable Ralph S. Northam, Toni Cacace-Beshears, Karla Blasquez, William R. Ermatinger, Debra Ferguson, PhD, Catherine Hancock, MS, RN, Christine Harris, PhD, The Honorable Rob Krupicka, Aleta Lawson, Dr. Marissa Levine, MD, Angelica D. Light, Selena Childress-Mayo, The Honorable John Miller, Phyllis Mondak, Barbara Newlin, Kurt Newman, MD, The Honorable Chris Peace, Robert Pianta, PhD, Patricia A. Popp, PhD, John C. Purnell, Jr, The Honorable Beth Dillow Rhinehart, The Honorable Frank Ruff, Margaret Schultze, Lisa Specter-Dunaway, Steve Staples, EdD, Veronica Tate, Cheryl Thompson-Stacy, Anne-Marie Twohie, Dora G. Wynn

Introductions and swearing in of members - Lt. Governor Northam

- Members were formally sworn in by Kelly Mercer, Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth

Overview of purpose and Executive Order – Lt. Governor Northam

- Executive Order: “The Commonwealth Council on Childhood Success shall regularly report to the Governor and the Children’s Cabinet. It will conduct a comprehensive, statewide assessment of current programs, services, and local, state, and federal public resources that serve Virginia’s children ages 0-8. In coordination with the Children’s Cabinet and relevant state agencies, it will serve as a central coordinating entity to identify opportunities and develop recommendations for improvement including, but not limited to:
 - 1) Funding for preschool
 - 2) Kindergarten readiness
 - 3) Strategies to close the achievement gap in early elementary years
 - 4) The quality and accountability of child care programs and providers
 - 5) Coordination of services for at-risk families.”
- Why is early childhood development important to Virginia? Economic development.
- Lt. Governor Northam suggested the following workgroups for this council:
 - Kindergarten readiness (consistent curriculum, funding, education for the educator)
 - Health and Well-Being of Children (premature birth rates, etc.)
 - Child Care (affordable and quality child care)
- Governor McAuliffe wants recommendations from this council in June 2015

Presentation on federal preschool expansion grant – Kathy Glazer, Virginia Early Childhood Foundation

- Under new Federal Preschool Development Grant, Virginia is eligible (along with 34 other states) for up to \$17.5 million per year for up to 4 years to build, develop, and expand high quality preschool and serve additional high needs student. The goal is to provide more high quality day care to communities in Virginia.
- The following divisions will receive grant money (if approved):
 - Brunswick, Chesterfield, Norfolk, Petersburg, Richmond, Sussex, Winchester, Prince William, Fairfax, Giles, Henrico
 - Funding will provide for an additional 1,400 4 year olds to classrooms
- Funding will also be of use to parent education programs in coordination with preschool's
- The Federal grant will make decision notifications in December 2014. If approved the expansion will begin in Fall 2015.
- Lt. Governor asked for a motion to approve submitting an application for this grant, Senator Miller motioned for approval, and the motion passed unanimously.

Presentation on early childhood work by the Commission on Youth – Delegate Peace

- The Commission on Youth is comprised of nine members of the General Assembly (6 Delegates and 3 Senators) and three citizens appointed by the Governor. It was enacted by the General Assembly in 1989 to study issues, track federal legislation, and make recommendations on state policies affecting children and families.
- The commission is currently looking at issues dealing with the use of restraints for children with disabilities, court appointed attorneys in state cases, unlawful adoption of children, and unlawful collection of evidence.
- Next meeting is October 20th at 1PM House Room C of the General Assembly Building.

Small group discussion on early childhood priorities - Lt. Governor Northam

- The council was divided into four workgroups to discuss specific issues related to the Lt. Governor's recommendations of kindergarten readiness, health and well-being of children, and child care. The following are recommendation to work on based on the work groups discussions:
 - **Work Group One** (Delegate Peace)
 - Develop long term planning for childcare services (policy and administration). Publish studies for providers to use.
 - Communicate to families for an increase in childhood success
 - Identify early at-risk children working with the court system (health and well-being, childcare)
 - Develop best practice curriculum and licensing requirements for childcare providers (Kindergarten readiness)
 - **Work Group Two** (Pat Popp)
 - Focusing on education including:
 - Professional development
 - Early identification of risk factors (asthma, mental health issues, etc.)
 - Early childhood health and support including pre-natal support

- Articulate what is most effective when working with families (child care, home visiting, etc.)
- Work Group Three (Senator Miller):
 - Separate kindergarten readiness from childcare
 - Focus on now and funding later
 - Parental engagement in a child’s learning
 - Identify all the groups involved in every issue
 - Connect educators and health care providers
 - Focus on outcomes
 - Childcare providers- accountability structure
 - Create specific recommendations for the proposal this council gives to the Governor
 - Suggested an additional work group “mental health for children workgroup” that focuses on appropriate services and support services
- Work Group Four (Delegate Krupicka)
 - Improve childcare regulations
 - Kindergarten readiness –
 - Giving educations proper information
 - Focus on children arriving to school healthy
 - Narrowing the gaps between kindergarten readiness and childcare
 - Quality of practitioner’s minimum level (define) of education
 - Integrated data systems (suggested workgroup)
 - Streamline funding (simplify grant processes)
 - Explore cost-effective quality childcare models
 - Develop permanent alignment of agencies and workgroups,
 - Explore home visiting (finance models, return on investment, how to allow localities to receive monetary returns)
 - Integrate early education programs and public schools

Discussion on workgroup structure – Lt. Governor Northam

- Council members and stakeholders will receive an email to rank in order of interest the workgroup (topics will be narrowed and defined) for which you are most interested in serving.

Meeting schedule and other logistics – Holly Coy/ Lt. Governor Northam

- Winter Council Meeting: Receive Preliminary Workgroup Recommendations
Workgroups to continue their work, refine recommendations
 - Will occur during session, possibly after cross-over.
- Early Spring: Regional town halls for local input on recommendations
Workgroups to finalize recommendations to be presented to the full Council
- Spring Council Meeting: Vote on final recommendations
- June 2015: Provide final report to Governor McAuliffe



Commonwealth of Virginia

October 7th, 2014

Secretary Sylvia Burwell
Secretary Arne Duncan
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Burwell and Secretary Duncan:

On behalf of the Commonwealth Council on Childhood Success, Virginia's Early Childhood State Advisory Council, I am writing to inform you of our unwavering support for Virginia's application for a Preschool Development Expansion Grant. One of the top priorities for the Council is expanding access to high quality preschool programs, particularly for our most vulnerable children, and we are confident that the Commonwealth has crafted a strong application, both strategic and sustainable, for such an expansion.

The Commonwealth has a solid public preschool foundation, the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI), upon which we hope to build and improve in the coming years. VPI began serving students in 1996 and currently provides high quality preschool and comprehensive services to more than 18,000 students per year. Despite the demand and support for this program, many Virginia localities face obstacles in providing access to VPI for all eligible four-year-olds. We believe this federal grant provides a unique and much-needed opportunity to help high-need communities overcome barriers to accessing high-quality preschool as well as the ability and responsibility to share these strategies and improvements with communities across the state. In addition to expanding access to preschool for our most at-risk children, the Commonwealth Council on Childhood Success is equally committed to improving the quality of all preschool programs.

As a practicing pediatric neurologist who served in the state legislature for 5 years, and now in my role as Lieutenant Governor and Chair of the Commonwealth Council on Childhood Success, I have witnessed growing support and understanding of the critical importance of the early years and the value of high-quality preschool. Virginia is nationally recognized for its strong public-private early childhood system and long-standing and vibrant business support for school readiness. With the high-level focus of the Council, as well as the creation of a bi-partisan legislative workgroup on early childhood education, I believe Virginia is well-positioned to fully leverage and successfully implement this important grant opportunity.

Building on his belief and commitment that every young Virginian deserves access to the benefits of an early childhood education, Governor McAuliffe established the Council in August 2014 as an integral part of his historic convening of Virginia's first Children's Cabinet. Together, these entities represent the Administration's serious commitment to comprehensively and systemically addressing the health and educational needs of Virginia's children in collaborative and creative ways. The Council includes a wide variety of representatives, including those from the legislature, the business and advocacy communities, relevant program administrators and Commissioners from state agencies, institutions of higher education, and parents.

A number of these representatives have been intimately involved in the development of Virginia's grant application in recent months. Their participation in the Council will provide strong continuity for implementation, should Virginia receive a grant, and for other initiatives around the health and education of young children. The Commonwealth Council on Childhood Success is dedicated to expanding access to high quality preschool for Virginia's at-risk children and stands ready to assist in any way possible. It is our belief that Virginia is worthy of this important grant and our sincere hope that you will agree.

Sincerely,

Ralph S. Northam
Lieutenant Governor of Virginia
Chair, Commonwealth Council on Childhood Success

Encl: Commonwealth Council on Childhood Success Roster

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