
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

NUMBER NINETY-ONE (2009)

DESIGNATING THE GOVERNOR'S WORKING GROUP ON EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVES AS VIRGINIA'S EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 requires that the Governor of each state designate an existing entity, or create a new entity, to serve as the state's Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care to improve the quality, availability, and coordination of services for children from birth to school entry. By virtue of the authority vested in me by Article V of the Constitution of Virginia and Section 2.2-134 of the Code of Virginia, I hereby create the Virginia's Early Childhood Advisory Council, in full recognition of the Commonwealth's commitment to creating a seamless continuum of services and resources for young children as their families support and nurture them through a profoundly fertile period of growth and development in the first few years of life. The Early Childhood Advisory Council succeeds the Governor's Working Group on Early Childhood Initiatives, established by Executive Directive in 2006.

The Council

Council activities shall be coordinated by the director of the Office of Early Childhood Development, with the Secretary of Education serving as chair and the President of the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation serving as co-chair. Members are appointed by the Governor and serve at his pleasure. The Council consists of the following members: the Secretaries of Commerce and Trade, Health and Human Resources, and Finance; the Governor's policy director; the state Superintendent of Instruction; Commissioners of the Departments of Social Services, Health, Behavioral Health and Rehabilitative Services, and Medical Assistance Services; director of the State Council Higher Education; chancellor of the Virginia Community College System; the director of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership; the director of

the state Head Start Collaboration office; a member of the state board of education; a local school division superintendent; a representative of local providers of early childhood education; and the director of a Virginia Head Start agency; and other members as appointed by the Governor.

The Council's activities will complement and coordinate with existing efforts such as the work of the Office of Early Childhood Development, the P-16 Council, and the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation. The Council's efforts will be supported by the work of subcommittees, as determined by the chair, dedicated to specific focus areas.

The Council's responsibilities shall include the following:

1. Lead implementation of the objectives of Virginia's Plan for Smart Beginnings.
2. Conduct a biennial progress report on school readiness in Virginia. The report should include:
 - a. performance data indicating the effectiveness and availability of early childhood programs and services for children from birth to school entry, as outlined in Virginia's Plan for Smart Beginnings,
 - b. an assessment of need concerning the quality and availability of early childhood programs and services for children from birth to school entry including an assessment of the availability of high-quality preschool services for low-income children in the Commonwealth,
 - c. a summary of recent reports, research and resources supporting school readiness in the Commonwealth.
3. Identify opportunities for, and barriers to, collaboration and coordination among Federally-funded and State-funded programs and services for young children, including collaboration and coordination among State agencies responsible for administering such programs.
4. Develop recommendations for increasing the overall participation of children in existing Federal, State, and local early childhood programs, including outreach to underrepresented and special populations.
5. Develop recommendations regarding the establishment of a unified data-driven evaluation system for public early childhood programs and services throughout the Commonwealth.
6. Develop recommendations regarding statewide professional development and career advancement plans for the early childhood workforce in the Commonwealth.
7. Assess the capacity and effectiveness of 2- and 4-year public and private institutions of higher education toward supporting the development of the early childhood workforce, including the extent to which such institutions have in place articulation agreements, professional development and career advancement plans, and practice or internships for students to spend time in Head Start or preschool programs.
8. Meet quarterly, or at the call of the Chair, and on a regular basis, review any implementation of recommendations in the report and address changes in state and local needs.

Council Staffing and Funding

Necessary staff support for the Council's work during its existence shall be furnished by the Office of Early Childhood Development, the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation, and such other agencies and offices as designated by the Governor.

Necessary funding to support the Council and its staff shall be provided from federal funds, private contributions, and state funds appropriated for the same purposes as the Council, as authorized by Section 2.2-135 of the Code of Virginia.

Council members shall serve without compensation and may receive reimbursement for expenses incurred in the discharge of their official duties.

This Executive Order will remain in effect until December 31, 2011.

Given under my hand and under the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this 23rd day of September 2009.

Timothy M. Kaine, Governor

Attest:

Secretary of the Commonwealth