



Children's Cabinet Workgroup:  
Early Childhood Development and School Readiness

October 16, 2019 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

## Agenda

Objective: To review recent progress and develop set of considerations and/or recommendations for Children's Cabinet

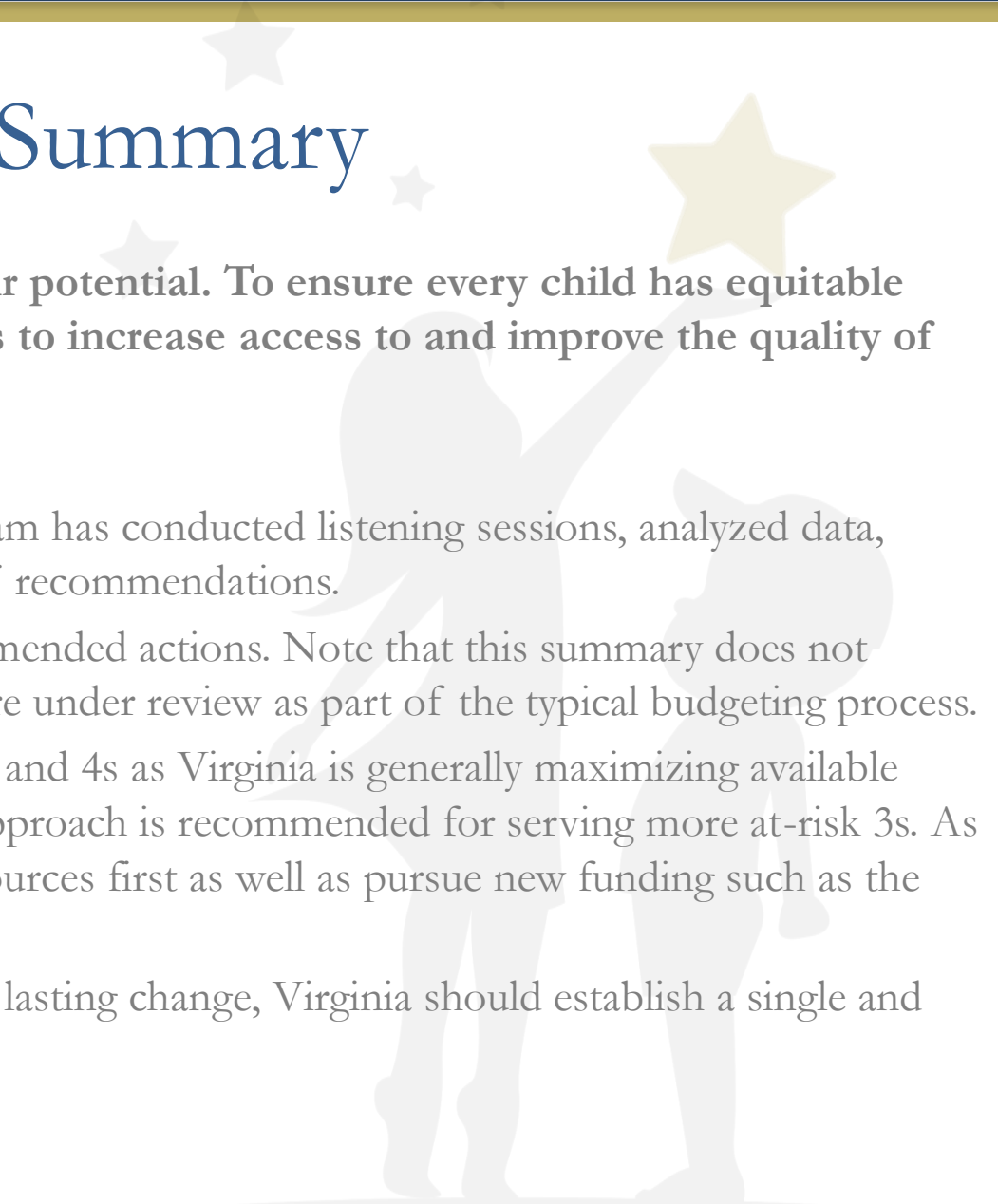
1. Check In
2. Update on Executive Directive 4
3. Update on Preschool Development Grant Birth-Five
4. Small Group Discussion on Recommendations



## Executive Directive 4: Executive Summary

Too many Virginia children enter school unprepared to fulfill their potential. To ensure every child has equitable access to opportunity, Virginia should invest more state resources to increase access to and improve the quality of its early childhood care and education system.

- In response to Executive Directive 4, the Executive Leadership Team has conducted listening sessions, analyzed data, collaborated across agencies and developed a comprehensive set of recommendations.
- This summary of findings outlines the challenges as well as recommended actions. Note that this summary does not include fiscal impact at this time as the formal recommendations are under review as part of the typical budgeting process.
- New state resources will be needed to increase access for at-risk 3s and 4s as Virginia is generally maximizing available federal resources. It should be noted that an incremental or pilot approach is recommended for serving more at-risk 3s. As relates to quality, Virginia should continue to maximize federal resources first as well as pursue new funding such as the Preschool Development Grant.
- To achieve these ambitious objectives and build the foundation for lasting change, Virginia should establish a single and durable point of accountability for school readiness.



## Executive Directive 4

The Executive Leadership Team was asked to address the following and report back to the Governor by September 30:

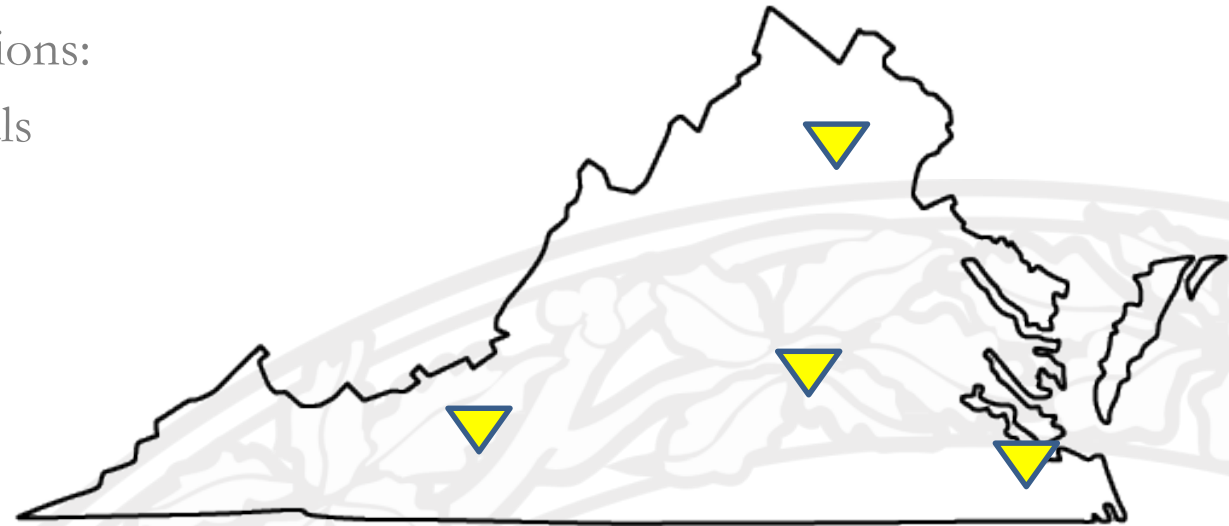
1. Conduct a series of stakeholder listening sessions on how to improve school readiness
2. Make recommendations on how to maximize access for underserved children and families, including offering an option to every underserved three-year-old and four-year-old by 2025 without jeopardizing access for infants and toddlers
3. Build, pilot and scale a uniform quality measurement and improvement system for all early childhood care and education programs that accept public funds to serve children five and under outside of their homes
4. Develop recommendations to most effectively and efficiently consolidate state oversight and administration for all early care and education programs

This document serves as the summary of findings for the public.



## Listening Sessions

- In partnership with Smart Beginnings, schools, social services, Head Start and child care, the Executive Leadership Team conducted listening sessions in Norfolk, Annandale, Salem, and Chesterfield.
- Attendees were encouraged to make comments, ask questions, complete comment cards and/or submit online feedback.
- More than 300 attendees representing 200+ organizations:
  - State, local, municipal government, elected officials
  - Head Start, Community Action agencies
  - Child care centers and family day home providers
  - Higher education and PreK-12 school systems
  - Non-profit organizations
  - Healthcare, consultants, media
  - Businesses



## Key Messages from Stakeholders

- Stakeholders expressed gratitude for focusing on early childhood and called for urgent action: “We don’t have gaps, we have chasms.”
- School readiness is more than academics; helping children develop strong social-emotional skills may be the most important aspect of early childhood.
- Increasing access is important and should occur at the same time as quality improvements.
- Families are children’s first teachers, and their choices should be honored. The most vulnerable families benefit from comprehensive, two-generation strategies to support family well-being.
- Improving quality requires a multi-faceted approach including but not limited to teacher preparation, professional development, classroom supports and compensation. Much of the early childhood workforce receives poverty-level wages yet are supporting children and families to overcome poverty.
- Gaps in understanding the value of the first 5 years continue among parents and the general public.
- A “future proof” and inclusive approach is needed to ensure lasting changes and necessitates building coalitions in communities with a broader set of stakeholders (e.g., libraries, arts programs, business, etc.).

## Executive Directive 4: Executive Summary

Here is a summary of the recommended actions to improve school readiness outcomes in Virginia:

Maximize Access for At-Risk 3s and 4s	Build a Uniform Measurement and Improvement System	Consolidate Oversight and Administration
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Preserve and maximize all available federal funding, specifically Early Head Start, Head Start, Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).</li> <li>2. Enhance VPI in four ways to ensure all families of at-risk 4s have an option.</li> <li>3. Expand two existing state programs – VPI and Mixed Delivery – to include at-risk 3s on a pilot basis in both public and private settings.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Require measurement to improve child outcomes.</li> <li>2. Build pathways to improvement that address the diverse educator needs and align with new measurement system.</li> <li>3. Support families to choose quality.</li> <li>4. Build on current quality efforts and better track child outcomes.</li> <li>5. Align expectations, measure cost impact and incent private providers.</li> <li>6. Phase in system over three years to avoid jeopardizing access for infants and toddlers.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish one board and one agency as responsible for child care and early learning to create a single point of accountability for school readiness.</li> <li>2. Transition Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and Head Start Collaboration to the VDOE.</li> <li>3. Ensure continuity and preserve match by having VDOE contract with VDSS for child care background checks and child care subsidy program so families can easily apply online or be supported at local Social Services offices.</li> <li>4. Task VDOE and VDSS to collaboratively design and build a new licensing platform prior to transition.</li> </ol>

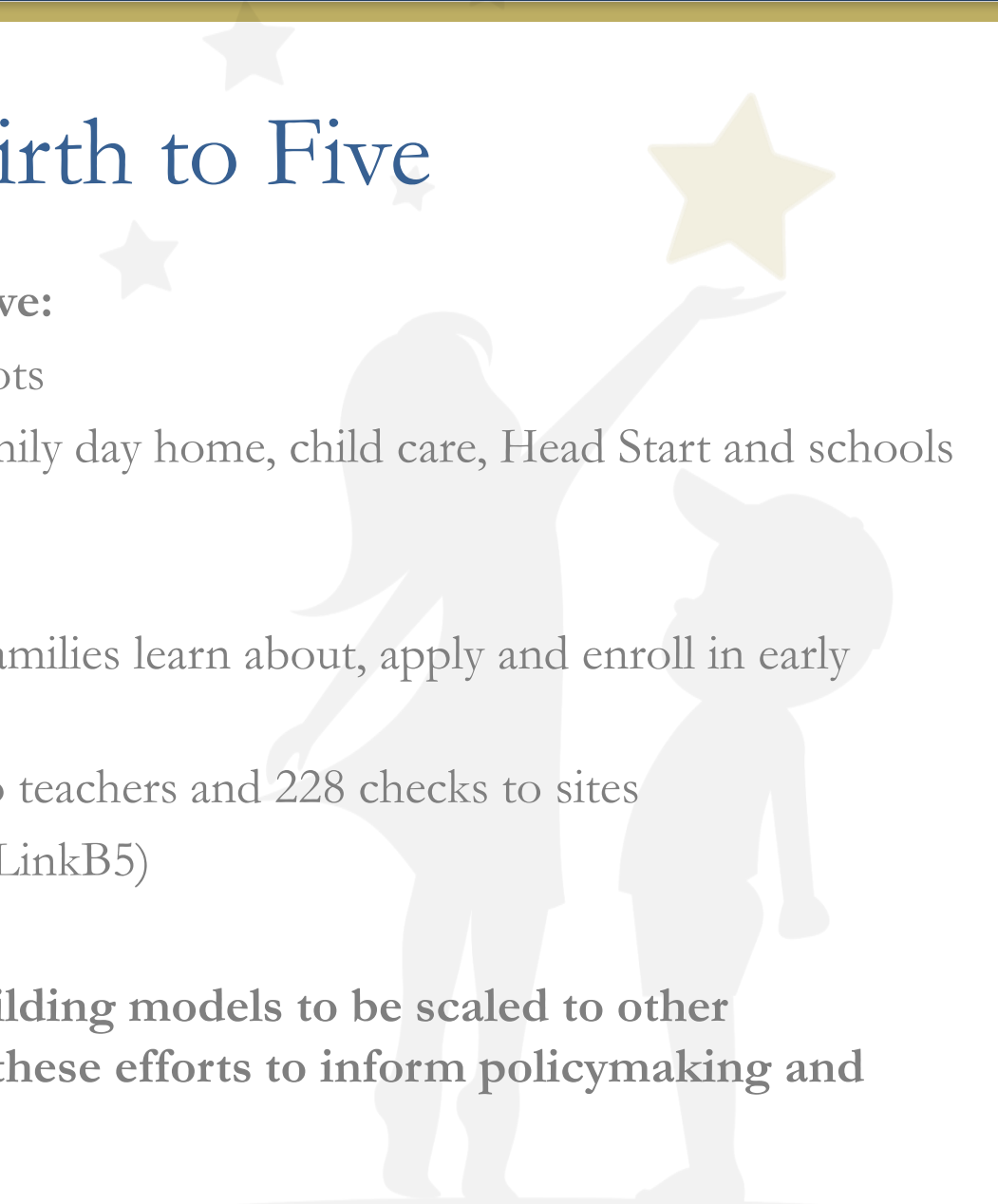


## Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five

**Over the last nine months, Virginia's Community Pilots have:**

- Recruited new partners and built new relationships in all pilots
- Registered more than 575 sites and 2,500 teachers across family day home, child care, Head Start and schools in 27 jurisdictions
- Collected more than 2,000 survey responses from teachers
- Conducted self-assessments in all pilots to determine how families learn about, apply and enroll in early childhood programs
- Distributed more than \$684,000 in funds via 1,140 checks to teachers and 228 checks to sites
- Collaborated to design, build and launch a new data portal (LinkB5)

**Pilots are not only strengthening their own systems but building models to be scaled to other communities. Virginia already using lessons learned from these efforts to inform policymaking and practice at the state level.**





## Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five

Virginia has consistently focused on 3 key activities:

1. A statewide vision, needs assessment and strategic plan

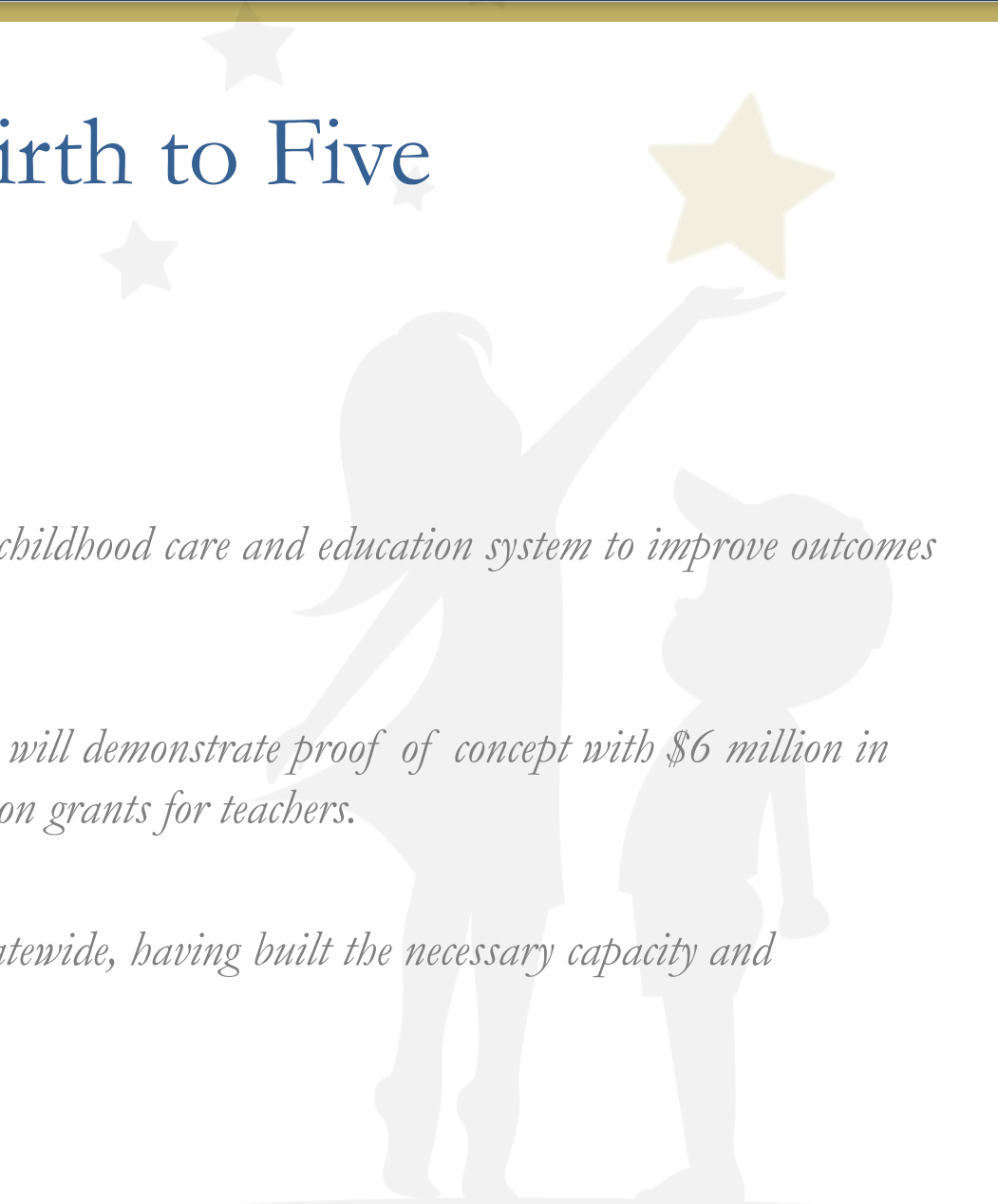
*Process and materials will be catalyst for strengthening the early childhood care and education system to improve outcomes including school readiness.*

2. Community models ready to scale

*Ten early adopter communities, representing Virginia's diversity, will demonstrate proof of concept with \$6 million in funding and support from state, including \$4 million in recognition grants for teachers.*

3. A stronger foundation at the state level

*The Commonwealth will be well positioned to scale the efforts statewide, having built the necessary capacity and infrastructure.*

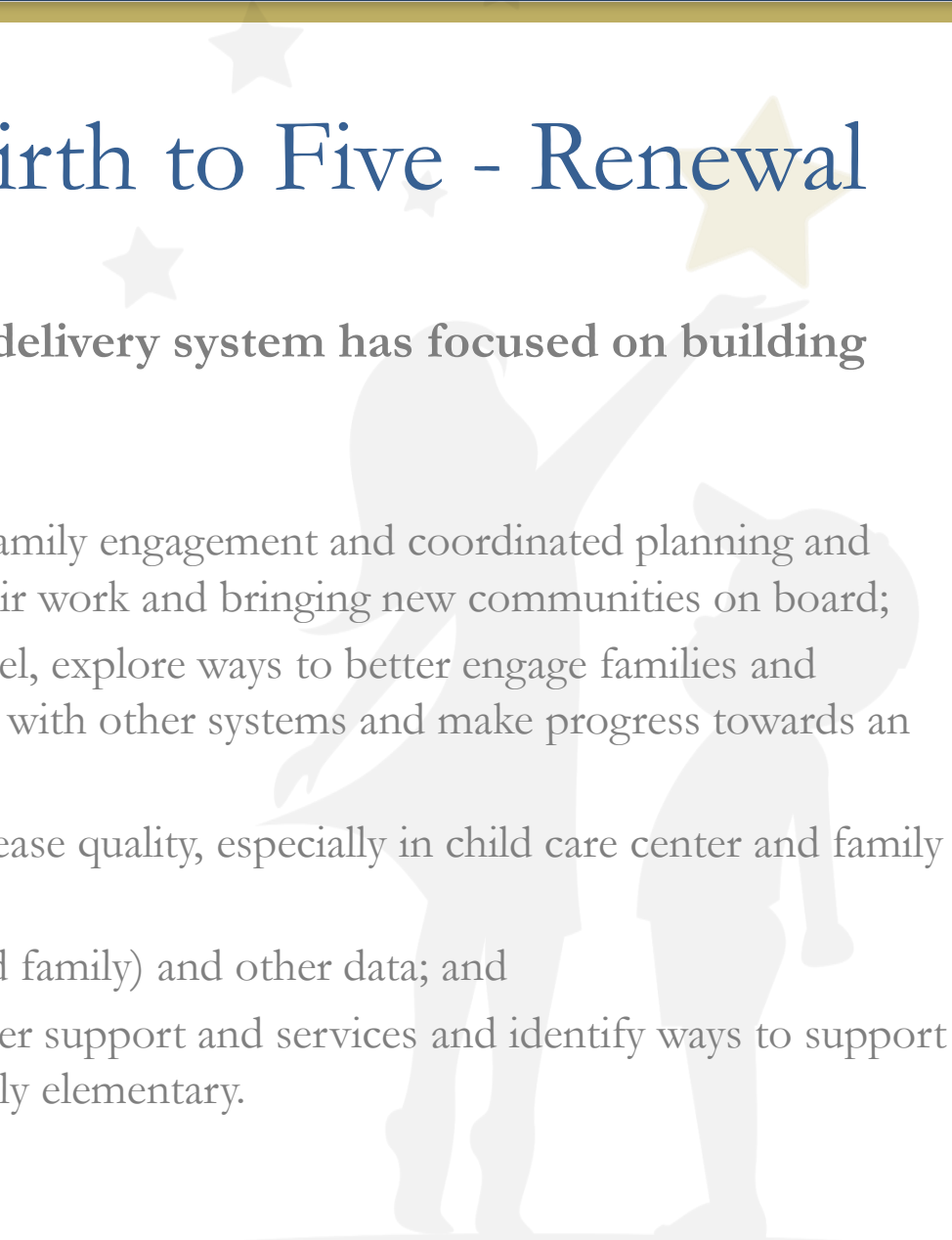


## Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five - Renewal

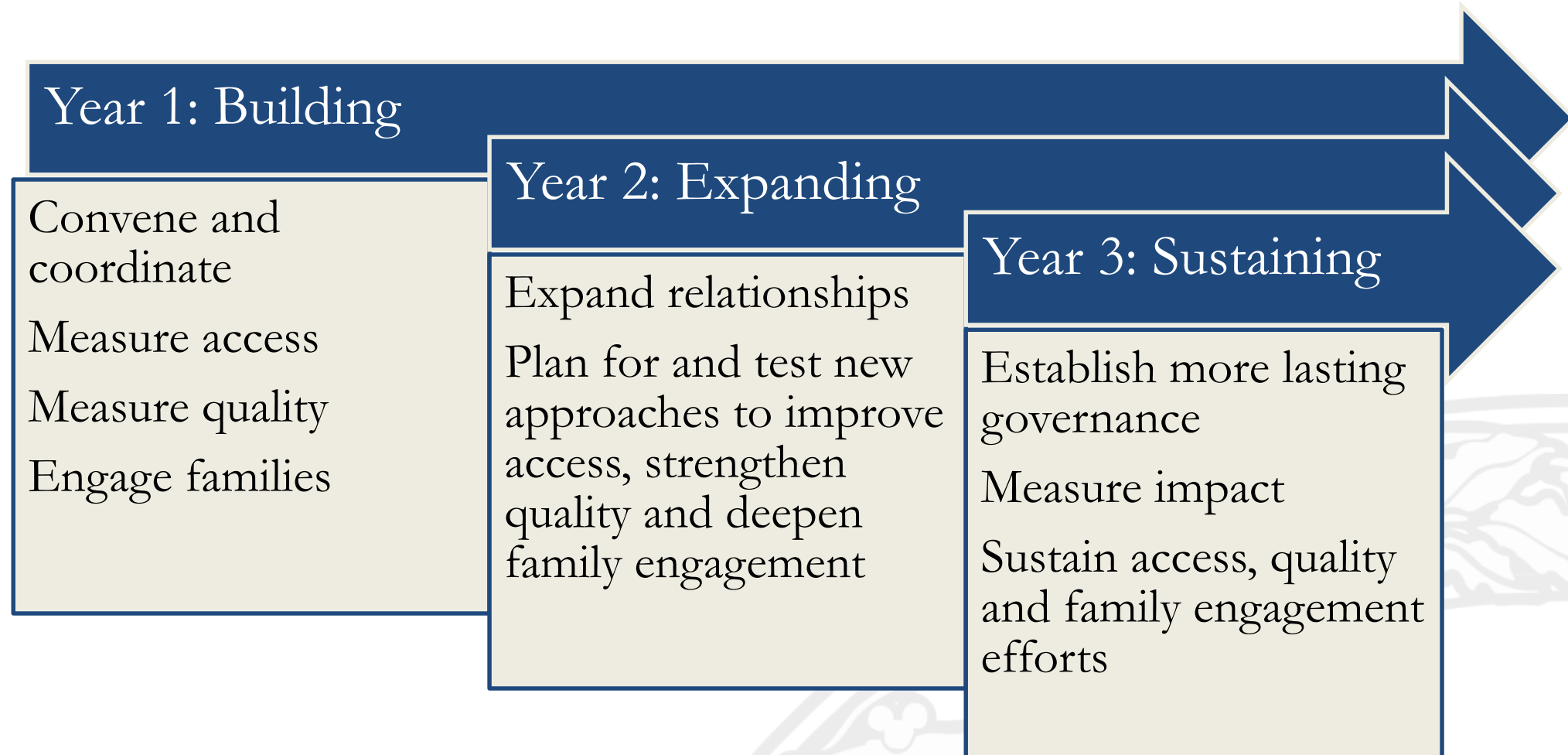
Virginia's approach to building a strong statewide mixed-delivery system has focused on building capacity in and learning from local communities.

In the renewal, Virginia should continue to:

- Invest in local capacity building, access and quality measurement, family engagement and coordinated planning and improvement – both supporting first set of 10 pilots to expand their work and bringing new communities on board;
- Build out LinkB5 to gather access and quality data at classroom level, explore ways to better engage families and communities with this information and determine how to link data with other systems and make progress towards an ECIDS;
- Test educator incentive(s) as a strategy to reduce turnover and increase quality, especially in child care center and family day home settings;
- Evaluate impact using LinkB5 data, survey data (leader, teacher and family) and other data; and
- Expand on coordinated enrollment efforts, strengthen infant-toddler support and services and identify ways to support transitions from home to early childhood care and education to early elementary.



## Vision for Community Efforts

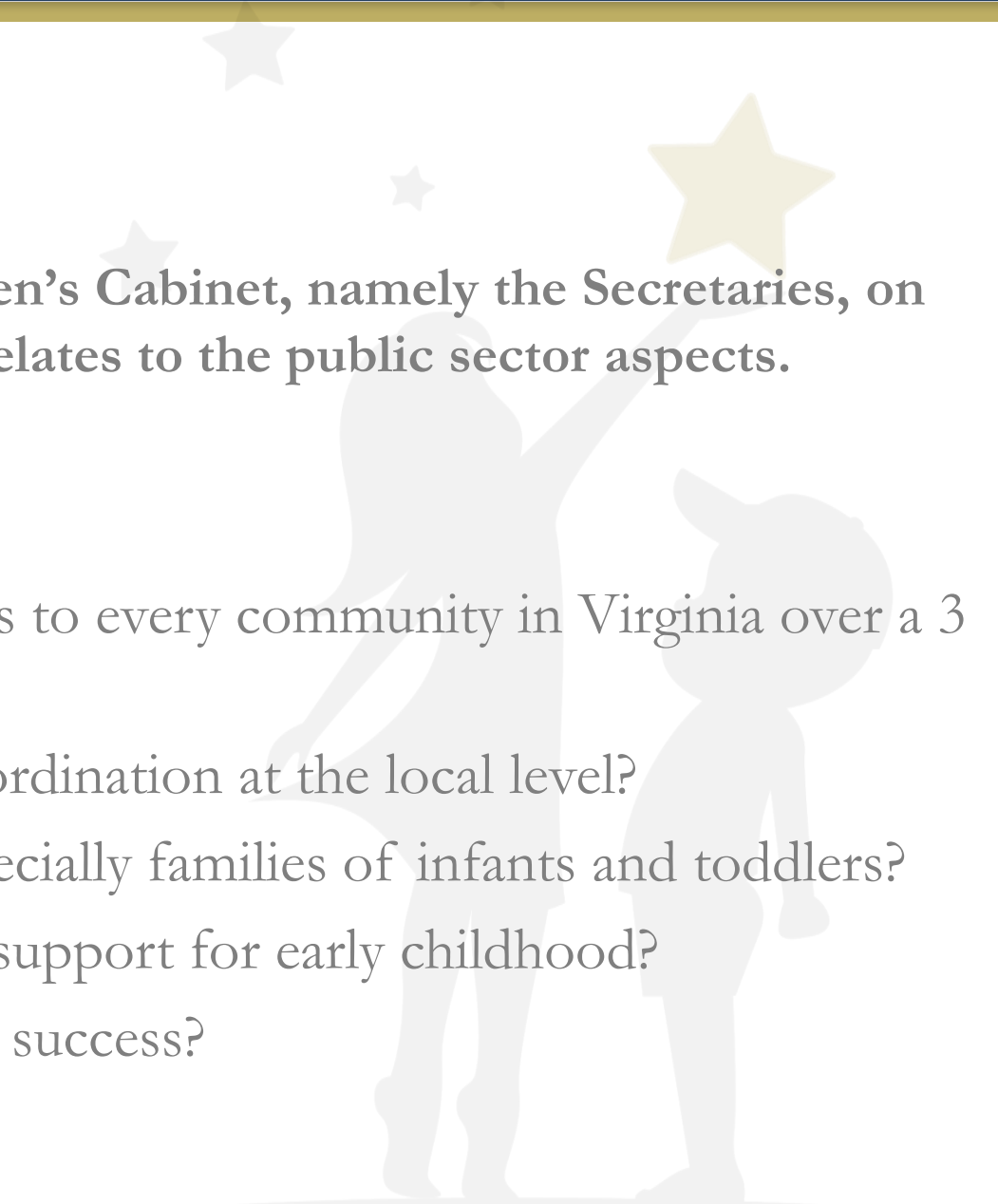


## Implementation Considerations

The charge of this Workgroup is to advise the Children's Cabinet, namely the Secretaries, on how to implement goals and strategies, at least as it relates to the public sector aspects.

### Small Group Discussion:

1. What will it take to scale the community-pilots to every community in Virginia over a 3 year period?
2. How can we better support public-private coordination at the local level?
3. How can Virginia better support families, especially families of infants and toddlers?
4. How can Virginia build broad awareness and support for early childhood?
5. What will it take to ensure lasting and durable success?



## Next Steps

- Virginia will apply for the Preschool Development Grant renewal in early November.
- The next Children's Cabinet meeting will be in early December.
- The Governor will present his biennial budget in mid-December.

