



OCTOBER MEETING

OCTOBER 2, 2018 WEST READING ROOM

1:00 – 3:00 PM PATRICK HENRY BUILDING



EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND SCHOOL READINESS

CHIEF SCHOOL READINESS OFFICER JENNA CONWAY

SEPTEMBER 21 MEETING

- Group participants engaged in discussion on two primary topics related to the vision for success by 2022:
 - 1) Integrating more early childhood data into the Virginia Longitudinal Data System
 - 2) Coordinating and strengthening home visiting
- Guest speakers provided outside expertise

INTEGRATING EARLY CHILDHOOD INTO THE VIRGINIA LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEM

- The Virginia Longitudinal Data System (VLDS) is a “federated data system of equal partners sharing de-identified administrative data, expertise, and purpose to improve lives through enhanced policy recommendations”
- VLDS includes data from Department of Education, Community College System, Employment Commission, Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services, Department for Blind and Vision Impaired, Department of Social Services, Office of Children’s Services, Department of Health Professions, State Council of Higher Education, and the Department of Juvenile Justice.

WHAT QUESTIONS CAN AN EARLY CHILDHOOD DATA SYSTEM ANSWER

- Distinct counts of children—how many and which children are being served?
- How can we make our services/programs more effective?
- How many young children are on track to succeed when they enter school? What experiences did they have that may have informed this?
- What are the credentials of our workforce and how well do they meet the needs of our children?



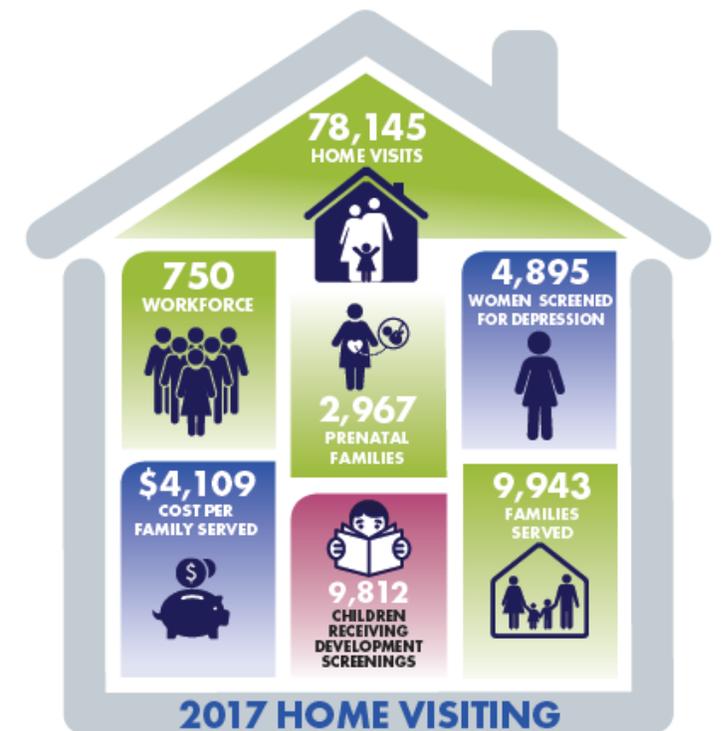
Source: [The Early Child Data Collaborative](#)

NEXT STEPS TO BETTER INTEGRATE EARLY CHILDHOOD DATA

- To support early childhood policy-makers, stakeholders, and practitioners improve outcomes for children, the Children's Cabinet should ensure that the VLDS integrates key early childhood data, as part of effort to build an Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS).
 - *Should include programs and services for young children (e.g., live births, subsidized child care, pre-K, Part C and Part B, 619, Head Start, home visiting)*
 - *Needs multiple levels of data – child, family, program, workforce*
 - *Designed to focus on early childhood and answer critical questions that cannot be answered by any one program or data system alone*
- Next steps are to:
 1. Complete Distinct Count Use Case
 2. Integrate additional key data sources into VLDS:
 - Live Births and other essential health data (Department of Health)
 - Service Data for children birth to three with special needs through IDEA Part C (Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services)

HOME VISITING IN VIRGINIA

- Voluntary home visiting matches parents with **trained professionals** to provide **information and support** during pregnancy and throughout their child's first five years—a critical developmental period.
- Home visitors **partner** with parents to support the healthy growth and development of their children. They **guide, teach, and encourage** young families as they take on life's most wonderful challenge – parenting.
- Research consistently demonstrates the **effectiveness** of improving short and long term child and family outcomes. **Return on investment** is established at rates of up to \$5.70.



EARLY IMPACT VIRGINIA AND NEXT STEPS

- Recent JLARC Early Childhood Study found that:
 1. *Virginia home visiting programs are effective*
 2. *Programs lack adequate administrative infrastructure to ensure effective coordination, evaluation, and planning across programs.*
- 2018 General Assembly charged Early Impact Virginia with: “the authority and responsibility to determine, systematically track, and report annually on the key activities and outcomes of Virginia’s home visiting programs; conduct systematic and statewide needs assessments ... at least once every three years; and to support continuous quality improvement, training and coordination across...programs on an ongoing basis.”
- Next steps are for Early Impact Virginia to convene Leadership Council which will need full support of Children’s Cabinet as it identifies opportunities for further alignment and brings forth recommendations.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT BIRTH TO FIVE

- Virginia has the opportunity to apply for a federal grant to help unify and strengthen the early childhood care and education system.
- Grants will range from \$500,000 to \$15M with an average of \$5M with 30% state match.
- States are expected to use funds for:
 1. *Producing needs assessment(s);*
 2. *Developing strategic plan(s);*
 3. *Maximizing parental choice and knowledge about the State's mixed delivery system of existing programs and providers;*
 4. *Sharing best practices among providers to increase collaboration and efficiency, including improving transitions to elementary school; and*
 5. *Improving the overall quality of early childhood education programs*
- This is a one year grant, but renewal grants may become available.
- Next steps are to draft application, secure state match and engage stakeholders with due date of Nov. 6.



NUTRITION AND FOOD SECURITY

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY HEIDI HERTZ

SEPTEMBER 20 MEETING

- 24 participants including representatives from:

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS

AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION
ARCADIA CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE
AGRICULTURE

COMMUNITY UNITY IN ACTION

SCHOOL NUTRITION ASSOCIATION
FARMERS MARKET.CO
FEDERATION OF VIRGINIA FOOD BANKS
GREATER RICHMOND FIT4KIDS
LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGRICULTURE
PROJECT
SHALOM FARMS

TRICYCLE

VIRGINIA ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS
VIRGINIA AGRICULTURE IN THE
CLASSROOM
VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AGING AND
REHABILITATION SERVICES**
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AND CONSUMER SERVICES
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

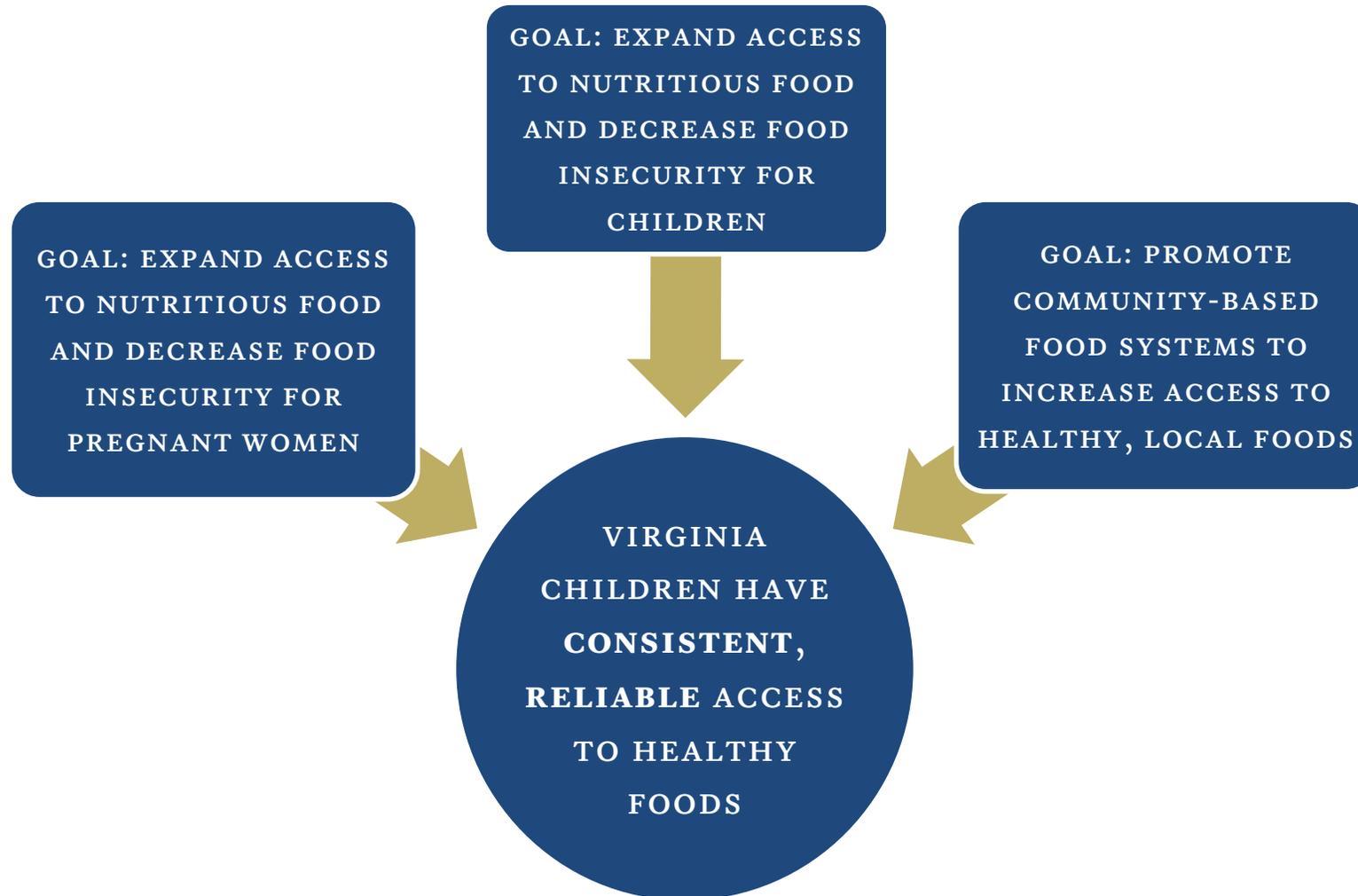
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL
SERVICES

VIRGINIA EARLY CHILDHOOD FOUNDATION

VIRGINIA FOUNDATION FOR HEALTHY
YOUTH
VIRGINIA FRESH MATCH
VIRGINIA LEAGUE OF SOCIAL SERVICES
EXECUTIVES
VIRGINIA NO KID HUNGRY
VIRGINIA POVERTY LAW
VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY

- Work group spent time revisiting strategies from the first meeting, discussing outcomes, and prioritizing items for the Children's Cabinet.

WORK GROUP GOALS



EXPAND ACCESS TO NUTRITIOUS FOOD AND DECREASE FOOD INSECURITY FOR PREGNANT WOMEN

STRATEGIES

- Identify community partners (VDH, DSS, DMAS, VDOE, AAP, ACOG) to promote the Virginia WIC program.
- Expand WIC program referral network specifically through the CommonHelp portal

NEXT STEPS

- Agency coordination between VDH, DSS to utilize CommonHelp as a central portal for access to nutrition programs and services.
- Communication/Outreach with DSS, VDOE, DMAS, and partners about the WIC program.

EXPAND ACCESS TO NUTRITIOUS FOOD AND DECREASE FOOD INSECURITY FOR CHILDREN

STRATEGIES

- Expanding participation in federal nutrition programs (school breakfast, after school meals, summer feeding).
- Incentivizing schools to use federal funding (school breakfast, state meal match, farm to school).
- Create scorecard to track progress in school nutrition and outcomes providing recognition.

NEXT STEPS

- Identify funding opportunities to assist local schools accessing federal nutrition funding.
- Prioritize nutrition standards across agencies (VDOE, VDH, VDACS, VFHY).
- Provide outreach opportunities to encourage schools to prioritize nutrition as key to educational outcomes.

PROMOTE COMMUNITY-BASED FOOD SYSTEMS TO INCREASE ACCESS TO HEALTHY, LOCAL FOODS

STRATEGIES

- Increase quantity of local, VA foods in VA schools, identify scope, establish strategy group.
- Expand the SNAP, FMNP, and other best practices (mobile markets, Produce Prescription programs, HCSI) to increase the access to VA products.

NEXT STEPS

- Develop cross-agency and cross-secretariat teams (VDOE, VDACS, VDH, DARS) to support establishing systems for farm to school and expanding market opportunities for farmers.

DISCUSSION

- Support for crafting a statewide blueprint report for achieving childhood food security
 - Outline action steps and policy recommendations for achieving childhood food security.
 - Include vision for food access equity in Virginia, quantifiable goals, scope of the problem, and policy recommendations to bringing together solutions and strategies in healthcare, agriculture, and education.
 - The report would align priorities and provide a roadmap for action, implementation, evaluation over the next 3 years.

DISCUSSION

- Explore integrating the American Academy of Pediatrics “Hunger Vital Sign” within state systems and supporting physicians using the food insecurity screening.
 - Cross Secretariat and interagency efforts
 - Identify community food access resources
 - Partnership with healthcare sector to provide resource and referral information

HUNGER VITAL SIGN

"WITHIN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, WE WORRIED WHETHER OUR FOOD WOULD RUN OUT BEFORE WE GOT MONEY TO BUY MORE"

"WITHIN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, THE FOOD WE BOUGHT JUST DIDN'T LAST AND WE DIDN'T HAVE MONEY TO GET MORE"



STUDENT SAFETY

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND HOMELAND SECURITY NICKY ZAMOSTNY

SEPTEMBER 25 MEETING

- Presentations included:
 - Promoting School Wellness – Dr. James Lane, Superintendent of Public Instruction
 - Research on School Resource Officers – Dr. Laura Welfare
 - The Culturally Responsive Framework: Building Global Mindsets – Maria Burgos
 - Facilitated Discussion – Chidi Uche and Nicky Zamostny

ENHANCE INFORMATION-SHARING AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAMS

1. Enhance reporting of concerning behaviors to threat assessment teams by developing and promoting educational campaigns and trainings that will help school professionals, students, parents and caregivers recognize behaviors that could indicate the potential for self-harm, or harm to others.
 - a. Promote student-driven, peer-to-peer, communication campaigns focusing on suicide prevention, recognizing when a peer may be in need of additional support, and “See Something, Say Something” principles. Particular emphasis should be placed on educating students, parents or caregivers, school professionals and others on how to report information and to whom information should be reported.
 - b. Local school divisions may consider adopting an anonymous reporting mechanism.
 - c. Develop school-appropriate guidance for school, mental health, and law enforcement professionals on which questions should be asked in order to assess a student’s risk-level for harm to self or others.

ENHANCE INFORMATION-SHARING AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAMS

2. Virginia should dedicate funding to the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety (the “Center”) to develop cross-disciplinary trainings for schools, law enforcement, and mental health professionals, improve data collection, and enhance information sharing within the threat assessment team, as well as between threat assessment teams and their partners, including across school divisions. This funding should be used to:
 - a. Provide technical assistance to local school divisions on the school climate survey, school safety audit, threat assessment teams, and other public safety practices.
 - b. Increase the availability of cross-disciplinary threat assessment training for all involved stakeholders (including community mental health partners) that encompasses key principles from each of the disciplines involved in threat assessment.
 - c. Authorize and fund the Center to conduct a single school climate survey in consultation with the Virginia Department of Education (DOE) and the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) that encompasses safety, education, and health interests. Survey students and staff in secondary schools (Grades 6-12) on an annual basis. This would reduce burden on schools, eliminate duplicative efforts, and provide statewide data to assist schools in addressing school climate issues and better direct their efforts.

ENHANCE INFORMATION-SHARING AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAMS

3. Enable the Center to adopt and implement a case management tool for threat assessment teams to ensure that schools are able to collect important data, monitor outcomes and track information over time.
4. Enhance timely notification from law enforcement to schools, and schools to law enforcement when they are aware that a student has experienced, or may experience, a traumatic event in the community.

ROLE AND PREVALENCE OF SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS AND SCHOOL SECURITY OFFICERS

5. Provide additional funding for the School Resource Officer Incentive Grant Program to expand the availability of SROs in schools with the ultimate goal of ensuring that every student has access to an SRO.
6. Require every SRO to receive SRO training approved by the Center within 12 months of employment, and encourage school administrators to attend this training with their assigned SRO. Additional funding should be provided to the Center to implement this recommendation.
7. Require all school divisions employing SROs to have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the employing law enforcement agency consistent with the Model MOU from the VCSCS. MOUs should be regularly reviewed and updated.
8. Modify the *Code of Virginia* to allow retired law enforcement officers to be hired as SROs and still receive retirement benefits.

SUICIDE PREVENTION

9. Local school divisions should adopt, utilize, or develop a standard, school-appropriate, suicide prevention screening tool.
10. Enhance information-sharing among health care professionals about a person's previous suicide attempt and/or history.
11. Promote statewide educational campaigns on the following topics:
 - a. Suicide prevention, including recognizing signs and identifying opportunities for a person to access help if they, or a loved one are in crisis.
 - b. Campaigns such as "Lock & Talk" that help parents and caregivers understand and address lethal means safety in their homes.
12. Direct VDOE, in consultation with DBHDS and the Center, to update and disseminate the Virginia Suicide Prevention Guidelines to all school divisions in a timely manner. Once updated, direct the agencies to update their model policies, training, and guidance documents to reflect the updated guidelines.
 - a. Updated guidelines should address: suicide prevention and intervention; screening; risk factors; messaging to students, staff, and parents and caregivers about recognizing and reporting behaviors; how and where to report concerning behaviors; engaging students during key transitional periods when data indicate that suicide rates are higher; how to engage students who may be experiencing suicidal thoughts; how to support students returning to school after treatment; postvention; and how to engage with students after a member of their community has died by suicide.

STAFFING LEVELS AND RATIOS OF SCHOOL COUNSELORS AND SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF

13. Lower the ratio of school counseling and support staff to students in schools (social workers, psychologists, nurses, behavioral specialists, etc).
 - a. Lower the ratio of school counselors to students in all public schools grades K-12 in a phased roll-out to meet the Virginia Board of Education's and the American School Counseling Association's recommendation of 1 to 250.
 - b. The Board of Education should consider increasing the Standard of Quality (SOQ) regarding the percentage of time school counselors spend providing direct counseling services to students to 80% and eliminate non-counseling activities and tasks.
 - c. Provide school divisions with the flexibility to hire these support positions based on demonstrated need.
14. Increase access to trauma-informed care within schools and communities, and expand access to trauma-informed training for school, mental health, and law enforcement professionals.
 - a. Promote increased access to telehealth services that will enable students to receive access to care during school hours.
 - b. Identify funding streams that may be utilized to achieve this goal.
 - c. Support the placement of behavioral interventionist positions in schools. These positions should promote whole-child education and the social and emotional well-being of all students, but especially our most at-risk students. These roles should serve as an intermediary between classrooms and administration.

COMMUNITY, SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY EDUCATIONAL TRAINING

15. Increase funding for school-appropriate mental health training for teachers and school professionals consistent with the updated VDOE Suicide Prevention Guidelines, and with particular emphasis on trauma-informed care.
 - a. Encourage school-based professionals to attend trainings in teams.
16. The Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety should develop online training on critical school and student safety issues that can be accessed by teachers (including provisional teachers), law enforcement, and school support staff who may not be able to attend in-person trainings. Training could include cultural competency, supporting special populations, the role of the SSO/SRO, mental health awareness, Threat Assessment Teams, etc.
 - a. Require at least one school administrator from each school attend a comprehensive school safety training developed or approved by the Center.
 - b. School divisions may require that teachers participate in certain trainings or modules as part of their in-service or re-certification requirements.
17. Produce state level guidance/best practices on information-sharing between law enforcement, schools, and mental health providers. (FERPA/HIPAA)

PHYSICAL SECURITY

18. Direct the Virginia Department of Education to identify opportunities to increase the \$100,000 cap on the School Security Equipment Grants, and expand the existing criteria to include school safety consultants or technical assistance, as well as technological advancements.
 - a. Review the current scoring criteria and whether the current criteria puts primary schools at a disadvantage.
19. Increase transparency and communication with students on safety measures and protocols which a school has put in place. Schools should also strive to include students in conversations about their personal safety and opportunities to enhance existing practices.
20. Encourage school divisions to partner with local law enforcement agencies on general school safety practices, as well as to ensure integration of preparation and response protocols.



OCTOBER MEETING

OCTOBER 2, 2018 WEST READING ROOM

1:00 – 3:00 PM PATRICK HENRY BUILDING