



Vision

Every Virginia child is prepared for school, laying the foundation for workforce and life success.

Mission

Virginia Early Childhood Foundation is the non-partisan steward and capacity-builder for advancing school readiness in the Commonwealth.

Strategies



FOCUS

VECF will spearhead Virginia's roadmap to school readiness to inform policy and budget decisions, provide research-based expertise, and nurture innovation.

PARTNERSHIPS

VECF will forge public and private partnerships that:

- build capacity for increasing school readiness at the state and local levels
- harness best practices
- maximize resources and gain efficiencies
- secure outcomes-driven investments.

RESULTS

VECF will set clear and consistent performance measures for school readiness, document gains and efficiencies, regularly report results and prioritize recommendations based on rigorous evaluation.

STRATEGY ONE: **FOCUS**

Virginia Early Childhood Foundation will spearhead Virginia's roadmap to school readiness to inform policy and budget decisions.

- Develop and promote 5-10 year business plan for school readiness, including specific recommendations for action and investment.
- Assert and rank priorities. Regularly update/hone to address dynamic economic and political environment.
- Stay nimble in order to seize opportunities as well as address crises.
- Keep abreast of national, federal, state, and local trends and reform efforts to ensure relevance and competitiveness.
- Continuously engage with state advocates and partners to be informed by their experiences while maintaining balanced, objective perspective for the vision.

Virginia Early Childhood Foundation will provide research-based expertise to inform policies and practices, preserving Virginia's role as a national education leader.

- VECF will drive the research and resources to help local partnerships implement evidence-based practices and ensure uniform data collection and evaluation of the efforts.
 - Convene research/academic advisory to bring expertise and credibility.
 - Conduct and/or sponsor research as relevant when gaps/needs are identified. Report the findings strategically.
 - Summarize and disseminate best practices and results of national, state and local research as they become available.

Virginia Early Childhood Foundation will nurture innovation.

As needed, VECF will serve as the venture capitalist for early childhood in Virginia, using local coalitions as incubators of innovation to drive strategies for school readiness:

- Discern gaps in early childhood system in Virginia and prioritize based on need and potential for impact.
- Identify innovative solution for incubation, in partnership with local coalitions, statewide leaders, subject matter experts, and drawing on best practices and lessons learned from other states.
- Implement strategy, with goal of statewide implementation and eye to ultimate sustainability.
- Refine strategy to ensure it is effective, efficient, and accomplishes desired goals, working with appropriate partners and using data from initial implementation.
- Transfer leadership of strategy to appropriate host(s) when in position to be sustained.

Examples:

- Co-administer QRIS pilot.
- Seed comprehensive kindergarten assessment.
- Advance and promote innovative practices among local partnerships.

STRATEGY TWO: **PARTNERSHIPS**

Virginia Early Childhood Foundation will forge public and private partnerships that build capacity for increasing school readiness at the state and local levels.

- Virginia Early Childhood Foundation will invest in, support and cultivate a statewide partnership of local coalitions that share innovative practice and support the development of efficiencies and strategies that produce outcomes and ensure targeted and effective use of public and private investments.
- Virginia Early Childhood Foundation will provide financial resources, technical assistance, and peer learning to build the capacity of communities and regions to promote the school readiness of young children, pre-natal to elementary school.
 - Create local/regional partnerships and infrastructure; groom leadership to sustain early childhood initiatives.
 - Foster evidence-based practices.
 - Serve as a problem solver for coalitions and regions; broker expertise as needed.
 - Drive policy solutions that facilitate greater access to higher quality programs for families and young children.
 - Coordinate collaborative resource development.
 - Create uniform data collection and evaluation.
 - Lead consistent branding and marketing.
 - Coordinate grass roots advocacy efforts among the network.
- Virginia Early Childhood Foundation will cultivate new private investors and leverage public investments.

Virginia Early Childhood Foundation will maximize resources and gain efficiencies.

- Promote peer learning and sharing among Smart Beginnings alliance.
- Promote and provide TA for policy, process, and funding integration that results in greater access to higher quality services for families and young children in communities.
- Guide private investors to leverage public funds.

Virginia Early Childhood Foundation will secure outcomes-driven investments.

- Build support for early childhood investment by using political assets strategically to accomplish specific goals.
 - **Grassroots strategy**
 - Coordinate SB network's cultivation of relationships with legislators in their home communities.
 - Show decision makers beacons of hope of successful early childhood work.
 - Expand the base of business champions and equip them with the tools they need to make the case for investment.
 - Unify consistent messages to elected officials.
 - Translate message for different audiences.
 - **Grasstops strategy**
 - Cultivate relationships with elected officials.
 - Develop and sustain strong relationship with the Governor and administration officials.
 - Build relationships with gubernatorial candidates; use connectors to these candidates strategically.
 - Strengthen relationships with key committee members in the legislature and with legislative staff.

STRATEGY THREE: **RESULTS**

Virginia Early Childhood Foundation will set clear and consistent performance targets for school readiness.

- Identify and track indicators of school readiness at the child, family, school, and community levels.
- Create consistent measure of kindergarten readiness statewide.

Virginia Early Childhood Foundation will document gains and efficiencies.

- Identify, anticipate, and promote cost savings from interventions.
- Conduct cost benefit studies as relevant.
- Document outcomes, improvements and efficiencies created through Smart Beginnings work.

Virginia Early Childhood Foundation will regularly report results.

- Produce “snapshots” of communities, highlighting school readiness indicators, providing community context and outlining Smart Beginnings efforts.
- Annual outcomes report to Governor, General Assembly.
- Convene Annual Meeting of Smart Beginnings network.

