

Virginia's Emerging Pathways for Early Childhood Educators

Building on the work of Virginia's National Academies of Medicine team to "bridge the divide" that early educators faced when navigating the higher education system, VECF facilitated a review of teacher licensure and education programs in the Commonwealth. The Early Childhood Articulation Workgroup grew out of this review; benefitted from the knowledge and skills of representatives from Virginia community colleges, four-year universities, and state agencies; and was encouraged by the School Readiness Committee. This group worked for over two years to iron out the details of this important change to the higher education system for early educators. Envisioning a seamless pathway of stackable credentials, the group worked to develop a universal associate degree program that would lead directly and seamlessly into baccalaureate programs at participating universities, newly designed with a concentration in early childhood. This new pathway leads to teacher licensure with a focus on the continuum of early childhood from birth through age 8 and is supported by Project Pathfinders scholarships administered by VECF. The new 2+2 pathway to baccalaureate degree and early / elementary PK-3 licensure for early educators was announced by Governor Northam in November 2018.

