

## Virginia Preschool Initiative Virtual Instruction Guidance for 2021-2022

The Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) aims to provide a quality preschool experience for eligible preschool aged students. Quality early childhood learning depends on in-person interactions and social experiences for young children and their peers. Recently passed legislation, [Senate Bill 1303](#), requires public school-based early childhood care and education programs, including VPI, to offer in-person instruction for the entirety of the instructional time mandated by program requirements. The programmatic requirements for VPI are as follows:

- Full day: VPI programs receiving full day funding for VPI slots must operate a minimum of five and one-half instructional hours, excluding breaks for meals. VPI must be full-year programs at 180 days or at least 990 hours per year.
- Half day: VPI programs receiving half day funding for VPI slots must operate a minimum of three hours of classroom instructional time per day, excluding breaks for lunch. Half-day programs must be 180 days or at least 495 hours per year.

While VPI programs must offer in-person instruction for at least the minimum instructional time requirement, providers may still elect to make virtual VPI programming available.

Whether fully in-person or virtual learning, all VPI programs must meet the above programmatic requirements. As localities plan for VPI in 2021-2022, the following guidance should be considered:

1. **Prioritize In-Person Learning for VPI:** School divisions offering VPI in 2021-2022 should prioritize offering in-person VPI experiences for families who are interested in attending in person. For school divisions who maintain a waitlist for the VPI program, families interested in in-person VPI should be prioritized for filling allocated slots.
2. **Meeting Program Requirements in a Virtual VPI Format:** In instances where VPI will be offered virtually, the programmatic hours set forth in the 2021 Appropriations Act must be met.
  - Based on the developmental needs and screen-time concerns for young learners, the VDOE recommends that any Virtual VPI be offered in the form of half-day slots, which require a minimum of three hours of classroom instructional time per day. This should include quality instructional experiences as described in the VPI guidelines and delivered in a synchronous manner.
  - Offering full-time VPI in a virtual format is allowable but not recommended. If a division elects to provide full-time Virtual VPI, five and one-half hours of synchronous instruction needs to be provided daily. Since this mode of

instruction presents challenges for young learners, any division considering this option should email VDOE at [EarlyChildhood@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:EarlyChildhood@doe.virginia.gov) to provide additional details on their proposed approach.

Please note that if during the 2021-2022 school year a locality makes the decision to temporarily move a site or multiple sites to virtual-only due to high-transmission rates of COVID 19, or other unforeseen COVID 19 circumstances, there will be no impact on funding rate. VPI Programs should have a plan in place at all sites to maximize instructional hours in the case of required closures.

### For more information

Questions related to VPI Virtual Instruction Guidance may be directed to [EarlyChildhood@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:EarlyChildhood@doe.virginia.gov).

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