2023-2024 UNIFIED VIRGINIA QUALITY BIRTH TO FIVE SYSTEM (VQB5) GUIDELINES

Prepared by the Virginia Department of Education

PREFACE

Section 22.1-289.03 of the Code of Virginia directs the Board of Education to establish a unified quality rating and improvement system for all publicly-funded birth-to-five providers in order to improve school readiness outcomes. Further, Chapter 446 of the Virginia Acts of the Assembly 2021 Special Session I requires the following:

> *11. That, notwithstanding the provisions of the third enactment of this act, the establishment and implementation of the quality rating and improvement system described in § 22.1-289.05 of the Code of Virginia, as created by this act, shall occur as follows: (i) the Board of Education shall establish such quality rating and improvement system no later than July 1, 2021, (ii) publicly-funded providers may participate in the quality rating and improvement system beginning in the 2021–2022 school year and shall participate in the quality rating and improvement system beginning in the 2022–2023 school year, and (iii) the initial quality ratings shall be published in the fall of 2024.*

In June 2021, the Board of Education fulfilled the expectation for establishing a quality rating and improvement system by approving the Guidelines for Practice Year 1 of Virginia's Unified Measurement and Improvement System, known as VQB5. These guidelines were updated a second time in June 2022, with the Board of Education approving Guidelines for Year 2 of VQB5.

Beginning in fall 2023, all publicly-funded birth-to-five program (school-based preschool, Head Start/Early Head Start, and child care subsidy participating child care and family day home) will be required to participate in VQB5, Virginia's Unified Measurement and Improvement System. Quality profiles from the 2023-2024 participation year will be published in fall 2024.

The following guidelines include the protocols and expectations for participation in this required statewide measurement and improvement system (VQB5). They reflect the learnings from the two practice years for VQB5, in which more than 70% of publicly-funded programs have participated, and set forth the strategies in which all programs will be supported to continuously improve the quality of care and education for Virginia's youngest learners to ensure all have the opportunity to enter school ready.

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SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 WHY SCHOOL READINESS MATTERS

The first five years of a child's life are incredibly important for the developing brain. Many critical language, social/emotional and early cognition skills are formed during these early years and they lay the foundation for future success.[1] Numerous studies show that children who enter school ready, with key early academic and social-emotional skills, are well poised to succeed in school and beyond. With many young children spending time in early childhood care and education outside of the home, much essential early learning takes place in child care, family day homes, Head Start or Early Head Start programs, and public schools. To maximize their potential, all of Virginia's young children need the opportunity to access early childhood experiences in public and private settings that support them to grow, learn, and thrive.

Virginia's current birth-to-five public-private system does *not* ensure all children have access to the early learning experiences they need to thrive. Recent data from the 2022 Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP) shows that 40% of students entered kindergarten "not ready" in terms of demonstrating key school readiness skills. Kindergarten readiness results were especially concerning in the areas of literacy and math.[2] Equally concerning is the disproportionate percentage of Black and Hispanic children, children with special needs and dual language learners who enter school without the opportunity to be ready in one or more critical school readiness areas. While research clearly demonstrates that quality early childhood experiences prepare children for success, Virginia families and children lack equitable access to these opportunities.

High-quality early learning and care across public and private settings provides the support children need to build a foundation for school and future success. Yet quality early childhood experiences can be prohibitively expensive; the average cost of infant care, for example, is more than in-state tuition at most Virginia colleges. Public funds can help cover the cost but only 30% of eligible children in Virginia are served by publicly-funded early learning programs (Pre-K, Head Start, and Child Care Assistance), meaning many children from low-income families are without access to high-quality early childhood programs that could dramatically improve their opportunities for a better future.[3] This lack of opportunity has a significant impact. Extensive

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[1] Harvard University. (n.d.). *Center on the Developing Child.* Science of Early Childhood.

[2] Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program, University of Virginia. (2022). VKRP Fact Sheets.

[3] First Five Years - (Why It Matters School Readiness)

research has identified many short- and long-term benefits of early learning experiences, including:

- Early childhood education reduces the percentage of children repeating a grade by 15%.
- Early childhood education lowers the rate of special education placement by 10%.[4]
- Children participating in high-quality early childhood education had increased college graduation rates and increased rates of employment at age 30.[5]
- Those participating children are more likely to be employed and less likely to be dependent on government assistance.

These positive effects are larger, and more likely to be sustained, when programs are high quality. Research has further shown that the impact of quality early childhood is larger for children from low-income families. And these families want to choose quality for their children. With so much known about the power of quality early childhood, it is imperative that Virginia ensure all birth-to-five learners have access to early experiences in public and private settings that offer them opportunity to thrive.

1.2 MEASURING QUALITY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

Supporting continuous quality improvement in early childhood programs of all types, including public schools, Head Start/Early Head Start, child care, and family day homes, is essential to improving the short and long-term outcomes for Virginia's youngest learners. The most important aspects of quality in early childhood education are stimulating and supportive interactions between educators and children and effective use of curricula.

Using nearly $400 million in state and federal funding annually, Virginia offers a diverse set of early childhood care and education programs in public and private settings to provide early care and learning to at-risk children ages birth-to-five. However, despite this investment, Virginia has historically had limited information on how publicly-funded programs define, measure and support quality and continuous improvement.

To improve school readiness outcomes, Virginia has developed a new system called VQB5 that focuses on measurable indicators of teaching and learning. This system:
- Focuses on the measures that promote positive child outcomes,
- Empowers educators with frequent, specific, and individualized feedback to educators,

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[4]Karoly, L. A. (n.d.). *Informing Investments in Preschool Quality*. Research Reports.

[5] Heckman. (n.d.). *Research Summary: The Lifecycle Benefits of an Influential Early Childhood Program*. The Heckman Equation.

- Provides improvement pathways that are accessible to all programs so that all educators have opportunity to strengthen their practice and support their children to thrive,
- Empowers and meaningfully engages parents and families in the co-creation of a system that fundamentally seeks to meet the unique needs of their children and families, and
- Rewards programs for continual improvement and ensure that educators are adequately compensated.

Studies on quality rating systems that include many measures have shown weak or inconsistent associations between quality ratings and children's outcomes and development. By contrast, a large body of research has linked targeted observational measures of teacher-child interactions to children's learning gains, both academic and socio-emotional.[6]

Curriculum is a key ingredient to helping teachers improve their interactions. A high quality curriculum defines specific, sequenced learning goals to meet all children's individual needs and provides developmentally-appropriate structure and sequence to classroom activities that promote children's engagement. A curriculum also provides teachers with ways to create nurturing and responsive practices, interactions, and environments that foster trust and emotional security.[7]

Virginia has a long-standing history of coalition building and a focus on quality across all early learning settings (See Appendix A). Over the last 20+ years, Virginia's public and private providers have engaged in meaningful opportunities to improve quality and provide additional information to families who are making choices for their young children. However, VQB5 marks the first unified and non-optional approach to supporting quality early learning systems. Through VQB5, Virginia has embraced an approach to measuring quality and supporting continuous quality improvement for all programs that take public funds, and to prioritize those measures that are shown to support positive child outcomes.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

Virginia State Code directs the Board of Education to establish a unified quality rating and improvement system for all publicly-funded providers. In June 2022, the Board of Education approved the second edition of this document, the Guidelines for Practice Year 2 of the Unified Measurement and Improvement System. Virginia State Code requires that the first full

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[6] Bassok, D., & Markowitz, A. (2020.). *The value of systemwide, high-quality data in early childhood education*. Brown Center Chalkboard.
[7] Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. Curriculum: https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/curriculum

implementation year of VQB5 will take place during the 2023-2024 with publicly posted quality ratings released in the fall of 2024 (See Appendix B for VQB5 development timeline).

This document has been designed for review by the Virginia Board of Education and for review and implementation by publicly-funded birth-to-five programs as of July 1, 2023. It sets forth the expectations for participation and ratings in VQB5 for the 2023-2024 year.

SECTION 2: VIRGINIA'S UNIFIED MEASUREMENT AND IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM (VQB5)

2.1 THEORY OF CHANGE - CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT ACROSS A UNIFIED SYSTEM

All Virginia children should have the opportunity to participate in quality early childhood experiences that enable them to thrive.

Virginia's current public-private early childhood system does not prepare all of the Commonwealth's children to succeed. As noted earlier, the kindergarten readiness data show that four out of ten children in Virginia do not have the opportunity to come to school ready. Moreover, even greater percentages of children who are Black, Hispanic, speak a language other than English at home, or have a diagnosed disability or developmental delay do not have the opportunity to begin school with the key readiness skills needed. Quite simply, the system fails to ensure that families have the opportunity to choose quality early childhood experiences that support their children to develop these key skills. Through the legislative requirement for VQB5, Virginia now has the opportunity to drive quality and improvement in all publicly-funded early childhood programs. If Virginia can 1) continually strengthen the quality of teaching and learning experiences in existing publicly-funded programs and 2) increase the number of children who can access these publicly-funded early childhood experiences in both public and private settings, then more families will have more choices and more children will enter school ready.

2.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

In response to the unification law, the VDOE worked with stakeholders and collaborators to establish a set of guiding principles for the uniform measurement and improvement system. The Guiding Principles below set forth the priorities and practical realities for building a statewide unified measurement and improvement system.

Guiding Principle: *Virginia's new system must:*	Explanation:
1. Impact quality and result in improved school readiness for children.	The ultimate purpose of the unified measurement and improvement system is to improve school readiness for all Virginia's children through continuous quality improvement. Research shows that impacting school preparedness has long-term positive effects on child and societal outcomes. The system should be designed using research on what has a meaningful impact on child learning and school readiness.
2. Use measures that can distinguish levels of quality and demonstrate growth over time.	Teachers and program leaders benefit from feedback on strengths and opportunities. Classroom level change can be motivated by specific information that spotlights areas for growth, and identifies the behaviors that are needed to drive improved experiences for children. The measurement and improvement system must clearly articulate levels of quality and present a clear path for improvement.
3. Provide clear, actionable information, resources, and incentives for improvement.	The measurement and improvement system must inspire action and offer coordinated resources and supports for improvement. The state should also consider formal and informal incentives that motivate community stakeholders, program leaders and educators. All stakeholders should find the information useful and meaningful and understand why these things matter for young learners and their families.
4. Be affordable for providers and the state.	The unified measures must support measurement and improvement, without placing an undue burden on either the programs or the State. The unified measurements must be cost efficient and able to be used year over year.
5. Scale for use up to 4,000 sites and 12,000 classrooms.	The measurement and improvement system needs to reliably and validly measure quality in every publicly-funded infant, toddler, and preschool classroom, including family day homes. This must be achieved in a method that provides reliable and current information to every participating provider across the state.
6. Increase opportunity for all children in 1) the outcomes that are measured, and 2) the process for making and using the system.	Virginia's measurement and improvement system must ensure a level playing field and provide targeted funding to support all programs in meeting such standards, especially programs serving underserved communities and programs that have historically had less access to resources, including family child care. Including the voices and perspectives of all programs, including underrepresented groups, is essential to making sure the unified system serves all of Virginia's children and

	families.
7. Serve as a resource for families.	Families are children's first and most important educators. Virginia's new measurement and improvement system should: 1. Leverage the valuable insight of parents, guardians, and families regarding the care and education their children need, 2. Ensure families can access quality options that provide culturally and linguistically responsive programming, 3. Enable deeper engagement in their child's teaching and learning, and 4. Be designed to inform and support family choice.

2.3 UNIFIED PROGRAM QUALITY STANDARDS

VQB5 measures the quality of infant, toddler, and preschool teaching and learning based on two nationally recognized quality indicators, interactions and curriculum.

- **Interactions -** This standard measures the quality of teacher-child interactions and instruction in a developmentally-appropriate way, as measured by the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). All children benefit socially and academically from being in classrooms with high quality teacher-child interactions, including children from diverse settings, dual language learners (DLLs), and children with special needs.[8]
- **Curriculum** - This standard measures the optional use of a comprehensive curriculum in alignment with Virginia's early learning and development standards to ensure that all areas of learning and development are being covered in developmentally-appropriate ways. This standard will also help ensure that early childhood programs have curricula that provide guidance on how to individualize instruction based on needs, including children with disabilities, suspected delays, or other special needs.

2.4 RATIONALE FOR INTERACTIONS AND CURRICULUM

Interactions and Curriculum were selected for the unified measurement and improvement system based on their close alignment to the Guiding Principles mentioned in the prior section. By focusing on teaching and learning in a simple, clear, and measurable way in every infant, toddler,

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[8] Teachstone Training, LLC. (2020). *Research Validating CLASS® with Child Outcomes across Diverse Populations of Children*.

and preschool classroom, Virginia can motivate meaningful improvement in all publicly-funded birth-to-five early learning settings.[9]

The intent of the unified system is to strengthen teaching and learning across all early childhood settings - regardless of program type, program resources, or educator background. These two measures will provide the clear and consistent information needed to understand the experiences occurring in every infant, toddler, and preschool classroom.

Teacher-child interactions form the foundation for all social and cognitive learning. Studies have shown that quality teacher-child interactions result in improved school readiness for all children. Over 200 research studies have demonstrated the connection between teacher-child interactions and academic and social outcomes.[10] All children benefit from improved teacher-child interactions, including children who are dual language learners and children with special needs. A focus on measuring teacher-child interactions translates into actionable feedback that educators in all early learning settings can implement, presenting opportunities for incremental improvement that motivates educators at every level of the system.

Along with interactions, VQB5 will support quality teaching and learning by promoting curriculum use in all settings. Using approved and effective curricula helps teachers support learning and development of critical learning skills in all early childhood programs and settings.[11] Identifying curriculum that is aligned with Virginia's Early Learning and Development Standards helps ensure that all areas of children's learning and development is addressed.

2.5 ROLE OF READY REGIONS IN VQB5

The Code of Virginia (§ 22.1-289.05) directs the Board of Education to establish a set of regional entities that are responsible for coordinating early childhood care and education services, guiding quality improvement of such services and coordinated access to such services for families, and implementing the uniform measurement and improvement system. In 2021, the VDOE worked closely with the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation to competitively select and launch nine regional entities, now called Ready Regions. The VDOE annually funds the Ready Regions to ensure the regional implementation of VQB5 and support coordination for every birth-to-five provider in the Commonwealth.

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[9] Yoshikawa, H., Weiland, C., Brooks-Gunn, J., Burchinal, M. R., Espinosa, L. M., Gormley, W. T., Ludwig, J., Magnuson, K. A., Phillips, D., & Zaslow, M. J. (2013, October). *Investing in Our Future: The Evidence Base on Preschool Education.*

[10] Teachstone. (2020). *Proving CLASS® Effectiveness— A Research Summary*.

[11] US Administration for Children & Families. (2020). *Criteria for Effective Curricula*. Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center.

Each Ready Region has a lead organization charged to partner with parents, school divisions, social and human services agencies, quality improvement networks, early childhood care and education programs, businesses, and other stakeholder organizations to coordinate and integrate critical services and resources for families with young children. Ready Regions are responsible for the coordination, accountability and family engagement for early childhood programs, including coordination of VQB5 activities.

See Appendix C for a list of Ready Region lead agencies and more detail on the Ready Region Responsibilities for VQB5.

2.6 VQB5'S DATA SYSTEM - LINKB5

In order to measure quality and drive improvement at scale, Virginia has developed a data strategy and uniform data system (LinkB5) for collecting and analyzing measurement and improvement data across early childhood programs participating in VQB5. The use of LinkB5 as is a requirement for all publicly-funded sites as part of VQB5.

All VQB5 participants are required to use LinkB5 to provide information about their sites, classrooms, and teachers through the completion of various profiles. Participants are also asked to provide information about children enrolled in publicly-funded sites in order to better understand the impact of public investments and ensure the growth and improvement of child outcomes at the classroom level. This enables the VDOE to link early childhood data with K-12 longitudinal data and track longer-term outcomes. Ready Regions are responsible for coordinating and monitoring the completion of all VQB5 data entry, including the entry of observation scores. The VDOE funds the University of Virginia to maintain and enhance LinkB5.

The LinkB5 system provides a secure environment for entering and storing data, as well as security protocols allowing end users to access their own data based on their user roles and credentials (e.g., a teacher can access his or her own data, a site director can access information on all teachers and classrooms at the site). The hosting environment that UVA uses for LinkB5 adheres to protocols in place from the Information Technology System department at UVA for sensitive data and is at the same level of security as the PALS and VKRP systems, which house child-level sensitive data. The use of the data by stakeholders, including UVA collaborators, is guided by VDOE-UVA data sharing agreements, as well as the guidance of UVA's Institutional Review Board (IRB), designed to establish data-use protocols in service of protecting confidentiality of data and individual's anonymity.

Through the completion of LinkB5 profiles, Ready Region leaders and program directors are able to use the data to support participating educators and regional planning. The information

gained from LinkB5 assists in the development of resources for communities and families. As a result of robust data collection and data interoperability through LinkB5, Virginia will be able to link early childhood experiences to subsequent student outcomes like VKRP scores, literacy, and overall achievement. Linking these data will enable the Commonwealth to not only strengthen early childhood programs, but to also understand student outcomes downstream and provide families with critical information regarding their students' education and experiences. LinkB5 data can also be used by providers, leaders, and educators to drive improvement within sites and offer targeted supports to the field and to families. Regional and state leaders, community stakeholders, and researchers will benefit from rich, longitudinal data that will contribute to planning efforts, resource development, and innovative research opportunities.

2.7 PROGRESS UPDATE

The opportunity to participate in two optional practice years was critical for both participating programs, teachers and local implementation leaders, as well as critical to the VDOE for learning about areas for clarification.

Practice Year 1 concluded in June 2022. Over 50% of Virginia's publicly-funded early childhood sites opted to participate in Practice Year 1 of VQB5. During the Practice Year 1 registration window in August-September 2021, 1,457 sites completed the registration process, including 669 child care centers, 533 public school preschools and 255 family day homes from across the Commonwealth. During the fall and the spring, Preschool Development Grant (PDG) Communities conducted over 8,000 CLASS observations and feedback sessions in participating infant, toddler, and preschool classrooms, including family day homes. Classroom data profiles, including information on the type of curriculum used, was entered in LinkB5 for 4,724 classrooms. Data from CLASS observations and curriculum use gathered in the fall was used to plan professional development and target resources for improvement support. Nearly 99% of the sites who completed the required VQB5 activities met or exceeded practice year expectations. In addition, over 6,000 child care center teachers and family day home providers are registered to receive a financial incentive of up to $2,000 for participating in VQB5 through RecognizeB5.

Practice Year 2 launched in August 2022 and will conclude in June 2023. During the Practice Year 2 registration window in August-September 2022, 2,632 sites completed the registration process, including 1180 child care centers, 790 public school preschools and 662 family day homes from across the Commonwealth. During the fall, Ready Regions conducted over 7,000 local CLASS observations and feedback sessions in participating infant, toddler, and preschool classrooms, including family day homes. The External Observation Vendor also conducted 1,900 external CLASS observations during the fall window and provided classrooms with an additional source of feedback and a quality assurance check for the state. Classroom data profiles, including

information on the type of curriculum used, was entered in LinkB5 for 8,700 classrooms. Data from fall CLASS observations and curriculum use are being used to guide individualized professional development. In addition, approximately 11,400 teachers from child care centers and family day homes are registered to receive a financial incentive of up to $2,500 for participating in VQB5 Practice Year 2 through RecognizeB5.

See Appendix D for additional data from Practice Year 1 and Practice Year 2

SECTION 3 – PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

According to Code of Virginia (§ 22.1-289.05), all publicly-funded providers shall be required to participate in the uniform measurement and improvement system (VQB5) established by the Board of Education.

All other child day programs may participate in such system. Any participation in such system shall comply with all applicable federal laws and regulations, including the federal Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. § 9801 et seq.), as amended, and associated regulations.

3.1 REQUIREMENTS FOR PUBLICLY-FUNDED PROVIDERS

To meet the participation requirements in the legislation, all publicly-funded programs are required to complete the following VQB5 measurement and improvement activities each year.

1. Sites must complete the registration process between August 15-October 1 in LinkB5, the VQB5 data portal. This includes completing site profiles, site administrator profiles, teacher profiles, and classroom profiles. Every eligible classroom must enter information about their optional use of a VDOE-approved curriculum, as a part of the classroom profile registration, by October 1.
2. Every eligible classroom must complete two local CLASS® observations, one in the fall and one in the spring, with scores entered in LinkB5.
   a. The fall local observation window occurs from August 15 to December 22
   b. The spring local observation window occurs from January 20 to May 31
3. In addition to the two local CLASS® observations coordinated by Ready Regions, all participating sites must participate in external CLASS observations for each age-level served, between August 15 and May 31.

3.1.2 PUBLICLY-FUNDED DEFINITION

"Publicly-funded provider" means any (i) educational program provided by a school division or local government to children between birth and age five or (ii) child day program that receives state or federal funds in support of its operations that serves three or more unrelated children. [12] "Publicly-funded provider" does not include any program for which the sole source of public funding is the federal Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service.

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[12] Code of Virginia (§ 22.1-289.02)

This definition is intended to capture funding sources that support direct early childhood care and educational services for young children. These public funding sources include:

- Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI)
- Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE or IDEA Part B, Section 619 preschool)
- Title I Preschool
- Head Start/Early Head Start[13]
- Virginia's Child Care Subsidy Program
- Local government child care assistance, such as Fairfax's Child Care Assistance and Referral (CCAR) program
- Federal Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS)
- Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF) Mixed Delivery
- Federal Department of Defense Military Child Care Fee Assistance (MCCYN)[14]

The "publicly-funded" participation requirement does not include:

- Any program for which the sole source of public funding is the federal Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service,
- Programs for which the sole source of public funding is COVID-related relief funding that is not related to serving children directly (i.e., ARPA, CARES, PPP),
- Publicly-funded programs that only provide before/after school care, after hours/evening care, or summer camps, and
- Programs that are not operating full-time.

3.1.2a Definition of 'Unrelated Children'
Unrelated children are those who are not a direct relative of a family day home provider or lead teacher. A child who is a "direct relative" means a son, daughter, grandchild, niece, or nephew whether by blood or adoption. Publicly-funded programs that serve three or more unrelated children are required to participate in VQB5. Publicly-funded programs that only serve children who are direct relatives are not required to participate in VQB5.

3.1.3 FULL-TIME PROGRAMS
Full-time refers to a program which operates at least four days per week for at least 128 days per year, with children enrolled in classes that operate for a minimum of 3 hours per day. All publicly-funded full-time programs are required to participate in VQB5.

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[13] Head Start Performance Standard 1302.05 requires all Head Start programs, with the exception of American Indian and Alaska Native programs, to participate in its state or local Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)

[14] As of 2019, the Dept of Defense Military Child Care Fee Assistance Plus program requires community child care programs to be quality rated by their state Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), https://www.childcareaware.org/standards-for-becoming-an-approved-mccyn-plus-provider-in-virginia/

The 'full-time' definition is intended to include all local, state and federally funded programs that provide early care and educational services on a regular and consistent basis and includes:

- All VPI programs - All full day and half day preschool programs that receive VPI funding are considered to be full-time within VQB5 based on the VPI state funding operations requirements outlined in the VPI Guidelines.
- All VECF Mixed Delivery - All Mixed Delivery classrooms are considered to be full-time within VQB5 based on state funding operation requirements that align with the VPI Guidelines.
- All Head Start and Early Head Start programs - All full day and half-day Head Start classrooms are considered to be full-time within VQB5 based on the updated guidance provided in the OHS Program Instruction ACF-PI-HS-21-02 Head Start Center-Based Service Duration Hour Requirements, with the exception of recipient agencies with an approved waiver.
- All other classrooms in public schools, child care centers, or family day homes who operate full day, or half-day schedules for at least 4 days a week on a regular basis.

3.1.1a Programs that Operate Less than Full-time
Publicly-funded early care and education programs that operate less than 3 hours a day, less than 4 days a week and less than 128 days per year are not required to participate in VQB5. Programs that operate less than full-time are not eligible for a VQB5 quality rating.

3.1.4 SITE DEFINITION

For VQB5, a site is defined as one physical location where children are served. Each site (e.g., each public school location, each child care center, etc.) will receive one VQB5 site quality profile, which will include their site's quality rating, based on the measures obtained during the year. This means that, in general, sites that receive multiple sources of public funding will receive one VQB5 site quality profile, which will include their site's quality rating based on the measures obtained during the year from all eligible classrooms at the site's physical location.

3.1.4a Site Separation Request
In a few rare situations where there are multiple programs with differing governing bodies located at the same physical location (i.e., site), and children from each program are enrolled and served in different classrooms, programs may submit a site separation request to VDOE to be rated separately and receive separate site quality profiles.

Sites must submit a site separation request, including all detailed documentation, to vqb5@doe.virginia.gov by July 1 to be considered for the program year.

3.2 ANNUAL REGISTRATION CYCLE

The VQB5 system operates on an annual cycle. All publicly-funded sites with at least one full-time classroom as of October 1 are required to complete annual registration in LinkB5 in order to be considered participating in VQB5. Sites that do not receive public funds have the option to complete registration for VQB5 participation.

3.2.1 REQUIRED REGISTRATION PROFILES

Registration in the VQB5 data portal LinkB5 must be completed between August 15 and October 1 on an annual basis. This includes completing all of the required fields for each of the following profile types in LinkB5:

1) site profiles,
2) site administrator profiles,
3) teacher profiles, and
4) classroom profiles

Publicly-funded sites that do not complete all of the above registration items in the LinkB5 system by October 1st will be out of compliance with state legislation requirements (See Section 3.4 for non-compliance).

All information entered into LinkB5 should be accurate and complete and is subject to verification or requests for documentation from Ready Regions and VDOE.

3.2.1a Designation of Primary Site Administrator

During registration, each site must designate a primary site administrator in LinkB5. The primary site administrator is required to:

- Ensure all site, teacher, and classroom profile information is accurate and reflects actual operations and enrollment as of October 1.
- Ensure appropriate staff are invited into LinkB5 during the registration window and staff who no longer work at the site are removed.
- Ensure current lead and assistant teachers complete their LinkB5 profile during the registration window by the October 1 deadline.
- Ensure all local CLASS scores from fall and spring observations are submitted and verified in LinkB5 by the observation deadlines. (See Section 4 for details).
- Receive and respond to CLASS observation scheduling and documentation requests related to local and external observations. (See Section 4 for details)
- Ensure observation results, feedback reports and other pertinent VQB5 information is shared with the other appropriate site administrators and teachers in a timely manner.

- Receive and coordinate the responses for employment verification requests for teacher eligibility in RecognizeB5 for teachers who meet RecognizeB5 eligibility requirements (See Section 7.6).

3.2.1b Classroom Registration for Family Day Homes

In VQB5, family day homes are sites who are also considered as classrooms as they are places where children are supported to develop and learn. Family day homes typically have one classroom.

If a family day home site operates more than one full-time birth-to-five classroom in their home, with more than one lead teacher they may request to add an additional classroom or classrooms to their LinkB5 site profile as long as the following guidelines are met:
- Children enrolled remain in the same classroom group for at least 3 hours per day and at least 4 days per week.
- The lead teacher remains with the same group of children for at least 3 hours per day and at least 4 days per week.

3.2.1c AM/PM Classroom Registration Requirements

If a lead teacher provides instruction to one group of children in the morning and a different group of children in the afternoon (i.e., AM/PM half-day sessions), both classrooms are required to enter information in separate classroom profiles in LinkB5 by Oct 1, provided that the classrooms each operate at least 3 hours per day, at least 4 days per week and at least 128 days per year. (See Section 4.5.2a for additional information regarding CLASS observation requirements for AM/PM classrooms.)

3.2.1d - Sites and Classrooms that Open after October 1

Publicly-funded sites and classrooms that open after October 1 of a program year are not required to register or complete VQB5 measurement activities until the start of the following program year. Sites that open after October 1 are not eligible for a VQB5 quality rating until the following year.

Sites or classrooms that open after October 1 may opt to participate in some VQB5 activities during the program year in order to prepare for required participation the following year. VQB5 preparation activities could include having the option to enter site information in LinkB5, complete CLASS training, or receive a local CLASS observation for professional development.

3.2.2 VQB5 PARTICIPATION ENROLLMENT MINIMUM

Virginia law indicates that publicly-funded early care and education providers that have fewer than three unrelated children under age 5 enrolled are not required to participate in VQB5. Any provider that serves fewer than three unrelated children under age 5 at the time of the annual registration period (Aug. 15-Oct. 1) must inform the VDOE in writing that it does not meet the

enrollment minimum by October 1 and are subject to annual verification or requests for documentation.

Sites approved to receive public funds who are not receiving any public funds at the time of the annual registration period (Aug. 15-Oct. 1) are required to participate if they meet the participation enrollment minimum.

Sites with fewer than three unrelated children under age 5 enrolled at the time of the annual registration period are not eligible to participate in VQB5 for the program year. This does not apply where a state or federal public funding authority requires VQB5 participation for all programs.

3.2.3 CLASSROOM LISTS

According to the Code of Virginia (§22.1-289.05), the VQB5 system shall include service provision and performance targets for children from birth to age five that align with standards for kindergarten readiness and early elementary grades. This means that VDOE must be able to monitor the growth and improvement of child outcomes at the classroom level in order to clearly understand the impact of classroom quality indicators on kindergarten readiness. VDOE will then be able to link this information with K-12 longitudinal data to understand how these classroom-level experiences impact early elementary grades and longer-term outcomes. Starting in the fall of 2024, VQB5 will require publicly-funded sites to provide information on child enrollment on an annual basis through classroom lists entered in LinkB5. This information will also enable the VDOE to quantify the impact of public investments in the workforce such as RecognizeB5.

In 2023-2024, publicly-funded sites are strongly encouraged to complete classroom lists for all VQB5 eligible classrooms in existence as of October 1. Class lists should be uploaded by November 30.

Uploading class lists includes successfully entering the following information in LinkB5 by November 30 for all children in all VQB5 eligible classrooms:
- Children's first and last names
- State-issued student testing identifiers (if applicable)
- Child demographics

Sites will receive reminders and technical assistance to assist with meeting the deadline of November 30.

Public schools do not have to complete the LinkB5 class list upload requirement. For public schools, this information has already been collected through the required Fall Student Record

Collection, managed by the VDOE for all public schools. The information from this alternate process is uploaded in LinkB5 to meet the goals of the class list.

In order to protect the critical information stored in LinkB5, the VDOE has worked closely with UVA to evaluate and expand security and safety procedures. LinkB5 has received Enterprise Cloud Oversight Service (ECOS) approval for sensitive data through the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA). The system meets all Commonwealth standards, including the Hosting Environment Information Security Standard (SEC525) and is in compliance with the Code of Virginia §2-2.2009. LinkB5 has robust security protocols in place and completes annual SOC2 Type II assessment reviews.

3.3 SITE AND CLASSROOM CLOSURES

If a site or classroom closes during the 2023-2024 year and/or is no longer serving three or more unrelated children, the site administrator may request that the site or classroom be deactivated in LinkB5 and excluded from the VQB5 required activities for the current year. Closure requests can be submitted for all registered sites or classrooms that have permanently closed, or for temporary closures longer than 30 days (See Section 3.3.1 below).

- Requests for fall closures (sites or classrooms) must be submitted at least three weeks prior to the end of the fall observation window
- Requests for spring closures (sites or classrooms) must be submitted at least three weeks prior to the end of the spring observation window.

Sites may notify the VDOE of a Site or Classroom Closure by emailing vqb5@doe.virginia.gov.

3.3.1 DEFINITION OF A CLOSED SITE OR CLASSROOM
A closed site or classroom is one that was operating full-time with three or more unrelated children enrolled during the VQB5 registration window, but then ceases to operate full-time and/or serve three or more unrelated children permanently or temporarily during the fall or spring observation windows.

- Permanently closed sites or classrooms are those sites that are no longer operating full-time and/or no longer serving at least three unrelated children and are not expected to reopen full-time or serve three or more unrelated children at any point during the fall or spring observation window.
- Temporarily closed sites or classrooms are those that are not operating full-time and/or not serving at least three unrelated children for a short period of time.
    - Sites or classrooms not operating full-time and/or not serving at least three unrelated children for 30 days or more during the fall or spring observation windows will be eligible to request a classroom closure in VQB5.

- Sites or classrooms not operating full-time and/or not serving three or more unrelated children for less than 30 days are not eligible for a classroom closure in VQB5.

3.4 CONSEQUENCES FOR NON-PARTICIPATION

The Code of Virginia (§ 22.1-289.05) indicates that "All publicly-funded providers shall be required to participate in the uniform measurement and improvement system" and charges the Board of Education to "establish consequences for publicly-funded providers that fail to participate."

Publicly-funded sites who do not complete the registration and enrollment minimum requirements outlined above will be notified in writing by VDOE that they are out of compliance with the law and will be given a time-bound deadline to complete registration in LinkB5 in order to maintain public funding eligibility.

Sites who do not comply with the law after receiving notification from VDOE may have their current public funding terminated, with potential restrictions for future public funding. VDOE will also notify the applicable local, state, and/or federal funding authorities in writing that the site is out of compliance with state law.

All publicly-funded sites will receive multiple communications and notices from VDOE and Ready Regions regarding VQB5 requirements for fall 2023, with the goal of avoiding consequences for sites. All publicly-funded sites will be notified in writing at least twice before the August 15 registration window opens to ensure they are informed about the participation requirements, including the requirement to complete registration by October 1.

Publicly-funded sites that do not comply will put their public funds at risk. Below are the steps that the VDOE will take in the case that a site is known to be accepting public funds, but has not completed registration by October 1:
- Sites will be notified in writing by VDOE that they are out of compliance with the law. This notification will clarify that they have 10 business days from receipt to register through LinkB5.
  - This will include informing participating families, in writing, and offering to facilitate their transitions to other sites.
- If the site does not register within 10 business days, VDOE will send a second written communication regarding non-compliance. This second notification will inform the site, in writing, that they continue to be in noncompliance with state law and inform them that

if they do not comply in 30 days their participation in the applicable public funding program/s will be terminated.
   - ○ This will include informing participating families, in writing, and facilitating their transitions to other sites.
- If after 30 days, the site is still out of compliance, VDOE, in consultation with the Attorney General, will provide a final notice of non-compliance and, where applicable, notice of termination of public funding to the site.
   - ○ This will include notifying any enrolled publicly-funded families in writing, and facilitating their transitions to other sites.
   - ○ Funding will be immediately terminated for sites that voluntarily take Child Care Subsidy, VPI, or Mixed Delivery funding.
   - ○ For Head Start and other funding sources that are not directly controlled by the state, the VDOE will work with the appropriate public funding authority to remove any non-compliant provider from their system.

Note that these steps outline the minimum process; the VDOE reserves the authority to add additional steps to improve communication or compliance.

VDOE will work with leaders from each public funding authority to establish additional notification procedures and follow up steps for the 2023-2024 year, with the goal of ensuring programs have the opportunity to meet legislation requirements and any unintended consequences/burden on families is limited to the extent possible.

SECTION 4: CLASS OBSERVATION REQUIREMENTS

4.1 RATIONALE FOR USING THE CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT SCORING SYSTEM (CLASS)

The quality of interactions between teachers and children is measured in VQB5 through use of the nationally recognized CLASS tool. CLASS stands for **CL**assroom **A**ssessment **S**coring **S**ystem. The CLASS is a tool for observing and assessing the characteristics of interactions among teachers and children in classrooms developed at the University of Virginia's Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL).

The CLASS tool was chosen for use in VQB5 because it provides a rigorous and consistent approach to observing and measuring teacher-child interactions during critical developmental periods, while still providing a context-specific and developmentally sensitive metric for each age group. In addition:

- The CLASS is the most researched and validated observation measure of early childhood teaching and classroom quality. Over 200 published studies show that students who attend classrooms with higher CLASS scores have better social and academic outcomes.
- All children benefit socially and academically from being in classrooms with high quality teacher-child interactions as measured by CLASS,[15] including classrooms and family day homes with diverse populations: Dual Language Learners (DLL), children from migrant families, tribal communities, children with special needs, and children from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Interactions, when measured by CLASS, promote incremental improvement that motivates educators at every level in the system. CLASS provides actionable feedback for every classroom and can be used with all educators, regardless of background, setting, or credential.

4.2 CLASS TOOLS USED IN VQB5

VQB5 uses the Infant, Toddler, and Pre-K CLASS observation tools. Each tool is developed specifically to evaluate the classroom characteristics and teacher-child interactions needed to promote child learning and development within each specific age range. In Virginia's system, family day home sites are considered as classrooms as they are places where children are supported to develop and learn (family day homes typically have one classroom).

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[15] Teachstone®. (2021). *Research*. Teachstone® Every student deserves life-changing teachers.

- Infant CLASS is used to observe classrooms that serve birth-18 months
- Toddler CLASS is used to observe classrooms that serve 15-36 months
- Pre-K CLASS is used to observe classrooms that serve 3–5-year-olds
  - For 2023-2024, VQB5 will use the original 2008 version of Pre-K CLASS.
- Mixed Age Settings, such as family day homes, use the CLASS tool that aligns with the age of the majority of children served.

To address the unique needs of learners with special needs or developmental delays, ECSE self-contained Pre-K classrooms may be allowed to use the Toddler CLASS based on the children's developmental age and IEP goals. Programs must notify VDOE at VQB5@doe.virginia.gov by October 1 to request the use of the Toddler CLASS tool and are subject to annual verification and requests for documentation.

4.2.1 CERTIFIED CLASS OBSERVERS

Observers using the CLASS tool must successfully complete observer training and pass the reliability test through Teachstone to receive an official observer card and certificate from Teachstone. Only Teachstone is permitted to determine an individual's reliability and certification status for purposes of being eligible to complete CLASS observations for VQB5.

In addition to being a certified observer and using the appropriate age-level CLASS manual, CLASS observers in VQB5 must use Teachstone's guidance for conducting observations in the following settings:
- Family Day Homes - Guidance for Observing in Family Day Homes
- Early Childhood Special Education Classrooms – Guidance for Using CLASS in Settings that Serve Children with Disabilities
- Classrooms with Dual Language Learners - Observing in Settings Serving Dual Language Learners, Birth-to-Five

4.2.2 CLASS DIMENSIONS INCLUDED IN VQB5
For each age-level, the CLASS tool organizes effective classroom interactions into broad categories or domains, which are further subdivided into dimensions. These dimensions are based solely on observed interactions between teachers and children in classrooms; this system does not evaluate the presence of materials, the physical environment or safety, or the adoption of a specific curriculum. VQB5 CLASS observations include all applicable dimensions for each age-level tool as listed below.

Figure 4.2.2 CLASS Domains and Dimensions Measured in VQB5

Infant Domain and Dimensions	Toddler Domains and Dimensions	Pre-K Domains and Dimensions
Responsive Caregiving ● Relational Climate (RC) ● Teacher Sensitivity (TS) ● Facilitated Exploration (FE) ● Early Language Support (ELS)	**Emotional and Behavioral Support** ● Positive Climate (PC) ● Negative Climate (NC) ● Teacher Sensitivity (TS) ● Regard for Child Perspectives (RCP) ● Behavior Guidance (BG) **Engaged Support for Learning** ● Facilitation of Learning & Development (FLD) ● Quality of Feedback (QF) ● Language Modeling (LM)	**Emotional Support** ● Positive Climate (PC) ● Negative Climate (NC) ● Teacher Sensitivity (TS) ● Regard for Student Perspectives (RSP) **Classroom Organization** ● Behavior Management (BM) ● Productivity (PR) ● Instructional Learning Formats (ILF) **Instructional Support** ● Concept Development (CD) ● Quality of Feedback (QF) ● Language Modeling (LM)
View CLASS Dimensions Summary Tools for age-level dimension descriptions View Birth-to-Five CLASS alignment summary		

4.3 SCORING WITH THE CLASS

In accordance with the manual, CLASS observers in VQB5 capture lower quality and higher quality behaviors that are demonstrated in classrooms. CLASS requires the observer to assign one score for each dimension per observation cycle based on the degree to which certain behavioral markers characterize the classroom during that cycle. A score from 1 (minimally characteristic) to 7 (highly characteristic) is given for each dimension and represents the extent to which that dimension is characteristic of that classroom.

Scores are assigned using the following scale for each dimension.
● **Low scores (1-2)** are assigned when behaviors associated with a dimension were demonstrated in a low-quality manner, were lacking, or were rarely present in the classroom interactions.
● **Mid scores (3-5)** are assigned when the classroom interactions associated with a dimension were somewhat present during the classroom observation or a part of some children's experience.
● **High scores (6-7)** are assigned when the classroom interactions were highly characteristic of a dimension during the observation. High-range behaviors are those that

are meaningful, consistent, sustained, and reflective of everyone's experience in the classroom.

4.3.1 OBSERVATION CYCLES IN VQB5

CLASS provides specific directions for observing classrooms, including family day homes as outlined in the manual for each age-level tool.

- Each cycle of observation for Pre-K and Toddler CLASS consists of a 20-minute period during which the observer watches classroom interaction and takes notes followed by a 10-minute period for recording scores.
- Observation cycles are 15 minutes in Infant CLASS followed by a 10-minute period for recording scores.

CLASS Observations in VQB5 require four observation cycles for all CLASS observations. This results in a total of 80 minutes of observed teacher-child interactions in preschool and toddler classrooms, and 60 minutes of observed interactions in infant classrooms.

4.4 TYPES OF CLASS OBSERVATIONS IN VQB5

There are two types of CLASS observations conducted in VQB5: local and external observations. These observations have different purposes and frequencies during the annual measurement and improvement cycle as described below.

	Local Observations	**External Observations**
Purpose	Used for gathering classroom-level information about the quality of teacher-child interactions and to provide individualized feedback in VQB5.	Used by the state to gather information about the accuracy and consistency of local observations across the Ready Regions and to provide additional feedback in VQB5.
Definition	Coordinated and scheduled at the local level through Ready Regions, with results recorded in LinkB5. Conducted by locally identified reliable observers.	Coordinated, scheduled, and recorded for the state by the Teachstone External Observation Team. Conducted by externally identified reliable Teachstone observers.
Annual Cycle	In VQB5, all birth-to-five classrooms will get two local observations each year. One in the fall and one in the spring.	In VQB5, only some birth-to-five classrooms will get an external observation. All sites will receive external observations in at least one of their classrooms, for each age-level.

Through both local and external observation, early childhood classrooms are better prepared to support child learning and development.

4.5 LOCAL OBSERVATION REQUIREMENTS

Local CLASS observations are used to gather classroom level information about the quality of teacher-child interactions and to provide individualized feedback to educators. In a VQB5 local CLASS observation, certified observers from the local community, such as principals, site directors, early childhood coordinators, or instructional specialists, conduct observations of the early childhood classrooms within their community. Local CLASS Observations are coordinated by Ready Regions and occur twice a year in every participating classroom.

4.5.1 REQUIREMENTS FOR LOCAL OBSERVERS

In addition to being certified by Teachstone (See Section 4.2.1), local observers must meet the following requirements:

- Local observers must be reliable for each version of the tool they observe with (Pre-K, Toddler, Infant)
- Local observers must maintain their certification each year by passing an online recertification test.
  - o If more than a year has lapsed, local observers need to take the CLASS Observer Training and certification again before conducting any CLASS observation.

Ready Regions have discretion in who may serve as local observers. Local observers may have working relationships with the sites and/or teachers they are observing, such as site director, program coordinator, or principal.

- Local observers are not allowed to observe teachers that they have a direct personal relationship with, such as a spouse or other relative.
- Local observers are not allowed to serve as VQB5 external CLASS observers in Virginia within the same region.

4.5.2 ANNUAL LOCAL OBSERVATION REQUIREMENTS
Ready Regions are responsible for making sure that every participating classroom is locally observed twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring. All local observations must take place during the following observation windows.

- The fall local observation window occurs from August 15 to December 22.
- The spring local observation window occurs from January 20 to May 31.

Fall local CLASS observations should not be scheduled during the first two weeks of school, to give teachers and children an opportunity to adjust to the classroom setting.

Local CLASS observations completed outside of these observation windows will not be counted in the site's overall quality rating. Sites who do not complete local CLASS observations during the above windows will be subject to consequences as outlined in Section 4.8.

4.5.2a AM/PM Classroom Observation Requirements
If a lead teacher provides instruction to one group of children in the morning and a different group of children in the afternoon (i.e., AM/PM half-day sessions), only the AM classroom needs to be observed once in the fall and once in the spring, as long as the following guidelines are met:
- The lead teacher is the same for both the AM and PM classrooms, and
- The group of children in the AM and PM classrooms are the same age-level, and
- The physical space used for instruction is the same for the AM and PM classrooms and,
- The instruction is generally provided in the same manner for the AM/PM classrooms,
  - There are no significant differences in the skills taught, language of instruction, or activities for the AM/PM classrooms.
  - If a curriculum is used, it must be the same curriculum in both the AM/PM classrooms.

Sites with AM/PM classrooms that meet the requirements above must notify Ready Regions and VDOE by October 1 to and are subject to annual verification or requests for documentation.

If the above items do not all apply to the AM and PM classrooms, then both the AM and PM classrooms must be observed.

4.5.3 LOCAL OBSERVATION PROTOCOLS

The following procedures are to be followed for all local CLASS observations in VQB5. Ready Regions are responsible for ensuring all local observers receive training and ongoing support with observation protocols.

A. BEFORE THE LOCAL OBSERVATION	
A.1 Determining Which Tool to Use	Local observations will be conducted in all infant, toddler, and preschool classrooms in sites participating in VQB5 using the following developmentally-appropriate tools: • Infant CLASS should be used to observe classrooms that serve birth-18 months • Toddler CLASS should be used to observe classrooms that serve 15-36 months • Pre-K CLASS should be used to observe classrooms that

	serve 3–5-year-olds
	○ For 2023-2024, VQB5 will use the original 2008 version of Pre-K CLASS.
	For observations in mixed-age classrooms and family day homes, the following guidelines are to be used to determine the appropriate age-group tool.
	● If the classroom contains a mix of infants, toddlers, and Pre-K aged children, use the tool that matches the majority of the children. For instance, if a classroom includes 1 infant, 1 toddler, and 5 Pre-K children, use the Pre-K CLASS tool.
	● If there are an equal number of children across age groups, use the Toddler tool. For instance, if a classroom includes 3 toddlers and 3 Pre-K children, use the Toddler CLASS tool.
A.2 Observing in Diverse Settings	In addition to selecting the appropriate age-level CLASS manual, observers must review guidance provided by Teachstone for conducting observations in the following settings: ● Family Day Homes - Guidance for Observing in Family Day Homes ● Early Childhood Special Education Classrooms - Guidance for Using CLASS in Settings that Serve Children with Disabilities ● Classrooms with Dual Language Learners - Observing in Settings Serving Dual Language Learners, Birth-to-Five Observers must be able to speak and understand the primary language of instruction used in the classroom.
A.3 Notification of Local Observations	Ready Regions may optionally provide teachers with a predetermined window of time during which unannounced local observations may take place or they may optionally decide to tell teachers the exact time and date of their local observation. Ready Regions are not required to notify teachers when local observations are taking place.
A.5 Foundational CLASS Training	Ready Regions must ensure that all teachers and leaders who are new to CLASS are provided with opportunities to complete foundational CLASS training prior to the classroom observation.

A.6 Health and Safety Procedures	Local setting (e.g., school-based, community-based) procedures and requirements for volunteers and visitors must always be followed (e.g., health & safety, background check, identification presented). Ready Regions or the local observer must ask about these procedures prior to the observation.
A.7 Recorded Video and Remote-Live Observations	Use of recorded video or remote-level observations is allowed in VQB5 provided that the following guidance provided by Teachstone is followed. Recorded Video Observations are those in which the teacher and children are recorded via video tape while they are physically together in a classroom, and then scored at a later time by a CLASS certified observer. • Guidance for Recording and Coding Video Observations Remote-live observations are those in which the teacher and children are physically together in a classroom, but the observer joins via Zoom or another video conferencing platform that allows the observer to watch the classroom in real time. • Guidance for Conducting Remote-Live Observations
B. DURING THE LOCAL OBSERVATION	
B.1 Length of Observations	Pre-K and Toddler Observations include four 20-minute observation cycles with a 10-minute coding session following each cycle (approximately 2 hours total). Infant CLASS observations include four 15-minute cycles with a 10-minute coding session following each cycle. There are a few circumstances where it is allowable for a cycle to be less than 20 minutes, such as a fire drill or sudden illness of the teacher that occurs in the middle of an observation cycle. In these situations, CLASS codes can still be assigned, provided that at least 10 minutes of observation have occurred. Local observers should use the guidance in Chapter 2 of each age-level CLASS manual, in the section on "*Rules for What to Observe and Terminating a Cycle*".
B.2 Activities to Observe	Local observers should ask about the typical classroom schedule prior to the observation to ensure that both structured and unstructured times of the day can be observed.

	Activities, transitions, and routines, including snacks and meals, in the morning or afternoon may be observed (mornings are typically preferred).

Time periods that should not be observed include: when the whole group leaves the classroom for "specials" which are taught by a different teacher (such as PE, music, art), or for cafeteria meals when children are allowed to sit with peers from different classrooms and are not supervised by one of their lead teachers.

In the case of children napping in infant, toddler, and mixed age classrooms (such as family day homes), only one child needs to be awake in order for the observation to proceed. For preschool classrooms, nap time should not be observed.

Observation of outdoor activities varies by age-level. Observers should follow the guidance in each age-level manual to determine whether or not outdoor activities should be included in the observation cycle. |
| **B.3 Adults to Observe** | The lead teacher should be present. Long-term substitutes may be observed in the assigned lead teachers place if they have been present in the classroom for 10 consecutive days.

If a new lead teacher is assigned to a classroom during the fall or spring observation window, they should not be observed during their first 2 weeks to give them time to adjust to their new teaching assignment.

Observations in the following situations may also be conducted when the lead teacher or a long-term sub is not present in order to observe children's typical experiences:

- A director, assistant teacher, substitute, or floater teacher who has led instruction for 10 or more non-consecutive days within the observation window can be observed.

- A short-term substitute can be observed, if there is another adult instructional leader in the room that typically leads instruction when the lead teacher is not present (such as an assistant teacher).

Observers should follow the CLASS manual, which states that observers watch children's interactions with all teachers/adults in the room/area. |

	At times, teachers may switch groups of children throughout the day. If this is typical practice and the lead teacher is still present and engaged with children, the observer may continue to observe even if the children in the classroom have changed.
B.4 Child Attendance	At least 50% of children enrolled (or typically in attendance) must be present during the observation. If less than 50% of children are present when the observer arrives, and this is not typical attendance for this time of day, Ready Regions will work with the program to reschedule the local observation. If less than 50% of child attendance occurs again during the rescheduled observation, Ready Regions should notify VDOE. This may be considered a concerning pattern and may result in additional external observations to ensure the site can meet requirements. (See Section 4.6.2)
B.5 Observer Interactions	Observers should use a gaze that appears to float over the teacher, child, or group rather than directly staring at individuals for long periods of time. If children approach the observer, observers should only acknowledge their presence with a warm smile or a nod. More engagement than this may cause the observer to distract from classroom processes being observed, and potentially disrupt the classroom and observation results.
B.6 Note-taking and Note Retention	Detailed notes with concrete examples must be taken for each dimension during every observation cycle. All notes and scores must be recorded on the official CLASS scoresheets. Original or complete copies of scoresheets with notes from local observations must be saved as back-up documentation for at least two years after the observation. (See Item C.4 below for record keeping details)
B.7 Scoring Cycles	For the 10-minute coding sessions following each 20-minute observation cycle, observers may select to remain in the classroom or leave the classroom to complete coding. Observers do not conduct observations during the 10-minute coding sessions.

	Observers do not conduct more than four cycles of observations.
B.8 Health and Safety Concerns	In the unusual circumstance of any suspected abuse or neglect observed at the time of the observation, the observer must report the observed behaviors to <u>Child Protective Services</u> as mandated by law. For other observed issues that significantly impact the health and safety of the children in care, observers can <u>report concerns to the VDOE.</u> Local observers must report observed health and safety concerns to Ready Regions. Ready Regions must share reported concerns with VDOE (vqb5@doe.virginia.gov).

C. AFTER THE LOCAL OBSERVATION	
C.1 Determining Scores	When determining CLASS scores, observers follow the guidelines on the appropriate pages of the CLASS manual and CLASS Scoring Summary Sheet.
C.2 Submitting Scores into LinkB5	Local observation scores must be entered into the LinkB5 data portal within 10 business days of the observation, or by the end of the observation period, whichever is first. Scores for Toddler and Pre-K Negative Climate should be entered in LinkB5 as the raw score (not reversed). All local observers are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of their CLASS scores before submitting scores in LinkB5.
C.3 Site Admin Score Review and Verification in LinkB5	Once scores have been submitted by the local observer in LinkB5, the primary site administrator, or other designated site administrator, must review and verify scores in LinkB5 within 10 business days, or by the end of the observation window whichever comes first. Verification of scores in LinkB5 includes checking to make sure the following observation information is accurate: • The name of the local observer • The date the observation occurred • The Negative Climate scores have been entered as the raw score (not reversed)

| | If the information listed above was not entered correctly, the site administrator should reject the scores in LinkB5 and contact the Ready Region. Observers must make requested corrections within 3 business days, or by the end of the observation period, whichever is first. Ready Regions may request additional documentation from the observer to verify the accuracy of the requested correction if needed.

If the site administrator rejects the CLASS scores due to a concern about the observation results, the site should request a VDOE CLASS observation review by emailing vqb5@doe.virginia.gov (See Section 4.9 for details). |
|---|---|
| **C.4 Record Keeping** | After the local observation and feedback form has been completed, observers send their CLASS scoresheets to the Ready Region lead agency. It is also acceptable for original or complete copies of scoresheets to be stored securely by the observer as long as they are easily accessible if requested for an audit by the Ready Region Lead and/or VDOE within 3 business days. |
| **C.5 Feedback** | The observer (or assigned feedback provider, in the case that a local observer is not in a position to provide the teacher feedback) must schedule a time to meet with each teacher or teaching team within 10 business days of the observation, or by the end of the observation period, whichever is first.

Local observers should use either the feedback templates posted on the VDOE VQB5 webpage, or another similar template provided by Ready Regions to share scores, ranges, and notes on what was observed (including positive examples).

Local observers should provide high-quality supportive feedback that recognizes teachers' strengths while also focusing on opportunities for growth and skill development. (See Section 7.2.2a for additional information about providing feedback in local observations.) |

4.6 EXTERNAL CLASS OBSERVATION REQUIREMENTS

VQB5 primarily relies on local observations and local feedback to produce site quality ratings and drive quality improvement across all of Virginia's publicly-funded classroom settings. Considering VQB5 includes thousands of observers who observe 12,000+ classrooms across diverse age groups and settings, the VDOE must ensure the consistency, reliability, and accuracy of these local observations. The VDOE funds, oversees, and uses VQB5 external observations to ensure statewide consistency by providing an impartial, external comparison point and to promote continual improvement of local observer capacity. This includes using external observations to 1) confirm the accuracy of local observers by providing an impartial, external comparison point 2) provide professional development to local observers to identify issues of "drift" as they continue to strengthen in their practice of the CLASS tool, and 3) provide additional feedback to educators. Starting in 2023, VQB5 will also employ a score replacement protocol to replace scores that are significantly different from the external observations results in the rating calculation. Continually evaluating the alignment between local and external observations enables the VDOE to continuously monitor the consistency, quality, and credibility of VQB5 local observations.

In VQB5, external classroom observations are conducted by a certified CLASS observer who is not employed by the program and has no relationship to the school, program, or classroom. This reduces the risk of actual or perceived observer bias. In addition, external observers participate in additional rigorous training to maintain their observation skills that go above and beyond what is expected of local observers. These requirements, which are detailed below, help ensure external classroom observations are conducted reliably and consistently statewide for compatibility.

External observations are conducted by a contracted party, selected by the VDOE. In 2022, the VDOE conducted a competitive Request For Proposals to identify an external observer contractor. The Teachstone External Observation Team will continue as the contractor for external observations in 2023-2024.

4.6.1 REQUIREMENTS FOR EXTERNAL OBSERVERS

In addition to being certified by Teachstone (See Section 4.2.1), external observers must meet the following requirements:

- Individual external observers must be reliable for each version of the tool they observe with (Pre-K, Toddler, Infant)
- External observers must maintain their certification each year by passing an online recertification test.

- o If more than a year has lapsed, external observers need to take the CLASS Observer Training and certification again before conducting any CLASS observations.
- External observers cannot have any direct working relationship or other potential conflict of interest with the sites, teachers, or classrooms they are observing. (See Appendix E for External Observer Conflict of Interest Policy.)
- External observers must complete anti-bias training and training for observing in different types of settings including Special Education, Family Day Homes, and Dual Language Learners.
- External observers must complete at least one calibration monthly. Observers who are certified on multiple age-levels of the CLASS tool will alternate the age-level at which they calibrate on a monthly basis.
  - o External observers are required to achieve at least an 80% reliability rate on each calibration for all three age-levels of the CLASS tool - Infant, Toddler, and Pre-K. If an observer does not achieve at least an 80% reliability rate, they are removed from observations at that age-level until they calibrate successfully.
- External observers must complete at least one double-coding session per program year as an inter-rater reliability check. External observer pairs must achieve at least an 85% inter-rater reliability rate across the four-cycle observation.

4.6.2 ANNUAL CYCLE EXTERNAL OBSERVATION REQUIREMENTS

In VQB5 Year 1 (2023-2024), external CLASS observations will be completed at every site with every age-level at a site receiving at least one external observation annually, in approximately 75% of all participating classrooms. Doing so will provide sufficient data to ensure consistency and fairness across the state in all programs and age-levels served.

- Sites with more than one age-level (infant, toddler or pre-K), will receive at least one external observation for each age-level served.
- Sites with only one age-level served or with only one mixed age classroom, such as a family day home, will receive at least one external observation annually.

The majority of external observations will be assigned to registered classrooms at random, with the objective of providing an external observation to every age-level within each site during the observation windows, which align with the local observation windows.

- The fall external observation window will be August 15-December 22
- The spring external observation window will be Jan. 20-May 31

Fall external CLASS observations will not be scheduled during the first two weeks of school, to give teachers and children an opportunity to adjust to the classroom setting.

In addition to the randomly selected classrooms, external observations will also be required in classrooms to address the following circumstances:

- Unusual scoring patterns such as all high scores (6 or higher) or all low scores (2 or lower).
- Unusual age-level tool selection, such as observing a Pre-K classroom with the Toddler CLASS tool (or) the use of different age-level tools for a local and external observation completed in the same classroom, during the same window.
- Incomplete local observation during the designated fall or spring window. (See Section 4.8)
- Discrepancies found during a VDOE CLASS observation review. (See Section 4.9)
- Other concerning patterns or unusual circumstances.

External observations for any of the above circumstances means that an individual classroom may receive more than one external observation during the program year. There is not a limit on the number of external observations that a classroom may receive. External observations may also be completed outside of the designated fall/spring observation windows in order to fulfill legislative requirements.

4.6.3 EXTERNAL OBSERVATION PROTOCOLS

The following procedures are to be followed for all external CLASS observations in VQB5. The external observation contractor is responsible for ensuring all external observers receive training and ongoing support with observation protocols.

A. BEFORE THE EXTERNAL OBSERVATION	
A.1 Determining Which Tool to Use	External observations conducted for VQB5 will use the following developmentally-appropriate tools: ● Infant CLASS will be used to observe classrooms that serve birth-18 months ● Toddler CLASS will be used to observe classrooms that serve 15-36 months ● Pre-K CLASS will be used to observe classrooms that serve 3–5-year-olds ○ For 2023-2024, VQB5 will use the original 2008 version of Pre-K CLASS. (See Section 4.2 for details) For observations in mixed-age classrooms and family day homes, the following guidelines are to be used to determine the appropriate age-group tool.

	- If the classroom contains a mix of infants, toddlers, and Pre-K aged children, use the tool that matches the majority of the children. For instance, if a classroom includes 1 infant, 1 toddler, and 5 Pre-K children, use the Pre-K CLASS tool. - If there are an equal number of children across age groups, use the Toddler tool. For instance, if a classroom includes 3 toddlers and 3 Pre-K children, use the Toddler CLASS tool.
A.2 Observing in Diverse Settings	In addition to selecting the appropriate age-level CLASS manual, external observers must complete training in observing in the following settings in alignment with Teachstone's guidance: - Family Day Homes - Guidance for Observing in Family Day Homes - Early Childhood Special Education Classrooms - Observing in Settings Serving Children with Special Needs Birth-to-Five - Classrooms with Dual Language Learners - Observing in Settings Serving Dual Language Learners, Birth-to-Five Observers must be able to speak and understand the primary language of instruction used in the classroom.
A.3 Notification of External Observations	The external observation team will notify the primary site administrator listed in LinkB5 via email at least two weeks before the first business day of the three-week observation window. The notification email will not include the specific classrooms receiving an external observation. The primary site administrator should share the observation window dates with all applicable staff at the site so that all staff are prepared for an observation to occur in their classroom if they are selected. The external observation team will also notify Ready Regions with a list of sites who are scheduled to receive external observations in the upcoming observation window. Ready Regions should share the observation window with the applicable site administrators to ensure that observation notifications have been received.
A.2 External Observation Window and Blackout Dates	External observations will be conducted within a three-week observation window. The primary site administrator may

	identify three blackout dates within the window as 'do not observe' dates. Blackout dates must be provided to the external observation contractor at least one week in advance of the observation window. • If the observation is confirmed as having been scheduled on a blackout date (i.e., it is a contractor error), the observation will be rescheduled on a date that does not conflict with blackout dates. • If site administration fails to provide blackout dates one week in advance of the observation window, the observation will take place in any classroom at the site.
A.6 Health and Safety Procedures	External observers must have a government-issued ID (i.e., driver's license, passport) as well as a VQB5 External Observer name tag with a photo to present when they arrive on site. External Observers are required to have a background check that is aligned with VDOE Child Care Licensing checks and verification of a negative TB Test to be kept on file by the external observation contractor.
B. DURING THE EXTERNAL OBSERVATION	
B.1 Time of Day	External observations can occur at any time of day, however, as much as possible, external observers will aim to arrive at the start time provided by the identified primary site administrator. If the primary site administrator does not provide a start time, observers will default to a start time of 8:45 am.
B.2 Length of External Observations	Pre-K and Toddler Observations include four 20-minute observation cycles with a 10-minute coding session following each cycle (approximately 2 hours total). Infant CLASS observations include four 15-minute cycles with a 10-minute coding session following each cycle. In a few select, circumstances it is allowable for a cycle to be less than 20 minutes, such as a fire drill or sudden illness of the teacher that occurs in the middle of an observation cycle. In these situations, CLASS codes can still be assigned, provided that at least 10 minutes of observation have occurred. Local observers should use the guidance in Chapter 2 of each age-level CLASS manual, in the section on "*Rules for What to Observe and Terminating a Cycle*".

B.3 Activities to Observe	Activities, transitions, and routines, including snacks and meals, in the morning or afternoon may be observed. (mornings are typically preferred, See Item B.1 above).
	Time periods that should not be observed include: when the whole group leaves the classroom for "specials" which are taught by a different teacher (such as PE, music, art), or for cafeteria meals when children are allowed to sit with peers from different classrooms and are not supervised by one of their lead teachers.
	In the case of children napping in infant, toddler, and mixed age classrooms (such as family day homes), only one child needs to be awake in order for the observation to proceed. For preschool classrooms, nap time should not be observed.
	Observation of outdoor activities varies by age-level. Observers should follow the guidance in each age-level manual to determine whether or not outdoor activities should be included in the observation cycle.
B.4 Adults to Observe	The lead teacher should be present during an observation. Long-term substitutes may be observed (e.g., typically any lead teacher present in the classroom for 10 consecutive days).
	If a new lead teacher is assigned to a classroom during the fall or spring observation window, they should not be observed during their first 2 weeks to give them time to adjust to their new teaching assignment.
	External observations in the following situations may also be conducted when the lead teacher or a long-term sub is not present in order to capture children's typical experiences and fulfill legislative requirements:
	● A director, assistant teacher, substitute, or floater teacher who has led instruction for 10 or more non-consecutive days within the observation window can be observed.
	● A short-term substitute can be observed, if there is another adult instructional leader in the room that typically leads instruction when the lead teacher is not present (such as an assistant teacher).

	Observers should follow guidance in the CLASS manual, which states that observers watch children's interactions with all teachers/adults in the room/area.
	At times, teachers may switch groups of children throughout the day. If this is typical practice and the lead teacher is still present and engaged with children, the observer may continue to observe.
B.5 Child Attendance	At least 50% of children enrolled (or typically in attendance) must be present during the observation.
	If less than 50% of children are present when the external observer arrives, the external observer will wait for one hour to see if more children arrive. If the number of children does not reach 50% of expected attendance after one hour, the external observation team will work with the site to reschedule the observation.
	If less than 50% of child attendance occurs again during the rescheduled observation, the external observation team will notify VDOE. This would be considered a concerning pattern and may result in additional external observations or consequences to ensure the site completes participation requirements. (See Section 4.8)
B.6 Observer Interactions	Observers should use a gaze that appears to float over the teacher, child, or group rather than directly staring at individuals for long periods of time.
	If children approach the observer, observers should only acknowledge their presence with a warm smile or a nod. More engagement than this may cause the observer to distract from classroom processes being observed, and potentially disrupt the classroom and observation results.
B.7 Note-taking	Detailed notes with concrete examples must be taken for each dimension during every observation cycle. All notes and scores must be recorded on the official CLASS scoresheets.
	Original or complete copies of scoresheets with notes from external observations must be saved as back-up documentation for at least two years after the observation. (See Item C.4 below for record keeping details)
B.8 Scoring Cycles	For the 10-minute coding sessions following each 20-minute observation cycle, observers may elect to remain in the classroom or leave the classroom to complete coding.

	Observers do not conduct observations during the 10-minute coding sessions. Observers do not conduct more than four cycles of observations.
B.8 Health and Safety Concerns	In the unusual circumstance of any suspected abuse or neglect observed at the time of the observation, the observer must report the observed behaviors to <u>Child Protective Services</u> as mandated by law. For other observed issues that significantly impact the health and safety of the children in care, observers can <u>report concerns to the VDOE.</u> External observers must report observed health and safety concerns to the external observation contractor. The external observation contractor must share reported concerns with VDOE. (vqb5@doe.virginia.gov)
C. AFTER THE EXTERNAL OBSERVATION	
C.1 Determining Scores	When determining CLASS scores, observers follow the guidelines on the appropriate pages of the CLASS manual and CLASS Scoring Summary Sheet.
C. 2 Submitting Scores	External observation scores must be submitted to the external observation contractor within 24 hours of the observation. All external observers are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of their CLASS scores before submitting to the external observation contractor.
C.4 Record Keeping	Original or complete copies of scoresheets with notes from external observations must be saved as back-up documentation for at least two years after the observation. After the observation and feedback form has been completed, observers send their CLASS scoresheets to the external observation contractors.
C. 5 Feedback	The external observation team will email a written feedback report to the primary site administrator and Ready Regions, 10 business days after the observation. • To assure statewide consistency of the external feedback process, external observers are not allowed to provide any in-person feedback to the program on the day of the observation or at any time after the observation.

	The external observation report will include CLASS dimension and domain scores as well as a summary of areas of strengths and recommended areas for improvement.

4.7 SCORE REPLACEMENT PROTOCOL

To ensure the consistency, quality, and credibility of ratings and performance profiles, VQB5 will use a score replacement protocol to address comparable observations with significantly different scores.

Throughout the fall and spring observation windows, the VDOE will compare all local and external observations that are completed in the same classroom during the same observation window (e.g., fall observation window or spring observation window). VDOE will use the following protocol to identify significant discrepancies for score replacement:

1) Compare Domain Level Scores

- If all domain level local scores are within one point of the external domain level scores, this observation is determined to be reliable, and no score replacement would occur. Only local scores will be used to determine the rating.
- If any local domain level scores differ by more than one point from the external domain level score, the external domain level scores will replace the local domain scores for the quality rating calculation. (See Section 6)
   a. Domains where there is not a difference of more than one between local and external scores will use the local domain score. Only the domains with a discrepancy will be replaced.

2) When domain scores are replaced, VDOE will notify the site, the designated local observer, and the Ready Region at the end of the fall and spring observation cycles.

3) The VDOE will provide a feedback summary at the end of the fall and spring observation cycles on the rate of replacement for local observers to the Ready Region.

4) All Ready Regions and sites will be informed again of all score replacements during the Data Verification process prior to the publication of any profiles or ratings.

Note: The use of the different age-level tools for a local and external observation in the same classroom during the same observation window, may be considered a concerning pattern. In this case, VDOE would complete an audit to verify ages of the children during each observation and may require the classroom to complete an additional external observation to determine if a score replacement is needed.

4.8 CONSEQUENCES FOR NOT COMPLETING REQUIRED CLASS OBSERVATIONS

All sites participating in VQB5 are required to complete local and external CLASS observations. In cases where the required observations do not take place, a set of actions will be followed to support the most complete collection of data for the site.

Type of Incomplete Local Observation	Resulting Action
Incomplete Fall Local Observation • No Fall Local Observation scores entered in LinkB5 as of December 22 for a particular classroom.	If an external observation was completed in the same classroom during the fall window, scores from the external observation will be used in place of the missing fall local observation. If there are no external observation scores available from the fall window, the state will send an external observer to the classroom. Scores from this external observation will be used in place of the missing fall local observation. Ready Regions will be notified in the case of any situations where an external observation was used for a missing local observation, because a local observation failed to be completed. In this case, the VDOE reserves the right to adjust Ready Regions contracted funding levels to reflect the cost for external observations.
Incomplete Spring Local Observation • No Spring Local Observation scores entered in LinkB5 by May 31 for a particular classroom.	If an external observation was completed in the same classroom during the spring window, scores from the external observation will be used in place of the missing spring local observation. If there are no external observation scores available for the spring window, scores from an external observation completed during the fall window will be used in place of the missing spring local observation. In order to support the most complete data collection by the end of the VQB5 program year, Ready Regions must notify VDOE within 3 business days if any local observation scheduled for May is not completed. In these circumstances, VDOE will send an external observer to the classroom by June 20, if there are no other external observations from the fall or spring available for the classroom.

	Ready Regions will be notified in the case of any situations where an external observation was used for a missing local observation, because a local observation failed to be completed. In this case, the VDOE reserves the right to adjust Ready Regions contracted funding levels to reflect the cost for external observations.
Incomplete Fall and Spring Local Observations	In addition to the consequences described above, if a classroom does not complete either of the required two annual local observations within the designated fall and spring windows, they will be considered out of compliance with the law and will be notified by VDOE that future public funding may be impacted. (See Section 3.4) Ready Regions will be notified in the case of any situations where external observations were used because fall and spring local observation failed to be completed. In this case, the VDOE reserves the right to adjust Ready Regions contracted funding levels to reflect the cost for external observations.
Incomplete External Observation • Site does not complete required external at any point during the program year.	Failure to complete any external observation during the program year will be considered as refusing to participate. Sites will be considered out of compliance with the law and will be notified by VDOE as described in Section 3.4 that future public funding may be impacted. In addition, any site that does not have at least one external observation during the program year will automatically receive a rating of Needs Support.

4.9 CLASS OBSERVATION REVIEW PROCESS

Site administrators or teachers who have a concern about their results from local or external CLASS observations, may request a formal review from VDOE by emailing vqb5@doe.virginia.gov during the program year.

- VDOE CLASS Review requests for fall observations must be submitted by January 12.
- VDOE CLASS Review requests for spring observations must be submitted by June 7.

For all requests submitted, VDOE will work with the Ready Region and/or the external observation contractor to gather all relevant observation data, observation scoresheets with notes, feedback forms provided to sites/teacher, other information from the observer and/or teacher that relates to the reason for the review request such as copies of classroom daily schedules, copies of lesson plans from the day of the observation, teacher/student attendance records, or other types of related evidence.

All requests will be reviewed thoroughly by VDOE in the following manner:

- VDOE will request a copy of the observer's certification from Ready Regions and/or the external observation contractor to determine if the required certification is up to date and aligns with the age-level of the observed classroom.
- VDOE will check the top section of the observation score sheet to determine if it was filled out completely for each cycle. Information from the top section of the scoresheet will be compared to the information provided by the site/teacher to determine if there is any potential discrepancy.
- VDOE will check to make sure all four cycles were completed correctly as outlined in Chapter 2 of each age-level CLASS manual.
- VDOE will check to make sure notes were recorded on the score sheet for every dimension, to determine if there is sufficient evidence to support the assigned score.
- VDOE will request and review other documentation submitted by the site (such as daily schedules, lesson plans, attendance records, or other information) if needed to support the review request. If additional information is needed from the site, VDOE will work with Ready Regions to obtain documentation.
- If there is a concern about observation procedures, protocols, or observer conflict of interest, VDOE will contact the Ready Region (or) external observation contractor to gather information from the observer and any others directly involved to obtain additional information about what occurred on the day of the observation or any potential conflict of interest.

The VDOE will use this process to determine if there are discrepancies or other concerns with the observation(s). If discrepancies or concerns are found, the VDOE will address the situation, typically using an external observation to replace the original score.

- Any local observation where a scoring discrepancy is found will result in a score replacement using scores from an external observation from the same classroom and same observation window. If there are no previous external scores available from the same window, an external observation will be scheduled in order complete a score replacement.
- Any external observation where a scoring discrepancy is found will require a second external observation (completed by a different external observer), conducted in the relevant classroom(s) to allow for additional score comparison and possible score replacement.
- In order to address all identified discrepancies, VDOE reserves the right to conduct an external observation outside of the designated observation windows in order to fulfill legislative requirements.

After the review is completed, VDOE will send a letter informing the site, and the Ready Region lead agency (or) external observation contractor, of the determination of the review within 30

days of submission. The letter will include information about applicable follow up, including but not limited to the situations described below:

Final VDOE Decision – Type of Discrepancy Found	Follow Up Steps to Support Observer Accuracy
1) Observation scoresheets and notes do not support the observation scores.	Ready Region (or) external observation contractor will work with observer to review proper scoring and note-taking procedures, as applicable. Observer must complete a calibration for the applicable age-level within 30 days of VDOE decision. The use of double-coding may be allowed in place of a calibration, provided this is done with an expert CLASS coder, such as a CLASS Affiliate Trainer, or external observation contractor team member. Observer must submit scoresheets with notes from next scheduled observation to Ready Regions (or) the external observation contractor for review and feedback, as applicable.
2) Proper observation procedures or protocols were not followed.	Ready Region (or) external observation contractor will work with the observer to review proper observation protocols, as applicable. Observer will complete a fidelity check with someone from the Ready Region, or the external observation contractor team.
3) Conflict of interest on the part of the observer.	Ready Region (or) external observation contractor will work with observer to review regional and/or external conflict of interest policies, as applicable. Observer should review and sign an updated conflict of interest statement.
4) Other discrepancy/error identified not captured in previous categories above.	To be determined, based on the type of discrepancy identified.
5) No discrepancy found, and scores determined to be accurate.	VDOE will provide cycle level scores to help leaders and teachers understand how the dimension level scores were determined.

● All procedures and protocols were followed.	VDOE will share information about state/regional external score averages.
	Ready Regions will work with site and classroom teachers to review CLASS scoring procedures and/or observation protocols to clarify future observation expectations.
	Leaders will be encouraged to complete CLASS Primer for Leaders and/or CLASS Observer Training to build leaders' understanding of CLASS.
	Teachers will be encouraged to complete Foundational CLASS training, or other similar CLASS training based on needs.

SECTION 5: MEASURING USE OF QUALITY OF CURRICULUM

5.1 BACKGROUND ON EARLY CHILDHOOD QUALITY CURRICULUM

Use of curricula in an early learning program is a critical first step to supporting learning in every birth-to-five classroom. Curriculum use data gathered during the practice years indicate significant disparities in access to quality curricula based on program type (See Appendix D). For this reason, the VDOE will continue to recognize sites for obtaining and implementing this foundational resource in at least one classroom during the 2023-2024 year, with the goal of strengthening the implementation of curricular materials and content in future years.

5.1.2 VIRGINIA'S BIRTH-TO-FIVE EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS - FOUNDATION FOR QUALITY INSTRUCTIONAL TOOLS

A core component of a high-quality early education experience is provision of opportunities, experiences, and materials that allow children to engage deeply within developmental/early learning domains that build their school readiness skills. The Virginia's Birth-to-Five Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) are a foundational school readiness resource that, through effective implementation, helps educators create and support conditions for the success of all of Virginia's youngest learners. All programs began implementing the new standards during the 2021-2022 school year.

The ELDS are designed for adults who care for and teach young children in a variety of settings including family day homes, center-based child care, Head Start classrooms, early intervention programs, private preschools, public early childhood programs, and Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) classes. The ELDS provide all early childhood providers, inclusive of parents/families, teachers, and program leaders, a resource for understanding what children should know and be able to do as they grow and change from birth until they enter kindergarten. **The ELDS are not intended to serve as a developmental checklist, an assessment, or a curriculum.**

These ELDS organize information into five Areas of Development. While not reflective of the true, integrated nature of development, this organization aims to help educators know what to encourage and what to look for as they support and keep watch over a child's development and learning. The Areas of Development include:
- Approaches to Play and Learning
- Social and Emotional Development
- Communication, Language, and Literacy Development

- Health and Physical Development
- Cognitive Development (including Science, Social Science, Mathematics, and Fine Arts)

5.1.3 DEFINING CURRICULUM FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD

According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), "curriculum" is the organized framework that delineates the content children are to learn, the processes through which children will use to achieve the identified curricular goals, what teachers will do to help children achieve these goals, and the context in which teaching and learning occur.[16] Essentially, a curriculum identifies the "what" and "how" of the learning experiences children will have.

Curriculum, or the content of what children learn, is central to supporting and strengthening young children's learning and development. Educators and other stakeholders in young children's lives have a shared responsibility to implement a curriculum that is thoughtfully planned, challenging, engaging, developmentally-appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive, comprehensive, and likely to promote positive outcomes for all young children.[17] Quality early childhood curriculum uses a strengths-based approach to teaching that is rooted in respect for all children's learning and development. Curriculum should support interactions, learning experiences, and learning materials that support responsive early learning experiences for all children and families.

5.1.4 THE ROLE OF APPROVED CURRICULUM IN VQB5

The use of an approved curriculum is optional in VQB5. VQB5 does not require the use of any curriculum.

The choice to use an approved curriculum in at least one classroom results in some additional points towards the rating displayed on VQB5 Quality Profiles (See Section 6). However, this is not required for participation or required for receiving a rating that meets expectations.

Programs that are interested in using an approved curriculum as part of VQB5 may: 1) use one of the 50+ approved early childhood curriculum available, including Virginia's no-to-low cost curriculum option, STREAMin3 (See Section 5.2.2) or 2) request to have their curriculum of choice reviewed for possible approval.

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[16] Marjorie, K., Anne, S., Alice, W., & Michelle, R. (2018). Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum: Best Practices in Early Childhood Education.

[17] National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS/SDE). (2003).

5.2 MEASURING THE QUALITY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD CURRICULA

VDOE-approved curricula are comprehensive, integrated and aligned to the VA-ELDS among other baseline criteria for quality early childhood curriculum. The following criteria from the National Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center's Curriculum Consumer Report are used to measure the quality of infant, toddler, preschool, and family day home (mixed-aged) curricula. These criteria are based on early childhood education research, the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS), and other standards for high-quality curricula.

VDOE Baseline Criteria for High-Quality Birth-to-Five Curriculum serves as a reference document to inform stakeholders of the criteria used to review birth-to-five curricula. Criteria and definitions used to indicate quality include:

- **Evidence Base for Child Outcomes:** Evidence from research demonstrates that the curriculum has been associated with children's positive learning outcomes.
- **Research-Based Curriculum:** The curriculum provides research-based content and teaching practices to support children's development and learning.
- **Scope and Sequence:** The curriculum includes an organized developmental scope and sequence to support children's development and learning.
- **Alignment with Applicable Early Learning and Development Standards**: The curriculum, or curricula, covers all areas of children's learning and development.
- **Learning Goals for Children:** The curriculum specifies learning goals for children.
- **Ongoing Child Assessments:** The curriculum provides guidance on ongoing assessment.
- **Parent and Family Engagement:** The curriculum promotes parent and family engagement.
- **Professional Development Materials to Support Implementation:** The curriculum offers professional development and materials to support implementation and continuous improvement.
- **Learning Experiences and Interactions:** The curriculum promotes rich learning experiences and interactions to support development across domains.
- **Learning Environments and Routines:** The curriculum provides guidance on how to set up rich learning environments and developmentally-appropriate routines.
- **Cultural Responsiveness:** The curriculum supports cultural responsiveness.
- **Linguistic Responsiveness:** The curriculum supports linguistic responsiveness.
- **Individualization for Children with Disabilities, Suspected Delays, or other Special Needs:** The curriculum provides guidance on how to individualize for children with disabilities, suspected delays, or other special needs.

- **Individualization Based on Interests, Strengths, and Needs:** The curriculum offers guidance on how to individualize based on children's interests, strengths, and needs.

5.2.1 REQUESTING A CURRICULUM REVIEW

The VDOE reviews and approves quality curriculum through a comprehensive and expert-led curriculum review process. While over 50 birth-to-five curricula have already been reviewed and approved as quality, as of March 2023, any site is able to request a review of the curriculum materials they are interested in using at any time.

The chart below outlines the curriculum review process for VQB5:

Step 1: Program completes Curriculum Pre-Submission Checklist for Birth-to-Five Programs	- Programs first review their curriculum and the set of <u>baseline evaluation criteria</u> for review by completing the Curriculum Pre-Submission Checklist for Birth-to-Five Programs. - Curricula that meet the criteria will be considered by VDOE for a comprehensive review. - Curricula that **do not** meet the criteria outlined in the Curriculum Pre-Submission Checklist **will not** be moved forward in review.
Step 2: Program works with VDOE to facilitate expert review of curriculum and materials	Once VDOE reviews the Curriculum Pre-Submission Checklist for Birth-to-Five Programs from Step 1 and confirms all criteria have been met, a full curriculum review is initiated. This includes: - Working with the program to obtain copies of all resources included with the curriculum. - Completing an in-depth review of the curriculum and related materials using a rubric. This rubric is similar to the tool developed by the <u>National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning (NCECDTL).</u>
Step 3: Decision on curriculum is made	Curriculum is determined to be "Approved" or "Not Approved". This decision will be communicated to the requesting program via a letter. If approved, the curriculum will be added to the <u>Approved Curriculum List</u>.

5.2.2 USING AN APPROVED CURRICULUM

The following curricula have been approved by the VDOE as of March 2023. This list is updated monthly and is posted on the VDOE Early Childhood Standards, Curriculum and Instruction website.

- Infant, Toddler and Family Day Home (Mixed-Age) Curricula
  - Ascend Curriculum: Toddlers
  - Ascend Curriculum: Twos
  - Beyond Cribs and Rattles (BCR) Comprehensive Program, 2nd Edition (2019)
  - Callahan Education
  - Early Learning Matters
  - Experience Early Learning/Mother Goose Time
  - Frog Street Infant
  - Frog Street Toddler
  - FunShine Express
  - Get Set For School (Learning Without Tears)
  - HighReach Learning
  - HighScope Infant-Toddler Curriculum
  - Kiddie Academy Life Essentials
  - Learn Every Day: The Program for Infants, Toddlers and Twos, 2nd ed (LED ITT)
  - Learn From the Start Twos (24 months to 36 months)
  - Learn From the Start Infants (6 weeks to 12 months)
  - Learn From the Start Toddlers (12 months to 24 months)
  - Learning Experience Academic Program (L.E.A.P.)
  - Montessori birth Through Five Curriculum: Virginia Montessori Association
  - PLAYWORKS
  - Seedlings
  - STREAMin3
  - The Creative Curriculum for Family Child Care, 3rd Edition
  - The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers & Twos, 3rd Edition
  - The Gee Whiz Curriculum for Family Child Care
- Preschool Curricula
  - Ascend Curriculum: Pre-K
  - Ascend Curriculum: Fours
  - Ascend Curriculum: Threes
  - Big Day for Pre-K (*retired)
  - Blueprint
  - Brain Based Learning by Blue Ribbon Results
  - Callahan Education
  - Childtime Empowered Child
  - Connect4Learning
  - Core Knowledge Preschool Sequence

- Curiosity Corner, 2nd Edition
- Early Learning Matters
- Exceed Preschool Curriculum (4 year old)
- Experience Early Learning/Mother Goose Time
- Fairfax County Public Schools Pre-K Curriculum
- Frog Street Pre-K
- Frog Street Threes
- Funnydaffer
- FunShine Express
- Get Set For School (Learning Without Tears)
- HighReach Learning
- HighScope Preschool Curriculum
- Kiddie Academy Life Essentials
- KinderCare
- LaPetite Academy Early Innovators
- Learn As We Grow (Early Preschool, 30 months to 42 months)
- Learn Every Day Preschool
- Learning Experience Academic Program (L.E.A.P.)
- Montessori birth Through Five Curriculum: Virginia Montessori Association
- Opening the World of Learning (OWL; retired)
- PLAYWORKS
- Pre-K On My Way
- Seedlings
- STREAMin3*
- The Creative Curriculum for Preschool, 6th Edition
- The InvestiGator Club PreKindergarten Learning System
- Three Cheers for Pre-K
- Tools of the Mind
- Virginia Beach Pre-K Curriculum
- World of Wonders

Open Source or Free Curriculum:
- STREAMin3 – available to publicly-funded programs in Virginia, through a vendor supported by a contract with VDOE.
  - Up to 2,000 classrooms a year who enroll in STREAMin3, receive all guides and activities printed and delivered to their program at no cost, a set of high-quality children's books to use with the curriculum activities delivered at no cost, and professional development support including small group training series and support from an Implementation Specialist, or, where it's needed most, direct coaching.
  - All other publicly-funded programs can receive virtual access to the curriculum, a list of books that the curriculum uses, a library of professional development resources, and large training events (e.g., webinars).

- [Early Learning Matters](#) is a nationally available free/open-sourced Virginia approved birth-to-five curricula.
- The Core Knowledge [Preschool Sequence](#) is a preschool-focused, nationally available free/open sourced Virginia approved curricula.

5.2.3 CURRICULUM USE REPORTING REQUIREMENT

Curricula use must be reported at the classroom level for every site on an annual basis. This data must be reported via the LinkB5 data portal as a part of their site classroom profiles as follows:

- Each registered full-time classroom must indicate if they are/aren't using a VDOE-Approved Curriculum by Oct 1 as a part of the initial registration requirements.
- Classrooms can update their curriculum use information through May 31.
- If a classroom is using a VDOE-Approved Curriculum, they must enter the name of the curriculum being used.

The VDOE may conduct a site audit by requesting documentation to support the validity of the curriculum information submitted.

The use of an approved curriculum in VQB5 is optional. There is no curriculum requirement.

SECTION 6: DETERMINING VQB5 QUALITY RESULTS

All VQB5 participating sites will receive an overall rating at the end of each annual cycle. Overall scores will range from 100-800 based on CLASS scores and the optional use of curriculum and will correspond to one of three levels on the rating scale, ranging from Needs Support to Exceeds Expectations. In addition, sites will receive a VQB5 quality profile, which will include information about each site, along with their quality performance results. (See Section 6.3 for information on VQB5 quality profiles).

6.1 DEFINITIONS OF QUALITY LEVELS

The following scale describes how well sites are meeting the quality standards.

- **Exceeds Expectations** - The site performing at this level demonstrates performance that consistently and considerably surpasses the established standard. This rating is reserved for performance that is truly exemplary and done in a manner that exemplifies the state's mission and goals for early childhood care and education.

- **Meets Expectations** - The site meets the standard in a manner that is consistent with the state's mission and goals for early childhood care and education.

- **Needs Support** - The site is performing below the established standard or in a manner that is inconsistent with the state's mission and goals for early care and education.

6.2 CALCULATING SITE RESULTS

The annual VQB5 quality rating is calculated at the end of the annual data collection cycle (i.e. end of the program year). The site results are based on measurement data collected from fall and spring local CLASS observations entered into the LinkB5 system, and from classroom curriculum information collected from the LinkB5 site profile. The site results are calculated after all score review and score replacement has taken place for the annual cycle (See Section 4.7 for score replacement protocol).

- All publicly-funded sites registered by October 1 will receive an annual quality rating. Non-publicly-funded sites who opt-in to participate in VQB5 will also receive a quality rating provided that all required participation activities have been completed.
    - o All full-time registered classrooms will be included in the site's calculated complete rating.

- VDOE-approved site or classroom closures will be excluded from the VQB5 required activities for the current year. (See Section 3).
- New publicly-funded sites that open or begin to receive public funding after the October 1 registration deadline will not receive a VQB5 quality rating for the year.
- New classrooms that open or begin to receive public funding after the October 1 registration deadline will not be included in the VQB5 quality rating calculation for that year.

6.2.1 CALCULATING INTERACTION POINTS

Interaction points are determined by using an overall CLASS average score for the site. This site score is calculated using the average CLASS scores from every eligible classroom including both fall and spring results, based on classroom registration information as listed above. All age-levels are weighted equally, and scores are averaged at the dimension level to provide a reflection of what is happening in the classroom.

Using classroom average scores at the dimension level allows for consistent quality measurement across the Infant, Toddler, and Pre-K CLASS tools. In addition, using average classroom and site scores rewards incremental improvements as well as offers the most overall transparency and fairness in terms of ratings.

VDOE will use the following steps to calculate the overall site average at the end of the academic year, after both the fall and spring observations are completed:

1. Determine the dimension scores for each classroom observed.
    a. Individual cycle scores for each dimension are averaged across the four observation cycles to determine the overall dimension score for the classroom.
        i. If an external CLASS observation has been completed for any classrooms during the fall or spring observation window, the external CLASS observation domains are compared to the local CLASS observation domains for the same classroom as outlined in the score replacement protocol See Section 4.7)
            1. Dimension scores within each domain are averaged to determine the domain scores for the classroom. (See Section 4.2.2)
        ii. If score replacement is necessary in one or more domains, observation scores for each dimension within the replaced domain occurs at this step.
2. Determine overall average CLASS score for each classroom in the fall and then again in the spring

a. Calculate average CLASS score for each classroom by summing the scores for each dimension and dividing by the number of dimensions for the specific age-level tool.

3. Determine average CLASS score for each age-level in the fall and then again in the spring. Then use fall and spring averages to calculate the full year age-level CLASS score.
    a. Calculate the fall and spring average CLASS scores for each age-level (Infant, Toddler, Pre-K), by summing scores for each classroom within the same age-level and then dividing by the number of classrooms within the same age-level.
    b. Then calculate the full-year age-level CLASS score by summing the fall and spring age-level averages and dividing by two.

4. Determine the overall average CLASS score for the site.
    a. Calculate the overall site CLASS score by summing the age-level scores and dividing by the number of age-levels served at the site.

All scores are rounded to two decimal places. If the digit in the thousandths place is greater or equal to 5, the hundredths digit is increased by one unit. For example, 4.6378 is rounded to 4.64

The average CLASS score for a site will be multiplied by 100 for the overall quality rating, resulting in a maximum score of 700 points from the CLASS observation portion of the measurement.

6.2.2 CALCULATING CURRICULUM POINTS
The site curriculum score is calculated using the classroom curriculum information entered as of May 31 each year as follows:
- Sites who are using an approved curriculum in at least one classroom by May 31 are awarded 100 points for the quality rating.
- Sites who are not using an approved curriculum in any classrooms by May 31 receive 0 points for curriculum.
- Sites who do not report on use of an approved curriculum as of May 31 receive 0 points for curriculum.

6.2.3 COMPUTING THE OVERALL SITE SCORE
The overall site score will be calculated by adding the interaction points and the curriculum points together. The total score will be out of a maximum of 800 points.

2023-2024 ratings will be broken down by the following ranges:

- A score between 700 and 800 points results in Exceeds Expectations rating
- A score between 400 and 699 points will result in Meets Expectations rating
- A score between 100 and 399 points will result in Needs Support rating

Interactions Points (700 pts total)	Average of all CLASS scores from the fall and the spring (*all classrooms* at a site) x 100 points
Curriculum Points (100 pts total)	Sites using an approved curriculum in *at least one classroom* will receive 100 points.
TOTAL POINTS	Interactions Points + Curriculum Points = Total Points
QUALITY RATING	Exceeds Expectations = 700 - 800 points Meets Expectations = 400 - 699 points Needs Support = 100 - 399 points

Additional details and quality rating examples are provided in the VQB5 Practice Rating User Guide available on the VDOE VQB5 webpage. (This guide will be updated for the 2023-2024 year).

6.1.2a Recognition and Consequences Based on Quality Rating Levels

VQB5 Quality Profiles, which will include the site quality rating, will be posted publicly starting in the fall of 2024 (See Section 6.3). In addition, all programs will receive a certificate to document their annual quality rating. Displaying the certificate for public recognition will be optional.

Programs that receive a "Needs Support" rating on their 2023-2024 VQB5 Quality Profile will be required to participate in improvement planning. (See Section 7.3)

In future years, VDOE will identify strategies to recognize sites that show annual improvement in VQB5 quality measures.

6.3 VQB5 QUALITY PROFILES

According to Code of Virginia (§ 22.1-289.05), all publicly-funded providers shall be required to participate in the uniform measurement and improvement system (VQB5) established by the Board of Education, with the initial quality ratings to be published in the fall of 2024.

As established by the Board of Education in June 2022, all VQB5 participating sites will receive an annual VQB5 quality profile which will include information about performance on measurements (i.e., quality rating results) and other topics of interest to families, policymakers,

and the general public. The Federal Office of Child Care also requires states to include quality rating information on a publicly accessible consumer education website for families.[18]

In accordance with state and federal legislation, and as directed by the Board of Education, VQB5 Quality Profiles must:
- Provide parents and families information about the quality and availability of providers by Fall 2024 (**state law**)
- Meet the federal requirements for a child care consumer-friendly website to serve as a resource for families (**federal regulation**)
- Be approved by the Virginia Board of Education Be scalable for up to 4,000 sites/12,000 classrooms
- Clearly articulate levels of quality and improvement over time

6.3.1 QUALITY PROFILE DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

Below is the timeline for the development of the public VQB5 quality profiles:

- **Spring 2023** - Practice Year 2 Quality Profile Prototype shared with the Early Childhood Advisory Committee, the Board of Education, and the field. Feedback gathered and will be used to revise prototype if needed. Feedback will include responses to how 1) site performance information is shared, and 2) other identified site information to be included in the prototype profile.

  o Vendor will be secured for development of VQB5 Quality Profile website for public hosting of ~4,000 site quality profiles.

- **Summer 2023** – Practice Year 2 Quality Profile Prototype finalized.

  o VDOE will share 1) site performance information, and 2) other site information entered in LinkB5 during the 2022-2023 year to create Quality Profiles for each site that participated in Practice Year 2.

- **Fall 2023** – Practice Year 2 Quality Profiles shared privately with sites.

  o VQB5 Quality Profiles will be shared privately via online distribution to site leaders as a PDF document. Sites will have an opportunity to provide feedback.

- **Winter - Spring 2024** – VDOE will work with the website vendor to develop public VQB5 Quality Profiles.

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[18] Administration of Children and Families – Requirements for Consumer Education Websites
https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/ccdf-fundamentals/consumer-education-website

- o Sample website profile 'mock-ups' will be shared with ECAC, VDOE leaders, Ready Regions, families, and the field to gather ongoing feedback that will be used to inform the public quality profiles. Feedback will include responses to how 1) site performance information is shared, and 2) other identified site information to be included in the quality profile.

- o As part of finalizing the guidelines for VQB5 Year 2 (2024-2025), the Board of Education, with recommendation from ECAC), will review and approve the final version of the public quality profile.

- **Summer 2024** - VDOE will use 1) site performance information, and 2) other site information entered in LinkB5 during the 2023-2024 year to create public VQB5 Quality Profiles for all publicly-funded sites, and any non-publicly-funded sites who opted to participate during the 2023-2024 year.

- **Fall 2024** – The first VQB5 Quality Profiles posted publicly.

  - o VDOE will provide a variety of communications to inform families and the general public about VQB5 Quality Profiles.

6.3.2 REQUIRED INFORMATION ON VQB5 QUALITY PROFILES

VQB5 quality profiles will include information about performance on VQB5 measurements as defined in the guidelines and other topics of interest to families and the general public. (See Sample Practice Year 2 Quality Profile Prototype in Appendix G)

1) **Site Performance** – This will include the overall site quality rating as well as information about interactions and curriculum performance by age-level.

2) **Site Information** - This will include basic site information, such as location, age-levels served, and hours of operation. This may also include other topics to be determined, such as type of public funding received, optional ECE care services provided at the site, as well as improvement over time.

6.4 DATA VERIFICATION PROCESS

All sites that are receiving a VQB5 quality profile must participate in a data verification process prior to profiles and rating information being made public. This will provide sites with an opportunity to verify information, review any score replacements that have taken place, or request corrections prior to the information becoming publicly available.

- No later than July 15, sites will receive notice via email that draft profiles are uploaded in LinkB5.
- Sites have 10 business days to log in to LinkB5 and review data in the draft profiles uploaded
- Sites have the opportunity to contact the VDOE with any corrections or concerns with the data by completing the online form linked in the instructions provided in the draft profile.

Data verification is the final opportunity sites will receive to review, confirm, and if needed, contest any data or rating information that will be included in the VQB5 Quality Profile.

- Before the publication of VQB5 ratings and quality profiles, sites will have the opportunity to preview their quality profiles and verify the information featured. The data verification process will allow sites to make changes to their profile, correct errors, and confirm information prior to publication.

Ready Regions and VDOE's VQB5 team will provide support to site administrators during the verification period.) Ready Regions and sites will be informed again of all score replacements during the Data Verification process prior to the publication of any profiles or ratings. (See Section 4.7 for score replacement protocol)

At the conclusion of the data verification process, VDOE will make changes to quality profiles as necessary, and finalize quality profiles before publication.

6.5 VQB5 FORMAL REVIEW PROCESSES

To ensure the integrity of the VQB5 system, VDOE will provide the following structured processes for programs to request formal reviews of decisions related to site/classroom eligibility, observation results, curriculum approval, practice ratings, and other applicable topics.

- Site/Classroom Enrollment Minimums (See Section 3.2.2)
- Site/Classroom Closure Request (See Section 3.3)
- CLASS Observation Review Request (See Section 4.9)
- Curriculum Review Request (See Section 5.2.1)
- Data Verification (See Section 6.4)

SECTION 7: SUPPORTING CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

7.1 QUALITY MEASUREMENT SUPPORTS IMPROVEMENT

Through the VQB5 system, all birth-to-five early learning programs will participate in ongoing quality improvement. All programs benefit from a shared vision for quality early teaching and learning. Identifying the core components of quality teaching and learning and aligning all improvement resources to these core components helps organize the system. Doing so helps ensure that each level of the system can create aligned targets for improvement and measure success in similar ways. Research has shown systems that focus on simple and consistent measures of quality can provide a feeling of control for educators and can result in significant gains across all program types.[19]

Quality improvement takes place on multiple levels within Virginia's system: state, regional and local implementation partners, program leaders and classroom educators. Systems-level work to improve effectiveness and outcomes impacts—and is impacted by—change on the program and implementing partners' levels.[20]

To improve child outcomes, Virginia's system continually improves supports for educators, prioritizing those who need it most. VQB5 must ensure that:

- **Educators**, including those in family day homes, centers, and school sites, receive consistent observations and frequent feedback on their teaching practice. Professional support and coaching are data driven and responds to specific needs. Educators have a foundational knowledge of quality, culturally and linguistically responsive teaching practices, and access to assistance to support ongoing progress. Their commitment to improvement is to be observable, and they are to be confident that site leaders and improvement leaders will recognize their progress in measurable and consistent ways.
- **Program leaders**, such as child care directors, principals, or early childhood coordinators, receive frequent information about the strengths and areas for growth within their program(s). The improvement supports and professional development accessible to program leaders addresses specific teacher-child interaction measures and strategies aligned with data-informed improvement areas for their educators and program.

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[19] Bassok, D., & Markowitz, A. (n.d.). *The value of systemwide, high-quality data in early childhood education*. Brown Center Chalkboard.

[20] Billie, Y., & BUILD initiative. (2017). Continuous Quality Improvement in Early Childhood and School Age Programs: An Update from the Field.

Progress resulting from commitments to quality improvement efforts are reinforced through sustained measurement and feedback.

- **Improvement partners**, such as organizations that are contracted to provide technical assistance (coaching, mentoring, and consultation), training, professional development and other supports to early childhood programs, have accurate and current data to inform their work with each site and more specifically, each classroom. They know that each educator and site leader has an understanding of the importance of teacher-child interactions and quality curriculum, and can begin from a place of a shared language and goals. They can use data to design improvement supports based on the detailed information known about each region, site, and classroom. The success of professional development intervention or initiative will be observable through the continual measurement and improvement process. Finally, it becomes easier to collaborate as everyone is working on similar efforts with a shared language and focus. (See list of VDOE-funded improvement partners in Section 7.4)

While VQB5's unified approach to measurement and improvement results in benefits for all programs and teachers, there is a significant level of attention provided to those who most need improvement. VQB5 aims to ensure every child is receiving a quality early learning experience. This requires an intentional focus on providing support to the educators who care for and teach children who are underserved or placed at the greatest risk of not fulfilling their potential.

Through frequent measurement and feedback, VQB5 identifies and intervenes where needed, dedicating targeted interventions and state resources for programs and classrooms where support is most critical. Public resources are targeted toward VQB5 programs in need of the most support and those with fewer resources which will likely include child care and family day home settings.

7.1.1 CYCLE OF CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

An important feature of VQB5 is that measurement, feedback, and supports are ongoing and frequent. Educators and leaders have opportunities to measure their progress multiple times a year. At the same time, reflection on data is embedded throughout the measurement cycle. This leads to continuous growth, year over year.

In VQB5, all educators and leaders begin by preparing for the annual cycle of measurement. This includes foundational training and guidance regarding the tools being used. Each classroom is measured throughout the year, with timely results shared with leaders and educators. Each time a classroom is measured, feedback is provided to the teacher(s) and site leaders regarding the classroom's strengths and opportunities for growth. Leaders are able to identify professional development supports that respond to the unique needs of their program. Finally, as the measurement cycle for the year closes and results are shared, educators at all levels reflect on the

successes and challenges of the past year and begin to prepare for the next cycle based on their reflections.

The continuous quality improvement cycle is applicable to all programs that are participating in VQB5. Programs with the most demonstrated need will receive additional resources and have additional expectations throughout the annual cycle. The expectations for programs that receive a 'Needs Support' rating support can be found in Section 7.4.
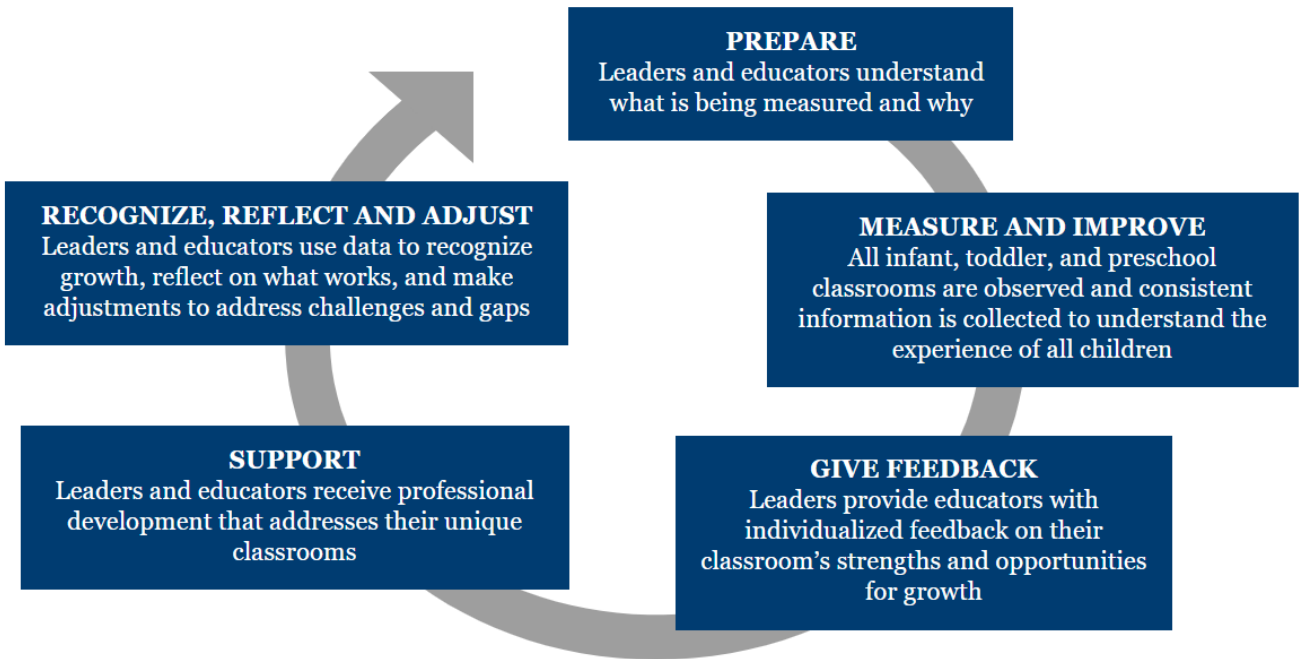
7.2 TARGETED SUPPORTS FOR INTERACTIONS AND CURRICULUM

As the VQB5 system continues to evolve, VDOE is using data collected through LinkB5, to support and practice a model of continuous reflection in dedicating resources towards targeted improvements. While the areas for targeted support will evolve over time based on statewide data, the VDOE will ensure that there is a focus on improvement for VQB5 programs who need targeted supports to improve the quality of teacher-child interactions and use of curriculum.

7.2.1 PREPARING EDUCATORS FOR CLASS OBSERVATIONS

Before classroom observations are conducted, teachers and program leaders need to understand what is being measured and why. Ready Regions are responsible for ensuring that all teachers and leaders who are new to CLASS are provided with opportunities to complete foundational

CLASS training prior to being observed. During foundational training, teachers and program leaders view videos from real classrooms to view effective teaching practices in action in alignment with the domains and dimensions in CLASS. Foundational CLASS training also provides information about what teachers can expect when an observer comes to their classroom as well as an overview of the types of information they'll receive after an observation.

Foundational CLASS training for teachers focuses on the CLASS tool that covers the age-level of the children in their classroom, including how the CLASS tool organizes interactions by domains and dimensions, for a specific age-level. Foundational CLASS training for program leaders focuses on CLASS tools for different age-levels in the program. Foundational CLASS training is different from reliable observer training in that it is much shorter and accessible via online and in-person options.

7.2.2 PROVIDING FEEDBACK ON CLASS OBSERVATIONS TO SUPPORT IMPROVEMENT

In VQB5, all site leaders and teachers benefit from receiving frequent and specific feedback provided through CLASS observations conducted at least twice a year at the local level in every classroom, and at least once at every site within each age-level served by the external observation contractor. Providing program leaders and teachers with quality feedback regarding their local and external CLASS observation is a critical component of VQB5 improvement supports.

7.2.2a Local Observation Feedback
One of the largest benefits of local CLASS observations is that teachers can receive more frequent feedback on their practice, at least twice a year from a local individual who already supports their practice (such as when the observer is a site leader). This feedback provides teachers with an opportunity to recognize growth and provides program leaders with a complete reflection of what children are experiencing throughout the year.

Local observers are well suited to provide an individualized and strengths-based approach to the feedback process, connecting CLASS to effective early childhood practices within all types of classroom settings, including family day homes and classrooms that serve children with disabilities and dual language learners.

Results and feedback from local observations can be used by program leaders to inform program level goals as well as goals for individualized professional development, within the context of infant, toddler, and preschool settings.

The following feedback steps should be used to prepare for and guide effective feedback sessions for local CLASS observations, which include:
- Starting with a general conversation and work to make teachers feel comfortable.
- Orienting teachers to the structure of the local feedback form.
- Reviewing dimension and domain level scores, which includes reminding the teacher about the focus of each dimension/domain and calling attention to score range trends. (i.e., scores in the high range, mid range, low range).
- Highlighting areas of strength (focus on the positive first) and then one area for growth by domain, unpacking specific examples.
  - If the teacher has had a previous CLASS observation, this step should also including highlighting areas of growth from last observation.
- Helping teachers understand how their results compare to other state and national CLASS trends using publicly available CLASS data averages .
- Working with teachers to determine a dimension or one aspect of a dimension to be an area of focus.
- Discussing how teachers can focus on this area of interactions in the coming weeks in his/her daily classroom interactions with children
- Identifying specific strategies or action steps that teachers can do to practice implementing quality interactions with children in a targeted manner, such as referring teacher to the CLASS Dimension Guide strategy tip pages.
- Connecting teachers to additional CLASS resources and information about other professional development options for ongoing improvement support.

Ready Regions are responsible for ensuring all local observers have training and support in providing individualized strengths-based feedback as outlined in the above protocols.

7.2.2b Using Feedback from External Observations to Support Teachers
External observations result in feedback for teachers as well. External observations provide an additional opportunity for feedback and help ensure that observation results are used consistently to support improvement and assess growth over time. Site leaders and Ready Regions should use the external observation feedback report along with the individualized feedback from local observations to guide professional development for teachers. Sample external feedback reports are provided for each age-level on the Virginia External Observation website.

7.2.2c Using Feedback from External Observations to Support Local Observers
Ready Regions and other programs leaders should regularly compare the results from external observation feedback reports to local observation results to identify local observer strengths and needs. The following guidance can be used for local-external score comparison and professional development planning.
- Scores within one point are considered to be reliable and indicate areas of consistency.

- Scores that differ by more than one point indicate areas of inconsistencies and should be targeted areas for local observer improvement support.
  - Local observers will receive notice of domain level scores that are off by more than one point and have been replaced during the fall and spring observation cycles (See Section 4.7).
  - Information on the frequency of score replacement, or recurring domains for score replacement, should be factored in to support for local observers.
- Resources for supporting observation consistency are available on the Teachstone Reliability Support website.

7.2.3 SUPPORT ON CLASS FOR ONGOING IMPROVEMENT

Results from local observations are used by instructional leaders to inform ongoing professional development and assess growth in teacher-child interactions over time. Increasing capacity and knowledge of quality interactions at the local level promotes shared understandings of the strong principles of high-quality teaching in early childhood settings that are highlighted in the CLASS tool. Having program or school division leaders trained to reliability in CLASS enables them to bring the CLASS lens to every aspect of their work.

Site leaders and other professional development providers should ensure that teachers receive ongoing support to grow in areas of need through individualized professional development. This may include activities such as:
- Participating in practice-focused professional development (in whole/small group sessions or online module formats) that introduce key knowledge pieces and then help teachers plan for and practice improvements.
- Engaging in action planning (in coaching or peer-learning communities) followed by regular feedback/analysis loops and reflection with colleagues (coach/admin/peer teachers) where teachers reflect on what worked in their classrooms and how to incrementally improve. (See Section 7.2.3a for additional information about coaching in VQB5)
- Conducting informal "walk-throughs" or "focused observations" targeted to specific action plan areas (e.g., one CLASS dimension) so that teachers can focus on improving one practice at a time and receive frequent feedback on that practice.
- Using CLASS data alongside other data sources (curriculum use, environment, child outcomes) to identify common needs. Research suggests that children benefit the most when interactions and instruction, guided by a strong curriculum, are maximized.
- Providing program leaders and teachers with resources and information aligned with CLASS domains and dimensions to support targeted improvements. Some examples include:
  - Head Start In-Service Suites aligned with CLASS
  - AEII Strengthening Quality Interactions Toolkit

- ○ [CLASS aligned resources available in Spanish](#)

7.2.3a CLASS Coaching in VQB5

Coaching is designed to build capacity for specific professional dispositions, skills, and behaviors and is focused on goal setting and achievement for an individual or group.

- Coaching supports the development of specific skills and practices focused on performance-based outcome(s) and uses relevant data to determine needs and measure progress.
- Coaching occurs through planned contacts and concludes when the specified goal has been achieved.
- Coaching may be provided in-person or virtually through distance, technology-based, or hybrid methods.

In VQB5, coaching is generally considered to be "Instructional Coaching" because it specifically aims to improve instructional practices focused on teacher-child interactions, as measured by CLASS, resulting in improved child outcomes. VDOE recommends that VQB5 coaching include the use of [Practice Based Coaching](#) strategies with site leaders and teachers to support continuous quality improvement.

Coaches supporting VQB5 programs use site and/or classroom results from the most recent CLASS observations to identify specific areas for improvement, set improvement goals and create an individualized coaching action plan. Scores from future observations are also used to assess growth in teacher-child interactions and to determine future coaching needs.

During the 2023-2024 year, the following organizations are funded through VDOE state and federal sources to provide coaching services to VQB5 programs focused on improving teacher-child interactions, as measured by CLASS.

- Virginia Infant & Toddler Specialist Network (VA-ITSN)
- Advancing Effective Interactions and Instruction (AEII)
- Training and Technical Assistance Centers (TTAC)
- STREAMin3 (See correlation between CLASS and curriculum in Section 7.2.4c)
- Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants

These VDOE funded VQB5 coaching services are prioritized for publicly-funded classrooms, based on results from fall and spring local CLASS observations. Ready Regions lead agencies work with these organizations to ensure coaching options are available to the VQB5 programs who need support the most.

Programs participating in VQB5 may also want to consider using program level professional development funding to support internal coaching capacity to target specific program level needs and priorities.

7.2.4 TARGETED SUPPORTS FOR CURRICULUM

Use of an effective curriculum includes professional development resources and materials to support implementation and continuous improvement. Professional development includes gaining the knowledge and skills required for effective implementation of a curriculum to meet the unique needs of diverse learners. The professional development materials that come with the curriculum should be used by education leaders, trainers and coaches to provide both initial training and ongoing support for teachers to implement the curriculum effectively. Training on curricula is an iterative process that also requires program leaders' fostering of collaboration between experienced and new teachers around curriculum development to orient new teachers to their curriculum, helping them figure out what to teach and how to teach it.

7.2.4.a Providing Support for Use of Approved Curriculum

Support in choosing, accessing and implementing an approved curriculum is important to quality improvement for VQB5. Currently, access and familiarity with quality curricular materials varies amongst program types. Family day homes and small child care centers are less likely to have a curriculum in place, or to be participating in ongoing training and assistance in implementing this important resource. For this reason, support for curriculum is targeted at those program types that need it most.

Programs participating in VQB5 may receive the following supports related to curricula:
- Assistance in understanding options for approved curricula materials listed in Section 5.
- Training on specific aspects of effective curriculum implementation (such as assessment, individualizing for children with special needs)
- Free access to the STREAMin3 curriculum and corresponding children's books and training for publicly-funded programs who are interested in the STREAMin3 curriculum option (See Section 7.2.4b)
- Introductory training on implementing Virginia's Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS), Birth-to-Five Learning Guidelines and curriculum alignment.
- Virginia Early Learning and Development Standards microcredential through the Radford University IMPACT Lab (Available in English and Spanish)
- Training on curricula that align with CLASS (Crosswalk examples - Conscious Discipline, Creative Curriculum)
- Professional Learning Communities on Curriculum

7.2.4b STREAMin3 - Open Access Curriculum and Support

The VDOE has partnered with STREAMin3 to provide a high-quality low-to-no-cost curriculum option to Virginia's early learning programs. The partnership aims to:

- Provide access to a low-to-no cost comprehensive, birth-through-preschool, curriculum.
- Deliver free professional development (PD) to help programs adopt and use the curriculum.
- Develop sustainable resources so programs can use the curriculum and professional development resources beyond the initial rollout years at low-to-no cost.

Publicly-funded programs are prioritized for STREAMin3 to receive full curriculum materials and professional development support if they are not using a VDOE-approved curriculum in at least one classroom. Online access to the STREAMin3 curriculum and professional development guidance materials is available to all publicly-funded programs in Virginia.

7.2.4c Correlation between CLASS and Quality Curricula
It should also be noted that some aspects of a quality curriculum help reinforce some of the quality measures and behaviors that are included in the CLASS tool, such as a curriculum that offers children ample opportunities to engage in hands-on exploration and provides teachers with guidance on how to extend children's exploration. A curriculum that offers guidance on how to individualize will help teachers be more responsive to individual children's strengths and needs. High quality teacher-child interactions are also supported by curricula that provide guidance on how to design developmentally-appropriate schedules, routines, and opportunities for choice, play, exploration, and experimentation.

To support VQB5 programs in understanding how any high-quality curriculum can be used to improve the quality of teacher-child interactions as measured by CLASS, VDOE has developed the resources below on how CLASS domains connect to all **quality** curriculum. These documents explain how CLASS domains connect to components of quality curriculum, and outline how different curriculum materials can be used to implement quality interactions aligned with CLASS.
- [CLASS and Curriculum Connections Infant/Toddler](#)
- [CLASS and Curriculum Connections Pre-K](#)

7.3 REQUIRED IMPROVEMENT PLANNING FOR NEEDS SUPPORT SITES

Starting with the 2023-2024 year, publicly-funded programs that receive a "Needs Support" rating will be required to participate in additional improvement activities through Site Improvement Planning. Site Improvement Planning will be facilitated by the VDOE and will be required for any site that receives a Needs Support rating in order to maintain public funding.

Site Improvement Planning is the formal mechanism for 1) prioritizing improvement resources and opportunities for sites that have demonstrated the most need, and 2) monitoring progress throughout the performance year to ensure sites are not repeatedly flagged for needing support.

Site Improvement Planning will be led by the VDOE. Any site that has been identified as "Needs Support" will be paired with a Site Improvement Consultant. Site Improvement Consultants are employees of or contracted through the VDOE.

Each Site Improvement Consultant will be assigned a small caseload of "Needs Support" sites to facilitate the following general Site Improvement Planning Process:

1. Complete initial visit and needs assessment:
   a. Build rapport and establish initial expectations.
   b. Assist with completion of site and teacher self-assessments of areas of strength, areas for improvement.
   c. Conduct a collaborative review of existing VQB5 CLASS observation data, including all local and external observations.
   d. Prepare to build quality improvement goals by identifying priority areas for improvement.
2. Develop annual quality improvement plan for the site:
   a. Develop at least 3 goals related to teacher-child interactions, using information on current need found in the most recent VQB5 Site Quality Profile results.
      i. Goals will identify deadlines and actions, as well as responsible parties.
      ii. Goals will include local and external CLASS observations as primary measurements.
      iii. Additional goals that align with VQB5 quality standards may also be identified based on other program needs and priorities.
   b. Site Improvement Consultant will make sure that site is being prioritized for access to state-funded coaching and technical assistance supports based on program needs.
   c. Once the quality improvement plan is complete, a copy will be shared with Ready Regions and with all relevant offices at the VDOE which could include Offices within the Division of Early Childhood as well as the K-12 Office of School Quality.
3. Complete monitoring of improvement plan throughout the year:
   a. Site Improvement consultant will check-in with the site at least once a month. These visits will include some in person and some virtual, based on the purpose of the meeting and goal achievement status.
   b. Site improvement consultant will conduct ongoing formal and informal monitoring to ensure goals related to training and coaching are underway. VDOE consultant may serve as point of contact for other improvement needs the site may have.

c. At the end of the fall observation window, the Site Improvement Consultant will conduct an in-depth review of CLASS observation results with site leaders.
d. Site Improvement Consultant will assist the site with updating the quality improvement plan based on fall observation data and other goal progress.
e. Site Improvement Consultant will conduct a mid-year check-in with Ready Region and VDOE to review updates to the site quality improvement plan.
4. Close out of the annual quality improvement plan:
a. At the end of the spring observation window, the Site Improvement consultant will meet with the site to review spring observation results and other goal progress to determine if additional improvement planning will formally continue next year.
b. Site improvement consultant will provide a final progress report to Ready Regions and all relevant parties at the VDOE.

The VDOE will alter or adapt this process as needed to address the unique needs of "Needs Support" sites.

Publicly-funded sites who have not completed identified action steps at the mid-year check outlined above will be notified in writing by VDOE that if goals are not met by the end of the year they will be out of compliance with the law.

Sites who have not completed all identified action steps by the end of the program year will receive notification from VDOE that they are out of compliance with the law. The VDOE may extend their Site Improvement Plan for another year and make any revisions or adjustments necessary to address concerns. Sites that fail to complete action steps and demonstrate improvement may have their current public funding terminated. All sites will receive notice in writing along with required next steps prior to the termination of any public funding. The VDOE will also notify the applicable local, state and/or federal funding authorities in writing that the site is out of compliance with state law.

7.4 VIRGINIA'S IMPROVEMENT PARTNERS – SUPPORTS AND STRATEGIES FOR COORDINATION

Virginia has multiple quality improvement partners that provide professional support to birth-to-five educators in alignment with the goals and measured objectives of VQB5. Through VQB5, the VDOE will continue to strengthen the coordination and alignment of all state and federally funded quality improvement efforts to ensure VQB5 programs have the support they need. This includes ensuring supports are available consistently across Ready Regions.

The following list includes the 2023-2024 quality improvement partners that the VDOE continues to work with and provide funding arrangements for through either federal or state funding sources. These providers are responsible for working with birth-to-five programs to provide training, coaching, or coursework intended to improve the early childhood system.

List of VDOE Quality Improvement Partners as of May 2023

VDOE Quality Improvement Partners: *Classroom and Site Support*	Primary Purpose	Eligible Participants	Cost for eligible participants
Virginia Infant & Toddler Specialist Network (VA-ITSN)	Improve the quality of care and education that infants and toddlers receive in child day centers and family day homes, by supporting success within VQB5, increasing provider education and competency, and increasing the use of practices to promote social and emotional development of infants and toddlers. • Coaching and TA services targeted to VQB5 sites with the lowest Infant and Toddler CLASS scores.	✓ VQB5 programs ✓ Some services available to non-publicly-funded programs	Free for VQB5 programs Some small fees for non-VQB5 programs
Advancing Effective Interactions and Instruction (AEII)	Assist VQB5 programs (birth-to-five) in using data to improve the quality of teacher-child interactions, curriculum and professional development, focusing particularly on classrooms with demonstrated need. Coaching services targeted to VQB5 sites with the lowest CLASS scores.	✓ VQB5 programs	Free
VDOE Quality Improvement Partners: *Special Education*	Primary Purpose	Eligible Participants	Cost for Eligible Participants

Support			
[Training and Technical Assistance Centers](#) (TTAC)	Provide professional development, technical assistance, and resources to school divisions, programs, and classrooms serving children ages 2-5 with Individualized Education Programs (IEP).	✓ School divisions ✓ VQB5 child care centers with children with IEPs	Free
[VCU Autism Center for Excellence Early Childhood](#) (VCU-ACE)	Provide professional development, technical assistance, and resources to school divisions, programs, and classrooms serving children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) ages 2-5 with IEPs and to families raising and supporting young children with ASD.	✓ School divisions ✓ VQB5 child care centers with children with IEPs	Free
[Early Childhood Special Education Consortium](#) (ECSE Consortium)	Partnership with Radford University and Lynchburg University to provide tuition assistance to Virginia preservice and in-service teachers pursuing the courses leading to licensure in Early Childhood Special Education.	✓ College students seeking ECSE licensure ✓ Provisionally licensed teachers seeking ECSE licensure	Free
VDOE Quality Improvement Partners: *Head Start Support*	**Primary Purpose**	**Eligible Participants**	**Cost for Eligible Participants**
[Virginia Head Start Association](#) (VHSA)	Provide training and advocacy support to enhance the growth of Head Start educators, agencies, partners and others who impact the lives of Head Start children and families.	✓ Head Start and Early Head Start programs	Free
[Virginia Commonwealth University - Head Start](#)	VCU conducts an annual needs assessment for the Head Start Collaboration office that examines the relationships Head Start grantees have	✓ Head Start and Early Head Start programs	Free

Statewide Needs Assessment (VCU)	with state and community partners.		
VDOE Quality Improvement Partners: *Workforce Support*	**Primary Purpose**	**Eligible Participants**	**Cost for Eligible Participants**
Virginia Child Care Provider Scholarship Program (VCCSP)	Assists child care staff in completing undergraduate college courses required for a certificate or degree in early childhood education.	✓ All child care and family day home educators	Free
Community College Workforce Alliance - Child Care Provider Training (CCWA)	Distance learning courses to support completion of the Infant-Toddler and Pre-K endorsement programs.	✓ All child care and family day home educators	Free
PD Essentials (previously called Virginia Cross-Sector Professional Development Team)	Strengthen the skills of early childhood professional development providers, including higher education staff, to deliver high quality education, training, and technical assistance.	✓ Professional development providers	Free
Early Educator Fast Track Initiative	Support Ready Regions and interested child care programs with recruiting and training new assistant teachers through an accelerated 4-week virtual course aligned with CHD 120 – plus provide pathways to continue education and receive competitive employment compensation.	✓ Child care programs	Free

VDOE Quality Improvement Partners: *Early Childhood Mental Health*	Primary Purpose	Eligible Participants	Cost for Eligible Participants
Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation	Consultation services that include collaborative, one-on-one coaching to help early childhood teachers and families promote young children's healthy social-emotional development based on identified needs. • In-person services available in Ready Regions Central and Blue Ridge; virtual services will be available across the state • VQB5 programs prioritized	✓ VQB5 Programs	Free
VDOE Quality Improvement Partners: *Focus on Principles of Early Learning and Development*	Primary Purpose	Eligible Participants	Cost for Eligible Participants
Early Learning Standards Microcredential	Online training courses on the new learning guidelines for children ages birth-to-five, resulting in a microcredential. • Special focus on supporting family day home and child care educators	✓ All birth-to-five programs	Free
STREAMin3 Curriculum Model and PD Support	Low-to-no cost comprehensive birth-to-five curriculum option. For two initial groups of up to 2,000 classrooms, includes all guides and activities, a set of high-quality children's books and targeted and customized professional development support, including direct coaching.	✓ VQB5 Programs	Free to ~2,000 classrooms Low costs for additional classrooms

	• Cohort enrollment required for full materials and PD support. • Online materials and PD tools available to all publicly-funded early childhood programs in Virginia		
Wolf Trap Early Childhood STEM Learning Through the Arts Initiative	Provides on-site and online training in Early Childhood STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) and literacy.	✓ School divisions, PK-1st grade	Free
Literacy Lab	Fellowship program that provides evidence-based literacy support to at-risk Pre-K students to diversify the educator pipeline, and assist fellowship participants in understanding the teacher education and licensure process in Virginia. • Currently offered in Northern VA (Metro DC area) and Central Virginia.	✓ VPI and Head Start classrooms	Free
VDOE Quality Improvement Partners: *Health and Safety Support*	**Primary Purpose**	**Eligible Participants**	**Cost for Eligible Participants**
Better Kid Care - Penn State Extension	Online courses used to meet licensing & subsidy health and safety requirements.	✓ All child care programs	Free
Child Care Resource and Referral (vendor to be determined)	Provide resource and referral services to connect families to high quality child care that is available and accessible in Virginia (family services, provider	✓ All child care programs	Free

	services, community), and to provide professional development opportunities.		

In addition to the many quality supports listed here, Virginia's early childhood landscape has a history of working with various early childhood accreditation organizations. These include organizations such as NAEYC, NAC, NAFCC, NECPA and Cognia, to name a few. While the function and requirements for each accreditation program varies, the primary purpose is to support professionalization and improvement. Accreditation organizations that provide improvement supports related to quality interactions and curriculum are also a key support for programs who have selected to seek accreditation.

7.4.1 SUPPORTING IMPROVEMENT PARTNERS

The Quality Improvement Partners listed above are essential to the success of VQB5. With the most direct access into birth-to-five classrooms, ensuring ongoing support for quality interactions and curriculum through the coordination of these critical groups will be essential in VQB5.

The VDOE has several strategies for supporting Improvement Partners to collaborate and coordinate approaches for supporting VQB5 participating programs:

1. **CLASS Coaching Collaborative** - Series of meetings to promote sharing/problem solving across different state improvement partners who provide coaching to VQB5 programs for improving the quality of teacher-child interactions as measured by CLASS.
2. **Improvement Partner Webinars**: Quarterly webinars for professional development providers to increase understanding about VQB5 and how improvement partners can support programs participating in the practice years. Webinars also provide ongoing opportunities for improvement partners to provide feedback to VDOE on approaches for supporting improvement efforts.
3. **Professional Development Resources**: The following resources are available for VQB5 program leaders and improvement partners and are available through the VQB5 website.
   a. VQB5 Implementation Guide for Program Leaders (English/Spanish) provides information about VQB5 measurement and improvement activities and resources.
   b. VQB5 Practice Rating User Guide provides information and examples to help VQB5 program leaders, and partners who support VQB5 programs, understand quality rating results. (Guide will be updated for 2023-2024)
   c. CLASS Dimension Summary documents (English/Spanish) for the infant, toddler, and preschool age-levels, as well as a mixed-ages alignment summary document for use by programs who work with multiple age-levels, such as family day home providers.
   d. Video tutorials, guidance documents and data worksheets designed to help site administrators and improvement partners access, understand and use site level CLASS data provided in LinkB5.

e. Crosswalks and correlation documents to help the field understand how different early childhood observation tools, resources and curricula align with VQB5 standards.

   f. Strengthening Quality Toolkit – Developed by AEII with input from VDOE and coaching collaboration partners. This toolkit provides information and resources for program leaders and improvement partners who provide professional development support to educators in Virginia's Birth-to-Five programs, in alignment with the goals of VQB5.

7.4.2 ROLE OF READY REGIONS WITH IMPROVEMENT PARTNERS

Ready Regions also help sites connect with the specific improvement resources programs need. Through this regional structure, all programs have a regional source for finding and connecting to the improvement partners that will best support them, based on their needs as established through VQB5.

Ready Regions are required to collaborate with existing improvement partners to coordinate the implementation of professional development activities that support quality interactions and curriculum, which includes:

- At minimum, establishing a quarterly meeting schedule with the Virginia Infant & Toddler Specialist Network (VA-ITSN), Advancing Effective Interactions and Instruction (AEII), and Virginia's Training and Technical Assistance Centers (TTAC).
- Designating one Ready Region staff member to serve as the Coaching Collaboration representative and attend quarterly collaboration meetings with the state to support consistent communications between the state, coaching partners and the field.
- Sharing information about professional development options and opportunities offered by state, regional and local partners with VQB5 sites during fall and spring observation windows.

7.5 ADDITIONAL FOCUS AREAS FOR SUPPORT

7.5.1 SUPPORTS FOR INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

Early childhood classrooms that serve diverse learners may need additional supports, resources, and tools to ensure all early childhood classrooms nurture active engagement and provide high quality teacher-child interactions for all children. For classrooms operating an inclusive model for children with identified disabilities, specific supports and training are necessary for the teachers (early childhood and early childhood special education) to ensure all children can access and participate in meaningful learning opportunities. It is important for teachers to present information and engagement opportunities in multiple ways and for children to be provided different ways to show what they know and can do, and how they are growing and progressing.

Children are different in how they are motivated and want to engage in learning, how they comprehend information and how they express themselves, thus, teachers must be flexible and adaptable with their approach to communication and sustained interactions. Finally, the classroom must be designed to be intentionally safe and provide positive social-emotional supports to meet each child with the care they need.

The CLASS tool has been successfully used in inclusive early childhood classrooms nationwide and yields critical foundational information to teachers and site leaders on the quality of the teacher-child interactions taking place within a classroom.[21] Accordingly, VQB5 will continue to use CLASS to measure all participating classrooms. However, to support additional quality improvement in inclusive classrooms, Virginia may also use the Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP), The ICP is a comprehensive, field-tested observational tool for classrooms serving children ages 2–5. It assesses 12 key practices with the strongest research base for supporting the education and development of young children in inclusive settings. In Virginia, the ICP has been used in many inclusive classrooms. Much of the current use of the ICP is facilitated through Virginia's Training and Technical Assistance Centers (TTAC). The ICP has been cross walked to the CLASS tool and aligns to several of the practices examined by CLASS.

During the Practice Years, the VDOE worked with TTACs to pilot the use of the ICP in some inclusive classrooms that were participating in VQB5 to examine and understand the alignment between the ICP and the CLASS. The pilot's goals were to determine how the CLASS and ICP can inform the quality of daily classroom practices for children with disabilities in inclusive early childhood settings and to better understand how the CLASS and ICP can inform professional development to improve the quality of teacher-child interactions in early childhood inclusive settings. As of March 2023,

- TTAC conducted 60 ICP observations in VQB5 participating inclusive classrooms. Scores from the ICP observations have been compared to local CLASS observation results. Preliminary correlation analysis indicated the following (See Appendix D2.18 for details):
  - On average, inclusive classrooms scored higher using the CLASS tool.
  - There is no correlation between ICP and CLASS scores in the initial pilot classrooms.
- TTAC and VDOE developed ICP-CLASS correlations documents and ICP observation feedback templates. These documents help program leaders and teachers understand the similarities and differences between the ICP and CLASS, providing educators and program leaders with examples of what effective interactions look like in inclusive classrooms.

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[21] Teachstone. (n.d.). Recommendations for Using the CLASS in Inclusive Early Childhood Programs, Birth–Age 8

- TTAC and VDOE conducted teacher/administrator surveys and focus groups to get feedback on use of ICP with the CLASS tool from the pilot participants. Initial pilot feedback indicated the following,
  - Most felt the ICP in addition to the CLASS provided useful information about teacher-child interactions and inclusive practices. Administrators were interested in getting more training on ICP to assist with inclusion efforts.
  - Leaders and teachers appreciated receiving specific feedback about strengths and areas for improvement from CLASS and ICP observations.
  - There were mixed responses about when and how the ICP should be used in conjunction with the CLASS tool, with some general concerns shared about having 'too many' required observations.
  - There were some challenges/concerns from administrators noted regarding having the capacity to train internal staff on the ICP in the future for ongoing use in addition to having internal staff trained on CLASS.

The VDOE will use the collected information from the practice year's pilot to continue considerations for strengthening interactions and supporting improvement in inclusive classrooms in future years of VQB5.

7.5.2 SUPPORTS FOR CHILD CARE AND FAMILY DAY HOMES

Equitable opportunity and access to quality improvements is central to VQB5. Recent studies on Virginia's early childhood workforce demonstrate key differences between the dedicated educators who work in child care and family day homes as compared to those in settings such as public schools. Nearly 40% of child care teachers have an annual household income under $25,000, while this is true for only 1% of school-based early childhood teachers.[22] These challenges are typically more dramatic in sites that accept public funds, such as the Child Care Subsidy Program. A 2023 study showed that in Virginia, child care centers that participate in subsidy have average hourly wages that are $2 lower than those not participating in the subsidy program. In addition, programs participating in subsidy program reported more difficulty in hiring staff (66%), and more frequency of turning families away (63%) - rates much higher than programs who do not take public funds.[23]

VQB5 must recognize the disparate challenges that impact the early childhood workforce, with a focus on supporting sites that are accepting public funds. When comparing resources and opportunities for professional learning and development, there are stark inequities in what is traditionally available for private programs, such as child care centers and family day homes. These sites, which serve our most vulnerable and youngest learners, are often less resourced.

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[22] Bassok, D., Doromal, J., Holland, A., & Michie, M. (2020). Who Teaches Virginia's Youngest Children? Sector Differences in the Racial/Ethnic Composition of Early Educators. Study of Early Education through Partnerships.

[23] Bassok, D. & Weisner, K. (February 2023). Staffing Challenges at Virginia Child Care Centers in Fall 2022: Differences by Centers' Subsidy Participation Status. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/see_partnerships_staffing_va_CCSP_fall2022

Investments and efforts related to improvement must prioritize access for Virginia's child care and family day homes.

During the 2023-2024 year, VDOE will fund the following efforts to specifically support publicly-funded child care centers and family day home providers to meet VQB5 legislative requirements and quality expectations.

- Ready Regions - Additional funding is provided to each Ready Region to engage and support family day home providers in each region.
- VDOE Sponsored Online CLASS Trainings – CLASS Observation training for program leaders and other local observers who specifically work at or conduct observations in child care centers and family day homes.
- Virginia Infant & Toddler Network - Training and Technical Assistance for publicly-funded child care centers and family day homes who serve children ages 0-3.
- STREAMin3 – Free/Low-cost curriculum materials and professional development for publicly-funded programs, prioritizing child care centers and family day home providers who are not using an approved curriculum.
- RecognizeB5 – Virginia's innovative early childhood educator incentive program that is limited to child care and family day home educators as described below.

7.6 RECOGNIZEB5 – FINANCIAL RECOGNITION FOR VIRGINIA'S EARLY CHILDHOOD CHILD CARE AND FAMILY DAY HOME EDUCATORS

Since 2019, Virginia has been providing financial incentives to eligible early childhood educators participating in the Preschool Development Grant and VQB5 through RecognizeB5. RecognizeB5 provides a financial incentive of up to $3,000 to eligible teachers, with the goal of reducing teacher turnover in child care and family day homes, where wages are significantly lower than comparable settings. The program is open to both lead and assistant teachers working in publicly-funded child care and family day home sites that are participating in VQB5.

RecognizeB5:
- Provides up to $3000 to eligible teachers who work at least 30 hours a week with birth-to-five children.
- Is solely intended to recognize educators for their ongoing efforts to improve Virginia's ECCE system.
- Does not have to be used for work related expenses.

The first three years of the RecognizeB5 have demonstrated that a financial incentive of this size has the potential for big impact.[24] An initial study, using a randomized control trial (RCT), showed that this valuable incentive reduced turnover for child care and family day homes by half (30% to 15%).[25] Understanding the significant impact of teacher turnover on the child care industry, which has been exacerbated by the COVID pandemic, Virginia has committed to expanding the RecognizeB5 program for the past three years, now including both federal funds (PDG and COVID relief dollars) and state general fund investments.

Teachers employed by public school divisions are not eligible for RecognizeB5. This determination was made due to the limited availability of funds and a commitment to more fully supporting child care teachers who are far less financially compensated and more likely to experience high rates of turnover which can negatively impact teacher-child interactions.

Participation in RecognizeB5 has increased significantly year over year, with more teachers than ever before participating during Practice Year 1.
- In 2019-2020 (first year of PDG) nearly 2,000 educators participated and received up to $1,500 with a total statewide investment of $2.9 Million.
- In 2020-2021 (second year of PDG) over 2,600 educators participated and received up to $2,000. This represented a statewide investment of $4.9 Million.
- In 2021-2022 (Practice Year 1 VQB5) over 5,000 educators participated and received up to $2,000. This represents a statewide investment of $9.5 Million.
- In 2022-2023 (Practice Year 2 VQB5) over 11,000 educators participated and received up to $2,500. This represents a statewide investment of up to $25 Million.

Virginia will continue to implement the educator incentive program during 2023-2024 year, with the commitment to increase the maximum amount per educator to $3,000. This represents an up to $45 Million dollar commitment for 14,000 eligible educators.

For the 2023-2024 year, educators may be eligible to receive RecognizeB5 if:
- They work in a child care center or family day home that accepts public-funds (such as the child care subsidy program),
- They continually work at least 30 hours or more per week directly with birth-to-five children in a classroom setting, and
- The child care center or family day home completes VQB5 required participation activities. (See Section 3 for details).

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[24] *Eligibility is generally limited to child care, FDH and Head Start educators who work 30 or more hours/week with children in publicly-funded programs and are not school system employees. Eligibility is subject to change.*

[25] Harvard University Center for Education Policy and Research. (2020, November 17). *Daphna Bassok - Teacher Turnover in Early Childhood Education: New Findings from Research Policy Partnerships in Louisiana and Virginia.* PIER Public Seminar Series (Archived).

7.7 ESTABLISHING PAYMENT RATES TO SUPPORT QUALITY

Under the direction of the General Assembly, VDOE is implementing cost-based payment rates across the publicly-funded system, with the goal of funding providers to meet quality expectations in VQB5. Cost estimation models are tools used to understand the relationship between the expense of delivering high-quality early childhood care and education services and available revenues. These tools incorporate data and assumptions of the costs incurred by early childhood providers under different program characteristics, such as program location, sponsorship, size, and type; and policy conditions, including health and safety standards and quality expectations.

Importantly, there are no mandatory costs associated with participating in VQB5 or achieving higher levels of quality. VDOE's core assumption is that being able to attract and retain competent and competitive educators is the primary driver of quality and quality improvement. A supported, stable workforce is necessary to facilitate strong teacher-child interactions and child-focused, developmentally-appropriate instruction in the classroom. Research from Virginia's child care sector shows that competitive wages are a primary driver of staff retention, with staff in the lowest wage quartile being twice as likely to turn over in a given year relative to those in the highest wage quartile.[26] As such, VDOE's methodologies for setting payment rates in publicly-funded programs account for competitive compensation—defined as salaries prorated against elementary educator salaries—benefits, and instructional supports to meet quality expectations in VQB5.

VDOE is monitoring the implementation of cost-based payment rates to understand the extent to which rates are driving quality improvement, increased compensation, and increased retention year over year. The models and cost data will be updated every 2-3 years, or more frequently as needed to address technical corrections or respond to major changes in state or federal policies.

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[26] Bassok et al., Teacher Turnover in Child Care: Pre-Pandemic Evidence from Virginia, EdPolicyWorks at the University of Virginia, 2021, https://files.elfsightcdn.com/022b8cb9-839c-4bc2-992e-cefccb8e877e/b8dd96c5-11e5-4fce-b7af-bd24e2ec9ad2.pdf.

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APPENDIX A: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND – BUILDING A UNIFIED EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM

Since the creation of the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) in 1994, Virginia's state and local leaders have worked in a collaborative, bipartisan manner to strengthen Virginia's public-private early childhood system. Through joint efforts across the General Assembly, stakeholders, and local and state leaders, Virginia has taken many steps to build a more unified public-private early childhood system. A few key milestones include:

Launch of Smart Beginnings Network - 2005: Through the establishment of the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF) a regional network of Smart Beginnings coalitions are formed, improving readiness, conditions, and policies for children and families. Smart Beginnings continues to grow to include a network of 17 public-private coalitions across the state, supporting early learning in all settings.

Pilot a Statewide Kindergarten Readiness Assessment - 2013: The Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP) was initiated by Elevate Early Education (E3), a bipartisan, issue-advocacy organization. In partnership with UVA, a three-phase approach to create a statewide comprehensive kindergarten readiness assessment was launched to facilitate research, trial, and expansion of the now statewide assessment.

First Preschool Development Grant - 2014: Virginia received a three-year federal grant to support improvements in preschool quality, access, and impact by integrating best practices in high-need communities. This grant established VPI+, a grant funded preschool program that included a greater focus on coaching, evidence-based curriculum, and family support.

Establishment of the Joint Subcommittee on VPI - 2015: Formed to assist in the reform of VPI and consider strategies for increasing accountability and clarity in the state's role and policy relating to providing a preschool experience. This subcommittee assisted in recommendations for expanded mixed-delivery pilots, expanded VPI+, and the establishment of the School Readiness Committee.

Establishment of School Readiness Committee Established - 2016: The School Readiness Committee was designated as the State Advisory Council (SAC) under the Head Start Act. Since its initiation, the committee has formed several workgroups to engage experts and develop recommendations, with a particular focus on the early childhood workforce. The School Readiness Committee has oversight of Virginia's Needs Assessment and Strategic plan, formed as a part of the Preschool Development Grant Birth-to-Five in 2018.

JLARC Report on Virginia's Early Childhood Development Programs - 2017: This report highlighted the need for additional investments and state alignment across early childhood initiatives. As a result, several key actions were taken during the 2018 session to improve school readiness outcomes in Virginia measuring kindergarten readiness through the Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program and creating and monitoring a unified measure of quality in all Virginia Preschool Initiative classrooms.

Preschool Development Grant Birth-to-Five and Virginia Needs Assessment and Renewal Grant - 2018 and 2019: Virginia was awarded both an initial and renewal Preschool Development Grant Birth-to-Five (PDG). The initial version of this grant (awarded in 2018) required the development of a Virginia Needs Assessment and a Preschool Development Grant Birth-to-Five Strategic Plan to set the goals for the grant, and for building a more unified public-private system.[27] The Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan evaluated the status of all publicly-funded programs, including Head Start/Early Head Start, child care, family day homes, and public schools. Both the needs assessment and strategic plan were integral in calling for further investigation and study through Executive Directive Four. In 2019, Virginia was awarded the PDG Renewal Grant, which will be funded through 2022, and is supporting many of the goals outlined in the PDG Strategic Plan.

Statewide Implementation of VKRP - 2019: The Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program was implemented statewide in fall 2019 for all kindergarteners, at the direction of the Virginia General Assembly. This allowed the first ever comprehensive examination of kindergarten readiness and provided important insight into the unmet needs of Virginia's young children related to school readiness.

Early Childhood Legislation - Executive Directive Four - 2019 and Legal Establishment of the Unified Early Childhood System and Requirement for Measurement and Improvement - 2020: With the issuing of ED4[28] and as part of the 2020 General Assembly, SB578/HB1021 was introduced with the aim of achieving three key goals:
1) Establish a unified public-private early care and education system that is administered by the VDOE and Board of Education
2) Create a unified quality measurement and improvement system for all early childhood programs that receive public funds
3) Move oversight and licensure of care and education entities to the VDOE and Board

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[27] PDG B5 Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan can be found in full here: https://www.vecf.org/federal-preschool-development-grant-b-5/

[28] Executive Directive Four - https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/ED-4-Establishing-The-Governors-Executive-Leadership-Team-on-School-Readiness.pdf

This legislation was successfully passed and signed into law in July 2020, requiring all publicly-funded providers to participate in the new unified measurement and improvement system starting in the fall of 2023.[29] Early childhood programs that do not receive any public funds will have the option to participate.

VQB5 Practice Year 1 - 2021-2022: 1,456 sites registered to participate in VQB5 Practice Year 1 which was available through 17 local PDG Communities, covering approximately 85% of the state. Participating sites receive two local CLASS observations, in the fall and spring, and enter information about curriculum use. Practice Year 1 ratings are calculated at the end of the academic year and were shared privately with sites in the fall of 2022. (See Appendix D for additional VQB5 Fall 2021 Data).

Establishment of Ready Regions - January 2022: In January 2022, Virginia announced the first ever Ready Regions[30] to enable the full statewide implementation of VQB5. Ready Regions were established to support coordination and accountability for early education programs in every community across the Commonwealth. Each Ready Region has a lead organization charged to partner with parents, school divisions, social and human services agencies, quality improvement networks, early childhood care and education programs, businesses, and other stakeholder organizations to coordinate and integrate critical services and resources for families with young children. A top priority for Ready Regions will be providing on-the-ground implementation support for VQB5. Ready Region organizations are selected through a competitive application process facilitated by the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation. In the 2022 State Virginia Assembly Session, HB389/SB529[31] was proposed to formalize the structure and role of Ready Regions.

VQB5 Practice Year 2 - 2022-2023: 2,632 sites registered to participate in VQB5 Practice Year 2 which was available statewide through Ready Regions. Participating sites receive two local CLASS observations, in the fall and spring, and enter information about curriculum use. Practice Year 2 ratings will be calculated at the end of the academic year and will be shared privately with sites in the fall of 2023. (See Appendix D for additional VQB5 Fall 2022 Data).

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[29] Code of Virginia (§ 22.1-289.03) - https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title22.1/chapter14.1/section22.1-289.03/

[30] Virginia Early Childhood Foundation - https://vecf.org/ready-regions/

[31] Virginia's Legislative Information System - https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?221+sum+HB389

APPENDIX B: TIMELINE FOR BUILDING THE UNIFIED MEASUREMENT AND IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM

Starting in 2018, the VDOE conducted extensive stakeholder engagement regarding the unified system. Over the past two practice years, the VDOE has worked with the Early Childhood Advisory Committee (ECAC), parents/families of young children ages 0-5, birth-to-five providers, and other critical stakeholders in the field, to develop and scale the new system.

Below is a timeline overview, including activities to be completed prior to the 2023-2024 participation requirement.

ITEMS COMPLETED
2020-2021 ● Developed proposals based on national research and current Virginia landscape ● Reviewed and modeled current quality data from Virginia ● Conducted stakeholder engagement webinars, presentations, and listening sessions ● Launched VDOE [Building a Unified Early Childhood System](#) and [Quality Measurement and Improvement (VQB5)](#) web pages to share information about the new measurement and improvement system **2021-2022** ● Completed Practice Year 1 with Preschool Development Communities ● Ready Regions identified through a competitive process facilitated by Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF) and announced in December 2021 ● Gathered feedback from participating sites and PDG communities about VQB5 activities ● Reviewed data and feedback from Practice Year 1 to inform needed revisions ● Provided financial incentive (RecognizeB5) for eligible teachers participating in VQB5 Practice Year 1 ● Awarded contract and work with new Third Party vendor to develop protocols for External CLASS Audits in Practice Year 2 **2022-2023** ● Launched Practice Year 2 with Ready Regions ● Shared Practice Year 1 Rating results privately with all sites who participated during the 2021-2022 year ● Completed fall data collection for every classroom participating in Practice Year 2

- Complete fall and spring local CLASS observations coordinated by Ready Regions *(in-process)*
- Complete fall and spring external observations coordinated by the Teachstone External Observation Team *(in-process)*
- Provide financial incentive (RecognizeB5) for eligible teachers participating in VQB5 Practice Year 2
- Develop VQB5 quality profile prototype for Practice Year 2 ratings
- Bring Guidelines for Year 1 to the ECAC and Board of Education by June 2023

WHAT'S AHEAD

2023-2024 – Required Participation Begins
- Launch first full year of VQB5 in the fall of 2023 (All publicly-funded programs are required to participate)
- Share Practice Year 2 Quality Profiles, including practice rating results, privately with all sites who participated during the 2022-2023 year.
- Provide financial incentive (RecognizeB5) for eligible teachers participating in VQB5 Year 1
- VDOE uses data from 2023-2024 to calculate quality ratings for public release in Fall 2024

2024-2025
- Post VQB5 quality profiles, including quality ratings, publicly in the fall of 2024
- Begin the second year of full VQB5 implementation

APPENDIX C: READY REGIONS RESPONSIBILITIES FOR VQB5

Table C.1 2023-2024 Ready Region Lead Agencies

Ready Region	Lead Agency
Southwest	United Way of Southwest Virginia
West	United Way of Roanoke Valley
Southside	Center for Early Success
Central	Thrive Birth to Five
Southeastern	Minus 9 to 5, Eastern Virginia Medical School
Chesapeake Bay	Smart Beginnings Virginia Peninsula
Capital Area	Fairfax County Office for Children
North Central	Foundation First (formerly) Smart Beginnings Rappahannock Area
Blue Ridge	United Way of Greater Charlottesville

Ready Region Responsibilities for VQB5

Per Virginia State Code (See § 22.1-289.05), Ready Region Lead Organizations are responsible for coordinating early childhood care and education services, and supporting quality improvement through the implementation of the uniform measurement and improvement system (VQB5). The specific Ready Region responsibilities for VQB5 are listed below.

1. **Build Relationships**
   A. Maintain VQB5 leadership responsible for coordination and oversight of all regional VQB5 activities with all publicly-funded and other participating programs: This will include:
      - Communicating VQB5 expectations with the field and state level partners and ensure completion of all Strengthening Quality assurances.
      - Maintaining a regional VQB5 implementation team to support the completion of all VQB5 required activities.
   B. Ensure regular communications with all partners, particularly with publicly-funded early care and education (ECCE) program leaders (site directors) to support required engagement with VQB5.
      - Use a variety of methods for communicating VQB5 requirements and expectations to all publicly-funded programs in the region on a regular basis (e.g., website, social media, webinars, e-newsletters, regional office hours).
      - Establish a schedule for an ongoing regional communication with all VQB5 participating sites.
      - Ensure that there are mechanism(s) for all partners to ask questions, raise concerns and provide constructive feedback.
   C. Participate in structured technical assistance (TA) and complete work toward continuous improvement across all assurance areas and responsibilities.

2. **Increase Access**
   A. Support VQB5 requirements by ensuring programs complete registration, profiles, and classroom lists in LinkB5:
   - Coordinate and facilitate annual registration of all publicly-funded programs within the Ready Region through LinkB5 from August 15 – October 1st.
   - Support site administrators and teachers with the completion of registration information in LinkB5 by October 1st.
   - Support site administrators with the completion of registration profiles by October 1st and classroom lists.
   - Support site administrators to ensure primary contact information is kept up to date, throughout the year.

3. **Strengthen Quality**
   A. Plan and complete all VQB5 Local Observations
   - Inventory local CLASS observers within your region at least twice a year to ensure sufficient local observer capacity to meet regional needs. Ensure adequate emphasis is placed on building a diverse group of observers across all age groups, with particular focus on experience needed to observe inclusive and other special education settings and family child care.
     - o Develop a written plan to address any gaps or needs.
   - Create a written observation schedule to ensure all registered classrooms are observed and receive feedback twice a year, in the fall and spring. When scheduling, ensure linguistic match between observer and primary language of instruction.
   - Support observers in entering and submitting for approval all CLASS® scores in LinkB5 and support site administrators with approving CLASS® scores in LinkB5. Regions should conduct follow-up as needed.
     - o Fall Observation Window - Aug. 15th-Dec. 22nd
     - o Spring Observation Window - Jan. 20th-May 31st
   B. Support Programs with VQB5 External Observations
   - Designate a Ready Region staff member to be the external observation representative for receiving scheduling notification emails from the Teachstone External Observation team.
   - Ensure site administrators are aware of their external observation schedule and understand the purpose of external observations in VQB5, throughout fall and spring observation windows.
   C. Maintain accurate, consistent and effective local observers
   - Establish written regional policies and practices to support observer consistency and effectiveness of resulting feedback, as well as policies and practices that reduce observer bias.
   - At a minimum, regional plans should include the use of double coding and/or calibrations for new observers and a selection of experienced observers at least every 6 months.
   - Use results from local-external alignment reports to inform practices for supporting local observers. Update regional policies to address any gaps/needs twice a year, following fall and spring alignment reports.

D. VQB5 Improvement Support
- Ensure that all teachers and leaders who are new to CLASS are provided with foundational CLASS training prior to being observed (ongoing, based on regional foundational training needs).
- Collaborate with improvement partners to coordinate the implementation of interactions-support activities. At a minimum, Ready Regions must establish a quarterly meeting schedule with Infant & Toddler Specialist Network (ITSN), Advancing Effective Interactions and Instruction (AEII), and Virginia's Training and Technical Assistance Centers (TTAC).
- Designate one Ready Region staff member to serve as the Coaching Collaboration representative and attend quarterly collaboration meetings with the state to support consistent communications between the state, coaching partners and the field.
- Share information about professional development options and opportunities offered by state, regional and local partners with VQB5 sites during fall and spring observation windows.

E. Support curriculum data submission
- Support site administrators to ensure curriculum use information is entered into LinkB5 for every classroom by May 31st.

F. Support Dissemination of Information related to RecognizeB5
- Communicate RecognizeB5 eligibility requirements with the field and help connect programs to information about the RecognizeB5 program (i.e. RecognizeB5 Help Center) during registration and verification time periods as needed.

4. Engage Families
A. Develop informational outreach to parents about VQB5 participation efforts (e.g., that their child's site is participating in broader statewide efforts).

Additional information can be found on the Ready Regions website.

APPENDIX D: VQB5 PRACTICE YEAR DATA

D.1 PRACTICE YEAR 1 FINAL RESULTS

The following charts represent practice year 1 results which were determined using CLASS and curriculum data gathered during the 2021-2022 year. Practice Year 1 Results were shared privately with participating sites in September 2022.

PRACTICE YEAR 1 PARTICIPATION DATA

Table D.1.1 PY1 Participation by Site Type

Site Type	Number of Sites	Percentage of Whole
Centers	701	46.3%
Public Schools	535	35.3%
Family Day Homes	278	18.4%
Total	**1,514**	**100%**

Table D.1.2 Practice Year 1 Site Participation by Ready Region (2021-2022)

Ready Region	Centers	Family Day Homes	Public Schools	Total
Southwest	102	19	90	**211**
West	85	16	74	**175**
Southside	53	13	57	**123**
Central	136	32	30	**198**
Southeastern	94	14	73	**181**
Chesapeake Bay	53	2	28	**83**
Capital Area	82	153	79	**314**
North Central	39	8	25	**72**
Blue Ridge	57	21	79	**157**
Total	**701**	**278**	**535**	**1,514**

Table D.1.3 – Practice Year 1 Rating Results by Site Type*

Practice Year 1 Site Type	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Needs Support	TOTAL
Centers	20	399	13	432
Family Day Homes	21	157	4	182
Public Schools	74	361	0	435
TOTAL	**115**	**917**	**17**	**1,049**

*465 sites received an incomplete rating, due to missing one or more CLASS observations from the fall or spring.

Table D.1.4 Overall Practice Year 1 Ratings by Points

Practice Year 1 Ratings	PY1 Sites Receiving a PY1 Rating Possible Range 100-800 points
Range of Points	340-799
Average Points	610

Table D.1.5 Practice Year 1 Local CLASS Observation Fall to Spring Improvement

Site Type	Infant Fall 2021	Infant Spring 2022	Toddler Fall 2021	Toddler Spring 2022	Pre-K Fall 2021	Pre-K Spring 2022
Centers n=701	4.87	**4.97**	4.62	**4.79**	4.84	**4.95**
Family Day Homes n=278	5.03	**5.49**	5.06	**5.24**	5.00	**5.33**
Public Schools N=535	--	--	5.34	**4.67**	5.33	**5.52**
All Sites N=1,514	**4.77**	**4.90**	**5.04**	**5.29**	**5.33**	**5.52**

Table D.1.6 – Practice Year 1 Local and External CLASS Observation Averages

CLASS Tool	Local Observation Average n= 8,435	External Observation Average n=667
Infant CLASS	4.93	4.43
Toddler CLASS	4.81	4.51
Pre-K CLASS	5.16	4.70
TOTAL	**5.05**	**4.54**

Table D.1.7 Practice Year 1 External Observation Averages and Ranges

CLASS Tool	Local Observation Score Ranges (PY1)	External Observation Score Ranges (PY1)
ALL Age-Levels	1.40-7.00	1.94-6.88

View 2021-2022 External CLASS Observation Averages by Domain and Dimension

Table D.1.8 Practice Year 1 External Observation Averages – Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Classroom Comparison

Data from 29 ECSE classrooms that received an External Pre-K CLASS observation during the 2021-2022 year.

Pre-K CLASS Domains	ECSE classrooms Pre-K CLASS Averages (PY1)	ECSE classroom Pre-K CLASS Ranges (PY1)
Emotional Support Domain Average	5.87	3.75-6.91
Classroom Organization Domain Average	5.60	3.25-6.89
Instructional Support Domain Average	2.52	1.00-4.66
Pre-K Total Dimension Average	**4.78**	**2.78-6.17**

Table D.1.9 Practice Year 1 Use of Approved Curriculum by Classroom vs. Sites

	Using Approved Curriculum (number)	Using Approved Curriculum (%)	Not Using Approved Curriculum (number)	Not Using Approved Curriculum (%)
Classrooms	3,663	78.2%	1,024	21.8%
Sites	895	85.3%	154	14.7%

Table D.1.10 – Practice Year 1 -Classroom Use of An Approved Curriculum by Age-Level

Classroom Type	Using Approved Curriculum	Not Using Approved Curriculum
Infant	63.7%	36.3%
Toddler	68.2%	31.8%
Preschool	84.8%	15.2%

Table D.1.11 Practice Year 1- Classroom Use of An Approved Curriculum by site-type

Site Type	Using Approved Curriculum	Not Using Approved Curriculum
Centers	68.9%	31.1%
Family Day Homes	67.9%	32.1%
Public Schools	97.8%	2.2%

D.2 – VQB5 PRACTICE YEAR 2 – FALL 2022 DATA

Final data from Practice Year 2 will be available in July 2023

Table D.2.1 Practice Year 2 Participation Data by Site Type – Fall 2022

	Number of Sites Participating by Type			Total Number of Participating Sites
	Centers	Family Day Homes	Public Schools	
N	1180	662	790	2632
%	45%	25%	30%	100%

Table D.2.2 Practice Year 2 Participation by Region – Fall 2022

Region Name	Number of Sites Participating In PY2
Region 1 - Southwest	215
Region 2 - West	180
Region 3 - Southside	146
Region 4 - Central	358
Region 5 - Southeastern	355
Region 6 - Chesapeake Bay	185
Region 7 - Capital Area	623
Region 8 - North Central	375
Region 9 - Blue Ridge	195
Statewide	**2,632**

D.2.3 Practice Year 2 Fall 2022 CLASS Completion

FALL 2022 CLASS Completion	Local Observations	External Observations
Number of Sites Observed	**2,277**	**986**
Number of Classrooms Observed: By Age-Level	**Local Observations**	**External Observations**
Pre-K	4,415	951
Toddler	2,081	417
Infant	977	259
Number of Classrooms Observed: By Site Type	**Local Observations**	**External Observations**
Public School	2,158	475

Affiliated Center	1,228	291
Stand-Alone Center	3,620	762
Family Day Home	467	99
Total Number of Classrooms Observed	**7,473**	**1,627**

Table D.2.4 – Practice Year 2 Local and External CLASS Observation Averages by Age-Level – Fall 2022

CLASS Tool	Local Observation Fall 2022 Averages *n=7,751*	External Observation Fall 2022 Averages N=1,627
Infant CLASS *n=977*	5.00	4.74
Toddler CLASS *n=2,081*	4.77	4.51
Pre-K CLASS *n=4,415*	5.08	4.74

Local and External Alignment Analysis

In the fall of 2022, 1,142 classrooms had both local and external observations using the same age-level tool. Score comparison information from the matched classrooms is below.

Table D.2.5 Practice Year 2 Local-External Observation Alignment results within 1 Scale Point by Age-Level

Fall 2022 Local-External Alignment Percentage of Dimension Scores within 1 Scale Point*	
Infant (n=230)	48%
Toddler (n=328)	53%
Pre-K (n=854)	55%
Total (n=1412)	**54%**

* The Total percentage indicates the percentage of Dimension scores across all age groups that fell within 1 scale point (i.e., within 1 scale point between the local and external score).

Table D.2.6 Practice Year 2 Local-External Observation Alignment results within 1 Scale Point by Site Type

Fall 2022 Local-External Alignment Percentage of Dimension Scores within 1 Scale Point*	
Centers (n=921)	52%
Family Day Homes (n=61)	54%
Public Schools (n=430)	57%
Total (n=1,412)	**54%**

* The Total percentage indicates the percentage of Dimension scores across all age groups that fell within 1 scale point (i.e., within 1 scale point between the local and external score).

Table D.2.7 Practice Year 2 Differences Between Local and External Scores – Fall 2022

	Number of Classrooms with Local and External Differences > 1.0 Point* (N)	**Percent of Classrooms with Local and External Differences > 1.0 Point (%)***
Infant	99	43.0%
Toddler	103	31.4%
Pre-K	253	29.6%

*where the difference between local observation and external observation was greater than 1 point

Table D.2.8 Practice Year 2 Use of An Approved Curriculum by Site Type – Fall 2022

Site Type	**Using Approved Curriculum**	**Not Using Approved Curriculum**
Center	78.4%	21.6%
Family Day Home	53.9%	46.1%
Public School	98.0%	2.0%

Table D.2.9 – Practice Year 2 -Classroom Use of An Approved Curriculum by Age-Level – Fall 2022

Age-Level	Using Approved Curriculum	Not Using Approved Curriculum
Infant	68%	32%
Toddler	70%	30%
Preschool	85%	15%

Table D.2.10 Practice Year 2 Use of Approved Curriculum by Classroom vs. Sites – Fall 2022

	Using Approved Curriculum (number)	Using Approved Curriculum (%)	Not Using Approved Curriculum (number)	Not Using Approved Curriculum (%)
Classrooms	6,557	78%	1,814	22%
Sites	1,991	78%	552	22%

Table D.2.11 Practice Year 2 Engagement and Feedback Summary (August 2022-Feb 2023)

The following engagement activities with the field during Practice Year 2 have provided many opportunities to continually gather feedback about VQB5 from a diverse set of participants and stakeholders.

Type of Engagement/Feedback	Occurrence – 2022-2023
Readiness Connections Weekly E-Newsletter and Quarterly Recap	VQB5 information included every Tuesday and VQB5 information and Ready Regions highlighted Quarterly
VQB5 Webinars • Recordings posted on VQB5 website • Feedback gathered through webinar Q&A and surveys	• Quarterly Improvement Partner Webinars • Local Observation Webinar • Info Session for Subsidy Vendors • Info Session for Early Childhood Special Education Coordinators • Mid-Year Refresher for Program Leaders
Ready Regions Ongoing Communications • RR meetings include regular opportunities to ask	• Weekly RR email every Monday • Office Hours every Wednesday • Ready Region Leads-only meetings monthly • Ready Regions Monthly TA Support meetings • Half-day TA-sessions for RR partners twice a year

questions and share feedback	• Practice Year 1 Data Deep Dive Sessions for Ready Region partners • VDOE participation at Regional meetings and office hours to talk about VQB5 (upon request)
Stakeholder Presentations • Include opportunities for Q&A and feedback	• VDOE Principals Conference, • VAAEYC • ITSN Director's Institute, • VPI Office Hours • Head Start Director's meetings • Local DSS office meetings • Virginia Promise Partnerships
Feedback Surveys	• External Observation Feedback Survey (ongoing) • Webinar Feedback surveys
VQB5 email	• Used regularly to receive inquires and feedback about VQB5

Table D.2.12 Practice Year 2 External Observation Overall Feedback (as of Feb 2022)

Question/Statement Regarding External Observations	Percent Response of "Strongly Agree" or "Agree"
Expectations for External Observations during VQB5 Practice Year 2 are clear	78%
The notification and scheduling process for External Observations was smooth	65%
The External Observation feedback report that I received was helpful	75%

N=90 respondents/site administrators

Table D.2.13 Practice Year 2 External Observation Feedback Shared (as of March 2023)

Stakeholder Type N=90	Percentage of Site Administrators who shared external feedback reports
Teachers	82%
Other Site Administrators	29%
Coach/PD Provider	12%
Ready Regions	12%
Did not share with anyone	7%
Other	7%

Table D.2.14 Total number of Local CLASS Observers within Ready Regions – January 2023

Age-Level	Local CLASS Observers
Infant CLASS	320
Toddler CLASS	448
Pre-K CLASS	825
State Total *	**1,005***

*State total represents number of individual observers. Some observers are certified in more than one tool.

Table D.2.15 Growth in Local CLASS Observers*

| Year	Number of Local CLASS Observers
2019	130
2020	611
2021	714
2022	857
2023 (as of 1/31/23)	1,005

*State total represents number of individual observers. Some observers are certified in more than one tool.

Table D.2.16 – Practice Year 2 Local Observers and Number of Observations Completed– Fall 2022

CLASS Age-Level	# of Local Observers* (fall 2022)	Average Observations Per Observer	Range of Observations per Observer
Infant CLASS	208	4	1-30
Toddler CLASS	405	5.4	1-61
Pre-K CLASS	809	5.6	1-50

*includes # of local observers who completed at least one local CLASS observations in the fall of 2022, with scores entered in LinkB5

Table D.2.17 Total Certified CLASS Observers in Virginia as of December 2022

CLASS Observer Growth in VA
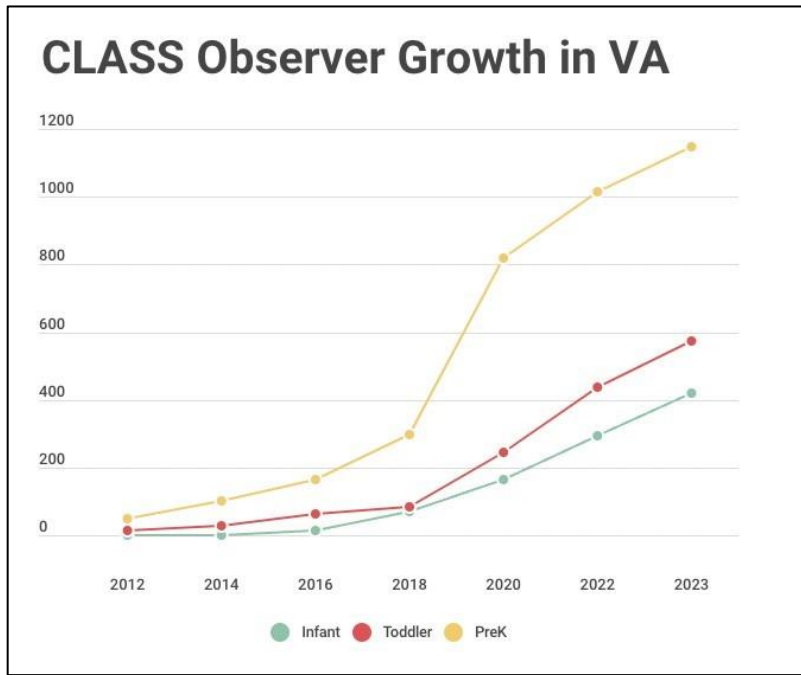
CLASS Tool Age-Level	Certified Observers in VA
Infant CLASS	422
Toddler CLASS	573
Pre-K CLASS	1,148

D.2.18 – Correlation Analysis for ICP-CLASS Pilot

Time period	Average ICP Score	Average CLASS Score	Correlation Coefficient
Fall 2021 $(n^1=26)$	3.75	5.38	0.08
Spring 2022 $(n^1=26)$	4.49	5.81	0.02
Fall 2021 – Spring 2022 $(n^1=26)$	3.93	5.58	0.10
Fall 2022 $(n^1=34)$	4.18	5.53	0.14
n=Represents the number of classrooms that received both an ICP and CLASS score.			

APPENDIX E: CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT FOR EXTERNAL OBSERVERS

A conflict of interest exists when there is evidence of or the appearance that an observer's personal interests have influenced or may influence the CLASS observation and scoring of a particular classroom or program or that the observer's personal interest would take precedence over the interests and goals of the external observation vendor or the requirements and objectives of the External VQB5 CLASS Observation Contract.

A conflict of interest may relate to the observer, the observer's spouse/partner, family member, or business interest in areas such as:
- The observer (or a party related to the observer) holds, directly or indirectly a financial interest in an organization that operates or is affiliated with a Public School, Private School, or Community Based Educational Organization within the districts/jurisdictions in which the observer will be conducting observations.
- The observer (or a party related to the observer) renders or have rendered in the past directive, managerial, or consultative service or is or has been an employee of any Public School, Private School, or Community Based Educational Organization within the districts/jurisdictions in which the observer will be conducting observations.
- The observer (or a party related to the observer) renders services relating to conducting or coordinating the local CLASS observations for an identified Ready Region within the state of Virginia including any Public School, Private School, or Community Based Educational Organization within the districts/jurisdictions in which the observer will be conducting external CLASS observations.
- The observer has accepted gifts or benefits from any Public School, Private School, or Community Based Educational Organization within the districts/jurisdictions in which the observer will be conducting observations or an organization that operates or is affiliated with any Public School, Private School, or Community Based Educational Organization within the districts/jurisdictions in which the observer will be conducting observations.
- A party related to the observer (including but not limited to spouse/partner, family member, or business associate/interest) has received or continues to receive benefits, financial or otherwise, from any Public School, Private School, or Community Based Educational Organization within the districts/jurisdictions in which the observer will be conducting observations or an organization that operates or is affiliated with any Public School, Private School, or Community Based Educational Organization within the districts/jurisdictions in which the observer will be conducting observations.

The external observation contractor is responsible for knowing what conflicts may exist with its observers and to manage and eliminate any appearance of conflict. The key to handling these potential conflicts is full disclosure of any potential conflict or the appearance of conflict by all observers. External observers must disclose any family members that may be supported by, employed by, a vendor of, or a business associate of any Public School, Private School, or Community Based Educational Organization within the districts/jurisdictions in which an observer will be conducting observations.

APPENDIX G: SAMPLE OF VQB5 QUALITY PROFILE PROTYPE

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

VQB5 Practice Year 2 Quality Profile SAMPLE 1 - CENTER		
SITE PERFORMANCE 2022-2023*		
Site Name: ABC Childcare		**Site ID:** 1234
Practice Year 2 Rating: Meets Practice Year Expectations		
Interactions Points: 465 points	**Curriculum Points:** 100 points	**Total Points:** 565 points
Interactions Performance Information		
Observations using the CLASS® tool were completed in every classroom at this site, in the fall and spring, to measure the quality of teacher-child interactions.		
Infant Classrooms	**Toddler Classrooms**	**PreK Classrooms**
CLASS Scores Exceed Practice Year Expectations	CLASS Scores Need Support	CLASS Scores Meet Practice Year Expectations
Curriculum Performance Information		
This site reported using a VDOE approved curriculum in at least one classroom.		
Curricula Used	Frog Street Toddler, Frog Street 3's, Frog Street 4's	
SITE INFORMATION		
Site Address: 123 Sesame Street, Richmond VA 22222		
Ready Region: Ready Region 4 - Central		
Site Email: director@abcchildcare.com		**Site Phone:** 111-111-1111
Days of Operation: Year-Round; M/T/W/Th/F		**Other care options:** Offers Drop-In; Offers Afterschool
Age Levels Served: Infants (0-15 months); Toddlers (16-35 months); 3 year olds; 4 year olds		**Licensing Information:** Licensed Child Day Center
Site Website: abcchildcare.com		**Public Funding Information:** Child Care Subsidy; VECF Mixed Delivery
View Practice Rating User Guide for more information about site performance results.		

*The site profile information and performance results are based on information entered in LinkB5 during the 2022-2023 year. Interactions results are based on local CLASS observations that were coordinated by your Ready Region. Use of an approved curriculum is not required for VQB5. Questions can be sent to vqb5@doe.virginia.gov.

APPENDIX H: COMMON TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AEII - Advancing Effective Interactions and Instruction
CASTL - Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (at UVA)
CCDBG - Child Care and Development Block Grant
CLASS - Classroom Assessment Scoring System
CQI - Continuous Quality Improvement
DLL - Dual Language Learners
ECAC - Early Childhood Advisory Committee
ECMHC – Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants
ED4 - Executive Directive Four
ELDS –Early Learning and Development Standards
ICP - Inclusive Classroom Profile
IDEA - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP/IFSP - Individual Education Plan/Individualized Family Service Plan
NAC - National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs
NAEYC - National Association for the Education of Young Children
NAFCC – National Association for Family Child Care
NCECDTL - National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning
NECPA - National Early Childhood Program Accreditation
PDG - Preschool Development Grant
QRIS - Quality Rating and Improvement System
TTAC - Training and Technical Assistance Centers
UVA - University of Virginia
VA ITSN - Virginia Infant Toddler Specialist Network
VCU-ACE – Virginia Commonwealth University Autism Center for Education
VECF - Virginia Early Childhood Foundation
VPI - Virginia Preschool Initiative
VQB5 - Unified Virginia Quality Birth-to-Five System
VDOE - Virginia Department of Education