



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

January 4, 2017

Mark R. Allan
Virginia Department of Education
P.O. Box 2120
Richmond, VA 23218-2120

Dear Dr. Allan:

On August 1, 2016, the project officer from the U.S. Department of Education (ED) (the Department) conducted a desk monitoring review of the Virginia Department of Education's (VDOE) implementation of its approved Preschool Development Grant (PDG). This monitoring aims to continue the collaborative relationship that began at the grant award and development of the scope of work. It provides the Department with a deeper understanding of each State's overall performance; the successes, challenges, and strategies for the implementation of its plans for its PDG Development grant; and the fiscal management of the grant funds. It also helps us tailor technical assistance to each State's specific needs.

The desk monitoring included discussions related to all projects in the approved scope of work, including grants management, high-quality preschool programs, early learning standards, comprehensive services, workforce development, and sustainability.

Enclosed is a summary report based upon this review. The report includes highlights of VDOE's implementation of PDG and a snapshot of Virginia's progress under each PDG key area. This report will be posted on the PDG website. The report includes "next steps" to ensure that the VDOE continues to implement their PDG consistent with its approved application, scope of work, and timelines identified in its project plans.

We want to thank you and your staff for your preparation and cooperation during the desk monitoring review, and for your efforts in providing high quality preschool opportunities through the Preschool Development Grant. We hope you will continue to communicate any needs or concerns to your ED project officer(s).

We look forward to continuing our work with you and supporting Virginia's technical assistance needs to ensure successful implementation of PDG. Thank you for your commitment to Virginia's youngest children.

Sincerely,

Libby Doggett
Deputy Assistant Secretary
Office of Early Learning
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
U.S. Department of Education

Enclosure



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PDG Desk Monitoring Report

Monitoring Information	
State Lead Agency	Virginia Department of Education
State Participating Agency(s)	Virginia State Department of Education
Grant Period	January 1, 2015-December 31, 2019
Current Year of Grant	January 1, 2016-December 31, 2016
PDG Monitoring Period	May 2016 – September 30, 2016
PDG Monitoring Activity (Desk or Onsite)	Desk
Monitoring Review Date(s)	August 1, 2016
State Participants/Project Leads	Dr. Christine Harris, Director of Humanities and Early Childhood Dr. Mark R. Allan, Early Childhood Education Project Manager Dr. Laura Kassner, VPI+ State Coordinator Mr. Christopher Steele, VPI+ Grants and Reports Manager
U.S. Department of Education Project Officer(s)	Tanesha Hembrey, Lead Project Officer

Overview of PDG Monitoring

The Department of Education is committed to supporting States as they implement the expansion of high-quality preschool programs for eligible children through their PDG grant. Consistent with this commitment, the Department has designed a monitoring process to assess a State's implementation of the program requirements and its approved Scope of Work for PDG and the State-level systems and processes needed to support implementation.

program requirements. As a result, the protocol is more rigorous, less burdensome on the subgrantees, and indicative of a high quality preschool.

- A VDOE school division is using available grant funds that have already been awarded to the division to add an additional VPI+ classroom (18 eligible students) on January 2, 2017. They are opening a new school in the division in January, which will provide classroom space for a new VPI+ class. This school division has a large number of unserved at-risk four-year olds. The need is great for new high-quality slots for eligible children. The school division opened three new classrooms at the start of the school year; this addition is a fourth classroom.
- VDOE continues to encourage VPI+ participating school divisions to partner with private providers for VPI+ services. In the second year of the grant two new VPI+ classrooms have been opened in community-based settings. Technical assistance around any necessary cost allocating is differentiated according to each school division’s needs. Examples of this differentiated technical assistance has included developing a cost-allocation spread sheet specific to the needs of the school division and providing onsite assistance in how to use cost-allocation spreadsheets.

Status of Implementation of PDG

In the desk monitoring, the Department used a monitoring and accountability rubric to help determine progress of the State’s implementation. The rubric includes three implementation status levels:

- **Level 1 – Developing:** the State is in the process of developing this activity, or the activity is very new. The State may be facing challenges in implementation, roll-out, or communications with subrecipients and other stakeholders.
- **Level 2 – Implementing:** the State has developed and implemented the activity, although the activity might still benefit from adjustments, training, or communications with subrecipients and other stakeholders.
- **Level 3 – Sustaining & Continuing Improvement:** the activity is well-established in the State, and may be undergoing a process of evaluation or program improvement. Subrecipients, stakeholders and users have been trained and/or communications strategies have been established.

Element	Status
Capacity Building and Increasing Slots	
The State public awareness and recruitment activities are targeted towards eligible 4 year old children in high need communities and families 200 percent below poverty.	Level 2-Implementing
The State’s expansion efforts are targeted towards increasing the access to high quality preschool programs for 4 year olds.	Level 2-Implementing
The State has a plan to ensure that existing State Preschool slots met the twelve standards of a High Quality Preschool Program under the PDG funding.	Level 2-Implementing
Subrecipient Monitoring	
The State Lead Agency has a process to monitor grant and subrecipients activities to ensure implementation of the goals and performance measures outlined in the approved PDG State Plan.	Level 3-Sustaining and Continuing Improvement

a major concern for one division. Virginia should continue to work with VPI+ participating school divisions partnering with private providers for VPI+ services. VDOE should continue to offer technical assistance around any necessary cost allocating to school divisions.

- VDOE acknowledged that they are considerably below the desired percentage of children with disabilities being served and agreed to provide technical assistance to address the situation. Although as of December 2016 Virginia's PDG classrooms were below the desired percentage of children with disabilities, by the end of the 2015-2016 school year, approximately 7% of students in PDG classrooms were students with disabilities which exceeded the national average. VDOE should continue to work with all subgrantees; all have indicated that they are working toward meeting the target for inclusion of children with disabilities in their VPI+ programs. Subgrantees and the VDOE are collaborating on ways to recruit more children with disabilities into the VPI+ program