



## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

### SUMMARY:

Well established research continues to emphasize the importance of early childhood education during the first five years of a child's life is importance to a child's long-term educational success. Virginia currently ranks 33<sup>rd</sup> in the nation in investment in early childhood education. According to the Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program, almost half of Virginia children enter kindergarten without the basic skills they need to succeed in school. This is in large part due to lack of access, as 72 percent of three-year-olds and 24 percent of four-year-olds from economically-disadvantaged families currently lack access to high-quality early learning experiences. To ensure every child has equitable access to opportunity, Virginia should invest more state resources to increase access to and improve the quality and regulatory oversight of its early childhood care and education system.

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**WHEREAS**, 40% of students entering kindergarten each year lack the key literacy, math, and social- emotional skills that predict success; and

**WHEREAS**, In Virginia, 24% of economically disadvantaged four-year-olds and 72% of economically disadvantaged three-year-olds lack access to quality preschool; and

**WHEREAS**, Two-thirds of Virginia children under age 6 have all available parents in the workforce; and

**WHEREAS**, Only 25% of Virginia's early childhood programs that receive public funding participate in the state's voluntary quality measurement system; and

**WHEREAS**, The Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) distributes state funds to schools and community-based organizations to provide quality preschool programs for at-risk four-year-olds un-served by the federal Head Start program; and

**WHEREAS**, Virginia ranks 37th nationally in early childhood governance and 33rd nationally in preschool funding; and

### THEREFORE, BE IT

**RESOLVED**, that Virginia PTA supports maximizing access and funding for At-Risk 3 year olds and up including Early Head Start, Head Start, Development Block Grants (CCBDG) and the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA).

**RESOLVED**, that Virginia PTA supports expansion of the Virginia Preschool Initiative and Mixed Delivery Grants to include at-risk three- year-olds in both public and private settings.

**RESOLVED**, that Virginia PTA supports use of evidenced-based, integrated and comprehensive curriculum for early childhood education as well as programs and funding the supports ongoing training and support for teachers.

**RESOLVED**, that Virginia PTA supports legislation that requires publicly-funded programs to participate in a uniform measurement, oversight and regulatory framework and improvement system that supports families to make informed choices, provides feedback to teachers, and is indicative of positive child outcomes.

**RESOLVED**, that Virginia PTA supports a single point of accountability and oversight for school readiness and the transition of child care licensing and the child care subsidy program from the Virginia Department of Social Services to the Virginia Department of Education, and granting the Board of Education agency oversight authority.

\* This resolution re-affirms and replaces Early Childhood resolutions adopted in 1986, 1997 and 2001

**January 25, 2020, Adopted by the Virginia PTA 2020 Annual Meeting Attendees**

