



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

DATE: March 2, 2018
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: Steven M. Constantino, Ed.D., Acting Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **Early Childhood Special Education Workshop, Collaborative Funding in Early Childhood: Considerations for Sustaining Inclusive Early Childhood Programs**

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) will provide a half-day workshop titled, *Collaborative Funding in Early Childhood: Considerations for Sustaining Inclusive Early Childhood Programs*. This workshop will be held April 12, 2018, in Charlottesville, Virginia from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

The *Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for children with Disabilities in Virginia* require school divisions to offer a continuum of placement options to meet the diverse needs of children with Individualized Education Programs (IEP). This requirement, known as the least restrictive environment (LRE), does not distinguish between school-aged and preschool-aged children. While research indicates that high quality inclusive programs benefit preschoolers both with and without disabilities, inclusion of children with IEPs in regular early childhood programs in Virginia is well-below the national average.

One important consideration to improve inclusion is allocating resources to fund inclusive programs. Historically, local education agencies have used most of their financial resources to support self-contained classrooms for preschoolers with IEPs. This practice, however, can be modified to support inclusion. The purpose of this workshop is to provide an overview of collaborative funding strategies and mechanisms, including braided funding, to create and sustain high-quality regular early childhood settings that are inclusive of preschool children with disabilities. It will be presented by Mr. Will Jensen, Nevada State Special Education Director. Early childhood programs include special education, Title I, Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI), VPI+, Head Start, child care, and other community programs. The workshop is useful for all state and local administrators of early childhood programs, special education directors, finance staff, and other school division leaders who act as the program administrator for Early Childhood Special Education programs.

The workshop will increase knowledge of:

- the need for inclusive programs,
- contexts and models for inclusive programs in Virginia,
- current and potential funding sources in early childhood, and
- challenges and solutions to early childhood inclusion in Virginia.

The VDOE will assume the cost of registration and lunch. Space is limited and registration is on a first-come, first-served basis until all participant spaces are filled.

Registration – Registration is available at the following website:

[Cvent registration for Collaborative Funding Workshop](#) 

Institute Site – Boars Head Inn, 200 Ednam Drive, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903.

Time – Registration will be from 9:30 -10 a.m. The workshop will begin at 10 a.m. and end by 3 p.m.

Institute Materials – Participant materials and an agenda will be provided at the workshop.

Meals – There will be a working lunch. When registering, indicate any dietary restrictions.

For questions regarding online registration, please contact [Krystle McCabe](#), Event Coordinator, at the Training and Technical Assistance Center at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Questions regarding the content of the workshop should be directed to [Dawn Hendricks](#) Early Childhood Special Education Coordinator by email or by phone at 804-225-2675.

SMC/DH

Virginia Department of Education © Commonwealth of Virginia, 2018