

Virginia's Early Learning & Development Standards (ELDS) Birth-Five Learning Guidelines

Introductory and Implementation Guidance Webinar

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Objective and Agenda

Objective: Viewers will gain a foundational understanding of what Virginia's New Early Learning and Development Standards, Birth to Five Learning Guidelines are and how to implement them.

Agenda

- The Importance of Early Learning and Development Standards
- Equity in Early Learning
 - **Standards as a Foundational Equity Resource**
- Overview of ELDS, Use, Structure and Alignment
- Next Steps for Implementation

Updated Standards: A Key Element to Improving School Readiness

To ensure all Virginia children have equitable opportunity to enter kindergarten ready, a comprehensive, unified set of early learning standards have been developed to support birth to five programs to:

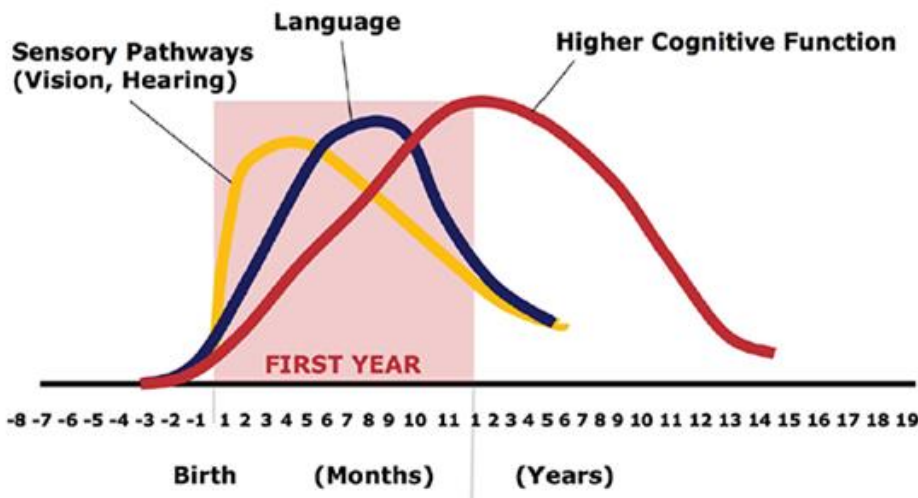
- Understand child development and provide developmentally-appropriate practice,
- Use quality instructional tools and engage in aligned professional development,
- Individualize care and instruction to meet the needs of all learners, and
- Promote holistic and intentional learning and development at each age and stage.



Equity Begins with Early Learning

The Opportunity of the Birth to Five Years

Human Brain Development
 Neural Connections for Different Functions Develop Sequentially



- 90% of a child’s brain development happens before age 5
- Early learning experiences- positive and negative- shape the architecture of a child’s brain

Source: C.A. Nelson (2000). Credit: Center on the Developing Child

Standards as a Foundational Equity Resource

**To learn more about the ELDS guiding principles and culturally responsive practice see pgs. 7-8 of the standards document.*

All Virginia children are capable of and deserve to enter school ready. Yet too many children enter kindergarten without this opportunity.

- 45% of Virginia's Kindergarteners entered school without the key literacy, math, and social-emotional skills needed to be successful (Fall 2020 VKRP results).
- Our system too often fails to prepare children who are Black, Hispanic, speak a language other than English at home, or have a diagnosed disability or developmental delay.

Virginia's early childhood system must ensure that all children have access to quality teaching and learning experiences that meet their unique needs. **VA's ELDS are a foundational equity resource** that provide:

1. Guidance on what children should know and be able to do at various ages and stages of the birth to five continuum

2. Grounding knowledge for developmentally appropriate and culturally and linguistically responsive adult-child interactions



Equity in the Process and Outcomes

Increasing Equity through Process

To ensure the new guidelines are culturally responsive, inclusive, and pragmatic, the VDOE:

- Engaged a broad set of stakeholders (representing diversity in race/ethnicity, geography, provider type and other relevant demographics) in the full developmental process;
- Elicited additional input on cultural responsiveness and inclusivity from a subgroup of stakeholders who more closely represent and serve the full diversity of Virginia's children, particularly those who are the farthest from opportunity, and all sectors of the childcare workforce; and
- Revised the draft based on feedback from the public with a questionnaire that focused on each of the three above noted targets.

Increasing Equity in Outcomes

Virginia's ELDS are designed to help eradicate inequities and disparities in child outcomes by:

- Providing actionable, culturally and developmentally appropriate guidance to all caregivers and educators on what children should know and be able to do
- Equipping caregivers and educators to provide individualized care and instruction that addresses the needs of ALL learners
- Prompting wider utilization of developmental screening and early intervention supports;
- Enabling collaboration across programs and ages
- Empowering all educators to more deeply engage families in supporting their children's learning and development.

**The VA ELDS are a Blueprint for
Preparing Every Child to Enter School
Ready to Thrive!**

How to Use the ELDS

*To learn more read "How To Use Virginia's Unified Early Learning And Development Standards" on pg. 9.

The ELDS can be used by individual providers and early childhood programs to:

- Understand how children build skills and understanding, in different areas of development, from birth to age 5;
- Discern whether a particular child is learning and growing according to general expectations;
- Identify topics for training to help all providers continually grow and improve as early educators.

The ELDS are NOT intended to be used as:

- A developmental checklist; not all children will demonstrate skills in the same time frame or in the same way.
- An assessment of a child's learning and development. Utilizing *valid* and *reliable* screeners and assessments are essential, especially when developmental concerns surface.
- A curriculum. Effective curricula provide caregivers and educators developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive *child-led and adult-guided activities*, which the ELDS do not.



ELDS Structure and Alignment

Structure of the Early Learning Standards

Early Learning and Development Standards are unique in their 1) focus on all aspects of learning and development, and 2) explicit overlap in age-bands and skill markers. There are five core areas of development.

ELDS Core Areas of Development



Read the “Design of the Virginia Early Learning and Development Document” (pgs. 9-10), “Virginia’s Early Learning Development Standards At a Glance” (pg. 11) and “Organization of the Standards” (pg. 12) for more information on the structure of the ELDS.

ORGANIZATION OF THE STANDARDS



DEVELOPMENTAL INDICATORS

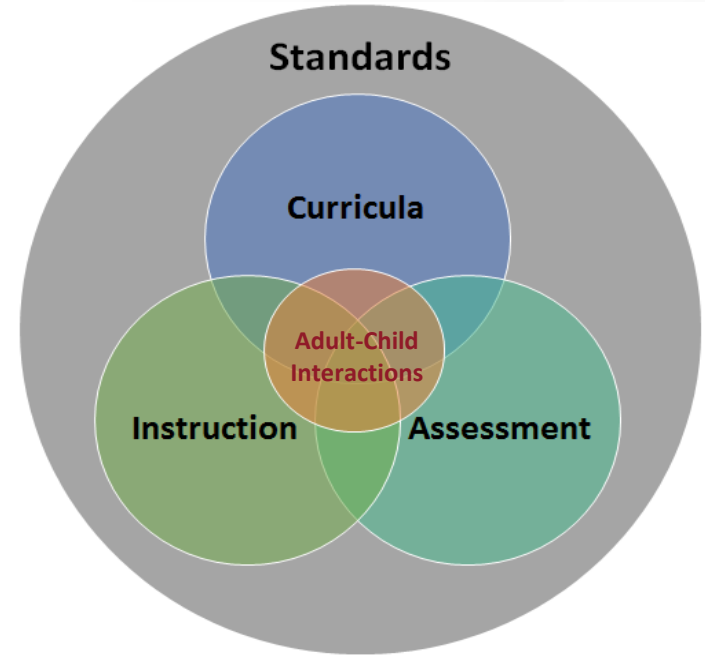
Early Infancy 0–8 months	Later Infancy 6–14 months	Early Toddler 12–24 months	Later Toddler 22–36 months	Early Preschool 34–48 months	Later Preschool 44–60 months
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Shows awareness of what is going on around them by turning head and looking around (APL1.1a) · Shows excitement with facial expressions, vocalizations, or physical movements (APL1.1b) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Shows interest in new experiences such as reaching out to touch rain, hearing a new song, or examining new items (APL1.1c) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Participates in new experiences, begins to ask questions, and experiments with new materials (APL1.1d) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Asks questions about materials and how they are used (APL1.1e) · Shows interest and awareness in changes in the environment (APL1.1f) ➔ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Seeks out new information, asks “Why?” (APL1.1g) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Shows curiosity by saying things like, “I wonder what will happen next.” (APL1.1h) · Seeks out new information by asking, “How does that work?” (APL1.1i) · Shows eagerness to learn about a variety of topics (APL1.1j)

Note: For some focus areas, behavior and skill development occurs more clearly later on in the developmental continuum. In these cases, a color-coded arrow (as such ➔) directs attention to the point at which development of a particular behavior or skill is more explicitly evidenced.

Connecting the Pieces: Standards and Other Key School Readiness Levers

Implementing Virginia's ELDS is one key ingredient for increasing school readiness outcomes for all children. Other crucial components include:

- targeted professional development
- effective, research based curricula
- high-quality instruction
- engaging and responsive adult-child Interactions
- assessment of student learning and skill development across core school readiness areas

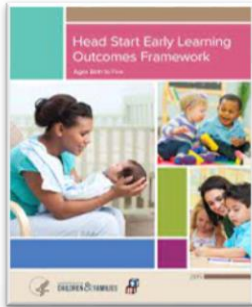


Learn more about how Virginia is [Advancing Effective Interactions and Instruction \(AEII\)](#).

Standards and Assessment Alignment

To make certain the new standards reflect current, national research on child development; are vertically articulated and are the basis for gathering evidence on the learning and development of children, Virginia's ELDS are aligned to:

1. Head Start and Early Head Start *Early Learning Outcomes Framework* for ages birth-five
2. Virginia's Kindergarten SOLs
3. VKRP assessment tools (PALS for literacy, EMAS for mathematics and the CBRS for self-regulation and social skills)



vkrponline.org





Next Steps for Implementation

Accessing the ELDS Document

Virginia's ELDS will be the early learning guidelines for all birth-five programs beginning with the 2021-2022 school year.

- The final document and updates are posted on the [VDOE Early Childhood Curriculum and Instruction webpage](#).
- VDOE does not have plans to print and distribute hard copies of the standards document. Additional digital tools and interactive platforms will be developed and shared with the birth-to-five field.
- VDOE also plans to provide additional resources that are aimed at better supporting children who are the farthest from opportunity (e.g., multilingual learners).



Contact

For questions related to VA's new ELDS contact:



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References and Resources

[Addressing Equity in Early Learning- The Time is Now](#)

[Advancing Effective Interactions and Instruction \(AEII\): Measuring Quality: Curriculum](#)

[Early Childhood Education-Virginia \(ECE-VA\)](#)

[Harvard University Center on the Developing Child: InBrief: The Science of Early Childhood Development](#)

[Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework](#)

[UVA-CASTL Equity Brief: Addressing Disparities in Early Childhood Education Through Early Childhood Resources](#)

[Virginia Department of Education: Early Childhood Curriculum and Instruction](#)

[Virginia is for Learners: Navigating EdEquityVA- Virginia's Roadmap to Equity](#)

[Virginia's Early Learning and Development Standards, Birth-Five Learning Guidelines](#)

[Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program \(VKRP\)](#)

[Virginia's Kindergarten Standards of Learning](#)

[WIDA Early Years™](#)