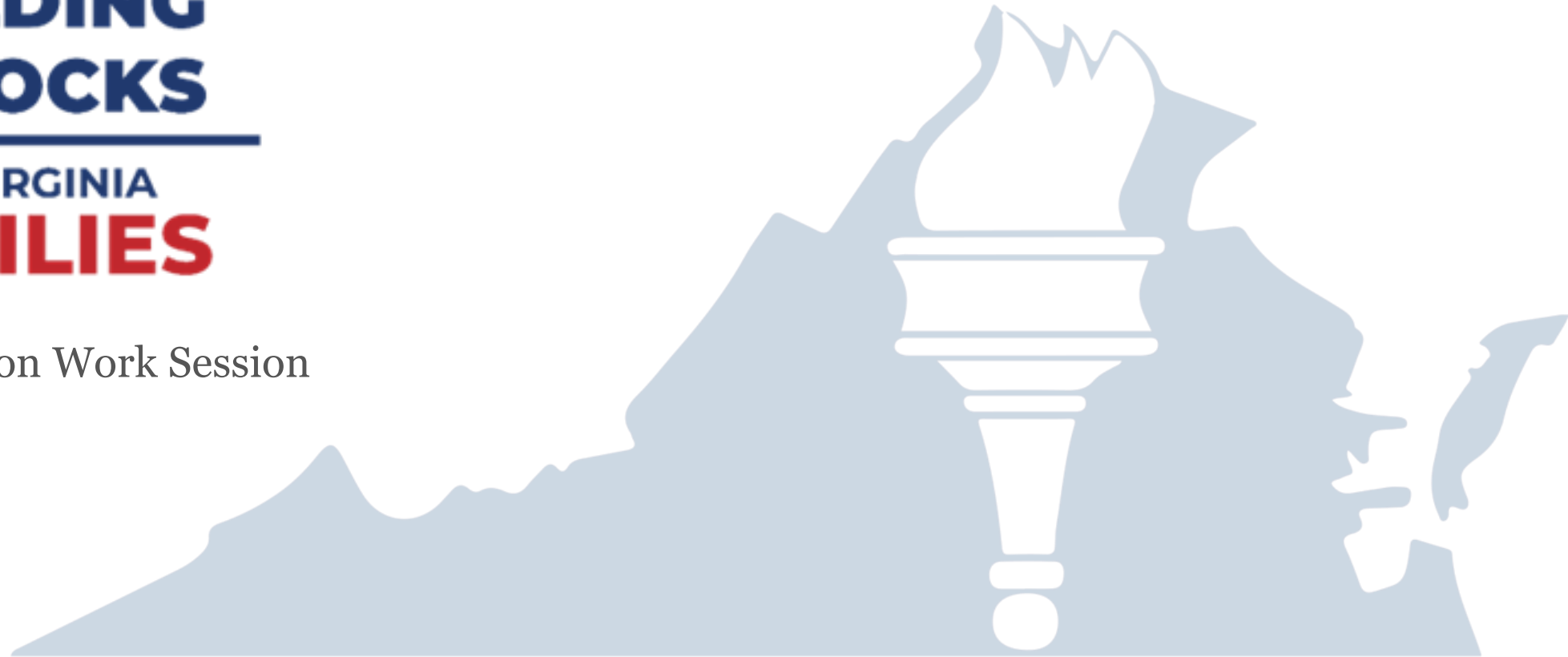


BUILDING
BLOCKS

FOR VIRGINIA
FAMILIES

Board of Education Work Session
January 2024



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OBJECTIVES AND AREAS COVERED

Objective:

Provide an overview of Virginia's early childhood care and education (ECCE) landscape, highlight best-in-class practices and share key details on *Building Block for Virginia Families*

Areas Covered:

1. School Readiness in Virginia
2. Virginia's Birth to Five, Public-Private Parent Choice System
3. *Building Blocks for Virginia Families*

School Readiness in Virginia

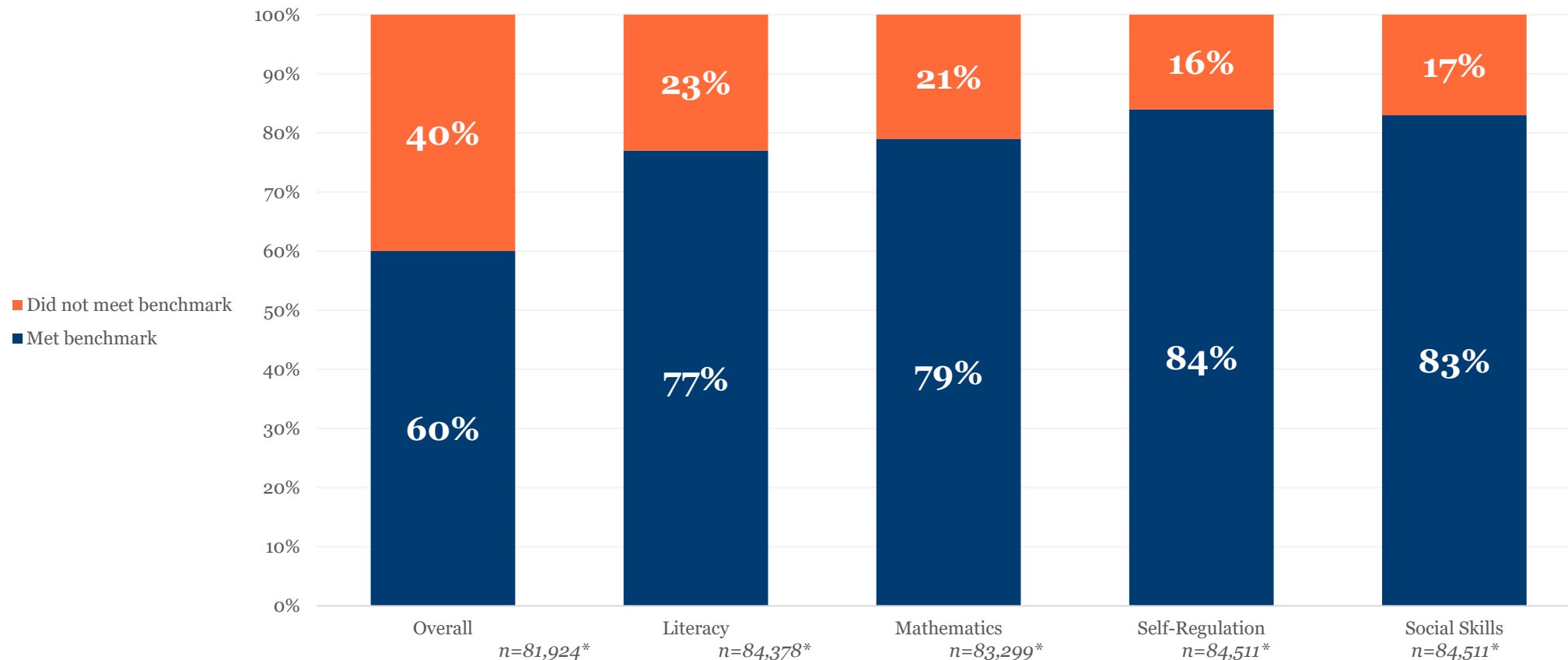
All children should have the opportunity to enter kindergarten ready

SCHOOL READINESS IN VIRGINIA



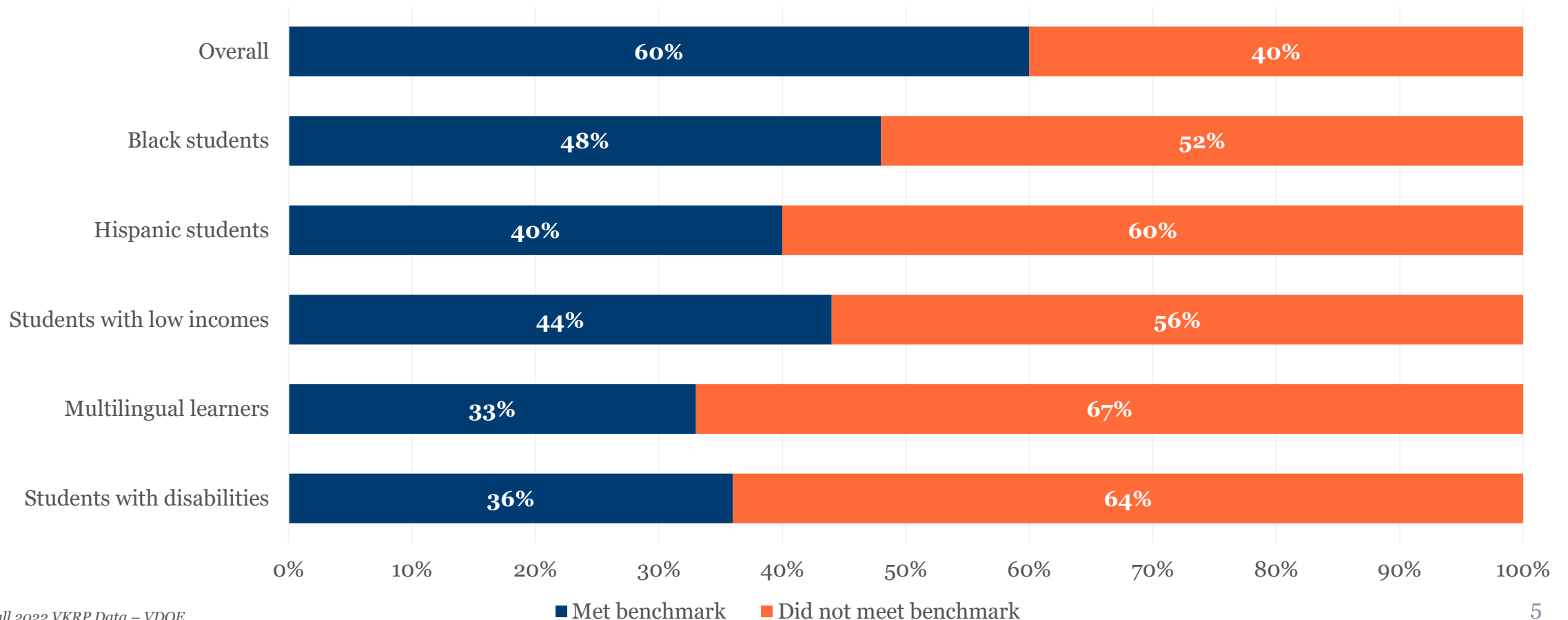
40%

of Virginia's kindergarteners began the 2022-2023 school year still needing to build skills in Literacy, Mathematics, Self-Regulation, and/or Social Skills.*



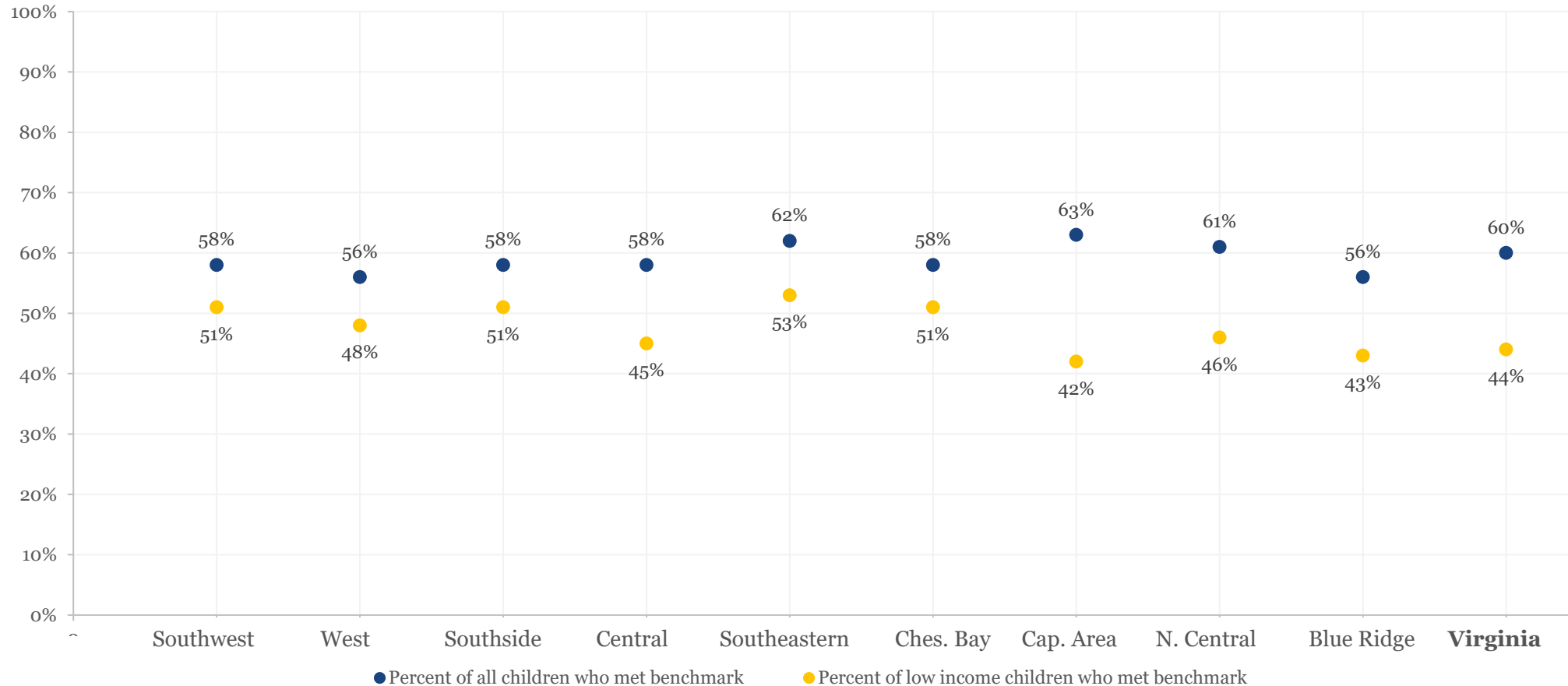
PERSISTENT DISPARITIES IN READINESS

Students who have historically faced barriers are less likely to enter kindergarten with the skills needed to succeed.



REGIONAL VARIATIONS IN READINESS

Students from low-income families are less likely to enter kindergarten ready in every region of Virginia.

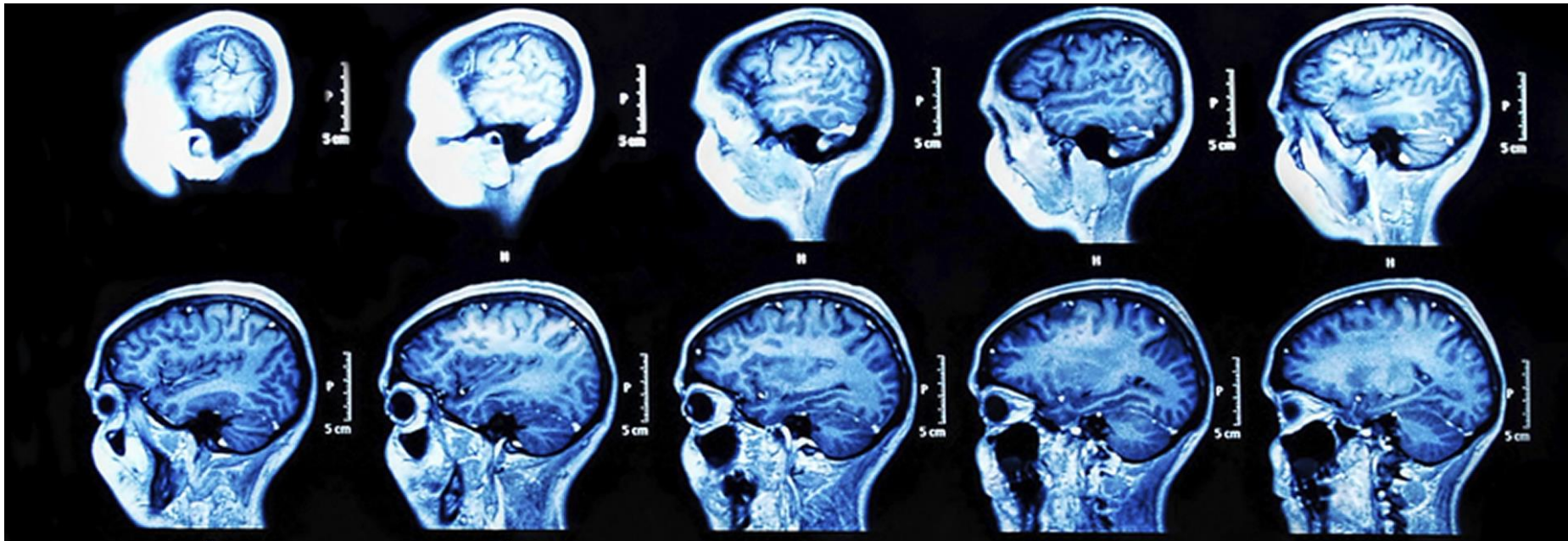


Why School Readiness?

*Increasing access, improving quality and promoting school readiness
helps ensure Virginia is the best state to live, work, and raise a family*

BRAIN DEVELOPMENT AND SCHOOL READINESS

Brain development in early childhood establishes the foundation for all cognitive, social-emotional and physical development.



1 million neural connections are formed every second in the first few years of life.

EARLY CHILDHOOD IS THE FOUNDATION

Quality ECCE programming leverages rapid birth-to-five brain development, enabling children to maximize their potential.

Babies are beginning to link language to core cognitive abilities at just **3 MONTHS**.



Gaps in children's vocabulary start to appear as early as **18 MONTHS**.



By the time children are **3 & 4 YEARS OLD** their vocabulary, attention, and general knowledge are predictors of **THIRD & FOURTH GRADE** reading comprehension.

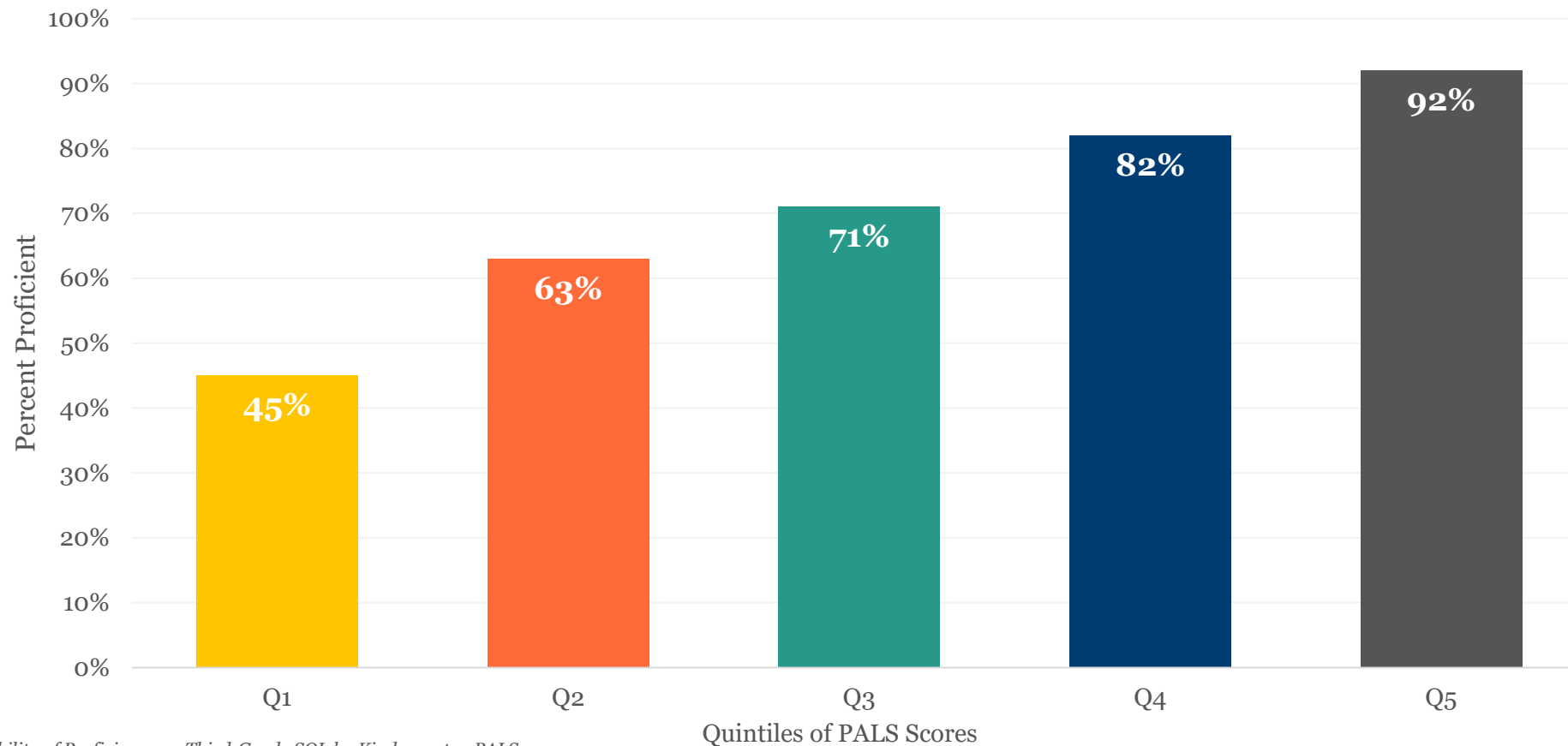


THIRD GRADE reading ability is one of the best predictors of **HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION**.



LINKING READINESS TO 3RD GRADE READING

Virginia children who enter kindergarten ready are more likely to read on level in 3rd grade.



BENEFITS PERSIST OVER TIME

Research shows high-quality early childhood is linked to better life outcomes:



Academic Achievement

- Less likely to be chronically absent
- Less likely to be retained a grade
- Less likely to be placed in special education
- More likely to graduate high school
- More likely to pursue higher education
- More likely to achieve a post-secondary degree, license, or certification



Health and Well-being

- Fewer chronic health issues
- Lower rates of alcohol and tobacco use
- Lower rates of teen pregnancy



Employment and Earnings

- Lower rates of criminal justice involvement
- Higher rates of employment and employability
- Increased earnings

Virginia's Early Childhood Landscape

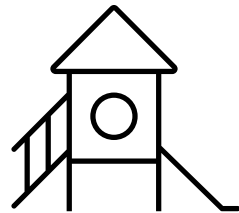
Building a premier birth-to-five, public-private parent choice system

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARENT CHOICE SYSTEM

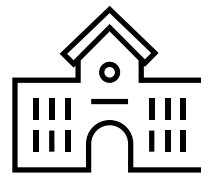
Virginia's early childhood system consists of multiple public and private providers that offer birth-to-five care and education across multiple settings.



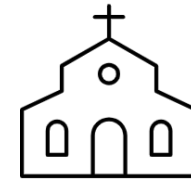
Over **1,900**
family child
care homes



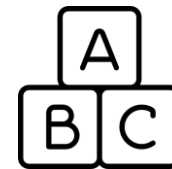
~2,700
licensed
child care
centers



946 public
schools



~870
religiously-
exempt child
care centers



52 Head Start
and Early
Head Start
grantees
(across 364
sites)

Note: Site totals are not mutually exclusive and should not be summed. Additional site types include certified preschools, local government approved centers, and short-term child day centers (generally summer camps).

ROLE OF PUBLIC FUNDING

Public funds enable choice and affordability in early childhood.

- Public funds enable families to choose options that meet their unique needs.
- All children are not guaranteed to be served like K-12. Different eligibility requirements are used to prioritize those in most need or who may benefit most.
- Public funds go to public and private settings in a system designed for 1) diverse providers and 2) diverse family preferences.

Across the public-private system, Virginia:

- Sets consistent expectations for health, safety, and quality, funds providers to meet expectations, and holds them accountable.
- Coordinates enrollment at the regional level to help families make informed choices.
- Captures consistent data down to the classroom level to promote continual quality improvement, support accountability and demonstrate impact.

OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC FUNDING

Program	# of Children Served FY23*	Approx. Investment Per-Child, FY23	Typical Dosage	Family Expectations	Setting
Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI)	22,290 (92% are 4-year-olds)	\$8,359 (\$6,353 in state funds) <i>(state funds and local match)</i>	990 hours/year	Child or family at risk; free to family; <u>not</u> connected to parental work status	Primarily schools; some child day centers
Mixed Delivery Preschool Grant Program (MDG)	2,142 (87% are 3- and 4-year-olds)	Between \$12,000-14,000 <i>(state and federal funds)</i>	Full-day, full year (~2,600 hours/year)	Child or family at risk; free to family; <u>not</u> connected to parental work status	Child day centers and family day homes
Early Head Start (EHS) and Head Start (HS)	13,866 (80% are 3- and 4-year-olds)	Between \$9,507-\$17,911 <i>(federal funds and local match)</i>	1,380 hours/year (EHS) 1,020 hours/year (HS)	Household income up to 130% FPG; free to family; <u>not</u> connected to parental work status	Schools, child day centers, and family day homes
Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP)	40,286 (68% are ages 5 and younger)	Average ~\$11,000 <i>(federal funds and state match)</i>	Up to full-day, full year (~2,600 hours/year)	Household income up to 85% SMI; family contribution of \$0-180 child/month; dependent on parental work status	Child day centers and family day homes

*Source: 2023 Enrollment Data – VDOE

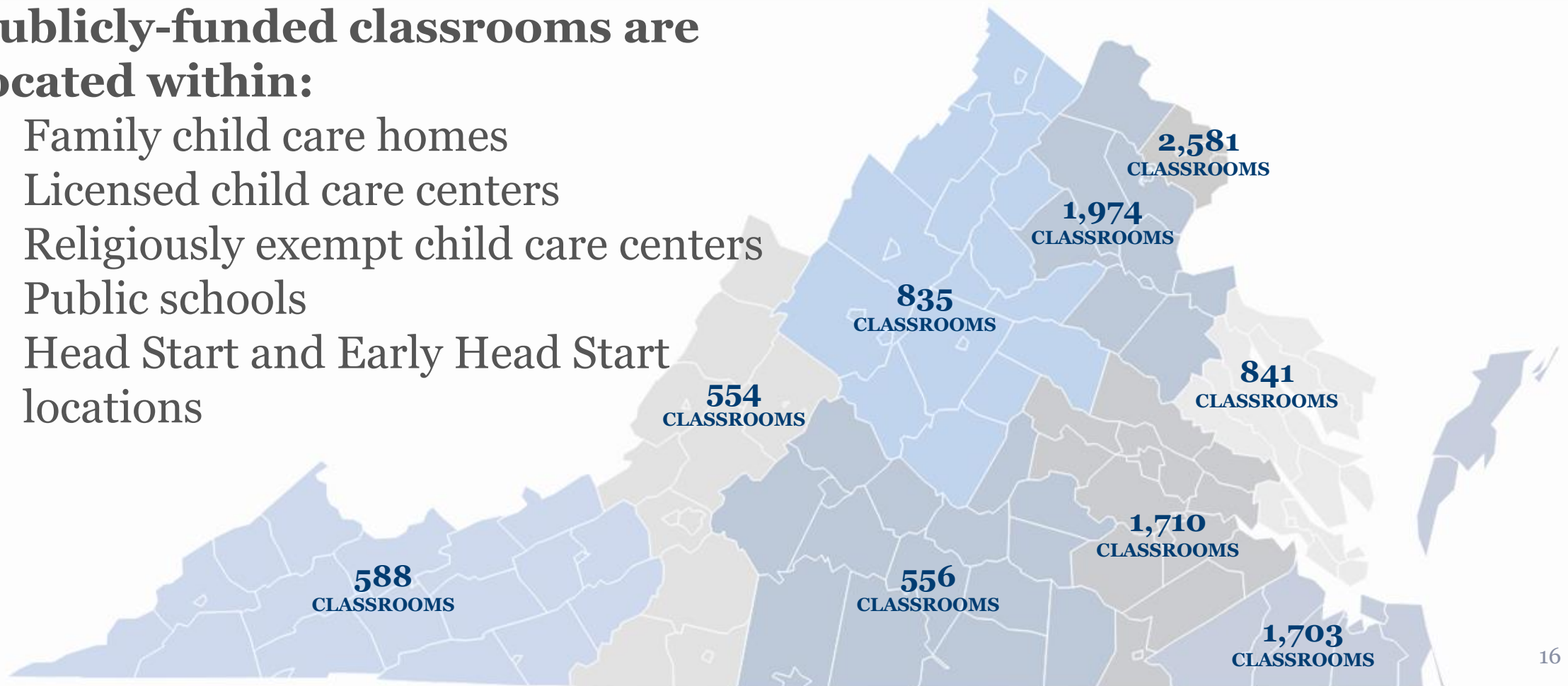
Note: Early Childhood Special Education serves 13,000 children through federal funds; dosage, funding and setting vary based on children's needs.

AVAILABILITY OF PUBLICLY-FUNDED ECCE, BY READY REGION

There are 11,342 classrooms in VQB5 across the Commonwealth.

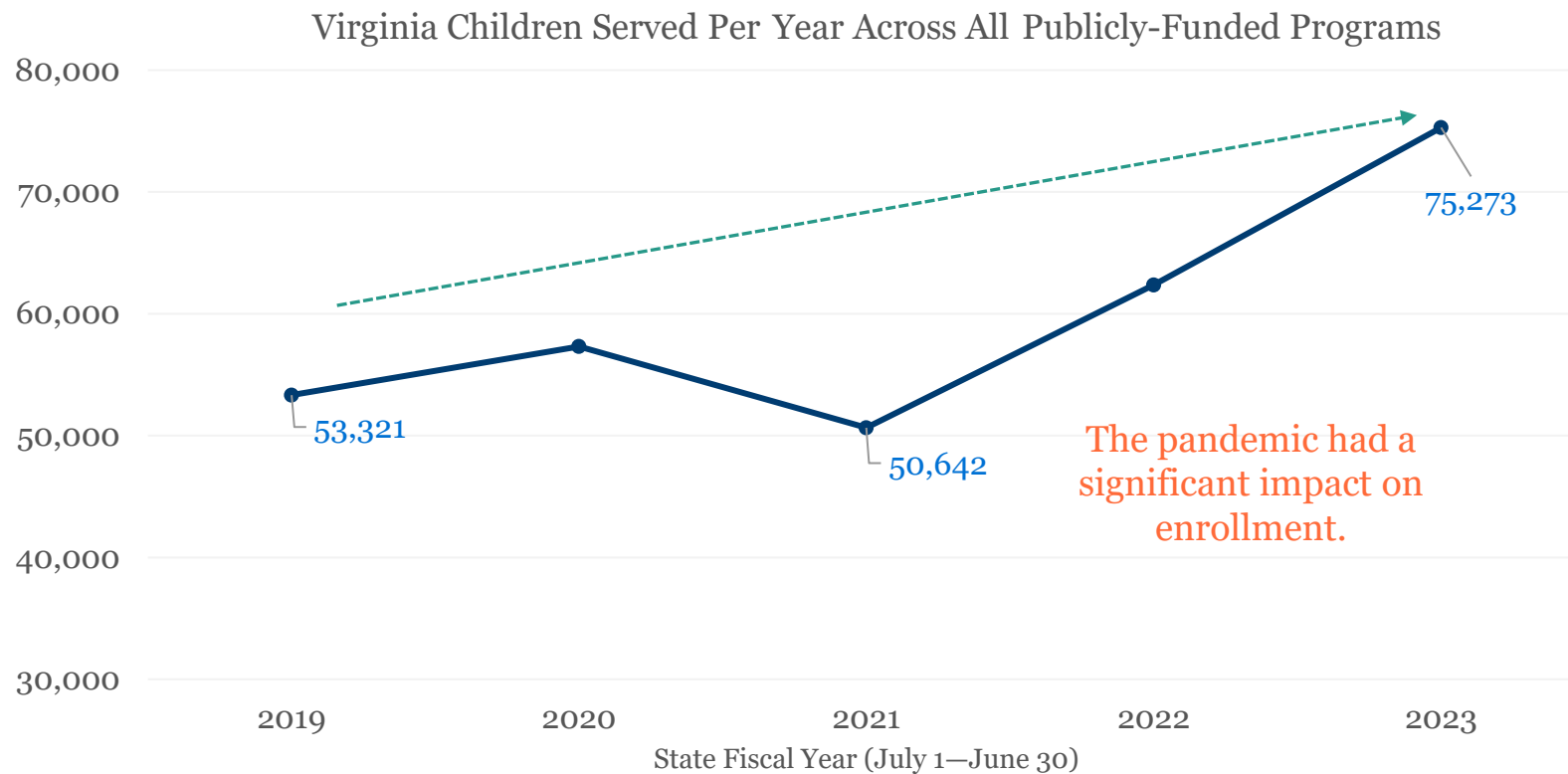
Publicly-funded classrooms are located within:

- Family child care homes
- Licensed child care centers
- Religiously exempt child care centers
- Public schools
- Head Start and Early Head Start locations



MORE CHOICES FOR MORE FAMILIES

More families are seeking to participate in Virginia's publicly-funded early childhood system.

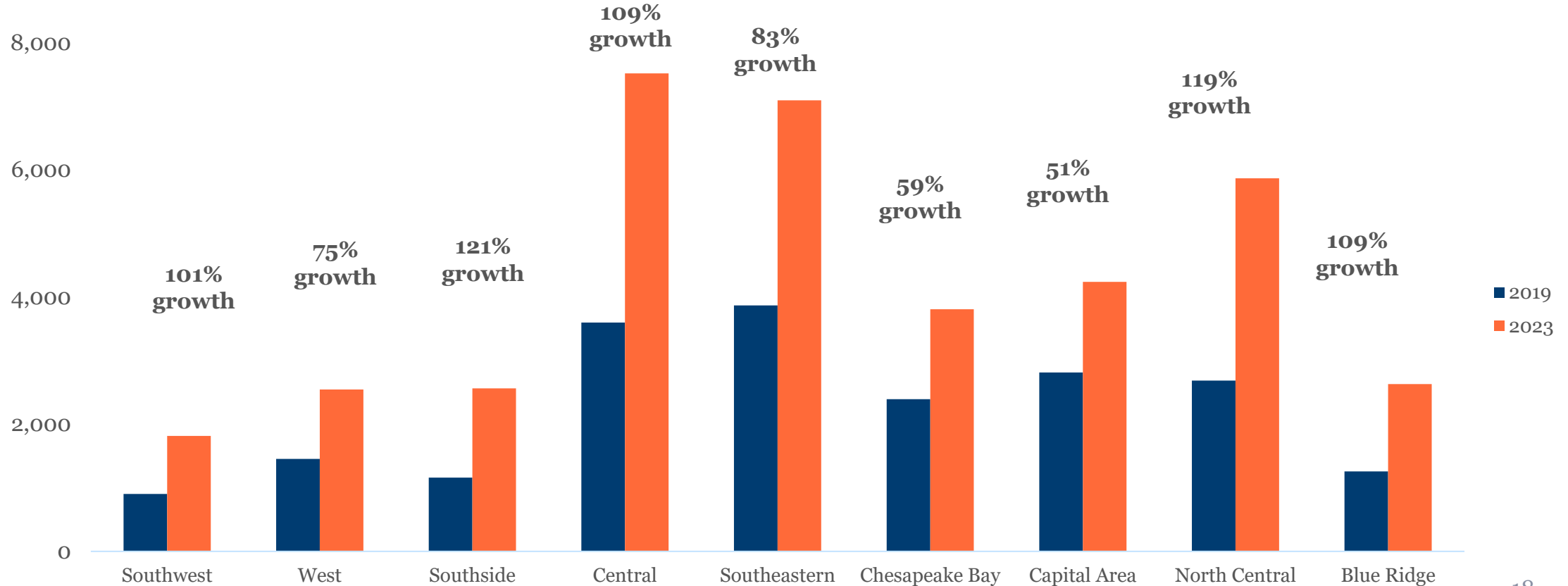


The pandemic had a significant impact on enrollment.

41% INCREASE
in enrollment
compared to
pre-pandemic

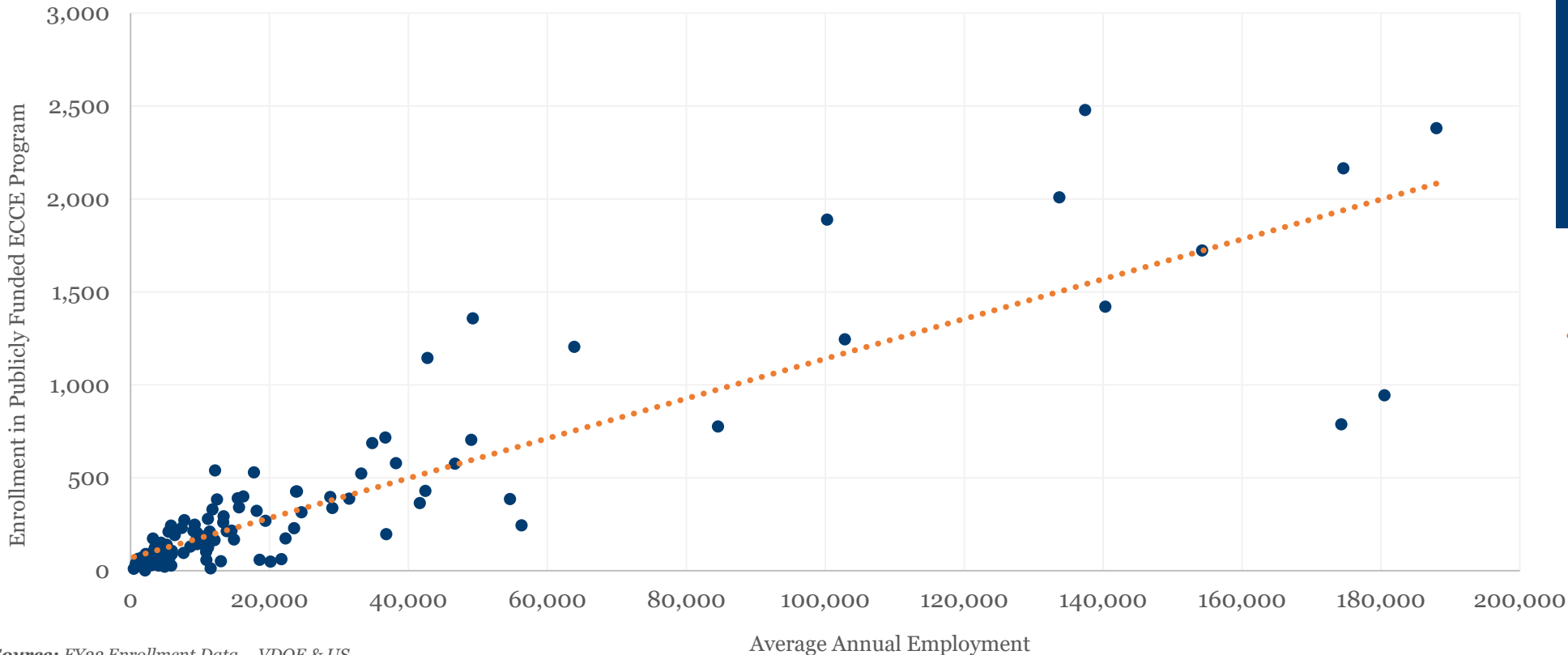
GROWTH IN DEMAND EVERYWHERE

Children served in private settings increased in every region between 2019 and 2023, ranging from 51% in Capital Area to 119% in North Central.



ACCESS TO EARLY CHILDHOOD DRIVES EMPLOYMENT

Data shows a strong, positive and statistically-significant correlation between ECCE enrollment and employment in Virginia, meaning that communities with greater access to ECCE have higher rates of employment.



TWO OUT OF THREE Virginia children under the age of 6 have all available parents in the **WORKFORCE**

- Total Enrollment & Employment
- Trendline

*Building Blocks for Virginia
Families*

KEY PRINCIPLES

- **Recognizing parents are children's first and most important educators, Virginia prioritizes parent choice.** Parents can choose from home-based providers, child care, Head Start, public, private and parochial schools and community partnerships.
 - Two-thirds of Virginia families are now choosing public-private options.
- Virginia's **highest-need working families** are striving to build a better future for themselves and their children.
 - They should be able to choose an early learning option that also addresses work-related child care needs.
- **Quality matters.** Virginia is leading the nation with VQB5, its statewide measurement and data system that measures quality in every classroom or setting receiving public funds.
- Virginia is focused on **child outcomes**.
 - VKRP is a nationally-recognized school readiness assessment of early literacy, math, and social skills.
- Virginia is recognized nationally for its **effective use of public dollars**.
 - A recent Vanderbilt study showed that investments in child care pay for themselves in less than a year; families work and earn more, stimulating the Virginia economy and increasing overall tax revenues.
- Virginia prioritizes both **keeping children safe** and **reducing administrative burden**.

GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED BUDGET



In the next biennium, Governor Youngkin proposes that Virginia will invest over **\$448 million annually** in early childhood care and education.

These investments and reforms, which are known as *Building Blocks for Virginia Families* will:

- Help advance Virginia's best-in-class early learning system;
- Serve as a response to the upcoming loss of one-time federal funding by building a viable approach for the future; and
- Help ensure the Commonwealth is the best place to live, work, learn, and raise a family.

OVERVIEW (1-4)

Building Blocks for Virginia Families seeks to:

1. Ensure every low-income working family that currently receives public support continues to have access to early childhood and after-school programs.
2. Accelerate parent choice across child care and early learning settings.
3. Maximize all available local, state, and federal funding – including allowing funds to be repurposed across programs based on parental demand and eliminating the cap on local match for VPI.
4. Ensure all ECCE programs annually measure and report unmet parental demand and preferences.

OVERVIEW (5-8)

Building Blocks for Virginia Families seeks to:

5. Prioritize attendance across all publicly-funded programs.
6. Ensure all families are invested and contributing by establishing consistent co-pays and work or activity requirements for full-day, full-year early childhood care and education.
7. Encourage shared contributions from employers, philanthropy, local government and other community stakeholders via launching an innovative “digital wallet” for child care and early learning.
8. Address deserts and increase supply of child care – including replicating innovative regional public-private partnerships and launching a \$25 million capital incentive fund to help transform underutilized spaces into sustainable child care sites in partnership with higher education and local government.

Questions?