



VQB5 Classroom Lists Toolkit for Site Leaders

2024-2025

Version 1 - September 2024

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To prepare all children for kindergarten, and in response to [state law](#), Virginia has developed the **Unified Virginia Quality Birth to Five System (VQB5)** to measure and improve the quality of all publicly-funded birth-to-five classrooms and support families to choose quality programming across all types of programs. VQB5 measures quality at the classroom level for 10,000+ classrooms, including in child care centers, family day homes, Head Start, and schools.

To understand how children’s classroom experiences support their growth and learning, Virginia, with parental permission, needs to understand which children are in each classroom each year. With this information, Virginia can show how these experiences prepare all children for kindergarten and ultimately help them be more successful in school and beyond.

This toolkit provides information for VQB5 site leaders to help you and your staff have a successful experience meeting the 2024-2025 requirements for classroom lists in **VQB5**.

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Overview of Classroom List Requirement in VQB5

State law requires the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to measure child outcomes as part of VQB5. Virginia meets this requirement by asking sites, with parental permission, to complete classroom lists in the secure LinkB5 data portal. Classroom lists include all children who are enrolled in birth-to-five classrooms in VQB5 participating sites.

Classroom lists connect the experiences of all children in Virginia's early childhood classrooms with specific outcomes, like kindergarten readiness, for children who later attend public schools. With this information, Virginia can show how high-quality early childhood experiences prepare all children for kindergarten, and ultimately help them be more successful in school and beyond.

There are no stakes or consequences attached to the information collected through classroom lists. The information provided through classroom lists may only be used in broad, de-identified, and legal ways to increase understanding of how Virginia classroom experiences are associated with children's growth and development.

Classroom Lists Requirement for VQB5

Classroom lists are a part of the overall 2024-2025 VQB5 participation requirements. There are three steps to meeting the classroom list requirement for VQB5 during the 2024-2025 year:

- **Step 1:** Inform all parents or legal guardians of VQB5 and its purpose in the fall (between August 15 - December 22).
 - *See Section 1 for guidance and suggestions for how to notify and engage families about VQB5, its purpose, and classroom lists in the fall.*
- **Step 2:** If needed, implement a parent permission process. This may include using an opt-in or opt-out approach.
 - *See Section 2 to determine if this step is needed and how to implement it based on the needs of your families.*
- **Step 3:** Enter classroom list information for applicable children by December 22.
 - *See Section 3 for information on how to enter classroom lists into LinkB5.*

All VQB5 site leaders are required to make all parents/legal guardians aware of VQB5 and its purpose as part of completing classroom lists.

Section 1: Informing all Parents about VQB5 and Classroom Lists



Site leaders are responsible for informing all parents/legal guardians about VQB5 and classroom lists. This means every parent/legal guardian should be aware that:

- ✓ Your site is participating in VQB5, and
- ✓ Child-level information is gathered safely and securely through the completion of classroom lists in a secure data portal, called LinkB5.

VDOE has developed a resource called '[VQB5 for Families](#)' which is available in English and Spanish on the VQB5 website.

Key Points for Informing Parents about VQB5 and Classroom Lists:

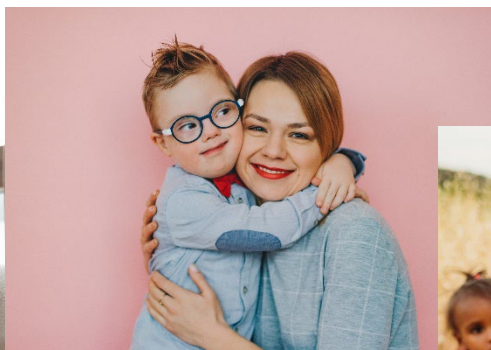
<i>Who must be notified about VQB5?</i>	All parents or legal guardians, regardless of tuition funding type, must be made aware of VQB5 and the VQB5 participation requirements.
<i>How should I inform parents about VQB5?</i>	There are several ways to inform parents about VQB5. One way is to share the 'VQB5 for Families' resource with parents (English/Spanish). Sharing this resource will meet the requirement to inform parents. Additional strategies and suggestions can be found later in this section.
<i>When should I inform parents of VQB5?</i>	Sites must inform parents about VQB5 in the fall as part of the annual site participation requirements. This means sites should inform parents between August 15-December 22 for the 2024-2025 year.
<i>Why do I need to inform parents about VQB5?</i>	<p>Strong relationships with families are built on successful communication. Ensuring that parents are aware of VQB5 and classroom lists will support positive relationships and will enable families to have deeper engagement in their child's teaching and learning.</p> <p>In addition, parents have the right to be involved in every step of their child's education. This includes the right to be informed about state laws that support the health, safety, and quality of early care and education programs in Virginia.</p>

Strategies for Ensuring Parent Awareness and Engagement with VQB5

You may consider one or more of the following strategies to ensure parents at your site are informed about VQB5 and the classroom lists requirement:






- Share the '[VQB5 for Families](#)' document with parents on your program's website, as a printed handout, or as a link in digital communications (e.g., email, e-newsletter).
- Send an email to families to let them know your site is participating in VQB5 and, once available, share the link to your public VQB5 quality profile (the new URL for the quality profile website will be available later this fall).
- Include some of the talking points included in this toolkit in your family communications, for example:
 - Include a section about VQB5 and classroom lists in your parent handbook
 - Share talking points on your site's social media page
 - Display VQB5 information on a family bulletin board
- Host a 'VQB5 for Families' information session, so that parents have an opportunity to learn more about your participation in VQB5 and use of classroom lists.
 - Information sessions could be held in-person or virtually (such as via Zoom).
 - Record a virtual meeting and share the recording with families who may not be able to attend the live event.
 - Reach out to your Ready Regions Family Engagement Coordinator for assistance.
 - *Note: VDOE is currently developing additional resources for families which will be posted on the VQB5 website later this fall.*
- Offer opportunities at your site and/or online for families to communicate any questions, concerns, or comments they may have about VQB5 and/or classroom lists, such as a discussion forum space on your website or via a question/comment box for families.

The strategies listed above are only examples. Sites should feel free to use whatever parent engagement strategy that makes sense for their ongoing communications to meet this expectation.



Talking to Families about VQB5 and Classroom Lists

Site leaders may be asked questions about VQB5 and classroom lists. The information below can be used to help inform responses and support information sharing:

 <h3>What is the purpose of VQB5?</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• VQB5 is short for Virginia Quality Birth to Five.• VQB5 is Virginia's system for measuring and supporting quality in early childhood programs so children enter kindergarten ready to learn.• VQB5 is used in child care centers, family day homes, public school preschools, and Head Start all across the state.• VQB5 builds on health and safety standards by measuring the quality of teacher-child interactions and use of curriculum.• Starting this fall, you can view our quality profile online.	 <h3>Why are classroom lists important for Virginia?</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Having child enrollment information for each classroom helps Virginia improve experiences for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.• This information will help bring important resources to early childhood programs in our state by showing the positive impact of early childhood education.• Classroom lists help demonstrate the value of having different types of programs available to support young children and to ensure families have access to quality options that meet their needs and preferences.
 <h3>How will my child's classroom list information be kept secure?</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LinkB5 is the secure data system used to collect and hold children's information.• LinkB5 has the same strong, protective infrastructure that is used by Virginia's K-12 public schools.• State and federal laws are in place that help protect how children's information is used.• VDOE is legally obligated to ensure that children's information is safe and secure.• LinkB5 is consistently audited for security and is built to modern security specifications (e.g. encryption).• Classroom lists data is never used in a way that can identify any individual child. (See Appendix B for details.)	 <h3>What do classroom lists mean for me and my child?</h3> <p>For families participating in VA-Child Care Subsidy, Mixed Delivery, or attending public school preschool:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your child's information is already part of existing state and educational records.• Classroom lists will link your child's information with their classroom-level experiences. <p>For private-pay families and families of Department of Defense-MCCYN and non-public school Early Head Start/Head Start:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You have the option to support classroom list completion.• You do not have to provide permission for use of your child's information in classroom lists if you do not want to.
 <p>Supporting classroom lists completion is especially important for families whose children will likely attend K-12 public schools in Virginia. These lists will help connect the experiences in Virginia's early childhood classrooms with specific outcomes like kindergarten readiness and third grade reading.</p>	

Section 2: Parent Permission Requirements and Resources

Depending on how a child’s early care and education is funded (i.e., private pay versus public funds) there are different requirements for obtaining parent permission. This section will help site leaders understand who may need a parent permission process and how to implement an opt-in/opt-out process based on the needs of your families.

Supporting Parent Permission:

<p><i>Who needs parental permission for classroom list participation?</i></p>	<p>Permission is needed from parents of private-pay children, and from parents whose children have no existing state administrative and/or educational records, have the option to support classroom list completion by giving permission for the inclusion of their child’s information.</p> <p>Refer to the Program-Specific Requirements and Expectations Chart on the next page, for details on specific expectations for who needs parent permission for classroom lists.</p>
<p><i>How should parents give permission for the use of their child’s information in classroom lists?</i></p>	<p>Sites can obtain parent permission for classrooms lists by using one of the following methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opt-in is when parents are asked to provide their explicit permission for the use of their child’s information in classroom lists. • Opt-out is when parents are notified that their child’s information will be included in classroom lists, unless the parent denies permission. <p>See below for details on selecting a process that makes sense for your site.</p>
<p><i>Why do only some parents need to give permission?</i></p>	<p>For parents of state publicly-funded children (Child Care Subsidy, Mixed Delivery, and public schools), child level information is part of existing state administrative and educational records. Therefore, no additional permission is needed for those children, and site leaders can proceed with entering child information in LinkB5 for classroom lists (or) the Fall Student Record collection as applicable (See information below for program specific details).</p>

Program-Specific Requirements and Expectations for 2024-2025 Classroom Lists:

The following chart details the requirements for each funding source that may support tuition at your site.

Tuition Funding Type	VQB5 Classroom Lists Expectations for 2024-2025
Virginia Child Care Subsidy Program (VA-CCSP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Parents must be informed of VQB5 by site ✓ Site leader must enter information into classroom lists in LinkB5 <p><i>Additional parent permission is NOT required for families in the VA Child Care Subsidy Program.</i></p>
Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF) Mixed Delivery Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Parents must be informed of VQB5 by site ✓ Site leader must enter information into classroom lists in LinkB5 <p><i>Additional parent permission is NOT required for families in the VECF Mixed Delivery Program.</i></p>
Public School Preschool (VPI, ECSE, Title 1, or locally funded classrooms)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Parents must be informed of VQB5 by site <p><i>Public school programs complete the fall student record collection (SRC). This meets the requirements for classroom lists, there is no requirement to enter information in LinkB5 for public school preschool students. Additional parent permission is NOT required for public school preschool.</i></p>
Head Start and Early Head Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Parents must be informed of VQB5 by site <p><i>Community-based Early Head Start/Head Start sites need to obtain parent permission for use of child information for classroom lists.</i></p> <p><i>All school division Head Start grant recipients will include their student level enrollment data as part of the Fall SRC of their local school division. This meets the requirements for classroom lists. There is no additional requirement to enter information in LinkB5 for public school Head Start students. Additional parent permission is NOT required for public school Head Start.</i></p>
Department of Defense (DoD) - Military Child Care Fee Assistance (MCCYN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Parents must be informed of VQB5 by site <p><i>Department of Defense (DoD) Military-Operated programs and community-based sites who serve Military Fee Assistance (MCCYN) children ages birth-5 need to obtain parent permission for use of child information for classroom lists.</i></p>
Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Parents must be informed of VQB5 by site ✓ Site leader must enter information into classroom lists in LinkB5 <p><i>Additional parent permission is NOT required for families funded through CCAMPIS higher education institutions in Virginia.</i></p>
Local Government fee assistance subsidy program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Parents must be informed of VQB5 by site ✓ Site leader must enter information into classroom lists in LinkB5 <p><i>Additional parent permission is NOT required for families funded through local government programs in Virginia.</i></p>
Private Pay Tuition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Parents must be informed of VQB5 by site <p><i>Sites are not required to ensure all private-pay families give permission as a condition of VQB5 or receiving public funds. They only have to ensure families are aware of and have the opportunity to support classroom lists.</i></p>

Parent Permission: Implementing an Opt-In or Opt-Out Process

Deciding whether to use an opt-in or an opt-out process for gathering parent permission is a site-level decision.

To help you decide which approach best meets the needs of your site and your families, consider the following:

- Using an opt-in approach may be the preferred option if your program already has a data sharing policy and/or you already have procedures in place to gather parent permission for use of child-level information.
- Using an opt-out approach may be the preferred option if your program wants to simplify the process for site administrators and parents and make it easier for parents to grant permission.

Considerations for an Opt-In Process

Opt-in requires collecting a permission form from every parent to indicate permission for the use of their child's information in classroom lists. VDOE has provided an "Opt-in" template in **Appendix C**. Sites may also create their own opt-in form to gather parent permission.

Sites deciding to use an opt-in process should:

- Distribute opt-in forms to parents in the fall.
- Ask parents to respond by a specified date as to whether they do/do not give permission.
- Choose a due date that will allow you sufficient time to complete classroom lists by December 22.

Sites deciding to use an opt-in process need to ensure that that site leaders have time to manage form collection and documentation, including developing a plan for how to follow up with parents who do not submit the form by the specified deadline.

Sites must keep copies of opt-in forms collected from parents securely on-site for at least 2 years after the child is no longer enrolled in the program. Forms may be requested for review by VDOE. Parents must be notified and offered the option to opt-in to classroom lists on an annual basis.

Considerations for an Opt-Out Process

Opt-out requires notifying parents that their child's information will be included in classroom lists, unless the parent denies permission. Parents only need to respond if they want to opt-out.

VDOE has provided an "Opt-out" template in **Appendix D**. Sites may also create their own opt-out forms.

Sites deciding to use an opt-out process should:

- Notify parents about classroom lists in the early fall, asking parents to notify the site in writing if they want to opt-out, by a specified date.

- Allow parents to send their opt-out request via email or a hand-written note signed/dated by the parent.
- Choose an opt-out deadline that will allow you sufficient time to complete classroom lists by December 22.

Sites must keep records of parent opt-out requests on-site for at least 2 years after the child is no longer enrolled in the program. Forms may be requested for review by VDOE. Parents must be notified and offered the ability to opt-out of classroom lists on an annual basis.

Sample Scenarios to Consider for Designing a Process for Parent Permission

To show what implementing a parent permission process could look like, the VDOE has shared the following sample scenarios.

This list is not exhaustive, and sites are encouraged to establish the process that makes sense for their families.

The example scenarios below all meet the 2024-2025 expectations for classroom lists for VQB5.

Scenario #1 - Center with *private pay, CCSP, and Mixed Delivery* children selecting an **OPT-OUT** process.

- 1) In early October, site director notifies all families via center messaging app of VQB5 by sharing the “VQB5 for Families” handout.
- 2) Site director includes in the notice that families who are private pay should contact them if they do not want their child to be included in VQB5 classroom lists.
 - a. Site director provides a modified version of the “opt-out” template for parents to notify them that their child’s information will be entered in LinkB5 classroom lists unless the parent denies permission.
 - b. Site director decides that parents need to notify her by a specific date.
- 3) By December 22, 2024, site director enters classroom list information for participating children. This includes all CCSP and Mixed Delivery children, along with private pay children who did not opt-out.
- 4) Site director keeps copies of opt-out requests on-site.

Scenario #2 - Center with *private pay and federally-funded Military Child Care Fee Assistance* children selecting the **OPT-IN** process.

1. In early October, site director provides all families with a printed copy of the “VQB5 for Families” handout. A copy of the “VQB5 for Families” handout is also posted on the family bulletin board at the center.
2. Site director sends a parent permission notification form to all families and asks that every parent complete and return the form by a specific date to indicate whether they do or do not give permission to include their child’s information in classroom lists.
 - a. A site administrator tracks and monitors form completion to ensure all parents submit a permission form by the specified date, indicating their preference.
 - b. A site administrator follows up with any parent who does not complete a permission form by the specified deadline.
3. By December 22, 2024, a site administrator enters classroom list information for the children whose parents have given their permission via the opt-in permission form. Children whose families did not give permission are not entered in classroom lists.
4. Site director keeps signed and dated permission forms from every family on-site.

Scenario #3 – Family Day Home provider with private pay and CCSP-funded children selecting an **OPT-OUT** process

1. In early October, the family day home provider gives all families a printed copy of the “VQB5 for Families” handout.
2. Family day home provider tells families who are private pay that they should contact her by a specific date if they do not want their child to be included in VQB5 classroom lists.
 - The family day home provider uses the opt-out template provided by VDOE to notify parents that their child’s information will be entered in LinkB5 classroom lists, unless the parent denies permission by site deadline.
 - The family day home provider does not provide this notice to families who are enrolled in CCSP; they cannot opt-out.
3. By December 22, 2024, the family day home provider enters classroom list information for all CCSP children, along with private pay children who did not opt-out.
4. Family day home provider keeps copies of opt-out requests on-site.

Scenario #4 – Community Based Head Start/Early Head Start Recipient Agency (Non-Public School) selecting the **OPT-OUT** process.

1. In early October, the Head Start recipient agency director notifies all Head Start and Early Head Start site leaders to share the “VQB5 for Families” handout with their parents. Site leaders are also asked to display a copy of the VQB5 for Families document on their family bulletin boards located within each site.
2. The Head Start director sends an email to all families of children enrolled in their Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms about classroom lists. In the email notification, families are asked to notify their center's HS/EHS site administrator by a specified date if they do not want their child to be included in VQB5 classroom lists.
 - a. The Head Start director uses a modified version of the “opt-out” template for parents to notify them that their child’s information will be entered in LinkB5 classroom lists unless the parent denies permission by the site deadline.
3. By December 22, 2024, the site administrator at each HS/EHS center enters classroom list information for participating HS/EHS children who did not opt-out.
4. Each site administrator keeps copies of the opt-out requests received on-site.

Section 3: Entering Classroom Lists in LinkB5

The final step in the process for site leaders is to enter the child-level information at the classroom level.

Sites must enter this information in LinkB5 classroom lists by December 22, 2024.

Key Points for Entering Classroom List Information in LinkB5:

<i>What type of child information is required for classroom lists in LinkB5?</i>	The following information is collected in LinkB5: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's first and last names • Children's dates of birth • Children's genders
<i>What date should we use for the basis of child enrollment information?</i>	Classroom lists should reflect enrollment as of October 1 (or as close to this general timeframe as possible).
<i>When do I need to complete classroom lists in LinkB5?</i>	Sites will need to enter child information in LinkB5 classroom lists during the fall for every VQB5 eligible classroom. The deadline for completing classroom lists is December 22, 2024.
<i>If our classroom enrollment changes later in the year, do we have to update classroom lists in LinkB5?</i>	Sites only need to complete classroom lists once each year, to capture annual 'point in time' enrollment information. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sites do not need to update classroom lists if enrollment changes later in the year. • Sites do not need to update classroom lists if children move to another classroom.

There are two ways for site administrators to complete classroom lists in LinkB5: 1) adding each child individually, or 2) uploading a list of children using a template. Instructions for each method are described below.

For the most current version of the LinkB5 Classroom List User Guide, please visit the [LinkB5 Resources Website](#). Tech support, detailed instructions, tutorial videos, and language translation are also available on the LinkB5 website.

Instructions for Adding Children Individually

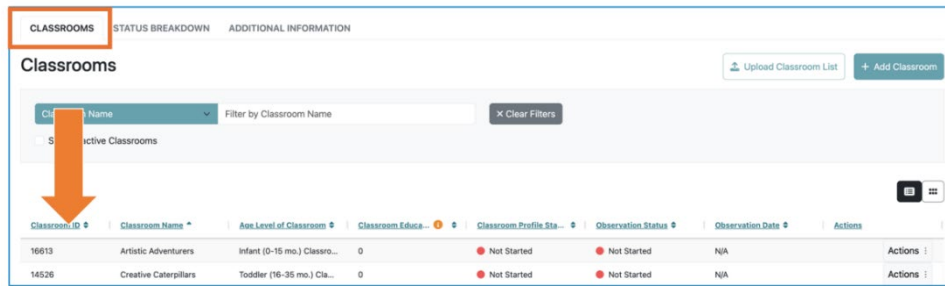
1. Log in to your site administrator LinkB5 account - <https://linkb5.virginia.edu/user/login>

Email Address:

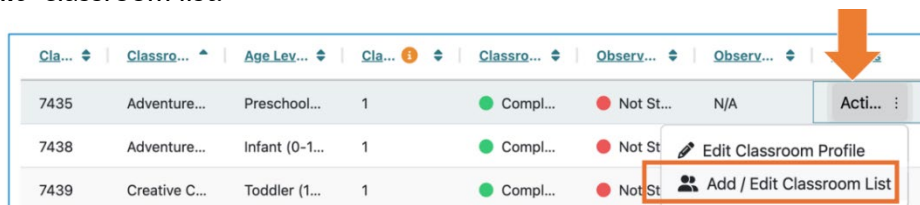
Password:

First time logging in? Please check your email to find your unique invitation link. Reach out to your Site Admin or Regional Lead if you have not yet received your invitation.

2. On your site administrator dashboard, navigate to your list of classrooms under the 'classrooms' tab at the top of your dashboard.



3. Click on the "Actions" button to the far right of the classroom and then click on "Add/Edit" classroom list.

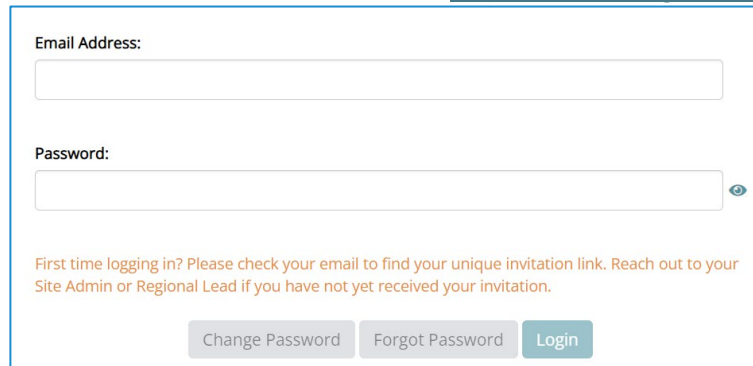


4. Complete the fields for each child you are adding to the classroom list.
 - a. Required fields include First Name, Last Name, Gender, and Birthdate. These fields are marked with a red asterisk (*). The form will not save if all of the required fields are not filled out.
 - b. Middle name and Student Testing Identifier (STI) are optional fields and do not need to be filled out in order for you to save the form.
5. Once you've entered the required items, click on "+Add Student" to add children to the classroom list.
6. Click on "Save" when you are finished adding children to your Classroom List.
7. Repeat steps for each classroom, as needed.

The screenshot shows the 'Add Student(s)' form. It includes fields for First Name (*), Middle Name, Last Name (*), Date of Birth (*), Gender (*), and State Testing Identifier (STI). The '+ ADD STUDENT' button is highlighted with an orange box. At the bottom right, the 'Save' button is also highlighted with an orange box.

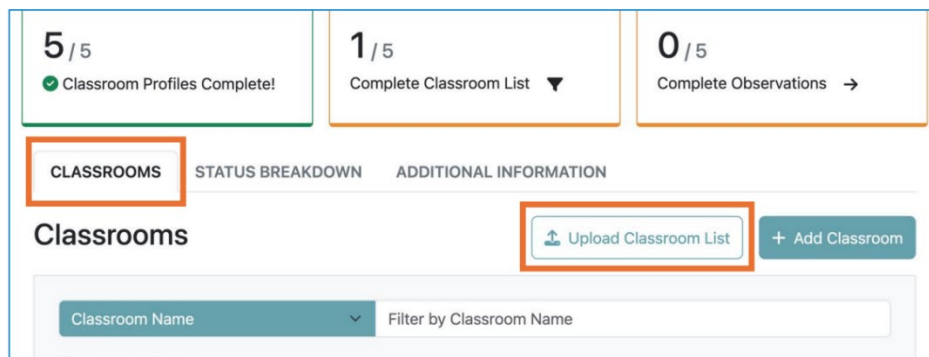
Instructions for Uploading a List of Children Using the Classroom List Import Template

1. Log in to your site administrator LinkB5 account - <https://linkb5.virginia.edu/user/login>



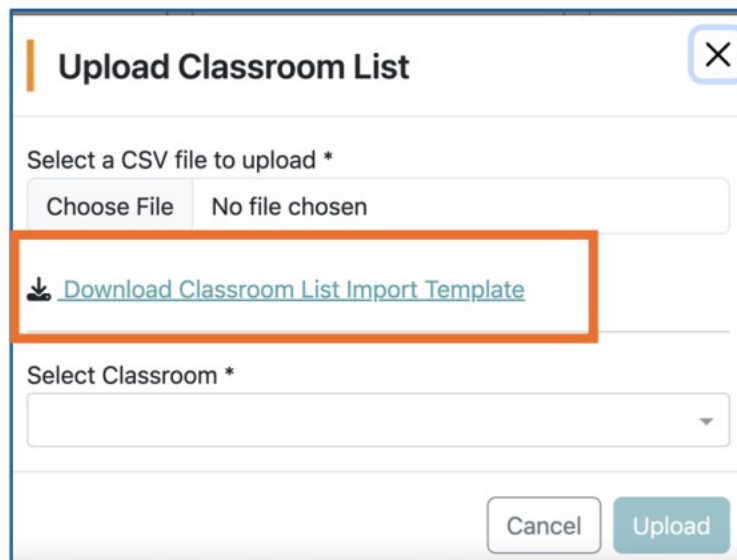
The image shows a login form with two input fields: "Email Address:" and "Password:". Below the fields is a note: "First time logging in? Please check your email to find your unique invitation link. Reach out to your Site Admin or Regional Lead if you have not yet received your invitation." At the bottom are three buttons: "Change Password", "Forgot Password", and "Login".

2. From your Site Dashboard, navigate to your **"Classrooms"** tab and click on **"Upload Classroom List"**.



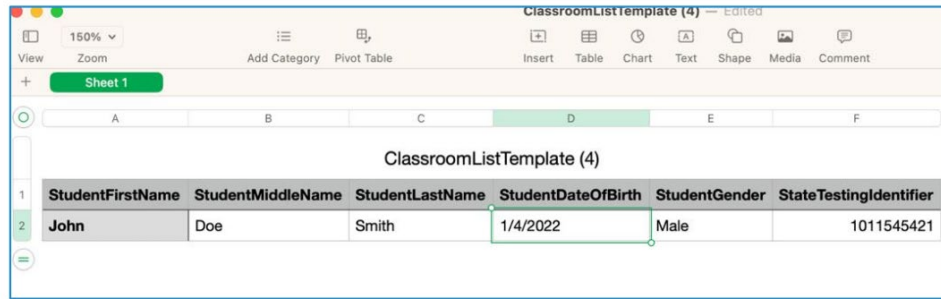
The image shows a dashboard with three progress indicators: "5/5 Classroom Profiles Complete!", "1/5 Complete Classroom List", and "0/5 Complete Observations". Below these are tabs for "CLASSROOMS", "STATUS BREAKDOWN", and "ADDITIONAL INFORMATION". The "CLASSROOMS" tab is active, showing a "Classrooms" section with a search filter and two buttons: "Upload Classroom List" and "+ Add Classroom".

3. Click on **"Download Classroom List Import Template"**. The template is an Excel spreadsheet document that has been formatted for use in LinkB5 and cannot be altered.
4. If you have not used Excel documents before and would like assistance completing the template, please reach out to your Ready Region.

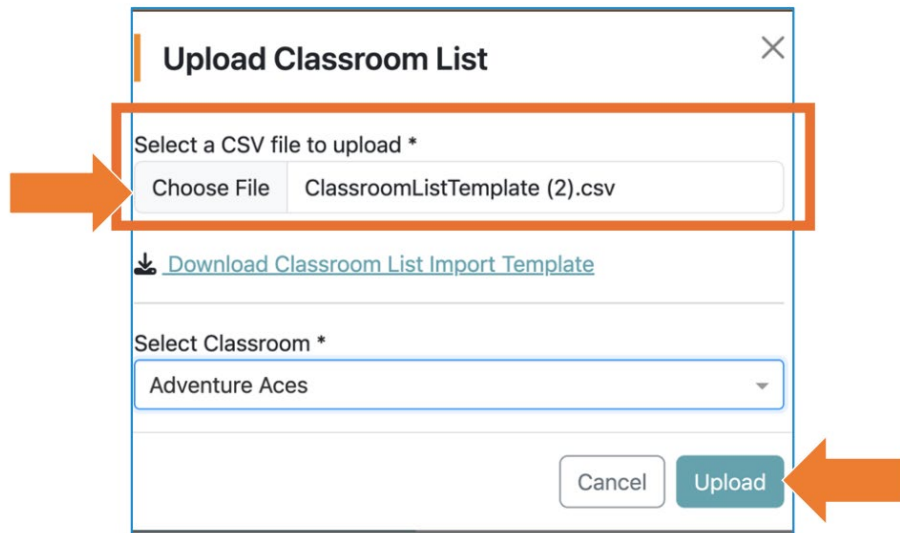


The image shows a modal window titled "Upload Classroom List". It has a close button (X) in the top right. The main content includes a section "Select a CSV file to upload *" with a "Choose File" button and "No file chosen" text. Below this is a link "Download Classroom List Import Template" with a download icon, which is highlighted with an orange box. At the bottom, there is a "Select Classroom *" dropdown menu and two buttons: "Cancel" and "Upload".

- Fill out a separate copy of the template for each classroom and save it on your computer or device.

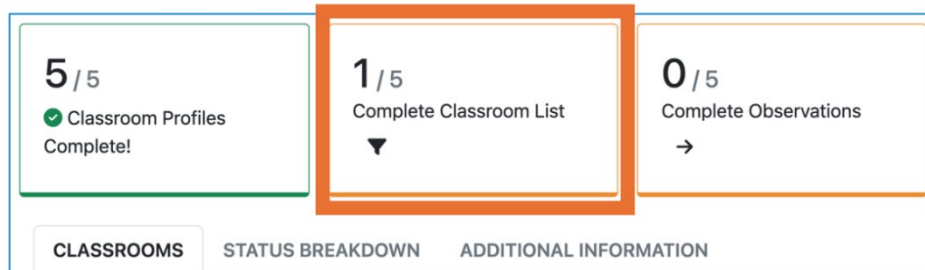


- When you've filled out your template with all the children in the classroom, log back in to LinkB5.
- Click on **"Choose File"** and select your completed template.
- Select the classroom for the list and click on **"Upload"**.
- Repeat the upload for each classroom.

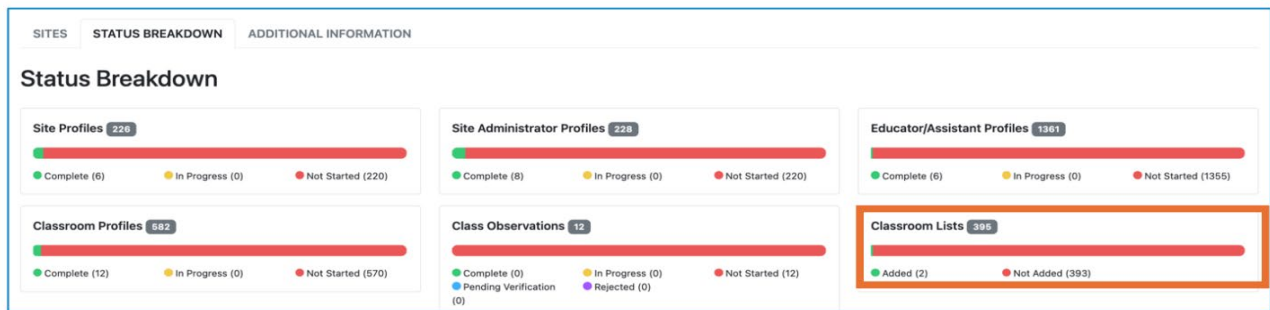


Checking on Classroom Lists Completion Progress

The Classroom Lists Priority Card at the top of your site administrator dashboard will display the number of classroom lists that have been completed based on the total number of VQB5-eligible classrooms at your site.



Click on the “**Status Breakdown Tab**” to track and confirm your classroom list completion. When all classroom lists for VQB5 eligible classrooms have been completed, the full red bar will turn green.

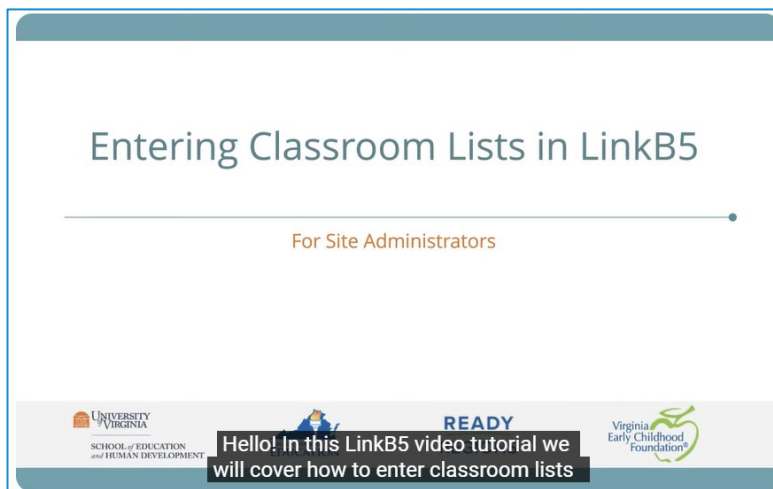


Supporting Successful Completion of Classroom Lists

Sites who do not complete classroom lists by December 22 will receive follow up communication from VDOE to determine appropriate next steps and/or supports needed for successful classroom lists completion. This may include requesting documentation of efforts to inform parents about VQB5 and/or copies of opt-in/opt-out parent permission forms. This may also include giving sites an additional time-bound deadline to complete classroom lists requirements.

RESOURCE: Video Tutorial

To view a short 4-minute video tutorial for entering classroom lists, click on the link below.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dfQ90Q9qLw>.



Appendix A: Legislative Information Related to Classroom Lists Requirement

VDOE Board of Education Approval of VQB5 Guidelines

Section 22.1-289.03 of the Code of Virginia directs the Board of Education to establish a unified quality rating and improvement system for all publicly-funded birth-to-five providers in order to improve school readiness outcomes.

The VQB5 Guidelines were established in June 2021 and submitted to the Board of Education annually, with the most recent Board approval of the VQB5 2024-2025 Guidelines received on June 21, 2024.

VQB5 Guidelines - Section 3.2.3 Classroom Lists

<https://www.doe.virginia.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/50503/638341862536730000>

According to the Code of Virginia (§22.1-289.05), the VQB5 system shall include service provision and performance targets for children from birth to age five that align with standards for kindergarten readiness and early elementary grades. This means that VDOE must be able to monitor the growth and improvement of child outcomes at the classroom level in order to clearly understand the impact of classroom quality indicators on kindergarten readiness. The VDOE will then be able to link this information with K-12 longitudinal data to understand how these birth to age five classroom-level experiences impact early elementary grades and longer-term outcomes.

Starting in the fall of 2024, VQB5 will require publicly-funded sites to provide information on child enrollment at the classroom level for all enrolled children on an annual basis through classroom lists entered in LinkB5. This information will also enable the VDOE to quantify the impact of public investments in the workforce such as RecognizeB5.

In 2024-2025, publicly-funded sites are required to complete classroom lists with all enrolled children for all VQB5 eligible classrooms in existence as of October 1. Classroom lists should be uploaded by December 22.

Parents and families will have the opportunity to opt-out but must make this request in writing. This opportunity will be available to parents or families whose children are not receiving any direct form of public funding (e.g., Child Care Subsidy Program or Mixed Delivery) and who have no pre-existing administrative or education records with the Commonwealth.

Head Start Performance Standards

The Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) define standards and minimum requirements for all Head Start services. They apply to both Head Start and Early Head Start programs. The standards serve as the foundation for the Head Start program's mission to deliver comprehensive, high-quality individualized services supporting the school readiness of children from families with low income.

HS Performance Standard 1302.53 Community partnerships and coordination with other early childhood and education programs

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/45-cfr-chap-xiii/1302-53-community-partnerships-coordination-other-early-childhood-education-programs>

(b2) **Quality Rating and Improvement Systems.** A program, with the exception of American Indian and Alaska Native programs, should participate in its State or local Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), to the extent practicable, if a State or local QRIS has a strategy to support Head Start participation without requiring programs to duplicate existing documentation from Office of Head Start oversight.

(b3) **Data systems.** A program, with the exception of American Indian and Alaska Native programs unless they would like to and to the extent practicable, should integrate and share relevant data with state education data systems, to the extent practicable, if the program can receive similar support and benefits as other participating early childhood programs.

Virginia Appropriations Act <https://budget.lis.virginia.gov/item/2022/2/HB30/Introduced/1/137/>

September 2024 - VDOE Memo sent to HS Directors and VPI Coordinators

As part of Virginia's ongoing efforts to secure state funding for the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the Appropriations Act, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Division of Early Childhood Care and Education is requiring all community-based Head Start grant recipients to submit their enrollment data to the Head Start Collaboration Office every spring of odd-numbered years. This data collection is critical to ensuring that all Head Start seats are accurately accounted for as part of the formula used to allocated VPI slots to localities.

The VDOE Student Record Collection (SRC) enables the commonwealth and its school divisions to comply with the information and reporting requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The collection also reduces the reporting burden on school divisions and ensures continuity and validity in all enrollment-based data collections. All school division Head Start grant recipients will include their student level enrollment data as part of the Fall SRC of their local school division.

These collaborative reporting efforts between our Head Start grant recipients and local school divisions are essential to maximizing access for at-risk preschool students across the state. To achieve this goal, it is imperative that this data is submitted in a timely manner. By doing so, we can work together to ensure that every eligible child has access to the early childhood education they need to thrive. For the 2024-2025, community-based Head Start grant recipients are expected to do the following:

Share Headcount of Enrolled Students with Head Start Collaboration Office in Spring 2025. This option is the expected method for submitting community-based Head Start enrollment on September 30th of both three and four-year-olds. Each year by May 15th, community-based Head Start directors will complete a an excel report in a SharePoint file that is created by the Head Start Collaboration Office.

Child Care Licensing Regulations in Virginia

The Virginia Department of Education licenses family day homes, family day systems, and child day centers, and enforces the standards through announced and unannounced visits. Legislation enacted at the 2020 General Assembly session transferred authority for promulgating child care regulations to the State Board of Education.

The current rules and regulations for licensed child care programs can be found on [ChildCareVA.com](https://www.childcareva.com). Virginia's licensed programs must meet the standards for their program (family day home or child day center), as well as requirements in General Procedures and Information for Licensure.

Code of Virginia: Title 22.1. Education » Chapter 14.1. Early Childhood Care and Education » Article 3. Licensure

<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title22.1/chapter14.1/section22.1-289.018/>

§ 22.1-289.018. Inspections and interviews.

A. Applicants for licensure and licensees shall at all times afford the Superintendent reasonable opportunity to inspect all of their facilities, books and records, and to interview their agents and employees and any person living or participating in such facilities, or under their custody, control, direction, or supervision. Interviews conducted pursuant to this section with persons living or participating in a facility operated by or under the custody, control, direction, or supervision of an applicant for licensure or a licensee shall be (i) authorized by the person to be interviewed or his legally authorized representative and (ii) limited to discussion of issues related to the applicant's or licensee's compliance with applicable laws and regulations, including ascertaining if assessments and reassessments of residents' cognitive and physical needs are performed as required under regulations of the Board.

B. All licensed child day programs and family day systems shall be inspected not less than twice annually, and one of those inspections shall be unannounced.

C. The activities, services, and facilities of each applicant for renewal of his license as a child day program or family day system shall be subject to an inspection or examination by the Superintendent to determine if he is in compliance with current regulations of the Board.

D. The Superintendent may authorize such other announced or unannounced inspections as the Superintendent considers appropriate.

Code of Virginia: Title 22.1. Education » Chapter 14.1. Early Childhood Care and Education » Article 1. General Provisions

<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title22.1/chapter14.1/section22.1-289.06/>

§ 22.1-289.06. Confidential records and information; penalty.

A. The records, information, and statistical registries of the Department and of all child day programs and family day systems concerning services to or on behalf of individuals shall be confidential information, provided that the Superintendent, the Board, and their agents or designees shall have access to such records, information, and statistical registries, and that such records, information, and statistical registries may be disclosed to any person having a legitimate interest in accordance with state and federal law and regulation. It shall be unlawful for any officer, agent, or employee of any child day program or family day system; for the Superintendent, the State Board, or their agents, designees, or employees; for any person who has held any such position; and for any other person to whom any such record or information is disclosed to disclose, directly or indirectly, any such confidential record or information, except as herein provided or pursuant to § 63.2-105. Every violation of this section shall constitute a Class 1 misdemeanor.

B. If a request for a record or information concerning applicants for and recipients of services provided in this chapter is made to the Department by a person who does not have a legitimate interest, the Superintendent shall not provide the record or information unless permitted by state or federal law or regulation.

APPENDIX B: Data Security

LinkB5 meets all Commonwealth standards, including the Virginia Information Security Standard ([SEC530](#)) and is in compliance with the Code of Virginia §2-2.2009 with additional oversight from the VDOE's Chief Information Security Officer. SEC530 specifies the requirements for features like encryption, access controls, authentication management, and more – all of which LinkB5 has implemented. In addition to meeting all security standards, LinkB5 has received Enterprise Cloud Oversight Service (ECOS) approval for sensitive data through the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA). To confirm ongoing security compliance, the VDOE scans LinkB5 for vulnerabilities regularly and a third party completes annual SOC2 Type II assessment reviews.

Because secure entry and storage of sensitive data is a top priority for the VDOE and LinkB5, the security of LinkB5 is mandated by more than 500 pages of rigorous security protocols with enforcement by VITA. In addition, any student data collected is compliant with the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99). To ensure the safety and security of data in transit and at rest, and of the system as a whole, several controls are in place. This includes:

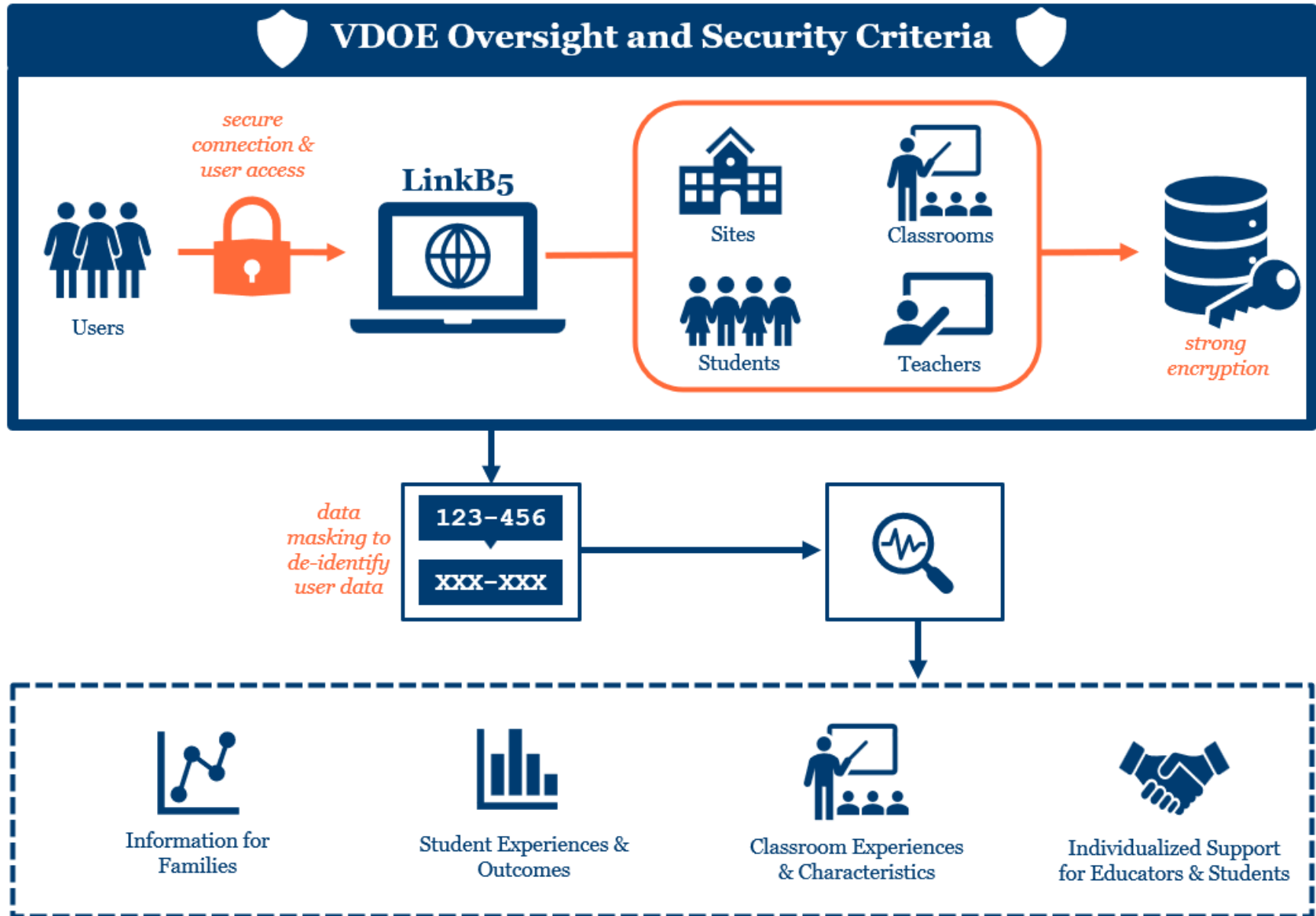
Encryption and Encryption Key Management

- Cryptographic certificates, keys, and customer access keys used for communication between Azure services and other internal components are stored securely and are rotated on a periodic basis.
- Cryptographic controls are used for information protection within the Azure platform based on the Azure Cryptographic Policy and Key Management procedures.
- Keys must have identifiable owners (binding keys to identities) and key management policies.
- Cryptographic certificates, keys, and access keys used for communication between Azure services and other internal components are stored securely and are rotated on a periodic basis.
- Administrative access to the Service environment is controlled through defined interfaces that require authentication using appropriate credentials. Privileges (i.e., read, write) are restricted to authorized personnel through designated channels based on job responsibilities.
- Data communicated through Azure service interfaces (i.e., entering data) is encrypted during transmission over external networks.

Cryptography and Key Management

- Procedures and technical measures have been established for strong encryption and authentication for the transmission of data over networks.
- User data communicated through Azure service interfaces is encrypted during transmission over external networks.
- Location-aware technologies are implemented within the Azure portal to identify and validate authentication sessions.
- External access to Azure services and the user data stored in the service requires authentication and is restricted based on user configured authorization settings.
- External traffic to the virtual machine is restricted to customer-enabled ports and protocols.
- The private root key belonging to the Azure services is protected from unauthorized access.

Exhibit A. Data Security and Data De-Identification in LinkB5



APPENDIX C: Opt-In Parent/Family Parent Permission Form Template

Please replace all information in red. Sites may also create their own similar 'opt-in' form to gather parent preference for supporting classroom lists completion.

Dear Family,

In response to state law, Virginia has developed the [Unified Virginia Quality Birth to Five System \(VQB5\)](#) to measure and improve the quality of infant, toddler, and preschool classrooms. VQB5 is used in child care centers, family day homes, public school preschools, and Head Start sites. VQB5 helps families learn about different birth-to-five programs so they can choose a quality program that best meets their needs.

Our goal is to ensure all Virginia children have learning experiences that prepare them for kindergarten. Measuring the quality of these learning experiences helps strengthen programs like ours and provide important information to families.

[State law](#) requires that the VDOE improve learning experiences for young children so more children can enter school with the foundational skills needed to be successful in kindergarten and beyond. To understand how different early learning experiences support kindergarten readiness, classroom lists of children enrolled will be entered into the secure VQB5 data portal, called LinkB5. The state will then use this information to better support early childhood programs and educators to improve experiences for children.

Federal and state laws protect how this data is used. This information will be kept private, secure, and confidential and will never be shared in a way that would identify any child.

Please complete the following information and return it by (Date) to indicate your preference for supporting VQB5 classroom list completion.

Name of Your Child _____ Today's Date _____

____ I agree to have my child's information included in the VQB5 classroom list

____ I do not want my child's information included in the VQB5 classroom list

Parent Name (print) _____

Parent Signature _____

Please refer to [VQB5 for Families/Spanish](#) for additional information. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, please let me know.

**Site Director's Name
Contact Information**

APPENDIX D: Opt-Out Parent/Family Notification Template

Please replace all information in red. Sites may also create their own similar 'opt-out' form to gather parent preference for supporting classroom lists completion.

Dear Family,

In response to state law, Virginia has developed VQB5, the [Unified Virginia Quality Birth to Five System](#), to measure and improve the quality of infant, toddler, and preschool classrooms. VQB5 is used in child care centers, family day homes, public school preschools, and Head Start sites. VQB5 helps families learn about different birth-to-five programs so they can choose a quality program that best meets their needs.

Our goal is to ensure all Virginia children have learning experiences that prepare them for kindergarten. Measuring the quality of these learning experiences helps strengthen programs like ours and provide important information to families.

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Federal and state laws protect how this data is used. This information will be kept private, secure, and confidential and will never be shared in a way that would identify any child.

If your family would like to opt-out of your child's information being included in the VQB5 classroom list, please put your opt-out request in writing and submit it to me by **(DATE)**.

Please refer to [VQB5 for Families/Spanish](#) for additional information. If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know.

Site Director's Name
Contact Info