



Virginia Early Childhood Foundation Launches *Ready Regions*
Transformative statewide network brings communities together
to support early childhood success

Richmond, Va. (Jan. 6, 2022) – The Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF) announces the launch of **Ready Regions**, a transformative network designed to bring unprecedented levels of coordination and accountability to early education programs in every community across the Commonwealth.

“Ready Regions upholds the commitment long embraced by Smart Beginnings to bring communities and local leaders together from both the public and private sectors to collaborate on early childhood education priorities,” said Liberty University’s Robert Hurt, board chair of VECF. “Moving forward, Ready Regions will enable the Commonwealth as a whole to benefit from the bottom-line win-win-win of quality early childhood education: school-ready children, work-ready parents and thriving Virginia families.”

“As we’ve learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, a strong early childhood education system that is responsive to the needs of children, families and communities is essential to Virginia’s recovery and prosperity,” said Kathy Glazer, president of VECF. “Now is the time for bold action that will allow every child and family in Virginia to benefit from greater and more equitable access to quality early childhood education services.”

Glazer noted that the Ready Regions network covers all geographic areas of the state from the tip of Southwest Virginia to the Eastern Shore and all points in between. “Ready Regions will help communities be accountable for their programs and systems to prepare children for success, as well as enabling families to choose the early childhood education options they want and need,” she added.

Each Ready Region has a lead organization charged to partner with parents, school divisions, social and human services agencies, quality improvement networks, early childhood care and education programs, businesses, and other stakeholder organizations to coordinate and integrate critical services and resources for families with young children.

A priority for Ready Regions will be providing accountability for quality measurement and improvement in all publicly funded early childhood classrooms across Virginia, including Head Start, public schools, private centers, and family day homes. Through this work, Ready Regions will impact quality and therefore children’s learning outcomes in over 9,000 classrooms across 3,400 sites, with information about quality services collected in a data accountability system. In addition, more than 18,000 early educators will receive feedback on their practice through

biannual observations using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) to assess the quality of teacher-child interactions.

The Ready Regions are listed below along with their lead organization:

- **Ready Region Southwest** led by United Way of Southwest Virginia
- **Ready Region West** led by United Way of Roanoke Valley
- **Ready Region Southside** led by Smart Beginnings Danville Pittsylvania
- **Ready Region Central** led by Smart Beginnings Greater Richmond
- **Ready Region Southeastern** led by EVMS Minus 9 to 5
- **Ready Region Chesapeake Bay** led by Smart Beginnings Virginia Peninsula
- **Ready Region Capital Area** led by Fairfax County Office for Children
- **Ready Region Blue Ridge** led by United Way of Greater Charlottesville

NOTE: A Ready Regions map showing the geographic areas can be found at <https://vecf.org/ready-regions/>

For more information, please contact the lead organizations listed above for Ready Regions or visit www.vecf.org.

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About the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation: VECF is the non-partisan steward of Virginia's promise for early childhood success, working in tandem with diverse stakeholders to ensure equitable opportunities for all families with young children to thrive. To learn more about VECF and Ready Regions, visit www.vecf.org.

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