



Systems Building Strategic Plan

2021



Stakeholders and Collaborators

Coalitions and Contributors

Smart Beginnings is an ongoing collaboration among stakeholders throughout Southwest Virginia. Many individuals and organizations who are dedicated to supporting our youngest citizens and their families join together to create regional coalitions. Each coalition works to connect families and providers with resources specific to their community. The coalition members serve as the “boots on the ground” for our efforts. This strategic plan was informed by survey responses, group coalition discussions, and meetings of the advisory council.

Lenowisco Coalition serving Lee, Wise, and Scott counties and the city of Norton

Tazewell Coalition serving Tazewell, Buchanan, and Dickenson counties

Highlands Coalition serving Washington, Smyth, and Russell counties and the City of Bristol

Wythe-Bland Coalition serving Wythe and Bland counties

Twin County Coalition serving Grayson and Carroll counties and the city of Galax

First Steps serving Pulaski, Giles, Montgomery, and Floyd counties and the city of Radford

Advisory Council

Leaders from each of the coalitions also serve on the United Way of Southwest Virginia Childhood Success Advisory Council. These are the leaders and decision makers for the organizations that form the Smart Beginnings Community. The council list below reflects individual members and/or organization representatives from the Kindergarten readiness, literacy, and childhood health and wellness working groups. The council serves as a steering committee for early childhood related initiatives across the region.

Kent Berryman

Carol Bland

Amber Boggs

William Boone

Isabel Bradburn

Eleanor Cantrell

Dennis Carter

Tom Casteel

Amy Compton

Deanna Crewey

Sarah Cook

Jessica Edwards

Katie England

Breanne Forbes-Hubbard

Bonnie Graham

Robert Graham

Kristie Hammonds

Jessica Hash

Sheryl Helm

Margaret Hurst

Audrey Kirk

Carolyn Koesters

Angie Leighton

Dan Minahan

Todd Norris

Jenny O'Hara

Susan Patrick

Suzanne Potts

Florence Powell

Sara Ransome

Sarah Seeley-Dick

Karen Shelton

Bill Shepley

John Shoulders

Kristin Shumate

Travis Staton

Tricia Van Hoy

Ciara Varnadore

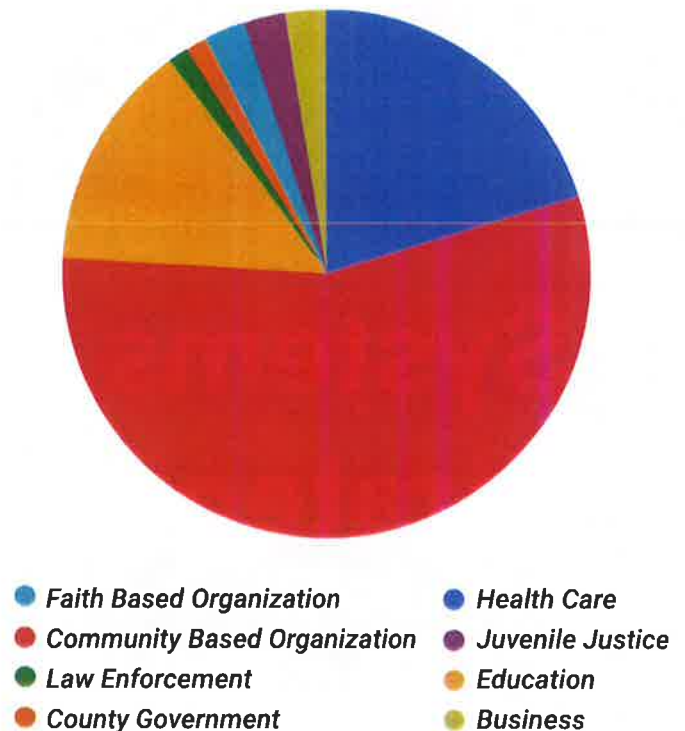
Patty Warren

Jessica Wirgau

Stephanie Woodall

Kristy Worley

Stakeholders Engaged



Our Mission

In 2016, Smart Beginnings of Southwest Virginia created a plan for the future that focused on the why behind our work. With that in mind, the coalition designed a mission to educate the community on the importance of the first five years of life. In doing this, we also developed an understanding of the importance of early childhood to the health of our communities as children grow to become the workers and citizens of our communities. With that early goal to foster a community system that promotes the healthy development of children, challenges such as poverty, remote locations, and other adverse childhood experiences had to be addressed.

In 2020, Virginia announced two system restructures that affect the work of Smart Beginnings. First, the announcement of the VQ B5 system, a unified measurement and improvement system to assess interactions and curriculum in quality early learning environments statewide in all publicly funded programs to ensure all families have equitable access to high quality care and education.

Additionally, the restructure of Smart Beginnings Communities into Ready Regions is needed to ensure consistency and capacity in a statewide network to equitably champion the needs of all children and families in every region, in every locality. Continuing a regional approach will allow Southwest Virginia to engage and support optimal environments for all young children and their families.

Remaining focused on the why led the coalitions and advisory council to identify the following areas of work which will regionalize the work to ensure all children are ready for school and ready for life.



EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Facilitate cross sector collaborations to guide the development, implementation, and evaluation of early childhood initiatives



EQUITABLE ACCESS

Preserve and expand the accessibility and utilization of quality early education for all children across the region.



HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Increase the capacity of communities to engage and support families to foster children's healthy development, learning, and well-being.

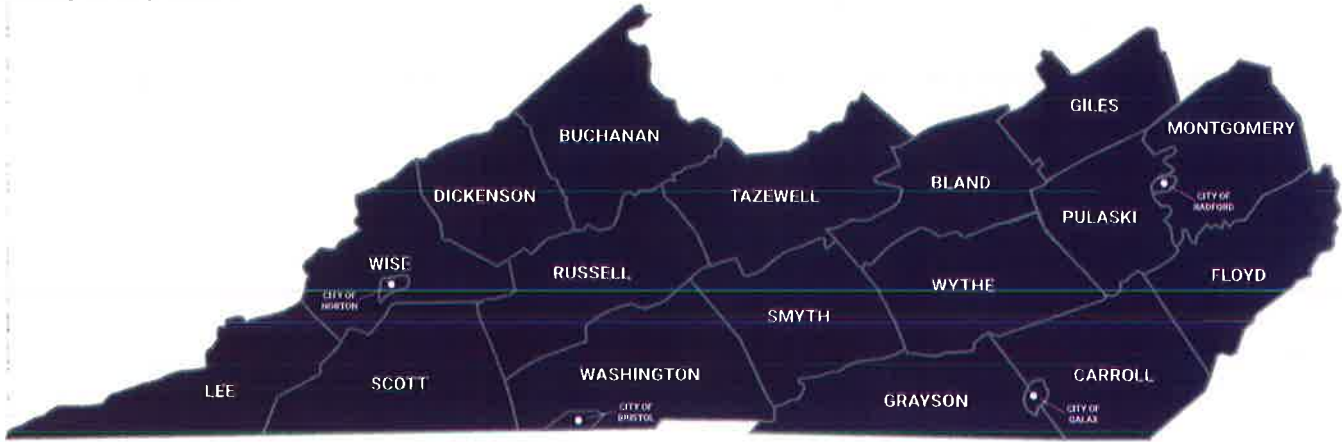


WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Help develop and support a highly competent and competitively compensated early childhood workforce.

What's Ahead?

Smart Beginnings of Southwest Virginia currently serves 21 counties and cities through cross sector collaborations and partnerships with stakeholders who are dedicated to supporting the health and well being of children and families. Smart Beginnings messaging currently reaches 2493 people via email, with coalition meetings held every other month virtually or in person.

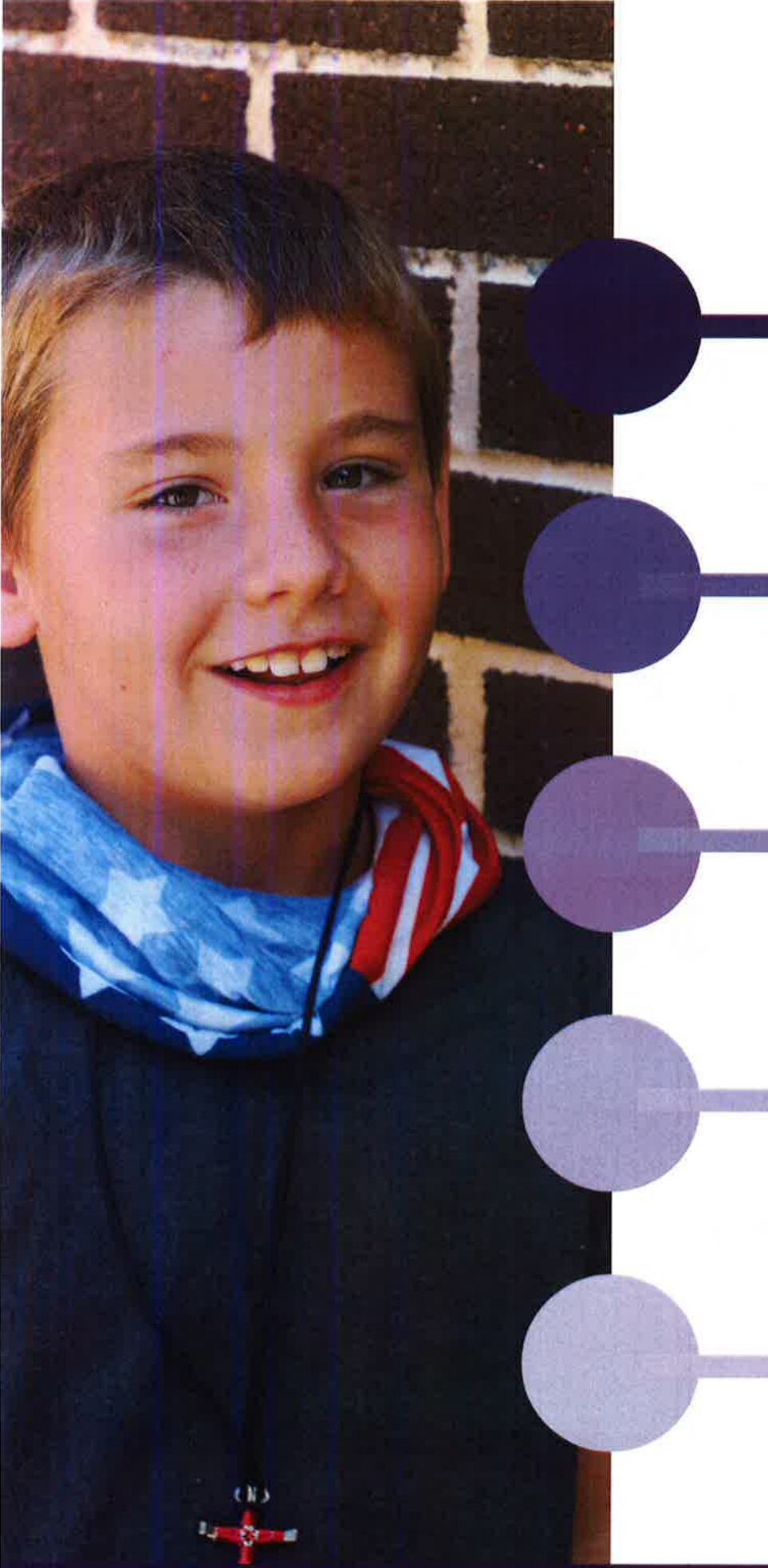


Virginia Quality and Transition to VQ B5

Current quality improvement enhancement initiatives reach about 1,200 early childhood educators and 4,878 children in more than 460 classrooms across the region. In 2021, the state began transitioning toward a unified measurement and improvement system unified system of measurement and improvement for the state of Virginia was implemented. Over a three year period, the VDOE will lead the development of the new measurement and improvement system, called VQB5, which will focus on the quality of all publicly funded birth-five classrooms and support families to choose quality programming across different program types. All publicly providers will be required to participate in the new unified VQB5 system. This effort will build on Virginia’s federal preschool development grant birth-to-five and efforts of local community networks.

	#	Quality Demonstrated
Basic Health and Safety		
Level 1	33	
Education and Qualifications		
Level 2	14	
Curriculum and Assessment		
Level 3	99	
Environment and Interactions		
Level 4	15	
Environment and Interactions		
Level 5	4	

Goals



Engage and support families with knowledge and resources to support their success. Ideally, these would include early intervention, quality early education environments, support for out of school time, and connections to financial, health, and nutritional resources.

Focus attention on social and emotional learning for children, educators, and families through the work of the Southwest Virginia Trauma Informed Community Network and it's partners.

Work to regionalize efforts through a central "Hub" or backbone agency to increase efficiency and coordination of work and reduce redundancies.

Build a data dashboard "Report Card" with key community indicators, including a fiscal resource map, connections to community partners, and other community factors relevant to early childhood success.

Help develop and support a highly competent and competitively compensated early childhood workforce through partnerships with workforce and economic development partners, colleges and universities, and an online professional development platform.

Action Plans / Looking Ahead

Based on grant funding timelines, the work will progress on a fiscal year of July 1 to June 30. The current plan is designed to support work during the three year transition from Smart Beginnings to Ready Regions.

2022

- Restructure Coalitions to 4 across the region and establish consistent leadership for each.
- Apply for the Ready Regions grant to regionalize resources and efforts.
- Promote and supporting our region's Trauma-Informed Community Network.
- Support the Accountable Care Community efforts to increase community health outcomes.
- Leverage developmental screening to connect children with appropriate services and resources.
- Work with colleges and universities to strengthen the pipeline for developing highly competent early childhood professionals.

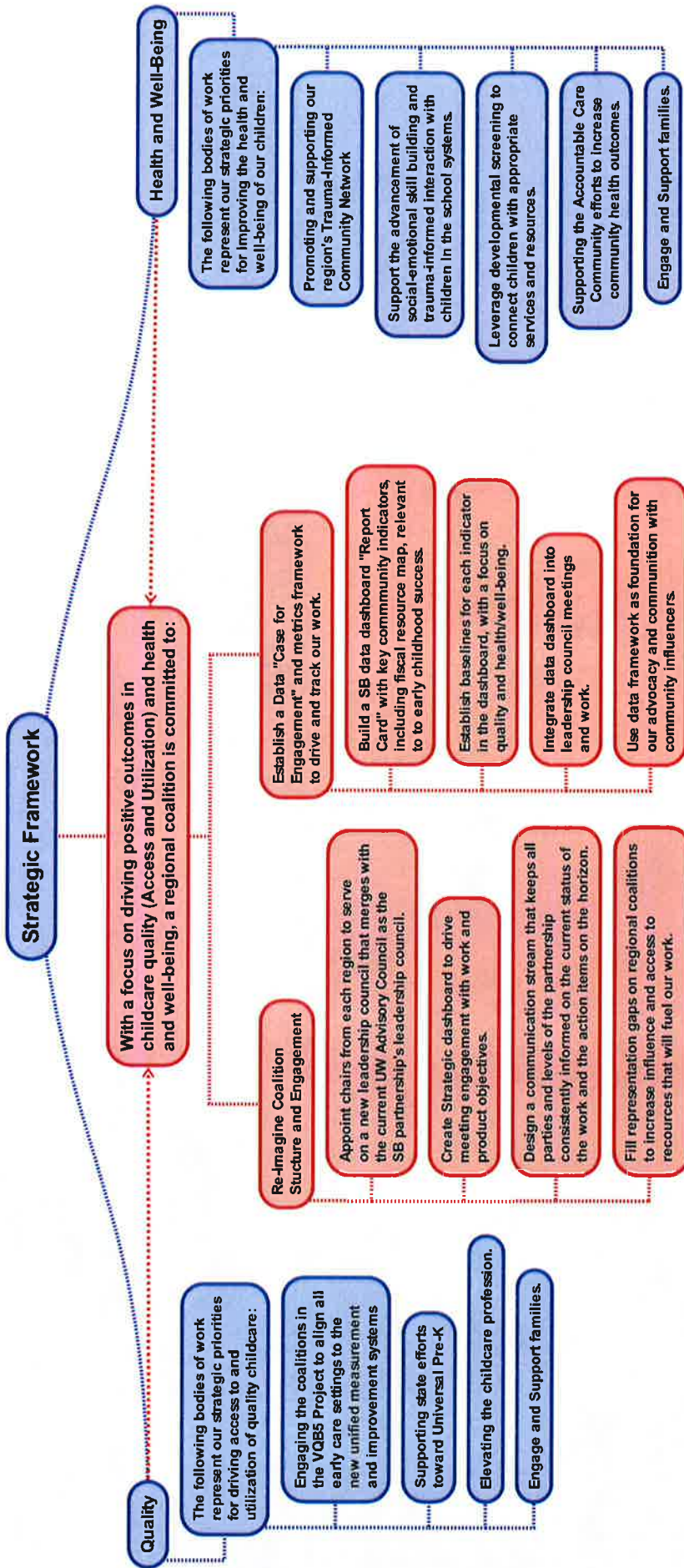
2023

- Begin to establish a data "Case for Engagement" and metrics framework to drive and track our work using a community "report card".
- Engage the coalitions in the VQB5 Project to align all early care settings to the new unified measurement and improvement systems.
- Support the advancement of social-emotional skill building and trauma-informed interaction with children in the school systems.
- Support the Accountable Care Community efforts to increase community health outcomes.

2024

- Continue to support state efforts toward Universal Pre-K.
- Use a data framework as the foundation for our advocacy and communication with community influencers.
- Support the Accountable Care Community efforts to increase community health outcomes.
- Engage and support families.





To focus the region's collaborative energy, the Regional Coalition is committed to a strategic framework that aligns efforts towards the health and well being of children in the environments where they live and learn. The graphic below represents the basic ideas of the framework:

