A new nine-region structure is changing the way early childhood education programs are coordinated in communities across Virginia. As of July 2022, Ready Regions bring unprecedented levels of coordination, accountability, and family engagement to early education programs in every community in the Commonwealth. Ready Regions builds on the strengths of Smart Beginnings programs, which served us well for the past fifteen years.

What is new?

As of July 2022, Ready Regions help every Virginia community:

- **Be accountable.** Virginia’s early education system must prepare children for success.
- **Be welcoming.** Families must be engaged in designing a system that works for them.
- **Be responsive.** Parents must be able to access the child care they want and need.
- **Be stable.** Early education programs need consistent supports to deliver quality services.
- **Be bold.** Every community in Virginia should be a place where families can thrive.

Why Ready Regions?

A strong child care system is essential to the well-being of children, families, and communities. Launch of the Ready Regions network is a critical component of bipartisan efforts to reimagine our child care system in Virginia. These efforts also include the July 2021 consolidation of child care oversight at the state level to the Virginia Department of Education, creating a single point of accountability for early childhood education. Through public-private partnerships at the regional level, Ready Regions allows every child and family to benefit from greater access to quality child care services.

- **Cover all geographic areas of the state** – meaning that every child and family in Virginia will benefit from Ready Regions programs
- **Strike the important balance** between maintaining consistent standards across regions, while enabling flexibility to address local needs and priorities
- **Promote greater efficiency and consistency** of standards through a new 9-region model
- **Enable regional leads to work closely** with the Virginia Department of Education to implement new quality standards, aligned with robust data collection and reporting
- **Empower regional leads** to more effectively manage and disperse grants from state and federal sources by simplifying distribution and oversight, covering all areas in the state

What stays the same?

- **Uphold the commitment** originally embraced by Smart Beginnings to bring public and private leaders together on the ground at a local level to collaborate on early childhood education priorities
- **Acknowledge the power** of giving Ready Regions the flexibility to meet each community’s unique needs while having strong centralized standards for coordination, consistency, support, and oversight as well as sharing best practices
- **Enable communities** and the Commonwealth as a whole to benefit from the triple bottom line of quality child care (school-ready children, work-ready parents, thriving communities)