

Update: Workgroup on the Future of School Age Care

General Assembly Directives

In response to the General Assembly, the VDOE established a joint workgroup on the future of school-age care also known as out-of-school-time (OST).

- Enactment language from Senate Bill 1084 directed the VDOE to convene a workgroup with a group of key stakeholders to review health and safety expectations for OST programs.
- Item 125.10 of the FY26 State Budget directed the VDOE to convene a workgroup to review and recommend adjustments to how the Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP) supports school-age children, including adjustments to the CCSP reimbursement rates for school age children and the appropriateness of continuing to provide services through the CCSP to school-age children.

Approach

The VDOE facilitated three workgroup meetings between June and September 2025 to develop recommendations related to health and safety, quality, and access to OST care.

Members included representatives of school divisions, 21st Century Learning grantees, private childcare providers, Virginia Partnership for Out-of-School Time, local Parks and Recreation entities, the YMCA, Communities in Schools, Boys and Girls Clubs, and other non-profit organizations that provide out-of-school time programming.

Meetings began with an icebreaker to support engagement and relationship-building, and included a wide range of approaches to discussion, including opportunities for individual reflection, small group discussions, large group share-outs, and gallery walks to observe all group reflections.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were put forward and discussed extensively:

Health and Safety

1. Increase stakeholder understanding of licensure, why it matters, and exemptions from licensure among families, providers, and legislators.
2. Explore ways in which VDOE can further support, not just regulate, providers to meet health and safety requirements.
3. Explore alternatives to licensure that provide assurance of health and safety and may be efficient for providers.

4. Explore potential additional statutory and regulatory changes that provide assurance of age-appropriate health and safety while minimizing burden.

Access

1. Identify strategies to ensure that all existing sources of funding are fully maximized.
2. Collect, analyze, and disseminate data to guide a collective understanding of supply, demand, costs, and outcomes associated with the provision of OST services.
3. Explore funding levers to increase revenue to support OST services.

Quality

1. Explore strategies to support the OST workforce by strengthening personnel knowledge, skills, and abilities.
2. Consider strategies to encourage and guide the use of quality standards among programs.
3. Explore the feasibility of developing a Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) system for OST care in Virginia, and practices to support engagement in a QRIS system.
4. Develop statewide data collection to determine existing quality programs and isolate factors influencing quality.