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**Inclusive Placement Opportunities for Preschoolers**

**Intensive Technical Assistance Grant**

**September, 2019**

**Application Package**

**Virginia Department of Education**

**Division of School Readiness**

**Office of Early Childhood**

**in Collaboration with**

**Virginia Department of Education’s Training and Technical Assistance Centers**

**APPLICATION SUBMISSION DEADLINE:**

**November 15, 2019**

**Submission of Grant Application:** In order to be considered for selection, applicants must submit all required information with complete responses. The application must be emailed to Laura.Heath@doe.virginia.gov **no later than 4 p.m. on November 15, 2019.**



**Inclusive Placement Opportunities for Preschoolers**

**Intensive Technical Assistance Grant**

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) is pleased to invite a team from your division to apply for an Inclusive Placement Opportunities for Preschoolers (IPOP) Intensive Technical Assistance (ITA) grant opportunity. IPOP is a systems change approach to support school divisions in the development, expansion, and/or improvement of inclusive placement opportunities for preschoolers with Individual Education Programs (IEPs). IPOP is designed to help local school divisions meet federal and state mandates requiring young children with disabilities to be educated in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).

## Background and Purpose

An investment in early childhood is one of the best investments society can make. Because of the importance of the early years of life, Virginia created a plan to improve the quality of early childhood care and education programs across the Commonwealth. The plan focuses on providing children with high-quality preschool experiences that help prepare them for kindergarten and enable them to thrive.

A goal of the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) is to expand accessibility of quality early childhood care and education programs. As such, VDOE is focused on providing support to divisions to ensure more children with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are served in inclusionary settings. High-quality inclusive preschool programs can help produce long-term success, characterized by higher productivity in adulthood and fewer resources spent on interventions and public assistance later in life.

Unfortunately, Virginia’s public classrooms currently include children with IEPs at a much lower rate than the national average—34% of children with IEPs, compared to 46% nationally. Inclusion in early childhood programs is supported through years of research and reinforced by a strong legal foundation. The ITA is designed to assist Virginia’s school divisions and early childhood communities in identifying, developing, and sustaining inclusive early childhood programs for children with IEPs ages two-, three-, and four-years old as well as providing high-quality early childhood classrooms that deliver individualization within inclusive contexts.

IPOP Grant Description

The ITA will be provided by VDOE’s Training and Technical Assistance Centers (T/TACs). Accepted applicants will receive technical assistance support for three years while developing and improving inclusive practices in early childhood. The ITA will address system and program related factors that impact the LRE and appropriate service provision.

School divisions may improve their inclusive early childhood programs and services by targeting either of the following through the ITA:

* Increase access through developing or expanding models of inclusion for children with IEPs.
	+ School divisions may offer inclusive early childhood programs in any of the following settings: public schools (e.g., Virginia Preschool Initiative [VPI], Title I), Head Start, or community-based entities. ITA will focus on supporting school divisions in identifying and developing new inclusive programs in one or more early childhood setting. For example, a division may target inclusion of children in the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) program or a division that already includes children in VPI targets inclusion of children in community-based programs. ITA will focus on system related factors by completing a needs assessment, identifying inclusive opportunities in the division and community, and implementing an action plan to build inclusive programs. Once inclusive programs are established, ITA will move to improving the quality of classroom practices that address children’s learning needs.
* Increase quality of inclusive practices that support the needs of children with IEPs in inclusive classrooms.
	+ Providing a high-quality inclusive classroom involves targeting both system related factors as well as classroom-based practices. ITA will target improving classroom practices delivered in inclusive programs to support the diverse needs of children with IEPs. For example, a division may include children in VPI and Head Start programs but focus on increasing the quality of instruction delivered. System level factors include focusing on the models of instruction, implementation of classroom quality assessment tools, and models of professional development that support those involved with meeting the needs of children in inclusive programs. Classroom practices may encompass adapting the classroom’s environment and delivering activities and instructional support in ways that encourage access and active participation in the group.

The IPOP TA is a systems change process designed to improve inclusive practices for preschoolers with IEPs. A systems change process is comprehensive and includes the educational system components that support early childhood education in the school and community. Therefore, there will be an organized and cohesive process and essential support structures designed to promote the adoption and integration of evidence-based practices, interventions, and policies within the established system. Systems change typically takes two to five years. The first year is devoted primarily to planning for the change to the system. In subsequent years, planning continues and implementation begins. In the ITA, the stages of implementation science will be used as teams work to improve inclusive practices. Implementation science is the study of methods to promote the adoption and integration of evidence-based practices, interventions and policies into real world settings. The stages are:

* Exploration
	+ Develop team structures
	+ Develop communication plans
	+ Gather and review data
	+ Complete a needs assessment
* Installation
	+ Develop an action plan
	+ Train first implementers
	+ Establish readiness of data systems to track progress
	+ Establish communication protocols
* Implementation
	+ Implement the plan
	+ Monitor fidelity
	+ Evaluate

Within each phase of systems change, there will be several steps. Each division involved in changing a particular system will identify the specific steps and how those steps will be sequenced for their unique situation.

**Responsibilities**

* **School Division Responsibilities**

The IPOP ITA grant process requires the school division to:

* Obtain administrative support and commitment,
* Form an ITA team for planning and implementation,
* Identify a person to serve as the team lead to fulfill logistical responsibilities associated with the role as well as lead implementation of action steps,
* Hold at least monthly scheduled team meetings,
* Develop an action plan,
* Commit to implementing activities outlined in the action plan,
* Schedule release time for teachers and planning team members to participate in activities associated with this initiative**, and**
* Evaluate progress of the grant activities.

Forming a team for planning and implementation is a requirement if your application for ITA is accepted. Prior to submitting an application for ITA, identify individuals who are committed members of the team. Additionally, identify an individual to be the team lead and serve as liaison to the larger governing board and the agency director or superintendent. More information about required and recommended team membership is provided on page 5 of this application. Once ITA begins, the team membership may change based on needs identified to ensure membership of those who may contribute to improving inclusive practices.

The team will learn and use a collaborative team meeting process. A regular monthly meeting date will be set and team meetings will be scheduled for the year. The team’s goal will be to develop an action plan to improve inclusive practices in early childhood, plan and implement activities, and evaluate progress.

* **T/TAC Responsibilities**

T/TAC staff roles will include guiding the team to conduct steps as outlined in the phases of systems change, participating as a team member on the planning team, and supporting the team in implementing the action plan. T/TAC will provide technical assistance at the division or program level by:

* Providing resources and information on inclusive practices, including contexts for inclusion, models, funding strategies, and evidence-based practices;
* Completing assessment activities;
* Assisting the team in identifying needs;
* Assisting the team in developing an action plan;
* Providing professional development to school division leaders and service providers;
* Supporting implementation of the action plan; and
* Assisting in developing a plan for sustainability.

# IPOP Intensive TA Grant General Information

## Eligibility

All school divisions are eligible to apply for the IPOP Intensive Technical Assistance grant. Applicants must show evidence of commitment from division leadership, including the superintendent. School divisions that have participated in the *Early Childhood Education Leaders Communities of Learning for Inclusive Programs* in 2018 or 2019are strongly encouraged to apply.

## Grant Awards Process

**ITA Providers:** There are five T/TACs across the state that provide training and technical assistance in Early Childhood Special Education. The T/TACs are located at the following locations and serve the entire state.

* + George Mason University – Region 4
	+ James Madison University – Region 5
	+ Old Dominion University – Regions 2 and 3
	+ Virginia Commonwealth University – Regions 1 and 8
	+ Virginia Tech University – Regions 6 and 7

ITA Grant Period: The grant period is from January, 2020 – December, 2022

The ITA will be provided for three years. In the event that a division meets the goals outlined in the action plan before December, 2022, the ITA may be concluded earlier. The division and ITA provider will make this determination together.

**IPOP Team:** A team is to be identified who will work together to implement activities to improve inclusive opportunities for preschoolers. The team at a minimum, should consist of:

* + an administrator who can commit to the process of expanding and sustaining inclusive opportunities (this includes a person who has policy and funding knowledge and authority)
	+ a school division leader who acts as the program administrator for ECSE programs, and
	+ a school division or local agency leader who acts as the program coordinator for Early Childhood (e.g., Virginia Preschool Initiative, Head Start, Title I).

Others who may be considered as team members include:

* + a program leader who acts as the Disabilities Specialist for the Head Start program;
	+ a community-based child care or preschool provider,
	+ community partners,
	+ principals/assistant principals,
	+ early childhood and early childhood special education teachers,
	+ related service providers,
	+ family members, and
	+ any other people who could be affected by the change to the system or may be able to support problem solving and/or implementation (e.g., representatives of the transportation department).

## Competitive Priority Ranking

Completed applications submitted by the deadline will be reviewed by VDOE and T/TAC staff and ranked in order using the following for priority ranking.

* Participation in the *Early Childhood Education Leaders Communities of Learning for Inclusive Programs* in 2018 or 2019
* Commitment to provide a team to work together (for team membership requirements, see page 4)
* Identification of 2-3 SMART (specific, measurable, ambitious, realistic and time-based) goals that are clear and data-informed
* Consideration of the division level data for Indicator 6, Early Childhood Educational Placement
	+ Percentage of students who attend a regular early childhood program and receive the majority of their special education and related services there
	+ Percentage of children who attend a separate classroom, school, or residential facility
* Completeness of the application

## Notification

The individual serving as the grant application contact for the division will be notified via email as to the final status of the application (i.e., awarded, not awarded) once a decision is made in December, 2019. School division superintendents of divisions selected for Inclusive Placement Opportunities for Preschoolers ITA grant awards will also be notified.

## Webinar Dates/Times

All interested school divisions are strongly encouraged to have the grant application contact attend the informational webinar. Additional information and technical assistance will be provided on the grant application process and an opportunity for questions will be provided. The grant webinar will be recorded and a link to the recording will be sent to all ECSE Coordinators and will be available on request.

* Quality Grant Webinar: Thursday, October 10, 2019 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

To join the Webinar

1. Go to <https://gmu.webex.com/gmu/k2/j.php?MTID=t75f4cb9f3448d6c3add3131dada0b313>
2. Enter your name and email address
3. Enter the session password: **MpuPF3Se**
4. Click "Join Now"
5. Follow the instructions that appear on your screen
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To join by phone only

US:+1-415-655-0003 Access code: 647 293 793

# Inclusive Placement Opportunities for Preschoolers (IPOP) Intensive Technical Assistance (ITA) Grant Application

# PART 1: COVER PAGE AND ASSURANCES

| School Division: | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| --- | --- |
| Name of Grant Contact: | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Title: | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Address: | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Email: | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Telephone: | Click or tap here to enter text. |

## Statement of Assurances

Should a grant award be made to the applicant in support of activities proposed in this application, the authorized signature certifies to the Virginia Department of Education that the authorized official will:

1. Conduct the activities of this project in compliance with laws, regulations, and grant criteria;
2. Provide leadership and support for the division’s plan to improve inclusive practices in early childhood;
3. Form a planning and implementation team of division and community-based members;
4. Meet monthly, at a minimum;
5. Collaborate to implement activities outlined in the action plan;
6. Complete evaluation activities as required; and
7. Submit by December, 2022, a final report, with required documentation and data in the format requested, to the VDOE.

**Certification Statement:**

I certify to the best of my knowledge that the information in this application is correct, that the filing of this application is duly authorized, and that this organization will comply with the Statement of Assurances.

| **Print Division Superintendent Name:** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| --- | --- |
| **Signature:** |  |
| **Date**: | Click or tap here to enter text. |

**Inclusive Placement Opportunities for Preschoolers (IPOP) Intensive Technical Assistance (ITA) Grant Application**

## PART 2: DIVISION INFORMATION

**School Division:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Date:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Team Leader** (This is the person who will meet with the TTAC representative to schedule the meetings and TA sessions and manage team logistics if your division is selected for ITA.)

Name: Click or tap here to enter text.Position: Click or tap here to enter text.

Address: Click or tap here to enter text.Phone Office: Click or tap here to enter text.

Phone Mobile: Click or tap here to enter text.E-mail address: Click or tap here to enter text.

**Members who Agree to Serve on the IPOP Planning Team:**

| **Name:** | **Position:** | **Agency:** |
| --- | --- | --- |
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**DIVISION DATA**

1. Please check if you participated in the *Early Childhood Education Leaders Communities of Learning for Inclusive Programs* in 2018 or 2019

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No

1. As of December 1, 2018, how many children with IEPs in preschool did your division serve?
	1. Total: Click or tap here to enter text.
	2. Age 2: Click or tap here to enter text.
	3. Age 3: Click or tap here to enter text.
	4. Age 4: Click or tap here to enter text.
	5. Age 5: Click or tap here to enter text.
2. As of December 1, 2018, what is your division’s Indicator 6 Data – Early Childhood Placement?
	1. Indicator 6A (percent of children attending a regular early childhood placement): Click or tap here to enter text.
	2. Indicator 6B (percent of children attending a separate class, school, or residential facility: Click or tap here to enter text.
3. In the 2019-2020 school year, what percent of children transitioned to kindergarten who received early childhood special education will be educated in an inclusive setting? Click or tap here to enter text.
4. Please check the programs provided in your school division / community and indicate the number of classrooms for each program:

[ ]  ECSE self-contained: Click or tap here to enter text.

[ ]  ECSE reverse-inclusion (includes typically developing children from the community): Click or tap here to enter text.

[ ]  Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) – division is the grantee: Click or tap here to enter text.

[ ]  Title I preschool: Click or tap here to enter text.

[ ]  Locally funded preschool: Click or tap here to enter text.

[ ]  Head Start – division is the grantee: Click or tap here to enter text.

[ ]  Head Start - community agency is the grantee: Click or tap here to enter text.

Check whether your community has the following:

[ ]  Community-Based Preschool

[ ]  Community-Based Child Care

1. Please list any curricula implemented in your early childhood programs (EC and ECSE classroom): Click or tap here to enter text.

**DIVISION BACKGROUND AND GOALS**

**A. Please check one:**

[ ]  Increase access through developing or expanding models of inclusion for children with IEPs.

[ ]  Increase quality of inclusive practices that support the needs of children with IEPs in inclusive classrooms.

**B. Briefly describe why this initiative was selected. Be specific (e.g., describe a survey/self-evaluation completed, data collected).**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**C. Describe the actions you have taken to address this need and the outcome of those actions. Please share what worked and what did not work with previous actions taken.**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**D. Describe the anticipated impact your team hopes to achieve as a result of receiving the TA by listing 2-3 specific SMART goals you want to achieve. (SMART goals are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time Based. An example of a SMART goal is: By the start of the 2020 school year, increase the number of children with IEPs attending VPI classrooms by 6 children.)**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**E. Identify at least three specific strengths of your division that will assist in implementing your initiative.**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**F. Describe existing and/or potential barriers that might affect the implementation of the initiative. Consider all possible circumstances that may arise associated with the initiative.**

Click or tap here to enter text.

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## PART 3: SUMITTING THE APPLICATION

**APPLICATION SUBMISSION DEADLINE:**

**November 15, 2019**

**Submission of Grant Application:** In order to be considered for selection, applicants must submit all required information with complete responses. The application must be emailed to Laura.Heath@doe.virginia.gov **no later than 4 p.m. on November 15, 2019.**

**For questions contact Dawn Hendricks at 804-225-2675 or** **Dawn.Hendricks@doe.virginia.gov****.**