



**EARLY
CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION
INITIATIVES**

STRATEGIC *Plan*

FY 2024-27



VIRGINIA TECH.



Early Childhood
Education Initiatives

Early Childhood Education Initiatives (ECEI) Strategic Plan

University Strategic Plan: Be a Destination for Talent

Virginia Tech aims to attract bold and dynamic faculty, staff, and students. Part of that means supporting their well-being and quality of life and to invest in, empower, and support a workforce that will champion our vision for the future.

ECEI Strategic Plan

Identify short and long-term strategies to address child care challenges impacting Virginia Tech faculty, staff, and students. This will differentiate our recruitment and retention of world-class faculty and staff while directly supporting the university's Global Distinction Initiative.

Key Pillars

We are advocating for child care opportunities that are:

HIGH QUALITY

The Virginia Department of Education [defines high quality child care](#) as that which provides: responsive interactions, a qualified and trained staff, a planned curriculum and assessment that promotes learning and play, a healthy and safe environment, and low student-to-teacher ratios.

ACCESSIBLE

Caregivers should have sufficient child care options available to choose from.

AFFORDABLE

7% of a family's income is the current benchmark for affordable family co-payments, as [established by the Department of Health and Human Services in 2016](#).

FLEXIBLE

Child care options should be available to accommodate non-traditional working schedules.



Goal 1

Expand access to quality early childhood education programs

Subgoals

- Create university-dedicated placement opportunities through partnerships with local child care providers.
- Enhance opportunities and programs to support caregiving needs of school-aged children.
- Identify programs to support back-up care needs (when child care gaps occur due to unforeseen events).
- Provide support to regional agencies focused on increasing licensed child care centers and licensed family day homes.
- Identify non-traditional caregiving options and evaluate opportunities for implementation.

FY 24-25 Strategic Priorities

- Establish at least one partnership in Roanoke to assist with faculty recruitment and retention.
- Explore partnership program with a specific focus on after school care.
- Revisit establishment of back-up care reimbursement program.
- Evaluate opportunities to develop flexible care programs, building upon the success of Little Hokies Hangout.
- Facilitate internal conversations around opportunities to enhance and/or expand campus child care.



Goal 2

Implement caregiving, educational, and outreach programs to support employees

Subgoals

- Benchmark peer institutions to identify opportunities to enhance existing caregiving programs and develop new programs.
- Partner with medical professionals to provide educational programming for caregivers.
- Offer educational programs through a variety of venues, including lunch and learn, special programming, etc.
- Provide outreach to the university community and families to communicate available resources.

FY 24-25 Strategic Priorities

- Evaluate the opportunity to expand Dependent Travel Program to colleges for teaching and research faculty.
- Explore back-up care programs and determine if programs functioning at peer institutions are viable programs for Virginia Tech to pilot.
- Evaluate needed outreach programs and events that will increase parent education and support of working parents at Virginia Tech.



Goal 3

Strengthen regional/state partnerships and engagement

Subgoals

- Sponsor the New River Valley Early Childhood Education Summit.
- Engage with regional organizations who support early childhood education, including:
 - Support professional development programs for early childhood education (ECE) providers.
 - Advocate for teacher pay.
- Partner with regional and state agencies to develop strategies that:
 - Build ECE workforce.
 - Advocate for financial support to help offset ECE expenses for lower income families.
- Facilitate Directors Network for ECE program leaders.
- Host the Igniting Connections Symposium for ECE professionals of the NRV.

FY 24-25 Strategic Priorities

- Identify opportunities to increase family-based child care.
- Support workforce development and recognition of the ECE career pathway.
- Serve as an active member of the Virginia Business Roundtable for Early Education.
- Support the [Unified Virginia Quality Birth to Five System \(VOB5\)](#) through Ready Regions.
- Support the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) system by providing leadership in statewide organizations.

Enabling Factors

- Strategic communication plan
- ECEI governance structure
- Quality data to support sound decision making
- Forward-thinking work-life and caregiving policies
- Finance and business plans to support existing programs and expand opportunities
- Trusted relationships, internally, regionally and at the state level

Success Metrics

- Number of participants in sponsored events:
 - Parent education
 - Educator professional development
- Number of external financial support resources provided to low-income families
- Number of available and utilized quality, early care and education placements
- Number of new services available for additional caregiving needs:
 - Summer care
 - Early and late hours
 - Back-up care
- Employee satisfaction with available early care and education and resources, as measured through surveys or other checkpoints
- Visits to the caregiving.vt.edu site