

MOST VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS

posted – March 26, 2016

“Many of our nation’s youngest and most vulnerable individuals are starting their K-12 schooling a step behind their peers from more affluent families.”

Governor Terry McAuliffe 2015

What is Hampton doing for its youngest and most vulnerable individuals?

How many of our most vulnerable individuals are given the opportunity to participate in pre-kindergarten?

Hampton Moton Early Childhood Center – “Pre-Kindergarten students at Moton Early Childhood Center are selected under the guidelines set forth by the Virginia Preschool Initiative. State funds are available to provide comprehensive programs to 90% of Virginia’s at-risk 4 year olds who are not served by federal programs.”

Ninety percent, that’s a lot.

Is that Virginia’s take on this issue?

Virginia Preschool Initiative Guidelines for the Virginia Preschool Initiative Application 2015-2016

– As of 2005-2006, state funds are available to provide comprehensive preschool programs to 100% of Virginia’s at-risk four-year-olds, as defined by VPI funding eligibility, and who are not being served by Head Start.

Did someone forget to tell Hampton...not 90%, but 100%? It was 10 years ago. We can’t expect our school board and 1 Franklin Street to stay savvy about all this education stuff.

So just whom is Hampton helping...for a nominal fee of \$137.60 Hampton will tell you. I would ask each of you who continues to read my rant to follow your conscience and contribute to the cause but I would feel guilty taking your money since the information requested and the information provided for that \$137.60 is crap!

Two simple questions were asked of Hampton City Schools –

1. Number of children with applications for pre-k in FY14, FY15 and FY16.
2. Of those applicants counted above, the number of children accepted for pre-k in FY14, FY15 and FY16.

Pretty straight forward. Didn’t ask about programs (VPI in particular)...race ...sex... disability ...nationality ...just how many children had applications submitted for pre-k and how many were accepted. I figured I would get the total served from VDOE and the fall demographics.

While I waited for Hampton’s response, I decided to ask the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) about the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) and Hampton’s application.

I didn’t ask VDOE about FY14. I’m slipping.

In FY15 Hampton had 612 students who would be funded through VPI. Of the 35 classrooms, only 27 of the teachers would have endorsements in NK or PK. Sixty-five percent of these students would be eligible for free or reduced lunch.

In FY16 Hampton had 625 students who would be funded through VPI. Of the 36 classrooms, only 28 of the teachers would have endorsements in NK or PK. Sixty-two percent of these students would be eligible for free or reduced lunch.

Lets see...what did Hampton report as the total pre-k students count to VDOE in the fall each years.

School Year	Grade PK
2013-2014	810
2014-2015	715
2015-2016	655

Hampton's response has arrived. They reported the total number of pre-k applications and acceptance as the following –

FOIA Request
 Re: PK Registration Totals
 March 8, 2016

School Year	Registrations Entered	Eligible & Accepted	Eligible & Chosen to Participate <small>(The number to serve is provided by the state.)</small>
2013-2014	898	706	617
2014-2015	931	681	612
2015-2016	907	675	625

That screwy. Hampton reported to VDOE nearly 200 more participating in 2014 than what they reported to me as the total **Eligible and Chosen to Participate**. I didn't ask how many participated but 1 Franklin was nice enough to give that data as a bonus...sort of, after all, I was paying someone \$34.40 an hour to research those numbers. Anyhow, by 2016, Hampton got more of a handle on those sneaky kids breaking into the pre-k classrooms. Those new security locks on the doors paid off. Only thirty pre-k students slipped through barriers this year.

I went back to Hampton to find out why they provide one number to me and another to VDOE.

According to Hampton – “VDOE *includes* special ed preschool in the report.”

Damn VDOE...counting those students with disabilities. Everybody knows those students don't count. They throw everything out of whack.

Hampton went on to tell me – “Special Ed and PK are reported as PK because the VDOE doesn't recognize a grade level of students with special needs.”

Again, damn you VDOE...you don't know how to report those terrible students with disabilities...or do you?

School Year	Grade PK	Grade KG	Grade 01	Grade 02	Grade 03	Grade 04	Grade 05	Grade 06	Grade 07	Grade 08	Grade 09	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
2013-2014	150	107	159	164	198	207	209	251	230	203	263	217	163	173
2014-2015	155	85	156	175	166	211	222	219	244	217	272	201	176	174
2015-2016	112	96	137	170	199	187	215	222	203	238	313	214	139	174

These are the number of students with disabilities in Hampton during the corresponding years in various grades. Maybe VDOE does recognize a grade level for students with disabilities. Shut the front door!

If we look at FY16 we see 112 students with disabilities. Hampton doesn't count these students so if you add that number to figure Hampton reported to me (625) we should get 655. Calculator time... $625 + 112 = 737$. They missed the plane!

The VPI program and its numbers were not in the two questions I asked Hampton about nor did Hampton note the numbers provided to me as being representative of that program. Apparently, the VPI program and its numbers are what Hampton feels more comfortable reporting...rather than the numbers requested.

In the year (2004-2005) prior to VPI being funded at 100%, Hampton provided services to 134 pre-k students. Of those 134, 125 were students with disabilities and services were mandated by IEPs.

My original curiosity was about how many of the most vulnerable individuals Hampton would help if they weren't obligated to. Apparently not many.