



# VIRGINIA OFFICE OF EDUCATION ECONOMICS

GENERATING INFORMED ACTION FROM DATA INSIGHTS

## 212,000

Number of Virginia high school and college students each year who graduate or complete a credential (and need to make informed decisions about their careers).

## 500+

Number of Virginia stakeholders (policymakers, employers, and higher ed institutions) that could benefit from the Office of Education Economics' insights.

## \$2.4B

Dollars the Commonwealth invests annually in postsecondary education, vocational training, and workforce development that data could help inform.

## 45

Pieces of legislation passed in Colorado that have been directly informed by data insights from Colorado's state-wide labor market data entity.



## PROPOSAL OVERVIEW

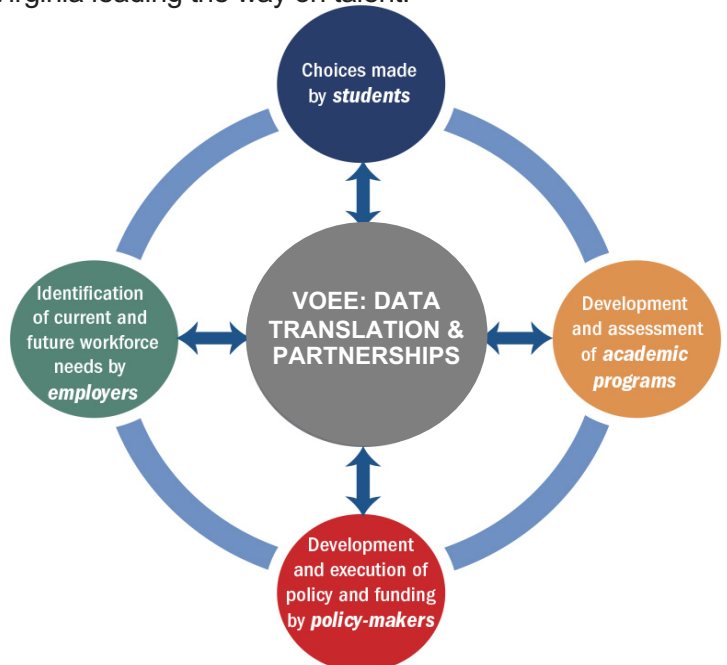
Virginia Economic Development Partnership is launching its newly created Virginia Office of Education Economics (VOEE) in July 2021. The purpose of VOEE is to provide a unified, consistent source of information and analysis on linkages between education and employment outcomes. VOEE-generated data insights will enable policymakers and educators to effectively respond to the talent needs of Virginia's economy, while better enabling individuals to navigate the complex, often confusing connections between education and the labor market.

Many stakeholders in the space need to develop a more robust understanding of the connections between education and the labor market. Such insights will be a crucial to Virginia leading the way on talent.

## WHY NOW?

Even prior to COVID-19, there existed an urgent need for an Office of Education Economics. The impacts of COVID-19 on higher education and labor market only has further heightened the urgency. **COVID-19 revealed significant gaps in Virginia's ability to quickly and consistently leverage real-time data on economic activity to inform policy decisions.** In the absence of this information, this gap was filled in an ad hoc manner by providing information through VEDP's analytical capabilities that quickly pulled together relevant labor market insights for a variety of stakeholders.

Virginia needs a dedicated, permanent entity to help fuel our economic recovery and growth for the decades to come.





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## WHAT ARE EDUCATORS, STUDENTS, AND POLICYMAKERS SAYING?



In the design phase of Virginia Office of Education Economics, we are gleaning **best practice insights from several states** (see map) as well as international examples.

"Having a clearer understanding of current and future labor markets will improve academic programs **at every level of education.**"



**Dr. Rosa Atkins**

Division Superintendent, Charlottesville City Schools & SCHEV Council member

Over the years I've advised countless high schoolers and adults on career options tied to Prince William County's Practical Nursing program. There are an array of career options available to them across rehabilitation centers, physician's offices, long-term care or assisted living facilities, clinics, and more. **If Virginia was able to provide me with regular, real-time data for specific geographies on how many current job openings are available**, what entry-level wages are, what wage growth historically has been over time, I could help my students make more informed choices about their next steps.

"Thanks to my high school career coach, I chose JMU for the strong success rate of its nursing school. **If all students had a more access to information about in-demand careers**, it would be so helpful in deciding what and where to study."



**Grace, Age 18**

Freshman student at James Madison University

In my over 40 years working with Virginia's community college students, **I can't underscore enough how absolutely crucial it is to create a state-level Office of Education Economics.** Understanding the connections between our educational programs and labor market outcomes would help policymakers and educators respond to the talent needs of our economy, while better enabling our students to navigate the complex, often confusing connections between education and the labor market.



**Dr. Susan S. Wood**

Professor Emeritus, J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College, and former Vice Chancellor, VCCS



**Tammy Dean**

Director of the Practical Nursing program Prince William County Schools

"We can't bridge computer science education gaps in K-12 if we don't have an **accurate, reliable, consistent, source-of-truth data** that gives us clear insight into where those gaps are. Great strategies are built on reliable, locally relevant, and up-to-date information. We need that crucial data on a regular basis."



**Chris Dovi**

Executive Director, [CodeVA](#)