READY REGIONS GOVERNANCE SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

As Ready Regions launch, Virginia leaders have a unique opportunity to lay groundwork for transformative early childhood systems that ensure all young children in the Commonwealth have what they need to be healthy, ready to learn, and thriving. To achieve this vision, Ready Regions will need strong, inclusive Governance structures that are fully representative of the families, early childhood care and education providers, and other stakeholders in their footprint, grounded in equity and accountability, family voice and choice, and continuous improvement.

This Ready Regions Governance Self-Assessment Tool identifies research-based characteristics of high functioning Governance structures in four key Practice Areas related to Establishing Governance Structures. Key indicators in each Practice Area are positioned along a Developmental Continuum from Exploring/Planning to Implementing to Strengthening/Sustaining. Ready Regions can use this self-assessment tool with partners to identify key strengths and opportunities, and collaboratively plan next steps for establishing Governance that is inclusive, builds trust, promotes transparency, and advances equity.

Establishing Governance Structures	Developmental Continuum		
Practice Areas	**Exploring/Planning** Foundational Elements of Engagement and Action	**Implementing** Early Iterations of Shared Governance	**Strengthening/Sustaining** Shared Governance for Transformative Excellence
1. Recruiting and Selecting Diverse, Representative Governance Leaders RR Governance will reflect the region's racial, linguistic, economic, geographic diversity.	Demographics that fully reflect the region's families are identified. Decision makers, family leaders, ECCE provider types to be represented in RR Governance are identified; recommendations for members are solicited. A rubric with selection criteria is developed with stakeholder input and shared publicly. Recruitment processes aim to ensure representation of the racial, linguistic, and economic demography.	A diverse, representative group is invited and agrees to serve in RR Governance. Most RR Governance members are participating regularly; most groups are consistently represented. Outreach is conducted if RR Governance members are not participating regularly to assess why. Adjustments are made to increase participation/ ensure representation.	A formal, transparent, and equitable process is used to select members, to regularly reassess RR Governance membership, and to remove, replace, or add members. All RR Governance members participate regularly; all groups are regularly represented. Current and former members of RR Governance are supported in the recruitment of future members.
2. Ensuring Family Voice has Impact in the Governance Structure RR Governance will be informed by a formal mechanism that elevates family voice and choice.	Approaches to ensure family voice has influence and power in RR Governance are considered (i.e., independent Family Council, assuring family leaders comprise % RR Governance, or both). Family leaders are consulted in the design and organization of the decision-making mechanism.	Family leaders have influence and power in the decisions that directly or significantly impact families. Family representation on RR Governance is not just tokenism; the power of the Family Council is not just advisory.	Family leaders and those most impacted by decisions design and lead the decision-making processes.

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3. Determining Decision Making Scope, Roles and Responsibilities for RR RR Governance, Family Council (if applicable) and lead organization will understand who 'owns' what decisions and responsibilities, and the related roles; (i.e., who approves, advises, is to be informed, etc.). Decision-making processes are designed to advance equity and fully serve the region.	RR lead organization understands the difference between shared governance and participatory governance. The responsibilities and decisions that need to be addressed by RR Governance, Family Council, and RR lead organization are articulated. Ownership of decisions and related roles are explored and defined. Possible decision-point bottlenecks are reviewed, and solutions are considered. Tools and frameworks to support inclusive decision-making processes, that include assessment of potential disparate impacts on racial, ethnic, linguistic, geographic, or socio-economic groups are identified.	RR Governance, Family Council, and lead organization make decisions and operate with some role definition, are working to further clarify decision ownership and roles. Tools or frameworks to support inclusive and equitable decision-making processes are adopted and used in decision-making to increase equity and consider potential disparate impact.	There is alignment and clarity around RR responsibilities, ownership and roles related to decisions. These responsibilities and roles are formalized (e.g., in a project charter, bylaws, etc.). Responsibilities and roles are routinely revised, if needed, to ensure RR centers family voice and equity. The potential impact of RR decisions is assessed using a tool that addresses racial equity impact and a process that centers the voices of families and providers of color in discussions and assessments. Effective decision-making processes are established and regularly reviewed as the RR Governance evolves to improve and ensure equity and inclusion.
4. Providing Orientation and Training RR Governance members will have training and orientation that prepares them to serve effectively.	The information that leaders in RR Governance need (i.e., early childhood system, the RR functions, Governance structure, etc.) is determined. The key gaps, needs and aspirations of all participants are identified. Equity and systemic discrimination (e.g., racism, classism, ableism), and the history of inequities, particularly racial, in the region, is planned as an orientation priority and a continued focus for RR Governance growth.	Orientation and training are provided RR Governance members. Training and orientation for RR Governance members includes historical context with a focus on key drivers of inequity in the region. Particular attention is paid to ensuring family leaders are given equal standing in RR Governance group settings.	RR Governance members express confidence about their role, goals, and capacity to serve and advance equity in their region. Consistent routines and practices are established for orientation and training of new members. A mentoring and support component orients new members.