

Access/FAFSA Initiatives

Briefing for Council

May 14, 2024



STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER
EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA

Agenda

- Virginia's Enrollment Goals & Challenges
- Current Initiatives & Impact
- FAFSA Support Initiatives
- Partnerships
- Future Directions



VA's Enrollment Goals & Challenges

- **Goal: Pathways to Opportunity**
 - Best state for education by 2030
- **Challenge:**
 - **VA enrollment trends & inequities. Subpopulations are not up to the state average**
 - 2022 - 66% state average enrolled in PSE overall
 - 2022 - 62% Native American, 60% African American, 57% Hispanic, 52% low income, 56% EL, 45% SWD, 60% male
 - **FAFSA completion rates**
 - 2024 – As of May 3, down 17% from last year (about 8,500 completions)



Current Initiatives & Impact

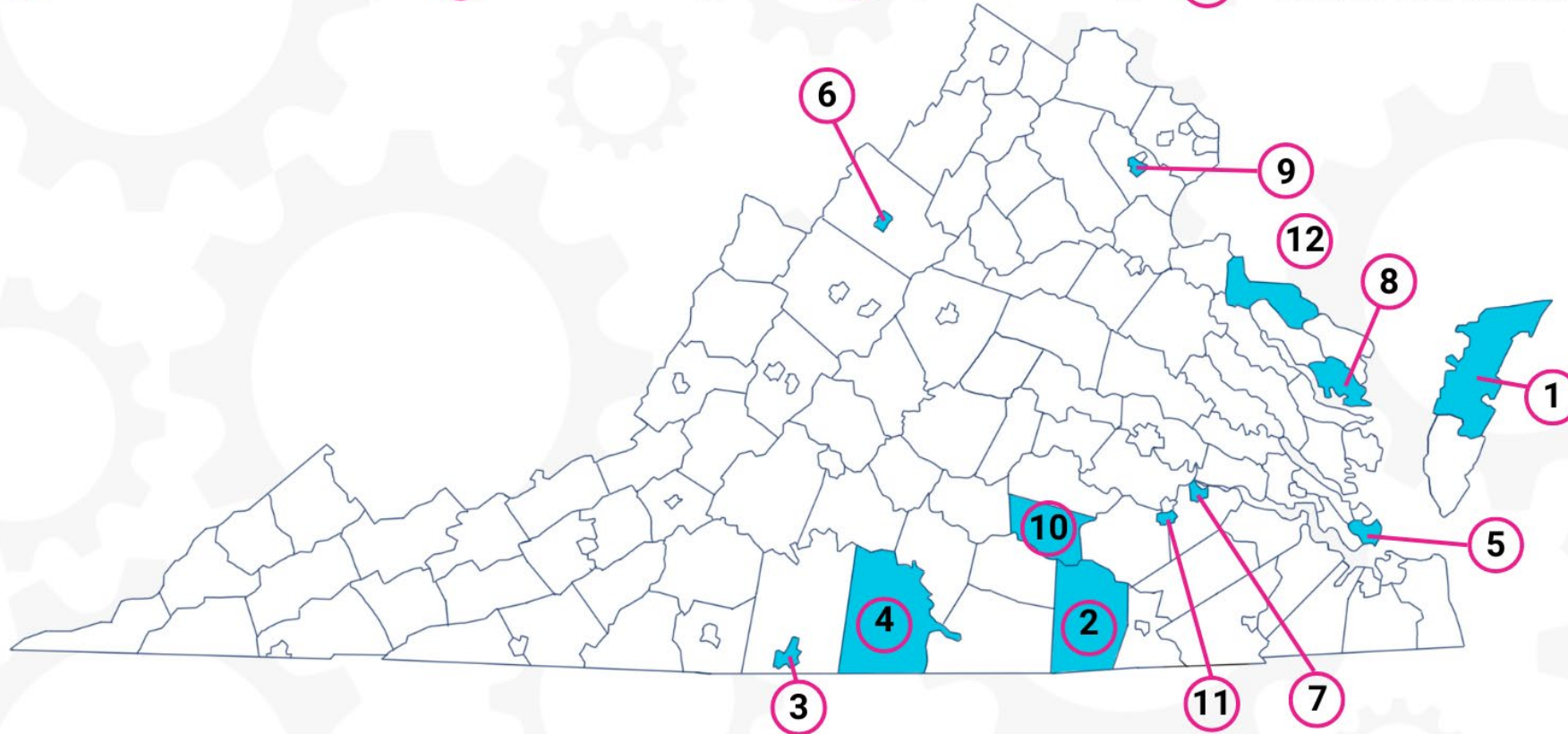


- **GEAR UP Virginia – cohort & priority pop**
 - 7-year \$24.7 million federal college access grant
 - Serving 8119 students in 12 school divisions
 - Follow cohort of students from 7th grade to 1st year postsecondary
 - Serve juniors & seniors in three “priority” schools
 - For students:
 - Tutoring, campus visits, summer camps (5), postsecondary (best match and fit) advising, financial aid advising, scholarships
 - For school faculty & staff:
 - Professional development – STEM instruction, data-driven instruction, online teaching certification, family engagement, SEL, FAFSA walk-throughs, VirginiaCAN conference sponsorships

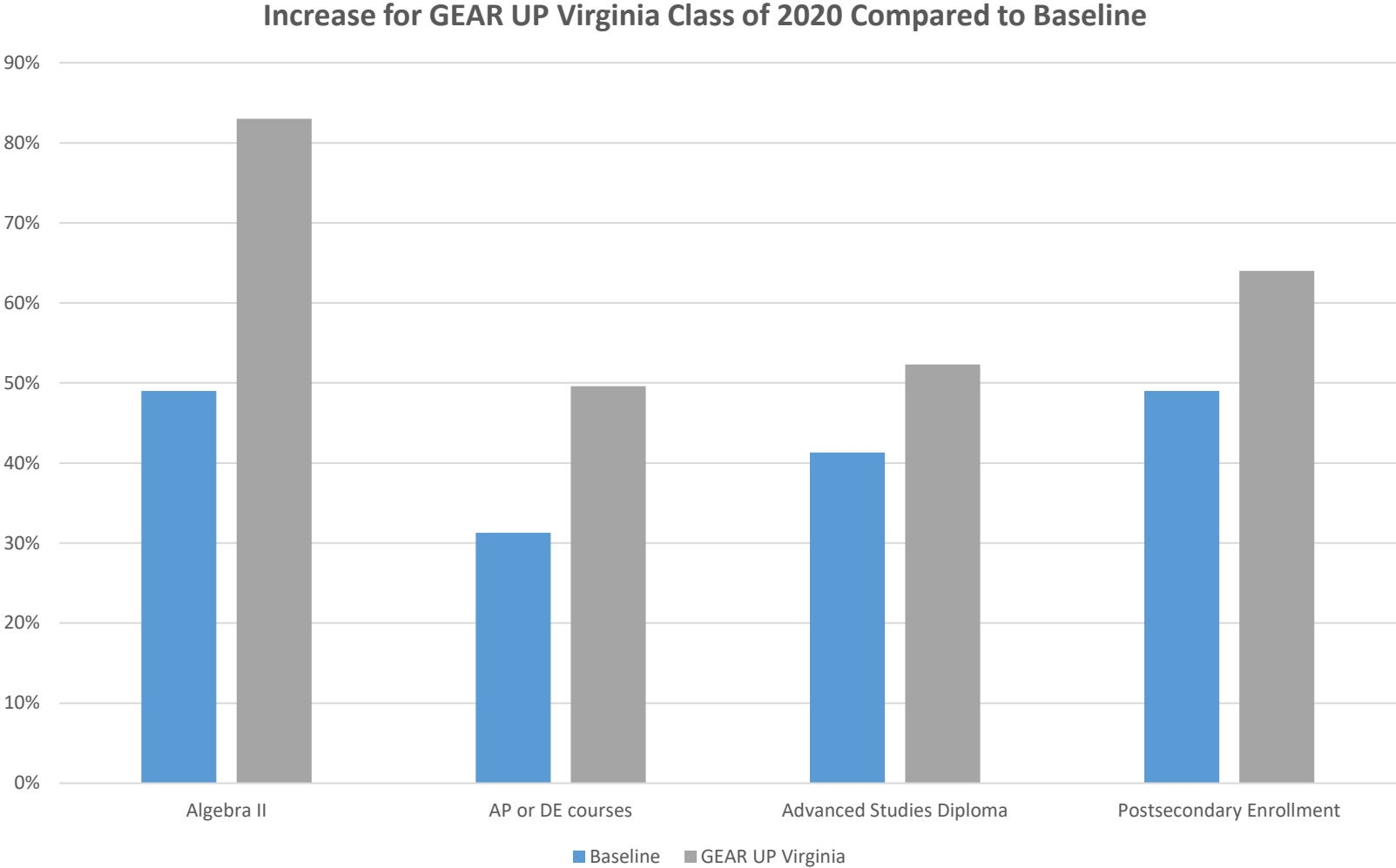


GEAR UP 2021-2028 Locations

- ① Accomack
- ② Brunswick
- ③ Danville
- ④ Halifax
- ⑤ Hampton
- ⑥ Harrisonburg
- ⑦ Hopewell
- ⑧ Lancaster
- ⑨ Manassas City
- ⑩ Nottoway
- ⑪ Petersburg
- ⑫ Westmoreland



GEAR UP 2014-21 Outcomes



GEAR UP Virginia Student Ambassadors



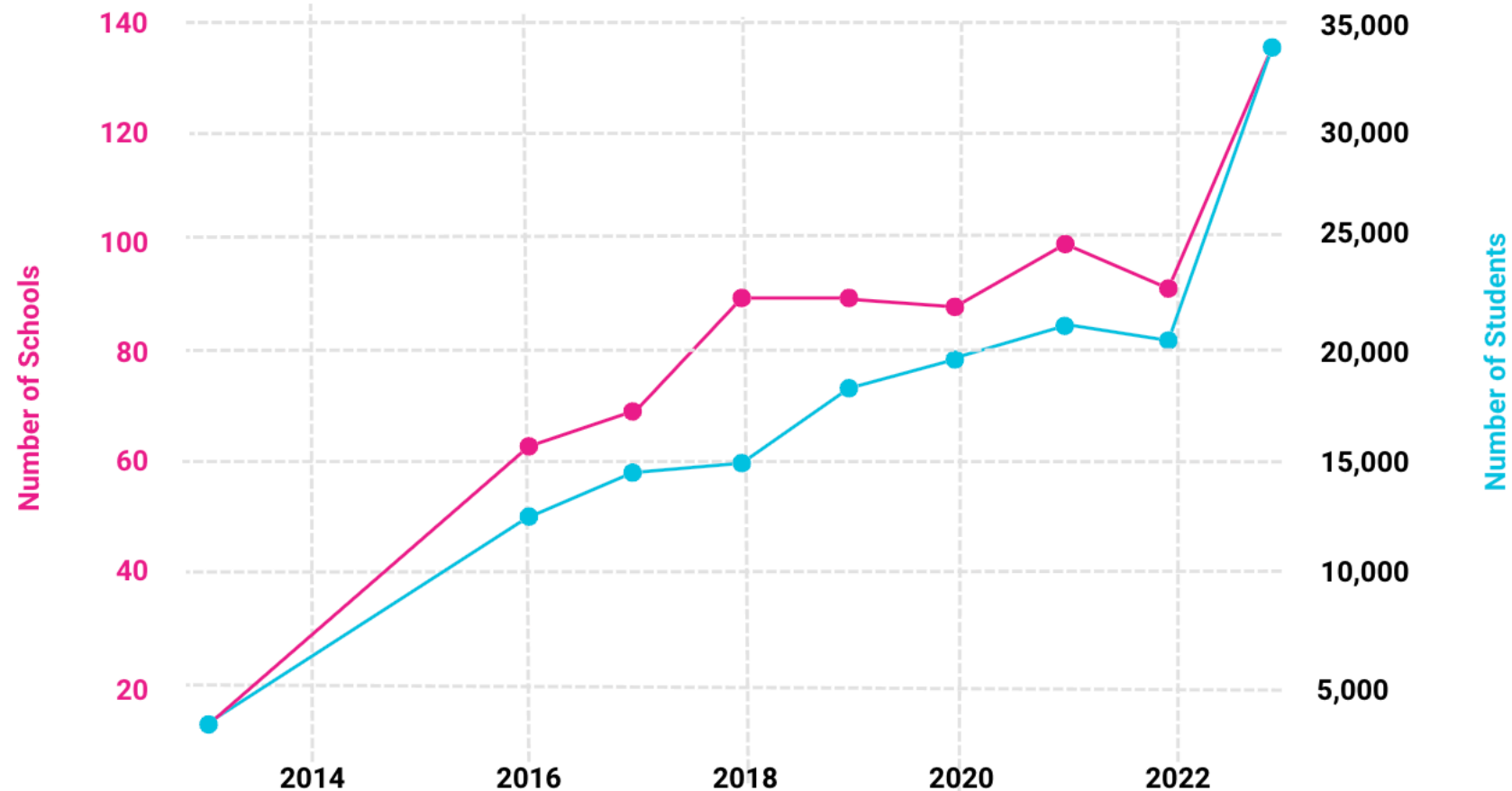
Current Initiatives & Impact cont'd

- Level Up Virginia - statewide
 - Level Up Virginia events
 - College Nights in Virginia
 - Virginia College Application Week
 - FAFSA Next
 - VCCS Spring Registration Roadshow (piloted in 2024)
 - Decision Day VA
 - Communications/digital strategy - website, newsletter, social media
 - Professional development & technical assistance for school counselors and access providers



Current Initiatives & Impact cont'd

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS & STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN LEVEL UP VIRGINIA EVENTS



Grown from 13 high schools in 2013 to 135 high schools in 2023.

Grown from 2860 students in 2013 to 35,444 students in 2023.



OLD FAFSA

- LONGER FORM WITH MORE QUESTIONS
- LESS STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR THE PELL GRANT

NEW FAFSA

- FEWER QUESTIONS TO ANSWER OVERALL
- MORE STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE MONEY FOR COLLEGE
- LARGER AVERAGE PELL GRANT AWARDS

APPLY • FINANCE • DECIDE

Cost Comparison Calculator by School

LEVEL UP VIRGINIA

Insert your financial aid award amounts in each section to compare what you will actually pay for one year of college. To find more information on funding, visit the Level Up Virginia website at www.levelupvirginia.org or contact your school's financial aid office.

Name: _____ Date: _____

School names: _____

| Cost of Attendance | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Direct Costs (Billable Items) | | | | | |
| Tuition and Fees | | | | | |
| Food and Housing | | | | | |
| Total Direct Costs | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Indirect Costs (Non-billable Items) | | | | | |
| Books and Supplies | | | | | |
| Transportation | | | | | |
| Personal/Misc. | | | | | |
| Other Expenses | | | | | |
| Total Indirect Costs | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Total Cost of Attendance | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |

DECISION DAY

LET'S CELEBRATE YOUR PLAN AFTER HIGH SCHOOL IS COLLEGE, A CAREER, THE MILITARY OR...

LEVEL UP VIRGINIA

EVENT CO-SPONSORED BY ECMC AND SCHEV FOR MORE INFO, VISIT: WWW.LEVELUPVIRGINIA.ORG

FAFSA NEXT

GET HELP COMPLETING YOUR FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID!

LEVEL UP VIRGINIA

EVENT CO-SPONSORED BY ECMC AND SCHEV FOR MORE INFO, VISIT: WWW.LEVELUPVIRGINIA.ORG

LEVEL UP VIRGINIA

I APPLIED!

I FILED MY FAFSA!

I DECIDED!

I AM FIRST GENERATION

@LevelUpVirginia

NATIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING WEEK

WE LOVE OUR college advisors

WHERE WILL YOU LEVEL UP?

PUBLIC TWO-YEAR SCHOOLS

PRIVATE, NON-PROFIT FOUR-YEAR SCHOOLS*

1 Averett University
2 Bluefield College
3 Bridgewater College
4 Eastern Mennonite University
5 Ferrum College
6 Shenandoah University
7 Hollins University
8 Liberty University
9 Mary Baldwin University
10 Shenandoah University
11 Southern Virginia University
12 Sweet Briar College
13 University of Lynchburg
14 University of Richmond
15 Virginia Union University
16 Virginia Wesleyan University

WHAT?

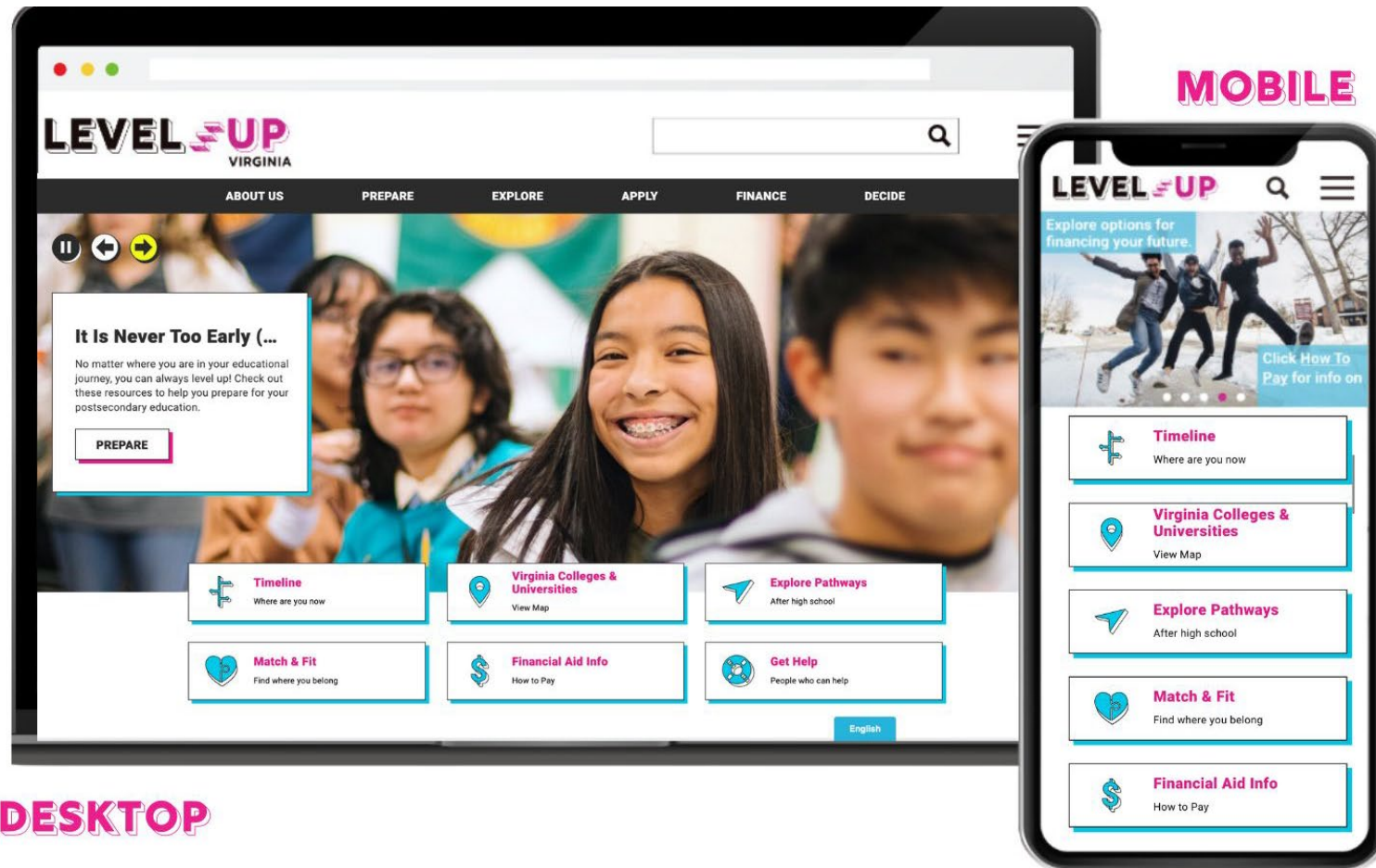
DECISION DAY VA

I'M GOING TO:

DECISION DAY VA

CLASS of 2024

Level Up Virginia Website



Current Initiatives & Impact cont'd

- Middle School Campus Visit Project
 - 12 IHEs hosted 46 campus visits for almost 7,000 middle schoolers
 - 84% of participants said they wanted to continue education after high school
- FAFSA Completion Pilot
 - Student-level FAFSA completion data
 - Sharing with 8 school divisions, 10 high schools
 - Portal developed – waiting for ISIRs



FAFSA Support Initiatives

- SCHEV's College Access Advisory Board
 - FAFSA focus this year
- Financial Aid webinar series
- Large Postcard Mailing
 - 28,960 postcards mailed to Virginia families earning \$60,000 or less/year with senior in high school – 33% of all families with seniors
- Pell Initiative
 - Free, virtual FAFSA support from VCAC & ECMC



Partnerships

- VDOE
 - Postsecondary Access & Success Specialist – Brittany Everett
- VA529
 - \$3.5 million match contribution to GEAR UP Virginia
- Virginia College Access Network (VirginiaCAN)
 - Active board, listserv, virtual professional development, yearly conference
- UVA's Virginia College Advising Corps
 - Placing full-time advisers in all GEAR UP VA high schools
- Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges
 - Campus visits to private institutions
- ECMC
 - Co-sponsor of Level Up Virginia events



Future Directions

- **Federal Student Aid/ECMC**
 - “FAFSA Student Support Strategy”
 - \$50 million funding for FAFSA initiatives
- **SREB/GoAlliance**
 - Summer institute on college access for middle & high school counselors
- **AmeriCorps planning grant**
 - To explore the possibility of “AdviseVA”



Thank you!

Questions?

Contact Erin McGrath, erinmcgrath@schev.edu

