

VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN EDUCATION PROGRAM (VPK) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- “Every four-year-old child in Florida shall be provided by the State a high quality pre-kindergarten learning opportunity...which shall be voluntary, high quality, free, and delivered according to professionally accepted standards....”

2004 LEGISLATION – HB 1A

Governance

- Transfers the existing school readiness system from the Florida Partnership for School Readiness to the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI).
- Designates AWI as responsible for the state-level coordination and day-to-day operations of the VPK and school readiness programs.
- Creates the *Florida Early Learning Advisory Council* within AWI to submit recommendations to AWI and DOE on early learning policy.
- Renames local coalitions as “early learning coalitions” and reduces the number of coalitions to 30 or fewer.
- Designates the Department of Education (DOE) as responsible for the accountability requirements, including administration of the statewide kindergarten screening system and calculation of readiness rates for VPK providers, and certification of school district eligibility to deliver the school-year program; and the State Board of Education (SBE) as responsible for the adoption of performance standards, VPK curricula standards, standards for the required emergent literacy course, and standards for the prekindergarten (prek) director credential.
- Designates the Department of Children and Families (DCF) as responsible for licensing, issuing credentials to VPK staff, and approving standards for Child Development Associate (CDA)-Equivalent programs.

Parental Choice and Program Options

- Provides parents with three program options:
 - a 540-instructional hour school-year VPK program delivered by a private prek provider with a director who holds the prek director credential, that has classes of at least 4 and not more than 18 students, and that has for each class at least one instructor who holds at least a CDA or equivalent state-approved credential and who completes a 5-clock hour course in emergent literacy training, and an additional prek instructor who does not have to meet those requirements for classes of 11 or more
 - if offered in a school district that meets the class-size reduction requirements, a 540-instructional hour school-year VPK program delivered by a public school that has classes of at least 4 and not more than 18 students, and that has for each class at least one instructor who holds at least a child development associate (CDA) or equivalent state-approved credential and who completes a 5-clock hour course in emergent literacy training, and an additional prek instructor who does not have to meet those requirements for classes of 11 or more
 - a 300-instructional hour summer VPK program delivered by a public school or private prek provider that has classes of at least 4 and not more than 10 students, and that has for each class at least one Florida-certified teacher or instructor who holds a bachelor’s degree or higher in specified early learning programs.

**VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN EDUCATION PROGRAM (VPK)
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (CONT.)**

2004 LEGISLATION – HB 1A (CONT.)

Resources

- Provides appropriations totaling approximately \$11.8 million from the General Revenue Fund and authorizes 42.5 additional positions in AWI, DOE, and DCF for initial administrative and program development costs of the VPK program during the remaining months of the 2004-05 fiscal year:
 - DOE: \$1,090,300 from recurring GR, \$975,000 from nonrecurring GR, and 17 additional positions
 - AWI: \$4,218,010 from recurring GR, \$5,275,000 from nonrecurring GR, and 20 additional positions
 - DCF: \$80,193 from recurring GR, \$140,037 from nonrecurring GR, and 5.5 additional positions

ESTIMATES

- Based on updated October 2004 Census data, the following numbers of four-year-olds may participate in the 2005-06 VPK program:

Projected Total # of Four-Year-Olds	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	70%
220,853	209,810	198,768	187,725	176,682	165,640	154,597

- Based on data from the November 8, 2004, Readiness Estimating Conference, it is estimated that 27.9% or 59,417 of the total number of four-year-olds are currently served by state or federally-funded school readiness programs.
- Based on data reported by the Office of Policy, Program and Governmental Accountability (OPPAGA) at the November 8, 2004, Readiness Estimating Conference which reported data from a DCF survey of licensed providers, 53,735 prek instructors with at least a CDA are currently employed (CDA, Associate of Arts or Bachelor’s of Arts). Estimates also indicated that there are currently 13,316 CDA-credentialed prek instructors working with approximately 135,821 four-year-olds at licensed centers which would provide a ratio of approximately 1 credentialed prek instructor to 10 children. Additionally, it was reported that community college and school district high school workforce programs are producing an estimated 700-900 CDA-credentialed students each year.

**VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN EDUCATION PROGRAM (VPK)
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (CONT.)**

MAJOR DOE FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION AND ADMINISTRATION

- ① Implement 2004 legislation
- ① Internal/External communication and collaboration
- ① Establish budget and hire staff

2. STANDARDS

- ① Performance – April 1, 2005; target March 15, 2005 SBE meeting
- ① Emergent literacy course(s) – April 1, 2005; target March 15, 2005 SBE meeting
- ① Curricula – target April 1, 2005; target March 15, 2005 SBE meeting
- ① Equivalent credentials for the school-year program; target TBA
- ② Kindergarten readiness rates; target July 1, 2005
- ② Articulation for postsecondary programs; target September 1, 2005
- ③ Director's credential – July 1, 2006

3. PROVIDER SERVICES

- ① Regional staff
- ① Reviewed curricula
- ③ Approved curricula
- ③ Guidance for summer program

4. ACCOUNTABILITY AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

- ① Certification of school district eligibility
- ② Quality assurance visits
- ② Report readiness rates

VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN EDUCATION PROGRAM (VPK) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (CONT.)

MAJOR DOE FUNCTIONS, RESPONSIBILITIES, TASKS, AND RESOURCES

- ❶ = First Priority
- ❷ = Second Priority
- ❸ = Third Priority

1. INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION AND ADMINISTRATION

DOE Responsibilities and Tasks

- ❶ Coordinate activities within DOE, as appropriate, and with the Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR), AWI, early learning coalitions, and DCF.
- ❶ Establish DOE VPK office.

Resources

- 17 positions (13 professional and 4 support); \$690,399 for salary and expense

2. STANDARDS (in collaboration with appropriate DOE offices, FCRR, AWI, and DCF)

DOE Responsibilities and Tasks

- ❶ By April 1, 2005, develop and adopt performance standards for students (s. 1002.67(1), F.S.).
 - Work with FCRR, early literacy experts, and practitioners to review and revise current school readiness student performance standards to include emergent literacy skills.
 - SBE to adopt revised standards; target March 15, 2005, SBE meeting.
- ❶ By April 1, 2005, adopt minimum standards for one or more training courses in emergent literacy for prek instructors (s. 1002.59, F.S.).
 - Work with FCRR, early literacy experts, and practitioners to develop standards for one or more emergent literacy training courses.
 - SBE to adopt standards; target March 15, 2005, SBE meeting.
- ❶ Adopt standards for curricula; review and approve curricula for use by private and public providers that are placed on probation by AWI; maintain a list of approved curricula (s. 1002.67(2)(c), F.S.).
 - Work with FCRR, early literacy experts, and practitioners to develop standards for “approval” of curricula to reflect revised student performance standards.
 - SBE to adopt standards; target April 1, 2005.
 - Maintain list of “approved” curricula.

**VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN EDUCATION PROGRAM (VPK)
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (CONT.)**

**2. STANDARDS (in collaboration with appropriate DOE offices, the Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR), AWI, and DCF)
(cont.)**

DOE Responsibilities and Tasks (cont.)

- ① Approve equivalent educational credentials for instructors for school-year VPK program (s. 1002.55(4)(e), F.S.).
 - Determine equivalent credentials/teacher certification coverage areas.
 - SBE to adopt; target TBA.

- ② Adopt a statewide kindergarten screening; adopt procedures for the calculation of readiness rates for each provider beginning with the 2005-06 VPK completers (s. 1002.69, F.S.).
 - Review 2005-06 contract timelines for school readiness uniform screening system.
 - Work with DOE staff and AWI to propose calculation of provider readiness rates.
 - Promulgate SBE rule.
 - SBE to adopt; target July 1, 2005.

- ② Establish standards for statewide articulation agreement to guarantee the articulation of 9 credit hours towards a postsecondary degree for programs approved by the SBE (s. 1007.23(5), F.S.).
 - Identify and resolve issues related to articulation.
 - Work with DCF and the Articulating Coordinating Committee to develop standards for the statewide articulation agreement; target September 1, 2005.

- ③ Standards for prek director credential (s. 1002.57, F.S.).
 - Work with early literacy experts and practitioners to review/revise current standards
 - SBE to adopt; July 1, 2006

Resources

- Staff
- \$300,000 for contracted services (nonrecurring)

VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN EDUCATION PROGRAM (VPK) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (CONT.)

3. PROVIDER SERVICES (in collaboration with AWI and DCF)

DOE Responsibilities and Tasks

- Provide training and assistance to coalitions, districts, providers, and schools in all aspects of planning, implementing, and evaluating research-based programs, which utilize appropriate curricula and effective instructional practices that meet established standards.
- Propose/implement options for the professional development of prek directors and prek instructors which address standards, curricula, emergent literacy and appropriate delivery systems for the programs.
- Deliver training as necessary to ensure sufficient numbers of appropriately qualified personnel to meet program needs.
- Develop and implement online system to facilitate recruitment, employment, and retention of qualified personnel. System must integrate with DOE Certification Database and DCF data system.
- Provide school districts and private providers support in planning effective summer programs.

Resources

- Staff
- \$300,000 for contracted services (recurring); 6 regionally-based staff
- \$675,000 for Internet-based training system (non-recurring)

4. ACCOUNTABILITY AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

DOE Responsibilities and Tasks

- ① Certification of school district eligibility (s. 1002.63(4), F.S.)
 - DOE to prepare class size calculations; SBE to approve at **January 18, 2005, SBE meeting.**
 - Establish certification process for school districts; **target January 2005.**
 - Review certifications provided by districts; **target February 2005.**
 - Commissioner certifies DOE review to SBE; **target February 15, 2005, SBE meeting.**
- ② Quality assurance visits
 - Collaborate with AWI and DCF; **target TBA**
- ② Report 2005-06 readiness rates; **target TBA**

Resources

- Staff