

Florida Department of Education  
Office of Early Learning

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**VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN EDUCATION PROGRAM (VPK)  
SETTING AND ALIGNING STANDARDS**

**CHILD PERFORMANCE STANDARDS: AN OVERVIEW AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

**HB 1A Requirements**

Section 1002.67, Florida Statutes, *Performance standards; curricula and accountability.*—

(1) By April 1, 2005, the department shall develop and adopt performance standards for students in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program. The performance standards must address the age-appropriate progress of students in the development of:

- (a) The **capabilities, capacities, and skills required under s. 1(b), Art. IX of the State Constitution**; and
- (b) Emergent literacy skills, including **oral communication, knowledge of print and letters, phonemic and phonological awareness, and vocabulary and comprehension development.**

Section 1(b), Art. IX of the State Constitution

Section 1. Public education.—

(b) Every four-year old child in Florida shall be provided by the State a high quality pre-kindergarten learning opportunity in the form of an early childhood development and education program which shall be voluntary, high quality, free, and delivered according to professionally accepted standards. An early childhood development and education program means an organized program designed to address and enhance each child's ability to make age appropriate progress in an appropriate range of settings in the **development of language and cognitive capabilities and emotional, social, regulatory and moral capacities through education in basic skills** and such other skills as the Legislature may determine to be appropriate.

**Current Status**

The Florida Partnership for School Readiness Board adopted the *Florida School Readiness Performance Standards for Three-, Four-, and Five-Year-Old Children.*

- The *Standards* were developed via an advisory group with representatives of district school systems; providers of public and private child care; health care providers; state agency partners; and state and national experts in child development, children with special needs, and measurement and assessment.

### **Current Status – cont.**

- The *Standards* are organized by age and the following six domains/areas of child development:
  - ⇒ Physical Health
  - ⇒ Approaches to Learning
  - ⇒ Social and Emotional Development
  - ⇒ Language and Communication
  - ⇒ Cognitive Development and General Knowledge
  - ⇒ Motor Development.
- The *Standards* are cross-referenced to the Head Start Performance standards; standards for five-year-old children are cross-referenced to the Sunshine State Standards.
- The *Standards* were presented to the State Board of Education (SBOE) in 2000.

In December 2003, the SBOE issued their recommendations for the VPK program, as required by section 411.012(2), Florida Statutes. These recommendations included a review of the current *Standards* to propose additional content to emphasize early literacy and oral language skills.

### **Relevant Materials**

*Florida School Readiness Performance Standards for Three-, Four-, and Five-Year-Old Children; 2002* ([http://www.schoolreadiness.org/lc/lc\\_performance.asp](http://www.schoolreadiness.org/lc/lc_performance.asp)).

*Overview of Standards: A National Perspective*; presentation by Dr. Sharon-Lynn Kagan and Dr. Catherine Scott-Little (<http://www.myfloridaeducation.com/earlylearning/res-perf.htm>).

A listing of [child-based outcome standards documents](http://www.upkcouncil.org/docs/topicsOC_standards.pdf) used in a variety of states ([http://www.upkcouncil.org/docs/topicsOC\\_standards.pdf](http://www.upkcouncil.org/docs/topicsOC_standards.pdf)).

### **Proceedings of Expert Panel, February 17-18, 2005**

See <http://www.myfloridaeducation.com/earlylearning/perform.htm>.

### **Recommendations – Performance Standards**

1. Adopt the attached *Early Learning Standards for Four-Year-Old Children* that incorporate the following revisions:
  - An additional standard under the Physical Health domain related to physical fitness
  - Additional standards related to *Planning and Reflection* under the Approaches to Learning domain
  - Additional standard related to the child's skill at developing friendships under the Social and Emotional domain
  - Additional standard related to forming relationships with adults
  - Creation of two separate domains to emphasize *Language and Communication* and *Emergent Literacy* with age-appropriate standards

**Recommendations – Performance Standards (continued)**

- An additional standard related to analysis of information under the Cognitive Developing and General Knowledge domain.

**Recommendations – Performance Standards (continued)**

2. Create an explanatory section for the *Early Learning Standards* to differentiate expectations of children versus program standards and instructor competencies.
3. Include appropriate cross-references to domains to highlight the relationships among these standards.
4. Continue work with identified experts to create benchmarks for the *Language and Communication* and *Emergent Literacy* domains.
5. Disseminate *Florida's Early Learning Standards for Four-Year-Old Children* with the benchmarks statewide.
6. Work with the Agency for Workforce Innovation to review, revise, and disseminate the *Florida School Readiness Performance Standards for Three-, Four- and Five-Year Olds*, as appropriate.

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