

VPK ACCOUNTABILITY: CALCULATING THE PROVIDER READINESS RATE

BACKGROUND

Section 1002.69, Florida Statutes, *Statewide kindergarten screening; kindergarten readiness rates*, requires that the DOE/State Board of Education:

- adopt a statewide kindergarten screening that provides objective data concerning each student's readiness for kindergarten and progress in attaining the VPK performance standards
- adopt procedures for the department to annually calculate each private prekindergarten provider's and public school's kindergarten readiness rate, which must be expressed as the percentage of the provider's or school's students who are assessed as ready for kindergarten; kindergarten readiness rates must be based exclusively on the results of the screening for students who completed the VPK program
- periodically adopt a minimum kindergarten readiness rate that, if achieved by a private prekindergarten provider or public school, would demonstrate the provider's or school's satisfactory delivery of the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program. The minimum rate must not exceed the rate at which more than 15 percent of the kindergarten readiness rates of all private prekindergarten providers and public schools delivering the VPK Program would fall below the minimum rate.

For the 2005-06 school-year VPK program, there were the following 4,180 providers (see slide 1):

- .56% (24) - Private Schools
- 2.54% (106) - Family Child Care Homes
- 17.13% (716) - Public Schools
- 79.76% (3,334) - Private Centers

For the 2005-06 summer VPK program, there were the following 594 providers (see slide 2):

- .56% (1) - Private Schools
- .17% (1) - Family Child Care Homes
- 47.64% (283) - Public Schools
- 52.02% (309) - Private Centers

POLICY ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Issue 1: What cell size should be used to calculate the readiness rate?

Section 1002.56(3)(e), F.S., specifies that a private VPK providers VPK class must be composed of at least four children.

For the 4,180 VPK school-year program providers (see slide 3):

- 9.74% (407) served 3 or fewer children
- 20.19% (844) served between 4 – 9 children
- 70.07% (2,929) served 10 or more children

For the 594 VPK summer program providers (see slide 4):

- 1.18% (7) served 3 or fewer children
- 32.66% (194) served between 4 – 9 children
- 66.16%% (393) served 10 or more children

Recommendation 1: A cell size of four should be used to calculate the readiness rate.

Issue 2: What information should be presented on providers who are not included in the readiness rate calculated because they served less than four children?

Recommendation 2: Information as to why the provider was not included in the readiness rate calculation should be included on the VPK Provider Profile (e.g., fewer than four children enrolled in the program, fewer than four children completed the program, fewer than four children who completed the program were screened).

Issue 3: What follow-up activities should occur for providers who are not included in the readiness rate calculation because of the reasons identified above?

Recommendation 3: The VPK Improvement Process will include targeted assistance for these providers (e.g., revising their attendance policy to improve completion rates, etc.).

Issue 4: How should “completed the VPK program” be defined to calculate the readiness rate?

A completion rate should be used to define “completed the VPK program.” AWI’s payment data (based on the number of hours paid) will be used to calculate a completion rate. For 2005-06, 1 VPK FTE may include a maximum of 26 days of allowable absences.

Completion rates from 10% - 85% along with cell sizes for the 4,180 school-year providers are shown on slides 5, 6, and 7 and for the 594 summer providers on slides 8, 9, and 10.

Recommendation 4: “Completed the VPK program” should be defined as a completion rate of 75%, 80%, or 85%. The percentages of providers included as these rates are as follows:

	75%		80%		85%	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
School-Year	3,591	88.45%	3,527	86.87%	3,476	85.62%
Summer	536	90.24%	524	88.22%	493	83.00%

Issue 5: How should the readiness rates be calculated for a provider that offered both the school-year and the summer programs?

The school-year and the summer VPK programs are distinctly different with regards to personnel requirements and time in program. Participants in these programs as well as the instructional personnel are different.

Recommendation 5: A provider should have both rates calculated and reported separately. Therefore, if the provider does not meet the state rate, supports/sanctions would be applied to that specific program.

Issue 6: How should points be assigned to student performance on kindergarten screening for the calculation of the readiness rate?

The Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS) for 2006-07 – 2008-09, consists of:

- a 19-item subset of the Early Childhood Observation System (ECHOS)
- two measures of Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)
 - Letter Naming Fluency
 - Initial Sound Fluency.

On the ECHOS, each of the 19 items is rated by the kindergarten teacher as one of the following with the corresponding points:

- Consistently Demonstrating – 2 points
- Emerging/Progressing – 1 point
- Not Yet Demonstrating – 0 points

The “overall” point range is:

- Consistently Demonstrating – 38-29 points (100 - 76%)
- Emerging/Progressing – 28-14 points (76 - 36%) with no more than 5 ratings of “Not Yet Demonstrating”
- Not Yet Demonstrating - 13 points and below (35 – 0%).

On the two DIBELS probes, the following risk levels have been established:

Letter Naming Fluency

17+ Above Average
8-16 Low Risk
2-7 Moderate Risk
0-1 High Risk

Initial Sound Fluency

12+ Above Average
8-11 Low Risk
4-7 Moderate Risk
0-3 High Risk

On ECHOS, scoring Consistently Demonstrating or Emerging/Progressing has been determined as “ready for kindergarten.”

On Letter Naming Fluency or Initial Sound Fluency, scoring Above Average or Low Risk has been determined as “ready for kindergarten.”

The following are options for the calculation of points for the readiness rate (see slides 11, 12, and 13).

Scenario 1 – Ready on Any Measure

- Assigns points for attaining “ready” on any of the three measures
- Includes number of students with valid scores
- Calculates a readiness rate by dividing the number of students ready by the number of students with valid scores

Scenario 2 – Ready on All Measures

- Assigns points only for attaining “ready” on all three measures
- Includes number of students with valid scores
- Calculates a total readiness rate by dividing the number of students ready by the number of students with valid scores

Scenario 3 – Ready on Each Measure

- Assigns points for attaining “ready” on each of the three measures
- Includes number of students with valid scores
- Calculates an individual rate for each measure
- Calculates the provider readiness rate by dividing the number of students ready on each measure by the number of students with valid scores and adding the percents

Recommendation 6: Scenario 3 which assigns points for attaining ready on each of the three measures should be used.