

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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Dr. Eric J. Smith  
Commissioner of Education



June 4, 2010

Dear Non-Public School Administrator:

Beginning in the 2005-06 school year, the Department of Education began using a statewide kindergarten screening that assesses the readiness of each student for kindergarten known as the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS). The results of this screening provide valuable information about a child's readiness for school, help teachers develop lesson plans to meet each child's individual needs, and provide useful information to parents. School districts must administer the screening to each kindergarten student in the school district within the first 30 school days of each school year.

The FLKRS included a portion of the Early Childhood Observation System™ (ECHOS™), which is an observational instrument that is used to monitor the skills, knowledge, and behaviors a student demonstrates or needs to develop, and the first two measures of the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills™ (DIBELS™) for kindergarten (Letter Naming Fluency and Initial Sound Fluency) to gather information on a child's development in emergent literacy.

During the 2009-10 school year, the Broad Screen/Progress Monitoring Tool of the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading for kindergarten (FAIR-K) replaced the DIBELS™ portion of the kindergarten screening. This Broad Screen measure includes the tasks of Letter Naming and Phonemic Awareness, which are included in the VPK Education Standards. These data are used to calculate a student's Probability of Reading Success score. The ECHOS™ will continue to be used through the 2010-11 school year.

Kindergarten students in your school who attended a Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program during 2009-10 are required to participate in the screening. Parents are required to make their child available for the kindergarten readiness screening if they are attending kindergarten in a non-public school setting. Communication with parents is critical in determining which students previously attended the VPK program.

Your local public school district will provide training on the ECHOS™ for teachers in your school who will serve kindergarten students who attended VPK during the prior year. (Please note that kindergarten teachers are not allowed to administer the ECHOS™ to the same students whom they taught in VPK.)

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Dates, times, locations, and contact information for ECHOS™ training offered by school districts are listed on the Department of Education's, Office of Early Learning website at: <http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/>. Training information will be updated as it becomes available, so please refer to this website often.

We are requesting that you assign one person to be the FLKRS contact for your school. The FLKRS contact should notify the district prior to attending a training session to check on availability for the date chosen. (See link to above-referenced website.) At the training, non-public school teachers will receive screening materials and a timetable/procedures for the return of the students' screening data. Note that districts will also explain the procedures for the district administration of FAIR-K to non-public school students.

If you have any questions about the FLKRS training dates for non-public schools, please contact Tom Mims, Program Specialist, Office of Early Learning, at (850) 245-5015 or via e-mail at [tom.mims@fldoe.org](mailto:tom.mims@fldoe.org). We appreciate your assistance in helping to ensure that all children who participated in VPK are included in the kindergarten screening.

Sincerely,



Dr. Eric J. Smith  
Commissioner of Education

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Attachment

cc: Early Learning Coalition Executive Directors  
School District Assessment Coordinators  
School District Prekindergarten Contacts  
FLKRS Contacts