

## 2009-10 VPK Assessment Field Test: Frequently Asked Questions

### **Background**

#### **1. What is the 2009-10 VPK Assessment field test?**

The 2009-10 VPK Assessment field test is a structured opportunity for researchers to conduct a “trial run” of the assessment measures they have developed, by allowing participants to use the assessment materials under the conditions which they were designed to operate. The purpose of the field test is to determine the viability of the materials and to collect data to establish a sample that represents the state. In this case, the VPK assessment measures are being administered by selected providers throughout Florida to gather and incorporate information about the materials into the development of the final product.

#### **2. How were the participants chosen for the VPK Assessment field test?**

A total of 451 VPK providers were identified through a random sampling process that pulled from the entire *population* of VPK providers throughout the state. These 451 VPK providers were invited to participate in the field test; however, the initial response rate was lower than anticipated. As a result, additional VPK providers (public and private) were invited, by geographic region, to participate in the field test.

#### **3. How was the content of the VPK Assessment determined?**

The content for the three early literacy measures was determined by identifying the best predictors of reading success. These measures are:

- Print Knowledge
- Phonological Awareness
- Oral Language/Vocabulary (For information on the 2008 National Early Literacy Panel (NELP) Report findings visit the following link:  
<http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-5325/dps-2009-029.pdf>.)

The content for the early mathematics measure was also determined by identifying the strongest predictors of later mathematics: Number Sense. Number sense is one of the best known informal predictors of formal math ability.

Research indicates that all four skill areas being assessed can benefit from targeted instruction during the preschool year.

#### **4. Are the assessment measures aligned with the VPK Education Standards?**

Yes, the skill areas and the methods used for assessment align to the standards and benchmarks. The standards indicate what a child should know and be able to do at the end of their VPK year.

The measures are also aligned with the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener which is comprised of the Early Childhood Observation System (ECHOS) and components of the Florida Assessment for Instruction in Reading (FAIR). The Broad Screen/Progress Monitoring measure of FAIR assessment in kindergarten includes letter naming and phonemic awareness.

#### **5. Will the VPK Assessment results be used for VPK accountability?**

No, there is no provision in law to use the results of these assessments in the VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate calculation. The assessment measures provide feedback to teachers about children's progress in mastering these four specific skill sets (e.g., Print Knowledge, Phonological Awareness, Mathematics, and Oral Language/Vocabulary).

#### **6. Will the VPK Assessment replace other assessments that we might be using?**

This decision needs to be made locally and should be based on other assessments administered and the purposes of each of those assessments. Some early child care settings may require assessments specific to projects and initiatives separate from the VPK Assessment (e.g., Head Start, School Readiness, and Early Reading First).

### **Administration of the VPK Assessment**

#### **7. Who should administer the assessment measures?**

The assessment measures were designed to be administered by the VPK instructor.

#### **8. When should the assessment measures be administered?**

There are three assessment periods (AP1, AP2, and AP3) throughout year. During the 2009-10 field test, the results of the children selected to participate will be collected during the following assessment periods:

- AP1 – October 3 - 23, 2009
- AP2 – February 8 - 19, 2010
- AP3 – End of April, 2010

**9. Do the assessment measures become more challenging across the year?**

No. The assessment measures are designed to be equal in terms of the skill level assessed; this is called “parallel or equal forms.” The outcomes will show the impact of effective instruction through child progress over time.

**10. Is there a prescribed order in which the assessment measures must be administered?**

Yes, the assessment measures for AP1, AP2 and AP3 are to be administered in the following order:

- Print Knowledge
- Phonological Awareness
- Mathematics
- Oral Language/Vocabulary