



Office of Early Learning  
[www.fldoe.org/earlylearning](http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning)

Create and Implement Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK)  
Assessments

VPK Assessment Workgroup

# PROCEEDINGS

January 28, 2009 - Webinar

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Florida Department of Education

**PROCEEDINGS OF VPK ASSESSMENT WORKGROUP**

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

On January 28, 2009, the VPK Assessment Workgroup convened via webinar to update the status of the development of the VPK assessments and to review the results of the new kindergarten assessments in the pilot districts and discuss its impact on next year's readiness rate calculation. This was the second meeting of the VPK assessment workgroup.

Previously, (August 7, 2008), the workgroup met in Tallahassee, FL and reviewed background information on Florida's reading goals and the development of the New VPK and K-12 Reading Assessments. Presenters included Dr. Evan Lefsky, Executive Director of *Just Read, Florida!*, Dr. Barbara Foorman, Director of the Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR), Dr. Chris Lonigan, Associate Director, FCRR, and Dr. Beth Phillips, Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Psychology and Learning Systems, College of Education, Florida State University.

### 1.1 ATTENDEES

#### Florida Experts

Sue Canning .....	VPK Project Manager Volusia Public Schools
San Juanita de la Cruz, Ed.D.....	District Supervisor Miami-Dade Public Schools
Lisa Feeney .....	Senior Early Care & Education Program Specialist Early Learning Coalition of Brevard
Suzan Gage .....	Program Development Developer Early Learning Coalition of Northwest Florida
Barbara Gaiser.....	Teacher on Assignment: Reading, Curriculum, Quality & Staff Development Lee County School District
AnaLynn Jones .....	Prekindergarten/School Readiness Administrator Seminole County Public Schools
Tom Logan.....	Executive Director, Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Gateway
Roseline Philippe .....	Voluntary Prekindergarten Director Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe
Kathleen Reynolds, Ph.D.....	CEO, Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida
Donna Rippley .....	Supervisor, Early Childhood Programs Pinellas County Schools
Jean Smith .....	Director of Voluntary Prekindergarten Services Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida
Mary Josephine "MJ" Steele .....	Director, Early Childhood Education School District of Palm Beach
Penny Westberry .....	Executive Director, Early Learning Coalition of Broward
Karen Willis .....	Executive Director, Early Learning Coalition of Orange County

**VPK Regional Facilitators**

Lisa Allen ..... Southwest Region  
Mary Ann Goodrich ..... West Central Region  
Bonnie Light ..... Central Region  
Heather Sargent..... Southeast Region

**Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI)**

Antrica Morgan..... Voluntary Prekindergarten Coordinator

**Department of Children and Families (DCF)**

Tara Orłowski.....Child Care Program Analyst, Child Care Services  
Pat Bowen..... Government Operation Consultant II, Child Care Services

**Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR)**

Barbara Foorman, Ph.D. .... Director  
Chris Lonigan, Ph.D. .... Associate Professor  
Beth Phillips, Ph.D. .... Assistant Professor

**Department of Education (DOE)**

Denise Bishop.....Director, Program Standards & Professional Development, OEL  
Amanda Burkhalter ..... Program Specialist IV, OEL  
Shan Goff .....Executive Director, OEL  
Marilyn Hibbard.....Program Specialist, Pre-K Children with Disabilities  
ESE Program Development & Services

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## 2.0 VPK ASSESSMENT WORKGROUP

### I. Background Information: Recap and Purpose

Shan Goff opened the meeting by recapping the information shared at the VPK Assessment Workgroup meeting convened August 7, 2008. Ms. Goff reviewed the first PowerPoint [VPK Assessment Webinar Part 1](#) and discussed the following: review of FCAT data; history of screening and accountability measures; and procurement and public process for adoption of assessment measure for Kindergarten screening.

Several questions were posed and answered. All questions posed during the Webinar can be found in section 3.0 of these proceedings.

Ms. Goff explained that she anticipates fewer than 60 providers will be LPP3s (out of 5,200) based on the preliminary 2008-09 screening data released in December 2008. These data are based on the 2007-08 VPK instructional year. Final rates will be released in February, 2009.

Ms. Goff indicated that the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) outcome data related to VPK “completers” versus “non-completers” will be available after resolution of the 2007-08 disputes.

### II. Review of New FLKRS – Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading and Implementation Study Data

Barbara Foorman, Ph. D., from Florida Center for Reading Research, presented the PowerPoint [Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading: K-2](#) and discussed the development of item analysis, provided the justification and benefits of designing and implementing a new assessment tool for Florida, and emphasized alignment with existing VPK Education standards. Dr. Foorman also presented a conceptual map that highlighted components of the assessment including the broad screen, broad diagnostic, and targeted diagnostic inventories.

Dr. Foorman stated that there was a risk with DIBELS to under-identify children at risk for later reading difficulties because the DIBELS outcome scores predicted to end of the year DIBELS scores and not a norm-referenced, global outcome measure, such as the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT). The Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading are designed to predict to outcome scores on the Stanford Achievement Test (e.g., Stanford Early School Achievement Test (SESAT) and SAT-10) at the end of the academic year. According to Dr. Foorman, children who are struggling readers will be more accurately identified as needing, and then receiving, supplemental support with the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading than they were with the DIBELS measures; “false negatives” were more likely with DIBELS.

Dr. Foorman indicated that there would be three assessment periods for the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading that will correspond with the current assessment periods for DIBELS. Assessment Period One (AP1) is the only assessment that is directly related to the kindergarten screening and the subsequent calculation of a readiness rate for VPK providers. The Broad Screen/Progress Monitoring measure, one component of the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener, is estimated to take about five minutes to administer and score. It is expected that it will be administered by the kindergarten classroom teacher.

Dr. Foorman stated that the assessment was developed using a *Probability of Success* model rather than a *risk* model and shared the categorical definitions of success. For example, if a child earns a *Probability of Success* score that falls at .89 or above as identified on the scoring template, it suggests that he or she has an 89 percent probability of scoring on grade level at the end of the year on the Stanford Achievement Test. The overall *Probability of Success* scores fall in the following ranges with respect to the color categories used with DIBELS: “green” is associated with an 85 percent or above *Probability of Success*; “yellow” is associated with a 16 to 84 percent *Probability of Success*, and “red” is associated with a *Probability of Success* that is 15 percent or below.

Dr. Foorman provided an overview of the vocabulary assessment and the listening comprehension assessment currently included in the Broad Diagnostic Inventory. She stated that the vocabulary assessment is comparable in format and purpose to the Expressive Vocabulary Test, second edition (EVT-II). The vocabulary assessment was designed to tap into “academic language” which is necessary to succeed in a school setting (i.e., academic language may include vocabulary found in children’s literature but not words used in general conversation).

Data reports will be available to districts, building administrators, and classroom teachers from the Progress Monitoring Reporting Network (PMRN).

### **III. Impact on 2008-09 VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rates: Next Steps and Discussion**

Ms. Goff shared a proposed timeline for Rule Development workshops throughout the state to provide an overview of the new reading assessment.

Shan Goff presented the PowerPoint [VPK Assessment Workgroup – Part 2](#) and discussed the current methodology for calculating the readiness rate, discussed policy issues and defined next steps in the process as well as timeline. She gave a concrete example of the Readiness Rate calculation (included in the PowerPoint). Ms. Goff posed the following questions to the audience: What components of the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading should be included in Kindergarten screening? What should districts be required to administer?

The workgroup made several recommendations and comments: the Broad Screen and the Broad Diagnostic Inventory should both be included in the kindergarten screening; the calculation of the readiness rate should be based on the Broad Screen results.

Ms. Goff reminded the audience that it is the State Board of Education (SBOE) that establishes what is “ready for kindergarten.”

One participant raised the concern that Reading First data did not predict to later reading comprehension. Dr. Foorman shared that the Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR) has data spanning a six-year period for students in Reading First Schools within Florida and the data are positive.

The workgroup discussed hypothetical models of readiness rate calculations based on various configurations of the assessments and inventory components. The Department of Education will develop a draft readiness rate rule. Ms. Goff indicated that in Spring/Summer, 2009, the Office of Early Learning will schedule seven to nine rule development workshops throughout the state.

Ms. Goff indicated that the current law, [section 1002.67](#), Florida Statutes, requires that the readiness rate be based upon the kindergarten screening that is administered within the first 30 days. Moving to a growth model for VPK accountability would require a change in legislation. It was also stated that many stakeholders agree that movement toward some sort of growth model is preferable to a single outcome measure. The workgroup discussed the use of a growth model for the calculation of the readiness rate.

#### **IV. Status/Timelines for Development of VPK Assessments**

Dr. Chris Lonigan and Dr. Beth Phillips shared the PowerPoint [Development of Screening Assessments for Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten Program: Overview and Update](#) and described that the overall goal of the assessments were to provide screening & progress monitoring tools in VPK classrooms so that teachers would have the instructional information they need to create and maintain effective learning environments for the children in their programs. Dr. Lonigan stated that the purpose of the assessments was to focus on skills that were predictors of later school success and have instructional utility. Assessments being developed target emergent literacy skills (vocabulary/oral language, print knowledge, and phonological awareness) and early math skills (counting and number sense).

Dr. Lonigan discussed the process for the development of the measures in terms of three phases: phase one is the development of the conceptual model; phase two is the initial field testing; and phase three is the application of the item response theory to generate specific test items. Dr. Lonigan emphasized that the assessments are not being designed as accountability measures for VPK.

The Print Knowledge and Phonological Awareness measures are currently being field-tested and the Math assessments are ahead of schedule with most items already generated. Dr. Lonigan stated that vocabulary/oral language item development is on schedule with field testing set to occur in late spring.

Dr. Lonigan stated that the assessments will be relatively long *during development* but will be shortened considerably once final items have been selected. Ideally, the assessments will require less than ten minutes to administer.

#### **V. Development of On-line Reporting System**

Shan Goff shared the final PowerPoint [VPK Assessment Webinar – Part 3](#). Ms. Goff provided a demonstration of what is available through the Bright Beginnings website: <http://www.brightbeginningsfl.org>. She completed her presentation by reviewing screenshots of the assessment tool that will be available to VPK teachers for entering, displaying and interpreting assessment information.

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### 3.0 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Please note that some questions were posed on-line during the webinar and were not answered during the presentation. A "Frequently Asked Questions" document will be developed and posted to address any remaining questions.

#### **Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS)**

**1. Will the new 2010-11 FLKRS assessment include an observation tool?**

It will be open for discussion, as there will be a new RFP to solicit instruments for 2010-11.

**2. Will the request for proposals for an assessment tool to replace ECHOS go out for public bid?**

Yes, this is a public process. All formal procurements are advertised via the State of Florida Vendor Bid System (VBS) at [http://vbs.dms.state.fl.us/vbs/main\\_menu](http://vbs.dms.state.fl.us/vbs/main_menu). Interested parties may monitor this site for procurement opportunities.

**3. Will the new assessment tool for 2010-11 sample behavior across all domains?**

The intent of the assessment is to sample behaviors across as many of the domains as is possible with a valid and reliable screening instrument.

**4. Will there be training available on the new kindergarten reading assessments?**

Yes. For school district personnel administering the assessment, the Summer Reading Academies are being scheduled throughout the state. For VPK providers, information about the new assessments is available at: <http://www.fldoe.org/earlyLearning/FLKRS2009.asp>. Additional information will be shared during the Spring/Summer 2009 workshops to discuss the 2008-09 VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate rule.

**5. Are accommodations provided for children with disabilities who need support to participate in the FLKRS?**

Yes, when appropriate, accommodations are allowable. However, there may be situations for which accommodations are not appropriate.

#### **VPK Assessments**

**6. Are there going to be *conceptual questions* included in the VPK vocabulary assessment?**

Yes. One example is the inclusion of items addressing *spatial relations*.

**7. Will the VPK vocabulary/oral language measures be aligned to the VPK Education standards?**

Yes. Phonological Awareness skills will be included as well but at a much lower level than is expected in kindergarten and probes will be age appropriate for four-year-old children.

**8. In addition to the classroom teacher a center director/administrator, who will be able to view the data that are collected from the VPK assessments?**

Policies related to access to these data have not been developed. As the on-line system for data management is crafted, stakeholder input regarding who should have access will be considered.

**9. Who is entering the data for the VPK assessments?**

The center director/administrator will enter the *center-level* information. Then the provider profile will automatically populate the majority of the remaining information. The assessment information should be entered by the person who administers the assessment.

**10. Is there any chance of capturing the kindergarten readiness at the end of the VPK year as part of the readiness rate calculation?**

No, not at the present time given the current legislative requirements.

**11. If providers agree to use the VPK assessments, could a DOE student number be assigned to reduce the end of program matching?**

FDOE is looking into the best way to capture the data and ensure that the procedure facilitates the matching process completed during the child's kindergarten year.

**12. Will there be a pre- and post-test?**

Yes, the VPK assessments and the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading both provide a pre-post test as well as on-going progress monitoring tasks.