



Florida Department of Education  
Office of Early Learning

Technical Assistance Paper #06-05: Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK)  
Director Endorsement for Private Providers

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June 2006

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## Purpose

This Technical Assistance Paper was developed to provide information regarding the new VPK Director Endorsement (see *Attachment 1*).

## Background Information – Department of Children and Families’ (DCF’s) Florida Child Care Director Credential

Since January 1, 2004, licensed child care programs have been required to have a credentialed director, except during evening hours. There are two types of credentials for child care directors: Foundational Director and Advanced Director. The specific requirements for these credentials are specified in Rule 65C-22.003(8), Florida Administrative Code (FAC) (<https://training01-dcf.myflorida.gov/dcf/cct/dircred.html>) and include the following requirements for either level:

### Core Requirements

- high school diploma or GED
- DCF’s Part I Introductory Training, comprised of the Introduction to Child Care module (20 hours) and the Behavioral Observation and Screening module (10 hours)
- DCF’s Special Needs Appropriate Practices module (10 hours) or 8 hours of in-service training in serving children with disabilities that meets the statutory requirements for licensing
- one of the following staff credentials: National Child Development Associate (CDA), state-approved Florida CDA-Equivalency, Florida School-Age Certification or a formal education exemption qualification.

In addition to the core requirements above, the applicants must also meet all requirements of either the Foundational Level or Advanced Level Director Credential listed below:

### Foundational Level Requirements

**Education:** Completion of an approved “Overview of Child Care Center Management” course, listed on [www.myflorida.com/childcare](http://www.myflorida.com/childcare). This course may be taken as college credit, vocational credit or Continuing Education Units (CEUs).

**Exception:** Subject to approval by the DCF Child Care Program Office, individuals who have

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attained a Director Credential recognized by another state may receive credit toward the "Overview of Child Care Management" course requirement.

**Experience:** One year of on-site experience as a child care facility director. A **Temporary Foundational Director Credential** will be issued, and can be renewed, until the experience component has been met.

#### Advanced Level Requirements

**Education:** Completion of at least one of the following:

- A. Three approved courses for college credit in child care education program administration.  
*\*Individuals are required to take three of the four courses listed below:*
  - Overview of Child Care Center Management
  - Child Care and Education Programming
  - Child Care and Education Organizational Leadership and Management
  - Child Care and Education Financial and Legal Issues
- B. A.S. degree in child care center management
- C. A.S., B.A., B.S., or advanced degree in early childhood education/child development, family and consumer sciences (formerly home economics/child development), school-age child care, or elementary education **WITH** three college credit hours in child care management/administration, business administration or educational administration
- D. B.A., B.S., or advanced degree other than those listed above, **WITH** three college credit hours in early childhood education/child development or school-age child care **AND** three college credit hours in child care management/administration, business administration or educational administration
- E. Five or more years of experience as an administrator or director in a licensed child facility or facility that is legally exempt pursuant to sections 402.3025 or 402.316, F.S., **WITH** three college credit hours in child care management/administration, business administration or educational administration. *All coursework must have been completed within the last ten years.*

**Exemption by Testing:** For the Advanced Level credential only, candidates who meet item C or D for an educational exception, but do not have coursework in early childhood education or administration may opt to take a competency-based exam to meet the three credit hour course requirement in early childhood/child development, or the three credit hour course requirement in administration, or both. This process will require the candidate to complete a written exam at an approved testing site and achieve a minimum score of 70.

**Experience:** Two years of on-site experience as a child care facility director. A **Temporary Advanced Director Credential** will be issued, and can be renewed, until the experience component has been met.

As of May 2006, 12,238 directors have been issued the following types of the Florida Director Credential:

- Advanced Director – 2,279 (19%)
- Temporary Advanced – 1,223 (10%)
- Foundational Director – 6,219 (51%)
- Temporary Foundational – 2,517 (20%)

As noted on page 1 of this document, an appropriate staff credential is a core requirement for the DCF Director Credential (Rule 65C-22.003(8), FAC). A staff credential requires completion of at least one of the following:

- A. An active National Child Development Associate (CDA) credential
- B. Formal Educational Qualifications
  - B.A., B.S., or advanced degree in ONE of the following areas:
    - Early Childhood Education/Child Development
    - Pre-Kindergarten or Primary Education
    - Preschool Education
    - Family and Consumer Sciences (formerly Home Economics/Child Development)
    - Exceptional Student Education
    - Special Education
    - Mental Disabilities
    - Specific Learning Disabilities
    - Physically Impaired
    - Varying Exceptionalities
    - Emotional Disabilities
    - Visually Impaired
    - Hearing Impaired
    - Speech-Language Pathology  
or Elementary Education with certification to teach any age birth through 6th grade (certification may be inactive provided the certificate is not suspended/revoked)
  - A.S. or A.A. degree in child development
  - Associate degree or higher with 6 college credits in early childhood/child development **WITH** 480 hours experience in a child care setting serving children ages birth through eight years of age.
- C. An active State-Approved Florida Child Development Associate Equivalency Credential. Visit the DCF's website at <http://www.myflorida.com/childcare/training> to obtain a list of the Early Childhood Education Training Organizations that offer a state-approved CDA Equivalency Training Program.
- D. An active State-Approved Florida School-Age Credential.

For additional information regarding the DCF Staff Credential process or to download the application, please visit the following website: <https://training01-dcf.myflorida.gov/dcf/cct/staffcred.html>.

## **Background Information – Voluntary Prekindergarten Director Credential/Endorsement**

In the legislation implementing the Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program, the Legislature recognized the importance of private child care directors having specific skills/competencies related to maintaining a high quality educational environment. [Section 1002.57, F.S.](#), requires the Department of Education (DOE) to adopt minimum standards for a credential for prekindergarten directors of private providers delivering the VPK program and specifies that the credential must include:

- professional accepted standards for prekindergarten programs, early learning, and strategies and techniques to address the age-appropriate progress of prekindergarten students in attaining the performance standards adopted by the department under section 1002.67, Florida Statutes
- strategies that allow students with disabilities and other special needs to derive maximum benefit from the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program
- program administration and operations, including management, organizational leadership, and financial and legal issues.

[Section 1002.57\(3\)-\(4\), F.S.](#), also requires that, "The prekindergarten director credential must meet or exceed the requirements of the Department of Children and Family Services for the child care facility director credential under s. 402.305(2)(f), and successful completion of the prekindergarten director credential satisfies these requirements for the child care facility director credential," and that, "The department shall, to the maximum extent practicable, award credit to a person who successfully completes the child care facility director credential under s. 402.305(2)(f) for those requirements of the prekindergarten director credential which are duplicative of requirements for the child care facility director credential."

[Section 1002.55\(3\)\(f\), F.S.](#), requires that, "Before the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year, the private prekindergarten provider must have a prekindergarten director who has a prekindergarten director credential that is approved by the department as meeting or exceeding the minimum standards adopted under s. 1002.57."

This section also states that, "Successful completion of a child care facility director credential under s. 402.305(2)(f) before the establishment of the prekindergarten director credential under s. 1002.57 or July 1, 2006, whichever occurs later, satisfies the requirement for a prekindergarten director credential under this paragraph." The current DCF requirements for the director credential are outlined in Rule 65C-22.003(8), FAC (<https://training01-dcf.myflorida.gov/dcf/cct/dircred.html>).

## **Background Information – Development of the VPK Director Endorsement**

The DOE, Office of Early Learning, worked in collaboration with DCF and the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) to establish a Technical Workgroup which was composed of private prekindergarten directors and educators. This workgroup provided assistance in drafting minimum standards for a credential for directors of private prekindergarten programs delivering the VPK Program and in developing draft training components. Meetings were convened on February 16, 2006, and March 16, 2006, in Tallahassee, Florida. (Additional information regarding the VPK Director Credential Workgroup members and the workgroup proceedings is available at: <http://www.myfloridaeducation.com/earlylearning/vpkdc.html>). The final VPK Director Endorsement Rule is incorporated into this document as an attachment.

*Please note that as a result of discussions held by workgroup members, a decision was reached to refer to the VPK Director Credential as the “VPK Director Endorsement.” This decision was based on the fact that the requirements under section 1002.57, F.S., are “add-ons” to the current DCF Director Credential.*

### **Questions and Answers: General**

#### **1. What is the purpose of the VPK Director Endorsement Rule?**

The purpose of this rule is to specify the minimum standards for an endorsement for prekindergarten directors of private programs delivering the VPK program, as required by section 1002.57(1), F.S. This rule also provides an enhanced educational credential for the directors of private prekindergarten programs delivering VPK.

#### **2. Who is required to have the VPK Director Endorsement?**

All private providers delivering the VPK program must have a director who has this “new” endorsement. Section 1002.51(5), F.S., defines a “private prekindergarten provider” as, “...a provider other than public school which is eligible to deliver the school-year prekindergarten program under s. 1002.55 or the summer prekindergarten program under s. 1002.61.” Please note that Rule 6A-6.040, FAC, specifies an effective date of **December 31, 2006**. Therefore, all providers who have been issued a DCF Director credential prior to **December 31, 2006**, are “**exempt**” from this new requirement, but are encouraged to participate in the available training.

There are approximately 4,016\* VPK providers, of which 501 are faith-based (May 2006). The following is a break-down of the provider types:

- Family Child Homes – 119
- Private Centers – 3,505 (includes licensed faith-based, family child care homes, and private schools)
- Private Schools – 26
- Public Schools – 585

*Please note that a provider type may change due to many reasons, e.g., licensing, certification, etc. As a result of this change in status, duplication in count may exist. This accounts for the break-out total above being slightly larger (4,235) than the number of VPK providers (4,016) indicated.*

All private providers choosing to participate in the VPK program, including religious exempt Family Child Care Homes and non-public schools, must have a director with the VPK Director Endorsement. The VPK Director Endorsement requires the completion of the Florida Director Credential. Directors who elect not to participate in the VPK program are not required to obtain the VPK Director Endorsement, but are strongly encouraged to participate in the available training.

### 3. Are school district personnel required to have the VPK Director Endorsement?

No. Section 1002.55(3)(f), F.S., requires that, "...the private prekindergarten provider must have a prekindergarten director who has a prekindergarten director credential that is approved by the department as meeting the or exceeding the minimum standards...." Section 1002.51(5), F.S., defines a "private prekindergarten provider" as, "...a provider other than a public school which is eligible to deliver the school-year prekindergarten program under s.1002.55 or the summer prekindergarten program under s.1002.61."

### 4. What is required for an applicant to obtain the DCF Director Credential?

Applicants interested in obtaining the DCF Director Credential should:

- download the application from the DCF website
- complete the application and include all required documents, and
- forward to the address shown on the application.

The DCF Child Care Program Office will review the application and notify you if additional documentation is needed to complete the application. For additional information regarding the DCF Director Credential and to download the application, please visit the following website: <https://training01-dcf.myflorida.gov/dcf/cct/dircred.html>.

### Requirements for VPK Director Endorsement

#### 5. What are the requirements for the VPK Director Endorsement?

Consistent with the requirements of section 1002.55(3)(f), F.S., a private prekindergarten program delivering the VPK program must have a director who has a VPK Director Endorsement, issued by DCF, that meets the requirements of Rule 6A.6.040(2), FAC. Successful completion of the Director Credential, as required by Rule 65C-22.003(8)(a), FAC, prior to **December 31, 2006**, satisfies this requirement.

The training requirements of the VPK Director Endorsement are as follows:

- completion of the Florida Director Credential Certificate program, as referenced in DCF's Rule 65C-22.003(8)(a), FAC, approved by DCF and the DOE. The requirements for obtaining the DCF Director Credential are outlined in the Background Information section of this document (see pages 1-3)
- completion of the DOE-approved training on the VPK Education standards adopted by the State Board of Education
- completion of the DOE-approved course(s) on emergent literacy
- completion of the DOE-approved course(s) addressing the VPK specific competencies.

As noted in the Background Information section on page one, the individual must have the appropriate staff credential prior to obtaining the DCF Director Credential.

For additional information regarding the staff credential, please visit the following website: <https://training01-dcf.myflorida.gov/dcf/cct/staffcred.html>.

*The VPK Endorsement is an "add-on" to the current DCF Director Credential.*

## **Training and Continuing Education Units (CEUs)**

### **6. How and where is training available for the VPK Director Endorsement?**

- **DOE-approved training on the VPK Education standards.** This instructor-led training is offered throughout the state by the six DOE regional facilitators or DOE-approved designated trainers. For information regarding the availability of the VPK Education standards training in your area, please visit DOE's website and view the Statewide Training Calendar at <http://myfloridaeducation.com/earlylearning/xls/statewidevpk.xls>. A Certificate of Completion is provided upon the completion of the training
- **DOE-approved course(s) on emergent literacy.** Currently, the DOE offers a five-hour on-line Emergent Literacy course for VPK instructors. Directors may access this course at <http://myfloridaeducation.com/earlylearning/> or <http://www.myflorida.com/childcare/>. Candidates will be provided with a Certificate of Completion upon the completion of the course, and documentation of completion will also appear on the candidate's DCF training transcript
- **DOE-approved course(s) addressing the VPK specific competencies.** This training is currently in development and will be offered on-line. For information regarding its availability in the near future, please visit the DOE/OEL website at [www.myfloridaeducation.com/earlylearning/](http://www.myfloridaeducation.com/earlylearning/).

### **7. How will the DOE-approved course(s) addressing the VPK specific competencies be delivered?**

To accommodate the immediate training needs of Florida's directors, the initial course, once developed, will be delivered on-line. This is the most efficient and effective method to ensure that the course is available to a multitude of directors in the most expeditious manner. In an effort to ensure that we address the various adult learning styles, the DOE will also make preparations to provide this training in an instructor-led session at a later date.

### **8. Can courses taken at a community college or university satisfy the requirements of the DOE-approved training for the VPK Director Endorsement?**

No, not at this time.

### **9. Are CEUs available to Directors completing the DOE-approved trainings?**

Yes, in most cases, through a collaborative effort with DCF and local agencies/organizations, applicants who successfully complete the DOE-approved training(s) and receive a Certificate of Completion could be eligible to receive CEUs.

For directors completing the VPK Standards Education training, the VPK regional facilitators will make every effort to collaborate with local agencies/organizations to secure CEUs. The number of CEUs awarded for the VPK Standards Education training will be dependent upon the agency's/organization's specific guidelines, and a cost may or may not be associated with the CEU process.

Directors completing the five hour on-line Emergent Literacy training are eligible to receive CEUs as a result of a collaborative effort between DOE and DCF. However, CEUs are not awarded automatically upon successful completion of the on-line Emergent Literacy training. Directors who wish to earn CEUs, in addition to completing the on-line course and assessment, must successfully pass a competency exam with a score of 70 or higher. The competency exam is not available at the current time, but will be available within the next few months.

The Emergent Literacy competency exams will be administered throughout Florida at approved DCF examination facilities. An individual must register for a competency exam at least 10 days prior to the exam date. To register for a competency exam, an individual must complete the on-line course and either register through their Child Care Training Transcript or call the Exam Scheduling Center at 1-888-375-3926. The fee for the Emergent Literacy competency exam is \$5. Once all of the requirements have been satisfied, a total of .5 CEUs will be earned.

CEUs will be available for the DOE-approved training addressing the VPK competencies. Information will be posted on the DOE/OEL website at [www.myfloridaeducation.com/earlylearning](http://www.myfloridaeducation.com/earlylearning) as soon as the process has been completed.

For additional information regarding the availability of the competency exam for the Emergent Literacy training visit the DCF website at [www.myflorida.com/childcare](http://www.myflorida.com/childcare) and click on the header "What's New." For general child care training questions, please call 1-888-352-2842.

### Timelines

- 10. If a candidate has not been issued the DCF Director Credential prior to December 31, 2006, what requirements must he/she meet to receive the VPK Director Endorsement?**

Candidates who have not been issued the DCF Director Credential prior to December 31, 2006, will be required to complete all of the training requirements listed in Rule 6A-6.040(2), FAC (see response to question # 5).

- 11. If a candidate has been issued the DCF Director Credential prior to December 31, 2006, what requirements must he/she meet to receive the VPK Director Endorsement?**

Directors who have been issued the DCF Director Credential, prior to December 31, 2006, are "**exempt**" from the VPK Director Endorsement requirements. This means that during this initial implementation period, they will not be required to complete any of the training requirements listed in Rule 6A-6.040(2), FAC, but are strongly encouraged to do so.

- 12. Will directors who have been issued a DCF Director Credential prior to December 31, 2006, and who are "exempt" from the VPK Director Endorsement requirements, be issued a separate certificate to reflect the VPK Director Endorsement?**

No, a separate certificate will not be issued. The VPK Director Endorsement will be reflected on the director's DCF training transcript which can be obtained by entering the individual's last name, social security number or identification number. For information on how to access the

DCF training transcript, please visit the following website: <https://training01-dcf.myflorida.gov/dcf/cct/reg/studentlogin?COURSESESSIONIDIN=1&onlinetraining=N&transcript=Y&mycourses=N>.

### **Application and Renewal Process**

#### **13. What is the application process for the VPK Director Endorsement?**

Applicants seeking to apply for the VPK Director Endorsement should download the application by visiting either of the websites listed below. The form should be completed with the appropriate documentation attached, and mailed to the address shown on the application.

DCF: <http://www.myflorida.com/childcare>

DOE: <http://www.myfloridaeducation.com/earlylearning>

#### **14. When should I submit my application for the VPK Endorsement?**

If you currently have been issued or will receive your DCF Director Credential prior to December 31, 2006, you are not required to submit an application for the VPK Endorsement until you renew your the DCF Director Credential.

If you will not be issued a DCF Director Credential prior to December 31, 2006, you are encouraged to submit your VPK Endorsement application, with all training documentation to date, as soon as possible. The DCF Child Care Program Office will accept the application and notify you of the additional documentation needed to complete the application. Once **all** required documentation has been received, the DCF Child Care Program Office will notify you and reflect satisfactory completion on your DCF training transcript. You will be allowed to operate a VPK program during this process.

#### **15. What is the renewal process for the VPK Director Endorsement?**

Currently, meeting DCF's renewal requirements will renew your VPK Director Endorsement. For details on the current DCF Florida Director Credential renewal process, please visit <http://www.myflorida.com/childcare>.

**For additional information regarding the DCF Director Credential and general child care training questions, please contact the Department of Children and Families at 1-888-352-2842 or visit the website at: [www.myflorida.com/childcare](http://www.myflorida.com/childcare).**

**For additional information regarding the VPK Director Endorsement, please contact the Florida Department of Education, Office of Early Learning at (850) 245-0445 or visit our website at <http://myfloridaeducation.com/earlylearning/>.**

**AS AMENDED BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION ON JUNE 20, 2006.**

THE FULL TEXT OF THE PROPOSED RULE IS:

Rule 6A-6.040, F.A.C., Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Director Endorsement for Private Providers.

- (1) Requirements for the Endorsement. Consistent with the requirements of Section 1002.55(3)f), Florida Statutes, a private prekindergarten program delivering the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program must have a director who has a VPK Director Endorsement, issued by the Department of Children and Families (DCF), that meets the requirements of section (2) of this rule. Successful completion of the Director Credential, as required by section 402.305(2)(f), Florida Statutes, and paragraph 65C-22.003(8)(a), F.A.C., prior to the effective date of this rule, shall satisfy this requirement.
- (2) Training Requirements. To be eligible for the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Director Endorsement, issued by the Department of Children and Families (DCF), applicants must successfully complete:

  - (a) A Florida credential certificate program, as referenced in paragraph 65C-22.003(8)(a), F.A.C., approved by DCF and the Department of Education (DOE);
  - (b) DOE-approved training on the VPK Education standards adopted by the State Board of Education;
  - (c) DOE-approved course(s) on emergent literacy; and
  - (d) DOE-approved course(s) that address the following VPK Director competencies:

    1. Organizational Leadership and Management – To implement strategies and techniques that promote a responsive work and learning environment, VPK directors shall be able to demonstrate knowledge and application of:

      - a. Management strategies that support a professional culture and climate;
      - b. Instructional leadership skills and the provision of supports to VPK instructors;
      - c. Available resources and supports for VPK instructors and parents; and
      - d. Local processes and procedures for the transition of VPK children to public and private kindergarten programs.
    2. Financial and Legal – To maintain effective financial planning and budgeting systems and sound practices related to legal obligations and responsibilities, VPK directors shall be able to demonstrate knowledge and application of:

      - a. Applicable laws and rules and legal responsibilities;
      - b. Roles and responsibilities of state agencies, local coalitions, and providers;
      - c. Monitoring requirements; and
      - d. Financial operating procedures.
    3. Program and Performance Standards – To maintain an instructional leadership role in creating and sustaining an effective learning environment, VPK directors shall be able to demonstrate knowledge and application of:

- a. Developmentally appropriate and research-based instructional practices and their application in the classroom;
  - b. Evaluation of the appropriateness and effectiveness of available prekindergarten curricula;
  - c. Effective implementation of a prekindergarten curriculum in the classroom;
  - d. Effective instructional strategies for children with disabilities or other special needs and for English language learners;
  - e. Developmentally appropriate methods for the on-going assessment of young children and interpretation of these data for program planning and the delivery of instruction; and
  - f. Local and state accountability systems.
- (3) Renewal. To maintain an active VPK Director Endorsement, the director of a private prekindergarten program delivering the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program must meet the requirements in subparagraphs 65C-22.003(8)(h)1.-4., F.A.C.
- (4) Effective date. This rule is effective December 31, 2006.

Specific Authority 1002.79(1), F.S.

Law Implemented 1002.55(3)(f), 1002.57, F.S. History – New – 6-20-06.