



Florida Department of Education
Office of Early Learning

What's happening in VPK?

November 2009



NEWS: Important VPK Provider Readiness Rate Update

The VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate measures how well a VPK provider prepares four-year-olds to be ready for kindergarten based on the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS).

The FLKRS is used to assess children's readiness for kindergarten within the first 30 days of kindergarten. As required by law, the FLKRS is aligned with the *Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Standards*. FLKRS is made up of a subset of the Early Childhood Observation System (ECHOS), an observational instrument used to monitor the skills, knowledge, and behaviors a student demonstrates or needs to develop; and two measures of the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (e.g., The Broad Screen/Progress Monitoring Tool and the Broad Diagnostic Inventory).

It is proposed that the 2008-09 VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate will be calculated using the results from the ECHOS and the Broad Screen/Progress Monitoring portion of the reading assessment. The Broad Screen consists of Letter Naming and Phonemic Awareness tasks.

Given this change, the maximum 2008-09 readiness rate will be **200**. ***This is a change from the previous 300 point scale.*** Readiness rates are calculated for all VPK providers that served at least four children, who attended at least 70-percent of either the School-Year VPK program or Summer VPK program, ***and*** participated in the FLKRS.

Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK)

Assessment: The Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR) in collaboration with the Department of Education has developed the Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Assessment. The purpose of this assessment is to provide teachers with valid and reliable feedback regarding children's progress in attaining the skills in the VPK Education Standards. Teachers may use this information to inform instructional decisions in the VPK classroom.

The VPK Assessment includes progress monitoring measures in the areas of Print Knowledge, Phonological Awareness, Oral Language/Vocabulary and Mathematics. The assessment measures are being field tested throughout the state during 2009-10. Information gathered from teachers involved in the field test will be considered in the development of the final assessment measures.

The VPK Assessment Measures are:

- aligned to the [VPK Education Standards](#) and the kindergarten screening (Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener)
- planned for statewide availability in 2010-11.



NOW AVAILABLE! Language and Vocabulary in the VPK Classroom Course: This online course is appropriate for all VPK teachers/instructors, assistants and directors and provides instructional strategies for increasing language and vocabulary with young children. There are videos of VPK teachers implementing the strategies with children, in addition to activities, and resources to support teachers as they begin to use the language and vocabulary strategies in their own classrooms. You may now register for this DOE-approved online course by visiting Department of Children and Families' Web site at <https://training01-dcf.myflorida.com/dcf/cct/inf0001.html>. ~~Five CEUs will be awarded for successful completion of the course.~~

Please note this correction!

Successful completion of this five-hour course will generate 0.5 CEUs.



VPK Teacher Toolkit: Mathematical Thinking Folder: This online resource is appropriate for all VPK teachers/instructors, assistants and directors. This folder will provide resources, instructional strategies, and activities for each of the six areas of Mathematical Thinking outlined in the 2008 VPK Education Standards. This folder will be **available in mid-November 2009**.

VPK Teacher Toolkit: Emergent Literacy Folder: This online resource is appropriate for all VPK teachers/instructors, assistants and directors. The Emergent Literacy folder will provide resources, instructional strategies, and activities for emergent reading, emergent writing, oral language and communication, and environments outlined in the 2008 VPK Education Standards. This folder will be **available Spring 2010**.

VPK Teacher Toolkit: English Language Learners Folder: This online resource is appropriate for VPK teachers, directors, and staff. Strategies and resources that may be used to develop culturally sensitive learning environments for children and build relationships with families who are English language learners will be provided in this folder. Although this resource is designed with English language learners in mind, there are numerous best practices that can be used with all young children. This folder will be **available Spring 2010**.

REMINDER: Given the significant budget cuts that occurred as a result of the last legislative session, the Department of Education, Office of Early Learning is limited in the amount of print material that can be produced and disseminated. We strongly encourage you to visit the **Publications and Papers** page at <http://www.fldoe.org/publications/> and sign up for the Department's paperless communication system. By doing so, you will be included (electronically) in any correspondence sent from the Department of Education that relates to the areas of interest *you select* (e.g., early childhood, VPK).

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