

## Children with Disabilities in Prekindergarten Programs, 2008-09

### Background

- Florida's prekindergarten program for children with disabilities is an entitlement program required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Under IDEA, all eligible children with disabilities ages 3 through 21, are entitled to a free and appropriate public education. The services provided to these students are funded, in large part, through the FEFP. This brief addresses prekindergarten students served under IDEA.
- Florida also participates in the IDEA, Part C Program for infants and toddlers, ages birth through two years, with disabilities. Participation in this program is permissive for local school districts and funding for participating districts is generated through the FEFP.
- Consistent with federal requirements, school districts locate children who are potentially eligible for services under IDEA and link them with needed services. The goal of this child find service is to ensure children and youth who are potentially eligible for services are located, screened, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services.

### Prekindergarten Students as Percent of Total Membership

- Data from the 2008 fall student survey, displayed in Figure 1, indicate that **2 percent** of the total membership in public schools is prekindergarten children (this includes all PK children served by the district including those in collaboration with local coalitions, district Head Start programs, migrant prekindergarten programs, programs for children of teen parents, and children with disabilities)
- The October 2008 child count shows **5 percent** of all students with disabilities in public schools are in prekindergarten. These data are displayed in Figure 2.

Figure 1: District Prekindergarten Programs as Percent of Total Population

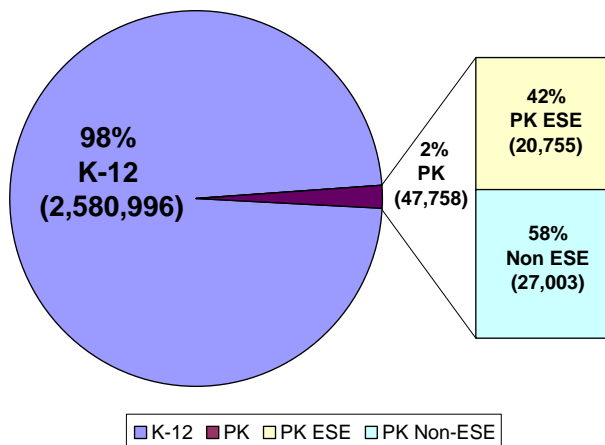
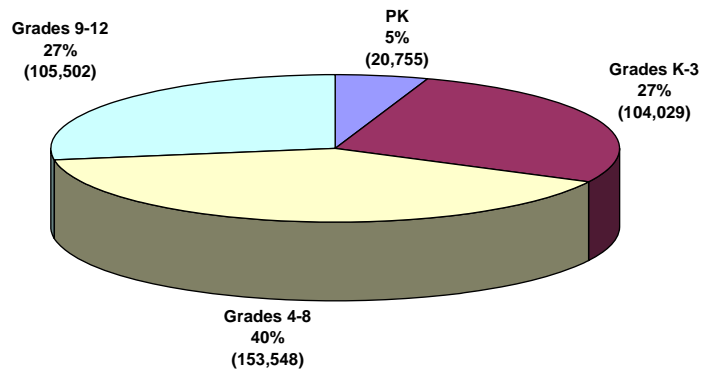


Figure 2: Students with Disabilities by Grade Grouping

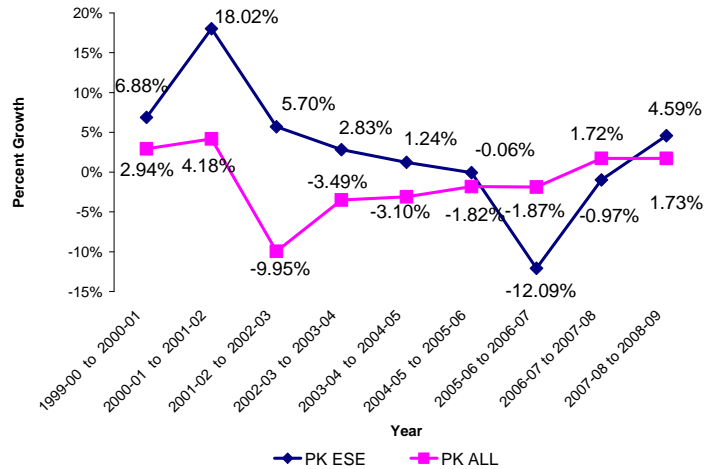


Source: File 62.975 as of 1/21/09.

### Growth in Prekindergarten Programs

- From 1999-00 through 2001-02, the total number of prekindergarten children grew 7.2 percent (from 53,037 to 56,879); From 2001-02 to 2006-07, the total number fell 18.9% to 46,150, followed by a 3.5% increase to 47,758 from 2006-07 to 2008-09.
- From 1999-00 to 2005-06, the number of prekindergarten children with disabilities grew 38.9 percent (from 16,406 to 22,794). Since then, the population has declined 8.9 percent to 20,755.
- Percent growth by year is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Percent Growth in Prekindergarten Population 1999-00 through 2008-09



Source: Source: Membership in Florida's Public Schools, and File 62.975, Fall 1999 through 2008.

### State Funding of Prekindergarten Programs for Children with Disabilities

- Fourth calculation unweighted FTE for prekindergarten children with disabilities in 2008-09 was 17,322.44. Weighted FTE for prekindergarten children with disabilities was 27,756.29.
- Base Student Allocation (BSA) for 2008-09 is \$3886.14.
- Prekindergarten students with disabilities generated approximately \$108 million in 2008-09 (WFTE x BSA)
- In addition to basic funding, districts received an additional \$1.1 billion in the ESE Guaranteed Allocation. These monies are used to provide special education services to students with disabilities PK-12.