

**House
Education Appropriations Subcommittee
and
Committee on Education K-20
December 9, 2003**

**A Study on the Curriculum, Design,
and Standards for Florida's
Voluntary Universal Prekindergarten
(UPK) Education Program**



Florida Department of Education

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Presentation

- ◆ Overview of Constitutional Amendment
- ◆ Senate Bill 1334
- ◆ Universal Prekindergarten Education
Advisory Council
- ◆ State Board of Education's
Recommendations
- ◆ Next Steps



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Constitutional Amendment...

- ◆ Passed by Florida's voters in November 2002 and requires:

"Every four-year-old-child in Florida...a high quality pre-kindergarten learning opportunity...which shall be voluntary, high quality, free, and delivered according to professionally accepted standards."



Constitutional Amendment...

"An early childhood development and education program means an organized program designed to address and enhance each child's ability to make age appropriate progress in an appropriate range of settings..."



Constitutional Amendment

"...shall be implemented no later than the beginning of the 2005 school year through funds generated in addition to those used for existing education, health, and development programs..."



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Senate Bill 1334...

◆ SB 1334 required

- A study by the State Board of Education (SBE)
- Performance audits of the school readiness program by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA)
- Financial and operational audits by the Auditor General



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Senate Bill 1334

- ◆ SB 1334 required SBE to identify recommendations or options on
 - Curriculum and standards
 - High quality learning opportunity
 - Quantity of instruction
 - Delivery system
 - Assessment and evaluation
 - Funding
 - Best practices to improve outcomes of local coalitions and providers



SBE's UPK Advisory Council

- ◆ Established by the SBE on April 15, 2003, to assist in the development of recommendations.
- ◆ Report accepted by the SBE on October 18, 2003.
- ◆ Provided the framework for the development of the SBE's recommendations and options.



State Board of Education's Recommendations

- ◆ Will require review, revision, and/or repeal of existing laws and rules.
- ◆ Are based on a vision of what the UPK program should look like and what must be available beginning in the 2005-06 school year for all Florida's four-year-old children.



Curriculum and Standards – Current Status

- ◆ Readiness Partnership Board has adopted standards for what three-, four-, and five-year-old children should know and be able to do.
- ◆ Standards were presented to the State Board of Education in 2000.
- ◆ Standards for five-year-old children are cross-referenced to the Sunshine State Standards.



High Quality Learning Opportunity – Current Status

- ◆ Section 411.01, Florida Statutes, provides the authority for school readiness programs. Minimum elements include developmentally appropriate curriculum, a character development program, and a resource and referral network to assist parents in making choices.



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Curriculum and Standards and High Quality – Recommendations

1. The DOE should review the performance standards with the Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR) to propose additional content that emphasizes early literacy and oral language skills.

The SBE should adopt these revised standards.



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Curriculum and Standards and High Quality – Recommendations

2. Curricula used in UPK programs should be aligned with the expected child outcomes and standards.



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Curriculum and Standards and High Quality – Recommendations

2. To ensure curriculum alignment:
(cont.)
 - The DOE should work with FCRR and other experts to develop the curriculum standards.
 - The Legislature should provide the SBE the authority to adopt these standards and a mechanism for DOE approval of additional curricula.



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Curriculum and Standards and High Quality - Recommendations

3. The Legislature should provide the SBE with the authority to adopt rules identifying when children are “ready for school.”



Curriculum and Standards and High Quality - Recommendations

4. The outcome for Florida’s UPK program shall be that 100% of all children enter kindergarten ready for school.

The DOE should establish annual intermediate targets and report these results annually.



Quantity of Instruction – Current Status...

- ◆ Section 411.01(5)(c)1b, Florida Statutes, requires that school readiness programs, "...provide extended day and extended year services to the maximum extent possible to meet the needs of parents who work."



Quantity of Instruction – Current Status

- ◆ Funding through the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) for kindergarten through grade three is based on twenty hours per week of instructional time.



Quantity of Instruction – Recommendations

5. The Legislature should fund the UPK program for a four-hour per day program for a total of 180 days.

Payments for UPK programs should be consistent across the state and provide for an incentive to achieve positive outcomes.



Delivery System – Current Status

- ◆ Section 402.305, Florida Statutes, establishes a staff to child ratio of 1:20 for four-year-old children.
- ◆ Since 1996, licensed child care facilities have been required to have one staff member with a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or an equivalent or higher for every 20 children.



Delivery System – Current Status

- ◆ Florida has 105 approved CDA preparation programs that are considered equivalent to the national CDA credential.
- ◆ In 2002-03, approximately 1,700 individuals were awarded a CDA equivalent credential.



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Delivery System – Current Status...

- ◆ The Gold Seal Quality Program is Florida's designation for a quality prekindergarten program. There are 11 accrediting agencies that are recognized for the purpose of designating a Gold Seal Quality Program. These include the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the Association of Christian Schools International, and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).



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Delivery System – Current Status

- ◆ 944 of the state’s licensed child care facilities, 293 of the state’s licensed family child care homes, and 648 public school programs are accredited through the Goal Seal Program.



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Delivery System - Recommendations

6. The SBE should assess the state’s capacity to provide high quality UPK programs by 2005 and thereafter.

This assessment should be developed in partnership with local governments, businesses, community and faith-based organizations, and postsecondary institutions.



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Delivery System – Recommendations

7. The Legislature should provide the SBE authority to adopt rules establishing licensing standards for providers of UPK programs to include:
 - State and federal requirements
 - Instructional staff-to-child ratios and staff credentials.



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Delivery System – Recommendations

8. The DOE should conduct a review of all currently approved CDA equivalent programs and corresponding state requirements.

The Legislature should provide the SBE the authority to adopt rules identifying standards for the approval of CDA programs and renewal of the CDA credential.



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Delivery System – Recommendations

9. The SBE should assess the capacity of the state's workforce for the provision of high quality instruction.

This assessment should be developed in collaboration with the Agency for Workforce Innovation, community colleges, and vocational/technical centers.



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Delivery System – Recommendations

9. The workforce capacity plan should:
(cont.)

- Include a mechanism whereby current child care providers who demonstrate the competencies required by CDA programs may earn the appropriate credential.



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Assessment and Evaluation – Current Status

- ◆ Beginning in 2002-03, all public school kindergarten students participated in the School Readiness Uniform Screening System. This screening included the administration of a developmental screening instrument and a social/behavioral screening instrument.



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Assessment and Evaluation – Recommendations

10. The Legislature should retain the requirement for the screening of all students entering public kindergarten to determine their level of readiness for school.



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Assessment and Evaluation – Recommendations

11. The Legislature should provide the SBE with the authority to adopt rules requiring local coalitions to implement a consumer protection system.



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Assessment and Evaluation - Recommendations

11. The consumer protection system should:
(cont.)
 - Identify appropriate outcomes for the purposes of accountability and funding local programs
 - Establish meaningful consequences for poor performing programs
 - Provide information that can lead to program improvement
 - Provide information to parents on the progress of their child in meeting the expected child outcomes



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Funding – Current Status 4-Year Old Population Estimates¹

Year	Total Estimated Number of 4-Year Olds	Number at 70% Participation Rate
2004	213,501	149,451
2005	217,140	151,998
2006	219,691	153,784
2007	221,441	155,009
2008	222,734	155,914
2009	223,920	156,744
2010	225,341	157,739

¹ Office of Economic and Demographic Research, February 21, 2002.

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Funding – Current Status Children Ages 0-5 Served by Funding Sources for FY 2002-2003¹

	Age 0 to 2	Age 3	Age 4	Age 5	Total 0-5
School Readiness ²	50,543	24,560	28,757	13,732	117,592
Public School Funded ³	3,705	5,801	14,333	444	24,283
Total State	54,248	30,361	43,090	14,176	141,875
Head Start Program ⁴	2,636	9,989	18,465	2,325	33,415
Total State & Head Start	56,884	40,350	61,555	16,501	175,290

¹ Children may receive services from more than one program

² School Readiness includes children served for FY 2002-03 including Even Start and HIPPIY programs

³ Public School Funded from Survey 2, October 2002, as of August 7, 2003

⁴ Head Start data from enrollment counts in December 2002 by the Head Start State Collaboration Office

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Funding: Current Cost of School Readiness Services for 4-Year Olds

Type of Current SR Program	Current Cost Per Day at 6-10 hours	Est. Cost per Day for 4 instruct. hours	180 Days at 4 instruct. hours (720)	Estimate for 91,000 additional* children
Gold Seal settings	\$23.67	\$16.00	\$2,880	\$262.1M
Average of All Program Types	\$20.23	\$13.50	\$2,430	\$221.1M

For comparison, the cost of an unweighted K-3 FTE

Average of All School districts	\$23.33	180 days, 720 instructional hours per year	\$4,200
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*Current expenditures for 4-year old children in school readiness programs excluding Head Start = approximately \$190M.



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Funding – Current Status Official Estimate for UPK Ballot Initiative

◆ Assumptions:

- 180 days/6 hours per day
- \$24 per day (with no inflation factor)¹
- No fixed capital outlay
- Estimated number of 4 year olds to serve 151,998 in 2005

- ◆ Cost estimates range from \$425m to \$650m depending on sources and uses of revenue for 4-yr-old children currently served in readiness programs.



¹ Daily cost average based on survey data collected May 1, 2003, of selected centers in Florida certified by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

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Funding – Recommendations

12. The estimated cost of a high quality UPK program is approximately \$2,880 per child per year.

This cost estimate is consistent with the funding allocated to current Gold Seal programs.



Funding – Recommendations

13. The Legislature should consider appropriating funds for 2004-05 to
 - Implement a plan to assess the state's capacity of private and public providers
 - Implement a plan to assess the capacity of the state's workforce for providing high quality instruction.



Best Practices to Improve Coalitions and Providers – Current Status

- ◆ There are 50 local coalitions that provide most of the state's school readiness programs. Local school boards are responsible for the provision of appropriate services to children with disabilities, ages three to five; children of teenage parents; and prekindergarten children funded through Title I.



Best Practices to Improve Coalitions and Providers – Current Status

- ◆ Section 411.01(5), Florida Statutes, specifies the duties and composition of the local school readiness coalitions.



Best Practices to Improve Coalitions and Providers - Recommendations

14. The Legislature should maintain a local governance structure with the specific modifications to strengthen the local coalitions' efficacy and to address conflicts in membership and operation.



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Best Practices to Improve Coalitions and Providers - Recommendations

14. Modifications to local governance (cont.) structure should:

- Consolidate administrative functions to minimize the number of coalitions, while assuring that program planning, services coordination, and funding allocations address the specific needs of each county



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Best Practices to Improve Coalitions and Providers

14. Modifications to local governance (cont.) structure should:

- Specify local coalition functions regarding
 - ◆ Financial and programmatic oversight and accountability principles
 - ◆ Reporting of expenditures
 - ◆ Statewide reporting
 - ◆ Monitoring of provider's compliance with the UPK standards and with applicable state and federal requirements
 - ◆ Accountability for the quality of the UPK program
 - ◆ Provision of assistance to providers.



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Best Practices to Improve Coalitions and Providers - Recommendations

14. Modifications to local governance (cont.) structure should:

- Revise current membership requirements to include representation from
 - ◆ Postsecondary education providers
 - ◆ Programs for children with disabilities ages 3-5 and programs for infants and toddlers with disabilities under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
 - ◆ Consumers and parents
 - ◆ Family child care homes.
- Authorize local coalitions to submit nominations for membership for consideration.



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Best Practices to Improve Coalitions and Providers - Recommendations

14. Modifications to local (cont.) governance structure should:
- Require that financial decisions of local coalitions must be "non-conflicted."

A voting majority of local coalition members should be persons who do not have a substantial financial interest in the design or delivery of school readiness services in Florida.



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State Governance – Current Status

- ◆ School Readiness Programs are administered by the Agency for Workforce Innovation through the Florida Partnership for School Readiness and local school readiness coalitions.



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State Governance – Recommendations

15. The Legislature should transfer school readiness programs (for children ages birth to kindergarten entry age and after school programs), effective 2004-05, to the Department of Education under separate a Chancellor for Early Learning.



State Governance – Recommendations

16. The Department of Education should organize a steering committee to guide implementation of the UPK program and to assist in the transition of current programs to the DOE.

The Department should ensure that providers of school readiness programs, local coalitions, agencies, and early childhood advocates are provided with frequent and consistent information regarding these activities and opportunities for input.



Next Steps

- ◆ Organize the steering committee and begin development of the implementation plan.

