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January 6, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: District School Superintendents

FROM: Dr. Eric J. Smith

SUBJECT: Results of 2009 Kindergarten Screening

Consistent with the Department of Education's Next Generation Prekindergarten-20 Strategic Plan to strengthen foundation skills in reading and mathematics, we are pleased to provide you with the results of the 2009 screening of public school kindergarten students. These results are especially noteworthy given that 63-percent of Florida's four-year-olds participated in the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program in 2008-09.

[Section 1002.69\(1\), Florida Statutes](#), (F.S.) directed the Florida Department of Education to establish a kindergarten readiness screening based upon standards adopted by the State Board of Education, under [Section 1002.67\(1\), F.S.](#) for the VPK Education Program. These VPK Education Standards describe what children should know and be able to do at the end of the VPK year in the areas of physical health, approaches to learning, social and emotional development, language and communication, emergent literacy, mathematical and scientific thinking, motor development, and social studies and the arts.

Since 2006-07, the Kindergarten Screening consisted of a subset of the Early Childhood Observation System (ECHOS™) and two measures from the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS™). Beginning with the 2009-10 school year, the DIBELS™ measures were replaced with two measures from the new Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR) that were developed in collaboration with the Florida Center for Reading Research. The Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener is administered by the kindergarten teacher within the first 30 days of kindergarten.

ECHOS™ is a brief observational screening instrument that is designed to measure a child's performance across seven developmental areas that are aligned with the VPK Education Standards. The two measures of the FAIR, the Broad Screen/Progress Monitoring Tool (i.e., letter-naming, phonemic awareness) and the Broad Diagnostic Inventory (i.e., listening comprehension, vocabulary), are screening instruments designed to measure specific skills that are specifically aligned with Florida's VPK Education Standards in the area of emergent literacy.

The results of the kindergarten screening are used to determine the readiness of children entering kindergarten for the *first time* in 2009-10, to inform classroom instruction, and to provide useful information to parents. In addition, data from the ECHOS and the Broad Screen will be used to calculate a readiness rate for private and public school providers of the VPK Education Program.

READINESS CATEGORIES USED FOR REPORTING

Results of the ECHOS were calculated by using the ratings teachers assigned to 19 activities as a result of their on-going classroom observation. Scores are reported for ECHOS in the following readiness categories:

- ❑ **Demonstrating** - the child demonstrated what he or she should know and be able to do at the beginning of kindergarten
- ❑ **Emerging/Progressing** - the child demonstrated some of the skills he or she needs to know or be able to do at the beginning of kindergarten
- ❑ **Not Yet Demonstrating** – the child did not demonstrate the appropriate skill during the screening

To be considered “**Ready for Kindergarten,**” children should be scoring at the **Demonstrating** or **Emerging/Progressing** levels.

Results from the Broad Screen letter naming and phonemic awareness measures were used to calculate a “**Probability of Reading Success**” score which is expressed as a percent chance from one to ninety-nine (1% - 99%). This **Probability of Reading Success** is a statement about the probability of the student scoring at or above grade-level at the end of the kindergarten year on the outcome measure (Word Reading performance on the Stanford Early School Achievement Test (SESAT)).

A Probability of Reading Success score of 67-percent (67%) or higher is considered “**Ready for Kindergarten.**”

The Broad Diagnostic Inventory includes listening comprehension and expressive vocabulary measures. The listening comprehension measure requires children to listen as one passage is read out loud and then answer five comprehension questions (three explicit questions and two implicit questions) about the passage. These scores are reported by number correct and the descriptive information is useful for the teacher to guide further instruction. A cut score for “Ready for Kindergarten” has not been established for this measure.

The expressive vocabulary measure involves children viewing picture cards and identifying the name, action, or attribute captured in the picture. These words/pictures were selected from a database that represents words that tap into the academic language of school. There are twenty-four items on the vocabulary measure. These scores are reported by number correct and then converted to a percentile rank. A cut score for “Ready for Kindergarten” has not been established for this measure.

2009-10 Kindergarten Screening Results

Scannable response sheets were received for 193,182 kindergarten students. This represents 99-percent of the 196,039 kindergarten students in public schools during October 2009. As appropriate, teachers provide a reason why a child could not be screened. The Department uses this information to track the status of as many children as possible. Screening is not valid or appropriate if:

- ❑ The child began school after the 30th day of school.
- ❑ The child was retained from the previous year.
- ❑ The child is an English language learner (only for the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading portion).
- ❑ The child had excessive absences (only for the Early Childhood Observation System portion).
- ❑ The child has significant disabilities.
- ❑ Valid scores could not be determined because of coding or gridding problems.

2009-10 ECHOS RESULTS

For the kindergarten children with valid results on the ECHOS (182,534) teacher ratings indicated **89 percent were considered “Ready for Kindergarten.”**

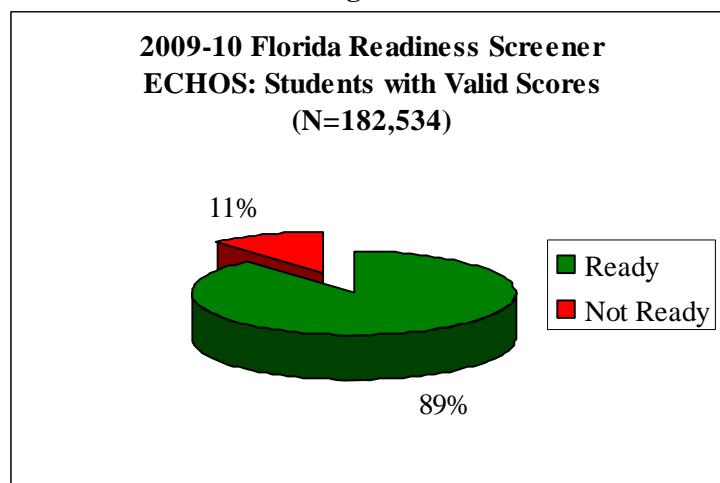
These findings are important to establish a baseline information about students upon their entry into kindergarten. Figures 1 and 2 provide these results.

Figure 1

Summary of ECHOS Status								
	2006		2007		2008		2009	
Total Scored	184,124		180,351		178,917		182,534	
Ready*	158,240	85.94%	158,257	87.75%	157,341	87.94%	161,561	88.51%
Not Ready	25,884	14.06%	22,094	12.25%	21,576	12.06%	20,973	11.49%

* To be considered “Ready for Kindergarten,” children should be scoring at the **Demonstrating** or **Emerging/Progressing** levels.

Figure 2



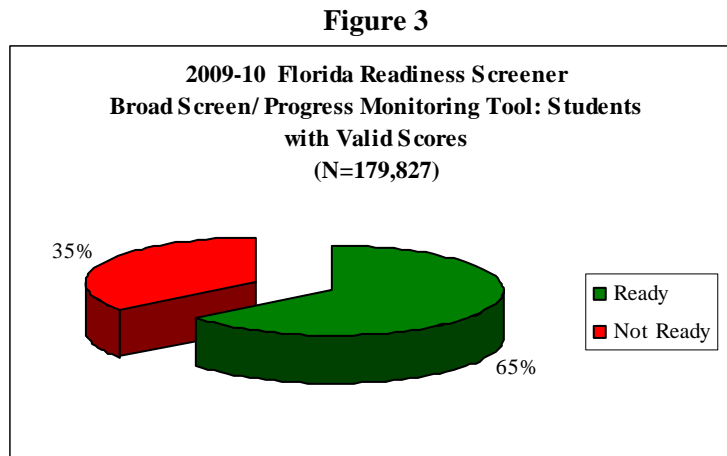
2009-10 ECHOS RESULTS (CONT.)

Attachment 1 provides the 2009-10 results by district and Attachment 2 displays the percent of kindergarten children “Ready” on ECHOS by district.

2009-10 FLORIDA ASSESSMENTS FOR INSTRUCTION IN READING (FAIR)

For kindergarten children with valid results on the Broad Screen (179,827), **65% were considered “Ready for Kindergarten” by scoring a Probability of Reading Success at or above 67% chance of scoring at or above grade level.**

These findings are important to establish a baseline information about students upon their entry into kindergarten. Figure 3 provide these results.



Attachment 3 provides the percent of children “Ready” and “Not Ready” by district on the Broad Screen. Attachment 4 displays the percent of kindergarten children “Ready” on the Broad Screen.

For kindergarten children with valid results on Listening Comprehension (179,485), the average number of correct responses was 2/3 for explicit and 1/2 for implicit comprehension. For kindergarten children with valid results on Vocabulary, the average percentile rank was 41. Cut scores for “ready for kindergarten” have not been established for either of these two measures.

Figures 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 provide these results.

Figure 4

Listening Comprehension Explicit			Listening Comprehension Implicit		
	N= 179,620		N= 179,524		
3 Total Correct	47,897	26.67%	2 Total Correct	28,104	15.65%
2 Total Correct	64,801	36.08%	1 Total Correct	57,159	31.84%
1 Total Correct	41,386	23.04%	0 Total Correct	94,261	52.51%
0 Total Correct	25,536	14.22%			

2009-10 FLORIDA ASSESSMENTS FOR INSTRUCTION IN READING (FAIR) CONT.

Figure 5

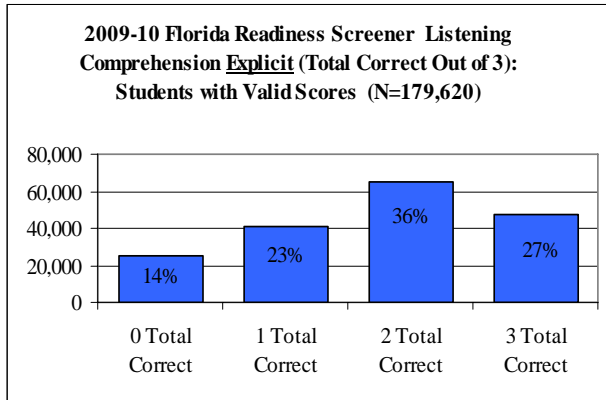


Figure 6

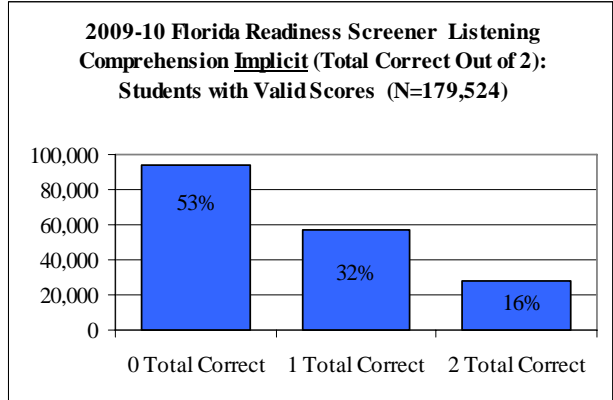
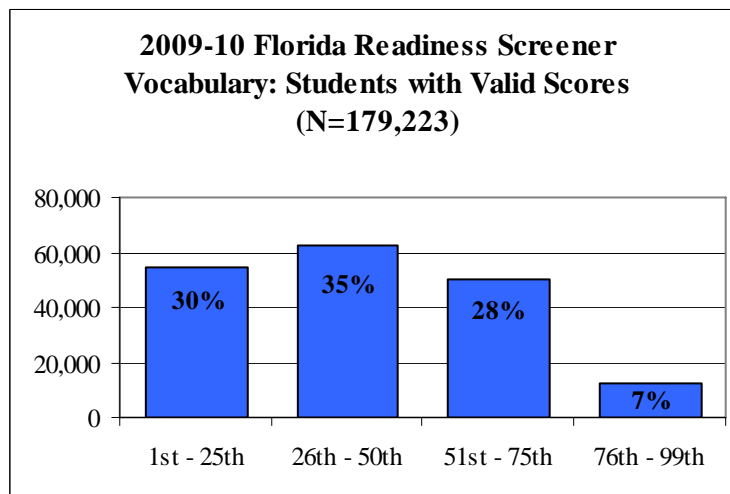


Figure 7

Vocabulary		
N= 179,223		
Percentile Rank		
1 st – 25 th Percentile	54,522	30.42%
26 th – 50 th Percentile	62,182	34.70%
51 st – 75 th Percentile	49,971	27.88%
76 th – 99 th Percentile	12,548	7.00%

Figure 8



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DISTRICT REPORT OF SCHOOL RESULTS

School districts have access to their *District Report of School Results* directly from the Department of Education's contractor. These data may be used in the development of local School Improvement Plans and for related student achievement initiatives.

Copies of the *District Report of School Results* will also be provided to the Florida Center for Reading Research, the *Just Read, Florida!* Office, the Executive Directors of the local Early Learning Coalitions, and the Office of Early Learning, Agency for Workforce Innovation. The Department of Education will be using these data for additional analysis.

If you have questions regarding the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener, please contact Shan Goff at 850/245-0445 or via email at shan.goff@fldoe.org or Jackie Mueller at 850/245-0775 or via email at jackie.mueller@fldoe.org.

We appreciate your support, collaboration, and ongoing commitment to young children and their families.

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Attachments (4)

cc: Assistant Superintendents, Curriculum and Instruction
District Coordinators, Assessment
Chairpersons, Early Learning Coalitions
Executive Directors, Early Learning Coalitions
Cynthia Lorenzo, Director, Agency for Workforce Innovation