



# Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program

October 19, 2023



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF  
**EDUCATION**  
fldoe.org

[www.FLDOE.org](http://www.FLDOE.org)

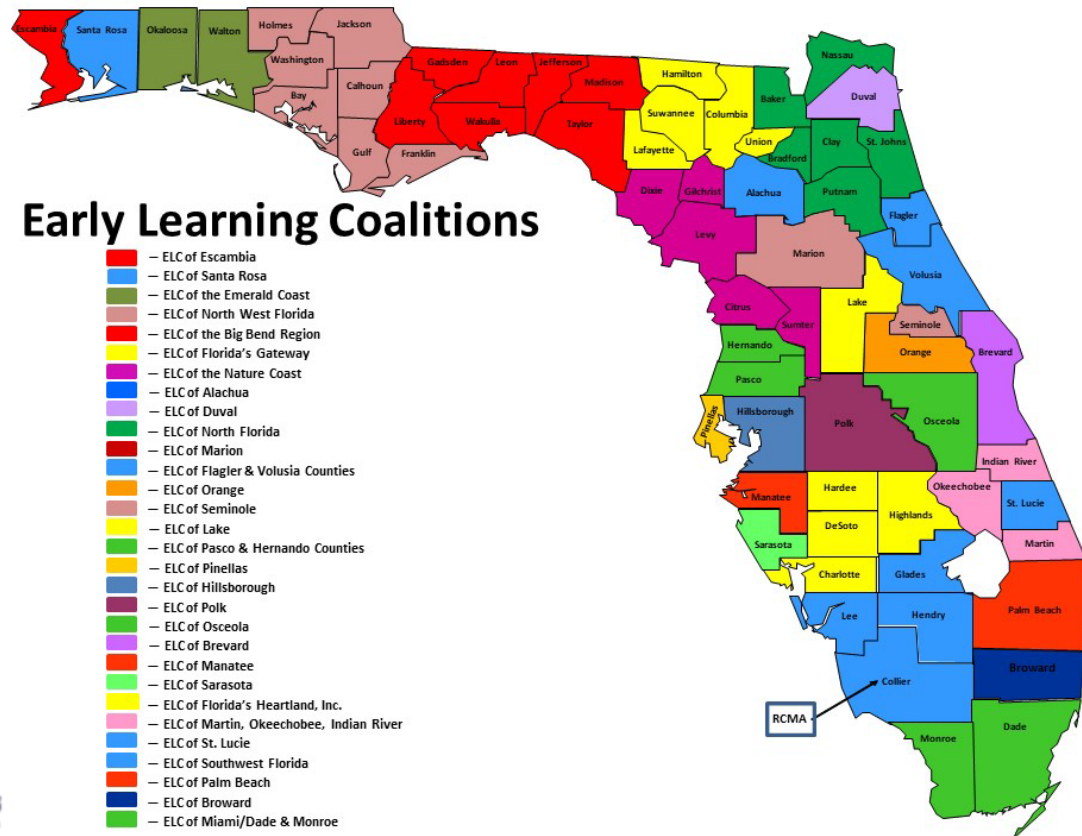
# New Structure for Early Learning

- In 2021, the Division of Early Learning (DEL) was brought into the Department of Education to provide coordinated and seamless educational services and supports to children from birth through K-12 and beyond.
- The division is the lead administrator for federal and state childcare funds. As such, DEL:
  - Oversees Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) network which helps parents identify and select quality child care options that best meet their needs, and provides technical assistance that improves the quality, availability and affordability of child care.
  - Administers the School Readiness (SR) and Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) programs.
  - Develops, adopts and implements quality standards and measures to improve Florida's comprehensive early childhood care and education system.



# Early Learning Coalitions and RCMA

The Department of Education’s DEL administers SR and VPK programs statewide in partnership with thirty (30) early learning coalitions (ELCs) and the Redlands Christian Migrant Association (RCMA).





# Importance of Kindergarten Readiness

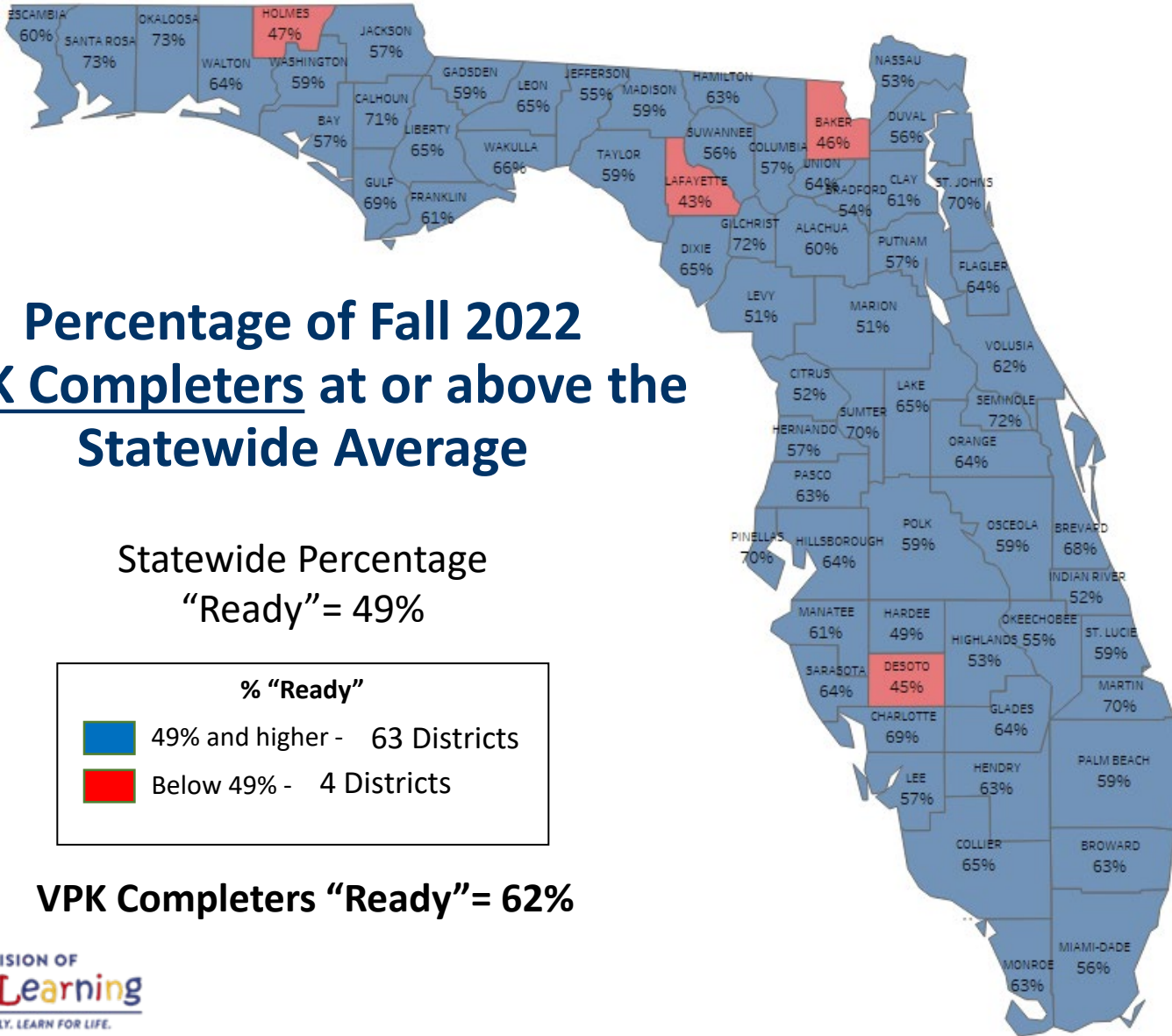
- For children who enter kindergarten behind, **roughly 75%** will never catch up to their classmates.
- State and local **prekindergarten programs**, almost without exception, **improve academic readiness for school.**
- Participants in the prekindergarten program **scored higher on third-grade language arts tests** than did nonparticipants.
- Participation in an **early childhood experience** (child care or preschool) **increases high school graduation rates.**







# 2022 FAST PM 1 VPK Completer Results by County



# VPK

- **Purpose of VPK**

- To prepare every four-year-old in Florida for kindergarten and build the foundation for their educational success.

- **For Who?**

- Florida children 4-years-old on or before Sept. 1.
- Children born from Feb. 2 through Sept. 1 of a calendar year may enroll in VPK either the program year they turn 4 or the next.

- **Program Options**

- **School Year Program:** Up to 540 hours of instruction available between August through June
- **Summer Program:** Up to 300 hours of instruction available between May through August
- **Specialized Instructional Services (SIS):** Services available outside traditional VPK classroom setting for 4-year-olds with disabilities – child must have current individual educational plan (IEP) from local school district.

# VPK Provider Eligibility

- Types of private providers eligible to offer VPK
  - **Child care facilities** (licensed by DCF under s. 402.305, F.S.)
  - **Family day care homes** (licensed under s. 402.313, F.S.)
  - **Large family child care homes** (licensed by DCF under s. 402.3131, F.S.)
  - **Faith-based providers** (license-exempt under s. 402.316, F.S.)
  - **Non-public schools** (license-exempt under s. 402.3025, F.S.)
- License-exempt providers must be accredited by an association listed in s. 1002.55(3)(b)1., F.S., or hold a current Gold Seal designation.
- All private VPK providers must also have a program director with a VPK Director Credential issued by the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF).
- Public schools, including charters may offer VPK.
- For the summer VPK program, school districts are required to provide admission for every eligible child whose parents enroll them in the district's VPK program [s. 1002.53(6)(b), F.S.].





## VPK Provider Eligibility

- Both private providers and public schools that offer VPK must meet quality standards
  - Employ qualified instructors
  - Teach Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for 4-Year-Olds
  - Maintain required class sizes

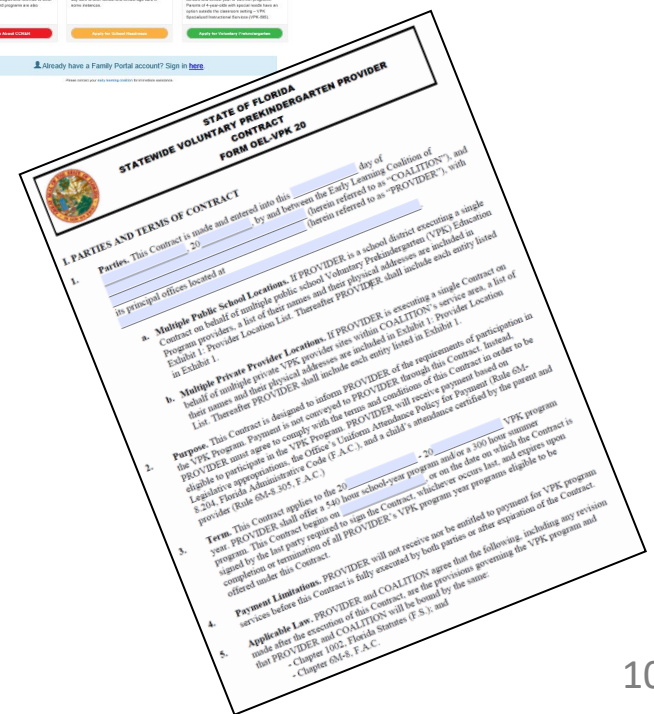
# How to Apply?

- Families apply for VPK through the Family Services Portal website <https://familyservices.floridaearlylearning.com/>
- Providers apply to offer VPK and contract annually with the ELC, using the Statewide VPK Provider Contract (Forms DEL-VPK 20 and DEL-VPK 20PS or DEL-VPK 20PP, as applicable) through the Provider Portal.



Resource & Referral	School Readiness	VPK
Florida's Child Care, Pre-K and School Readiness (RHD) Program is a free voluntary program for children ages 3 to 5. It provides a variety of services to help children get ready for school. For more information, visit <a href="http://www.floridachildcare.com">www.floridachildcare.com</a> .	Florida's School Readiness Program is a free voluntary program for children ages 3 to 5. It provides a variety of services to help children get ready for school. For more information, visit <a href="http://www.floridachildcare.com">www.floridachildcare.com</a> .	Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program (VPK) is a free voluntary program for children ages 3 to 5. It provides a variety of services to help children get ready for school. For more information, visit <a href="http://www.floridachildcare.com">www.floridachildcare.com</a> .
<a href="#">Learn More About CCRD</a>	<a href="#">Apply for School Readiness</a>	<a href="#">Apply for Voluntary Prekindergarten</a>

Already have a Family Portal account? [Sign in here](#)



**STATE OF FLORIDA**  
**STATEWIDE VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN PROVIDER CONTRACT**  
**FORM DEL-VPK 20**

**I. PARTIES AND TERMS OF CONTRACT**

1. Parties. This Contract is made and entered into this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, by and between the Early Learning Coalition of \_\_\_\_\_ (herein referred to as "COALITION"), and \_\_\_\_\_ (herein referred to as "PROVIDER"), with its principal offices located at \_\_\_\_\_

a. **Multiple Public School Locations.** If PROVIDER is a school district executing a single Contract on behalf of multiple public school Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program providers, a list of their names and their physical addresses are included in Exhibit 1. Provider Location List. Thereafter PROVIDER shall include each entry listed in Exhibit 1.

b. **Multiple Private Provider Locations.** If PROVIDER is executing a single Contract on behalf of multiple private VPK provider sites within COALITION's service area, a list of their names and their physical addresses are included in Exhibit 1. Provider Location List. Thereafter PROVIDER shall include each entry listed in Exhibit 1.

2. **Purpose.** This Contract is designed to inform PROVIDER of the requirements of participation in the VPK Program. Payment is not conveyed to PROVIDER through this Contract in order to be eligible to participate in the VPK Program. PROVIDER will receive payment based on Legislative Appropriation Code (F.A.C.) \_\_\_\_\_ or on the basis on which the Contract is executed. PROVIDER shall comply with the terms and conditions of the VPK program (Rule 68F-024, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.)).

3. **Term.** This Contract applies to the 20\_\_\_\_ - 20\_\_\_\_ VPK program year. PROVIDER shall offer a 540 hour school-year program and/or a 370 hour summer program. This Contract begins on \_\_\_\_\_ and ends on \_\_\_\_\_, and expires upon completion or termination of all PROVIDER's VPK program year programs eligible to be offered under this Contract.

4. **Payment Limitations.** PROVIDER will not receive not be entitled to payment for VPK program services before this Contract is fully executed by both parties or after expiration of the Contract.

5. **Applicable Law.** PROVIDER and COALITION agree that the following, including any revisions made after the execution of this Contract, are the provisions governing the VPK program and that PROVIDER and COALITION will be bound by the same:  
- Chapter 68F, Florida Statutes (F.S.), and  
- Chapter 68A, F.A.C.



# VPK Program Initiatives and Services

- **Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards, 4 Year Olds to Kindergarten**
- **Program Assessment (CLASS)** - measures teacher/child interactions and supports improvement.
- **Student Assessment (FAST Star Early Literacy)** – monitors improvement in emergent literacy and math skills and helps teachers provide instruction based on children’s needs.
- **Professional Learning Opportunities via VPK Regional Facilitators**
  - Online, In-Person Instructor-Led, and Virtual Instructor-Led Professional Learning Opportunities
  - Professional Learning Communities
  - Emergent/Elementary Literacy Micro-Credential(s)
- **New Worlds Reading Initiative**

For Questions – [VPKQuestions@del.fldoe.org](mailto:VPKQuestions@del.fldoe.org)



# Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards (FELDS)



Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four Years Old to Kindergarten (2017)

An Educator's Guide to Understanding  
**THE FLORIDA EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENTAL STANDARDS:**  
**4 YEARS OLD TO KINDERGARTEN**





**MATHEMATICAL THINKING/MATHEMATICS**

**FLORIDA EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENTAL STANDARDS:**

**4 YEARS OLD TO KINDERGARTEN (2017)**

**CROSSWALK WITH FLORIDA B.E.S.T. K-3 STANDARDS (2020)**

**April 2020**



# FELDS Bridge to K-3 B.E.S.T. Standards

**LANGUAGE AND LITERACY/ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

**FLORIDA EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENTAL STANDARDS:**

**4 YEARS OLD TO KINDERGARTEN (2017)**

**CROSSWALK WITH FLORIDA B.E.S.T. K-3 STANDARDS (2020)**

**April 2020**





## VPK Program Assessment: CLASS

- CLASS = **C**lassroom **A**ssessment **S**coring **S**ystem
- CLASS is a research-based method of measuring, evaluating and improving teacher-student interactions from infant care-12<sup>th</sup> grade.
- CLASS measures high quality interactions that lead to improved academic outcomes. The interactions teachers have with children are proven to impact learning development.
- Each VPK classroom must be assessed.
- Providers receive each classroom's results within 14 days.
- Early learning coalitions (ELCs) are responsible for administration of CLASS which must be conducted by qualified individuals.
- In 2023-24, VPK providers must have a 4.00 composite score to contract in future years.

# CLASS Resources and Support

## ADMINISTRATORS

- A **CLASS Primer for Leaders** provides the how and why of CLASS, identifies the value CLASS brings and interprets CLASS data. 2-hour online course.

## COACHES

- **FEEDBACK TRAINING** helps coaches feel more positive and confident when going into their next coaching and professional learning session.

## TEACHERS

- **CLASS Foundations for Teachers** introduces teachers to the CLASS framework and encourages them to reflect on their own teaching practice. Uses real-life videos and hands-on exercises to connect learning. 21 hours - hybrid model of online and facilitated training.
- **MyTeachstone Focus**, a myTeachstone subscription with access to over 1,000 resources in a variety of media.

## OBSERVERS

- **CLASS Observations Support Series - virtual training** increases confidence in accurately observing across multiple classroom settings, such as those with dual language learners or children with special needs.

# FAST Star Early Literacy for VPK

The Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring Program is the statewide, standardized program known as Florida Assessment of Student Thinking or FAST Star Early Literacy implemented in all VPK programs.

- **Why are we implementing Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring?**
  - To assess and monitor VPK student achievement and learning gains of the performance standards in early literacy and mathematics (Sections 1002.68 and 1008.25(9), F.S., and Rule 6M-8.620, F.A.C.)
- **Who is assessed?**
  - All VPK program students enrolled with valid certificates of eligibility.
- **What is assessed?**
  - 27 total items – 22 early literacy items and 5 numeracy items
  - 10-key early literacy sub-domains: Visual Discrimination, Alphabetic Principle, Concept of Word, Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Structural Analysis, Vocabulary, Sentence-Level Comprehension, Paragraph-Level Comprehension, Early Numeracy
- **When are the students assessed?**
  - Three progress monitoring periods in a program year (PM1, PM2, PM3)
- **How long does it take?**
  - 10-20 minutes average test length

# FAST Star Early Literacy Resources and Support

**Bookmark the VPK FAST Star Early Literacy website today!**

<https://www.fldoe.org/schools/early-learning/providers/fast-star-earlit.shtml>

- [VPK Program Guide to FAST Star Early Literacy](#) supports programs with understanding implementation requirements.
- [FAST Star Early Literacy Renaissance-U Enrollment Guidance](#) details the training requirements and courses for programs to have qualified test administrators.
- [FAST Star Early Literacy Family Letter – What Families Need to Know](#) is a resource for families prior to their child participating in FAST assessment administration.
- [FAST Star Early Literacy Resources and Reports](#) provide links to the Renaissance Resources and Reports that best support programs with FAST implementation.
- [Star Early Literacy Score Definitions](#) provide descriptions for each score that a student may receive on the various Renaissance reports.
- [FAST-Star Early Literacy FAQs](#) is a great go-to document for frequently asked questions to support programs with implementation questions.

**If you have VPK FAST implementation or policy questions, email [VPKFAST@del.fldoe.org](mailto:VPKFAST@del.fldoe.org). If you need assistance with the Renaissance system, contact Renaissance Support at 1-800-338-4204.**



# Training Requirements for VPK Personnel

- **VPK Director Credential**

- Implementing the Florida Standards in Preschool Classrooms: 3 Years Old to Kindergarten (online VFSP or instructor-led SPC3TK)
- Emergent Literacy for VPK Instructors (VPK, VPKR or VPK21)
- Mathematical Thinking for Early Learners (MATH)
- Language and Vocabulary in the VPK Classroom (LVPK or LVPK21)
- VPK Director Credential Course (DVPK)

- **VPK Instructors**

- Emergent Literacy Training
  - Three 5-hour courses with additional training required every five (5) years
- Performance Standards Training
  - 5-hours online or 3-hours instructor-led course on the most current early learning and developmental standards





# VPK Professional Learning Opportunities

Online



In-Person Instructor-led



Virtual Instructor-led





# Online Courses

- Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards (FELDS)
- Emergent Literacy/Phonological Awareness
- English Language Learners (ELL)
- Language and Vocabulary
- Mathematical Thinking
- VPK Director Credential



Florida Early Childhood Professional Development Registry  
Your Child Care Training System



**Sign In**

username/email

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password

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**Sign In**

Don't have an account?

**Sign Up**

Need help?  
Call the Child Care Training Information Center  
at 1-888-352-2842

**\$10 cost**  
**0.3 – 0.5 CEUs**

# In-Person Instructor-led Training

- Delivered by VPK Regional Facilitators or approved DEL trainers
- Aligned to the **FELDS**
- It's Okay to Play in VPK (Part II)
- 10 additional course options
- FELDS, Emergent Literacy, Math
- Register in the DCF Training System
- 0.3 – 0.5 CEUs
- **FREE**



Florida Early Childhood Professional Development Registry  
Your Child Care Training System



Visit the [Florida Early Childhood Professional Catalog](#) to find training courses near you!

**Sign In**

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**Sign In**

Don't have an account?

**Sign Up**

Need help?  
Call the Child Care Training Information Center  
at 1-888-352-2842

# Virtual Instructor-led Training

- Delivered by VPK Regional Facilitators or approved DEL trainers
- Aligned to the **FELDS**
- 7 available course options
  - Book Embedded Vocabulary Instruction: Language and Vocabulary Development
  - Dialogic Reading: Language and Vocabulary Development
  - Scaffolding and Think, Show, Tell, Talk: Language and Vocabulary Development
  - Implementing the Florida Standards in Preschool Classrooms: 3 Years Old to Kindergarten
  - Phonological Awareness Development for Preschoolers 2021
  - Building a Strong Foundation for Emergent Literacy
  - It's Okay to Play in VPK (Part I)
- Register in the DCF Training System
- 0.3 – 0.5 CEUs
- **FREE**



# Emergent/Elementary Literacy Micro-Credential

<https://www.fldoe.org/schools/early-learning/>

- **Emergent – Designed for instructional and child care personnel who work in a public or private early learning program.**
  - 60 hours/3 components (20 hours each)
  - \$2,000 stipend for completion
  - Meets the VPK instructor emergent literacy course requirement
- **Elementary – Designed for PreK-Grade 5 instructional personnel who work in public schools.**
  - 60 hours/3 components (20 hours each)
  - For child care and instructional personnel who work in a public or private early learning program: \$2,000 stipend for completion
  - For K-5 public school instructional personnel (including charters): \$1,000 stipend for completion
  - Satisfies Competency 1 of the Reading Endorsement
  - Satisfies the 40-hour reading requirement for teacher certification renewal
  - Allows instructional personnel to teach intensive reading intervention if supervised by a certified or reading endorsed teacher





# New Worlds Reading Initiative

**New Worlds Reading Initiative (NWRI)** is expanded to include eligible VPK students.

<https://www.fldoe.org/academics/standards/just-read-fl/nwri.shtml>

## What is NWRI?

- Eligible VPK-Grade 5 students receive free books monthly until the students exit fifth grade.
- Eligible students include VPK-Grade 2 students scoring below grade level (below 40<sup>th</sup> percentile on FAST Star) in early literacy/reading or grades 3-5 students scoring below a Level 3 on FAST (PM1, PM2 or PM3).
- Distribution of books begins no later than October and continues through at least June.
- Parent resources are included.
- Teacher resources around books being distributed.





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# VPK Accountability

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## *Methodology for Calculating Each Provider's Performance Metric*

- The department shall adopt a methodology for calculating each private prekindergarten provider's and public school provider's performance metric, which must be based on a combination of the following:

<b>1</b>	Program assessment composite score, which must be weighted at no less than 50 percent. <b>(CLASS)</b>
<b>2</b>	Learning gains operationalized as change-in-ability scores from the initial and final progress monitoring results. <b>(FAST Star Early Literacy)</b>
<b>3</b>	Norm-referenced developmental learning outcomes. <b>(FAST Star Early Literacy)</b>

- The methodology shall include a statistical latent profile analysis developed by the department that shall produce a limited number of performance metric profiles which summarize the profiles of all sites that must be used to inform designations.

*\*s. 1002.68, F.S., Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program accountability*



# VPK Accountability

## *Designations*

Produce a limited number of performance metric profiles which summarize the profiles of all sites that must be used to inform the following designations:

- Unsatisfactory
- Emerging Proficiency
- Proficient
- Highly Proficient
- Excellent

**OR**

Comparable terminology determined by the department which may not include letter grades.

*\*s. 1002.68, F.S., Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program accountability*

## Timeline for Establishing Performance Metric for VPK Accountability

- **July 1-August 31:** Receive final CLASS/Star data
- **Week of August 14<sup>th</sup>:** Virtual CEGS meeting – Update on VPK accountability legislation; overview of 2022-23 CLASS and FAST results (school year programs)
- **September:** Finalize and execute contract for Psychometrician and immediately begin working on establishment of a performance metric calculation/designations
- **October 5<sup>th</sup>:** CEGS meeting – K Ready cut score recommendations
- **August 1-November 30:** Run simulations using 22-23 data from CLASS/Star; develop 3-5 models for consideration (learning gains calculation, performance metrics and designations)
- **December:** ELC committee meeting for feedback on the proposed models/designations
- **January 2024:** CEGS meeting/consultation of proposed models
- **February 2024:** FDOE considers recommendations from CEGS and make final determination for performance metric/designations
- **March 2024:** Notice of Rule Development packet due
- **April 1-2, 2024:** Tentative Rule workshop dates
- **May 15, 2024:** Notice of Rule Promulgation and final Rule language and materials due
- **July 2024:** State Board meeting; publish VPK accountability calculation/designations and VPK provider results using approved model (information use only) to set 2024-25 VPK accountability expectations.





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