



2015-2016

VPK Provider Guide

Early education. Lifelong success.



Disclaimer: Procedures and policies are subject to change. This guide will be updated annually.

Voluntary Prekindergarten Provider Guide

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Voluntary Prekindergarten Provider Guide

Dear VPK Provider,

Welcome to the Early Learning Coalition of Miami -Dade/Monroe Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) education program. We know a strong partnership with you will make a great difference in early childhood education and we are pleased to have you as a provider.

Our Mission

To promote high-quality school readiness, voluntary prekindergarten and after school programs, thus increasing all children's chances of achieving future educational success and becoming productive members of society. The Early Learning Coalition seeks to further the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of Miami-Dade and Monroe County children with a priority toward the ages before birth through age 5.

Our Vision

To ensure a comprehensive and integrated system providing for all families and their children, beginning before birth to 5 years, the affordable opportunity to enter school ready to learn and succeed in life.

Our Values

- **Children** – Children are at the heart of all we do. We believe that all children, regardless of circumstance, are capable of educational excellence and personal growth, and we are committed to ensuring school readiness and lifelong success for each one.
- **Community** – We believe children are the future, and our community is an essential part of their road to success. By working together, we can promote education and support children as they become thriving, productive members of society.
- **Partnership** – We value partnerships and are collaborative in all we do. We work closely with fellow service providers, families, corporations, elected officials, individuals and the community at large to promote the importance of early learning and to secure educational opportunities for all children.
- **Advocacy** – We are a champion for children, promoting positive societal and community change. Our staff and community partners are committed to advancing education throughout Miami-Dade and Monroe counties and are set apart by their passion, strength and dedication to children.
- **Excellence** – When it comes to early learning, quality matters. We are committed to excellence, providing quality programs and services that make a difference in our community. Designed to further the physical, social, emotional and intellectual needs of all children, our programs are innovative and offer each child an equal opportunity for a successful future.

The VPK Provider Guide is provided to assist you with questions you may have involving VPK. However, please note, the VPK program is evolving and subsequently this guide will be updated on an annual basis to include new requirements regarding the VPK program. You can periodically check this guide for changes and/or new information regarding VPK rules and regulations by going to www.elcmdm.org

The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe welcome you as a VPK provider. Thank you for your continuous efforts to improve the quality of early childhood education. We look forward to working with you to support children's early learning experience. Please feel free to contact us for help or support at:

Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe
2555 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Suite 500
Coral Gables, FL 33134

305.646.7220
786.433.3227 (fax)
info@elcmdm.org

Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe (Monroe Office)
1111 12 Street, Suite 1-20
Key West, FL 33040

305.296.5557
305.296.5588 (fax)

Miami-Dade Locations

South Service Center

The Centre at Cutler Bay Condominium
18951 SW 106 Ave
Unit B-208
Miami, FL 33157

Central Service Center

United Way Building
3250 SW 3rd Avenue
Miami, FL 33129

North Service Center

Golden Glades Office Park
1515 NW 167th Street, Suite 320
Miami Gardens, FL 33169

Monroe Locations

To contact any of these service centers, please call our Monroe office at 305-296-5557.

Upper Keys Service Center

Pink Plaza
103400 Overseas Highway, Suite 232

Middle Keys Service Center

Co-location with Keys AHEC, Gulfside Village
5800 Overseas Highway, Suite 36

Lower keys Service Center

Professional Plaza
1111 12 St., Suite 206

Program Overview

Voluntary Prekindergarten or VPK gives children a jump start by preparing them for school and enhancing their pre-reading, pre-math, language and social skills. By developing the skills children need to become strong readers and students at an early age, children are more likely to be successful in school. VPK classrooms offer high-quality programs that include high literacy standards, developmentally appropriate curricula, manageable class sizes, and qualified teachers.

VPK is a free program for any child in Florida who turns 4 years of age by September 1, regardless of family income. No fees can be required of families during VPK hours and families cannot be under obligation to enroll children in any extra services in order to participate in VPK. Also, families cannot be required to purchase materials and/or supplies.

Legislation sets forth specific requirements that providers must comply with when designing their VPK program. However, VPK providers do have flexibility in how they design their program as long as they meet the required number of instructional hours, staffing requirements, and class sizes. Parents are free to choose the program that best meets their child’s individual needs but only can choose one.

VPK Statewide Program Administration

The Florida Office of Early Learning (OEL) works in collaboration with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to implement the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education program. The VPK program begins at the State level and is administered by local coalitions. In turn, the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe contracts with local providers to provide direct VPK services to children. The Early Learning Coalition receives state funding to administer the VPK program in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties. The Coalition registers eligible public and private early learning programs as VPK Providers and is responsible for collecting, reviewing, and maintaining all required documentation for both public school and private Providers.

Office of Early Learning	Department of Children and Families
Responsible for operational requirements and day-to-day management of VPK Program and for creation of performance standards, curriculum and accountability	Responsible for childcare licensing and credentialing of staff

VPK Contract

VPK Program Contract Submission and Approval Timeline:

- ❖ Miami-Dade and Monroe providers please use the [Provider Portal](#) to fill out your VPK Contract

School Year VPK: sessions may be approved to begin on the first day of the regular school board calendar in the Provider's county.

Summer VPK: sessions may be approved to begin May 1st or later; and after the Provider's School Year VPK session has ended.

A VPK session is considered approved and recognized for payment when both the Early Learning Coalition and the Provider have signed the OEL-VPK20 Statewide Provider Contract.

An incomplete application will not be accepted.

OEL-VPK 10 form:

The OEL-VPK 10 contains information about the facility. Copies of the following documents must be submitted:

- License/License Exempt documentation, if applicable- License Exempt status must be supported by an Accreditation Certificate that has been issued by an Accrediting Agency
- Attendance Policy for your VPK Program
- Director Credential (with VPK Endorsement if received after 12/31/06)
- Cleared DCF Level II Background Screening on the Director
- Gold Seal Accreditation, if applicable - consists of DCF congratulatory letter/ Gold Seal certificate and Accrediting agency certificate.

General Liability Insurance

In addition the private prekindergarten provider must maintain general liability insurance and provide the coalition with written evidence of general liability insurance coverage, including coverage for transportation of children if prekindergarten students are transported by the provider. A provider must obtain and retain an insurance policy that provides a minimum of \$100,000 of coverage per occurrence and a minimum of \$300,000 general aggregate coverage. A provider must add the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe as a named certificate holder and as an additional insured. A provider must provide the coalition with a minimum of 10 calendar days' advance written notice of cancellation of or changes to coverage. The general liability insurance required by this paragraph must remain in full force and effect for the entire period of the provider contract with the coalition with no gaps in coverage.

OEL-VPK 11A form:

The OEL-VPK 11A is about the proposed VPK classroom Instructor(s). Copies of the following documents must be submitted:

Each credentialed VPK Instructor (lead teacher) must have:

*Copy of a five (or more) hour Early Literacy training certificate. If Literacy training was completed after October 1, 2005, it must be the Emergent Literacy for VPK Instructors course.

And

*Standards for Four-Year-Olds (online or instructor led)

These course are offered on-line at www.myflorida.com/childcare, select training requirements and then on-line training courses.

1.
 - Child Development Associate (CDA) or Florida Child Care Professional Certificate (FCCPC) earned within the last five (5) years; or
 - An Associate's Degree or higher in Child Development; or
 - An Associate's Degree or higher in an unrelated field, with at least 6 credit hours in early childhood education or child development, and at least 480 hours of experience in teaching or providing childcare services for children any age from birth to 8 years of age; (verified through DCF Staff Credential Verification)
 - A Bachelor's Degree or higher in early childhood education, prekindergarten or primary education, preschool education, or family and consumer science; or
 - A Bachelor's Degree in elementary education, if the prekindergarten instructor has been certified to teach children any age from birth through 6th grade, with a Florida Educator's Certificate, regardless whether the certificate is current or not, and has not had this educator certificate suspended or revoked.
 - Please note that a teaching degree from another country must be evaluated and translated by an accredited organization and submitted to DCF for approval.

*Formal Education does not require Emergent Literacy for VPK Instructors training certificate or the Standards for Four- Year-Olds training.

2. Copy of Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Criminal Background screening completed in the past 5 years.
3. Copy of Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Criminal Background check completed within the last 5 years.

Please note: Effective April 1, 2012, all fingerprints submitted for background screening must be completed using LiveScan. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) will no longer accept or process fingerprint cards. This is due to a change in Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) policy.

4. Copy of Affidavit of Good Moral Character (Notarized)

You must include the following for each VPK aide/assistant:

1. Copy of Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Criminal Background screening completed in the past 5 years.
2. Copy of Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Criminal Background check completed within the last 5 years.
3. Copy of Affidavit of Good Moral Character

Summer VPK Program

You must include the following for each credentialed VPK Instructor:

1. Copy of one (1) of the following credentials:
 - A Bachelor's Degree or higher in early childhood education, prekindergarten or primary education, preschool education, or family and consumer science; or
 - A Bachelor's Degree in elementary education, if the prekindergarten instructor has been certified to teach children any age from birth through 6th grade, with a Florida Educator's Certificate, regardless whether the certificate is current or not, and has not had this educator certificate suspended or revoked.
 - A valid (current) Florida Educator Certificate
 - Please note that a teaching degree from another country must be evaluated and translated by an accredited organization and submitted to DCF for approval.
2. Copy of Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Criminal Background screening completed in the past 5 years.
3. Copy of Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Criminal Background check completed within the last 5 years.
4. Copy of Affidavit of Good Moral Character (Notarized)

VPK Substitute Requirements:

When the assigned and approved VPK staff is absent from a VPK class, the Provider is required to temporarily assign substitute staff who has the required credential and background screening. Providers must notify the Early Learning Coalition in advance of substitutes to be used during the VPK session. The Notification Form and OEL-VPK 11A form is used to notify the Early Learning Coalition of the use of substitute staff.

A Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) substitute must pass a Level 2 background screening and sign Affidavit of Good Moral Character before beginning employment as a substitute.

This information must be submitted to the Early Learning Coalition for approval prior to assigning a substitute to any VPK classroom.

A VPK substitute must meet the qualifications of a credentialed instructor or successfully complete one or more of the following, depending on which program they are substituting in (School Year program or Summer program):

School Year Program Sub Requirements:

- Child Development Associate (CDA) or Florida Child Care Professional Certificate (FCCPC) earned within the last five (5) years; or
- An Associate's Degree or higher in Child Development; or
- An Associate's Degree or higher in an unrelated field, with at least 6 credit hours in early childhood education or child development, and at least 480 hours of experience in teaching or providing childcare services for children any age from birth to 8 years of age; (verified through DCF Staff Credential Verification)
- A Bachelor's Degree or higher in early childhood education, prekindergarten or primary education, preschool education, or family and consumer science; or
- A Bachelor's Degree in elementary education, if the prekindergarten instructor has been certified to teach children any age from birth through 6th grade, with a Florida Educator's Certificate, regardless whether the certificate is current or not, and has not had this educator certificate suspended or revoked.
- Please note that a teaching degree from another country must be evaluated and translated by an accredited organization and submitted to DCF for approval.

Summer Program Sub Requirements:

Copy of one (1) of the following credentials:

- A Bachelor's Degree or higher in early childhood education, prekindergarten or primary education, preschool education, or family and consumer science; or
- A Bachelor's Degree in elementary education, if the prekindergarten instructor has been certified to teach children any age from birth through 6th grade, with a Florida Educator's Certificate, regardless whether the certificate is current or not, and has not had this educator certificate suspended or revoked.
- A valid (current) Florida Educator Certificate
- Please note that a teaching degree from another country must be evaluated and translated by an accredited organization and submitted to DCF for approval.

- Copy of Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Criminal Background screening completed in the past 5 years.
- Copy of Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Criminal Background check completed within the last 5 years.
- Copy of Affidavit of Good Moral Character (Notarized)

Substitute instructors may be assigned to substitute for an absent credentialed instructor **up to 30 percent** of the program hours (this is 90 hours for the summer and 162 hours for the school year). Providers may use different substitute instructors on different days, but the combined instructional hours of all substitutes cannot exceed 30 percent of the VPK program hours. A new credentialed instructor must be assigned to replace the absent instructor in the event the absence of the credentialed instructor will exceed 30 percent of the program hours. A substitute instructor may not be assigned to a classroom while the assigned credentialed instructor is offering instruction in another classroom.

A VPK provider shall maintain a record of the number of hours a substitute instructor has been assigned to each VPK classroom. Records shall be maintained by the VPK provider for a minimum of 1 year and shall be made available for review by the Early Learning Coalition during normal hours of operation, and shall submit a copy of the documentation to the Early Learning Coalition upon request. Should a provider not submit the information requested regarding substitute tracking, the Early Learning Coalition reserves the right to take corrective action to assure compliance with state policies.

OEL-VPK 11B form:

The OEL-VPK 11B is about the proposed VPK classroom calendar(s).

Calendars

During the application process, potential VPK providers will be required to submit their program calendar which will indicate the start and end dates, operational days and hours of VPK operation per day.

A provider is limited to modifying its class calendar twice. Exceptions to class schedule modification limits may be made for emergency circumstances. Emergency circumstances exist when federal, state, or local officials declare a state of emergency for the area in which a provider is located. This is limited to five days total per VPK class. If one or more emergency declarations create closures that exceed five days, then a provider must modify its calendar. Calendar changes under this section are in addition to the two calendar changes contained in rule for non-emergency circumstances.

School Year Program: The school year program option consists of **540 hours** of VPK instruction. The Early Learning Coalition may not pay a VPK provider for a VPK class unless the class schedule complies with the following:

- ❖ A school-year program may not begin instruction more than 14 days before Labor Day.
- ❖ A school-year program must complete instruction by June 30.
- ❖ It is recommended that any schedule over 4 hours should include a break for non-instructional activities (i.e. lunch, nap time)

*NO FEES CAN BE REQUIRED OF FAMILIES DURING BREAKS (lunch, nap time, etc.).

The charts below shows various program options. However, you can elect to customize your own program.

VPK Program Options	Minimum Number of Days	Total Number of Instructional
3 hour Instructional Hour Session	180	540
4 hour Instructional Hour Session	135	540
4.5 hour Instructional Hour Session	120	540
5 hour Instructional Hour Session	108	540
6 hour Instructional Hour Session	90	540

Summer Program:

A private provider can also choose to offer a summer VPK program, however public schools are required by law to offer a summer program if any eligible families are interested in enrolling their children (a minimum of 4 children is required). The summer VPK program consists of **300 hours** of instruction. A summer VPK program cannot start before May 1 and must end before the start date of public school in the fall.

- ❖ A summer VPK program cannot start before May 1 and must end before the start date of public school in the fall.
- ❖ Any schedule over 4 hours should include a break for non-instructional activities (i.e. lunch, nap time)
- ❖ A minimum of 4 children are required to start reimbursement of VPK services.

NO FEES CAN BE REQUIRED OF FAMILIES DURING BREAKS (lunch, nap time, etc.).

VPK Program Options	Minimum Number of Days	Total Number of Instructional
4 hour Instructional Hour Session	75	300
6 hour Instructional Hour Session	50	300
7.5 hour Instructional Hour Session	40	300

Instructional Hours:

Instructional hours are the times instructors are actively working with children to promote the VPK performance standards and a developmentally appropriate curriculum. Snack times are considered instructional time as long as VPK staff sit with and interact with the children and it is included in the lesson plan.

Naptime cannot be counted as instructional time during the VPK program.

*During **Summer VPK hours** breakfast and lunch can be counted as instructional hours if the VPK instructor is offering instruction during meal time. In addition, they must be listed on the lesson plan showing the enhancement and nurturing of children’s development.

Non-Instructional Days:

Non-instructional days are days that the provider chooses to be closed (holidays, teacher planning days, etc.), as well as days that the provider chooses not to provide VPK services but may be open and operating (in this case, if a provider serves children who receive a child care subsidy, the provider would be reimbursed the full day regular rate for children on non-instructional days).

Field Trips:

VPK programs are allowed to take field trips if completed in accordance to DCF regulations. Field trips must be planned activities or experiences that implement curricula; the VPK instructor must be present; and the VPK instructor must be engaged in activities or experiences. The provider must also have an alternative activity for a child that does not attend a field trip. Providers **cannot** charge VPK families for field trip costs.

STATEWIDE PROVIDER CONTRACT OEL-VPK 20

Prior to being authorized to provide VPK services, every VPK Provider applicant must enter into a contractual contract with the Coalition by signing a VPK Statewide Contract (VPK-20). This document outlines the following established requirements of each VPK Provider and the Provider's commitment to comply with those requirements:

1. **Prohibition of Starting VPK Program before approval:** VPK Providers must have a fully executed copy of the Statewide Contract (OEL-VPK-20) for the current program year prior to beginning their VPK Program.
2. **Locations of VPK Programs:** Each location where VPK is offered must, at all times, meet every qualification and requirement for offering the VPK program.

Change in Location

In this case, the Program name, owner and director are remaining the same. The change is in the physical location (address) of the facility. This change must first be confirmed through the Department of Children and Families Licensing with the issuance of a new license. The Early Learning Coalition must be notified prior to the move.

The VPK children enrolled in your program will need to be moved as well. To do this the parents will need to complete a "VPK Parent and Provider Authorization to Transfer form".

Do not move VPK funded children to the new location until the change has been approved through the Early Learning Coalition. To do so causes a non-payable lapse in funding effective from the date the children were moved, and creating the need to extend the Provider's VPK calendar in order to fulfill the full instructional hour requirement.

3. **Notification of Changes:** VPK Providers are required to notify the Coalition as follows:
 - a. Contact your Contracts Specialist if there is a change in ownership, corporate structure, name or location: Provider will report any of these changes to the COALITION or designee a minimum of fourteen (14) calendar days BEFORE the change.
 - Any changes to information previously provided to the Coalition on VPK required forms (OEL-VPK 10 and OEL-VPK-11A).
 - Loss or change of Director

- Loss or change of VPK teacher or VPK secondary teacher;
- Loss or change in accreditation or licensure status (i.e. Gold Seal);
- VPK class schedule change, addition or deletion to information previously submitted to the COALITION as a part of the Provider's eligibility to conduct VPK services,
- Changes that directly affect the operation of their program (i.e. emergency closure) or the ability to be contacted (i.e. telephone numbers, mailing address, etc.).
- Notice of dismissal of one or more students. (Such notice must be followed in writing within 14 calendar days and must specify the reasons for the child's removal from the class. (See VPK Child Delete Form).

4. Child Eligibility, Enrollment and Attendance

To be eligible for reimbursement, the VPK Provider may only enroll a child who has a VPK certificate issued by the Early Learning Coalition.

Upon enrollment, the VPK Provider will promptly notify the Early Learning Coalition that the child has been admitted into your program by submitting the VPK Certificate of Eligibility (COE) form through the Provider Portal. Unless you notify the Early Learning Coalition, they will not know the child is in your program and you will not be paid.

VPK Providers have its own attendance policy, which providers must give to parents at the time of enrollment. If a child or a parent does not comply with the VPK provider's attendance policy, the provider may dismiss the child from its VPK program.

If you discharge a student, you must contact the Early Learning Coalition no later than 14 days to explain why the child was dismissed. You may use the VPK Delete Form to communicate this action.

VPK Providers must document daily attendance both in the facility and in the classroom. (e.g., a school based program's classroom attendance sheet). Alternative processes must be pre-approved by the coalition. This documentation supports the attendance certification each month of the child's attendance.

VPK Providers are responsible for ensuring that parents certify their child's attendance each month by signing the Student Attendance and Parental Choice certificates the last day of the month and maintaining these records.

The Provider is responsible for complying with the Early Learning Coalition regarding submission of attendance records and other required information in order to be paid promptly.

5. Maintenance of Records

VPK child enrollment records are confidential and must be kept by the Provider for at least five (5) years after the child's last day of attendance. PROVIDER agrees to maintain records, including enrollment and attendance records for children funded by the VPK Program; records of each VPK student, VPK instructor, substitute instructor, or VPK director; and other fiscal records for audit purposes for a period of five (5) years from the date of the last payment for that fiscal year or until the resolution of any audit findings or any litigation related to this Contract, whichever occurs last. PROVIDER may maintain records in an electronic medium and if the PROVIDER does so, then the PROVIDER shall back up records on a regular basis to safeguard against loss.

Parents of VPK children have the right to inspect and review the individual record for only his or her child and to obtain copies of the records if requested.

6. Nondiscrimination

Statute [1002.53(6)(a)] states that private providers "may determine whether to admit any child" as long as the provider complies with the antidiscrimination requirements of 42 U.S.C. s. 2000d which states no discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. [1002.53(6) (c)]

7. Parent Rights

It is against the law for a VPK Provider to charge parents a fee or require a payment for a child in the VPK program.

A VPK Provider may not require a fee or payment as a condition of enrollment or participation in the VPK program.

A VPK Provider may not require a child be enrolled full time, or spend extended hours in their facility as a condition of enrollment in the VPK program.

A VPK Provider may not charge a parent for any VPK days. The Provider is further prohibited from charging a parent for any fee or reimbursement for funds lost due to the Provider's non-compliance with the VPK rules and regulations.

8. Compliance Verification Monitoring

The Coalition has an ongoing duty to verify a VPK Provider's compliance with Florida Statutes, state rules; and policies and procedures of the Florida's Department of Education's Office of Early Learning.

The Provider must allow the Coalition to enter the VPK site at any time for this purpose.

The Provider must also allow the Coalition or designated staff to inspect and copy the records maintained by the Provider concerning the VPK Program, VPK instructors, VPK directors, and VPK children.

The Provider must submit corrective action plans for any non-compliance documented during a VPK monitoring inspection.

The Providers non-compliance with any terms of the VPK Provider Contract may result in the Coalition withholding funds. The Coalition will notify the Provider in writing of any financial penalties. **If the center fails to come into compliance within 10 business days, payments will be recouped from the date that the center became non-compliant.**

9. Complaints and Dispute Resolution

If a provider disputes any action taken by the Coalition pursuant to the terms of the Statewide Voluntary Prekindergarten Provider Contract, the provider may request a review hearing in writing by sending it to the contact person listed in the Coalition's action. A review hearing is a "meeting" for the purposes of the Sunshine Law which is subject to public notice. During a review hearing, the provider will have a reasonable opportunity to address Coalition staff-persons or sub-contractor staff regarding the Coalition's action and to present supporting evidence before a Review Hearing Committee. Provider may have an attorney present at the review hearing to represent or advise the provider.

10. Termination as VPK Provider

The Coalition may withhold or deny payment, or terminate the VPK Provider contract if the Provider fails to comply with the requirements of the statute, rule, corrective action or Contract. Repeated failure to meet VPK requirements could result in termination of the Provider's VPK contract.

Curriculum Requirements

Curriculum:

Each VPK provider's curriculum must be developmentally appropriate, designed to prepare a student for early literacy, enhance age-appropriate student progress in attaining state-adopted performance standards, and prepare students to be ready for kindergarten based on the statewide kindergarten screening as described in Section 1002.67(2) (b), Florida Statutes.

VPK providers may select or design the curriculum for their classrooms, unless they are on probation as a result of their kindergarten readiness rates falling below the minimum rate. Legislation implementing the VPK Education Program requires providers on probation use approved curricula.

http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/providers/provider_resources/vpk_curriculum.aspx

The curriculum used in a VPK classroom should include active learning experiences that are child-initiated, as well as those planned and initiated by the teacher and the curriculum must have a character development component. The curriculum should be developmentally appropriate, meaning that it is appropriate for four-year-olds and can be modified for individual four-year-olds that have skills at either end of a developmental continuum (individually appropriate). Also, the teacher should take into account a child's personal knowledge, often related to culture (culturally appropriate), and then use this information to build on a child's strength and skills when planning the curriculum.

As part of active learning within a VPK classroom, children should be engaged in many hands-on experiences throughout the day. Children **should not** learn about concepts through paper and pencil activities, work sheets, or coloring pages. Learning occurs when the child is engaged in the activity (teacher-or-child-directed), and a child's attention span tends to be longer in activities and topics that are interest to the child.

Note: It is developmentally inappropriate to use a kindergarten curriculum with prekindergarten students.

Class Size and Staff to Child Ratios

School Year VPK Program:

Minimum class size is 4 VPK eligible children. The Early Learning Coalition will not issue the initial prepayment for a VPK class unless at least four children in the class are enrolled in the VPK program.

A provider or school does not violate the minimum class size if fewer than four VPK eligible students attend on a particular day and if after the initial prepayment is issued, fewer than four children in a VPK class remain enrolled in the VPK program (e.g., withdrawals).

A VPK class may not exceed – either in enrollment or a particular day's attendance – the maximum class size.

- Staff to child ratio for a class of 4 to 11 children is one (1) Lead Instructor (including any non-VPK eligible children)
- Staff to child ratio for a class of 12 to 20 is one (1) Lead Instructor and one (1) Secondary Instructor (including any non-VPK eligible children)

Summer VPK Program:

Minimum class size is 4 VPK eligible children. A provider or school does not violate the minimum class size if fewer than four VPK eligible students attend on a particular day and if after the initial prepayment is issued, fewer than four children in a VPK class remain enrolled in the VPK program (e.g., withdrawals).

- Maximum class size is 12 (including any non-VPK eligible children). A VPK class may not exceed – either in enrollment or a particular day's attendance – the maximum class size.
- Staff to child ratio for a class of 4 to 12 children is one (1) Lead Instructor

Blended Classes:

A private provider or public school may organize a VPK class as a blended class, instructing students enrolled in the VPK program together with children who are not enrolled in the VPK program.

- A blended class may include children of any age; however, these multi-age arrangements must not interfere with the provider's or school's obligation to deliver 540 instructional hours for the School-Year VPK program or 300 instructional hours for the Summer VPK program. Also, it cannot prevent the provider or school from implementing a developmentally appropriate curriculum in accordance with Section 1002.67(2) (b), F.S.

Multi-Class groups:

- A provider or school may teach two or more VPK classes in a single classroom (VPK Instructors and Assistants must be assigned to a class and be responsible for the children enrolled in that class). However, this grouping arrangement does not authorize a provider or school to exceed any staff-to-child ratio, square footage per child requirement or other state and local requirement. You must adhere to the definition of “separation of classrooms.” Namely, a separate classroom is defined by having classes in separate rooms or, in the case where space is being shared between two or more classrooms, a separation of classroom must be met by meeting all of the following conditions: a separate lesson plan, a separate daily schedule, a separate pictorial schedule *and* a separate attendance sheet is required for each class sharing the space. In addition, please ensure that students are not mixed together for a majority of VPK hours and access to materials is not limited.
- Each VPK class with a multi-class group may not exceed 20 students for the School-Year VPK program or 12 students for the Summer VPK program.

Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Performance Standards:

The Department of Education has created The Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds. The standards cover five domains of development.

- Physical Development
- Approaches to Learning
- Social and Emotional Development
- Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy
- Cognitive Development and General Knowledge

The goals set forth in the standards are intended to be reached by the *end* of the child’s VPK year. It is the purpose of the VPK program to develop the whole child and to have the child ready to learn upon entering kindergarten. The key word here is “whole” child not just their academic abilities.

- An electronic version of the *Standards for Four-Year-Olds* document is available. [Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds \(2011\)\(PDF, 9MB\)](#)
- Trainings are available online or instructor led at www.myflorida.com/childcare.

Child Assessments

All VPK providers are required to administer and submit the results of the VPK Assessment for all VPK children each session. *(Traditional schedules are school-year VPK classrooms whose schedule (start and end date) begins in August or September and ends in April or May. Non-Traditional schedules are school-year VPK classrooms whose schedule (start and end date) does not fall in the traditional category, this includes all summer VPK classrooms)*

- Assessment Period 1 is required and should be completed with all VPK enrolled children by September 30. Assessment results should be entered into the VPK Assessment Online Reporting System, Bright Beginnings, soon after administration of the assessment so that reports can be generated to inform teachers as they plan instruction (traditional calendar) or during the first 30 days of the VPK classrooms schedule (non-traditional calendar).

- Assessment Period 2 is optional and recommended to assist with individualized instruction.*
- Assessment Period 3 is required and should be completed and entered by June 15 (traditional calendar) or no later than 15 calendar days after the VPK classroom's schedule ends.

*Providers on Probation who have chosen the DOE-approved Staff Development Plan are also required to administer AP2 and submit the assessment data online. AP2 is optional for other VPK providers, **but strongly** recommended.

All existing VPK providers must reset their password to access the Online Reporting System each program year. The center/school will not be able to access the VPK Assessment Online Reporting System until the VPK Administrator completes the Initial Registration Wizard at <https://brightbeginningsfl.org/Register.aspx> for the current program year.

VPK Assessment Kits

To order a VPK Assessment kit go to

<https://marcomcentral.app.pti.com/graphiccommunicationscorp/earlylearning>

For directions on how to place an order on the VPK Assessment Ordering System go to

<http://www.flvpkonline.org/teachertoolkit/assessment/index.htm>

Order a new kit if:

- ❖ It's your first year offering a VPK program
- ❖ If you added a new VPK class

Order a replacement kit if:

- ❖ The year before you were a VPK provider

You will need a VPK Assessment kit for each of your certified VPK classrooms.

Response Booklets may only be copied for the purpose of assessment.

Providers should participate in professional development on How to Administer the Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Assessment to ensure the proper administration of the VPK Assessment measures. **Providers on Probation who chose the DOE-Approved Staff Development Plan must participate in instructor-led professional development to receive credit on their DCF transcript.**

This instructor-led professional development includes information on the development of the VPK Assessment and how to administer, record, and score each of the VPK Assessment measures. VPK providers who are not on probation may choose to use the VPK Assessment Administration DVD (which contains the same information provided in the instructor-led training) and read the VPK Assessment Teacher's Manual, included in each assessment kit.

If you have forgotten your Provider ID, contact the VPK Assessment Help Desk for assistance.

- **Online:** <https://brightbeginningsfl.org/RequestAssistance/RequestAssistance.aspx>
- **By Email:** vpkassessment@fcrr.org
- **By Phone:** local 850-645-0835 toll-free at 1-844-545-4777
- **Hours: Monday to Thursday** - 7 am to 5 pm EST
Friday - 7 am to 4 pm EST

For questions regarding the VPK Assessment Ordering System or the shipping status of your assessment materials contact **Drummond Press** at **1-800-247-5361** or via email at orders@drummondpress.com.

Teaching Strategies® GOLD™

GOLD™ offers a revolutionary approach to early childhood assessment. It is an assessment tool available to teachers that is user-friendly and inclusive—one that enables them to increase the effectiveness of their assessments while having more time to spend with children. It's easy to use, it's effective, and it works—saving teacher's time and helping them be confident in their assessment decisions.

Helps Early Educators Focus on What Matters Most

GOLD™ can be used with any developmentally appropriate early childhood curriculum and is based on 38 research-based objectives that include predictors of school success and are aligned with the Common Core State Standards, state early learning guidelines, and the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework. These help teachers focus on what matters most for children's success.

Supports All Learners

GOLD™ can be used to support all types of learners, including children with special needs and children with advanced knowledge and skills.

The Office of Early Learning (OEL) recently began rolling out the Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment for VPK. During the 2015-16 program year, OEL will only require VPK providers to submit GOLD scores for the post-assessment, which will allow additional time for training and practice using GOLD.

Rule 6A-1.09433, *Voluntary Prekindergarten Pre- and Post-Assessments*, Florida Administrative Code, states that assessors must complete required training before administering GOLD for VPK.

Each assessor must also meet minimum qualifications to be a VPK instructor during the school-year program, regardless of program type (summer or school-year). Coalitions may encourage VPK providers to have staff complete GOLD training early; however, assessors are not required to complete the training until the program begins assessing children for the post-assessment.

VPK providers may participate in either the GOLD Basic Course through the GOLD online system or the instructor-led GOLD Basic Course for Florida VPK. More than 16,000 individuals were recently granted access to the GOLD online system based on users active in the Bright Beginnings Online Reporting System. Providers can access the VPK Teaching Strategies GOLD Help Desk at 844-838-4653 for more information about the online system. Instructor-led course are offered through the Department of Children and Families provider portal. For the 2015-2016 program years Teaching Strategies GOLD will not be required until Assessment Period 3 to allow providers more time for training and practice.

For the most up to date information on assessment deadlines please visit:

[VPK Pre- and Post-Assessment Administration and Submission Deadlines](#)

http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/providers/provider_menu/vpk_pre_and_post-assessments.aspx

VPK GOLD Help Desk (Teaching Strategies)

1-844-838-4653 or flvpk@teachingstrategies.com

Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate Readiness Rate:

*The VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate measures how well a VPK provider prepares four-year-olds to be ready to learn for kindergarten based on the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS). The FLKRS is administered to children within the first 30 days of kindergarten. As required by law, the FLKRS is aligned with the *Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Standards*. The FLKRS is made up of two separate measures: the Early Childhood Observation System (ECHOS) and the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading – K (FAIR-K). The ECHOS measures benchmarks in seven domains. It provides a simple, uniform method for observing and measuring the progress of young readers. FAIR measures the growth and development of early literacy skills.

*The maximum VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate possible is **100**. Readiness rates are calculated for all VPK providers that served at least four (4) children who were in attendance for at least 70-percent of either the School-Year or Summer VPK program (have substantially completed the program).

*Measures and readiness rate will likely be revised.

VPK Provider Readiness Rate Website:

Rates for providers are published at: www.vpk.fldoe.org

Readiness rates are to be re-calculated each year as a method of measuring the performance of providers in preparing Florida's four-year-olds to be ready to learn for kindergarten.

The State Board of Education sets the readiness rate. A **Provider on Probation (POP)** is a VPK provider that does not have at least 70% of children (that substantially completed the program) score "ready" on both state accountability measures (ECHOS and FAIR).

Providers on probation are required to

- Year 1—Submit an improvement plan for approval by the coalition or school district and implement the plan. The provider must select two target areas for improvement. The first target area is mandatory; providers must purchase and implement a [DOE-approved curriculum](#) (proof of scheduled training by the publisher must be submitted) or complete the DOE-Approved Staff Development Plan for Providers on Probation.

Staff Development Plan Required Staff Development Trainings

Prior to beginning of the program year*, each site director/supervisor, VPK teacher, and VPK assistant teacher must complete:

- ❖ Standards for Four-Year-Olds (online or instructor led)
- ❖ How to Administer the Florida VPK Assessment (instructor led)
- ❖ Emergent Literacy for VPK Instructors (online)
- ❖ Language and Vocabulary in the VPK Classroom (online)

In the first half of program year*, each site director/supervisor, VPK teacher, and VPK assistant teacher must complete:

- ❖ Integrating the Standards: Phonological Awareness (instructor led)
- ❖ VPK Assessment Instructional Implications for Providers on Probation (instructor led)

*If new staff members are hired after the VPK program has begun, these trainings must be completed within one month of hire.

- Year 2—Remain on probation and submit a VPK Education Program Annual Probation Progress Report.
- Year 3—Apply for and be granted a good cause exemption or be removed from the VPK program for five years.

Changes to Classroom Capacity, Curriculum, or to Dissolve a Classroom

1. The capacity of a classroom is automatically identified in accordance with the staff assigned to the VPK class, indicated on the OEL-VPK 11A. During the school year, when an assistant is added, the capacity of a classroom is adjusted automatically to 20. When an assistant is removed, the enrolled capacity must be 11 or less, or a new assistant must be added to keep the original capacity of 20.
2. Changes in curriculum information should be submitted to the Early Learning Coalition using the Notification Form and OEL-VPK 11A. The new curriculum information is important if it differs from what was initially recorded on the OEL-VPK 11A at the time of application approval (list all curricula being used).
3. The dissolving of a classroom may occur when a Provider received approval to operate multiple classrooms. During the course of the VPK Program, the provider may realize that enrollment does not justify the number of classrooms approved. A Provider can transfer children to another class and dissolve the now empty class by submitting Notification Form to the Early Learning Coalition.

Permanent Change in Staffing

Teachers

Use the Notification Form and submit the necessary documentation of credentials, DCF level II background screening, Standards for Four Year Olds and Emergent Literacy for the lead teacher and DCF level II background screening for the assistant.

Director

Use the Notification Form and submit the necessary documentation of credentials and DCF level II background screening.

If an on-site monitoring occurs and information observed is different than what is shown in your approved VPK file, funding may be recouped for each day of the non-compliance. The VPK calendar may need to be extended as well to administer the full 540 or 300 instructional hours.

The program may not receive reimbursement until new staff has been submitted and approved.

VPK Program Monitoring

The Early Learning Coalition will monitor VPK providers for compliance with the terms and conditions documented on the VPK 20 Statewide Provider Contract, OEL-VPK Form 10, OEL-VPK Form 11A, and OEL-VPK Form 11B, including details as outlined in Florida Statutes 1002.55 and 1002.61 as appropriate, dependent upon whether the provider is offering a school year or summer program. The monitoring procedure will consist of a combination of review of documentation and on-site visits. If a monitor is not permitted in the VPK classroom(s) for 15 minutes or more the center will be found non-compliant.

VPK onsite monitoring will be unannounced.

The Early Learning Coalition staff will monitor attendance information for any indications of non-compliance with the providers' approved calendar. Any irregularities identified could result in technical assistance by the Early Learning Coalition staff to ensure the provider can still meet the 540-hour or the 300-hour VPK instructional requirements.

During monitoring, the following will be verified:

- The Child Attendance and Parental Choice Certificate forms are on-site and daily attendance is being marked and forms are signed by parents on the last VPK instructional day of every month. Remember, this form must be kept at your facility for monitoring purposes for 5 years, per our contract with the Office of Early Learning. Obtain all your parent signatures on site. **Do not** send these forms home to obtain the parent signature. If you are unable to obtain parent signatures the last day of the month you have 3 calendar days in the new month to obtain the missing signatures.
- A class attendance roster lists all children enrolled in the class (including non-VPK children) and daily attendance is being marked.
- The class attendance roster and the Child Attendance and Parental Choice Certificate forms must be marked accurately and should match.
- The Director that is identified on-site is the Director documented on the OEL VPK Form 10.
- Staff identified in the VPK classroom(s) is the staff documented on the OEL VPK Form 11A.
- The number of children in the VPK classroom(s) does not exceed the class size documented on the OEL VPK Form 11A.
- The operating hours of the VPK classroom(s) identified match the hours documented on the OEL VPK Form 11B.
- The curriculum being used matches the one(s) documented in the approved OEL VPK Form 11A.

Non-Compliance items (including, but not limited to):

- Attendance is not being marked daily on the Child Attendance and Parental Choice Certificate forms.
- Parent signatures were obtained on the Child Attendance and Parental Choice Certificate forms before the last day of the month.
- Daily attendance was not being marked on the class roster.
- All children (VPK and non-VPK) were not listed on the class roster.
- Attendance marked on the Child Attendance and Parental Choice Certificate forms and the class roster did not match.
- The curriculum being used is not the approved curriculum on the OEL VPK Form 11A.
- The operating hours of the VPK classroom(s) identified does not match the hours documented on the OEL VPK Form 11B.
- A substitute teacher has been permanently placed as a lead or assistant teacher with notifying the Early Learning Coalition by submitting a Notification Form and OEL VPK Form 11A.

Non-Compliance items with suspension of payments (including, but not limited to):

- The Director that is identified on-site is not the Director documented on the OEL VPK Form 10.
- The Director has an expired Director Credential and/or background screenings.
- Teachers identified in the VPK classroom(s) is not the staff documented on the OEL VPK Form 11A.
- The teacher(s) credential and/or background screenings have expired.
- Substitute on the day of monitoring is not listed the OEL VPK Form 11A.
- The number of children in the VPK classroom(s) exceeds the class size documented on the OEL VPK Form 11A.
- VPK children enrolled in an uncertified VPK class.
- VPK children have been transferred to an uncertified VPK location.
- The center is closed during an instructional day(s) listed on the OEL VPK Form 11B.

Corrective Action Plans

If a corrective action plan needs to be submitted it should be on the center's letterhead, dated and signed by the director/owner. The corrective action plan should include:

1. State the problem
Some questions to consider are:
 - a. What is the current situation?
 - b. What should be the right situation?

- c. What is the reason behind the current situation?
 - d. What is the impact of the current situation?
 - e. How can the current situation be rectified or resolved?
2. Define the plan and the deadline. This should describe how the center plans on implementing the corrective action plan.

Attendance and Payment

Providers Attendance Policy

Providers are paid the full monthly rate for each child as long as they are in compliance with the VPK attendance policy as follows:

- Providers must inform parents of their attendance policy prior to the VPK program start. Parents must agree to comply with the individual program's attendance policy.
- A Provider may dismiss a child who does not comply with their attendance policy, and a child may re-enroll in another Provider's program.

Temporary Closure

A temporary closure is eligible for payment if a VPK Provider submits written documentation which demonstrates that the closure is temporary and caused by circumstances beyond the Provider's control.

a. Documentation is not required if a state of emergency is declared, not to exceed 10 instructional days.

b. If a temporary closure is caused by other circumstances, then the closure is not eligible for payment and Provider must revise its class schedule or calendar.

Submitting Information for Payment

The Provider must submit their signed student attendance roster by the **3rd** of each month. VPK absence documentation does not need to be submitted to the Coalition.

Advance Payment for VPK Services

Providers have the option to receive Advance Payment for VPK services which is based on projected perfect attendance for each child enrolled. Advance Payments are normally dispersed on the first day of the month at 95% of the VPK rate.

VPK Provider Fees

- Providers may not charge fees for the VPK program including, but not limited to:
 - Registration fees,
 - Other supplemental fees.
- A Provider can request that a parent voluntarily pay fees for offsite activities, etc. but it cannot be a mandatory fee for the VPK program.
- Parents must be notified in writing that they are voluntary fees, not mandatory.

*VPK does not allow late fees, however, once VPK time is over, the parent is paying for non-VPK time and therefore may be charged late fees.

VPK Post Attendance Audit & Payment

VPK Providers must be audited at least one time during the fiscal year. Attendance may be audited at any period in which the Provider received VPK funding. Every VPK Provider is required to have the parents verify their child's attendance for the prior month.

Parents must verify the child's attendance on Form OEL-VPK 03S (Student Attendance and Parent Choice Certificate Short Form) or Form OEL-VPK 03L (Student Attendance and Parent Choice Certificate Long Form)

- If a Provider uses the **short form** for attendance verification, then **daily** sign in/out logs that records the date, child's name, and signature of the parent or person dropping off or picking up the child must be submitted for post attendance audit.
- If a Provider uses the **long form** for attendance verification, then this is the only form submitted for post attendance audit.

VPK Payments are based on the number of hours children attend VPK programs, starting with the first day of attendance and ending with the last day of attendance, and the number of hours of payable absences. A child is considered attending for a whole day, even if he/she attends part of the day.

Attendance: If a child attends more than 80% of the VPK class time, then the Provider is paid for the whole month. If the child attends less than 80% of the time, the payments are a portion of the month. This payment formula is applied every month. VPK payments are reconciled at the end of the program. Absences are paid up to 20% of the month, and 20% of the year. Providers will receive the full payment upon the final reconciliation of the classroom. Due to the new method of determining payment, it is no longer necessary to obtain written excuses from the parent for any absences in the VPK Program.

Payment Adjustments

The provider agrees to review their reimbursement summary provided with each monthly reimbursement check. The provider agrees to report any discrepancy, overpayment, or underpayment within 45 days from the date the reimbursement was deposited or mailed. Any underpayments reported after 45 days will not be honored. Any reconciliation must be paid to the provider on the next

payment cycle. The provider agrees to submit all required attendance records to the Coalition no later than the third (3) business day of each month. The provider understands that payment for services will be received by the 20th working day of the month following the month in which care was provided. Any attendance records submitted after the third business day are considered late and reimbursement to the provider will be processed the following month. Attendance records and/or reported changes submitted after the last working day of the month following the one in which care was provided will not be paid.

Child Enrollment in the VPK Program

Eligibility Requirement

1. Child must turn 4 years old on or before September 1st of the service year (whether enrolling for a school year or summer program). Parents must provide proof with documented birth verification, preferably birth certificate.
2. Child must reside in the State of Florida. (Parent must provide proof of residence).

Transfer Procedure

1. Provider may accept children who transfer from one program to another, however the parent may only transfer the child one time for VPK and only if the child has attended for less than 70% (375 hours) of the 540 program hours. A provider can deny a transfer if only parent fees are outstanding.
2. Parents may request a second transfer for VPK but an extreme hardship must be filed. If the extreme hardship is approved a re-enrollment certificate will be issued to the parent.
3. The parent must obtain a re-enrollment certificate of eligibility prior to transferring the child to the new center of choice. Provider will not receive payment for a child unless the parent obtains the re-enrollment certificate and the new provider submits the certificate to transfers@elcmdm.org for enrollment.

Advance Payment Option and VPK Rate

1. A provider may elect to receive monthly advance payments based on the number of students enrolled in the provider's VPK program class(es) by checking the following box in the provider contract:

- PROVIDER elects to receive monthly advance payments and understands that advance payments will be reconciled and adjusted in accordance with the rules of the Office of Early Learning.

2. Rates are determined by the amount of funding from the legislature every year. Once known, the Office of Early Learning divides resources to the Coalitions based upon various criteria.

Withdrawal from the VPK Program

If a child withdraws from the VPK program, the Provider will not receive payment for any days after the last instructional day that the child attended the program.

Grievance Policy and Procedures

The grievance policy is designed to provide prompt and orderly resolution of complaints or disputes arising in the course of conducting business with, receiving services from, and/or providing services to the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe. Any party has the right to present their grievance to the Coalition within 30 days of an occurrence, or within 30 days of a party having reasonable knowledge of said matter.

Grievance(s) must be submitted by in written form (electronic or mail) to the following address:

grievance@elcmdm.org

or

Grievance

Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe

2555 Ponce De Leon Blvd., Suite 500

Coral Gables, FL 33134

A written acknowledgment of the grievance will be provided within seven (7) business days of receipt. Complaints and disputes may be resolved during this initial contact and thus would not require further action. A written resolution will be submitted by the Coalition within 30 business days.

In the event the party is not satisfied with the outcome provided by the Coalition, they must identify in writing the specific unresolved issue(s) and the resolution being sought within 30 days of the response and address it to:

Provider Services Committee

Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe

2555 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Suite 500

Coral Gables, FL 33134

A written acknowledgment of the grievance will be provided within five (5) business days of receipt. The grievance will then be scheduled for the next Provider Services Committee Meeting.

If the Provider Services Committee is unable to resolve the matter, or a potential resolution requires action by the Board of Directors of the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe the grievance shall be presented for resolution before the full Board by the chairperson of the Provider Services Committee on behalf of all involved parties. The result will be the final outcome on behalf of the Coalition unless otherwise state by Florida law.

In the event the party is not satisfied with the outcome provided by the provider Services Committee and/or the Coalition's Board of Directors, they may seek legal remedies as afforded under the laws of the state of Florida.

Our Services

School Readiness – School Readiness programs provide early education opportunities to children ages birth to 5 years old, particularly children whose parents are economically disadvantaged; children who have been determined to be at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation; and children with disabilities. Services may be provided to children ages 6 to 7 depending on availability of funding.

Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) – VPK offers all 4-year-old children a jump start on reading, math, language and social skills. Qualified VPK teachers utilize developmentally appropriate curricula to educate children, preparing them for kindergarten while inspiring their desire to learn. The program is offered free-of-charge during the school year as well as the summer, offering all children and families an equal opportunity for educational success.

Curriculum Learning Communities (CLC) project helps early learning programs implement developmentally appropriate curricula. Initially, it supports programs that use Creative Curriculum or High Scope Curriculum, with plans to include other approved curricula in the future. CLC is based on best practices and lessons learned from the local Ready Schools Miami project and other local and national early childhood curriculum implementation initiatives.

Developmental Screenings and Assessments – The Coalition, through its skilled community partners, completes child development screenings and assessments for children ages birth to 5 years old. Referrals to appropriate services are made when developmental delays are identified in children, ensuring each child receives the special attention he/she needs.

The Coalition also assesses learning environments in early care and education centers and homes, ensuring teachers are able to provide quality education and meaningful activities for children in positive, educational settings.

Inclusion Services – Inclusion Services prepare children with special needs for kindergarten. Utilizing specialized curricula, services address the individualized needs of children, equipping them with the reading, math, language and social skills they need to succeed alongside their peers throughout elementary school.

Quality Counts, Miami-Dade County's Quality Rating Improvement System – Quality Counts is a voluntary rating system that reviews early learning programs according to clearly defined, high quality standards. Quality Counts offers supports and incentives to help providers reach their goals.

Teenage Parent Program (TAP) - This program that offers early care and education services to teenage parents enrolled in Miami-Dade County Public Schools, facilitated by the University of Miami Linda Ray Intervention Center.

Technical Assistance and Mentoring – The Coalition provides a variety of support services to early care and education centers and homes, including one-on-one mentoring and professional development trainings, ensuring child care staff are equipped to prepare children for kindergarten.

The Coalition also provides technical assistance, such as accreditation, selected curriculum enhancement and necessary materials, enriching the quality of care and education provided to children in early education programs.

Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten Specialized Instructional Serviced Education Program (VPK SIS) - VPK SIS is a new option for parents of 4 year old children with disabilities that is available outside the traditional VPK classroom setting.

Inclusion Warm Line Services – The Coalition provides assistance and consultation about children with disabilities and special health care needs. This service is available to any early care and education provider requesting information relating to the disability and special health care needs of children. Services are also provided for child care providers on topics including: Positive behavioral support, curriculum, strategies, child development, health, environmental adaptations and laws and regulations (e.g., The Americans Disabilities Act)

Child Care Resource and Referral

CCR&R is available 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. from Monday to Friday. To reach a CCR&R specialist, please call 305-646-7220.

Helpful Websites

The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe

<http://www.elcmdm.org/>

Child Care Training Staff Credential

<http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/childcare/>

OEL Website

<http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/>

FDLE website

<http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/>

Background Screening

www.dcfbackgroundscreening.com

VPK Program Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate

<https://vpk.fldoe.org>

Quality Counts Career Training Calendar

<http://www.qccareers.org/index.php>

ELC Provider Portal

<https://providers.elcmdm.org/Account/LogOn>

VPK Information for Families and Providers

<http://www.vpkhelp.org/>

Directory

Department of Children Families

DCF Mainline: 850-921-4713

Miami-Dade/Monroe: 305-377-5055

Child Care Training Information Center: 1-888-352-2842

Child Care Regulation & Background Screening: 888-352-2842 or 850-488-4900

Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-962-2873

Department of Education

DOE Mainline: 850-245-0505

School Choice (McKay Scholarship): 1800-447-1636

Just Read Florida: 850-245-0503

VPK GOLD Help Desk (Teaching Strategies)

1-844-838-4653

flvpk@teachingstrategies.com

Mon-Fri 7am – 7pm

VPK Assessment Help Desk

1-844-545-4777

vpkassessment@fcr.org

Mon-Thurs 7am-5pm

Drummond Press (VPK Assessment Kit orders)

1-800-247-5361

orders@drummondpress.com

Bright Beginnings

1-844-545-4777

<https://www.brightbeginningsfl.org/>

Others

T.E.A.C.H. Hotline: 1-877-458-3224