



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

F. PHILIP HANDY, *Chairman*

T. WILLARD FAIR, *Vice Chairman*

Members

DONNA G. CALLAWAY

JULIA L. JOHNSON

ROBERTO MARTÍNEZ

PHOEBE RAULERSON

LINDA K. TAYLOR

John L. Winn
Commissioner of Education



November 3, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO: Early Learning Coalition Chairs
Early Learning Coalition Executive Directors

FROM: John L. Winn, Commissioner

SUBJECT: Enrollment in Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) School-Year Education Programs

On behalf of the State Board of Education, I want to thank you for all your efforts toward the successful implementation of Florida's VPK program. Your continuing hard work moves us closer to our goal of having all children enter kindergarten ready to learn.

We would also like to take this opportunity to encourage you to continue activities to expand the current enrollment of children in the 540-hour school-year VPK program. We know that the school-year program provides four-year-olds more time to learn than they would have in the 300-hour summer program. Continuing to increase the enrollment in the school-year program will also defray the impact of the summer program on both public and private providers.

The attached charts compare the number of four-year-olds expected to be served (147,235) and the number currently enrolled (81,090). The difference (66,145) could potentially be served in a 300-hour summer program through local school districts. January enrollment and stepped up efforts to enroll more children may significantly reduce the need for summer programs.

Again, we applaud the tremendous job you have already done to implement this inaugural year of VPK. Florida is poised to become the recognized national leader in high-quality VPK programs because of the collaborative effort to help tens of thousands more children be successful in school and in life. I pledge to you our continuing support, collaboration, and ongoing commitment to the success of Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program.

jlw/mh
Attachments

cc: Susan Pareigis
Superintendents

Gladys Wilson