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DPS: 2009-180

## MEMORANDUM #09-21

**TO:** Interested Persons  
Early Learning Coalition Chairs  
Early Learning Coalition Executive Directors

**FROM:** Shan Goff, Executive Director

**SUBJECT:** 2009-10 Kindergarten Screening Instruments: Clarification

Given the recent media coverage on the new portion of Florida's 2009-10 Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS), we would like to provide the attached *Questions and Answers* to clarify information related to the development and use of these new assessments in calculating the 2008-09 Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate calculation.

If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact me or the Office of Early Learning at (850) 245-0445 or via email at: [shan.goff@fldoe.org](mailto:shan.goff@fldoe.org).

c: Brittany Birken, Deputy Director, Agency for Workforce Innovation  
District Coordinators of Assessment  
District Prekindergarten Contacts  
Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Facilitators

Attachment

SHAN GOFF  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
OFFICE OF EARLY LEARNING

Florida Department of Education  
Office of Early Learning

*Questions and Answers on the New Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading Used for the 2009-10 Kindergarten Screening*

2009-10 New Kindergarten Screening Measures

1. *What are the new portions of the kindergarten screening for 2009-10 and when are they administered?*

The *Broad Screen* and the *Broad Diagnostic Inventory* of the new *Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading* are replacing the *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) Letter Naming* and *Initial Sound* measures. The required kindergarten screening instruments are administered within the first 30 days of school.

2. *Are the skills measured by the Broad Screen and Broad Diagnostic Inventory consistent with the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Standards?*

Yes. All of the measures in the *Broad Screen* and the *Broad Diagnostic Inventory* are consistent with the VPK Standards; expectations of what children should know and be able to do by the end of their VPK experience.

Development of the New Assessments

3. *How were these new reading assessments developed?*

The *Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading* were developed by the Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR) in collaboration with the Department of Education. These assessments are administered individually three times a year. The purpose of these assessments is to:

- evaluate progress towards the end-of-year benchmarks
- diagnose learning needs and set instructional goals
- monitor instructional progress.

The *Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading* represent the next generation of assessments in Florida by providing teachers with data on each child's mastery of specific skills essential to future reading success.

4. *Are these assessments reflective of the current research in early reading?*

Yes. There is consensus in the research that the predictors of success in learning to read in the primary grades (kindergarten – second grade) are knowledge of letter names and sounds, phonological awareness, word reading, and comprehension of oral and written language. The assessments for kindergarten through second grade reflect the consensus of research on how children learn to read, how to predict risk for reading difficulties, and the recommendations from [\*Developing Early Literacy: Report of the National Early Literacy Panel.\*](#)

For example, with respect to predicting literacy success, blending syllables is predictive for preschool, onset-rime blending for early kindergarten, and phonemic blending is more predictive for the second half of kindergarten and early first grade (Anthony & Lonigan; Schatschneider et al., 1999). More technical information related to the development of these assessments is available from the Florida Center for Reading Research, Florida State University at: <http://www.fcrr.org/fair/index.htm>.

5. *What types of assessments are included for kindergarten through second grade?*

For kindergarten through second grade, the following four types of assessments are included:

- Broad Screen
- Broad Diagnostic Inventory
- Targeted Diagnostic Inventory
- Ongoing Progress Monitoring.

The Broad Screen and the Broad Diagnostic Inventory

6. *What does the Broad Screen measure?*

The *Broad Screen* measures Letter Naming and Phonemic Awareness. Letter Naming consists of recognizing letters of the alphabet. The majority of items for the Phonemic Awareness portion of the kindergarten screening are onset-rime activities. For example, the teacher would say, "Tell me what word I am making: /c/ + "at." The child would respond, "cat."

7. *What is done with the student's scores on the Broad Screen?*

The two scores from the *Broad Screen* are used to compute the student's *Probability of Reading Success* (PRS). The PRS indicates the likelihood that the child will perform on grade-level (40<sup>th</sup> percentile or better on a standardized, norm-referenced test) at the end-of the year. These data are also predictive of future reading success as measured by the Standard Achievement Test.

8. *What does the Broad Diagnostic Inventory measure?*

The *Broad Diagnostic Inventory* consists of Listening Comprehension and Vocabulary. In Listening Comprehension, children are asked questions about a passage the teacher reads aloud. Words for the Vocabulary section were selected to tap into the academic language of school, which predicts understanding of the written language.

2008-09 VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate

9. *What measures are proposed to be included in the 2008-09 VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness rate?*

It is proposed that the Probability of Reading Success be used along with the results of the Early Childhood Observation System (ECHOS), to calculate the 2008-09 VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness rate. Eight workshops to obtain public input on the calculation of this readiness rate have been scheduled in September. Information on these rule development workshops is available at: <http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/> .

10. *Where can additional information on these assessments be found?*

Additional information may be viewed at:

- [Office of Early Learning, Florida Department of Education - http://www.fldoe.org/earlyLearning/FLKRS2009.asp](http://www.fldoe.org/earlyLearning/FLKRS2009.asp)
- [Florida Center for Reading Research, Florida State University - http://www.fcrr.org/fair/index.htm](http://www.fcrr.org/fair/index.htm)
- [Just Read, Florida! Florida Department of Education - http://www.justreadflorida.com/instrreading.asp](http://www.justreadflorida.com/instrreading.asp)