

# **Program of Excellence Guidelines**

## **Miami-Dade County Public Schools Pre-Kindergarten Programs 2013-2014**

### **Scholastic Big Day for PreK**



**Miami-Dade County Public Schools  
Office of Early Childhood Programs  
1501 N.E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Suite 234  
Miami, Florida 33132  
(305) 995-7632**

# Miami-Dade County Public Schools

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## PREFACE

This handbook was developed for Pre-Kindergarten programs that serve children throughout the Miami-Dade County Public School (M-DCPS) district. Each member of the faculty and support staff who works with prekindergarten children should become familiar with the contents of this handbook and follow the guidelines provided within. This handbook is dedicated to young children, their families, and the professionals who work with them.

Research has shown there is much to gain from providing a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate education program for prekindergarten children. When a developmentally effective program is provided to children at an early age, it is possible to increase their potential for growth and independence. For children at risk of school failure, a high quality prekindergarten experience may significantly reduce the negative impact of their at-risk situation.

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# **MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

## **Office of Early Childhood Programs**

### **VISION**

The Office of Early Childhood Programs is committed to providing high-quality comprehensive services and programs to prepare young children for life-long learning.

### **MISSION**

The mission of the Office of Early Childhood Programs is to provide curriculum leadership and instructional support that enables young children and their families to participate in high-quality, developmentally effective programs.

### **CORE VALUES**

- ◇ Respect the worth and dignity of children as members of the family, the school, neighborhood, and global community.
- ◇ Recognize that all children are capable and competent learners.
- ◇ Assist parent(s)/guardian(s) in understanding their role(s) as the child's first teacher.
- ◇ Advocate for developmentally appropriate and instructionally effective programs to meet the needs of all children.
- ◇ Recognize the value of children's diverse cultures and their physical, intellectual, social and emotional needs.
- ◇ Provide research-based, high-quality, comprehensive and continuous professional development to educators of young children.

## Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program

### Background

The Florida state constitution was amended in 2004 to include Section 1(b), Article IX. The amendment mandates:

*Every four year old child in Florida shall be provided by the State a high quality prekindergarten learning opportunity in the form of an early childhood development and education program which shall be voluntary, high quality, free, and delivered according to professionally accepted standards. An early childhood development and education program means an organized program designed to address and enhance each child's ability to make age appropriate progress in an appropriate range of settings in the development of language and cognitive capabilities and emotional, social, regulatory and moral capacities through education in basic skills and such other skills as the Legislature may determine to be appropriate.*

### Program Description

Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) is a legislatively authorized program designed to prepare every four-year-old in Florida for kindergarten and build the foundation for their educational success. All eligible four-year-olds are entitled to participate in one of the VPK program options. The VPK program provides each child with a high quality educational experience that includes high literacy standards, accountability, appropriate curricula, substantial instructional periods, manageable class sizes, a certified teacher and a highly qualified paraprofessional.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) offers the VPK Core Instructional Day from 8:20 a.m. to 11:20 a.m. The Prekindergarten Enrichment program extends the instructional day until 1:50 p.m. through Title I funds or parent fees. Enrollment is based on a maximum class size of 20 students in the school year program, maintaining a ratio of 1 adult per 10 students at all times. The maximum class size for the Summer Program is 10 students, maintaining a ratio of 1 adult per 10 students at all times.

### Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum

Section 1002.67, F.S., requires that all curricula used in VPK classrooms must be developmentally appropriate, be designed to prepare a student for early literacy, enhance the age-appropriate progress of children in attaining the VPK Education Standards, and prepare children to be ready for kindergarten based upon the statewide kindergarten screening of the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screening (FLKRS). A developmentally appropriate curriculum should be appropriate for four-year-olds and flexible enough to modify for individual four-year-olds who have skills at either end of a developmental continuum.

A curriculum is defined by the State Board of Education as a set of written materials that:

- Is replicable
- Addresses the use of materials, scheduling, arranging the environment, and interaction between children and adults either separately or in combination
- Includes more than activity suggestions and more than theory and pedagogy
- Is aligned with the Standards for Four-Year-Olds
- Is aligned with scientifically based research

## Description of a Challenging Curriculum and Pedagogy

### Comprehensive

A comprehensive curriculum is one that contains a mix of instruction and practice activities to build strong skills in each of the five domains of the Standards for Four-Year-Olds. The curriculum must provide explicit, systematic instruction, assessment and intervention that leads to children's growing proficiency at each stage of skill development. Frequent practice activities and games must be provided within the curriculum to attain mastery of each of the Standards for Four-Year-Olds. Activities should include options for children of disparate abilities and backgrounds, providing instructors with alternatives to teach all children the required skills and content.

The overall instructional design should include the following:

- A clear roadmap or blueprint for instructors to get an overall picture of the program (i.e. a scope and sequence)
- Clearly stated goals and objectives
- Resources to help the instructor understand the rationale for the instructional approach and strategies utilized in the program (i.e. explanations in the instructor manuals, references, articles, reliable websites)
- A coherent instructional design
- Explicit instruction in the particular skill area
- Consistently systematic and intentional instruction
- A logical organization to the materials so that it's clear how the curriculum proceeds over the course of the program (day, week, month, year)
- Consistent "instructor friendly" instructional routines
- Student materials aligned with the Standards for Four-Year- Olds
- Examples of constructive feedback
- Scaffolding with specific instructions
- Differentiated instruction
- Guidelines and materials for flexible grouping
- Enrichment activities for advanced children
- Guidelines for use with diverse populations such as English Language Learners (ELL) and Students with Disabilities
- Components that foster intrinsic motivation in children (Approaches to Learning Domain)
- Ample opportunities for practice

## **Integration**

The VPK curriculum must be authentic and support and reinforce Florida's Standards for Four-Year-Olds in other subject areas. Research emphasizes the importance of connecting classroom learning to real-life situations which is accomplished most effectively when children are able to move seamlessly from one activity to the next.

## **Alignment with Florida's Standards for Four-Year-Olds (2011)**

Section 1002.67, F.S., requires the Florida Department of Education to develop and adopt performance standards for children in the VPK program that addresses emergent literacy, oral communication skills, knowledge of print and letters, phonemic and phonological awareness, and vocabulary and comprehension development.

The Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Standards were initially adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE) in 2002 and revised in 2005, 2008, and 2011. Presently, the *Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds* (2011) establish one set of performance standards for Florida's four-year-olds in School Readiness and VPK Programs. They are also aligned with the kindergarten *Next Generation Sunshine State Standards* and *Common Core State Standards*, and prepare children for kindergarten. Please refer to the Scholastic Big Day for PreK Correlation with the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds on the Office of Early Childhood Programs website at <http://earlychildhood.dadeschools.net>.

## **Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds**

The Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds are grouped around these five domains (See Appendix A):

- I. Physical Development
- II. Social and Emotional Development
- III. Approaches to Learning
- IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy
- V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge

## **Physical Health**

There are two primary themes or components of physical health for four-year-old children. The first component is physical health across all body systems. The status and support of nutritional, physical, dental, auditory, and visual health are included in this component. This component is demonstrated when children follow basic health and safety rules and habits such as making good food choices, participating in physical activities, and performing self-care tasks independently.

## **Approaches to Learning**

The development of a child's approach to learning is highly dependent on the quality and quantity of interactions with supportive adults. For this reason, it is essential that instructors who observe and assess learning styles, provide a well-designed learning environment, plan a variety of challenging activities, encourage children and ask questions to scaffold group learning, and provide individual learning opportunities to help children develop positive approaches to learning. Four-year-old children learn best when eagerness, curiosity, persistence, creativity, inventiveness, and planning and reflection are encouraged and supported across all domains of development.

## **Social and Emotional Development**

Social and emotional readiness is critical to a child's successful kindergarten transition, early school success, and even future well-being. Studies indicate that young children who are able to understand and express their own feelings, understand the viewpoint and feelings of others, cooperate with peers and adults, and resolve conflicts are more likely to be successful in school. These skills appear to be rooted in relationships with adults.

Relationships guide how young children learn about themselves, others, and the world. Children who develop positive relationships with adults are secure, confident, and can master new learning challenges. Positive relationships with adults set the stage for learning as children want to interact with, convey their thoughts and ideas to, understand the feelings of, cooperate with, and model the actions of the adults who care for them.

Positive relationships with adults also lead to positive relationships with peers. Four-year-old children are developing important interpersonal skills. They are learning how to join, question, and listen to their peers and adults. They construct knowledge by interacting with others and their environment, and they learn how to interact successfully with a variety of people and in different settings and circumstances.

## **Language and Communication**

Prekindergarten children's language and communication develops in five primary areas. Listening or receptive language is demonstrated by the way a child verbally and behaviorally responds to oral communication. Speaking or expressive language refers to the child's own skill at clearly expressing him or herself in words. Vocabulary development includes an extensive expansion in the words that a child understands, especially words related to a growing knowledge of the world and the ways that people describe objects and actions, as well as substantial growth in the words children use in their own verbal expression. Children's development in the area of sentences and structure is expanded as they use more complete sentences and demonstrate growing mastery of correct structure in the way they arrange words used to communicate. Conversation skills include how to initiate, participate appropriately, and modify speaking patterns for different contexts and settings.

Additionally, participation in a VPK program allows children to learn the language of school, including vocabulary, sentence structure, and content that is a key part of the educational experience in the United States.

## **Emergent Literacy**

Emergent literacy includes two components, emergent reading and emergent writing. Both reflect the development of the knowledge and conceptual understanding of skills that form the basis for later reading and writing. Emergent reading includes showing motivation for reading demonstrated by interest in being read to and told what written words mean, and development in appropriate use of books and other printed materials. Children also develop age-appropriate phonological awareness which is demonstrated by their growing capacity to recognize that words are made up of smaller units of sounds, understanding that they can blend sounds together to form words, or break words apart into smaller pieces. Alphabetic knowledge refers to children's growing recognition of and ability to name the letters and the sounds they make. As children are growing in their ability to comprehend spoken language, they also are developing their understanding of text read aloud as demonstrated by their accurate reenactment or retelling of stories read to them, and by their ability to ask and answer factual and abstract questions about the text. These oral language skills emerge with adult support as children who are four years old typically are not reading text.

In emergent writing, children develop motivation for written expression and learn the concept that print conveys meaning. Just as children grow in their ability to name and recognize alphabet letters, they also gain skill in using letter-like shapes, symbols, and letters to convey meaning, and age-appropriate skill at writing letters. Children's knowledge of the structure of written composition is demonstrated in their dictated stories and their own beginning forms of written expression.

### **Mathematical and Scientific Thinking**

Mathematical thinking refers to the child's reasoning, understanding number sense, using simple strategies to solve problems, sorting and grouping, recognizing patterns and relationships, collecting and describing information in a variety of ways, understanding spatial relations, and comparing and measuring objects. Mathematics helps children understand and make sense of their world. Scientific thinking is evidenced through the asking of questions, the use of simple tools, and the making of comparisons. The natural world and physical events are fascinating to pre-kindergarteners, and the instructors' questions can foster inquisitiveness and scientific thinking.

### **Social Studies and the Arts**

Social studies knowledge is demonstrated through identifying attributes of familiar people and understanding family roles and relationships. Children are developing new ways of examining and noticing places and the environment. Group rules are becoming easier to understand and follow, and four-year-olds have a beginning understanding of leadership. The arts provide opportunities for children to grow, to express what they know, pursue their own interests and abilities, and appreciate the contributions of others in creative ways. Children express and represent their ideas through various art media, and begin to understand and appreciate art.

### **Motor Development**

Motor development activities must include opportunities for both gross and fine motor development. While unstructured play and movement activities are important and provide opportunities to practice developing movement skills, play alone is not sufficient for the development of physical skills. Planned movement activities are needed, and exposure to many different types of movements should be the goal, rather than high performance in one or more particular skills.

## **Access to the Curriculum**

Florida's VPK Education Program ensures four-year-olds access to a high quality prekindergarten learning opportunity. It is important to note the great diversity of four-year-olds residing in Florida, including children with special developmental, behavioral, or physical needs, who are English Language Learners (ELL), or who may be at-risk of future learning or school difficulties for a variety of reasons. Accommodations implemented to foster access to the program do not lessen achievement expectations; they should, however, provide a wide range of techniques and support systems to help children work around areas of special need. Frequently, accommodations that may be required to ensure meaningful participation by a given child are found to benefit many other children in the classroom. Accommodations include changes in instructional methods and materials, learning activities and assessments, time demands and scheduling, the learning environment, and the use of special communication systems.

Source: Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program: Curriculum Approval Specifications 2010; Florida Department of Education Office of Early Learning

## Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS)

Section 1002.69, Florida Statutes, describes the Department of Education's responsibilities related to statewide kindergarten screening and the calculation of VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rates. The law requires that the statewide kindergarten screening be administered to all kindergarten students in the school district within the first 30 days of each school year. Children who participated in VPK are screened on the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener. The FLKRS includes a subset of the Early Childhood Observation System (ECHOS) and the Florida Assessment for Instruction in Reading-Kindergarten (FAIR-K) which includes Letter Naming and Phonemic Awareness tasks.

Readiness for kindergarten on ECHOS is *Demonstrating or Emerging/Progressing*, and on FAIR-K it is a probability of reading success of .67 percent or above. A school that has been identified as a Provider on Probation (POP) is one that does not achieve a minimum readiness rate of demonstrating the Provider's satisfactory delivery of the VPK program. If the readiness rate of a provider falls below the minimum rate, the school district requires the school to submit an improvement plan for approval and to implement the plan. To demonstrate satisfactory delivery of the VPK program, a minimum of seventy (70) percent of the children enrolled in the VPK program in each classroom from the previous year, must test ready for kindergarten.

The purpose of the FLKRS is:

- To inform instruction;
- To gather information on a child's overall development;
- To specifically address the readiness of each student for kindergarten based on the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds (2011); and
- To calculate the VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate that measures how well a VPK provider prepares four-year-olds for kindergarten based upon the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds (2011).

### Scholastic Big Day for PreK

Miami-Dade County Public Schools Prekindergarten Programs are implementing Scholastic Big Day for PreK curriculum. Big Day for PreK's approach to learning is grounded in cognitive research and builds on young children's knowledge and curiosity about the world around them. This comprehensive curriculum is designed to ensure that children acquire new knowledge, skills, and understanding each day through hands-on experiences, purposeful play, and teacher-led instruction. Big Day for PreK learning experiences integrate all domains, including:

- I. Social-Emotional Development
- II. Oral Language
- III. Literacy
- IV. Mathematics
- V. Science
- VI. Social Studies
- VII. Art
- VIII. Physical Development

Please refer to the Office of Early Childhood Programs website under Teacher Information at <http://earlychildhood.dadeschools.net> for the Scholastic Big Day for PreK Curriculum Resources listed below.

Scholastic Big Day for PreK Curriculum Guide for Administrators

Scholastic Big Day for PreK Curriculum Guide for Teachers and Paraprofessionals

Scholastic Big Day Webinar Initial Training

Scope and Sequence

Alphabet Sequence

Florida Early Learning and Development Standards for Four-Year-Olds (FELDS) Correlation

Common Core Alignment

Area Signs

Title I Daily Routine

Fee-Supported Daily Routine

Title I Lesson Plan

Fee-Supported Lesson Plan

Title I Pictorial Daily Routine Cards

Fee-Supported Pictorial Daily Routine Cards

The central organizing features of the Big Day for PreK Curriculum are the Big Experiences-Circle Time and Story Time lessons-that occur three times each day. These Big Experiences integrate learning domains and provide an anchor for conversation, play, and learning. In addition to Big Experiences, time for Small Group Instruction and Learning Centers is built into each day of the program.

The Big Day for PreK Curriculum is divided into eight engaging themes, each about one month long. Early in the year, the themes focus on concepts in children's immediate world, and they broaden over the course of the year as children understand more and more about the world around them. The eight themes integrate learning across content areas:

Theme 1: Ready for School!

Theme 2: My Family

Theme 3: Our Community

Theme 4: Awesome Animals!

Theme 5: Imagine It, Make It

Theme 6: Growing Up Healthy

Theme 7: Nature All Around Us

Theme 8: Moving On

The Enrichment Program (afternoon session) instruction which extends beyond the VPK hours includes Songs and Fingerplays, Interactive Reading, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. Emphasis on providing students with opportunities for growth in social/emotional development, physical development, health and safety, media and technology, art, music, and dramatic play are integrated throughout both the VPK and Enrichment portions of the day. Each component fosters the cognitive, literacy and content area learning needed for success in kindergarten.

The power of learning comes from personal initiative. Young children act on their innate desire to explore; they ask and search for answers to questions about people, materials, events, and ideas that spark their curiosity; they solve problems that stand in the way of their goals; and they generate new strategies to try. See Appendix B for sample materials for Learning Centers.

## **Assessments**

In every M-DCPS Voluntary Prekindergarten classroom, students are assessed both formally and informally. Developmentally appropriate assessment at the classroom level is crucial to the implementation process of a high quality early childhood program. It is highly recommended that each classroom teacher maintain a data binder containing the results of all assessments specifically the VPK Assessment Class Summary Sheet, Anecdotal Records (as needed), Waterford and Imagine Learning classroom summary reports. These reports will provide detailed analysis of student performance that may be analyzed and used to plan instruction. This data may also be used in the referral process. They are to be accessible to district personnel and administration. Miami-Dade County Public Schools utilizes the assessment practices outlined below. (See Appendix C).

### **VPK Assessment (State Mandated)**

The Florida Center for Reading Research has developed the Florida VPK Assessment in collaboration with the Department of Education. The purpose of this assessment is to provide teachers with valid and reliable feedback regarding children's progress in attaining the skills in the VPK Education Standards. Teachers may use this information to inform instructional decisions in the VPK classroom.

The content for the three early literacy measures was decided by identifying the best predictors of later reading success. Print knowledge, phonological awareness, and oral language/vocabulary are the best predictors for conventional early reading ability. The content for the early mathematics measure was decided by identifying the best predictors of later mathematics success. Number sense is one of the best known informal predictors of formal mathematics ability. In addition, research demonstrates that all four skill areas (e.g. print knowledge, phonological awareness, mathematics, oral language/vocabulary) can benefit from targeted instruction during the preschool year.

Plan to administer the assessments as outlined below:

- Assessment Period 1 (AP1): September 3-30, 2013
- Assessment Period 2 (AP2): January 7-February 4, 2014
- Assessment Period 3 (AP3): April 22-May 16, 2014

The Florida VPK Assessment Online Reporting System provides teachers with a user friendly tool to track children's progress in attaining the skills in the VPK Education Standards. Teachers may use this information to guide instructional decisions in the VPK classroom. The Florida VPK Assessment Online Reporting System is available to all registered providers free of charge. This system allows VPK teachers to enter each child's assessment results and then analyze children's data in order to plan lessons that meet the individual needs of all children.

The VPK Assessment Online Reporting System has the capacity to:

- Create individual, classroom, and center level reports to track progress
- Link the assessment data to instructional strategies and resources that are aligned with the VPK Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds
- Create a letter to parents about their child's performance on each assessment

Instructions for access to assessment results are posted in the Office of Early Childhood Programs website and will be distributed during the VPK Assessment training sessions. Schools must keep all VPK Assessment scoring booklets on file for five years. Parents can be given a copy of the scoring booklet. Schools must keep the originals for reporting purposes to the Florida Department of Education.

**Oral Language Proficiency Scale-Revised (OLPS-R)....Mandatory**

Prekindergarten students will be assessed in the OLPS-R at the end of the school year by trained school staff. Prekindergarten teachers are to read the Home Language Survey (HLS) of each student to ascertain which language a student speaks or is exposed to at home. Additional strategies are provided by the Office of Early Childhood Programs on how to meet the educational needs of ELL students. (See Appendix D).

**Instructions**

Pre-K students need to be assessed with the M-DCOLPS-R by May 30, 2014. **The following information must be entered in the ISIS - “J” Screen by June 6, 2014:**

Score of 20 – Proficient	Score less than 20 – ESOL level I-IV
Assessment Date	Assessment Date
Aural/Oral results	Aural/Oral results
LEP: N	LEP: Y
	ESOL level

\* ESOL Program **Entry Date** will be entered at the beginning of the school year when the student enters Kindergarten (2014-2015)

**Anecdotal Notes/Observations....As needed**

Assessment includes a range of tasks adults use to ensure that observing children, interacting with children, and planning for children receive full adult energy and attention. The teachers are active observers and listeners in a VPK classroom. Teamwork built on supportive adult relationships form a solid base for adults doing this work together. While observing and interacting, the teaching team may gather accurate information about children. These anecdotal notes are based on what the teaching team sees and hears from the students. Observations/anecdotes may target students who need remediation, enrichment, or behavioral interventions. The teaching team is to engage in planning sessions in which they share their observations of children, identify activities that may interest their students, analyze the observations in terms of the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds, and make plans for the day/next day (See Appendices E and F).

Examples of anecdotal notes are as follows:

<b>Mathematical and Scientific Thinking</b>	10/12/12 SG At small group time, Maria made identical patterns of red/blue, red/blue with linking cubes.
<b>Emergent Literacy</b>	10/27/12 WT During work time in the book area, Maria sat on the beanbag chair and looked at all the pictures in “Brown Bear, Brown Bear,” turning the pages from left to right.
<b>Language and Communication</b>	11/2/12 ST At storytime, Maria listened to Ms. Hanlon read “ <i>The Very Hungry Caterpillar</i> .” When Ms. Hanlon read “and on Tuesday he ate through two _____,” Maria said, Pears!

**SG-Small Group**

**WT-Work Time**

**ST-Story Time**

## Prekindergarten Screenings

The Prekindergarten Screenings Consent (FM 5490) for vision, hearing and speech screening is a part of the prekindergarten registration packet. The form must be signed by the parent or guardian at the time of registration and before any of the screenings are administered.

### Speech Language Screening....As needed

During the first week of school, adults in the classroom need to be observant of any child whose speech is difficult to understand or has very limited to no verbal skills. A speech screening by the teacher is often accurate in identifying children with obvious speech needs, particularly articulation problems. Referrals should be made to the school speech pathologist as soon as possible.

### Vision Screening....Mandatory

The teacher or school nurse administers the vision screening for all children by the first week of October. The materials needed for the vision screening are: an eye chart (house, apple, square, and circle), an instruction sheet, a pass/fail criteria sheet, two tissues per child (one for each eye), or two occludes (cleaned with alcohol between each exam). Please contact a Curriculum Support Specialist if you need the vision chart with instructions.

### Hearing Screening....As needed

The M-DCPS Comprehensive Health Services Department screens all students in grades K, 1, 6, and 10. The speech pathologist conducts these screenings. If there is a hearing concern with a student, the prekindergarten teacher must request a screening and arrange a date and time with the speech pathologist that will be mutually convenient.

## VPK Instructional Personnel

Teamwork is an interactive process that is crucial in creating a supportive climate for young learners. When adults work together to establish and maintain active learning environments for children the effects are far-reaching. The team shares responsibilities throughout the daily routine. The VPK paraprofessional is to be in the classroom throughout the day and provide support during all components of the day as mandated by the Florida Department of Education. It is important to remember that the adult to student ratio must be 1:10 at all times.

Contractually, all full-time teachers are entitled to a 30 minute duty-free lunch. All full-time paraprofessionals are entitled to a 30 minute duty-free lunch and two 10 minute breaks daily. All part-time paraprofessionals who work five hours per day shall be allowed one 15 minute break daily. In an effort to comply with VPK mandates and the Quality Counts Initiative, it is highly recommended that the M-DCPS Pre-Kindergarten program implement the following:

<b>Title/Position</b>	<b>Lunch Time</b>	<b>A.M. Break</b>	<b>P.M. Break</b>
<b>Full-time Teacher</b>	After 11:20 a.m. (During students' VPK Lunch Time paraprofessional will provide adult supervision)	Not applicable	Not applicable
<b>Full-time Paraprofessional</b>	12:05 p.m. - 12:35 p.m. (During afternoon Storytime and Large Group Time)	11:20 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. (During morning closing Circle Time)	2:00 p.m. – 2:10 p.m. (After dismissal)
<b>Part-time Paraprofessional</b>	Not applicable	11:05 a.m. – 11:20 a.m. (During morning closing Circle Time)	Not applicable

The teacher and full-time paraprofessional plan together daily from 2:10 p.m. to 3:05 p.m. This requirement does not apply to hourly paraprofessionals.

### **Teacher Responsibilities**

The classroom teacher, in all of the pre-kindergarten programs, has the primary responsibility for providing a high quality, developmentally appropriate and effective educational experience for the students. Also, the classroom teacher must read and follow the VPK Program Guidelines to be in compliance with the Office of Early Childhood Programs directives.

### **Role and Function of Paraprofessionals**

Paraprofessionals in prekindergarten classrooms are employed to assist classroom teachers and are to be utilized exclusively to provide direct instructional assistance for the implementation of the program and services for the preschoolers. When working with students individually or in small groups, the paraprofessional interacts with the children much the same as the teacher. Small groups of children must be fluid and interchangeable. For large group activities both adults work cooperatively to maximize student learning. Paraprofessionals are administratively responsible to the on-site administrator and under the direct supervision of the classroom teacher at all times, except when left with small groups of students or with a total group for a short period of time. Paraprofessionals shall not perform office duties which are not directly related to classroom instruction.

### **School Support Team**

Teachers may obtain the support of the school's guidance counselors, psychologists, social workers, and/or speech pathologists to service the VPK population and assist in determining classroom interventions or any other type of support to ensure that the educational needs of four-year-old children are met. The School Support Team (SST) procedures apply to the students in the VPK program.

## **Program Quality Rating System**

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS), in partnership with University of Florida Professional Development (UFPD), is part of the Quality Counts Initiative. The UFPD is a multi-partner, multi-year effort to improve the quality of early childhood education and services. The goal of UFPD is to create a system that promotes early learning and child well-being from birth through elementary school. Quality Counts is a quality improvement rating system designed and funded by The Children's Trust in partnership with the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe and the Early Childhood Initiative Foundation/UFPD. This Quality Counts Initiative utilizes the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R) to assess and improve the quality of our program. This assessment focuses on the physical environment of the classroom: Space and Furnishings, Personal Care Routines, Language-Reasoning, Activities and Interactions, as well as the daily routine. Currently, selected Ready Schools Partner schools are participating in the UFPD, Quality Counts Initiative. Our goal is to include all VPK classrooms in this initiative over a period of time.

## **Prekindergarten Computer-Assisted Instruction**

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) incorporates interactive computer-assisted instruction in the prekindergarten program to provide students opportunities to engage in practice activities and tutorials. The following programs are utilized in the VPK program:

- ***Imagine Learning English*** is a comprehensive software program that provides language support to English Language Learners (ELL). Fifty-three schools have the

Imagine Learning English program. Support: susy.garcia@imaginelearning.com

- **Waterford Reading, Math and Science** program provides full curriculum software and support materials to broaden children's exposure to targeted reading skills, math, and science concepts. Technical Support (888) 977-7100.

The Waterford online program has the capacity to provide the following reports:

1. Individual Placement for Reading, Math and Science
2. Individual Progress Reports for Reading, Math and Science
3. Area of Difficulty for Reading, Math and Science

- **Riverdeep Learning Village** includes a prekindergarten section which offers engaging, interactive components in math, language arts, science, and social studies. This program can be accessed through the district website.

### Implementation Guidelines

- In schools where **Imagine Learning** is implemented:
  - ALL ELL students in Pre-K classrooms must use Imagine Learning for the minimum recommended time of 15 minutes daily, 4 days per week.
  - Teachers are encouraged to allow ELL's to use Waterford Early Learning (Reading) one day per week if available.
  - Teachers should look at data of non-ELL students and determine which program best addresses their needs. Priority should be given to students who demonstrate the highest literacy needs/deficiencies in AP1 and AP2, i.e.: Below Expectations (BE).
  - NON-ELL students who "Meet" and/or "Exceed" Expectations may use Waterford Early Learning if available, the recommended 15 minutes a day, 4 days a week.
- In schools where ONLY **Waterford Early Learning** (Reading/Math & Science) is implemented:
  - All students should use the programs for the recommended 15 minutes per day, 4 days per week, per program.
  - In classrooms with low technology capability (2 or less computers), teachers should prioritize usage according to student needs.
    - Priority should be given to students who demonstrate the highest literacy needs/deficiencies in AP1 and AP2, i.e.: Below Expectations (BE).
    - These students should use Waterford Early Learning a minimum of 15 minutes per day, 4 times per week.
    - Students who "Meet" or "Exceed" Expectations must use Waterford Early Learning a minimum of 3 times per week.

*Note: A rotation schedule should include the name of student and schedule for computer time.*

### Typical Behaviors of Prekindergarten Students

In an active learning environment, behaviors typical and natural for four-year olds are expected and planned for. The process of growth moves young children along a continuum. Behavior that occurs along this continuum is developmentally important. At every age, some behavior which may look like misbehavior is a sound and healthy part of growing. The professional's job is to have an understanding of child development in order to facilitate interventions. The first month of school is a social-emotional adjustment period for students and adults, therefore, teachers should use intervention strategies before referring a student for evaluation.

## Intervention Strategies for Positive Behavior Management

The use of a consistent, well-balanced daily routine provides security for children, reduces stress on them, and contributes to positive behavior. In a classroom using developmentally appropriate practices, management techniques include specific attention to prevention. Events in the daily routine should be scheduled to provide a variety of active and passive activities with a minimum of waiting time. Young children's short attention span should be taken into consideration when planning any activity. Rules need to be clear since they help children control their behavior. Rules should also be simple, few in number and reasonable according to the children's age. As the foundation of establishing a balanced learning environment, children should learn one basic rule: Take care of yourself, others and things. Any other established rule should reflect this rule.

Appropriate intervention strategies for prekindergarten children include redirecting or distracting children from potential problems, reminding children of rules, ignoring inappropriate behavior (as long as it is not unsafe), noticing appropriate behavior (i.e. positive reinforcement), helping children solve their own problems, assisting children in making appropriate choices, and helping children see consequences of their actions.

Teachers facilitate the development of self-control in children by using positive guidance techniques such as modeling and encouraging expected behavior, redirecting children to a more acceptable activity, and setting clear limits for the benefit and safety of all children. Young children best learn social behavior when teachers' expectations match and respect children's developing capabilities, not by punishing them.

### Preventing Problems and Conflicts

- Think about the principles of child development.
- Establish a consistent daily routine.
- Make the classroom rich in opportunities.
- Set reasonable limits and agree on the rationale to use to explain these to the children.
- Model ways of interacting with people and materials.
- Plan for transition times.
- Respect and plan for the different abilities, interests, and pacing levels of each child.
- Design space with areas and materials that are of interest and value to the population of children served.

### Steps for Solving Problems and Resolving Conflicts

Use these steps when children are engaged in conflict with each other. Just as with any new set of skills, it takes practice to learn to apply the process of conflict resolution. With time and repeated experience, both children and adults will come to rely on this shared process.

- **Approach calmly, stopping any hurtful actions.**
  - Place yourself between the children, on their level.
  - Use a calm voice and gentle touch.
  - Remain neutral rather than take sides.
- **Acknowledge feelings.**
  - "You look really upset."

Let children know you need to hold any object in question.

➤ **Gather information.**

“What’s the problem?”

➤ **Restate the problem.**

“So the problem is...”

➤ **Ask for ideas for solutions.**

“What can we do to solve this problem?”

Encourage children to think of a solution.

➤ **Summarize the plan and be prepared to give follow-up support.**

“You solved the problem!”

Stay near the children.

### **Child Management Checklist**

#### **Preventive Management Strategies**

1. Adults establish and maintain a safe learning environment.
2. The learning environment includes work areas in which children have enough space to play and a variety of materials that are of value and interest to them.
3. Throughout the day, adults plan for, anticipate, and accept a variety of behaviors in the ways children use space and materials because they realize that children are functioning at various developmental levels.
4. Adults establish and maintain a predictable, consistent daily routine with a balance of adult-initiated and child-initiated activities, so that children have a sense of control over what is going to happen next.
5. Adults plan for and help children anticipate transitions.
6. Adults eliminate long waiting periods and make the short waiting periods as active and concrete as possible. For example, an effective strategy would be to set up a chart with children’s signs to indicate who will have the next turn to pass out snack items.
7. Children initiate their own plans at work time and carry them out with adult support.
8. Children make choices throughout the daily routine. Adults support children’s choices and interests.
9. Adults model care and concern for people and materials throughout the daily routine.
10. Adults elicit, value, and listen to children’s points of view, ideas, concerns, and feelings.
11. Adults attend to, acknowledge, value, and support children’s strengths and interests throughout the day.
12. Teaching team members discuss, agree on, and are consistent in following the classroom rules, limits, and expectations throughout the day.

13. Teaching team members provide children with clear and consistent reasons for the expectations, rules, and limits that have been established.
14. Teaching team members share and record observations of children, and plan for children on a daily basis.
15. Team members work together with parents to support children's growth and development.

### **On-the-Spot Management Techniques**

1. Adults stop aggressive or destructive behavior (hitting, biting, kicking, throwing things) immediately, give a reason for their action, and suggest a more acceptable way to handle the situation (i.e. "Stop biting. Biting hurts. Use your words to tell Tony what you want.").
2. Adults help children resolve conflicts by:
  - Eliciting, listening to, and acknowledging children's descriptions of problems, including their feelings, observations, and reasoning about the problems;
  - Encouraging children to talk with one another about the difficult situation they are experiencing;
  - Interpreting a less articulate child's needs, feelings, and actions to other children when necessary;
  - Patiently supporting children's efforts to generate appropriate alternatives on their own;
  - Helping children generate appropriate alternatives when necessary; and
  - Using factual, nonjudgmental language throughout this process.
3. In conflicts that do not involve hurtful behavior or bullying, adults give children the opportunity to settle differences on their own.
4. Adults help children become aware of and take responsibility for the outcomes of their actions (i.e. repairing toys students break or wiping up spills).
5. Adults acknowledge that a problem-solving approach to child management takes time, patience, and consistency.

### **Follow-up Steps for Specific Children**

1. Adults document behaviors that are of concern and keep records of any intervention strategies that are being used and the results.
2. Parents will be informed and included in choosing intervention strategies.
3. In extreme cases, the teacher, the curriculum support specialist, school counselor or school administrator will visit the classroom to observe the child, talk to the parent or guardian, and make an assessment as to future steps to take.

### **Character Education**

Character is described as "moral or ethical strength, integrity and fortitude." In prekindergarten, character education is addressed through the development of pro-social behavior. Teachers foster and facilitate the development of pro-social skills in young children by providing opportunities to develop character building skills in themselves and the children. These activities and experiences should be implemented throughout the day.

## Conscious Discipline

Conscious Discipline is a comprehensive, social-emotional, intelligence approach based on brain research and its effect on children's behavior. It is designed to help teachers integrate "Brain Smart Principles" that will enable them to create a positive social-emotional learning environment. Developmentally appropriate techniques are taught to help children learn logical problem solving strategies. Dr. Becky Bailey, Professor at the University of Central Florida, has established ten principles of Conscious Discipline. These principles are built on cogent child development theories which encourage an understanding of and respect for children, their temperaments, their personalities, and unique dispositions. Putting child development knowledge into action, results in quality classroom management. A well planned learning environment is organized and provides adequate space for children to move as they learn and contribute to appropriate behaviors.

Conscious Discipline is a journey requiring an open mind and an open heart. The journey starts by learning the 7 Powers of Self-Control which shift the teacher's focus from blame to solutions, from punishment to teaching, and from fear to love. The Conscious Discipline approach should be used by those teachers that have been trained. The classroom structures and activities which facilitate these powers and skills include:

- Greeting Apron
- Brain Smart Start
- Activity to Unite
- Activity to Disengage Stress
- Activity to Connect/I Love You Rituals
- Commitments (Gentle Touch, Be a STAR, My Turn, Read a Book with a Friend)
- Safe Keeper Box
- Wish Well Heart
- Safe Place
- Job Board
- Friends and Family Board
- Ways to be Helpful
- Board/Books like "You did it!"
- I Noticed Board
- Good-bye Rituals



### Pyramid Model [Social-Emotional]

The Pyramid Model has been identified as a tiered intervention model that provides guidance for the design and delivery of evidence-based interventions to promote the social development of young children and provide more intensive intervention for children who have social emotional delays or behavioral challenges. Implementation of the Pyramid Model builds upon the foundation expectations, language, and responsibilities outlined in the Standards for Four-Year-Olds. The model describes three tiers of intervention practice.

#### Tier 1: Universal Promotion

The first tier involves two levels of practices that are essential to promoting the social development of young children. The first level of practices is the provision of nurturing and responsive care giving relationships to the child. This includes the family/caregiver and the

teacher/paraprofessional within an early childhood program. The second level is the provision of supportive environments. It refers to the provision of predictable and supportive environments and family interactions that will promote the child's social and emotional development.

In the early years, children exist within a web of relationships with parents, teachers, other caring adults in their lives and eventually peers. This web supplies the context within which healthy social emotional growth and the capacity to form strong positive relationships with adults and peers develop.

### **Tier 2: Secondary Prevention**

This tier includes the provision of explicit instruction in social skills and emotional regulation. In early childhood programs, all young children require adult guidance and instruction to learn how to express their emotions appropriately, play cooperatively with peers, and use social problem solving strategies. However, for some children it will be necessary to provide more systematic and focused instruction to teach children social emotional skills.

### **Tier 3: Tertiary Interventions**

When children have persistent challenging behavior that is not responsive to interventions at the previous levels, comprehensive interventions are developed to resolve problem behaviors and support the development of new skills. Positive Behavior Support (PBS) provides an approach to address problem behavior that is individually designed and is focused on supporting the child in developing new skills. The process begins with a Functional Assessment of Behavior (FAB) to gain a better understanding of the factors related to the child's challenging behavior. Functional assessment ends with the implementation of the child's support plan.

## **Early Interventions**

Prekindergarten children will encounter many new challenges that include a new school/classroom atmosphere, unfamiliar adults and children, a structured daily routine, large/small group instruction, independent activities, and new rules. Children need approximately 30 days to adjust to these new expectations. Although a prekindergarten program can take many forms, it is important to remember that the program is developmental, not remedial. Developmentally appropriate programs must be age appropriate as well as individually appropriate. A quality prekindergarten program strives to meet the needs of children in the best possible atmosphere for their growth. It is imperative for the adults in a prekindergarten program to conduct early informal screenings of the children as they work with them on a day-to-day basis. As the adult becomes acquainted with each child's abilities, learning style, and level of functioning, he/she may become aware of particular children who seem to need closer scrutiny. The vision, hearing, speech, and language screenings will supply valuable information. The daily observation notes that are taken by classroom staff, as well as positive parents/teacher interactions, are crucial to this process.

In specific cases, concerns may be shared with the school support staff: school counselor, SPED specialist, and/or Curriculum Support Specialist. Documentation of behaviors, early intervention strategies that have been implemented, and the results of the strategies need to be recorded and kept as supporting documentation. In turn, the school support staff may observe the child and suggest further strategies. In extreme cases, the school support staff should be informed of the situation and various alternative strategies for working with the child should be considered. This entire process will take some time.

## Response to Intervention (Rtl) [Instructional]

In early childhood programs, the Rtl model offers a framework for ensuring the delivery of high quality education and care to support the development of all children. Response to Intervention (Rtl) is a process used in determining how to identify and assist young children in need of additional intervention(s) to ensure their developmental progress. Response to Intervention (Rtl) relies on evidence-based instructional practices and frequent progress monitoring to provide the data necessary to make decisions about a child's progress and the need for more intensive interventions if necessary. This model is intended to reduce unnecessary referrals to special education by ensuring that all children in the general education setting have access to high quality curriculum and instruction that are provided in a cascade of intensity, and that each child receives a level of instructional intensity matched to his or her level of need. The Rtl process has three tiers that build upon one another. Each tier provides more intensive levels of support:

- **Tier I: High Quality Instruction**

The school provides all students with access to high quality curriculum, instruction, and behavior supports in the general education classroom. *Prevention:* Scholastic Big Day for PreK Curriculum, VPK Assessment, Differentiated Instruction, Conscious Discipline, Waterford/Imagine Learning. Complete Rtl/SST/PST Student Tier I and Tier II Data Profile (FM-7452).

- **Tier II: Additional Targeted, Supplemental Instruction/Interventions**

The school provides interventions to small groups of students who need more support than they are receiving through Tier 1. *Strategic Intervention:* targeted one-on-one instruction, targeted small-group instruction, additional computer-assisted instruction, Riverdeep, Starfall. Complete Rtl/SST/PST Student Tier I and Tier II Data Profile (FM-7452).

- **Tier III: Intensive Interventions**

The school develops and implements interventions to meet the individual needs of students. Children's progress is monitored and results are used to make decisions about additional instruction and intervention. *Intensive Intervention:* SST Intervention Plan, and IEP. Complete Tier III/SST/PST Problem Solving (FM-7450).

### Response to Intervention (Rtl) Referral Process

The Rtl referral process is required for VPK students who are being considered for Specific Learning Disabilities. Children considered for Developmentally Delayed, Intellectual Disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities or Other Health Impaired do not require a Rtl referral. Any child with extremely challenging behaviors will require the development and intervention of a Functional Assessment of Behavior (FAB) Observation Form (FM-6667) and a Positive Behavioral Support (PBS) before an evaluation is completed. A student who has a medical diagnosis of Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) will also require the development and intervention of a Functional Assessment of Behavior (FAB) and a Positive Behavioral Support (PBS) prior to determining eligibility for Other Health Impairments.

### Steps to Initialize a Referral for an Evaluation

Once it is determined that a VPK child may need to begin the referral process for an evaluation for special education the following procedures will need to be initiated.

1. Complete School Support Team/Problem Solving Team (SST/PST) Request for Assistance (RFA) (FM-7073) Complete Section A: Identifying Information on page 1 and Section C: Areas of Strength on page 2.

2. Have the parent/guardian sign the Notice of Intent and Parental/Guardian Consent to Conduct a Screening/Assessment (FM-6279) for the vision, hearing, developmental screening and the Observation of Prekindergarten Student Behaviors (FM-4140). The developmental screener will be the Battelle Developmental Inventory-2 (BDI-2) screener.
3. The VPK teacher will complete the vision, hearing, BDI-2 Screener and two Observations of Prekindergarten for Student Behaviors.
4. The following screenings/assessments will be forwarded to the School's SST/PST Coordinator: Florida VPK Assessment 1, BDI-2 screener, Vision and Hearing screenings, Referral and Consent forms.

**Referrals for Speech/Language Evaluations**

1. School Speech/Language Pathologist reviews all the support documentation given to the school's SST/PST Coordinator from the referral process above.
2. Speech/Language pathologist will observe VPK student in the classroom and complete Observation of Speech/Language Skills – Prekindergarten (FM-7415)
3. Speech Language pathologist will determine the need to complete a speech/language screening or an evaluation.
4. If speech/language screening or evaluation is deemed necessary, parent will be given the Notice of Intent and Parental/Guardian Consent to Conduct an Evaluation (FM-4961).
5. Upon completion of the screener/evaluation the speech/language pathologist submits the results to the school SST Coordinator.
6. SST coordinator contacts the Prekindergarten staffing specialist to schedule a staffing conference to review evaluation, determine eligibility, and develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) if appropriate.

**Involving and Reporting to Parents**

Events	How to Involve Parents
Start of school year for all students	Send notice home to all parents referencing process in place to address needs of all students; may include conferences, additional specialized staff, sensory screening activities, etc.  Review the Rtl system so that parents do not think it is an "ESE referral".
<i>Intervention Tier I Data Collection:</i> VPK Assessment, parent reports, and observations (anecdotes)	Notify parent through written notice or document; provide contact information if parent has questions or needs clarification.
<i>Intervention Tier I and II:</i> Individual student issues addressed	Conduct parent/teacher conference.
<i>Intervention Tier II:</i> Multidisciplinary team meets to address problems of identified students, progress monitoring.	Invite parent to attend these meetings; solicit input in a formal manner if unable to attend.

<i>Intervention Tier II:</i> Documentation of progress	Continue to send home reports, data is reviewed by team; involve parent(s) in the intervention process.  NOTE: If teacher is individualizing instruction or teaching a targeted skill, the parent should be informed and guided in helping the student at home to the extent the parent is willing and able.
<i>Intervention Tier II and III:</i> Team meetings to review progress and make instructional decisions	Invite parent(s) to participate in meetings and/or receive any of the data that is used by the team with a summary of the meeting in writing accompanied by a follow-up telephone call and/or parent/teacher conference.
<i>Intervention Tier III:</i> Decisions that result in a student spending more time in intensive instruction than typical peers	Send form letter home; obtain consent for individual evaluation; and conduct follow-up call to address parent questions.

Visit <http://www.florida-rti.org/> for more detailed information.

### **Parent/Family Involvement**

The importance of family involvement to success in school has been validated by research. A key ingredient in this process is to focus on the parents'/family's strengths and formulate strategies that will build success for the parent, as well as the child. To that end, the M-DCPS prekindergarten programs encourage parent/family participation. All volunteers must be cleared by M-DCPS according to the Jessica Lunsford Act. It is recognized that many parents are not able to participate in the classroom on a regular basis. For this reason, several strategies have been identified and implemented that offer parents various opportunities to involve themselves in their child's educational process. Active participation by parents is enhanced by specific planned events. Some suggested activities are reading to the children, serving as a chaperone for field trips, joining the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), lunch room assistance, and assisting with other class activities to mention a few.

As a matter of policy, prekindergarten teachers are required to hold, and parents are required to attend, three parent/teacher conferences to discuss each child's developmental progress during the school year and one end-of-year transition to Kindergarten meeting.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences Timeline**

**Meeting 1:** Parent/Teacher Conference – by October 1, 2013  
(Share learner's goals with parents)

**Meeting 2:** Parent/Teacher Conference – by February 3, 2014  
(Share learner's progress with parents)

**Meeting 3:** Parent/Teacher Conference – by May 19, 2014  
(Share learner's progress with parents)

**Meeting 4:** Parent Meeting/Transition to Kindergarten from May 22 – June 6, 2014

During the first three meetings (Meeting 1, Meeting 2, and Meeting 3) discuss data from VPK Assessments, interactive computer-assisted instruction reports, and observations/anecdotal notes. Remember that the Florida VPK Assessment may be used to gather data in preparation for the IPEGS progress goal(s) and may be used for the parent conferences.

### **Parent Meeting/Transition to Kindergarten**

For young children and their parents, moving from prekindergarten to kindergarten is one of the most significant transitions they will experience. They will be faced with:

- Change in Place/Classroom
- New Expectations
- Adjusting to a New Peer Group
- New Authority Figure
- New Role as a Student

Transition is a period of adjustment. Some adjustments can be stressful. When parents, teachers, and school administrators work together the process of transitioning to kindergarten operates smoothly reducing the amount of stress experienced by the child. The parent meetings should be interactive as well as informative. Examples of topics that may be discussed and/or activities that may be conducted are as follows:

- Registration
- Skills Useful in Kindergarten
- Five-Year-Old Developmental Stages
- A Book List for Young Children
- Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screening (FLKRS)
- A Visit to Kindergarten Classroom
- The Kindergarten Curriculum
- Attendance Policy
- First Day of School Tips
- Homework Expectations
- Parental Involvement
- Developing Literacy at Home
- School Supply List
- School Readiness
- Engaging parents in a Language and Literacy Activity. Visit the Florida Center for Reading Research website at <http://www.fcrr.org> for ideas for this activity. Click on the link for Instructional Materials for Teachers.

### **VPK Parent Options**

The VPK program's mission is to ensure that all children are intellectually, emotionally, physically, and socially prepared to enter school ready to learn, fully recognizing the crucial role of parents as the child's first teacher. Parents have the right to select a VPK program option that best meets their family's needs. The options include:

- School-Year Program which includes 540 instructional hours; OR
- Summer Program which includes 300 instructional hours. Children may participate in the VPK program the summer immediately before the school year in which the child is eligible for kindergarten.

### **Parents' Rights**

Parents have the right to:

- ✓ Select the VPK program options that meet their child's needs.
- ✓ Enroll in either a school-year or free summer VPK program.
- ✓ Select a VPK program that employs VPK instructors and meets minimum classroom requirements.
- ✓ Select a VPK program that follows approved curriculum and guidelines.

### **Parents' Responsibilities**

Parents are responsible for:

- ✓ Date of birth verification requirements.
- ✓ Residential address verification requirements.
- ✓ Ensuring that their child participates in kindergarten screening.
- ✓ Providing transportation for their child.
- ✓ Complying with the school's attendance program and other program policies.

## **VPK Registration Requirements**

A child is eligible to be registered for prekindergarten if he/she attains the age of 4 on or before September 1st of the current school year. Before a child can be admitted to prekindergarten in Miami-Dade County Public Schools, parents/guardians must provide or complete the following items.

### **A. Age and Legal Name Verification**

Parents must provide **one** of the following:

1. Duly attested original birth certificate or birth card which must be original; hospital certificate not acceptable.
2. Duly attested Certificate of Baptism with a parent affidavit.
3. Insurance policy on the child's life in force for two years.
4. Bona fide bible record with parent affidavit.
5. Passport or Certificate of Arrival in the United States showing age of child.
6. Transcript of school records of at least four years prior, stating date of birth.
7. Affidavit of age signed by parent and Certificate of Age signed by public health officer.

### **B. Proof of Address**

Students in the program are assigned to attend school on the basis of the actual residence of the parent/guardian and in the attendance area of the school as approved by the School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida. Verification of residence should be presented by the parent/guardian at the time of registration. Parents must provide **two** of the following:

1. Broker's or attorney's statement of parents' purchase of residence or properly executed lease agreement.
2. Current Homestead Exemption Card

3. Electric deposit receipt or electric bill, showing name and service address

### **C. Health and Immunization Requirements**

In accordance with the Florida Plan for School Health Services, all parents/guardians of prekindergarten through 12th grade students must submit documentation verifying that a student's health examination was performed within the 12-month period preceding initial entry into a Florida school. Parents must provide **both** forms:

1. Student Health Examination-DH 3040 (yellow form); health examination performed within one year prior to enrollment; and
2. Florida Certificate of Immunization-DH 680 (blue card) from a private doctor or local health provider. Part A, B, or C or a religious exemption form DH681.

Parents are encouraged to contact their health care provider to schedule an appointment for children affected by the school immunization requirements. Required immunizations are covered under most health insurance policies.

Children whose parents cannot afford to pay for vaccines may receive immunizations free of charge at all county health department centers. To make an appointment or to obtain more information, contact the Special Immunization Program (SIP) Office of the Department of Health at 786-845-0550. It is important to remember that no student will be admitted to school without presenting tangible documentation that immunization and health requirements have been met.

### **D. Home Language Survey**

At the time of initial registration parents are asked to complete a Home Language Survey. Each student is assessed if there is a "Yes" response to any of the questions to determine if he/she is an English Language Learner (ELL). The law requires that students classified as ELL receive appropriate services in order to become proficient in English.

### **E. Student Data Card**

In the event of an emergency, the school needs to contact parents as quickly as possible. Parents are required to provide the following information:

1. Home, work, and cell phone numbers (must remain up to date).
2. An emergency contact in the event the school is unable to reach parents/guardians.  
Parents/Guardians should provide emergency contact telephone numbers in addition to the ones on the front of the card.
3. Identify those individuals who are authorized and not authorized to pick up their child from school.

## **VPK Student Selection Process in M-DCPS**

When a school has more eligible applicants than the 19 regular education slots available, the school must make their selections utilizing a lottery system. Each applicant is assigned a number for the lottery. Numbers are pulled until the maximum class size is reached creating the final roster. If the applicant family has twins or triplets, the drawing of one name entitles all children to be eligible for enrollment. The exception would be if the number drawn is number 19 or the last one. In this case, only one of the twins or triplets will be allowed to enroll. When the maximum class size is reached, the school staff continues to draw numbers and records the numbers for the waiting list. Parents may choose to place their child on the waiting list at the school or parents can choose a private VPK provider. All parents should be notified in writing of their child's enrollment status within one week of the drawing.

After the final selection, parents are required to complete/provide the following documents that must remain on file in each child's folder:

- Signed Financial Responsibility Form
- Signed Prekindergarten Screening Consent Form
- Signed Copy of Certificate of Eligibility (COE)

### **Final Roster and Waiting List**

A Final Roster is completed for children selected in the lottery, as well as for children who have registered at those schools that do not have full enrollment.

A waiting list of all eligible children must also be established and ranked according to the results of the lottery. Parents of children on the waiting list are contacted when withdrawals occur. The list must be used to maintain an enrollment of 19 regular education children. Solicitation of children from neighboring schools offering the same program model is necessary when enrollment falls below the class size maximum and the waiting list is depleted.

Mail the Final Roster and Waiting List to Office of Early Childhood Program, Mail Code 9613, Attention: Greysel Marquez

### **VPK Registration throughout the Year**

As children enroll throughout the year, the school must fax a copy of the COE document to the Office of Early Childhood Programs at 305-995-7650, Attention: Greysel Marquez. When a student transfers from another school, a new COE and transfer form must be provided by the parent to the school. If the parent does not have a COE, direct them to the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe to obtain a new COE prior to enrollment.

### **Procedures for Completing and Maintaining Certificates of Eligibility (COE)**

Each student listed on the Final Roster must have a COE on file at the school. The following procedures are established for completing and maintaining COE at the school site:

- Obtain a copy of the original COE from the parent.
- Complete Sections III and IV on each original COE. These sections must be fully completed by the school.
- Write the Confirmation Number. The Confirmation Number is Miami-Dade County Public Schools' Federal Identification Number (FEIN Number 59-60000572) followed by the school location number. For example, Florida City Elementary School would enter 59-60000572-2001.
- Make a copy of the completed COE and file the copy in a folder designated for VPK students. Keep the file accessible at all times (preferably with the registrar/clerk).
- Return the original COE to the parent.
- Mail a copy of the completed COE to the Office of Early Childhood Programs, Mail Code 9613, Attention: Greysel Marquez.

### **VPK Fee-Supported Enrichment Program**

The collection of fees from parents for the enrichment portion of the day for Fee-Supported programs is crucial to the maintenance of a full day program. It is clearly understood that funding from VPK covers the first 3 hours of the prekindergarten day. Schools must make every effort to maintain and consistently collect all fees. Budget shortfalls in this area seriously impact program implementation.

The Community Education Fee-Supported Prekindergarten Enrichment Program fee for the 2013-2014 school year is \$12 per day/\$60 per week. The Bi-Weekly Payment Schedule should be posted for parent reference. Failure to make payments prior to the first day of the bi-weekly service periods requires that the child(ren) be withdrawn from the Enrichment Program. Parents/Guardians of prekindergarten students must pay separate fees for food services based on the child's free/reduced lunch status. Separate fees as determined by the service provider must be paid for before-school and after-school care. If the child remains for the Enrichment Program, 11:20 a.m. to 1:50 p.m., parents must complete the 2013-2014 Registration Form Before and After School Programs – Summer Camp – Pre-K (FM 3170) and make the fee payment for the first bi-weekly service period.

Parents of children enrolled after the start of school must pay fees using a prorated bi-weekly service period based on the enrollment date after which the regular bi-weekly payment schedule begins. Use the Community Education Pre-K Cash Transmittal Report (FM 4935) to submit the collection of parent fees on a monthly basis to the Office of Treasury Management and a copy to the Office of Early Childhood Programs, Mail Code 9613, Attention: Greysel Marquez.

### **VPK Enrollment and Attendance Procedures**

When registering a student into ISIS, students who attend the VPK program must be given a code along with the teacher's employee number and the course number. After selecting a prekindergarten course code for a VPK student, the registrar/clerk must enter the COE number to continue the registration process. The codes for M-DCPS VPK programs are as follows:

<b>Program</b>	<b>Code</b>
Title I VPK	F
Fee-Supported VPK (Full Day)	X
Fee Supported VPK 8:20 a.m. – 11:20 a.m. (Half Day)	V
Role Model	A

#### **District Attendance Policy**

Regular and punctual attendance is important to a student's progress in school. Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) has a vision whereby each student engages in a rigorous course of study which prepares him/her for a myriad of successful post-secondary options. Students are expected to:

- Be present at school each and every day;
- Attend class as scheduled;
- Arrive to school and class on time; and
- Demonstrate appropriate behavior and a readiness to learn.

#### **VPK Attendance Policy**

The Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) has issued an attendance policy for VPK which includes the following:

- Beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, no more than 20% of a child's absence will be paid. The total reimbursement will be at least 80% for days attended. The absence can be either excused or unexcused.
- Only 108 hours (36 days) will be paid to the District for absences for the entire year.

- Notes excusing illness, vacation, or special family situations are required for VPK purposes.
- The annual reimbursement rate per child for the 2013-2014 school year is \$2,412.31.
- Parents/Guardians may not sign the *Child Attendance and Parental Choice Certificate, AWI - VPK 03L* earlier than the last school day of the month.
- Stress to parents/guardians the importance of consistent school attendance.
- It is a requirement that the parent/guardian be notified in writing before the school withdraws a student from the VPK program. The school must first provide the parent/guardian a written certified-letter or a document from the school site principal explaining the absences history and why this action will be taken if not corrected. The school must have documented proof that the parent/guardian was notified of the procedure before the action is taken.
- Before withdrawing a VPK student from the program, please contact the Office of Early Childhood Programs at 305-995-7632.

### **VPK Attendance and Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe Monitoring**

The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe is responsible for the administration of the state funded VPK Program. Staff from the Early Learning Coalition will visit randomly selected schools unannounced to monitor the compliance with VPK Statutes. The principal will be requested to provide the previous month's VPK attendance records for all VPK students in general education and those in the Role Model Pre-K Program. To prepare for the monitoring visit and to avoid audit exceptions:

- Follow all procedures outlined in Weekly Briefings #13589 (Title I) or #13709 (Fee-Supported), Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Program Registration Procedures/Guidelines for the 2013-2014 school year.
- Register a VPK child only with a valid COE. Forward COE copies to the Office of Early Childhood Programs throughout the year to Mail Code 9613. The original COE is returned to the parent/guardian at the time of registration. Maintain COE copies at the school office but not in the cumulative folders.
- Secure parent/guardian signatures on a monthly basis on the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) *Student Attendance and Parental Choice Certificate, AWI-VPK 03L* (Long Form) at the end of each month. Make sure that the form is signed in blue ink and dated on or after the last school day of the month. Staple the individual student's monthly attendance printout to the Long Form prior to parents signing the form (See Appendices G and H).
- File by month in the school's office for state audit. **DO NOT ACCEPT ANY PRE-SIGNED FORMS FOR FUTURE MONTHS.** Do not fill in the calendar grid. COE copies may be kept along with the monthly attendance for ease of access.
- Provide to the Office of Early Childhood Programs any changes in VPK Instructional team to ensure compliance with the teacher or paraprofessional of record. The names of the teacher(s) and paraprofessional(s) of record are confirmed according to the annual Staff Survey of Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) Form that schools submit to the Office of Early Childhood Programs and to the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe. If any changes

occur with the prekindergarten teacher or the paraprofessional, the school must inform Dr. San Juanita de la Cruz at M-DCPS Office of Early Childhood Programs and fax a new, updated Instructional Staff Survey of Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) Classrooms to 305-995-2604 (See Appendix I).

### **Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds (2011)**

It is required that all teachers and paraprofessionals assigned to VPK classrooms be trained in the new VPK Standards for Four-Year-Olds as this element will also be monitored. The Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds are available in our office. Training on the new Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds will be provided for new prekindergarten teachers by the Office of Early Childhood Programs.

### **Observation of Instructional Practices**

This task will be accomplished by the Early Childhood Curriculum Support Specialists (CSS) from the Office of Early Childhood Programs. When visiting the classroom, a Prekindergarten Technical Assistance Record (TAR) form is completed and reviewed with the classroom teacher and a copy is provided for the school administrator. In Role Model Pre-K Programs, the Program Review form in the Teacher Handbook (Appendix X in the Pre-K Handbook for Children with Disabilities) or the Preschool Quality Assessment (PQA) is used. These forms are submitted to the Early Learning Coalition for compliance purposes.

The following instructional practices will be observed by Curriculum Support Specialists (CSS) from the Office of Early Childhood Programs:

- At least five areas are clearly defined.
- Shelves and containers are labeled.
- Daily class schedule is posted.
- Pictorial schedule is posted at children's eye level.
- Child's authentic art work is at child's eye level.
- Literacy activities are evident.
- Lesson plans must have evidence of the correlation of the VPK standards and domains.

The use of dittos is not permitted in the prekindergarten classrooms during the daily routine. The Scholastic blackline masters may only be copied for teacher use (i.e. monthly newsletters, story props, and home learning).

### **DAILY ROUTINE PROGRAM COMPONENTS**

#### VPK Portion of the Day: 8:20 a.m. – 11:20 a.m.

ALL daily routine components must be covered and times are not flexible.

Paraprofessional must support the teacher during the entire 3 hours...NO BREAK TIMES

#### Enrichment Portion of the Day: 11:20 a.m. – 1:50 p.m.

To accommodate differing lunch times...ALL daily routine components must be covered, however, times are flexible. Please refer to VPK Instructional Personnel Lunch/Break Times before making changes.

### **Staff Development and Instructional Support**

#### **Commitment**

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) has a strong commitment to quality in its early childhood programs. The determination to continually provide the best quality early childhood programs for children and families must be renewed, and continuously strengthened each year. This dedication to quality begins with providing resources, professional training, and support for

the teaching staff each year. Educators are being asked to master new skills and responsibilities, learn new methods of teaching, and further develop their practice. Professional development has become an integral part of the teacher's work. The Office of Early Childhood Programs is committed to providing the best staff development available.

### **Purpose**

A primary objective for all staff development activities is to provide VPK educators with a framework for examining the events and interactions of their classrooms, their own reactions, and their need for further professional growth. It is important that teachers acquire both knowledge and skills, and strengthen their dispositions for working with children to encourage life-long learning. The staff development component is designed to encourage teachers to be knowledgeable about children's growth and development, to take a diagnostic approach to teaching, and to use specific strategies that will support and extend individual children's thinking and learning.

It is expected that teachers will be willing to take risks, learn from mistakes, participate in on-going reflection and self-examination, increase knowledge, and refine their skills. In compliance with the federal requirements to provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum for prekindergarten programs, teachers and paraprofessionals will receive training in curriculum that matches the developmental stage, age, cultural, and specific needs of individual children. Staff development activities include workshops, roundtable meetings, Center for Professional Learning in-service activities, training provided by local colleges and universities, and classroom demonstrations. ALL teachers and administrators will be notified of professional development opportunities by email.

### **Teachers New To Prekindergarten**

New prekindergarten teachers and/or administrators are encouraged to contact the Office of Early Childhood Programs at 305-995-7632 to request technical assistance from a Curriculum Support Specialist (CSS). During the initial year of training, it is expected that teachers new to prekindergarten will be trained in the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds, Florida VPK Assessment and the Scholastic Big Day for PreK curriculum to grow in their understanding of children and how they learn.

### **Veteran Prekindergarten Teachers**

After the first year of training and practice, early childhood educators are encouraged to continue a quest for professional growth. This encourages teachers to become reflective practitioners, to develop and nurture the habit of inquiry, to continue to learn through dialogue about their practice, and to have collegial conversations among themselves and others.

### **Instructional Support**

Curriculum Support Specialists (CSS) serve as a liaison between the Office of Early Childhood Programs and the VPK classrooms to provide teachers and school site personnel with support on the various components of the VPK program. The CSS provide one-on-one support, professional development, coaching, modeling, assisting with proper classroom arrangement, VPK attendance procedures, fiscal documentation, ordering of materials, and responding to individual school/teacher needs. (See Appendix J).

**All Employees are required to read  
The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida  
Bylaws and Policies which can be found at <http://www.neola.com/miamidade-fl/>**

<b>POLICY NUMBER</b>	<b>POLICY TITLE</b>
1113	Conflicting Employment or Contractual Relationship
1124	Drug Free Workplace
1129	Conflict of Interest
1139	Educator Misconduct
1170.01	Employee Assistance Program
1210	Standards of Ethical Conduct
1210.01	Code of Ethics
1213	Student Supervision and Welfare
1215	Tobacco Use
1217	Weapons
1362	Antidiscrimination/Harassment
1362.02	Antidiscrimination/Harassment Complaint Procedure
1380	Threatening Behavior Toward Staff Members
1590	Personnel File
5200	Attendance
5500	Student Conduct and Discipline
6550	Travel and Per Diem
7530.01	Staff Use of Wireless Communication Devices
7540.04	Staff Network and Internet Acceptable Use and Safety
7540.05	Staff Electronic Mail
8141	Mandatory Reporting of Misconduct by Certified Employees
8400	Health and Safety Issues
8442	Reporting Accidents
8462	Student Abuse and Neglect

**This information is also provided in your school's faculty handbook.**

## **VPK Sample Learning Lessons**

### **Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds**

The following are sample lesson plans for the five domains correlated to the VPK educational standards. Type the link below in the address bar and it will take you directly to the lesson plan.

#### **Physical Development**

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/HealthyFoodsCollageLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/JumpinandRollinRelay.pdf>

#### **Social and Emotional Development**

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/TheGivingBoxLessonPlan.pdf>

#### **Language and Communication**

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/HowAreYouFeelingLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/MannersLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/MayITakeYourOrderLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/OurFavoriteFoodsLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/PictureBagsLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/SortItOutLessonPlan.pdf>

#### **Emergent Literacy**

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/BrownBagItLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/CompoundWordSnakesLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/GuessingGameLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/GuessTheWordLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/LetterNamesandLetterSoundsLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/LetterSoundPlacematsLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/Letter-SoundPyramidLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/Letter-SoundSortLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/Letter-SoundTrainLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/MysteryLetterGameLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/PhotoChartLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/TheNameGameLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/PuppetWordDetectivesLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/RimeTrainLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/SoundDetectiveLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/WhatDoesntBelongLessonPlan.pdf>

## **Cognitive Development and General Knowledge**

### **Mathematical Thinking**

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/WhatDoesntBelongLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/ApplesandOrangesLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/BirthdayWishesLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/CinderellaDressedinYellowLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/CircleTriangleRectangleSquareISeeShapesEverywhereLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/DiagonalHorizontalVerticalLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/DogBonePatternsLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/FlowerPowerLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/FruityPatternsLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/HowManyAreThereLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/HowManyBeadsAreLeftLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/HowManySidesCanWeCountLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/ISeeLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/ItsaSnowmanKindofDay.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/LadybugsLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/MouseCountAdditionandSubtractionLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/OldMacDonaldsCountingFarmLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/OneTwoTieMyShoeLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/PaperChainPatternsLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/SeaCreaturesLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/ShapesAllAroundLessonUsPlans.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/SimoneSaysLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/SpongePaintShapesLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/TenBearsRidingonaSledLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/TenLittleSpottedFrogsLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/TheLittleRedHenLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/Tie-DyedButterfliesLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/WhatComesNextLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/WhatILikeAboutMeGraphingLessonPlan.pdf>

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/WormyWormsLessonPlan.pdf>

### **Scientific Inquiry**

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/SeedsLessonPlan.pdf>

### **Social Studies**

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/pdf/TheSameyetDifferentCelebratingInclusionLessonPlan.pdf>

**Sample Materials List for an M-DCPS Prekindergarten Classroom**

The following list represents some of the many possible materials children could find in the interest areas (creativity, dramatic play, blocks and building, math and science, reading and listening, sand and water, technology, and music and movement areas) in a prekindergarten classroom. Use this list to help plan for materials you want to add to the areas in your setting.

**Creativity Center**

***Materials for Mixing and Painting***

Tempera Paint  
 Liquid Starch for Finger Paint  
 Soap Flakes  
 Water-Color Paints  
 Easels  
 Plastic Squeeze Bottles  
 Jars with Lids for Storing Paint  
 Paintbrushes of Different Sizes  
 Muffin Tins, Frozen Food Tins  
 Saucers for Painting, Printing  
 Sponges  
 Paper Towels  
 Smocks or Paint Shirts  
 Toothbrushes  
 Screening

***Materials for Holding Things Together  
 and Taking Them Apart***

Scissors  
 Yarn  
 Shoestrings  
 String  
 Rubber Bands  
 Paper Clips  
 Cellophane Tape  
 Masking Tape  
 White Glue  
 Paste  
 Paper Punch  
 Staplers

**Creativity Center (Continued)**

***Materials for Two-Dimensional  
 Representations***

Pencils  
 Colored Pencils  
 Crayons  
 Chalk and Chalkboard  
 Markers  
 Ink Pads and Stamps  
 Magazines and Catalogs  
 Paper of Different Sizes, Textures, Colors  
 Paper Plates  
 Shoe Boxes  
 Newsprint  
 Aluminum Foil  
 Wax Paper  
 Tissue Paper  
 Wallpaper Samples  
 Cardboard Pieces  
 Cotton Balls

***Materials for Three-Dimensional  
 Representations***

Clay  
 Play-Doh with Accessories  
 Buttons  
 Straws  
 Egg Cartons  
 Ice Cream Tubs  
 Empty Thread Spools  
 Pipe Cleaners  
 Clothespins  
 Bits of Wood  
 Sequins  
 Cardboard Tubes  
 Paper Bags  
 Cloth, Felt, Rug, Vinyl Scraps  
 Feathers  
 Styrofoam Bits  
 Macaroni

## **Dramatic Play Center**

### ***Materials Children See at Home***

Telephones  
Old Clocks  
One-Step Stepladder  
Plastic Tool Box  
Child-Sized Ironing Board, Iron  
Soft Chair  
Small Vacuum Cleaner  
Broom and Dustpan  
Toaster  
Non-Working Microwave  
Luggage  
Cooler or Ice Chest  
Desk  
Small Tables and Chairs

### ***Kitchen Equipment***

Child-Sized Stove, Refrigerator and Sink  
Adult-Sized Pots and Pans  
Cooking Utensils  
Large and Small Spoons  
Large and Small Spatulas  
Eggbeater  
Egg Timer  
Teapot  
Coffee Maker  
Ladle  
Ice Cube Trays  
Hamburger Press  
Cake Tins  
Mixing Bowls  
Measuring Cups  
Canister Set  
Sifter  
Potheolders  
Adult-Sized Plates, Cups, and Bowls  
Sponges, Dishcloths and Towels  
Napkins and Placemats  
Plastic Fruit  
Plastic Vegetables  
Poker Chips and Bottle Caps  
Styrofoam Bits, Buttons, Small Pine Cones  
Acorns  
Cereal Boxes  
Cans, Cartons, Jars and Bags

## **Dramatic Play Center (Continued)**

### ***Materials for Pretend Play***

Props for Pretend Play (e.g. barbershop, farm, fire station, doctor's office, restaurant, and gas station)  
Dolls and Stuffed Animals  
Doll Beds  
Baby Rattles, Bibs and Bottles  
Clothes and Hats  
Mirror  
Sleeping Bag

## **Blocks and Building Center**

### ***Materials to Build With***

Building Materials  
Large Hollow Blocks  
Unit Blocks  
Small Blocks  
Cardboard Blocks  
Blocks Made from Shoe Boxes  
Milk Cartons  
Carpet Pieces  
Bedspreads, Old Sheets, and Blankets  
Large and Small Boxes  
Wood Scraps  
Tubes  
String and Rope

### ***Materials to Represent With***

Steering Wheel  
Used Keyboard  
Telephone  
Small Trucks  
Small Cars and People Figurines  
Tinker Toys  
Interlocking Boards  
Wooden Train Set and Track  
Barn and Farm Animals

## **Math and Science Center**

Legos  
Marble Games  
Puppets  
Puzzles  
Magnifying Glasses  
Nesting Cans, Coffee Cans or Cups  
Cuisenaire Rods  
Washers, Nuts-and-Bolts  
Pegs and Pegboards  
Stacking Rings  
Magnets  
Interlocking Squares  
Scales and Balances  
Bead Stringing Materials  
Attribute Blocks  
Buttons, Stones, and Shells  
Picture Dominoes  
Parquetry Blocks  
Little People  
Sorting Trays  
Manipulatives

## **Reading and Listening Center**

### ***Materials for Reading***

Assorted Books  
Photograph Books (Field Trips, etc.)  
Child-Made Books  
Beanbag Chair  
Children Magazines  
Books on CD

### ***Materials for Writing***

Pencils  
Crayons  
Erasers  
Old Computer Keyboard  
Markers  
Typewriter  
Rubber Stamps  
Paper Clips  
Tape  
Rulers  
Different Kinds of Paper: graph paper;  
paper with and without lines  
Envelopes  
Stamps and Stickers  
Inkpad

## **Sand and Water Center**

### ***Materials for a Water Table***

Plastic Cars and Trucks  
Pans, Dishes and Silverware  
Plastic Tubing  
Squeeze Bottle  
Siphon and Pump  
Funnels  
Measuring Cups and Spoons  
Smocks

### ***Materials for a Sand Table***

Materials also found in Water Table  
Shovels and Spoons  
Sifters and Strainers  
Dried Beans, Peas, Sawdust, and Wood

## **Music and Movement Center**

### ***Equipment***

Tape Player  
Tape/Recorded Music  
Tapes of Teacher or other Adults  
Reading Stories  
Microphone  
Earphones  
Streamers

### ***Musical Instruments***

Triangles  
Bells  
Sand Blocks  
Maracas  
Wooden Xylophone  
Tambourines  
Drums  
Claves

## **Technology Center**

Computers  
Printers

**Writing Center** and **Clifford's Corner** may be set up alone if space permits  
or may be integrated with other Learning Centers.

**2013-2014 VPK YEARLY CALENDAR OF IMPORTANT DATES FOR TEACHERS**

	Student Attendance Form (filed in the main office)	HMH Assessment (EGIBA) Optional	VPK Assessment	OLPS-R	Parent Conferences	Speech & Language Screening	Vision Screening	Hearing Screening	PQA's (for Low Performing School Only)	
August	by Sept. 6 <sup>th</sup>					R E F E R R A L S  A S  N E E D E D		R E F E R R A L S  A S  N E E D E D		
September	by Oct. 4 <sup>th</sup>	<u>Initial</u> by Sept 13 <sup>th</sup>	AP1 Sept. 3-30		Time 1: by Sept. 13					
October	by Nov. 7 <sup>th</sup>						by the end of the first week			
November	by Dec. 6 <sup>th</sup>									
December	by Jan. 10 <sup>th</sup>									
January	by Feb. 6 <sup>th</sup>	<u>Mid-Year</u> Upon Completion of Theme 6 by Jan.17 <sup>th</sup>	AP2 Jan. 7- Feb. 4		Time 2: by Jan. 17					by Jan. 21st
February	by March 7 <sup>th</sup>									
March	By April 4 <sup>th</sup>									
April	By May 2 <sup>nd</sup>	<u>Final</u> Upon completion of Theme 9 by Apr. 11 <sup>th</sup>	AP3 April 22- May 16		Time 3: by Apr. 11					
May	by June 2 <sup>nd</sup>			by the end of the month						
June	by June 5 <sup>th</sup>				Time 4: May 19 <sup>th</sup> to June 5 <sup>th</sup>					

## Strategies for English Language Learner (ELL) Prekindergarten Students

The communication strategies of the High/Scope Approach are compatible with and often identical to ELL strategies for young children acquiring a first or second language. These developmentally appropriate High/Scope interaction strategies include:

1. Join the child at their level.
2. Use the SOUL process to approach interactions with the child.
  - Silently approach the child at play
  - Observe what the child is doing
  - Understand the child's action(s)
  - Listen to what the child is saying
3. Use interactive matching and turn-taking.
4. Use comments or observations as conversational openers.
5. Label and describe the child's actions.
6. Acknowledge what the child says by responding, repeating, or restating.
7. Ask the ELL student and parents/guardians to bring in native language magazines.
8. Ask bilingual parents/guardians to do cultural demonstrations in the classroom.
9. Tie the cultures of the ELL child to your curriculum whenever possible.
10. Encourage the child to write in a home language journal (draw pictures of people and places in their home country).
11. Encourage children to expand or extend the range of the conversation.
12. Use questions sparingly.

Other early childhood and ELL strategies that are appropriate for all young children include:

- Create a warm, friendly, supportive and well-structured atmosphere
- Provide a consistent and balanced daily routine
- Model language, attitudes, and behaviors
- Talk with children who are non-verbal
- Relate activities to the interest of children
- Listen carefully to children
- Use non-verbal cues, i.e. gesturing, pointing, facial expressions
- Use pictures, visuals, 3-dimensional models and real objects
- Use puppets
- Provide multi-sensory materials
- Provide multi-cultural materials
- Read to children daily
- Use books with clear, colorful pictures
- Record their speaking and play it back
- Label objects in the classroom
- Display pictures in your classroom from the child's home country
- Keep a collection of pictures from different countries
- Use books with repetition
- Encourage role playing
- Anticipate errors
- Present information in small steps
- Give hints and suggestions
- Speak slowly and naturally
- Use vocabulary in context
- Teach simple rhymes and songs
- Use choral speaking
- Provide opportunities for conversation
- Use cue cards
- Use substitution word games
- Use self-talk (thinking aloud)
- Simplify problems
- Use eye contact
- Use tapes or stories
- Use puppets
- Use various learning methods
- Pair ELL with a more verbal child
- Use tapes or recorded stories
- Read books in the child's home language
- Listen to the child's native language music

**Miami-Dade County Public Schools**  
**Office of Early Childhood Programs**  
**Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK)**  
**Anecdotal Note Form**

<b>Physical Development</b>	
<b>Approaches to Learning</b>	
<b>Social and Emotional Development</b>	

**(For Teachers, As Needed)**

**Miami-Dade County Public Schools  
Office of Early Childhood Programs  
Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK)  
Anecdotal Note Form**

<b>Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy</b>	
<b>Cognitive Development and General Knowledge</b>	
<b>Other Observations</b>	

Miami-Dade County Public Schools  
Prekindergarten Program  
Summary of Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Accomplishments

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Physical Development**

**Approaches to Learning**

**Social and Emotional Development**

**Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy**

**Cognitive Development and General Knowledge**

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX G

Florida's Office of Early Learning  
**VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN EDUCATION PROGRAM CHILD  
 ATTENDANCE AND PARENTAL CHOICE CERTIFICATE (LONG  
 FORM)**



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> = Days attended				

### PARENTAL CERTIFICATION

I swear (or affirm) that my child (*whose name appears above in item 1*) attended the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program on the days entered above, or included in the documentation attached to this form, and certify that I continue to choose the private provider or public school (*whose name appears above in item 3*) to deliver the program for my child and direct that program funds be paid to the provider or school for my child.

1. Child's First Name      Middle Name      Last Name      Jr./III				2. Child's Date of Birth	
3. Name of Provider or Public School			4. VPK Class		
5. Attendance Month		6. Year		7. Child's Attendance is: <input type="checkbox"/> Entered Below	
8. First Name of Parent or Guardian		Middle Name		Last Name	
				Jr./Sr./III	
9. Signature of Parent or Guardian				10. Date signed	

**NOTICE TO PRIVATE PROVIDER OR PUBLIC SCHOOL:** A private provider or public school must keep this original signed form for at least 2 years. A private provider must permit the early learning coalition, and a public school must permit the school district, to inspect this original signed form during normal business hours. If required by the early learning coalition, a signed copy of this certificate must be forwarded to the coalition or a qualified contractor acting on behalf of the coalition.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRINTING MANDATORY  
MONTHLY STUDENT ATTENDANCE RECORDS**

**USING "ISIS"**

1. Open ISIS
2. Enter 1 for STUDENT DATA BASE SYSTEM
3. Click PF3
4. Enter Student ID number
5. Click ENTER
6. Click PF7
7. Click ENTER (2 times)
8. PRINT

*Note: To print the next students' attendance reports, change the ID number from the last step and PRINT*

**USING "GRADEBOOK"**

1. Open GRADEBOOK
2. Log on
3. Click on MY REPORTS
4. Click on NEW
5. Click on OTHER
6. Click COURSE ATTENDANCE GRID
7. A page will open: REPORT PARAMETERS FOR COURSE ATTENDANCE
8. Under this category, do the following:
  - A. CLASSES: Pre-K Homeroom will be selected.
  - B. STUDENTS: Click on OTHER and click on each individual student for each report.
  - C. START DATE: Click on the first day of the month.
  - D. END DATE: Click on the last day of the month.
  - E. Click on RUN REPORT
  - F. CLICK on the REPORT and then click on PRINT.

*Notes: You can run all the reports and print them afterwards. They will save until you delete them. To delete them, check the box next to the report located on the left-hand corner of the screen and click the DELETE button which is located on the right-hand corner of the screen.*

**THE ATTENDANCE REPORT NEEDS TO BE PRINTED MONTHLY FOR EACH STUDENT, ATTACHED TO THE LONG FORM,  
AND THEN GIVEN TO EACH PARENT FOR THEIR SIGNATURE.**

**THESE DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE FILED BY MONTH & STORED IN THE MAIN OFFICE FOR STATE AUDIT.**

**INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF SURVEY  
VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN (VPK) CLASSROOMS  
2013 – 2014 SCHOOL YEAR PROGRAM**

NAME OF SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_

WORK LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_ REGION: \_\_\_\_\_

How many VPK classes does your school have? \_\_\_\_\_

CIRCLE ONE:            TITLE I            FEE-SUPPORTED            ROLE MODEL

Please Print

NAME	POSITION	CREDENTIALS (Degree, Certification, CDA, HQP, etc.)
	Teacher	
	Paraprofessional	

NAME	POSITION	CREDENTIALS (Degree, Certification, CDA, HQP, etc.)
	Teacher	
	Paraprofessional	

NAME	POSITION	CREDENTIALS (Degree, Certification, CDA, HQP, etc.)
	Teacher	
	Paraprofessional	

CDA Child Development Associate

HQP Highly Qualified Paraprofessional

Principal's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

**RETURN BY FAX TO: 305-995-2604**

When changes in staff occur, please send an updated survey within **three days** of the change.  
Use as many pages as necessary.

## Resources to Support High Quality Early Learning Programs From the Department of Education

### [Dual Language Learners in the Early Years: Getting Ready to Succeed in School](#)

This report examines the conditions of early childhood for dual language learners (DLLs) from a variety of angles and discusses the degree to which the nation is succeeding in preparing DLLs for kindergarten and first grade.

### [Developing Early Literacy: Report of the National Early Literacy Panel](#)

This report of the National Early Literacy Panel examines the implications of instructional practices used with children from birth through age five.

### [Early Beginnings: Early Literacy Knowledge and Instruction](#)

This guide is to help early childhood administrators, supervisors, and professional development staff provide teachers with the support and training needed to increase their knowledge base and refine current literacy practice.

### [Teaching Our Youngest: Guide for Preschool Teachers, Child Care and Family Providers](#)

This guide discusses how to help children develop their language abilities, increase their knowledge, become familiar with books and other printed materials, learn letters and sounds, recognize numbers, and learn to count.

### [Helping Your Preschool Child](#)

How well children will learn and develop and how well they will do in school depends on a number of things, including their health and physical well-being, social and emotional preparation, and language skills and general knowledge of the world. This booklet highlights techniques parents can use to encourage their children to develop the skills necessary for success in school and life by focusing on activities that make learning fun. [En Español](#) | [More "Helping Your Child" publications](#)

### [If You Think There's a Problem—Helping Your Child Become a Reader](#)

When a child is having a language or reading problem, the reason might be simple to understand and deal with or it might be complicated and require expert help. [En Español](#)

### [Learning to Talk and Listen](#)

An oral language resource for early childhood caregivers.

### [Words All Around](#)

Language Building Tips for Center-Based and Home-Based Child Care Providers

### [Shining Stars: Toddlers Get Ready To Read: How Parents Can Help Their Toddlers Get Ready To Read](#)

### [Shining Stars: Preschoolers Get Ready To Read: How Parents Can Help Their Preschoolers Get Ready To Read](#)

### [Shining Stars: Kindergartners Learn To Read: How Parents Can Help Their Kindergartners Learn To Read](#)

### [Tool Kit for Hispanic Families](#)

How to help your child succeed in school and resources that can help.

### [Parent Power, Build the Bridge to Success](#)

This guide has tools to help parents take responsibility for their child's success.

### [Typical Language Accomplishments for Children, Birth to Age 6—Helping Your Child Become a Reader](#)

Learning to read is built on a foundation of language skills that children start to learn at birth—a process that is both complicated and amazing. Most children develop certain skills as they move through the early stages of learning language.

## **From the National Research Council**

### [Eager to Learn: Educating Our Preschoolers](#)

Research findings on how children's early experiences lay the foundations for their later social and emotional behavior, as well as their literacy and cognitive development.

### [Early Childhood Assessment: Why, What, and How](#)

A look at how assessments that are well designed, effectively implemented, developed in the context of systematic planning, and interpreted and used appropriately can inform teaching and program improvement, and contribute to better outcomes for children.

### [Mathematics Learning in Early Childhood: Paths Toward Excellence and Equity](#)

Information about the critical areas that should be the focus of young children's early mathematics education, explores the extent to which they are currently being incorporated in early childhood settings, and identifies the changes needed to improve the quality of mathematics experiences for young children. This book can be viewed online for free at [http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record\\_id=12519#description](http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12519#description)

### [Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children](#)

A summary report that examines research findings to provide an integrated picture of how reading develops and the importance of high-quality preschool and kindergarten environments and their contribution to providing a critical foundation to facilitate children's acquisition of essential reading skills.

### [Starting Out Right: A Guide to Promoting Children's Reading Success](#)

How children learn to read and how adults can help them.

*From the Department of Health and Human Services*

**[Compendium of Quality Rating Systems and Evaluations](#)**

The Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) offers this compendium which provides definitions, description, and an analytic framework for assessing the critical elements of Quality Rating and Assessment Systems (QRS) and QRS evaluations.

**[Make the Most of Playtime](#)**

This publication features tips for how parents can help children learn and develop new skills through play.

**OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS  
Voluntary Prekindergarten Program**

Ms. Marie L. Izquierdo  
**Chief Academic Officer**  
**Office of Academics and Transformation**

Dr. Magaly C. Abrahante  
**Assistant Superintendent**  
**Division of Early Childhood Programs, Title I Administration,  
and Summer Services**

Dr. Marisel Elías-Miranda, **Administrative Director**  
[melias@dadeschools.net](mailto:melias@dadeschools.net)

Dr. Maite Riestra-Quintero, **Executive Director**  
[mriestraquint@dadeschools.net](mailto:mriestraquint@dadeschools.net)

Mrs. Pilar Baldwin, **District Supervisor**  
[plbaldwin@dadeschools.net](mailto:plbaldwin@dadeschools.net)

Dr. San Juanita de la Cruz, **District Supervisor**  
[jdelacruz@dadeschools.net](mailto:jdelacruz@dadeschools.net)

Mrs. Kim Roy, **Instructional Support Specialist**  
[kroy@dadeschools.net](mailto:kroy@dadeschools.net)

**Curriculum Support Specialists**

Mrs. Maria Cabrera  
[mcabrera@dadeschools.net](mailto:mcabrera@dadeschools.net)

Mrs. Lucy Martinez  
[lucymartinez@dadeschools.net](mailto:lucymartinez@dadeschools.net)

Ms. Julienne Owens  
[jowens@dadeschools.net](mailto:jowens@dadeschools.net)

Ms. Judy Palenzuela  
[jpalezuela@dadeschools.net](mailto:jpalezuela@dadeschools.net)

Ms. Nancy Sapiro  
[nsapiro@dadeschools.net](mailto:nsapiro@dadeschools.net)

**Support Staff**

Mrs. Greysel Marquez, Senior Secretary  
[gmarquez@dadeschools.net](mailto:gmarquez@dadeschools.net)

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida adheres to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment and educational programs/activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department of Education, and strives affirmatively to provide equal opportunity for all as required by:

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY  
Federal and State Laws**

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida adheres to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment and educational programs/activities and strives affirmatively to provide equal opportunity for all as required by:

**Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964** - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin.

**Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended** - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin.

**Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972** - prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender.

**Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) as amended** - prohibits discrimination on the basis of age with respect to individuals who are at least 40.

**The Equal Pay Act of 1963 as amended** - prohibits gender discrimination in payment of wages to women and men performing substantially equal work in the same establishment.

**Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973** - prohibits discrimination against the disabled.

**Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)** - prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, public service, public accommodations and telecommunications.

**The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA)** - requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to "eligible" employees for certain family and medical reasons.

**The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978** - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

**Florida Educational Equity Act (FEEA)** - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national origin, marital status, or handicap against a student or employee.

**Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992** - secures for all individuals within the state freedom from discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, or marital status.

**Title II of the Genetic Information and Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA)**: Prohibits discrimination against employees or applicants because of genetic information.

*Veterans are provided re-employment rights in accordance with P. L. 93-508 (Federal Law) and Section 205.07 (Florida Statutes), which stipulate categorical preferences for employment.*

**In Addition:**

**School Board Policies 1362, 3362, 4362, and 5517** – Prohibit harassment and/or discrimination against students, employees, or applicants on the basis of sex, race, color, ethnic or national origin, religion, marital status, disability, genetic information, age, political beliefs, sexual orientation, gender, gender identification, social and family background, linguistic preference, pregnancy, and any other legally prohibited basis. Retaliation for engaging in a protected activity is also prohibited.

Revised (07-11)

**Please acknowledge that you have received and read the Office of Early Childhood Programs' 2013-2014 Program of Excellence Guidelines by completing this form.**

I, the undersigned, \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print your Name)

acknowledge I have received and read the 2013-2014 Program of Excellence Guidelines established by the Office of Early Childhood Programs.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Your Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Work Location and Work Location Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Your Position

Please return this form via school mail to the Office of Early Childhood Programs, Mail Code #9613 or by fax to 305-995-7650, Attention: Dr. San Juanita de la Cruz.