

May 2024

Volume 10 Issue 5

# Early Learning Parents' Pages

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE DIVISION OF EARLY LEARNING

## Goodbye VPK, Hello K!

Florida's school-year Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program is coming to an end and now is the time to prepare this year's VPK "graduates" and their families for the transition to kindergarten. VPK is not a requirement to enter kindergarten, but data show that children who participate in VPK are more likely to enter kindergarten ready to learn.

The first step in the transition is to sign up your child for kindergarten! Pre-registration is under way so contact your local school's office of admissions for more information.

Once registered for kindergarten, join your school's contact list for important updates - like when the program will host an orientation where you and your child can see the classroom and visit the teacher. Even before then, you can inspire excitement about kindergarten by driving the route to school, talking about meeting the new teacher and new friends and describing what the first day may be like. The Division of Early Learning provides the following tips and resources to help you prepare for the transition to kindergarten.

### How to Prepare for Kindergarten Registration

**Locate a School** Your local school district will explain the enrollment process for your selected school and requirements for [school choice](#) options.

#### Bring Documents Needed for Kindergarten Registration

- Proof of residency (a copy of your driver's license)
- Proof of your child's age (an official copy of your child's birth certificate)
- Copy of Individual Educational Plan or 504 Plan (if applicable)
- Proof of current State of Florida immunization records and a physical (dated within two years)
- Any standardized test results

### What to Expect in Kindergarten

Want to know more about what your child will learn in kindergarten? The Florida Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) Standards for Kindergarten will help you prepare to support your child's learning progression and communicate with your child's teacher about classroom instruction, locate resources to support your child's learning at home and understand how the B.E.S.T. standards are essential for shaping your child's critical thinking, literacy and mathematical skills.

- [Parent Guide for Kindergarten English Language Arts Standards](#)



Be sure you don't miss an issue!  
Scan the QR code  
and sign up to receive Parents' Pages.



## Congratulations 2024 VPK Graduates

Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) 2023-24 school-year graduates are now ready and on their way to kindergarten. Find resources on the [Division of Early Learning's website](#) to continue supporting your child's learning during the summer and as they transition to kindergarten.

### How do you plan to celebrate your VPK graduate?

Use #VPKGraduation2024 and tag us!



VPK is a free high-quality education program designed to prepare Florida's 4-year-olds for kindergarten and educational success in life. Enroll today for summer VPK! **Did you know there are different VPK program options?** Families can choose from one of several program selections:

- **VPK School-Year Program** provides 540 instructional hours.
- **VPK Summer Program** offers 300 instructional hours.
- **VPK Specialized Instructional Services (VPK SIS) Program** takes place outside a traditional classroom setting and is for 4-year-olds with special needs and current individualized education plans from local school districts.

Summer VPK program classes have 12 or fewer students with one lead instructor and an assistant. All VPK providers deliver age-appropriate curricula with a focus on math and early literacy standards. Children who live in Florida and are 4 years old on or before Sept. 1 are eligible for the 2024-25 school-year program. Families with children born between Feb. 2 and Sept. 1 may postpone enrollment until the following year when their child is 5. To apply, visit the [Family Portal](#)

## Show Appreciation to Your Early Learning Teacher or Provider

May 10, 2024, is Provider Appreciation Day. Think of ways to show your provider appreciation for the role they play in your child's life. You can include your child in the gift-making process.

- Write a note from you and your child to show your appreciation.
- Draw a picture or make a card with your child thanking them for the kindness they show every day.

Throughout the year, take a few minutes to say, "Thank you for all you do for my child!" It will make your early learning teacher feel appreciated all year long.

## Summer BreakSpot

During the summer, many children who eat breakfast and lunch at school each day may not have a nutritious breakfast, lunch or dinner at home. Summer BreakSpot, or Summer Food Service Program, is a federal nutrition program that local nonprofits and schools use to provide nutritious meals to children and teens in their communities during the summer. Summer BreakSpot is sponsored by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Summer BreakSpots are conveniently located throughout Florida in neighborhoods, churches and schools so children can walk to the sites. Some Summer BreakSpots are mobile and visit different areas and some may offer transportation. To find a location, visit the [site finder map](#), text "Food" to 304-304 or dial 2-1-1 when schools release for the summer break.

