

Early Learning Update

OFFICE OF EARLY LEARNING

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Getting off to a good start in the New Year.

Gearing up for the 2014 legislative session, both House and Senate education committees gather information.

Even though 2014 has barely begun, the world of early learning in Florida is halfway into the first year of House Bill 7165 -- the important new early learning legislation that passed during the 2013 legislative session and took effect July 1, 2013.

Both House and Senate asked for updates on implementation before year end and are looking at what comes next. How does Florida continue to offer high-quality early education and care opportunities to young children in Florida?

In early January, Executive Director Shan Goff briefed the House Education Committee about the [impact of attendance on early learning student achievement](#).

(Shan's presentation begins at about 52 minutes into the video.)

The VPK provider accountability cycle is officially underway. Approximately 6,800 providers who get state funding, are logging into the VPK Provider Readiness Rate website to verify their program data and view preliminary readiness rates. The rates will be finalized in late February and then become available to parents who may use the data to help decide where to enroll their children in VPK.

Check out OEL's new website www.floridaearlylearning.com

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New website highlights state's early learning services

In December, OEL launched a new website with a statewide perspective of early learning. The user-friendly site offers new functions, including search capability, a calendar and a searchable fact book to look up statewide data.

The site is organized based on those who need to use the site—parents, providers and coalitions—and also by topic. The site has registered

nearly 40,000 visits since it debuted. One of the most popular destinations?

VPK, where visitors were interested in provider readiness rates and curricula.

For those interested in reading about early learning accomplishments in 2012-2013, [OEL's annual report](#) is available on the website.

N.E.W.S.

NorthEastWestSouth

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Encounters with children and parents touch the hearts of child care providers, as in two examples from the **Early Learning Coalition of Flagler and Volusia**. The first: "Last week I had the privilege of interacting with a 4-year-old girl in the lobby. When first meeting her I thought she was older. She was tall for 4 and her language skills were exceptional. We played in the sand, building castles. It was a joy to spend time with her and listen to her stories. When it was time for her to go, I thanked her for coming to play with me. I was kneeling at the sand table. She bent over and gave me a kiss on the cheek. That one small gesture was so loving it brought tears to my eyes." The second: "A new parent came in as a walk-in after being called off the wait list. She works during our business hours. Today was the only day she had and was hoping we could help her. She thanked us several times, grateful for the services and that her name was called. She kept saying she could not believe she got called when she did. She was at her lowest and feeling hopeless and we called her right then. She was and is so filled with joy over the help we are giving her and said this is truly going to make a difference in her family's life."

The **ELC of Manatee County** has been awarded a \$6,538 grant from the State College of Florida to participate in the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service on Jan. 20, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Part of a community-wide initiative, the ELC will promote Dr. King's values of collaboration, non-violence, racial and social equality through volunteerism and distributing age-appropriate books to children.

The Governor's Corner by Governor Rick Scott

Florida's economy continues to improve, thanks to your hard work. With the unemployment rate down to 6.4 percent, it is clear our state is moving forward. But we aren't done yet.

We want to create an opportunity economy in Florida that will support jobs for generations to come. To do this, we're proposing to give more money back to Florida families and job creators.

With less than two months until the beginning of the legislative session,

we are committed to putting money back in the pockets of Florida families. That is why we are going to undo the 54 percent tax increase Floridians saw in 2009 to register their motor vehicles. This means around \$400 million annually will be given back to Florida families, and I look forward to working with our partners in the Florida Legislature to return this money back to our families.

With your help, we will make Florida the number one state for families to get a job, a quality education, and enjoy a low cost of living.

The **ELC of Sarasota** got positive attention for its partnership with the Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County recently. A program titled *Early Encounters with the Arts* brought teams of teaching artists into VPK classrooms for face-to-face experiences with artists.

The future looks bright for Florida families and we look forward to seeing what 2014 will bring.

Early Learning Programs Profile Monthly State Report November 2013 School Readiness By Provider Type

	Private Center or School	Public Schools	Family Day Care Home	Informal	Total
Children Served in 2013-14 as of 11/2013	156,643	8,901	12,922	76	171,725
Providers Active in 2013-14 as of 11/2013	5,812	895	2,059	41	8,809

¹Duplication may exist if a child receives school readiness services from more than one provider within the limits allowed by OEL policies.

²Duplication may exist if a provider's type changed during the service period.

By Care Level

	By Age								Total
	Infant	Toddler	2 Yr	3 Yr	4 Yr	5 Yr	School Age	Special Needs	
Children Served in 2013-14 as of 11/2013	8,688	19,190	24,200	26,361	26,521	13,000	52,967	796	171,725
Providers Active in 2013-14 as of 11/2013	3,983	5,364	5,822	5,966	6,051	5,547	6,415	513	8,809

¹Duplication may exist if a child receiving school readiness services has a birthday during the service period.

Voluntary PreKindergarten (VPK) By Provider Type

	Private Centers	Public Schools	Family Day Care Home	Private School	Total
Children Served in 2013-14 as of 11/2013	127,732	26,605	741	1,705	155,794
Providers Active in 2013-14 as of 11/2013	4,950	1,035	91	57	6,127

¹Duplication may exist if children receiving VPK services transfer among different providers within limits allowed by OEL policies.

²Duplication may exist if a provider's type changed during the period of time being examined.

Current Program Year Compared to the Previous Program Year

	School Year	Summer	Program Year
Children Served in 2013-14 as of 11/2013	155,794	0	155,794
Providers Active in 2013-14 as of 11/2013	6,127	0	6,127
Children Served in 2012-13 Final Count	167,303	6,938	174,241
Providers Active in 2012-13 Final Count	6,313	506	6,822

¹Duplication may exist if a provider participates in both VPK programs.