



EARLY LEARNING UPDATE

STUDENT PERFORMANCE STANDARDS COURSE FOR VPK INSTRUCTORS NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

JULY 2014

VPK instructors who need to complete a *Standards for Four-Year-Olds* course as part of early learning legislation that took effect July 1, 2014, can now do so online. The course has been available since late 2011 in a classroom, but was not required for instructors except in certain circumstances. The 2013 Florida Legislature made it a requirement for VPK instructors with less than an associate's degree starting July 1 of this year. To make it convenient, the legislature also required the course to be available online. Designed to help participants understand the standards and how to use the manual to help children grow and learn during their prekindergarten year, the course includes pictures and video from VPK classrooms across the state of Florida.

VPK Bureau Chief Tara Huls said that, while the course is required for prekindergarten instructors with a CDA or equivalent, "We recommend the course for all VPK instructors." The course is available on the Department of Children and Families [Child Care Training System](#) under the in-service option. More information is available on [OEL's website](#).



Summer can be a good time to learn and have fun as a family at the same time. Check out the [new parent resources section](#) of the [early learning website](#).

3 WORDS + 3 DAYS ADD UP TO SAVINGS\$ FOR FLORIDA FAMILIES



The three words "back to school" may evoke smiles from parents and frowns from children; but, in Florida, add the three words "Sales Tax Holiday" and you are apt to get big grins from retailers and Florida residents. That's because the tax break includes a range of items from clothing to school supplies and computer-related purchases. Need a new tablet? August 1-3 of this year may be the time to act. You can find details, including lists of items eligible for the tax break, on the [Florida Department of Revenue website](#).

JUST THE FACTS

Nearly 363,453 children in Florida have participated in VPK or school readiness programs through May of this fiscal year. Find details about state, coalition and program participation in OEL's online [Fact Book](#).

N-E-W-S EARLY LEARNING COALITION HIGHLIGHTS FROM NORTH, EAST, WEST AND SOUTH FLORIDA



The Rays Baseball Foundation recently awarded the [Early Learning Coalition of Pinellas County](#) a \$5,000 community fund grant to help support the coalition's School Readiness Child Care Scholarship Program. Read the story in the [Tampa Bay News Weekly](#).



With some promotional support from the [St. Augustine Record](#), the [ELC of North Florida](#) drew a crowd to their Toddler/Preschool Festival June 7 in St. Augustine. A May event in Palatka attracted 300.

[County](#). OEL Executive Director Shan Goff spoke to attendees. A [full account of the event](#) and history of the coalition appeared in [The Ocala Star-Banner](#).



Gov. Rick Scott and his wife Ann surprised staff at the [ELC of Palm Beach County](#) in early July with a visit during a lunch

break. Early literacy is a priority for the First Lady.



Elected officials and community leaders were on hand June 16 for the formal open house to unveil the new offices of the [ELC of Marion](#)



CEO Matt Guse and OEL Deputy Director Stephanie Gehres are all smiles at the [ELC of the Big Bend Region](#) as a visit from the Dept. of Health and Human Services Office of Child Care winds down.

THE GOVERNOR'S CORNER by Governor Rick Scott

We recently took the time to honor the brave men and women of Florida who have served in the United States military. Thanks in part to the help of our dedicated public servants, more than 1,700 veterans were presented with the Governor's Veterans Service Award during honor ceremonies in Tampa, Fort Myers, Hollywood, West Palm Beach, Jacksonville, Orlando, Pensacola and Panama City. This award serves as a testament of our gratitude on behalf of every Floridian.

With more than 1.5 million veterans living in Florida, many of us have friends and family members who have selflessly served our country, and many of our public servants are veterans themselves. These heroes have made countless sacrifices for Florida families. Their service has protected our freedoms and allowed us the opportunities to achieve the American Dream. Let's keep working to support our veteran men and women, and make Florida the most military-friendly state in the nation.

