



For Immediate Release
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Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe

Miami-Dade and Monroe Children More Prepared than Ever to Enter School

MIAMI, FL (December 20, 2007) - The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe through the Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten program is pleased to announce the results of the 2007 Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS) for Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties.

Both counties' scores showed an increase in all areas of the FLKRS that measures each kindergartener's school readiness in seven areas. Those areas include: language and literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, social and personal skills, physical health and fitness and the creative arts. The screening, administered within the first 30 days of kindergarten, is used to determine student school readiness, inform classroom instruction and provide useful information to parents and teachers.

With more than 1,300 providers serving over 30,000 children with early care and education services, the Early Learning Coalition strives to improve their lives, their families' lives and the community as a whole.

A summary of the screening results for both Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties is as

follows:

1. Classroom Readiness. The Early Childhood Observation System (ECHOS) is an observational assessment tool that allows teachers to measure learning development. Students in Miami-Dade County showed a 2% increase over last year, while Monroe kindergarteners showed a 3% increase. Both counties were among 30 other districts statewide to show such increases.

2. Alphabet Recognition. The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) Letter Naming Fluency measures pre-reading and early reading skills. Miami-Dade County kindergarteners showed a 2% increase over last year, and Monroe County students demonstrated an increase of 6%. Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties were among 36 other districts throughout Florida to demonstrate such increases.

3. Sound Recognition. The DIBELS Initial Sound Fluency measures a student's ability to recognize the beginning sound(s) in a spoken word. Our community's kindergarteners showed increases here as well, with a 3% increase in Miami-Dade and a 6% increase in Monroe. Both counties were among 29 other districts statewide to show such increases.

"We are proud to showcase a continued increase in the percentage of kindergarten students demonstrating early literacy skills, with many of these same children having participated in the Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) program prior to entering school," said Evelio Torres, President & Chief Executive Officer.

"A strong foundation for these children entering their academic careers ensures that they will be productive members of our society in the future," added Torres.

About the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe

The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe is a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring early education for children in Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties. Through a variety of affordable and innovative early education and voluntary pre-kindergarten programs, the Coalition serves more than 30,000 children, age birth to 12, along with their families. For more information, please visit www.elcmdm.org or call 305-646-7220.

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