



# CEO Report

**June 3, 2019**

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# Strategic Plan



# Mission and Vision

## Mission

To promote high-quality inclusive school readiness, voluntary pre-kindergarten and after school programs, thus increasing all children's chances of achieving future educational success and becoming productive members of society. The Coalition seeks to further the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of Miami-Dade and Monroe County children with a priority toward the ages birth through age 5.

## Vision

### *Children First*

To ensure a comprehensive and integrated early learning system for all families and their children, birth to 5 years, ensuring high-quality programs throughout Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties, so children enter school ready to learn and succeed in life.



# Children First: The Strategic Plan for the Early Learning Coalition of Miami Dade/Monroe

## 2017-2022

### OUR MISSION

To promote high-quality inclusive school readiness, voluntary pre-kindergarten and after school programs, thus increasing all children's chances of achieving future educational success and becoming productive members of society. The Coalition seeks to further the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of Miami-Dade and Monroe County children with a priority toward the ages birth through age 5.

### OUR VISION

#### CHILDREN FIRST

To ensure a comprehensive and integrated early learning system for all families and their children, birth to 5 years, ensuring high-quality programs throughout Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties, so children enter school ready to learn and succeed in life.

### OUR VALUES

- **CHILDREN** - Children are at the heart of all we do. We believe that all children, regardless of circumstance, are capable of educational excellence and personal growth, and we are committed to ensuring school readiness and lifelong success for each one.
- **COMMUNITY** - We believe children are the future, and our community is an essential part of their road to success. By working together, we can promote high quality early education and support children as they become thriving, productive members of society.
- **PARTNERSHIP** - We value partnerships and are collaborative in all we do. We work closely with fellow service providers, families, corporations, elected officials, individuals, and the community at large to promote the importance of early learning and to secure educational opportunities for all children.
- **ADVOCACY** - We are a champion for children, promoting positive societal and community change. Our staff and community partners are committed to advancing early education throughout Miami-Dade and Monroe counties and are set apart by our collective passion, strength and dedication to children.
- **EXCELLENCE** - When it comes to early learning, quality matters. We are committed to excellence, providing quality programs and services that make a difference in our community. Designed to further the physical, social, emotional and intellectual needs of all children, our programs are innovative and offer each child an equal opportunity for a successful future.
- **CUSTOMER SERVICES** - We strive to meet the needs of our parents, families, providers and partners by providing comprehensive customer service in a professional, timely and courteous manner.
- **EQUITY** - In working with parents, families, providers, and partners, we are committed to the principle of equity and balance, so that all may benefit from the work we do, while keeping children first.

## PRIORITY INITIATIVES

### NEEDIEST CHILDREN

*Improve outcomes for children in our neediest communities, including children with developmental and other delays and disabilities, by improving the quality of early learning programs*

#### Target neediest areas

Identify centers in distressed zip codes and those serving children with, or at risk for, developmental delays & provide extra support for them to meet higher standards

#### Increase the Number of Children

Receiving services who have physical, developmental, sensory, and social-emotional delays and disabilities

### YOUNGEST CHILDREN

*Offer a continuum of care throughout childhood, with a particular focus on infants and toddlers*

#### Age-based Rates

Adjust reimbursement rates to offer incentives to serve the youngest children

### PROVIDERS

*Strengthen Coalition relationship with providers and support providers meeting higher quality performance requirements*

#### Improve Provider Selection and Contracting Process

Establish local provisions that support parental choice and ensure providers serving children receiving subsidies meet contract and quality requirements

#### Teacher Education

Increase the number of teachers with child care credentials

#### Quality Providers

Drive incentives to higher performing providers

#### Technical Business Assistance

Offer business assistance to providers in distressed areas

#### Educate Providers

Provide program directors/staff with training and resources to provide high quality care to all children, including children with disabilities

### EDUCATE ALL

*Educate families and the community at large about the benefits of quality early learning.*

#### Parental Choice

Develop innovative strategies to help parents choose child care programs that ensure better outcomes for their children

#### Visibility

Achieve increased visibility of the importance of early learning throughout both counties by creating child care resources and providing information

### CAPACITY BUILDING

*Strengthen Board and Staff capacity to carry out strategic goals*

#### Advocacy

Engage aggressively & systematically in advocacy to drive better outcomes for children

#### Early Child Care Education Systems Building

Establish regular meetings with partners to strengthen cross-sector investments and policies for children birth through age five

### FUNDING

*Increase public and private funding and reallocate funds to strategic goals*

#### Public

Secure adequate resources to ensure high quality delivery to each child we serve

#### Monroe County

Establish a Permanent Funding Model for Social Services

### FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC GOALS

Develop widely accepted state-wide bench marks of quality (e.g. Child assessments, accreditation, learning environment, etc.)

Change state policy to allow ELCs to contract only with childcare programs that meet state-wide quality bench marks

Establish the Performance Funding Program platform as the statewide quality, tiered reimbursement and pay for performance model



# Legislative Update



# School Readiness Funding Formula

- The funding formula conversation is not over and will be a big topic next session.
- Proviso language was included that calls for the Office of Early Learning, in partnership with the Department of Education, to develop a funding allocation methodology for the equitable distribution, by county, of the school readiness program funds pursuant to section 1002.89, Florida Statutes.
- The funding allocation methodology must take into consideration the Office of Early Learning's market rate survey data; wage, salary, or cost of goods and services data by county; and must identify an equal and appropriate percentage of potentially eligible children to be served which must be consistent for each county.
- Early learning coalition wait lists shall not be included as a component of the funding allocation methodology.
- The Office of Early Learning and the Department of Education shall submit their recommended funding allocation methodology for the distribution of the school readiness program funds to the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Executive Office of the Governor by October 1, 2019.
- The implementation of any recommendations shall not occur unless affirmatively enacted by the Legislature.

# Child Care Executive Partnership

- The **Child Care Executive Partnership** has been eliminated, however it has been replaced with a very similar local match program.
- The new local match program still expands the provision of services to low income families at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level as long as the income does not exceed 85% of the state median income.
- Local matching funds can be derived from local governments, employers, charitable foundations, and other sources so that Florida communities can create local partnerships focused on using the state and local funds for direct services and expanding the number of child care slots.
- To be eligible for funding, an early learning coalition must match the state funds on a dollar-for-dollar basis.
- The Office of Early Learning shall establish procedures for the match program that shall include giving priority to early learning coalitions whose local match complies with federal Child Care and Development Block Grant matching requirements.
- The big difference is that OEL will decide the funding allocations instead of a governor appointed CCEP Board.
- **State Match funding for this has doubled from \$15m to \$30m.**

# VPK

- While the overall VPK budget is slightly higher due to population changes, there was **no increase to the VPK base student allocation**.
- The VPK Bill we were supporting died in PreK-12 Education Appropriations despite our efforts.
- The Senate companion was then temporarily postponed.
- We are told it will come up again next year and we will work with our partners in the meantime to fine-tune the legislation.

# HB1027/SB1456 Office of Early Learning

This bill was passed and requires an informal professional development pathway for School Readiness providers. It requires the Office of Early Learning to:

- establish certain preservice and in-service training requirements;
- include specified professional development pathways;
- develop certain training and course standards for school readiness program providers;
- identify certain formal and informal career pathways, stackable credentials, and certifications that meet specified criteria for such providers, etc.

# Letter to Miami Delegation



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May 31, 2019

The Honorable Jose Oliva  
Speaker of the Florida House of Representative  
3798 West 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite A  
Hialeah, FL 33012

Dear Mr. Speaker:

On behalf of the working families and children served by the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe, our network of child care providers, and my fellow board members, please accept my sincere appreciation for your work in the 2019 legislative session.

As noted in the attached letter, Miami-Dade and Monroe counties' School Readiness Program could have lost millions of dollars this session. This major reduction in funding would have come as a result of a proposed new funding allocation formula. A funding loss of this magnitude would have been catastrophic for our community's children. It would have resulted in a substantial increase in the number of children who are on our waiting list for child care services provided through funding for the School Readiness Program.

The child care providers, most of whom are independently owned small businesses, were also very concerned with the implications that such a large funding reduction would have on them. They understand that a reduction in funding translates into fewer children served and this affects their bottom line and our counties' economy. Some entertained the real possibility of permanently closing down their programs.

The child care providers are also very grateful that the Miami-Dade and Monroe Legislative Delegations fought to keep our federal and state dollars in our communities. The children at one center, ABF Learning Center, made thank you notes to express their gratitude and a copy of one of the notes is enclosed.

We now request that you please pay close attention to proviso language included in the General Appropriation Act that requires the Department of Education and Office of Early Learning to develop a funding allocation methodology for the School Readiness Program by October 1, 2019. While we understand the need for an accurate, equity based funding methodology that treats every county fairly, Miami-Dade always seems to

be the target when other counties need new dollars. We appreciate your continued advocacy for our School Readiness program and our community's children.

Again, thank you for your leadership and tireless work to ensure that the families and children in our communities continue to receive the early education services they so desperately need.

Sincerely,

Adrian Alfonso,  
Board Chair

Enclosures

cc: Evelio Torres, President & CEO

## Early learning funds cut in Sarasota, Palm Beach, Duval

By Ryan McKinnon

Staff Writer

Posted May 24, 2019 at 9:10 PM

Updated May 24, 2019 at 9:10 PM

Other counties saw millions in new money, although funding mechanism remains a mystery

Nobody knows how it works. And state lawmakers have opted to keep it that way.

This year the state will allocate \$676 million in School Readiness funds to pay for childcare for low-income families. The money offsets the cost of care, ideally allowing parents to work full time. It ultimately goes to the hundreds of small-business owners running childcare centers across the state.

But nobody — not the lawmakers setting policy, directors overseeing the agency nor the bureaucrats doling out the cash — knows the rationale for how much each county receives.

The money isn't given out based on need. One county could theoretically take on every single poor child in the state and not see a significant increase in their base allocation. It isn't given out based on current demographics, population or the cost of childcare in the market.

"No one seems to really know" what the allocation is based on, former Office of Early Learning spokeswoman Cynthia Sucher told the Herald-Tribune in 2017.

As the 2019 legislative session ended this month, Palm Beach, Duval, Broward and Sarasota were among the counties losing out on money for low-income families. Palm Beach's funding was cut by \$2.4 million (6%) compared to its allocation last year; Duval lost \$1.3 million (4%); Broward lost \$1.7 million (3%);

and Sarasota lost \$161,053 (3%). Miami-Dade/Monroe, with multiple analyses showing a disproportionate share, got \$7 million more, or 6% over its allocation last year.

An attempt led by Rep. Erin Grall, R-Vero Beach, to establish a needs-based funding formula for the distribution of \$676 million fell apart at the end of the 2019 legislative session. Efforts to fix a funding mechanism that auditors have described as "outdated and unexplained" once again failed.

Grall was not available for comment on Friday, but Sarasota Early Learning Coalition Director Janet Kahn said Grall's efforts were tanked by coalitions that knew a funding formula was more equitable but stood to lose funding.

"My colleagues actively sabotaged the funding allocation even though we all worked together," Kahn said. "They reneged on their agreements to work together on this."

Grall had sought to garner the support of lawmakers and Early Learning Coalitions statewide to build a formula into the budget language that would be sent on to Gov. Ron DeSantis.

She was cautiously optimistic in April, saying this year was a rare opportunity to establish a funding formula. A mid-year infusion of cash into the system from the federal government meant no coalition would receive less in base funding than their original baseline in 2018-19. However, several counties with high numbers of legislators stood to receive less in total under Grall's proposal than they would if the unexplained methodology remained in place, and none more so than Miami-Dade.

With two dozen legislators between the House and Senate, Miami would have received \$12 million less if Grall's plan had been adopted than it ultimately received.

In April Grall acknowledged that adopting a needs-based formula would be politically difficult because some lawmakers would need to explain to constituents why they supported a measure that may be good for the state but reduce their local funding.

"This is really where you have to put on the statewide hat," Grall said. "It is asking people to step outside of their comfort zone of fighting for their county and say this is what is best for the state."

Despite the failed overhaul, Grall got a small win, with language written into the budget requiring the Department of Education and OEL to develop a funding formula.

However, the same tensions between what is best for the state and bringing home the pork will be present next year, as lawmakers will be once again asked if they want to implement a formula or stick to the unexplained methodology.

# VPK Readiness Rates

Program YEAR 2017-18

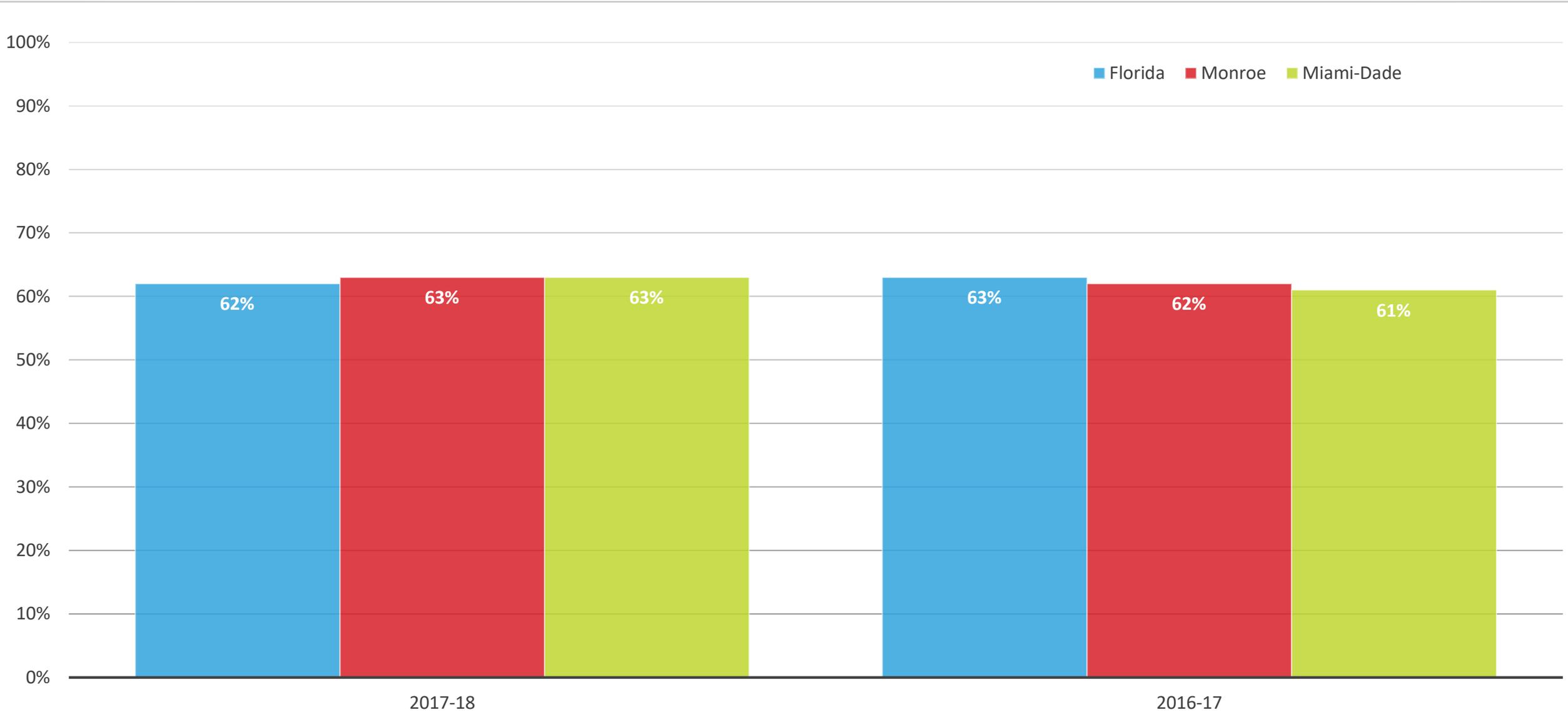
# What is the VPK Provider Readiness Rate?

- [Section 1002.69, Florida Statutes \(F.S.\)](#), requires the Florida Department of Education to adopt a statewide kindergarten screening instrument that assesses the readiness of each student for kindergarten based on the performance standards adopted by the department under section [1002.67\(1\), F.S.](#), for the VPK Program.
- The readiness rate reflects the percentage of screened children a VPK provider has adequately prepared for Kindergarten and teachers use the results to help understand each child's readiness for school and plan lessons to meet individual needs.
- The readiness rate is based on the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS).
- State law requires screening for all public school kindergarten students within the first 30 days of the school year. *Private schools may administer the FLKRS as well.*

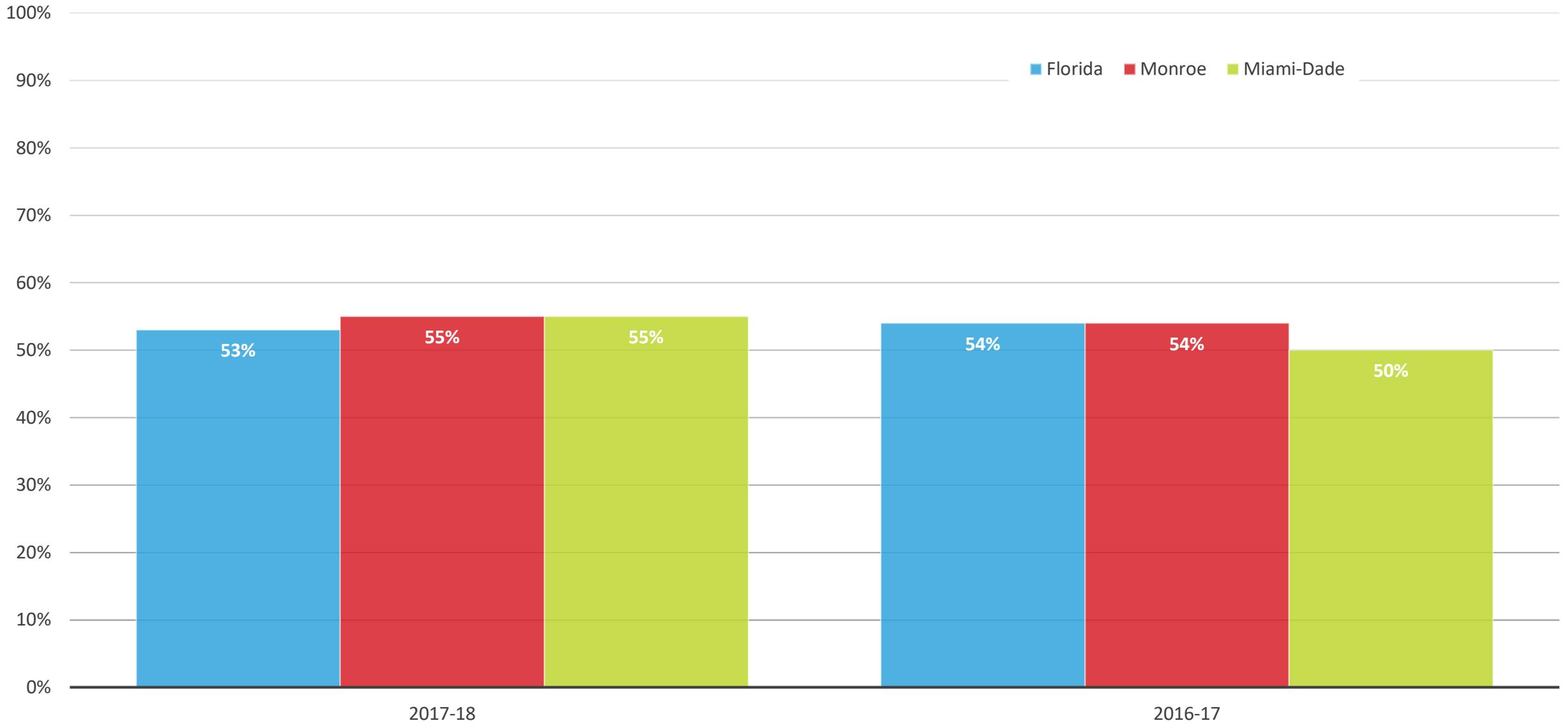
# Star Early Literacy Overview

- Online Adaptive Assessment
  - Children may respond by using a mouse, keyboard or touchscreen.
  - 15 – 20 Minutes
- Measures Early Literacy and Early Mathematics Skills
- Ready for Kindergarten = Scoring 500+

# Percent of VPK Completers Ready



# Percent of Kindergarteners “Ready” Total Population



# Low Performing Providers and Providers on Probation

- For the 2017-18 Readiness Rates, no new providers will be placed on probation.
  - Providers currently on probation and score above a sixty, will no longer be on probation.
  - Providers currently on probation and score below a sixty, will remain on probation.

|  | 2016-17    |        | 2017-18    |        |
|--|------------|--------|------------|--------|
|  | Miami-Dade | Monroe | Miami-Dade | Monroe |
| <b>Low Performing Providers (LPP)*</b>                                   |            |        |            |        |
| Providers who scored below the minimum rate of 60.                       | 418        | 7      | 382        | 10     |
| <b>Providers on Probation (POP)**</b>                                    |            |        |            |        |
| Existing Providers of Probation who scored below the minimum rate of 60. | 106        | 0      | 86         | 0      |

*\*Total number does not include those providers who did not receive a score due to the following: Fewer than four children were screened on one or more measure(s), Fewer than 4 children met substantial completion and not enough children were screened, and Fewer than 4 children were enrolled.*

*\*\* Total number does not include MDCPS POPs.*

# Governor DeSantis Directs Education Commissioner Richard Corcoran to Address Voluntary Pre-K Readiness Rates

## Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS)

|  | 2016-2017  |        |         | 2017-2018  |        |         |
|--|------------|--------|---------|------------|--------|---------|
|  | Miami Dade | Monroe | Florida | Miami Dade | Monroe | Florida |
| % Kindergarteners “Ready” Total Population | 50.39%     | 53.75% | 53.95%  | 55%        | 55%    | 53%     |

**Tallahassee, Fla.** – Today, the Florida Department of Education released the 2017-18 Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) readiness rates, and 42% of children who participated in VPK were not ready for kindergarten. In response, Governor Ron DeSantis called on Education Commissioner Richard Corcoran to create a plan to ensure Florida families receive the great start to an education their children deserve.

Governor Ron DeSantis said, “A 42% failure rate is simply not defensible and certainly not good enough for Florida’s youngest learners. I have asked Commissioner Corcoran to prioritize this issue and direct available funding to make enhancements. Nearly three-quarters of Florida parents rely on VPK programs to lay the academic and social foundation necessary for their children to succeed in kindergarten and beyond.”

Commissioner of Education Richard Corcoran said, “We must have a real accountability measure for all our school readiness programs. We are highlighting this data to serve as a rallying cry going forward that we will improve our early learning opportunities for students. Our youngest learners deserve nothing else.”

Early learning policy champions State Representative Erin Grall and State Senator Gayle Harrell also weighed in:

Representative Grall noted, “These results are disheartening for our students and their families. A quality, accountable VPK system contributes to children being ready for kindergarten and ensures our K-3 educators are building upon a strong foundation. I am encouraged by Governor DeSantis and Commissioner Corcoran’s commitment to improvement and their recognition of the need for change. I look forward to working with the Commissioner and many early learning stakeholders over the summer months to improve our early learning system.”

# Governor DeSantis Directs Education Commissioner Richard Corcoran to Address Voluntary Pre-K Readiness Rates

Senator Harrell said, “I appreciate the Governor and Commissioner’s focus on improving every aspect of education, especially for students at this critical time when their readiness greatly improves their likelihood of achievement and opportunity throughout their entire education. We must have one goal and one goal only, and that is to have the best Pre-K in the nation. I am committed to doing my part to help achieve that goal.”

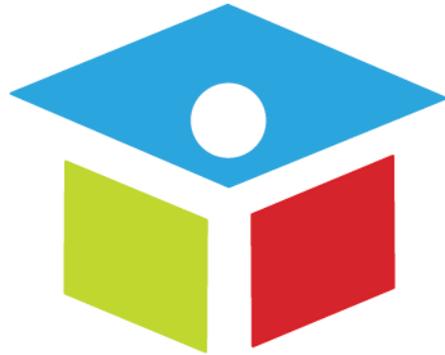
Section 1002.69, Florida Statutes, requires each school district to administer the statewide kindergarten screening to each kindergarten student in the school district within the first 30 school days of each school year. The screening gathers information about each student’s development and readiness for kindergarten based on VPK performance standards. The kindergarten screener results are used to evaluate the performance of VPK providers. Learning gains of the students enrolled in the VPK are also required to be used in determining the quality of the VPK provider. Although providers have been capturing learning gains for five years, learning gains have not been used in readiness rates.

In accordance with state law, beginning with the release of the 2018-19 school year results, VPK readiness rates will be calculated on both learning gains and kindergarten screener results. Providers that do not meet the minimum readiness rate will be subject to the following consequences:

- Placement of the provider on probation;
- Implementation of an improvement plan approved by the early learning coalition or school district including the use of an Office of Early Learning (OEL)-approved curriculum or a staff development plan;
- Annual submission of an application to OEL for approval for a good cause exemption for providers not meeting the minimum readiness rate for three consecutive years;
- Continued probation until the provider meets the minimum readiness rate; and
- Ineligibility to offer the VPK program if on probation for three or more years without a good cause exemption.

[LINK: 2017-18 School Year Readiness Rates](#)

###



Miami-Dade/Monroe

EARLY CHILDHOOD  
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
INSTITUTE

*A division of the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe*

**Strategic Plan Priority Initiative:**

- **Educate All**
- **Neediest Children**
- **Providers**

# Monroe Early Childhood Conference: Building a Strong Foundation

- April 27, 2019- Hawks Cay Resort- Duck Key
- Over 100 early childhood practitioners in attendance from Miami-Dade and Monroe
- Inclusion Roundtable Discussion led by Dr. Espinosa
- Nine (9) concurrent sessions on quality early learning experiences





A professional development conference for the early learning community

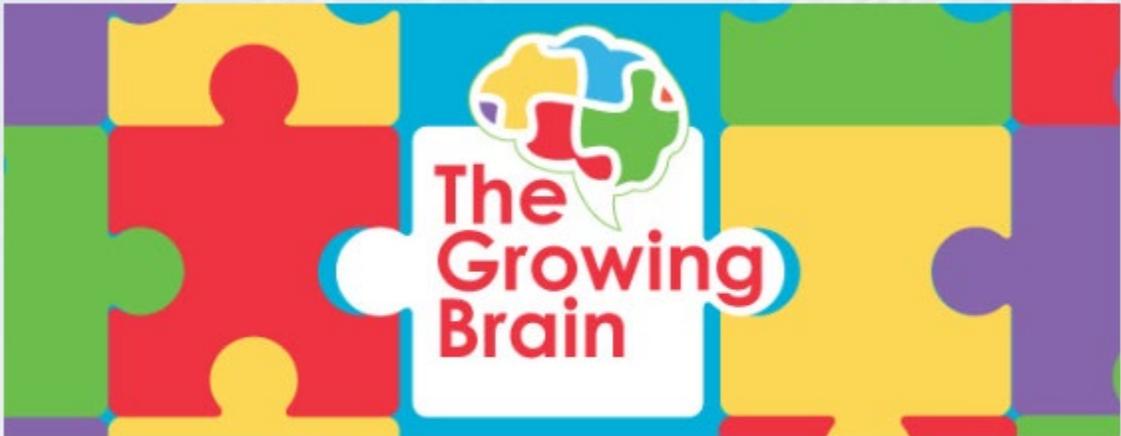
Children First Conference 2019  
**SAVE THE DATE**  
December 7, 2019



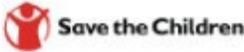
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Pre-K Prep Rally:  
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