



Florida Office of Early Learning

Rick Scott
Governor
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Director

Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Specialized Instructional Services (SIS) Program Fact Sheet for Parents April 12, 2013

Enrollment in VPK SIS

1. What is VPK SIS?

VPK SIS is an alternative method for four-year-old children with disabilities, who have Individual Educational Plans (IEP) from their local school districts, to receive specialized services instead of traditional VPK classroom instruction.

2. How do I enroll my child in VPK SIS?

Contact your local early learning coalition for assistance with registering your child. You will need to:

- Choose a service consistent with your child's IEP and
- Select a VPK SIS provider that DOE has approved and who wishes to participate in the VPK SIS program

3. My child has an IEP. Would my child be better suited for the traditional VPK or to the VPK SIS program?

That choice is yours to make as you know your child's needs. The traditional VPK program takes place in a classroom and there may be as many as 20 students with two instructors in the class. VPK SIS, on the other hand, will most likely occur in individual or small group settings with a certified or licensed professional trained to provide specialized services.

4. Can my child be enrolled in a traditional VPK program and in VPK SIS at the same time?

No. A child may be enrolled in only one VPK program type – school-year, summer or SIS.

5. If my child attends traditional VPK now, may I move my child to the VPK SIS program?

Under certain circumstances, yes; but there are restrictions. A child may reenroll in the SIS program if the child has used 70 percent or less of his/her funding for VPK and has not had a previous reenrollment. You should contact your local early learning coalition for assistance.

Available Instructional Services

6. What specialized instructional services are available in VPK SIS?

Students enrolled in VPK SIS may access the following specialized services:

- Applied behavior analysis
- Speech language pathology
- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy
- Listening and spoken language instruction in an appropriate acoustical environment for a child who is deaf or hard of hearing, who has received an implant or assisted hearing device
- Any other specialized instructional services that are consistent with your child's IEP

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7. Who has the Department of Education (DOE) approved to be VPK SIS providers?

The Department of Education has approved the following professionals to be VPK SIS providers:

- Individuals certified or licensed for applied behavior analysis services
- Licensed speech-language pathologists
- Licensed occupational therapists
- Licensed physical therapists
- Licensed clinical social workers
- Licensed psychologists

The Department of Education may have approved other SIS providers in your area, including:

- Listening and Spoken Language Specialists™ certified by the Alexander Graham Bell Academy for Listening and Spoken Language
- Board Certified Behavior Analysts certified by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board®
- Other licensed professionals who have applied to, and been approved by DOE

8. May I choose more than one VPK SIS provider for my child?

Yes, but each SIS provider must have been approved by DOE and be willing to participate in the VPK SIS program.

Funding

9. What is the difference in funding between traditional VPK and VPK SIS?

The funding is identical for the traditional VPK program and for VPK SIS. The funding per student is \$2,383 for the 2012-2013 school-year program and \$2,026 for the summer program. If, however, a student was previously enrolled in traditional VPK and then reenrolled in VPK SIS, the funding for that student would be pro-rated between the two program types. It is important to know that reimbursement to VPK SIS providers is based on the rates those providers charge for their services. As a result, a student enrolled in VPK SIS will likely receive fewer hours of services than a student enrolled in traditional VPK.

10. How does a VPK SIS provider receive payment for services provided?

The early learning coalition will pay the SIS provider for services your child receives. First, you and the SIS provider will work together to complete and submit required forms. You can obtain these forms from your local early learning coalition, once the coalition approves the forms. After your child receives the service, you will write your initials and the date by that service on the appropriate form. The SIS provider then submits that form to the coalition to receive payment.

11. Will I have to pay any fees for my child to participate in the VPK SIS program?

The VPK program is a free program, but VPK SIS pays only for the specialized instructional services that are listed, approved, and received by the early learning coalition on the Schedule of Services form. If you arrive late to an appointment or miss an appointment, the VPK SIS program will not pay those charges and you may be liable.

Additional Questions

12. If I have additional questions who should I contact?

You should first contact your local early learning coalition. If they cannot assist you, you may contact OEL for questions about child enrollment and funding at 1-866-357-3239. For questions about approved VPK SIS providers you may contact DOE's Bureau of VPK at 1-866-447-1159.