

Florida's Kindergarteners Show Continued Growth in Early Learning

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The number of Florida's Kindergarteners showing early literacy skills reached its highest point to date according to the 2008 Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS) results released today by the Florida Department of Education.

The screening measures each Kindergartener's readiness in seven areas, including 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 readiness, inform classroom instruction and provide useful information to parents and teachers.

"These are outstanding results and I am thrilled to see that our youngest students are more prepared than ever before to tackle the work that is ahead of them," said Education Commissioner Dr. Eric J. Smith. "You can never start the learning process too early and I am proud of our parents and teachers for ensuring that our children hit the ground running."

All Kindergartners are measured through this process, which assesses what students should know and be able to do as defined by the Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) Education Standards. The screening instrument evaluates students' abilities using the Early Childhood Observation System™ (ECHOS™) and the first two criteria of the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills™ (DIBELS™). Scannable response sheets were received for 190,000 Kindergarten students, representing 98 percent of the Kindergarten students in public schools in October 2008.

A summary of the screening results is as follows:

- **Alphabet Recognition.** The DIBELS Letter Naming Fluency measures pre-reading and early reading skills. Of the 178,115 students screened in 2008, 76.6 percent were determined to be above average/low risk – an increase of almost five percent compared to last year. In addition, the number of students considered moderate/high risk decreased to 23.4 percent statewide from 28.3 percent last year.
- **Sound Recognition.** The DIBELS Initial Sound Fluency measures a student's ability to recognize the beginning sound(s) in a spoken word. Of the 172,976 students screened in 2008, 67.9 percent were above average/low risk – an increase of more than three percent compared to last year. The number of students considered moderate/high risk decreased to 32.1 percent statewide compared to 35.2 percent last year.
- **Classroom Readiness.** The Early Childhood Observation System™ (ECHOS™) allows teachers to measure learning development. Of the 178,917 students screened by the ECHOS™ in 2008, 47.6 percent were considered to "demonstrate" grade-level learning development (48 percent in 2007), 40.3

percent were considered “emerging/progressing” (39.7 percent in 2007), and 12.1 percent were identified as “not yet demonstrating” (12.3 percent in 2007).

[View the complete results](#)