

## Memorandum

To: CD<sup>2</sup> (Career Development in Child Development) Tri-County Allies  
From: Dr. Roanne Moreno, PBCC Institute of Excellence  
Re: Feedback on State of Florida Curricula Standards, Emergent Literacy Standards  
and Child Performance Standards  
Date: March 9, 2005

In response to the request by the CD<sup>2</sup> Allies group that a position statement relative to State of Florida Curricula, Emergent Literacy and Child Performance standards be prepared, the following brief outline is being submitted to you.

### Summary Statements:

- The proposed **curriculum selection guide** to inform Florida Pre-K sites about different curricula or curricular approaches is appropriate and should help sites select an evidenced based, developmentally appropriate curriculum.
- The **criteria for the review of Emergent Literacy programs** are also appropriate.
- The proposed **Child Performance Standards** convey appropriate child based outcomes (CBO) and cover all five dimensions of school readiness specified by the National Education Goals Panel.
- Although Florida has identified appropriate child based outcome standards, there **are not yet adequate tools in place to reliably and validly measure each child's progress on the standards and to align a curriculum with the outcome standards.** This problem is not unique to the State of Florida. Assessing child outcomes is a complex process that includes such methods as child observations, portfolios, etc., and is best done in conjunction with an appropriate curriculum. There must be a connection between the identified Child Performance Standards and a selected curriculum which includes a valid child based outcomes measurement tool.
- Complicating the issue, is the state's proposal **to hold VPK programs accountable for child based outcomes using measurement tools that are not designed for this purpose.** The selected tools, the ESI-K and DIBELS, are relatively low cost, easy to administer measures. The ESI-K is a highly reliable and valid developmental screening instrument. The DIBELS' indicators are a set of standardized, individually administered measures of children's early literacy development. These two tools should help inform teaching methods and curricular approaches for individual children and should be used to identify children with special needs, but not to evaluate program quality.
- It is our recommendation that due to the lack of available tools to easily measure child based outcomes, that the ESI-K and DIBELS be used as proposed. However, we highly recommend that if a VPK site is deemed to not be producing good child based outcomes, that a tool be used to assess the attributes of the site to determine if the site has deficiencies or if the site serves children who enter with a lower level of skills due to geographic location, etc.
- An accepted and widely recognized tool for this purpose is the **Environment Rating Scale-R** which is used in many states to assess quality within early learning sites. A number of studies correlate a good score on the ECERS-R with good child based outcomes related to school readiness skills.