

VPK Instructor Increased Emergent Literacy Course Requirement

Frequently Asked Questions October 2021

Recent legislative changes to [section \(s.\) 1002.55, Florida Statutes \(F.S.\)](#), and [s. 1002.63, F.S.](#), following the passage of [House Bill \(HB\) 419](#) and [HB 7011](#), provide all VPK instructors, including those holding a valid Florida educator certificate, opportunities to increase skills for emergent literacy instruction with young children. All VPK instructors must complete three 5-hour emergent literacy courses, an increase from the previous requirement of one emergent literacy course. After completing the first three emergent literacy courses, VPK instructors must complete one emergent literacy course every five years.

1. **What is the deadline for meeting this new requirement?**

This legislative change became effective on July 1, 2021. Given the importance of this training, the Division of Early Learning (DEL) is setting a deadline of July 1, 2022, for all prekindergarten providers to meet this requirement.

Importance of Early Literacy

1. **How will completing the three 5-hour emergent literacy courses impact or benefit my instruction?**

Through the participation in an emergent literacy course, teachers will expand and enhance their knowledge and instructional strategies related to emergent literacy. Teachers will gain a deeper understanding of the emergent literacy progression and how the sequence of instruction impacts the learning process for young learners. Several of the training courses include three component areas: a content instructional component, a classroom implementation component and a virtual reflection component. It is through these various methods of delivery that teachers will expand professionally as an early childhood educator.

Course Requirements for VPK Instructors

2. **What courses meet the 5-hour emergent literacy course requirement?**

The following courses meet the emergent literacy course requirement and may be accessed via the following links:

Division of Early Learning Literacy Courses Registration link: https://training01-dcf.myflorida.com/student/site/admin/signin	Date Available	Course Description	Cost
1. <i>Emergent Literacy for VPK Instructors</i> (online VPK21) 5 hours; 0.5 CEUs	Currently available	This course will provide participants with background information on emergent literacy and demonstrate instructional practices that can be used in early learning classrooms with 4- to 5-year-olds, supporting success in kindergarten and beyond.	\$10.00
2. <i>Language and Vocabulary in the VPK Classroom</i> (online LVPK21) 5 hours; 0.5 CEUs	Currently available	This course will provide participants with instructional strategies for increasing language and vocabulary with young children, a critical component of children's development.	\$10.00

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Division of Early Learning Literacy Courses Registration link: https://training01-dcf.myflorida.com/student/site/admin/signin	Date Available	Course Description	Cost
3. <i>Phonological Awareness Development for Preschoolers</i> (online VIPA21 ; in-person and virtual instructor-led PAP21) 5 hours; 0.5 CEUs	October 30, 2021	This training is appropriate for preschool educators and directors, and is open to all. Participants will have an opportunity to participate in hands-on activities supporting developmentally appropriate instruction in phonological awareness as well as explore the phonological awareness stages of development.	\$10.00
4. <i>Dialogic Reading: Language and Vocabulary Development for Preschoolers</i> (in-person and virtual instructor-led DRP) 5 hours; 0.5 CEUs	October 30, 2021	This virtual instructor-led course is appropriate for administrative staff, directors and teachers of 3-, 4- and 5-year-old children. Participants will learn Dialogic Reading as a strategy used with books to promote vocabulary and oral language skills. In Dialogic Reading, the book becomes a shared visual and verbal context for the instructor to teach their children new words.	Free
5. <i>Book Embedded Vocabulary Instruction: Language and Vocabulary Development for Preschoolers</i> (in-person and virtual instructor-led BEP) 5 hours; 0.5 CEUs	October 30, 2021	This virtual instructor-led course is appropriate for administrative staff, directors and teachers of 3-, 4- and 5-year-old children. Participants will learn how to implement the Book Embedded Vocabulary Instructional strategy to facilitate vocabulary teaching and learning.	Free
6. <i>Scaffolding and Think, Show, Tell, Talk: Language and Vocabulary Development for Preschoolers</i> (in-person and virtual instructor-led STSTTP) 5 hours; 0.5 CEUs	October 30, 2021	This virtual instructor-led course is appropriate for administrative staff, directors and teachers of 3-, 4-, and 5-year-old children. Participants will learn about Language Scaffolding and Think, Show, Tell, Talk instructional strategies used to promote language, vocabulary and oral language skills.	Free
7. <i>Building a Strong Foundation for Emergent Literacy</i> (virtual instructor-led BSFEL) 5 hours; 0.5 CEUs	October 30, 2021	This virtual instructor-led course provides foundational content focused on emergent literacy skills and instruction. This course is most appropriate for directors, new VPK instructors and/or preschool instructors who are new to early childhood education.	Free

Early Learning Florida (University of Florida Lastinger Center) Literacy Courses Registration: Contact the local early learning coalition	Date Available	Course Description	Cost
8. <i>Preschool Language Development</i> (online) 20 hours; 2.0 CEUs Meets full 15-hour requirement	Currently available	Participants will explore language development in young children and learn evidence-based strategies for helping children develop language skills and extend their vocabulary knowledge. These strategies are job-embedded and will need to be implemented with the preschool children (3-5 year olds) in the participant's setting.	Free
9. <i>The Building Blocks of Preschool Literacy</i> (online) 20 hours; 2.0 CEUs Meets full 15-hour requirement	Currently available	This course will review the research and provide participants with ways to support children in classrooms as they continue on their journey to becoming successful readers and writers. These strategies are job-embedded and will need to be implemented with preschoolers in the participant's program.	Free
Reading Endorsement Registration: Contact the local school district	Date Available	Course Description	Cost
10. <i>Competency 1: Foundations of Reading Instruction (varied delivery methods)</i> 60 hours Meets full 15-hour requirement	Currently available	Participants will develop substantive understanding of six components of reading as a process: comprehension, oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency and vocabulary.	Varies

- 3. Where can instructors find additional information regarding emergent literacy professional development?**
 The emergent literacy course requirement information as well as other professional development information may be found on the Division of Early Learning (DEL) website at <http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/vpk/vpk-providers/professional-development-training>.
- 4. Are public school VPK teachers and/or certified teachers required to complete the three 5-hour courses?**
 Yes. All VPK teachers are required to complete three 5-hour emergent literacy courses. See ss. 1002.55(3)(c) and 1002.63(4), F.S.
- 5. Are substitute instructors or classroom assistants required to meet the emergent literacy course requirement?**
 No. Substitute instructors and classroom assistants are not required to complete the course requirement. However, it would be recommended that any person providing instruction to young children complete the trainings in an effort to increase their professional knowledge and instructional abilities.

6. Can an instructor receive credit for courses previously taken?

Yes. Teachers who have completed the following online courses, after the dates identified below, may count these courses toward the emergent literacy course requirement.

- *Emergent Literacy for VPK Instructors* (5 hours) (July 1, 2018)
- *Language and Vocabulary in the VPK Classroom* (5 hours) (July 1, 2020)
- *Preschool Language Development* (20 hours) (March 19, 2018)
- *The Building Blocks of Preschool Literacy* (20 hours) (January 7, 2019)

7. How will instructor course participation be tracked?

DEL, in partnership with the Department of Children and Families (DCF), offers course access via the [Florida Early Childhood Professional Development Registry](#). Instructor completion of three 5-hour emergent literacy courses will be recognized on the participant's training transcript with the following message:

"VPK Instructor Emergent Literacy Course Requirement has been completed."

Participants have access to their training transcripts in the [Florida Early Childhood Professional Development Registry](#).

8. Are public school teachers required to use the Florida Early Childhood Professional Development Registry?

Yes. Teacher participation and completion of course requirements will be tracked via the [Florida Early Childhood Professional Development Registry](#). Public and private school VPK teachers will create an account in the Registry and utilize the system to access approved emergent literacy courses. Completed courses will appear on the participant's training transcript. Once the course requirement is met, a notice of completion will also be posted to the transcript.

"VPK Instructor Emergent Literacy Course Requirement has been completed."

Additionally, school districts may add DEL training courses to their Master Inservice Plan (MIP) and offer inservice points for course completion.

9. Can this requirement be satisfied by taking a single class that is at least 15-hours, instead of three 5-hour classes?

Yes. The list of approved classes includes three longer classes that meet this requirement.

Course Access and Information

10. When can VPK instructors begin taking the courses?

Instructors may begin taking the available courses immediately.

11. Where are the approved courses offered?

Emergent literacy courses are available both **online** via the [Florida Early Childhood Professional Development Registry](#) (DCF) for \$10 per course or through the **instructor-led** trainings offered **virtually** by the VPK Regional Facilitators. The virtual instructor-led trainings are free. A schedule of **virtual instructor-led** training opportunities and registration tips are available [here](#).

Additionally, [Early Learning Florida](#) offers the following courses. Course fees are paid by DEL.

- Preschool Language Development (online)
- The Building Blocks of Preschool Literacy (online)

12. How do instructors gain access to the online training courses?

Emergent literacy courses are available through the [Florida Early Childhood Professional Development Registry](#) (DCF). Instructors will set up an account in the registry if they do not already have one. Teachers will be able to access the online courses in the registry. Emergent literacy course reference numbers will be posted on the DEL professional development webpage located at <http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/vpk/vpk-providers/professional-development-training>.

13. Are there free course options?

Yes. All of the virtual instructor-led and in-person courses offered by the VPK Regional Facilitators are free of charge. Registration information can be found at <http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/vpk/vpk-providers/professional-development-training>.

14. Do the emergent literacy courses have to be taken online?

No. Teachers may complete an approved online course or register and attend a virtual instructor-led training offered by the VPK Regional Facilitators. Additional training information can be found on the DEL website at <http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/vpk/vpk-providers/professional-development-training>.

15. Where can the course reference numbers be found?

DEL course reference numbers can be found at <http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/vpk/vpk-providers/professional-development-training>.

16. Where is registration available for Reading Endorsement Competency 1?

Interested individuals should contact their local school district for course availability information.

Districts and Early Learning Coalitions

17. Are districts or coalitions required to pay for the instructors to take the emergent literacy courses?

No. There are free and low-cost options available to all instructors. Online courses are available via the [Florida Early Childhood Professional Development Registry](#) (DCF) are \$10 per course. The Virtual Instructor-led courses are free and also available via the Registry.

18. Are coalitions or school districts required to track teacher completion of this requirement?

Teacher participation and completion of course requirements will be tracked via the [Florida Early Childhood Professional Development Registry](#).

Coalitions and school districts may require VPK providers to upload participants' [Florida Early Childhood Professional Development Registry training](#) transcripts to the Provider Portal. The transcript will reflect the following upon completion of the three emergent literacy courses:

“VPK Instructor Emergent Literacy Course Requirement has been completed.”

19. Will DEL conduct a train-the-trainer for coalition or school district staff for the emergent literacy courses?

VPK Regional Facilitators will be available to provide virtual instructor-led trainings. Ultimately, DEL plans to utilize previously trained trainers for the *Phonological Awareness Development for Preschoolers* course. As the need arises, DEL may provide train-the-trainer sessions to train additional trainers at the local level for selected emergent literacy courses.

Directors/Administrators/Owners

20. How can directors track teacher progress towards the emergent literacy requirement?

Directors may require instructors to provide their [Florida Early Childhood Professional Development Registry training](#) transcripts to their director as evidence of requirement completion.

Coalitions or school districts may also accept a copy of the participant's transcript, which upon completion of the three 5-hour emergent literacy courses will reflect the following:

“VPK Instructor Emergent Literacy Course Requirement has been completed.”

Administrative Rule

21. Will DEL create State Board Rule for the Emergent Literacy Course Requirement?

DEL is scheduled to seek rule approval by the State Board of Education in early 2022.

22. Will there be workshops for the public, early learning coalition and school district staff to attend?

DEL Rule Workshops are scheduled to be presented in the fall of 2021.