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OFFICE OF EARLY LEARNING (OEL)– QUALITY NOTE 07.03

Issue

Managing Low-performing Providers

Section 1002.67(3)(c)1., F.S. requires each private or public school VPK provider falling below the State Board of Education minimum kindergarten readiness rate to submit an improvement plan for approval by the coalition or school district, as applicable, and to implement the plan.

A low-performing provider may not start a new VPK class until it has an approved improvement plan, although an early learning coalition may establish a VPK class for a low-performing provider prior to its plan being submitted. If a low-performing provider fails to submit an improvement plan or have an improvement plan approved, it may not deliver the VPK program.

Purpose

This quality note guides the management of low-performing VPK providers in EFS during the approval process for VPK improvement plans. It provides information on how to remove low-performing providers from the prepayment process, determine the VPK class start date for a low-performing provider, and inactivate a low-performing VPK provider in EFS. This quality note accompanies interim program guidance titled, *Managing the VPK Improvement Plan Approval Process* [OEL-PG-0046-07].

Conventions

The following conventions are used to clarify the steps in the *Instructions* sections:

- **The name of a button, a key, a mouse selection, or an entry typed in a text box is written in this format.**
- **The name of a text box or other entry field on the application screen is written in this format.**
- The title of an application window, dialogue box, or section of a screen is written in this format.

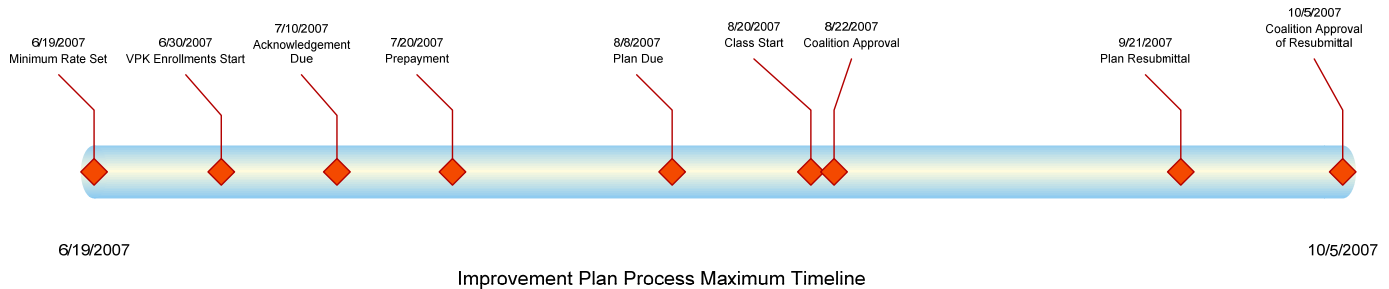
Instructions

The VPK legislation (ss. 1002.51-1002.79, F.S.) establishes that the Department of Education shall calculate the kindergarten readiness rate periodically for each VPK provider that delivers either a school-year or a summer program. The State Board of Education is responsible for setting the minimum readiness rate.

The VPK school-year and summer programs are considered two distinct programs for the purposes of establishing the kindergarten readiness rate. If a VPK provider delivers both a school-year and summer program, the provider will receive a readiness rate for each program. A provider may be a low-performing provider for one VPK program, but still be eligible to deliver the other program. For example, a provider may be a low-performing provider for the school-year program, but is not a low-performing provider for the summer program. In this case, the provider must submit an improvement plan for the school-year program, but does not have to submit an improvement plan for the summer program. If the provider fails to submit an improvement plan for the school-year program, the provider is still eligible to deliver the summer program.

Improvement plan process timeline

A VPK provider has 21 calendar days from the date the readiness rate is published to acknowledge its status as a low-performing provider by using the VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate website (<https://www.ImproveVPK.org>). A provider has 30 calendar days from its acknowledgement date to submit an improvement plan to its early learning coalition or school district, as applicable, using the online template. The coalition or school district has 14 calendar days to approve or not approve the plan. The timeline below illustrates a potential process flow if a provider submits its acknowledgement on July 10, 2007. If a coalition or school district does not approve a provider’s improvement plan, the provider has 30 calendar days to resubmit a plan for consideration.



A coalition may establish a VPK provider classroom in EFS for the upcoming program year for a low-performing provider before the provider has submitted its improvement plan. A child may be enrolled with a low-performing VPK provider but may not begin receiving state-funded VPK services until the provider has submitted and the coalition or school district, as applicable, has approved the provider’s improvement plan. Any costs incurred for services delivered before a provider’s improvement plan is approved will be disallowed.

Important note for low-performing providers that do not submit an improvement plan

If a low-performing provider fails to submit its improvement plan by the deadline, the following steps must be taken:

1. **Terminate all enrollments for the upcoming school-year or summer program (as applicable)**
2. **Delete all classrooms for the upcoming school-year or summer program (as applicable)**
3. **Inactivate the provider (see exceptions below)**

Exceptions

Classrooms—if a provider has received a prepayment or payment for the upcoming program, the classroom cannot be deleted. If a classroom cannot be deleted, enter a **Class End Date** (see *Provider Classroom Maintenance* screen on page 4) to prevent future enrollments in the class. The **Class End Date** should be the earliest date after the last closed reporting period. For example, if the August 2007 reporting period has been closed, enter 09/01/2007 as the class end date.

Inactivate provider—do not inactivate a provider if the provider is still delivering the current year’s program or is eligible to deliver either the upcoming school-year or summer program.

Best Practice - Omit from prepayment

A low-performing provider without an approved improvement plan should not receive a prepayment. If a provider does not have an approved plan, the provider should be omitted from the prepayment process.

1. To omit a provider from prepayment click to select **Provider>Prov Demographics** from the main EFS screen; the Provider Demographics Maintenance screen appears.

2. **Omit from VPK Prepayment.** Click this checkbox to omit the provider from the prepayment process.
3. Click the **OK** button.

Once a low-performing provider has an approved improvement plan, it may begin receiving prepayments.

Allowing provider prepayment
A coalition may elect to prepay a low-performing provider on a case by case basis. If a provider fails to meet the improvement plan requirement, the coalition is responsible for collecting the prepaid funds from the provider (see OEL-FG-0042-07, Collection of Delinquent Account). Ultimately a coalition is responsible for returning any disallowed funds to the Office of Early Learning.

VPK class begin date

A low-performing provider cannot start a new VPK class until its VPK improvement plan has been approved by the coalition or school district. It's possible that a low-performing provider may not start a 2007–2008 school-year program until October 5, 2007 (see the timeline example on page 2); however, a provider may have an earlier class begin date depending on when a provider submits its acknowledgement and improvement plan.

To change the class Begin Date in EFS:

1. Click to select **Provider>Prov Demographics**. The Provider Demographics Maintenance screen appears.
2. Press the **F11** key to initiate a search. Enter the **Provider ID** and press the **F12** key to generate the search. Once the correct provider has been located, click **Classroom** on the toolbar at the top of the screen. The Provider Classroom Maintenance screen appears.

3. **Begin Date.** Enter the new begin date for the class as indicated by the provider. The begin date has to be on or after the date the provider’s improvement plan was approved.

Note: Enter the begin date as indicated on Form AWI-VPK 11. If a provider fails to start on this date, all enrollments with the provider must be terminated, the class begin date must be changed in EFS and the children re-enrolled with the new begin date.

A provider must submit a revised Form AWI-VPK 11 if there is a schedule change, including a revised start date. The coalition should determine a deadline for the submission of a revised form.

4. **Calendar.** A change in the begin date most likely will require a new calendar or a change to the existing calendar. If a new calendar is required, enter the new calendar ID.
5. **Hours/Days per Week.** If a change in the begin date occurs, it might impact the provider’s entire schedule, including the daily operating schedule. Enter any change in **Hours per Week** or **Days per Week**.
6. Click the **OK** button when all changes have been made to return to the Provider Demographics Maintenance screen. Click the **OK** button again to save changes.

VPK Inactive Date

A low-performing provider may remain as an active VPK provider in EFS as long as the provider adheres to the improvement plan process. Please refer to the following table of consequences:

| Action | Consequence |
|---|--|
| The low-performing provider fails to submit an improvement plan. | The provider may not deliver VPK services. |
| The low-performing provider submits an improvement plan that is not approved by the coalition or school district. | The provider has an additional 30 days to submit a revised improvement plan. |
| The coalition or school district does not approve the second submission of the improvement plan. | The provider may not deliver VPK services. |
| The provider fails to submit or have an improvement plan approved, but remains eligible for one VPK program type (school-year or summer). | The provider may still deliver VPK services for the eligible program type. |

Active enrollments

If children have been enrolled with a low-performing provider that must be inactivated, each child's enrollment should be terminated before the provider is inactivated. Each child is eligible to re-enroll for a full program; the coalition or its contractor should notify each parent or guardian and facilitate the re-enrollment process.

If a provider is currently delivering a VPK program, the provider cannot be inactivated until the class ends and all enrollments have been terminated, unless the children were enrolled and days were paid in error.

1. To inactivate a VPK provider, click to select Provider>Prov Demographics from the main EFS screen.
2. Press the **F11** key to generate a search. Enter the provider ID or name and press the **F12** key to initiate the search.
3. **VPK Inactive.** Once the correct provider record has been located, enter the VPK inactive date.
4. **Reason.** Enter code **20** (No Longer a VPK Provider), or press the **F2** key to display a list of options.
5. Click the **OK** button.

The screenshot shows the 'Provider Demographics Maintenance' window in the Enhanced Field System (EFS). The window is titled 'Classroom Window' and contains several sections:

- Provider Demographics Maintenance:**
 - Provider ID: [] Ext: 0
 - CCMS Name: TESTPROVIDER
 - CCRR Name: TESTPROVIDER
 - CCMS Type: S GOLD SEAL CENTER, NON-SUB
 - CCRR Type: []
 - Vendor: []
 - Faith Based Center:
 - Omit from VPK Prepayment:
- Residence:**
 - Addr1: 123 TEST STREET
 - Addr2: []
 - City: TAMPA St: FL Zip: 32388
- Mailing:**
 - Addr1: 123 TEST STREET
 - Addr2: []
 - City: TAMPA St: FL Zip: 32388
- Location/Telephone:**
 - County: 52 PINELLAS COUNTY
 - Main: [] Alternate: [] Fax: []
- Contacts:**

| Title | First Name | Last Name |
|-------|------------|-----------|
| [] | [] | [] |
| [] | [] | [] |
- Activity:**

| | CCMS | CCRR | VPK |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Active: | 06/01/2005 | [] | 07/01/2005 |
| Inactive: | [] | [] | 09/29/2007 |
| Reason: | [] | [] | 20 |
| Accepts Referrals: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Accepts Non-Classroom Enrollments: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | |

Buttons for 'OK' and 'Cancel' are located at the bottom right of the window.

Special note on public schools

Each school district is responsible for reviewing and approving a public school's improvement plan. A coalition or contractor responsible for services delivery should review the VPK Provider Readiness Rate website at <https://www.ImproveVPK.org>. The website provides verification that the school district has approved each low-performing public school's improvement plan.

If a public school fails to submit its improvement plan before the deadline, it may not deliver VPK services.

A public school may not start delivering services until the school district approves the plan.

A public school should not be paid retroactively for services delivered before its plan was approved. If a coalition chooses to pay a public school for services delivered before the plan approval date, these costs may be disallowed.
