

NEWS



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Miami-Dade children show steady improvement year after year in state mandated readiness test

Coral Gables—January 7th—The Florida Department of Education released results of the 2008 screenings of public school kindergarten students who completed the Voluntary Prekindergarten Program (VPK). The students are assessed within 30 days of entering kindergarten, and the results are based on a test that measures a child's performance in the classroom setting and two literacy measures that determine letter naming and initial sound fluencies. The results showed steady improvements in Miami-Dade County, particularly with letter naming and letter sounding. From 2007 to 2008, there was an increase of 7.3% for letter naming and an increase of 5.2% in letter sounding.

With over 22,000 children assessed, Miami-Dade County ranked first among metropolitan counties in the state for percentage change in letter naming and second for letter sounding. "I am very pleased that our efforts and those of our partners have resulted in these improvements and successes," said Octavio Verdeja Jr., President of the Board for the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe. Since 2005, the first year assessments were mandated by the state, the percentage of students who have scored high on these assessments has increase by over 20%.

"We are thrilled to see the consistent improvements made by students throughout Florida, and especially by the children of Miami-Dade," said Evelio Torres, CEO and President of the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe. "The VPK program is needed to insure that all of our community's 4 year-olds are provided with the fundamentals for success in the elementary school setting...these results are proof of the program's effectiveness."

About the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe

The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe is a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring early education for children in Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties. Through a variety of affordable and innovative early education and voluntary pre-kindergarten programs, the Coalition serves more than 50,000 children, ages birth to 12, along with their families. For more information, please visit www.elcmdm.org.