



Frequently Asked Questions

Will schools be paid for days children are absent?

Yes, our current uniform attendance policy OEL-0015-05 explains the state's policy for payment of absences. The provider is paid for each instructional day that a student is absent from the VPK program until the student's cumulative number of absences exceeds 15 percent of the program's total number of instructional days.

The provider or school is also paid, up to an additional five percent of the program's total number of instructional days for each instructional day that the student is absent from the VPK program due to extraordinary circumstances that are documented. After a student's cumulative absences exceed 15 percent (or exceed 20 percent as a result of absences due to extraordinary circumstances) of the program's total number of instructional days the provider or school is not paid for the student's subsequent absences.

Will extended absences cause the child to be dropped from the program by the state?

If a student is absent from the VPK program for five consecutive instructional days, the student is considered withdrawn from the program unless the provider or school submits to the early learning coalition or its designee written documentation provided by the student's parent or guardian which describes the reasons for the absence. The documentation may describe any reasons for the absence, not limited to extraordinary circumstances. If a student is withdrawn from the VPK program but subsequently attends the program, the student's enrollment in the program is resumed, each instructional day that the student did not attend the program is recorded as an absence.

May a provider drop a child for extended absences?

Yes. The state's uniform attendance policy is used for funding purposes only and does not prohibit a private prekindergarten provider or public school from adopting and enforcing the provider's or school district's attendance policy. A provider must inform the parent of their attendance policy in advance of the child's enrollment.

If I elect to have a six-hour day for 90 days, can I enroll another child for the remaining 90 days of the school year?

Under Section 1002.55(2), F.S.), a provider must deliver a 540 hour instructional program or under Section 1002.61(2)(a)(b), F.S.) a 300 hour summer instructional program that must not begin earlier than May 1. The amount of instructional hours per day a provider delivers VPK is up to that individual provider. However, VPK must be delivered according to standards set forth by DOE. Time spent such as naptime will not be considered instructional time.

If the ratio is one to ten, why can't we have 20 children in a room with two teachers? Private providers rely on tuition to survive. 18 children instead of 20 can make a difference to a small center.

The Florida VPK law establishes class size minimum and maximum requirements:

(1) Section 1002.55(3)(e), F.S. sets out the class size requirements for private, school-year prekindergarten providers.

A prekindergarten class must be composed of at least four students, but may not exceed 18 students, whether the class is comprised entirely of VPK students or blended with non-VPK students. If there are more than 11 students in a class, then, in addition to the prekindergarten instructor who meets the requirements of s. 1002.55(3)(c), F.S., there also must be one adult prekindergarten instructor who meets the requirements of 1002.55(3)(d), F.S.

As always, OEL staff and field analysts are always willing to help in any way possible. Please don't hesitate to contact us with questions or concerns you have. The Office of Early Learning main number: (850) 921-3180.