



Draper Notes

EMAIL TO SUSAN HOFFMAN, EDITOR OF THE ARCADIAN. REGARDING CLOSURE OF DESOTO EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER VPK PROGRAM

Date: August 12, 2014

Ms. Hoffman:

The attached information regarding the closure of the VPK Program sponsored by the School District of DeSoto County is forwarded for your review. The following are attached:

- A parent brochure that was approved for distribution to VPK parents on July 29, 2014.
- The results of my July 30, 2014, telephone call to the Florida Office of Early Learning in Tallahassee regarding the closure of the Desoto School District VPK Program.

D. Draper, PhD

Attachment

Date: July 31, 2014

From: Dan Draper

I telephoned and spoke with the Florida Office of Early Learning in Tallahassee this morning. They were very forthcoming with information regarding the closure of the DECC VPK Program. On the heels of a failing elementary program, this is sad news. It appears that the superintendent has not advised the school board and community of these reasons in a public meeting. She has certainly had adequate opportunity to accomplish this.

The reasons for the forced closure of the DECC VPS program are:

- The district VPK program did not meet the 70% readiness rate for kindergarten by VPK students for three consecutive years.

- Even without meeting the 70% readiness rate for three consecutive years, the district was eligible for a good cause exemption. The district request for a good cause exemption was denied based on the lack of adequate data to support the exemption. The superintendent is responsible for requesting and providing the data for this exemption. The request for a good cause exemption is a common practice from VPK programs.

The following points were also added by Tallahassee:

- The Florida Office of Early Learning advised the superintendent on many occasions that it was essential that the good cause exemption be submitted with supporting data.
- The program must close due to lack of compliance with the bullet points.
- It can reopen as a new program at another site.

In addition, I was advised that DECC has been SACS approved and Gold Seal approved for years. The superintendent's brochure erroneously gives the impression that these are new achievements.

D. Draper, PhD



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