

2018

First Class Pre-K Director Survey Report



I. Sample

A. Respondents

The First Class Pre-K Director Survey was distributed to 311 First Class Pre-K directors in spring 2018. Of these, 208 answered the survey for a response rate of 69%.

Distribution List	311
Emails bounced	4
Duplicates	4
Total Distribution	303
Completed Responses	208
Response Rate	69%

Responses were categorized according to Pre-K regions through respondent identification of program location selected from the color-coded map and legend below. The largest number of responses came from Region 8 in the southeast of the state.

Region	Number of Counties in Region	Number of Responses	Percent of Total Responses
1	7	27	14.8
2	4	15	8.2
3	14	19	10.4
4	3	22	12.0
5	11	23	12.6
6	8	25	13.7
7	7	24	13.1
8	13	28	15.3

- Region 1
- Region 2
- Region 3
- Region 4
- Region 5
- Region 6
- Region 7
- Region 8



First Class Pre K Regional Map

Identified role in the First Class Pre-K program (could check all that apply – 177 answered this question)

	Number	Percent
Preschool director	104	58.8
Principal of a public school with First Class Pre-K classroom(s)	57	32.2
District administrator	43	24.3
Other (please specify)*	22	9.7

*Other included principal of a private school, team leader, mentor teacher, owner, university professor, child development and health services manager, education/disabilities manager, liaison, Head Start director, executive director, secretary, retired district administrator

Director is located on-site with the First Class Pre-K program

	Number	Percent
Yes	121	66.1
No	47	25.7
Sometimes	15	8.2

Years working with First Class Pre-K

	Number	Percent
Less than 1	39	21.8
1-5	92	51.4
6-10	31	17.3
More than 10	17	9.5

Highest degree in early childhood education/special education

	Number	Percent
Child Development Associate degree/Associate degree in Early Childhood Education	9	5.1
Bachelor degree in Early Childhood Education and/or Early Childhood Special Education	16	9.0
Graduate degree in Early Childhood Education and/or Early Childhood Special Education	37	20.8
None/degree in another area of education (e.g., elementary education)	48	27.0
None/degree in another area of study (please specify)*	34	19.1
Other (please specify)**	34	19.1

*None/degree in another area of study included various Associate's degrees, various Bachelor's degrees (Business, Arts & Sciences, Nursing), various Master's degrees,

**Other included various Master's degrees. Ed. Specialist degrees, various Doctoral degrees

- **Directors were primarily located on-site with the First Class Pre-K program.**
- **About half of directors had 1-5 years of experience working with First Class Pre-K.**
- **Just over one in five directors had graduate degrees in Early Childhood Education and/or Early Childhood Special Education.**
- **Just over one quarter of directors had degrees in other areas of education.**

B. Classroom Specifics

Respondents were asked the number of First Class Pre-K classrooms they operated.

	Number	Percent
Less than 5	151	83.4
5 – 10	23	12.7
11 – 15	3	1.7
16 – 20	1	0.6
More than 20	3	1.7

Directors were asked to assess various characteristics of the First Class Pre-K classrooms in their facility.

	Strongly Disagree % (n)	Disagree % (n)	Neither Agree or Disagree % (n)	Agree % (n)	Strongly Agree % (n)
My First Class Pre-K classroom(s) is based on Developmentally Appropriate Practice.	2.8 (5)	0.6 (1)	1.7 (3)	27.4 (49)	67.6 (121)
Children in my First Class Pre-K classroom(s) made significant gains in developmental outcomes this year.	2.8 (5)	0.6 (1)	2.2 (4)	31.3 (56)	63.1 (113)
My First Class Pre-K playground is developmentally appropriate for children.	1.7 (3)	1.1 (2)	6.8 (12)	31.1 (55)	59.3 (105)
My First Class Pre-K classroom(s) served as a mentor program to other Pre-K teachers.	2.8 (5)	4.5 (8)	28.1 (50)	32.6 (58)	32.0 (57)

Respondents were asked if their program operated non-OSR Pre-K classrooms (Pre-K classrooms other than First Class Pre-K by the state OSR).

	Number	Percent
Yes	59	33.0
No	120	67.0

If yes,

Number of non-OSR Pre-K classrooms program operates

	Number	Percent
Less than 5	42	71.2
5-10	10	17.0
11-15	1	1.7
16 - 20	2	3.4
More than 20	4	6.8

C. Program Characteristics

i. Does your program have children enrolled who speak a language other than English?

	Number	Percent
Yes	71	37.2
No	120	62.8

Methods for communicating with children/families who speak a language other than English (could check all that apply – 71 answered this question).

	Number	Percent
Use of adult interpreter	37	52.1
Use of physical cues/hand gestures with child	37	52.1
Learn phrases from parents	23	32.4
Other children interpret	18	25.3
Speak to child in English only	18	25.3
Staff speaks children’s languages	16	22.5
Other (please specify)*	17	23.9

*Other included phone/computer apps, bilingual or dual language learners, signage and labeling in Spanish, translation devices, certified EL teachers

ii. Special Education

	Yes % (n)	No % (n)
Did your program have a child with an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) PRIOR to entering Pre-K?	46.6 (88)	53.4 (101)
Did your program have a child with an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) AFTER to entering Pre-K?	57.1 (108)	42.9 (81)
Do you provide support for teachers on how to navigate the referral/IEP (Individual Education Plan) process?	88.8 (166)	11.2 (21)
Did your program maintain full enrollment of 18 students during the year (16 or 17 if approved waivers were granted)?	76.6 (144)	23.4 (44)

iii. Length of time to fill a child's spot when program/classroom experienced a vacancy

	Number	Percent
Waiting list intact; vacancy filled immediately	100	53.2
About a week	30	16.0
Two weeks to one month	27	14.4
More than one month	31	16.5

iv. Did your program struggle with enrollment this year?

	Number	Percent
Yes	38	20.0
No	152	80.0

Respondents were asked to describe their struggles with enrollment

Struggles with enrollment
Transportation issues
At-risk characteristics (stable housing)
Lack of afterschool program for children
Multiple competing options
Population decline
Tuition-based vs. free options

v. Directors were asked to identify the areas in which their classroom(s) had good parental participation

	Yes % (n)	No % (n)
Workshops	70.5 (91)	29.5 (38)
Volunteering	91.8 (167)	8.2 (15)
Special Events	100.0 (186)	0.0 (0)

Respondents were asked to identify factors that contributed to the lack of parental involvement

Contributing factors to lack of parental involvement
Working parents/scheduling Time
Lack of understanding regarding the importance of parental involvement
Transportation

vi. Use of weekly parent newsletter or email highlighting upcoming classroom/program events

	Number	Percent
Yes	167	87.9
No	23	12.1

II. Results

A. First Class Pre-K (OSR) Coaching

i. Coaches in Classrooms

Respondents were asked to identify the number of First Class (Office of School Readiness – OSR) coaches they worked with.

	Number	Percent
1	157	76.6
2-5	47	22.9
6-10	1	0.5
More than 10	0	0.0

Directors were also asked to report if there were other coaches that work with the First Class Pre-K classrooms in addition to the OSR coaches.

	Number	Percent
Yes	34	18.0
No	155	82.0

- **The majority of directors indicated that they worked with only one First Class Pre-K coach and that only OSR coaches worked with First Class Pre-K classrooms in their program.**

ii. *Frequency and Method of Interactions*

Respondents were asked about the frequency and methods of interacting with First Class Pre-K coaches.

Interactions with coaches (on average, by method)

	Frequency					
	Once a week % (n)	Twice a month % (n)	Once a month % (n)	Once every quarter % (n)	1-2 times per year % (n)	Never % (n)
Email or phone contact	21.4 (42)	42.4 (83)	24.0 (47)	5.6 (11)	4.1 (8)	2.6 (5)
Observe coaches working with teachers	2.6 (5)	12.0 (23)	43.8 (84)	16.7 (32)	11.0 (21)	14.1 (27)

Interactions with teachers in First Class Pre-K classrooms (on average, by method)

	Frequency					
	Once a week % (n)	Twice a month % (n)	Once a month % (n)	Once every quarter % (n)	1-2 times per year % (n)	Never % (n)
In-person	62.0 (11)	13.4 (24)	11.7 (21)	9.5 (17)	3.4 (6)	0.0 (0)
Email or phone	81.9 (145)	8.47 (15)	7.3 (13)	0.6 (1)	1.1 (2)	0.6 (1)
Classroom observation	43.5 (77)	18.1 (32)	16.4 (29)	11.9 (21)	8.5 (15)	1.7 (3)

- **Most directors interact with coaches two times per month by email or phone and observe coaches working with teachers on a monthly basis.**
- **Most directors interact with First Class Pre-K teachers weekly, primarily by email or phone.**

Method of OSR coaches sharing reports or data about coaching with directors (Could check all that apply – 199 answered this question).

Response	Number	Percent
Email or written reports	180	90.4
Phone calls or oral discussions	113	56.8
Coaches do not share reports or data with me	12	6.0
Other (Please specify)	12	6.0

*Other included in-person/face-to-face, Baseline/oral and written reports

- **Coaches share reports and data with directors primarily by email.**

iii. *Assessment of First-Class Pre-K Coaching*

	Strongly Disagree % (n)	Disagree % (n)	Neither Agree or Disagree % (n)	Agree % (n)	Strongly Agree % (n)
OSR coaching is effective in supporting First Class teachers' use of evidence-based teaching practices	3.0 (6)	0.5 (1)	5.1 (10)	35.0 (69)	56.4 (111)
First Class Pre-K teachers benefit from First Class (OSR) coaching	3.6 (7)	0.5 (1)	5.1 (10)	33.5 (66)	57.4 (113)

- **Over 91% of directors agreed or strongly agreed that First Class Pre-K coaching is effective in supporting their teachers' use of evidence-based teaching practices.**
- **Over 90% of directors agreed or strongly agreed that their teachers benefit from First Class Pre-K coaching.**

Respondents were given an opportunity to further explain their ratings of the previous two statements regarding coaching.

Use of evidence-based teaching

I have witnessed first hand the benefits First-Class Pre-K coaching has made with our teachers from a beginning Pre-K teacher to a veteran Pre-K teacher that has taught Pre-K for many years.

I feel teachers benefit most from a day of modeling with their own students. It is great when a coach can come and spend the day and demonstrate best practices for a novice teacher.

The First-Class Pre-K coaching is invaluable to our program in Crenshaw County. Our coach ensures our teachers are continuously improving. She ensures appropriate materials and supplies are present and helps to ensure our teachers are providing developmentally appropriate instruction.

The coaches that we work with strive to put the child's interest and the teacher's success first. They have supported staff by modeling and offering strategies.

Pre-K First Class coaches are a great asset to the OSR program. They really do an excellent job with the teachers in providing effective strategies and making sure teachers are implementing appropriate practices.

I think coaching is an integral component of the high quality of First Class Pre-K classrooms. It helps to keep all classrooms at a high quality of early childhood instruction.

Our First-Class Pre-K coach supports our teachers and auxiliary teachers by sharing evidence-based teaching practices. She has developed a trusting relationship with them which makes them more receptive to suggestions for their classrooms. I appreciate her frequent and consistent visits and the reports she shares with me.

Benefits of OSR coach

The teachers love the OSR coaches and state she is a great benefit to the program

The support is outstanding and a key component of what we do.

I love the idea of having a Coach on each OSR First Class Pre-K classroom. I think it is for the benefit of the teacher to have someone guiding them to the right direction in terms of students and in classroom.

The coach assigned to our school is very attentive and supportive of the classroom and teachers.

Pre-K First Class coaches are a great access to the OSR program. They really do an excellent job with the teachers in providing effective strategies and making sure teachers are implementing appropriate practices.

The coaches have helped us so much by making suggestions for everything from curriculum, room arrangement to classroom management. They are so accessible and quick to respond to our calls. They are wonderful and we appreciate their guidance so much!

In our PreK, we contribute much of our success to the coach and her ability to aid teachers in appropriate instructional practices. We could not have been as successful without that guidance.

B. First Class Pre-K (OSR) Monitoring

i. Monitors in the Facility

Respondents were asked to identify the number of First Class (OSR) monitors they worked with.

	Number	Percent
1	182	92.9
2 or more	14	7.1
Total	196	100

ii. Frequency and Method of Interactions

Respondents were asked about the frequency and methods of interacting with First Class Pre-K monitors.

Interactions with monitors (on average, by method)

	Frequency					
	Once a week % (n)	Twice a month % (n)	Once a month % (n)	Once every quarter % (n)	1-2 times per year % (n)	Never % (n)
Email or phone contact	25.1 (49)	42.6 (83)	29.8 (58)	1.5 (3)	1.0 (2)	0.0 (0)
In-person meetings	2.6 (5)	9.3 (18)	76.3 (148)	8.8 (17)	3.0 (6)	0.0 (0)

iii. *Assessment of First-Class Pre-K Monitoring*

	Strongly Disagree % (n)	Disagree % (n)	Neither Agree or Disagree % (n)	Agree % (n)	Strongly Agree % (n)
First Class (OSR) monitoring has been effective in providing my Pre-K program with grant compliance.	1.6 (3)	1.0 (2)	5.7 (11)	28.9 (56)	62.9 (122)
First Class (OSR) monitoring has been effective in supporting First Class directors' use of evidence-based teaching practices.	1.0 (2)	1.0 (2)	12.4 (24)	29.9 (58)	55.7 (108)
As a First Class director, I benefit from First Class Pre-K (OSR) monitoring.	1.0 (2)	2.6 (5)	5.7 (11)	29.7 (57)	60.9 (117)

- **Over 91% of directors agreed or strongly agreed that First Class Pre-K monitoring is effective in providing their Pre-K program with grant compliance.**
- **Over 85% of directors agreed or strongly agreed that First Class Pre-K monitoring is effective in supporting their use of evidence-based teaching practices.**
- **Over 91% of directors agreed or strongly agreed that they benefit from First Class Pre-K coaching.**

Respondents were given an opportunity to further explain their ratings of the previous three statements regarding monitoring.

Effectiveness of monitoring for grant compliance

The OSR monitor is invaluable to our program in Crenshaw County. Much like many other First Class Directors in the public school system, I wear many hats. My OSR monitor recognizes and understands the demands of the job. She works diligently to assist me with ensuring our program is in compliance.

(xxxx) helps me stay on-track and ensure the highest quality in compliance!

We appreciate the support that First-Class Pre-K monitoring offers our program. Miss Pamela has been extremely helpful in many areas of grant compliance. She is very knowledgeable about guidelines, assessments and childhood development. Miss (xxxx) also encourages us to call her anytime with questions or concerns. Her response is always quick and of course with a happy spirit to help. We feel very fortunate to have such grand support from our monitor and all the other Pre-K staff.

It helps to have a First Class monitor to maintain grant compliance. It helps to have someone to ask questions and get answers quickly.

(xxxx) is the monitor for Butler County. She does an awesome job, preparing us for the audit. She is very thorough and explains everything.

Support of evidence-based teaching practices

The Pre-K First Class monitor does an excellent with ensuring the guidelines are implemented. Mrs. (xxxx) works diligently with the director and explains everything explicitly if there are concerns.

Our monitor is very helpful in providing both information and new practices. She goes above and beyond in communication for all aspects of operating our classroom.

Benefits of monitoring

My monitor is (xxxx) and Ms. (xxxx) has been a great asset. As a first year grant recipient her insight and expertise in the program has been very valuable. (xxxx) has gone above and beyond her normal responsibilities to ensure that we had a successful year. I am very pleased with Ms. (xxxx) as our OSR pre-k monitor.

Our monitor (xxxx) has done an outstanding job this year as our monitor. She sends emails about any and everything as soon as she knows it and that helps us stay on top of the requirements. She has offered suggestions which have been very helpful also. We were very pleased with (xxxx).

Mrs. (xxxx) is our monitor. She has been exceptionally patient and helpful. As a first year director, I really must say that I could not have done it without her. She is quick to respond to any question or concern I may have. She is great! (Teacher Name) School Name Elementary Pre-K

Monitor is courteous and organized. She is very helpful in helping us remain focused on deadlines.

Our first class monitor is my go to person. She is a good listener and helps to find solutions to my concerns. It is hard to add all of the responsibilities and demands of Pre-K when you are already overworked with all of your other job duties. The monitor saves my life with the support she provides.

Our monitor focuses on monitoring, and shares her findings with me promptly after each monitoring visit. Her guidance has been very helpful for a first year director, and I use the written reports she shares as a checklist of items I need to address.

C. Professional Development by the Office of School Readiness (OSR)

	Strongly Disagree % (n)	Disagree % (n)	Neither Agree or Disagree % (n)	Agree % (n)	Strongly Agree % (n)
My teachers have received valuable training from First Class Professional Development staff this year.	2.1 (4)	0.5 (1)	3.1 (6)	42.5 (82)	51.8 (100)
The professional development provided to my Pre-K program by OSR is effective in sharing best practices.	1.6 (3)	0.0 (0)	4.7 (9)	42.0 (81)	51.8 (100)

The First Class State Pre-K Conference is beneficial to my teachers as professional development.	1.6 (3)	0.5 (1)	7.8 (15)	35.9 (69)	54.2 (104)
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- **Directors had overwhelmingly positive feedback about professional development opportunities provided by the Office of School Readiness.**

Respondents were given an opportunity to share more information about professional development
Professional Development

The professional development opportunities have been great! I feel it has greatly benefited our program.

My teachers always benefit greatly from professional development provide through OSR. It is always beneficial and real-world and my teachers come back excited to implement what they've learned.

First Class Pre-K is doing an outstanding job of providing age/developmentally appropriate PD for our Pre- K staff. We have recently participated in the Conscious Discipline training. It is one of the most powerful trainings I've ever attended. Our Pre-K staff is currently implementing many of the strategies presented. We anxiously await the next training.

The trainings are great. I enjoy the diversity of topics that are offered. My teachers and I are able to continue to learn new ideas and grow in our professional development and effective teaching practices.

The professional development sessions on Conscious Discipline have been very helpful for our teachers.

D. Regional Directors

Directors were asked if they contacted their Regional Director for any reason this year?

Response	Number	Percent
Yes	172	89.6
No	20	10.4

Of those who responded yes, the following questions were presented:

	Yes % (n)	No % (n)
Did the Regional Director respond in a timely manner?	99.4 (171)	0.6 (1)
Did the Regional Director provide you the guidance and/or support you needed?	99.4 (171)	0.6 (1)

Directors were asked if they received a face-to-face visit with their First Class Regional Director this year.

	Number	Percent
Yes	149	78.0
No	42	22.0

Respondents were given an opportunity to identify the reason for the face-to-face visit with their First Class Regional Director

Reasons for visit
Beginning of the year introductory meeting
Budget
Clarify requirements and/or documentation
General guidance
Checking in
Performance observation
Provide program updates

E. Overall First Class Pre-K Program Assessment

OSR Supports

Assessment of the Office of School Readiness (OSR) Supports

	Very Dissatisfied % (n)	Dissatisfied % (n)	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied % (n)	Satisfied % (n)	Very Satisfied % (n)
First Class Coaching	1.6 (3)	1.1 (2)	5.3 (10)	30.3 (57)	61.7 (116)
First Class Monitoring	0.5 (1)	1.1 (2)	6.4 (12)	25.0 (47)	67 (126)
Administrative Assistance	1.1 (2)	0.5 (1)	9.1 (17)	26.2 (49)	63.1 (118)

- **Directors were overwhelmingly satisfied or very satisfied with the supports they receive through the Office of School Readiness.**

Suggested Changes

Respondents were asked to provide feedback regarding changes they would like to see related to services provided by OSR

Changes
Communication
More coaches and monitors
Special education referrals
Improvements in budgets/tracking
Greater levels of funding

Suggestions for Continuous Quality Improvement

Respondents were asked to provide suggestions for continuous quality improvement of the OSR First Class Pre-K program.

Suggestions for Continuous Improvement
Forms available in English and Spanish
Strategies to assist families with transportation
Greater levels of funding
Additional training for new First Class Pre-K directors, coaches, and monitors
Improvements in registration process
Sliding scale of funds
Additional support for IEPs
More professional development

Impact of First Class Pre-K

Assessment of First Class Pre-K

	Strongly Disagree % (n)	Disagree % (n)	Neither Agree or Disagree % (n)	Agree % (n)	Strongly Agree % (n)
The Pre-K services we provide with the support of OSR impact the quality of other Pre-K classrooms in our facility.	0.5 (1)	0.5 (1)	25.1 (47)	28.3 (53)	45.5 (85)
The instruction of other teachers in our facility has changed as a result of watching and/or working with teachers in the state-funded classroom.	1.1 (2)	4.8 (9)	33.0 (62)	33.5 (63)	27.7 (52)
The Pre-K classroom in our community is in high demand as indicated by waiting lists and/or parent attendance on enrollment day.	1.1 (2)	3.2 (6)	8.5 (16)	35.1 (66)	52.1 (98)

Respondents were given an opportunity to further explain their ratings of the previous statements regarding the First Class Pre-K

Pre-K services impact Pre-K classes

I truly feel that Pre-K has a great impact on student learning, especially in our community. We are very rural and our students come to us with limited parental involvement, experiences and social skills. Pre-K addresses so many age appropriate skills. It provides a remarkable "jump start" to kindergarten and early learning.

Very grateful for the grant funded OSR Pre-K. Without this opportunity, we would not have a Pre-K classroom in our district.

This program has allowed us to serve twice as many students in poverty. Our parents have been so pleased!

The PreK students are learning by leaps and bounds through free learning and the classroom instruction centers. It is fantastic.

Pre-K services impact non-Pre-K classes

We hold our pre school teachers and classrooms to an equally high standard of quality. This has evolved over the years from combining OSR/Head Start and Licensing standards. We have embraced the Conscious Discipline philosophy and will be providing training to all our staff this Fall. This is a result of seeing how effective CD is in the Pre K classrooms. We also appreciate and benefitted from our coaches attending the 2 day CD training that OSR offered. Thank you so much for that opportunity.

Because of our involvement with First Class Pre-K, we have begun training the other teachers in our program to use Teaching Strategies Gold along with the Creative Curriculum. It is our goal to use this program with not only our pre-k children but with our infants, toddlers and twos.

Being a part of First Class Pre-K has a positive impact on our overall program!

Because of the interest and participation in the pre-K program in our school, I believe our school has benefited in overall enrollment numbers over the years. Our elementary population has steadily grown and is the largest its ever been. Our students who attend pre-K are better prepared to begin classwork and school activities.

Pre-K classroom is in high demand

Obviously, the interest/demand is high. For the 2018-19 school year, we had 104 who applied for our 54 total spaces.

The prek waiting list at our school is high due to the high quality of the teachers.

Our community and school system is eager to add another classroom at (School Name)

Elementary. Our waiting list is always long and certainly supports another classroom!

First class Pre-K is in high demand in our area which proves the positive effects it is having (and has had) on children and families. The good word about the program has spread.

Most Beneficial

Respondents were asked to respond to the following question:

What is most beneficial about having an OSR Pre-K classroom? In other words, what do appreciate MOST about having First Class Pre-K classroom(s) in your facility?

What do appreciate MOST about having First Class Pre-K classroom(s) in your facility?

Ability to serve additional students

Guidance and support by experts

High quality programs and services

Professional development

Eases transition to Kindergarten

Support for low income families

Funding for programs that would not otherwise be available

Diverse student population

Early identification of needs

Biggest Successes

Respondents were asked to describe their biggest success stories from their First Class Pre-K classrooms this past year

Biggest success stories

Students' cognitive, social, and emotional growth

Language acquisition for non-English speaking student

Significant growth and maturity for students with behavioral/discipline issues

Pre-K teachers selected to present at state conference

Ability to address concerns of students with special needs

Increased parental support

Professional development of teachers

Biggest Challenges

Respondents were asked to describe the biggest obstacles/challenges in providing high quality Pre-K in their program.

Greatest obstacles/challenges

Enrollment numbers

Student behavior

Communication with parents/families

Budgets/Funding

Compliance

Finding qualified teachers/aides

Parental involvement

Consistent attendance

Adequate/appropriate space and equipment

Time

Addressing diversity of special needs

Need for additional classrooms/Wait list
