



# Primrose Schools

The Leader in Educational Child Care®

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## **Franchise Systems Look to Take Page Out of Primrose Schools' Lesson Plan**

*20 Years of Consecutive Growth & Providing Peace of Mind for Families Across America*

**ATLANTA** (May 14, 2009) – Consistently known as a leader in the child care industry and early childhood education, Primrose Schools ([www.primroseschools.com](http://www.primroseschools.com)) is also gaining acclaim for high grades in business practices, including its lesson plan for positive franchise and revenue growth in a down economy.

After opening 40 new schools in the past two years alone and opening its 200<sup>th</sup> milestone school earlier this year, Primrose Schools recently announced plans to continue building growth momentum by planning to open another 200 private preschools over the next five years in 15 key markets around the country. Even more, the company finished 2008 with total system revenue growth for the 20<sup>th</sup> year in a row.

Primrose Schools' CEO Jo Kirchner attributes the franchise company's resilience to a variety of factors, including a proven, standardized and consistently delivered educational model, the quality of its people and a stringent franchise owner selection process that results in high-performing schools. Kirchner noted that the brand is still performing well, despite a down economy. There are more two-parent working households that are now spending more time at their offices creating a continuous demand for high-quality educational child care. In addition, concerned grandparents are stepping-in and are paying tuition in order to ensure that their grandchildren are receiving the best early education foundation for future success in learning and life.

Primrose Schools has a long history of strong loan performance and even while credit markets were, and many still are struggling, the brand has continued to secure financing for its franchise owners. Primrose has also taken proactive steps to streamline financing options for current owners looking to secure an additional school as well as new franchise owners, including a real estate leasing program that significantly reduces up-front cash investments. Also in 2008, Primrose Schools entered into a strategic equity partnership with Roark Capital Group, an Atlanta-based private equity firm. Roark has invested capital in resources to support the brand's plans for continued quality growth for the system.

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“When market conditions change for the worse, great companies take a leadership role and refine their strategy to take advantage of opportunities that may come as a result of a downturn,” Kirchner said. “We have been very proactive at Primrose. We took several measures to help ensure continued success of our existing schools, as well as help new franchise owners join our system. As a result, the brand isn’t just surviving; we’re continuing to thrive in this marketplace.”

Primrose Schools COO Darin Harris said the company has targeted new schools to open in the next five years in Chicago, New Jersey, Philadelphia, Nashville, Kansas City, Baltimore, Atlanta, Omaha/Lincoln, Washington, D.C./Northern Virginia, Lexington, Louisville, St. Louis, Raleigh-Durham, Columbus and Phoenix. In several markets, Primrose Schools has already invested money in land to hold ideal sites for existing franchise owners wanting to grow by adding another school as well as new owners looking to open their first school in a shorter than normal timeframe.

The company chose those markets after conducting extensive research, including area demographics and other factors. Research found that while the demand for high-quality preschools continues to grow throughout the country, providers are limited. Meanwhile, many existing Primrose Schools nationwide are seeing solid enrollment numbers, and some schools even have wait-lists.

“While there’s a definite need for Primrose Schools in each of our targeted markets, we’re taking a careful approach to finding the *right* franchise owners who share our same values,” Harris said. “We look for motive, character and business savvy, but even more importantly, we must be absolutely certain that every one of our franchise owners shares the Primrose passion for educating and nurturing children, and for making a difference in the community and in the lives of the families they serve in their schools.”

Primrose Schools nationwide serve families with children ages six weeks to five years old, and its afterschool program provides engaging activities for children up to age 12. Primrose was the first educational preschool organization in the country to achieve the gold standard in educational accreditation (CITA, SACS CASI/NCA CASI), the same body that assesses 13,000 schools across the country.

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Well-trained teachers bring to life the brand's proven, accredited and consistently delivered nationwide Balanced Learning® programming. Balanced Learning considers multiple aspects of growth and learning – social, emotional, physical and cognitive. Primrose uses national standards and research based knowledge to determine learning outcomes for children at different stages of their development. Primrose provides teachers comprehensive teaching objectives and curriculum activities that act as a blue print. This enables the teachers to focus on guiding and supporting each child's learning experience rather than having to make up daily activities. The curriculum blends together teacher-directed and child-initiated activities with a special emphasis on character development.

To this point, Primrose Schools has enjoyed significant organic growth to fuel the franchise system's development. The majority of Primrose Schools franchise owners have had their children or grandchildren enrolled in Primrose Schools and personally experienced the Primrose difference before joining the organization.

### **About Primrose Schools**

Founded in 1982, Primrose Schools is the country's leader in early childhood education. Primrose Schools' foundation is based on providing quality, early education and child care services with a balance of learning, character development and play. Developed by and taught exclusively at Primrose Schools, the school's Balanced Learning® curriculum dynamically blends child-initiated play and teacher-guided instruction. The company's success, fueled by parents' demand for quality child care, is sustained by individual school owners and teachers. It is the first educational preschool to achieve accreditation by CITA/SACS CASI and CITA/NCA CASI, the prestigious associations recognized as the gold standard in evaluating local public and private schools and universities. Primrose Schools currently operates more than 200 schools in 16 states. The excellent reputation that Primrose Schools has enjoyed for over 25 years has allowed its growth as a franchising company to continue and flourish. For more information: [www.primroseschools.com](http://www.primroseschools.com) For franchise opportunities, please contact Kim Musso at [kmusso@primroseschools.com](mailto:kmusso@primroseschools.com) or 1-800-PRIMROSE.

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