

2024-2025 Florida Division of Early Learning

Customer Service Surveys Executive Final Program Report

**for Florida Early Learning Coalitions (ELCs)
and Redlands Christian Migrant Association (RCMA)**

August 2025

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The UF team involved in this project included:

- Scott Richards, Project Director
 - Elizabeth Lynch
 - Oriana Diaz
 - Mark Girson
 - Matthew Albrecht
 - Louise Pronstroller

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Preface

During the 2021 Legislative Session, the passage of House Bill 419 required a series of statewide customer service surveys across Florida's 30 Early Learning Coalitions (ELCs) and Redlands Christian Migrant Association (RCMA). This report covers the third year of these statutorily required surveys.

The Florida Department of Education's Division of Early Learning (DEL) oversees the Florida School Readiness (SR) Program, which offers financial assistance to low-income families for early education and care; DEL also oversees the Voluntary Prekindergarten Program (VPK) for 4- and 5-year-olds, which began in 2005-2006.

DEL has administrative oversight of Florida's 30 ELCs and RCMA across the state. Coalitions and RCMA administer these programs at the local level and provide educational services to families and providers. Coalitions also provide Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) services to help families choose the best provider for their child. The CCR&R service is available in all 67 Florida counties, with some Coalitions covering multiple counties.

Each Coalition has a board that is responsible for policymaking to safeguard the success of the SR, VPK, and CCR&R programs; board composition is outlined in §1002.83, F.S.

House Bill 419 requires that four groups of customer service surveys be conducted:

- Group 1: Families seeking CCR&R services, upon completion of a referral inquiry,
- Group 2: Families with a child recently determined eligible for SR or VPK (including re-eligible),
- Group 3: Child care providers contracted for SR or VPK programs, and
- Group 4: Coalition and RCMA board members.

The primary goals of these surveys are to:

- Enhance the customer experience for families and child care providers who participate in early learning programs administered by Florida's 30 ELCs and RCMA.
- Provide aggregate survey results to Coalitions and RCMA to increase the quality of its customer service and enhance participant engagement of early learning programs.

In order to implement the surveys, DEL sent out a solicitation letter to universities on November 16, 2021, seeking an academic research center qualified to carry out this task. The UF Survey Research Center (UFSRC) sent a letter of interest in response and was selected by DEL to administer these statutorily required surveys.

Executive Summary

The initial pilot year of this project, 2022-2023, laid the groundwork for these four annual satisfaction surveys, but due to significant contracting/time constraints, data collection only ran for a few months. Although there were many useful findings from the limited data from the initial year, it was clear that the 2023-2024 year would best serve as a true baseline year.

A Kick-Off Meeting was held on Tuesday, September 11th, 2024, to discuss plans for the third year of this survey. A systematic review of the previous year's data sets has led to some minor revisions to the survey being recommended; unless otherwise requested by DEL, changes will not be made until the 2025-2026 data collection period has ended.

The goal of this project is to enhance the customer experience for individuals who work with the ELCs/RCMA, and to provide feedback to the ELCs and RCMA to facilitate improved engagement in their early learning programs.

This project was based on surveying four groups:

- Group 1: Families seeking CCR&R services, upon completion of a referral inquiry
- Group 2: Families with a child recently determined eligible (including re-eligible)
- Group 3: Child care providers contracted for SR or VPK programs
- Group 4: Coalition and RCMA board members.

An algorithm agreed upon by the DEL and the UFSRC was used on survey responses to calculate a summary score for each ELC and RCMA. In the 2024-2025 cycle, the UFSRC and DEL agreed to reduce the minimum required responses for Groups 1, 3 and 4 for score calculations. For Groups 1 and 3, the minimum responses required for inclusion in the composite calculations is now five, and for Group 4, the minimum number is four. The minimum required response for Group 2 remained ten.

Prior to the 2024-2025 cycle of this project, the minimum number of required responses for scoring were 10 for Groups 1, 2, and 3, and 5 for Group 4. The numbers were lowered for Groups 1, 3, and 4 because several coalitions/RCMA had an insufficient number of completed surveys and were unable to be scored for the relevant group as a result. Group 2 was not changed because all coalitions and the RCMA had well over 10 responses; a reduction was unnecessary.

Almost all ELCs had a sufficient number of responses in each group to calculate scores using all groups. The exceptions include Florida's Heartland Group 1 (four responses), Manatee Group 3 (three responses), and RCMA Group 3 (no responses). Limited sample records were available for these; for the entire 2024-2025 cycle, Florida's Heartland Group 1 had 28 sample records, Manatee Group 3 had 15, and RCMA Group 3 had three.

Overall observations:

Group 1 statewide observations:

- Throughout the year, 44,694 respondents were contacted to do the survey, and a total of 3,622 surveys were completed. Overall, there were fewer Group 1 responses this year than last year, and the statewide score decreased from 85.3% to 80.5%.

- The composite scores for all ELCs exceeded the 60% threshold.
- This year, 3.8% of respondents (137) took the survey in Haitian Creole, up from 0.5% last year. We attribute this increase to the addition of a sentence stating that the survey is available in Haitian Creole in the invitation and reminder emails sent beginning in the 2024-2025 cycle.
- The highest proportion of respondents (42.5%) heard about their Coalition through a friend or family member, with "online" (29.5%) and "child care provider" (26.8%) as the second and third most common.
- The vast majority of respondents (81.1%) were seeking School Readiness / child care financial assistance from their coalition; the second most common service sought was a child care provider listing (36.3%).
- The highest share of respondents (45.1%) initially contacted the coalition via phone, with the second-highest share contacting via Coalition website/chat at 30.4% - these are very similar to last year's results.
- The lowest level of satisfaction was found in the length of time it took for those who left a message to receive a callback; 26.7% of respondents responded with "Not at all satisfied" or "Not too satisfied." Although this question also represented the lowest level of satisfaction last year, the proportion of dissatisfied respondents was slightly lower last year at 22.7%.
- When asked how likely they were to recommend the coalition to someone else, 83.1% of respondents gave a high ranking (very likely or extremely likely).

Group 2 statewide observations:

- Throughout the year, a total of 330,903 respondents were contacted to take the survey, and a total of 35,163 surveys were completed, which is significantly more Group 2 responses than last year (25,600). The statewide score decreased somewhat this year from 91.7% to 87.9%.
- Group 2 scored most highly overall at 87.9%; the composite scores for all ELCs exceeded the 60% threshold.
- Nearly two-thirds of respondents (66.2%) already knew which provider they wanted to use and did not need assistance in finding one.
- Dissatisfaction was very low on all scored questions in Group 2; the percentage of respondents who gave a 1 or 2 on a 5-point scale ranged from 1.3% (helpfulness of the support received for types of child care available) to 4.3% (helpfulness of the coalition staff member who assisted the respondent in finding child care).
- UFSRC efforts to increase the number of RCMA completes for Group 2 to a minimum of 100 were successful; RCMA Group 2 ended with 159 responses, 61 of which were gathered on the phone. Group 2 RCMA remains challenging due to both a low number of sample records and difficulty reaching respondents.

- This year, 1.4% of respondents (503) took the survey in Haitian Creole, up from 0.2% last year. We attribute this increase to the same addition of a sentence in Haitian Creole in the invitations and reminders referenced in Group 1.
- Most respondents (93.2%) have three or fewer children in their family; only 6.8% have four or more children.

Group 3 statewide observations:

- Throughout the year, 2,441 providers were contacted to do the survey, and a total of 1,081 surveys were completed, 555 online and 526 over the phone with UFSRC interviewers. This is a decrease from last year, but the statewide score changed very little – 86.6% this year versus 86.8% last year.
- The composite scores for all ELCs but one (ELC of the Big Bend) exceeded the 60% threshold; ELC of the Big Bend was very close at 74.6%.
- The vast majority (93.8%) of providers indicated they felt all available support services provided by the ELC were useful.
- The most commonly used support service was training at 65.4% with technical assistance as the second most common at 61.2%.
- 87.4% of providers are very likely or extremely likely to recommend their Coalition to a colleague; this is the highest percentage of all the scored questions.
- Of the scored questions, 13.1% of providers responded that they strongly disagreed or somewhat disagreed with the statement: “The ELC/RCMA maintains communication with SR providers about new enrollments and redeterminations in a timely manner.”
- RCMA Group 3 ended the year with zero completed surveys; this is because there were only three RCMA providers for the entire 2024-2025 cycle.

Group 4 statewide observations:

- During spring 2025, unduplicated contact emails were sent to 617 board members to do the survey, and a total of 285 surveys were completed. Although a Spanish version of the survey is available, all board members took the survey in English. (This language preference is unchanged from the 2023-2024 cycle.)
- The composite scores for all ELCs exceeded the 60% minimum threshold. The score for RCMA was significantly lower than any others at 58.9% .
- Over half (55.6%) of board members have served on the board for three years or less; only 11.9% have served on the board for more than ten years.
- All new board members who received an orientation rated their orientation as “Somewhat helpful,” “Very helpful,” or “Extremely helpful.”

- No board members rated their coalition “Not at all likely” to meet organizational goals, and only 2.6% rated their coalition “Not too likely” to meet goals.
- For the first time, one board member survey was clearly completed by AI; this response was from the ELC of the Emerald Coast and was removed from all reporting.

Survey Methods

Developing a customer service survey for each of the four groups of customers

The 2024-2025 survey instruments had slight changes from the 2023-2024 survey instruments, which were principally based on the 2022-2023 survey. The original 2022-2023 instruments were the culmination of efforts from DEL, UFSRC, area experts, and Coalitions and RCMA staff. In review, survey questions were designed and tested for language simplicity to ensure readability (short sentences, words with few syllables). The project, including draft questionnaires, was submitted to UF's IRB-02, the IRB that typically evaluates social science research, as Division of Early Learning (DEL) Survey Project 2024, IRB protocol #ET00044189. The project was approved as exempt on November 13, 2024, and the IRB approval letter was sent to DEL.

As these surveys are administered annually, all questionnaires specifically ask the respondents to answer regarding their experience "in the last year" or during their "most recent eligibility determination" to focus on activities in most recent year. The questionnaires were timed for length to ensure that the respondent burden was reasonable, with an average administration time well under the goal of 10 minutes. All questionnaires for all groups, both online and phone, were thoroughly tested and debugged to ensure that skip patterns correctly moved respondents to the appropriate next item.

The approved questionnaires for groups 1 and 2 were previously translated from English to Spanish and Creole by professional translators using a team review approach to promote agreement on the specific translation used. Professional translators also translated the small changes made to the questionnaires this year. The invitation emails and the initial screens of the questionnaires included a Spanish and a Creole passage explaining how to change languages, if that was desired by the respondent. Groups 3 and 4 questionnaires were only translated to Spanish since there have been no Creole translation requests documented to date. In fact, Group 4 surveys have all been taken in English for two years running, so the available Spanish version of the survey has not been needed.

One change was made to the Group 1 and Group 2 survey invitations towards the end of the 2024-2025 data collection cycle. This change was made due to a high volume of email replies to UFSRC staff regarding portal login issues, provider changes, application status and documents, etc. The following red text was added to these invitations and reminder emails:

IMPORTANT: If you have any concerns or questions about your child's early learning services, contact your local ELC directly for assistance. Any messages sent to this email address about your child's early learning services will not be responded to. To contact your local ELC, follow this link: <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/early-learning/directory/>.

The primary mode of data collection for each survey used Qualtrics web survey software. Qualtrics is considered one of the most sophisticated online survey platforms available, with data security approved by Institutional Review Boards (IRB) across the country, and includes useful metadata such as when invitations are opened, at what point incomplete surveys are abandoned, etc. The Qualtrics platform used responses from one question to show only the appropriate subsequent questions for that individual participant, cutting down on the time burden of each person's survey and eliminating the confusion that comes with a complex paper questionnaire. Programming was optimized for implementation on smart phones or mobile devices. Question presentation was designed so most questions would appear on-screen without the need for additional scrolling. This effort was facilitated in the 2024-2025 cycle via a change to

the survey response options from a numeric scale with ten options to a lexical Likert scale with five options.

Although they were not budgeted, limited phone follow-up interviews were implemented to enhance data collection for select low-response coalitions in Group 1, specifically ELC of Florida's Gateway, ELC of Florida's Heartland, ELC of Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee, ELC of Manatee, and ELC of Nature Coast, as well as for RCMA Group 2. Trained UFSRC telephone interviewers made up to 2 attempts to reach participants who did not respond to the online survey in Group 1 and up to 3 in RCMA Group 2. Phone interviews were also performed for Group 3 providers who did not complete the survey online; up to 15 attempts were made for participants in Group 3. This substantial effort highlights how challenging it can be to reach these populations of respondents.

The standard sample preparation process each month involves a de-duplication process and removal of unusable sample records. When the sample files are received from DEL, the listed respondents for each group (1-4) are first internally de-duplicated (duplicates found within that month's sample file), and G1-3 are then de-duplicated based on the prior two months.

Internal de-duplication is done for Groups 1-4, but most of the internal duplicates we find are in Group 3, where (for example) we may receive 5 contacts for a single provider – we only send an invitation to one of the contacts in that instance. Prior two month de-duplication is necessary in Groups 1, 2, and 3, but most of the prior month duplicate records are found in Groups 1 and 2. For example, if we invited a new respondent to take the survey from the sample file DEL provided in February, and the same respondent appeared in the sample file provided in April, we would remove that respondent as a duplicate and would not send an additional invitation to that respondent in April.

Some sample records received do not have usable information, i.e., the email field may say "noemail@noemail.com," or the telephone number may be listed as 9999999999. If the email address provided is unusable, we remove those records prior to sending email invitations. If the phone number is unusable, the record is omitted from our dialing sample.

Survey Implementation

Prior to survey distribution, plans were made for the best sample approach. The Qualtrics survey software allows us to track responses by customer's email and add data such as the month they enter sample, date the questionnaire is completed, and information in the administrative file.

Survey Distribution, Group 1: DEL provided sample on a monthly basis, including an email address, telephone number, and Coalition/RCMA indicator. Data collection officially started 7/25/24, when the project contract was finalized. Respondents received an invitation email with a link to complete the survey, and two reminder emails sent to non-completers. Each reminder was issued approximately one week after the previous email. Telephone follow-ups were attempted with five ELCs non-completer participants whose record included a phone number. Up to 2 contact attempts were made with non-completers by phone. These five ELCs were selected because they had very few completed online surveys. Additionally, due to a high volume of non-survey-related email replies to the survey invitations and reminders received by the UFSRC, the DEL and UFSRC jointly agreed to add text to the invitations and reminders to instruct respondents to contact their ELC directly for questions about their child's early learning services.

Survey Distribution, Group 2: DEL provided monthly lists of sample records containing information for each newly eligible SR or VPK parent in the month that followed their enrollment determination, including

an email address, telephone number, Coalition/RCMA indicator, date of most recent eligibility, re-enrollee status, and a VPK or SR flag. The official start of data collection was on 7/25/24, when the project contract was finalized. Respondents received an invitation email with a link to complete the survey, and two reminder emails to non-completers. Each reminder was issued approximately a week after the previous email. Telephone follow-ups were attempted with RCMA non-completers whose record included a phone number. Up to 3 contact attempts were made with these non-completers by phone. Due to a high volume of non-survey-related email replies to the survey invitations and reminders received by the UFSRC, the DEL and UFSRC jointly agreed to add text to the invitations and reminders to instruct respondents to contact their ELC directly for questions about their child's early learning services.

Survey Distribution, Group 3: Sample was received from DEL for each newly contracted and renewed provider in the month following the provider's contract signing. The sample included an email address, telephone number, name of director, flag indicating VPK or SR provider, a physical address if available, and specific Coalition or RCMA. The official start of data collection was on 7/25/24, when the project contract was finalized. Providers received an invitation email with a link to complete the survey. Up to two reminder emails were sent to providers that did not complete the survey. Each reminder was issued a week after the previous email. Telephone follow-ups were attempted with all non-completers whose record included a phone number. Up to 15 contact attempts were made with non-completers by phone.

Survey Distribution, Group 4: Data collection started on 4/1/2025, after current lists of board members were provided to the UFSRC with their name, email address, and associated coalition. All listed Board members received email invitations with a link to complete the survey. These invitations were sent between Monday and Thursday, during the work week. A minimum of two reminder emails were sent to Board members who did not complete the survey, with invitations re-sent if requested. Reminders were issued a week after the previous email.

Analytic methods employed to evaluate customer satisfaction

During the 2022-2023 survey period a scoring algorithm was designed using input from the UFSRC, DEL staff, and a workgroup of volunteers from the coalitions. To better balance group weighting, the DEL and UFSRC agreed in the 2024-2025 cycle to decrease Group 2 scoring from 35% to 30% and to increase Group 4 scoring from 15% to 20%.

The agreed-upon formula for the compilation of scores for each Coalition and the RCMA (which does not offer CCR&R services) is as follows:

Survey Weighting	Customer	ELC	RCMA
Group 1	CCR&R	30%	N/A
Group 2	SR_VPK Eligibility	30%	55%
Group 3	Service Providers	20%	20%
Group 4	Board Members	20%	25%
TOTAL		100%	100%

Weighted scores have had the survey weights for each customer group (for ELCs 30%, 30%, 20%, and 20% respectively) applied to the raw scores. The composite score is the average of the weighted raw scores.

A full description of the scored items is included in Appendix B, and scored items are denoted in red text in the data tables for each Coalition and RCMA.

Survey Results

Within a coalition's survey's responses, there were varying numbers of responses to different items on the questionnaire. This is by design; the survey software only gave each respondent the questions that were appropriate for their situation, which reduced the amount of time required to take the survey.

Some items with varying response numbers are follow-up questions only asked of people who had responses to a previous item; for example, only respondents who said they emailed the coalition are asked how long it took to receive an email response. In other questions, a reduced response number is due to a question either refused, or which the respondent indicated they didn't know. For example, if a coalition had 35 responses, and a question that is asked of everyone says there were only 34 respondents, one respondent refused to answer that question or didn't know how to answer it.

In other questions, the respondent can choose all the options that apply to them, and the percentage reported for each option is the percentage who chose that item out of all who selected any answer for that item. On these questions, the percentages are unlikely to add up to 100%; this is notated with the question text for clarity.

Only completed questionnaires were included in the data. A completed questionnaire is one where the respondent viewed or was asked every substantive question on the instrument, even if they chose not to answer some items.

A challenge with any customer service survey is that many factors may influence satisfaction. While the overall goal was to evaluate satisfaction with the Coalitions and RCMA, some families were unhappy and blamed the Coalition if they were not approved for a program or could not find an available provider, even if the reason for rejection was due to factors outside of the coalition's control and not to a failure in performance by the Coalition.

Open-ended responses were submitted in Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, French, and Haitian Creole. Each translated comment is preceded by a language-specific identifier: "s:" for Spanish, "p:" for Portuguese, "m:" for Chinese (Mandarin), "f:" for French, and "c:" for Haitian Creole. As Portuguese translators were not available, AI tools were used to translate comments in that language. To maintain transparency, these AI-translated responses are followed by the note "(AI translated)."

Some open-ended responses contained personally identifiable information, such as dates of birth, which were removed to protect respondent confidentiality. These were replaced with placeholders such as "[Date]". Additionally, in instances where negative comments referenced an individual by name, the name was replaced with "[Name]" to ensure anonymity.

Questions included in the calculation of a coalition's composite scores are in red text for ease of reference.

For Group 1, families who completed a referral, we provide frequencies and percentages only for Coalitions who had at least 5 survey participants. Only one ELC (Florida's Heartland) had fewer than 5, thus their results are suppressed.

For Group 2, families who completed an eligibility or re-eligibility process, we provide numbers and frequencies for those Coalitions who had at least 10 survey participants; no coalitions had fewer than 10 respondents.

For Group 3, SR or VPK providers, we provide numbers and frequencies for those Coalitions that had at least 5 survey participants. Two coalitions had fewer than 5 responses: Manatee had three and RCMA had zero responses, thus there are no results to report.

Group 4, board members, has frequencies and percentages reported for Coalitions that had at least 4 survey participants; no coalitions had fewer than 4 responses. If the minimum required number of completed surveys had not been reduced to 4 this year, responses would have been suppressed for both the ELC of the Nature Coast and the ELC of Santa Rosa.

Composite Scores, Early Learning Coalitions, 2024-2025 cycle

Coalition ID	Coalition Name	Group 1: CCR&R		Group 2: SR/VPK Enrollments		Group 3: Providers		Group 4: Board Members		Composite Score (weighted)
		Score	N	Score	N	Score	N	Score	N	
1	Alachua	70.1%	37	84.3%	474	84.1%	10	80.3%	12	79.2%
2	Brevard	80.3%	49	88.5%	886	87.8%	55	97.6%	5	87.7%
3	Broward	78.0%	549	88.3%	3382	87.7%	36	90.7%	9	85.6%
4	Duval	81.9%	220	88.4%	1773	86.6%	36	84.0%	9	85.2%
5	Escambia	82.4%	46	88.2%	419	91.9%	25	85.5%	8	86.7%
6	Flagler & Volusia	81.0%	119	88.7%	978	84.6%	16	88.5%	15	85.5%
7	Florida's Gateway	85.3%	11	91.0%	253	87.3%	8	81.0%	8	86.6%
8	Florida's Heartland	n/a	n/a	89.2%	413	86.3%	31	91.6%	10	89.1%
9	Hillsborough	82.9%	136	88.9%	3116	84.2%	140	83.1%	9	85.0%
10	IRMO	81.0%	17	86.5%	537	89.4%	32	89.3%	6	86.0%
11	Lake	81.3%	19	89.4%	576	90.5%	35	96.8%	5	88.7%
12	Manatee	77.3%	20	87.3%	684	n/a	n/a	96.0%	15	85.7%
13	Marion	81.9%	33	87.8%	523	81.9%	28	85.3%	15	84.4%
14	Miami-Dade & Monroe	80.6%	565	89.2%	4238	84.6%	49	95.8%	16	87.0%
16	North Florida/Episcopal Children's Services	83.6%	45	87.6%	1054	86.7%	75	92.9%	14	87.3%

Coalition ID	Coalition Name	Score (G1)	N (G1)	Score (G2)	N (G2)	Score (G3)	N (G3)	Score (G4)	N (G4)	Composite Score (weighted)
19	Northwest Florida	79.2%	22	87.8%	476	86.5%	16	90.9%	11	85.6%
20	Emerald Coast	80.5%	32	87.3%	484	84.4%	34	81.5%	8	83.5%
21	Orange	78.4%	243	87.6%	2599	84.1%	58	84.8%	10	83.6%
22	Osceola	82.1%	99	87.2%	848	87.4%	18	91.6%	10	86.6%
23	Palm Beach	81.5%	723	88.4%	2841	88.4%	20	90.2%	9	86.7%
24	Pasco & Hernando	85.6%	74	87.5%	1170	88.1%	54	91.3%	12	87.8%
26	Pinellas	82.1%	93	88.8%	1235	82.0%	55	85.2%	10	84.7%
27	Polk	79.7%	165	87.8%	1152	87.4%	12	90.4%	5	85.8%
28	Santa Rosa	77.7%	24	86.6%	256	93.6%	6	92.0%	4	86.4%
29	Sarasota	83.8%	51	88.5%	572	86.7%	32	63.0%	8	81.6%
30	Seminole	69.5%	30	84.5%	737	83.5%	81	86.0%	10	80.1%
31	Southwest Florida	78.3%	73	86.7%	1369	89.0%	17	83.1%	9	83.9%
32	St. Lucie	84.6%	40	88.9%	766	84.9%	15	94.3%	7	87.9%
33	Big Bend	76.5%	71	89.2%	794	74.6%	64	81.5%	5	80.9%
34	Nature Coast	88.0%	12	90.7%	399	94.1%	23	82.0%	4	88.8%
36	RCMA	n/a	n/a	85.4%	159	n/a	n/a	58.9%	7	77.1%
Statewide		80.5%	3618	87.9%	35163	86.5%	1081	86.6%	285	

Proposed Improvements for 2025-2026 Year

After reviewing the data and responses, and through conversations with the DEL, the UFSRC proposes several improvements to the surveys/process going forward. As expected, there are fewer recommendations for improvement this year since the questionnaires and process have become more refined over time.

- In order to reduce confusion, we recommend updating the wording on Group 2 Question 9, “Including the enrolled child, how many children in your family are under the age of 13?” Many phone respondents asked if we were referring to children under 13 in their whole family, or just in their household. Alternative options include:
 - “Including the enrolled child, how many children in your household are under the age of 13?”, or
 - “Including the enrolled child, how many children in your whole family are under the age of 13?”
- For Group 4 Question 1, DEL will modify this question on the survey for the 2025-2026 fiscal year to reflect that board members have served more than eight years versus ten years.
- DEL will modify the algorithm for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. The changes will be reflected in the 2025-2026 Customer Service Surveys Executive Final Program Report due to DEL August 2026.
- Although the effort was not budgeted, during the 2024-2025 cycle the UFSRC added some limited but successful phone follow-up interviews for Group 2 RCMA respondents and Group 1 ELCs who had very few responses. To improve response rates for these populations, the UFSRC recommends expansion of these phone follow-up efforts for these groups and coalitions with minimal responses. Limited available sample records may make Group 1 efforts difficult for some coalitions.
- To reduce phone interview time, we recommend changing the order of two of the initial questions in the Group 3 survey. Unlike emailing a specific contact who is knowledgeable about the VPK and SR programs or who can forward the email to the appropriate person, when calling providers, we must ensure we are speaking to the person who is most knowledgeable about these programs. Because there are often multiple contacts listed in the sample records for an individual provider, and we can only choose one person to prevent duplicate responses from the same provider, the person listed as the contact may not be the person most knowledgeable about these programs, and in practice, it is rare that the person answering the phone is the person with whom we need to speak.
 - Currently, the telephone interviewers introduce themselves and then describe the survey and its purpose in detail before asking for the person who is most knowledgeable about the statewide SR or VPK provider contract process and engagement with the early learning coalition.

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A PEO is a type of full-service HR outsourcing service that operates in a co-employment model, meaning both the business and the PEO share certain employer responsibilities. The PEO performs various employee administration tasks, as well as providing HR guidance.



Always Designing
for People®



Among companies who do not currently use a PEO,
88% were interested in using one in the future.³

Covering all your HR needs with a true full-service HR provider



A Compelling ROI

The value of ADP TotalSource is best expressed by our clients, who regularly cite their time savings, improved payroll accuracy, a superior employee experience with less turnover, less tedious HR administration tasks, compliance support, and data-driven insights; all legally backed by ADP.

An industry leader

When you partner with ADP TotalSource, you access a company you can trust. ADP has been around for over 75 years and is the nation's largest PEO. We are ESAC accredited and IRS certified — demonstrating we do things the right way, and we have our clients' best interest at heart. With ADP TotalSource in your corner, you can be confident that we have your back.

CONTACT ME TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE NATION'S LEADING PEO

1. McLean & Company, HR Trends Report, 2024

2. NAPEO, "PEO Clients: Faster Growing, More Resilient Businesses," 2024

3. NAPEO, Annual Tracking Survey, 2024

We do more so you can do more

ADP TotalSource® is your all-in-one PEO for everything HR

We take on your time-consuming HR tasks and offer your employees the same best-in-class benefits as big businesses.



Your dedicated **ADP HR Business Partner** provides proactive, strategic guidance and expertise for compliance, benefits, hiring, turnover, or even handling tricky employee situations.

ADP TotalSource clients save an average of **30% of their time** on all HR tasks.

Client survey Dec. 2022



HR



Compliance

- ADP HR Investigation Team
- Employment Practices Liability Insurance (EPLI)
- Legal Defense Benefit
- Workplace compliance support
- Federal, state and local regulatory knowledgebase
- HR best practices, forms library, employee handbook
- Online document management

Talent

- New hire onboarding, I-9, employment verification
- Employee system of record
- Employee training and development courses
- Leave of absence administration
- Unemployment claims administration
- Talent modules for recruitment, performance, and compensation management, plus help from an ADP Talent Specialist (additional fee)
- Full-service recruitment and resume search service by ADP Certified Recruiters (additional fee)

Workplace Safety

- ADP Risk and Safety Consultant
- OSHA compliance and training
- Safety program builder and safety recommendations
- Illness and injury prevention programs

BENEFITS



Benefits Administration

- ADP Benefits Team
- Benefits administration service
- Carrier relations and negotiations
- Benefit plan setup, enrollment, and employee comms
- Dependent tracking
- COBRA administration
- ACA compliance dashboard, reporting, filing and support

Employee Benefits

- Medical, dental, and vision insurance
- 401(k) plan
- HSA and FSA
- Employee assistance program
- Employee discount program
- Health Advocate™ services
- Short- and long-term disability
- Life insurance
- Accident insurance
- Personal loss insurance
- Critical illness insurance
- Hospital indemnity insurance
- Commuter benefits
- Group legal plan
- Funeral planning services

Workers' Compensation

- ADP Workers' Comp Claims Specialist oversees claim reserves, payments and investigations
- Workers' comp insurance

PAYROLL



Payroll Administration

- ADP Payroll Advisor
- Payroll administration and processing
- Payroll compliance validations
- Review and audit of payroll preview before submission
- Benefit and retirement payroll deductions
- Quarterly and year-end processing and reporting requirements
- Full-service garnishments
- Self-service portal for support

Tax

- ADP Tax Team
- Tax filing and reporting, including W-2s
- Federal and state regulatory changes
- State Unemployment Insurance (SUI)
- Business expansion tax registration services

Time

- ADP Time and Attendance Team
- Seamless payroll integration
- PTO accruals
- Time-off requests and processing
- Employee scheduling
- Mobile time collection

24/7 DATA AND REPORTS



- ADP DataCloud Analytics
- ADP Enhanced Insights (Benchmarking)
- Customizable workforce data dashboards
- 300 standard reports, plus custom reports

EMPLOYEE SUPPORT



- ADP MyLife Advisors ensure your employees get answers to all their HR, payroll and benefits questions
- ADP Mobile App for self-service access
- Live chat support and case management

Contact me today to learn more!

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TriNet HR Plus

Tyler Fink
Sales Consultant

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**35+ Years
Experience**

**Over 335K
Employees
Services**

**Over 25k
clients**



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HR Manager



HR Manager is the best solution for businesses looking for a cost-effective, less involved approach to HR and payroll tasks. Your dedicated, experienced professional will help with the responsibilities of a traditional HR department.

HR Manager services include but not limited to:

- Strategic and collaboration calls on an unlimited basis
- Monitor and support the employee life cycle from onboarding to offboarding
- Provision data summaries for unemployment claim responses
- Leave of absence management
- Monitor and support employer-sponsored employee benefits
- Administer workers' compensation payroll reporting
- Assist with custom policies and procedures and ongoing support
- Administer employee pay changes
- Third-party intermediary to help with employee complaints and concerns
- Conduct quarterly and annual internal policy reviews
- Upload policies and templates into the HR platform such as offer letters and paid time off policies
- Performance management
- Provide access to an account manager with HR and payroll expertise
- Support the processing of garnishments
- Contact by phone, email, or video conference

37 W2 Employees

(Annual Agreement Paid Monthly)

- ✓ Flat PEPM Rate = price predictability on yearly spend
- ✓ Natively built system
- ✓ Cost effective
- ✓ Includes dedicated support & training

Pricing Details:

- Annual contract starts at point of execution
- Added users are prorated once initial seat count is surpassed
- Dedicated Customer Success Manager and HR Manager

SUMMARY

\$19,980
per year

\$2,280 per month

\$45 per W2 ee per month

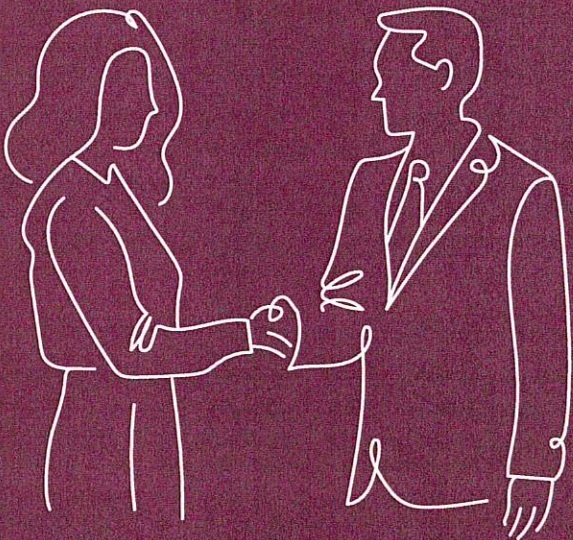
- Dedicated HR Manager
- Access to Advisor Team
- Customer Success Manager

trinet

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OUTSOURCED HR SERVICES PLUS COMPREHENSIVE TECHNOLOGY

HR Plus simplifies HR, payroll, and compliance for small and medium-size businesses. A dedicated support team and all-in-one technology platform save companies time and money, ensuring compliance and a seamless experience for leaders and employees.



✓ Save Time

Outsourcing HR and payroll tasks to dedicated professionals along with easy-to-use technology allows you to focus on core business activities rather than spending time on administrative HR functions.

✓ Gain Expertise

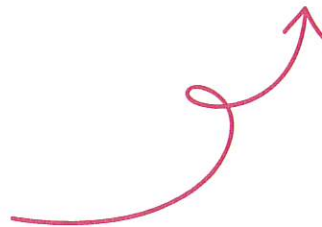
Gain access to an HR team with specialized knowledge in various areas of HR, including payroll processing, benefits administration, compliance with employment-related rules and requirements and employee relations.

✓ Cost Effective

By outsourcing certain tasks, you can free up in-house HR professionals to focus on more strategic and valuable initiatives, while also reducing the need for additional personnel.

✓ Scale your Business

Comprehensive HR technology, combined with a range of service level options, provides scale and agility to your business. This allows you to easily adapt to changes, such as business growth.



GUIDANCE & OUTSOURCED SERVICES

HR Plus is available at various service levels, allowing you to choose the option that best aligns with the evolving needs of your business.

✓ **HR Manager**

Dedicated team of experienced and certified professionals that helps with HR, payroll and payroll tax tasks, as well as provide best practices. Your team will get help with duties like a traditional HR department.

✓ **Payroll Manager**

Dedicated payroll manager (certified payroll professional) that administers scheduled and off-cycle payroll runs for U.S. employees, as well as careful review of pay runs.

✓ **Payroll Tax Compliance Manager**

Dedicated compliance expert that assists with the payroll tax account set-ups, retroactive filings, jurisdiction recoveries, and ongoing payroll tax jurisdiction monitoring for your business.

✓ **HR Advisory**

Access to our team of HR and payroll experts, to answer your HR questions and provide best practices.



AUDIT SERVICES

✓ **Payroll Tax Compliance Audit**

Count on payroll tax experts to help uncover payroll tax-related risks that could leave your business open to potential liability. Your team will receive a consultation with one of our payroll tax specialists to review your payroll tax documents and processes. We assess your current situation, help identify concerns and provide best practices guidance to navigate any concerns.

✓ **HR Operations Audit**

Leverage our HR experts who are dedicated to helping your business uncover HR operational risks that could leave you open to potential liability. This audit includes everything in the Payroll Tax Compliance Audit along with a full HR operations audit relating to HR compliance and best practices.



HR Plus Service Level Options

HR Advisory	Payroll Tax Compliance Manager	Payroll Manager	HR Manager
✓ Access to a team of HR and payroll advisors ✓ Best practice advice on HR and payroll challenges ✓ Advice on difficult employee situations	Everything in HR Advisory <i>plus</i> ✓ Payroll tax account set-ups ✓ Jurisdiction recoveries ✓ Ongoing payroll tax jurisdiction monitoring ✓ Closure of inactive payroll accounts ✓ Payroll Tax Compliance audit	Everything in Payroll Tax Compliance Manager <i>plus</i> ✓ Dedicated payroll manager (Certified Payroll Professional "CPP") ✓ Pay run review ✓ Workers' compensation payroll reporting ✓ Monitor and support payroll updates ✓ Payroll guidance	Everything in Payroll Manager <i>plus</i> ✓ Dedicated HR manager (SHRM certified) ✓ Third-party intermediary for employee complaints ✓ Employee on/off-boarding support ✓ Policy and procedure creation ✓ HR guidance ✓ HR Operations audit



State Board of Education

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MEMORANDUM

TO: School District Superintendents
Early Learning Coalition Executive Directors

FROM: Cari Miller, Chancellor of Early Learning

DATE: September 12, 2025

SUBJECT: Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program Celebrates 20th Birthday

Contact Information:

Cassandra Jackson
(850) 717-8583
Cassandra.Jackson@del.fldoe.org
DPS: 2025-127

The Florida Department of Education's Division of Early Learning (DEL) proudly commemorates a historic milestone in Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) program – 20 years of empowering young learners to enter kindergarten ready for school.

Florida was one of the first states in the country to offer free prekindergarten for all 4-year-olds regardless of family income. Since its launch in 2005, more than 3.1 million children have benefited from the VPK program. State data confirm that children who participate in VPK are much more prepared to enter kindergarten ready for school, setting them on a path to learn, graduate and succeed.

DEL is excited to celebrate the VPK program's 20th birthday with the state's early learning coalitions, VPK providers, partners and families. DEL offers a [VPK 20th Birthday Toolkit](#) to encourage statewide participation. The toolkit includes suggested classroom activities, family activities, social media posts, printable posters and banners.

Join us in celebrating VPK's 20th birthday!

For questions, contact the Division of Early Learning at VPKQuestions@del.fldoe.org.

CM/na

CARI MILLER

CHANCELLOR, DIVISION OF EARLY LEARNING

325 W. GAINES STREET • TALLAHASSEE, FL 32399-0400 • 850-717-8550 • Toll Free 866-357-3239 • www.FloridaEarlyLearning.com





1720 West Fairfield Dr., Suite 100/400
Pensacola, FL 32501
850-595-5400
www.elcescambia.org

Board Meeting Dates for 2026 Time 10:00 a.m.

February 12, 2026	May 14, 2026	August 13, 2026	November 12, 2026
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Executive/Finance Committee Dates for 2026 Time 9:00 a.m.

January 22, 2026	March 26, 2026	April 23, 2026	June 25, 2026
July 23, 2026	September 24, 2026	October 22, 2026 Code of Ethics	November 19, 2026

Resource Development Committee 2026 Time 10:00 a.m.

January 20, 2026	April 21, 2026	July 21, 2026	October 20, 2026
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October 1, 2025

ELC Escambia CARES/CRRSA/ESSER/ARPA Funding Summary					Compiled 2 November 2025	
Fiscal Year	Fund Source	Program Goals	Funding Total	Program Manager/ Coordinator	Notes	
19-20	CARES	Keep CC industry viable thru Mini Grants, Relief Supplies	\$ 1,438,567.78	Watson/Watson	Concise funding sketchy because much was billed to regular OCA's. ED/Finance only process.	
20-21	CARES	More CC Covid Relief Grants	\$ 2,471,584.31	Watson/Watson	DEL was very prescriptive regarding payments. ED/Finance only.	
20-21	CRRSA	Focus more on grants to providers	\$ 1,362,272.76	Watson/Watson	Provider grants in various phases with set criteria. ED/Finance only.	
21-22	CRRSA	Combo grants and staff incentives	\$ 3,458,054.33	Watson/Engel	Provider grants in various phases with set criteria.	
21-22	ARPA	Combo grants and staff incentives	\$ 2,566,502.31	Engel/Engel	Provider grants in various phases with set criteria.	
22-23	CRRSA	More focus on CC staff incentives	\$ 1,017,115.05	Watson/Engel	Engel developed program for who gets what funding.	
22-23	ARPA	Focused more on provider grants	\$ 15,484,671.89	Engel/Engel	Primarily focused on direct grants to providers.	
22-23	ARPA Discretionary	New approach to ARPA spending	\$ 9,806.00	Engel/Engel	First crack at letting ELC's decide what to do with funding.	
22-23	ESSER	Tablets for VPK Assessments	\$ 16,664.00	Engel/Engel	One time good deal for a focused buy.	
23-24	ARPA Stabilization	Combo grants and staff incentives	\$ 1,401,998.54	Engel/Engel	Sweep up of nondiscretionary funding to ensure full use of funds.	
23-24	ARPA Discretionary	Focus on curriculum	\$ 403,780.81	Engel/Engel	All funding went to curriculum improvements.	
23-24	ARPA Early Learning Discretionary	Focus on CC retention, staff training, and quality improvement	\$ 4,943,142.62	Engel/Engel	Some provider grants. A lot of ELC choice in training and quality improvements. ELC developed retention and recruitment programs.	
24-25	NA	NA	NA	NA	No grants received this fiscal year.	
Total	All Programs	Total all supplemental funding	\$ 34,574,160.40		Does not include SR Funding 100% enrollments and parent fee waivers 19-20 to 21-22. Use of Quality OCA \$ for supplies, etc, in 19-20 to 20-21.	
FY19-20:						
FY23-24						
Acronym Key:		Watson managed	\$ 9,747,594.23			
		Engel managed	\$ 24,826,566.17			

CARES	The Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security Act , is a stimulus bill passed on March 27, 2020. This bill included \$2.2 trillion in relief for many aspects of the American economy affected by the results of the coronavirus including, direct to taxpayers, federal aid to healthcare, support for small businesses, and education. Under the education relief, SEAs or State Education Agencies received \$30.75 billion in emergency funding.					
CRRSA	The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act is a secondary stimulus passed on December 27, 2020. Similar to CARES, this bill provided \$81.8 billion to the nation.					
ARPA	The American Rescue Plan Act is a third stimulus passed on March 11, 2021. In an increase from CARES and CRRSA, this bill will provide \$1.9 trillion to the nation.					
ESSER	The Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER) was established as part of the CARES Act to provide funding to states and districts to address the impact of COVID-19 on elementary and secondary schools. The ESSER fund is designed to help schools with local relief, prevention, preparation, and recovery efforts related to the pandemic.					

Education cuts are the deepest

Sissy Carter knows the value of early education. She has been in the child care business for 42 years. For 22 years, she and her daughter, Terry Horton, have been partners in Kinderworld on Toni Street in North Pensacola.

The bright, cheery facility — with its age-appropriate outdoor play areas, structured curriculum and a puppet room full of felt faces of every creature under the sun — is so enticing it is tough for even grown-ups to leave.

For some of the children who come to her — especially the poor ones — it is more than just a cool place to play and learn.



Shannon Nickinson
snickinson@pnj.com
435-8539

It is the first place anyone has told them the names of colors. Or asked them to name shapes, recognize the letters of the alphabet and numbers, and given them the tools to scribble or col-

or.

Or taught them what their name looks like written down.

Through the voluntary kindergarten program, Carter and her staff will help the children who come to them through the Escambia County Early Learning Coalition make up the gap. Many will close it by the time they go to kindergarten.

But some won't. And thanks to several rounds of budget cuts, there are likely to be a lot more at risk of being left behind.

Escambia's stagnant population is translating into one of the largest funding cuts in the state for the local coalition, which helps poor parents afford early education, says Bruce Watson, executive director.

Coalitions are funded by the Florida Office of Early Learning based on lots of things, including population change and a county's economic standing.

Watson says despite our chronic standing as one of the poorest metropolitan areas in the state, Escambia is taking the second or third largest cut — about \$2.85 million from its nearly \$13 million budget — in the state because our population has been flat.

"The (funding) matrix is built on population change."

As it is now, one out of every four children who are eligible for the coalition's services don't get them. The coalition serves a little less than 3,000 children, with about 1,200 on the waiting list.

The state cut — coupled with the 5 percent the Escambia County Commission cut from its allocation for the coalition — effectively adds another 1,000 children to the waiting list, Watson says.

Research suggests children who start out behind in kindergarten stand a good risk of staying behind throughout their school career.

Advocates have an uphill task persuading lawmakers that spending on early education is an investment worth protecting.

"It's hard to persuade legislators that \$1 today saves \$20 tomorrow," says Watson.

Education is the ultimate economic development tool.

We see the result of short-changing that investment in poor literacy levels, low wages and declining population.

If we want more of the same, we can keep on balancing today's books on the heads of our children's future.

Learning the value of a dollar

Bruce Watson views it as a "one-year stay of execution."

Last Friday, Gov. Rick Scott ordered that a new funding formula for the state's subsidized school readiness programs be frozen and reviewed.



**Shannon
Nickinson**
snickinson@
pnj.com
435-8539

All 31 early learning coalition directors in the state — Watson included — decried the changes as arbitrary and unfair.

Scott's order came a day after the state head of the Office of Early Learning resigned. The order asks that a work group establish a new formula to be put in place by Jan. 1, 2014.

The \$400,000 Escambia stood to lose was zeroed out by a grant the coalition did not renew that provided screening and placement services for children with mental, physical or behavioral handicaps through the state Department of Education.

"We were thinking we were going to save some money and it turned out it just kept us even," Watson says.

Hiring their own inclusion specialist will cost less than contracting out. More savings came from dropping the coalition's funding for a Title I program through the school district that is federally funded.

When children come into the coalition's program they are screened for developmental issues. Some of the coalition's providers specialize in those areas and can direct parents appropriately.

The coalitions subsidize child care for working families and promote school readiness.

As of the end of November, Escambia's waiting list was 734 children, down from about 1,200 in October.

The new funding formula is just one way in which early education could come up during the Legislative session, due to open March 5.

Watson and others hope for a resurrection of Bill 5103, which Scott vetoed in April.

Watson says Scott was persuaded that aspects of the bill were at odds with federal funding, but "I personally have pored through it and not found that clause."

The bill changed the way the state reimbursement rate for providers would be calculated; created standard statewide contract language for providers; required parents to report income, employment or family changes within 10 days; and revised eligibility categories for children to receive services, among other things.

Watson is pragmatic about what may come from the funding work group, hence his "stay of execution" metaphor.

"There just aren't enough dollars to spread across the state evenly," he says.

Of course, legislators could have a change of heart and direct more funding toward early education, one of a community's most powerful economic development tools.

No one would say no to that. But no one is holding his breath either.