Early Learning Coalition of Escambia County

DIVISION OF Early Learning

LEARN EARLY. LEARN FOR LIFE.

School Readiness Contract Briefing FY 2026-2027

SSO, EFS Modernization and Provider Portal – 2026-2027 Contracting Prerequisites

- **The Division of Early Learning requires all Coalitions, School Readiness and VPK Providers to use their statewide data system, SSO, and EFS MOD, for all processes of the School Readiness and Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Programs, to include Developmental Screenings (ASQ's).**
- **You are eligible for a School Readiness contract because you have registered in the SSO and Provider Portal, completed a provider profile and submitted a contract application.**
- **A contract cannot be granted to any Provider until their contract application, provider profile in the portal have been approved.**
- **Payments are calculated from EFS MOD.**
  - **However, paper copies of attendance verification (daily sign-in/sign-out or equivalent) are still required.**

Contract Eligibility

To be eligible to deliver the School Readiness Program must be one of the following:

- **Child care facility licensed under s. 402.305**
- **Family day care home licensed or registered under s. 402.313,**
- **Large family child care home licensed under s. 402.3131**
- **Public school or nonpublic school exempt from licensure under s. 402.3025**
- **Faith-based child care provider exempt from licensure under s. 402.316**
- **Before-school or after-school program described in s. 402.305(1)(c), or**
- **Informal child care provider**

The Provider must maintain legally operating status. The Coalition may immediately terminate a contract upon revocation, suspension or termination of Provider's licensure, exemption, accreditation, or status to legally operate.

Contract Eligibility Cont.

Rule 6M-4.610(3) School Readiness Program Ineligibility. For the purpose of this subsection "individual associated with a provider" means an individual or family member of an individual who, regardless of compensation, holds a management position, oversees the operations of a provider, or is an officer, shareholder, beneficial owner or member of the board of directors of a provider. A provider shall not be eligible to contract to offer the SR program if any of the following circumstances apply:

- **The provider, or individual associated with the provider, is on the United States Department of Agriculture National Disqualified List ;**
- **The provider, or individual associated with the provider has not committed public assistance fraud;**
- **The provider, or individual associated with the provider, has been terminated from participation in the program due to fraud and is currently not eligible to participate in the school readiness program;**
- **The provider, or individual associated with the provider, is currently ineligible to participate in the program pursuant to Section 1002.88(2), F.S.**

Child Eligibility

Enrollment Requirements

Children may only be enrolled if there is an electronic authorization from the Coalition. This authorization must be issued in the form of a payment certificate.

- Providers are only paid for:
  - Children who are eligible as of the payment certificate start date
  - The level of care authorized on the certificate
  - **Providers cannot** add extra days of care beyond what is authorized
  - Increase care from Part-Time (PT) to Full-Time (FT) without updated authorization

  To ensure payment is processed, both of the following must be completed:

  - **Provider Responsibility** is to accept each child's enrollment in EFSM (Early Learning Family Support/Portal system)This must be done as soon as possible
  - **Parent Responsibility** is to complete the online acknowledgement form ("sign" electronically)

  ✅ Important: Payment will not occur unless both steps are completed.

Child Eligibility Continued

Timeliness Matters

Waiting until attendance is processed to complete enrollment tasks can:

- **Create delays**
- **Slow down reimbursement for all providers**

Provider Portal Functions

Pending Enrollments

- **Where providers view and accept children needing enrollment approval**

Redetermination Queue

- **Displays Parents who are due for redetermination (redet)**

ASQ Queue

- **Used to track and manage Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) requirements**

Terminations

- **The provider portal is also where you can process and complete child terminations AND, parents must "sign" online the acknowledgement form. Both must be done to allow payment for services.**

Reminder: parents must "sign" online the acknowledgement form. Both must be done to allow payment for services.

Child Attendance

Additional Provider Portal Functions

Registration Fees

- Where providers submit for reimbursement of registration fees

Completing Attendance

- Recommendations:
  - Complete attendance daily or weekly in your provider portal
  - Put reason for absence in the portal so the Finance team can see
  - Upload absence documentation for review

Health and Safety Requirements

- **Provide a healthy and safe environment pursuant to s. 402.305(5), (6), and (7), as applicable, and as verified pursuant to s. 402.311.**
- **Unlicensed, license exempt providers now receive annual health and safety review by DCF.**
- **Since July 1, 2017, Coalition enforces violations of standards as contractual non-compliance.**
- **DCF still checks licensed, but Coalition required to enforce contractual compliance.**
- **DCF also doing three checks per year of all Gold Seal.**
- **May be terminated for excessive Class 1, 2 or 3 violations.**

School Readiness Program Assessments and Child Assessment Requirements

1. **SRPA: Does Provider meet minimum threshold for contracting?**
   - **Yes - Receive a SR Contract**
   - **No - You are not eligible to receive a SR contract**

2. **SR Quality Performance Incentive**
   - **Different levels of payment based on SRPA CLASS score**

3. **Child Assessment Incentive**
   - **SR Quality Performance Incentive**
   - **100% SR children Birth to 5, 75% teaching staff retention = 5% rate incentive**

School Readiness Program Assessments Thresholds for 2026-2027

- **Providers with SR children**
  - **Program Assessment Required**
  - **Exemptions:**
    - **No SR Children enrolled**
    - **Centers that have less than 20% of published capacity is SR children**
    - **Family Child Care homes with 2 or fewer paid SR children**
    - **Night and Weekend care only**
    - **School age care only**
  - **If at any time a provider is no longer exempt, they remain in a must be assessed status with the exception of Family Child Care Homes.**
- **Program Assessment CLASS Scores**
  - **Minimum Threshold for Contracting = 4.0**
  - **SR Quality Performance Incentive must score 5.0 or above**
    - **5.00-5.99 = 7%,**
    - **6.00-7.00 = 10%**

SR Quality Performance Incentives

- **What is the SR Quality Performance Incentive?**
- **Differential payment program *(1002.82(2)(o))***
  - **Effective July 1, 2025**
  - **Based on quality measures of program assessment**
  - **SR Quality Performance Incentive: CLASS Score of:**
    - **5.00-5.99 = 7%**
    - **6.00-7.00 = 10%**
  - **Total State incentive may not exceed 15%**
  - **No more than 5% (of the 15%) may be provided to providers who submit valid and reliable child assessment data to statewide information system in the domains of language and executive functioning**
  - **Total Incentives may not exceed 20% (Does not include Gold Seal)**



High CLASS Learning

Best practices for a better CLASS

- **Teacher Stability**: Not just keeping them on staff, but **keeping them in the same age class every day**
- **Director Competence**: Directing and owning is more than just reaping profits. Successful classrooms come from successful leadership
- **Training**: Make effective use of training opportunities. Expend time & money to improve staff qualifications
- **Curriculum**: Take it off the shelf and **Use it**! Assessors can tell if you do this, and if you don't

Better prepare for your next SRPA

- **Get Familiar with the CLASS tool**
- **Participate in LENA Grow With Me**
- **Attend Interaction Essentials, formerly know as CLASS Group Coaching (MMCI)**
- **Good News: If CLASS Score improves into a new QPI Range, increased rates start the first of the next month**
- **Similarly, if score goes down the rate changes the first of next month**
- **Scoring below 4.00 starts the process to terminate contract; unless a second assessment is requested**

Ratio and Group Size Requirements

- **SR-20 - 11.b. Supervision. Provider agrees to provide minimum staff-to-children ratio by provider type at all times and direct supervision to ensure the health and safety of children in care.**

- **SR-20L and LE - 2. Group Size and Staff to Children Ratio. In accordance with s. 1002.88(1)(d), F.S., Provider agrees to maintain group size and staff to child ratio in accordance with s. 402.302(8) or (11), F.S., as applicable, and as verified pursuant to s. 402.311, F.S.**

- **Group Size sets the maximum number of children, by age, that can be in single "classroom"**

  - Over or equal to age 2 based on majority population

  - Under age 2 based on youngest population



Ratio and Group Size Requirements Cont.

Age Group	Max Group Size	No active CDA required	1 active CDA required	2 active CDA required
Birth -12	12	1-4 children	5-8 children	9-12 children
One year olds	12	1-6 children	7-12 children	N/A
Two year olds	22	1-11 children	12-22 children	N/A
Three year olds	30	1-15 children	16-30 children	N/A
4,5,6 year olds	40	1-20 children	21-40 children	N/A
School age (>6)	50	1-25 children	26-50 children	N/A

- **Does not apply during: Outdoor, sedentary activities (School age), dining, specific large group assemblies or events.**
- **Simple guide: If two adults are required one must be CDA credentialed!**

Educational Requirements

- **<u>Curriculum</u>: Implement one of the curricula approved by the DEL that meets the State child development standards.**

(F.S.S. 1002.88.1.f)

- **<u>Character Development</u>: Implement a character development program approved by the DEL to develop basic values.**

(F.S.S. 1002.88.1.g)

**** Must have curriculum from new 2025 DEL list of Approved School Readiness Curricula**

Developmental Screening Requirements – ASQ's

"Collaborate with the Coalition to complete initial screening for each child, aged 6 weeks to kindergarten eligibility (60 months), within 45 days after the child's first or subsequent enrollment, to identify a child who may need individualized support services." (F.S.S. 1002.88.1.i)

- **ASQ's are completed in the Provider Profile in EFS MOD**
- **NOTIFICATIONS FOR SCREENINGS DUE ARE MADE VIA THE PROVIDER PORTAL IN YOUR QUEUE. Eligibility is NO LONGER sending notifications via email.**
- **Parents shall have the first option to complete the ASQ**
- **The Coalition requires the Provider to complete the ASQ Process IF the parent defers or does not complete the screening in time allotted**
- **Failure to complete all requirements of the ASQ process can be grounds for contract termination**

Developmental Screening Requirements – ASQ's Cont.

1. Initial Screening due no later than 45 days upon screening start date
   a. Parents shall have first option to complete screening within 20 days of enrollment
   b. Parent may defer screening to provider
   c. Provider will be required to complete screening if parent defers or fails to complete on time. The providers due date for the provider will be 45 days after the child's first day of attendance.
   d. Parent will be notified via their parent portal with screening results

2. Annual Screening due no later than 45 days from date of redetermination
   a. Parents have first option to complete screening within 20 days of enrollment
   b. Parent may defer screening to provider
   c. Provider will be required to complete screening if parent defers or fails to complete on time
   d. Parent will be notified via their parent portal with screening results

- Questions or issues contact: inclusion@elcescambia.org

Developmental Screening Requirements – ASQ's Cont.

- **If an observation results in an additional screening, Coalition Medical Staff may be requested to conduct vision and hearing screenings. This is part of the screening process, and you must allow Coalition staff onsite.**
- **Parents have given permission for these screenings, therefore, we ask you to help assist Med Staff to ensure they obtain the correct results for referral purposes.**
- **Please ensure permission slips are completed promptly.**

  *** Best practice is to have caregiver complete permission slips annually with their registration packets or on the Coalition website.**

➢ **Questions or issues contact: inclusion@elcescambia.org**

Prohibited Forms of Discipline

- **Standards in s. 1002.88(1)(i), F.S. and s. 402.305(12), F.S.**
- **No discipline that is severe, humiliating or frightening**
- **Discipline may not be associated with food, rest or toileting**
- **Spanking of other forms of physical punishment is prohibited**
- **May not deny active play as a consequence of misbehavior**
- **Must have documented Discipline policy per contract and monitoring tool**



Workers Compensation

- **Provider must obtain and maintain any required workers compensation insurance under Chapter 440, F.S. and unemployment compensation coverage under Chapter 443, F.S.**
- **Provider must have evidence of coverage, waiver or exception.**
- **Must provide proof on site as part of monitoring.**



E-Verify Requirements

- **Providers must use the I-9 and E-Verify system for all new employees effective January 1, 2021.**
- **Provider must provide evidence of using E-Verify.**
- **This will be part of the SR contract documents each year.**
- **Providers shall also be required to attest that all employees hired before January 1, 2021, are cleared to work in the United States.**
- **An attestation form is provided.**

Information Changes

- **Coalition must receive updates on all changes in business information, such as changes in owner, director, teachers, business name, banking info, or phone number, within 14 calendar days.**
  - ***NOTE: If you change your FEIN number, this will require a whole new profile and a new contract. Please consult with the Contracts Administrator before make this change.***



- **Temporary emergency closings reported by the close of business the first day that the closing occurs.**
- **Closing permanently, changing location or ownership must be reported at least 30 days prior to changes.**

Unusual Incidents

- **All unusual incidents are to be reported to the Coalition by close of business next business day and a written report is to be submitted within 3 business days.**
- **You may go to www.elcescambia.org/families/incidents/ to complete an incident report online.**
- **Anything illness related that is considered an outbreak is a reportable incident.**
- **Use PIU@elcescambia.org or call 850-595-5400 for incident reporting.**



Child Abuse Hotline

- **Comply with state child abuse and neglect reporting requirements.**
- **All employees are required to call 1-800-962-2873 if child abuse is suspected. (F.S.S. section 39.201)**

Rilya Wilson Act

Providers caring for a child in the Protective Supervision Program must notify the Coalition of all absences.

Go to www.elcescambia.org/providers/absent-child/ to report an absence online.

You may also send your absence report to absent@elcescambia.org or by fax at 850-466-3783.

Additionally, if a PS child is out 7 consecutive days they must notify DCF and the Coalition

Questions regarding PS reporting contact the ELCEC Protective Services Liaison at 850-290-7724

(F.S.S. Section 39.604)

Other Program Requirements

- **Parental Choice: Parents have the right to choose and to change providers.**
- **Parental Access: Parents must have unlimited access to their child(ren) and all that concerns their child(ren).**
- **Child Care Resource and Referral**
  - **New requirement is to keep your Provider Portal up to date. Noncompliance if change is more than ten days old.**
  - **Every time the Provider Portal changes your account is Pending and no payments can be made until Accepted.**

Record Requirements

Record Confidentiality: The Provider must have all staff complete confidentiality agreements and have processes in place to protect the privacy of child and family information. Confidential information associated with the SR Program should only be available to the Provider, the parent/legal guardian, the Coalition or its representative, the Florida Division of Early Learning, and federal agencies as required for audit and research information. (F.S.S. 1002.97)

Records Maintenance: Maintain records, including sign in and sign out documentation, enrollment and attendance certification, documentation to support excused absences, and proof of parent co-payments. All records must be kept on file for 5 years. Coalition must have access to records for audit purposes.

Record Transfer on Termination: Provide records no later than last business day of contract. No records, no last payment!

Coalition Responsibilities

- **<u>Training and Technical Assistance:</u> Provide notification of availability of training, technical assistance, and other targeted assistance.**
- **<u>Developmental Screenings (ASQ):</u> Provide notification in the Provider Portal of screening due date. It is based on first day of attendance.**
- **<u>Monitoring:</u> Coalition will monitor Provider for compliance with contract and applicable laws per s. 1002.85(2)(h) per monitoring plan and in response to parental complaints.**

Holidays



Holidays. Per Rule 6M-4.500(3)(a) F.A.C., every Provider is approved to be paid for up to twelve holidays per year. The Coalition has identified seven days of the year to be fixed holidays for all Providers. Providers can choose up to five additional days to be paid holidays. These days must be identified in the Provider Portal as holiday closures.

Professional Development Day. Each provider is approved one paid Professional Development Day per contract year. This is a workday to do staff training. Proof of training and that staff were paid must be provided. **This day is optional.** If taken, it will be the thirteenth paid closure day.

Provider Portal. In the Provider Portal only the seven fixed holidays will be identified in the master calendar. Providers must identify all the days they are planning to be closed for the coming year, both with or without reimbursement, to include the fixed holidays. The Provider Portal prompts users to another menu to choose from their list of closed days which will be the optional paid holidays. The seven fixed paid holidays will be preselected.

Absences

Three excused absences allowed per month.

Extraordinary absences are ONLY allowed for extreme circumstances, such as death or hospitalization, routine doctor or health related appt, and must be documented, such as an obituary, doctor note, court order.

Max 13 days of absence, excused and extraordinary.

The Coalition must be notified if a child is absent 5 consecutive days, and it is unexplained, by the close of the 5th business day.

Notify the Coalition AS SOON AS POSSIBLE when SR children no longer attend your program. Reporting at the end of the month as part of attendance submission is too late, and may result in financial penalties.

Must submit a summary report of ALL absences of 5 days or more, explained and unexplained, each month.

Submit an absence report online via Coalition website at www.elcescambia.org/providers/absent-child/ (preferred) or email reports to Absent@elcescambia.org (backup alternate).

Closures

- **<u>Emergency Closure Days.</u> If the Coalition is closed in all likelihood a CR day will be awarded for all providers. Additional C days may be based on the severity of the emergency.**
- **<u>Temporary emergency.</u> Temporary emergency closures must be reported by the close of business the first day that the closing occurs. Providing notice to the COALITION of subsequent reopening of the SR Program within two (2) business days of reopening.**
- **<u>Closure Notification.</u> You must notify the Coalition by the close of business on the first day of a closure, otherwise approval of the closure for payment will not be approved.**
- **<u>EFS MOD Entries.</u> Provider must select Closure Days in Provider Closure Calendar. The Coalition will enter Closed Reimbursable (CR) or Closed Non-reimbursable (CN) for all other closures.**



Closures for Illnesses

- **Any type of outbreak is considered a reportable incident.**
- **The current outbreak definition according to FLDOH is three or more unrelated non-household sharing staff or attendees becoming positive for an illness within a 14-day period.**
- **A variety of options in response to closures. Contact the Coalition to determine which option is best.**
- **Child absence days for outbreaks will be counted toward a child's absences just like all other absences.**
- **Use Covid@elcescambia.org or call 850-595-5400 for incident reporting.**



Reimbursements





Providers are paid based on budget availability, current reimbursement rates and incentives, family eligibility, and reported work schedule.

- **<u>Registration Fees.</u> Registration fees reimbursement will continue in 26-27. However, the system will begin to deny payment if a child has had fees paid twice in 5 years.**
- **<u>Monthly Statement.</u> Review monthly statements and if discrepancies, overpayment or underpayment, occur the provider must notify Coalition within 60 days of date of payment.**
- **<u>Parent Copayments.</u> It is the Provider's responsibility to collect "Parent fees" from parents. Copayments are automatically deducted from monthly reimbursement payment. New process for assessing copayments. One fee for entire family assigned to one child.**
- **<u>Gold Seal.</u> Providers are required to provide private rates and report changes in their Gold Seal status to the Coalition. Total payment received by the Provider per SR child shall not exceed the Coalitions maximum rate.**

SR Sliding Fee Scale

Effective date October 1, 2025

Florida Division of Early Learning
SLIDING FEE SCHEDULE for SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM

DAILY FEE		------- Annual Gross Income - Number of People in the Family -------														
Full-Time	Part-Time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4.0%	2.0%	5% SMI 2,680	3,604	4,328	5,153	5,978	6,802	6,957	7,111	7,266	7,421	7,575	7,730	7,884	8,039	8,194
		2,681	3,605	4,330	5,154	5,979	6,803	6,958	7,112	7,267	7,422	7,576	7,731	7,885	8,040	8,195
4.0%	2.0%	10% SMI 5,359	7,208	8,657	10,306	11,955	13,604	13,914	14,223	14,532	14,841	15,150	15,460	15,769	16,078	16,387
		5,360	7,209	8,658	10,307	11,956	13,605	13,915	14,224	14,533	14,842	15,151	15,461	15,770	16,079	16,388
4.0%	2.0%	15% SMI 8,039	10,812	12,986	15,459	17,933	20,406	20,870	21,334	21,798	22,262	22,726	23,189	23,653	24,117	24,581
		8,040	10,813	12,987	15,460	17,934	20,407	20,871	21,335	21,799	22,263	22,726	23,190	23,654	24,118	24,582
4.0%	2.0%	20% SMI 10,719	14,417	17,315	20,613	23,911	27,209	27,827	28,445	29,064	29,682	30,301	30,919	31,537	32,155	32,774
		10,720	14,418	17,316	20,614	23,912	27,210	27,828	28,446	29,065	29,683	30,302	30,920	31,538	32,157	32,775
4.0%	2.0%	25% SMI 13,398	17,521	21,643	25,766	29,888	34,011	34,784	35,557	36,330	37,103	37,876	38,649	39,422	40,195	40,968
		13,399	17,522	21,644	25,767	29,889	34,012	34,785	35,558	36,331	37,104	37,877	38,650	39,423	40,196	40,969
4.0%	2.0%	30% SMI 16,078	21,026	25,972	30,919	35,866	40,813	41,741	42,668	43,596	44,523	45,451	46,379	47,306	48,233	49,161
		16,079	21,026	25,973	30,920	35,867	40,814	41,742	42,669	43,597	44,524	45,452	46,380	47,307	48,234	49,162
4.0%	2.0%	35% SMI 18,758	24,529	30,301	36,072	41,844	47,615	48,697	49,779	50,862	51,944	53,026	54,108	55,190	56,272	57,355
		18,759	24,530	30,302	36,073	41,845	47,616	48,698	49,780	50,863	51,945	53,027	54,109	55,191	56,273	57,356
4.0%	2.0%	40% SMI 21,437	28,033	34,629	41,225	47,821	54,417	55,654	56,891	58,128	59,364	60,601	61,838	63,074	64,311	65,548
		21,438	28,034	34,630	41,226	47,822	54,418	55,655	56,892	58,129	59,365	60,602	61,839	63,075	64,312	65,549
4.0%	2.0%	45% SMI 24,117	31,537	38,958	46,378	53,799	61,219	62,611	64,002	65,394	66,785	68,176	69,568	70,959	72,350	73,742
		24,118	31,538	38,959	46,379	53,800	61,220	62,612	64,003	65,395	66,786	68,177	69,569	70,960	72,351	73,743
4.0%	2.0%	50% SMI 26,797	35,042	43,287	51,532	59,777	68,022	69,568	71,114	72,660	74,206	75,752	77,298	78,843	80,389	81,935
		26,798	35,043	43,288	51,533	59,778	68,023	69,569	71,115	72,661	74,207	75,753	77,299	78,844	80,390	81,936
		55% SMI 29,476	38,546	47,615	56,685	65,754	74,824	76,524	78,225	79,925	81,626	83,327	85,027	86,727	88,428	90,129
6.0%	3.0%	29,477	38,547	47,616	56,686	65,755	74,825	76,525	78,226	79,926	81,627	83,328	85,028	86,728	88,429	90,130
		60% SMI 32,156	42,050	51,944	61,838	71,732	81,626	83,481	85,336	87,191	89,047	90,902	92,757	94,612	96,467	98,322
6.0%	3.0%	32,157	42,051	51,945	61,839	71,733	81,627	83,482	85,337	87,192	89,048	90,903	92,758	94,613	96,468	98,323
		65% SMI 34,836	45,554	56,272	66,991	77,709	88,428	90,439	92,448	94,457	96,467	98,477	100,487	102,496	104,506	106,516
6.0%	3.0%	34,836	45,555	56,273	66,992	77,710	88,429	90,439	92,449	94,458	96,468	98,478	100,488	102,497	104,507	106,517
		70% SMI 37,515	49,058	60,601	72,144	83,687	95,230	97,395	99,559	101,723	103,888	106,052	108,217	110,380	112,545	114,709
6.0%	3.0%	37,516	49,059	60,602	72,145	83,688	95,231	97,396	99,560	101,724	103,889	106,053	108,218	110,381	112,546	114,710
		75% SMI 40,195	52,562	64,930	77,297	89,665	102,032	104,351	106,670	108,989	111,308	113,627	115,946	118,265	120,584	122,903
6.0%	3.0%	40,196	52,563	64,931	77,298	89,666	102,033	104,352	106,671	108,990	111,309	113,628	115,947	118,265	120,585	122,904
		80% SMI 42,874	56,066	69,258	82,450	95,642	108,834	111,308	113,782	116,255	118,729	121,202	123,676	126,149	128,622	131,096
6.0%	3.0%	42,875	56,067	69,259	82,451	95,643	108,835	111,309	113,783	116,256	118,730	121,203	123,677	126,150	128,623	131,097
		85% SMI 45,554	59,571	73,587	87,604	101,620	115,637	118,265	120,893	123,521	126,149	128,778	131,406	134,033	136,661	139,290

Parents receiving hourly care pay up to the part time fee.

FFY 2026 ANNUAL State Median Income Estimates

Refer to 6M-4.400, F.A.C.

55% SMI	Entry threshold for School Readiness program eligibility.
70% SMI	Entry threshold for School Readiness Match eligibility
85% SMI	Upper threshold for School Readiness program eligibility

SR Plus Sliding Fee Scale

Effective date October 1, 2025

Florida Division of Early Learning
SLIDING FEE SCHEDULE for SCHOOL READINESS PLUS PROGRAM

DAILY FEE			------- Annual Gross Income - Number of People in the Family -------													
Full-Time	Part-Time		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
8.0%	4.0%	85% SMI + $1	45,555	59,572	73,588	87,605	101,621	115,638	118,266	120,894	123,522	126,150	128,779	131,407	134,034	136,662	139,291
		90% SMI	48,234	63,075	77,916	92,757	107,598	122,439	125,222	128,004	130,787	133,570	136,353	139,136	141,917	144,700	147,483
9.0%	4.5%	90% SMI + $1	48,235	63,076	77,917	92,758	107,599	122,440	125,223	128,005	130,788	133,571	136,354	139,137	141,918	144,701	147,484
		95% SMI	50,913	66,579	82,244	97,910	113,575	129,241	132,178	135,116	138,053	140,990	143,928	146,865	149,802	152,739	155,677
10.0%	5.0%	95% SMI + $1	50,914	66,580	82,245	97,911	113,576	129,242	132,179	135,117	138,054	140,991	143,929	146,866	149,803	152,740	155,678
		100% SMI	53,593	70,083	86,573	103,063	119,553	136,043	139,135	142,227	145,319	148,411	151,503	154,595	157,686	160,778	163,870

Parents receiving hourly care pay up to the part time fee.

FFY 2026 ANNUAL State Median Income Estimates

Refer to 1002.935, Florida Statutes
Income 100% State Median Income: Upper threshold for eligibility

Reimbursements Cont.





- **Providers are required to notify the Coalition in writing at least 14 calendar days prior to any rate changes a provider plans to implement.**
- **Providers are required to state in their contract whether or not they require parents to pay the differential between their private pay rates and the provider reimbursement rates. Providers are required to provide parents these rates, along with any additional fees in writing prior to enrollment of a child.**
- **Parents will only be held responsible for the last 30 days of parent copayments upon disenrolling or transferring from a program. All other unpaid fees, to include the differentials, are a matter between the provider and the parent.**

Reimbursements Cont.





- **Maintain accurate monthly attendance. Be careful as the system selects every child as present every day authorized.**
  - **Must deselect absent day(s).**
- **Maintain daily Sign-in/Sign-out sheets or equivalent system**
  - **<u>Parents must sign</u> IN AND OUT with full signature (no initials) and time of day every day their child attends**
  - **Coalition conducts extensive cross checking. Errors vs. fraud!**
  - **Monitoring will check closely for Sign-in/Sign-out on site**
- **Online attendance submission, Sign-in/Sign-out sheets, and supporting documents due by 3rd business day. If not received on time, no payment until the next month.**
- **Sign-in/Sign-out sheets or equivalent are required for payment. No Sign-in/Sign-out sheet for a child, payment will be denied.**
- **Adjustments requests are for discrepancies, under and over payments. Currently due NLT 60 days after invoice payment.**

Monitoring



- **<u>Monitoring Schedule</u>: Monitoring for new fiscal year begins July 2026.**
- **<u>Access:</u> Provider agrees to allow DEL and Coalition open access to its' facilities and records upon request. Records stored off-site shall be provided within 72 hours.**
- **<u>Monitoring Specifics:</u>**
  - **Tier 1: Annually. Desk Review. Includes reimbursement desk audit. No discrepancy Provider will not know monitoring was done.**
  - **Tier 2: Coalition Monitoring Plan requires every provider receive a Tier 2 at least once every two years, some providers may receive one two years in a row.**
  - **High Risk monitoring *once every six months*.**
  - **Coalition does not announce Tier 2 reviews.**

Monitoring Cont.



- **Receiving an excessive number of DCF Class Violations results in a provider being designated as High Risk.**
- **Being on probation for any reason results in a provider being designated as High Risk.**
- **Monitoring Tool follows contract almost verbatim.**
- **Added focus on admin related to child safety and accountability, especially cross-referencing sign-in/sign-out to transportation logs.**
- **Now checking for proof that parent billing is done on a WEEKLY basis. Must have copies of receipts given to parents.**

Monitoring Cont.



- **Current hit list:**
  - **Differences between Sign-in/Sign-out forms and attendance reported in EFS MOD.**
  - **Parents are not signing their children in and out properly**
  - **INITIALS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE**
  - **Providers are signing children in and out daily and this is FRAUD**
  - **Providers altering sign in and out sheets…this is FRAUD**
  - **Not reporting absences and terminations**
  - **Emergency Preparedness Plans (COOP Plan) has deficiencies**
    - **Plan must be signed and dated**
    - **Relocation site must be a site big enough to hold the number of children enrolled.**
    - **Your site verification letter must be signed and dated annually by person allowing you to use their site for relocation purposes.**
    - **When writing your COOP Plan, you must take into account all types of emergency situations: hurricane, tornado, flood, fire, chemical spill, shooting....etc.**

Monitoring Cont.



- **Use PIU@elcescambia.org for CAP responses, incident reporting, parent and provider complaints, ASQ compliance and dispute resolution correspondence**
- **Dispute requests must be sent by letter but can attach to an email**
- **If you want to dispute, follow Exhibit 7 of SR contract**

- **Note: The Coalition reviews the Provider's compliance and evaluates the Provider's past and present performance and DCF violation record when considering contract renewal**

Noncompliance

- **Corrective Action Notice: If Provider fails to comply and Coalition concludes corrective action will resolve failure to comply a Corrective Action Notice will be provided in writing.**
- **Probation: Same non-compliance twice, multiple CAPs, multiple DCF Health and Safety violations, or failure to complete CAP shall result in probation up to six months.**
- **Termination for Cause: Coalition has right to terminate for cause. Grounds for termination are:**
  - ❖ **Action which threatens health, safety or welfare of children.**
  - ❖ **Material failure to comply with contract terms, including failure to implement corrective action or terms of probation.**
  - ❖ **Refusal to accept any notice the Coalition is required to send.**
  - ❖ **Reasonable or probable cause to suspect provider fraud.**



- **Notification of Termination: Notification in writing at least five days before termination. Must include Provider right to request review.**

Revocation of Eligibility

- **The Coalition may revoke the provider's eligibility to deliver the school readiness program or receive state or federal funds under this chapter for a period of 5 years. s. 1002.88.(2).**
- **It is still 5 years or nothing for most revocations, except for termination due to SRPA score.**
- **Coalition may revoke for failing to meet quality standards.**



Fraud





- **All suspected Fraud must be reported to the proper authorities**
- **The Coalition and its representatives are required to report any identified regulation deficiencies to the Division of Early Learning and the Bureau of Public Assistance Fraud for further investigation and cases where there is sufficient reason to believe that a Provider has knowingly provided or submitted any fraudulent information.**
- **Provider agrees that they shall not use their position as a SR Provider to engage in any activity, or be a party to, any form of deception, misrepresentation, falsification, fraudulent or unlawful behavior to affect a personal gain, or the personal gain of any relative, friend or business associate.**
- **A fraud referral shall result in suspension or termination of your contract.**

Fraud Cont.





Examples of Fraud being discovered

- **Providers signing children in and out when they are not present.**
- **Providers altering sign in and out sheets.**
- **Providers informing parents that they must sign for days their child wasn't present, using their voucher as leverage.**
- **Having the parent complete the Sign-in/Sign-out form all at one time at the end of the month.**
- **Changing sign in and out times.**
- **Closing early and claiming a full day of attendance. Open less than six hours is part-time for all attendees. Claiming full time is fraud.**
- **Accepting food stamps for payment.**
- **Signing a child in for one day out of the month so the provider can claim the 3 excused absences for the month.**

Due Process

- **The Provider may request a review of determinations made by the Coalition using procedures detailed in Exhibit 7.**
- **Provider can only request a review for termination, not submission for suspected fraud.**
- **While a review for termination is being examined a Provider may not offer services.**
- **Exhibit 7 has detailed steps to follow and starts with a request in writing for a review hearing.**
  - **Request must be within 5 business days of receipt of notice.**
  - **Name and contact information individual authorized by Provider.**
  - **Specific action by Coalition that Provider disputes and specific reasons.**
  - **Whether Provider will be represented by an attorney.**
  - **Include supporting documentation.**
- **Dispute requests must be by signed letter but can attach to email. Use PIU@elcescambia.org for dispute resolution correspondence.**
- **Decision of Review Hearing Committee is final.**



Indemnification



- **Provider shall be fully liable for and indemnify, defend and hold harmless the Coalition, DEL and all officers, directors, and employees.**

- **If Provider is state agency, public school or school district indemnification is limited by law.**

Contract Changes

- **Addendums and attachments are not allowed, except as allowed by Rule.**
- **Changes to the Contract requires a new contract, except for the following:**
  - **Doing Business As Name (DBA) (Paragraph 1)**
  - **The location of the provider's principal offices (Paragraph 1)**
  - **Adding or deleting Provider Locations (Exhibit 1)**
  - **Identification of the state-approved curriculum or curricula (Paragraph 16)**
  - **Identification of the character development program (Paragraph 17)**
  - **Change in Signature Authority (Exhibit 2, number 4)**
  - **Change in Provider's Program Assessment Requirements (Paragraph 7)**
  - **Change in Selection to Conduct Child Assessments or Eligibility (Paragraph 34)**
  - **Coalition & Provider Reimbursement Rates (Exhibit 5)**
  - **Change in Holidays (Paragraph 58, Exhibit 6)**
  - **Change Coalition Contact persons or Provider Contract Person (Paragraph 86)**
  - **Gold Seal Status (Exhibit 2)**
  - **Identification of liability insurance policies (Exhibit 2)**
- **<u>Reminder</u>: Any changes not listed above require the execution of a new Statewide School Readiness Provider Contract.**

Insurance Requirements

<u>Liability Insurance</u>: "Provider must obtain and retain an insurance policy that provides a minimum of $100,000 of coverage per occurrence and a minimum of $300,000 general aggregate coverage. A provider must add the coalition as a named certificate holder and as an additional insured. A provider must provide the coalition with a minimum of 10 calendar days' advance written notice of cancellation of or changes to coverage. The general liability insurance required by this paragraph must remain in full force and effect for the entire period of this Contract." s. 1002.88.(1)(l).

<u>Transportation</u>: If SR children are transported by the program appropriate commercial automotive insurance is required.



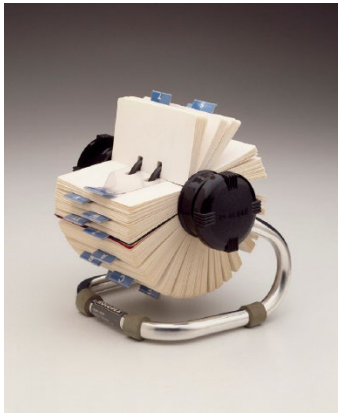
Coalition Provider Reps and Meetings

- **The Coalition has two Provider representatives on its Board.**
  - **Private Childcare Providers Representative: Ashley Colon**
  - **Faith-based Childcare Providers Representative: Deirdre Patton**
- **Board meetings, Executive Committee meetings, Resource Development Committee meetings and Review Hearing Committee meetings are open to the public.**
- **All meetings are posted and indicate times and locations.**
- **A Board meeting is posted whenever two or more board members come together and Coalition business will be discussed and/or decisions made.**
- **All meetings of the Coalition are open to the public and conducted as per the Sunshine Law.**

Coalition Email Contacts

To ensure your email reaches the correct department for immediate assistance, please refer to the email list below. These go directly to staff working in these areas.

- **Absence Reporting: www.elcescambia.org/providers/absent-child/ or email absent@elcescambia.org**
- **Ask a general question: askelc@elcescambia.org**
- **Program Assessment questions: classhelp@elcescambia.org**
- **Child Care Resource & Referral: ccrr@elcescambia.org**
- **Closure reporting: thoang@elcescambia.org**
- **Contract questions: contracts@elcescambia.org**
- **Illness/Outbreak reporting: covid@elcescambia.org**
- **Early Intervention questions: inclusion@elcescambia.org**
- **Incident reporting: www.elcescambia.org/families/incidents/ or email piu@elcescambia.org**
- **Submit Corrective Action Plans: piu@elcescambia.org**
- **SR Child Eligibility questions: sreligibility@elcescambia.org**
- **SR Attendance questions: srattendance@elcescambia.org**



Questions Email: AskELC@elcescambia.org









The “If All Else Fails” Contact

Alphonsa Henderson

Executive Director

ahenderson@elcescambia.org

850-595-5400

1720 West Fairfield Dr.

Suite 100/400

Pensacola, FL 32501