



DIVISION OF
Early Learning
LEARN EARLY. LEARN FOR LIFE.



Legislative Changes Impacting the Early Learning Community

In this document, we outline new legislation that will impact child care VPK and School Readiness providers in our community.



Hello Early Childhood Education Providers:

A few weeks ago Florida Legislators supported two big early learning bills (House Bill 419/HB 7011) that later signed into law by the Governor. These bills include some changes to Florida's early learning system, including some which will directly impact child care small businesses who contract with Early Learning Coalitions to provide School Readiness and/or VPK services. Overall, we're excited to see that the early learning community's voices were heard and needs prioritized. We believe the passing of this bill is a step in the right direction and look forward to closer collaboration between Office of Early Learning and the Florida Department of Education.

OEL is in the process of reviewing the bills, planning for implementation, and preparing guidelines and timelines, which we hope to receive over the next few months. Until then, we wanted to provide the most relevant changes so you are aware of them. The ELC will share additional information as it becomes available including an implementation timeline. The good news is most of the changes included in these two approved bills require a good deal of planning and as a result, they do NOT go into effect immediately.

VPK Assessment and Readiness Rate:

- The 2020 – 2021 program year will be the last year that the kindergarten students' assessment (FLKRS) will be used towards a VPK provider's readiness score.
- The FLKRS score will be used in conjunction with pre and post learning gains.
- A provider may not be newly placed on probation but will have the opportunity to come off probationary status if the minimum rate is earned and will keep the score for the 2021 - 2022 school year.
- Enhanced professional development and training will be required for VPK directors and teachers.
- Beginning the 2022-2023 school year, a VPK Provider's Readiness Rate will be based on a program assessment, learning gains and an end of the year measure of child readiness.
- Starting School Year 2022-23, only children completing 85% of VPK will be included in the calculation of readiness rather than the current substantial completion threshold of 75%.
- This new VPK calculation will be part of a Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring Program (CSPMP) for all students from Pre-K to 3rd Grade (to be developed in the near future).

VPK Assessment and Readiness Rate (cont'd)

- VPK programs will be responsible for providing parents with timely progress data for their child.
- VPK providers will be required to share the results from the Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring Program within 7 days after the administration of the tool.
- Parents will also have access to providers licensing inspections and VPK Readiness Rates and School Readiness Program Assessment scores.
- The Department of Education (DOE) will have to set minimum program assessment composite score threshold required for child care businesses in order to contract with the ELC.
- Beginning in the 2023-2024 School Year, VPK providers, like those with School Readiness programs, will have a program assessment composite score which will impact Contracting and for some providers may result in required Improvement Plans.
- Those providers with a program assessment composite score lower than the established minimum (TBD) may not be eligible to contract with ELC to provide VPK services.
- ELC VPK contracted providers will be eligible for differential payments of up to 15% for those scoring Highly Proficient or Excellent on the program assessment.

Gold Seal Quality & SR Program

- Accredited/Gold Seal SR child care small businesses will be required to adhere to the child ratios from their accrediting agency, not just have 85% compliance.
- A workgroup will be formed to explore and make recommendations to DOE on how to (better) establish annual market rate calculation and differentials.
- The Gold Seal Quality Program will move from the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to the Department of Education (DOE), where it may be placed under the Early Learning Division.
- The accreditation standards for the program must be based on "nationally recognized standards" as determined by DOE and the State Board of Education (not just those available from accreditation bodies).
- The bill will also allow DOE to recommend that a Gold Seal provider maintain its status if they are cited for a Class I or II violation but have been in operation for 5+ years with no other Class I violations.

Questions or Concerns? Reach out to:

Pablo Calvo, Director of Community Engagement

PCalvo@elcbroward.org