

HB 419 Summary

Below are some highlights from **HB 419** the comprehensive early learning bill proposed by Representative Erin Grall (Indian River) with the respective lines. The bill is still pending a full review by Committee Staff.

Office of Early Learning governance and Responsibilities

- ★ Moves Florida's Office of Early Learning (OEL) into the State's Department of Education (DOE). (251)
- ★ Moves rule-making authority from OEL into and the State Board of Education (SBE). (2312)
- ★ Moves OEL budget authority under DOE including determining prevailing market rates. (2474)
- ★ Requires DOE to develop an integrated Early Learning to 20 information system. (4134)
- ★ Requires DOE and OEL to develop standards trainings for credentials. (1520,1542)
- ★ Requires DOE to develop and implement performance standards for Early Learning Coalitions. (2226)
- ★ DOE must provide programmatic and fiscal monitoring of Coalitions biennially (2659).

Early Learning Coalitions Accountability and Responsibilities

- ★ Allows DOE and OEL to remove Early Learning Coalitions from eligibility to offer SR and VPK or to merge one or more Coalitions as a result of noncompliance with established performance standards. (2747)
- ★ Allows Head Start and Early Head Start as allowable enrollments for waiving parent copayments. (2942)
- ★ Increases transparency and limits conflicts of interest for Board Members of Coalitions. (3002)
- ★ Requires ELCs to provide prompt and accurate reports as requested by the SBE. (4241)
- ★ Coalitions must submit the CEO/Executive Director's annual performance evaluation to the SBE. (2887)
- ★ Adds oversight jurisdiction of the Coalitions to the SBE and sets the max at 30 ELCs. (267,2831)
- ★ DOE's Commissioner may appoint interim Board Chair if vacant and pending gubernatorial appointment and to request a new Board Member if a current is non-participating. (2842,2859)
- ★ Requires Coalitions to conduct customer service surveys and achieve at least a 60% level or higher satisfaction with those who do not meet that standard being placed on corrective action plans. (2726)

Gold Seal Designations

- ★ Moves the Gold Seal Program from Department of Children and Families (DCF) to the SBE. (601)
- ★ Expands options for accrediting agencies but requires they must provide onsite monitoring at least every five years with an annual reporting process that requires risk-based on-site monitoring. (474)
- ★ Establishes a minimum Gold Seal differential of 20% per each child served. (599)
- ★ Allows those providers operating for 5 years or longer who are cited with a Class 1 Violation (and no other violations) to appeal to DOE/SBE for a waiver to maintain their Gold Seal designation. (583)
- ★ Sets up independent third party consultants to recommend Counties' School Readiness market rate.

Estimating Conference

- ★ Mandates School Readiness data be included in biennial estimating conference by DOE/SBE. (350)
- ★ The Early Learning Programs Estimating Conference will now set statewide reimbursement rates plus the application of differentials by each county rate, the level of care, and the provider type. (3383)
- ★ Revises use of "average" market rate to "prevailing" market rate for the funding formula. (2405)

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Coordinated Screening and Assessments

- ★ Requires all children in VPK to participate in coordinated screening and assessment system. (1325)
- ★ Requires assessment tool to include math domains and to detect early signs of dyslexia. (3827)
- ★ Student performance results shared with parents within seven days of completing assessment. (1804)
- ★ Kids with reading deficiencies at end of VPK referred for services in kindergarten public schools. (3959)
- ★ Formalizes Committee for Early Grades Success with responsibility of working with DOE to implement the new Coordinated Screening and Assessment program from PreK to third grade. (3873)

VPK Accountability

- ★ VPK providers must participate in program assessments with thresholds like School Readiness. (1806)
- ★ Modifies VPK readiness rates to a “performance metric” that includes child pre/post-assessments, learning gains, final achievement score and program assessment (no longer uses FLKRS after 20/21)
- ★ Results of program assessment and learning gains are calculated under new methodology towards a designation of Unsatisfactory, Approaching Proficiency, Proficient, Highly Proficient, or Excellent. (1876)
- ★ Development of enhanced provider profiles to display quality indicators for families. (1233)
- ★ Includes exceptions in good cause exemptions for providers serving kids with special needs. (1990)
- ★ Requires approval of improvement plans submitted by low performing providers to include the adoption of an approved curricula AND staff development instead of just one of those options. (2569)

VPK Trainings:

- ★ VPK Providers will receive training on new program assessments as in School Readiness based on teacher child interactions and including emotional and behavioral components. (1806)
- ★ Requires DOE to make available at least 8 hours of training for VPK instructors for competency of teacher-child interactions, and requires 3 courses on emergent literacy for all instructors. (1542)
- ★ Specialized training and professional development will be required for VPK directors and educators to ensure they are equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to support child outcomes. Requires VPK Directors train on curriculum and use student level data to deliver instruction. (1231)

Other changes:

- ★ Clarifies DOD military child care programs may participate in SR and VPK programs. (1343,1458)
- ★ Requires study of current methodology for the funding and the impact of quality differentials. (1850)
- ★ Sets up independent third party consultants to recommend School Readiness market rates. (3380)

We will be tracking the bill’s changes as it goes through different committees this session.

For any questions please contact **Renee Jaffe, CEO:** rjaffe@elcbroward.org