EARLY LEARNING PERFORMANCE FUNDING PROJECT

YEAR 3 EVALUATION 2016-2017 FINAL REPORT

Prepared for the Florida Office of Early Learning
by
University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning

CONTRACT #SR971
The UF Lastinger Center and Yale University Evaluation Study Team

UF Lastinger Center and Yale University assembled a team of talented professionals with diverse backgrounds and experiences in research, evaluation, and early childhood education to conduct this study. This research team was co-led by Walter Leite, Ph.D., a UF Research and Evaluation Methodology Professor; Mary Kay Rodgers, Ph.D., a UF Lastinger Research, Evaluation and Development Coordinator; and Chin Reyes, Ph.D., an Associate Research Scientist at the Edward Zigler Center of Child Development and Social Policy at Yale University. Other consulting team members included from UF Lastinger Center: Abby Thorman, Ph.D., Manager of Early Learning Innovations; Lara Glaser, MA, Lastinger Early Childhood Operations Manager; Natalie Hagler, Jingyi He, Sherry Zhou, and Yuxi Qiu, UF Lastinger Center doctoral graduate researchers; and from Yale University: Walter Gilliam, Ph.D., an Associate Professor and Director of the Edward Zigler Center of Child Development and Social Policy; and Landon Hurley, a research consultant. The complexity of this evaluation required team members with early childhood systems and policy development expertise, university faculty with quantitative and qualitative research expertise, specialists in early childhood teacher professional development, and professionals with experience working in Early Learning Coalitions, and early childhood programs within the state of Florida.

This study team met weekly by virtual meeting and regularly in person to conduct analysis and share study progress, successes, challenges, and problem solving to maximize study potential and credibility. Quantitative measures and results were continuously analyzed by researchers at both UF Lastinger Center and Yale University, and these results were then compared with qualitative measures and results throughout the study’s duration. Because Early Learning Florida courses are coordinated by UF Lastinger Center, all course quantitative measures were completed by Yale University researchers to ensure objectivity in research and findings. In addition, all qualitative findings were reviewed by each member of the research team individually and then collectively discussed until consensus of analysis was reached in order to provide reliability of analysis procedures. Due to this rigorous methodological approach of cross-triangulation of data between research institutions, transparency and validity of research outcomes were achieved.

The UF Lastinger Center and Yale University research team are grateful to all early childhood teachers, directors, and ELC leaders and staff who participated in this study for offering important resources, knowledge and perspective to create recommendations to benefit Florida’s early childhood educational community.

Suggested citation for this report:
## CONTENTS

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** .................................................................................................................................................................................. 1

**STUDY BACKGROUND** .................................................................................................................................................................................. 3

**OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM AND EVALUATION PLAN** ................................................................................................................................. 4

- The Early Learning Performance Funding Pilot Project- Year One (2014-2015) ................................................................................. 4
- The Early Learning Performance Funding Pilot Project- Year Two (2015-2016) ................................................................................. 4
- Results from the 2015-2016 ELPFP Evaluation ............................................................................................................................ 5
- Year 3 Evaluation Findings Summary: 2016-2017 .......................................................................................................................... 8

**STUDY METHODOLOGY** .................................................................................................................................................................................. 11

- Conceptual Framework for this Study .................................................................................................................................................... 11
  - Research on Early Childhood Educational Quality and Child Outcomes ............................................................................................... 11
  - Teacher Professional Development in Early Childhood Settings ........................................................................................................ 11
  - Quality Professional Development Research and Design .................................................................................................................. 12
- Context of Study .......................................................................................................................................................................................... 13
- Evaluation Logic Model for Year 3 (2016-2017) ........................................................................................................................................ 15
- ELPFP Required Benchmarks for Year 3 ................................................................................................................................................ 16
- Glossary of Terms .......................................................................................................................................................................................... 17
- Research Questions ...................................................................................................................................................................................... 18
- Interventions ................................................................................................................................................................................................. 19
  - Tier 1 Professional Development Strategies ........................................................................................................................................ 19
  - Making the Most of Child Interactions (MMCI) ................................................................................................................................. 19
  - Tier 2 and Tier 3 Professional Development Strategies ................................................................................................................ 20
    - Early Learning Florida Professional Development System ........................................................................................................ 20
    - Technical Assistance and Instructional Coaching .......................................................................................................................... 21
    - Child Assessment Systems ................................................................................................................................................................. 21
    - Professional Development Progress Plan ......................................................................................................................................... 23
- Data Sources and Instruments ....................................................................................................................................................................... 23
  - Quantitative Data Sources and Instruments ........................................................................................................................................ 23
    - Teacher-Child Interactions ................................................................................................................................................................. 23
    - CLASS* ......................................................................................................................................................................................................... 23
  - Child Outcomes ....................................................................................................................................................................................... 24
    - GOLD* Observational Child Data .......................................................................................................................................................... 24
    - The Bracken Basic Concept Scale-Third Edition (BBCS-3; Bracken, 2006) ................................................................................. 24
  - Classroom Climate ................................................................................................................................................................................... 24
  - Teacher Knowledge .................................................................................................................................................................................. 25
  - Qualitative Data Sources ......................................................................................................................................................................... 26
- Data Collection ............................................................................................................................................................................................. 26
  - Quantitative Data Collection ................................................................................................................................................................. 26
    - Sample ....................................................................................................................................................................................................... 27
      - CLASS* Sample ...................................................................................................................................................................................... 27
      - GOLD* Child Data Sample ............................................................................................................................................................... 27
      - BRACKEN Sample ............................................................................................................................................................................... 29
      - CHILD Sample .................................................................................................................................................................................. 29
      - Control Group .................................................................................................................................................................................. 29
      - Knowledge Assessment Sample .................................................................................................................................................. 30
    - Early Learning Florida Course Completion Survey Sample ......................................................................................................... 31
  - Qualitative Data Collection and Sample ........................................................................................................................................... 31
- Data Analysis ............................................................................................................................................................................................... 32
  - Quantitative Primary Data Analysis ...................................................................................................................................................... 32
    - Primary Analysis of CLASS* Scores ................................................................................................................................................ 32
    - Secondary Data Analysis of CLASS* Scores .................................................................................................................................... 33
  - GOLD* Scores ............................................................................................................................................................................................ 34
    - Validation study of GOLD* Scores .................................................................................................................................................... 34
  - CHILD Scores ........................................................................................................................................................................................... 34
    - Knowledge Assessment Scores .......................................................................................................................................................... 35
    - Tier 1 knowledge assessments ......................................................................................................................................................... 36
    - Tier 2 and Tier 3 knowledge assessments ....................................................................................................................................... 36
RESULTS

Qualitative Data Analysis .................................................................................................................. 37
Concurrent Triangulation Analysis (Mixed-Methods) ........................................................................ 38

Quantitative Measures ........................................................................................................................ 40

Research Question 1: What impact does the Early Learning Performance Funding Project (ELPFP) have on teacher-child interactions for Tier 1, and Tier 2 and 3 providers across multiple years of participation?

Research Question Findings Summary .............................................................................................. 40
Teacher-Child Interactions .................................................................................................................... 40
CLASS® Analysis 1 ................................................................................................................................. 41
Independent Validation of Analysis 1 ................................................................................................. 42
CLASS® Analysis 2 ................................................................................................................................. 42
Independent Validation of CLASS® Analysis 2 ............................................................................... 43
Comparison of CLASS® Scores by ELC for Year 3 of ELPFP ............................................................. 44
Descriptive Tables and Graphs for CLASS® Domains ........................................................................ 47
Pre-K CLASS® Emotional Support ..................................................................................................... 48
Pre-K CLASS® Classroom Organization ......................................................................................... 51
Pre-K CLASS® Instructional Support ............................................................................................... 55
Toddler CLASS® Emotional and Behavioral Support ...................................................................... 58
Toddler CLASS® Engaged Support for Learning ............................................................................. 62

Research Question 2: Are ELPFP interventions starting to show an impact on direct child outcomes after three years of participation by teachers, as compared to a control group?

Research Question Findings Summary .............................................................................................. 66
Results of Validation Study of GOLD® Scores .................................................................................. 66
Latent Growth Models for GOLD® Scores .......................................................................................... 67
Social-Emotional Domain .................................................................................................................... 68
Physical Domain ................................................................................................................................. 70
Language Domain ............................................................................................................................... 71
Cognitive Domain ............................................................................................................................... 73
Literacy Domain ................................................................................................................................. 74
Mathematics Domain .......................................................................................................................... 76

Research Question 3: What impact does the Early Learning Performance Funding Project (ELPFP) have on classroom climate for the Tier 3 providers as compared to a control group?

Research Question Findings Summary .............................................................................................. 77

Research Question 4: What impact does the Early Learning Performance Funding Project (ELPFP) have on teacher knowledge gain for Tier 1, 2 and 3 providers?

Research Question Findings Summary .............................................................................................. 78
Tier 1 Teacher Knowledge Gain from MMCI Training ....................................................................... 79
Tier 2 and Tier 3 Teacher Knowledge Gain from Early Learning Florida Courses ......................... 80
Knowledge Gain Differences in Early Learning Florida English and Spanish Courses ................ 82
Teacher Mastery Rates of Early Learning Florida Courses ................................................................ 82
Teacher Knowledge Gain from Early Learning Florida Courses by ELC .......................................... 82

Research Question 5: Do the effects of participating in the Tier 2 and 3 programs depend on predictors such as time spent in course LMS; course language option; course model option; teacher-child classroom ratios, type of accreditation, or local QRIS?

Research Question Findings Summary .............................................................................................. 85
Effects of Predictors on Pre-Test Knowledge Assessment Scores .................................................... 85
Effects of Predictors on Teacher Knowledge Gain ............................................................................ 86
Effects of Predictors on CLASS® Scores .......................................................................................... 87
Number of Children Attending Each Provider ............................................................................... 87
Percentage of children in poverty ....................................................................................................... 88
Provider Accreditation ......................................................................................................................... 88
Local Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) ........................................................................... 89

Research Question 6: Do Early Learning Florida course experiences of Tier 2 and Tier 3 providers depend on internal support (center directors and teacher peers) and external organizational support?

Research Question Findings Summary .............................................................................................. 90
Early Learning Florida Course Implementation ................................................................................. 90
Time Completing Early Learning Florida Course Work in a Typical Week ................................... 91
Time of Implementation of Tasks in the Course ............................................................................... 92
Difficulty Completing Course Assignments ...................................................................................... 93
Difficulty with Expression of Course Content .................................................................................... 93
Implementation of New Course Strategies in Teacher Classrooms ........................................................................................................ 94
Type of Early Learning Florida Course Model ........................................................................................................................................ 94
Usefulness of Early Learning Florida Course Knowledge and Practices .................................................................................................... 95
Usefulness of the Early Learning Florida Courses with Respect to Increasing Practitioners’ Knowledge of Course Content ................... 95
Usefulness of the Early Learning Florida Courses with Respect to Increasing Practitioners’ Knowledge of Teaching Practice .................. 96
Usefulness of the Early Learning Florida Courses with Respect to Learning Knowledge of Working with Families .................................................... 96
Usefulness of the Early Learning Florida Courses with Respect to Learning New Approaches to Child Assessment ........................................... 97
Usefulness of the Early Learning Florida Courses with Respect to Learning Strategies to Teach ALL Children .................................................. 97
Teacher Interest in Continuing Education .................................................................................................................................................... 98
Changes Made in Practitioners’ Teaching Practices as a Result of the Early Learning Florida Course Participation ........................................ 98
Teachers Discussed What They Learned With Other Colleagues Who Did Not Participate in Early Learning Florida Courses ......................... 99
Taking Another Early Learning Florida Course ........................................................................................................................................ 100
Encouraging Other Colleagues to Take an Early Learning Florida Course .................................................................................................. 100
Support from Course Instructors, TA/Coaches and CoP Facilitators ............................................................................................................ 101
Support from Early Learning Florida Course Instructor .................................................................................................................................. 101
Course Instructor Providing Timely Feedback ................................................................................................................................................ 101
Course Instructor Communication of Ideas and Information .......................................................................................................................... 102
Course Instructor Respect and Concern for Practitioners .................................................................................................................................. 102
Course Instructor Facilitation of Learning .................................................................................................................................................. 103
Course Instructor Encouragement of Independent, Creative, and Critical Thinking .................................................................................. 103
Interactions with the UF Lastinger-Certified Coach in Improving Teachers’ Practice ............................................................................... 104
Number of Meetings with the UF Lastinger-Certified Coach .......................................................................................................................... 105
Number of Classroom Visitations the UF Lastinger-Certified Coach Completed During Course Term .......................................................... 106
Teachers Sharing Successes and Challenges in Blended CoP Sessions ....................................................................................................... 107
Teachers Seek Ideas from Colleagues in the Course CoP Sessions ................................................................................................................ 107
Teachers Learn from Others in the Course CoP Session ................................................................................................................................. 108
Number of Community of Practice (CoP) Sessions Attended ....................................................................................................................... 108
Organizational and Leadership Support .................................................................................................................................................. 109
Support from Center Director ........................................................................................................................................................................ 109
Support from Teacher Peers .......................................................................................................................................................................... 110
Lack of Necessary Course Materials .......................................................................................................................................................... 110
Collaboration with Colleagues to Implement Course Strategies .................................................................................................................. 111

RESULTS ........................................................................................................................................................................................................... 112
Qualitative Interviews .......................................................................................................................................................................................... 112
Experiences of ELPFP Stakeholders in Year 3 (2016-2017) .............................................................................................................................................. 113
Tier 2 Teachers’ Voices .......................................................................................................................................................................................... 114
Overall Tier 2 impact: Powerful Job-Embedded Learning That Promoted Professionalism ........................................................................ 114
ELPFP Provided Tools for Teachers to Teach All Children .......................................................................................................................... 116
ELPFP Helped Teachers Improve Their Classroom Learning Environment .................................................................................................. 117
Indirect Impact of ELPFP: Improvement in Children’s Language, Literacy, and Social-Emotional Development ................................................. 118
Challenges of Tier 2 Participation .................................................................................................................................................................... 118
Tier 2 Case Study: Chelsea ........................................................................................................................................................................ 120
Tier 3 Teachers’ Voices .......................................................................................................................................................................................... 122
Overall Tier 3 Impact: Three Years of Learning, Implementing, and Reflecting Created Improvement in Teacher Practice and Program Quality ........................................................................................................................................ 122
Tier 3 Providers Gained Consistent Knowledge From Certified Coaching .................................................................................................... 124
Challenges of the ELPFP: Sustainability of Funding, Teacher Retention, and Leadership Capacity .................................................................. 126
Tier 3 Case Study: Lara .................................................................................................................................................................................................. 128
ELC Leadership and Staff .......................................................................................................................................................................................... 130
Overall ELC impact: Program Structure Supported Teacher Learning ........................................................................................................ 130
ELPFP Structural Changes Promoted Implementation Improvement ........................................................................................................ 131
ELC Implementation Challenges with Year 3 ELPFP: Capacity, Communication, and Funding ........................................................................... 132
Outliers in Triangulation

Challenges with Child Assessment Systems: The Use of GOLD®

Provider Accreditation

Providers with High Populations of Children in Poverty

Limitations

Attrition

Sample Size

CLASS® Data Collection

CLASS® Ceiling Effects

Knowledge Assessments

Completion Surveys

MMCI

GOLD®

Accreditation

Qualitative Interviews

Qualitative Self-Reporting and the Hawthorne Effect

RECOMMENDATIONS

ELPFP Structure

Funding Accountability and Sustainability

Pre-tier for Florida’s Most Needy Providers

ELPFP Conference and Network for all Stakeholders

ELPFP Professional Development Strategies

Child Assessment Recommendations

Timeline for Quality Child Assessment Implementation

Potential Capacity Building for Statewide Assessment Implementation

Professional Development for Teachers and Administrators

Financial and Technical Supports for Providers

Use of GOLD® Reports to Build Instructional Capacity

Early Learning Florida Course Recommendations

Certified Coaching Based on Provider Need

ELPFP Data Processes
Effectiveness of GOLD® Implementation in the Third Year of Use ................................................................. 241
Survey Results by ELC ......................................................................................................................................... 242
Basic Information Regarding Implementation of GOLD® in Each ELC .......................................................... 242
The Use of GOLD® Reports in Each ELC ............................................................................................................ 243
Checkpoints Required for Providers in Each ELC ............................................................................................ 244
ELC Interpretations of Interrater Reliability ........................................................................................................ 245
Training for GOLD® Implementation .................................................................................................................. 246
Type of GOLD® Support Given to Providers by ELC ....................................................................................... 247
How GOLD® Results are Aggregated in Each ELC ......................................................................................... 248

APPENDIX G .......................................................................................................................................................... 249
EARLY LEARNING FLORIDA COURSE KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENTS ................................................................. 249

APPENDIX H ....................................................................................................................................................... 257
UF LASTINGER EARLY CHILDHOOD COACHING AND COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE MODEL ......................... 257

APPENDIX I ......................................................................................................................................................... 258
DEFINITION OF TERMS IN MULTILEVEL MODEL FOR SCORES OF KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENTS ..................... 258

APPENDIX J ......................................................................................................................................................... 261
TIER 3 ARTIFACTS OF PRACTICE ....................................................................................................................... 261

APPENDIX K ......................................................................................................................................................... 264
TIER 2 AND TIER 3 ELPFP COURSE OBJECTIVES AND PARTICIPANTS .......................................................... 264
FIGURES

FIGURE 1. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES FOR ELPFP YEAR 3 (2016-2017) ................................................................. 6

FIGURE 2. LOGIC MODEL OF THE EARLY LEARNING PERFORMANCE FUNDING PROJECT (2016-2017) ................................................................. 7

FIGURE 3. CLASS® THRESHOLD SCORES FOR TIER 3 ELPFP PARTICIPATION ........................................................................ 14

FIGURE 4. ELPFP EVALUATION ALIGNMENT LOGIC MODEL FOR 2016-2017 YEAR ............................................................................. 15

FIGURE 5. TIER 1 PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES FOR YEAR 3 .................................................................................... 19

FIGURE 6. TIER 2 PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES FOR YEAR 3 .................................................................................... 19

FIGURE 7. TIER 3 PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES FOR YEAR 3 .................................................................................... 20

FIGURE 8. HISTOGRAM OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF AGE FOR CONTROL AND ELPFP GROUPS FOR GOLD® CHILD DATA ACROSS ALL CHECKPOINTS .......................................................................................................................................................................................... 29

FIGURE 9. UNCONDITIONAL LINEAR LATENT GROWTH MODEL OF SIX GOLD® CHECKPOINTS ........................................................................................................... 35

FIGURE 10. MULTILEVEL REGRESSION MODEL OF KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENTS ................................................................................... 37

FIGURE 11. FREQUENCY OF PRE-K CLASS® PRE-TEST SCORES ON EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FOR TIER 1, TIER 2, AND TIER 3 PROVIDERS .......... 48

FIGURE 12. FREQUENCY OF PRE-K CLASS® POST-TEST SCORES ON EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FOR TIER 1, TIER 2, AND TIER 3 PROVIDERS .......... 49

FIGURE 13. FREQUENCY OF PRE-K CLASS® SCORES ON EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FOR PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST ACROSS TIERS ................. 49

FIGURE 14. FREQUENCY OF PRE-K CLASS® SCORES ON EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FOR PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST FOR TIER 1 PROVIDERS .......... 50

FIGURE 15. FREQUENCY OF PRE- AND POST-SCORES ON PRE-K CLASS® EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FOR TIER 2 PROVIDERS ......................... 50

FIGURE 16. FREQUENCY OF PRE- AND POST-SCORES ON PRE-K CLASS® EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FOR TIER 3 PROVIDERS ......................... 51

FIGURE 17. FREQUENCY OF PROVIDERS BY PRE-TEST PRE-K CLASS® CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION SCORE .................................................. 52

FIGURE 18. FREQUENCY OF PROVIDERS BY POST-TEST PRE-K CLASS® CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION SCORE .................................. 52

FIGURE 19. FREQUENCY OF PRE-K CLASS® CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION SCORES ACROSS TIERS .......................................................... 53

FIGURE 20. FREQUENCY OF PRE- AND POST-SCORES ON PRE-K CLASS® CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION FOR TIER 1 PROVIDERS .............. 53

FIGURE 21. FREQUENCY OF PRE- AND POST-SCORES ON PRE-K CLASS® CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION FOR TIER 2 PROVIDERS .............. 54

FIGURE 22. FREQUENCY OF PRE- AND POST-SCORES ON PRE-K CLASS® CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION FOR TIER 3 PROVIDER .............. 54

FIGURE 23. FREQUENCY OF PROVIDERS BY PRE-TEST PRE-K CLASS® INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT SCORES ...................................................... 55

FIGURE 24. FREQUENCY OF PROVIDERS BY POST-TEST PRE-K CLASS® INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT SCORES ...................................................... 56
**TABLES**

- TABLE 1. NUMBER OF CHILDREN AT EACH CHECKPOINT ................................................................. 28
- TABLE 2. TOTAL NUMBER OF CLASSROOMS OBSERVED BY AGE OF CLASSROOM.............................. 29
- TABLE 3. TOTAL NUMBER OF BLOCKS OBSERVED BY AGE OF CLASSROOM ........................................ 30
- TABLE 4. TEACHERS’ ATTENDANCE IN EACH COURSE .......................................................................... 30
- TABLE 5. DUMMY CODING SCHEMES OF PROVIDER PARTICIPATION INDICATORS FOR CLASS® ANALYSES ............................................................................................................ 33
- TABLE 6. RESULTS FROM FIXED EFFECT MODELS WITH PROGRAM PARTICIPATION CODED BY TIER ............................................................. 41
- TABLE 7. ESTIMATES AND CONFIDENCE INTERVALS FOR EFFECTS BY TIER (VALIDATION ANALYSIS) .............................................................................................................................. 42
- NOTE. RESULTS IN BOLD ARE NOT SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT FROM RESULTS OF ANALYSIS 1 .............................................................................................................................. 42
- TABLE 8. THE COEFFICIENTS ESTIMATES OF ALL SIX DOMAINS BY USING FIXED EFFECT MODELS WITH INTERVENTION TYPE INDICATORS ............................................................ 43
- TABLE 9. ESTIMATES AND CONFIDENCE INTERVALS FOR EFFECTS BY TRAINING (VALIDATION ANALYSIS) .................................................................................................................. 44
- TABLE 10. MEANS OF DOMAIN SCORES OF CLASS® AT PRE- AND POST-TEST BY TIERS AND ELCS FOR YEAR 3 OF ELPFP—TIER 1 ................................................................. 45
- TABLE 11. MEANS OF DOMAIN SCORES OF CLASS® AT PRE- AND POST-TEST BY TIERS AND ELCS FOR YEAR 3 OF ELPFP—TIER 2 ................................................................. 46
- TABLE 12. MEANS OF DOMAIN SCORES OF CLASS® AT PRE- AND POST-TEST BY TIERS AND ELCS FOR YEAR 3 OF ELPFP—TIER 3 ................................................................. 47
- TABLE 13. MEAN SCORES OF TIER 1, TIER 2 AND TIER 3 PROVIDERS AT PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST. .......................................................................................................................... 48
- TABLE 14. AVERAGE SCORES OF TIER 1, TIER 2 AND TIER 3 PROVIDERS ON PRE-K CLASS® CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION ................................................................. 51
- TABLE 15. AVERAGE SCORES OF TIER 1, TIER 2 AND TIER 3 PROVIDERS ON PRE-K CLASS® INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT ............................................................................................. 55
- TABLE 16. AVERAGE SCORES OF TIER 1, TIER 2 AND TIER 3 PROVIDERS ON TODDLER CLASS® EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT .................................................................................. 58
- TABLE 17. AVERAGE SCORES OF TIER 1, TIER 2, AND TIER 3 PROVIDERS ON TODDLER CLASS® ENGAGED SUPPORT FOR LEARNING .................................................................................. 62
- TABLE 18. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN GOLD® SCALE SCORES AND BRACKEN SCALE SCORES ................................................................................................................................. 66
- TABLE 19. PERCENTAGES OF VARIANCE OF BRACKEN SCALE SCORES ACCOUNTED FOR BY GOLD® SCALE SCORES .......................................................................................... 67
- TABLE 20. EFFECTS ON SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DOMAIN STATUS AT AGE THREE ................................................................. 68
- TABLE 21. EFFECTS ON GROWTH RATE OF SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DOMAIN ................................................................................................................................. 68
- TABLE 22. EFFECTS ON THE PHYSICAL DOMAIN AT AGE THREE ........................................................................ 70
- TABLE 23. EFFECTS ON GROWTH RATE OF PHYSICAL DOMAIN ................................................................................ 71
- TABLE 24. EFFECTS ON THE LANGUAGE DOMAIN AT AGE THREE ........................................................................ 72
EARLY LEARNING PERFORMANCE FUNDING PROJECT
YEAR THREE (2016-2017)

A STUDY PREPARED FOR THE FLORIDA OFFICE OF EARLY LEARNING
Evaluated by:

BACKGROUND

Recognizing that Florida’s School Readiness Program provides early learning opportunities to children at risk for school failure, the Florida Legislature created the Early Learning Performance Funding Project (ELPFP). The ELPFP was designed to provide performance-based funding for School Readiness providers that demonstrate improved: program quality, teacher-child interactions and/or child outcomes. The ELPFP has demonstrated a significant and positive effect on early childhood program quality and child outcomes among at-risk children and the teachers who support them. Year 3 evaluation findings validate that the ELPFP serves as an effective initiative, and provides a well-established foundation and road map for the expansion of increased investment and accountability.

Florida’s ELPFP was designed to:

- Create a funding differential for programs serving high-needs populations;
- Create professional development interventions to significantly improve teacher quality;
- Measure teacher interactions with children and provide continuous assessment of child growth and development.

554 early learning providers have participated since the beginning of the ELPFP, which includes an estimated 2,216 teachers who affect an estimated 21,052 children.

Providers were selected based on good standing with licensing standards and contractual compliance, as well as availability of funding. Each participating provider was assessed using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®), which measures the quality of teacher-child interactions and is the national leading indicator for quality early learning programs. Based on the assessment results, providers completed various professional development offerings that have demonstrated impact on effective teaching practices and improved child outcomes. To facilitate continuous quality improvement strategies based on performance, providers were classified into a Tier, dependent on their assessment results and experiences. Each Tier represents cumulative growth in quality and experiences:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 1 Provider</th>
<th>Tier 2 Provider</th>
<th>Tier 3 Provider</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-hour training for teachers to learn the basics for changing their teaching behavior for positive outcomes for children in their care [Making the Most of Classroom Interaction or MMCI] and two-hour online training to allow teachers to practice effective teaching practices and 25% of instructors/directors demonstrate progress toward meeting individualized professional development goals.</td>
<td>Prerequisites: Successful completion of all Tier 1 requirements. Successful completion of 20-40 hours of online professional development with an instructor over two 11-week terms [Early Learning Florida courses.] Conduct child assessments on all birth through five children enrolled in the School Readiness Program. Collaborate with a coach in the teacher’s classroom 4 times towards goals for improvement. 50% of instructors/directors demonstrate progress toward meeting individualized professional development goals.</td>
<td>Prerequisites: Successful completion of all Tier 1 and Tier 2 requirements. Score on the teacher observation tool that meets research-supported level of quality [CLASS®] Successful completion of 20-40 hours of online professional development with an instructor over two 11-week terms [Early Learning Florida courses.] Conduct child assessments on all enrolled children. Collaborate with a coach in the teacher’s classroom 4 times towards goals for improvement. 75% of instructors/directors demonstrate progress toward meeting individualized professional development goals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on the Year 3 evaluation, ELPFP interventions demonstrated an overall significant positive impact on program quality, teacher-child interactions, gains in teacher knowledge, change in teacher practice, and teacher collaboration in the classroom. There was also significant positive cumulative impact shown from ELPFP interventions in Tier 3 direct child outcomes. Tier 3 teachers and directors verified this cumulative benefit from three years of continuous participation and reflection on quality instructional and programmatic improvement.

FINDINGS SUMMARY

Impact On Direct Child Outcomes
A sample of Tier 3 children's growth and development was measured over the course of the 2016-2017 year:
- Child assessment scores showed teacher participation in the ELPFP demonstrated significant positive effects on children's social-emotional, physical, language, and cognitive growth and development.
- The growth rate of children was an average of 23% higher than children who did not participate; meaning children in ELPFP providers increased growth at a faster pace and made more gains in less time than their peers who did not participate in ELPFP sites.

Impact On Program Quality
Teacher-child interactions are the strongest predictor of program quality and children's readiness for success.
- Program quality, as measured by teacher-child interaction scores, showed significant increases in each tier.
- The gains improved annually showing the cumulative impact of participation in the ELPFP, with scores increasing as much as 79%.

Impact On Teacher Knowledge
Gains in teacher knowledge is an important predictor for improving practice. The required professional development substantially improved teacher knowledge.
- Teacher knowledge improved by 26% with just one year of participation in the ELPFP in the [MMCI training.]
- Teacher knowledge improved more significantly after two years of participation in the ELPFP, with scores increasing as much as 82%. [Early Learning Florida courses.]

Impact On Teacher Practice and Collaboration In the Classroom
In teacher qualitative interviews, teachers provided evidence of impact from ELPFP participation.
- Over 90% of teachers reported Early Learning Florida courses were extremely useful in providing strategies for teaching ALL children, including those with special needs, dual-language learners, and high-needs populations, as well as creating learning partnerships with families. The research reported a particular impact on teacher's skills to support children's language and literacy development.
- All Tier 3 participants reported that the certified coaching they received was significantly beneficial to their teaching practice.
- 85% of Tier 2 and 3 teachers reported they collaborated with other teachers when implementing practices learned.
- 80% of teachers reported course content and strategies were extremely useful in their daily instructional practice.
- Over 80% of Tier 2 and 3 teachers reported interest in taking additional professional development and career advancement

Stakeholder Successes and Challenges With ELPFP Implementation
Overall themes of positive stakeholder experiences from the ELPFP Year 3 experience were:
- Overall program quality improvement from ELPFP interventions.
- Increased professionalism of teachers and providers.
- Improvement in language and literacy for teachers and the children they serve.

Participants reported that they would have benefitted more from the initiative with:
- More time, training, support, and accountability for implementing a child assessment system.
- More compensation to continue career advancement.
- ELPFP structures to promote teacher retention.
- ELPFP to include leadership capacity building with teachers and directors.
- Support for early learning coalitions to increase capacity for implementation and communication support.
- Expanded access for more programs to participate in the ELPFP.

CONCLUSION
The Early Learning Performance Funding Project is having a significant, positive impact on quality of programs serving Florida's highest need children. This investment holds great promise for expanding access to high quality programs in the future.
STUDY BACKGROUND

High-quality early learning programs help children have the foundation for lifelong social and emotional skills, literacy, curiosity, and approaches to learning (Barnett, 2011; Pianta, Barnett, Burchinal, & Thornburg, 2009; Sabol, Hong, Pianta & Burchinal, 2013). Driven by this understanding, Florida’s Office of Early Learning (OEL), along with the state’s 30 early learning coalitions (ELCs), provider associations, and other partners have collaborated on the Early Learning Performance Funding Project (ELPFP) to improve the quality of early childhood programs and develop the skills and knowledge of early childhood professionals.

The Florida Legislature created the pilot of the Early Learning Performance Funding Project (ELPFPP) through the 2014-2015 General Appropriations Act. The ELPFPP was designed to: (1) place an emphasis on school readiness providers in areas with high-needs populations; and (2) collect sufficient data to determine if targeted professional development experiences had a positive impact on program quality, teacher interactions with children, and/or child outcomes. The project was approved to continue into the 2015-2016 fiscal year, offering the opportunity for approximately 400 early learning providers and their teachers to receive additional support for improving school readiness program outcomes (Florida Office of Early Learning, 2015). Based on the positive evaluation and results of the program’s pilot implementation over the last two years, the Florida Legislature approved continuation of this quality improvement program as the ELPFP in 2016-2017.

To understand the impact of this investment, OEL commissioned the Florida Center for Reading Research at Florida State University to complete the Year 1 evaluation of the pilot year and then the University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning (UF Lastinger Center), in partnership with Yale University, to complete the comprehensive evaluation study of the ELPFP in 2015-2016 and 2016-2017. This cumulative evaluation study emphasizes examining if early learning provider participation in the ELPFP has an effect on program quality, gains in teacher knowledge, improvement in teacher-child interactions, implementation of effective teaching practices, improvement in classroom climate, the use of child assessments, and improvement in direct child outcomes.

This final evaluation report includes:
• An overview of the 2016-2017 ELPFP
• A detailed overview of the methods and design of the ELPFP 2016-2017 evaluation study
• Quantitative and qualitative evaluation results of the ELPFP for 2016-2017
• Key strengths and challenges of ELPFP improvement strategies by key stakeholders: Tiers 2 and 3 providers; ELC leadership and staff
• Detailed descriptions of stakeholders’ experiences emphasizing both successes and practical and contextual issues faced with ELPFP 2016-2017 implementation
• Quantitative and qualitative evidence of growth from Tier 3 providers that have participated in the ELPFP since the inception of the program (three-year duration)
• Analysis, implications and recommendations to strengthen the ELPFP for the 2017-2018 Year 4 implementation and future years
OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM AND EVALUATION PLAN

The Early Learning Performance Funding Pilot Project- Year One (2014-2015)
Florida’s Early Learning Performance Funding Pilot Project (ELPFPP) began in 2014, designed to achieve the following: (1) create a funding differential to provide incentives for programs serving high-needs populations; (2) create professional development interventions to significantly improve teacher quality; and (3) incorporate a research-based observational system to measure teacher interactions with children. In year one of the ELPFPP implementation, 200 providers were selected as the “treatment” group from specific criteria and required to improve school readiness outcomes through tiered interventions, and 200 providers were selected as the “control” group and did not receive these interventions but were provided incentives for their participation. The Florida Center for Reading Research (Florida Center for Reading Research, 2015) was commissioned to conduct evaluation of this pilot year (2014-2015).

The Early Learning Performance Funding Pilot Project- Year Two (2015-2016)
The ELPFP was approved to continue for the 2015-2016 fiscal year by the Florida Legislature. This approval gave approximately 400 providers and their teachers the opportunity to receive additional funding for improving School Readiness program outcomes (OEL, 2015). The professional development design was refined for Year 2 and providers were assigned to one of two tiers based on previous performance and program pre-requisites (OEL, 2015). Participants received over 20 hours of high quality, focused professional development; demonstrated mastery of skills learned in professional development through regular benchmark submissions; received coaching to improve teacher practice and support implementation of individualized instruction to young children; and implemented a child assessment tool for school readiness children.

Based on the stated objectives of OEL’s 2015-2016 ELPFPP Implementation Logic Model (Rodgers et al., 2016), the UF Lastinger Center and Yale University research team created a research plan to align with the data collection instruments and measurements to determine if these proposed outcomes were achieved. Specifically, these investigations focused on whether early learning provider participation in the ELPFPP had a positive impact on: (1) teacher knowledge; (2) teacher-child interactions; (3) teacher implementation of effective teaching practices; (4) classroom climate; and (5) teacher use of curriculum-based child assessments.
Results from the 2015-2016 ELPFPP Evaluation study determined the following findings:

ELPFPP sites improved program quality for 14,733 children who received school readiness funds.

Over 1,300 teachers from 275 early learning providers improved program quality, teacher-child interactions, and their skills and knowledge in educating young children.

IMPACT ON TEACHER KNOWLEDGE GAIN as measured by Early Learning Florida course pre- and post-knowledge assessments:

- 43% average increase of teacher knowledge gain for Infant-Toddler courses
- 23% average increase of teacher knowledge gain for Preschool courses

IMPACT ON TEACHER-CHILD INTERACTIONS: Teacher-child interactions significantly improved for participants in the ELPFPP, as measured by the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®):

- 23% average improvement in program quality for ELPFPP providers

IMPACT ON TEACHER PRACTICE AND COLLABORATION IN THE CLASSROOM as measured by Early Learning Florida course completion surveys and stakeholder qualitative interviews:

- 88% of teachers reported a positive change in teaching practice as a result of participating in the ELPFPP
- 87% of teachers collaborated with other colleagues when implementing new teaching strategies
- 72% of teachers indicated they are able to easily implement the new strategies into their classrooms on a daily basis

CHALLENGES OF YEAR 2 IMPLEMENTATION as measured by qualitative stakeholder interviews and Early Learning Florida course completion surveys:

- Teachers reported challenges such as lack of technology access or expertise, lack of time for implementation and understanding, and lack of organizational support regarding the implementation of child-based assessments
- ELC leadership focus groups voiced challenges such as ELC lack of staffing capacity to implement ELPFPP strategies, lack of input regarding provider selection and support, and lack of oversight regarding ELPFPP guidelines and funding as obstacles for both provider and ELC success
- Teacher attrition rates for the ELPFPP program were significant, with over 30% of teachers who started the 2015-2016 year leaving or being dropped from the program
The Early Learning Performance Funding Project - Year Three (2016-2017)

After obtaining overall positive results from the ELPFPP in Year 2, the Florida Legislature approved the continued funding for this initiative, calling it the Early Learning Performance Funding Project (ELPFPP) for 2016-2017. The goal of the funding was to give selected, eligible early learning providers and their teachers an opportunity to earn additional funding for improving School Readiness program outcomes. For this Year 3 implementation, at least 30 percent of a provider’s enrollment had to include children in the School Readiness Program (OEL, 2016). OEL also established the following objectives for the Year 3 project implementation based on evaluation results from the 2015-2016 year: (1) Increase School Readiness subsidy payment rates for providers that exhibit quality, i.e. pay for performance; (2) incorporate participation in local supports such as technical assistance and ELC professional development opportunities that increase quality; (3) gain statewide data to target quality improvement; (4) shift from building capacity to rewarding sustained quality; (5) reward providers for what they have already accomplished; and (6) create joint decision-making between providers and ELCs to plan quality improvement (OEL, 2016). The professional development design was created based on OEL’s implementation goals as well as modifications towards stronger, more individualized teacher professional development based on the Year 2 evaluation (Rodgers et al., 2016). ELPFP Year 3 improvement strategies consisted of three tiers of professional development and financial incentives as seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Professional Development Strategies for ELPFP Year 3 (2016-2017)

The UF Lastinger Center and Yale University were commissioned to continue the evaluation study of the ELPFP for the 2016-2017 implementation year. To accurately evaluate the goals and desired outcomes of the ELPFP, OEL and the UF-Yale research team created an implementation logic model based upon OEL’s stated objectives and alignment with Year 3 improvement strategies. This model details the inputs (sources of both financial and human capital) of these tiered initiatives, the professional development activities of each tier, and assumed desired short-term and intermediate outcomes based on these objectives. As part of this evaluation, data from a myriad of sources, using both quantitative and qualitative measures, were collected to answer multiple formative and summative inquiries to assess the impact of this project.
YEAR 3 EVALUATION FINDINGS SUMMARY: 2016-2017

Impact on teacher-child interactions Information regarding the quality of teacher-child interactions was gathered using CLASS®, and two sets of subsequent analysis were performed with one comparing the differences on each of the six domains of CLASS® between teachers receiving trainings against those that were not across tiers, and the other investigating the mentioned differences between types of professional training. Each of the analyses was validated alternatively using Bayesian approaches.

In comparing the cumulative effect of professional development interventions, the 20-hour Making the Most of Classroom Interactions (MMCI) training presented significant positive impact on teacher-child interactions for the age groups of Pre-K and Toddler. The effects ranged from CLASS® score increases of 0.49 to 0.76 depending on a particular domain/aspect of CLASS®. However, the net effect of year-one Early Learning Florida (i.e., the effect of year-one Early Learning Florida after taking out the effect of MMCI) showed significant effect on the Pre-K CLASS® Instructional Support (IS) domain and Toddler CLASS® Engaged Support for Learning (ESL) domain. A similar pattern of increase in Pre-K CLASS® IS and Toddler CLASS® ESL was found on the net effect of the year-two Early Learning Florida (i.e., the effect of year-two Early Learning Florida after taking out the effect of MMCI and the effect of year-one Early Learning Florida).

For the second consecutive year, all three tiers improved in the Pre-K Instructional Support (IS) domain.
- In Tier 1: 32% of teachers improved IS scores and gains ranged from 3% to 76%.
- In Tier 2: 51% of teachers improved IS scores and gains ranged from 4% to 77%.
- In Tier 3: 60% of teachers made improvements in IS and gains ranged from 20% to 79%.

An analysis of CLASS® scores in Pre-K and Toddler domains showed significant increases for those teachers who participated in Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions. Tier 1 increases ranged from 0.53 to 0.76 and Tier 2 increases ranged from 0.58 to 1.10 depending upon the domain. For Tier 3, significant gains were detected on the domains of Pre-K CLASS® Instructional Support (IS) and Toddler CLASS® Engaged Support for Learning (ESL), which are widely recognized as the most challenging domains to improve.

Impact on direct child outcomes Investigations of the impact of ELPFP interventions on child outcomes were conducted two-fold: a validation study and a growth modeling study of children’s ongoing development and learning. The former was aimed at establishing validity evidence on external criteria and was accomplished by inspecting the relationships between domains measured by the child assessment tool, GOLD® and those measured by the Bracken School Readiness Assessment, Third Edition (BSRA-3). The validity study supported the use of the GOLD® as a child assessment as there were moderate to large correlations between GOLD® domains and Bracken domains.

Across the six domains of GOLD®, the latent growth models showed participation in the ELPFP intervention demonstrated significant positive effects on the improvement of children’s ongoing development and learning. Relative to children in the control group, the percent improvement in growth rate ranged from 10% to 26%, depending on particular domains for those receiving the intervention. Also, providers with an accreditation had children with higher scores at age three and growth rates for many of the domains. However, there were negative interactions between ELPFP and accreditation, meaning that within ELPFP providers, those with an accreditation had children who had lower scores and growth rates on average than those without accreditation.
Impact on Class Climate
The Preschool Climate of Healthy Interactions for Learning and Development (CHILD) assessment revealed evidence showing that mean scores on certain domains (Transitions, Directions & Rules, Staff Awareness, Staff Affect, Staff Cooperation, Staff-Child Interactions, and Child Behaviors) are slightly higher for teachers receiving the ELPFP interventions compared to those in the control group.

Impact on Teacher Knowledge Gain
The gains for Tier 1 were substantial, indicating that MMCI training was effective in terms of improving teacher’s knowledge. Results indicate that there was statistically significant increase from pre-test to post-test on MMCI by 1.63, or an average gain of 26%. The results of the knowledge assessment analysis indicated substantial gains from pre-test to post-test for teachers in Tier 2 and Tier 3 providers in all Early Learning Florida courses. Among the 13 Early Learning Florida courses, average percentage gain scores on knowledge assessment varied from 17% to 82%.

Teachers enrolled in Spanish courses averaged gains that were approximately 18% lower than teachers in English courses; however, teachers who enrolled in Spanish courses obtained a higher mastery rate of the course (those that scored 80% or higher) by almost 8% from those who completed English courses. From qualitative sources, teachers described knowledge gain related to strategies to promote classroom engagement, children's language and literacy, and improving the classroom learning environment.

Impact on Teacher Practice and Collaboration in the Classroom
In qualitative interviews, teachers reported using knowledge gained from ELPFP in their practice with fidelity, and provided anecdotal evidence of impact on children's learning and behavior from these strategies. From course completion surveys, more than 85% of teachers reported that they collaborated with other teachers when implementing practices learned in Early Learning Florida courses. Around 80% of teachers reported course content and strategies were extremely useful in their daily instructional practice, and over 80% of teachers reported having interest in taking another Early Learning Florida course, with Spanish course takers reporting a higher interest than English course takers. Over 90% of teachers reported that Early Learning Florida courses were extremely useful in providing strategies for working with families, and for providing strategies to work with ALL children.

Impact of Internal (Center Director and Teacher Peer) Support and External (Organizational) Support on Teacher Learning and Practice:
From course completion surveys and qualitative interviews, the majority of teachers reported receiving tremendous support from internal leadership such as center directors or teacher peers, as well as organizational support from ELC staff and coaches. Over 78% of teachers reported support from directors, and 88% of teachers reported support from teacher peers. The majority of teachers (78%) also reported no issues with receiving necessary professional development materials to implement learning from MMCI trainings and Early Learning Florida courses.

Stakeholder Successes and Challenges with ELPFP Implementation
Results from stakeholder interviews showed a shift of impact from Year 2 to Year 3, from individual teacher impact to a collective system impact involving all stakeholders, which follows the intended logic model of this initiative in which individual impact is then transformed into center and system reform. Overall themes of positive stakeholder experiences from the ELPFP Year 3 experience were: (1) Increased professionalism of teachers and providers; (2) improvement in language and literacy
for teachers and the children they serve; and (3) overall program quality improvement from ELPFP interventions. Tier 2 participants reported specific benefits such as the ELPFP providing tools to teach all children, the tools and funding to improve classroom environments, and saw direct improvement in children’s language and literacy outcomes. Tier 3 teachers and directors reported similar results and benefits, and also reported a cumulative benefit from three years of continuous implementation and reflection on improvement strategies. Tier 3 participants also reported the significant professional development benefits of certified coaching to provide one-on-one support that increased outcomes. ELCs mirrored these benefits from an organizational perspective, and also highlighted the changes in ELPFP structures and guidelines from Year 2 to Year 3 that promoted these positive shifts.

Challenges from teachers and director participants included the need for more time and training to effectively implement child assessment systems; the need for more compensation for these interventions to continue teacher career advancement; and the need for ELPFP structures to promote teacher retention and leadership capacity within teachers and directors. ELC stakeholders also echoed these practitioner challenges, and continued to voice challenges with ELC capacity for implementation, communication regarding ELPFP structures and policies, and the sustainability of funding this initiative.

Overall Impact of ELPFP in 2016-2017
Based on the Year 3 evaluation, ELPFP interventions demonstrated an overall significant positive impact on program quality, teacher-child interactions, teacher knowledge, teacher practice, and teacher collaboration in the classroom. There was also significant positive cumulative impact shown from ELPFP interventions in Tier 3 direct child outcomes.

Tier 3 teachers and directors verified this cumulative benefit from three years of continuous participation and reflection on quality instructional and programmatic improvement. This three-year investment from the Florida Legislature and the OEL has demonstrated significant quality improvements and elevated the teaching and learning of Florida’s early childhood workforce that participated in this program.
STUDY METHODOLOGY

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THIS STUDY
The conceptual framework that informed the research design for this study is based on research of quality early childhood educational settings; the examination between provider quality and improvement in child outcomes; synthesis reports on the current state of early childhood professional development, and research on core theories of action to produce teacher change in practice and improve children's learning.

Research on Early Childhood Educational Quality and Child Outcomes
Multiple studies confirm classroom quality predicts positive developmental and academic outcomes for children (Barnett, 2011; Curby et al., 2009; Mashburn et al., 2008; Pianta, Barnett, Burchinal, & Thornburg, 2009; Sabol, Hong, Pianta & Burchinal, 2013). For example, The NICHD Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development (2007) is a seminal study that examined children's experiences in early education settings and elementary schools across the country. After examining the educational experiences of over 1,300 children who were followed from birth through ninth grade academic year, researchers determined that quality interactions were a major component of successful educational outcomes, and specifically identified how teachers interacted with children as the main contributor to that quality (NICHD, 2007). Furthermore, targeted professional development helps teachers improve how they interact with children, leading to better child outcomes (Curby et al., 2009; Mashburn et al., 2008).

Quality of early child care programs can be discussed as structural quality and process quality. (Winterbottom & Piasta, 2015). Structural quality are elements that are evident in the environment and can be easily regulated by state or regulatory licensing, but are not necessarily dependent on human interactions (Cassidy et al., 2005; Winterbottom & Piasta, 2015). Factors such as teacher-child ratios and health and safety issues fall into this category. Process quality, however, requires human interaction, and targets specific teacher-child interactions and activities (Cassidy et al., 2005). Mashburn et al. (2008) indicates that the quality of teacher-child interaction in prekindergarten programs was a better predictor of children’s school readiness than structural classroom quality. Process quality is considered more critical because it influences children more directly (Zellman, Perlman, Le, & Setodji, 2008).

A growing body of research has outlined positive relations between children who attend high quality preschools and higher academic performance and outcomes (NICHD ECCRN, 2003). The NICHD study of early child care (2003), found that high quality child care was significantly associated with cognitive development and language development. Children in high quality child care programs have been shown to have better language skills than children in lower quality preschools (Winterbottom & Piasta, 2015). Evidence from other studies (D'Amour, 2008; Peisner-Feinberg et al., 2001) also indicates that high-quality early childhood programs are beneficial for the cognitive and language development of children in high-needs environments, and these gains have been shown to continue in later school years.

Teacher Professional Development in Early Childhood Settings
Educational research has identified the continuing development and learning of teachers as key to improving the quality of educational programs in the United States (Desimone, 2009; Putnam & Borko, 2000), and, as a result, creating effective professional development for educators has become integral in transforming all levels of education (Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson & Orphanos, 2009;

Due to varied levels of education, training and experience of early childhood teachers, there is a growing call in early childhood literature to determine what professional development experiences produce the highest quality early learning programs (Neuman, Roskos, Vukelich & Clements, 2003). Priorities include the importance of “teacher or caregiver-child interactions that are emotionally supportive, responsive to children's individual and developmental needs, and rich in their provision of support for children’s exploration and understanding of new concepts” (Smith, Robbins, Schneider, Kreader & Ong, 2012, p. 4). Thus, professional development for early childhood educators should facilitate the acquisition of specific learning and social-emotional competencies in young children (Sheridan, Edwards, Marvin, & Knoche, 2009).

A synthesis of studies examined the connections between program characteristics and environmental quality in early childhood settings, and found that teachers with more education and specialization in early childhood development had higher quality programs and engaged children in best practices (Fukkink & Lont, 2007). Kontos & Wilcox-Herzog (1997) showed that teachers demonstrated positive gains from professional development in the domains of roles (socializing, encouraging play, managing misbehavior); sensitivity (being responsive, not harsh or detached); and teacher talk (frequency and quality of verbal support and stimulation). Other studies (Girolametto, Weitzman, & Greenburg, 2003; Rhodes & Hennessy, 2000) showed a dramatic increase in children's language production as well as intensification of children's play after teacher training. There is also evidence that indicates the importance of connecting early childhood content and context in teachers' professional development, and researchers suggest that professional development should occur in the learning context of teacher practices in their classrooms, and not at off-site workshops or trainings (Neuman & Cunningham, 2009).

However, there is a growing consensus that existing early childhood professional development efforts at the national, state, and local levels are fragmented at best (Buyesse, Winton & Rous, 2009; Institute of Medicine and National Research Council, 2015; Winton & McCollum, 2008), and professional learning within teacher practice in early childhood classrooms is almost non-existent (Fukkink & Lont, 2007).

Quality Professional Development Research and Design
Numerous studies have documented a causal link between improved teacher practice and improved child outcomes (Desimone, 2009; Hamilton et al., 2003; Mayer, 1998; Supovitz, 2001; Wenglinsky, 2002):

1. Teachers experience effective professional development.
2. Professional development increases teachers’ knowledge and skills and/or changes attitudes and beliefs.
3. Teachers use their new knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs to improve the content of their instruction or their approach, or both.
4. The instructional changes foster increases in student learning.

Based on this conceptual framework for studying teachers’ professional development (Desimone, 2009), specific design features are critical to quality professional development intervention research. First, the issue of what treatment being studied in professional development interventions rests on two theories, the theory of instruction and the theory of teacher change. Theory of instruction is the
link between the specific kinds of teacher knowledge and instruction (a specific set of instructional practices) emphasized in the professional development, and the expected changes in child outcomes. Theory of teacher change examines the features of the professional development that will promote change in teacher knowledge and/or practice including its theory about the assumed mechanisms through which features of the professional development are expected to support teacher learning (duration, span, elements of activities, and intermediate teacher outcomes). This model also operates using classroom context as an important mediator and moderator (Desimone, 2009).

Secondly, professional development research needs to address what should be measured, and how and when those outcomes should be measured (Supovitz, 2001). The “what” examines specific alignment between approaches of instruction. The “how” examines specific methodologies, such as observations, surveys, interviews and direct assessments to determine the alignment between the content of what is taught in the classroom and the changes in both teacher and student performance; and the “when” must allow for sufficient time between the professional development intervention and the measurement of the professional development impact. Therefore, during implementation years (when teachers are receiving interventions), studies should focus on increases in teacher knowledge and changes in teacher attitude, beliefs, and practices (Borko, 2004; Desimone, 2009; Wayne et al., 2008).

Together, this research highlights key assumptions that underlie our research for this evaluation, which are: (a) early childhood education programs that are characterized by stimulating and supportive teacher-child interactions in classroom settings promote children’s learning and school readiness; (b) quality teaching plays an immense role in children’s early learning development; (b) professional development that occurs within the context of teachers’ classrooms and contains both content and pedagogical knowledge may best support early learning teachers to apply knowledge into practice; and (c) the causal link between teachers’ gain of knowledge and change in beliefs and practices to provide improved instruction requires the study of outcomes over a span of time that allows teachers to implement these changes.

**CONTEXT OF STUDY**

Based on these theoretical underpinnings of quality professional development research and design, this study focused on measuring the impact of early learning provider participation in the ELPFP on program quality, teacher knowledge gain, improvement in teacher-child interactions, implementation of effective teaching practices, improvement in classroom climate, the use of child assessments, and based on results of comprehensive analysis from previous implementation years, an investigation into child outcomes. Researchers also investigated what these effects were, and how and why they occurred with data from participant experiences.
Year 3 of the ELPFP was comprised of three tiered interventions administered at the provider level (i.e., early childhood centers or family child care homes) and consisted of engaging providers in both online, blended, and face-to-face professional development and instructional support. In the 2016-2017 year, participants had specific requirements for eligibility to participate in ELPFP. Participants were selected for each tier based on previous successful ELPFP participation as well as recommendations from their local ELC, and were under contract with that ELC to provide services to children receiving child care subsidies (called School Readiness funds). The requirements of participation for each tier included:

**Tier 1 Provider**
- All teachers complete the twenty hour *Making the Most of Classroom Interaction* (MMCI) training
- All teachers complete the two hour Introduction to CLASS® training
- A sample of teachers (25%) complete a Professional Development Progress Plan

**Tier 2 Provider**
- All teachers complete two *Early Learning Florida* courses
- A sample of teachers implement an approved child assessment tool for School Readiness children
- All teachers participate in four technical assistance/coaching visits
- A sample of teachers (50%) complete a Professional Development Progress Plan

**Tier 3 Provider**
- All teachers complete all Tier 2 requirements
- Providers must meet minimum CLASS® threshold scores (see Figure 3)
- The majority of teachers (75%) complete a Professional Development Progress Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infant CLASS®</th>
<th>Toddler CLASS®</th>
<th>Pre-K CLASS®</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsive Caregiving:</td>
<td>Emotional/Behavioral</td>
<td>Emotional Support: 5.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Support: 5.0</td>
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<td>Engaged Support for</td>
<td>Classroom Organization:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning: 3.0</td>
<td>4.5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Instructional Support:</td>
<td>2.49</td>
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*Figure 3. CLASS® Threshold Scores for Tier 3 ELPFP Participation*

This evaluation included observations and assessments of all three levels of ELPFP providers, and the evaluation scope is presented in the ELPFP Year 3 Evaluation Logic Model in Figure 4.
Early Learning Performance Funding Project
Year 3 Evaluation 2016-2017

EVALUATION LOGIC MODEL FOR YEAR 3 (2016-2017)

Figure 4. ELPFP Evaluation Alignment Logic Model for 2016-2017 Year
## ELPFP REQUIRED BENCHMARKS FOR YEAR 3

Participation in ELPFP required all providers to submit evidence of completion for benchmarks at four times during the 2016-2017 program year, which were reviewed and approved by ELCs before submission to the OEL database.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmark 1</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• All providers were required to have CLASS® pre-observations completed</td>
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<td>• Tier 1 providers were required to purchase MMCI training kits, and</td>
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<td>complete a two hour Intro to CLASS® online module</td>
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<td>• Tier 2 and 3 providers were required to show that they had met the</td>
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<td>prerequisite professional development offered in prior tiers, as well as</td>
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<td>show registration for their first Early Learning Florida course</td>
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<th>Benchmark 2</th>
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<td></td>
<td>• Tier 1 providers were required to show significant progress in their 20-</td>
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<td>hour MMCI coursework</td>
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<td>• Tier 2 and 3 providers were required to show that they had completed</td>
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<td>one Early Learning Florida course and registered for a second, as well as</td>
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<td>participate in two TA/Coaching visits, and conduct an initial child</td>
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<td>assessment</td>
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<th>Benchmark 3</th>
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<td></td>
<td>• All tiers were required to generate a professional development progress</td>
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<td>plan for teachers who had not yet completed an associate's degree or</td>
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<td>higher in early childhood education, or a related field</td>
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<td>• Tier 1 providers were required to show “significant” progress in their</td>
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<td>MMCI coursework</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Tier 2 and 3 providers were required to show participation in Early</td>
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<td>Learning Florida courses, and participate in two additional TA/Coaching</td>
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<td>visits</td>
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<th>Benchmark 4</th>
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<td></td>
<td>• All tiers were required to demonstrate progress on their professional</td>
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<td>development progress plan and receive a CLASS® post-observation for each</td>
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<td>active classroom</td>
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<td>• Tier 1 providers were required to show completion of the full 20 hour</td>
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<td>MMCI course</td>
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<td>• Tiers 2 and 3 providers were required to demonstrate mastery in their</td>
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<td>second ELFL course (80% in course), complete (but not pass) the</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Interrater Reliability Test on an approved child assessment tool, and</td>
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<td>conduct their final child assessment</td>
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In addition, for benchmarks 2-4 all providers were required to update their teacher/director rosters, active classrooms, and provide quality expenditure reports to ELCs.
**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

Due to the reference of several contextual terms in this report, the following is a glossary to provide common language for readers to interpret findings:

**Bayesian approach**
Through a standard set of procedures and formulae, this method of statistical inference is used to revise the probability for a hypothesis as new evidence becomes available after taking into account the relevant evidence related to the particular case being examined.

**Coach**
According to the definition from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, 2011), an early learning instructional coach is a professional who uses reflective practice strategies to help teachers analyze their teaching and its impact on children. As engaged facilitators of teacher learning, coaches cultivate in teachers the habit of continually assessing what teachers can do to support children's learning.

**Course Instructor**
A UF-trained and employed instructor of online *Early Learning Florida* course for Tier 2 and Tier 3 participants.

**Community of Practice (CoP) Facilitator**
A Community of Practice facilitator is a UF Lastinger trained professional who works closely with teachers and directors in a Community of Practice to support this group of learners through facilitated dialogue, examination of problems of practice, and group collaboration. In the context of the ELPFP, CoP facilitators arranged and led CoP sessions of the online + CoP option of *Early Learning Florida* courses.

**Director**
An early learning professional who provides administrative, organizational, instructional and operational leadership in an early learning provider site.

**Early Learning Coalitions (ELCs)**
In accordance with Florida Statute 411.01 that establishes Florida's Office of Early Learning, ELCs are non-profit organizations that establish programs and policies to prepare Florida's children from birth through Prekindergarten for success in school. There are 30 ELCs that serve all 67 counties in Florida and oversee implementation of the School Readiness program (child care subsidies for low-income working families), the Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten program (VPK), and other early childhood supports and services.

**Programs**
Strategic plans and services offered by ELCs and early learning providers designed to improve the social-emotional, health, and cognitive outcomes for children from birth through prekindergarten.

**Provider**
Providers are organizations who serve children age birth through five to provide educational and supportive care environments. Providers include family child care home, public schools, and private and faith-based care centers.
Provider Associations
Organizations that support leadership development for providers by offering access to resources and opportunities for collaboration, training, and accreditation.

School Readiness Program
Birth to prekindergarten programs offered by early learning providers contracted with their local ELC to serve children meeting eligibility criteria which include low-income families, children at risk of abuse and/or neglect, and other vulnerable populations.

Teacher
An early childhood professional with daily responsibilities for the caring for and educating young children.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
Based on the intended short and intermediate outcomes (1-3 years) of the ELPFP Year 3 implementation, the following research questions were investigated:

1. What impact does the Early Learning Performance Funding Project (ELPFP) have on teacher-child interactions for all tiers, and specifically for Tier 2 and 3 programs across multiple years of participation?
2. Are ELPFP tiered improvement strategies starting to show an impact on direct child outcomes after three years of participation by teachers, as compared to a control group?
3. What impact does the Early Learning Performance Funding Project (ELPFP) have on classroom climate for Tier 3 teachers as compared to a control group?
4. What impact does the Early Learning Performance Funding Project (ELPFP) have on teacher knowledge for Tier 1, 2 and 3 providers?
5. Do the effects of participating in the Tier 2 and 3 programs depend on predictors such as time spent in course Learning Management System (LMS); course language option; course model option; teacher-child classroom ratios, type of accreditation, or participation in a local QRIS?
6. Do Early Learning Florida course experiences of Tier 2 and Tier 3 providers depend on internal leadership support from center directors and teacher peers; and external organizational support?
**INTerventions**

**Tier 1 Professional Development Strategies**

**Making the Most of Child Interactions (MMCI)**

MMCI is an interactive, face-to-face training for teachers to help prepare them to recognize, understand, and implement stronger teacher-child interactions in their classroom or care settings. The teacher attends 10 two-hour workshops with a Teachstone-trained instructor where teachers learn to identify and describe effective interactions with young children, discuss strategies on how to interact intentionally to increase their children’s learning, and are provided with CLASS® handouts and exemplar video resources (Teachstone, 2016).

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![Figure 5. Tier 1 Professional Improvement Strategies for Year 3](image)

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**Figure 6. Tier 2 Professional Improvement Strategies for Year 3.**
TIER 2 AND TIER 3 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Early Learning Florida Professional Development System
Early Learning Florida is an online/blended professional learning system custom-designed to build the skills and knowledge of early learning teachers who serve infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in centers, schools, and family child care homes. Early Learning Florida courses can be accessed online 24 hours a day and offer teachers guidance and feedback from a highly qualified course instructor. Courses are provided free of charge to the teacher and upon mastery (80%), the teacher can earn up to 2.0 CEUs or 20 in-service hours. Online discussion forums provide opportunities to collaborate with peers, and additional support is also delivered through face-to-face meetings with a trained Communities of Practice facilitator or a Certified Early Learning Coach. There are three levels in which a teacher can experience Early Learning Florida courses:

Online only: Participants take the course with an online course instructor who provides guidance and feedback to each participant through the course learning management system (LMS).

Online + Community of Practice (CoP): Participants take a blended course, in which they participate in online course with an online course instructor in conjunction with meeting face-to-face as a cohort with a UF Lastinger-Certified CoP Facilitator multiple times during the course to reflect on their practice and support implementation of the content.

Online + TA/Coaching: Participants take a blended course, in which they participate in online course with an online course instructor in conjunction with engaging in one-on-one individualized sessions with a UF Lastinger-Certified Early Learning Coach in their classroom or family child care home.
Technical Assistance and Instructional Coaching

Within the Tier 2 and Tier 3 ELPFP programs, there were two variations of the coaching delivered through technical assistance and/or instructional coaching:

- **Coaching Option A:** For Tier 2 and Tier 3 providers that engaged in the ELPFP Early Learning Florida course option that did not provide coaching, these providers received four technical assistance visits from coaches working with their local ELC. These coaches were not required to be UF Lastinger-Certified Coaches, but some ELCs chose to use UF Lastinger-Certified Coaches for this process.

- **Coaching Option B:** For Tier 2 and Tier 3 ELPFP providers that engaged in the Early Learning Florida course option that included TA/Coaching, they also received the required four coaching visits per ELPFP guidelines. However, these coaching visits were provided by a UF Lastinger-Certified Coach, and coaching sessions focused specifically on course content, instructional support, and specific teacher-centered learning strategies to improve child outcomes based on the UF Lastinger Early Childhood Instructional Coaching Model (see Appendix H).

Child Assessment Systems

OEL has approved three assessment systems for use in the state of Florida: Teaching Strategies GOLD® (GOLD®); Assessment Technology, Incorporated (Galileo); and High Scope Educational Research Foundation Child Observation Record (COR). Both ATI and COR systems are designed to coordinate with a specific curriculum also produced by the publishers, while GOLD® considers its system agnostic of a curriculum choice, but still aligns with the Creative Curriculum® system.

ELPFP providers had the option of using any of these child assessment systems within this program, but the majority of ELPFP providers (over 60%) have implemented GOLD® based on provider reports and feedback from participant surveys.

**GOLD®**

GOLD® combines authentic observational assessment with performance tasks for selected objectives in literacy and numeracy. It can be used with any developmentally appropriate curriculum and is available in toolkit form and online. The online version can aggregate data for groups of children at the class, program, site, or district or ELC level. According to recent research (Heroman et al., 2010; Lambert, Taylor & McGee, 2010), this system has been found to yield highly reliable scores and teachers are able to make valid ratings of the developmental progress of children. While GOLD® is created for age birth through five, the new MyTeachingStrategies® system allows assessment up through third grade (www.teachingstrategies.com). The purpose of the instrument is to assist teachers in planning appropriate experiences, individualizing instruction, and monitoring and communicating child progress to families and other stakeholders. The measure is intended to be inclusive of English language learners and children with disabilities as well as typically developing children and those who demonstrate competencies beyond developmental expectations.

GOLD® has five components: (1) Objectives for Development and Learning (birth through Kindergarten); (2) Child Assessment Portfolio; (3) Assessment Opportunity Cards; (4) On-the-spot Observation Recording Tool; and (5) Family Conference Form (Teaching Strategies, 2013). Objectives for Development and Learning anchors this assessment system, and shows expectations for age-groups and for classes/grades, as well as explains how the various elements work together. Color bands are used to show “widely held expectations” for development and learning by indicating where most children (within a national norm) of a particular age or grade are likely to be at the beginning and end of a program year (Teaching Strategies, 2013). There are 38 objectives based on research of what predicts school success and are part of many states’ early learning standards (Dichtelmiller, 2011).
These objectives are organized into nine areas of learning and development: social-emotional; physical; cognitive; language; literacy; mathematics; science and technology; social studies; and the arts. A tenth objective, English language acquisition, is used to determine if the child is an English language learner, and these acquisition objectives are mobilized to assess the child’s receptive and expressive language skills (Teaching Strategies, 2013). Tools such as the Child Assessment Portfolio, Assessment Opportunity Cards, On-The-Spot Recording Tool, and Family Conference Forms provide and document evidence of learning related to each objective. Unlike the other two assessment systems used in the state of Florida, GOLD® uses the same materials and procedures to assess children from birth through kindergarten. Therefore, for providers that serve infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and kindergarteners, all staff members use the same tool, and data collection for each child can follow them through several years of growth and development (Dichtelmiller, 2011). This assessment tool was also used to measure direct child outcomes for this evaluation study, which will be discussed in the following quantitative instruments section.

**Galileo**
This assessment system provides early childhood educators and other stakeholders a complete and fully integrated assessment, curriculum, and reporting system that links assessment, planning, individualization and program progress. Galileo utilizes the Instructional Intervention Cycle and provides users with reliable and valid data on which to base learning opportunities and program management decisions. Developmental domains addressed in the assessment include creative arts, approaches to learning, early math, language and literacy, nature and science, physical health practices, fine and gross motor development, and social and emotional development. The cycle begins with goal setting and planning and is followed by implementation, then evaluation (data gathering and analysis); the results of evaluation inform decisions guiding the next goal setting and planning stages (www.ati-online.com).

**COR**
The COR assessment is based on six child development categories that represent broad domains of child development. For the Preschool COR, these categories are initiative; social relations; creative representation; movement and music; language and literacy; and mathematics and science. The Infant-Toddler COR has a parallel set of six categories: sense of self; social relations; creative representation; movement; communication and language; and exploration and early logic. Within each category, children are assessed on three to eight COR items that describe developmentally important behaviors.

(The Preschool COR has 32 items, the Infant-Toddler COR has 28). Each item has five levels that indicate a typical developmental sequence for that behavior, enabling COR users to assign precise ratings to their observations of children. To carry out the assessment, teachers or caregivers spend a few minutes each day writing brief notes (called “anecdotes”) that describe significant episodes of young children’s behavior. They record their notes on printed forms or in computer files, and then classify and rate them according to the COR categories, items, and levels (HighScope Educational Research Foundation, 2015). The COR is based on the same developmental framework as the HighScope curriculum, and while indicators are not tied to age levels, they do represent a continuum of development in an area (Dichtelmiller, 2011).
Professional Development Progress Plan

In all tiers, providers were required to develop a professional development progress plan mapping career and educational progress for all participating teachers or directors at a provider. Teachers who attained an associate’s degree or higher, with at least 21 college credits in Early Childhood/Child Development, Elementary Education, or Youth Development from a regionally accredited college or university were exempt from this requirement. By the end of benchmark 4, 25% of Tier 1 participants in each provider should have been shown to be making progress on their professional development plan, with 50% of Tier 2 and 75% of Tier 3 participants also required to complete this intervention.

DATA SOURCES AND INSTRUMENTS

This study design and analyses were guided by the theoretical model of teacher learning and development (Desimone, 2009) to examine study research questions. The study used well-established instruments to measure teacher-student interactions, classroom climate, and child outcomes. In addition, instruments were created to measure teacher knowledge and perceptions of Early Learning Florida coursework.

Quantitative Data Sources and Instruments

Teacher-Child Interactions

CLASS®
CLASS® measures the quality of teacher-child interactions. CLASS® pre- and post- observations assessed the quality of classroom interactions. CLASS® differs from other program quality measurement tools that focus on the content of the physical environment, available materials, or a specific curriculum. For CLASS®, the physical environment (including materials) and curriculum matter in the context of how teachers put them to use in their interactions with children. The CLASS® observation tool is organized to assess two or three broad domains of interactions among teachers and children, depending on which age group is assessed. The Infant CLASS® tool measures the Responsive Caregiving domain; the Toddler CLASS® tool measures Emotional/Behavioral Support and Engaged Support for Learning domains.

The Pre-K CLASS® tool is divided into three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support. Each of these domains contains specific dimensions that examine classroom interactions. Within the Emotional Support Domain, dimensions include positive climate, negative climate, teacher sensitivity, and regard for student perspective. Within the Classroom Organization domain, dimensions include behavior management, productivity, and instructional learning formats. Within the Instructional Support domain, dimensions include concept development, quality of feedback, and language modeling (Teachstone, 2016).

The Toddler CLASS® tool is divided into two domains: Emotional and Behavioral Support, and Engaged Support for Learning. Each domain is divided into dimensions that examine classroom interactions. Within the Emotional and Behavioral Support, dimensions include positive climate, negative climate, teacher sensitivity, regard for child perspectives, and behavior guidance. Within the Engaged Support for Learning domain, dimensions include facilitation of learning and development, quality of feedback, and language modelling (Teachstone, 2016).
Child Outcomes

**GOLD® Observational Child Data**

GOLD® was used as a measure of child outcomes for this study based on research showing this system to be a well-validated assessment tool (Kim, Lambert & Burts, 2013; Lambert, Kim, & Burts, 2015) and was already being used by the providers within several ELCs. Therefore, data was available on child outcomes for a large sample of children without any additional costs of data collection. GOLD® is an observation-based teacher rating evaluation instrument designed to assess the ongoing development and learning of children from birth through kindergarten age. The purpose of this instrument is to measure a child’s progress in the major developmental and content areas for children, and is intended for use with typically developing children, children with disabilities, children who demonstrate competencies beyond typical developmental expectations, and dual language learners (Kim, Lambert & Burts, 2013; Lambert, Kim, & Burts, 2015). Teachers regularly gather child information through observations, conversations with children and families, samples of children’s work, photos, video observations and clips, recordings, etc. Once taken, the assessment information is used in planning appropriate experiences, individualizing instruction, and monitoring and communicating child progress to families and other stakeholders (Lambert, Kim, & Burts, 2015). Child assessment data from GOLD® is summarized using paper or online versions of the instrument at three checkpoint periods during the year (i.e. fall, winter and spring).

Due to the goals of the ELPFP to reach children from diverse populations, GOLD® was also used because research suggests this system is a promising instrument which has utility for children representing diverse populations (Kim & Smith, 2010; Kim, Lambert, & Burts, 2013; Lambert, Kim, & Burts, 2014). Researchers also provided evidence of concurrent validity comparing GOLD® scores to the Bracken Basic Concept Scale (see description below) which showed correlations in mathematics and literacy scale scores, and total raw and standard scores (Lambert, Kim, & Burts, 2015). Based on this previous research, this research plan used Bracken as the criterion measure for GOLD® scores to provide concurrent validity for Tier 3 participants in order to provide additional support of concurrent validity noted in other studies (Lambert et al., 2013; Soderburg et al., 2013).

**The Bracken Basic Concept Scale—Third Edition (BBCS-3; Bracken, 2006)**

The Bracken Basic Concept Scale, School Readiness Composite, Third Edition (BSRA-3) is a well-regarded and validated test of basic school readiness skills. Because this instrument was used to validate GOLD® data, only the school readiness composite was used for this evaluation. The BBCS-3 also has a Spanish adaptation version for use with children for home Spanish is their home or dominant language. The School Readiness Composite areas of basic skills such as colors, letters/sounds, numbers/counting, sizes/comparisons, and shapes.

Classroom Climate

**The Preschool Climate of Healthy Interactions for Learning and Development (CHILD)**

The Preschool Climate of Healthy Interactions for Learning and Development (CHILD) (Gilliam & Reyes, 2016) was used in conjunction with the CLASS® post observations. The CHILD is an objective observational measure of the social-emotional climate of child care classrooms of preschoolers, providing a greater depth of information in this area than the Emotional Support domain of the CLASS® alone. It consists of nine dimensions that are comprised of 28 items, rated on a 5-point scale ranging from -2 to +2. The five-point scale is anchored to a mid-point of 0, corresponding to teacher behaviors that are neither undermining nor facilitative to children’s development. Negative scores (-1 to -2) correspond to undermining teacher behaviors, and positive scores (+1 to +2) correspond to teacher behaviors that facilitate or promote positive
child development. The nine dimensions of the CHILD include Transitions (staff ability to manage transitions efficiently), Directions & Rules (consistent rule-setting and scaffolding of appropriate behaviors), Staff Awareness (staff awareness of surroundings and attunement to children's needs), Staff Affect (staff demonstration of positive facial expressions and body language), Staff Cooperation (positive interactions among staff), Staff-Child Interactions (positive interactions between staff and children), Social & Emotional Learning (staff promotion of social and emotional skills), Individualized & Developmentally Appropriate Pedagogy (child-centered/whole child approach to teaching), and Child Behaviors (positive interactions among children).

**GOLD® Implementation Survey**
Based on information collected during the Year 2 ELPFP evaluation (2015-2016), the UF Lastinger Center research team in partnership with OEL felt that more data on child assessment systems were needed to determine the level of statewide implementation, as well as understand the benefits and challenges of these child assessment systems within the ELPFP and other programs. A 54-question survey was created in order to collect both quantitative and qualitative data about (a) how GOLD® child data are used and reported to help inform teachers' instruction for children in all ELCs; (b) how Interrater Reliability (IRR) is achieved and used to determine fidelity of the assessment data; (c) how GOLD® administration is handled within ELCs and providers; (d) the level of ELC interaction and feedback to providers regarding GOLD® data and administration; and (e) how ELCs provide support for GOLD® implementation to their ELPFP providers. All participating ELPFP ELCs were sent the survey in December of 2016. This survey was sent to the ELC staff who self-identified to work most closely with GOLD® administration and implementation through the online survey software, and a 100% response rate was received from all ELPFP ELCs.

While this survey was not included in the evaluation logic model regarding specific measures or outcomes, these results provided valuable data from ELCs to compare with teacher experiential data regarding child assessment implementation. Results from this survey are located in Appendix F.

**Teacher Knowledge**

**Pre-Post Teacher Knowledge Assessment**
The MMCI knowledge assessment (Teachstone, 2016) contains nine multiple choice questions, which is worth a total of nine points. Each item presents teachers with a scenario that they might encounter in a classroom, and asks them to select the best response out of four possible responses. The same knowledge assessment test was given before teachers began their MMCI coursework, and again at the end of the course (see Appendix G for an example).

For Tier 2 and Tier 3 providers, the direct effect of professional development on teacher knowledge was measured with a pre- and post-knowledge assessment embedded in each Early Learning Florida course. These knowledge assessments evaluate the teacher’s knowledge with respect to the standards of early childhood education knowledge and course content and objectives. Each course contained between eighteen and twenty-four multiple choice questions. The same test was administered during the introduction cycle of each course, and again at the final course cycle (see Appendix G for an example).
Early Learning Florida Course Completion Survey
Teachers in Tier 2 and Tier 3 provider sites completed an online survey after successfully completing two Early Learning Florida courses during the 2016-2017 year. This outgoing survey measured perceived value from teachers of Early Learning Florida course experiences, and offered data for triangulation with qualitative interviews in providing depth and value of teacher experience. This survey collected data about teachers’ interactions in the Early Learning Florida course system, internal and external organizational support during course participation, interactions with Early Learning Florida course instructors, UF Lastinger-Certified Coaches and UF Lastinger-Certified CoP Facilitators, and opportunities to implement knowledge and strategies obtained in Early Learning Florida coursework. The online survey was created following Desimone’s (2009) model for evaluating professional development (see Appendix D for an example).

Qualitative Data Sources
For the purpose of gathering data to voice stakeholders’ perspectives of engaging in the ELPFP Year 3 implementation, three sets of stakeholder interviews were conducted. Interviews with Tier 2 participants were completed to determine:
   a. How teachers experienced all ELPFP professional development interventions;
   b. What impact teachers perceived each professional development intervention had on their instructional practice and gains in content knowledge, as well as the cumulative impact of all interventions;
   c. Teachers’ perceptions of the implementation of child assessments; and
   d. Teacher’s perceptions of successes, challenges and barriers of Year 3 ELPFP implementation.

Interviews with Tier 3 participants included all Tier 2 interview elements, as well investigated what impact teachers’ perceived this three-year comprehensive professional development intervention had on teacher-child interactions, direct child outcomes, and changes in teacher behaviors, practice, and beliefs.

Focus group interviews with ELPFP ELC stakeholders (CoP facilitators, coaches, and ELC leaders and staff) were conducted to determine:
   a. The perceived impact of ELPFP on teacher effectiveness with regard to children’s outcomes;
   b. The experiences and perceptions of ELC staff involved with implementing the ELPFP; and
   c. Feedback and suggestions for implementation improvement in future years.

DATA COLLECTION
Quantitative Data Collection
Implementing the Year 3 research design required a pre-program assessment using CLASS®. If a valid CLASS® observation existed for a participating classroom, the classroom was required to use it as their pre-observation if it met the following criteria:
   • The observation must have been conducted after April 2016 and before June 2017.
   • The age level of the classroom remained the same.
   • At least one teacher present at the previous observation was still in the classroom in the 2016-2017 project year.

Based on data from OEL, 34% of participating classrooms met these requirements and were able to use observations conducted prior to the start of this project year. The remaining classrooms received new CLASS® observations.
Sample

Providers were recruited for participation in Tier 1, 2 and 3 programs by OEL and ELCs. All interested providers were required to apply to participate in the ELPFP. Regardless of tier, all providers were required to have at least 30% of birth-to-five enrollment in the School Readiness program. Providers were also required to have incurred no Department of Children and Families’ Class I and no more than three Class II licensing violations within two years of applying to participate. Providers’ participation could also be terminated within the program year if they received licensing violations that exceed these requirements.

All directors and classrooms had to agree to participate in the intervention, except for infant classrooms in Tier 1. Due to there being no MMCI Infant/Toddler course, Toddler teachers could take the preschool MMCI course, but Infant teachers had no existing course to complete.

CLASS® Sample

CLASS® was developed to measure the quality of teacher-child interactions. Two versions of CLASS® were used in this study: Pre-K and Toddler. Due to the low number of ELPFP participants teaching infant level classrooms, this scoring measure was not used in this analysis. In Year 3 of ELPFP, teachers were assessed once before participation (pre-assessment) and again after participation (post-assessment). The data for the two CLASS® measurements in Year 3 were merged with the data from years 1 and 2. This resulted in a longitudinal dataset with the number of CLASS® measurements available per teacher depending on the duration of provider participation: Tier 1 teachers were measured twice (pre and post), Tier 2 teachers were measured four times (two years with pre and post in each year), and Tier 3 teachers were measured six times (three years with pre and post in each year). The actual number of measurements per teacher also varied due to providers withdrawing from ELPFP and teacher attrition. Across three years of implementation, a total of 3,136 CLASS® observations of 1,805 teachers in 475 providers were used for the current analysis. From these, 52.98% were for the Pre-K CLASS®, and 42.42% were for the Toddler CLASS®.

GOLD® Child Data Sample

The UF Lastinger Center research team chose a longitudinal design with treatment and control group for the evaluation of the effects of ELPFP on GOLD® scores to allow attribution of the treatment effect to treatment participation by contrasting with the control group. This would not be possible if a single-group treatment-only design had been used. For both the treatment and control group, GOLD® providers were limited to five ELCs in which providers had been using GOLD® for at least three years. This was done to ensure that teachers had ample experience with GOLD® to minimize errors in assessment administration and scoring. Within the treatment group, this selection was further limited to ELCs in which there were Tier 3 providers, of which only three ELCs qualified. For the control group, ELCs were tasked with recruiting a sample of providers with similar characteristics to ELPFP providers. Control group providers were also required to have not taken any MMCI or Early Learning Florida coursework, or have received specialized coaching on CLASS®. Control group providers identified for the GOLD® control group were the same providers selected for classroom observations with CHILD.

Once eligible ELCs were identified, GOLD® data was requested from five ELCs that implemented GOLD® assessments for at least three years and had contracts with GOLD® that covered all of their providers. One ELC did not participate due to data consent issues with Teaching Strategies®. Because the GOLD® data was unidentified secondary data, consent was obtained from the leadership of each participating ELC that held a GOLD® contract using the standard consent letter provided by Teaching Strategies®. These ELCs (identified as Coalitions A, B, C and D) met these
requirements and agreed to participate. Once the consent letters were transmitted to Teaching Strategies®, a dataset without any child identifiers was provided.

Prior to the main GOLD® child data analysis, a concurrent validity study was conducted, in which the Bracken School Readiness Assessment (Bracken, Panter & Bracken, 2009) was used as a criterion measure (Lambert, Kim & Burts, 2015). A sample of Tier 3 practitioners participated in this validation study. A total of 62 children taught by 16 teachers in nine providers completed both Bracken and GOLD®.

For the estimation of the effect of ELPFP teacher participation on child outcomes, two years of GOLD® data (2015/2016 and 2016/2017 academic years) were analyzed. A total of 1,715 children were rated by 126 teachers from 23 providers using GOLD®. The dataset included six GOLD® checkpoints (measurement waves), which were fall, winter and spring of the 2015/2016 academic year, and fall, winter, and spring of the 2016/2017 academic year. Therefore, each child could have from one to six observations, depending on the age and duration of enrollment in the participating provider. All children whose teachers worked in Tier 3 ELPFP providers were considered as the treatment group and the control group were children in providers not participating in the ELPFP. The control group were children in providers in the four ELCS that had not participated in PFP. The treatment group were children in providers of two ELCs who had participated in Tier 3 of PFP. Among all children whose scores were provided in the GOLD® secondary dataset, 1,104 (64.37%) were in the control group and 611 (35.63%) were in the treatment group. The total number of observations in the dataset was 5,126, with 3,407 observations in the control group and 1,719 observations in the PFP group. The age range of participating children is from birth to 71 months (three years) across all check points, comprised of 46% girls and 53% boys. For ethnicity, 9% of the children were identified as Hispanic and the 91% were not Hispanic. Also, 28% were marked as eligible for free and reduced lunch (FRL) and 72% were not. The age distributions of children in the PFP and control groups are shown in Figure 8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spring 2015-16</td>
<td>Fall 2015-16</td>
<td>Winter 2015-16</td>
<td>Spring 2016-17</td>
<td>Fall 2016-17</td>
<td>Winter 2016-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>652</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Number of Children at Each Checkpoint
**Bracken Sample**

Bracken assessments were conducted by trained assessors in four ELCs that also provided GOLD® child data as a validity measure only. As with GOLD®, selection was limited to Tier 3 providers with at least three years of GOLD® experience. Providers were sent parental consent forms for child participation in the Bracken validity assessment. Assessors were assigned to providers to conduct observations, and given a quota of observations to complete at each site, based proportionally on the number of children over thirty-six months of age present at the provider with signed consent forms. From this, children were selected randomly at each provider for assessment.

**CHILD Sample**

The CHILD scores for each classroom were collected in blocks, with each block consisting of a 20-minute observation. Due to high costs of collecting data with the CHILD instrument, data was collected with a treatment/control post-test only design. The sample had 35 Tier 3 treatment classrooms and 42 control classrooms. For each domain, the recommended data collection for the CHILD consists of a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 4 blocks. Therefore, the CHILD assessment data collected consisted of 140 blocks of 35 Tier 3 PFP classrooms and 168 blocks of 42 control classrooms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Classrooms</th>
<th>Age of Classroom</th>
<th>Age of Classroom</th>
<th>Age of Classroom</th>
<th>Age of Classroom</th>
<th>Age of Classroom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Five</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Total Number of Classrooms Observed by Age of Classroom

Note. The sum of the number of classrooms across age groups does not equal to the total as indicated in column two because multiple age groups can occur in one classroom.
Table 3. Total Number of Blocks Observed by Age of Classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Blocks</th>
<th>Blocks by Age of Classroom</th>
<th>Blocks by Age of Classroom</th>
<th>Blocks by Age of Classroom</th>
<th>Blocks by Age of Classroom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Knowledge Assessment Sample

Test scores on the MMCI knowledge assessment (pre- and post-) were collected by each participating ELC in Tier 1. The ELCs were then asked by OEL to send MMCI scores securely to the research team. The final sample is based on all scores received. A total of 510 pre-tests and 120 post-tests were received.

All Tier 2 and Tier 3 teachers who participated Early Learning Florida courses were required to complete the knowledge assessment before and after each course. A total of 1,154 teachers completed at least one course. Among these teachers, 18 had knowledge assessment scores equal to 0, which indicates that they opened the knowledge assessment but skipped all the questions. Hence, those were removed from the dataset, and the analysis was based on scores of 1,136 teachers. The final knowledge assessment dataset analyzed consisted of 3,502 assessment scores (pre-test and post-test) of 1,136 teachers from 212 providers in 28 ELCs. The dataset contained knowledge assessment scores for the 13 ELPFP Early Learning Florida courses, of which five courses were offered in both English and Spanish. These five courses were: Designing Infant and Toddler Learning Environments (ITLE), Infant and Toddler Social-Emotional Development (ITSED), Engaging Families of Infants and Toddlers (ITF), Preschool Language Development (PLD), and Using Observation to Inform Individualized Instruction in Preschool (PKO). The number of teachers in each course is shown in Table 4, where a dash indicates that a course was not offered in Spanish.

Table 4. Teachers’ Attendance in Each Course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-K or Toddler</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infant/Toddler</td>
<td>Designing Infant and Toddler Learning Environments (ITLE)</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engaging Families of Infants and Toddlers (ITF)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Infant and Toddler Language Development (ITLD)</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Infant and Toddler Social-Emotional Development (ITSED)</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Infant Developmental Stages: The First Year of Life (ITGD)</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-K</td>
<td>Using Observation to Support Developmentally Appropriate Practice with Infants and Toddlers (ITDAP)</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Act 1: Getting Organized for Learning in Preschool (VPK1)</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instructional Support in Preschool: Quality of Feedback (QOF)</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preschool Language Development (PLD)</td>
<td>188</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preschool Learning Environments (PLE)</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Screening and Assessing Young Dual Language Learners in Preschool (DLL 2)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding and Promoting the Development and Learning of Young Dual Language Learners (DLL 1)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using Observation to Inform Individualized Instruction in Preschool (PKO)</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30
The Early Learning Florida Course Completion Survey was sent to Tier 2 and 3 practitioners who completed and mastered Early Learning Florida courses through online survey software. Different from the Year 2 evaluation, courses were offered in two language versions, English and Spanish. For teachers who completed English courses, 408 responses (49% of the targeting practitioners) were received from a sample of 821 practitioners. After excluding the duplicates and the respondents who opened the survey but did not answer, 374 respondents’ results (completed or partially completed) were used in the analysis. Among the teachers who completed Spanish courses, the response rate was much higher, with 74 responses (87% of practitioners) received from a sample of 85 practitioners. After excluding the duplicates and the respondents who opened the survey but did not answer, 66 respondents’ results (completed/partial completed) were used in the analysis.

**Qualitative Data Collection and Sample**

In March, 2017, Tier 2 and Tier 3 teachers who were enrolled in both fall and spring terms for Early Learning Florida courses were identified and selected for individual interviews with criterion sampling (Glesne, 2006), which required that participants:

1. Have completed Tier 1 ELPFP professional development (MMCI/CLASS® training);
2. Be enrolled and achieve mastery in all Early Learning Florida courses completed to date;
3. Participate in other ELPFP professional development activities required for Tier 2 and Tier 3 (TA/Coaching, implementation of a child assessment tool, Professional Development Progress Plan); and
4. Have successfully completed all ELPFP benchmark submissions to date.
5. Participant recruitment emails were sent to each teacher identified in all ELCs participating in the ELPFP for 2016-2017. Twenty-four Tier 2 participants agreed and interviews were scheduled, and of those, 18 interviews were completed. Twenty-two Tier 3 participants agreed and interviews were scheduled, and of those, 18 interviews were completed. Due to participants’ scheduling conflicts, some interviews were unable to be completed within the evaluation study timeline.

Due to the research objectives of investigating growth of Tier 3 participants after three years of ELPFP participation, Tier 3 participants were also asked to provide evidence of change in their teaching practice through anecdotal or visual data. Of these Tier 2 and Tier 3 participants, four teachers were Spanish-speaking and were interviewed in Spanish. Participants were interviewed by the study investigators by phone or online meeting room. Each interview took between 45-60 minutes, and a semi-structured interview protocol was used (see Appendix B). Interviews were audio recorded and field notes were taken by the interviewer. Interview recordings were transcribed verbatim, and all audio recordings were destroyed per University of Florida IRB policy. Due to interviews occurring outside of regular teacher work hours, participants were compensated with $50 stipends.

In the spring of 2017, all 30 ELCs were contacted by email for recruitment of ELPFP leadership focus group participation. Participants were recruited based upon:

1. Participation in Year 3 ELPFP
2. Location of teachers that participated in evaluation interviews for data triangulation in those ELCs;
3. Availability and willingness to participate in focus groups regarding ELPFP implementation; and
4. Regional perspectives of all tiers of ELPFP implementation.
These participants included ELC directors and assistant directors, professional development and quality improvement coordinators, TA/Coaches, CoP Facilitators, and finance and contract personnel. 18 ELCs agreed and leadership focus group interviews were scheduled. Of those, 15 interviews were completed due to scheduling conflicts with ELC staff. All ELC focus groups interviews were conducted either face-to-face or by online meeting (Zoom), with interviews taking between 45-90 minutes for completion. A semi-structured interview protocol was used (see Appendix B), and interviews were audio recorded with field notes also taken by the interviewer. Interview recordings were transcribed verbatim, and all audio recordings were destroyed per University of Florida IRB policy.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

**Quantitative Primary Data Analysis**

The research design of the third year of ELPFP is quasi-experimental because participants were added non-randomly to Tier 1, 2, and 3 and these participants cannot be considered to have similar characteristics. Therefore, analyses focus on examining the improvement of each group across one, two, or three years of participation, as applicable, depending on whether the outcome was measured at one or multiple years of the ELPFP project and how long the providers have been participating in this improvement initiative.

*Primary Analysis of CLASS® Scores*

The research design to answer research question one was a longitudinal design that required at least two CLASS® observations per classroom, and used all observations available from the previous two years of ELPFP. Two separate analyses of the effects of provider participation in ELPFP on teacher-child interactions was performed. Each analysis followed the teachers across multiple years of participation and examined within-teacher change in the quality of teacher-child interactions across time.

In CLASS® analysis 1, the CLASS® observations from when the teachers were in Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 were contrasted against observations from teachers were not yet begun any interventions in the ELPFP. These observations included both the pre-tests for Tier 1 in years 1, 2, and 3, and also the control group in Year 1.

In CLASS® analysis 2, the *Early Learning Florida* training was contrasted with the MMCI training, which in turn was contrasted with no training. This second analysis was cumulative, because it looked at the improvement due to one year of *Early Learning Florida* courses (in addition to the improvement already obtained by the MMCI course), then looked at the improvement with two years of *Early Learning Florida* courses over and above the improvement that had been obtained with MMCI plus one year of *Early Learning Florida* courses.

The coding schemes of the participation indicators for statistical analyses 1 and 2 are shown in Table 5. The statistical model for CLASS® analysis 1 and 2 was a fixed-effects regression model as it is used for panel data econometrics (Angrist & Pischke, 2009). The advantage of this model over a random-effects (i.e. multilevel) model is that it estimates the within-teacher effect of moving from a non-participant to a participant of ELPFP. When within-teacher effects are estimated, any teacher, provider and ELC variables that are invariant over time do not affect the results (that is, they are not confounding variables), which is a major advantage of the fixed-effects regression model (Allison, 2009).
Secondary Data Analysis of CLASS® Scores

The objective of the secondary data analysis of CLASS® scores was to establish and replicate the validity of the primary analysis. As part of a secondary data analysis, the data were shared with research partners at Edward Zigler Center for Child Development and Social Policy at Yale University, and this research group used alternative models to analyze the CLASS® data. More specifically, a Bayesian multilevel model (Guo et al., 2016; Gelman et al., 2014) was employed which enabled the missing data and hierarchically nested structure of the data to be combined as part of the estimation process. This combination allowed researchers to establish, with a 95% probability, the interval within which it is credible for each effect to be found, and thus overlap between the point estimates of the primary analysis, and the credible intervals, aids in validating the primary analysis’ estimated effects.

To achieve this, each of the Bayesian multilevel models were constructed to include the nested structure of teachers being exposed to multiple programs as a function of both the participation within the program, and the ELC-wide differences in program support, which otherwise would confound differences across participation with the effects upon individual teachers. Since the ELC-level differences were not in the interests of this analysis, these differences were controlled for using random effects, which allowed for the individual effects upon each program to be removed from overall effects of interest, without compromising the stability of the estimation process. Likewise, individual room identification and program groups were allowed to have individual average performances as represented by random intercepts. This enabled the individual effects to be interpreted without concern for exogenous factors which may have inconsistent effects that are difficult to model without a marked increase in overall sampling requirements.

In an effort to address the specific question of the average effects of the programs in question both individual accreditation were included, as well as the tiers and individual programs (MMCI, ELFL, ELFL2, GOLD), in order to establish the individual group differences with respect to each outcome, independent of any differences that may have occurred as a consequence of the specific accreditation training curricula. All effects were estimated using a four chain Metropolis-Hastings Robbins -Monro with non-informative priors, which when combined with the large sample sizes make the estimates a function of the information contained within the data. Convergence was assessed both by leave-one-out cross-validation, in order to establish the overall suitable reliability of the model and its estimates, and the standard Rhat metric introduced by Gelman & Rubin (1992).
**GOLD® Scores**

**Validation Study of GOLD® Scores**

For the validation study of GOLD® scores, Pearson correlations were used to assess the degree of association between Bracken scale scores and all six domains of GOLD® scale scores. One caveat of using correlations for concurrent evidence for the GOLD® is that simple correlation coefficients do not account for the effects of teachers and providers on the scores. To obtain concurrent evidence of validity for the GOLD® accounting for the effects of teachers and providers, a three-level multilevel regression model was used to predict each Bracken scale score with the GOLD® scale scores. In addition, examiners were also accounted for in this model to control for assessor bias. The equation of the multilevel regression model (Snijders & Bosker, 2012) used is:

\[
Bracken\ Score_{ijkl} = \pi_0 + \pi_1 (TSGscore_{ijk}) + \mu_k + \gamma_j + \tau_l + e_{ijkl}
\]

In this Equation, \(\pi_0\) is the intercept, \(\pi_1\) is the effect a GOLD® domain score on a Bracken score, \(\mu_k\) represents the random effect of providers, \(\gamma_j\) represents the random effect of teachers, \(e_{ijkl}\) represents the residual error and \(\tau_l\) is the random effect of assessor. One multilevel regression model was run with each combination of Bracken content/concept category score as outcome and GOLD® domain score as predictor. This model and its corresponding unconditional model (i.e., without the GOLD® predictor in the formula) were used to estimate the variance accounted for by GOLD® scale scores for each Bracken scale score.
Latent Growth Models of GOLD® Scores

Linear latent growth models (Bollen & Curran, 2006) were implemented to analyze the changes in children's GOLD® scores across time. These models allowed estimating whether children in Tier 3 providers had different growth trajectories with respect to the GOLD® domains as compared to children in control providers.

In the latent growth models, change in GOLD® domains for each child are estimated across time as a function of age of the child in months. Age in months was centered by subtracting 36, so zero means that the child is three years old, and -36 means a newborn. Centering at 36 months was chosen because the mean of age is close to 36 months so there are more observations available around this age. There are two latent factors describing the growth trajectory of children on each GOLD® domain: Intercept and Slope. Because age was centered at 36 months of age, the intercept is the child’s status on the GOLD® domain at three years old. The slope is the growth rate, indicating the amount of growth per month of age in the GOLD® domain.

The linear models included ELPFP as predictor of the intercept and slope. ELPFP is a binary variable with zero to indicate a child in a control provider and one to indicate a child in a Tier 3 PFP provider. The models included the provider-level variable accreditation as well. The accreditation variable provided data on ELPFP providers’ possession of the three most common accreditations (NAC, NAFCC, and APPLE). In addition, to control for confounding due to differences in the initial performance of teachers and providers at the beginning of the study, the teacher mean and provider mean GOLD® domain score in the Fall of 2015 were added as predictors in the model. The models were estimated with robust maximum likelihood estimation that accounted for the clustering of children within providers (Stapleton, 2006).

**CHILD Scores**

Domain scores from two to four blocks of observations were collected by a set of assessors for classrooms in ELPFP as well as control providers that are contracted with ELCs. The means of the control and ELPFP providers were compared and tested for statistical significance using an independent samples Welch t-test, which is appropriate for groups with unequal sample sizes and unequal variances.
Knowledge Assessment Scores

Tier 1 Knowledge Assessments
The MMCI analysis consisted in computing the means of pre-assessment and post-assessment scores received from ELC data and testing the difference for statistical significance using a dependent samples t-test.

Tier 2 and Tier 3 Knowledge Assessments
The analysis of teacher knowledge data consisted of testing whether there were significant gains in teacher knowledge from pre-assessment to post-assessment in Early Learning Florida course knowledge assessments and whether gains depended on time that teacher was logged in to the Early Learning Florida course system, type of accreditation of the provider, number of children enrolled in provider, and percent of children in poverty in the teacher’s classroom.

A multilevel regression model (Snijders & Bosker, 2012) with four levels was used, which corresponds to the four levels of the data (knowledge assessments, teachers, providers and ELCs). The scores from all courses were analyzed simultaneously, and dummy course indicators were included in the model to account for differences between courses, such as differences in difficulty of content and difficulty of assessment items. The most important predictor was a binary time indicator with zero indicating pre-assessment and one indicating post-assessment, because the coefficient of this indicator is the average gain from pre-assessment to post-assessment. The model also included interactions between this time indicator and the other predictors, which evaluated whether the gain from pre-test to post-test depended on other predictors.

The provider-level continuous predictors “Number of children”, “Percent of children in poverty”, and the teacher-level predictor “ELFL usage minutes” were categorized into four groups based on the quartiles to allow non-linear effects and facilitate interpretation. Information on the accreditations of each provider was available, but the model indicators for the accreditations that are held by at least 1% of the providers in the sample were included (see accreditation descriptions in Appendix C). The specific equation for the multilevel regression model used for analyzing the knowledge assessment data is shown below. The specific definitions of the terms of the equation can be found in Appendix I.
\[ Y_{tijk} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Occasion} + \sum_{m} y_m \text{CourseID}_{mi} + \beta_3 \text{Language} + \sum_{n} \eta_n \text{SystemTime}_{ni} + \sum_{g} \delta_g \text{ModelType}_{gi} + \sum_{s} \theta_s \text{AttendingCount}_{sj} + \sum_{h} \lambda_h \text{Poverty}_{hj} + \beta_4 \text{GOLD} + \beta_5 \text{APPLE} + \beta_6 \text{GSB5} + \beta_7 \text{NAC} + \beta_8 \text{NECP} + \beta_9 \text{GSSA} + \beta_{10} \text{NAEY} + \beta_{11} \text{NFCC} + \sum_{m} \alpha_m (\text{CourseID}_{mi} \times \text{Occasion}) + \beta_{12} (\text{Language} \times \text{Occasion}) + \sum_{n} \zeta_n (\text{SystemTime}_{ni} \times \text{Occasion}) + \sum_{g} \mu_g (\text{ModelType}_{gi} \times \text{Occasion}) + \sum_{s} \nu_s (\text{AttendingCount}_{sj} \times \text{Occasion}) + \sum_{h} \xi_h (\text{Poverty}_{hj} \times \text{Occasion}) + \beta_{13} (\text{GOLD} \times \text{Occasion}) + \beta_{14} (\text{APPLE} \times \text{Occasion}) + \beta_{15} (\text{GSB5} \times \text{Occasion}) + \beta_{16} (\text{NAC} \times \text{Occasion}) + \beta_{17} (\text{NECP} \times \text{Occasion}) + \beta_{18} (\text{GSSA} \times \text{Occasion}) + \beta_{19} (\text{NAEY} \times \text{Occasion}) + \beta_{20} (\text{NFCC} \times \text{Occasion}) + T_i + P_j + C_k + \xi_{tijk} \]

**Figure 10. Multilevel Regression Model of Knowledge Assessments**

**Participant Course Completion Surveys**
Analyses of the Early Learning Florida course completion surveys consisted in the calculation of percentages of responses for each question for respondents of the English and Spanish versions of the survey.
Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative analysis occurred in three phases using an inductive interpretive analysis approach (Hatch, 2007; Miles, Huberman and Saldana, 2013). After Tier 2 and Tier 3 interviews were completed, transcripts from interviews were separated by Tier and analyzed individually for initial common themes and descriptions according to research questions to determine patterns related to study objectives. Researchers convened to discuss and debate initial thoughts and reflections on participant data, and reach consensus on understandings present in this first phase of analysis.

Phase two of analysis consisted of researchers creating condensed codes using data analysis software HyperResearch according to the following tenets:

- Participants experience elements of ELPFP professional development in terms of changes or improvements to the quality of instructional practice, teacher-child interactions, and program quality;
- Participants perceptions of the impact of the ELPFP professional development on teacher gains in content knowledge and child development;
- Participants' perceptions of direct impact on children's learning and growth in their classrooms; and
- Participants’ experiences related to successes, challenges and barriers of ELPFP professional development.
After this second phase, researchers again convened to discuss analysis codes, and further reduced data to salient themes and quotes related to each code. This comprehensive analysis of each participant's entire data set as well as researcher memos ensued repeating these procedures and condensing data into emerging codes and phrases related to this study's objectives. From this data reduction, a third phase of analysis occurred in which case “stories” were written for stakeholder participants (Tier 2 teachers, Tier 3 teachers, and ELC leadership and staff) to summarize findings from these experiences. These vignettes were member-checked by participants to promote trustworthiness and rigor in research.

**Concurrent Triangulation Analysis (Mixed-Methods)**

In an effort to fully explore the relationships and phenomenon under study in this evaluation, a triangulation method of research was used by combining quantitative and qualitative methods in order to compensate for the weaknesses and blind spots of both research methods (Cresswell, 2003; Flick, 2009). These methods remained autonomous and occurred side by side, with their meeting point being the study objectives of this investigation. Within this study, triangulation of qualitative and quantitative methods focused on single cases (teachers), as well groups (Tier 2 and Tier 3 teachers and ELCs). Cases required that the same participants that completed course surveys, knowledge assessments, CLASS® and CHILD observations, and GOLD® assessments were also interview participants. However, due to the number of ELPFP Tier 2 and Tier 3 providers, only a sample of teachers meeting these criteria were used as cases. These answers were compared to each other, and combined for analysis at the final stage of this research process. Group data from ELCs were used to triangulate case data and compare results. Once case and group qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analyzed, all data were reduced and analyzed further to explore outcomes in which quantitative and qualitative results converged and confirmed conclusions, were complementary to each other to lead to a fuller picture, and also diverged and provided contradictory evidence. From this triangulation analysis, typologies were developed and linked to the broader study objectives (Flick, 2009).
RESULTS

QUANTITATIVE MEASURES
Based on this evaluation study’s objectives, quantitative measures focused on if early learning provider participation in the ELPFP had a positive effect on teacher-child interactions, direct child outcomes, classroom climate, teacher knowledge gain, the implementation of effective teaching practices, and teacher collaboration in the classroom. Results from these measures are presented in the order of research questions.

RESEARCH QUESTION 1
WHAT IMPACT DOES THE EARLY LEARNING PERFORMANCE FUNDING PROJECT (ELPFP) HAVE ON TEACHER-CHILD INTERACTIONS FOR TIER 1, AND TIER 2 AND 3 PROVIDERS ACROSS MULTIPLE YEARS OF PARTICIPATION?

Teacher-Child Interactions
Data collected from the CLASS® measuring teacher-child interactions at pre-test and post-test for each of the three years of the ELPFP evaluation were analyzed with fixed-effects regression models (Croissant & Millo, 2008) to estimate within-teacher effects of ELPFP participation. A research question findings summary is presented, and then tables and conclusions about statistical significance of the gains due to ELPFP participation from the results of the fixed-effects regression models are presented below.

Research Question Findings Summary

- The 20-hour Making the Most of Classroom Interactions (MMCI) training presented **significant positive impact** on teacher-child interactions for the age groups of Pre-K and Toddler.
- An analysis of CLASS® scores in Pre-K and Toddler domains showed **significant increases** for those teachers who participated in Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions.
- For Tier 3, significant increases were detected on the domains of Pre-K CLASS® Instructional Support (IS) and Toddler CLASS® Engaged Support for Learning (ESL), which are widely recognized as the most challenging domains to improve.
- For the second consecutive year, all three tiers improved in the Pre-K Instructional Support (IS) domain (Tier 1: 32% of teachers improved IS scores and gains ranged from 3% to 76%; Tier 2: 51% of teachers improved IS scores and gains ranged from 4% to 77%; Tier 3: 60% of teachers made improvements in IS and gains ranged from 20% to 79%).
**CLASS® Analysis 1**

Data from multiple CLASS® observations was analyzed using a fixed-effects regression model (Allison, 2009). The fixed effect model uses the multiple observations of the same teacher to estimate within-teacher change as a result of participation in an intervention. Analysis included all six CLASS® domains. Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 indicators were dummy coded according to Table 5. In Table 6 below, the statistically significant gains in teacher-child interactions are shown in bold.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-K</td>
<td>ES</td>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.09</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tier 3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>CO</td>
<td>Tier 1</td>
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<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Tier 3</td>
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<td>0.22</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IS</td>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.06</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>0.09</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toddler</td>
<td>EBS</td>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Tier 2</td>
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<td>Tier 3</td>
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<td>0.31</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Results from Fixed Effect Models with Program Participation Coded by Tier

Note. Significant coefficients are in bold.

For Pre-K CLASS® Emotional Support (ES), teachers receiving Tier 1 training gained .58 on average as compared with no training. Teachers receiving Tier 2 training also had a gain of 0.58. For Pre-K CLASS® Classroom Organization (CO), Tier 1 and Tier 2 teachers had significant score gain of 0.49 and 0.58, respectively. For Pre-K CLASS® Instructional Support (IS), Tiers 1, 2, and 3 had significant gains as compared with no training, with gains equal to 0.66, 1.10 and 1.01 respectively.

For Toddler CLASS® Emotional Behavior Support (EBS), Tier 1 had gain of 0.53 and Tier 2 had gain of 0.67 from no training. For Toddler CLASS® Engaged Support for Learning (ESL), all tiers had significant gains equal to 0.76, 1.02, and 0.67 for Tier 1, 2, and 3 respectively.

For the Infant CLASS®, only the effect of Tier 1 and Tier 3 on CLASS® Infant Responsive Caregiving (RC) were evaluated due to the lack of variance of Tier 2 teachers. In other words, not have enough Tier 2 teachers were in this domain to calculate its effect. Also, no significant change was found for either Tier 1 or Tier 3 on this domain.

In summary, Analysis 1 indicates gains for participation on at least one Tier of ELPFP for all CLASS® domains except response caregiving.
**Independent Validation of Analysis 1**
Each of the models nested the potential repeated exposure of the teachers, the program in which they taught, and the ELC to account for any commonalities within each of these structures in the sample which affected the results. From these results, any treatment estimate from Analysis 1 which were within the 95% confidence interval of the Bayesian analysis, as emboldened, may be interpreted as being non-significantly different from the original analyses found in Analysis 1. Specifically, this indicates similar estimates of effects for Tier 1 upon Pre-K ES at 0.49, Pre-K CO at 0.45, Pre-K IS at 0.76, and Toddler ESL at 0.72. Similar corresponding results were found for Tier 3 effects on Pre-K IS at 1.02, Toddler EBS at 0.47, Toddler ESL at 0.81, and Infant RC, at -0.08.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>2.5% Lower Bound</th>
<th>97.5% Upper Bound</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-K</td>
<td>ES</td>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.58</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.24</td>
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<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.55</td>
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<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
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<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.37</td>
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<tr>
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<td>IS</td>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.65</td>
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</tr>
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<td>0.77</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.19</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 7. Estimates and Confidence Intervals for Effects by Tier (Validation Analysis)*

*Note. Results in bold are not significantly different from results of Analysis 1*

**CLASS® Analysis 2**
A fixed effect model with different ELPFP participation coding was used to analyze the individual CLASS® domains. In this model, different types of intervention were coded so that the effects were cumulative. The coding scheme used for this analysis was shown previously in Table 5 of the methods section. The MMCI indicator was used to estimate the change from a teacher having to training to participating in MMCI training. The ELFL indicator was used to estimate change from a teacher having MMCI training to also taking one year of Early Learning Florida courses. The ELFL2 indicator was used to estimate change for a teacher from having completed MMCI training and one year of Early Learning Florida course to having a second year of Early Learning Florida courses. The estimates obtained with the fixed effects model with this ELPFP participation coding is shown in Table 8 below, and the estimates in bold indicate statistically significant gains.
Table 8. The Coefficients Estimates of all Six Domains by Using Fixed Effect Models with Intervention Type Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-K</td>
<td>ES</td>
<td>MMCI</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ELFL</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ELFL2</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CO</td>
<td>MMCI</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ELFL</td>
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<td>0.09</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ELFL2</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IS</td>
<td>MMCI</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ELFL</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ELFL2</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toddler</td>
<td>EBS</td>
<td>MMCI</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ELFL</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.11</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ELFL2</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>MMCI</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ELFL</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ELFL2</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 8, there were significant changes from no training to receiving MMCI training with all Pre-K and Toddler domains. The change due to MMCI could not be calculated with the infant domains due to lack of variability. For Pre-K domains, the changes due to MMCI were 0.58, 0.49, and 0.66 for ES, CO, and IS domains, respectively. For Toddler domains, EBS changed by 0.53 while ESL changed by 0.76.

One year of Early Learning Florida course participation improved CLASS® scores over and above MMCI training for the Pre-K IS by 0.44, and for the Toddler ESL by 0.26. Two years of Early Learning Florida course participation improved CLASS® domains beyond one year of Early Learning Florida courses for Pre-K IS by 1.01 and for the Toddler ESL by 0.67. Neither one year nor two years of Early Learning Florida participation had significant changes for the Pre K ES and Pre-K CO, or Toddler EBS.

In summary, the CLASS® domains that show consistent significant improvement with each increment of the ELPFP participation are Pre-K IS domain and the Toddler ESL domain. All other CLASS® domains showed initial significant improvement with MMCI and improvement with each year of participation in the ELPFP. Due to ceiling effect of the CLASS® tool that can vary by domains, some results are not considered significant.

Independent Validation of CLASS® Analysis 2
From these results, any treatment estimates from Analysis 2, which are within the 95% confidence interval of Analysis 4, may be interpreted as being non-significantly different. In this analysis, similar effects were found in several domains giving more power to the results shared in analysis 1 as described. Table 9 shows these overlaps in analysis.
### Table 9. Estimates and Confidence Intervals for Effects by Training (Validation Analysis)

Note. Results in bold are not significantly different from results of Analysis 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>2.5% Lower Bound</th>
<th>97.5% Upper Bound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-K</td>
<td>ES</td>
<td>MMCI</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ELFL</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ELFL2</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DD</td>
<td>MMCI</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ELFL</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ELFL2</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS</td>
<td>MMCI</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ELFL</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ELFL2</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toddler</td>
<td>EBS</td>
<td>MMCI</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>0.09</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
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<td>ELFL2</td>
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<td>-0.10</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>ESL</td>
<td>MMCI</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ELFL</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ELFL2</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Comparison of CLASS® Scores by ELC for Year 3 of ELPFP**

Table 10, 11 and 12 below show the pre- and post-mean scores for all tiers for each ELPFP ELC in Florida. The dash entries in the table indicated that there were no scores available for that specific domain. The sample column indicates the number of CLASS® observations that were performed. These tables are organized by sample size, categorizing ELCs with small samples (1-9), medium samples (10-30), large samples (31-60) and ELCs with larger than 60+ samples. Caution should be taken not to compare ELCs with very low numbers of observations, because means are unreliable when they are based on few scores.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coalition</th>
<th>prec. post</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>ES</th>
<th>CO</th>
<th>IS</th>
<th>EBD</th>
<th>ESL</th>
<th>RC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELC of Alachua County</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>5.53</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELC of Alachua County</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5.68</td>
<td>5.51</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>6.10</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELC of Broward</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>5.83</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>5.84</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELC of Broward</td>
<td>Post</td>
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<td>5.52</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>6.34</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELC of Broward County</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>6.18</td>
<td>5.77</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>4.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELC of Broward County</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>5.99</td>
<td>5.44</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>6.09</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELC of Duval</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6.01</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>6.28</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELC of Duval</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5.85</td>
<td>5.39</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>6.41</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Pre</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>5.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>6.03</td>
<td>5.96</td>
<td>2.88</td>
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<td>2.38</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Pre</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6.09</td>
<td>5.36</td>
<td>2.83</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<td>3.21</td>
<td>5.66</td>
<td>3.55</td>
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<td>Pre</td>
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<td>5.86</td>
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<td>5.70</td>
<td>3.67</td>
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<td>6.63</td>
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<td>5.82</td>
<td>4.03</td>
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</tr>
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<td>4.88</td>
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<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>5.75</td>
<td>4.96</td>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2.31</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>2.25</td>
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<td>Post</td>
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<td>5.38</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>4.98</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELC of Indian River, Martin, and Okeechobee Counties</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5.77</td>
<td>4.92</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>5.08</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELC of Indian River, Martin, and Okeechobee Counties</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.13</td>
<td>5.69</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>6.47</td>
<td>6.38</td>
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<td>NA</td>
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<td>5.23</td>
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<td>6.10</td>
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<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
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<td>5.52</td>
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<td>5.33</td>
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<td>5.58</td>
<td>3.44</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELC of Miami-Dade/Monroe</td>
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<td>5.29</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>5.92</td>
<td>4.06</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>4.67</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>5.59</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>4.13</td>
</tr>
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<td>6.33</td>
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<td>3.48</td>
<td>5.18</td>
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<td>5.37</td>
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Table 11. Means of Domain Scores of CLASS® at Pre- and Post-Test By Tiers and ELCs for Year 3 of ELPFP—Tier 2
Table 12. Means of Domain Scores of CLASS® at Pre- and Post-Test By Tiers and ELCs for Year 3 of ELPFP—Tier 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coalition</th>
<th>pre_post</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>ES</th>
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<th>IS</th>
<th>EBS</th>
<th>ESL</th>
<th>RC</th>
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<td>ELC of Broward County</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>NA</td>
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<td>Post</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>NA</td>
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<td>Post</td>
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<td>6.06</td>
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<td>3.58</td>
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<td>NA</td>
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<td>6.14</td>
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<td>6.08</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>5.24</td>
<td>2.75</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Pre</td>
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<td>NA</td>
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<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELC of Indian River, Martin, and Okeechobee Counties</td>
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<td>6.35</td>
<td>6.25</td>
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<td>6.66</td>
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<td>NA</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>6.06</td>
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<td>5.09</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>2.46</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>Pre</td>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>6.10</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>4.28</td>
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<tr>
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<td>12</td>
<td>6.19</td>
<td>5.47</td>
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<td>5.45</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>4.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELC of Orange County</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>4.18</td>
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<td>6.20</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>5.38</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Post</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.60</td>
<td>6.00</td>
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<td>4.00</td>
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<td>Pre</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.38</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>2.97</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>5.96</td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td>2.05</td>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>4.95</td>
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<td>ELC of Pinellas</td>
<td>Post</td>
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<tr>
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<td>5</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>5.40</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELC of Seminole</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.47</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELC of St. Lucie</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>5.96</td>
<td>4.54</td>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>6.19</td>
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<td>ELC of St. Lucie</td>
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<td>5.39</td>
<td>3.72</td>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>6.80</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>5.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELC of the Big Bend Region</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>6.76</td>
<td>6.35</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>6.55</td>
<td>5.46</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELC of the Nature Coast</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.75</td>
<td>6.17</td>
<td>5.83</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELC of the Nature Coast</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6.47</td>
<td>5.87</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>6.26</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Descriptive Tables and Graphs for CLASS® Domains

The following six sections provide descriptive information on CLASS® scores, but do not indicate whether differences between means are statistically significant. Descriptive statistics cannot be interpreted as indicating substantial differences between ELPFP tiers for the population of providers, because the observed differences may not be statistically significant. These results only show differences for the observed samples without accounting potential confounders, such as differences in classroom size, attrition of classrooms from pre-test to post-test, and differences in characteristics of children in the classroom. Therefore, they are useful for preliminary comparison based on the limited samples collected but not for inferences for the population of classrooms in the state of Florida. For conclusions about statistical significance of the effects of ELPFP participation that generalized to the population of classrooms in Florida, refer to the previous section which describes the results of the fixed-effects regression model.
**Pre-K CLASS® Emotional Support**

Table 13 shows means of the Pre-K ES by Tier at pre-test and post-test. When comparing Pre-K CLASS® pre-test scores on Emotional Support for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 providers, the average score for providers was 5.58, 5.88, and 6.02 respectively, yielding a difference from Tier 1 to Tier 3 of +0.44. When comparing Pre-K CLASS® post-test scores on Emotional Support for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 providers, the average score for all providers was 5.91, 6.07, and 6.20 respectively, yielding a difference from Tier 1 to Tier 3 of +0.29. Figure 11 indicates that the ranges of scores of the Tiers overlap, but the lowest performing classrooms in the ES domain are in Tier 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>Pre-K ES (pre)</th>
<th>Pre-K ES (post)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>5.58</td>
<td>5.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>6.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>6.02</td>
<td>6.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13. Mean Scores of Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 Providers at Pre-Test and Post-Test.

![Figure 11. Frequency of Pre-K CLASS® Pre-Test Scores on Emotional Support for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 Providers](image-url)
Figure 12. Frequency of Pre-K CLASS® Post-Test Scores on Emotional Support for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 Providers

Figure 13. Frequency of Pre-K CLASS® Scores on Emotional Support for Pre-Test and Post-Test Across Tiers
Figure 14. Frequency of Pre-K CLASS® Scores on Emotional Support for Pre-Test and Post-Test for Tier 1 Providers

Figure 15. Frequency of Pre- and Post-Scores on Pre-K CLASS® Emotional Support for Tier 2 Providers
Figure 16. Frequency of Pre- and Post-Scores on Pre-K CLASS® Emotional Support for Tier 3 Providers

**Pre-K CLASS® Classroom Organization**

When comparing Pre-K CLASS® pre-test scores on Classroom Organization for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 providers, the average score for providers was 4.86, 5.19, and 5.29 respectively yielding a difference from Tier 1 to Tier 3 of +0.43. When comparing Pre-K CLASS® post-test scores on Classroom Organization for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 providers, the average score for all providers was 5.27, 5.43, and 5.61 respectively, yielding a difference from Tier 1 to Tier 3 of +0.34. The table below provides the average pre-test and post-test scores of Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 providers on Pre-K CLASS® Classroom Organization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>Pre-K CO (Pre)</th>
<th>Pre-K CO (Post)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>5.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>5.19</td>
<td>5.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>5.29</td>
<td>5.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 14. Average Scores of Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 Providers on Pre-K CLASS® Classroom Organization*
Figure 17. Frequency of Providers by Pre-Test Pre-K CLASS® Classroom Organization Score

Figure 18. Frequency of Providers by Post-Test Classroom Organization Score
Figure 19. Frequency of Pre-K CLASS® Classroom Organization Scores across Tiers

Figure 20. Frequency of Pre- and Post-Scores on Pre-K CLASS® Classroom Organization for Tier 1 Providers
Figure 21. Frequency of Pre- and Post-Scores on Pre-K CLASS® Classroom Organization for Tier 2 Providers

Figure 22. Frequency of Pre- and Post-Scores on Pre-K CLASS® Classroom Organization for Tier 3 Provider
Pre-K CLASS® Instructional Support

When comparing Pre-K CLASS® pre-test scores on Instructional Support for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 providers, the average score for providers was 2.49, 2.91, 3.43 respectively, yielding a difference from Tier 1 to Tier 3 of +0.94. When comparing Pre-K CLASS® post-test scores on Instructional Support for Tier 1, 2, and 3 providers, the average scores for all providers were 3.04, 3.45, 3.74 respectively, yielding a difference from Tier 1 to Tier 3 of +0.70. The table below provides the average pre-test and post-test scores of Tier1, Tier2 and Tier 3 providers on Pre-K CLASS® Instructional Support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>Pre-K IS (Pre)</th>
<th>Pre-K IS (Post)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>3.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>3.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>3.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15. Average scores of Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 providers on Pre-K CLASS® Instructional Support

Figure 23. Frequency of Providers by Pre-Test Pre-K CLASS® Instructional Support Scores
Figure 24. Frequency of Providers by Post-Test Pre-K CLASS® Instructional Support Scores

Figure 25. Frequency of Pre-K CLASS® Instructional Support Scores across Tiers
Figure 26. Frequency of Pre- and Post-Scores on Pre-K CLASS® Instructional Support for Tier 1 Providers

Figure 27. Frequency of Pre- and Post-Scores on Pre-K CLASS® Instructional Support for Tier 2 Providers
Toddler CLASS® Emotional and Behavioral Support

When comparing Toddler CLASS® pre-test scores on Emotional and Behavioral Support for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 providers, the average score for providers was 5.35, 5.48, and 5.88 respectively, yielding a difference from Tier 1 to Tier 3 of +0.53. When comparing Toddler CLASS® post-test scores on Emotional and Behavioral Support for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 providers, the average score for providers was 5.70, 5.73, 5.99 respectively, yielding a difference from Tier 1 to Tier 3 of +0.29. The pre-score of all tiers for EBS are relatively high but some change occurred from pre-test to post-test. The table below provides the average pre-test and post-test scores of Tier1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 providers on Toddler CLASS® Emotional Behavioral Support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>Toddler EBS (Pre)</th>
<th>Toddler EBS (Post)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>5.35</td>
<td>5.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>5.48</td>
<td>5.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>5.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16. Average Scores of Tier 1, Tier2 and Tier 3 Providers on Toddler CLASS® Emotional and Behavioral Support
Figure 29. Frequency of Providers by Pre-Test Toddler CLASS® Emotional and Behavioral Support Scores

Figure 30. Frequency of Providers by Post-Test Toddler CLASS® Emotional and Behavioral Support Scores
Figure 31. Frequency of Toddler CLASS® Emotional and Behavioral Support Scores across Tiers

Figure 32. Frequency of Pre- and Post-Scores on Toddler CLASS® Emotional and Behavioral Support for Tier 1 Providers
Figure 33. Frequency of Pre- and Post-Scores on Emotional and Behavioral Support for Tier 2 Providers

Figure 34. Frequency of Pre- and Post-Scores on Toddler CLASS® Emotional and Behavioral Support for Tier 3 Providers
**Toddler CLASS® Engaged Support for Learning**

When comparing Toddler CLASS® pre-test scores on Engaged Support and Learning for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 providers, the average score for providers was 2.90, 3.15, and 3.60 respectively, yielding a difference from Tier 1 to Tier 3 of +0.70. When comparing Toddler CLASS® pre-test scores on Engaged Support and Learning for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 providers, the average score for providers was 3.46, 3.65, and 4.13 respectively, yielding a difference from Tier 1 to Tier 3 of +0.67. The table below provides the average pre-test and post-test scores of Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 providers on Toddler CLASS® Engaged Support and Learning.

Table 17 shows the average pre-test scores post-test scores from different tiers on Toddler CLASS® Engaged Support for Learning (ESL) domain. The corresponding distribution of providers at each score level can be seen in Figure 31 and Figure 37. Pre-test scores are lower for Tier 1 and there are consistent changes from pre-test to post-test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>Toddler ESL (Pre)</th>
<th>Toddler ESL (Post)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>3.46</td>
</tr>
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<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>3.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>4.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 17. Average Scores of Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 Providers on Toddler CLASS® Engaged Support for Learning*

*Figure 35. Frequency of Providers by Pre-Test Toddler CLASS® Engaged Support For Learning Score*
Figure 36. Frequency of Providers by Post-Test Toddler CLASS® Engaged Support for Learning Score

Figure 37. Frequency of Toddler CLASS® Engaged Support for Learning Scores across Tiers
Figure 38. Frequency of Pre- and Post-Scores on Toddler CLASS® Engaged Support for Learning for Tier 1 Providers

Figure 39. Frequency of Pre- and Post-Scores on Toddler CLASS® Engaged Support for Learning for Tier 2 Providers
Figure 40. Frequency of Pre- and Post-Scores on Engaged Support for Learning Scores for Tier 3 Providers
RESEARCH QUESTION 2
ARE ELPFP INTERVENTIONS STARTING TO SHOW AN IMPACT ON DIRECT CHILD OUTCOMES AFTER THREE YEARS OF PARTICIPATION BY TEACHERS, AS COMPARED TO A CONTROL GROUP?

For this evaluation study, GOLD® child data was used as direct child outcomes. Teaching Strategies GOLD® combines authentic observational assessment with performance tasks for selected objectives in literacy and numeracy. The online version can aggregate data for groups of children at the class, program, site, or district or coalition level. The purpose of the instrument is to assist teachers in planning appropriate experiences, individualizing instruction, and monitoring and communicating child progress to families and other stakeholders. Teachers complete observations and create records and documentation during a specific period of time, and entire documentation into the system matching achieved objectives with observational data. Observational data is then aggregated with child growth and development benchmarks. Because this observational assessment is teacher-reported, a validation of these scores was required to ensure reliability of outcomes for this study. Findings will be presenting first in a summary, and then the validation findings and latent growth model findings will be presented in detail.

Research Question Findings Summary

- Child assessment scores showed teacher participation in the ELPFP demonstrated significant positive effects on children’s social-emotional, physical, language, and cognitive growth and development, as compared to a control group.
- The growth rate of improvement for children in ELPFP providers ranged from 19% to 26% higher than children in non-ELPFP providers across four of the six domains of child development.

Results of Validation Study of GOLD® Scores
GOLD® scores were validated using scores of the five content/concept categories of the Bracken assessment, as well as a raw composite score and a standard composite score. The correlations between GOLD® scores and Bracken scores were moderate to high, except for the Colors category of Bracken. Lower correlations between Colors scores and GOLD® scores are expected because this content is not covered by GOLD®. Therefore, the correlation matrix in Table 19 provides concurrent evidence of validity for the GOLD®, because the moderate to high relationships indicate that they are measuring similar constructs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TSG Scale Scores</th>
<th>Bracken Scale Scores</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Emotional</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 18. Correlations between GOLD® Scale Scores and Bracken Scale Scores
The estimated percentage of variance of each Bracken scale score accounted for by each GOLD® scale score is shown in Table 19 below. The percentage of variance accounted for were moderate to high for all Bracken scale scores, except for the Colors category. These percentages of variance accounted for provide strong evidence of concurrent validity for the GOLD® measure, because it shows that it is able to predict a substantial portion of the variation in the Bracken scale scores.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>TSB Scale Scores</th>
<th>Colors</th>
<th>Letters</th>
<th>Numbers</th>
<th>Sizes</th>
<th>Shapes</th>
<th>Raw Composite</th>
<th>Standard Score</th>
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<td>Social Emotional</td>
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<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.74</td>
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<td>Physical</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.59</td>
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<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.37</td>
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<td>Language</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
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<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 19. Percentages of Variance of Bracken Scale Scores Accounted for by GOLD® Scale Scores

Latent Growth Models for GOLD® Scores
For this analysis the treatment group consisted of providers in Tier 3 and the control group consisted of providers not involved with ELPFP. Latent growth models were used to model children's growth on GOLD® scores across six checkpoints measured over two years (2015-2016 and 2016-2017). These latent growth models have intercept and slope parameters, with the intercept indicating the child’s status on a GOLD® domain at age three and the slope showing the growth rate on the GOLD® domain.

The primary interest in this study is to explore whether ELPFP interventions were starting to show an impact on direct child outcomes after three years of participation by teachers. Therefore, the most important coefficients in the latent growth models are the effect of ELPFP on whether:
- Children participating in ELPFP programs are different at age three than their peers not participating in ELPFP programs with respect to the GOLD® domains; and
- Children participating in ELPFP programs had different educational growth than their peers not participating in ELPFP programs.

This model also included the effect of accreditation of the providers and the interactions between ELPFP participation and accreditation, because accreditation is expected to affect the quality of instruction at the provider level and therefore modify the effect of ELPFP.

Scaled scores for each GOLD® domain were used in the analyses. These scores were calculated by using interval-level Rasch rating scale ability estimates (Lambert, Kim & Burts, 2014), in which 500 is considered the normative mean for children across all age groups and 100 represents one standard division. In this case, children whose scores are below 200 or above 800 are considered as extremely low and extremely high respectively.
Social-Emotional Domain

Table 20 shows the effects of the predictors on the status of age three of the social-emotional domain. The mean status at age three adjusted for all covariates in the model was 487.62. There was a significant effect of Tier 3 ELPFP participation on the status of social-emotional domain at age three. More specifically, children in Tier 3 providers had social-emotional domain scores that were higher by 41.12 points on average than children in non-participating providers. This difference corresponds to an increase of 8.4% over the mean status at age three.

There were also significant positive increases with each accreditation obtained (35.77 or 7%). However, there was a negative interaction between ELPFP participation and accreditation was -63.88, indicating for ELFP providers, adding an accreditation corresponded to having children with 13% lower social-emotional domain scores at age three.1

Table 20. Effects on Social-Emotional Domain Status at Age Three

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TSG Scale Scores</th>
<th>Colors</th>
<th>Letters</th>
<th>Numbers</th>
<th>Sizes</th>
<th>Shapes</th>
<th>Composite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Emotional</td>
<td>8.53%</td>
<td>22.78%</td>
<td>38.95%</td>
<td>39.55%</td>
<td>24.95%</td>
<td>39.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>4.10%</td>
<td>17.36%</td>
<td>30.36%</td>
<td>29.11%</td>
<td>12.65%</td>
<td>28.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>4.27%</td>
<td>14.13%</td>
<td>30.32%</td>
<td>32.83%</td>
<td>12.85%</td>
<td>25.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>2.72%</td>
<td>16.04%</td>
<td>29.32%</td>
<td>28.60%</td>
<td>15.42%</td>
<td>26.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>9.67%</td>
<td>28.29%</td>
<td>50.39%</td>
<td>38.51%</td>
<td>23.48%</td>
<td>45.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>12.45%</td>
<td>25.29%</td>
<td>41.84%</td>
<td>36.08%</td>
<td>25.76%</td>
<td>41.90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 21 shows the effects of predictors on the growth rate of the social-emotional domain of GOLD®. The mean growth rate is 5.22 points per month. There is a significant difference between ELPFP participants and non-participants on the growth rate. Specifically, children in ELPFP improved the social-emotional domain faster over time (19% faster) than the children in control group.

Accreditation also had a significant effect on growth rate: The children in providers with accreditation(s) had growth per month that was 0.76 (15%) higher on average the children in providers without accreditation at all. In addition, the interaction between ELPFP and accreditation was statistically significant and negative, showing that children in ELPFP providers with accreditation had growth rate that was 1.58 (30%) smaller than providers without accreditation. Figure 41 shows the predicted growth trajectories on the social-emotional domain for children in the treated and control providers from 36 to 60 months, indicating higher scores at age three and faster growth rate for children in the Tier 3 providers than in control providers.

Table 21. Effects on Growth Rate of Social-Emotional Domain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Emotional Domain Scores</th>
<th>Estimates</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>p-value</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean Status At Age 3</td>
<td>487.62</td>
<td>7.23</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect Of teacher Mean At Fall 2015</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect Of Provider Mean At Fall 2015</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Difference For Children In PFP Providers</td>
<td>41.12</td>
<td>9.90</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Change By Number Of Accreditations</td>
<td>35.77</td>
<td>8.10</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Change By Number Of Accreditations For PFP Providers</td>
<td>-63.88</td>
<td>8.66</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. For providers that had TSG scores and were in the Year 3 ELPFP, only one had an accreditation. This is a limitation of the study, and is discussed more thoroughly in the limitations section of this report.
Figure 41. Growth Trajectories in Social-Emotional Domain for Children (Age 3-5) In Control and ELPFP Groups
Physical Domain

Effects of ELPFP participation and accreditation on the physical domain scores at age three are shown in Table 22. The mean score on the physical domain at age three for children in control providers was 487.46. Children in Tier 3 providers had physical domain scores that were higher by 27.14 points (5.6%) on average than children in control providers. Children in providers with an accreditation had increase in scores by 31.27 points (6.4%). Also, ELPFP providers with an accreditation had children with scores that were 52.19 points (11%) lower on average than ELPFP providers without an accreditation.

Table 22. Effects on the Physical Domain at Age Three

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Emotional Domain Scores</th>
<th>Estimates</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>p-value</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean Growth Rate</td>
<td>5.22</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect Of teacher Mean At Fall 2015</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect Of provider Mean At Fall 2015</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth Rate Difference For Children In PFP Providers</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth Rate Difference By Number Of Accreditations</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth Rate Difference By Number Of Accreditations For PFP Providers</td>
<td>-1.58</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The effects on growth rate of the physical domain are shown in Table 23. The overall growth rate of children in control providers on the physical domain was 4.99, and children in ELPFP providers had growth rate that was 1.13 higher (23%) on average than children in the control providers. Children in providers with accreditation had growth rates higher by 1.22 points (24%) on average. There was a negative interaction between ELPFP participation and accreditation: Children in ELPFP providers with accreditation had average growth rate 2.07 points (33%) lower than in ELPFP providers without accreditation. Figure 42 shows the predicted growth trajectory for children in
Tier 3 and control groups for the physical domain, showing that although the predicted status was the same at age 3, the growth rate was faster for children in the Tier 3 group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Domain Scores</th>
<th>Estimates</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>p-value</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean Score</td>
<td>487.96</td>
<td>9.39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect Of Teacher Mean At Fall 2015</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect Of Provider Mean At Fall 2015</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Difference For Children In PFP Providers</td>
<td>27.14</td>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Change By Number Of Accreditations</td>
<td>31.27</td>
<td>10.58</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Change By Number Of Accreditations For PFP Providers</td>
<td>-52.19</td>
<td>10.16</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 23: Effects on Growth Rate of Physical Domain

![Figure 42. Growth Trajectories in Physical Domain for Children (Age 3-5) In Control and ELPFP Groups](image)

Language Domain

The effects of ELPFP participation and accreditation on the language domain at age three are shown in Table 24. Children in control providers had mean language scores at age three equal to 494.31. Children in ELPFP providers had significantly higher scores at age three by 32.00 points (6.5%) on average. Providers with accreditation(s) had children who scored 28.42 points (5.7%) higher than providers without accreditation. ELPFP providers with accreditation(s) had children who scored lower on language by 46.00 points (9.3%) than ELPFP providers without an accreditation.
The effects of ELPFP participation and accreditation on the growth rate of language are shown on Table 25. The mean growth rate across all providers was 5.03 points per month, with children in ELPFP providers having a growth rate that was 1.33 points (26%) higher than in control providers. There was also a negative interaction between ELPFP and accreditation equal to -1.15, indicating that children in ELPFP providers with an accreditation have growth rates that are lower than in ELPFP providers without accreditation by 1.15 points (23%) on average.

Figure 48 shows the predicted trajectory for the language domain, indicating that the children in Tier 3 providers are expected to have higher levels of the language domain at year 3 as well as faster growth rate.

![Figure 43. Growth Trajectories in Language Domain for Children (Age 3-5) in Control and ELPFP Groups](image-url)
Cognitive Domain
The effects of predictors on the scores of the cognitive domain are shown in Table 26. The mean score at age three was 488.05 children from control providers, and for children from ELPFP providers, their score on cognitive domain is 28.15 points (6%) higher. In addition, there was a significant effect of accreditation. Furthermore, PFP providers with an accreditation had children that scores on average 46.44 points (10%) lower at age three than ELPFP providers without an accreditation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Domain Scores</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>p-value</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean Growth Rate</td>
<td>5.03</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect Of Teacher Mean At Fall 2015</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect Of Provider Mean At Fall 2015</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth Rate Difference For Children In PFP providers</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth Rate Difference By Number Of Accreditations</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth Rate Difference By Number Of Accreditations For PFP Providers</td>
<td>-1.15</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 26. Effects on Cognitive Domain at Age Three

The effects of ELPFP participation and accreditation on the growth rate of the cognitive domain are shown on Table 27. The mean growth rate of the cognitive domain was 5.24 points per month. There was a significant effect of ELPFP participation, corresponding to an increase in 1.12 points (21%) in the growth rate. Also, children in ELPFP providers with an accreditation had lower growth rates by 1.12 points (21%) as compared to children in ELPFP providers without an accreditation. Figure 44 shows that the predicted growth trajectories for children in Tier 3 and control providers do not differ at age 3 but the growth rate is larger for children in Tier 3 providers.
The effects of ELPFP and accreditation on the status at age three on the literacy domain are shown on Table 28. The mean score at age three was 490.05 for both ELPFP and control providers, because there was no effect of ELPFP participation on status of age 3. Accreditation was found having a statistically significant effect of 24 points (5%) on scores of literacy. Accreditation also interacted with ELPFP participation: Among ELPFP providers, those with an accreditation had children who scored lower on average by 34.00 points (7%) on literacy at age three.

**Literacy Domain**

The effects of ELPFP and accreditation on the status at age three on the literacy domain are shown on Table 28. The mean score at age three was 490.05 for both ELPFP and control providers, because there was no effect of ELPFP participation on status of age 3. Accreditation was found having a statistically significant effect of 24 points (5%) on scores of literacy. Accreditation also interacted with ELPFP participation: Among ELPFP providers, those with an accreditation had children who scored lower on average by 34.00 points (7%) on literacy at age three.
The effects of predictors on the growth rate of the literacy domain are shown in Table 29. The average change in literacy per month of age for children in control providers was 4.98. Children in ELPFP providers had an average growth rate that was 0.70 points (14%) higher on average. However, this difference in terms of growth rate was not found statistically significant. The predicted trajectories on the literacy domain indicate no difference at age 3 but a faster growth rate for children in Tier 3 providers as compared to children in control providers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literacy Domain Scores</th>
<th>Estimates</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>p-value</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean Score At Age Three</td>
<td>490.05</td>
<td>9.01</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect Of Teacher Mean At Fall 2015</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect Of Provider Mean At Fall 2015</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Difference For Children In PFP Providers</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>12.56</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Change By Number Of Accreditations</td>
<td>24.00</td>
<td>11.84</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Change By Number Of Accreditations For PFP Providers</td>
<td>-34.00</td>
<td>15.76</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 29. Effects on Growth Rate of Literacy Domain

Figure 45. Growth Trajectories in Literacy Domain for Children (Age 3-5) in Control and ELPFP Groups
**Mathematics Domain**

The effects of ELPFP participation and other predictors on the status of the mathematics domain at age 3 are shown in Table 30. The mean score at age three for children in control providers without an accreditation was 503.43. The main effect of ELPFP participation on the mathematics domain scores was not statistically significant which implies that the mean score at age three was expected to be the same for both the PFP and control groups. The interaction between accreditation and ELPFP participation showed significance, and this indicates that children in ELPFP providers with an accreditation had scores at age three that were 44.26 points (9%) lower on average than children in PFP and control providers without accreditation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean Growth Rate</th>
<th>Estimates</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>p-value</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effect Of Teacher Mean At Fall 2015</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect Of Provider Mean At Fall 2015</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth Rate Difference By Number Of Accreditations</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth Rate Difference By Number Of Accreditations For PFP Providers</td>
<td>-0.90</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>-0.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 30. Effects on Mathematics Domain at Age Three

The effects of ELPFP participation and accreditation on the growth rate of mathematics domain scores are shown in Table 31. The mean growth rate for children in control providers was 5.35. However, this difference in terms of growth rate was not found statistically significant. Similar for accreditations and its interaction with PFP participation. The predicted growth trajectories for Tier 3 and control groups are shown in Figure 46, indicating no difference in status at age 3 but a difference in growth rate in factor of children in Tier 3 providers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mathematics Domain Scores</th>
<th>Estimates</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>p-value</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean Score At Age Three</td>
<td>503.43</td>
<td>9.20</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect Of Teacher Mean At Fall 2015</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect Of Provider Mean At Fall 2015</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Difference For Children In PFP Providers</td>
<td>15.18</td>
<td>12.22</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Change By Number Of Accreditations</td>
<td>29.71</td>
<td>10.01</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Change by Number Of Accreditations For PFP Providers</td>
<td>-44.26</td>
<td>11.47</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 31. Effects on the Growth Rate of Mathematics Domain
RESEARCH QUESTION 3
WHAT IMPACT DOES THE EARLY LEARNING PERFORMANCE FUNDING PROJECT (ELPFP) HAVE ON CLASSROOM CLIMATE FOR THE TIER 3 PROVIDERS AS COMPARED TO A CONTROL GROUP?

Table 32 contains the mean and standard deviation of composite scores across blocks of each of the nine domains for treatment and control groups: composite scores on Transitions, Staff Affect, Staff Cooperation, Staff-Child Interactions, and Individualized and Developmentally Appropriate Pedagogy are slightly higher for the control group than for the treatment group. However, a comparison of mean scores between treatment and control groups using a Welsh t test did not find significant differences for any of the nine domains.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mathematics Domain Scores</th>
<th>Estimates</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>p-value</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean Growth Rate</td>
<td>5.35</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect Of Teacher Mean At Fall 2015</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect Of Provider Mean At Fall 2015</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth Rate Difference For Children In PFP Providers</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth Rate Difference By Number Of Accreditations</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth Rate Difference By Number Of Accreditations For PFP Providers</td>
<td>-0.52</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 32. Mean Differences of Domain Composite Scores between Treatment and Control Groups (N=77)
One potential factor that may have affected the results of the classroom climate is differences in teacher-child ratios across participating programs and non-participating programs. Researchers examined whether there were substantial differences in teacher-child ratios because as the fewer children served by each staff member is pivotal to higher quality, a small value of this ratio could be indicative of high quality of early learning programs. Table 33 presents the mean and standard deviation for treatment and control groups on teacher-child ratio that was calculated by dividing the number of children by the number of teachers in a particular classroom. The average teacher-child ratio is slightly higher for participating classrooms ($Mean=7.54$) than for non-participating classrooms ($Mean=7.06$). This signifies that, on average, there were more children served by each staff member for classrooms in the ELPFP classrooms than there were in the non-participating classrooms. However, as suggested by the Welsh t-test, the mean difference on teacher-child ratio between treatment and control was not statistically significant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transitions</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directions and Rules</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and Emotional Learning</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Awareness</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Affect</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Cooperation</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff-Child Interactions</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualized &amp; Developmentally Appropriate Pedagogy</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Behaviors</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 33. Mean Difference of Teacher-Child Ratio between Treatment and Control Groups (N=77)

**RESEARCH QUESTION 4**
WHAT IMPACT DOES THE EARLY LEARNING PERFORMANCE FUNDING PROJECT (ELPFP) HAVE ON TEACHER KNOWLEDGE GAIN FOR TIER 1, 2 AND 3 PROVIDERS?

Gains in teacher knowledge is an important predictor for improving practice. The required ELPFP professional development substantially improved teacher knowledge in all tiers. Findings will be presented in a summary, and then increases will be presented by Tier with respect to the effects of type of Early Learning Florida Course (language and course option), time spent in the online learning management system (LMS), percent of children identified as living in poverty enrolled in the providers’ program, and the accreditation(s) of the provider. A comparison between course knowledge gain and course mastery rates will be presented for Tier 2 and Tier 3 participants, and also by ELC.

Research Question Findings Summary

- Tier 1: Average gains in teacher knowledge from the 20 hour Making the Most of Classroom Interactions (MMCI) training were 26%.
- Tier 2, Tier 3: Average gains in teacher knowledge from participating in two Early Learning Florida courses were 17-82%.
Tier 1 Teacher Knowledge Gain from MMCI Training

The MMCI knowledge assessment contains nine multiple choice questions, which worth a total of nine points. Only Tier 1 practitioners received this measurement. Pre- and post-tests were used to measure knowledge gained from taking the 20-hour MMCI face-to-face training. The pre-test and post-test were given to practitioners before and after taking the MMCI training respectively. Comparing practitioners’ post-test scores to their pre-test scores enabled examination of whether the MMCI training was successful in increasing practitioners’ knowledge of practices taught in the MMCI training. Test scores on the MMCI knowledge assessment were collected by each participating ELC in Tier 1. Researchers received 510 pre-tests and 120 post-tests.

The average pre-test score was 5.92 (SD=1.72), ranging from 0 to 9. For those teachers who took the post-test, the average score was 7.47 (SD=1.60), ranging from 3 to 9 (See Figure 47). Also, Figure 48 depicts the distribution of teachers on different level of score gains after MMCI. Most teachers had positive gains in knowledge after the training. A dependent samples T-test was performed to analyze the scores of MMCI. Results indicate that there was statistically significant increase from pre-test to post-test. Practitioners gained significantly on MMCI by 1.63 (t(118)=9.91, p<0.001, Glass’s Δ = 0.90).

![Figure 47. Mean and Range of Pre-Test and Post-Test MMCI Scores](image-url)
Tier 2 and Tier 3 Teacher Knowledge Gain from *Early Learning Florida* Courses

A multilevel regression model was used to estimate the change in knowledge assessment scores between pre-test and post-test for the different *Early Learning Florida* courses in which Tier 2 and Tier 3 providers participated. Adjusted gain scores were calculated by adjusting for the effects of type of *Early Learning Florida* Course, time spent in the online learning management system (LMS), percent of children identified as living in poverty enrolled in the providers' program, and the accreditation(s) of the provider. Details of adjusted effects criteria are below:

- The number of children in each provider and the percent in poverty were categorized by dividing the values into four equal groups, each containing the same fraction of the total sample. The number of children represents the number of children enrolled in each provider. The four equal-size groups based on number of children were 4 to 64, 65 to 97, 98 to 132, and 133 to 288 children.
- Poverty percentage consists of the percent of children considered under poverty line in a provider and the four groups created had boundaries 0% to 28.3%, 28.3% to 48.7%, 48.7% to 62% and 62% to 100%.
- The teacher-level variable *Early Learning Florida* course usage minutes shows how much total time a teacher spent logged into the *Early Learning Florida* system for a particular course. For easier interpretation, minutes were converted to hours in the results tables. The groups created were 2.7 to 7.3, 7.4 to 9.4, 9.5 to 12.6, and 12.7 to 44.0 hours.
- Researchers added two binary indicators of type of *Early Learning Florida* courses in the model (online + community of practice, and online + TA/coaching), with the reference category being online only.
The accreditations included in the model were:
• Accredited Professional Preschool Learning Environment (APPLE)
• Florida Gold Seal Program serving children birth to 5 (GSBS)
• National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs (NAC)
• Florida Gold Seal Program for school age children (GSSA)
• National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
• Church of God Association (CGAC)
• United Methodist Association of Preschools (UMA)
• Green Apple Association of Christian Schools (GAAC)
• Association of Christian Teachers & Schools (ACT)
• Florida Catholic Conference (FACC)
• Florida Kindergarten Council (FLKC)
• Southern Association of Colleges & Schools (SACS)
• Florida League of Christian Schools (FLOC)
• National Association of Family Child Care (NFCC).

The complete list of accreditation percentages in the sample are shown in Table 34, and all accrediting agencies are described in Appendix C. It is noticeable that only six accreditations were prevalent in more than 5% of the providers and the accreditations with less than 1% of frequency are religious group accreditations. APPLE is the leading accreditations held by providers in the ELPFP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accreditation</th>
<th>APPLE</th>
<th>GSBS</th>
<th>NAC</th>
<th>NECP</th>
<th>GSSA</th>
<th>NAEY</th>
<th>NFCC</th>
<th>CGAC</th>
<th>UMA</th>
<th>GAAC</th>
<th>ACT</th>
<th>FACC</th>
<th>FLKC</th>
<th>SACS</th>
<th>FLDC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>32.28</td>
<td>11.53</td>
<td>10.80</td>
<td>6.78</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 34. Percentage of Providers with Each Accreditation

As shown in Table 35, cumulative gains from pre- to post-test were evident in all courses. The adjusted means were calculated from coefficients in Table 35 by using the sum of coefficient of “Gain” and the estimates of interaction between “Gain” and each course. Results show the largest percent adjusted gain at 82.18% in the Infant and Toddler Social-Emotional Development (ITSED) course. Infant Developmental Stages: The First Year of Life (ITGD) had the lowest adjusted gain at 13.82%. Variation in course difficulty may influence gains, therefore a comparison across courses would not reflect true differences in gains. The results of the multilevel regression model used to obtain the adjusted gains are described later in this report. These results were also divided into knowledge gain scores from Early Learning Florida courses in English and Spanish, as presented in Tables 36 and 37.

Table 35. Cumulative Teachers’ Knowledge Assessment Score Gain in Each Course
Knowledge gain differences in *Early Learning Florida* English and Spanish courses

Based on separated results from *Early Learning Florida* courses in English and Spanish, it is noticeable that Spanish course knowledge gains were slightly lower than English course knowledge gains, except for the Preschool Language Development (PLD) course, in which Spanish course takers had slightly higher gains.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Score Gain</th>
<th>Adjusted Gain</th>
<th>Percent Adjusted Gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Act 1: Getting Organized for Learning in Preschool (VPK1)</td>
<td>1350.00</td>
<td>1814.83</td>
<td>464.83</td>
<td>425.24</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing Infant and Toddler Learning Environments (ITLE)</td>
<td>1651.83</td>
<td>2207.32</td>
<td>555.49</td>
<td>541.28</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging Families of Infants and Toddlers (ITF)</td>
<td>1686.67</td>
<td>2346.67</td>
<td>660.00</td>
<td>645.12</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant and Toddler Language Development (ITLD)</td>
<td>1392.86</td>
<td>2082.14</td>
<td>689.29</td>
<td>663.65</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant and Toddler Social-Emotional Development (ITSED)</td>
<td>1065.00</td>
<td>1444.55</td>
<td>779.55</td>
<td>757.2</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Developmental Stages: The First Year of Life (ITGD)</td>
<td>1936.49</td>
<td>2213.51</td>
<td>277.03</td>
<td>267.59</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Support in Preschool: Quality of Feedback (QOF)</td>
<td>1680.24</td>
<td>2202.37</td>
<td>522.13</td>
<td>511.93</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Language Development (PLD)</td>
<td>1845.73</td>
<td>2235.68</td>
<td>389.95</td>
<td>316.77</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Learning Environments (PLE)</td>
<td>1481.82</td>
<td>1785.91</td>
<td>304.09</td>
<td>294.29</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screening and Assessing Young Dual Language Learners in Preschool (DLL 2)</td>
<td>1584.62</td>
<td>2153.85</td>
<td>569.23</td>
<td>521.57</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding and Promoting the Development and Learning of Young Dual Language Learners (DLL 1)</td>
<td>1551.52</td>
<td>2242.42</td>
<td>690.91</td>
<td>632.53</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Observation to Inform Individualized Instruction in Preschool (PKO)</td>
<td>1254.39</td>
<td>1688.89</td>
<td>434.50</td>
<td>440.99</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Observation to Support Developmentally Appropriate Practice with Infants and Toddlers (ITDAP)</td>
<td>1855.81</td>
<td>2231.40</td>
<td>375.58</td>
<td>380.35</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 36. Means and Gains of Scores on Knowledge Assessment—English Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Score Gain</th>
<th>Adjusted Gain</th>
<th>Percent Adjusted Gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding and Promoting the Development and Learning of Young Dual Language Learners (DLL 1)</td>
<td>1551.52</td>
<td>2242.42</td>
<td>690.91</td>
<td>501.27</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screening and Assessing Young Dual Language Learners in Preschool (DLL 2)</td>
<td>1584.62</td>
<td>2153.85</td>
<td>569.23</td>
<td>501.27</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Observation to Support Developmentally Appropriate Practice with Infants and Toddlers (ITDAP)</td>
<td>1845.09</td>
<td>2230.06</td>
<td>384.97</td>
<td>660.28</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging Families of Infants and Toddlers (ITF)</td>
<td>1687.69</td>
<td>2452.31</td>
<td>764.62</td>
<td>738.51</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Developmental Stages: The First Year of Life (ITGD)</td>
<td>1936.49</td>
<td>2213.51</td>
<td>277.03</td>
<td>616.47</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant and Toddler Language Development (ITLD)</td>
<td>1377.97</td>
<td>2010.17</td>
<td>632.20</td>
<td>481.14</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing Infant and Toddler Learning Environments (ITLE)</td>
<td>1639.68</td>
<td>2181.75</td>
<td>542.06</td>
<td>592.39</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant and Toddler Social-Emotional Development (ITSED)</td>
<td>1063.64</td>
<td>1947.27</td>
<td>883.64</td>
<td>372.65</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Observation to Inform Individualized Instruction in Preschool (PKO)</td>
<td>1256.44</td>
<td>1694.63</td>
<td>428.19</td>
<td>126.00</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Language Development (PLD)</td>
<td>1845.79</td>
<td>2250.00</td>
<td>404.21</td>
<td>642.97</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Learning Environments (PLE)</td>
<td>1481.82</td>
<td>1785.91</td>
<td>304.09</td>
<td>202.01</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Support in Preschool: Quality of Feedback (QOF)</td>
<td>1060.55</td>
<td>2197.27</td>
<td>530.72</td>
<td>600.75</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 1: Getting Organized for Learning in Preschool (VPK1)</td>
<td>1347.13</td>
<td>1793.97</td>
<td>446.84</td>
<td>401.09</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 37. Means and Gains of Scores on Knowledge Assessment—Spanish Courses

Teacher Mastery Rates of *Early Learning Florida* Courses

While teacher knowledge gain was specifically measured to understand how much content knowledge teachers gained completing *Early Learning Florida* courses, teacher mastery rates are the best indication of specific skills and job-embedded practices teachers used during the course, and provide a holistic approach to understanding teacher growth in Tier 2 and Tier 3 providers. Mastering of a course indicates that teachers have achieved an 80% or better on all course assignments, turned in all assignments on time, and completed the course successfully including participating with peers in the online discussion forums. For those taking the course in the online + CoP model, mastery also included attending all CoP sessions. For those taking the
Early Learning Performance Funding Project
Year 3 Evaluation 2016-2017

course in the online + coaching model, mastery also included successfully completed four and coaching sessions. Tables 38 through 41 show the differences between mastery rates in English and Spanish Early Learning Florida courses, and also show the differences in mastery between the three different Early Learning Florida course options.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Score Gain</th>
<th>Adjusted Gain</th>
<th>Percent Adjusted Gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engaging Families of Infants and Toddlers (ITF)</td>
<td>1864.00</td>
<td>2072.00</td>
<td>208.00</td>
<td>650.11</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing Infant and Toddler Learning Environments (ITLE)</td>
<td>1637.50</td>
<td>2180.00</td>
<td>542.50</td>
<td>503.99</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant and Toddler Social-Emotional Development (ITSED)</td>
<td>1001.67</td>
<td>1891.67</td>
<td>890.00</td>
<td>284.25</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Observation to Inform Individualized Instruction in Preschool (PKO)</td>
<td>1172.73</td>
<td>1650.00</td>
<td>477.27</td>
<td>37.50</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Language Development (PLD)</td>
<td>1383.33</td>
<td>2016.67</td>
<td>633.33</td>
<td>554.57</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 38. Course Completion and Mastery Frequencies across ELPFP English and Spanish Early Learning Florida Courses

Table 39 indicates that the Fall 2016 course mastery rates were similar, with an average of 88% mastering in the Fall for both English and Spanish courses, and an average of 92% mastery for Spring 2017 English and Spanish courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Total Starting Course</th>
<th>Total Completing Course</th>
<th>Mastery</th>
<th>Non Mastery</th>
<th>UF Mastery Rate</th>
<th>Withdrawn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2016 (Spanish)</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2016 (English)</td>
<td>1229</td>
<td>1171</td>
<td>1040</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2017 (Spanish)</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2017 (English)</td>
<td>1136</td>
<td>1076</td>
<td>957</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2609</td>
<td>2480</td>
<td>2198</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 39. Course completion and mastery frequencies for ELPFP Early Learning Florida English courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Total Starting Course</th>
<th>Total Completing</th>
<th>Mastery</th>
<th>Non Mastery</th>
<th>UF Mastery Rate</th>
<th>Withdrawn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding and Promoting the Development and Learning of Young Dual Language Learners (DLL 1)</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screening and Assessing Young Dual Language Learners (DLL 2)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Observation to Support Developmentally Appropriate Practice with Infants and Toddlers (ITDAP)</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging Families of Infants and Toddlers (ITEF)</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Developmental Stages: The First Year of Life (ITGD)</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Toddler Language Development (ITLD)</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing Infant and Toddler Learning Environments (ITLE)</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Toddler Social-Emotional Development (ITSED)</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Observation to Inform Individualized Instruction in Preschool (PKO)</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Language Development (PLD)</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Learning Environments (PLE)</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Support in Preschool: Quality of Feedback (QOF)</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 1: Getting organized for Learning in Preschool (VPK1)</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Total</td>
<td>2365</td>
<td>2247</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 40. Course Completion and Mastery Frequencies for Spanish Courses
Teacher Knowledge Gain from Early Learning Florida Courses by ELC

Knowledge assessment scores and mean gains for each ELC are represented in Table 42. The positive correlation between number of enrollments and score gain per ELC ($r = 0.43$), indicates that ELCs with larger course enrollments also had larger mean score gains. In addition, the negative correlation between the number of course enrollments and the mean pre-test score ($r = -0.52$) indicates that ELCs with fewer course enrollments had teacher participants who scored higher at the pre-test assessment.

Table 42. Mean Teachers’ Knowledge Assessment Scores and Gains per ELC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>COALITION NAME</th>
<th>Number of course enrollments</th>
<th>Mean Pre-test Score</th>
<th>Mean Post-test Score</th>
<th>Mean Score Gain</th>
<th>Percent Gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ELC of Alachua County</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1632.33</td>
<td>2000.00</td>
<td>366.67</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ELC of Brevard</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>1575.68</td>
<td>2122.97</td>
<td>547.30</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ELC of Broward County</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>1464.34</td>
<td>2030.07</td>
<td>565.73</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>ELC of Duval</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>1543.94</td>
<td>2051.52</td>
<td>507.58</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>ELC of Escambia County</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1900.00</td>
<td>2000.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>ELC of Flagler &amp; Volusia Counties</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>1476.81</td>
<td>2047.83</td>
<td>571.01</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ELC of Florida’s Gateway</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1657.14</td>
<td>2257.14</td>
<td>600.00</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>ELC of Florida’s Heartland</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1571.43</td>
<td>2071.43</td>
<td>500.00</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>ELC of Hillsborough County</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>1501.83</td>
<td>2146.18</td>
<td>544.34</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>ELC of Indian River, Martin, and Okееchobee Counties</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>1676.71</td>
<td>2050.68</td>
<td>373.97</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>ELC of Lake County</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1766.67</td>
<td>2350.00</td>
<td>583.33</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>ELC of Manatee County</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1648.39</td>
<td>1935.48</td>
<td>287.10</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>ELC of Marion County</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1745.00</td>
<td>2020.00</td>
<td>275.00</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>ELC of Miami-Dade/Monroe</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>1405.59</td>
<td>1950.50</td>
<td>545.92</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>ELC of North Florida</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1718.75</td>
<td>2143.75</td>
<td>425.00</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>ELC of Northwest Florida</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>1462.59</td>
<td>2009.29</td>
<td>546.70</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>ELC of Orange County</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>1415.28</td>
<td>2001.39</td>
<td>586.11</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>ELC of Osceola County</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1400.00</td>
<td>1600.00</td>
<td>200.00</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>ELC of Palm Beach County</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>1521.68</td>
<td>1909.44</td>
<td>387.76</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>ELC of Pasco and Hernando Counties</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1744.00</td>
<td>2224.00</td>
<td>480.00</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>ELC of Pinellas</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>1686.67</td>
<td>2219.33</td>
<td>532.67</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>ELC of Polk County</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1750.00</td>
<td>2187.50</td>
<td>437.50</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>ELC of Sarasota</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1720.00</td>
<td>2000.00</td>
<td>280.00</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>ELC of Seminole</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1666.67</td>
<td>2236.36</td>
<td>569.70</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>ELC of Southwest Florida</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1391.67</td>
<td>2033.33</td>
<td>641.67</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>ELC of St. Lucie</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>1521.21</td>
<td>1969.70</td>
<td>448.48</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>ELC of the Big Bend Region</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>1700.24</td>
<td>2118.07</td>
<td>417.83</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>ELC of the Nature Coast</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>1781.25</td>
<td>2237.50</td>
<td>456.25</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Missing ELC Information</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1750.00</td>
<td>2183.33</td>
<td>433.33</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Early Learning Performance Funding Project
Year 3 Evaluation 2016-2017

RESEARCH QUESTION 5
DO THE EFFECTS OF PARTICIPATING IN THE TIER 2 AND 3 PROGRAMS DEPEND ON PREDICTORS SUCH AS TIME SPENT IN COURSE LMS; COURSE LANGUAGE OPTION; COURSE MODEL OPTION; TEACHER-CHILD CLASSROOM RATIOS, TYPE OF ACCREDITATION, OR LOCAL QRIS?

Researchers investigated whether the effects of gains on knowledge assessments depended on predictors such as time spent in the course (LMS usage); participating in English or Spanish Early Learning Florida courses; the Early Learning Florida course model option (online only, online + CoP, online + TA); number of children, type of provider accreditation. These interactions between predictors and ELPFP are important because they show differential benefits of ELPFP for certain groups, as well as whether the context of implementation (such as time spent logged into the Early Learning Florida system) modified ELPFP effects. Findings are presented in a summary, and then followed by detailed analysis of predictors.

**Research Question Findings Summary**

- Teachers who were logged in into the Early Learning Florida system between 9.5 and 12.6 hours were found to have gains that were higher than teachers who logged in fewer hours.
- Considered in conjunction with lower pre-test knowledge of teachers who spent more time in the Early Learning Florida system, it can be concluded that participants spending more time in the course LMS start with lower knowledge but obtain higher knowledge gains.
- The means for the QRIS groups at the pre-test and post-test are higher than the non-QRIS group, indicating that providers in ELCs with a local QRIS perform better on CLASS® domains, or that high-performing providers in ELCs with QRIS are more likely to self-select into participation in ELPFP.

**Effects of Predictors on Pre-Test Knowledge Assessment Scores**

Table 43 shows the differences in pre-test scores by level of predictor on the knowledge scores, estimated with a multilevel regression model. The intercept, which is the overall pre-test score controlling for course differences and predictor differences, was 1593.42. The overall gain from pre-test to post-test was 501.27. There were no differences in pre-test scores due to the course being in Spanish. There were statistically significant differences in pre-test by course system usage time, showing that the two groups with higher system usage time tended to start the course with lower pre-test scores. This can be taken to indicate that teachers with lower levels of previous knowledge spent more time logged in into the course system, which is a positive outcome because it may indicate higher motivation to learn. There were no differences in pre-test knowledge between teachers enrolled in different course model types (i.e., online only, online + Coaching, online + Community of Practice). Providers with APPLE accreditation had higher pre-test scores comparing to the ones without APPLE. In addition, the number of children enrolled and the percent of children in poverty for each provider were not found significant predictors of knowledge assessment gains of the providers’ teachers.
Effects of Predictors on Teacher Knowledge Gain

Table 43 depicts gains differences from pre-test to post-test by several predictors. Among these predictors, *Early Learning Florida* course language type (English and Spanish) and course model type (*online, online + CoP, online + TA/Coach*), time spent in the course LMS, and accreditation specifically from NECPA showed as statistically significant differences in gains. There were also differences in gains across courses, but because courses vary in difficulty, gains across courses should not be compared.

Participants who completed Spanish courses had lower knowledge gains on average than participants of English courses, but this result is of limited interpretation because only a small subset of courses were available in Spanish. Teachers who were logged in into the *Early Learning Florida* system between 9.5 and 12.6 hours were found to have gains that were higher by 50.42 points than teachers who logged in less than 9.5 hours. Furthermore, teachers who spent longer than 12.6 hours in the course LMS showed significantly higher knowledge gains by 116.07 points than teachers who spent less than 9.5 hours logged in into the system. Considered in conjunction with lower pre-test knowledge of teachers who spent more time in the *Early Learning Florida* LMS shown in Table 43, it can be concluded that participants spending more time in the course LMS start with lower knowledge but obtain higher knowledge gains. The results also show that teachers in the online + TA/Coaching *Early Learning Florida* model type did show smaller gains compared to teachers in either online only or online + Community of Practice models. Teachers working for providers with NECPA accreditation showed significantly higher gains in knowledge by 95.31 points, but there were no differences in knowledge gains by other types of accreditation.
| Effect of Predictors on CLASS® Scores                                                                 |
|                                                                                                          |
| Number of Children Attending Each Provider                                                             |
|                                                                                                          |
| Table 43 shows means of CLASS® domains for pre- and post-observations grouped according to the number of children attending the provider. The table does not show any visible difference in CLASS® performance across different sizes of providers |
Table 44. Means of Domain Scores of CLASS® at Pre- and Post-Test by Attending Count

Percentage of Children in Poverty
Table 45 shows means of CLASS® domains by poverty percentage of the provider for pre- and post-observations. There are no observable differences in CLASS® scores due to percentage of children in poverty.

Table 45. Means of Domain Scores of CLASS® At Pre- and Post-Test By Percent of Children In Poverty

Provider Accreditation
Table 46 shows means of CLASS® domains for pre-test and post-test observations for providers with different accreditations. These are not mutually exclusive groups because providers can have more than one accreditation. The most frequent accreditation is APPLE. It is noticeable that some groups have larger pre-test means, such as providers with NAC accreditation, but comparisons based on this table of means are difficult and should not be over emphasized because of large differences in the number of providers with these accreditations; the differences between number of pre-test and post-test scores due to differential dropout of providers across accreditations; and the fact that accreditations are not mutually exclusive. In the table, a dash indicates that there were no scores at that domain of CLASS® for the specific group.
Early Learning Performance Funding Project
Year 3 Evaluation 2016-2017

Table 46. Means of Domain Scores of CLASS® at Pre- and Post-Test by Types of Accreditation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accreditation</th>
<th>pre_post</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>ES</th>
<th>CO</th>
<th>IS</th>
<th>EBS</th>
<th>ESL</th>
<th>RC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APPLE</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>5.87</td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>5.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>5.98</td>
<td>5.35</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>5.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAC</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>6.53</td>
<td>5.62</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>6.28</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>4.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>6.31</td>
<td>5.65</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>6.04</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>6.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEDP</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>6.30</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>5.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>5.90</td>
<td>5.31</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>5.48</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>4.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSSA</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>5.93</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>5.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>6.08</td>
<td>5.39</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>5.87</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>5.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAEY</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.35</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>5.80</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFCC</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.25</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.30</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>5.87</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>No accreditation/ other</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>6.06</td>
<td>5.42</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>5.73</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>4.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>6.07</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>5.86</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>4.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 46. Means of Domain Scores of CLASS® at Pre- and Post-Test by Types of Accreditation

Local Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS)
Table 47 shows the means for CLASS® domains by whether the ELC has implemented a quality rating improvement system (QRIS). The table shows that the means for the QRIS groups at the pre-test and post-test are higher than the non-QRIS group. This may indicate that providers in ELCs with a local QRIS perform better on CLASS® domains, or that high-performing providers in ELCs with QRIS are more likely to self-select into participation in ELPFP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELC Type</th>
<th>pre_post</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>ES</th>
<th>CO</th>
<th>IS</th>
<th>EBS</th>
<th>ESL</th>
<th>RC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No QRIS</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>770</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>4.99</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>5.57</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>4.80</td>
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<td>5.38</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>5.70</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>4.76</td>
</tr>
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<td>QRIS</td>
<td>Pre</td>
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<td>5.54</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>5.66</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>4.99</td>
</tr>
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<td>QRIS</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>5.85</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>4.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 47. Means of Domain Scores of CLASS® At Pre- and Post-Test by Types of ELC
RESEARCH QUESTION 6
DO EARLY LEARNING FLORIDA COURSE EXPERIENCES OF TIER 2 AND TIER 3 PROVIDERS DEPEND ON INTERNAL SUPPORT (CENTER DIRECTORS AND TEACHER PEERS) AND EXTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT?

Data on participants’ experiences with Early Learning Florida course implementation, support from internal and external leadership and organizational support and access to materials and systems were obtained from the Early Learning Florida course completion surveys taken by Tier 2 and Tier 3 teacher participants after successfully completing at least two courses. Results are presented in a summary, and then detailed survey results are presented in order of: time used to complete Early Learning Florida courses and implement strategies; benefits from participating in Early Learning Florida courses; and support from internal leadership (directors) and external support (course instructors, coaches and CoP facilitators) and challenges in course participation.

### Research Question Findings Summary

- Over 90% of teachers reported Early Learning Florida courses were extremely useful in providing strategies for teaching ALL children, including those with special needs, dual-language learners, and high-needs populations, as well as creating learning partnerships with families.
- Over 96% of teachers would encourage other colleagues to take an Early Learning Florida course.
- 85% of Tier 2 and 3 teachers reported that they collaborated with other teachers when implementing practices learned.
- 80% of Tier 2 and 3 teachers reported course content and strategies were extremely useful in their daily instructional practice.
- For both English and Spanish speakers, 80% of teachers received “efficient” support from the course instructor.
- A discrepancy in Early Learning Florida course instructor’s ability to provide timely feedback and communicate with participants was reported, with more than 75% of Spanish speakers indicated their instructors were excellent in these skills, while less than 44% of English speakers reported this result. Only 7% of Spanish speakers claimed their instructors were below average or even poor, compared to 33% of English speakers.
Time Completing Early Learning Florida Course Work in a Typical Week

Among the practitioners who have completed and mastered at least two Early Learning Florida (Tier 2 teachers) courses, the majority of both Spanish and English speakers spent more than one hour a week to complete coursework. Of the Spanish speaking participants, 41% required between two to four hours to their coursework and 21% more than four hours a week. English speaking participants required slightly less time with approximately 36% working two to four hours and 17% more than 4 hours per week.
Figure 49. Amount of Time Used to Complete At Least Two Early Learning Florida Courses for Teachers in Different Language Groups (English and Spanish)

Time of Implementation of Tasks in the Course

In terms of time to complete the tasks required in the course such as reflection assignments, discussion forums, and course exams, both English and Spanish speakers (42%) had enough time to complete the tasks that were required in course curriculum. Around 30% always found enough time to complete the tasks. Less than 6% of either English or Spanish speakers rarely or never found enough time to complete the tasks.

Figure 50. Proportion of Teachers (English and Spanish) in Reported Level of Sufficiency in Terms of Time to Implement Tasks Assigned in Early Learning Florida Courses
**Difficulty Completing Course Assignments**
Among Tier 2 practitioners who have completed and mastered two *Early Learning Florida* courses, very few English and Spanish speakers found it somewhat or very difficult completing the assignments, with nearly half of either language speakers think there is no difficulty at all completing the assignments. However, Spanish speakers found it slightly more difficult completing the assignments comparing to English speakers. Almost 55% of Spanish speakers found it a little bit or somewhat difficult completing the assignments while less than 35% of English speakers found it a little bit or somewhat difficult.

![Figure 51. Proportion of Teachers (English and Spanish) In Reported Level of Difficulty in Terms of Completing Assignments from Early Learning Florida Courses](image1)

**Difficulty with Expression of Course Content**
Almost all teachers had little difficulty understanding how course content was expressed. Less than 10% of either language speakers had minor problems with language. Less than 8% of Spanish speakers and less than 2% of English speakers found it somewhat difficult. Less than 2% of either language speakers had severe problems.

![Figure 52. Proportion of Teachers (English and Spanish) In Reported Level of Difficulty in Terms of Understanding the Expression of Course Content Used in Early Learning Florida Courses](image2)
Implementation of New Course Strategies in Teacher Classrooms

Regarding the implementation of Early Learning Florida practices in classroom, most teachers reported little or no difficulty finding time to implement new practices, which accounted for 87% and 67% among English speakers and Spanish speakers respectively.

Figure 53. Proportion of Teachers (English and Spanish) in Reported Level of Difficulty In Terms of Finding Time to Implement Course Strategies Learned From Early Learning Florida Courses in Their Classrooms

Type of Early Learning Florida Course Model

When asked about course model information, it is important to point out the most teachers could not choose their own course type, which was chosen primarily by their ELC. For either language speakers, the percentage of “online course only” was the highest. However, the response patterns from English speakers and Spanish speakers seem to be slightly different. For Spanish speakers, over 83% of teachers have tried the “online course only” model type while less than 14% chose either online + TA/Coaching or online + Community of Practice model type. For English speakers, the percentage of choosing online course only was slightly lower with 68%. The percentage to choose online + Community of Practice and online + TA/Coaching is relatively higher for English speakers compared to Spanish speakers.

Figure 54. Proportion of Teachers (English and Spanish) in Each Type of the Early Learning Florida Course Models
Usefulness of *Early Learning Florida* Course Knowledge and Practices

With respect to usefulness of *Early Learning Florida* courses, more than two-thirds of all participants reported that the courses helped them increase their knowledge of content, teaching practice, strategies to work with families, new approaches to child assessment, and strategies to teach all children. Less than 5% of teachers indicated that courses were “not useful” at all. In terms of changes made in practitioners’ teaching practices as a result of participating in *Early Learning Florida* courses, most practitioners indicated that they made “somewhat” or “a lot” of changes, in which Spanish speakers accounted for slightly more (92%) comparing to English speakers (85%). Almost 99% of both English and Spanish speakers found the videos used in courses helpful in their learning.

*Usefulness of the Early Learning Florida Courses with Respect to Increasing Practitioners’ Knowledge of Course Content*

In terms of the usefulness of the *Early Learning Florida* courses in increasing practitioners’ knowledge of course content, both English and Spanish speakers share similar response pattern. In both groups, the respondents indicate that taking the *Early Learning Florida* courses was very useful to increasing practitioners’ knowledge of content. The percentage of English speakers is slightly higher than Spanish speakers, with 78% and 73% respectively.

![Figure 55. Proportion of Teachers (English and Spanish) in Reported Level of Usefulness in Terms of the Effect of Early Learning Florida Courses—Improvement of Practitioners’ Knowledge on Course Content](image)
Usefulness of the Early Learning Florida Courses with Respect to Increasing Practitioners’ Knowledge of Teaching Practice

Approximately 76% of both English and Spanish speakers reported that *Early Learning Florida* courses was very useful in increasing practitioner knowledge of teaching practice. Around 14% of English speakers and 20% of Spanish speakers found the courses fairly useful. Less than 9% among either language speakers found the course slightly useful or not useful at all.

Usefulness of the Early Learning Florida Courses with Respect to Learning Knowledge of Working with Families

Among both English and Spanish speakers, approximately 72% of teachers consider *Early Learning Florida* courses a very useful tool to help them develop knowledge of working with families. About 22% of Spanish speakers indicated the courses were “fairly useful”, which is slightly higher than English speakers (15%). Less than 12% of either language speakers considered courses are only slightly useful or not useful at all.
Usefulness of the Early Learning Florida Courses with Respect to Learning New Approaches to Child Assessment

Over 90% of both language speakers indicated the Early Learning Florida courses were very useful with respect to learning new approaches to child assessment. Only 9% of English speakers think the courses are only slightly useful or not useful at all, and less than 5% of Spanish speakers think the courses are not useful at all.

Figure 58. Proportion of Teachers (English and Spanish) in Reported Level of Usefulness In Terms of the Effect of Early Learning Florida Courses—Learning New Approaches to Child Assessment

Usefulness of the Early Learning Florida Courses with Respect to Learning Strategies to Teach ALL Children

More than 90% English and Spanish speakers found the ELF courses fairly or very useful with respect to learning strategies to teach ALL Children. Very few teachers thought the Early Learning Florida courses were only slightly useful or not useful at all. Among English speakers, approximately 5% of them indicated that the ELF courses were slightly useful and only 3% of them said courses were not useful at all. For the Spanish speakers, none of them consider courses slightly useful and less than 5% of them indicated that courses are not useful at all.

Figure 59. Proportion of Teachers (English and Spanish) In Reported Level of Usefulness In Terms of the Effect of Early Learning Florida Courses—Learning Strategies to Teach All Children
Changes Made in Practitioners’ Teaching Practices as a Result of the Early Learning Florida Course Participation

In terms of the extent to which practitioners have made changes in their teaching practices as a result of participating in Early Learning Florida courses, most practitioners made changes. Spanish speakers accounted for a slightly higher percentage (92%) comparing to English speakers (85%). Less than 10% of either language speakers made only a little change. Less than 4% of English speakers and no Spanish speakers said that taking the Early Learning Florida courses failed to make a change in their practice.
Teachers Discussed What They Learned With Other Colleagues Who Did Not Participate in Early Learning Florida Courses

Among the practitioners who have completed and mastered two Early Learning Florida courses, over 93% of both English and Spanish speakers have discussed what they learned with other colleagues who did not participate. Very few have not discussed what they learned at all.
**Taking Another Early Learning Florida Course**

Most of English speakers (83%) and Spanish speakers (91%) reported that they were interested in taking another *Early Learning Florida* course.

**Encouraging Other Colleagues to Take an Early Learning Florida Course**

Over 96% of both language speakers would encourage other colleagues to take an *Early Learning Florida* course. Less than 4% of them would not.
Support from Course Instructors, TA/Coaches and CoP Facilitators

Support from Early Learning Florida Course Instructor
For both English and Spanish speakers, almost 80% of teachers received efficient support from the course instructor. Less than 10% in total among language speakers reported a lack of support from the instructor somewhat. Furthermore, none of Spanish speakers reported feeling they lacked support from the instructor a lot.

Course Instructor Providing Timely Feedback
In terms of the course instructor’s ability with respect to providing timely feedback, more than 75% of Spanish speakers indicated their instructors were excellent, while less than 44% of English speakers think the same way. Only 7% of Spanish speakers claimed their instructors were below average or even poor while compared to 33% of English speakers.
**Course Instructor Communication of Ideas and Information**

Eighty percent of Spanish speakers claimed their instructors were excellent at communication and less than 17% of them said their instructors were either average or above average. In contrast, less than 49% of English speakers think their instructors were excellent with communication, and around 47% of them think their instructors are average or above average. Very few English or Spanish speakers indicated their instructor’s ability to communicate ideas and information was below average or poor.

![Figure 66. Proportion of Teachers (English and Spanish) in Reported Level of Quality of the Instructors of Early Learning Florida Courses in Communication of Ideas and Information](image)

**Course Instructor Respect and Concern for Practitioners**

Almost 97% of either language speakers indicated at least average performance of their instructors. Among these teachers, the percentage of Spanish speakers (80%) who chose “Excellent or High” was much higher than English speakers (50%). For English speakers, nearly half of them reported that instructors were either average or above average.

![Figure 67. Proportion of Teachers (English and Spanish) in Reported Level of Quality of the Instructors of Early Learning Florida Courses in Awareness and Respectfulness to Students](image)
Course Instructor Facilitation of Learning

Only about 3% of teachers who participated in the courses indicated their course instructor’s ability to facilitate learning was poor or below average. Most teachers claimed their course instructor’s ability was at least average, in which more than 78% Spanish speakers and 46% of English speakers said their instructor’s ability was excellent. A little more than half of English speakers thought their instructor’s ability was either average or above average.

Course Instructor Encouragement of Independent, Creative, and Critical Thinking

Nearly 97% of both language speakers indicated their course instructors were at or above average when encouraging them think independently, creatively and critically. Almost 77% of Spanish speakers, but only 48% of English speakers claimed their instructors did an excellent job. Almost half of the English speakers think their instructor’s ability was either average or above average.
Interactions with the UF Lastinger-Certified Coach in Improving Teachers’ Practice
Among the practitioners who were participating the online + TA/Coaching model, nearly 75% thought their interactions with the UF Lastinger-Certified Coach were very helpful in improving their practices. Twenty percent of teachers thought their interactions with the UF Lastinger-Certified Coach were fairly helpful in improving their practices. About 4% of teachers thought the interactions were slightly helpful, and only 1% of them thought the interactions were not helpful at all in improving their practices.

Figure 70. Proportion of Teachers in Reported Level of Satisfaction toward the UF Lastinger-Certified Coach in Improvement of Teachers’ Practice
**Number of Meetings with the UF Lastinger-Certified Coach**

A total of 59% of teachers met with their coaches between three and five times. Twenty-six percent of practitioners met with the UF Lastinger-Certified Coach less than three times, and approximately 3% of teachers met with their coaches more than five times, and a little more than 4% had met with their coaches more than ten times. Around 7% of teachers were not sure how many times they met with their coaches.

*Figure 71. Proportion of Teachers in Reported Level of Frequencies Terms of Meeting with the UF Lastinger-Certified Coach*
Number of Classroom Visitations the UF Lastinger-Certified Coach Completed During Course Term

Regarding the number of classroom visitations made by the UF Lastinger-Certified Coach, almost 44% of the classrooms were visited between three times and five times, and nearly 38% of the practitioners who participated in the Coaching course model reported that their classrooms were visited less than three times. Approximately 3% of teachers reported classrooms were visited more than five times, and around 2% were visited more than 10 times. Approximately 14% of practitioners are not sure about the times their classrooms were visited by coaches.

Figure 72. Proportion of Teachers in Reported Level of Frequency in Terms Of the Number of Observation Conducted by the UF Lastinger-Certified Coach
**Teachers Sharing Successes and Challenges in Blended CoP Sessions**

Among those teachers who participated in the online + Communities of Practice course option, most of practitioners shared their success and challenges in the CoP session after taking the online courses. Comparing English speakers and Spanish speakers, the percentage to share frequently among Spanish speakers is much higher, almost 88%. Less than 13% of Spanish speakers reported they only shared their success and challenges sometimes and no Spanish speakers reported never shared any success and challenge. However, more than 31% of English speakers shared their success and challenges sometimes, and almost 10% reported they never shared at all in CoP sessions.

![Figure 73. Proportion of Teachers (English and Spanish) in Reported Level of Frequency in Terms of Sharing Their Success and Challenges in Blended CoP Sessions](image)

**Teachers Seek Ideas from Colleagues in the Course CoP Sessions**

When seeking ideas, Spanish speakers always turned to colleagues in their CoP sessions (100%), while less than 44% of English speakers sought ideas from colleagues. Nearly half of English speakers reported they sought ideas from colleagues sometimes, and only 8% of English speakers never sought ideas from colleagues at all.

![Figure 74. Proportion of Teachers (English and Spanish) in Reported Level of Frequency In Terms of Seeking Ideas from Colleagues in Blended CoP Sessions](image)
Teachers Learn from Others in the Course CoP Session

Most practitioners who were participating in the online + Community of Practice course model reported they learned from others in their CoP sessions. Almost 88% of Spanish speakers said they learned a great deal from others while the percentage was much lower among English speakers.

![Bar chart showing the proportion of teachers in reported level of learning received from colleagues in blended CoP sessions for English and Spanish.](image)

Figure 75. Proportion of Teachers (English and Spanish) In Reported Level of Learning Received From Colleagues in Blended CoP Sessions

Number of Community of Practice (CoP) Sessions Attended

In terms of attendance of CoP sessions, both language groups share the same response pattern. About 60% of practitioners attended more than three times and approximately 30% of either language speakers attended less than three times. The rest of practitioners were not sure the how many time they attended.

![Bar chart showing the proportion of teachers in reported level of frequency in terms of attending CoP sessions for English and Spanish.](image)

Figure 76. Proportion of Teachers (English and Spanish) in Reported Level of Frequency in Terms of Attending CoP Sessions
Organizational and Leadership Support
Over 86% English and Spanish speaking teachers indicated that they did not have problems in terms of administrative, peer, or instructional support. Also, no Spanish speakers found “severe problems” at all receiving support from their instructors. Less than 15% of either language speakers reported they might have at least some minor problems in material accessibility.

Support from Center Director
Among the practitioners who completed and mastered two Early Learning Florida courses, over 78% of English speakers and Spanish speakers received “a lot” of director support. None of the Spanish speakers reported a significant lack of director support. Less than 12% of either language speakers reported that they somewhat lack director support or a lack of director support a little.

Figure 77. Proportion of Teachers (English and Spanish) in Reported Level of Support Received from Center Director
Support from Teacher Peers
With respect of support received from other teachers, more than 88% of English speakers and Spanish speakers indicated they received sufficient support from other teachers. Only around 10% of either language speakers reported they lacked support from other teachers to some extent.

![Figure 78. Proportion of Teachers (English and Spanish) in Reported Level of Support Received from Other Teachers](image)

Lack of Necessary Course Materials
In terms of the materials accessibility, almost 77% of both language speakers were able to get all the necessary materials. Around 15% of teachers lacked necessary materials a little, and less than 8% of either language speakers lacked necessary materials somewhat or a lot. In addition, no Spanish speakers lacked necessary materials a lot.

![Figure 79. Proportion of Teachers (English and Spanish) in Reported Level of Sufficiency In terms of the Necessary Course Materials](image)
Collaboration with Colleagues to Implement Course Strategies

Over 86% of both English and Spanish speaking teachers reported collaboration with colleagues in their center or family child home care as influential in the implementation of new course strategies in their practice. Approximately 25% of English speakers and less than 17% of Spanish speakers indicated the new practice may break the routine. Also, no Spanish speakers indicated that implementing new practice would disturb the routine “severely”.

![Figure 80. Proportion of Teachers (English and Spanish) in Reported Level of Collaboration during the Implementation of Course Strategies](image-url)
RESULTS

QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

In order to triangulate quantitative results and present the voice of stakeholders who engaged in the ELPFP, three sets of stakeholder interviews were conducted: Tier 2 participants (teachers and directors); Tier 3 participants (teachers and directors); and ELC partners. These interviews were conducted to determine:

a. Participant perceptions of their ELPFP experience;

b. Elements of the ELPFP that impacted change of teachers’ practice and promoted teacher knowledge gain;

c. Participants’ perceptions of changes and improvements in children’s learning, behavior, child-child and teacher-child interactions; and

d. Participant successes, challenges, and overall suggestions for future implementation of the ELPFP initiative.

Evidence in the form of direct quotes from stakeholders are provided to further support themes and offer in-depth description of processes and structures involved in this project. With each stakeholder group, a case study is also offered to provide a comprehensive view of participation in ELPFP and connections to practice and program elements. All evidence are provided with codes that categorize participants by role (teacher, director, ELC staff), but de-identify individual participants in order to preserve confidentiality during the data collection and analysis process. The goal was to interview ELPFP teachers and ELC staff in the same regions in order to further triangulate data regarding ELPFP experiences. While no Tier 1 providers were direct participants in these interviews, data regarding Tier 1 interventions were collected from other stakeholder groups, and thus will be presented. Figure 81 represents the geographic location of ELCs that participated in Year 3 of ELPFP, and the sample of qualitative stakeholders that participated in this Year 3 evaluation study throughout the state.
Experiences of ELPFP Stakeholders in Year 3 (2016-2017)

During stakeholder interviews, questions regarding aspects of the ELPFP implementation were discussed relating to each tiered intervention, the motivation behind participating in the ELPFP, and stakeholder impressions of the changes within this program throughout the three-year implementation of the ELPFP. Comparing this year's results to those from Tier 2 participants and ELC partners during the 2015-2016 implementation year (Rodgers et al., 2016) revealed that the majority of stakeholders focused more on the positive collective impact of this program for every level of their learning system: children, teachers, families, ELCs, and community partners. Though the individual ELPFP experience was investigated and discussed, the positive collective experience of the ELPFP is what came to light. Teachers discussed the impact of their learning in relation to an impact on classroom and provider quality. Teachers specifically spoke of change in their children's learning and behavior as well as the impact on their children's families. Directors spoke of the impact of this learning on their teachers, but focused more on the direct positive impact that participating in the ELPFP had on program quality and teacher professionalism. Early learning partners looked through the organizational lens of measured growth and change, and gave specific examples of programs within their ELCs that significantly improved throughout this three-year initiative, as well as discussed growth within ELC partners from professional development they received related to the ELPFP.
Overall themes of stakeholder groups from the ELPFP Year 3 experience were:

1. Increased professionalism of teachers and providers;
2. Improvement in language and literacy for both children and teachers; and
3. Overall program quality improvement based on ELPFP interventions.

Themes of each tier of participants as well as early learning partner perspectives are presented in order of the most dominantly discussed themes. For each stakeholder group (Tier 2, Tier 3, and ELC staff), a case study is provided to illuminate the systemic connections of this quality improvement initiative, and show how the ELPFP is impacting every level of the early learning system in Florida. Challenges with ELPFP implementation are also discussed within each stakeholder group for Year 3. Results are presented by stakeholder participant group, followed by feedback on each intervention for all three tiers of the Year 3 ELPFP implementation to provide a cumulative lens for analysis of these interventions.

TIER 2 TEACHERS’ VOICES
During Tier 2 participant interviews, questions regarding motivations to participate in the ELPFP were asked. Almost all teachers responded that they wanted to gain new knowledge and strategies that could directly impact the children in their classroom. Individual goals such as learning about strategies to implement with dual language learners, children with special needs, and language and literacy were prominently stated by Tier 2 teachers and director participants. Programmatic goals such as more collaboration with their director and peer teachers, as well as effectively using observation and assessment as a center-wide improvement approach were also discussed. All Tier 2 participants discussed tremendous improvement in classroom climate, teacher-child and child-child interactions, and family engagement and communication. Before participating in the ELPFP, many Tier 2 participants did not feel that language, literacy, and social-emotional needs for children could be addressed in their early learning program, and felt that the ELPFP “opened new doors” to these elements of education. Evidence from Tier 2 stakeholders is presented by perception of overall ELPFP impact from Year 3, and then focused specifically on categories that resonated most with participants.

Overall Tier 2 Impact: Powerful Job-Embedded Learning that Promoted Professionalism
Tier 2 participants were asked several questions about the comparisons of teaching before and after joining the ELPFP. All Tier 2 participants stated that they felt more “professional” as teachers, and “valuable” as educators. Teachers discussed the need to be “better in the classroom,” but stated they didn’t understand or have the tools necessary to create these changes before the ELPFP. Teachers spoke of their jobs being difficult without tools or technology to impact children’s learning. They appreciated the ELPFP for the combination of reinforcement of quality strategies as well as the challenge of learning new ways to teach and interact with children. A family child care home owner who has been teaching for over 20 years stated:

Just being a part of the program, it opened my eyes to think, “You don’t have to have control of everything they do, you can teach them how to control what they do...if they take away nothing else from me... I want them to have social skills. It allowed me to be a little more open, because if I’m always trying to control every experience they have, they’re not learning to make decisions; they’re not learning to do things for themselves; they’re not learning to trust the decisions they make. And I know they’re young, but it makes a difference, so I think that’s what allowed me to say, you know what? We can do this. You just have to give them the tools to use (14e0e, interview).
Most Tier 2 participants spoke of a newly discovered confidence in their ability to differentiate their teaching skills based on strategies they learned in the ELPFP. Before this experience, many teachers were apprehensive to provide strategies for children with special needs or language challenges in their classrooms. A teacher in a center spoke of having these tools to make her job easier and more rewarding:

This program has been a great influence in my training as a teacher. I’ve found it to be very interesting since it’s taught me how to work with all children in my classroom. It has also shown me how to use some new technology which allows me to keep a better record of the children in my classroom according to their individual characteristics and needs. Each child has his own characteristics and we must learn to acknowledge them as the school year goes by; relaying in the different activities conducted in the classroom to do so successfully. This project has been a great help in making my job easier. It is very well organized and that allows me to identify my goals in each area, and really helps me decide what I need to learn in order to teach them properly (14a3f, interview).

As with previous interviews in Year 2 (Rodgers et al., 2016), the concept of professionalism and being undervalued as teachers was highlighted for many participants during this experience. Teachers cited lack of compensation, lack of access to quality learning, and lack of time as barriers to professionalism in previous years. Tier 2 participants described their need to become more knowledgeable as teachers, and use that knowledge to promote growth in their children. A common theme in these interviews was teachers remembering themselves as “babysitters” before the ELPFP. A fifth-year teacher stated that her love for her job pushed her to enter in to the ELPFP despite her lack of previous professional development:

It has helped me be more professional and careful with the words that I say around these kids. You know, a long time ago we were just all called babysitters, but now it’s given me a different approach. Now we’re professional teachers, and just knowing what to say and how to say it really has helped me throughout the program… Instead of being a babysitter, just being there for them and not teaching them anything, I see them develop more and more, which has taught me to be more professional, rather than just being there, just watching them throughout the day. I don’t just watch now, I teach (14c49, interview).

All Tier 2 participants reiterated that though participation in the ELPFP was not easy due to time, technology issues, and life challenges, they wanted to continue with the program because they saw positive impact on their instructional capacity and in the learning of their children. A 25-year veteran teacher stated:

I just wanna be better. I love my job, I’ve been doing this forever. I love this program [ELPFP], even though it’s not easy, it’s definitely challenging. I’m happy when I see that my kids are excited that they accomplished something that they did something on their own, and it’s the same for me. It really feels good to me to accomplish this, and I want to continue. I want to go all the way! (14efb, interview).

Researchers observed that Year 3 participants articulated specific strategies that helped increase their instructional quality with language and knowledge, and teachers highlighted how these strategies impacted the learning of their children, making a direct connection from learning to practice.
ELPFP Provided Tools for Teachers to Teach All Children

An important finding from Tier 2 participants in Year 3 was the common theme of teachers feeling confident in differentiating their instruction to teach diverse populations due to learning specific strategies in their Tier 2 professional learning. This finding was not evident in Year 2 results, and shows that specific content and strategies geared towards teaching diverse populations was added in Year 3 interventions and made an impact on teacher practice. A teacher in a 4-year-old classroom gave an example of one of her children's and her progress based on skills this teacher learned in her Early Learning Florida course:

There is one girl in my classroom who showed an underdeveloped muscle control; she wasn’t able to hold pencils correctly, she barely had any strength or mobility in her hands at all. Using all the information I was able to gather from observing her in all different areas, I was in a position to improve her condition. Helping her and giving her ideas and clues as to how to solve this problem on her own had a positive outcome, and now she has overcome her mobility issues. She’s painting some lovely drawings now… I have to teach every one of my kids differently. And that’s why I really loved the course videos and reading the work after they talk about a certain thing, because I have to expand my knowledge and learn different ways to teach. Every child is different, so I have to learn a different way to get through to this child that may not work for another child (14be5, interview).

Many Tier 2 teachers and directors acknowledge their lack of understanding of learning differences in their children before the ELPFP, and felt unprepared to handle these challenges of learning in the classroom. Teachers told stories of not wanting to dig into these children’s learning differences because of their lack of confidence and understanding, and as a result, dealt with many challenging behaviors that created classroom disruptions. A veteran teacher described one such example, and how she used specific knowledge from her course as well as peers in her CoP to help these children:

There were two children in my classroom that had trouble focusing. One of them even showed quite aggressive behavior and I really struggled trying to keep things going while not punishing him. And, thanks to my course instructor and all the community of practice meetings—talking to other teachers who were facing similar cases as well as with my teacher’s help—I was able to find different methods that I would later put into practice. For example, I gave more responsibility to these children. I made them feel more independent because, sometimes, children with special needs are overprotected. Even their parents noticed the change and they really appreciated it (14c57, interview).

Tier 2 participants consistently discussed the evolving populations of children they were seeing in their classrooms, and a feeling of finally being able to help these children learn successfully. A director in a large child care facility stated that as both a leader and a teacher, ELPFP provided much needed support to help her and her teachers:

We have so many different kinds of kids here, from every place and every walk of life. There are kids with disabilities, there are kids that are dual language learners. So as a teacher you have to be prepared for all those children and make sure that whatever you’re doing that they are fully engaged and learning because that is their right. And this program has really helped me do that, especially the courses. Encouraging these kids so that they will eventually warm up and want to be flowing with the class and getting the experiences to support that… it was important to make sure that we can lesson plan and incorporate everybody, any kind of disability or if they were an English learner, the information was well incorporated in the lesson plan. It really gave us tremendous support in helping these children (14a7b, interview).
ELPFP Helped Teachers Improve Their Classroom Learning Environment

Another common theme with Tier 2 teachers and directors was their ability to change and improve their classroom learning environment based on knowledge and strategies learned from ELPFP interventions. Teachers realized that physical and organizational changes in their learning environments resulted in social and emotional growth for their children, and provided a more positive atmosphere for learning as well as decreased negative child behaviors. One teacher from a small center gave an example of confronting her own assumptions about what her classroom should look like:

> Well, for me, just watching a child be able to explore their environment more, it reduced the crying and really helped me understand the children's needs. It reduced the anxiety in the environment. Letting them explore and building what it is that they have taken an interest in has changed my environment drastically. It's really engaging them where they are versus, I think as a teacher, we kind of come in with our own concept of how we're gonna do it, versus allowing the child to lead the way and to create the pathway and follow that. So for me, that has been one of the greatest investments of this program, and being a part of this is really allowing the child to kind of explore, kind of lead, and whatever they found that was an interest, building on that interest that whether they're looking at it or touching it, or however they were engaged with it, just building on that opportunity (14a4b, interview).

A new Tier 2 toddler teacher, who felt very overwhelmed by lack of structure in her classroom which resulted in children's behavior issues, gave an example of the impact of her overall change of both her classroom and her demeanor as a teacher, and how that produced child-centered learning:
My climate moved from “negative,” where you get a lot of the crying and the fighting over toys, to a great learning environment. That has totally been eliminated, and it was eliminated I feel like, due to just restructuring the environment, scaffolding the environment, making it more accessible to the child and allowing them to create the pathways and teaching at their level of interest because kids, they talk even without the words, and when you’re attentive and when you’re listening you hear and you see, they feel it. I think that has been the benefit of me being in this performance funding program, is that I’ve actually been able to really help make my environment a place where a child teaches versus me having all the answers… which sounds crazy, but they do teach! (14aad, interview).

Other Tier 2 teachers discussed the simple changes needed to make their classroom more conducive to learning and less controlled by restrictions. One 4-year old classroom teacher talked about a small change she made in the physical organization of her center area to create a shift in classroom climate and child learning.

For me it helped me create a safer environment, a thriving environment for the children to learn and grow…. looking more closely at the environment, and maybe rearranging it so that the children can actually enjoy learning without restrictions… just watching a child be able to explore their environment more, reduced the crying. It reduced the anxiety in the environment (14a4b, interview).

While Tier 2 teachers mentioned Early Learning Florida courses and coaching as the combined professional intervention that made the most impact with improving their classroom learning environments, teachers also spoke of collaboration with their peers as a major tool to aide them when thinking about ways to change their classrooms. These specific insights will be discussed in the Tier 2 intervention section more thoroughly.

Indirect Impact of ELPFP: Improvement in Children’s Language, Literacy, and Social-Emotional Development

While direct child outcomes were not part of the quantitative measures for Tier 2 providers, several teachers and directors gave specific anecdotal examples of the causal link between gains in teacher knowledge from Tier 2 interventions and teacher change in practice which directly impacted children learning, and provided descriptions of those learning gains they noticed with their children. Specifically, Tier 2 participants noticed an improvement in children’s language and literacy skills, and social and emotional development. For example, one veteran family child care home provider discussed how incorporating wait time helped her children think more deeply and respond:

The thing that stuck out to me the most is, something I was lacking on was giving that wait time for my kids to answer me, and learning different ways to ask a question…. One little boy, after I asked him a question, and waited, he thought and thought, and then came up with this answer that was brilliant. He would have never had the room to do that before, but I let him mull it over, and asked the right question to lead him to that place. Before when I ask a question and they don’t know it, I will give them the answer, because I would think that they don’t know it…. but now, I know better and give them the time to think (14be5, interview.)

Several teachers discussed the literacy and language strategies that were most useful from ELPFP learning, and one 3-year old classroom teacher described her new arsenal of strategies that promoted conversation with her 3-year olds that didn’t happen previously:
I feel much more comfortable doing all these things. Now I’ve got this feeling of knowing that I’m going to be able to achieve something. Including all the strategies that were taught to us in my job routine has helped me a lot: using puppets during story time, encouraging the children to talk to each other… I would make each of them tell the rest of the class something, and I would ask the rest of them for careful attention since they would have to be able to remember what their classmates have said. This communication helped them get along better; in the end, it prevented many problems. I had one little girl who never used to speak, and now she’s always reminding other children what they said. She’s such a good listener, and now her language is catching up and she’s talking all the time (14d02, interview).

Several teachers noticed children’s improvement not only in their responses with teachers, but more importantly, in their interactions with each other. Teachers spoke of social-emotional development of their children because of specific strategies they incorporated from the ELPFP learning. An infant and toddler teacher described a huge realization of the importance of talking more with these youngest children and the impact it made:

We taught them those social-emotional skills, being able to interact with their peers, also being able to interact with us. The more you talk to a child, the more they’re going to talk to you. So even though they’re infants and toddlers and they don’t have all the words, a lot of times if we’re repeating the same words daily, not all the same words, but if we’re typically saying the same phrases or showing them the sign language to want more or say please or what not, until they have those words we’re leading by example. And I see it in them all the time now. The children will follow us and then they’ll pick up those skills and be able to use them with each other. They are like little people interacting now (14a58, interview).

Challenges of Tier 2 Participation

When asked about challenges of Tier 2 participation, many participants responded that there were fewer challenges this year, and cited the organization of the ELPFP program to be more user-friendly during Year 3. Internal challenges such as time management and balancing full-time teaching with engaging in ELPFP interventions were discussed, as well as external challenges such as implementation of the child assessments, technology issues such as uploading and downloading documents and difficulty streaming videos with the Early Learning Florida course system, the database used by providers for ELPFP benchmarks (Office of Early Learning, 2016), and lack of support from ELCs regarding program support for contracts, stipends, and benchmark coordination. A director stated that the “balancing act” was her biggest challenge:

I’m gonna have to say the management of time was hardest for me because the things that are on my schedule and that I carry as an individual, really managing my time to make sure that I’m balanced. I think when I initially started, I didn’t even realize I had fell behind in the class and I think that’s what caused me to stop and really plan. I had to really stop and really plan out my schedule so that nothing fell from my table, so that I was really able to manage the time to meet my milestones, because there were milestones for me as well (14a4b, interview).

Though a limited number of Tier 2 participants identified themselves as bilingual Spanish speakers, a few participants identified a language barrier when first being enrolled in the program and with Early Learning Florida courses. A teacher who considered herself Spanish-speaking discussed the hardships of interpreting English guidelines into Spanish, and needing extra time to understand program materials:

The hardest part was at the beginning for me. First, all the documents were in English; this made me feel very nervous since my English is bad, and to be able to work with this kind of contents is necessary to really understand them. It all changed when we were offered all the documents in Spanish, and that became more helpful (14c0d, interview).

Specific challenges with each Tier 2 intervention will be discussed in the intervention section more thoroughly.
TIER 2 CASE STUDY: CHELSEA

Chelsea (pseudonym to protect participant confidentiality) is a Tier 2 director of a learning center in a southern ELC in Florida, and was originally skeptical about participating in the ELPFP due to her teachers’ lack of time and experience with online learning. However, once her teachers completed Tier 1 and MMCI training, Chelsea began to see teacher learning implemented in the classroom. Though her teachers’ CLASS® scores showed gains from 2015 to 2016, Chelsea felt there was still something missing to make teachers successful in the ELPFP.

They weren’t seeing the connection to what they were learning in courses to what they were doing in classrooms to how that was being observed and assessed with the CLASS® tool, and therefore didn’t create the time to implement strategies that were needed.

Chelsea decided in order to create buy-in from her teachers, she would also take courses alongside her teachers during the 2016-2017 ELPFP year. Immediately after their Early Learning Florida courses started, Chelsea started noticing teachers working and collaborating with each other to learn strategies and reflect on those strategies for course assignments. She also helped teachers because she was learning the same content. Chelsea also asked their ELPFP coach to work on one specific goal with each classroom. The infant and toddler teachers decided to work on classroom learning environments, and her preschool teachers worked on family communication and involvement.

I would probably say the classroom organization course was the most influential one because in the day to day, you get so wrapped up. It helped us in pre-planning, having those picture schedules so that the children have the consistency. For example, we’re having to put new teachers in their classrooms and having those picture schedules, and the easy to read lesson plans and what’s needed already ready for each activity, just makes it so much smoother because you don’t want a teacher that doesn’t know what they’re doing. They don’t know what the lesson plan is, what time they’re supposed to go outside. The difference that one strategy made was incredible.

Chelsea was also teaching a VPK class, and realized that as a teacher, her communication with parents was lacking. As a director, she only spoke of schedules and events, but never truly learned about her children.
I think the biggest thing that helped me improve myself as a teacher was the communication process and actually communicating more with the children and their parents. I actually started coaching myself and saying, ‘Okay, welcome every parent. Ask them how their child’s night was, ask them how the morning was. Did the child eat breakfast? Were they having a good morning?’ so we can learn about the child a little bit more and see how their day is going to go. I think the ‘a-ha’ moment was the home visit. That was one of the recommendations from the course… and implementing that, going into that child’s environment, watching that child interact with peers, and adult family members, and getting the information and the feedback from Mom. I did it with one of my kids that was struggling with communication, and when we actually sat down and went through the questions, his mom and I found out that our answers were almost identical…that the child was going home and doing exactly what was being done here in the classroom, that was so interesting to me. We were opening up and communicating and talking, and we realized the child was actually performing in the home the way he was performing here in the center. That answered so many questions for both of us, and it helped us plan and try some strategies. I thought that was awesome.

Once Chelsea and her teachers completed this year’s professional improvement strategies for ELPFP, Chelsea asked her teachers if they felt more professional and noticed a difference from the year before.

They all said that doing this as a group, with all of us taking classes and learning these things, and incorporating these into our staff meetings, and helping each other with learning environments and questioning, it really made a difference with our kids. And it has tremendous impact. I know for a fact this has impacted the learning, our learning and the children’s learning. I sit back and I laugh and I watch, because kids mimic us; they mimic the things they see. They see us working together, so they start working together. They’re getting it; they’re able to maneuver by themselves. But I think it’s because of the PFP, it has allowed us to free up our hands and not try to control everything they do but to let them lead (14efe, interview).
**TIER 3 TEACHERS’ VOICES**

The goal of interviews with Tier 3 participants included similar inquiries related to ELPFP implementation, experiences and challenges that were included in Tier 2 interviews, but focused more on the comprehensive three-year journey these teachers and directors experienced thus far with the ELPFP. As a sampling strategy to bolster a comprehensive view of the ELPFP experience, once Tier 3 participants volunteered to participate in this evaluation study, teachers and directors that had been interviewed for the Year 2 evaluation were identified and selected. As a result, 14 of 18 Tier 3 participants were previous Tier 2 participants in Year 2 (Rodgers et al., 2016). This allowed these participants to provide insight into changes they recognized from Tier 2 to Tier 3, and create deep understanding of professional and personal growth, change in practice, benefits, and challenges from this cumulative experience.

Tier 3 teachers and directors were also asked questions about programmatic change and improvement of quality during their three-year experience, as well as inquiries into how the ELPFP created collaboration and continued educational opportunities for teachers within their centers or family child care homes. Finally, Tier 3 participants were asked to provide specific evidence of their culminated learning from the ELPFP. Questions were asked about an artifact of practice teachers’ chose during their interviews that exemplified what they believed as significant learning from ELPFP interventions. These artifacts highlighted the use of new strategies, reflection, change in beliefs and practice, and evidence of children’s development and learning because of teacher participation in the ELPFP. Two artifacts of practice are provided as examples in Appendix J.

**Overall Tier 3 Impact: Three Years of Learning, Implementing, and Reflecting Created Improvement in Teacher Practice and Program Quality**

Teachers and directors that participated in Tier 3 interventions during the Year 3 ELPFP spoke overwhelmingly of the positive changes in their instructional practice and programs because of being in the ELPFP for three years. When asked if they could take a picture of their classrooms during Year 1 (2014-2015), and then take a picture of their classrooms after completing this current year of implementation, teachers and directors described transformational changes to their teaching, their beliefs, their classroom environments, and the quality improvement of their programs because of key strategies and reflection learned in the ELPFP. For example, a family child care home provider spoke of changing to a child-centered planning approach:

> Our planning has definitely changed. We plan, but we plan with the kids more in mind now, instead of before it was what we wanted them to do. And, so now as a teacher, I ask my kids, “What do y'all want to learn? What do you want to know? What do you want to see?” I include them into what I plan ahead (14b85, interview).

When asked why these teachers continued with the ELPFP despite several challenges during their Tier 1 and Tier 2 experiences (Rodgers et al., 2016), one teacher stated she felt her professionalism increased and she connected her daily practice to her new knowledge, a bridge that never occurred before the ELPFP:

> I really wanted to improve my professionalism and I also wanted to be able to serve the children better. PFP offers classes, they do hands-on work, and they give me technical assistance. It was like they was coming in my house, coming in my home to help me get better so I can help the children better... That feeling is based on looking around this place and seeing that it’s really beginning to look like a school. And then, when I see certain things, it relates to what I've learned through the Early Learning Florida classes. I'm able to identify and note it later. I see connections of it in every area, and that has never happened before this (14b16, interview).
When asked to state one specific benefit gained from being in the ELPFP for three years, a 15-year veteran teacher described her experience:

After three years of PFP? In one word? Confidence, I think. You would see a much more confident teacher who walks the walk and talks the talk. I think that in Year One… coming to grips that I was a rigid teacher was a little devastating for me because I did not know that I was a rigid teacher. And, being able to figure out what kind of teacher that you are at that point, it was overwhelming… And now, I am much more laid back. I go with the flow, and if it takes us three days to understand that an ant doesn’t have a toe, then we’re going to stay on that subject for three days and boy are we going to have some good questions about it. There’s no more, “let me move to this because I want them to get all of this;” it’s less focused on me and more on them, and depends on what we’re teaching. And that is a very powerful thing for me (14bc6, interview).

While many teachers spoke of professional motivations for continuing with the ELPFP for three years, all teachers related their learning and gains back to the benefits for children they teach daily:

I [am] really glad I had this opportunity because, you know, as an educator you want to give children everything and give them the best, and make sure that they’re getting what they need from you. And to understand that you may have been lacking in some areas that you thought you were so correct and so predominantly right, it’s an opportunity I feel like every teacher really needs. None of us are masters, we are all learners. I hope it continues to go further because I think that every teacher needs the opportunity to understand that even though you’re an educator, you have the power to set a beautiful foundation for kids. It’s important to find your own way. You can idolize a teacher and embody her and take her ways that you thought or her skills, and add them and make them your own. And this program allows us to learn from other educators (14b53, interview).

Several veteran teachers and directors also spoke of this process igniting the love for learning after years of feeling frustrated, overwhelmed, and underappreciated. One family child care home provider spoke of how her outlook on being part of the ELPFP changed from Year 1 to Year 3:

I was so overwhelmed my first year with the technology and getting all this information. It was a lot, you remember me telling you? But now I’m just so excited to use it in my classroom. I’m ready to see what the next strategy is going to be that you can use on the kids and you get through with that one and you’re ready to go to the next strategy so you can see how you can implement it into the mix. And you keep all the ones you like that make a difference, like a set of tools. I remember when the first year when we did it, I was like, “Oh, I got to do all this? How am I doing this?” It was a burden, but now I consider it a blessing (14fc5, interview).

Other changes Tier 3 teachers and directors described about their Year 3 related to experiencing minimal challenge from technology issues and time management, which they described as major challenges the previous year. When asked how this change occurred, all teachers responded that both the systems of the ELPFP were improved, and they felt more confident and knowledgeable with the tools and technology. More in-depth description of these changes are described in the Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention section.
Tier 3 Providers Gained Consistent Knowledge From Certified Coaching

All Tier 3 teachers and directors were asked about changes related to the professional development they received from Year 3 compared to Year 2 improvement strategies. A significant finding with Tier 3 participants was their impression of the success and benefit of technical assistance and coaching for this year’s ELPFP implementation, and how a coach’s actions impacted their learning directly. Previously in Year 2, there was an inconsistency in coaching practice that occurred throughout the state (Rodgers et al., 2016). Some teachers received quality coaching and technical assistance, while other teachers received no coaching at all within the ELPFP Year 2 implementation. However, for year 3, all Tier 3 participants were coached by a UF Lastinger-Certified Coach, and this experience was perceived as beneficial for consistent knowledge gain and improvement in instructional practice.

While coaching goals for Tier 3 participants focused mainly around the CLASS® tool or Early Learning Florida course content, all Tier 3 teachers described the coach’s practice as being most beneficial for their learning. For example, a teacher of 4-year olds described her coaching experience related to completing child assessments:

> I loved having her come out, and I enjoyed her coaching and what we talked about in what we deal with every day in the classroom and how we can improve on our skill set. … you know she did one thing with me. She did observations. She listened to what I felt I needed, and she collected data that really helped me, and then she showed me how to collect great data. She was truly modeling. You know, how do we observe the children and do documentation of that? That was really good for me, and [coach] showed me how to do that. And the best part about doing it with a coach was that instant feedback and modeling. I didn't have to wait for an email or feedback on an assignment.  She was right there, showing me and asking me questions and helping me, and that data was so important for my kids (14f77, interview).

A veteran director who had previously experienced ineffective coaching from her ELPFP coach in Year 2 felt the certified coach exemplified best practice to provide her and her teachers’ quality one-on-one professional development, and as a result, all of her Tier 3 teachers achieved mastery in their courses. She describes the coach’s specific actions that created teacher change:

> She truly immersed herself into the classroom when she coached our teachers. When she would go in and teach a certain teacher, she would go on into that classroom in the morning and you would not see her until she came out and she was ready to go. She was totally focused on that one teacher the whole time. She would help them determine goals, and then when she would come back she would follow-up with them and collect data, and ask questions like “How did that work for you? How did you do this?” She would model for them… like take charge of the class so that the teacher could observe, like if the teacher wanted to say “How do I do a science experiment, or I'm not sure how to bring science into this classroom of 2 year olds,” the next time she'd walk in and she would bring in a science activity and she’d say, “The next time I want you to do one and I’m going to watch you and collect data so you can see.” The data was key in showing the teacher how to really improve her skills (14d88, interview).

Teachers also discussed how coaching provided a better connection for teachers to understand both Early Learning Florida course content as well as the CLASS® assessment tool, and often provided a link so they could understand those connections of knowledge. More discussion of specific coaching elements will be provided in the Tier 3 interventions section.

ELPFP Structure and Funding Promoted Improved Learning Environments for Children

There was consistent discussion in Tier 3 interviews about the financial benefits of the participating in the ELPFP from a programmatic perspective. Family child care owners as well as directors of centers discussed the need for stipends and incentives to improve their physical learning environments as well as enhance curriculum offerings and provide materials for children’s learning. A family home
care provider explained how she used her ELPFP bonus to purchase materials related to specific improvement strategies she learned about in her Early Learning Florida course:

The ability to take our stipend and use it towards needed materials in our home, that’s been huge… like this one class I had we had to redo our centers. So I used our money to buy new materials for our centers, and I did it from a child-centered idea. It was mainly seeing what the kids wanted, what we as adults we don’t really necessarily see and understand, until you’re really put in that situation to say, okay, well if I go into your block area, what am I going to do in your block area if you don’t tell me what to do the block area? So, it was adding hints and clues and different things and picture displays for the kids to do different things in the classroom. And so, it was just more of a support for me to help my kids get what they need out of each section in the classroom (14c15, interview).

Several smaller family child care home owners who participated in the ELPFP solely because of the funding incentives explained how they now viewed the professional development as more critical than the funding for improving their programs:

And I think the major components of what has helped us… the funding, of course. We were able to do a lot of upgrades and keep a lot of things together. Because in this type of business, even though your heart reaches out to children, you have a lot of maintenance… You know, to keep them safe… But the most important piece of this is the learning: the courses, the coaching. You want to keep your teachers motivated and learning and growing. What good is buying new materials and equipment if teachers don’t use them properly to make kids learn? It’s so hard when they have families and ends to meet… because continuous education is key in doing what we do. We want to be equipped educators, inside and out, and involved in the children’s lives in a major way (14d09, interview).

The majority of Tier 3 participants discussed the ELPFP in terms of benefits that were interrelated. All the pieces of the ELPFP puzzle seemed to fit together for these teachers and directors, whereas previously, in Year 2, interventions were disconnected and provided challenge in terms of implementation. Teachers and directors understood how course content related to CLASS® observations, and how child assessments related to lesson planning. They appreciated that coaching was the glue to make all these pieces fit together in a cohesive manner, and realized the one-on-one individualized support was necessary in order to create change in their classrooms and programs. The consistency of ELPFP interventions was a highlighted change with Tier 3 teacher experiences, and will discussed in detail in the Tier 3 intervention section.
Challenges of the ELPFP: Sustainability of Funding, Teacher Retention, and Leadership Capacity

In previous years of ELPFP implementation, teachers and directors focused on implementation challenges that were individual, and related to their quality of learning. The majority of challenges related to technology access and expertise, the difficulty in completing child assessments, or individual learning challenges with course instructors or coaches (Rodgers et al., 2016). However, a major finding from Tier 3 participants this year was their concern with the ELPFP program as a whole, and how it would be sustainable to continue quality improvement for their programs. These teachers and directors spoke of the benefit of increasing teacher knowledge and quality of instruction, but worried about the lack of compensation and funding as major obstacles to continued success. For example, one director of a small center illuminated this concern:

> Over the years, the incentives have helped… we have some play equipment out in our playground. We got plenty of room to put stuff. So the PFP has helped us with that and with new things for the classroom. But over the years, the finances keep going down because of the budget, and it seems like every tier you go up, you get less, and that really impacts me as a program and as a teacher (14cbe, interview).

Tier 3 directors voiced concerns about the lack of compensation for their teachers contributing to their worry of retaining quality staff. One director in a northern ELC described a current scenario in her program:

> You don't know how hard it is for me to spend my professional development dollars on these teachers. . . Would you want to go back to school? If your daughter came home to you and told you, “I'm going to go back to school, I'm going to take this job.” And you ask, “Oh, how much more money would you make down the line?” And she answers, “Oh, nothing.” Where are we going with this? A job in early learning can't even get you out of the poverty track here. If you want to push that professional development, I think it has forced a certain number of teachers to go into professional development pathway that wouldn't. There is nothing but good that comes from that. And they want more, they see how this helps them. I just don't know how long they'll stay there. You've educated them. And you told them that they were worth more. Now they're saying, okay, where's my money? We tell them education opens doors, but they are not seeing any advantage with regard to compensation. That's the huge shortfall of this program (14e5b, interview).

Tier 3 participants who were directors of centers or family child care owners spoke specifically of shifting their entire structure around the ELPFP in order to continue this funding stream and retain quality teachers. A director in a southern ELC stated:

> What I would really like to be able to do is pay them more money so that I don't lose them because my biggest fear is if these two ladies quit that are in Tier 3 with me, I close the door… I would like to be able to pay them more and I'd like it to be able to be a sustainable wage but right now all I can do is give them bonuses. You can't raise somebody up and then next year if the legislator decides they're going to pull the money, all of a sudden, I have to put you back down (14d74, interview).

Many teachers also discussed the need to directly affiliate directors with every level of this system, and incorporate leadership learning for directors similar to instructional improvement strategies teachers enjoyed. While teachers appreciated directors being a member of their courses and knowing the content so they could collaborate, several teachers recognized the need for director leadership training within the ELPFP. A teacher in a large central public school center stated:
We have to start teaching the directors how to handle this stuff with their own staff. We need to be able to do this in a work meeting or a staff meeting, but you’re talking about me doing the same thing as you, and directors have different responsibilities. They can’t even run the center without working seven days a week. How are they going to take on coaching? And mentoring? And all this? They are not prepared to do that, and need the same coaching and support that we get geared towards managing all this (14be9, interview).

Despite several participants voicing these concerns of funding, lack of leadership capacity, and teacher retention, all participants said they would continue to participate in the ELPFP if they were selected because they saw the benefit of learning within their programs.
TIER 3 CASE STUDY: LARA

Lara (pseudonym to protect participant identity) is a bilingual Spanish-speaking teacher who has been in early childhood education for over 20 years. When Lara first started the ELPFP in the pilot in 2014-2015, she couldn't speak English well enough to really understand the MMCI training, and struggled through the first year. MMCI was not offered in Spanish in her area, and thus, she spent many long days and nights having a colleague help her translate through the material. She reflects back to that experience, and her realization how important this professional development was, stating, “I would go home and for hours would work through the MMCI, and it was so hard, but so good. I would get little sleep, but I wanted for this learning.”

During Lara’s second year of ELPFP as a Tier 2 participant, she was again challenged by Early Learning Florida courses that were only in English, and again, she had a colleague help her translate course assignments and readings. Lara spoke of being blessed with a course instructor who was bilingual, and would help her understand assignments more clearly. “She would email me in Spanish and explain the assignments to me, and she would give me extra time to get things completed, and as a result of taking the class in English, my English got so much better. She [course instructor] was a God-send.”

During the spring term of 2015-2016, Lara was able to enroll in an Early Learning Florida course in Spanish, and she said the experience was life-changing. “All of a sudden, everything made so much sense to me, and I was able to really understand the strategies in a way I couldn’t before. And everything just made sense, that’s the best way I can explain it!”

Because Lara enjoyed taking the Spanish courses, she asked her director if she could help mentor other Spanish-speaking teachers in her center, and soon became an expert in the course strategies they were learning together and would model for other teachers. “Especially the new teachers, they were so afraid to try and understand and so overwhelmed, I remember that feeling, and wanted to help them.”

As a Tier 3 teacher, Lara was excited to continue her learning journey, and felt confident enough to take courses in both English and Spanish, and had an English-speaking coach. When asked about her overall thoughts of her ELPFP experience, she said,

Well, there’s a lot of good things about this program that have been good. The classes have been very interesting, very informative and when we worked in the classes, it made me think a lot about my job. And I’ve also had a coach who has come to look at our classes and provided support for the classes, and how we can be better and I think those two things have really helped a lot. I feel more confident in my job, how I’m doing it, and I’m reflecting on what I do more.

Lara attributed her ability to reflect as a key component of her continued learning, and realized that learning the course content in Spanish really helped that process.

I’ve taken four classes and each one has shown me different things, such as how to arrange the classroom. Another one taught me how to make everything beneficial for the children, how to speak to the children. I took another course on how to make lesson plans. Each class has been different. I’ve learned things that I have been able to incorporate in my classroom. I have also noted changes in the other teachers as well. I noticed a difference between the beginning and the end of the classes that the children have had many positive changes. I wouldn’t be able to do any of that without reflection, which my teacher taught me.
In her interview, Lara chose an artifact of practice about her ability to complete child assessments, and how that informed her practice as a teacher. “When I started using GOLD® last year, it was so hard, so hard. And it wasn’t in Spanish so I struggled. My coach helped me a lot with this, and so slowly, I learned how to read the reports so I could help my kids.”

Below is an excerpt from Lara’s artifact of practice, which can be found in Appendix J.

**How did this report help me determine the best way to teach this child?**

The information contained in the reports could be used to reach an analysis of JS’s strengths and needs. With this information, along with observations made in class, I can offer exercises individually and in a group that can help JS to be more engaged. I believe that creating meaningful activities and conversations that keep JS focused on his task will help us reach our objectives.

**What did I learn from this process?**

I learned that assessments had valuable information about my kids and [by] using this battery of information I can analyze and design projects and lessons based on the interests and needs of the kids. In this case, JS’s assessments allowed me to see the learning level on different objectives. I can see not only the individual progress, but also each class’ progress. Lastly, I shared the results with JS’s parents because I think it is important to maintain a good communication system with the parents.

**How did this report and process impact my teaching?**

This report and process impacted my teaching because it helped me reflect on what I am doing in my classroom. It is really important to stay focused on the goals of the class and the individual so that we can achieve them. Identifying learning goals and providing activities about that scaffold and support the student’s learning should be my objectives. This will all be done with the help of my co-worker and the parents.

**How do I want to continue with this process to help this child learn or why do I want to change what I did?**

I want to continue this process by keeping up with the objectives previously mentioned, also following up periodically to know how everything is working. I believe that it is important that we have periodic conferences with our coworkers and the parents to share our points of view, as well as talk about the learning progress or needs. Working as a team we will ensure that we will see progress in our children.

**How can working on this help me as a teacher, and help this child learn successfully?**

Working on this process has helped me as a teacher because it gives me more tools for my work to better understand the abilities and challenges of my students. I feel more assertive in the moment of taking decisions about choosing an activity or making a lesson plan. I have in mind individual and group necessities; my plan for the school year becomes clearer and so do my objectives (14f85, interview; artifact of practice).

Lara’s ability to relate her instructional choices with her student’s identified needs is a direct result of her participation in the ELPFP, and represents a transformational shift in practice as well as provides direct evidence of teacher growth from engaging in the ELPFP over the three-year duration of the program.
ELC LEADERSHIP AND STAFF

Because ELCs are considered partners with OEL in the implementation of ELPFP, the perspective of ELC leadership and staff was integral to determine the impact and effectiveness of the Year 3 program on participating teachers and providers as well as improvement of provider quality in their ELCs. These focus group interviews consisted of investigation of ELC leadership, program coordinators, coaches, professional development facilitators, and contract managers’ perceptions of the ELPFP from an organizational perspective. Questions investigated improvement of teaching quality within classrooms, provider quality, and quality improvement in the ELC as a whole. Based on recommendations from the Year 2 evaluation study (Rodgers et al., 2016), OEL provided ELCs the ability to determine which providers could be accepted into the ELPFP program for Year 3 (Rodgers et al., 2016), and thus, could tailor their professional development offerings within the ELPFP to the needs of participating providers. ELC leadership and staff echoed other stakeholder perspectives of benefits from the ELPFP, and provided specific challenges related to ELC capacity, funding, and structures related to quality improvement.

Overall ELC impact: Program Structure Supported Teacher Learning

The majority of focus group participants had direct contact with ELPFP providers, and believed the impact of this year’s ELPFP was both positive and powerful. An interesting finding from these organizational perspectives was that ELC leadership and staff viewed this improvement initiative as becoming more integrated with their local quality initiatives, which is a shift from Year 2 (Rodgers et al., 2016). ELC coaches, facilitators, and contract managers described noticeable improvements in teaching quality as well child outcomes based on ELPFP interventions. For example, an ELC quality program director in a central ELC stated:

I noticed in the lower tiers that the participants focused more on the emotional support areas... teacher sensitivity, regard to student perspectives, and then moving up a little, behavior management. And then as we got into Tier 3 they were focusing more on the concept development or instructional learning formats or quality of feedback and language modeling. So their personal goals increased based on the knowledge that they had... like crawling before you walk. Once they were able to grasp regard to student's perspective they were able to work their way up to more challenging topics like concept development (027e9, focus group interview).

When asked about child outcomes, several ELC leadership members stated they were seeing a difference in provider quality based on CLASS® observations and assessments, and a “sense of excitement” was renewed for teacher learning in these providers. A coach from an eastern ELC stated:

We see it in our CLASS® scores. I think that's one thing that we see locally that we see an excitement for teaching again. We see an excitement for learning new things. Some of our teachers are very competitive about wanting to move their CLASS® scores. They weren't happy with what they received in the beginning. So I think it's capturing that passion that we maybe have lost that's now been reignited by the program (027e9, focus group interview).

Focus group participants discussed the changes from Year 2 to Year 3 in ELPFP implementation, and all agreed that having more voice in which providers were able to participate really made a difference in impact and quality of instructional improvement. A central ELC director stated:

As far as our providers went, I'm delighted with this year's group. In the past, we've had providers who perhaps weren't as strong in terms of the administration at their facility and we didn't have a choice for them to be in the program. And they weren't able to really get their staff on the same page or they perhaps were punitive instead of rewarding in terms of how they expressed their expectations for them. So they had turnover or people just didn't finish training. This year, almost everybody finished training and that's a direct result of our efforts. The directors were very proactive. They were very generous with giving staff bonuses for
Several questions during the focus group interviews focused on teacher-child and child-child interactions, and many ELC coaches believed these interactions were greatly improved throughout ELPFP implementation. Coaches spoke of seeing improvement in language and literacy, child engagement, and more child-centered instructional strategies in classrooms. An ELC quality improvement coordinator from a central ELC stated:

I’ve seen a lot of difference in the teachers in the way they interact with a child. For example, this one particular program, it’s one of our largest school readiness programs as far as the number of kids that they serve. There’s the director who’s amazing, the owner is 100% committed to professional development, always has been. You’ve got a lot of staff with CDAs, you’ve got several staff that have gone through and gotten bachelors in early childhood. But nothing has made these radical differences across the board in that center than this (ELPFP) has. It’s been very interesting because everybody’s stepping up on the same rung. They’re all looking at the same thing at the same time…its made things very clear (0ea86, focus group interview).

Many ELC staff commented on the connection between the ELPFP interventions during Year 3, and how teachers were finally understanding how these strategies connected and were aligned. An ELC director from a northern ELC stated that engagement in every aspect of provider quality has improved:

I would say specifically just the engagement has really improved. Even when we were going in there with the children, the CLASS® really seemed to have an impact and we were going back and working with the providers and providing some technical assistance. They seemed very receptive to that. And I could see some improvement in their classrooms in every area… And speaking on the CLASS® observation side of it, the growth from the pre-to the post-observation and tying in with the Early Learning Florida courses and the quality improvement plan and the coaches going in and checking and mentoring the teachers and role modeling, tying that in with MMCI… it was very beneficial. And you did see a lot of growth and the interactions with the children and teachers understanding that CLASS®. That was really rewarding (04083, focus group interview).

ELC participants also focused on the capacity development in specific providers that have participated in the ELPFP since the pilot (2014-2015), and overwhelmingly felt these providers were more equipped both professionally and personally to be successful when teaching children, especially those in high needs areas. This supports other stakeholder experiences (Tier 2 and Tier 3 teachers) and provides a cumulative perspective of improvement for providers.

ELPFP Structural Changes Promoted Implementation Improvement

ELC focus group participants were asked which structural changes in Year 3 ELPFP implementation made the most impact on their providers, and most participants felt that ELC input in provider selection and Early Learning Florida course changes directly resulted in improvement. A southern ELC quality program director stated:

I think it has improved compared to year one and two, but I really felt that there was still a lot of room for growth in year three. I have seen those changes, hopefully for the year four as well. In terms of the provider turnover, that also really helped. . . I know my last year, when I did a focus group, we gave feedback around teacher-staff turnover, and how people were trying to find a way to cheat the system. I can see that there was a lot of changes that were made, but I still felt that-ending the year that we could do a lot better for year four and it looks like we are (0e23f, focus group interview).
Participants in ELCs with bilingual and monolingual Spanish-speaking providers voiced praise for the ability to offer Early Learning Florida courses in Spanish in order to reach diverse populations of teachers and their children. A southern ELC professional development coordinator stated:

> Overall, I think that the Spanish courses were definitely well received and a huge need was filled... we had the greatest amount of enrollees... in Spanish sessions. I think that when Spanish sessions rolled out, I think spring of 2016, we started to get one or two classes, and then last fall when we had more choices, we tried to meet the needs of the providers and offer as many as we could, and those were definitely popular. In fact, we were running out of space in class for some of the Spanish sessions... we must get more of these (0e23f, focus group interview).

While ELPFP structural and implementation improvements were recognized by focus group participants, several challenges were still voiced, and these issues continue to create difficulties in implementation for ELC leadership and staff.

**ELC Implementation Challenges with Year 3 ELPFP: Capacity, Communication, and Funding**

During Year 2 focus groups, ELCs voiced a need to increase local capacity in order to implement these ELPFP interventions effectively and with fidelity (Rodgers et al., 2016). While many ELCs stated they improved and aligned their local strategic and quality improvement plans in order to create more capacity to alleviate these issues, all ELCs stated that capacity still remains their most prominent challenge with ELPFP implementation.

Based on the ELPFP guidelines of four technical assistance/coaching visits per classroom, most focus group participants felt this was still not enough one-on-one support for teachers who are struggling in high needs areas, and ELCs don’t have the funding to alleviate this tension between learning and practice. A central ELC assistant ELC director stated:

> Where we're going to run into trouble, and we've stated this before, is being able to coach to fidelity. The trick is the change doesn't happen until they practice it, and to practice it they need coaching. If they're competent on their own, they don't need me in there, but my problem is there's so many. We have the at-risk raising the at-risk... We've got people with limited cognitive competence and capabilities who we're asking them to do a very complicated evaluation of children's child development, make instructional decisions, and individualize instruction. And so that requires very dedicated coaching, a lot of work around child development, a lot of reflecting practicing and it's very, very expensive (16b9f, focus group interview).

A southern ELC program director echoed this concern, and raised the issue of funding regarding quality dollars for professional development related to ELPFP interventions:

> Our challenge here has always been the capacity. The TA piece, the blended model for TA, we only have capacity at the coalition level right now. But, that was our problem last year, is that nobody was UF coach certified, and also, we had a limited amount of staff that were CoP certified to facilitate. So, mostly it was [coalition] staff, so unless the programs were in [coalition QRIS], we couldn't provide those services for free... that was one of our challenges... having programs that are non [QRIS], and how the coalition can build that capacity internally is also a challenge (0e23f, focus group interview).

Many ELC directors recognize that quality coaching requires certified coaches, and did not have the financial ability to have staff with many job duties dedicate so much of their time to coaching only. A northern ELC professional development director voiced this concern, and discussed her compromise based on limited staff and capacity:
For the Early Learning Florida courses, there was an overlap, and I was unable to offer the TA model, which I know so many of our providers needed. I could only offer the CoP model because I did not have the capacity. And I was not willing to have another version of the coaching, the non-certified version, because I noticed that the people that keep doing that alternative version, their percentage was lower than those that had an extra coach who went through the certification. I was either going to do it the right way or not offer it at all. And the CoP version was effective, because all of us had gone through that process. I just couldn’t meet the demand because of our limited staff (0783e, focus group interview).

A central ELC director also described the difficulty in providing quality support for providers with limited staff and funding:

I will say that locally we value the CoPs and we value the Lastinger-certified coaching. But the barrier we have is staffing and being able to have the capacity to offer that. The first year that we did it, we did both models with our Early Learning Florida coursework, but it was just too much and too hard on the staff. And so this year we did slightly smaller groups with our Tier 3 providers. We were able to offer them some of the Lastinger coaching, which I do think is a model that yields better results. But our existing staff just doesn’t have the time to be able to invest in that on a large-scale basis at all, and I feel like those providers didn’t get the best we could give (027e9, focus group interview).

Many focus group participants agreed that funding structures, while improving, still left gaps in capacity for ELCs, and several participants were wary of future ELPFP implementation changes based on this concern. As one central ELC coach stated, the struggle for balance is always evident:

It’s a struggle to balance the funding. You know, it’s always a struggle. We believe in all of this, and we believe in this wholeheartedly and the fidelity of the program is incredibly important to us. So watering anything down to alleviate capacity issues is not going to happen in (coalition), and so we struggle with how do we keep the fidelity, yet not stress our staff out to where they want to walk. With next year’s quality improvement strategies for PFP, we are going to be stretched even more (0e23b, focus group interview).

Other participants noted that the funding structure of the ELPFP also provided lack of opportunities for providers really needing these interventions to improve quality. A central ELC director stated:

Here’s our biggest challenge, there’s not enough money in it. We want to put more programs in it. We’d like to get it funded right now. We’ve got a whole group of programs on the horizon that are ready. We’re ready to double our numbers this year. But our budget doesn’t look like there is gonna be capacity to really expand it (0ea86, focus group interview).

A notable finding from this year’s evaluation was that focus group participants from larger ELCs voiced the continued need for better communication and explanation of expectations for each tier in the PFP from OEL. While smaller ELCs seemed to feel that providers were more informed and successful this year, larger ELCs provided descriptions of providers that were still unsure of program requirements. Many ELC staff believe that despite their local efforts to provide ELPFP participation information consistently and effectively, many teachers and directors still do not understand the effort required to be successful in the ELPFP. A central ELC director discussed the need to offer unified and scaffolded supports to teachers:

Well, very simply, our challenge is and has always been learning management with lower tier providers. If you had an online tutorial for Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3, etc., that would make sense… with an assessment measure at the end of those to determine their understanding and that they signify they understand, and then we can go in and then do technical assistance around the pieces they clearly don’t understand. It would give us an idea of what are problematic or stumbling points. It’s just like good old instruction around anything, you have to give them information in several formats (16b9f, focus group interview).
A central ELC coach echoed this sentiment, stating that getting directors on board with this initiative required “sensitivity” training for directors in order to provide teachers the space and time to complete tasks related to ELPFP interventions:

Our biggest challenge was directors, especially when they don’t do anything for their teachers. I have been asking everyone that I have known that worked with PFP to do a sensitivity director training, so they understand that the teachers are the main resource that they have for PFP and they have to let them have the time to do GOLD®, and have the time to do the MMCI, and have the time to do the courses. Even when we’re there coaching, the directors are, “How much more time are you going to be here talking to them? We have to move on.” A lot of directors are only looking for the money… they are not looking at the benefits that they are having by having a teacher instructed and having a teacher that know what’s best for that child (16b9f, focus group interview).

Some ELC staff have taken the challenge of onboarding providers in the ELPFP by creating their own systems of accountability, but still concede many ELPFP providers use inequitable practices and need to be audited by OEL. An eastern ELC director described their method of creating provider buy-in:

In the past when we’ve done the onboarding of tiers… we had them sign an agreement understanding the commitment that they’re making of their teachers. Now I know that’s part of the process, but until it’s sat down and you discuss it they don’t get it. The other thing people talk about is if you don’t compensate your teachers they’ll leave and then you’d be out of the program. I think that’s part of some stuff we have to do but it is (the) part that has come up before in these conversations… Everybody seems to know that these are the application pieces. We’ve got people in the program who do not use best business practice, and whether we move pedagogically or not, they’re not following law actually (16b9f, focus group interview).

Based on the challenges voiced by ELC stakeholders, several participants offered suggestions for future implementation that will be discussed below and also highlighted in the Recommendations section of this report.

Suggestions for Future ELPFP implementation: Coaching, Leadership, Collaboration and Pre-Tier Training

Despite capacity crunches for ELCs, all ELC participants believe that more coaching dosage and higher coaching quality is needed for impact of ELPFP interventions, which was also previously suggested in Year 2 focus groups (Rodgers et al., 2016). For example, a northern ELC coach stated:

I feel like a broken record saying this again, but more coaching, definitely. The challenge is, there’s not enough time to do anything specific with teachers. In four visits, which technically is actually three by Lastinger standards, because you do have to spend some time gaining some trust from them and building the relationship, it’s like in three visits you really cannot coach on the tool as in depth as CLASS® in three visits (0783e, focus group interview).

Another eastern ELC coach echoed this statement, also highlighting the need to coach directors and teachers within an ELPFP program:

I think definitely we need more coaching and TA visits to the program, and whether coalitions take the initiative and do that on their own or that’s something that’s the requirement of the program, I think it takes a lot more than four visits to a program to really support them through this and make sure that they’re doing what they need to be doing and what they say that they’re doing. I think specifically, support for directors, so that they can support their teachers in making the most of classroom interactions. We put them through the same training, but they don’t really get support. Like, how do you help your teacher do this? And what are the ways that you can do that? (144be, focus group interview).
The lack of director professional development in the ELPFP structure was a topic of discussion in all focus groups, and the majority of participants felt this was a huge gap in capacity to promote systemic improvement. A central ELC director highlighted this need:

*Nowhere in here are we building out the director as the pedagogical leader for their site. So there’s the sustainability model that I’m talking about. And all of this, of course, when you put in coaching and technical assistance, the Cadillac model. We know it works, BUILD has proven it works, however it is extremely expensive. And I don’t mind that it’s expensive but then I want them to go ahead and give me more money for more slots, and then I’ll take my entire quality budget and build out staff...we just need to be clear that’s what we’re doing (16b9f, focus group interview).*

Several ELC participants suggested the continued need for collaboration and support between ELCs to share innovations and successes with ELPFP implementation, which was previously voiced in Year 2 focus group interviews (Rodgers et al., 2016). A central ELC leader stated:

*We see where this is headed, we value it. There are systemic issues but that’s where the local coalitions need to innovate and share. We need to actually have a ELPFP conference or an ELPFP track, or bring us all together and say these are the tools we’re using, this is our success around this. Because the truth is, it’s replicable but I’m not sure it’s sustainable based on the dollars (16b9f, focus group interview).*

Other ELC participants mentioned ELPFP teachers wanting more collaboration and exposure with other ELPFP participants, and the need for an ELPFP conference to showcase impact from instructional learning, as well as provide continued learning through collaboration with statewide stakeholders:

*We’ve had a few teachers present at conferences about their courses and the assignments they created, and it was such an encouragement of professional practices. It would be really beneficial to have OEL or a private partner fund a conference for practitioners and coalition partners to share this information with each other, and benefit from the learning of the entire system (11de1, focus group interview).*

As focus group participants were asked about other suggestions for the Year 4 ELPFP design, larger ELC participants voiced concern about those providers that would not qualify for any of the tiers based on their CLASS® composite score. Because ELPFP was designed to meet the needs of providers and families in high need areas and help create instructional improvement with diverse populations (OEL, 2016), many participants felt this sector of the system was being forgotten. A central ELC director voiced this concern:

*The problem is we’ve not really factored in those that are below, that aren’t even going to come in at Tier 1, and what I would love to see is a pre-tier, and that seems foolish but we need a pre-tier or we need DCF to step up their ballgame and we need to terminate providers who don’t qualify. My problem is in my most needy zip codes I have no one who qualifies, out of 48 providers we had four that qualified for PFP. That’s just in one zip code that we have 48 providers, four qualified and it was based on DCF violations alone. And that is my neediest community. That’s where all my babies are that really need this help (16b9f, focus group interview).*
Suggestions of a pre-tier, or introductory tier program within the ELPFP for those providers who struggle with basic foundational care and licensing was voiced by several ELC staff members, and was justified by the improvement shown in providers already enrolled in the program. An eastern ELC program director gave this example:

*You could certainly see the improvements that they’ve put in, it is very visible in each of them and just the fact that having that amount of knowledge makes a difference. And some of these providers, I would have never expected this. We know that early learning is underfunded. We know that especially when they’re serving a high percentage of subsidized children, they’re not making enough money to keep up with structural needs to make playground improvements or keep the classrooms adequately supplied or compensate the teachers. And so this just starts making inroads in that direction. And you can see it, people feel proud, it’s helping to professionalize this field. Everybody has responsibility with this. There are clear expectations but then for those expectations, they’re also rewarded. Simply put, nothing’s going to work if we don’t treat people professionally and respectfully and fund this program properly, and we need to start at the bottom, not the top (0ea86, focus group interview).*
ELC CASE STUDY: THE ELC OF FLAGLER AND VOLUSIA

While the 15 ELC stakeholder groups that were interviewed for this evaluation study had structures in place to support ELPFP providers, this case study of the ELC of Flagler and Volusia gives deep description of the connections of ELPFP implementation provided by ELC staff to create benefits for providers. This ELC is considered a mid-size ELC with ten Tier 2 providers, and three Tier 3 providers in this year’s program, and has experienced less provider attrition within the ELPFP than the Year 3 average (19% provider attrition rate versus 27% average for all ELPFP providers). Therefore, this case study provides useful ideas and suggestions from the ELC of Flagler and Volusia leadership and staff in order to share these structures with other ELC partners. Researchers have obtained collective permission from the ELC of Flagler and Volusia staff to provide these examples to start this conversation among ELC partners to further improve ELPFP implementation.

Support for Coaching Connections to Improve Practice
ELC coaches described the purpose of their coaching process, in which they provided at all levels of the ELPFP, to connect the CLASS® tool, Early Learning Florida content, and quality improvement plans.

When we provided technical assistance at first, we specifically were guided by what their CLASS® score was in order to help them choose a dimension to work on, and then make an action plan with them. But it was their choice, and they liked that autonomy geared towards their practice. Once we got through that piece, we really started to coach more instructionally. So, the benefit was that we were really able to develop those focused quality improvement plans with each teacher, and were able to go back and reflect on what they chose to do. I think it was also great that we did that as a team, so really the teacher was getting what she needed or choosing what she felt was important to work on, as opposed to us saying, ‘Okay, do this.’ It was really valuable. What we also learned is that the four visits isn’t enough really to do much.

When asked why this type of reflective coaching was valuable, one coach responded:

ELC coaches and leadership staff were also asked about coaching capacity within their ELC, and how they managed the “crunch” so many ELCs spoke about. The ELC quality initiatives director agreed that the capacity crunch was real and hard to maneuver, and I think it kept them (teachers) accountable. I think it helped them really understand what their CLASS® score meant, and helped bring focus to something that they might want to improve on, and then again, held them accountable for doing something different and changing their practice. I also think it helped them focus on just one thing. It provided that tunnel vision on one dimension... it can be very overwhelming when you get that CLASS® score and well, you know, you ask how can I do better in every area? So using that CLASS® score to focus on something specific they could work on, that made a difference.
ELC coaches and leadership staff were also asked about coaching capacity within their ELC, and how they managed the “crunch” so many ELCs spoke about. The ELC quality Initiatives director agreed that the capacity crunch was real and hard to maneuver, and responded:

“We are now staffed and situated so that we can be visiting programs more frequently, which took a lot of restructuring of our department direction of more quality dollars towards this work. I also think that it would be helpful for coaches to be able to participate in the courses, and we talked about that. You know, is it possible for people to take the course on an audit basis? Just knowing the content so that when they’re coming to do the coaching, they can be on that same level as far as knowing what the teacher is experiencing? Our coaches the coaching model well, but it’s the content of courses that would be helpful to have more of.

ELC Choice in ELPFP PD Development

Many ELC stakeholders discussed the improvement in ELPFP structures for Year 3 to allow ELCs to provide more targeted professional development strategies based on provider need. The ELC program coordinator discussed their strategy to choose for their providers:

“As an ELC, it was really great to be able to choose PD [professional development] strategies for our providers. We were able to decide what training we wanted people to take at different levels, and we were intentional about creating a progression, and that there wasn’t confusion about that. Providers would ask, ‘Well which one should I take when I’m in Tier Two, which one in Tier Three? I already took that course,’ and so it was nice to have that ability. It was also nice to have the ability to choose within an Early Learning Florida session that some people may want to be supported with CoP while others maybe would not. Having that option to say some people can choose to do on-line only while others might need more support through a CoP made a huge difference, and also helped us alleviate some capacity issues internally.

ELC staff also discussed the challenge of providing individualized support for veteran ELPFP practitioners that were becoming knowledgeable with strategies in ELPFP interventions, but not necessarily moving that knowledge to changes in practice. An ELC coach gave this example:

“As far as just making those connections between the training and the CLASS®… A challenge that we’ve had is that in Tier 3, we have a smaller number of providers, and so we don’t offer them CoP, and rationalize that by saying, “They’re in Tier 3, they’ve already had some experience with Early Learning Florida”, and so we feel like they’re okay just taking the on-line only. But then we notice that they aren’t connecting to implementation of practices. So how do we fix that? For them to possibly have a virtual CoP with others outside of our area might be helpful, because I think CoP is the best way to interpret this information to create improvement. I think it’s important to keep the emphasis on professional development and specifically on professional development pathways.”
Need for Director Professional Development and Support in ELPFP
As with other ELC stakeholders, the ELC staff spoke of the direct need for support and strategies. The ELC quality initiatives director stated:

I think one of the things that our targeted professional development for directors and family child care owners. This ELC participated in an Early Learning Florida Director’s Course Pilot in the fall and spring terms, and felt this program needed to continue with specific-director related content and directors said was that they like courses that help them support teachers. How can they support the teachers in what they’re trying to implement in the classroom? If the goal of this project is to improve instruction, doesn’t it make sense to have administrative training, and help the director understand how to support her teacher? And we did a pilot with this in our area where we tried to do that with a field team. The directors took the same course as their teachers, but they had their own virtual CoP where they talked about, how can you support your teachers with implementation of this? It worked well, but I think what they demonstrated is that when directors think about this, they think, ‘I’ve helped my teacher implement this in the classroom, how have I implemented it myself? What does that look like in practice for a director to implement these strategies?’

Suggestions for Improved Provider Resources
ELC staff noticed two specific areas of need with providers related to administration that required intentional support, and suggested ideas for future ELPFP implementation: a budgeting tool, and contract support.

I think it would be great to be able to give providers a budgeting tool to help them with the idea that you’re getting this extra money, how are you using it? What are you going to do with it? How are you going to improve your program and make it better with this increased level of funding that you will have? and provide some suggestions about how you might do that. There’s really no specific information about what each of those categories means, and often times we’re seeing providers that say they’re spending it on family engagement, but they had a graduation party.

The ELC also still struggles with the contracting piece with OEL and providers:

I think the contract is really hard for them... and I’m not sure they take the time to understand it. There are frequently questions about the deliverables. I think OEL’s done a much better job this year in doing webinars, specifically the webinar about the PD plan was really helpful. There were some providers that still didn’t get it, but many more got it, and I think having that specific information from OEL about this is... what the deliverable is and this is what we need from you. I think that would have been helpful at every benchmark, like around the Teaching Strategies reporting, because providers just really struggle with which report it is and how do I get in... the webinars scheduled around benchmark dates to clarify what is due, how to get it, what it looks like would be helpful for every step of the process.
ELC Outlook on ELPFP

When thinking about positioning the ELPFP in the Flagler and Volusia community, the ELC staff believes that transparency of practice is key for community buy-in.

In our community, the idea of Performance Funding is very well received. We have a fundraiser gala, and so we talked about our providers that had received ELPFP dollars, and when we talked about the providers and the number that received the dollars and the amount of dollars that they received, the room broke out into applause because, I think the community, particularly the business community, understands that. They understand pay-for-performance. I like that we’re using that type of language because I think it helps spread the message in our community and I think it gives providers that impression that they do have perform in order to receive these dollars and become professionals who improve the lives and learning of children. It’s a good thing, and it needs to continue.
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES FOR YEAR 3 ELPFP (2016-2017)

Each stakeholder group was questioned about specific ELPFP interventions in Tiers 1, 2, and 3 and provided detailed descriptions of both the benefits and challenges of each tiered program. An interesting finding from the Year 3 evaluation was that all stakeholders believed the Tier 1 MMCI training to be the most integral component of increasing teacher knowledge, and the combination of coaching and Early Learning Florida coursework was most impactful for teacher change in practice and instructional improvement in Tiers 2 and 3. Stakeholder descriptions of tiered interventions are discussed by tier. However, the child assessment tool for Tiers 2 and 3 practitioners is discussed separately in the next session to provide a comprehensive view of this intervention based on stakeholder input as well as quantitative data from previous surveys given during the Year 3 implementation.

Tier 1 Interventions
For the 2016-2017 ELPFP implementation, Tier 1 professional development for providers consisted of a two-hour online introduction to MMCI and then 10 two-hour face-to-face training sessions based on the MMCI framework created by Teachstone (Teachstone, 2014), and facilitated by local ELC MMCI trainers. Of Tier 1 teachers 25% in each participating provider were also required to show professional development progress, as described earlier in the Intervention section of this report. Though no Tier 1 participants were directly interviewed for this evaluation study, both Tier 2 and Tier 3 teachers as well as ELC focus group participants discussed MMCI training and described benefits of this comprehensive training related to teacher-child interactions and quality instruction.

Making the Most of Child Interactions (MMCI)
Similar to Year 2 stakeholder data, MMCI was described as beneficial for teachers to create improved classroom interactions, and both teachers and ELC staff spoke of the foundational learning that was included in these trainings to promote quality in the classroom. A Tier 2 teacher said, “I loved the MMCI. I left walking away from there telling everybody, ‘You all need to take the MMCI training whether you’re in the program or not because it’ll make you think differently and then do things differently with your kids” (14efe, interview). Another Tier 2 teacher described the initial challenges with MMCI training, but then then realized the improvements were worth the struggle:

I think at first, during Tier 1, I think there were some struggles and now that we’ve entered into another year of it, I think they’ve maybe gotten it more about how beneficial these classes are because we’ve really reiterated that it’s not a test. I mean these are things that are helping you to be your best in your classroom. And seeing those improvements. Like when they get their final observation scores and they’d say, “Okay, well, I did try it, and look, I’ve improved in my classroom because I did.” So I think, as a whole, getting to see that we implemented it and you’re actually improving because of it has been really helpful (14d02, interview).

ELC participants described the shift for providers after taking MMCI, and connected this with direct teacher growth as evidenced by improved CLASS® outcomes. An ELC coach stated:

So from our perspective locally, we know that MMCI made a change. We know that there was growth for the teachers that took that course. We also believe locally that not only did the model of technical assistance for ELCs make a difference, but the (EL)PFP model for coaching, but it was a different model for coaching that was less consuming on the staff. We also believe that that was very instrumental in the growth because it spoke specifically to the CLASS®. So those two pieces, we hold in very high regard in this community (027e9, focus group interview).
A similar perception was made by an ELC MMCI trainer in a southern coalition, who emphasized the improvement in interactions from MMCI for those teachers who were new to early childhood and had not worked with children previously. She said, “I think that MMCI opened the door for even teachers that have never worked before with children. It’s really important… we see so much growth in just the connections they make and just understanding the whole teacher-child interaction” (16b9f, focus group interview).

A specific suggestion for future Tier 1 interventions was to incorporate Spanish versions of the MMCI training, and have all modules and materials translated into Spanish, especially for practitioners in the southern part of the state. Many ELC staff members noted that having to implement the MMCI training in English and then translate for these practitioners was difficult, time-consuming, costly, and inequitable.

**Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions**

Tier 2 and Tier 3 providers engaged in four elements of professional development during the 2016-2017 implementation of the ELPFP as well as specific assessments for each tier according this evaluation study design (CLASS® for Tier 2; CLASS ® for all Tier 3, with CHILD and GOLD® for a sample of Tier 3).

Teachers were required to take 2 courses of Early Learning Florida online coursework. To determine which courses were offered to teachers, ELCs were provided options of course level (preschool, infant and toddler), course content (language development, socio-emotional skills, etc.), delivery options (online only, online + CoP, and online + TA/Coaching), and language options (Spanish or English courses) based on ELC capacity, OEL ELPFP guidelines, and teacher requirements. Because there was no designated progression of which Early Learning Florida courses should be taken by Tier 2 and Tier 3 participants, Tier 3 participants had completed the majority of Early Learning Florida courses in Tier 2, and thus, there were fewer course choices for these practitioners. A complete list of Early Learning Florida course offerings for ELPFP participants was listed previously in the Quantitative Results section.

The second professional development element focused on one-to-one teacher support by providing four technical assistance/coaching visits for teachers to enhance learning from Early Learning Florida coursework and provide guidance from CLASS® assessments. Coaching was provided by a teacher’s local ELC staff or sub-contractors. ELCs were not required to use Lastinger certified coaches in ELPFP coaching visits, but were required to use Lastinger certified coaches if teachers enrolled in the Early Learning Florida online+ TA/Coaching option.

Tier 2 and Tier 3 providers were also required to adopt and implement a research-based child assessment tool (see intervention descriptions) and engage in any training necessary to implement these assessments with school readiness children. For the majority of providers, GOLD® was used which required 12 total hours of online training in four consecutive modules, and then a reliability assessment before the tool could be used. Providers were required to purchase the assessment tools and training directly from the manufacturer (though some ELCs purchased these tools directly), and ELC staff were not required to provide support for this element of the ELPFP. OEL ELPFP guidelines did not dictate that teachers be certified as inter-rater reliable to administer GOLD®, nor was any observational or anecdotal evidence required for submission for ELPFP benchmarks during this year’s program.
Finally, new to the ELPFP Tier 2 and Tier 3 requirement this year, OEL designated a percentage of practitioners from each tier had to provide evidence of professional development progress in a plan that is aligned with the State of Florida's registry.

Qualitative results for each intervention with be presented with Tier 2, Tier 3 and ELC leadership feedback to discuss strengths, challenges, and barriers of these interventions.

**Early Learning Florida Courses**
Due to each ELC engaging in different *Early Learning Florida* course and language options, there were variations of course experiences reported in qualitative interviews. However, all stakeholders believed that participation in these courses provided valuable knowledge and useable strategies to improve instructional quality. During Year 2 interviews, many teachers and directors described apprehension due to lack of technological capacity or experience. In Year 3 interviews, teachers and directors described the benefits of these educational courses, and rarely discussed technological or ideological challenges with this learning intervention. For example, a Tier 2 teacher stated that though courses were online, she still enjoyed collaboration through discussion forums:

> I really liked the discussion board because again seeing what your peers are doing, seeing their ideas, it really is great to bounce off. There's a lot of try. I mean there's always something you didn't think about or didn't see because especially when you've got, 15 to 20 different teachers on there doing their discussion boards, there are five or six ideas that you've never even thought of. That's what I enjoy is that you get to see that and take back from it or be like, 'I like that idea, but what if we tried this?' (14d02, interview).

A veteran Tier 3 teachers believed that though she knew some of the content in the courses from previous experiences, she felt these new takes on instruction validated her current strategies in the classroom, and also provided new strategies to implement: “*What the courses have done for me is attach the name to the strategies I've been using. It allowed me to identify and to tweak or enhance what I've already been using, but to use it in a more positive way so it's more effective.*” (14e0e, interview).

Several teachers discussed the value of course content with regard to positive interactions and family engagement. Many teachers previously undervalued the need for parent-teacher conferences, and realized during the implementation activities in their course how important this partnership with families really was. A Tier 2 teacher discussed this:

> The biggest thing that they did was talk a lot about the interactions. . . . we implemented the parent-teacher conferences, and it brought to my attention that it was really important, doing the parent-teacher conferences and actually getting the parents involved, sharing the teaching strategies observations with them, all the observations, getting the parents more involved in what their children are doing. . . . and letting them know their child's strengths and what they can work on (14cfd, interview).

When asked about the most impactful intervention for Tier 2 and Tier 3 providers, the majority of stakeholders agreed that *Early Learning Florida* courses provided the necessary tools for successful strategy implementation, and coaching provided the “how” to show teachers successful ways to incorporate these ideas. For example, a Tier 3 director explained the connection between the course content and personalized coaching:
I think the Early Learning Florida course work was most helpful. I think the teachers would agree with me, and I do see that in the classroom. Things that they learned in that coursework are more readily implemented and are more useful to them. The tools are more useful to them, and they learn how to use the tools with the coaching. It’s like the courses answer the What, and the coaching answers the How. The teachers are more aware of why things are needed and how they can improve an existing tool… (14d88, interview).

ELC stakeholders also agreed that Early Learning Florida courses helped teachers connect theory and research to practice. An ELC staff member stated:

I think teachers learned the most through the implementation plan in the courses. It wasn’t just that they were getting the information, but they had to supply a plan about how they were going do that in their classroom and provide evidence that they had actually done it. It really takes them full circle where they’re not just getting the information and then sitting on it, they’re actually having to demonstrate that they’ve gone into the classroom and done something with it. It really prepares them and forces them to implement the strategies and do something to change your practice (123d1, focus group interview).

Teachers also felt course instructors were helpful, and attentive when challenges occurred. A Tier 2 teacher replied: “They made sure that you kept on track with your assignment and made sure that if you did have problems, you can call them… they would make sure that they get back with you in that twenty-four hour time frame… they make sure to get back with you” (14ae4, interview).

Communities of Practice (CoP)
A critical common theme of teacher learning identified from participants in interviews was the continued need for collaboration and interaction with other teachers, which mirrored statements in Year 2 interviews (Rodgers et al., 2016). This attribute of quality professional development, which is researched and shown to provide change and growth in teacher practice in early learning literature (Desimone, 2006; Wenger, 2004) was present throughout these interviews. Participants specifically mentioned wanting the ability to meet, learn with, and learn from other teachers within their own centers, and with other providers through discussion boards and blended course options within Early Learning Florida courses. For example, a Tier 2 director discussed the revelations of learning from other teachers’ experiences that she could bring back to teachers in her center:

It’s been really great because I can then take it back to the staff and implement in staff meetings. Because not all of our staff are participating, because we’ve got some new staff and so they can see, “Hey, look at what they’re learning. Look at what they’re doing in their classroom.” And they see it and they want to try it (14d02, interview).

Teachers also discussed the ability to learn strategies both from their courses, but also from their CoP meetings based on other teachers’ experiences. For example, a Tier 2 teacher talked about a specific strategy that she re-implemented after getting ideas from a peer in her CoP:

It was really nice to come to the COP and talk out the strategies that I learned in the course, and getting that viewpoint and input from another teacher was very helpful… I remember I learned about parallel talk, and I went through some of the strategies going back in the course, but I implemented it in a different way because I learned that from a teacher at my CoP (14bc6, interview).

CoP facilitators discussed the relationship-building based on CoP meetings, and believed this unique learning opportunity created partnerships across centers, and coalitions. A central CoP facilitator called these “professional friendships”:
Early Learning Performance Funding Project
Year 3 Evaluation 2016-2017

I know what the most important thing is aside from applying it is being able to share it with a variety of peers. They're participating in online conversations about it and they're participating in CoP activities around it and we saw some very interesting friendships, professional friendships, evolve from some very unlikely partners...and they just bonded, they became so close and they follow each other in subsequent classes (0ea86, focus group interview).

Several CoP facilitators discussed the need to have course instructors as members of the CoP, and how this benefitted participants to create relationships in practice:

I also think that a community of practice is really helpful in connecting with their course instructor. We've had really great experiences with our instructors...they'll call in and we have conversation with them as a part of the CoP and it really helps the participants feel connected and build that relationship with the instructor (144be, focus group interview).

CoP structural challenges such as the location and timing of the CoP were discussed as in Year 2, and several family care providers in both Tier 2 and Tier 3 discussed the need to have a CoP specifically for these providers to discuss problems of practice related to family child care homes.

Course Challenges

As with Year 2 interviews, there were challenges voiced about Early Learning Florida courses during the Year 3 implementation. However, different from Year 2, challenges focused on course instructor inconsistencies, the lack of Spanish course offerings, and the need for more differentiated course content for Tier 3 teachers and future higher tiers of participation. While teacher interviews reported a continuum of satisfaction with course instructors, ELC staff voiced the inconsistencies that participants were experiencing with particular courses. One ELC leader elaborated on the inconsistency of grading and feedback from course instructors for her Tier 2 teachers and directors:

I think the instructors are not consistent with their grading. I think that presents a problem. We have included Early Learning Florida in our wage-incentive program. I could not even begin to tell you the amount of issues that we've come across because they've taken these courses through other agencies locally here and there have been inconsistencies with things, and we've run into some problems there. I know flexibility is great, but at some point there's got to be some kind of foundational requirement, a basic requirement that everybody's got to follow, a policy, and then I think exceptions can be made on an individual basis. With the instructors, some of the content that she's getting back, some of the responses that these (instructors) are doing, it's just not a good level of a response. And so then you think of having these courses turn into college credit classes, I just don't see it...It's something that needs to be looked at more closely... (1783a, focus group interview).

Consistency of instruction was also mentioned by some Tier 2 and Tier 3 providers regarding getting consistent and timely feedback, as well as being provided explanation when not achieving mastery (80% overall course grade). One Tier 2 teacher explained her difficult with getting feedback from her instructor:

I tried several times to reach out to my instructor both by email and even by phone, and got no response. I was panicking because I had missed an assignment, and couldn't see my grade, and the instructor wasn't providing any feedback on my assignments to that point. I finally called my ELC coach, and she intervened and contacted the instructor directly, but it shouldn't have to go that far... (14ed1, interview).

While the majority of Tier 2 and Tier 3 participants spoke highly of their course instructors, a few described grading inconsistencies when taking the same course. A Tier 3 teacher provided details about a specific assignment she was unsure about:
The other teacher and I were collaborating in the classroom, and we did this assignment together, and the course teacher said that wasn't allowed, and gave me a lower grade than she gave the other teacher. Aren't we supposed to be working together and doing this together? I was so confused by this, because I guess the course instructor thought we were using the same project instead of working together, like we were cheating or something (14be9, interview).

Stakeholders also spoke of challenges with Spanish *Early Learning Florida* courses, discussing specific needs for more Spanish course offerings, as well as the need for some sort of assessment for teachers and directors that determines if Spanish-speaking practitioners have the ability to successfully complete English courses. One CoP facilitator spoke of the challenge of having Spanish-speaking teachers in her CoP:

When I facilitated a class outside of the coalition, I did have some students in my class who did not speak English, and I had to call them, or kind of go through it, because they could not even understand the coursework. They were placed in there wrong, and then I think when I finally figured out why they’re not participating, I called and it was too late to get them transferred to a Spanish-speaking class...so we had to make the best of it, but I could tell they weren’t getting it. There needs to be a beginning module or assessment that finds out just how proficient teachers are in English to make sure they can handle this kind of learning (0783a, focus group interview).

Both Tier 2 and Tier 3 Spanish-speaking teachers as well as ELC leadership discussed the need for more Spanish courses, especially for Tier 3 providers who have completed the majority of *Early Learning Florida* courses. A coalition director stated her concern about not providing Spanish-speaking providers with courses they needed to improve:

We did have one center in particular with three practitioners who were interested on the Spanish course but unfortunately, the courses offered in Spanish that term were the ones they had already taken in English the previous term. There has to be more intentionality about which courses are being created in Spanish so teachers have more choices. You can’t make the courses that everyone’s taken already... (0ea86, focus group interview).

Another director of a large center spoke of the fact that there were fewer infant-toddler courses in Spanish, which put her teachers who spoke Spanish at a disadvantage because of mismatched content:

They had to take some of the courses in Spanish...but at the end, as we are Tier 3, what happened is they ran out of Spanish courses...especially because they work with toddlers and they wanted to take the toddler courses to be able to apply them, but they had to take one of the pre-K trainings that were in Spanish...but they were going crazy because they never worked with pre-K before...it just didn’t fit (14d74, interview).

While technological issues such as Learning Management System (LMS) problems or issues logging in to the system were mentioned intermittently, there was a noticeable decrease in feedback from teachers and directors about the difficulty of completing online courses, signifying both improvement in technological systems as well as more capacity development in practitioners. Some Tier 3 teachers and ELC staff commented on the quality of learning videos in *Early Learning Florida* courses. These teachers believed the more courses they took, the more they felt the course videos didn’t adequately convey realistic learning settings in order to understand how to use strategies. For example, a Tier 3 teacher stated:
I think often times when I look at videos and I say, “Well, that’s great in that environment, because that teacher’s got all these wonderful things and she’s got an assistant right there and she’s sitting there with only three children, but how can I implement that in my program because I don’t have all those things?” So I think the videos are good to see the exemplary practice but I think a lot of times they’re a little bit unrealistic (14b03, interview).

A small group of experienced Tier 3 teachers also felt that the further they progressed with Early Learning Florida course work, the course format should also progress and become more “professional” and geared towards “proficiency in adult learning.” For example, one Tier 3 director stated:

I have to say, I’m getting pretty tired of the cartoon professor, and I feel like I’m almost being a little made fun of by the simplicity of this. As you progress through these courses, and take 4 and then 6 and so on, they should become more like college courses, where instead of an animated professor and a journey with a map, we are having adult conversations about adult content… I know the teacher this is primarily geared for, but if we are going to truly make this a tiered system that helps everyone grow, then we need tiered courses without cartoons that take us seriously (14e5b, interview).

All stakeholder groups had suggestions for improvements in Early Learning Florida courses, which will be discussed in detail in the Recommendations section of this report.

Technical Assistance and Coaching
All participants were asked about their perceptions of the four TA/Coaching visits that were provided to Tier 2 and Tier 3 teachers during ELPFP implementation. In Year 2, a regional discrepancy became evident regarding the quality of coaching for participants. Regional coaching inconsistencies were highlighted as well as differences in quality between Lastinger certified coaches and non-Lastinger certified coaches, and recommendations were made in the Year 2 evaluation report to align coaching dosage, goals, and practices in all ELCs to provide more coaching impact (Rodgers et al., 2016). A significant result found in this year’s interviews reveals that coaching consistency improved in all ELCs, and coaches aligned their one-on-one professional development specifically with the CLASS® tool as well as Early Learning Florida coursework, to create a more cohesive coaching focus. While a continuum of coaching experiences was conferred in Year 2 (Rodgers et al., 2016), almost all participants reported a positive experience from coaching in Year 3.

Tier 2 and Tier 3 participants spoke of coaching practices, relationships, and outcomes, and credited this one-on-one support directly with their change in practice. For example, a Tier 2 teacher stated:

They were incredibly helpful in order to really understand the program and be able to put it into practice successfully later on. They helped me with all the different areas from the classroom: language, mobility, physical development. She would come in and she would model the way things should be done and then I watched her. And then the next time, I'll do it. And then she watched me and then she gave me feedback on how I need to implement more… my coach was great (14efe, interview).

Many Tier 2 and Tier 3 teachers and directors commented on the coach’s ability to ask probing questions and allow the teachers to articulate the changes needed, as well as explore their thinking about instruction. A Tier 2 teacher described her challenge with transitions and her coach’s impact:

She gave me a chance to say what I think we need to work on in the classroom after hearing the feedback, so it kind of put us both on the same page… It was helpful because I shared my thoughts with her of what I think and then told me that she agreed but asked me questions to help me figure out why. And then I thought we kind of needed help with different ideas for transition because some children are infants, some are toddlers, so transition time is kind of difficult in this room. And she kind of gave me different ideas, of how we could work on the transition, which turned out to work really well (14f09, interview).
Coaches that were interviewed during ELC focus groups echoed the power of providing coaching, and described the cycle of coaching as the needed connection for teachers to implement strategies, understand them, reflect on them, and continue that cycle of improvement. A central ELC coach gave an example of one of her Spanish-speaking Tier 2 teachers:

*She was a one-year-old teacher and she's actually Spanish speaking, but she took the English course for early language support because she wanted to. She got very excited when I would come to do TA or coaching and we would tie in her goals to the particular things that she was learning in the course at the time. Being able to go back and talk to the instructor of the course about what she was doing in this classroom, it was like a circle... it made sense for her to learn about it, do it in her classroom and then go back and talk about it, then learning about it some more, do it in her classroom, and then go back and talk about it (0e23b, focus group interview).*

One coach who was Lastinger certified discussed the difficulty of finding goals that were aligned with both the CLASS® tool and the *Early Learning Florida* course. She gave an example of focusing on one child in her classroom:

*For this provider, it was difficult to get her to choose a goal that aligned with the course and with CLASS®, but she was very nervous about this little girl who had a language barrier and she was very concerned about this little girl's language development. So what we were able to do was connect that with the language modeling area of CLASS® and took the experience of me being able to explain a little more in depth to her child development or language development and also model some ways that she could increase this little girl's vocabulary was very helpful... it really yielded better results (027e9, focus group interview).*
Challenges with coaching during the Year 3 implementation varied from teachers wanting more coaching than the required 4 visits, to having several different coaches visiting the same practitioner during one term due to ELC capacity issues and turnover. Similar to the concerns stated in the ELC focus group interviews, many teachers felt that coaching is stronger and more powerful once that trusting relationship is built, and having several coaches doesn’t provide that needed trust and rapport to create change. A Tier 3 teacher voiced this challenge from her spring term:

I had different [coaches] ones. ...Like, I went through three. I started out with one initial person, and because they couldn’t do each one of them, so I got three different perspectives. I think that would probably be the most challenging piece of it, is because I did get three different perspectives, so you have to find that best solution out of the different perspectives that fit or worked (14a4b, interviewed).

Progress on the Professional Development Plan

In order to promote the continuing education of early learning professionals, OEL created the Professional Development Plan, which is an individualized plan for teachers to meet the requirements of the Florida Pathway to Early Care and Education Tiers (OEL, 2016). Non-exempt providers were required to provide evidence of progress towards these goals, and a specific percentage of each Tier of ELPFP providers needed to fulfill this requirement.

All stakeholders agreed that having a “charted course” for career advancement and need for pathways to provide professional development were crucial to improving Florida’s early learning systems. For example, a Tier 2 teacher stated that this pathway gives the needed “push” to continue:

I know we had to come up with a professional development plan, so that made me realize that there’s always more to learn and further to go. I actually have my COA, of course, and I have my directors, and I have my AA, so I am working towards my Bachelor’s. And it kind of helps push you there. If something’s required, it helps you get that oomph to want to do it and move on and go further. Sometimes we just get caught up in our day-to-day life that we just keep going because that’s routine and that’s what we’re used to. But, when the idea is brought up that you should further your education, and soon you will be required to have more education to be a teacher, you move further along the way (14ae4, interview).

However, some stakeholders expressed confusion about the Professional Development Plan element of ELPFP for Tier 2 and Tier 3 participants, and this will be examined more in the following Discussion section of this report.

Child Assessments

In 2016-2017 ELPFP implementation year, Tier 2 and Tier 3 providers were able to choose between three possible child assessment systems, as described previously in the interventions section of this report. However, all Tier 2, Tier 3, and ELC focus group interview participants used GOLD® and provided feedback and data on this specific child assessment system only.

While implementation of GOLD® as a child assessment tool in Florida’s ELPFP varies due to factors such as who holds the subscription (ELC or provider) and the type of subscription model, the majority of teachers receive professional development to use this child assessment tool with online training offered within the Teaching Strategies online platform, known as Teaching Strategies GOLD® BASIC. This is a four-module (12 hour) self-paced course that introduces the structure and components of the child assessment system (Teaching Strategies, 2013). Most ELCs also provided in-person orientations and trainings regarding using the tool itself, but few provided continuous support or monitored the use of the tool.
Within the GOLD® system, interrater reliability practice and certification are offered as part of a subscription. This process helps early childhood educators increase effectiveness when they identify the children’s levels of development and learning. In this process, teachers seeking interrater reliability certification analyze online sample children’s portfolios. Their assessment decisions are then compared with those of Teaching Strategies developers, with an “agreement goal” of 80% or better (Teaching Strategies, 2013). According to Teaching Strategies, once reliability is achieved, “teachers can stand behind assessment decisions with greater confidence” (Teaching Strategies, 2013, p. 13).

Tier 2 and Tier 3 providers were required to implement this child assessment tool to a portion of their school readiness children, and provide documentation of use for benchmarks (Office of Early Learning, 2016). ELPFP providers were not required to obtain interrater reliability certification to implement this assessment system based on OEL’s program requirements (www.earlylearningflorida.com). Though three ELCs required that teachers pass IRR certification in a certain amount of attempts (ten), this was not the norm. The majority of ELPFP teachers could attempt the IRR certification as many times as needed to obtain the 80% passing rate. This stipulation will be further discussed in the discussion section of this report.

Because the Year 2 ELPFP evaluation highlighted the need to further investigate this intervention for Tier 2 and Tier 3 providers (Rodgers et al., 2016), the Year 3 evaluation design included an open-ended survey that was completed by ELC staff in January, 2017 with a 100% response rate. This survey asked ELCs to provide information about GOLD® implementation in their coalitions, and the complete survey results can be found in Appendix F. A summary of these results are listed below, which will then be followed by qualitative interview feedback regarding the benefits of a child assessment tool and the challenges of GOLD® implementation within the ELPFP.
ELC GOLD® Implementation Survey Results

Based on analysis of the ELC GOLD® Implementation survey results, the following findings were reported:

ELC demographics using GOLD®:
- Nearly 67% of the ELCs have implemented GOLD® either currently or previously.
- Within ELCs that responded, providers not in the ELPFP use GOLD® for quality initiatives such as ELC quality improvement systems, VPK implementation, pilot groups for quality implementation studies, and Head Start providers.

Administration of GOLD®:
- 64% of ELCs have implemented GOLD® more than three years either currently or in the past, and nearly 42% have ELPFP providers currently using GOLD®.
- Of ELCs using GOLD®, the majority (73%) house the GOLD® subscription, and 64% of ELCs manage the GOLD® administration site directly.
- A small percentage of ELCs (10%) reported using GOLD® data to inform families in the form of reports during parent-teacher conferences, and these ELCs also reported allowing families to directly access the GOLD® system.

Support and professional development for GOLD®:
- 82% of ELCs provide onsite coaching to practitioners within their ELCs regarding GOLD® implementation.
- The majority of ELCs (87%) provide the GOLD® BASIC online 12-hour course modules in order to train providers on GOLD® implementation and data interpretation of the assessment system and process.
- In terms of the type of support provided for users to design instruction based on GOLD® results in ELCs, about 20% provide administrative support; nearly 13% provide support on checkpoints; approximately 13% provide support on observations; and 13% provide support on reports.
- Over 50% of ELCs provide “other” supports to providers in addition to training and onsite coaching for GOLD® implementation, which include: issuing technical equipment for providers; providing observational and note taking training; providing reimbursements for substitutes for teachers to attend training; simplified handouts, booklets, and manuals to help teachers understand the GOLD® system; and stipends to help providers transition to their own GOLD® platforms.
- About 20% percent of ELCs who responded provide more targeted coaching support through modeling observation and assessment strategies, Interrater Reliability support, and interpretation of documentation for instructional use.

Use of GOLD® reports and checkpoints in implementation:
- The report most used by ELCs is the Snapshot Report (77%), followed by the Checkpoint Report (71%), Growth Report (60%), the Interrater Reliability (IRR) Report (59%), the Individual Child Report (55%), the Professional Development Report (55%), Documentation Report (50%), and the Comparative Report (32%).
- Regarding the checkpoints required for their providers, 78% of ELCs require providers to complete the Spring checkpoint and Fall checkpoints; approximately 18% of ELCs require providers to complete the Winter checkpoint; and only 4% do not require any of those three checkpoints.
Fidelity and effectiveness of GOLD® implementation:
• In terms of the effectiveness of GOLD® implementation, 80% of ELCs believe their providers implementation of GOLD® was “slightly effective” in the first year of GOLD® use; nearly 67% of ELCs believe providers implementation of GOLD® was “moderately effective” in the second year; and in the third year of GOLD® use, approximately 87% of ELCs thought the implementation of GOLD® was either “moderately” or “very effective”.
• The majority (77%) of ELCs believe it would take three years of effective implementation for Interrater Reliability to be strong enough so that the tool can be used with fidelity.
• About half of ELCs (51%) use the IRR Report for verification of teacher reliability, but had no system other than the IRR certification report for verification, and did not limit the amount of attempts at IRR certification. Half of ELCs (49%) did not verify IRR certification at all.
Benefits of Child Assessment Tools

When asked about the benefits of using a child assessment system on a regular basis, some ELPFP participants responded that using the tool provided help with determining a child’s strengths and challenges, as well as a way to provide helpful information for families. For example, a Tier 2 teacher described how using GOLD® allowed her to connect with families and extend instruction from the classroom to the home:

We use Teaching Strategies, so actually getting the parents involved, sharing the results and strategies with them, all the observations, getting the parents more involved in what their children are doing… So showing the parent, “Hey, this is what your child’s doing and they’re actually able to do this, and this is how you can do it at home, and implement the same things that we’re doing here.” And letting them know their child’s strengths and what they can work on (14efb, interview).

A Tier 3 teacher also discussed how this tool helped her create several resources to help families understand their child’s educational level and goals:

So it gave me a way to assess the child and also share the child’s assessment with the parent… it creates lesson plans when you put everything in and family newsletters, and it creates its own child assessment scoring sheet. So I think it helps out in that way. Doing the GOLD®, it has all those objectives so I’m covering social, emotional, language, the concept development, physical… I’m able to better understand what my kids need to know and where they should be at so when they go to kindergarten they don’t fail (14f09, interview).

A Tier 3 family child care provider discussed how much she enjoyed and learned from using GOLD®, and provided usable resources that she could access at her convenience:

I thoroughly enjoyed the GOLD®. I just started reflecting on how useful I found it when there are certain things I was encountering in my home with the children related to developmental learning. I actually could go to that resource and look at different videos and look at the scenarios that it offered and tried to streamline it in my home to see if it maybe I needed to tweak it or adjust it in some format (14a4b, interview).

While the majority of Tier 2 and Tier 3 teachers agreed that continuous, effective observations and assessments were crucial to informing instructional choices and strategies, many believed that requiring this specific assessment tool as part of ELPFP was not helpful because of the multitude of challenges they faced.

Challenges with GOLD® Implementation

For coalitions that have not yet achieved interrater reliability, there are a myriad of challenges related to capacity building. The challenges outlined here provide important insights into what type of capacity building is most needed to ensure teachers have the skills to appropriately and consistently implement child assessments.

When asked about the challenges of implementing child assessments, the majority of teachers focused on challenges of GOLD® implementation citing lack of understanding from online training, the inability to complete quality observations, the complexity of creating and inputing documentation, and the lack of time to complete tasks involved with GOLD® in addition to their instructional responsibilities. ELC staff echoed these challenges, but were most concerned with the issue of unreliable data within these assessment systems.
Because Tier 3 participants were on their second year of GOLD® implementation, many Tier 3 teachers and directors voiced their concern about the quality of documentation needed for GOLD®, and the lack of understanding teachers had to complete this task properly. A Tier 3 director gave this example:

> The teachers do not understand documentation... they can take the 12 hours on the modules, and they can see how it's done, but they were taking tons of videos, and I said, “What was your objective? What were you focused on when you did this?” They have it backwards... they think they take a video and then they find an objective. We have the Creative Curriculum... they have the cards there that tells them what they're supposed to be doing and how they can challenge it to the next color band... They take that online class and they come back and they don't know how to use it. The training that is required is not near enough (14c15, interview).

When asked what the biggest challenge was in implementing GOLD® observations and assessments, several family child care home providers reported that because they are often the only teachers in their facility, there simply isn't the time or space to complete adequate observations and input the documentation required. A Tier 2 family child care provider provided this example:

> Because it's just me and my children during the day, I struggle with how to use this and continue to pay attention to everything else and provide a safe atmosphere. How can I input documentations when I'm trying to teach kids? ... And it's like my most dreaded thing. I don't know if there's an easier tool that can help family child care providers, because I don't have extra staff to observe, it's just me. A lot of directors I talked with in my CoP have a designated person that can go in there and do that... we get so much paperwork and this is the last thing on my list, which also means I'm probably not doing my best on it (14cbe, interview).

A Tier 3 veteran teacher who was labeled as the “GOLD expert” in her center also commented on the difficulty of monitoring quality observations and documentation:

> We monitor the documentation, and mostly, during the time I just monitor and just make sure that there's documentation to all of the things. However what we have found this time was that one of the teachers was also putting in a lot of documentation and when we went in now to level her...the documentation was horrible. Because I was monitoring the count, not the quality. She definitely did not get it, and so now we're going to have to go in and do it again (14d88, interview).

ELC focus group participants echoed these challenges listed by their providers, and were most concerned with reliable child outcomes from GOLD®. Many ELC staff spoke of unusable or inaccurate data being entered and analyzed within the GOLD® system because teachers weren’t interrater reliable and were not required to be by ELPFP guidelines. For example, a southern ELC director stated:

> I can tell you that TS GOLD is a nightmare for our providers... and I think part of that has to do with what's required in PFP. They have to take the reliability, but they don't really have to pass it, and I think it's terrible. If TS GOLD is a part of the deliverable then you want the data you are receiving to be valid. They must pass the reliability. And I know there's no documentation being put in there, that people are just going leveling all their children, and I think that's terrible. I think they should have to pass it. And when providers know that they don't really have to pass it, it makes them happy because they'll just go in and do whatever they have to get in there to get their money (0e23b, focus group interview).

A central coalition director explained that unreliable or invalid data hurts all stakeholders, and discussed her coalition's issues regarding funding and quality initiatives:
Our biggest concern at this point is, are they reliable outcomes? Teachers who don’t pass reliability are still putting data in the system, and it’s still being used. And I think that’s the part at a coalition level that we’re struggling with, is we want that reliable data. We want to be able to bring forth on our legislative agendas or thereafter the idea that GOLD helped pave the way for us to show that the child has growth. But teachers who input data that isn’t truly accurate are hurting those children more than anyone else (027e9, focus group interview).

A northern coalition professional development coordinator believed that the key to creating reliability of implementation with teachers was in-person training and coaching, as well as continuous support and monitoring of data to ensure reliability:

We really feel like they’re not equipped with the skills and ability to be able to become reliable without having some face-to-face instruction and coaching support. There’s no support for providers at all for it, and we have no follow-up on that at all at a coalition level. I think the state might look for it when all is finished. And then no one talks to the providers at all about the results and how to use that to guide their lesson planning and their instruction (0783a, focus group interview).

Similar to findings in the Year 2 evaluation, ELC participants once again agreed that child assessments are critical to shaping the landscape of early learning in the state of Florida, but can only be implemented and sustained successfully with a long-term, scaffolded approach with face to face professional development, and several years of practice before child outcome data from these systems are considered reliable. An ELC coach elaborated on the idea of creating this knowledge and having center collaboration to achieve this notion:

We asked if they would show us what they had entered into the system and what we found was that many of them are just reporting with the observational booklet. Because they found it so challenging when inputting it into the computer system, and they didn’t know how to navigate it. They should really offer a mentoring system for this, it’s just so complex. Centers that really get this and do it well should be able to go help other centers in the program that are struggling. It’s too much for the coaches, and honestly, a lot of coaches don’t understand the tool. You can’t carry a whole center forever...and it is taking too much time away from the children. Teachers are spending too much time documenting the needs that children have instead of trying to work towards fulfilling those needs... we should be listening to children (04083, focus group interview).
DISCUSSION

This evaluation study examined professional development interventions of the ELPFP during the 2016-2017 implementation year to determine if early learning provider participation in the ELPFP had an effect on: teacher knowledge gain; the implementation of effective teaching practices; improvement in teacher-child interactions and classroom climate; the use of child assessments; and impact on child outcomes. This study also examined stakeholders’ experiences participating in the ELPFP, and the cumulative impact of professional development interventions with participants.

Data collection from quantitative and qualitative methods and a concurrent triangulation analysis (Cresswell, 2003; Desimone, 2009; Flick, 2002) produced results regarding all tiers of ELPFP professional development strategies. The research team also determined how these professional development interventions were experienced by all stakeholders, and examined benefits, challenges and barriers of the 2016-2017 implementation. While Year 2 results showed impact on specific teacher competencies (Rodgers et al., 2016), the results from this evaluation show significant impact on teacher and program outcomes, and beginning improvement in a sample of child outcomes.

The results of this evaluation study provided strong evidence that participation in the ELPFP positively impacted the following teacher, program, and child outcomes:

- Improvement in overall program quality
- Improvement in teacher-child interactions, specifically in instructional support
- Continuous improvement in teacher instructional quality and reflective capacity through multiple years of participation
- Improvement in a sample of Tier 3 direct child outcomes
- Improvement in teacher gains in knowledge

These findings were consistent through the entire sample, and were supported by both quantitative and qualitative measures. By engaging in the ELPFP in all tiers, teachers gained knowledge, and applied this new knowledge to improve teacher-child interactions, instructional practice and program quality, and collaboration with peers and families. This quality improvement in ELPFP programs directly impacted child outcomes. These results provide evidence of a link from quality professional development to improved child outcomes provided in the ELPFP logic model and rarely found in professional development literature (Desimone, 2009; Guskey, 2005). Discussions of these and other significant findings will be presented according to the concurrent triangulation analysis, in which concurrent results that were supported by both methods of quantitative and qualitative data analysis are explained; challenges or discrepancies in data sets are presented and hypothesized; and data that outlies previous explanations are questioned and discussed.

CONCURRENT TYPOLOGIES OF ANALYSIS

When triangulating quantitative and qualitative results, a comparative analysis was used in which quantitative measurable gains or improvements specific to research questions was analyzed, and then supporting evidence from qualitative data was compared that concurred with these results. For the Year 3 triangulation analysis, five specific concurrent typologies were supported by both data sets: improvement in overall ELPFP program quality; improvement in teacher-child interactions, specifically in instructional quality; a cumulative benefit of continuous teacher participation and reflection on quality instructional and programmatic improvement; improvement in a sample of Tier 3 direct child outcomes; and improvement in teacher gains in knowledge.
Improvement in Overall ELPFP Program Quality

Teacher-child interactions are considered the strongest predictor of program quality and children’s readiness for success (Pianta et al., 2009). The quantitative analysis of teacher-child interaction scores from CLASS® observations showed significant increases for those teachers who participated in each tier, with an average improvement of 23% in CLASS® composite scores for total program quality. These gains also improved annually, showing the cumulative and growing impact of sustained professional development and a focus on quality. In Tier 1 the improvements ranged from 10-26%; in Tier 2, the improvements ranged from 11-32%; and in Tier 3, the improvements ranged from 19-29%.

Qualitative support for these increases were also provided by all stakeholder groups as well as teacher completion surveys. When asked about impact on early learning programs from ELPFP participation, over 85% of teachers responded that being a participant in these Year 3 interventions improved the quality of their entire center or family child care home. Qualitative evidence from directors and family child care owners supported this finding with specific descriptive evidence about increased professionalism, improvement in learning environments, and more engagement and partnerships with families. These educational and environment factors contributed to improved assessment outcomes, as well as a perceived improvement by teachers, directors, and ELC staff of ELPFP providers.

Improvement in Teacher-Child Interactions and Instructional Quality

Both quantitative and qualitative results detail an increasing trend in CLASS® scores for PreK and Toddler domains. In ELPFP PreK CLASS® assessments, Tier 1 and Tier 2 teachers had gains in the PreK Emotional Support (ES) domain; Tier 1 and Tier 2 teachers had gains in the PreK Classroom Organization (CO) domain; and all three tiers had significant gains in the PreK Instructional Support (IS) domain. In ELPFP Toddler CLASS® assessments, Tier 1 and Tier 2 had gains in Toddler Emotional and Behavioral Support (EBS) domain, and all three tiers had significant gains in Toddler Engaged Support for Learning (ESL) domain.

In addition, the CLASS® domains that showed consistent significant improvement with each increment of the ELPFP participation (from no training to Tier 1, Tier 1 to Tier 2, and Tier 2 to Tier 3) were the Pre-K Instructional Support domain and the Toddler Engaged Support for Learning domain. These improvements were also supported by multiple data sets within this analysis. Though Tier 1 participants were not directly interviewed, Tier 2 and Tier 3 participants as well as ELC staff provided detailed description of the benefits of all professional development strategies that contributed to improved teacher-child interactions in the classroom. Teachers discussed gaining knowledge related to instructional support, and implementing strategies that incorporated this knowledge. ELC staff provided evidence of specific programs that increased CLASS® scores because of the combination of taking Early Learning Florida courses and being coached towards improvement in CLASS® domains.

Teacher survey results supported this finding, with 78% of teachers reporting a positive change in practice, and over 85% of teachers reporting an improvement in classroom quality from professional development strategies such as Early Learning Florida courses and one-on-one coaching. For a sample of Tier 3 providers, direct child data from GOLD® showed similar improvement in social-emotional, cognitive, physical, and language domains for children in ELPFP programs. While GOLD® domains do not directly correlate with CLASS® assessment domains, many of the observational checkpoints are similar, which will be discussed more thoroughly in the Child Outcomes section.

**PreK CLASS® Domains**

When discussing CLASS® results, it's important to create the link from professional development objectives to assessed outcomes, and provide evidence of why these outcomes occurred. PreK and Toddler CLASS® domain components are listed in Figure 82 below in order to understand
these connections. For Tier 1 providers who showed gains in all PreK CLASS® domains, these results can be explained because Tier 1 providers likely have never received any professional development previously regarding creating quality teacher-child interactions, and thus show the highest percentage of growth from no training to completing MMCI. Researchers have provided evidence that the MMCI training gives teachers foundational knowledge about positive and beneficial interactions in the classroom that directly impact classroom practice (Curby et al., 2009; Mashburn et al., 2008; Pianta et al., 2009).

For Tier 2 providers, whose professional development strategies included two Early Learning Florida courses and four coaching sessions, this same theory of being exposed to new and pertinent information applies. Teachers who had previously taken MMCI were now engaged in learning with several course objectives relating directly to CLASS® domains. For example, Tier 2 providers engaged in the Preschool Learning Environments (PLE) course, in which course objectives included: learning to arrange classroom space to increase children’s learning; creating learning centers; establishing schedules and routines; planning for transitions; and creating a caring and safe environment for children (Early Learning Florida, 2016). These objectives directly connect to the PreK Emotional Support domain (regard for student perspectives, positive climate), the PreK Classroom Organization domain (instructional learning formats), and the PreK Instructional Support domain (concept development). The knowledge being gained by teachers was directly implemented as strategies in the classroom, and improvements were assessed in CLASS® outcomes. All ELPFP Tier 2 and Tier 3 courses with objectives are listed by percentage of practitioners who completed the course in Appendix K for review.

For Tier 3 providers, gains in CLASS® scores showed no significant improvement in PreK Emotional Support and Classroom Organization domains versus Tiers 1 and 2 providers, which can be explained by examining the Tier 3 professional development interventions. One explanation derives from the fact that the majority of Tier 3 provider Early Learning Florida courses were geared specifically towards PreK Instructional Support domain elements, which are most often the lowest outcomes for classrooms and considered the hardest to improve (Pianta et al., 2009). For example, Tier 3 providers completed the Preschool Language Development course (PLD); the Instructional Support in Preschool: Quality of Feedback course (QF); Understanding and Promoting the Development and Learning of Young Dual Language Learners 1 and 2 (DLL 1 and DLL 2); and Using Observation to Inform Individualized Instruction in Preschool (PKO). Courses with language objectives (PLD, DLL 1 and DLL 2) promoted children’s language development, such as open-ended questions and extending child responses, using advanced language, prompting thought

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Emotional and Behavioral Support</th>
<th>Engaged Support for Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Toddler | • Positive Climate  
• Negative Climate  
• Teacher Sensitivity  
• Regard for Student Perspectives  
• Behavior Guidance | • Facilitation of Learning and Development  
• Quality of Feedback  
• Language Modeling |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age/ Grade Level</th>
<th>Emotional Support</th>
<th>Classroom Organization</th>
<th>Instructional Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Pre-K            | • Positive Climate  
• Negative Climate  
• Teacher Sensitivity  
• Regard for Student Perspectives | • Behavior Management  
• Productivity  
• Instructional Learning Formats | • Concept Development  
• Quality of Feedback  
• Language Modeling |

Figure 82. CLASS® domains and dimensions for Toddler and PreK assessments

For Tier 2 providers, whose professional development strategies included two Early Learning Florida courses and four coaching sessions, this same theory of being exposed to new and pertinent information applies. Teachers who had previously taken MMCI were now engaged in learning with several course objectives relating directly to CLASS® domains. For example, Tier 2 providers engaged in the Preschool Learning Environments (PLE) course, in which course objectives included: learning to arrange classroom space to increase children’s learning; creating learning centers; establishing schedules and routines; planning for transitions; and creating a caring and safe environment for children (Early Learning Florida, 2016). These objectives directly connect to the PreK Emotional Support domain (regard for student perspectives, positive climate), the PreK Classroom Organization domain (instructional learning formats), and the PreK Instructional Support domain (concept development). The knowledge being gained by teachers was directly implemented as strategies in the classroom, and improvements were assessed in CLASS® outcomes. All ELPFP Tier 2 and Tier 3 courses with objectives are listed by percentage of practitioners who completed the course in Appendix K for review.
processes, and encouraging peer conversations. Observation and feedback courses (PKO and QF) promoted objectives related to scaffolding learning, encouraging feedback loops to sustain conversations, prompting thought processes, expanding children's understanding, and using encouragement to provide specific feedback (Early Learning Florida, 2016).

Thus, concepts related to the PreK Instructional Support domain (concept development, quality of feedback, and language modeling) were most emphasized, and produced significant gains for Tier 3 providers in this domain. However, because providers did not receive specific knowledge and strategies related to the other two PreK CLASS® domains, this may account for the lack of movement in CLASS® scores. Because coalitions chose courses for ELPFP participants, there may not have been an alignment of teacher needs for improvement based on CLASS® scores with what course they completed. A calibration of course objectives and CLASS® improvements needed might have produced more significant impact on these two PreK CLASS® domains.

A second explanation for lack of gains for Tier 3 providers in the PreK Emotional Support and Classroom Organization domain is because Tier 3 provider scores for these domains were higher when starting this Year 3 program, and therefore there is less room for gains. This also follows the theory of CLASS® ceiling scores, in which teachers that have been exposed to professional development and CLASS® domains for multiple years have a more difficult time improving scores because they gain more and more information and expertise with cumulative years of learning. This explanation is also discussed in the Limitations section of this report.

**Toddler CLASS® Domains**

Similar to PreK CLASS® increases, improvements were shown for Tier 1 and Tier 2 providers in the Toddler CLASS® Emotional and Behavioral Support (EBS) domain, and in all tiers for the Toddler CLASS® Engaged Support for Learning (ESL) domain, showing significant gains equal to 0.76, 1.02, and 0.67 for Tier 1, 2, and 3 respectively. These findings mirror the gains in PreK CLASS® domains, and can be attributed to similar explanations.

One thing to consider with Toddler CLASS® scores is that toddler classrooms have the highest teacher-child ratio in the state of Florida (11 children to 1 teacher), and teachers have multiple tasks related to children’s social-emotional and physical development such as toilet training, changing diapers, and language acquisition. Therefore, many providers may not initially place emphasis on instructional quality, and focus more on social-emotional and physical domains. An explanation in Tier 1 and Tier 2 providers gaining in the Toddler Emotional and Behavioral Support (EBS) domain is that teachers were most needing this knowledge and these tools and strategies to create positive learning environments for children, and therefore incorporated these strategies more readily in their daily routine.

Tier 2 courses such as Designing Infant Toddler Learning Environments (ITLE), and Infant Toddler Social-Emotional Development (ITSED) have objectives directly related to this CLASS® domain such as: creating attachments with young infants and toddlers; support parents of mobile infants and toddlers; establish healthy social-emotional development with infants and toddlers with special needs; and developing self-regulation in mobile infants and toddlers; providing a secure base and active and responsive caregiving; and using rituals, routines, and schedules to support learning (Early Learning Florida, 2016). For Tier 3 providers, the lack of improvement in the Toddler Emotional and Behavioral Support (EBS) domain could also be attributed to specific course objectives provided in Tier 3 Infant Toddler courses.
Tier 3 teachers engaged in *Early Learning Florida* courses such as Using Observation to Support Developmentally Appropriate Practice with Infants and Toddlers (ITDAP), Infant Toddler Language Development (ITLD), and Designing Infant and Toddler Learning Environments (ITLE), which are more attuned to the Toddler Engaged Support for Learning domain. These courses included objectives geared towards language and learning development (implementing communication loops with the infants and toddlers; facilitating early language and speech skills with infants and toddlers through mediation); and designing learning environments conducive to cognitive development (using rituals, routines, and schedules to support learning; providing a learning environment for language and literacy) (*Early Learning Florida*, 2016). These courses provided teachers direct knowledge and strategies to enhance these skills and improve assessment outcomes.

All three tiers made significant gains in the Toddler Engaged Support for Learning CLASS® domain because Tier 1 and Tier 2 teachers had little exposure to this knowledge previously and thus made significant gains, with Tier 2 being the highest gain percentage. These gains are shown in Appendix K.

**The Cumulative Benefit of Participating in ELPFP**

A significant finding from this evaluation was the cumulative impact of participating in the ELPFP, which was evident in several data sets. As mentioned previously, the Year 2 evaluation study showed significant increases in CLASS® outcomes for Tier 1 and Tier 2 participants (Rodgers et al., 2016), and this year’s evaluation further supports this result with larger increases in CLASS® scores as well as a cumulative impact on the PreK Instructional Support domain and the Toddler Engaged Support for Learning domain over multiple years. As mentioned previously, all three tiers improved in the Pre-K Instructional Support (IS) domain. These scores show an increased cumulative impact from Tier 1 to Tier 3, and provide evidence of continued teacher learning and implementation of practices.

In teacher completion surveys, teachers also supported this finding, with over 90% of teachers reporting that *Early Learning Florida* courses were extremely useful in providing strategies for teaching children. This benefit from ELPFP participation was also mentioned in Year 2 (Rodgers et al., 2016) but evidence for Year 3 was far more substantial. Particular impact on teachers’ learning skills to support children’s language development was reported in both Year 2 and Year 3 results (Rodgers et al., 2016).

Another significant finding pointing towards comprehensive and cumulative learning over multiple years of ELPFP participation is that over 80% of Tier 2 and 3 teachers reported having interest in taking additional professional development and career advancement, and over 90% of teachers reporting they want to continue participation in the ELPFP program. Qualitative evidence from all stakeholders supported these findings in qualitative interviews as well as artifacts of practice submitted by Tier 3 participants. Teachers gave multiple accounts of anecdotal evidence of increased professionalism, increased knowledge, increased effectiveness of instructional quality, and most importantly, increased child outcomes because of multiple years of participation in these professional development strategies. ELC leadership and staff commented specifically on Tier 3 providers being more knowledgeable, and providing more effective learning environments for children after participating in the ELPFP for multiple years.

Finally, a sample of Tier 3 child assessment data provides supporting evidence of gains in child growth and development because of Tier 3 teachers’ cumulative participation in the ELPFP. Child gains in the social-emotional, physical, language and cognitive domains support teachers’ descriptions of children’s language and learning growth, as well the growth rates of children in ELPFP programs being
higher and faster than those in a control group. However, it is important to note this sample of child data was small, and thus making correlations between teacher learning and child gains requires more research in future ELPFP implementation to validate these results.

Teacher Gains in Knowledge
Gains in teacher knowledge is an important predictor for improving practice, and results from this evaluation show that the required professional development strategies for the Year 3 ELPFP substantially improved teacher knowledge. In Tier 1, average gains in teacher knowledge from the 20 hour MMCI training were 26%. In Tier 2 and Tier 3, average gains in teacher knowledge from participating in two Early Learning Florida courses were 17-82%. This result was also supported with qualitative evidence from teacher interviews, as well as teacher completion surveys, where approximately 78% of teachers reported gaining knowledge in both course content and effective teaching practices.

Because of the discrepancy in knowledge gain percentages in Early Learning Florida courses, this requires a more detailed examination of these results. While knowledge gains were evident in all courses, results show the largest percent adjusted gain at 82.18% in the Infant and Toddler Social-Emotional Development (ITSED) course. The lowest adjusted gain was 13.82%, was for the Infant Developmental Stages: The First Year of Life (ITGD) course. An interesting finding to compare with these knowledge gain results is that mastery rates in these courses were almost identical, with the ITSED course having a combined 90% mastery rate, and the ITGD course having a 91% mastery rate.

The differences between achieving mastery and an increase in knowledge assessment scores should be discussed because these assessments represent different objectives and teacher competencies. Mastery is obtained in an Early Learning Florida course when a participant achieves at least 80% in all course assignments, discussion requirements, final projects, and has 100% attendance at CoP meetings or TA/Coach sessions for those participants in online + CoP and online + TA/Coaching course models. The achievement of mastery requires participants to engage in deep learning throughout the duration of the course, and shows a more holistic achievement through both formative and summative assessments of these combined tasks. An increase in knowledge assessment score only requires teachers to increase the number of questions answered correctly from pre-test to post-test, of which questions are the same, but in different order.

For the ITGD class, participants only increased knowledge by approximately 14%, but over 90% of participants' gained mastery in the course, signifying the course content may be repetitive for course participants. However, in the ITSED course, the knowledge assessment gains and mastery scores were similar, being 82% and 90% respectively. This could mean that the content in this course was unknown to the majority of participants, as evidenced in qualitative interviews. Therefore, while knowledge gain measured from pre-and post-knowledge assessments represents the reiteration of knowledge learned, mastery rates represents learning and growth in specific teacher competencies related to improvement, and could be considered a better gauge of teacher growth and development.

Child Outcome Gains in Tier 3 Providers
A new quantitative data set comprised of GOLD® child assessments was introduced in this Year 3 evaluation to provide evidence of the beginning impact of teacher participation in the ELPFP on direct child outcomes. These assessments provided a small sample of evidence of child growth and development from teacher participation in Tier 3 of the ELPFP, and this was supported by teacher anecdotal evidence in qualitative interviews and surveys, as well as CLASS® increases in specific domains related to these GOLD® assessments. Figure 83 provides the alignment between CLASS® domains and GOLD® domains.
### Early Learning Performance Funding Project
#### Year 3 Evaluation 2016-2017

#### Figure 83. Alignment between CLASS® and GOLD® Domains

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Pre-K CLASS Domain</th>
<th>Low Range GOLD Level</th>
<th>Mid Range GOLD Level</th>
<th>High Range GOLD Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social–Emotional</td>
<td>1. Regulates own emotions and behaviors</td>
<td>a. Manages feelings</td>
<td>PC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Follows limits and expectations</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TS</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>RSP</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BM</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. Takes care of own needs appropriately</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Establishes and sustains positive relationships</td>
<td>a. Forms relationships with adults</td>
<td>PC</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Follows emotional cues</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. Interacts with peers</td>
<td>TS</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>d. Makes friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations</td>
<td>a. Balances needs and rights of self and others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Solves social problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TS</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>8. Listens to and understands increasingly complex language</td>
<td>a. Comprehends language</td>
<td>QF</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Follows directions</td>
<td>LM</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. Uses language to express thoughts and needs</td>
<td>a. Uses an expanding expressive vocabulary</td>
<td>RSP</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Speaks clearly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. Uses conventional grammar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>d. Tells about another time or place</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. Uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills</td>
<td>a. Engages in conversations</td>
<td>CD</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Makes conversations</td>
<td>QF</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>LM</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Uses social rules of language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>11. Demonstrates positive approaches to learning</td>
<td>a. Attends and engages</td>
<td>RSP</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Persist</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ILF</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>QF</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. Remembers and connects experiences</td>
<td>a. Recognizes and recalls</td>
<td>RSP</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Makes connections</td>
<td>CD</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13. Uses classification skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14. Uses symbols and images to represent something not present</td>
<td>a. Thinks symbolically</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Engages in sociodramatic play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

English Language Acquisition

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162
There are several factors that could explain the increases recorded in these child assessments. While the children in ELPFP providers had higher scores in four domains, those increases were minimal with an average of 7% increase over children in the control group of non-participating providers. However, the growth rate of children in ELPFP providers was an average of 23% higher than those children in control group providers, meaning children in ELPFP providers increased growth at a faster pace in these domains than children in the control group, making more gains in less time. This growth increase could be a result of ongoing certified coaching and training that teachers in the Tier 3 ELPFP group received. As evidenced in ELC focus group interviews, professional development selected for teachers in this ELPFP group aligned with GOLD® social-emotional, cognitive, physical, and language development areas, as well as provided emphasis on language acquisition and development skills.

Another important finding is that in two GOLD® domains, Mathematics and Literacy, no gains were shown with children in ELPFP Tier 3 providers. As evidenced earlier, courses taken by Tier 3 providers did not include objectives related to either Mathematics or Literacy objectives. With regard to Tier 3 teacher professional development, when comparing trainings offered to teachers in both Tier 3 and control groups to these areas aligned with GOLD®, ELC staff and Tier 3 teachers reported that Mathematics and Literacy were two developmental areas that did not align with professional development objectives, which may be why children did not demonstrate developmental progression in these areas. Another explanation for lack of gains in these domains is that children in this study were measured at age 3, which may not show increased learning in these domains at this developmental level. Future research should include older ages children (ages 4 and 5) for these domains to provide more examination of growth.

A final explanation for gains in these child assessment scores can be related to the validity of observations and assessments provided by teachers in this Tier 3 ELPFP group. The majority of teachers in these providers are located in two ELCs that have an established plan of progression and accountability for GOLD® and require teachers to complete interrater reliability certification on a continual basis for accountability and validity of outcomes. Also, these Tier 3 teachers have used the GOLD® tool for longer than three years due to coalition quality improvement initiatives, and thus may have more knowledge and expertise when conducting observations and providing documentation. Therefore, Tier 3 teachers in this group may have more understanding of how to incorporate assessment information into their instructional strategies for continued improvement in child growth and development.
CHALLENGES IN TRIANGULATION

During triangulation analysis, there were some results that were contradictory or challenging, and required further analysis for more interpretive results and discussion. These results were compared, and additional data collection and analysis was required in order to understand how and why these discrepancies occurred. These results included course challenges, and challenges of child assessment systems and outcomes.

Course Challenges

There was a disparity in data reporting regarding both course instruction and course model types of Early Learning Florida courses.

Course Instructors

Qualitative data provided descriptions of positive experiences with course instructors for the majority of ELPFP participants, but this data contradicted teacher survey results with regard to different language options and instructor quality. In interviews with Spanish-speaking course participants, teachers described their teachers as “helpful” and “dedicated to helping me learn.” In course completion surveys, over 80% of Spanish speakers claimed their instructors were excellent at communication. In addition, nearly 97% of both language speakers indicated their course instructors were at or above average when encouraging them think independently, creatively and critically.

This data provides contrast to qualitative feedback about English course instructors, in which English course participants described challenges in terms of receiving timely feedback and consistent communication. This is also evidenced in course completion surveys, with less than 49% of English speakers replying their instructors are excellent and around 47% of them think their instructors are average. Mastery rates for both English and Spanish courses also contradict this result, with Spanish-speaking courses having a 91% average of mastery, and English-speaking courses having an 89% mastery rate. Mastery of a course is often attributed to both participant effort and instructor effectiveness (Rodgers et al., 2016), and therefore these diverging statistics and descriptions need further investigation.

One possible explanation is an inconsistency in course instructor quality, with Spanish-speaking instructors being rated more highly than English-speaking instructors in competencies such as quality of feedback, consistency in grading, and being caring and supportive throughout the course term. Possible explanations for this could be due to the small size of Spanish-speaking courses, as well as the quality of Spanish-speaking instructors and their ability to differentiate instruction for Spanish-speakers due to low class sizes. Another explanation is that the majority of Spanish course instructors were veteran Early Learning Florida instructors, and had deep knowledge of course objectives, assignments and assessments, as well as deep connections with their participants because of the cultural connection of language. Finally, because Spanish courses were new to this ELPFP year, Spanish instructors were deeply committed to seeing this group of practitioners succeed and feel confident because of previous inequities in course offerings.

Course Models

With the three different types of course models offered by Early Learning Florida, quantitative data results showed that teachers in the online + coaching model showed smaller gains in knowledge assessment scores as compared to teachers in the online only model or the online + Community of Practice models. This result was also recorded and disputed with Year 2 findings (Rodgers et al., 2016), in which online only knowledge scores were higher than both the online + CoP and online
+TA/Coaching model. This directly challenges data reporting with both qualitative evidence and course mastery rates.

In the 2016-2017 year, the online + TA/Coaching model produced a mastery rate of over 96%, while the online only course average mastery rate was 89%, and the online + CoP average mastery rate was 87%. Descriptive evidence of the power of coaching and CoP were also provided in multiple qualitative data sets, with teachers describing the powerful professional learning with both group and one-on-one guidance and support. In teacher completion surveys, over 80% of teachers responded that TA/coaching provided support and help in their practice, and 88% of CoP participants reported gaining knowledge and strategies from attending CoP sessions.

Considering this range of evidence, one explanation for this inconsistency might be the fact that while knowledge gain was not necessarily impacted by coaching or attending a Community of Practice, improvement in teacher competency and practices were impacted. Competencies such as critical thinking, problem solving, questioning, facilitating, and working collectively are evidenced by obtaining mastery in a course. Another explanation for this divergent outcome is that many sample sizes were too small to detect significant impact from knowledge gain. Finally, as mentioned previously, the skills and dispositions gained from coaching and attending CoPs are not quantitatively measurable by either CLASS® observations or knowledge assessments.

Challenges with Child Assessment Systems: The Use of GOLD®

There are several contradictions and challenges when discussing ELPFP child assessment outcomes. First, there is a challenge with the validity of GOLD® data from ELPFP providers. While GOLD® data was used in this evaluation study as a measure of Tier 3 child outcomes, there was considerable qualitative evidence that this child assessment data from the 2016-2017 year may be unreliable according to all stakeholders. Another contradiction surfaced with teacher reporting of the quality of implementation of the tool in both qualitative data and completion surveys. While teachers claimed multiple challenges with the implementation of child assessments systems, and the need for more support and training in interviews, over 90% of teachers indicated that Early Learning Florida courses were very useful with respect to implementation approaches to child assessment in course completion surveys.

Furthermore, results from the ELC child assessment implementation survey (Appendix F) verified qualitative descriptions and showed the current lack of structure or processes relating to reliability of assessments. According to survey results, only a small percentage of ELCs require GOLD® Interrater Reliability certification from teachers before they use this assessment system, and no ELCs limit the amount of times teachers can attempt certification. Another gap in implementation based on quality assessment systems was lack of communication with families regarding children’s development and progress.

Therefore, these discrepancies provide support that GOLD® may not have been implemented as an authentic assessment as it was intended, but as a method of summative child assessment in a statewide professional development system. A discussion of the use of GOLD® data as a child outcome measure requires both research and theory for examination. Interpreting assessment data requires teachers and administrators to examine evidence, and decide what best course of action to take to improve children’s learning and development (Dichtelmiller, 2011).

In high quality early learning assessment systems, evidence should be provided for three types of interpretation: responsive or immediate interpretation, interpretation for planning, and then evaluative interpretation. Responsive interpretation requires teachers to use assessment observations
Planning interpretation helps teachers use data daily, weekly, and monthly in order to plan differentiated instruction and resolve classroom learning challenges. Evaluative interpretation is based on a sampling of data after several weeks or months in order to evaluate each child’s performance and progress (Dichtelmiller, 2011). As qualitative data has described, GOLD® data being produced from ELPFP providers was rarely used in these capacities for children's growth and development, and data was inputted inconsistently and without accountability towards quality.

Furthermore, both Teaching Strategies® as an organization, as well as prominent child assessment researchers caution using GOLD® as a high-stakes summative assessment due to the fact that this system was designed as an authentic assessment. “The assessment information is to be used in planning appropriate experiences, individualizing instruction, and monitoring and communicating child progress to families and other stakeholders… GOLD® is a formative assessment measure; it is not a test, nor is it intended to be used as a diagnostic, clinical, or high-stakes instrument (Lambert, Kim & Burts, 2013). With respect to high needs populations of children and teachers being served through ELPFP, researchers also claim that using the GOLD® online is more likely to place both children and teachers in a web of continuous observation or even ongoing surveillance that accompanies normalizing judgment (Foucault, 1977).

OUTLIERS IN TRIANGULATION

Two specific predictors from this evaluation are considered outliers of triangulation because data was either not verifiable, contradicting, or inconclusive. These outlying predictors are provider accreditation and providers with high populations of children in poverty.

Provider Accreditation

In 1996, the Florida Legislature established the Gold Seal Quality Care program to acknowledge child care facilities and family day care homes that are accredited by nationally recognized agencies and whose standards reflect quality in the level of care and supervision provided to children. In addition, the Legislature established provisions for Gold Seal providers participating in the subsidized child care program, (a.k.a. School Readiness and Early Learning), to receive a higher reimbursement per child, than providers not receiving a Gold Seal designation. In 1999, the Legislature revised the program to provide tax incentives through the Department of Revenue or county tax appraiser for participating in the Gold Seal Quality Care Program. Since then, the Florida Legislature has revised the maximum amount of the reimbursement. Currently, the rate differential cannot exceed 20% above the reimbursement rate established by the local ELC, a.k.a. the local school readiness coalition. In December 2004, Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) legislation was passed and signed into law. This bill requires participating child care facilities and homes to maintain quality care accreditation and higher education standards for staff. The Gold Seal Quality Care Program is an approved accreditation for child care providers to be eligible to participate in VPK (www.myflorida.com).

While provider accreditation was used as an independent variable in several quantitative measures of quality (knowledge assessment gain, CLASS® outcomes, and GOLD® outcomes), quantitative results showed positive and negative effects of provider accreditation on outcomes. In addition, there was no qualitative data reported on this predictor. Therefore, results are inconclusive regarding the impact of accreditation on ELPFP provider performance and require further examination. Provider accreditation results included:

- Only six accreditations were prevalent in more than 5% of the providers and the accreditations with less than 1% of frequency are religious group accreditations.
• APPLE is the leading accreditation held by providers in the ELPFP.
• Providers with APPLE certification had higher pre-test CLASS® scores compared to the providers without certification.
• Teachers working for providers with NECPA accreditation showed significantly higher gains in course knowledge assessment scores (by 95.31 points), but there were no differences in knowledge gains by other types of accreditation.
• Tier 3 ELPFP providers with an accreditation had children that scored lower at age three in all six GOLD® domains than ELPFP Tier 3 providers without an accreditation.
• Children in Tier 3 ELPFP providers with accreditation had growth rates in GOLD® outcomes that were smaller than ELPFP Tier 3 providers without accreditation.

While it is noticeable that some groups have larger pre-test mean scores in both knowledge assessments and CLASS®, these comparisons are difficult to explain and should not be over emphasized because of large differences in the number of providers with these accreditations; the differences between number of pre-test and post-test scores due to differential dropout of providers across accreditations; and the fact that accreditations are not mutually exclusive. Based on this variation of results from this predictor, further research is required to determine the impact of provider accreditation on ELPFP outcomes.

Providers with High Populations of Children in Poverty
As with the Year 2 evaluation (Rodgers et al., 2016), the characteristics of providers discussed above attest to the standards of quality required both by the state of Florida and ELCs. An important finding from this research is that the characteristic of providers that serve high populations of children in poverty was not statistically significant. This means that providers who serve high populations of children in poverty did not score lower on CLASS® assessments or knowledge gain. This result speaks to one of the objectives of the ELPFP, which was to target providers who serve high needs areas and provide equitable education for children in poverty, and thus, the ability of these tiered interventions to meet the needs of these teachers provides hope that early childhood educational settings in these areas can be improved. While higher scores in knowledge gain and teacher-child interactions are more likely to come as these interventions progress and get refined, this finding is significant in the goal of creating equitable education for teachers who serve school readiness children.
LIMITATIONS

The findings of this study are promising but should be interpreted with some caution given limitations inherent in both quantitative and qualitative research, as well as in the process of data collection for both proximal and distal outcomes.

Attrition
For a longitudinal study where data are collected over two or more points in time, such as the one implemented in evaluating the ELPFP, attrition occurs, when participants drop out of the study prematurely. Attrition may introduce bias in the results when the participants that drop out are systematically different from those that stay. For example, if low performing participants drop out, the results would be biased upward. An additional impact of attrition is a loss of statistical power due to the reduction in the amount of data that is available and effective to support complex statistical analyses.

Sample Size
Low statistical power can be due to small sample sizes. The issue of lack of statistical power due to small sample sizes is highly likely to have been the cause of statistically non-significant effect on classroom climate for the Tier 3 providers because only a small number of Tier 3 and control group classrooms were observed.

CLASS® Data Collection
Significant challenges were posed during the data collection process. Two databases were used to coordinate and collect CLASS® observations. The Web-based Early Learning System (WELS) is a centralized database provided by OEL to ELCs utilizing CLASS©. Observers enter CLASS® observation scores by classroom. Classrooms and providers were initially loaded into this system in 2014, and various agencies could update classroom and teacher information as needed, and would need to do so manually. This database allows providers to update the status of their teachers and classrooms, as well as submit all benchmarks for the project. It also allows ELCs to approve all benchmarks in a centralized location, and could be used to inform the most up-to-date official changes to rooms for CLASS® score entry. As these two databases were not linked, multiple stakeholder partners were required to dedicate outsized limited staff resources to matching classrooms and providers in each database, confirming updated classroom and teacher rosters and provider participation status. Coalitions were also unable to pull reports of all active classrooms and providers in their coalitions in order to coordinate and check the status of CLASS® observations. For coalitions with high ELPFP participation, this may have contributed to diminished support capacity.

CLASS® Ceiling Effects
While it is reasonable to expect that higher process quality in providers is related to better child outcomes, and that higher structural quality is related to better process quality, it is also reasonable to expect that there may be a minimum level of quality that needs to be reached before better outcomes are manifested (Le, Schaack, & Setodji, 2015). As we noted above for professional development interventions, this perhaps suggests the more challenging nature of changing instructional support but may also signal that for some teachers, there may be a ceiling effect in terms of how much change they can achieve in one year. Finally, it should also be noted that a considerable limitation of this study is the use of the CLASS® as both the focus of intervention and an outcome measure, a circumstance that could reflect “teaching to the test” (Pianta et al., 2014). The lack of a separate and perhaps more...
independent measures of observed teacher practice is a shortcoming of this work.

**Knowledge Assessments**
A limitation of the knowledge assessment analysis is that the gain from pre-test to post-test cannot be compared across courses, because the course assessments may have different difficulties, which are unknown. Furthermore, the knowledge assessments analyzed may not have included all eligible participants. Separate organizations implemented the OEL-ELPFP database, WELS database, and *Early Learning Florida* course participant and user databases, and these were not linked with common teacher identifiers. ELPFP participants identified for inclusion in the study analysis based on user-inputted provider names. Therefore, practitioners who did not include their provider name at the time of registration for *Early Learning Florida* courses may have been excluded from analysis.

**Completion Surveys**
The ELPFP teacher participant survey had response rates below 50%, which complicates analyses because individuals that responded could be systematically different from those that chose not to respond. Therefore, survey results only represent the responders. The lower response rate for Year 3 as compared to the previous year, which was above 88%, may be due to teachers having received multiple survey measures from multiple sources (*Early Learning Florida*, OEL) which increased respondent burden.

**MMCI**
This intervention, required of all Tier 1 participants, was created for preschool teachers. Because of this, toddler teachers were to take this Pre-K course, and infant teachers were unable to participate. In addition, this course was only offered in English, which could have diminished utility for teachers or classrooms whose primary language was Spanish.

**GOLD®**
Another limitation is related to the rater effect pertaining to the collection of GOLD® scores. To be specific, child measures were produced based on the rating of children that was done by the corresponding teacher. However, data was not available on whether the teacher was a reliable rater of GOLD®. A possible consequence could be certain teachers tend to consistently assign high or low scores to children, and because there is not an indicator to signify the reliability status, the effect of ELPFP intervention could be confounded. Another possible problem is that teachers self-select to complete the GOLD® reliability certification process, which is time consuming, and better teachers may be more likely to complete the process. It would be important for future evaluation to have data regarding the reliability status of each teacher administering the GOLD®.

In addition, the sampled population for GOLD® scores was limited. Of thirty participating ELCs, only three met all evaluation requirements for inclusion in the analysis. Of these three ELCs, data was unavailable for one ELC, as individual providers owned GOLD® subscription data and would not release that data. Of those willing to consent to their data to be used in the study, some did not have any observations collected after 2015 and were not eligible for inclusion.
Accreditation
One limitation in the assessment of effect of accreditation is that most accreditations had low frequency in the sample. Only APPLE had frequencies above 10% in the sample, and most had frequencies below 5%. Also, for the GOLD® analysis, only one center in the Tier 3 group had accreditations, so the interaction between ELPFP participation and accreditation reported is completely attributable to the performance of a single center.

Qualitative Interviews
A limitation of the Tier 2 and Tier 3 qualitative interviews was that participation in this study was voluntary, and interviews were not completed in-person, allowing for possible outcomes that researchers could not document, such as body language and eye contact. While the interviews represented geographic diversity, interested practitioners self-selected to be interviewed, and may not be characteristic of all practitioners. For Tier 3 participants, very few artifacts of practice were submitted, which created a lack of data to support teacher perceptions of change in practice and children's learning.

Qualitative Self-Reporting and the Hawthorne Effect
A key limitation to qualitative data was the power dynamic of the researcher-participant relationship, which may contribute to the Hawthorne Effect, in which participants believe their performances were changed because they were being interviewed and observed regarding those changes. To alleviate this effect, all interviews were conducted by research team members who did not have previous relationships with participants, and challenging data regarding lack of positive improvement was included in analysis. All interviews and correspondence were scheduled at participants’ convenience, and trust and rapport established as much as possible by providing resources and words of encouragement and appreciation during interviews and meetings.

A second limitation stems from the self-reporting of information from all participants. There was no externally reliable data to show whether teachers were doing what they reported in their classrooms with the exception of CLASS® observations, which were not aligned with several interventions measured in this study such as implementation of practices and child-based assessments. This study was concerned with the experiences and challenges faced by ELPFP stakeholders, and thus depended on personal feedback through interviews and the integration and testing of ideas presented within the literature on early childhood teacher professional development.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Multiple studies confirm classroom quality predicts positive developmental and academic outcomes for children (Barnett, 2011; Curby et al., 2009; Mashburn et al., 2008; Pianta, Barnett, Burchinal, & Thornburg, 2009; Sabol, Hong, Pianta & Burchinal, 2013). Many authors emphasize the importance of training as a means of improving and maintaining educational quality (Clarke-Stewart et al., 2002; Zaslow & Martinez-Beck, 2006), and document the significant gains in the quality of teacher-child interactions that can be realized from these learning opportunities. In addition to improving instructional and classroom quality, system reform also requires the consistent and continuous improvement of interrelated parts of the system (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2016). Therefore, improvement in the early learning systems requires not only improvement in individual teachers, but in early learning leadership, communities, families, policy makers and all stakeholders to improve the learning and lives of children.

In the state of Florida, synthesis studies showed inconsistent access to high quality trainings that included active and consistent engagement based upon content to build core competencies and support early learning and developmental standards (Pemberton et al., 2013). This was particularly true in areas with providers that served high needs populations such as children from low-income families. Based on the 2016-2017 logic model of the ELPFP, long-term outcomes intended from this program included a cumulative positive impact on stakeholders from ELPFP implementation, and results from this evaluation confirm this goal was achieved.

This evaluation study demonstrates the causal link that ELPFP quality professional development impacted teacher beliefs and practices, improved teacher knowledge gain, instructional practices and collaboration, and resulted in benefits for children, families, teachers, and providers. These findings answer many questions regarding learning forms (methods, structures, and delivery approaches) and processes (underlying mechanisms for influencing change) based on both proximal and distal outcomes of the ELPFP. Results from this study also reinforce Desimone’s (2009) theory of educational action in that the more specific, consistent, powerful, and stable a policy initiative is in education, the stronger its implementation will be.

After careful confirmation with stakeholders across the state through multiple rounds of feedback, member-checking and triangulation of data, researchers have created high-impact recommendations for future ELPFP implementation through identifying specific improvements to ELPFP program structures, professional development strategies, and data processes. These recommendations are created on a systems level and apply to stakeholders (i.e. Office of Early Learning, ELC partners, system supporters and vendors, early learning providers, early learning teachers, and families) to improve early childhood professional learning and child outcomes. It is important to note that while families of children are stakeholders in this statewide learning initiative through distal outcomes, these stakeholders were not directly involved in evaluation inquiries, and should be included in future investigations.

Also, it should be noted that due to the timeline of the completion of this evaluation and the start of Year 4 of the ELPFP contract and implementation with coalitions (2017-2018), several of these recommendations are post-programmatic, and may not have the possibility of consideration immediately.
ELPFP STRUCTURE
As triangulation analysis revealed, this year’s ELPFP implementation was more consistent and impactful for early learning providers and partners, and ELPFP guidelines for the 2016-2017 year incorporated many of the recommendations provided in the 2015-2016 evaluation study (Rodgers et al., 2016). These suggestions are offered to continue this structural improvement effort, and create more clarity, communication, alignment, support and resources for all participating stakeholders.

Funding Accountability and Sustainability
ELPFP providers and ELCs both voiced concerns over the continued funding sustainability of the ELPFP in its current state with regard to financial incentives and accountability. Specific recommendations to improve sustainability include:

• An ELPFP funding verification system that provides continuous monitoring, verification and accountability of funding disbursements from providers to be monitored by both ELCs and OEL. This system would still allow providers to choose how to re-invest quality dollars in their systems but require guidance and coaching from ELCs, as well require teacher-level financial support such as bonuses or stipends for time and effort related to ELPFP professional development and activities. This would alleviate teacher attrition and promote retention.

• A ELPFP budget tool or matrix for providers to help directors and owners work towards financial autonomy and responsibility towards quality improvement with ELPFP funding.

Pre-tier for Florida’s Most Needy Providers
A continued goal of the ELPFP is to create program quality improvement in Florida’s most vulnerable communities through increasing school readiness subsidy payment rates for providers that exhibit quality (OEL, 2016). However, many providers who are restricted from applying to the ELPFP due to licensing violations from Florida’s Department of Child and Families (DCF) are the providers and children who most need this support. A recommendation made by several early learning partners throughout the state is to create a Pre-Tier for these providers with these components:

• Coordinate with the Department of Child and Families to create a comprehensive Pre-Tier program that incorporates a modified version of the DCF 40-hour training, which incorporates OEL Health and Safety modules, pre-tier coaching, and scaffolded capacity building to satisfy prerequisite skills needed to participate in the ELPFP.

• Coordinate Pre-Tier training with leadership and business management training for provider owners and directors through Early Learning Florida leadership and professional management courses.

ELPFP Conference and Network for all Stakeholders
The majority of stakeholders recommended OEL providing an annual ELPFP conference and network to allow stakeholders to share, collaborate, and learn from each other to continue quality improvement on all system levels:

• Teachers specifically requested the ability to present their learning as well as engage in collaborative learning environments with other ELPFP teachers, and participate in advisory groups for future ELPFP implementation.

• ELC staff suggested having a conference with different tracks to allow coalitions to share successes and challenges, but also allow providers to view ELPFP strategies with an organizational lens.

• All stakeholders requested a “virtual” network for statewide ELPFP participants in an online platform to allow teachers and directors to access resources, collaborate virtually, and share experiences throughout the implementation year.
ELPFP PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Child Assessment Recommendations

Figure 85. Framework of Current GOLD® Implementation

Figure 85 portrays the current elements of GOLD® implementation based upon this evaluation analysis. Results showed the current lack of structure or processes relating to reliability of assessments. Another gap in implementation based on quality assessment systems was lack of partnerships and respect of families regarding children’s development and progress. While several ELCs reported using GOLD® reports to monitor accountability of providers as well as children’s overall growth, the use of these reports varied widely from each ELC, and was therefore considered inconclusive.

Timeline for Quality Child Assessment Implementation

Based on literature from quality assessment systems as well as information gleaned from this evaluation, there are clear indications that implementation of any assessment system takes more than one year of implementation, and often requires three or more years in order to create fidelity of implementation and reliability of outcomes. The following recommendations for implementation are:

• **Year One:** This first assessment implementation year should be considered a practice year, in which Interrater Reliability must be achieved, verified (a system should be in place to limit attempts at certification and monitor fidelity after certification), and supported. Teachers and administrators need to use observations and tools to practice, and compare results with other ELCs using the tools. Year One assessment data should still be considered unreliable due to lack of use and understanding of implementation.

• **Year Two:** This second year of assessment implementation should be used as an apprentice year, in which teachers and administrators use the tool to observe and monitor children, but still receive continuous support through coaching and professional development on analyzing the data throughout the year. While these assessments can be used to inform instruction, Year Two data should still be considered practice, and consistently analyzed for verification of outcomes with other assessment tools (such as environment assessments and classroom assessments, such as the CLASS® framework).

• **Year Three:** This third year of assessment implementation becomes valid and reliable in terms of data gathering and analysis, and therefore teachers and administrators can learn to use this
information to create lesson plans, use specific tools to inform children’s instruction based on reporting, and predict future learning needs of children based on analysis and comparisons of data. Nuances of assessment systems can be tapped into to further inform how a child is progressing, and resources are incorporated into the family partnership of learning in order to have consistent outcomes of children’s growth and development both at home and in their place of learning to produce positive outcomes and benefits for children and families.

**Potential Capacity Building for Statewide Assessment Implementation**

Several beneficial practices were reported that can potentially help build statewide assessment capacity if brought to scale. While each ELC requires different accountability checkpoints based on quality improvement plans, funding needs, and ELC capacity, the following best practices are suggested to benefit the fidelity of implementation of GOLD® and are recommended to create statewide capacity for reliable child assessment.

**Professional Development for Teachers and Administrators**

- Create GOLD® workgroups and Communities of Practice facilitated by regional ELC staff to help alleviate teacher and administrator knowledge gaps and misconceptions from other users.
- Create GOLD® practitioner mentors (teachers and directors) regionally who are reliably and knowledgeable with the tool and system to provide internal and external support for providers that are new to child assessment system, and alleviate capacity needs outside of ELC staff.
- Create *Early Learning Florida* courses and a course-bundled child assessment credential (Observation course, Assessment course 1 and 2) to be taken in tandem with GOLD® training modules to further teacher understanding of tools and assessment systems, and provide job-embedded strategies for effective observation and assessments.
- Provide coaching for providers to determine how the tool best fits the providers’ needs, and provide observation and data input modeling for teachers.

**Financial and Technical Supports for Providers**

- Provide technical training and equipment to help providers with observations and data input (tablets, laptops, video cameras).
- Create interpretative guides for tool use and implementation based on provider’s needs (Spanish translations, more simplified directions for use).
- Provide stipends for teachers that achieve Interrater Reliability by certain deadlines, as well as funding incentives for providers that meet checkpoints regularly and with fidelity.

**Use of GOLD® Reports to Build Instructional Capacity**

- Provide GOLD® reporting for all participating providers from ELCs who use quality assessments to move beyond accountability, and pursue analysis of reports to help teachers understand children's growth and development, and use these data trends to provide benefits for families and children's learning outcomes.
**Early Learning Florida Course Recommendations**

*Early Learning Florida* courses were reported as an impactful ELPFP professional development strategy by all stakeholders. These blended courses provided useful strategies teachers and directors could incorporate immediately in daily practice, content to promote deeper learning experiences for their children, resources and tools to provide quality observations, assessments and feedback, and collaboration with course instructors, course peers, and organizational peers and leadership.

Based on the Year 3 evaluation, recommendations for the *Early Learning Florida* course system include:

- Create a crosswalk with all PreK, Toddler, and Infant CLASS® domains and *Early Learning Florida* course objectives; determine which courses most impact practice related to each domain; and then create a tool for ELC coaches, program coordinators and OAs that provides this information to align teacher needs with course goals in order to create more impact in CLASS® outcomes for Tier 2 and above.
- Create more consistency in course instructional quality with grading, feedback, and responsiveness by implementing a unified instructional evaluation system that outlines components of effective online instruction, including: planning and preparation, the online classroom environment, quality instructional practice, consistency in grading and feedback, and communication and collaboration with course participants.
- Create more courses in Spanish
- Create a Director/Family Child Care Owner track of courses that provides job-embedded learning, content and strategies to promote early learning leadership, beneficial business operations, professionalism, effective coaching and facilitation, and quality instruction in teachers.
- Create advanced courses for upper tiers of ELPFP participants that incorporate more advanced content, strategies, and assignments, and provide participants more options for collaboration and reflection with course instructor and peers.
- Create course-bundled credentials that articulate into college credit to promote teacher career advancement and retention.

**Certified Coaching Based on Provider Need**

Based on stakeholder recommendations, the UF Lastinger Certified Coaching model was more consistent and impactful for teachers than previous coaching experiences in Year 2 (Rodgers et al., 2016). Therefore, technical assistance and coaching recommendations for future implementation include:

- All ELPFP coaches should be certified by an OEL-approved certification program
- Provide a certified coaching option for all ELPFP participants based on provider need, not a prescribed amount of sessions.
- Technical assistance and coaching be provided for all ELPFP improvement strategies, including child assessment systems, for all participants.
- Coaches be monitored by ELCs and OEL, and submit coaching artifacts or evidence to ensure reliability and consistency in coaching quality.

**ELPFP Data Processes**
Based on triangulation data and analysis, the evaluation research team has determined improvements in data processes for future years of ELPFP implementation. These processes may occur at the provider, ELC, or state agency level.

**Share ELPFP Data with Providers**

All stakeholders requested that all ELPFP quantitative measures are able to be accessed by providers in order to promote quality improvement. Recommendations include:

- Providers have access to all child assessment scores (GOLD®) and reports
- CLASS® outcomes should be provided to participants within 30 days of observations in order to allow providers time and capacity to design and implement quality improvement efforts.

**Improved Data Processes and Linkages**

As a statewide program, the use of technology and electronic submissions are imperative for ensuring that the ELPFP is a far-reaching, scalable system. Electronically linking these components would allow not only for more robust data collection and evaluation, but could also alleviate many capacity challenges stakeholders face.

- The CLASS® score database (WELS) and provider portal and listing of active, participating providers and classrooms should be electronically linked to ensure program quality. An accurate representation of classrooms would also allow for a CLASS® composite to be conducted and allow more providers to participate in ELPFP.
- Common identifiers should be used for providers, classrooms, and teachers across all professional development options in ELPFP to better triangulate data and assess more precisely the most impactful components of the intervention
- Continuing development of a centralized professional development registry to further link all PD activities. A comprehensive registry could allow more flexibility in PD pathways, and alleviate stakeholder capacity challenges and mismatched goals and outcomes.

**Future ELPFP Evaluation Design**

Based on triangulation data and analysis, the evaluation research team has determined improvements for future years of ELPFP evaluation that might better measure both changes and outcomes of this professional development initiative.

**Evaluation Timeline**

As mentioned previously, the timeline for this Year 3 evaluation study prohibits many recommendations from being implemented in the next consecutive program year due to program contracts being sent to all providers before the evaluation was completed (August, 2017). Researchers suggest for future years to create a “reflection period” of three months after evaluation data has been measured to provide evaluation analysis and findings prior to the rollout of contracts (if possible) in order to bolster implementation strategies and strengthen both ELC and provider capacity to create stronger intermediate outcomes.
Participant Surveys
Because of discrepancies in ELPFP participant course completion survey results as well as a low percentage of return due to several surveys being given to course participants (internal and external Early Learning Florida surveys), the research design for Year 4 ELPFP will include an ELPFP participant survey based on specific chosen quality improvement strategies. This participant survey will be given to all tiers of participants (Tier 1-5) through Qualtrics, and administered at the completion of interventions in Spring, 2018. This survey will replace the course completion survey, and provide more detailed information regarding ELPFP experiences and improvement strategies from all participants.

Families as Forgotten Stakeholders
As mentioned earlier in the qualitative results, several families of children in ELPFP providers expressed interest in this continued professional development initiative, and a sample of ELPFP families should be included as Year 4 stakeholder participants. Family perspectives of teacher quality and program quality are vital to the continuation of this improvement effort, and partnerships with families are critical for continued ELPFP success. Therefore, data from families whose children participate in ELPFP classrooms should be collected with surveys and/or interviews in order to add dimension and more triangulation to future evaluations.
The results presented in this report provide a window into a systemic statewide professional development reform initiative, and suggest areas where current practices and structures could be strengthened. However, this window offers only a small picture of the potential landscape of reform that the ELPFP could provide in future years. Implications for both early childhood educational practice, and early childhood research are far reaching, and will be discussed briefly.

Early childhood professionals deserve the opportunity to advance their educational careers through engaging in quality professional development. This study has shown that Florida’s early learning teachers have the drive and motivation to elevate their teaching ability and improve classroom environments when given the opportunity. While many other states have attempted to incorporate sequenced professional development reform in the past in which teachers participate in certain programs without connection or progression (Zaslow & Martinez-Beck, 2006), few have successfully incorporated a multi-tiered progression of professional learning which combines theory, practice, and assessment in a collaborative learning environment like the ELPFP.

A number of lessons can be gleaned from this evaluation study on all levels of this systemic approach to learning and these results support themes in current professional development research, including: (1) the importance of valuing teachers and their time and effort; (2) the need for creating systemic capacity to provide quality professional development; (3) the requirement of adequate time to create effective change through processes of “development in use” (Fullan, 2007); (4) the importance of consistency in instruction and implementation while still respecting contextual differences; (5) the need for alignment of initiative goals and resources at all levels of implementation; (5) the emphasis on providing follow up, and continuous reflection and evaluation to inform development and create institutionalization of practices; and (6) the importance of systems-level buy-in, support, and development to achieve educational objectives for all stakeholders (Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson & Orphanos, 2009; Fullan & Hargreaves, 2016; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman & Yoon, 2001).

These findings contribute to early childhood educational research by providing evidence that there is a causal link between teachers engaging in quality professional development and incorporating that learning into improved instruction and classroom environments to positively impact children’s learning outcomes. This study also contributes to a small but growing subset of early childhood professional development research that argues that through targeted content, specific collaborative mechanisms such as a Community of Practice that provide reflection, guided support of practice and problem-solving, teachers will change their beliefs to improve instructional practice for increased child outcomes. Finally, these findings offer specific evidence of the value and power of quality coaching to improve teacher practice. The ELPFP Year 3 evaluation provides both quantitative and qualitative evidence that focused, relationship-based coaching which incorporates reflection improves teacher practice, provides gains in teacher knowledge, and improves child outcomes.

Implications for future research both within future ELPFP evaluations and in other early childhood professional development initiatives are extensive. Many topics merit further investigation, including:

1. The relationship of contextual classroom elements such as lower class ratios, teacher experience,
child demographics, and organizational support and direct child outcomes;

2. The examination of specific elements (leadership support, teacher buy-in, accreditation requirements, coalition support) within “quality” providers (i.e. Gold Seal providers, Providers within QRIS) that contribute to higher gains in teacher knowledge and implementation of practice;

3. The continued investigation and identification of “promising” practices of technical assistance and early childhood coaching that help create teacher and provider improvement in instructional outcomes, and the impact of a certified coaching model on teacher practice and improvement in children’s learning;

4. The examination of the relationship between provider “culture” (collaborative vs. compliance-based, reflective vs. evaluative) and teacher learning and implementation of new instructional practices;

5. The elements of online learning that create the most beneficial outcomes for teachers with regard to child-based outcomes; and

6. The impact of providing director leadership capacity and training in conjunction with teacher professional development to create quality instructional leaders within early learning classrooms.

7. The relationship between Spanish-speaking and English-speaking providers and the ability to participate in monolingual courses, coaching, and assessments, and the power of cultural competency in transforming early learning educational environments;

The challenges of providing effective professional development to improve teacher practice and children’s learning is well documented in the literature, and this study has presented the tensions and transformations that early childhood teachers and stakeholders experienced when engaging in this systemic professional development initiative. It is important to acknowledge that this professional development initiative served over 2,600 early childhood teachers. Yet this research shows the potential of these tiered interventions to push teachers toward a level of professionalism and learning that will not only will help them better meet the diverse needs of children, but also provide purpose and motivation to become elevated in their teaching practices and interactions with children. As this elevation of the early learning workforce occurs, the challenge then becomes the ability to keep these system improvements consistent, scalable, and sustainable. According to Fullan (2007), “Small scale improvement will not last if we do not identify with and help improve the surrounding system. Thus, we have both selfish and altruistic reasons for wanting to see the overall system get better” (p. 303).

Educational research is so often about the scores, the variables, and the outcomes, which are directly tied to funding and inputs, but often overlooks the voice of teachers and the needs of children. When engaging in this research, researchers were encouraged to find that teachers spoke with confidence, professionalism, and pride about participation in this initiative. Though challenges were evident, views were positive, and in some cases, transformational. Each teacher reported specific growth from this process, but also illuminated the many complexities which impact teaching, learning and coaching, and provided the beginning of a continuing conversation to further enhance this process. It is our hope that as this research is analyzed, interpreted and discussed, it creates a larger conversation based on equity and excellence in implementation, and provides the springboard for further educational opportunity and advancement of Florida’s early childhood educators.
REFERENCES


Pianta, R.C., Barnett, W.S., Burchinal, M.R., & Thornburg, K.R. (2009). *The effects of preschool education: What we know, how public policy is or is not aligned with the evidence base, and what we need to know*. Psychological Science in the Public Interest, 10(2), 49-88.


APPENDIX A

Early Learning Performance Funding Project
2016-17 Overview | April 11, 2016

The 2014 Florida Legislature created the Early Learning Performance Funding Pilot Project in the 2014-15 General Appropriations Act and directed the Office of Early Learning to organize a workgroup of early learning stakeholders who would provide input to OEL on determining the details of the pilot. The project was reauthorized in 2015-16 and has been approved to continue into the 2016-17 fiscal year.

Approximately 400 providers and their instructors will have an opportunity to receive additional funding for improving school readiness program outcomes. The method for allocating funds to early learning coalitions must include

- A funding differential incentive for high-need populations.
- A professional development system to significantly improve instructor quality.
- A research-based observational system to significantly improve instructor interactions with children.
- Alignment to Early Learning Florida to provide consistency in technical assistance to improve instructor quality.

Providers will be assigned to one of three tiers where specific professional development strategies will occur.

**Tier 1** providers will participate in

- A two-hour Introduction to Classroom Assessment and Scoring System® (CLASS) online module.
- 20 hours of Making the Most of CLASSroom Interactions training.
- Creation of a Professional Development plan.

**Tier 2** providers will participate in

- Implementing a research-based, comprehensive child assessment tool for each School Readiness child.
- Two Early Learning Florida courses.
- Four technical assistance visits initiated by the local early learning coalition.
- Creation of a Professional Development plan.
Tier 3 providers will participate in

- Two *Early Learning Florida* courses. New courses added, including some in Spanish.
- Implementing a research-based, comprehensive child assessment tool for each child enrolled at the site. The difference
- Four technical assistance visits per classroom initiated by the local early learning coalition.
- Creation of a Professional Development plan.

Classroom Assessment Scoring System

The project will use CLASS, an observation-based program assessment instrument that measures teacher-child interactions in three broad domains: emotional support, classroom organization and instructional support. CLASS has been validated in thousands of classrooms and is used to support research, monitoring, evaluating and professional development efforts nationwide. Each classroom will receive a CLASS observation to measure program outcomes.

High-Need Populations

Providers identified as serving high needs children are eligible for an additional differential payment.

Eligibility and Participant Requirements

Providers agreeing to participate will be assigned to one of three groups—Tier 1, Tier 2 or Tier 3. Each tier of providers will complete a contract with their coalition that outlines expected benchmarks/deliverables. Coalitions will also complete a contract with OEL. To be eligible to participate in the project, *providers* must

- Have a minimum of 30 percent of their birth-5 enrollment made up of children in the School Readiness Program.
- Have no Class I or more than three Class II licensing violations within the last two years.
- Have all of the center’s infant to prekindergarten classrooms agree to participate.
- Agree to have the evaluator conduct assessments.
- Agree to all of the benchmarks and submitting information to OEL.
- Agree to have the director participate in all training.
- Agree to pay for instructors’ access to selected CLASS training (estimated at $75/instructor) or child subscriptions to an online assessment system (estimated around $11 per child in school readiness).
Award Timeline and Benchmarks

Beginning in November 2016, tier 1 and tier 2 providers will receive quarterly payments based on meeting benchmarks/deliverables. Award amounts will be calculated on a per-child payment (for children enrolled in the School Readiness Program), based on a fixed percentage increase of the state’s average school readiness reimbursement rate for 2 year-olds. A bonus will be awarded at the end of the project to providers who improved their teacher-child classroom interactions from fall to spring as evidenced by CLASS scores.

Payments to providers for successfully completing benchmarks/deliverables will be based on the number of children receiving school readiness services at the center as of August 2016 and calculated as follows:

- A fixed percentage (TBD) increase of the average reimbursement rate
- A fixed percentage (TBD) increase for high-need providers
- An end-of-year bonus based on the results of CLASS pre- and post-observations.

Providers in tier 3 receive an increase in the per child reimbursement rate.

How to Apply

Apply online at http://earlylearningpfp2016.fldoe.org/Home/Welcome
APPENDIX B

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

PFP Tier 2 Practitioner Interview Protocol:
Investigating the Impact of the Early Learning Performance Funding Project on Early Childhood Instructional Practice from Stakeholders’ Perspectives

Post-Intervention Interview (60 minutes by Zoom online meeting)
Goals:
1. Determine how PFP instructors experienced the professional development 
2. What impact instructors perceived the professional development had on their instructional practice, gains in content knowledge, and student interactions

Interviewer
Thanks so much for meeting with me again. Our purpose for this interview is to focus on your experiences and perceptions as an instructor who participated in the PFP. I will ask you specific questions about each aspect of the PFP program, your instructional practice, and your general impressions of the program as a whole related to instructional quality. We greatly appreciate you being completely open and honest as this will assist us to focus on both strengths and challenges in the program for future implementation.

1. Experience of PFP Teacher Learning and Changes in Practice
   • Looking at the whole experience of the PFP program as professional development, think about specific things that helped or hindered the process for you and let’s talk about that.
   » What factors or elements about the PFP most contributed to your learning as a teacher? (Prompt for specific examples)
   » Describe if, and how, you have incorporated this new content knowledge into your instructional practice. (Prompt for specific evidence or examples in classroom practice)
   » How has your participation in this program made a difference in the way you think about teaching or in your development as a teacher? (prompt for change in beliefs, practice, interactions)
   » What, in your view, was the most challenging part of this experience for you as a teacher? What did you struggle with throughout this process?

2. Discussion of Specific PFP PD elements:
   • Let’s talk about the three specific pieces of the PFP professional development program, and your thoughts and experiences with each one. For each of these elements, we would like to also look at an artifact or example to help us understand your learning process. For the Early Learning Florida course, we will look at a sample course together (through share screen on Zoom video) so I can remind you about certain aspects of the course.

   a. Early Learning Florida Courses: (prompt with course artifact)
      » Tell me your overall impression of each ELF course.
      » What course options (online only, online + CoP, online + TA) did you participate in?
      » What aspects of the course did you enjoy? What aspects did you struggle with? (prompt with
screen and artifact regarding assignments, discussion posts, and videos)
» What were some strategies or ideas that you took away from your coursework? (prompt for discussion of delivery of strategies within online course)
» What suggestions can you give me about these courses in order to make this experience stronger and better for participants in the future? (use specific examples about technology, course design for evidence)

b. Research-based Child Assessment Tool (GOLD® or other)
» Tell me your overall impression of the Child Assessment Tool and the professional development you received related to this assessment.
» Describe the reliability training and challenges and success you experienced.
» What aspects of this PD did you enjoy? What aspects did you struggle with?
» What were some strategies or ideas that you took away from this PD experience?

c. TA/Coaching (prompt with artifacts from coaching session)
» How did having two TA/Coaching sessions help or hinder your instructional growth? What did you enjoy? What did you struggle with?
» Can you give me specific examples of strategies from coaching that your coach used to help you change your practice in the classroom?
» When you think about this type of personalized professional development in comparison to the other PFP elements, how does this compare? (prompt for specific examples)
» Can you describe your coaching relationship with your coach to me?
» Who was your coach? (for UF Lastinger-Certified vs. non-certified comparison)

3. Changes in Teacher-Student Interactions and Outcomes
• The goal of the PFP was to result in improved teacher-child interactions in classrooms that are better aligned with the specific needs of children, with children gaining more skills in school readiness domains including socio-emotional development, language and general readiness skills.
» How has your participation in this program impacted your student’s learning? What specific elements of the PFP most contributed to improving your instruction with regard to your student interactions?
» What are some other ways you feel could most help you achieve these goals that were not included in the PFP program?
» What ideas or suggestions can you offer for Tier 2 and Tier 3 participants next year? What would you like to see change for next year?

PFP Tier 3 Practitioner Interview Protocol:
Investigating the Impact of the Early Learning Performance Funding Project on Early Childhood Instructional Practice from Stakeholders’ Perspectives

*Post-Intervention Interview (60 minutes by Zoom online meeting)*
Goals:
1. Determine how PFP instructors experienced the professional development
2. What impact instructors perceived the professional development had on their instructional
practice, gains in content knowledge, and student interactions

3. After three years of this professional development, how has this program impacted teacher knowledge and beliefs, change in practice, and student outcomes?

**Interviewer**

Our purpose for this interview is to focus on your experiences and perceptions as an instructor who participated in the PFP. I will ask you specific questions about each aspect of the PFP program, your instructional practice, and your general impressions of the program as a whole related to instructional quality. We greatly appreciate you being completely open and honest as this will assist us to focus on both strengths and challenges in the program for future implementation.

1. Practitioner Background and Experience
   • Tell me a little bit about your center or family care home (probe for years of experience, demographics of children, SR percentage, age of instructional level, motivation for joining PFP).

2. Experience of PFP Teacher Learning and Changes in Practice
   • Looking at the whole experience of the PFP program as professional development, think about specific things that helped or hindered the process for you and let’s talk about that.
     » What factors or elements from the PFP most contributed to your learning as a teacher? (Prompt for specific examples)
     » Describe if, and how, you have incorporated this new content knowledge into your instructional practice. (Prompt for specific evidence or examples in classroom practice)
     » How has your participation in this program made a difference in the way you think about teaching or in your development as a teacher? (prompt for change in beliefs, practice, interactions)

3. Discussion of Artifact of Practice:
   » How did using the child assessment tool help you understand that your child needed help in math?
   » What specific GOLD® reports did you use to determine his strengths and needs for extra support?
   » How did this assessment tool help you communicate with this child’s parents?
   » What other kinds of activities have you used to help this child other than the one you wrote about?
   » How do you use information from your observations of this child to make new objectives?

4. Discussion of Specific PFP PD elements:
   • Let’s talk about the three specific pieces of the PFP professional development program, and your thoughts and experiences with each one.

   a. *Early Learning Florida* Courses:
      » Tell me your overall impression of each ELF course in which you participated.
      » What course options (online only, online + CoP, online + TA) did you participate in?
      » What aspects of the course did you enjoy? What aspects did you struggle with?
      » What were some strategies or ideas that you took away from your coursework? (prompt for discussion of delivery of strategies within online course)
» What suggestions can you give me about these courses in order to make this experience stronger and better for participants in the future? (use specific examples about technology, course design for evidence)

b. Research-based Child Assessment Tool (GOLD® or other)
» Tell me your overall impression of the Child Assessment Tool and the professional development you received related to this assessment (specifically ask about online PD vs. ELC provided PD here)
» Describe the reliability training and challenges and success you experienced.
» What specifics aspects of the tool were most helpful for you? What aspects were the most difficult to understand or use?

c. TA/Coaching
» How did having two TA/Coaching sessions help your instructional growth? What did you enjoy? What did you struggle with?
» Can you give me specific examples of strategies from coaching that your coach used to help you change your practice in the classroom?
» Who was your coach? (for UF Lastinger-Certified vs. non-certified comparison)

5. Changes in Children's Outcomes from PFP
• The goal of the PFP was to result in improved teacher-child interactions in classrooms that are better aligned with the specific needs of children, with children gaining more skills in school readiness domains including socio-emotional development, language and general readiness skills.
  » How has your participation in this program impacted your children's learning? (prompt for evidence and examples)
  » What, in your view, was the most challenging part of this experience for you as a teacher in Tier 3? What did you struggle with throughout this process?
  » How has being a Tier 3 provider compared to your experience last year as a Tier 2 provider?
  » What ideas or suggestions can you offer for Tier 3 participants next year? What would you like to see change for next year?
  » Is there anything else you'd like to discuss about the PFP?
PFP ELC Leadership Focus Group Interview Protocol:

Investigating the Impact of the Early Learning Performance Funding Project (2016-2017) on Early Childhood Instructional Practice from Stakeholders’ Perspectives

Post-Intervention Interview (60 minutes)

Goals:
1. Determine ELC leadership perspectives of Year 3 PFP professional development
2. Determine what impact ELC leaders perceived the professional development had on teacher instructional practice, teacher-child interactions, gains in content knowledge, and direct child outcomes

Interviewer

Thanks so much for meeting with me as a group. Our purpose for this interview is to focus on your experiences and perceptions as ELC leaders and facilitators who participated in this year’s PFP. I will ask you all general questions about your overall impressions, and then more specific questions about each aspect of the PFP program related to instructional and program quality. We greatly appreciate you being completely open and honest as this will assist us to focus on both strengths and challenges in the program for future implementation. I will ask each question to the group, and would love to hear perspectives from all of you.

1. Experience of PFP and Changes in Teacher Practices and Instructional Quality
   • Looking at the whole experience of the PFP as professional development for your programs, think about specific things that helped or hindered the process for your providers, and let’s talk about that.
     » In your capacity as (coach, CoP facilitator, ELC leader), what involvement did you have with the PFP implementation, and what were your responsibilities?
     » What was your overall impression of the quality of the PFP professional development this year?
     » From your viewpoint, what elements of the PFP most contributed to practitioners’ change or improvement of their classroom practice? (Prompt for specific examples)
     » In your capacity as (coach, CoP facilitator, ELC leader), what challenges did you face with PFP implementation?
     » From your viewpoint, do you feel that participating in the PFP has promoted instructional quality and program improvement? Why or why not?
     » What aspects of the funding disbursements, the application process, and ELC partnerships with OEL most benefitted your providers? What would you like to see change about these elements?

2. Discussion of Specific PFP PD elements:
   • Let’s talk about the three specific pieces of the PFP professional development program, and your thoughts and experiences with each one.

   a. Early Learning Florida Courses:
     » Briefly describe how many Tier 2 and Tier 3 (if any) providers you had this year, and what courses they completed this year (prompt for course name and model, online, online + CoP, online + coaching)
     » Tell me your overall impression of the ELF courses for this implementation year.
» If you had any providers taking *Early Learning Florida* Spanish courses, what was your impression of this experience?

» How did participating in the ELF coursework prepare your providers to engage in quality instruction and student interactions? (Prompt for specific examples).

» What suggestions can you tell me in order to make the ELF courses better for participants in the future?

b. Research-based Child Assessment Tool (GOLD® or other; if other, skip to last two questions)

» Based on your responses to the GOLD® implementation survey from earlier this year, please elaborate on your overall experience with GOLD® implementation.

» Tell me what aspect of GOLD® was most beneficial for your use at the ELC level.

» How do you think this child assessment tool helped your providers or impacted their practice? (probe for examples)

» What specific changes for implementation would you suggest if GOLD® was to be a mandated statewide assessment tool in the future?

c. TA/Coaching

» What benefits and challenges did your ELC experience with providing coaching for PFP providers?

» How did TA/Coaching sessions assist providers with support and learning? (prompt for specific provider examples)

» What specific suggestions can you give us about TA/coaching to help instructors incorporate PFP content knowledge and instructional practice in the future?

3. Changes in Teacher-Student Interactions and Child Outcomes

- The goal of the PFP was to result in improved teacher-child interactions in classrooms that are better aligned with the specific needs of children, with children gaining more skills in school readiness domains including socio-emotional development, language and general readiness skills.

» Tell me about what you have noticed with your providers and their teacher-child interactions as a result of participating in the PFP in Year 3.

» What are your predictions for direct child outcomes with this year’s PFP providers? Do you have internal ELC data that would support this?

» From your viewpoint, what specific elements of the PFP most contributed to improving teacher-student interactions? Teacher gains in content knowledge?

» In terms of future program implementation, what are your suggestions to pass on to OEL for program planning, contract implementation, and overall program success?

4. What other suggestions do you have for future PFP implementation?

5. Are there any other reflections or perceptions about this experience that you would like to discuss that we haven’t covered?
APPENDIX C

STATE OF FLORIDA EARLY CHILDHOOD ACCREDITATION ORGANIZATIONS

Association of Christian Teachers and Schools (ACT)
Tasked with establishing uniform standards among its member schools, the Association of Christian Teachers and Schools accreditation requires on-site program examinations to maintain the consistency and quality of school operations. Through the process of accreditation, schools also undergo a rigorous self-examination. The ACT is committed to educational and spiritual academic excellence.

Accredited Professional Preschool Learning Environment (APPLE)
Over 1,000 programs currently carry APPLE accreditations nationally. Developed by owners and operators of early learning centers, APPLE strives improve the quality of early childhood education. According to the 2016 APPLE accreditation manual, some of APPLE's goals for learning and development include experiences in all developmental domains, cultural and linguistic sensitivity, active learning environments, easily accessible materials, and meaningful teacher-child interactions, positive social-emotional guidance. Additional goals address appropriate developmental domain, literacy skills, and assessment. APPLE accreditation includes a self-study, portfolio review, and verifier visits of the program.

Church of God Association (CGACS)
Operating under the Florida Church of God, CGACS promotes preschools as ministries. Its mission is to uphold the highest educational standards in operating child care facilities as an important extension of the local church. Licensing through CGACS requires that participating centers pay a licensing fee, pass required inspections, and participate in ongoing continuing education for teachers and staff.

Florida Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (FACCS)
As the oldest state-level association of Christian schools in the nation, the FACCS offers a nationally recognized accreditation based on four core values: 1) biblical authority, 2) religious liberty, 3) excellence, and 4) services. After completing their Candidacy for Accreditation, schools participate in a lengthy self-evaluation of all areas of the school. A visiting committee appraises the school based on an overall picture that includes the self-study and an evaluation of student learning, instructional quality, and educational outcomes as well as the spiritual and moral level of the school.

Florida Kindergarten Council (FKC)
Currently, 149 schools have earned membership in the Florida Kindergarten Council. The purpose of the council is to provide accreditation and support to member schools, promote and maintain outstanding education and ethical standards, and disseminate and promote legislation that protects school patrons and elevates standards for FLKS schools. Accreditation for FKC extends no higher than grade 2. Schools interested in FCK accreditation must commit to continuing study of curriculum and evaluation that includes a curricular philosophy, consistent formatting across grade levels, goals and objectives, instructional resources, assessment, and a scope and sequence per grade.

Florida League of Christian Schools (FLOC)
Since 1984, the FLOC has promoted biblical, academic, and processional quality. The process of accreditation requires an extensive self-evaluation of the program, a visit from and approval of the
accreditation team, and indication that the program meets FLOC standards. Accredited schools provide transcripts of student progress that are transferrable to other schools. FLOC is recognized as a Gold Seal Provider.

**Green Apple Christian (GAAC)**
As a national accrediting agency, GAAC has five goals for child care and early childhood programs: 1) to increase the quality of programs, 2) to improve health services, 3) to establish a quality, best-practices driven rating system that rewards high quality schools, 4) to support parents in exercising their children’s educational rights, and 5) to advocate for and support relevant stakeholders in early childhood education. Accreditation is valid for three years. Eligibility for accreditation requires state or local licensing or license-exempt approval and results in Gold Seal Quality Care (Birth to Five and School Age) and Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) Program.

**National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs (NAC)**
The National Accreditation Commission aligns with state quality improvement initiatives and early learning outcomes. It includes government-funded initiatives including but not limited to public Pre-K and Department of Defense programs. NAC reaches public and private programs within 38 states and over 1,500 early learning programs. Accreditation standards fall within the following six categories: 1) administration, 2) family engagement, 3) health and safety, 4) curriculum, 5) teacher child interactions, and 6) classroom health and safety.

**National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)**
The 10 NAEYC Early Learning Program Standards and Criteria comprise the framework for its accreditation program: relationships, curriculum, teaching, assessment of child progress, health, teacher, families, community relations, physical environment, and management. Established in 1985, NAEYC represents over 60,000 early learning professionals worldwide. Affiliates must demonstrate continued compliance with the Early Learning Program standards in order to renew accreditation.

**National Accreditation for Child Care Programs (NECPA)**
Center-based, family home, faith based, and university centers are among the various types of centers that can apply for NECPA accreditation. NECPA requires compliance with the nationally recognized 29 key concept areas that are statistical predictors of quality early childhood programming.

**National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC)**
NAFCC works to promote high-quality early childhood experiences to family child care providers and the children and families they serve. Designed specifically for family child care providers, NAFCC accreditation establishes standards for professionalism for providers nationwide. Accreditation with NAFCC requires that family child care providers meet quality standards in their practice with regard to teacher—student relationships, the environment, developmental learning activities, safety and health, and professional business practices. Accreditation also promotes providers professional development.

**Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)**
SACS serves schools in accreditation and school improvement since 1895. Through their AdvancEd Accreditation process, SACS implements a standards-focused teaching and learning accreditation process that supports learning and development of pre-school aged children. The following standards are connected within the accreditation program to specific indicators and evaluation criteria: 1) purpose and direction, 2) governance and leadership, 3) teaching and assessing for learning, 4) resources and support systems, 5) using results for continuous improvement.
United Methodist Association of Preschool (UMAP)

UMAP Child care programs committed to accreditation must commit to a minimum eight months self-evaluation process. In operation for over 30 years, UMAP supports schools to provide quality child care and early childhood education through training, mentoring, and support. Recognized by the State of Florida by a Gold Seal designation, UMAP serves Florida's children and families in the Christian faith and their early childhood education.
Default Question Block

This survey will ask you questions about your experience with Early Learning Florida courses. Your participation is very important because it will help guide future decisions for Early Learning Florida. Your answers are completely confidential and will only be reported as part of group summaries.

Please write your name. This information will only be used to certify that you completed the survey.

First Name:  
Last Name:  

Please write the name of your center or family child care home:

Child care provider name:  

Please select your Early Learning Coalition:

- Less than 1 hour  
- Between 1 and 2 hours  

In a typical week, how long did it take you to complete the work required to do the course?
Early Learning Performance Funding Project
Year 3 Evaluation 2016-2017

10/30/2017

Qualtrics Survey Software

- Between 2 and 4 hours
- Between 4 and 6 hours
- More than 5 hours

In a typical week, how long were you actually online (watching videos, reading handouts, responding to peers on the internet) in the course?

- Less than 1 hour
- Between 1 and 2 hours
- Between 2 and 4 hours
- Between 4 and 6 hours
- More than 5 hours

In a typical week, how long did it take you to prepare to implement the strategies presented in the Early Learning Florida cycles into your classroom (planning time)?

- Less than 1 hour
- Between 1 and 2 hours
- Between 2 and 4 hours
- Between 4 and 6 hours
- More than 5 hours

To what extent did you encounter difficulties to complete the Early Learning Florida courses?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulty finding time to watch videos</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>A lot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty finding time to complete the assigned readings</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Difficulty completing the assignments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Difficulty with internet connection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Difficulty with the language</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other difficulties</td>
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</table>

Please indicate other difficulties to complete Early Learning Florida courses not presented in the previous question:

First barrier: 
Second barrier: 
Third barrier: 

To what extent did the videos used in the Early Learning Florida courses help you in your learning?

- Not at all
- A little
- Somewhat
- A lot

Please indicate reasons that prevented Early Learning Florida videos from enhancing your learning:

First reason: 
Second reason: 
Third reason: 

In a typical week, did you have enough time to complete the tasks asked of you in the course?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Most of the Time
- Always

What was the main reason that prevented you from having enough time to complete course-related tasks?
To what extent did you encounter barriers for implementing Early Learning Florida practices in your classroom?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>A lot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of time to implement the practices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of Director support</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of support from the instructor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of support from other teachers</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of necessary materials</td>
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<tr>
<td>New practice would disturb the routine of the classroom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other barriers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please indicate other barriers to implementing Early Learning Florida practices in your center or family child care home not presented in the previous question:

First barrier:  
Second barrier:  
Third barrier:  

Did you collaborate with other colleagues in your center or family child care home when implementing the strategies?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
- [ ] I am the only caregiver in the classroom.
- [ ] I was not able to implement the strategies.

How useful were the Early Learning Florida courses with respect to the following aspects?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increased my knowledge of content</th>
<th>Not useful at all</th>
<th>Slightly useful</th>
<th>Fairly useful</th>
<th>Very useful</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased my knowledge of teaching practice</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Increased my knowledge of working with families</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learned new approaches to child assessment</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Learned strategies to teach ALL Children</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**To what extent have you made changes in your teaching practices as a result of the Early Learning Florida activity?**

- Not at all
- A little
- Somewhat
- A Lot

**Please indicate reasons that prevented you from making changes in your teaching practices as a result of Early Learning Florida?**

First reason: 

Second reason: 

Third reason: 

**Have you discussed what you learned with other colleagues in your center or family child care home who did not participate in the course?**

- Yes
- No
- I do not work with other caregivers.

**Will you be interested in taking another Early Learning Florida course?**

- Yes
Would you encourage other colleagues to take an Early Learning Florida course?

- Yes
- No

Please explain the main reason for not encouraging other colleagues to take an Early Learning Florida course.

Please rate the instructor of your most recent Early Learning Florida course with respect to the characteristics shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Poor or Low</th>
<th>Below Average</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Above Average</th>
<th>Excellent or High</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication of ideas and information</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Expression of expectations for performance in this class</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Availability to assist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respect and concern for students</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Stimulation of interest in course</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitation of learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm for the subject</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Encouragement of independent, creative, and critical thinking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing timely feedback</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall rating of the instructor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Which type of the Early Learning Florida model did you participate? (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)

- Online course only
- Online course + TA Coaching
Online course + Community of Practice

How many times did you meet with the UF Certified TA Coach?

How many classroom observations did the UF Certified TA Coach make?

How helpful were your interactions with the UF Certified TA Coach in improving your practice?
- Not helpful at all
- Slightly helpful
- Fairly helpful
- Very helpful

In your most recent course, how many Community of Practice sessions did you attend?

What prevented you from attending a Community of Practice session?
- Because I could not leave my center.
- Because I was not informed of the session.
- Because I was taking a college course that night.
- Other reasons

To what extent were the interactions with the Community of Practice helpful to you?
- Not helpful at all
- Slightly helpful
- Fairly helpful
In the Community of Practice, to what extent did you share your success and challenges?

- Not at all
- Sometimes
- Frequently

In the Community of Practice, to what extent did you seek ideas from colleagues participating in the same course?

- Not at all
- Sometimes
- Frequently

In the Community of Practice, to what extent did you learn from others in the learning community?

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- A great deal

Thank you for completing the survey! If there is anything else you would like to tell us about Early Learning Florida or this survey, please do so in the space provided below.

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Survey Powered By Quatrics
APPENDIX E

TEACHING STRATEGIES GOLD® IMPLEMENTATION SURVEY

This survey will ask you questions about Teaching Strategies GOLD® administration and implementation in your coalition for the PFP Year 3 evaluation. Your participation is very important because it will help guide future decisions for a statewide PFP implementation model. Your answers are completely confidential and will only be used for evaluative analysis and future design of professional development initiatives.

Q13 At which Early Learning Coalition do you work?

- ELC of Alachua County
- ELC of Brevard
- ELC of Broward County
- ELC of Duval
- ELC of Escambia County
- ELC of Flagler & Volusia Counties
- ELC of Florida's Gateway
- ELC of Florida's Heartland
- ELC of Hillsborough County
- ELC of Indian River, Martin, and Okeechobee Counties
- ELC of Lake County
- ELC of Manatee County
- ELC of Marion County
- ELC of Miami-Dade/Monroe
- ELC of North Florida
- ELC of Northwest Florida
- ELC of Okaloosa/Walton
- ELC of Orange County
- ELC of Osceola County
- ELC of Palm Beach County
- ELC of Pasco and Hernando Counties
- ELC of Pinellas
- ELC of Polk County
- ELC of Santa Rosa County
- ELC of Sarasota
- ELC of Seminole
- ELC of Southwest Florida
- ELC of St. Lucie
- ELC of the Big Bend Region
- ELC of the Nature Coast
Q8 What is your role in the Early Learning Coalition?
- Executive Director
- Assistant Director
- Oversee quality improvement initiative
- Coach
- Trainer
- Assessor
- Other

Display This Question:
If What is your role in the Early Learning Coalition? Other Is Selected
Q129 Please specify:

Q116 In which tier of PFP are the providers in your coalition participating? (Please mark all that apply)
- Tier 1
- Tier 2
- Tier 3

Q128 Has your coalition implemented Teaching Strategies GOLD®?
- Yes
- No

Condition: No Is Selected. Skip To: End of Survey.

Q1 Which providers currently use GOLD® within your coalition? (Please mark all that apply)
- VPK providers
- School Readiness providers
- ELPFP Providers
- Other

Display This Question:
If Which providers currently use Teaching Strategies GOLD® within your coalition? Other Is Selected
Q17 Please specify:

Q131 How many providers currently use GOLD® within your coalition?

Q74 Who houses the GOLD® Subscription?
- ELC
- Provider

Q22 How long has your coalition implemented Teaching Strategies GOLD®?
- 0-1 year
- 1-2 years
- 2-3 years
- More than 3 years
Q75 Who manages the GOLD® Administration Site?
   □ ELC
   □ Provider
   □ Other

Display This Question:
If Who manages the Admin Site? Other Is Selected
Q76 Please specify:

Display This Question:
If Who houses the Teaching Strategies GOLD® Subscription? ELC Is Selected
Q81 Who trained your administration users?
   □ Teaching Strategies GOLD®
   □ Other

Display This Question:
If Who trained your admin users? Other Is Selected
Q80 Please specify:

Q140 How many coalition staff have been trained on GOLD® administration?

Q147 How many directors have received GOLD® coaching support within your coalition?

Q148 How many practitioners have received GOLD® coaching support within your coalition?

Display This Question:
If In which tier of PFP are the providers in your coalition participating? (Please mark all that apply) Tier 3 Is Selected
Q134 In your coalition, how many practitioners are using Teaching Strategies GOLD® with fidelity (passed Inter-rater Reliability)?

Display This Question:
If In which tier of PFP are the providers in your coalition participating? (Please mark all that apply) Tier 3 Is Selected
Q149 In your coalition, how many practitioners are using Teaching Strategies GOLD® without passing Inter-rater Reliability?

Display This Question:
If In which tier of PFP are the providers in your coalition participating? (Please mark all that apply) Tier 3 Is Selected
Q118 Please describe any training that has been provided to the practitioners within your coalition to ensure fidelity of implementation. (Please provide the list of Teaching Strategies options as well as FTF options your coalition may develop.)
Q150 Do you provide onsite coaching to practitioners within your coalition regarding GOLD® implementation?
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No

Display This Question:
If Do you provide onsite coaching to practitioners within your coalition regarding GOLD® implementation? Yes Is Selected

Q119 What type of onsite coaching is provided to practitioners within your coalition regarding GOLD® implementation?

Display This Question:
If Do you provide onsite coaching to practitioners within your coalition regarding GOLD® implementation? Yes Is Selected

Q120 How many hours of onsite coaching do you provide?

Q151 In addition to training and onsite coaching, are there other supports given to providers within your coalition for GOLD® implementation?
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No

Display This Question:
If In addition to training and onsite coaching, are there other supports given to providers within your coalition for GOLD® implementation? Yes Is Selected

Q132 In addition to training and onsite coaching, what other supports are given to providers within your coalition for GOLD® implementation?

Display This Question:
If Which tier of PFP are the providers in your coalition participating in. (Please mark all that apply) Tier 3 Is Selected

Q122 Has your coalition developed any innovative ways to create local provider capacity and sustainability in GOLD® implementation?
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No

Display This Question:
If Has your coalition developed any innovative ways to build local GOLD® capacity? If Yes Is Selected

Q123 If applicable, please explain how your coalition builds capacity with your providers (such as coaching support, administration support, or instructional support) and provide examples if possible?
Q79 What do you manage on the administration site? (Select all that apply)
   - Program
   - Site
   - Classes
   - Children
   - Users
   - Reports
   - License Settings

Display This Question:
If Which tier of PFP are the providers in your coalition participating in. (Please mark all that apply) Tier 3 Is Selected
Q125 If applicable, please explain how your coalition measures controlled quality improvement (CQI) with providers to make sure sites are showing growth through GOLD® implementation from year to year?

Q78 Do you use the Growth report?
   - Yes
   - No

Display This Question:
If Do you use the Individual Child Report? If Yes Is Selected
Q77 Please explain how this report is used.

Q82 Do you use the Individual Child report?
   - Yes
   - No

Display This Question:
If Do you use the Documentation report? If Yes Is Selected
Q97 Please explain how this report is used.

Q83 Do you use the Snapshot report?
   - Yes
   - No

Display This Question:
If Do you use the Documentation report? If Yes Is Selected
Q96 Please explain how this report is used.

Q84 Do you use the Forms report?
   - Yes
   - No
Display This Question:
If Do you use the Documentation report? If Yes Is Selected
Q93 Please explain how this report is used.

Q85 Do you use the Inter-rater Reliability report?
  - Yes
  - No

Display This Question:
If Do you use the Documentation report? If Yes Is Selected
Q94 Please explain how this report is used.

Q114 How do you measure the Inter-rater Reliability?

Q115 From your perspective, how long does it take for Inter-rater Reliability to be strong enough so that the tool can be used with fidelity?
  - One year
  - Two years
  - Three years
  - More than three years

Q86 Do you use the Professional Development report?
  - Yes
  - No

Display This Question:
If Do you use the Documentation report? If Yes Is Selected
Q92 Please explain how this report is used.

Q87 Do you use the Comparative report?
  - Yes
  - No

Display This Question:
If Do you use the Documentation report? If Yes Is Selected
Q90 Please explain how this report is used.

Q88 Do you use the Documentation report?
  - Yes
  - No

Display This Question:
If Do you use the Documentation report? If Yes Is Selected
Q91 Please explain how this report is used.

Q89 Do you use the Checkpoint report?
Display This Question:
If Do you use the Checkpoint report? If Yes Is Selected
Q98 Please explain how this report is used.

Q99 What checkpoints does your coalition require providers to complete? (Select all that apply)
- Fall
- Winter
- Spring
- Summer
- None of these

Q100 What are your checkpoint deadline dates?

Display This Question:
If Who houses the GOLD® Subscription? ELC Is Selected
Q101 What type of support does your coalition provide for users to design instruction based on GOLD® results? (select all that apply)
- Administrative
- Observations
- Checkpoints
- Reports
- Other

Display This Question:
If What type of support does your coalition provide for users to design instruction based on GOLD® results? (select all that apply) If Other Is Selected
Q111 Please specify:

Q144 How do the providers within your coalition use GOLD® results to share information with families?

Q145 Do families have the ability to access the GOLD® system and contribute their own observations?
- Yes
- No

Q152 How does your coalition aggregate GOLD® results?
- By classroom
- By program
- Overall
- None of these

Q146 How do GOLD® results inform other initiatives and quality improvement decisions within your coalition?
Display This Question:
If Who houses the GOLD® Subscription? ELC Is Selected
Q102 In the first year of GOLD® use, from your perspective, how effectively do providers implement GOLD®?
☐ Very effective
☐ Moderately effective
☐ Slightly effective
☐ Not effective at all

Display This Question:
If In the second year how effective do program implement GOLD®? If Not effective at all Is Selected
Q103 If not effective, please explain why?

Display This Question:
If Who houses the GOLD® Subscription? ELC Is Selected
Q104 In the second year of GOLD® use, from your perspective, how effectively do providers implement GOLD®?
☐ Very effective
☐ Moderately effective
☐ Slightly effective
☐ Not effective at all

Display This Question:
If In the third year how effective do program implement GOLD®? If Not effective at all Is Selected
Q105 If not effective, please explain why?

Display This Question:
If Who houses the GOLD® Subscription? ELC Is Selected
Q106 In the third year of GOLD® use, from your perspective, how effectively do providers implement GOLD®?
☐ Very effective
☐ Moderately effective
☐ Slightly effective
☐ Not effective at all

Display This Question:
If In the third year how effective do program implement GOLD®? If Not effective at all Is Selected
Q107 If not effective, please explain why?

Display This Question:
If Who houses the GOLD® Subscription? ELC Is Selected
Q109 Do you have customized funding source fields?
☐ Yes
☐ No
Display This Question: 
If Do you have customized funding source fields? If Yes Is Selected 
Q108 What custom funding sources do you have?

Display This Question: 
If Who houses the GOLD® Subscription? ELC Is Selected 
Q110 Once you receive GOLD® reporting, how do you communicate feedback to providers?
ELC Demographics of GOLD® Implementation

Role in the ELC

Among the respondents who have completed GOLD® implementation survey, around 2% were executive directors of ELCs and 3% were assistant directors. About 40% of survey respondents were overseeing quality improvement initiatives within the ELCs, and 15% of respondents were coaches, while 11% responded as trainers. Similarly, 11% of respondents were self-identified as assessors. 18% of respondents fulfilled “other” roles in the ELCs.
**Tier of ELPFP Providers**

Among the ELCs who have completed GOLD® implementation survey, nearly 41% have Tier 1 providers; 33% have Tier 2 providers, and 27% of ELCs have Tier 3 providers in the ELPFP.

![Bar chart showing the percentage of ELCs with Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 providers.]

**Implementation of GOLD®**

Among the ELCs who have completed GOLD® implementation survey, 67% have implemented GOLD® while approximately 33% have not implemented GOLD®.

![Bar chart showing the percentage of ELCs who have implemented GOLD® or not.]

Type of Providers Currently using GOLD®
Among those ELCs who have implemented GOLD® only 42% of ELCs have ELPFP providers currently using GOLD® within their ELCs. Approximately 26% of ELCs have School Readiness providers currently using GOLD® within their ELCs. About 14% of ELCs have VPK providers currently using GOLD® within their ELCs. Almost 18% of ELCs have “other” providers currently using GOLD® within their ELCs.
**Administration of GOLD®**

**Housing the GOLD® Subscription**
Among those ELCs who have implemented GOLD®, nearly 73% house the GOLD® subscription. Approximately 27% of ELCs have the providers house the GOLD® subscription.
Management of the GOLD® Administration Site
Among those ELCs who have implemented GOLD®, nearly 64% manage the GOLD® Administration Site directly. Approximately 14% of ELCs have the providers manage the GOLD® Administration Site. About 22% of ELCs have “other” organizations manage the GOLD® Administration Site.
**Training of the Administration Users**

Among those ELCs that house the GOLD® subscription, nearly 69% have GOLD® personnel provide training to their administration users. Approximately 31% have other trainers, such as consultants or ELC trainers, provide training for their administration users.
Support and Professional Development for GOLD® Implementation

Onsite Coaching to Practitioners Regarding GOLD® Implementation

Among those ELCs who have implemented GOLD®, nearly 82% of them provide onsite coaching to practitioners within their ELCs regarding GOLD® implementation. Approximately 18% of them do not provide onsite coaching to practitioners regarding GOLD® implementation.
Other Supports Given to Providers for GOLD® Implementation
Among those ELCs who have implemented GOLD®, nearly 55% give other supports to providers in addition to training and onsite coaching for GOLD® implementation. Approximately 45% do not provide other supports in addition to training and onsite coaching.
Whether ELC Developed Any Innovative Ways to Create Local Provider Capacity and Sustainability in GOLD® Implementation

Among those ELCs that have Tier 3 providers, half of them reported developing some innovative ways to create local provider capacity and sustainability in GOLD® implementation, while half reported no innovative systems like this in place.
Type of Support Provided for Users to Design Instruction Based on GOLD® Results
Among those ELCs who house the GOLD® Subscriptions, 20% provide administrative support; nearly 13% provide support on checkpoints; 13% report providing support on observations; 13% provide support on GOLD® reporting and report interpretation. The remaining 40% provide “other” types of support for users to design instruction based on GOLD® results.
Use of Reports and Checkpoints in GOLD® Implementation

Use of the Growth Report
Among those ELCs who have implemented GOLD®, nearly 60% of them use the Growth report (40% do not use this report).
Use of the Individual Child Report
Among those ELCs who have implemented GOLD®, nearly 55% use the individual child report (45% do not use this report).
Use of the Snapshot Report
Among those ELCs who have implemented GOLD®, nearly 77% use the Snapshot Report (23% do not use this report).
Use of the Forms Report
Among those ELCs who have implemented GOLD®, only 14% use the Forms report (86% do not use this report).
Use of the Interrater Reliability Report
Among those ELCs who have implemented GOLD®, 59% use the Interrater Reliability Report (41% do not use this report).
Use of the Professional Development Report

Among those ELCs who have implemented GOLD®, nearly 55% use the Professional Development Report (45% do not use this report).
Use of the Comparative Report
Among those ELCs who have implemented GOLD®, nearly 32% use the Comparative Report (68% do not use this report).
Use of the Documentation Report
Among those ELCs who have implemented GOLD®, 50% use the Documentation Report (50% do not use this report).
Use of the Checkpoint Report
Among those ELCs who have implemented GOLD®, nearly 71% use the Checkpoint Report (29% do not use this report).
Families Access to the GOLD® System and Contribution Their Own Observations
Among those ELCs who have implemented GOLD®, only 10% provide families with access to the GOLD® system and let them contribute their own observations. Approximately 90% of ELCs that were surveyed do not provide families with access to the GOLD® system or include them in the observation and assessment process.
**Aggregating GOLD® Results**

Among those ELCs who have implemented GOLD®, 22% aggregate GOLD® results by classroom; 31% aggregate GOLD® results by provider; 31% aggregate GOLD® results overall; and only 16% do not aggregate GOLD® results.
Fidelity and Effectiveness of GOLD® Implementation

**Time Implementing GOLD®**
Among those ELCs who have implemented GOLD®, 63% have implemented GOLD® for more than three years; 9% have implemented GOLD® for less than one year; 14% have implemented GOLD® for less than two years; and about 14% have implemented GOLD® for less than three years.
Time for Obtaining Strong Interrater Reliability
Among those ELCs’ staff who responded to the survey, nearly 14% of them thought it would take one year for the Interrater Reliability to be strong enough so that the tool can be used with fidelity; approximately 32% thought it would take two years; and 45% thought it would take three years to implement the tool with fidelity. Only 9% of survey respondents thought it would take more than three years.
**Checkpoints Required for Providers**

Among those ELCs who have implemented GOLD®, 39% require providers to complete the Spring checkpoint and Fall checkpoint. In addition, about 18% of ELCs also require providers to complete the Winter checkpoint, while only 4% do not require any of those three checkpoints.
Effectiveness of GOLD® Implementation in the First Year of Use

Among those survey respondents who implemented GOLD®, nearly 80% thought their providers implement GOLD® “slightly” effectively in the first year of GOLD® use, and 20% thought the implementation of GOLD® was “not effective at all” in the first year of GOLD® use.
Effectiveness of GOLD® Implementation in the Second Year of Use

Among those survey respondents who implemented GOLD®, nearly 67% thought their providers implement GOLD® “moderately” effectively in the second year of GOLD® use, and 33% thought the implementation of GOLD® was “slightly” effective in the second year of GOLD® use.
Effectiveness of GOLD® Implementation in the Third Year of Use

Among those ELCs who have implemented GOLD® for at least three years, nearly 34% of survey respondents thought the implementation of GOLD® was “very” effective. Approximately 53% thought the implementation of GOLD® in their ELCs was “moderately” effective. About 13% thought the implementation of GOLD® was “slightly” effective.
Survey Results by ELC
After analyzing aggregated results from the GOLD® implementation survey, the research team also analyzed results by ELC in order to examine trends and patterns of implementation as well as discern differences in how ELCs were implementing, supporting, and using GOLD® data. The tables below present specific information pertaining to our research examination: ELC information regarding use of GOLD®; ELC support and implementation information; ELC use of GOLD® reports; and ELC training and professional development offered to support fidelity of implementation (IRR).

### Basic Information Regarding Implementation of GOLD® in Each ELC

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<tr>
<th>ELC Number</th>
<th>Implementing GOLD®</th>
<th>Number of providers using GOLD®</th>
<th>Time for implementing GOLD®</th>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>30</td>
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### The Use of GOLD® Reports in Each ELC

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# Training for GOLD® Implementation

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</tbody>
</table>
Infant Development: The First Year of Life Knowledge Assessment Questions

1. When does receptive language first occur? 2.D.II.7
   a. When an infant watches a caregiver's face and listens to what she is saying
   b. When an infant learns to follow an object
   c. When an infant uses expressive language
   d. When an infant responds to a caregiver’s voice by making sounds

2. Which statement is true about temperament? 2.A.I.5
   a. It describes the environment of the classroom.
   b. It refers to patterns of behaviors that impact the way a person approaches and reacts to the world.
   c. It tends to change throughout a person’s lifetime.
   d. It develops after an infant turns one.

3. Which statement is true about states of awareness? 2.A.I.1
   a. A baby is in the same state for the entire day.
   b. A baby changes states every time he or she wakes up.
   c. A baby can move back and forth from one state of awareness to another in a short period of time.
   d. A baby’s state of awareness changes when he or she meets certain developmental milestones.

4. Which statement about the brain of an infant is true? 2.D.II.7
   a. The brain does not have any synapses yet.
   b. The brain does not grow much during the first year.
   c. The structure of the brain is not heavily influenced by early experiences.
   d. The connections of the brain cells are impacted by the environment.

5. What are the three temperament types? 2.A.I.5
   a. Flexible, cautious, and feisty (intense)
   b. Adjustable, dependable, and irritable
   c. Cautious, friendly, and feisty (intense)
   d. Flexible, dependable, and irritable

6. What is the BEST state of awareness for learning? 2.A.I.1
   a. The infant has just woken up and is a little drowsy.
   b. The infant is alert and quiet.
   c. Mom has just left and the infant needs calming.
   d. The infant has been screaming and is finally quiet.

7. What is attachment? 2.A.I.3
a. When mothers try to separate from their infants  
b. When many caregivers take care of the same baby but at different times  
c. When a deep emotional bond develops between an infant and important caregivers  
d. When infants learn to develop relationships with other infants in child care

8. What strategy supports attachment relationships? 2.A.I.3  
a. Provide lots of different caregivers to care for young infants. 
b. Provide the baby with tummy time on a colorful mat.  
c. Allow the baby to “cry it out.”  
d. Respond to infants’ signals for attention.

9. What activity is appropriate for a baby at three months? 2.D.II.7  
a. Provide them with a rattle to shake.  
b. Provide them with two objects to bang.  
c. Provide them with a container of blocks to stack.  
d. Provide them with large puzzles.

10. What is an example of an appropriate environment for a two-month-old? 2.D.II.7  
a. Bright wall colors  
b. A mobile  
c. Loud music  
d. Outside furniture

11. What should you do if you have an infant that you are concerned about? 2.A.III.8  
a. Diagnose the child.  
b. Tell the parents they are not doing what they need to do.  
c. Recommend that parents contact their health care professional for evaluation.  
d. Ask that the child be removed from your center or family child care home.

12. Why is object permanence an important developmental skill? 2.A.III.8  
a. The baby can take objects out of a container and put them in another container.  
b. The caregiver does not have to worry about where they put the baby.  
c. Infants can play with objects that they can push.  
d. The brain has developed the capacity to remember information that is not in the immediate environment.

13. What is the best way for babies to learn? 2.D.1.3  
a. Interacting with caregivers and exploring the environment  
b. Letting them watch educational television programs  
c. Giving them lots of books to sit and look at by themselves  
d. Planning content lessons to prepare them for kindergarten

14. How would you describe an infant who cries when an unfamiliar person comes in the room? 2.D.1.3  
a. A baby who is difficult  
b. A baby who is experiencing stranger anxiety  
c. A baby who is feisty  
d. A baby who is unhappy

15. Which of the following statements is true about self-feeding for infants? 2.D.1.3
a. If babies make a mess, don’t let them self-feed.
b. Babies are not learning when they self-feed.
c. Self-feeding is a sign of independence and should be encouraged.
d. Self-feeding wastes food and should be discouraged.

16. Which of the following is important for caregivers to do during feeding? 2.D.1.3
a. Hold on to the spoon so the babies do not drop it.
b. Feed the babies so they don’t make a mess.
c. Feed the babies one type of food at a time quickly.
d. Promote language by talking about what the babies are doing.

17. What is the BEST practice for a caregiver who is attending to a baby who crawls away and is getting into something that may be harmful or dangerous? 4.B.1.1
a. Pick up the baby and move her to a safer, more appropriate place and let her know she should play there.
b. Call out the baby’s name from across the room.
c. Pick up the baby and let her know she is doing something wrong using a stern voice.
d. Call out loudly for the baby to stop.

18. When is stranger anxiety typically experienced? 2.D.1.3
a. It is not usually experienced by infants in child care.
b. It is a normal stage in development that lasts from around seven months to about eighteen months.
c. It is a normal stage in development that is usually seen at around four months.
d. It is uncommon in infants who have a good relationship with their parents.

19. What is the most important part of an infant curriculum? 2.D.1.3
a. Teaching young children beginning sounds and letters
b. Setting limits on children’s behavior
c. Building a good relationship and meeting the needs of children.
d. Teaching babies to share and make friends

20. What is an example of expressive language for a one-year-old? 2.D.1.3
a. Listening to a book being read aloud
b. Responding to the command, “give it to me”
c. Turning around when you say his name
d. Saying “bah-bah” for bottle

21. What is true about reading to infants before the age of one year? 2.D.1.3
a. It is the beginning of literacy learning.
b. It is a waste of time since they are too young.
c. It is not an important part of the daily curriculum.
d. It is a fun activity but does not have any academic impact.

22. What should parents in a child care setting do to build a collaborative relationship with the
caregiver? 3.C.1.3
a. Keep their concerns to themselves, so they don't upset the caregiver
b. Express their concerns to the caregiver when something is troubling them
c. Drop off their child quickly so as not to create a scene
d. Never drop in without calling first

23. What is one way for a caregiver to build collaborative relationships between the home and the program? 3.C.2.4
a. Tell parents how to best care for their child at home.
b. Share information about the child’s development.
c. Take care of concerns at your center and don’t bother the parents.
d. Only share positive information about what the child is doing.

24. What kind of information should be included in the daily communication form to families? 3.C.1.3
a. The policies of the center or family child care home
b. Phone numbers of other families
c. Times and amount of milk/food the baby drank/ate
d. The agenda for the next family night

25. Maternal use of drugs can cause a baby to suffer from what condition? 3.C.1.3
a. Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS)
b. Preterm Difficulty Syndrome (PDS)
c. Early Intervention Condition (EIC)
d. Infant Addiction Condition (IAC)

Desarrollo del Lenguaje en Niños Preescolares (Preschool Language Development)
Knowledge Assessment Questions

1. ¿Cuál de las siguientes acciones debe hacer para ampliar el lenguaje de los niños? 5.E.I.4
a. Observar las acciones de los niños.
b. Tomar nota de las acciones de los niños.
c. Escribir lo que los niños dicen.
d. Agregar algo a las ideas presentadas por los niños.

2. ¿Cuál es una forma práctica de propiciar conversaciones entre compañeros? 5.E.III.11
a. Enseñar habilidades de interacción directamente, tales como crear procedimientos para que los niños usen cuando hablen con los compañeros.
b. Instar a los niños a que jueguen solamente con los juguetes que tienen cuando estén jugando.
c. Reducir las interacciones durante las rutinas diarias para mantener el orden.
d. Dejar que los niños jueguen separadamente.

3. ¿Cuál de las siguientes acciones es propicia para enseñar las habilidades de conversación entre compañeros? 5.E.II.6
a. Animar a los niños para que jueguen y trabajen de manera independiente.
b. Repetir la afirmación de un niño a otro niño para que pueda ser entendida.
c. Elogiar a los niños que siguen las instrucciones cuando juegan y trabajan.
d. Animar a los niños a que se lo coman todo a la hora del almuerzo y las meriendas.

4. ¿Cuál es una forma de apoyar a los niños que están aprendiendo inglés? 5.E.I.5
   a. Repetir lo que se dijo pero un poco más alto.
   b. Empezar con lo que los niños ya conocen.
   c. Reducir el uso de gestos.
   d. Decir en inglés a los niños lo que tienen que hacer y esperar que lo hagan.

5. ¿Cuál de las siguientes describe el planificar y diseñar con un objetivo determinado, los entornos de educación temprana, para que TODOS los niños puedan tener acceso y participar en TODAS las oportunidades de aprendizaje en función de sus virtudes y habilidades individuales, y demostrar su aprendizaje en diversas maneras? 5.E.III.13
   a. Diseño Accesible para el Aprendizaje
   b. Diseño Eficiente para el Aprendizaje
   c. Diseño Inteligente para el Aprendizaje
   d. Diseño Universal para el Aprendizaje

6. Los investigadores nos dicen que los niños que conocen menos palabras, cuando entran a la escuela tienen más probabilidades de cuál de las siguientes: 5.E.IV.17
   a. Ponerse a la par de los demás niños
   b. Quedarse atrás en relación a su compañeros
   c. Sobrepasar a los demás niños
   d. Estar al mismo nivel de los demás niños

7. ¿Cuál de los siguientes describe la capacidad de entender lo que se está diciendo? 5.E.IV.17
   a. Lenguaje expresivo
   b. Lenguaje receptivo
   c. Hablar de sí mismo
   d. Hablar en paralelo

8. ¿Cuál de las siguientes es esencial para planificar un currículo que brinde apoyo al desarrollo del lenguaje y la lectoescritura? 5.E.I.1
   a. Tener materiales organizados para que jueguen libremente
   b. Celebrar reuniones formales e informales con los padres
   c. Proporcionar experiencias formales e informales de lectura de libros
   d. Planificar experiencias prácticas y concretas

9. ¿Cuál de las siguientes describe la capacidad de usar el lenguaje para comunicarse a través del lenguaje escrito o hablado? 5.E.IV.17
   a. Lenguaje expresivo
   b. Lenguaje receptivo
   c. Hablar de sí mismo
   d. Hablar en paralelo

10. ¿Cuál de los siguientes describe mejor lo que es una retroalimentación de alta calidad? 5.E.III.12
    a. Desarrollada
    b. Intencionada
    c. Organizada
d. Retrasada

11. ¿Cuál de los siguientes describe una pregunta que se responde con más de una palabra y requiere una respuesta significativa usando el propio conocimiento de la persona? 5.E.I.3
   a. Modelada
   b. Hablar de sí mismo
   c. Cerrada
   d. Abierta

12. ¿Cuál de las siguientes describe una pregunta cuya respuesta normalmente requiere una sola palabra o una respuesta correcta de algún tipo? 5.E.I.2
   a. Modelada
   b. Hablar de sí mismo
   c. Cerrada
   d. Abierta

13. ¿Cuál de las siguientes debe ser su objetivo al proveer una retroalimentación de alta calidad?: 5.E.I.4
   a. Involucrar a los niños en actividades que incrementen su independencia de los demás niños.
   b. Involucrar a los niños en actividades que incrementen su dependencia de los demás niños.
   c. Involucrar a los niños en conversaciones que incrementen el aprendizaje, el entendimiento y la participación.
   d. Involucrar a los niños en breves interacciones que incrementen su autoestima.

14. ¿Cuál de las siguientes palabras es un ejemplo de una palabra del nivel dos? 5.E.IV.17
   a. Feliz
   b. Triste
   c. Cansado
   d. Malhumorado

15. Cuando impulsa el proceso de pensamiento de los niños, ¿cuál de los siguientes entornos está creando? 5.E.I.3
   a. Un entorno donde los niños pueden mostrar su entendimiento de una conversación.
   b. Un entorno donde los niños se sienten obligados a sostener una conversación.
   c. Un entorno donde se desanima a los niños a que muestren su entendimiento de una conversación.
   d. Un entorno donde el entendimiento de los niños de una conversación es limitado.

16. ¿Cuál de los siguientes define mejor lo que es hablar en paralelo? 5.E.I.4
   a. Cuando un adulto habla sobre lo que está haciendo, viendo, pensando o sintiendo.
   b. Cuando un adulto habla sobre lo que un niño está haciendo, viendo o escuchando a medida que va sucediendo.
   c. Cuando un adulto habla sobre lo que un niño hizo, vio o escuchó el día anterior.
   d. Cuando un adulto habla sobre lo que hizo, vio o sintió el día anterior.

17. ¿Cuál de los siguientes define mejor lo que es hablar de sí mismo? 5.E.I.4
a. Cuando un adulto habla sobre lo que está haciendo, viendo, pensando o sintiendo.

b. Cuando un adulto habla sobre lo que un niño está haciendo, viendo, pensando o sintiendo.

c. Cuando un adulto habla sobre lo que un niño hizo, vio o escuchó el día anterior.

d. Cuando un adulto habla sobre lo que hizo, vio o sintió el día anterior.

18. ¿Cuál de los siguientes describe una conversación entre compañeros? 5.E.II.6
   a. Cuando un adulto inicia una conversación con un niño.
   b. Cuando un niño inicia una conversación con un adulto.
   c. Cuando un niño inicia una conversación con otro niño.
   d. Cuando un niño pretende que está sosteniendo una conversación al jugar con sus juguetes.

19. ¿Qué factor tiene el mayor impacto en el éxito de los niños en el salón o el hogar familiar para cuidado de niños? 5.E.IV.17
   a. Entorno
   b. Materiales
   c. Compañeros
   d. Maestros

20. ¿Cuándo es importante hablar con los niños? 5.E.III.12
   a. Solamente cuando los niños están en grupos grandes
   b. Solamente cuando los niños están en grupos pequeños
   c. Solamente uno-a-uno para que a cada niño le toque su turno
   d. En grandes y pequeños grupos, así como uno-a-uno

21. ¿Cuándo son más efectivas las estrategias para apoyar las conversaciones entre compañeros? 5.E.III.12
   a. Cuando se planifican para una hora específica del día.
   b. Cuando forman parte del itinerario cotidiano del día.
   c. Cuando hay suficiente tiempo para que las interacciones se desarrollen a plenitud.
   d. Cuando la mayoría de los niños están durmiendo la siesta excepto unos pocos.

22. ¿Cuál de los siguientes describe el uso de muchas palabras de vocabulario distintas para ampliar lo que los niños ya saben? 5.E.I.3
   a. Lenguaje avanzado
   b. Palabras del nivel tres
   c. Conversación entre compañeros
   d. Hablar en paralelo

23. ¿Cuál de los siguientes define lo que es una explicación apta para los niños? 5.E.IV.17
   a. Cuando usted presenta una palabra nueva y lee una definición del diccionario.
   b. Cuando usted pregunta a los niños lo que piensan que significa una palabra.
   c. Cuando usted presenta una palabra que los niños ya deben saber.
   d. Cuando usted define una palabra nueva simplemente agregando una explicación sencilla a un concepto que los niños ya conocen.

24. ¿Cuál de los siguientes corresponde a la definición de palabras nuevas para conceptos ya familiares, que ayudan a desarrollar el vocabulario de los niños? 5.E.IV.17
   a. Palabras del nivel uno
25. ¿Cuál de los siguientes acciones es importante seguir cuando usted está leyendo un cuento a los niños? 5.E.II.8
   a. Conversar frecuentemente con los niños.
   b. Limitar las conversaciones con los niños.
   c. Avanzar lo más posible en el relato del cuento.
   d. Terminar el cuento para que los niños sepan el final.
APPENDIX H
UF LASTINGER EARLY CHILDHOOD COACHING AND COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE MODEL

Communities of Practice Institute

- Making Practice Public
- Shifting Conversations
- Creating Conditions for Collaboration
- Developing an Inquiry Stance
- Practice Field for Developing Coaching Skills

TA/Coaching Certification Program

- Equality
- Choice
- Voice
- Dialogue
- Reflection
- Praxis
- Reciprocity
### APPENDIX I

**DEFINITION OF TERMS IN MULTILEVEL MODEL FOR SCORES OF KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$Y_{tijk}$</td>
<td>The expected score on knowledge assessment collected at time $t$ for teacher $i$ from provider $j$ of ELC $k$;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasion</td>
<td>A binary indicator of assessment wave (pre-test =0, post-test=1);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CourseID $m_{i}$</td>
<td>A collection of $M=12$ dummy variables coded on type of courses associated to teacher $i$ where VPK1 is referred to as the reference and $m=1,\ldots,12$;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>A binary indicator of the language used in participated courses (Spanish = 1, else = 0);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SystemTime $n_{i}$</td>
<td>The amount of time practitioners spent logging into the online course (this variable was transformed into four categories based on quartiles and was dummy coded into $N=3$ variables with the 1st quartile $(2.7, 7.3]$ was referred to as the reference, $n=1,2,3$);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ModelType $g_{i}$</td>
<td>A collection of $G=2$ dummy variables coded on the type of ELFL program where ‘online only’ was referred to as the reference and $g=1,2$;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AttendingCount $s_{j}$</td>
<td>The number of children in a provider (this variable was transformed into four categories based on quartiles and was then dummy coded into $S=3$ variables with the 1st quartile $(4,65]$ was referred to as the reference, $s=1,2,3$);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty $h_{j}$</td>
<td>The percent of children in poverty (this variable was transformed into four categories based on quartiles and was then dummy coded into $H=3$ variables with the 1st quartile $(0,28.3]$ was referred to as the reference, $h=1,2,3$);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOLD</td>
<td>A binary indicator of GOLD accreditation (Yes = 1, NO = 0);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPL</td>
<td>A binary indicator of APPLE accreditation (Yes = 1, NO = 0);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSB5</td>
<td>A binary indicator of GSB5 accreditation (Yes = 1, NO = 0);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAC</td>
<td>A binary indicator of NAC accreditation (Yes = 1, NO = 0);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NECP</td>
<td>A binary indicator of NECPA accreditation (Yes = 1, NO = 0);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAEY</td>
<td>A binary indicator of NAEY accreditation (Yes = 1, NO = 0);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFCC</td>
<td>A binary indicator of NFCC accreditation (Yes = 1, NO = 0);</td>
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<tr>
<td>CourseID×Occasion</td>
<td>A collection of interaction terms of type of courses (dummy coded, $M=12$) and the measurement occasion;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language×Occasion</td>
<td>Interaction term of the language used in participated courses and the measurement occasion;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SystemTime×Occasion</td>
<td>A collection of interaction terms of the amount of time practitioners spent logging into the online course (dummy coded, $N=3$) and the measurement occasion;</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Early Learning Performance Funding Project
Year 3 Evaluation 2016-2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model Type x Occasion</th>
<th>A collection of interaction terms of the type of ELFL programs (dummy coded, $G=2$) and the measurement occasion;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attending Count x Occasion</td>
<td>A collection of interaction terms of the number of children (dummy coded, $S=3$) and the measurement occasion;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty x Occasion</td>
<td>A collection of interaction terms of the percent of children in poverty (dummy coded, $H=3$) and the measurement occasion;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOLD x Occasion</td>
<td>Interaction term of whether or not the type of accreditation is GOLD and the measurement occasion;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPPL x Occasion</td>
<td>Interaction term of whether or not the type of accreditation is APPPL and the measurement occasion;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSB5 x Occasion</td>
<td>Interaction term of whether or not the type of accreditation is GSB5 and the measurement occasion;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAC x Occasion</td>
<td>Interaction term of whether or not the type of accreditation is NAC and the measurement occasion;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NECP x Occasion</td>
<td>Interaction term of whether or not the type of accreditation is NECPA and the measurement occasion;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAEY x Occasion</td>
<td>Interaction term of whether or not the type of accreditation is NAEY and the measurement occasion;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFCC x Occasion</td>
<td>Interaction term of whether or not the type of accreditation is NFCC and the measurement occasion;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fixed Effects:**

<p>| $\beta_0$ | Intercept (grand of scores on knowledge assessment across teachers, providers, and ELCs); |
| $\beta_1$ | The expected gain in terms of the score on knowledge assessment; |
| $\gamma_m$ | A collection of differences of the expected score on knowledge assessment between a type of course $m$ and VPK1; |
| $\beta_3$ | difference of the expected score on knowledge assessment between a course delivered in Spanish versus in other languages; |
| $\eta_n$ | A collection of differences of the expected score on knowledge assessment between practitioners who spent the following amount of time on course platform (7.3 to 9.4, 9.4 to 12.6, and 12.6 to 44.0 hours, respectively) comparing to those spent 2.7 to 7.3 hours; |
| $\delta_g$ | A collection of differences of the expected score on knowledge assessment between the type of ELFL program being either “online + community of practice” or “online + mentoring” comparing to “online only”; |
| $\theta_i$ | A collection of differences of the expected score on knowledge assessment between the amount of students being 65 to 97, 97 to 132, and 132 to 288 comparing to an amount of 4 to 65 students, respectively; |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$\lambda_h$</td>
<td>A collection of differences of the expected score on knowledge assessment between the percent of poverty students being 28.3% to 48.7%, 48.7% to 62%, and 62% to 100% comparing to the percent of 0% to 28.3%, respectively;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta_d, \ldots, \beta_{11}$</td>
<td>Difference of the expected score on knowledge assessment between a particular type of accreditation versus the other types;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\alpha_m$</td>
<td>A collection of differences of the expected score on knowledge assessment between a type of course $m$ being assessed in post-test comparing to VPK1 being assessed in pre-test;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta_{12}$</td>
<td>Difference of the expected score on knowledge assessment between a course delivered in Spanish in post-test and a course that was in other language types in pre-test;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\zeta_n$</td>
<td>A collection of differences of the expected score on knowledge assessment between practitioners who spent the following amount of time on course platform (7.3 to 9.4, 9.4 to 12.6, and 12.6 to 44.0 hours, respectively) and were assessed in post-test comparing to those spent 2.7 to 7.3 hours and were assessed in pre-test;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\mu_g$</td>
<td>A collection of differences of the expected score on knowledge assessment between the type of ELFL program being either “online + community of practice” or “online + mentoring” in post-test comparing to “online only” in pre-test;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\nu_s$</td>
<td>A collection of differences of the expected score on knowledge assessment between the amount of students being 65 to 97, 97 to 132, and 132 to 288 plus the measurement occasion is post-test comparing to an amount of 4 to 65 students and the measurement occasion is pre-test, respectively;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\xi_h$</td>
<td>A collection of differences of the expected score on knowledge assessment between the percent of poverty children being 28.3% to 48.7%, 48.7% to 62%, and 62% to 100% plus the measurement occasion is post-test comparing to the percent of 0% to 28.3% and the measurement occasion is pre-test, respectively;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta_{13}, \ldots, \beta_{20}$</td>
<td>Difference of the expected score on knowledge assessment between a particular type of accreditation in post-test versus the other types of accreditation in pre-test;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Random Effects:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$T_i$</td>
<td>Teacher-specific deviation from provider’s predicted outcome;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$P_j$</td>
<td>Provider-specific deviation from ELC’s predicted outcome;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$C_k$</td>
<td>ELC-specific deviation from fixed intercept;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\epsilon_{tijk}$</td>
<td>Time-specific deviation from teacher’s predicted score on knowledge assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX J

TIER 3 ARTIFACTS OF PRACTICE

Example 1: Inquiry Journal with Child Study

1. Review this child’s assessment reports (GOLD® or other), and describe the child in your classroom, any strengths and challenges this person has in regards to learning based on your observations.

JS is a child of 5 years. He is the oldest of three brothers in his household. During the school year JS has demonstrated his abilities to regulate his emotions and behaviors. He establishes positive relationships with his teacher and peers and is able to participate in different the activities we propose in the class, always showing motivation and integrity. During the year JS has also proven he is a leader in his class; he is a child which all his peers follow. Another strength he has shown is his ease in the area of language and literacy; he communicates with flow. He has a very good vocabulary for a child of his age and he likes to participate during circle time, making and answering questions. This is reflected in his VPK and gold assessments that we have practiced throughout the year. He scores high in the areas of language letter and sound recognition vocabulary, and compound words. JS has challenges in the area of math, specifically, with counting and comparing. This area presents the lowest levels in the assessments.

2.
   a. How did this report help me determine the best way to teach this child?
      The information contained in the reports could be used to reach an analysis of JS’s strengths and needs. With this information, along with observations made in class, I can offer exercises individually and in a group that can help JS to be more engaged. I believe that creating meaningful activities and conversations that keep JS focused on his task will help us reach our objectives.

   b. What did I learn from this process?
      I learned that assessments had valuable information about my kids and I using this battery of information I can analyze and design projects and lessons based on the interests and needs of the kids. In this case, JS’s assessments allowed me to see the learning level on different objectives. I can see not only the individual progress, but also each class’ progress. Lastly, I shared the results with JS’s parents because I think it is important to maintain a good communication system with the parents.

   c. How did this report and process impact my teaching?
      This report and process impacted my teaching because it helped me reflect on what I am doing in my classroom. It is really important to stay focused on the goals of the class and the individual so that we can achieve them. Identifying learning goals and providing activities about that scaffold and support the student’s learning should be my objectives. This will all done with the help of my coworker and the parents.

   d. How do I want to continue with this process to help this child learn or why do I want to
change what I did?
I want to continue this process by keeping up with the objectives previously mentioned, also following up periodically to know how everything is working. I believe that it is important that we have periodic conferences with our coworkers and the parents to share our points of view, as well as talk about the learning progress or needs. Working as a team we will ensure that we will see progress in our children.

e. How can working on this help me as a teacher, and help this child learn successfully?
Working on this process has helped me as a teacher because it gives me more tools for my work to better understand the abilities and challenges of my students. I feel more assertive in the moment of taking decisions about choosing an activity or making a lesson plan. I have in mind individual and group necessities; my plan for the school year becomes clearer and so do my objectives.

3. Create a lesson plan or activity based on the questions answered above that will create individualized learning for the child based on the observations and reports reviewed.

Activity: Counting and Comparing

Objectives: V. Cognitive Development> A. Math Thinking> 2. Show understanding of how to count and construct sets.

Goal: Help JS to use number concepts and operations.

Time: Small group (4 children)-Table toys

Steps of lesson: (Prepare the table with materials to sort, counting bears, and cardstock folded to make stand up cards.)
1. Gather the kids around the arranged bears and ask questions that will encourage them to speak. (Which are different, which are similar etc)
2. Write the different categories on a card and begin to separate the bears into the different categories. (big, small, colors, etc).
3. Ask questions that encourage the children to compare the groups (which group has more, which has the same amount.)
4. Record the predictions and then count the objects in each group. Compare the groups once again.
5. Compare the results with the predictions.

Prediction: I believe that this exercise will help the kids to reach their own objectives. The group will be small, so I will have time for each child in the moment of putting the lesson plan into practice. Specifically for JS, it will help him to practice objectives that need to be developed like counting and comparing. He will work in a small group, which will ensure he has the attention he needs to meet the objectives more efficiently because he will learn from this.

Example 2: Written Reflection Journal with Child Study Option 1

I chose reflection assignments 1 and 5 from Language Development for Infant and Toddlers. I also chose reflection assignments 3 and 6 from Using Observation to Support Developmentally
Appropriate Practice with Infants and Toddlers. I chose these reflections because they have been the most beneficial in my classroom. I still use these strategies in the classroom today.

1. **How does reflecting on your practice help you as a teacher, and help this child in your classroom learn more successfully?**
   Reflection assignment 1 in Language Development for Infants and Toddlers -
   When I planned to use joint attention and communication loops it helped me to prepare to listen for a response from the students and then reply. I was also so prepared to listen for more back and forth communication than I had in the past. I used the communication loops as it was difficult to wait for the child to speak before I replied. These strategies were beneficial because I was able to have more communication with the students.

   Reflection assignment 6 in Using Observation to Support Development Appropriate Practice with Infant and Toddlers -
   When planning the curriculum, I was influenced with the idea to be more aware of what to expect of the children and be ready for the outcome. Planning for this was time consuming but the outcome was worth the time.

2. **What specific teaching or behavior strategies did you notice (from reading your previous reflections) that really stand out to you, and how did these strategies impact this child’s learning? Please give specific examples from your classroom.**
   Reflection assignment 3 in Using Observation to Support Development Appropriate Practice with Infants and Toddlers -
   When implementing culture responsive strategies, we placed picture of all the children parents at their jobs. The children were able to look at each other’s parents and talk about where they work. This strategy was beneficial to the children in the classroom because they were able to explore different job sites. The insight that I received from this activity was how the children talked about seeing their classmate’s parents at work.

   Reflection assignment 5 in Language Development for Infants and Toddlers -
   When implementing expansions and extensions intentionally it helped me prepare for a conversation with the child one on one. Additionally, it helped me to extend the conversation with the child. This strategy was beneficial because it helped me be prepare for a conversation with the child and I was excited about what the outcome would be. It made me listen and focus on what the child had to say.

3. **If you could summarize your PFP experience after reading these reflections again, what would you say? What would this child say about how you have changed as a teacher?**
   I have gained much knowledge from these courses and I feel like they have been a great benefit to the children and families in our center. I would like to think that the children in my classroom would say I am more prepared to teach the strategies.

4. **If you could work on one specific thing in your practice after reading these reflections, what would it be and why?**
   Continue to listen for the child’s response and listen for more back and forth communication.
## Tier 2 Courses and Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Number of Practitioners</th>
<th>Percentage of Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Instructional Support in Preschool: Quality of Feedback                | - The student will scaffold learning  
- The student will encourage feedback loops to sustain conversations  
- The student will prompt thought processes  
- The student will expand children's understanding  
- The student will use encouragement to provide specific feedback                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 303                      | 19%                   |
| Infant and Toddler Social-Emotional Development                        | - The student will build partnerships with parents  
- The student will create attachments with young infants  
- The student will support parents of mobile infants and toddlers  
- The student will establish healthy social-emotional development with infants and toddlers with special needs  
- The student will develop self-regulation in infants  
- The student will develop self-regulation in mobile infants and toddlers  
- The student will create goodness of fit                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 275                      | 17%                   |
| Preschool Language Development                                         | The student will use open-ended questions  
- The student will extend child responses  
- The student will use advanced language (vocabulary development)  
- The student will prompt thought processes  
- The student will use self- and parallel talk  
- The student will encourage peer conversations  
- The student will support children with special needs and dual language learners                                                                                                                                                                                               | 236                      | 15%                   |
| Preschool Learning Environments                                        | - The student will arrange classroom space to increase children's learning  
- The student will create learning centers  
- The student will select and store learning materials  
- The student will establish schedules and routines  
- The student will plan for transitions  
- The student will create caring and safe environments for children                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 189                      | 12%                   |
| Designing Infant and Toddler Learning Environments                    | - The student will create and maintain partnerships with families  
- The student will provide a secure base: active and responsive caregiving  
- The student will use rituals, routines, and schedules to support learning  
- The student will create spaces for infant and toddler success  
- The student will provide a learning environment for language and literacy  
- The student will develop an individualized and emergent curriculum                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 176                      | 11%                   |
| Using Observation to Inform Individualized Instruction in Preschool    | - Plan a screening process  
- Write objective and accurate anecdotal records  
- Develop specific learning objectives based on children's strengths and needs  
- Design classroom projects based on children's interests and learning needs  
- Understand the effects of home culture  
- Engage children with special needs                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 166                      | 11%                   |
| Using Observation to Support Developmentally Appropriate Practice with Infants and Toddlers | - The student will develop responsive relationships with infants and toddlers  
- The student will observe and document the behavior of infants and toddlers  
- The student will incorporate the understanding of culture in the early childhood environment  
- The student will establish meaningful partnerships with families  
- The student will plan activities for infants and toddlers with special needs  
- The student will prepare a developmentally appropriate curriculum for infants and toddlers                                                                                                                                                                                | 148                      | 9%                    |
| Engaging Families of Infants and Toddlers                             | - The student will welcome families into the program  
- The student will build trusting relationships with families and children  
- The student will engage families in learning and teaching  
- The student will engage families in supporting children's learning at home  
- The student will engage families with peers and community resources  
- The student will engage families in supporting their child's transitions                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 109                      | 7%                    |
### Infant Developmental Stages: The First Year of Life

- The student will observe and identify the different states of awareness and make decisions about when the baby needs quiet and when he or she is ready for an active learning experience.
- The student will plan activities to support babies’ growth and development during the first three months by connecting with families and promoting secure attachments between you and the baby.
- The student will plan developmentally appropriate activities to support language and cognitive development in four to six-month-old babies.
- The student will understand the progression of motor skills in seven to nine-month-old babies and plan activities to support language, cognitive, and motor development.
- The student will plan developmentally appropriate activities for ten-twelve-month old babies through read alouds, rhymes, music, and other games and activities.
- The student will plan to include parents as partners in the care of their baby through relationship-building activities.

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<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td>6%</td>
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### Infant and Toddler Language Development

- The student will implement communication loops with the infants and toddlers in his/her care.
- The student will select appropriate toys, books, and other materials to facilitate exploration of the environment and enhance language development.
- The student will facilitate early language and speech skills with infants and toddlers through mediation.
- The student will facilitate toddlers’ language development through conversations and questions throughout the day.
- The student will provide quality feedback to toddlers by expanding and extending what they say.
- The student will encourage peer conversations between the toddlers in his/her care.

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<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>5%</td>
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</table>

### Act 1: Getting Organized for Learning in Preschool

- Set up your learning environment to provide space for children to engage in meaningful learning experiences throughout the day.
- Create schedules, establish routines, and plan for transitions to provide a safe and predictable environment for children.
- Support children’s social and emotional learning and discover why it’s important for their academic development.
- Support oral language development through engaging interactions with children.
- Support emergent literacy development through alphabet knowledge and phonological awareness.
- Support mathematical thinking by fostering number sense and other math skills.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>5%</td>
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</table>

### Understanding and Promoting the Development and Learning of Young Dual Language Learners (DLL 1)

- Identify the major stages of second language acquisition for preschool children who are learning English.
- Know and understand how children can learn more than one language during the early childhood years and how this positively influences brain development.
- Understand the importance of supporting the home language of dual language learners and learn classroom strategies to support home language maintenance.
- Demonstrate knowledge of specific instructional strategies that will help dual language learners acquire English language skills.
- Learn interactive storybook reading strategies that are appropriate for young dual language learners.

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<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>12</td>
<td>1%</td>
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</table>

### Screening and Assessing Young Dual Language Learners in Preschool (DLL 2)

- Assist families of dual language learners in completing a home language questionnaire.
- Use interpreters effectively to conduct assessments and communicate with families and children.
- Conduct observations of children and collect language samples.
- Assess children in English, as well as their home language, and create a plan to gather data from multiple sources.
- Use assessment tools in languages other than English to monitor children’s progress.
- Understand a child’s performance in each language in order to guide instruction.

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<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
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</table>
## Tier 3 Courses and Participants

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Number of Practitioners</th>
<th>Percentage of Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Learning Environments</td>
<td>• The student will arrange classroom space to increase children's learning</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The student will create learning centers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The student will select and store learning materials</td>
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<td>• The student will plan for transitions</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The student will create caring and safe environments for children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Using Observation to Support Developmentally Appropriate Practice with Infants and Toddlers</td>
<td>• The student will develop responsive relationships with infants and toddlers</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The student will observe and document the behavior of infants and toddlers</td>
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<td>• The student will incorporate the understanding of culture in the early childhood environment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The student will establish meaningful partnerships with families</td>
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<td>• The student will plan activities for infants and toddlers with special needs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The student will prepare a developmentally appropriate curriculum for infants and toddlers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Using Observation to Inform Individualized Instruction in Preschool</td>
<td>• Plan a screening process</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Write objective and accurate anecdotal records</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Develop specific learning objectives based on children's strengths and needs</td>
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<td>• Design classroom projects based on children's interests and learning needs</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Engage children with special needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructional Support in Preschool: Quality of Feedback</td>
<td>• The student will scaffold learning</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>9%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The student will encourage feedback loops to sustain conversations</td>
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<td>• The student will prompt thought processes</td>
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<td>• The student will use encouragement to provide specific feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td>Designing Infant and Toddler Learning Environments</td>
<td>• The student will create and maintain partnerships with families</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>9%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The student will provide a secure base: active and responsive caregiving</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infant and Toddler Language Development</td>
<td>• The student will implement communication loops with the infants and toddlers in his/her care.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>• The student will select appropriate toys, books, and other materials to facilitate exploration of the environment and enhance language development.</td>
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<td>• The student will facilitate early language and speech skills with infants and toddlers through mediation.</td>
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<td>• The student will facilitate toddlers' language development through conversations and questions throughout the day.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preschool Language Development</td>
<td>The student will use open-ended questions</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The student will extend child responses</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The student will use advanced language (vocabulary development)</td>
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<td>• The student will encourage peer conversations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The student will support children with special needs and dual language learners</td>
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</table>
| Understanding and Promoting the Development and Learning of Young Dual Language Learners (DLL 1) | • Identify the major stages of second language acquisition for preschool children who are learning English  
• Know and understand how children can learn more than one language during the early childhood years and how this positively influences brain development  
• Understand the importance of supporting the home language of dual language learners and learn classroom strategies to support home language maintenance  
• Demonstrate knowledge of specific instructional strategies that will help dual language learners acquire English language skills  
• Learn interactive storybook reading strategies that are appropriate for young dual language learners | 33 | 7% |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Engaging Families of Infants and Toddlers | • The student will welcome families into the program  
• The student will build trusting relationships with families and children  
• The student will engage families in learning and teaching  
• The student will engage families in supporting children's learning at home  
• The student will engage families with peers and community resources  
• The student will engage families in supporting their child's transitions | 25 | 5% |
| Infant Developmental Stages: The First Year of Life | • The student will observe and identify the different states of awareness and make decisions about when the baby needs quiet and when he or she is ready for an active learning experience  
• The student will plan activities to support babies' growth and development during the first three months by connecting with families and promoting secure attachments between you and the baby  
• The student will plan developmentally appropriate activities to support language and cognitive development in four to six-month-old babies  
• The student will understand the progression of motor skills in seven to nine-month-old babies and plan activities to support language, cognitive, and motor development  
• The student will plan developmentally appropriate activities for ten-twelve-month old babies through read alouds, rhymes, music, and other games and activities  
• The student will plan to include parents as partners in the care of their baby through relationship-building activities | 17 | 4% |
| Act 1: Getting Organized for Learning in Preschool | • Set up your learning environment to provide space for children to engage in meaningful learning experiences throughout the day;  
• Create schedules, establish routines, and plan for transitions to provide a safe and predictable environment for children;  
• Support children's social and emotional learning and discover why it's important for their academic development;  
• Support oral language development through engaging interactions with children;  
• Support emergent literacy development through alphabet knowledge and phonological awareness;  
• Support mathematical thinking by fostering number sense and other math skills. | 15 | 3% |
| Screening and Assessing Young Dual Language Learners in Preschool (DLL 2) | • Assist families of dual language learners in completing a home language questionnaire Use interpreters effectively to conduct assessments and communicate with families and children  
• Conduct observations of children and collect language samples Assess children in English, as well as their home language, and create a plan to gather data from multiple sources  
• Use assessment tools in languages other than English to monitor children's progress  
• Understand a child's performance in each language in order to guide instruction | 11 | 2% |
| Infant and Toddler Social-Emotional Development | • The student will build partnerships with parents  
• The student will create attachments with young infants  
• The student will support parents of mobile infants and toddlers  
• The student will establish healthy social-emotional development with infants and toddlers with special needs  
• The student will develop self-regulation in infants  
• The student will develop self-regulation in mobile infants and toddlers  
• The student will create goodness of fit | 10 | 2% |