



Early Learning Coalition School Readiness Plan Guide

Table of Contents

Overview.....	4
I. Coalition Operations.....	4
A. <i>Membership</i>	4
B. <i>Business Organization</i>	5
C. <i>Articles of Incorporation</i>	5
D. <i>Bylaws</i>	6
E. <i>Fiscal Agent Contract</i>	6
F. <i>Procurement</i>	6
G. <i>Tangible Personal Property Maintenance</i>	7
H. <i>Records Maintenance</i>	9
I. <i>Information Technology Security Controls</i>	10
J. <i>Disbursement Controls</i>	10
II. Implementation.....	11
A. <i>Minimum Children to be Served by Care Level</i>	11
B. <i>School Readiness Application and Waiting List Procedures</i>	11
C. <i>Eligibility and Enrollment Policies and Procedures</i>	13
D. <i>Parent Access and Choice</i>	14
E. <i>Sliding Fee Scale and Fee Waiver Policies</i>	16
F. <i>Child Screening</i>	17
G. <i>Program Assessment</i>	18
H. <i>Use of Observation-Based Child Assessment</i>	18
I. <i>Provider Payment Rates</i>	19
J. <i>Contracted Slots</i>	19
III. Quality Activities and Services.....	20
A. <i>Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R and School-Aged Care</i>	20
B. <i>Infant and Toddler Early Learning Programs</i>	20
C. <i>Inclusive Early Learning Programs</i>	21
D. <i>Quality Improvement Strategies</i>	22
IV. Financial Management	22
A. <i>Budget</i>	22
B. <i>Prior Year Revenues and Expenditures</i>	23
V. Monitoring.....	24
A. <i>Monitoring Plan and Procedures</i>	24
B. <i>Grievance/Complaint Resolution</i>	25

VI. Coalition Plan Validation26

A. Public Input..... **26**

Overview

Section 1002.85, Florida Statutes (F.S.) gives authority to the Department of Education to adopt rules setting School Readiness (SR) Program plan standardized format and required content as necessary for a coalition or other qualified entity to administer the SR Program.

Each early learning coalition must biennially submit a SR Program plan to the department before spending funds (s.1002.85(2),F.S.). A coalition may not implement its SR Program plan until it receives department approval. A coalition may not implement any revision to its SR Program plan until the coalition submits the revised plan to the department and receives approval. If the department rejects a plan or revision, the coalition must continue operating under its previously-approved plan.

The coalition may periodically amend its plan as necessary. The coalition must submit an amended plan to the department and receive approval before incurring any expenses on the new activities proposed in the amendment.

DEL must publish a copy of the standardized format and required content of SR Program plans on its website.

I. Coalition Operations

A. Membership

A SR Program plan a coalition submits must describe the coalition’s operations, including its membership if the coalition is organized as a corporation (s. 1002.85(2)(a), F.S., and Rule 6M-9.110, F.A.C.).

1.	<p>The coalition composition must adhere to minimum and maximum membership requirements. (s. 1002.83(2), F.S.)</p> <p>At least 15 but not more than 30 members shall compose each early learning coalition.</p>
2.	<p>The coalition has private sector business membership representation. (s. 1002.83(6), F.S.)</p> <p>Private sector business membership representation includes all private sector non ex-officio board members.</p>
3.	<p>The coalition must fill all of the required ex officio positions. (s. 1002.83(4), F.S.)</p> <p>Each early learning coalition must include the following member positions. In a multicounty coalition, multiple non-voting members may fill each ex officio member position, but the coalition may seat only one voting member per position. If an early learning coalition has more than one member representing the same entity, only one may serve as a voting member –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. A Department of Children and Families regional administrator or a permanent designee authorized to make decisions on the department’s behalf. B. A district superintendent of schools or a permanent designee authorized to make decisions on the district’s behalf. C. A local workforce board executive director or a permanent designee. D. A county health department director or designee. E. A children’s services council or juvenile welfare board chair or executive director, if applicable.

	<p>F. Where applicable, a Department of Children and Families child care regulation representative or a local licensing agency head as s. 402.302, F.S., defines.</p> <p>G. A Florida College System institution president or a permanent designee.</p> <p>H. One member that a board of county commissioners or the governing board of a municipality appoints.</p> <p>I. A Head Start director.</p> <p>J. A private for-profit child care provider representative, including private for-profit family day care homes.</p> <p>K. A faith-based child care provider representative.</p> <p>L. A representative for programs for children with disabilities under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.</p>
4.	<p>If a coalition has a vacancy in any voting ex officio position, the coalition must maintain documentation that it has taken action to fill the position.</p> <p>Action may include requesting that the applicable agency designate a member.</p>
5.	<p>If the coalition has vacancies in the governor appointee private business sector positions, the coalition (or prospective appointee) must submit appointment applications to the Governor’s Office of Appointments and inform the Division of Early Learning that the application is being submitted. (s. 1002.83(3), F.S.)</p> <p>The governor shall appoint the chair and two other members of each early learning coalition. They must each meet the same qualifications as private sector business members the coalition appoints. In the absence of a governor-appointed chair, the Commissioner of Education may appoint an interim chair from the current early learning coalition board membership.</p>
6.	<p>If the coalition has more than one county represented, the coalition must have representation from each county. (s. 1002.83(11), F.S.)</p>
7.	<p>Coalitions shall establish terms for all applicable appointed coalition members. (s. 1002.83(12), F.S.)</p> <p>The coalition must stagger terms and they must be a uniform length that does not exceed four years per term. Appointed members may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms.</p>
8.	<p>If the coalition has a vacancy in one of its appointed positions, the coalition must advertise the vacancy. (s. 1002.83 (12), F.S.)</p>
<p><i>B. Business Organization</i></p> <p>A SR Program plan the coalition submits must describe the coalition’s operations, including its business organization if the coalition is organized as a corporation (s. 1002.85(2)(a), F.S.).</p>	
1.	<p>The coalition’s organizational chart should include all of the coalition’s business units by title or function.</p>
2.	<p>The coalition’s organizational chart should identify position titles for each position associated with a coalition business unit.</p>
<p><i>C. Articles of Incorporation</i></p> <p>A SR Program plan the coalition submits must describe the coalition’s operations, including its articles of incorporation if the coalition is organized as a corporation (s. 1002.85(2)(a), F.S.).</p>	

	<p>subsection 6M-4.200(2) or (3), F.A.C. Upon determining the family eligible for the school readiness program, the child is eligible for enrollment with a provider delivering the school readiness program. The coalition shall indicate the required supporting documents for eligibility determination pursuant to Rule 6M-4.208, F.A.C.</p> <p>If the family is potentially eligible and funding is not available, the coalition shall place the child on its waiting list.</p> <p>If the family is not potentially eligible, the coalition shall offer the parent CCR&R services pursuant to Rule 6M-9.300, F.A.C.</p> <p><i>Please note: all families requesting services shall be provided CCR&R services.</i></p> <p>The early learning coalition shall review each submitted application and required documentation within 20 calendar days of receipt to determine if the parent is potentially eligible pursuant to Section 1002.87(1), F.S. The early learning coalition shall notify the parent if the eligibility criteria have or have not been met.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>The policy or procedure requires placing eligible children on the waiting list on a first-come, first-serve basis, based on the date of the submitted application, the potential eligibility category and priority categories specified in Section 1002.87(1), F.S., and the age of the child.</p> <p>The coalition’s policy or procedures shall establish a methodology for prioritizing the waiting list according to eligibility category.</p> <p>A coalition may establish local service priorities within one of the above referenced priority groups.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>The policy establishes procedures for waiting list revalidation.</p> <p>At least once every six (6) months from the date the family was initially placed on the waiting list or from the last revalidation date the coalition shall contact the parent and request the parent to submit updated information regarding eligibility status.</p> <p>The coalition shall notify the parent within 30 calendar days prior to the revalidation date.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>The policy establishes procedures for removal from the waiting list.</p> <p>Notification shall include the reason why the family was not placed on the waiting list or why the family or child was removed from the waiting list.</p> <p>A family will be removed from the waiting list under the following circumstances:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Failure to maintain accurate contact information; 2. Failure to meet the school readiness eligibility requirements as specified in Section 1002.87(1), F.S.; 3. Failure to confirm information by the due date indicated on the notification; 4. Over age limitations. Any child on the waiting list age 13 or older will be removed from the waiting list; 5. School readiness services no longer needed. The parent indicates, via email, fax, mail, telephone or in person, that school readiness services are no longer needed; 6. The parent does not respond to the notification for available funding by the due date; 7. The family no longer resides in the coalition’s service delivery area; or 8. Funding becomes available for the child to receive school readiness services and the child is enrolled with a school readiness provider. Actual eligibility determination will be conducted prior to authorization for enrollment, which will be based on available funding. Enrollment in the school readiness program will be on a first-come, first-serve basis pursuant to Section 1002.87(1), F.S.
<p>6.</p>	<p>The policy and procedures establish a process for reapplication to the waiting list.</p>

	<p>If a family is removed from the waiting list, a parent must reapply for school readiness services and shall be screened for eligibility according to subsection (3) to be placed back onto the waiting list and receive a new waiting list date.</p> <p>If a family on the waiting list of a coalition moves out of the coalition’s service area, the family shall reapply for eligibility services with the coalition operating in the family’s new location. The family will receive a new waiting list date with the coalition offering services in the new location.</p>
--	---

7.	The policy establishes that an unborn child is not eligible for the waiting list.
-----------	--

C. Eligibility and Enrollment Policies and Procedures

A SR Program plan a coalition submits must describe its procedures for implementing eligibility and enrollment processes and local eligibility priorities for children (s. 1002.85(2)(c)3., F.S.).

1.	<p>The coalition must have clearly defined and written eligibility enrollment procedures that reflect the eligibility priority categories and local eligibility priorities for serving children in the SR Program. (ss. 1002.84(8);1002.85(2)(j) and 1002.87, F.S.)</p> <p>A coalition shall determine child eligibility based on ss. 1002.87 and 1002.85(2)(j), F.S.</p> <p>Section 1002.87, F.S., requires a coalition to assign priority in the following order –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Priority shall be given first to a child younger than 13 years of age from a family that includes a parent who is receiving temporary cash assistance and subject to the federal work requirements or a parent who has an Intensive Service Account or an Individual Training Account under s. 445.009, F.S. b) Priority shall be given next to an at-risk child younger than 9 years of age. c) Subsequent priority shall be given, based on an early learning coalition’s local priorities identified under s.1002.85(2)(j), FS, to children who meet the following criteria: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A child from birth to the beginning of the school year for which the child is eligible for admission to kindergarten in a public school who is from a working family that is economically disadvantaged, and may include such child’s eligible siblings, beginning with the school year in which the sibling is eligible for admission to kindergarten in a public school until the beginning of the school year in which the sibling is eligible to begin 6th grade, provided that the first priority for funding an eligible sibling is local revenues available to a coalition for funding direct services. 2. A child, from birth to the beginning of the school year for which the child is eligible for admission to kindergarten in a public school, of a parent who transitions from the work program into employment. 3. An at-risk child who is at least 9 years of age but younger than 13 years of age. An at-risk child whose sibling is enrolled in the SR Program within eligibility priority category listed in paragraphs (a) and (b) and subparagraph (c)1 shall be given priority over other children who are eligible under this paragraph. 4. A child who is younger than 13 years of age from a working family that is economically disadvantaged. 5. A child, who is younger than 13 years of age, of a parent who transitions from the work program into employment. 6. A child who has special needs, has been determined eligible as a student with a disability, has a current individual education plan with a Florida school district, and is at least 3 years of age but is not yet eligible for admission to kindergarten in a public school.
-----------	--

	<p>7. A child who otherwise meets one of the eligibility criteria in paragraphs (a) and (b) and subparagraphs (c)(1) and (c)(2) but who is also enrolled concurrently in the federal Head Start Program and the VPK Program.</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>The coalition must include an assessment of local priorities within the county or multi-county region based on the needs of families and provider capacity using available community data. <i>(s. 1002.85(2)(j), F.S.)</i></p> <p>The community assessment shall not be more than three years old and must include, at a minimum, the collection and analysis of the following information about the coalition’s service area:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The demographic make-up of eligible children/families and unique populations, including their estimated number and geographic location; 2) Other child development and early learning programs that are serving eligible children, including public and private programs, and the approximate number of eligible children served by each; 3) Data regarding the education and social service needs of eligible children and their families, including children with disabilities and special needs; and 4) Resources in the community that could be used to address the needs of children and their families, including assessments of their availability and accessibility. <p>Coalitions are encouraged to work collaboratively with community partners to develop the community assessment. In many cases, community partners (e.g., Head Start, Healthy Start, and Children’s Services Councils) may have similar requirements for community assessments.</p> <p>Coalitions shall identify local priorities from s. 1002.87(1)(c), F.S., through information gained from completing the community assessment.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>The coalition must have written policies and procedures that comply with s. 1002.87(7), F.S., and the DEL Grant Agreement for disenrolling SR children from SR services. <i>(ss. 1002.81(5) and 1002.87(7), F.S.; DEL Grant Agreement)</i></p> <p>“Disenrollment” means removing, either temporarily or permanently, a child from participation in the SR Program. A coalition may remove a child from the SR Program in accordance with 6M-4.200(8), F.A.C.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>The coalition’s written eligibility determination and redetermination policies and procedures must align with rules and statutes. <i>(ss. 1002.81 and 1002.87, F.S., and Rules 6M-4.200 and 6M-4.208, F.A.C.)</i></p>
<p>D. Parent Access and Choice</p> <p>A SR Program plan a coalition submits must describe its procedures for implementing parent access and choice (s. 1002.85(2)(c)4., F.S.).</p>	
<p>1.</p>	<p>The coalition’s policy or procedure must require and document that it will inform parents about a parent’s right to choose from a variety of legally operating child care categories. <i>(45 CFR s. 98.30; s. 1002.82(2)(b), F.S.)</i></p> <p>Preserve parental choice by permitting parents to choose from a variety of child care categories, including center-based care, family child care and informal child care to the extent authorized in the state’s Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan as the United States Department of Health and Human Services approved, based on 45 CFR s. 98.18. None of the categories may limit or exclude a faith-based provider’s care and curriculum.</p>

	<p>(a) The parent or parents of an eligible child who receives or is offered child care services shall be offered a choice:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) To enroll the child with an eligible child care provider that has a grant or contract for the provision of such services, if such services are available; or (2) To receive a child care certificate as defined in § 98.2. Such choice shall be offered any time that child care services are made available to a parent. <p>(b) When a parent elects to enroll the child with a provider that has a grant or contract for the provision of child care services, the child will be enrolled with the provider selected by the parent to the maximum extent practicable.</p> <p>(c) In cases in which a parent elects to use a child care certificate, such certificate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Will be issued directly to the parent; (2) Shall be of a value commensurate with the subsidy value of the child care services provided under paragraph (a)(1) of this section; (3) May be used as a deposit for child care services if such a deposit is required of other children being cared for by the provider; (4) May be used for child care services provided by a sectarian organization or agency, including those that engage in religious activities, if those services are chosen by the parent; (5) May be expended by providers for any sectarian purpose or activity that is part of the child care services, including sectarian worship or instruction; (6) Shall not be considered a grant or contract to a provider but shall be considered assistance to the parent. <p>(d) Child care certificates shall be made available to any parents offered child care services.</p> <p>(e) (1) For child care services, certificates under paragraph (a)(2) of this section shall permit parents to choose from a variety of child care categories, including –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i.) Center-based child care; (ii.) Family child care; and (iii.) In-home child care, with limitations, if any, imposed by the Lead Agency and described in its Plan at § 98.16(g)(2). Under each of the above categories, care by a sectarian provider may not be limited or excluded. <p>(7) Lead Agencies shall provide information regarding the range of provider options under paragraph (e)(1) of this section, including care by sectarian providers and relatives, to families offered child care services.</p> <p>(f) With respect to State and local regulatory requirements under § 98.40, health and safety requirements under § 98.41, and payment rates under § 98.45, CCDF funds will not be available to a Lead Agency if State or local rules, procedures or other requirements promulgated for purposes of the CCDF significantly restrict parental choice by –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Expressly or effectively excluding – <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i.) Any category of care or type of provider, as defined in § 98.2; or (ii.) Any type of provider within a category of care; or (2) Having the effect of limiting parental access to or choice from among such categories of care or types of providers, as defined in § 98.2; or (3) Excluding a significant number of providers in any category of care or of any type as defined in § 98.2.
<p>2.</p>	<p>The coalition’s policy and or procedure must require and document that the coalition inform parents about a parent’s right to unlimited access to his or her child during normal hours of provider operation and whenever the child is in the provider’s care. (45 C.F.R. s. 98.31)</p> <p>The lead agency shall have in effect procedures to ensure that child care service providers who receive SR program funds allow parents unlimited access to their children, and to the providers caring for their children. Providers must grant this access during normal provider operation hours and whenever the children are in the provider’s care.</p>

	<p>Custodial parent or guardian access to children while in the care of any legally operating provider, regardless of whether receiving financial assistance through the Child Care and Development Fund, is an enforceable requirement of ss. 402.305, 402.313 and 402.3131, F.S.; Chapters 65C-20 and 65C-22, F.A.C.; each grant award with early learning coalitions; and the Redlands Christian Migrant Association (RCMA) contract.</p>
<p><i>E. Sliding Fee Scale and Fee Waiver Policies</i></p> <p>A SR Program plan a coalition submits must describe its procedures for implementing a sliding fee scale and policies on applying the waiver or reduction of fees based on s. 1002.84(9), F.S., (s. 1002.85(2)(c)5., F.S.).</p>	
<p>1.</p>	<p>The coalition must base its sliding fee scale on the income thresholds from the most current DEL release of the federal property level (FPL).</p> <p>HHS annually revises the FPL and publishes this information in the Federal Register. The FPL specifies that “these guidelines go into effect on the day they are published unless an office administering a program using the guidelines specifies a different effective date for that particular program.” (The most recent FPL is available at https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines)</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>For each family co-payment listed on the sliding fee scale, the co-payment is less than or equal to 10 percent of the family’s income, regardless of the number of children in care. If the coalition’s proposed sliding fee scale does exceed 10 percent of family income, the coalition must provide justification of how the sliding fee scale meets the federal requirement that the copayment be affordable, prior to DEL approving the proposed sliding fee scale.</p> <p>DEL encourages coalitions to analyze their parent co-payments in order to make informed decisions in implementing their new sliding fee scales based on the most recent Federal Poverty Level (FPL). Implementing a graduated sliding fee scale could help better prepare families as they move toward economic self-sufficiency.</p> <p>Rule 6M-4.400(1)(a), F.A.C., provides additional instruction on establishing a coalition’s sliding fee scale, stating that a “coalition’s sliding fee scale must be set at a level that provides economically disadvantaged families equal access to the care available to families whose income is high enough not to qualify for financial assistance for school readiness services.” The total amount of a family’s copayment for services based upon the sliding fee scale may not exceed 10 percent of the family’s income, regardless of the number of children in care during the 12-months of eligibility. If the coalition’s proposed sliding fee scale does exceed 10 percent of family income, the coalition must provide justification of how the sliding fee scale meets the federal requirement that the copayment be affordable, prior to DEL approving the proposed sliding fee scale.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Coalitions may only waive family copayments on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>A-coalition shall establish a parent sliding fee scale that requires a parent copayment to participate in the SR Program. Providers must collect the parent’s copayment.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>A coalition will establish special circumstances for which it will waive family copayments that are consistent with the examples from s. 1002.84(9), F.S., and Rule 6M-4.400, F.A.C.</p> <p>A coalition may, on a case-by-case basis, waive the copayment for an at-risk child or temporarily waive the copayment for a child whose family experiences a natural disaster or an event that limits the parent’s ability to pay. Examples are incarceration, placement in residential treatment or becoming homeless; an emergency situation such as a household fire or burglary; or while the parent participates in parenting classes or participating in an Early Head Start Program or Head Start Program.</p>

	Coalition copayment waiver policies must outline procedures for obtaining and documenting copayment waivers.
5.	<p>A coalition must submit the sliding fee scale in the format prescribed by DEL.</p> <p>The sliding fee scale should indicate the coalition name, county name and effective revised sliding fee scale date. The revised sliding fee scale effective date must be no later than July 1 of each fiscal year. Each coalition should submit its sliding fee scale to DEL no later than-April 1 of each year.</p> <p>A coalition’s sliding fee scale must reflect parent fees for families with an income up to 85% of the State Median Income (SMI).</p>
<p>F. Child Screening</p> <p>A SR Program plan a coalition submits must describe its policies and procedures for implementing child screenings. (s. 1002.84(5) and s. 1002.85, F.S.; Rule 6M-4.720, F.A.C.)</p>	
1.	<p>All children must receive a developmental screening within 45 days of enrollment. <i>(Rule 6M-4.720(2)(a)-(b), F.A.C.)</i></p> <p>Each early learning coalition shall coordinate with parents or providers to complete initial screening for each child, aged six weeks to age of 60 months. Children shall be screened no later than 45 calendar days after:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • His or her first enrollment in the School Readiness program; or • Subsequent enrollment after being terminated or withdrawn from the School Readiness program. <p>If a child, aged six weeks to age 60 months, is again enrolled in the School Readiness program after prior termination or withdrawal that is less than 12 months from initial enrollment, the coalition must determine if the child has been screened in accordance with the subsequent screening intervals identified in paragraph (2)(c), no later than 45 calendar days after subsequent enrollment.</p>
2.	<p>All parents must be provided the screening results in writing. <i>(Rule 6M-4.720(2)(e), F.A.C.)</i></p> <p>Each early learning coalition shall provide, in writing, or shall require a child care provider to provide in writing, the screening results with concerns for each child to the child’s parent. Early learning coalitions shall make staff persons available to explain screening results if requested by a parent.</p>
3.	<p>The coalition must initiate intervention practices within 30 calendar days for children showing concerning screening results. <i>(Rule 6M-4.720(5), F.A.C.)</i></p> <p>The process for implementing intervention practices must include –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern identification. • Concern analysis. • Intervention implementation. • Plan evaluation. • Referrals to early intervention or specialized care, if applicable.

4.	<p>The coalition must have a process to verify that each parent of a child who receives a referral services notification of the referral in writing. <i>(Rule 6M-4.720(5), F.A.C.)</i></p> <p>Each coalition shall notify or require a child care provider to notify, in writing, the parent of a child who receives a referral. The notification must include, at a minimum, areas identified through the screening that are concerning, and local contact information for the appropriate referral agency.</p> <p>The coalition must offer to contact the appropriate referral agency.</p>
-----------	---

G. Program Assessment

A SR Program plan a coalition submits must describe its procedures for implementing the program assessment requirement for potential providers and current providers to be eligible to deliver the SR Program. *(ss. 1002.82(2)(n); 1002.85 and 1002.88(1)(h), F.S.)*

1.	<p>An early learning coalition shall require providers to participate in program assessments as determined by DEL in order to be eligible to deliver the SR Program. <i>(ss. 1002.82(2)(n) and 1002.88(1)(h), F.S.)</i></p> <p>Section 1002.82(2)(n), F.S., requires the department to, “Adopt a program assessment for school readiness program providers that measure the quality of teacher-child interactions, including emotional and behavioral support, engaged support for learning, classroom organization, and instructions support for children ages birth to 5 years.”</p> <p>DEL will identify a program assessment that includes quality measures. DEL will establish a minimum scoring threshold for contracting purposes and program improvement through a program improvement plan (Quality Improvement Plan). DEL will establish requirements for program participation, frequency of program assessments, and exemptions to program assessments. The coalition’s policies and procedures must describe how the coalition will implement the program assessment requirements, including provisions for termination for cause for up to 5 years.</p>
-----------	--

2.	<p>An early learning coalition that exercises the option to waive the school readiness program contract minimum threshold composite score requirement must describe its policies and procedures for determining if a provider meets local child care capacity needs as determined by its community needs assessment. <i>(Rule 6M-4.740(2), (6), F.A.C.)</i></p> <p>The coalition will identify minimum criteria for determining if a school readiness program provider is essential to meeting local child care capacity needs using data from the community needs assessment. A coalition may use local community data from state or county agencies or municipalities in addition to the community needs assessment. Providers deemed essential as defined within the policies, must be placed on a Quality Improvement Plan.</p>
-----------	--

H. Use of Observation-Based Child Assessment

A SR Program plan a coalition submits must describe its procedures for implementing a child assessment for use at least three times a year. *(s. 1002.85(2)(c)6., F.S.)*

1.	<p>If specified in the coalition’s approved plan, an early learning coalition shall implement an age-appropriate ongoing assessment of children. <i>(s. 1002.84(6), F.S.)</i></p> <p>Section 1002.82(2)(k), F.S., requires the department to, Identify observation based child assessments that are valid, reliable, and developmentally appropriate for use at least three times a year. The coalition must explain how it solicits voluntary participation. A coalition may not require a provider to administer a child assessment <i>(s. 1002.88(3)(c), F.S.)</i>.</p>
-----------	---

	<p>DEL will identify a list of assessments as valid, reliable, and developmentally appropriate for use three times per year.</p> <p>The early learning coalition must identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What tool/tools are used for the child assessments – How it solicits voluntary participation
--	---

I. Provider Payment Rates

A SR Program plan a coalition submits must describe its procedures for implementing payment rate (s. 1002.85(2)(c)7., F.S.).

1.	<p>The coalition’s policy should establish the procedures for implementing payment rate changes. The procedures should take into consideration how a rate increase or decrease will impact the coalition’s financial status.</p>
2.	<p>The payment rate schedule must take into consideration the prevailing market rate or an alternative model developed by DEL. The coalition’s policy must describe how the coalition considered the prevailing market rate or an alternative model to establish the payment rates. Coalitions shall reimburse informal child care arrangements at not more than 50 percent of the rate adopted for a family day care home. (ss. 1002.84(17), F.S., and 1002.895, F.S.).</p>
3.	<p>The coalition’s policy must establish that the provider payment rate schedule includes type-differentiated rates, including rates for providers holding a Gold Seal Quality Care designation and rates for participation in program assessment and child assessment; children with special needs; full-time and part-time differentiated rates; rates for informal child care arrangements that the coalition reimburses at not more than 50 percent of the rate adopted for a family day care home; and rates that consider discounts for multiple children in a single family.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Gold Seal Quality Care designated providers that participate in the school readiness program shall receive a minimum of a 20 percent rate differential for each enrolled school readiness child by care level and unit of care (s. 1002.945, F.S.) – Reimbursement rates shall be set in accordance with Rule 6M-4.500, F.A.C. <p>The coalition must submit the payment rate schedule to DEL for approval.</p>
4.	<p><u>The coalition’s policy must describe reimbursement rates applied to contracted out-of-county school readiness providers. Multi-county coalitions that may use a different DEL approved payment rate schedule for each county within its service area must identify the payment rate schedule that will be applied to a contracted out-of-county provider.</u></p>

J. Contracted Slots

A SR Program plan a coalition submits must include policies and procedures regarding implementation of the Contracted Slots Program based on the community assessment, as applicable (s. 1002.85(2)(c)8., F.S.).

1.	If the coalition has providers participating in the Contracted Slots Program, the coalition must describe and submit a contracted slots policy and procedure on how the use of Contracted Slots are based on the community assessment conducted in accordance with plan element II.C.2. and the latest census data identifying poverty area tracts The coalition is responsible for selecting eligible provider participants in the program based on the community assessment.
----	--

III. Quality Activities and Services

A. Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R and School-Aged Care

A SR Program plan a coalition submits must include a detailed description of the coalition’s quality activities and services for resource and referral and school-age children (s. 1002.85(2)(d)1., F.S.).

1.	<p>The coalition must submit a description of its quality activities for resource and referral and school-aged care with its SR Program plan. (s. 1002.85(2)(d)1., F.S.)</p> <p>A SR Program plan a coalition submits must include a detailed description of the coalition’s quality activities and services for resource and referral and school-age children. Coalition activities may only include developing, establishing, expanding, operating and coordinating CCR&R services specifically related to providing thorough education to parents and the public (s. 1002.89(5)(b), F.S.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – CCR&R services that increase parental choice by helping families identify quality early learning programs and locate a provider who meets the family’s needs. – Services that provide child care referrals customized to meeting each family’s needs, as well as offering referrals and information about other services available in local communities. – Activities to improve the quality and availability of inclusive child care, including resource and referral for early special needs intervention, special needs referrals, warm line contact information and other activities that facilitate inclusion.
----	---

2.	<p>The coalition’s description of quality activities should align with what the coalition reported in the most recent projected budget. (s. 1002.89(5), F.S.)</p> <p>The quality Other Cost Accumulator (OCA) associated with these activities is 97QI4.</p> <p>Section 1002.89(5), F.S., requires that coalitions keep costs to the minimum necessary for efficiently and effectively administering the SR Program with the highest priority of expenditure being direct services for eligible children. Coalitions may use no more than 5 percent of funds (total allocation) for administrative costs and may use no more than 22 percent of the funds in any fiscal year for any combination of administrative costs, quality activities and nondirect services.</p>
----	---

B. Infant and Toddler Early Learning Programs

A SR Program plan a coalition submits must include a detailed description of the coalition’s quality activities and services for infant and toddler early learning (s. 1002.85(2)(d)2., F.S.).

1.	<p>The coalition must submit a description of its quality activities for infant and toddler early learning with its SR Program plan. (s. 1002.85(2)(d)2., F.S.)</p>
----	--

	<p>A SR Program plan a coalition submits must include a detailed description of the coalition’s quality activities and services for infant and toddler early learning. Coalitions must limit activities to <i>(s. 1002.89(5)(b), F.S.)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Training and technical assistance for school readiness providers and staff on standards and teacher-child interactions specific to infant and toddler children birth to 36 months. – Coalition services provided through contracted agencies or as direct services to providers in their respective areas. – Training and other initiatives that focus on selecting age-appropriate materials, creating developmentally-appropriate environments and using an infant/toddler mental health consultant. – Other infant and toddler quality initiatives identified and approved in the early learning coalition’s school readiness program plan.
<p>2.</p>	<p>The coalition’s description of quality activities should align with what is reported in the most recent projected budget. <i>(s. 1002.89(5), F.S.)</i></p> <p>The quality Other Cost Accumulator (OCA) associated with these activities is 97INT., 97ICS, 97 ICR, 97IAS and 97IGS.</p> <p>Section 1002.89(6), F.S., requires that coalitions keep costs to the minimum necessary for efficiently and effectively administering the SR Program with the highest priority of expenditure being direct services for eligible children. Coalitions may spend no more than 5 percent of funds (total allocation) described in subsection (5) for administrative costs and no more than 22 percent of funds described in subsection (5) in any fiscal year for any combination of administrative costs, quality activities and nondirect services.</p>
<p>C. Inclusive Early Learning Programs</p> <p>A SR Program plan a coalition submits must include a detailed description of the coalition’s quality activities and services for inclusive early learning programs <i>(s. 1002.85(2)(d)3., F.S.)</i>.</p>	
<p>1.</p>	<p>The coalition must submit a description of its quality activities for inclusive early learning programs. <i>(s. 1002.85(2)(d)3., F.S.)</i></p> <p>A SR Program plan a coalition submits must include a detailed description of the coalition’s quality activities and services for inclusive early learning programs. Coalitions must limit activities <i>(s. 1002.85(2)(d), F.S.)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Quality improvement inclusion services may include coalition or contractor staff time, materials and resources that pertain to assisting any early learning or school-age program (not limited to SR or birth to 5) that has a child with identified or suspected disabilities or special health care needs. Services include, but are not limited to, making accommodations for specific disabilities; quality enhancement; screening and assessment; training; collaborative meetings with staff, parents and partner agencies; and local training. – Responding to provider and parent warm line requests.
<p>2.</p>	<p>The coalition’s description of quality activities should align with what is reported in the most recent projected budget. <i>(s. 1002.89(5), F.S.)</i></p> <p>The quality Other Cost Accumulator (OCA) associated with these activities is 97QIN.</p> <p>Section 1002.89(5)(6), F.S., requires that coalitions keep costs to the minimum necessary for efficiently and effectively administering the SR Program with the highest priority of expenditure being direct services for eligible children. Coalitions may spend no more than 5 percent of funds (total allocation) described in subsection (5) for administrative costs and no more than 22 percent of funds described in subsection (5) in any fiscal year for any combination of administrative costs, quality activities and nondirect services.</p>

D. Quality Improvement Strategies

A SR Program plan a coalition submits must include quality improvement strategies that strengthen teaching practices and increase child outcomes (*s. 1002.85(2)(d)4., F.S.*).

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 1. | The coalition must include a detailed description of the coalition’s local quality improvement strategies to use in the program assessment Quality Improvement Plan for applicable early learning programs. |
|-----------|--|

IV. Financial Management

A. Budget

A SR Program plan a coalition submits must include a detailed budget that outlines estimated expenditures for state, federal and local matching funds at the lowest level of detail available by other-cost-accumulator code number; all estimated sources of revenue with identifiable descriptions; a listing of full-time equivalent positions; contracted subcontractor costs with related annual compensation amount or hourly compensation rate; and a capital improvements plan outlining existing fixed capital outlay projects and proposed capital outlay projects that will begin during the budget year (*s. 1002.85(2)(e), F.S.*).

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 1. | <p>The coalition’s budget must provide an estimate of expenditures by Other Cost Accumulator (OCA) codes. (<i>s. 1002.85(2)(e), F.S.</i>)</p> <p>A SR Program plan a coalition submits must include a detailed budget that outlines estimated expenditures for state, federal and local matching funds at the lowest level of detail available by other-cost-accumulator code number.</p> |
| 2. | <p>The coalition’s budget must identify all sources of revenue and describe in detail the source of the revenue. (<i>s. 1002.85(2)(e), F.S.</i>)</p> <p>A SR Program plan a coalition submits must include a detailed budget that outlines estimated expenditures for state, federal and local matching funds at the lowest level of detail available by all estimated revenue sources with identifiable descriptions.</p> |
| 3. | <p>The coalition’s budget must provide detail of all full-time equivalent positions within the coalition and contractor or contractors. (<i>s. 1002.85(2)(e), F.S.</i>)</p> <p>A SR Program plan a coalition submits must include a detailed budget that outlines estimated expenditures for state, federal and local matching funds at the lowest level of detail available by a listing of full-time equivalent positions.</p> |
| 4. | <p>The coalition’s budget must provide detail of all contract costs, including compensation. (<i>s. 1002.85(2)(e), F.S.</i>)</p> <p>A SR Program plan a coalition submits must include a detailed budget that outlines estimated expenditures for state, federal and local matching funds at the lowest level of detail available by contracted subcontractor costs with related annual compensation amount or hourly compensation rate.</p> |
| 5. | <p>The coalition’s budget must outline fixed capital outlay or clearly state this is not applicable to the coalition. (<i>s. 1002.85(2)(e), F.S.</i>)</p> |

	A SR Program plan a coalition submits must include a detailed budget that outlines estimated expenditures for state, federal and local matching funds at the lowest level of detail available by a capital improvements plan outlining existing fixed capital outlay projects and proposed capital outlay projects that will begin during the budget year.
6.	The coalition will submit its budget in the format prescribed above.
<i>B. Prior Year Revenues and Expenditures</i>	
A SR Program plan a coalition submits must include a detailed accounting, in the format DEL specifies, of all revenues and expenditures during the previous state fiscal year. Revenue sources should be identifiable and coalitions should report expenditures by two categories – state and federal funds, and local matching funds. (s. 1002.85(2), F.S.)	
1.	The coalition’s revenue report must identify all sources of revenue.
2.	The coalition’s expenditure report must be reported by two categories: (a) state and federal funds and (b) local matching funds.
3.	The coalition’s revenue and expenditure report must be allocated using a uniform chart of accounts.
4.	The coalition’s revenue and expenditure report must identify the following categories of expenditure to the extent practicable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct services to children • Administrative costs • Quality activities • Non-direct services
5.	The coalition’s revenue and expenditure report must identify DEL revenue and expenditures by other-cost-accumulator code number.
6.	The coalition’s revenue and expenditure report must include a listing of full-time equivalent positions.
7.	The coalition’s revenue and expenditure report must include contracted subcontractor costs with related annual compensation amount or hourly rate of compensation.
8.	The coalition will provide prior year revenues and expenditures in the format prescribed above.

V. Monitoring

A. Monitoring Plan and Procedures

A SR Program plan a coalition submits must include a description of the procedures for monitoring SR Program providers, including responding to a parental complaint, to determine that the standards prescribed in s. 1002.88, F.S., are met using the standard monitoring tool adopted by the department. The coalition shall more frequently monitor providers the coalition determines high risk based on substantial findings of law violations (s. 1002.85(2)(h), F.S.).

1.	<p>The coalition must adopt and implement processes to monitor SR Program child care provider eligibility (including its monitoring plan and monitoring policies).</p> <p>The coalition’s monitoring plan should identify timelines for monitoring SR Program child care providers annually, the percentage or number of child care providers monitored based on sample size requirements and the process by which the coalition selects providers for monitoring under Rule 6M-4.630(3), F.A.C.</p>
2.	<p>The sample size is based on the number of SR programs funded by the coalition and not the total number of provider contracts. This includes contracted provider program sites outside of the coalition service area. When establishing the sample size, a coalition must determine the final count of the total number of SR provider contracted sites with the coalition, based on the current SR fiscal year. Once determined, a coalition should use Attachment B of Form DEL-SR 20M, Statewide School Readiness Provider Contract Monitoring Tool, to establish the number of provider sites to monitor, based on the total number of SR contracted provider sites.</p> <p>If contracted provider sites outside of the coalition service area are selected in the sample, the home coalition where the provider is located may conduct tier 2 monitoring for compliance with the SR contract. If this arrangement is made, the coalition contracting outside of its service area will need to obtain copies of monitoring documents for the provider sites in question. Otherwise, the coalition contracting outside its service area will be required to monitor the provider.</p> <p>The coalition’s monitoring plan and policies for SR program providers should include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A provider monitoring schedule. – A process to evaluate compliance with all requirements in the SR Program provider contract. Coalitions will use the monitoring tool adopted by DEL. – A process for timely reporting of findings and recommendations. – Documentation that the provider is aware of any monitoring findings and has an opportunity to respond and take corrective action.
3.	<p>The coalition must submit its policies and procedures for refusal to contract and eligibility revocation based on Class I violations, if applicable.</p> <p>In accordance with s. 1002.88(2)(b), F.S., the early learning coalition may refuse to contract with a provider or revoke a provider’s eligibility to deliver the School Readiness Program if the provider has been cited for a Class 1 violation by the Department of Children and Families (DCF). If the coalition chooses to implement this standard and refuse to contract with a potential or current provider or to revoke a current provider’s eligibility to deliver the programs if the provider is cited with a class 1 violation, the coalition’s must develop policies and procedures to guarantee the provision is applied consistently to all potential and current school readiness program providers.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">1) Address the coalition’s standards for refusal to contract with a provider.</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Address the coalition’s standards for eligibility revocation. 3) Establish a process for monitoring providers for continuing compliance with coalition standards and in conjunction with plan element V.A.1 above. 4) Continue to follow all other health and safety contracting requirements in accordance with Rules 6M-4.610 and 6M-4.620, F.A.C.
4.	<p>Section 1002.84(15), F.S., requires that coalitions develop written policies, procedures and standards for monitoring vendor contracts, including provisions specifying the particular procedures that a coalition may use to evaluate contractor performance and the documentation that the coalition will maintain to serve as a contractor performance record. This subsection does not apply to contracts with SR Program providers-</p> <p>If the coalition uses a subrecipient’s services to implement any SR Program administrative, programmatic or eligibility requirements, the coalition must adopt and implement processes to monitor the SR Program service provider(s) (including a monitoring plan, monitoring tool and monitoring policies).</p> <p>The coalition’s monitoring plan, tool and policies for service providers should include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A contract monitoring schedule. – A process to track the administrative, programmatic and eligibility requirements in each service provider’s contract. – A process for creating monitoring reports that include findings and recommendations. – Documentation that demonstrates the service provider is aware of any monitoring findings and received the opportunity to respond and take corrective action.
<p><i>B. Grievance/Complaint Resolution</i></p> <p>A SR Program plan a coalition submits must include a description of the procedures for monitoring SR Program providers, including responding to a parental complaint, to determine that the coalition meets the standards from s. 1002.88, F.S., using a standard monitoring tool that the department adopts (s. 1002.85(2)(h), F.S.).</p>	
1.	<p>The coalition’s policy must establish a written process by which parents can submit to the coalition a grievance against a provider’s or the coalition’s actions that may be contrary to state and federal policies, procedures, rules or regulations.</p>
2.	<p>The coalition’s policy must establish the nature (definition) of what constitutes a grievance and complainant identification.</p>
3.	<p>The coalition’s policy must establish timeframes for reviewing and processing the parental grievance.</p>
4.	<p>The coalition’s policy must establish the levels of review and indicate which coalition staff or members must review and act upon the parental grievance in each level of review.</p>
5.	<p>The coalition’s policy must establish a methodology for presenting the parental grievance to the coalition (e.g. application forms, contact persons, process, etc.).</p>
6.	<p>The coalition’s policy must establish how the coalition will resolve the parental grievance.</p>

7.	<p>The coalition’s policy must establish a process for maintaining a record of substantiated parental complaints to comply with federal regulation 45 CFR 98.32.</p> <p>The Child Care Resource and Referral Network has policies and procedures for maintaining substantiated parental complaint records. Coalitions must record all complaints on a coalition approved form and retain them in a complaint file for a minimum of five years. Coalitions must report abuse/neglect complaints within the hour to the Florida Abuse Hotline and the licensing authority.</p>
8.	<p>The coalition’s policy must establish a process by which the coalition makes available to the public information regarding parental complaints on request to comply with federal regulation 45 CFR 98.32.</p> <p>The State shall –</p> <p>(a) Make information regarding such parental complaints available to the public on request; and (b) The Lead Agency shall provide a detailed description of how such record is maintained and is made available.</p>

VI. Coalition Plan Validation

A. Public Input

A SR Program plan a coalition submits must include documentation that the coalition has solicited from the local community and considered comments regarding the proposed SR Program plan (s. 1002.85(2)(i), F.S.).

1.	The coalition’s SR program plan must show how the coalition solicited community comments.
2.	The coalition’s SR Program plan must indicate that the coalition considered comments or suggestions from the local community during plan development.

The coalition certifies that it will provide all services compliance with the plan as the Florida Division of Early Learning (DEL) approved. The coalition further certifies that it will provide the local services in compliance with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations and the State Child Care and Development Fund Plan that Federal Department of Health and Human Services approved.

School Readiness Plan Template

Coalition Identification and Information

Coalition Name:
Address:

Phone:
E-mail Address:

FEIN #:
Mailing Address
(if different)
Fax:

Chair	Executive Director or Chief Executive Officer	Finance Director	Counties Represented

I. COALITION OPERATIONS

A. Membership

Please complete the **Coalition Membership Form**.

Early Learning Coalition of [Insert coalition name] Approved as of [date added when approved by DEL]								
Count or N/A	Designation in F.S. 1002.83(3) and (4)	Voting Member	Name Address Telephone Number Fax Number Email Address	Affiliation and/or Employment	For multi-county coalitions, indicate the county the member represents	Date Appointed	Length of Current Term and Date it Will End	Term
	Chair, appointed by the Governor	Yes						
	Private sector appointed by the Governor	Yes						
	Private sector appointed by the Governor	Yes						
	Department of Children & Family Services regional administrator or designee	Yes						
	District superintendent of schools or designee	Yes						
	Local workforce board executive director or designee	Yes						
	County health department director or designee	Yes						

Early Learning Coalition of [Insert coalition name] Approved as of [date added when approved by DEL]								
Count or N/A	Designation in F.S. 1002.83(3) and (4)	Voting Member	Name Address Telephone Number Fax Number Email Address	Affiliation and/or Employment	For multi-county coalitions, indicate the county the member represents	Date Appointed	Length of Current Term and Date it Will End	Term
	President of a Florida College System institution or his or her permanent designee	Yes						
	Member appointed by Board of County Commissioners or the governing board of a municipality	Yes						
	Head Start Director	Yes						
	Representative of private for-profit child care providers	Yes						
	Representative of faith based child care providers	Yes						
	Representative of program under federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act	Yes						
	Children services council or juvenile welfare board chair or executive director from each county, if applicable	Yes, if applicable						

Early Learning Coalition of [Insert coalition name] Approved as of [date added when approved by DEL]								
Count or N/A	Designation in F.S. 1002.83(3) and (4)	Voting Member	Name Address Telephone Number Fax Number Email Address	Affiliation and/or Employment	For multi-county coalitions, indicate the county the member represents	Date Appointed	Length of Current Term and Date it Will End	Term
	DCF child care regulation representative or child care licensing agency head	Yes, if applicable						
	Private Sector Business	Yes, if needed to meet multi-county representation						
	Private Sector Business	Yes, if needed to meet multi-county representation						
	Private Sector Business	Yes, if needed to meet multi-county representation						
	Private Sector Business	Yes, if needed to meet multi-county representation						
	Private Sector Business	Yes, if needed to meet multi-county representation						
	Private Sector Business	Yes, if needed to meet multi-county representation						
	Private Sector Business	Yes, if needed to meet multi-county representation						

