



www.elcfh.org

ELCFH Annual Board Meeting – Wednesday, August 26, 2026- 10:00 A.M.
Turner Center Annex, (2250 NE Roan St. in Arcadia)

The mission of the Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Heartland, Inc. is to support families and children in accessing high quality early care and education services via School Readiness and Voluntary Pre-kindergarten programs. The ELCFH also serves as a point of access to resources and referrals for health care and family support services.

Agenda Item	Content	Presenter(s)
1.	Call to Order- Introductions; Additions or Changes to the Agenda.	<i>John Stover, ELCFH Interim Board Chair</i>
2. Action p. 4-6 p. 7-10 p. 11 p. 12 p. 13 p.14-15 p.16 p.17	Consent Agenda- a. Approve minutes from the 5.27.26 Board Meeting b. Review Committee Meeting minutes c. Approve Board Membership: Ericka Brown, Faith-based Provider Representative d. Approve FY 26-27 Committee Roster e. Approve Surplus Inventory f. Approve FY 26-27 SR Budget modification g. Approve FY 26-27 VPK Budget modification h. Annual Approval of Children's Forum contract for SR/ VPK Provider CLASS Assessments	<i>John Stover</i>
3. Action p. 19 p. 20 p. 21	Related Party contracts for FY 26-27: Three contracts are being presented for the required 2/3 Board approval vote via roll call. Results will be reported to DEL as required: a. Approval of a contract with Hillestad Electric of Southwest Florida, LLC for electrical maintenance services is requested. b. Approval of a contract specific to ELCFH retirement benefits administration with Edward Jones (Adam Cummings) c. Approval of a contract specific to ELCFH Highlands Office handyman work (Steven Jones)	<i>Anne Brewer, Executive Director</i>

4. Action p. 22-24 p. 25-30 p. 31-33 p. 34 p. 35 p. 36	ELCFH Policy and SR Plan Updates: a. Employee Handbook 3.12: Background Screening Policy b. SR6: SR Program Eligibility and Enrollment c. SR7: SR Program Disenrollment due to Funding Constraints d. CP1- Provider Contracting, Program Assessment e. CP3 Child Screening f. CP4- Special Needs Rate	Anne Brewer
5. Information	Finance and Utilization Report- <i>Reports listed below will be presented via power point</i> • Financial overview- <i>Pam Hillestad, Director- Finance & IT</i> • FY 25-26 Utilization trends- <i>Olga Olvera, Director- Family Services</i> • FY 26-27 Provider contracting- <i>Kelly Wertenbach, Director- Provider Services</i>	Anne Brewer
6. Information p. 37-38	Board Chair Report: A report of the 8.12.26 Executive Committee meeting will be provided. Meeting minutes are included in the Board packet.	John Stover
7. Information	Agency Report: <i>Reports listed below will be presented via power point and posted on the ELCFH website as applicable.</i> a. ELCFH Community Needs Assessment (revised)- <i>Website</i> b. ELCFH Focus Areas: Review of FY 25-26 outcomes & approve plan for FY 26-27. - <i>Website</i> c. ELCFH FY 26-27 Org Chart - <i>Website</i> d. Hurricane Ian Grant Update- expansion of shelter backpacks project e. HB 797: Florida Nonprofit Corporation Act	Anne Brewer
8.	FY 25-26 Highlight: Teacher Feature! Examples of exemplary work and sound advice from early learning professionals in the ELCFH service area!	Beth Muller
9.	Thank you! • FY 25-26 Board Members and Funders • Local Funders and Partnerships • ELCFH Staff Service Awards <i>Thank you for having a  for children!</i>	John Stover
10. Adjourn	Next ELCFH Board Meeting: Wednesday, October 28, 2026 at 9:30 AM; via ZOOM and ELCFH Port Charlotte office (18501 Murdock Circle, Suite 200)	John Stover

ELCFH Board Meeting

Consent Agenda

August 26, 2026

Consent Agenda 2.a: ELCFH Meeting- Minutes; Wednesday, May 27, 2026 at 9:30 AM

Members Present: John Stover (Chair), Nancy Ebrahimi-Driggers (Vice Chair), Nancy Zachary (Secretary), Rick Pucci, Leigh Ann Moccia, Aaron Stitt, Larry Lawman, Gail Werley, Peg Elmore, Mary Stewart (Treasurer), Dr. Asena Mott, Dr. Amy Bennett, Amy Huddleston, Ashleigh Hayes

Members not present: Susan Norris (excused), Amber Chudoba (excused) Dr. Joe Pepe (excused)

ELCFH Staff Present: Anne Brewer, Pam Hillestad, Kelly Wertenbach, Beth Mueller, Tina Yates, Janet Lane, Olga Olvera, Vickmary Rodriguez

Guests: Tony Smith

Number required for quorum: 9 Number of voting members present: 14

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:34 AM; introductions were made. A quorum of ELCFH Board members was established.

2. Consent Agenda- The following items were presented for Board approval:

- i. Minutes from the 2.25.26 Board Meeting
- j. Committee Meeting minutes
- k. FY 26-27 Board and Committee Meeting calendar
- l. Annual Delegation of Authority Memo for ELCFH COOP
- m. FY 25-26 School Readiness Budget Modification- NOA/invoicing adjustments
- n. FY 25-26 SR Plus Budget Modification- invoicing adjustments
- o. FY 25-26 VPK Budget Modification- NOA/invoicing adjustments
- p. FY 25-26 Program Assessment Budget Modification - NOA/invoicing adjustments

A correction was announced to the 2.25.26 Board Meeting Minutes; the VPK admin percent on page 6 of the packet was corrected to read 3.9% Dr. Asena Mott made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda with the noted correction. Amy Huddleston seconded. The motion carried.

3. FY 24-25 Independent Auditor's Report- The audit for FY 24-25 was presented to the Board noting the report as clean and without any findings. The issue of a late submission due to the data breach in FY 23-24 had been fully corrected. ELCFH management had found an error in the accounting for program-related transactions; this required a prior period adjustment which has been fully completed. Larry Lawman made a motion to approve the FY 24-25 Independent Auditor's Report as presented. Nancy Ebrahimi-Driggers seconded. The motion carried.

4. RFP Proposal Submission and request to engage in contracting: Two RFPs were facilitated by the ELCFH in the 4th quarter as required; the proposed entities listed met the required criteria and were presented for approval for ELCFH contracting:

- a. **ELCFH Hurricane Ian Disaster Relief Funding-** Contract engagement with Becker's School Supplies for Childcare Provider Continuity of Operations (COOP) facility kits effective June 1, 2026. Dr. Amy Bennett made a motion to approve contracting with Becker's School Supplies July 1, 2026 as presented. Nancy Ebrahimi-Driggers seconded. The motion carried.

- b. **ELCFH Copier leasing services-** Contract engagement with Dex Imaging effective July 1, 2026 for copier leasing services for both of the ELCFH offices. Nancy Zachary made a motion to approve contracting with Dex Imaging effective July 1, 2026 as presented. Leigh Ann Moccia seconded. The motion carried.

5. ELCFH Policy Revision and new Policy was presented.

- a. ELCFH Policy *SR2- Parent Fees and Fee Waivers Waiver* was updated at the direction of DEL. An overview of the updates was presented and discussed. Dr. Asena Mott made a motion to approve the updates to ELCFH Policy SR2- Parent Fees and Fee Waivers Waiver as presented. Larry Lawman seconded. The motion carried.
- b. Newly developed policy *CP14- Developmentally Appropriate Practice in SR and VPK Programs* was presented. This policy would be incorporated into the ELCFH Contracted Provider Handbook. Most importantly, this policy addresses the requirement of verification of lesson plan implementation at contract SR and VPK provider sites. It was noted by the Board that the content of the policy is steeped in research. The ELCFH was commended for providing vital support to ELCFH providers on developmentally appropriate classroom practice through offered training and on-site technical assistance. Nancy Ebrahimi- Driggers made a motion to approve CP14- Developmentally Appropriate Practice in SR and VPK Programs as presented. Dr. Asena Mott seconded. The motion carried.

6. Board Membership, Officers and Committee Chairs for FY 26-27! – the following was presented by the ELCFH Administrative Committee in preparation for FY 26-27.

- a. Board seat change: Susan Norris, Private Sector Business (Highlands) effective July 1, 2026
- b. ELCFH Board Officer and Committee Chair appointments
- c. Board Membership recruitment: Faith-based Provider Representation
- d. The ELCFH continues to recruit for applicants for the Gubernatorial Appointment seats. Currently the ELCFH has two confirmed applications on file with the Governor's Appointments office

Leigh Anne Moccia made a motion to accept the FY 26-27 Board Membership and Board Officer and Committee Chair slate as presented. Rick Pucci seconded. The motion carried.

7. FY 26-27 School Readiness and VPK Budgets- The presented budgets are draft only; final budgets that align with the issued FY 26-27 DEL NOA will be presented at the August 25, 2026 Board meeting. Nancy Ebrahimi-Driggers made a motion to accept the draft FY 26-27 School Readiness and VPK budgets as presented. Ashleigh Hayes seconded. The motion carried.

8. Finance and Utilization report- the following informational reports were presented: The School Readiness program, at 83.3% of FY 25-26, has been expended at 71.9% with 1502 children enrolled in services. A total of 4.2% of the allowable 5% has been spent on admin. 82.7% of SR funds have been expended for direct services (of a 78% mandated earmark).

Currently the ELCFH is serving 1,429 VPK children with 3.7% in admin (of an allowable 5%). The waitlist for SR services is being purged every 15 days with 100% of families being invited in throughout the month. The ELCFH has served a total of 2,070 unduplicated children in the School Readiness program since July 1, 2025.

The Match Funding Report for the SR program was also provided noting that the UWCF application for Hardee and Highlands direct services match funding is in process and due by June 1st. The site visit for UWCC/ CBOCC direct services funding for Charlotte County was held on May 18th. The ELCFH participated in the Giving Challenge in April and all funding received will be utilized directly

for the bookbag buddies program.

Other activities reported: Copperfish Books facilitated the annual book drive again and the results of the donations are expected in soon. This event has served as an exceptional way for the ELCFH to secure “tender topic” books for children in need that might be otherwise difficult to obtain. The DEL Fiscal Monitor has concluded and it was reported that the ELCFH has no findings or observations. The ELCFH Finance Team was commended!

9. ELCFH Agency Report- *Anne Brewer*

- a. Chancellor Miller’s visit to ELCFH/ Charlotte County included time with ELCFH Board members, provider site visits and energized conversation with the full ELCFH staff team about early learning services in the ELCFH service area. The ELCFH Position Statement on School Readiness was discussed along with challenges facing overall program quality and family access to needed services. Chancellor Miller discussed the need for applications for Gubernatorial appointments for the ELCFH Board and offered support for applications on file so that open seats could be filled.
- b. Updated format to Board listing on website: the Administrative Committee worked with ELCFH management to revise the ELCFH Board listing on the website to include headshots. Photos are optional for members and can be provided/ updated at any time during the fiscal year. The new page will launch at the start of FY 26-27.
- c. DEL Accountability Monitor: the DEL Accountability Monitor team visited the ELCFH on May 19th. A review of the report showed that there were relatively few issues, and the DEL team commended the ELCFH for the policies, processes and teamwork in place.
- d. Provider Appreciation Day, Friday, May 8, 2026: all contracted providers were given a parachute for multi-age gross motor play along with an ELCFH created parachute play activity book. Providers shared that they really enjoyed receiving this!
- e. Board Membership: Gubernatorial applications from eligible private sector business leaders needed! The ELCFH currently has two verified/ completed applications on file. Chancellor Miller has been advised of both. At least one additional application is needed to assure all three Gubernatorial Appointment seats are filled.

Open Forum The following was shared: Board members were reminded of the annual form submission and to submit electronically to abrewer@elcfh.org by Friday, May 29th.

Adjourn **Next ELCFH Board meeting:** FY 26-27 Annual Meeting! Wednesday, August 26th, 2026 @ 10:00 AM at the Turner Center (2250 NE Roan St, Arcadia). It was noted that this is an in-person meeting! The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 AM.

Minutes prepared by Anne Brewer, Executive Director

Date

Meeting minutes approved by Nancy Zachary, Board Secretary

Da

Consent Agenda 2.b: Finance Committee Meeting Minutes- 5.27.26

Board Members Present: Mary Stewart, Peg Elmore, Amy Huddleston, John Stover

ELCFH Staff Present: Anne Brewer, Pam Hillestad, Olga Olvera, Beth Mueller, Kelly Wertenbach, Tina Yates, Janet Lane, Vickmary Rodriguez

Guests: Tony Smith

Agenda Item	Content
1. Opening	The meeting opened at 9:03 AM.
2. Reports	Utilization Report for School Readiness (SR) and VPK: SR at 83.3% of FY 25-26 shows a total of 71.9% of funding expended. • 82.7% for Direct Services (of a required 78% minimum) • 4.2% of an allowable 5% for Administrative costs, which make up part of the total 17.3% non-direct costs (of a total allowable maximum of 22%). • A total caseload of 1,502 children was billed for SR in April 2026. The VPK program is expended at 79.7% as of 83.3% of FY 25-26 with a total child count of 1,429. The admin cost is 3.7% of an allowable 5%. Other reports presented: <u>FY 25-26 April Data Report:</u> Waitlist pulls are being facilitated every 15 days with 100% of families being invited in, resulting in a higher rate of determined eligibility. The YTD unduplicated child count of children served via SR was reported at 2,070. <u>School Readiness Grant Expenditures</u> - from 7.1.25 – 4.30.26. <u>VPK Grant Expenditures</u> - from 7.1.25 – 4.30.26. <u>FY 25-26 5/19/2026 Balance Sheet and Cash Flow report:</u> it was announced that needed funding was just deposited upping the cash balance to \$1,140,138. The SR and VPK refundable advances are in process of being paid back to DEL as required. <u>April 2026 Direct Services and Program/ Quality Activities Match Report (FY 25-26):</u> It was reported that the UWCF application for Hardee and Highlands direct services match funding is in process and due by June 1st. The site visit for UWCC/ CCBOCC direct services funding for Charlotte County was held on May 18th. Other report highlights included the Copperfish Books book drive being held this month and the United Way Suncoast pivot to allow purchase of cozy corner materials for two sites in need in DeSoto County.
3. Items to the Board	The following items were presented for consensus to move to the May 27, 2026 Board Meeting (via consent agenda) for approval: • FY 25-26 SR Budget Adjustment Proposal/ NOA reflecting deobligation of SR and QPI funds (including by County budget adjustment) • FY 25-26 SRPlus Budget Adjustment Proposal

	• FY 25-26 VPK Budget Adjustment Proposal/ NOA reflecting deobligation of funds • FY 25-26 VPAS Budget Adjustment Proposal/ NOA reflecting reobligation of funds Committee members were asked if the report reflecting movement of funds between counties was useful to review. It was agreed that this would continue to be included. <u>The committee recommended approval at the 5.27.26 Board meeting of the four budget proposals as presented.</u> The FY 26-27 SR and VPK Budgets Proposals Draft #1 were presented and discussed. These have been provided to the full Board for approval at the May 27th Board meeting. The finalized budgets will be presented to the Board at the Annual Meeting in August (pending the finalized NOA from DEL for FY 26-27) . <u>The committee recommended approval at the FY 26-27 SR and VPK DRAFT budgets as presented.</u>
4. Expenditures over \$5,000	The following expenditures were reported as reviewed and approved by the Board Treasurer: • 04/30/26 – ACH - \$7,360 – Children’s Forum - March 2026 Assessments, 7 SR and 9 VPK Classrooms • 5/14/26 – Check#27317 – \$6,425 - Ashley, Brown & Smith CPA, Audit Fees for Completion of FY 24-25 Audit • 5/18/26 – ACH - \$12,500 – Child Care Biz Help LLC – Third/Final Installment for Provider COOP Training
5. Other items reported	Credit Card Review: 05/26/26 - April Charges (05/05/2026 Closing) – (\$189.20) due to refund of One Goal Registration for Beth Mueller (will be presenting at conference) The Bank Reconciliations for April 2026 are pending review by the Board Treasurer. FY 24-25 Audit: The audit was completed and submitted to the Clearinghouse by the March 31st deadline. The auditor will be present at the May 27, 2026 Board meeting to formally present the audit to the Board.
6. Open Forum	Nothing additional to report.
7. Adjourn	The meeting adjourned at 9:25 AM

Consent Agenda 2.b: Quality Committee Meeting Minutes- 8.20.26

Board Members Present: Susan Norris, Rick Pucci, Gail Werley, Leigh Ann Moccia, Ericka Brown
Partners Present: Kendra Stamp, Trena Miller, Billie-Jo Moretta, Susan Fleming, Altagracia Lajara, Janice Houchins,
Staff Members Present: Anne Brewer, Beth Mueller, Janet Lane, Pam Hillestad, Kelly Wertenbach

Agenda Items	Item Overview	Comments/ Actions
1. Opening	The meeting opened at 9:00 AM. Introductions were made. The 5.21.26 Quality Committee meeting minutes were presented and reviewed.	
2. Committee Discussion & Reccs to the ELCFH Board	Review- 5.21.26- Quality Comm meeting minutes: The 5.21.26 Quality Committee meeting minutes were presented and reviewed. It was noted that Provider Handbook Policy CP14 had been approved by the Board at the May 27th Board meeting and was being utilized as a review point during initial visits for FY 26-27 with contracted providers. Faith-based Provider Representative: <i>Ericka Brown, DeSoto County</i>- has been elected as the new representative/ Board member and is slated to be approved at the August 26th Board meeting. Provider Policy revisions: Committee members were asked to review and make recommendations to the ELCFH Board for approval. All of the policies are existing and were in need of updating due to changes in Florida Rule: CP1- Contracting, Program Assessment: language specific to requirements for minimum threshold for contracting was clarified and unneeded language deleted; new language regarding orientation requirements was added. CP3- Child Screening: updates were applied to the number of days for parent completion. ELCFH notification emails to the provider language was added. Further clarification was needed regarding the number of days providers have to complete the screenings as applicable. CP4- Provider Specials Needs Rate: updates regarding training requirements for the special needs rate was added. <u>Committee members recommended Board approval of all three policies with updates noted as discussed.</u> Hurricane Ian Relief Grant- next steps: Areas of current discussion and application revision (as required) were to broaden distribution of backpack shelter kits, Broaden scope of Provider Grants (Charlotte, DeSoto, Hardee); and Facilitate additional round of COOP training (with	

	recorded session from ChildCare Biz) to meet desired outcome of 50 providers certified. The committee was in favor of broadening the backpacks to emergency shelters in the service area.
Discussion Items	Provider Sanctions- An overview of applied provider sanctions was provided. Some providers are struggling with maintaining health and safety standards per the DCF childcare licensing requirements. The ELCFH stance is to support providers and help them to move toward good habits that will assure compliant DCF reports. Provider Event is scheduled for February 27, 2027 and will be held in Arcadia. Devereux has been contracted to facilitate the training day with the focus on FLIP-IT/Challenging Behaviors training. The event will serve as the launch to the FLIP-IT/Challenging Behaviors bundles and will be followed by virtual session specific to teachers and other sessions specific to non-teaching staff/ parents. Book Bag Buddies update: The ELCFH received \$2400 from the April 2026 Giving Challenge, all of which is being applied to the ELCFH Book Bag Buddies Program. Additionally, The Cape Haze/ Engle Kiwanis provided a donation to support Book Bag Buddies in Charlotte County. This program supports outreach to SR funded children who are either entered foster care or who have endured some kind of trauma. Additional funding may be coming from a new local partner. DEL Updates – VPK: agenda notes from the 8.12.26 DEL Statewide VPK Program Administrator Meeting were provided. Noted included info on Emergency Literacy training requirements/ micro-credential, back-to-school reminders, New Worlds Reading initiative, and DCF Transcript updating. The committee engaged in discussion specific to requirement for emergent literacy requirement. It was suggested that providers refresh their transcripts annually in their staff files to assure they have the most current information on record.
3. Healthy Families	The Charlotte program provided the 4 th quarter performance measures report (4.1.26 – 6.30.26), noting all measure performance showing as “ met or exceeded “ with the exception of one item, which had to do with non-responsiveness of a family. The site is currently recruiting for a new bilingual home visitor. Similar results were reported for the Desoto/ Hardee Program.
4. Open Forum	The HIPPY Home visitstion program requested information on events to help recruit new families. Fliers can be made avilaable either as a hard copy on electronically.
5. Adjourn	The meeting adjourned at 10:01 AM.

Consent Agenda 2.c:

Board Membership: Faith-based Provider Representative

Per ELCFH Policy ADM-3 (Contracted Provider Representatives), a ballot with qualified applicants was presented to all faith-based providers for a vote, and then to the Administrative Committee for recommendation to the Board.

ELCFH Board Seat #12:	Faith-based Provider Representative (1002.83(4)(k) F.S.)
Applicant:	Ericka Brown
Affiliation:	Owner/ Director, Faith Preparatory School, DeSoto County
Proposed Appointment Date:	August 26, 2026
Term:	1 st Term: August 26, 2026 – June 30, 2030
Roster entry approved by DEL:	August 12, 2026

Statement of Interest:

I believe that it's important to be active in our community. Working with directors in our area to share our passion for children is one of my joys. Unless you are in our profession, most people don't understand the value of what we do. I love having conversations to inform others that we are "not just babysitting". Being a faith based program, allows us the ability to teach children that they are loved and safe in our school.

Consent Agenda 2.d:

FY 26-27 ELCFH Committee Roster

Executive Committee	Meeting Dates/ Times (via ZOOM)
John Stover, <i>Locally elected Board Chair</i>	Wed, Aug 12 @ 9AM
Nancy Ebrahimi-Driggers, <i>Board Vice Chair</i>	Wed, Dec 9 after 9AM Finance
Mary Stewart, <i>Board Treasurer</i>	As needed
Nancy Zachary, <i>Board Secretary</i>	

Administrative Committee	Meeting Dates/ Times (via ZOOM)
Aaron Stitt, <i>Committee Chair</i>	Thurs, Nov 5 at 9AM
Dr. Joe Pepe	Thurs, Feb 1 @ 9AM
Asena Mott	Thurs, May 13 @ 9AM
Larry Lawman	
Dr. Amy Bennett	

Finance Committee	Meeting Dates/ Times (via ZOOM)	
Mary Stewart, <i>Board Treasurer, Committee Chair</i>	Wed, Sept 23 @ 9AM	Wed, Feb 24 @ 9AM
Peg Elmore	Wed, Oct 28 @ 9AM	Wed, Mar 24 @ 9AM
Ashleigh Hayes	Wed, Dec 9 @ 9AM	Wed, Apr 28 @ 9AM
Amy Huddleston	Wed, Jan 27 @ 9AM	Wed, June 9 @ 9AM

Quality Committee	Meeting Dates/ Times (via ZOOM)
Susan Norris, <i>Committee Chair</i>	Thurs, Aug 20 @ 9AM
Rick Pucci	Thurs, Oct 15 @ 9AM
Leigh Ann Moccia	Thurs, Jan 14 @ 9AM
Gail Werley	Thurs, March 18 @ 9AM
Amber King	Thurs, May 20, @ 9AM
Ericka Brown	

Consent Agenda 2.e: Surplus Inventory

Division of Early Learning Surplus Property Form

To: Florida Division of Early Learning 325 West Gaines Street, Suite 522 Tallahassee, FL 32399	From: ELC of Florida's Heartland 18501 Murdock Circle, Suite 200 Port Charlotte, FL 33948
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Page: 1
 Date: 7/7/2026

Line #	Description of Property	Tag #	Serial Number	Condition	Comments	Physical Location:
1	Cross Match - Bundled Guardian USB System	1558	PA2EPA3EPA, CXP558L1	Outdated	Software/Laptop all outdated - orig purchase 2010	As Above
2	Edgemark 250IAD 8Ex4A Telephone System w/Telephones	1820	Service Order #N3016818591386 0319	Outdated	AT&T VOIP Converter for Faxes - orig purchase 2017	Custodian Delegate: Pamela Hillestad Director Finance & IT (941) 255-1650 x140
3						
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10						
11						Suncom Number: NA
12						
13						Fax Number: (941) 255-5856
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19						Board Approved Date:
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23						Posted Date:
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Custodian Signature: Pamela Hillestad Date: 7/7/2026

Consent Agenda 2.f: FY 26-27 SR Budget modification

School Readiness Budget FY 26-27 Draft 070126 NOA

Roll-Up

School Readiness Grant

Account Description:	2026/27 SR Approved Budget	2026/27 SR Proposed Budget	2026/27 SR Grant Earmarks	(Over)/Under Earmarks	% of Total Budget
SR-Eligibility/Non-Direct	1,037,515	1,052,491			8.2%
SR-QI Infant/Toddler can Include GSD	96,453	97,024			0.8%
SR-Quality	642,971	653,630	511,151	(142,479)	5.1%
SR-Scholarships (minimum 78%)	10,278,323	10,326,790	9,967,437	(359,353)	80.8%
SR-Coalition Administration (max 5%)	567,717	563,244	638,936	55,694	4.6%
Resource and Referral	7,231	7,284			0.1%
Inclusion Services	57,777	58,302			0.5%
Total Allocated:	12,687,967	12,778,765	11,117,536		100.0%
	0	0	1,661,239		0.0%
Total Grant Revenue:	12,687,967	12,778,765	12,778,765		100.0%

		2026/27 SR	2026/27 SR
	Account Description	Approved Budget	Proposed Budget
5000-5021	Salaries, Taxes and Benefits	1,914,258	1,999,258
6111	CDE-Annual Conference	12,000	12,000
6132	CDE-Director Mentor Stipend	2,500	2,500
6200	CD-Annual Memberships	250	250
6206	CD-Website	4,117	5,117
6209	Hosted Technology Services	41,630	46,755
6301	Audit Fees	24,868	24,868
6302	Computer/Technical Support	2,962	4,235
6303	Legal Fees	7,441	12,000
6304	Professional Services	53,820	53,820
6400	Bank Fees	5,382	5,382
6500	Travel	10,020	10,020
6501	Conference Travel	3,320	6,820
6600	Telephone/DSL	7,937	7,937
6601	Cell Phone Services	7,545	7,545
6602	Internet Services	6,714	6,714
6700	Postage	2,941	2,941
6800	Rent	174,830	174,830
6802	Occupancy Expenses	1,083	1,083
6901	Copies: Lease	9,777	9,777
6902	Copies: Usage	777	1,802
6903	Office Supplies	9,226	9,226
6904	Software	9,907	9,907
6905	Storage Expenses	4,163	4,163
6906	Utilities	3,349	3,349
6910	Books	2,500	2,500
6951	Staff/Board Expense	232	232
7000	Educational Expenses	2,000	2,000
7001	Licensing	113	113
7002	Membership Dues	4,547	4,547
7003	Staff Development	2,964	2,964
7004	Staff Screening	393	722

8/18/2026

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		2026/27 SR	2026/27 SR
	Account Description	Approved Budget	Proposed Budget
7100	Janitorial Services	7,489	7,489
7101	Janitorial Supplies	1,126	1,126
7102	Leasehold Improvements	5,196	5,196
7200	Insurance: Liability	5,370	5,370
7202	Insurance: Property	3,332	3,332
7203	Insurance: D&O	4,640	4,640
7204	Insurance & Surety Bonds (Other)	1,949	2,449
7300	Outside Printing	2,000	2,000
7500	Program Supplies	25,000	25,000
7700	Small Equipment	10,000	10,000
8000	Capital Purchases - Equipment	10,000	10,000
		2,409,664	2,451,975
	SR Provider Payments	10,278,323	10,326,790
		12,687,987	12,778,765

8/18/2026

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Consent Agenda 2.g: FY 26-27 VPK Budget modification

FY 26-27 VPK Budget - NOA 7/01/26

Roll-up

Revenues:	2026/27 VPK Approved Budget	2026/27 VPK Proposed Budget
VPK Administration	229,024.00	227,849.00
VPK Program Services	4,580,470.00	4,556,979.00
Total Grant Revenues:	4,809,494.00	4,784,828.00

Acct #	Account Description	2025/26 VPK Approved Budget	2026/27 VPK Proposed Budget
5000-5021	Salaries, Taxes and Benefits	191,551	190,376
6006	Website	333	333
6009	Hosted Technology Services	3,371	3,371
6301	Audit Fees	1,932	1,932
6302	Computer/Technical Support	262	262
6303	Legal Fees	613	613
6304	Professional Services - Other	600	600
6400	Bank Fees	418	418
6500	Travel	405	405
6501	Conference Travel	180	180
6600	Telephone/DSL	663	663
6601	Cell Phone Services	496	496
6602	Internet Services	456	456
6700	Postage	959	959
6800	Rent	15,258	15,258
6802	Occupancy Expenses	49	49
6901	Copier Lease	514	514
6902	Copier Usage	63	63
6903	Office Supplies	746	746
6904	Software	779	779
6905	Storage Expenses	337	337
6906	Utilities	151	151
6911	Personal Protective Equipment	0	0
6951	Staff/Board Expense	18	18
7000	Educational Expense	0	0
7001	Licensing	9	9
7002	Membership Dues	353	353
7003	Staff Development	36	36
7004	Staff Screening	7	7
7100	Janitorial Services	431	431
7101	Janitorial Supplies	74	74
7102	Leasehold Improvements	305	305
7200	Insurance: Liability	430	430
7202	Insurance: Property	268	268
7203	Insurance: D&O	361	361
7204	Insurance: Surety Bonds and Other	151	151
7300	Outside Printing	1,000	1,000
7500	Program Supplies	3,516	3,516
7700	Small Equipment	600	600
8000	Capital Purchases - Equipment	1,000	1,000
	Total Operating Budget	229,024	227,849
7601	VPK Provider Payments	4,580,470	4,556,979
	Total Budget	\$ 4,809,494	4,784,828

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Consent Agenda 2.j: FY 26-27 Children's Forum contract for SR/ VPK Provider CLASS Assessments (annual approval)

CHILDREN'S FORUM

**PURCHASE ORDER REQUEST: ASSESSMENT SERVICES
with WELS Direct Entry or 4-Cycle Entry with one set of notes**

Office use only:
PO# _____
Contract #24-L.10

PO Request Date:	05/26/2026		
Customer Organization Name:	Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Heartland		
Address:	18501 Murdock Circle, Suite 200		
City:	Port Charlotte	State:	FL Zip code: 33948
Phone:	(941) 255-1650		
Invoice Contact Name(s):	Anne Brewer		
Invoice Email Address(es):	abrewer@elcfh.org		

Final Completion Date for all Observations:	6/30/27		
Total Number of Programs to be Observed:	93		
Total Number of Classrooms to be Observed:	234		
Cost Per Observation (Effective 07/01/2026 - 06/30/2027)	\$460	Total Cost:	\$ 107,640.00

Note:

The Children's Forum (Forum) will fulfill assessment requests up to the number reflected on this Purchase Order providing we have been given all necessary classroom information and are able to meet the need at the time that the classroom must be assessed. The Forum may not be able to complete some assessments or may not be able to complete assessments at the requested time due to circumstances beyond the Forum's control including but not limited to weather related events, public health emergencies, contractor or staff illness or emergency, and shifts in availability of contracted assessors. The Forum will notify funders as soon as possible should we be unable to complete an assessment or meet a specific due date for a requested assessment.

Customer Authorized Signator Signature: _____ Name: <u>Anne Brewer</u> Title: <u>Executive Director</u> Date: <u>June 10, 2026</u>	Children's Forum Authorized Signator Signature: _____ Name: _____ Title: _____ Date: _____
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The Children's Forum will invoice the customer contact(s) listed above for services within 30 days of completing the requested assessments.

Submit completed purchase orders to iroberts@thechildrensforum.com



ELCFH Board Meeting Packet- Action and Information Items

August 26, 2026

Agenda Item 3.a: Related Parties Contract- Hillestad Electric of Southwest Florida, LLC

This Contract for Services is made effective as of 07/01/2026, by and between Hillestad Electric of Southwest Florida, LLC, (Jack Hillestad), and the Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Heartland, Inc. ("ELCFH") of 18501 Murdock Circle, Suite 200, Port Charlotte, Florida 33948.

1. **DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES.** Beginning on July 1, 2026, Hillestad Electric of SW FL., LLC will provide to ELCFH the following services (collectively, the "Services"): (Electrical and varied services to be detailed on all work orders/ PO and may include any material costs as needed.)
2. **PAYMENT.** Payment shall be made to Hillestad Electric of Southwest Florida, LLC, in the amount of \$50 per hour, upon completion of the services described in this Contract and supported by the attached signed/ approved work order and any approved receipts.
3. **TERM.** This Contract will begin on July 1, 2026 for a period of 1 year as based on review and the needs of the ELCFH. Changes in hourly rate will require a new General Contract,
4. **REMEDIES.** In addition to all other rights a party may have available according to law, if a party defaults by failing to substantially perform any provision, term or condition of this Contract, the other party may terminate the Contract by providing written notice to the defaulting party. This notice shall describe in sufficient detail the nature of the default. The party receiving such notice shall have 15 days from the effective date of such notice to cure the default(s). Unless waived in writing by a party providing notice, the failure to cure the default(s) within such time period shall result in the automatic termination of this Contract.
5. **ENTIRE AGREEMENT.** This Contract contains the entire agreement of the parties, and there are no other promises or conditions in any other agreement whether oral or written concerning the subject matter of this Contract. This Contract supersedes any prior written or oral agreements between the parties.
6. **GOVERNING LAW.** This Contract shall be construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Florida.
7. **NOTICE.** Any notice or communication required or permitted under this Contract shall be sufficiently given if delivered in person or by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the address set forth in the opening paragraph or to such other address as one party may have furnished to the other in writing.
8. **WAIVER OF CONTRACTUAL RIGHT.** The failure of either party to enforce any provision of this Contract shall not be construed as a waiver or limitation of that party's right to subsequently enforce and compel strict compliance with every provision of this Contract.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be executed by their duly authorized representatives as of the date first above written and effective as of the date first above written.

Hillestad Electric of Southwest Florida, LLC:

By: _____ Date: July 1, 2026
Jack Hillestad, owner

Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Heartland, Inc:

By: _____ Date: July 1, 2026
Anne Brewer, M.A., Executive Director

Agenda Item 3.b: Related Parties Contract- Adam Cummings (Edward Jones)

This Notification of Services is made effective as of 07/01/2026, by and between Adam Cummings, Financial Advisor for Edward Jones and the Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Heartland, Inc. ("ELCFH") of 18501 Murdock Circle, Suite 200, Port Charlotte, Florida 33948.

- 1. DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES.** Beginning on July 1, 2026, Adam Cummings will provide to ELCFH the following services (collectively, the "Services"): Provide financial advice and investment strategies to build and maintain the Simple IRA Pension Plan for each ELCFH employee.
- 2. PAYMENT.** Payments will not be made directly to Adam Cummings. ACH deposits will be transferred, on a bi-weekly basis, to the Simple IRA pension accounts of each individual employee.
- 3. TERM.** This Notification will begin on July 1, 2026 and renew each fiscal year as based on review and the needs of the ELCFH.
- 4. REMEDIES.** In addition to all other rights a party may have available according to law, if a party defaults by failing to substantially perform any provision, term or condition of this Contract, the other party may terminate the Contract by providing written notice to the defaulting party. This notice shall describe in sufficient detail the nature of the default. The party receiving such notice shall have 15 days from the effective date of such notice to cure the default(s). Unless waived in writing by a party providing notice, the failure to cure the default(s) within such time period shall result in the automatic termination of this Contract.
- 5. ENTIRE AGREEMENT.** This Contract contains the entire agreement of the parties, and there are no other promises or conditions in any other agreement whether oral or written concerning the subject matter of this Contract. This Contract supersedes any prior written or oral agreements between the parties.
- 6. GOVERNING LAW.** This Contract shall be construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Florida.
- 7. NOTICE.** Any notice or communication required or permitted under this Contract shall be sufficiently given if delivered in person or by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the address set forth in the opening paragraph or to such other address as one party may have furnished to the other in writing.
- 8. WAIVER OF CONTRACTUAL RIGHT.** The failure of either party to enforce any provision of this Contract shall not be construed as a waiver or limitation of that party's right to subsequently enforce and compel strict compliance with every provision of this Contract.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be executed by their duly authorized representatives as of the date first above written and effective as of the date first above written.

Adam Cummings, Financial Advisor for Edward Jones ELC of Florida's Heartland, Inc:

By: _____ Date: July 1, 2026

Adam Cummings, CFP, CRPA

By: _____ Date: July 1, 2026

Anne Brewer, M.A., Executive Director

Agenda Item 3.c: Related Parties Contract- Steven Jones- Handyman Services

This Contract for Services is made effective as of 07/01/2026, by and between Steven Jones and the Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Heartland, Inc. ("ELCFH") of 18501 Murdock Circle, Suite 200, Port Charlotte, Florida 33948.

1. **DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES.** Beginning on July 1, 2026, Steven Jones will provide to ELCFH the following services (collectively, the "Services"): varied handyman services to be detailed on all work orders/ PO and may include any material costs as needed.
2. **PAYMENT.** Payment shall be made to Steven Jones, in the amount of \$25 per hour, upon completion of the services described in this Contract and supported by the attached signed/ approved work order and any approved receipts.
3. **TERM.** This Contract will begin on July 1, 2026 for a period of 1 year as based on review and the needs of the ELCFH. Changes in hourly rate will require a new General Contract.
4. **REMEDIES.** In addition to all other rights a party may have available according to law, if a party defaults by failing to substantially perform any provision, term or condition of this Contract, the other party may terminate the Contract by providing written notice to the defaulting party. This notice shall describe in sufficient detail the nature of the default. The party receiving such notice shall have 15 days from the effective date of such notice to cure the default(s). Unless waived in writing by a party providing notice, the failure to cure the default(s) within such time period shall result in the automatic termination of this Contract.
5. **ENTIRE AGREEMENT.** This Contract contains the entire agreement of the parties, and there are no other promises or conditions in any other agreement whether oral or written concerning the subject matter of this Contract. This Contract supersedes any prior written or oral agreements between the parties.
6. **GOVERNING LAW.** This Contract shall be construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Florida.
7. **NOTICE.** Any notice or communication required or permitted under this Contract shall be sufficiently given if delivered in person or by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the address set forth in the opening paragraph or to such other address as one party may have furnished to the other in writing.
8. **WAIVER OF CONTRACTUAL RIGHT.** The failure of either party to enforce any provision of this Contract shall not be construed as a waiver or limitation of that party's right to subsequently enforce and compel strict compliance with every provision of this Contract.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be executed by their duly authorized representatives as of the date first above written and effective as of the date first above written.

Steven Jones

By: _____ Date: July 1, 2026
Steven Jones

Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Heartland, Inc:

By: _____ Date: July 1, 2026
Anne Bouhebent, M.A., Executive Directo

Agenda Item 4.a: ELCFH Policy Updates- ELCFH Employee Handbook Policy 3.12 Background/Criminal Record Check & Drug Screen

The ELCFH meets the definition of a “qualified entity” and has ELCFH employees, including full time and part time staff, sub-recipients, contractors, and volunteers who have access to confidential information and/or contact with children, and who meet the definition of a “Qualified Entity” “covered individual,” according to section 943.0542, F.S. These individuals will have a Level 2 background screening/ criminal record check completed according to 435.04 F.S. A level 2 screening requires fingerprinting for statewide criminal history records checks through FDLE, and national criminal history records checks through the Federal Bureau of Investigation and may include local criminal records checks through local law enforcement agencies, as well as a drug screening prior to the first day of work/ assigned contract work. The ELCFH will pay for the Level 2 background screening as well as the drug screening. “Qualified entities” will be requested to sign a consent form for Level II background screening before screenings are performed. Refusal will result in rescinding the offer of employment and termination.

ELCFH contractors and sub-recipients, subcontractors, and volunteers who are not defined as “Qualified Entities” covered individuals but are assigned duties or responsibilities which may have them in contact with children and/or confidential information will also be required to have a Level II background screen as described above.

Alleged screening offenses are subject to review by the Executive Director and/or designee. A determination will be made as to whether the offense is one that would exclude an employee, sub-recipient, contractor, subcontractor, or volunteer from continuing employment.

If it is determined that certain ELCFH employee(s) do not meet the definition of a “covered individual”, while having access to confidential information, those ELCFH staff shall receive a level 1 background screening, per s. 435.03, F.S., that requires screening for employment history, statewide criminal correspondence checks through FDLE, a check of the Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public Website, and a local criminal records check through local law enforcement agencies. This is as defined in 402.302, F.S., Background screening costs for ELC board members and volunteers are allowable ELC expenditures. A volunteer who assists on an intermittent basis for less than 10 hours per month is not included in the term ‘personnel’ for the purposes of screening and training if a person who meets the screening requirements of s. 402.305(2) is always present and has the volunteer in his or her line of sight.

Any subrecipient, contractor, or subcontractor who does not meet the definition of “Qualified Entity” or who FDLE has determined does not meet the definition of “Qualified Entity” or whose employee(s) will perform duties under contract with the ELC and are permitted unsupervised access to ELC or DEL confidential information (about the children in care or their family and child care providers) shall comply with all of the above. However, the screening shall only include the equivalent of a level 1 background screening that requires screening for employment history, statewide criminal correspondence checks through the FDLE, a check of the Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public Website and local criminal

records check through local law enforcement agencies. For subrecipients, contractors, or subcontractors that have staff residing out of the State of Florida, the ELC's agreement with the subrecipient, contractor or subcontractor shall include a requirement for the subrecipient, contractor or subcontractor employees assigned to the agreement to receive the equivalent of a level 1 screening in the state in which the employee resides in.

Any ELCFH employee, sub-recipient, contractor, subcontractor, or volunteer who is arrested or receives notice of possible criminal prosecution, including any violation mandating a court appearance, must notify the ELCFH Executive Director and direct supervisor within 48 hours of being arrested for any criminal offense. The ELCFH will review the alleged offense within 48 hours of the notification, determine whether the offense is one that would exclude the employee under a level 2 screening and, if so, remove the employee from work on this agreement. If the 48 hour period falls on a Saturday, Sunday or paid holiday, the determination will occur the next business day.

For purposes of this policy a minor traffic violation is defined as a non-criminal violation that may require community service hours but is not punishable by incarceration and for which there is no right to trial by jury. Criminal traffic violations, including driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, are not minor and must be reported.

ELCFH Employees, sub-recipient, contractor, subcontractor, or volunteer with backgrounds deemed contrary to the best interest of the ELCFH will not be eligible for employment/continued employment with the ELCFH (*reference Section II, Employment: Termination from Employment, also Section III, Workplace Policies and Regulations: Drug-Free Workplace*). The employee, sub-recipient, contractor, subcontractor, or volunteer will not be allowed to return to work unless they are cleared of all charges. Employees who are absent from work due to incarceration and /or court appearances will have their time away from work charged against any available PLT or as unpaid leave.

The ELCFH requires (as applicable) any sub-recipients, contractors or subcontractors to:

1. Notify the ELCFH Executive Director within 48 hours of an employee being arrested or removed from working on the contract for any criminal offense;
2. Review the alleged offense within 48 hours, determine whether the offense is one that would exclude the employee under a level 2 screening and, if so, remove the employee from work on the contract. If the 48 hour period fall on a Saturday, Sunday or paid holiday, the determination will occur on the next business day;
3. Not permit the employee to return to work on the contract until cleared of all charges that would exclude the employee under a level 2 background screening.

Level I and Level 2 Background /Criminal Record Checks and drug screenings may be performed on all ELCFH employees, sub-recipient, contractor, subcontractor, or volunteer under the following circumstances:

1. As a condition of **initial employment**
2. Employee background screenings must be from no earlier than five (5) years before the employee's ELC employment dates.
3. **Re-Hires:** Anyone who is re-hired with a 90 day or more lapse of employment/ work with the ELCFH will be rescreened.
4. **Five year up-date:** All ELCFH employees, sub-recipient, contractor, subcontractor, or volunteers will have a rescreen of their required background/Criminal Record Check every five years before the anniversary date of their prior screening. A drug screen will be performed if it is deemed necessary.
5. **Random checks:** Routine, periodic background /criminal record check and/or drug screening may be required at the discretion of the ELCFH.
6. **On-the-job accident/injury:** An employee involved in an accident or injury maybe required to submit to a drug screening (including alcohol).
7. **Erratic or unusual behavior:** In the event an ELCFH employee, sub-recipient, contractor, subcontractor, or volunteer is observed displaying erratic or unusual behavior, a drug screening including alcohol may be required.

The ELCFH shall obtain and maintain on file the following documentation for all employees prior to their first day of employment and subrecipient, contractor, and subcontractor staff prior to their first day of work associated with the agreement_

1. The highest level of education claimed, if the position requires.
2. **Documentation of the position description**
3. All applicable professional licenses claimed, if the position requires.
4. Applicable employment history, if the position requires.

Any subrecipient, contractor, or subcontractor who does not meet the definition of "qualified entity" and who has staff that will perform duties under this agreement, but will have absolutely no interaction with nor be present around a child in care nor will they have access to any confidential information about either a child in care or that child's family is not required to submit its employees to a background screening.

Agenda Item 4.b: ELCFH Policy Updates- SR Program Eligibility & Enrollment

ELCFH FAMILY SERVICES

SR6 Policy and Process	Subject: <i>School Readiness Eligibility and Enrollment; Child disenrollment from School Readiness Services</i>	Effective date	12.14.22; 5.27.26
		Last revision	pending
		SR Plan Section	II.B
	Authority Reference: ss.1002.84(8); 1002.85(2)(j) and 1002.87, F.S.; s.1002.87(7), F.S.; DEL PG-240.04, SR Funds Management		

I. PURPOSE:

Early Learning Coalitions are required to have written eligibility and enrollment procedures that are clearly defined and reflective of local eligibility priorities. The ELCFH has utilized available data and trends in School Readiness Program enrollment in the four county service area to determine priorities of eligibility. All families are required to complete a prescreening to determine initial eligibility for services and then complete a full service application with the required DEL EFS-MOD system as a condition of approval for funded School Readiness services. Families will be placed on a wait list for service and determined for eligibility on a first come first serve basis.

II. POLICY:

Eligible children are enrolled per Section 1002.87(1), Florida Statutes, per the following nine priorities for serving children through the School Readiness (SR) Program:

- Priority 1 – Children younger than age 13 whose parent is receiving temporary cash assistance under chapter 414 and are subject to federal work requirements or a parent who has an Intensive Service Account or an Individual Training Account.
- Priority 2 – At-risk children younger than age 9.
- Priority 3 – Economically disadvantaged children age birth until eligible to enter kindergarten. Their older siblings up to the age they are eligible to enter 6th grade may also be served.
- Priority 4 – Economically disadvantaged children younger than 13. Priority in this category is given to children who have a younger sibling in the School Readiness Program under priority 3.
- Priority 5 – Children from birth to kindergarten whose parents are transitioning from the temporary cash assistance work program to employment.
- Priority 6 – At-risk children who are at least age 9 but younger than 13. Those with siblings in priority groups 1-3 are higher priority than other children ages 9-13 in this priority group.
- Priority 7 – Children younger than 13 whose parents are transitioning from the temporary cash assistance work program to employment.

- Priority 8 – Children who have special needs and current individual educational plans from age 3 until they are eligible to enter kindergarten, and have eligibility as one who requires accommodations beyond those stated by the ADA. Such determination must be verified by a licensed health care provider, licensed mental health provider or educational psychologist.
- Priority 9 – Children concurrently enrolled in the federal Head Start Program and VPK, regardless of priorities 1-4. Children who are enrolled in the federal Head Start Program and VPK and meet one of above the eligibility criteria.

Twelve-month authorization period. The ELCFH is required to authorize at-risk, Economically Disadvantaged, children with verified special needs, and children of parents who have an Intensive Service Account (ISA) or an Individual Training Account (ITA) as stated in s. 445.009, F.S., for 12-months of childcare funding. Family eligibility for continued service is reviewed and verified (redetermined for eligibility) by the ELCFH every twelve months.

Child eligibility for Referral Based Eligibility Categories: At-Risk, Protective Services and Relative Caregiver Program. Eligibility is based on a documented referral from the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) or its contracted providers, DCF-designated Lead Homeless Coalition Continuum of Care agency or Certified Domestic Violence Center. “At Risk Child” is defined in Section 1002.81(1), F.S.

1. Referrals for at-risk and protective services categories will be valid for the duration determined by the referring entity and up to a period of 12 months.
2. A child may continue to maintain eligibility under the at-risk or protective services categories if there is a current and valid referral from the referring entity.
3. A child may continue to maintain eligibility under the relative caregiver program category if, upon closure of the protective services case, the guardian is in receipt of Relative Caregiver Assistance payments from the Florida Department of Children and Families. The authorization period for this category of childcare funding may be less than or up to a total of 12-months (6M-4.200(c), F.A.C.).

Intensive Service Account (ISA) or Individual Training Account (ITA). Eligibility under this category is determined through documented referrals issued by the local workforce referral agency or its authorized contracted provider (s. 445.009, F.S.).

1. A child may continue to maintain eligibility if the parent has an ISA or ITA for the duration of the time specific by the referring entity.
2. During the 12-month authorization period, childcare services will continue incrementally as determined by the referring agency. If an additional referral is provided to the client that extends the initial 12-month authorization period, the ELCFH is required to authorize the client for an additional 12-month authorization period.

Welfare Transition Program: Eligibility under this category is determined through documented referrals issued by DCF or the local workforce referral agency.

1. Referral authorization period is determined by the referring entity.
2. Temporary cash assistance clients must also maintain compliance with statutory welfare transition program requirements by DCF or the local workforce referral agency.

3. Transitional Child Care/Non-Temporary Cash Assistance clients must also maintain compliance with statutory welfare transition program requirements by DCF or the local workforce referral agency.

Child eligibility for Income Based Eligibility Categories : Initial Eligibility Determination.

1. The family's income must be at or below 55% State Median Income (SMI) threshold (s. 1002.81, F.S.) for initial entry into the School Readiness Program. Families may not exceed 85% SMI for continued eligibility.
2. Families who exceed 85% SMI but do not exceed 100% at the time of reauthorization for services and have maintained a purpose for care will be enrolled in the SR Plus Program (1002.935 F.S.).
3. The family must meet the definition of "Working Family" as defined by Section 1002.81(14), F.S.
4. The family must not have assets that exceed one million dollars as certified by a member of the family.

Documentation Requirements: The ELCFH is required to obtain documentation to support the family's eligibility for service:

1. Verification of child's citizenship: children who receive School Readiness services must be U.S. citizens/qualified aliens. Documentation that supports child citizenship includes: U.S. birth certificate; U.S. passport; Lawfully admitted alien document (ie: Forms I-94, I-94A, I-197, I-551 & I-766) with non-U.S. passport; certificate of U.S. citizenship/ naturalization; documentation of the child's Medicaid eligible status.
2. Verification of Residency: Clients must submit verification of current residency in the county of application. Supporting documentation includes current (within 12 months of application): Utility bill (electric, gas, water), cable, internet or landline phone bill dated; Pay stub from a current employer; or signed residential rental agreement, mortgage statement or rental payment receipt that contains the clients name and address.
3. Verification of Parent Status: Each client must show evidence of meeting the definition of "parent" (6M-4.200(1), F.A.C.) and provide a government-issued ID and documentation of child guardianship. Additional documentation includes: child's birth certificate, which includes the parent's name or maiden name; court order that shows the client's relationship to the child(ren);

DCF or Workforce Child Care Authorization Form listing child and parent names; evidence that the client is in receipt of Relative Caregiver payment, Guardianship Assistance payment or TANF benefits for the child; notarized statement from the child's parent listing the client to be responsible for the child.

4. Verification of Family Size: Clients Each applicant must provide information regarding each child and adult included in the family size (1002.81(9), F.S.). This includes the parent(s) and the child(ren) currently living together in the same home/ dwelling.
 - Children with a child care authorization who are in a licensed foster care or relative/non-relative placement must be stated as a "child only" case. In these cases, the family unit will include an individual child referred or related sibling group referred in a licensed out-of-home placement or relative/non-relative placement.

- In cases of *Relative Caregiver or Guardianship Assistance payment*, the family unit will only include the child(ren) in receipt of the Relative Caregiver or Guardianship Assistance payment.
- Child(ren) in receipt of *TANF child only benefits* will be listed as a family unit to include the child(ren) if the child(ren) resides with a guardian. If the child(ren) resides with a parent, the parent must be included in the family size.
- A teen parent will be considered a separate household, unless the teen and their child(ren) are included in their parent's School Readiness family size.

5. Children with Disabilities/ Special needs: Documentation must be provided (1002. 87, F.S.) a licensed health care provider, licensed mental health provider or educational psychologist attesting to the child's need.

Verification of Employment and Income: For every financially assisted school readiness services applicant, all earned income and unearned income not excluded by rule, will be documented using School Readiness Income Worksheet for Eligibility and Parent Copayments (SR-100) and verified per 6M-4.208 in order to determine eligibility and to establish the applicable co-payment based on the sliding fee scale per 6M-4.400.

Applicants who are not self-employed, each source of earned income, will be documented at a minimum by hours of employment and rate of pay based on:

1. Four weekly, two biweekly, two semi-monthly or one monthly pay stubs that are current and consecutive, or
2. A signed statement by the employer, or
3. A signed contract for employment.

Self-employed applicants will provide appropriate documentation sufficient to determine hours worked and income, such as:

1. Business account ledgers,
2. Written documentation from customers, contractors, or
3. Federal tax returns.

Each source of unearned income, as defined by rule, will be documented, at a minimum, by:

1. An award letter or verification statement.
2. A written statement from the absent parent or household member.
3. If the amount varies, then a minimum of six weekly, three biweekly, or two monthly income amounts, for each income source that varies, will be required and verified.

A teen parent who is emancipated will be considered a separate household and eligibility and income will be determined consistent with the procedures for other households.

Payment Certificate: Upon determination of eligibility, a child care certificate will be issued to enroll the child in the parent's choice of currently contracted SR providers. The child care certificate serves as prior notice to both the parent and the SR provider of:

1. The child or children enrolled with the provider for SR services.
2. The approved start and end date of SR services.

3. The reimbursement rate approved by ELCFH; additional fees which are charged by the provider may apply.
4. The co-payment to be paid by the parent; deducted from provider's reimbursement rate.

Eligibility Period: A family will maintain eligibility for school readiness services for a 12 month eligibility period regardless of changes in income (as long as income does not exceed the federal threshold of 85 percent of State median income (SMI)) or temporary changes in participation in work, training, or education activities. **The exception to this eligibility rule is childcare authorization of less than 12 months, via a mandated referral which is valid only for the time period as determined by the referring agency.**

If during this time of eligibility authorization the family has an eligible sibling (within Priority 3) who needs to be enrolled in the School Readiness Program, enrollment will be permitted without placement of the new eligible child on the wait list. In the event of a parent's non-temporary job loss or cessation of attendance at a job training or education program, parents will be provided a 3 month period to re-establish their purpose for care. The 3-month period will start on the last day of verifiable employment/training/education for working families or the last day of the referral period for at-risk families. If a parent does not establish a purpose for care at the end of the 3-month period, SR funding will be discontinued.

Maintaining Eligibility at Redetermination.

1. **Each enrolled child's eligibility is required to be evaluated on an annual basis for the purpose of assuring ongoing eligibility for service (redetermination).**
 - a. Age of the child. A child will remain eligible until he or she reaches established age limits as set forth in Section 1002.87(1), F.S. If a child exceeds the age limit during the 12-month authorization period, the child will continue to receive services for the remainder of that authorization period.
 - b. Working Family. The family's work or educational activity must continue to meet the definition of "Working Family".
 - c. Family Income. The family's income must remain at or below 85 percent of the State Median Income (SMI) as the upper level of the program subsidy support.
2. If a family's income remains at or below **85% SMI 150% of the FPL**, the family's eligibility, co-payment, and reporting requirements are subject to the requirements of the initial eligibility.
3. **If the family's income exceeds 150% of the FPL, but is at or below 85% but not more than 100%** of the SMI, the family will enter the graduated phase-out **via the SR Plus Program**. During graduated phase out:
 - a. SR funding will be authorized for 12 months from the redetermination date.
 - b. Written notice will be provided to the family and provider of the required co-payment. The notice will inform the parent that the co-payment will increase as the family's income increases.
 - c. The parent co-payment will be increased or decreased based on any reported changes that affect the parent co-payment. The family and provider will be notified of any changes within ten (10) calendar days.

d. ~~If the family's income falls below 150% of the FPL, the copayment will be adjusted based on the approved sliding fee scale, the family will remain in the graduated phase out and continue to receive services for the remainder of the twelve month phase out period.~~

4. ~~If at any time the family's income exceeds 85% of the SMI, the family is no longer eligible for the program. SR services will be discontinued two weeks (14 calendar days) from the date of the notice, as long as the two week period does not extend beyond the family's authorized eligibility period.~~
5. Parents and providers will be notified within a two-week period if, as a result of redetermination, a child is determined ineligible for financial assistance for child care.

Change of Circumstances: Parents are responsible to notify the ELCFH within 10 calendar days of any change of circumstances that would affect eligibility.

Transferring School Readiness Services. Families in the school readiness program and move to another part of Florida during their 12-month authorization period will continue to receive services via another Early Learning Coalition. The SR funding will transfer to the applicable ELC service area that the family relocates to with the same documentation requirements. The new ELC is required to work with the transferring ELC to obtain records that would remain valid (such as birth certificates, immunization records or proof of parental relationship).

The parent copayment may not be increased due to the transfer, unless the family is in graduated phase-out at the time (6M-4.400(3), F.A.C.). The new ELC will be responsible for the redetermination of eligibility at the conclusion of 12-month authorization period.

Termination of School Readiness Services: There are circumstances that can lead to the termination of School Readiness service. The family and provider will be notified of termination at least two weeks prior to services ending or before the end of the current authorization period. The communication to the parent will state the reason for termination. Reasons for termination typically include:

1. Excessive unexplained absences for more than ten (10) calendar days during a any month of attendance. The ELCFH does make three attempts to contact the family and the provider regarding excessive absences before terminating.
2. Issues of substantiated fraud as identified by the ELCFH (ss. 1002.91 and 1002.84(18), F.S.)
3. The family moves outside of Florida.
4. The family's purpose of care is not reestablished at the end of a 3 month period.
5. The family income exceeds 85% of the current state median income.

Reference ELCFH Policy SR-7: School Readiness Program Disenrollment for additional policy statements on School Readiness child disenrollment.

Agenda Item 4.c: ELCFH Policy Updates- SR Program Disenrollment

ELCFH FAMILY SERVICES

SR7 Policy and Process	Subject: <i>School Readiness Program Disenrollment due to funding constraints</i>	Effective date	<i>12.20.06; 12.13.17</i>
		Last revision	<i>Pending (6.16.26)</i>
		SR Plan Section	<i>II.B.3</i>
	Authority Reference: <i>s. 1002.87(7), F.S. and DEL PG-240.04, SR Funds Management</i>		

I. PURPOSE:

Early Learning Coalitions are required to have written child disenrollment policy and procedures that are clearly defined and explain the rationale for disenrollment. “Disenrollment” means removing, either temporarily or permanently, a child from participation in the SR Program. ELC rationale for removing a child from the SR Program are:

- A reduction in available funding.
- Participant’s failure to meet eligibility or program participation requirements.
- Fraud.
- A change in local service priorities.

The ELCFH will have a fair disclosure statement on all eligibility and re-determination forms notifying parents that the provision of school readiness services is subject to the availability of funding and placement priorities. A wide range of budget management strategies are continuously implemented by ELCFH management and reviewed by the ELCFH Finance Committee and Board of Directors to maintain fiscal integrity and balance. Disenrollment of children will be facilitated as a last resort option to maintain fiscal balance.

II. POLICY:

The ELCFH will comply with the following:

1. Individual families may be terminated from the School Readiness Program as stated in *ELCFH Policy SR6- School Readiness Eligibility and Enrollment*.
2. A child shall not be disenrolled due to a projected deficit unless a deficit has been forecasted through the end of the fiscal year and the fund management strategies have been addressed and implemented, as appropriate. If, after implementation of fund management strategies, a deficit continues to be projected, making disenrollment a continued possibility, **no individual child nor group of children shall be disenrolled due to a projected deficit before consulting with representatives of DEL.**

Written Notification Requirements:

3. Written notification will be issued to DEL at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the initiation of formal consideration by the Board to disenroll a group of children from early learning programs due to a projected funds deficit.
4. Written notification will be issued to DEL at least five (5) business days prior to taking action to notify providers or families of a determination to disenroll a child from early learning programs due to a projected funds deficit. The notice to DEL shall be submitted with a copy of the two most recent monthly use analyses; and identify the enrollment priority group from which the ELCFH plans to disenroll children due to a projected funds deficit and the number of children planned to be disenrolled within the enrollment priority group.
5. Written notice to any affected child's parent or guardian at least two (2) weeks before the child is disenrolled from the School Readiness program due to a projected funds deficit, which includes the effective date of the child's disenrollment.
6. Written notice to any affected child's School Readiness provider at least two (2) weeks before the child is disenrolled from the School Readiness program due to a projected funds deficit, which includes the effective date of the child's disenrollment.

Priority Groups of Enrolled Children:

7. The continued initial enrollment of a child in a priority eligibility group in accordance with Section 1002.87(1)(a)-(i), Florida Statutes.
 - a. An at-risk child may not be disenrolled without Child Welfare Program Office of the Department of Children and Families or the community-based lead agency written approval.
8. Children must be disenrolled in reverse order of the eligibility priorities listed in s.1002.87(1), F.S., and the approved ELCFH Policy SR6: ~~beginning with children from families with the highest family incomes.~~
 - a. Priority 9 – Children who are enrolled in the federal Head Start Program and VPK and meet one of above the eligibility criteria.
 - b. Priority 8 – Children who have special needs and have eligibility as one who requires accommodations beyond those stated by the ADA. Such determination must be verified by a licensed health care provider, licensed mental health provider or educational psychologist.
 - c. Priority 7 – Children younger than 13 whose parents are transitioning from the work program to employment.
 - d. Priority 6 – At-risk children who are at least age 9 but younger than 13. Those with siblings in priority groups 1-3 are higher priority than other children ages 9-13 in this priority group.
 - e. Priority 5 – Children from birth to kindergarten whose parents are transitioning from the temporary cash assistance work program to employment.
 - f. Priority 4 – Economically disadvantaged children younger than 13. Priority in this category is given to children who have a younger sibling in the School Readiness Program under priority 3.
 - g. Priority 3 – Economically disadvantaged children age birth until eligible to enter kindergarten. Their older siblings up to the age they are eligible to enter 6th grade may also

be served.

- h. Priority 2 – At-risk children younger than age 9.
- i. Priority 1 – Children younger than age 13 whose parent is receiving temporary cash assistance under chapter 414 and are subject to federal work requirements or a parent who has an Intensive Service Account or an Individual Training Account.

Other Action:

- 9. Disenrollment of groups of children for a reason other than preventing a deficit or failure to comply with eligibility requirements is prohibited.
- 10. This policy permits the disenrollment of children in order, pursuant to Section 1002.87(7), Florida Statutes. The policy may allow for the disenrollment of a distinct subgroup within an enrollment priority (*e.g.*, a school- age child older than a specified age).
- 11. A plan amendment will be submitted, if applicable, and written approval of the submitted plan amendment from DEL will be obtained prior to disenrollment.

Agenda Item 4.d: ELCFH Policy Updates

Contracted Provider Policy: CP1- Contracting, Program Assessment and Consideration for local childcare capacity

Child Care Providers who choose to contract for School Readiness are required to adhere to the provisions as listed in the DEL Health and Safety Handbook (DEL SR-6202; 6M-4.620 F.A.C.) and achieve the CLASS observation minimum threshold score (Rule 6M-4.740 F.A.C.). A composite Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) observation score meeting the minimum threshold must be attained in order to contract with the ELCFH. A provider who does not meet this score will be required to have a second program assessment at their own cost and must attain the minimum threshold score as a condition of contracting. The request for a second program assessment must be submitted to the ELCFH within 30 days of the first program assessment. The ELCFH will provide coaching and technical assistance support to help the provider best prepare for the second program assessment.

Exceptions to the minimum threshold programs assessment score may only exist if the ELCFH identifies/ verifies the provider as essential to meeting local childcare capacity needs as defined in the ELCFH School Readiness Plan. In cases where the provider does not meet one or both of these requirements, the provider will be reviewed for contract eligibility with consideration given by the ELCFH regarding the local capacity needs. Local capacity determination is defined as the city/ town/ vicinity in which the provider is situated while reviewing other childcare program availability for families in that same area. Such review will be presented by ELCFH management to the Quality Committee for review and consensus; determinations regarding continued contracting will be reported to the Board at the following applicable meeting.

All SR and VPK Providers are required to have an annual contract orientation with the ELCFH. This includes providers located in counties outside of the ELCFH four county service area.

Agenda Item 4.e: ELCFH Policy Updates Contracted Provider Policy: CP3- Child Screening

Reference: 6M-4.720 Screening of Children in the School Readiness program

Background: Early Learning Coalitions are required to assure children age six weeks to 60 months are screened using a family friendly, valid and reliable screening tool/ process that reviews each developmental domain. Children who have potential concerns noted via the screening process are to be provided with individualized supports by the ELCFH and connection to community resources.

Policy Rationale: Newly enrolled, redetermined or re-enrolled SR children age 6 weeks to age 60 months will be screened using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) system no later than 65 calendar days after the child's initial enrollment/ re-enrollment in the School Readiness Program.

Policy: As families enroll or redetermine for School Readiness services as required through the Division of Early Learning Portal System, an automatic prompt will provide access to the ASQ/ ASQ:SE tool specific to the child's age.

Process:

- Families have five twenty days to choose to complete, decline or defer the screening process within the DEL Portal System
- After 20 days if parent has not completed screenings they will move automatically through Portal function to the Provider for completion. Providers will log into their Provider Portal to find their incomplete screening queue to complete assigned screenings by the due date which is within forty-five (45) calendar days after the screening start date for providers, excluding state-observed holidays. The ELCFH will encourage provider completion and send an email notification no later than 15 days after the provider screening start date. Notification email to include screening start date for provider, screening due date, child's name and date of birth.
- Once completed by either the family or the provider, the ELCFH will review the screening results and provide access to the summary for the family and provider within 15 days. ELCFH staff will initiate interventions as applicable within 30 days of receipt of the screening results.
- Interventions will provide short and long term goals with engagement of the family and provider to support concern areas for the child.
- Intervention implementation will include technical assistance, coaching, observation, program accommodation, and/or parent-teacher education as applicable.
- Plan evaluation will be conducted periodically to assess the applied supports; evaluation may include referral to partner agencies for further screening and evaluation to determine eligibility for services.

Agenda Item 4.f: ELCFH Policy Updates Contracted Provider Policy: CP4- Provider Rate Reimbursement- Children with Special Needs

Children with special needs who receive child care services may require accommodations on the part of the childcare provider. These accommodations can be critical to assure a healthy and safe child care experience. To support needed accommodations for children with special needs in the child care setting, the ELCFH is authorized to offer a special needs rate that is applied to provider payments. The special needs rate is twenty percent more than the regular infant rate for children at all age levels. Gold Seal providers receive twenty percent more than the Gold Seal infant rate.

Providers are required to request this rate and document the modifications that have been made (or planned to be made) in order to serve the child. Documentation includes the parent/ guardian authorization with supporting documentation (ex: IFSP, IEP) and the completed provider application for the special needs provider rate on the ELCFH approved application forms. Additionally, beginning July 1, 2027, to receive a special needs differential, a SR provider must meet or exceed the minimum program assessment composite score identified in Rule 6M-4.740, F.A.C., and submit to the coalition documentation of instructional staff assigned by the provider to the child having met training requirements established in s. 1002.89(1)(d), F.S.

Once received, the ELCFH will review the full request to determine if the accommodation facilitated by the provider warrants the special needs rate. As needed, a site visit to verify existing or planned accommodations will be conducted. Once approved, a Child Development & Education (CDE) Specialist will be assigned to the child's case/ provider to provide support and to assure the agreed upon accommodation is continuously facilitated while the child is in care. Upon approval of the special needs rate, the provider will enter that rate into their profile and submit. The special needs rate request will be reviewed annually to assure the need still exists and accommodations are being made. Updated support documentation from the parent/ provider may be required as applicable.

Information Item 6: Board Chair Report

ELCFH Executive Committee meeting

Wednesday, August 12, 2026

Board Members Present: John Stover, locally elected interim Board Chair;
Nancy Ebrahimi-Driggers, Vice Chair; Nancy Zachary, Secretary;
Mary Stewart, Treasurer

Staff present: Anne Brewer, Pam Hillestad

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 9:01 AM. Introductions were made; there were no additions or changes to the agenda. The purpose of the meeting was to review the annual evaluation documentation for the ELCFH Executive Director, to be completed by the Executive Committee on the *DEL- SR 120 ED Evaluation tool* and submitted as required to DEL by August 30, 2026.

Executive Director Annual Evaluation: The following documentation was provided to support completion of the evaluation tool (*DEL- SR 120 ED Evaluation tool*):

- **ED Annual Evaluation Process and Evaluation timeline (ELCFH Policy ADM-5; Process #1):** The timeline for Executive Committee member completion and submission of the evaluation tools was provided. A report of the meeting will be presented to the Board by the Board Chair at the August 26, 2026 Annual Board meeting.
- **ED Annual Work Activity Report:** The Executive Director provided an overview of the work report which contained response to each of the indicators in the six domains. Emphasis was placed on the value of a connected and transparent management team, which ultimately works together to manage the agency in its entirety and per statutory/ DEL grant agreement requirements. Notable points were specific to the overall longevity of ELCFH staff, with little turnover and a general feeling of workplace satisfaction reported by staff as well as positive monitor and audit reports. An Internal Management Policy (IMP) handbook is maintained by the Executive Director to document management team level agreements on operationalizing items such as Board approved policies and needed internal processes and the School Readiness position statement developed in FY 25-26 has supported community level conversations about children's readiness to learn. Goals identified by the Executive Director for the current year include continued work on the Hurricane Ian grant to further refine and broaden currently funded COOP activities, and concerted effort on policy review and organization to assure all pertinent updates have been completed as required through the DEL School Readiness Plan.
- **Executive Director Position Description:** No changes have been made to the position description for FY 26-27.

- **Executive Director Emergency Succession Plan:** The core intention of the succession plan was stated, with no revisions from the previous year. Mary Stewart made a motion to approve the Executive Director Emergency Succession Plan as presented. Nancy Zachary seconded. The motion carried.
- **FY 26-27 ELCFH Org Chart:** This document is part of the annual review conducted by the ELCFH Management team, in addition to review of the salary matrix, agency functions grid and staff position descriptions. This helps to assure that all required functions of the agency have a department level “home” and that ELCFH staff position descriptions are streamlined to the work that needs to be completed.
- **FY 26-27 ELCFH Core Agency Functions:** This chart contains a listing of all work tasks/ functions as required by the DEL Grant Agreement/ Florida Statute/ Rule and funder agreements by department. While some listed items require input from more than one ELCFH department, each function is given a primary “home” to assure oversight and required completion.
- The **current ED contract term** is for a two year period which ends on 10.31.27. Continued contracting within the two-year term and applicable salary increase (based on evaluation results) is requested. The Board Chair will be presented with the final results of the compiled evaluation tools and will work with the ELCFH Director- Finance to set the salary increase as aligned with the ELCFH Employee Handbook Policy #6.7 (not-to-exceed of 3% merit + 2% cost of living increase).

Open Forum: No additional items were reported.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 9:38 AM.

Minutes prepared by: _____, Executive Director Date: _____

Minutes approved by: _____, ELCFH Board Secretary Date: _____