

Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Heartland, Inc.

www.elcfh.org

ELCFH Board Meeting Wednesday, February 25, 2026- 9:30 AM

Zoom meeting link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88431525778?pwd=ZvKGk8DWLzqsRTcdKan0RbsC1gUWzC.1>

Meeting ID: 884 3152 5778 Password: 999620 Phone: +1 305 224 1968

Physical Meeting Location: 18501 Murdock Circle, Suite 200, Port Charlotte, 33948

ZOOM Meeting access assistance- text or call Beth Mueller at (941) 457-9246

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
1.	Call to Order- John Stover, ELCFH Locally Elected, Interim Board Chair Introductions; Additions or Changes to the Agenda.
2. Action p. 4-8 p. 9-27 p. 28 p. 29 p. 30 p. 31 p. 32	Consent Agenda- John Stover a. Approve minutes from the 8.27.25 Board Meeting b. Review Committee Meeting minutes c. Accept UWCC/ BOCC Award Letter d. Approve Board Membership- Amy Huddleston, PSB, Charlotte County e. FY 25-26 School Readiness Budget Modification f. FY 25-26 School Readiness PLUS Budget Modification g. FY 25-26 Voluntary Prekindergarten Budget Modification
3. Action Attachment A	Presentation of the FY 24-25 Independent Auditor's Report- (Finance Committee, 2.25.26); Presented by Tony Smith, CPA Ashley, Brown & Smith, CPAs
4. Action p. 34	FY 25-26 Budget Proposal for Disaster Relief- Hurricane Ian Grant Funding- Pam Hillestad, Director- Finance & IT.
5. Action p. 35	Amendment to ELCFH Bylaws: <u>Article 5- Meetings; Section 5.4- Voting Regulations.</u> – Anne Brewer, Executive Director

6. Action p. 36	Amendment to ELCFH Articles of Incorporation: Article 2- Agency Principle Address and Article 3- Registered Agent– <i>Anne Brewer, Executive Director.</i>
7. Action p. 37-43 p. 44-46	ELCFH Policy updates: <i>Anne Brewer</i> a. NEW Policy: ELCFH Employee Handbook: Hybrid Work Schedules b. UPDATED Policy: ELCFH Compliance- Reporting for Internal Controls
8. Action p. 47-49	ELCFH position statement development: local definition of school readiness- <i>Anne Brewer</i>
9. Information p. 51-53	Finance and Utilization Reports- <i>Anne Brewer, Pam Hillestad, Olga Olvera (Director- Family Services)</i> a. Utilization Report b. Data report c. Match Report
10. Information p. 55-56	Board Chair Update- Executive Committee meeting minutes- <i>John Stover</i>
11. Information p. 57-58 p. 59-61	ELCFH Agency Report- <i>Anne Brewer</i> a. 2026 Legislative Update b. ELCFH Focus Area Updates- c. Provider Event Update (February 21 in Fort Ogden) d. Board Membership: Gubernatorial applications from eligible private sector business leaders needed!
12.	Open Forum
13.	Adjourn- <i>John Stover</i> Next ELCFH Board meeting: Wednesday, May 27 th , 2026 @ 9:30 AM via ZOOM/ in-person at the ELCFH Port Charlotte office (18501 Murdock Circle, Suite 200).

ELCFH Board Meeting

Consent Agenda February 25, 2026

Consent Agenda 2.a: ELCFH Board Meeting Minutes

ELCFH Annual Meeting- Minutes; Wednesday, August 27, 2025 at 10:00 AM
Turner Center Annex, (2250 NE Roan St. in Arcadia)

Members Present: John Stover (Chair), Nancy Ebrahimi (Vice Chair)*, Nancy Zachary (Secretary), Susan Norris, Leigh Ann Moccia*, Aaron Stitt, Rick Pucci*, Larry Lawman, Dr. Amy Bennett, Peg Elmore, Mary Stewart (Treasurer)*, Asena Mott

Members not present: Ashleigh Hayes (excused); Joe Pepe (excused), Gail Werley (excused)

ELCFH Staff Present: Anne Bouhebert, Pam Hillestad, Kelly Wertenbach, Beth Mueller, Tina Yates Vickmary Rodriguez, Janet Lane, Olga Olvera, Becky Malbourn, Denise Hoefer, Lori McDonnell, Tracy Pipitone, Patricia Villafuerte, Megan Adams, Beverly Cutright, Peggy Martel, Meralys Sanchez, Sheralee Turley, Liliana Mejia, Rikki Connelly, Connie Cody, Samatha Jarvis

Guests: Donna Doubleday, Dr. Thomas Rath, Anne Lang, Diana Jacobson, Brian Nason, Cassia Merlos, Tina Rambo, Mellissa Wiest, Erisa Preni, Ramona, Moeller, Maria Guerrero, Diane Ramseyer, Barbara Short, Denita Browning

**indicates virtual attendance;* Number required for quorum: 8; Number of voting members present: 12

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 AM; introductions of Board Members, Community Partners/ Guests and ELCFH were made. There were no changes of additions to the agenda. A quorum of ELCFH Board members was established.

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

- a. Minutes from the 6.25.25 Board Meeting
- b. Review of Committee Meeting minutes
- c. FY25-26 Committee Roster
- d. Modification to the FY25-26 SR Budget
- e. Modification to the FY25-26 VPK Budget
- f. SR Plus budget for FY 25-26

Larry Lawman made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Nancy Zachary seconded. The motion carried.

3. Three Related Parties Contracts for FY 25-26 were presented for Board Action:

- a. Hillestad Electric of Southwest Florida, LLC for electrical maintenance services. Susan Norris made a motion to approve the contract with Hillestad Electric of Southwest Florida, LLC as presented. Dr. Amy Bennett seconded. The motion carried. A roll call vote was taken; 12 of

15 ELCFH Board Members voted approval of the contract as presented; 3 members were absent. This met the 2/3 vote requirement for contract approval.

- b. ELCFH retirement benefits administration with Edward Jones (Adam Cummings): Peg Elmore made a motion to approve the contract with Edward Jone (Adam Cummings) as presented. Aaron Stitt seconded. The motion carried. A roll call vote was taken; 12 of 15 ELCFH Board Members voted approval of the contract as presented; 3 members were absent. This met the 2/3 vote requirement for contract approval.
- c. ELCFH Highlands Office handyman work (Steven Jones): Nancy Zachary made a motion to approve the contract with Stephen Jones for handyman services for the Highlands Office. Asena Mott seconded. The motion carried. A roll call vote was taken; 12 of 15 ELCFH Board Members voted approval of the contract as presented; 3 members were absent. This met the 2/3 vote requirement for contract approval.

4. The FY 25-26 Kindergarten Transition Plan was presented for Board Action. This included an overview of the plan's successes and challenges from FY 24-25. An update specific to a Community of Practice (CoP) to broaden discussion and shared ideas between kindergarten teacher and VPK teachers was presented as a new activity for FY 25-26. Susan Norris made a motion to approve the update to the FY 25-26 Kindergarten Transition Plan as presented. Nancy Zachary seconded. The motion carried.

5. The FY 24-25 ELCFH Focus Areas with updates for FY 25-26 was presented for Board Action: The seven focus areas were presented with data on the outcomes for FY 24-25. It was noted that the majority of the activities are now a good fit for the work and direction of the ELCFH. Further detail on the services offered through the Child Development & Education Services team was mentioned- this aligns with the child screening work which helps to detect possible developmental concerns early. Updates to the plan were specific to kindergarten transition (as previously presented and approved). Peg Elmore made a motion to approve the ELCFH Focus Areas with the update to the Kindergarten Transition Community of Practice plan as previously approved. Larry Lawman seconded. The motion carried.

6. Finance and Utilization report- the following informational reports were presented:

Utilization Report:

- School Readiness: at 8.3% of FY 25-26, a total of 7.8% has been expended with 1388 children enrolled in services. A total of 4.8% of the allowable 5% has been spent on admin. 85.1% of SR funds have been expended for direct services (of a 78% mandated earmark).
- VPK is always low at this time of the year due to school year programs starting in August. Currently the ELCFH is serving 1,566 VPK children and VPK calendars have been distributed.
- Data Report: the waitlist for SR services continues to be purged monthly with 100% of families being invited in. More notably, of the 86 children invited in for serviced in the 1st pull of FY

25-26, 58.1% were deemed eligible. The ELCFH has served a total of 1,371 unduplicated children in the School Readiness program since July 1, 2025.

The Match Funding Report for the SR program was also presented noting FY 25-26 United Way funding applications submitted and presentations for Central Florida will happen in October. The finalized memo for funding for DeSoto County is pending with United Way Suncoast. The primary focus of match funding application is for direct services, which then qualifies for the 1:1 DEL match program.

The ELCFH is receiving an allocation of Hurricane Relief funding (Hurricane Ian) in the amount of \$1,632,641 and is in the process of applying for fund usage with DEL. A review of the ideas for the funds was presented and is being discussed in other forums to assure the most comprehensive and efficient use of the funding. Additional information will be provided at the November 12, 2025 Board meeting.

7. An overview of the August 7, 2025 Executive Committee meeting was presented:

The Executive Committee met on August 7, 2025 to hear the FY 23-24 audit and review the process for the annual ED performance evaluation.

As previously reported to the Board, the FY 23-24 audit was delayed due to the cyberattack on the previous 3rd party IT vendor in December 2023, resulting in unretrievable encryption of the ELCFH MIP accounting system. There is a related finding and required corrective action plan in the audit, however, it was noted that the overall internal controls of the ELCFH are sound and the issue was not a reflection of ELCFH staff or processes. The draft audit was provided to the full Board for review and invitation extended to attend the Executive Committee meeting to hear the auditor presentation. The Executive Committee accepted the audit which has since been submitted to the clearinghouse as required.

The other business conducted was the ED annual review with supporting documentation. All ELCs are required to submit the completed annual evaluation to DEL by August 30th. Documentation that required review and approval by the Executive Committee were updates to the ED evaluation process memo and annual review of the FY 25-26 ED Succession Plan. The Committee voted to recontract with current ED with each contract renewal in place for a period of two years.

8. The following information was provided as an Agency Report:

- a. **The VPK Program is 20 years old!** Providers who are “trailblazers” of this program will be acknowledged during this meeting. An overview of recently received VPK Accountability results for the ELCFH service area was provided.
- b. **Thank you to our FY 24-25 Board Members and Funders!** A listing was provided in the Board packet- FY 24-25 Board members and funders were thanked for their support of the ELCFH!
- c. **ELCFH FY 25-26 Org Chart:** The current agency org chart was provided as an informational item. This is also posted on the ELCFH website.

d. Board Membership: Applications are needed for Gubernatorial Appointments! Members who qualify as private sector business members are encouraged to apply.

9. ELCFH Annual Highlight- Back to Basics- This was a core training facilitated by the ELCFH with providers during FY 24-25. The information presented was to help given meeting attendees a taste of learning through play and developmentally appropriate practices. The ELCFH hopes to encourage teachers to be creative with their lesson planning and cultivate the classroom community in which children thrive.

10. ELCFH Annual Recognition of Board Members and Providers; ELCFH Staff Service Awards- Terming Board members, staff members who have reached major milestones and providers who served as “early-on” facilitators of the VPK programs were recognized:
The following were thanked by category:

Providers who established VPK programs between 2007 and 2013:

Charlotte County	
Adventures Preschool	2009
Educare Learning Center	2007
Port Charlotte Christian Academy	2011
Redeemer Lutheran Child Care and After School	2010
St. Borromeo	2013
Hardee County	
First Baptist Children’s Academy	2012
Highlands County	
Avon Park Community Child Development Center	2010
St. Catherine Catholic Preschool	2010

Providers who started VPK programs at the very beginning in 2005 and are actively providing service as of FY 25-26:

Charlotte County	
Baker Center Early Childhood Program	2005
Genesis Christian School	2005
Good Shepherd Day School	2005
Joyful Noise	2005
Living Waters Preschool & Childcare	2005
Miss Heidi’s Preschool	2005
Tiny Hands Childcare Preschool, Inc.	2005
YMCA Charlotte Harbor	2005
Hardee County	
S J Learning Academy, Inc.	2005
Highlands County	
Busy Kids Creative Learning Center	2005
First Baptist Weekday Early Education Center	2005
Trinity Tots Preschool	2005

VPK teachers/ directors who have facilitated VPK since 2005:

- Susan Flemming - Leaping Lizards (Charlotte)
- Ericka Brown- Faith Preparatory (DeSoto)
- Annie Rose McDonald – New Life N You (Hardee)

Board members whose terms ended on June 30, 2025:

Kristen Rivas ELCFH Board Member: 2017 – 2025
School District Superintendent designee, Hardee County

Donna Doubleday ELCFH Board Member: 2017 - 2025
ELCFH Board Officer CareerSource Heartland, Hardee County

Penny Pringle ELCFH Board Member: 2021 - 2025
Florida Dept of Health, DeSoto County

Chantal Porte ELCFH Board Member: 2021 - 2025
DCF Child Care Regulation, DeSoto County

Dr. Thomas Rath ELCFH Board Member: 2018 - 2025
ELCFH Board Officer, Florida SouthWestern State College, Charlotte County

Diane Ramseyer ELCFH Board Member: 2017 - 2025
ELCFH Administrative Committee Chair BOCC Representative, Charlotte County

Michelle Potter ELCFH Board Member: 2024 - 2025
Private Sector Business, DeSoto County

ELCFH Staff Service awards:

- **Denise Hoefler**, Child Development & Education Specialist- celebrating 5 years with the ELCFH!
- *Denise also completed her Bachelor's Degree this year through the TEACH Scholarship!*
- **Peggy Martel**, Lead- Finance & Administrative Services- celebrating 10 years with the ELCFH!
- **Tina Yates**, Coordinator- Provider Services- celebrating 15 years with the ELCFH!
- **Liliana Mejia**, Provider Services Specialist- celebrating 15 years with the ELCFH!
- **Becky Malbaurn**, Provider Services Specialist – celebrating 20 years with the ELCFH!

11.Adjourn **The Next ELCFH Board Meeting** is scheduled for Wednesday, November 12, 2025 at 9:30 AM via ZOOM and ELCFH Port Charlotte office (18501 Murdock Circle, Suite 200)

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 AM.

Meeting prepared by Anne Brewer, Executive Director

Date

Meeting minutes approved by Nancy Zachary, Board Secretary

Date

Consent Agenda 2.b: ELCFH Finance Committee Meeting Minutes - Wednesday, 9.24.25

Committee/ Board Members Present: Mary Stewart, Peg Elmore, Cathy Graham
ELCFH Staff Present: Anne Brewer, Pam Hillestad, Olga Olvera, Janet Lane
Providers/ Guests: Denice Aviles

Agenda Item	Content
<p>Opening</p> <p>Review of Financial reports/ Utilization</p>	<p>The meeting opened at 9:00 AM.</p> <p>Utilization Report for School Readiness (SR) and VPK: SR at 16.7% of FY 25-26 shows a total of 15.5% of funding expended.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 81.7% for Direct Services (of a mandated 78% minimum) • 5.3% of an allowable 5% for Administrative costs, which make up part of the total 18.3% non-direct costs (of a total allowable maximum of 22%). The overage in Admin is due a requirement of end of June expenditures being applied to the July workbook/ expenditures. This is expected to resolve as the fiscal year progresses. • A total caseload of 1,425 children were billed for SR in August 2025. <p>The VPK program is expended at 8.2% as of 16.7% of FY 25-26 with a total child count of 1,356. The admin cost is at 8.2% of an allowable 5% due to programs having just started in mid-August.</p> <p>Other reports presented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELCFH Executive Summary from DEL Workbook (August 2025) • FY 25-26 August Data Report: Waitlist pulls continue on a monthly basis; the YTD unduplicated child count of children served is 1,489. • School Readiness Grant Expenditures by Program FY 2025/ 2026 w/o QPI • VPK Grant Expenditures by Program FY 2025/ 2026 from 07/01/25 through 8/31/25 • August 2025 Direct Services and Program/ Quality Activities Match Report (FY 25-26). <i>A question was asked about direct services funding; it was explained that this funding is directly utilized for provider payments for child care services and are 1:1 matched through the DEL State Match funds program.</i> • FY 25-26 August Balance Sheet and Cash Flow report: <i>a question was asked about the Provider Overpayment notation; it was explained that this was due to the</i>

	<i>DEL EFS-Mod system release in FY 18-19 that resulted in serious statewide data migration errors, numerous months of SR provider payments had to be issued as estimates (at DEL's direction) and not based on actual attendance (as is the normal process). This was a complete anomaly and not expected to occur again.</i>
Board Action items	The following item was presented for committee consensus to move to the Board (via consent agenda) for approval: <i>FY 25-26 SR Budget Amendment – SR CCDF & SR Match Revert/Reappropriation Allocation</i>
Expenditures over \$5,000	<p>The following expenditures were reported as reviewed and approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check #27140 06/26/25 - \$6,760 – ZipData.net Hosted Tech Serv May & June 2025 • Check #27179 06/26/25 - \$22,908 – Ashley, Brown & Smith CPA Audit Fee 92% Complete • Check #27146 07/10/25 - \$6,399.59 – Abila Momentive Software Maintenance & Support for FY25-26 • Check #27172 07/24/25 - \$327,662.21 – DEL – Division of Early Learning – FY 18-19 Provider Overpayments Reimbursement Payment #1 of 3 • Check #27208 08/28/25 - \$297,488.82 – DEL – Division of Early Learning – FY 18-19 Provider Overpayments Reimbursement Payment #2 of 3 • Check #27173 07/28/25 – \$375,000 - DEL – Division of Early Learning – EL115 SR Advance Payback per invoice instructions from DEL
Other items reported	<p>Credit Card Review: The June and July 2025 charges were reviewed by the Board Treasurer; totals are \$1,126.51 and \$560.36 respectively.</p> <p>The Bank Reconciliations for June, July and August 2025 were also reviewed by the Board Treasurer.</p> <p>FY 24-25 Audit Status: The auditors are onsite at the ELCFH Charlotte office for the FY 24-25 Audit. Due to the late submission of the FY 23-24 audit resulting in a high-risk status for the ELCFH, the audit testing is expected to be more rigorous.</p>
Open Forum	The meeting adjourned at 9:25 AM

Consent Agenda 2.b: Quality Committee meeting- Thursday, October 23, 2025

Committee/ Board Members Present: Susan Norris, Trena Miller, Gail Werley, John Stover, Leigh Ann Moccia, Alma Ovalle, Billie-Jo Moretta, Maria Castillo, Maria Magowan Nancy Ebrahimi-Driggers, Rick Pucci, Susan Flemming

Staff Members Present: Anne Brewer, Beth Mueller, Janet Lane, Pam Hillestad, Kelly Wertenbach, Tina Yates

Guests Present: Amber Chudoba, Bianca Petco, Altagracia Lajara-Paredes, Casia Merlos

Agenda Items	Item Overview	Comments/ Actions
Opening	The meeting opened at 9:00 AM. Introductions were made. The 8.14.25 Quality Committee meeting minutes were reviewed.	
Committee Discussion Items	<p>a. ELCFH position statement development: local definition of school readiness</p> <p>Committee members engaged in a lively conversation on the definition of School Readiness. The goal is to ultimately develop a formal statement that could be adopted by the ELCFH Board and utilized in community based conversations. Definitions from nationally recognized early childhood experts were provided. Dr. David Elkind’s work on the concern for hurried children and the reality of socio-emotional skills being in place prior to kindergarten entry was highlighted.</p> <p>Overarching issues that impact a child’s readiness for school entry were identified and included: child behavioral issues that are dismissed/ not addressed, children being expelled from their preschool programs, teachers and parents not understanding the value of developmental screening (ASQ), and stakeholders not understanding the impact poverty has on child development. Training needs surrounding developmental screening for parents and teachers, the cycle of poverty (Ruby Payne) and ACES were discussed. High child to teacher ratios with inadequate pay was voiced as a critical component that consistently affects quality.</p> <p><u>The committee agreed that an ELCFH Board approved statement would be good especially for helping community members understand the reality of what children need prior to school entry (especially those who are deemed at-risk or living in poverty.). A draft statement will be brought back to the next Quality Committee meeting for further discussion.</u></p>	

	<p>b. Using surveys to strengthen and inform childcare businesses:</p> <p>The committee discussed the value of regular surveys of parents and staff as well as surveys from those exiting the program.. It was noted that surveys can help inform improvements for a childcare business which can lead to business growth. Review of key areas such as safety, curriculum, staff management, and parent communication can support providers in creating specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals, ultimately leading to higher quality care. To support this effort, a two-page handout was developed and the committee talked about a sample jot form based survey. Allowing anonymous survey responses was encouraged for honest feedback.</p> <p><u>The committee agreed that the information provided in addition to a sample jotform survey would be useful to providers. This will be a training piece at the next ELCFH contracted provider meeting.</u></p> <p>c. Hurricane Season- child care program COOP/ emergency preparations- Hurricane Disaster funding follow-up:</p> <p>The ELCFH has been granted an award from DEL (via the federal government) specific to needed funding for Hurricane Ian. A plan has been developed and the ELCFH continues to work with DEL to assure the supplies and equipment purchased are in alignment with the grant guidance. <u>The overarching goal of the grant is to support providers in developing unique COOP plans for their facilities along with necessary equipment. This will continue to develop with reporting out to the committee.</u></p> <p>d. Directors meetings- low participation in Highlands:</p> <p>The ELCFH will facilitate one more meeting in Highlands County in an effort to improve participation. <u>Committee members agreed that direct phone calls to providers by providers and ELCFH specialists to encourage attendance would be helpful.</u></p>
<p>Healthy Families</p>	<p>The DeSoto/ Hardee program provided the quarterly performance measures report (7.1.25 – 9.30.25) with some indicators highlighted where percentages were not yet achieved. The Quality Assurance visit report was completed and the summary provided. The program continues to work towards meeting required goal within each indicator.</p> <p>The Charlotte program also provided the quarterly performance measures report</p>

	(7.1.25– 9.30.25). It was noted that out of the 20 measured performance outcomes, 18 were met or exceeded.
1. Open Forum	An announcement was made that DCF trainings are free- providers are encouraged to take advantage of this resource.
2. Adjourn	The next Quality Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, January 15, 2026 at 9AM via ZOOM. The meeting adjourned at 10:12 AM.

Consent Agenda 2.b: ELCFH Finance Committee Meeting Minutes - Wednesday, 12.12.2025

Committee/ Board Members Present: Mary Stewart, Peg Elmore, Cathy Graham,

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

Guests: Jessica Hairston, Denice Aviles, Casia Merlos

Agenda Item	Content
Opening	The meeting opened at 9:00 AM.
Review of Financial reports/ Utilization	<p>Utilization Report for School Readiness (SR) and VPK:</p> <p>SR at 25% of FY 25-26 shows a total of 22.8% of funding expended.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 82.1% for Direct Services (of a mandated 78% minimum) • 4.9% of an allowable 5% for Administrative costs, which make up part of the total 17.9% non-direct costs (of a total allowable maximum of 22%). • A total caseload of 1,340 children were billed for SR in September 2025. <p>The VPK program is expended at 18.6% as of 18.6% of FY 25-26 with a total child count of 1,442. The admin cost is at 5.4% of an allowable 5%;</p> <p>Other reports presented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>ELCFH Executive Summary from DEL Workbook (September 2025)</u> • <u>FY 25-26 October Data Report:</u> Waitlist pulls continue on a monthly basis; the YTD unduplicated child count of children served is 1,583. • <u>School Readiness Grant Expenditures</u> by Program FY 2025/ 2026 w/o QPI- from 7.1.25 – 9.30.25.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>SRPlus Expenditures</u> by OCA from 7.1.25 – 9.30.25 which represents a small caseload of children. • <u>VPK Grant Expenditures</u> by Program FY 2025/ 2026 from 7.1.25 – 9.30.25 • <u>FY 25-26 10.29.25 Balance Sheet and Cash Flow report</u>: SR/ VPK provider payment dates were announced. Management anticipates that the Line of Credit will be accessed more frequently because the ELCFH is no longer holding as large of an advance from DEL. • <u>September 2025 Direct Services and Program/ Quality Activities Match Report (FY 25-26)</u>: The ELCFH is working through the profile and update requirements in order to participate in the 2026 Giving Challenge. Site visits with United Way of Central Florida were facilitated in mid-October and was well received. • <u>FY 24-25 Fiscal Summary</u>: the annual roll-up of ELCFH SR and VPK expenditure by county and with SR match was presented. One correction was noted under VPK- the final Administration percent will be corrected to reflect 4.3% of an allowable 5% was expended.
<p>Expenditures over \$5,000</p>	<p>The following expenditures were reported as reviewed and approved by the Board Treasurer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check #27236 10/07/25 in the amount of \$256,951.63 to DEL – Division of Early Learning for FY 18-19 Provider Overpayments Reimbursement Payment #3 of 4 • Check #27237 10/07/25 in the amount of \$55,511.60 to DEL – Division of Early Learning for FY 18-19 Provider Overpayments Reimbursement Payment #4 of 4 • ACH 10/07/25 in the amount of \$7,360.00 to the Children’s Forum for 16 SR CLASS Assessments • Check #27251 in the amount of \$5,625.00 to Markel Insurance for Worker’s Compensation Insurance Renewal (12/21/2025 – 12/21/2026)
<p>Other items reported</p>	<p>Credit Card Review: The August and September 2025 charges were reviewed by the Board Treasurer.</p> <p>The Bank Reconciliations for September 2025 were also reviewed by the Board Treasurer.</p>

<p>Open Forum</p>	<p>A question was asked about any impact for the ELCFH by the government shut-down. The ELCFH did not experience an impact but certainly knew of another agencies who were impacted.</p> <p>The following questions were asked by a contracted provider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there about hurricane funding available to help families who are still recovering from Hurricane Ian? It was shared that the most recent hurricane funding received by the ELCFH has been specifically slated to help childcare businesses recover from storms. • How many times can families reapply for SR services? Is it true families wait a year or more to be notified of funding availability? Families can reapply as often as they want/ need to. The ELCFH wants to assure eligible families can access services quickly- so wait list pulls typically occur monthly. Families must submit all required documentation in order to be enrolled in service- the ELCFH is heavily monitored by DOE- DEL and is required to show proof of eligibility for all families. • Are families are immediately terminated for job/changes? Families are given a 12-month eligibility with a requirement to report changes within 14 calendar days. continued purpose for care. • Why do low income families receiving SR funding still having to pay something for childcare? In Florida, families do have a legislatively mandated parent co-pay. In addition, providers may charge a differential or GAP pay change to make up for the difference in childcare reimbursement not covered by state (DEL) funds. The ELCFH is limited to reimbursing providers at the approved state reimbursement rate.
<p>Adjourn</p>	<p>The meeting adjourned at 9:41 AM</p>

Consent Agenda 2.b: ELCFH Administrative Committee Meeting Minutes- Thursday, 12.4.2025

Committee Members Present: Aaron Stitt, Dr. Joe Pepe, Asena Mott, Dr. Amy Bennett

Staff Members Present: Anne Brewer, Pam Hillestad, Peggy Martel

Agenda Items	Item Overview	Comments/ Actions
Opening	The meeting opened at 9:00 AM. An overview of the Krizner Annual HR audit conducted on October 22 nd was presented and discussed. This included a listing of all covered audit topics and resources provided by the auditor for ELCFH consideration. A relevant training was provide to the ELCFH management team.	N/A
Krizner Audit Recommendations for policy updates for the ELCFH Employee Handbook	<p><i>Current ELCFH policies or applicable excerpts were provided for comparison with the recommended policy. Management team review and recommendation was also provided. The policies addressed the following topics:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Internal Promotions- no changes to current policy recommended b. Self Reporting of Arrests- addition of statement requested: <i>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. Any employee in violation of the reporting requirements of this policy will be dismissed.</i> c. Workplace Surveillance and Monitoring: Sufficient policy exists to allow management to address individual issues should they arise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Committee members agreed with management that no update was needed. b. Committee members agreed with management that the addition of the referenced statement helped to further explain/ define the existing policy. <u>Additional statement recommended for Board/ Executive Committee approval as presented.</u> c. Committee members agreed with management that implementation of this policy could be to the detriment of ELCFH employee morale.

<p>FY 25-26 Board Membership</p>	<p>The following items were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. ELCFH Board Membership Roster by County was reviewed FY 25-26. b. Gubernational appointment applications continue to be a need for the ELCFH. Outreach to current private sector business members, the Appointments Office, the full Board and Community Partners will continue. c. The Membership Application for Amber Chudoba was presented and discussed for eligibility. d. Additional applicants were discussed/ identified. 	<p>The Committee commented on proposed recruitment efforts for FY 25-26 including outreach to individual PSB members and individuals who may qualify as PSB Board Members. .</p> <p><u>Committee members recommended approval of the application for A. Chudoba by the Board/ Executive Committee.</u></p>
<p>Open Forum and Adjourn</p>	<p>A member commented on the desire to visit provider sites with ELCFH staff. This will be arranged for interested members in all four counties.</p> <p>The meeting adjourned at 9:28 AM.</p>	<p>Follow-up will be provided on this item.</p>

Consent Agenda 2.b: ELCFH Finance Committee Meeting Minutes - Wednesday, 12.10.2025

Committee/ Board Members Present: Mary Stewart, Peg Elmore, Cathy Graham,
Nancy Ebrahimi-Driggers

ELCFH Staff Present: Anne Brewer, Pam Hillestad, Olga Olvera, Beth Mueller, Kelly Wertenbach

Agenda Item	Content
<p>Opening</p> <p>Review of Financial reports/ Utilization</p>	<p>The meeting opened at 9:00 AM.</p> <p>Utilization Report for School Readiness (SR) and VPK: SR at 33.3% of FY 25-26 shows a total of 30.7% of funding expended.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 82.4% for Direct Services (of a mandated 78% minimum) • 4.7% of an allowable 5% for Administrative costs, which make up part of the total 17.6% non-direct costs (of a total allowable maximum of 22%). End of June expenditures are required to be applied to the July workbook/ expenditures which inflates Admin/ Non-direct percentages; likewise, Direct Services would most likely show at a higher percent if this requirement were not in place. • A total caseload of 1,389 children were billed for SR in October 2025. <p>The VPK program is expended at 29.3% as of 33.3% of FY 25-26 with a total child count of 1,455. The admin cost is at 4.2% of an allowable 5%;</p> <p>Other reports presented: <u>ELCFH Executive Summary from DEL Workbook (October 2025)</u>- it was agreed that since the numbers are inflated as stated previously, this report will be held back until the process of reporting correct FY data is corrected by DEL. It was noted that Gold Seal continues to show budgetary shortfalls- needed funds are pulled from the ELCFH operating budget or direct services to assure overall budget balance. A similar issue exists with QPI due to the differential paid to providers who reach the required composite annual CLASS score.</p> <p><u>FY 25-26 October Data Report:</u> Waitlist pulls continue on a monthly basis; the YTD unduplicated child count of children served is 1,680, which is down from the previous year.</p> <p><u>School Readiness Grant Expenditures</u> by Program FY 2025/ 2026 w/o QPI- from 7.1.25 – 10.31.25.</p> <p><u>VPK Grant Expenditures</u> by Program FY 2025/ 2026 from 7.1.25 – 10.31.25.</p>

	<p><u>FY 25-26 12/3/25 Balance Sheet and Cash Flow report</u>: it was announced that the line of credit had been pulled on November 18 to pay payroll and SR provider payments. This was not yet listed in the report due to the timing in the month of the Finance Committee meeting. The LOC was repaid on November 26 and all activities were reported to the ELCFH Executive Committee as required.</p> <p><u>October 2025 Direct Services and Program/ Quality Activities Match Report (FY 25-26)</u>: It was reported that the ELCFH Has completed the agency submission of the profile updates and registration required to participate in the 2026 Giving Challenge. Currently the ELCFH is pending notification of the UWCF grant award for Hardee and Highlands Counties; site visits with UWCF were conducted in mid-October.</p>
Board Action items	<p>The following item was presented for committee consensus to move to the Executive Committee (via consent agenda) for approval: FY 25-26 VPK Budget Budget Revision – October Invoicing adjustment for summer VPK School District round-up funding.</p> <p><i>Committee members recommended Executive Committee approval of the budget revision as presented.</i></p>
Expenditures over \$5,000	<p>The following expenditure was reported as reviewed and approved by the Board Treasurer: ACH 12.10.25 in the amount of \$6,220.00 to the Children’s Forum for four SR and ten VPK CLASS Assessments.</p>
Other items reported	<p>Credit Card Review: The October 2025 charges totaling \$78.13 were reviewed by the Board Treasurer.</p> <p>The Bank Reconciliations for November 2025 were also reviewed by the Board Treasurer.</p> <p>FY 24-25 Audit Status: overall, the process is good; the auditors and ELCFH Finance Team are pending the revenue confirmation from DEL so that the SEFA report can be completed.</p>
4 Open Forum	<p>The QPR report issued by DEL is pending. This is typically completed by November 1 of each fiscal year.</p>
5 Adjourn	<p>The meeting adjourned at 9:19 AM</p>

Consent Agenda 2.b: Quality Committee meeting- Thursday, January 15, 2026

Committee/ Board Members Present: Susan Norris, Trena Miller, Gail Werley, John Stover, Leigh Ann Moccia, Alma Ovalle, Billie-Jo Moretta, Maria Castillo, Maria Magowan, Nancy Ebrahimi-Driggers, Rick Pucci, Susan Flemming

Staff Members Present: Anne Brewer, Beth Mueller, Janet Lane, Pam Hillestad, Kelly Wertenbach, Tina Yates

Guests Present: Amber Chudoba, Bianca Petco, Altagracia Lajara-Paredes, Casia Merlos

Agenda Items	Item Overview- <u>Comments/ Actions</u>
Opening	The meeting opened at 9:00 AM. Introductions were made. The 10.23.25 Quality Committee meeting minutes were reviewed.
Committee Discussion Items	<p>ELCFH position statement development: local definition of school readiness: The DRAFT statement was reviewed with the following highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few typos in the draft had been identified and were announced as corrected. • Understanding that socio-emotional development is a prevailing concern for children, Dr. David Elkind’s quote about children understanding how to relate within the classroom was highlighted. • A framework for a truly “Ready Child” is inclusive of ready families, ready schools and ready communities. This is understood to be the “Readiness Equation”. This is important to acknowledge so that all the pressure of “readiness” is not put on the child- which can result in push down academics, where child readiness is based solely on what the child can perform/ memorize, rather than the child’s state of mind towards learning and the programs ability to engage children in developmentally appropriate learning experiences. • Ideas for how readiness can be measured within the ELCFH School Readiness Program (and VPK!) were discussed- this is important to agree upon as conversation continues with community partners who may be more focused on memorization and recitation based skills. • Further definitions and ideas about a child’s true readiness for school was included as a “food for thought” piece to include with the SR statement. • The specific needs of foster families and involvement of case managers were noted. Case managers were mentioned as hard to include and should be a source of family resources. • The ELCFH is poised to assist all families with needed resources, whether

funded or not. This is most specific to childcare services and information on selecting a quality program, but certainly the ELCFH will help families with referrals to other needs.

- The committee discussed some of the important parameters of ready community and ready programs- citing inexperienced directors, misinformation about the importance of early screening/ early identification, and how to best assure families in need are pointed in the right direction for resources. It was agreed that some issues such as parent engagement are huge with no easy answers, and that the finalized statement can help with discussion and training of community members.

The committee recommends adoption of the School Readiness Position Statement by the ELCFH Board as presented. The statement will be presented to the Board at the February 25, 2026 Board meeting.

Hurricane Disaster/ Hurricane Ian funding follow-up: The ELCFH has contracted with Child Care Biz to provide COOP training and resources that will help providers develop individualized COOP plans and have access to needed supplies in response to weather emergencies. An idea about purchase of playground turf for providers to support resilient outdoor surfaces and to address impacted sand/ mulch washing away (making playground surfaces unsafe). This is in response to federal guidance regarding use of grant funds to support child care supply (and not just in response to emergency situations).

2026 Legislative Conversations surrounding early learning: session started this past week and the AELC state level weekly advocacy meetings are getting going. A presentation about “Fraud Prevention” at the ELC level will be facilitate by DEL and the AELC at the Jan 20th House Pre-K-12 subcommittee meeting.

Concerns that programs are having trouble being able to afford to deliver the VPK program have been voiced. An idea is to talk with local legislatures about the true cost of a quality early learning program, the challenge in finding teachers, how much VPK pays vs private pay, and the requirements of being a VPK provider. There remains prevailing concern regarding children’s behavior- which many early learning programs in the ELCFH report as a significant challenge.

	<p>ELCFH Agency Updates- the following items were reported:</p> <p>Teacher Feature: this is a new concept being facilitated by the ELCFH to highlight teachers and best practices in the classroom. These monthly features will be posted on the ELCFH website and blasted via the provider blast.</p> <p>Celebrate Literacy Week: Jan 26 – 30, 2026; THEME: Read, White and Blue: 250 Chapters of America!: The books are Parade Colors by Barbara Barbieri McGrath (infant/toddler) and What Is America? by Michelle Medlock Adams (preschool). CDE will be delivering the books as soon as they arrive. DEL has provided activities for providers and families to do with the children with a Patriotic theme which are included in the ELCFH blast.</p> <p>Lesson plan implementation: (excerpt of email sent to providers): During upcoming site visits, CDE Specialists will look for the materials and activities noted in the lesson plans and engage in brief conversations with teachers to better understand how plans are used throughout the day. ELCFH CDE Specialists are available to work with provider to support lesson planning and implementation in a way that is practical, meaningful, and responsive to the needs of the children in your care.</p> <p>CDE Lead- Child Support Specialist- change! The ELCFH CDE Lead, will be working closely with the CDE staff to strengthen partnerships with families and teachers—especially in supporting children who may benefit from extra help. The goal is to provide individualized support for children and connect families with the resources needed to best support their child at a deeper level.</p> <p>ELCFH 2026 Provider Event: Registration for the ELCFH 2026 Provider event with guest presenter Stephen Fite is underway. Providers can register on the ELCFH website at www.elcfh.org.</p>
Healthy Families	<p>The Charlotte program provided the 2nd quarter performance measures report (10.1.25 – 12.31.25) which was in draft form at the time of the meeting packet prep. Program outcome numbers were run as of the date of the meeting and a couple of minor differences were noted. A total of 14 of the 20 outcomes were met at 100%, four outcomes exceeded the required standard and two outcomes were narrowly missed. The updated outcomes will be provided at the next meeting. The program is fully staffed at this time, having hired the last vacant position with a bilingual staff member.</p> <p>The DeSoto/ Hardee program has noted some struggles with outcomes due to the total</p>

	number cited in the indicator (which is a small number). It was shared that to even miss one of the required assessments (which must be completed within 30 days of program enrollment) meant that the outcome would not be met. The program is currently fully staffed, which ultimately will help with family enrollment and retention.
Open Forum	It was shared that there appear to be some glitches with the DCF website, resulting in staff trainings not posting to transcripts. It was advised that for the time being, providers should have staff print certificates so they can assure they receive credit for the trainings completed.
Adjourn	The next Quality Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, March 12, 2026 at 9AM via ZOOM. The meeting adjourned at 10:25 AM.

Consent Agenda 2.b: Finance Committee Meeting Minutes - Wednesday, January 28, 2026

Committee/ Board Members Present: Mary Stewart, John Stover

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

Agenda Item	Content
Opening	The meeting opened at 9:00 AM.
Review of Financial reports/ Utilization	<p>Utilization Report for School Readiness (SR) and VPK: SR at 50% of FY 25-26 shows a total of 42.2% of funding expended.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 83.4% for Direct Services (of a required 78% minimum) • 4.0% of an allowable 5% for Administrative costs, which make up part of the total 16.6% non-direct costs (of a total allowable maximum of 22%). This reflects the actual percentage of expenditures including match and not the combined FY 25-26 and 2025 end of June expenditures as shown in the DEL workbook (and previously reported out via the ELCFH Finance Committee reports). • A total caseload of 1,378 children was billed for SR in December 2025. <p>The VPK program is expended at 43.4% as of 50% of FY 25-26 with a total child count of 1,392. The admin cost is 3.7% of an allowable 5%.</p>

	<p>Other reports presented:</p> <p><u>FY 25-26 December Data Report:</u> Waitlist pulls continue on a monthly basis; The current pull was in progress at the time of the presented report accounting for the low percentage of families deemed eligible. The YTD unduplicated child count of children served via SR was reported at 1,789.</p> <p><u>School Readiness Grant Expenditures</u> by Program FY 2025/ 2026 w/o QPI- from 7.1.25 – 12.31.25.</p> <p><u>VPK Grant Expenditures</u> by Program FY 2025/ 2026 from 7.1.25 – 12.31.25. A question was asked about the personnel expenditure line, which was reported as expended at 34.8%. It was explained that the budget in its entirety is \$113,017, so most personnel expenditures are reflected in SR funding.</p> <p><u>FY 25-26 1/26/2026 Balance Sheet and Cash Flow report:</u> it was announced that funding hit the bank yesterday and today, upping the cash balance to \$1,474,909. Provider payments were facilitated on January 20th for SR and scheduled for January 30th for VPK.</p> <p><u>December 2025 Direct Services and Program/ Quality Activities Match Report (FY 25-26):</u> It was reported that the UWCF funding for Highlands has been merged into one grant specific to direct services. United Way Suncoast expenditures are ongoing and specific to provider event registration and training stipends for DeSoto County providers.</p>
<p>Board Action items</p>	<p>The following items were presented for consensus to move to the February 25, 2026 Board Meeting (via consent agenda) for approval:</p> <p>FY 25-26 Budget Proposal for Disaster Relief- Hurricane Ian Grant Funding. Core activities detailing use of the funds have been approved by DEL via the required grant application and further reviewed/ approved by the Executive Committee. Any updates to the budget/ activities will require further application/ budget narrative submission and approval by DEL (with reporting to the Board with action requested as needed). The ELCFH is working very closely with Board, Finance, Quality Committee and DCF representatives to assure funds meet provider needs and are aligned with the expenditures rules as set by DEL/ federal government. <u><i>The committee recommended Board approval at the 2.25.26 Board meeting of the budget proposal as presented.</i></u></p> <p>FM2: ELCFH Compliance Reporting for Internal Controls: updates to the policy including benign changes to align with current titles/ agency name.</p>

	<p>Two policy changes were presented: 1. Update to language allowing executive director signature on any check over \$5000 with the required approval without a not to exceed amount: 2. Policy statement of assurance of alignments with best practices in internal controls set through position descriptions/ specific job functions. The Committee engaged in discussion regarding the first update and recommended added language to clarify approval requirements for <u>checks and electronic transfers</u>. <i><u>The committee recommended Board approval of the updates to ELCFH Policy FM2 at the 2.25.26 Board meeting with the recommended update to clarify approval for checks and electronic transfers.</u></i></p>
<p>Expenditures over \$5,000</p>	<p>The following expenditures were reported as reviewed and approved by the Board Treasurer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACH on 01.08.26 in the amount of \$9,200 to the Children’s Forum for 9SR and 11 VPK CLASS Assessments • ACH on 01.23.26 in the amount of \$25,000 to ChildCare Biz- COOP training/ support services (March and April 2026), resources, and support/ technical assistance for providers.
<p>Other items reported</p>	<p>Credit Card Review: The November 2025 charges totaling \$80.74 and December 2025 charges totaling \$732.97 are pending review by the Board Treasurer.</p> <p>The Bank Reconciliations for December 2025 are pending review by the Board Treasurer.</p> <p>FY 24-25 Audit Status: the draft audit has been provided to ELCFH management for review and comment. Feedback has been submitted to the auditor and the clean draft will be provided to the Finance Committee once received. It is expected that the audit will be presented to the full Board for approval at the 2.25.26 Board meeting.</p>
<p>Open Forum</p>	<p>Nothing additional to report.</p>
<p>Adjourn</p>	<p>The meeting adjourned at 9:29 AM</p>

Consent Agenda 2.b: Administrative Committee meeting minutes, Thursday, February 12, 2026

Committee Members Present: Aaron Stitt, Dr. Joe Pepe, Asena Mott, Dr. Amy Bennett, Larry Lawman

Staff Members Present: Anne Brewer, Pam Hillestad, Peggy Martel

Agenda Items	Item Overview; Committee Comments/ Recommendations
1. Opening	The meeting opened at 9:02 AM. The minutes from the 12.4.25 meeting were reviewed,
2. Committee Recommendations to the ELCFH Board	<p>d. ELCFH Bylaws Amendment: Article 5- Meetings; Section 5.4- Voting Regulations: the required language for the bylaws addresses designees of Board members who attend a Board meeting in the member’s place. These representatives would not have voting privileges. Notice of the proposed amendment was provided to the full Board on Monday, Feb 9th in preparation for the February 25th Board meeting (as required).</p> <p>It was also shared that an update to the ELCFH main office address (Article 2) and registered agent name (Article 3) was needed for the Articles of Incorporation. The Board agenda and packet will contain these two excerpts for Board approval on Feb 25, 2026.</p> <p><u>The committee recommended Board approval of the amendment to Article 5, Section 5.4 of the ELCFH Bylaws as presented.</u></p> <p><u>The committee recommended Board approval of the updates to the ELCFH Articles of Incorporation- Articles 2 and 3 as presented.</u></p> <p>e. ELCFH Employee Handbook: Hybrid Work Schedules. The ELCFH is aware of a continuing trend to offer staff hybrid schedules as an employment perk. A sample policy was provided by the Krizner Group HR consultant and edited to fit the work of ELCFH; the ELCFH management team fully reviewed and requested support for this policy. The committee engaged in discussion, noting points to consider such as assuring equitable application and concrete reference to other policies to better show alignment.</p> <p><u>The committee recommended Board approval of the ELCFH Employee Handbook: Hybrid Work Schedules policy with incorporation of the comments as stated.</u></p>
3. FY 25-26 Board Membership	<p>The following items were discussed:</p> <p>e. ELCFH Board Membership Roster by County- review of membership for FY 25-26 was discussed. Planning for membership for FY 26-27 means some turnover as</p>

	<p>current members reach the end of their terms. Those seats were identified and <u>it was agreed that ELCFH outreach for mandatory seats as well as Board officer and Committee Chair seats should start in March in preparation for the May 14th Administrative Committee meeting.</u></p> <p>f. An update on the most current communication with the Governor’s Appointments office regarding Gubernatorial Appointment applications on file was provided. Two current Private Sector Business Members have indicated possible interest in applying for these seats. The appointments office has confirmed that the ELCFH does not have any applications on file.</p> <p>g. Chancellor Cari Miller is visiting the ELCFH at the beginnings of April (date to be confirmed) and has stated willingness to provide support for gubernatorial appointments. As applications come in, she has asked that they be sent to her directly (in addition to being submitted to the Governor’s Appointments office) so that she can assist with getting the seats filled.</p> <p>h. A Board Membership Application and resume was reviewed for <i>Amy Huddleston</i>. Ms. Huddleston qualifies as a private sector business member representing Charlotte County.</p> <p><u>The committee recommended Board approval of Board Membership application for Amy Huddleston effective February 25, 2026.</u></p> <p>i. An update regarding Board member visits to childcare provider sites was provided. It was agreed that this could be an ongoing activity with regular invitations to Board members to visit childcare provider sites. Relevant information specific to the current trends in ELCFH technical assistance and provider capacity is provided at each visit. Similar “field trips” are provided to ELCFH office based staff to help with understanding best practices within the scope of childcare services we strive to assure each child receives.</p>
<p>4. Open Forum and Adjourn</p>	<p>A member offered a name/ connection for possible support for the ELCFH Board and Finance Committee. A virtual introduction was facilitated with the ED and the community member via the Board member..</p> <p>Board member photos on the ELCFH were discussed with some members agreeing that this would be a forward facing, friendly way to engage the public. It was agreed that a survey of Board members to determine interest would occur.</p> <p>The new teacher recognition piece that has been part of the ELCFH blast and posted on the ELCFH website was noted as a great morale booster for teachers.</p> <p>The meeting adjourned at 10:10AM.</p>

**Consent Agenda 2.c: United Way Charlotte/ Charlotte County BOCC Award Letter
(10.1.25 – 9.30.26) Local Funding for Direct Services (School Readiness)**



September 11, 2024

Anne Brewer
Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Heartland, Inc.
18501 Murdock Circle, Suite 200
Port Charlotte, FL 33948

Dear Anne,

I hope this letter finds you well. On behalf of the United Way Charlotte County (UWCC) and our Board of Directors, I want to express our sincere appreciation for your continued dedication to serving the residents of Charlotte County. The work your organization does has a profound impact, and we are grateful for your partnership in addressing the health and human service needs of our community.

As you know, the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) allocates a portion of its annual budget to support local nonprofit organizations that provide essential services to our residents. UWCC administers these funds through our Community Impact process, in which a panel of volunteers carefully review and consider key factors such as program objectives, agency standing, financial health, and the ability to deliver measurable results. The panel's recommendations are then presented to the UWCC Board for approval.

I am pleased to inform you that your program has been approved for funding in Year 2 of the 2024–2026 funding cycle, contingent upon the approval of the BOCC budget and the receipt of funds. Please take note of the award amount listed below, as it may differ from your Year 1 funding.

**Program Name: Child Care for Economically Disadvantaged
Funding Amount for 2025 - 2026: \$72,548.00**

This grant term extends through September 30, 2026, with 12 monthly payments disbursed in equal portions throughout the year.

Attached, you will find the Right to Appeal Policy and Procedures for your reference. The Agency Agreement will follow this correspondence shortly.

Thank you once again for your unwavering commitment to making a meaningful difference in the lives of children and families in Charlotte County. We are honored to continue partnering with you in this important work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Angie Matthiessen".

Angie Matthiessen
Executive Director
United Way Charlotte County (UWCC)

Consent Agenda 2.d: Board Membership Application

NOTE:

The ELCFH Administrative Committee reviewed the full application/ resume for Ms. Huddleston on February 12, 2026 and recommends Board approval for ELCFH Board Membership. As required, Ms. Huddleston's information is pending submission as a School Readiness plan amendment to the Division of Early Learning (DEL).

New Member effective 2.25.26:

Name: Amy Huddleston

Position: Manager of Community Engagement & Partnerships, Valerie's House

ELCFH Board Affiliation: *Charlotte County*- Private Sector Business

Statement of Interest: Ms. Huddleston, through in-person meeting and written application, expressed a sincere interest in partnership and Board membership with the ELCFH for *"building relationships in our community and helping our families with resources."* Valerie's House supports children in Charlotte County (and other counties) who are dealing with grief from loss of a loved one and looks to expand into other parts of the ELCFH service area.

Consent Agenda 2.e: School Readiness Budget Modification

FY 25-26 SR Budget Proposal 01/15/26 & 02/12/26 Invoicing Adjustments Prepared for 02/25/26 Board Meeting

		FY 25-26 Approved SR Budget	01/15/26 & 02/12/26 Invoicing Adjustments	FY 25-26 Proposed SR Budget
Expenditures				
Admin Expenditures				
Other				
SR Administration	97BBA	635,254		635,254
SR Non Direct Services	97BBD	281,787		281,787
SR Program Eligibility	97BDE	858,798		858,798
SR Early Learning Assessment-Infant & Toddler	97IAS	44,028	1,053	45,082
SR Child Screening-Develop & Health-Infant & Toddler	97ICS	7,962		7,962
SR Quality Improvement - Infant and Toddler	97INT	70,797		70,797
SR Quality	97Q00	643,646		643,646
SR Early Learning Assessment 3 & >	97QAS	23,781		23,781
SR Child Screening - Developmental & Health	97QCS	8,078		8,078
SR Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R)	97QE4	6,047		6,047
SR Quality Improvement - Inclusion Services	97QIN	<u>57,768</u>	<u>(1,053)</u>	<u>56,715</u>
Total Admin Expenditures		2,637,947	0	2,637,947
Direct				
Other				
SR Transitional Child Care	97G00	29,057		29,057
SR Tanf Child Only	97GNW	292,601		292,601
SR Gold Seal Quality Care Shortfall	97GOV	48,265		48,265
Gold Seal Direct	97GSD	458,440		458,440
SR Economically Disadvantaged	97P00	8,840,820		8,840,820
SR At Risk	97R00	1,182,711		1,182,711
Quality Perf Incentive Diff Child Assessment	QFICQ	28,082		28,082
Quality Performance Incentive Differentials	QFIPQ	496,477		496,477
QPI Differential Shortfall	QFIPS	44,593		44,593
Special Needs Quality Differential	SPCRQ	7,098		7,098
SR Match Program	SRMAT	127,880		127,880
SR Registration Fees	SRREG	<u>59,118</u>		<u>59,118</u>
Total Direct		11,615,080	0	11,615,080
Total Expenditures		<u>14,253,027</u>		<u>14,253,027</u>

SR Budgets Adjustments by County 01/15/26 & 02/12/26

		Charlotte	DeSoto	Hardee	Highlands
Expenditures					
Admin Expenditures					
Other					
SR Early Learning Assessment-Infant & Toddler	97IAS			1,053	
SR Quality Improvement - Inclusion Services	97QIN			<u>(1,053)</u>	
Total Admin				<u>0</u>	
Direct					
SR Transitional Child Care	97G00	6,000			(6,000)
Special Needs Quality Differential	SPCRQ	<u>2,534</u>		<u>(2,534)</u>	
Total Direct		<u>8,534</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(2,534)</u>	<u>(6,000)</u>

Consent Agenda 2.f: School Readiness PLUS Budget Modification

**FY 25-26 SRPlus Budget Proposal
01/15/26 Invoicing Adjustments
Prepared for 02/25/26 Board Meeting**

		<u>FY 25-26 Approved SRPlus Budget</u>	<u>01/15/26 Invoicing Adjustments</u>	<u>FY 25-26 Proposed SRPlus Budget</u>
Expenditures				
Admin Expenditures				
Other				
SR Plus Admin	SRPAD	<u>3,100</u>		<u>3,100</u>
Total Admin Expenditures		3,100		3,100
Direct				
Other				
SR Plus Registration Fees	SPREG	300		300
SR Plus Direct Services	SRPDS	54,169	(2,000)	52,169
SR Plus Gold Seal	SRPGS	998	2,000	2,998
SR Plus Quality	SRPQP	<u>3,429</u>		<u>3,429</u>
Total Direct		<u>58,896</u>		<u>58,896</u>
Total Expenditures		<u>61,996</u>		<u>61,996</u>

Consent Agenda 2.g: Voluntary Prekindergarten Budget Modification

**FY 25-26 VPK Budget Proposal
01/15/26 Invoicing Adjustments
Prepared for 02/25/26 Board Meeting**

		FY 25-26 Approved VPK Budget	01/15/26 Invoicing Adjustments	FY 25-26 Proposed VPK Budget
Expenditures				
Admin Expenditures				
Other				
VPK Administration	VPADM	144,663	(1,200)	
VPK Enrollment	VPENR	80,950		
VPK Monitoring	VPMON	<u>3,410</u>	<u>1,200</u>	
Total Admin Expenditures		229,024		
Direct				
Other				
VPK School District Minimum Funding	VPKSD	62,000		
VPK Provider Advance	VPPRP	0		
VPK Direct Program Services	VPPRS	<u>4,518,470</u>		
Total Direct		<u>4,580,470</u>		
Total Expenditures		<u>4,809,494</u>		

VPK Budgets Adjustments by County 01/15/26

Admin Expenditures		Charlotte	DeSoto	Hard ee	Highlands
Other					
VPK Administration	VPADM		(700)	(500)	
VPK Enrollment	VPENR				
VPK Monitoring	VPMON		<u>700</u>	<u>500</u>	
Total Admin Expenditures		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

ELCFH Board Meeting

Action Items

February 25, 2026

Action Item 3- Attachment- FY 24-25 Independent Auditor's Report

Action Item 4- FY 25-26 Budget Proposal for Disaster Relief- Hurricane Ian Grant Funding

NOTES: . Core activities detailing use of the funds have been approved by DEL via the required grant application and further reviewed by the Quality Committee and approved by the Executive Committee. Vendors have been secured through the ELCFH procurement Process and Board approval. Any updates to the scope of work/ budget requires DEL approval. Budget reviewed and recommended for approval by Finance Committee (1.28.26)

**FY 25-26 Budget Proposal
Disaster Relief - Hurricane Ian
07/01/2025 Notice of Award - \$1,632,641**

		DRG Budget Proposal
		<hr/>
Disaster Relief Grant Budget		
DRG Administration	97BBA	\$1,632
DRG Non Direct Services	97BBD	0
DRG Mental Health	97INT	141,306
DRG Quality	97Q00	1,359,703
DRG Early Learning Curriculum	97QCR	0
DRG Professional Development	97QPD	50,000
Total Budget		<hr/> 1,632,641

Action Item 5- Amendment to ELCFH Bylaws (applicable excerpt provided)

NOTES:

- Noticed as required to the ELCFH Board on Monday, February 9, 2026.
 - Reviewed and recommended for approval by the Administrative Committee on Thursday, February 12, 2026.
-

5.4 VOTING REGULATIONS

A majority of the Coalition Board membership constitutes quorum to conduct business. The act of a majority of the members present at the meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the voting members. The exception will be any business that requires the concurrence of two-thirds of the members as stated in ELCFH policy.

- 5.4.1** Fifty-one percent (51%) of the members will constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Coalition Board. If less than a majority of voting members is present at said meeting, a majority of the to FS 1002.83(6), an early learning coalition may use any method of telecommunication to conduct meetings, including establishing a quorum through telecommunications, provided that the public is given proper notice of a telecommunications meeting and reasonable access to observe and, when appropriate, participate.
- 5.4.2** Any voting member who has a conflict of interest on any item brought before the Coalition Board for discussion or action will disclose that conflict in advance, complying fully with statutory rules governing conflicts of interest.
- 5.4.3** Pursuant to s. 1002.83(8), F.S., "a voting member of an early learning coalition may not appoint a designee to act in his or her place, except as otherwise provided in this subsection. A voting member may send a representative to coalition meetings, but that representative does not have voting privileges. When a regional administrator for the Department of Children and Families appoints a designee to an early learning coalition, that designee is the voting member of the coalition, and any individual attending in the designee's place, including the district administrator, does not have voting privileges.

Action Item 6- ELCFH Articles of Incorporation (excerpt)- correction to agency address and last name of registered agent

**AMENDED AND RESTATED
ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION**

OF

**EARLY LEARNING COALITION
OF FLORIDA'S HEARTLAND, INC.**

Pursuant to Section 617.1007, Florida Statutes, the Articles of Incorporation the of School Readiness Coalition of Charlotte and DeSoto Counties, Inc., a Florida corporation not for profit, which was originally incorporated on December 12, 1999, and assigned document number N99000007627 are hereby amended and restated in their entirety. All amendments included herein have been adopted pursuant to Section 617.1007, Florida Statutes, including the name change of the corporation to Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Heartland, Inc. There is no discrepancy between the corporation's Articles of Incorporation as heretofore amended and the provisions of these Amended and Restated Articles other than the inclusion of amendments adopted pursuant to Section 617.1007 and the omission of matters of historical interest. The Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation of Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Heartland, Inc. shall henceforth be as follows:

ARTICLE 1 - NAME

The name of the corporation is as follows: EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF FLORIDA'S HEARTLAND, INC.

ARTICLE 2 - ADDRESS

The address of the principal office and the mailing address of the corporation is: ~~2886 Tamiami Trail, Suite 1, Port Charlotte, FL 33952~~ **18501 Murdock Circle, Suite 200, Port Charlotte, FL 33948.**

ARTICLE 3 - REGISTERED OFFICE AND AGENT

The street address of the registered office of the corporation ~~2886 Tamiami Trail, Suite 1, Port Charlotte, FL 33952~~ **18501 Murdock Circle, Suite 200, Port Charlotte, FL 33948.** The name of its registered agent at that address is Anne Brewer.

Action Item 7.a- NEW ELCFH Employee Handbook Policy- Section 6: Work Hours and Pay

NOTE: The below proposed policy includes edits from the Administrative Committee (2.12.26).

Policy 6.7: Hybrid Work Schedules (Remote Work)

The ELCFH is committed to creating a work environment that supports overall strategic goals and organizational values. In keeping with this commitment, we see the value in allowing flexible work arrangements that are conducive to accomplishing the goals of the agency, the individual position, as well as the individual department teams. The ELCFH understands that hybrid work arrangements will increase retention and recruitment of highly qualified employees, maintain employee productivity, and promote employee engagement. Hybrid work schedules are not an entitlement or an agency-wide benefit. It is a privilege; and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with the ELCFH.

ELCFH Management/ direct supervisors determine whether a specific job may be performed effectively off-site and whether an individual is effectively working without in-office supervision. The Hybrid Work Policy/ Hybrid Work Schedule will include four and five-day work week options that allows for some telecommuting/ remote work.

Eligibility

Regular permanent, full-time, non-exempt employees must meet the following criteria to qualify for a hybrid work schedule:

- Reached the one year anniversary of working for the ELCFH;
- Received an overall score of 4 or higher on the ELCFH Annual Performance Evaluation (with no score less than 3 on any individual indicators);
- Is not under an active Corrective Action Plan or other disciplinary action;
- Has the needed connection and technology requirements for secure remote work as defined by the ELCFH Technology Use & Security Policy and IT Vendor requirements;
- Demonstrated accurate and contemporaneous timekeeping skills for three consecutive months prior to approval. To meet this requirement, time will be reviewed weekly to ensure compliance within the work week, Sunday – Saturday;
- Demonstrated use of Outlook calendaring for all meetings and personal time (e.g. doctor's appointment) during ELCFH regular business hours (including applicable after hours meeting/ trainings/ weekend events) for three consecutive months, prior to approval;

- Supervisor approves the requested plan for remote work privileges (before submitting to Executive Director);
- Demonstrated compliance with all roles and responsibilities as listed in the applicable position description.

Waiver of eligibility requirements may be granted by Executive Director under unique and extreme circumstances.

Communication & Response Time Expectations

Clear communications and timely responses among staff are vital for an effective organization. Staff who are working a hybrid schedule must be attentive to communications, especially those with high importance and deadlines. A key to effective communication while working remotely is to recognize that other staff are in need of a response, input, or feedback. Responses may not be delayed until the remote employee is in the office. If a remote employee is not able to timely and effectively respond as if in the office, the employee may no longer be permitted to work a hybrid schedule.

Unless otherwise discussed with their supervisor, employees who are working remotely are expected to be available to colleagues and external stakeholders by phone, virtual meeting platforms, email, and/or any other means of communication utilized by their team or in the performance of their job responsibilities. If during a time when an employee working a hybrid schedule is working a planned day at their approved remote location and they experience a significant technology based work impediment (ie slow or no internet), they will be required to either take the “down time/ non-working time” as PLT or come into the office to continue working. Drive time to the office on such occasions is not considered work/ paid time and does not qualify for mileage reimbursement.

Employees working a hybrid schedule are expected to have the functionality and knowledge to respond to emails, voicemails, instant messages/ texts, and requests for virtual video meetings while in their remote work location. These employees are expected to have the ability to perform basic office functions, such as accessing the internet and utilizing video and audio devices.

Hybrid work privileges must not adversely affect relations with outside individuals or organizations, employee productivity, or progress of an individual or team assignment. At their sole discretion, supervisors may require team members who are working remotely to submit a specific work plan in advance of the remote workday(s) and/or to submit a summary of work completed. This may be important if there is an upcoming deadline that requires tight coordination between team members to meet that deadline.

Hybrid Work Location Requirements: *(Policy reference: ELCFH Employee Handbook Policy 4.5, 4.7, 4.14, 4.16, 4.22; DEL Data Security Agreement)*

The ELCFH requires high standards for confidentiality and properly secured information protocols apply to any remote work location. Remote locations for hybrid work must have prior approval by the ELCFH Executive Director. Employees working a hybrid schedule must ensure their designated remote work location provides for client confidentiality, enables performance of job responsibilities in a professional manner, and that employee performance and case handling standards are met, including:

- Ensure that the remote work location has the ability to have private phone and video conversations.
- Properly safeguard all electronic data and equipment. Confidential paper files and documents may only be housed at the ELCFH office locations or approved secured storage facilities.
- Meet the minimum requirement for secure internet network access as established under ELCFH policy and by the IT Vendor/ Support.
- Meet the minimum requirement for internet speed to allow for quality phone and videocommunications.
- Use an assigned computer when possible. If not using an assigned computer, staff may not download ELCFH information to the non-organization device, must utilize up-to-date anti-virus protection, and should make sure to log out of all active sessions in applicable cloud-based systems. Where possible, the history and cache should be cleared. The use of both ELCFH-owned and non-owned equipment must adhere to the guidelines in the ELCFH Employee Handbook which includes all applicable ELCFH technology use and security policies.
- Ensure a safe physical working environment that is free from hazards.

Security: *(Policy reference: ELCFH Employee Handbook Policy 4.6, 4.14, 4.16, 4.22; FDEL Data Security Agreement)*

Employees will also abide by all ELCFH policies and procedures on use of electronic devices and systems; to contact IT Support for any issues in supporting updated electronic security and measures on ELCFH equipment; and to immediately report any lost, stolen, compromised, or damaged systems or devices to a supervisor and Director- Finance & IT

Safety & Liability: *(Policy reference: ELCFH Employee Handbook Policy 4.10 and 7.7)*

Employees are expected to maintain their remote workspace in a safe manner, free from safety hazards. Employees are responsible for notifying the ELCFH of any injuries sustained while at their remote work location in conjunction with their regular work duties. Employees are covered under the Workers' Compensation Act if injured in the course of performing official duties at the approved remote site. An employee's claim for benefits or services will be governed by Chapter 440, Florida Statutes. If an injury is determined to have been caused by employee negligence or employee failure in maintaining safe working conditions over which the employee has or had control, the employee may be subject to disciplinary action. If an employee is injured in a work-related accident at the remote work site, the employee must notify the supervisor immediately.

Employees are not permitted to operate a motor vehicle while performing active work duties such as responding to emails/messages or participating in a video call or non-hands-free phone calls.

The ELCFH is not liable for loss, destruction, or injury that may occur in or to the employee's remote workspace. This includes family members, visitors, or others that may become injured within or around the employee's remote workspace.

Staff may not hold in-person work-related meetings at their homes or other personal/ remote work spaces.

Professional Appearance: *(Policy reference: ELCFH Employee Handbook Policy 4.3)*

Remote staff are expected to be fully prepared to participate in scheduled meetings in a professional manner.

- When scheduling a meeting, ensure there is a listed conference line, zoom video conferencing, or meeting link included in calendared events;
- Dress code remains consistent with the ELCFH offices and employees are expected to dress appropriately to reflect the professionalism of the ELCFH.
- The remote work location must be free of unprofessional or offensive visual distractions

Dependent Care

Employees may not use remote work time to care for a family member. If the employee must stay home to care for a family member due to illness, lack of childcare, or any other reason, it is assumed that the employee is not available for a full workday and is not working remotely. This employee would need to utilize their earned leave options for this non-working time.

During extraordinary circumstances (as experienced with the COVID-19 pandemic), an employee may be granted permission to work remotely while also being a primary caregiver to a family member if recommended by the direct supervisor and approved by the Executive Director.

Job Description and Responsibilities

Employees participating in hybrid work plans are subject to the same job description expectations and policies and procedures regarding attendance, leave, job performance, discipline, and employment separation as an employee not participating in a hybrid work plan. The job description and expectations are not altered because an employee is electing to participate in a hybrid work plan.

Work Week: *(Policy reference: ELCFH Employee Handbook Policy 6.2)*

An eligible employee can work a maximum of 35% of their regular work schedule remotely on no more than two days a week in an approved, predictable schedule. The ELCFH Management Team in conjunction with the Executive Director may select one regularly scheduled day a week where remote work is not permitted. This is intended to ensure the office and team culture of collaboration is maintained. In-person meetings, trainings, outreach activities, and other required travel needs, and commitments of the department/ ELCFH supersede any individual employee's approved hybrid schedule.

Compensation

The employee's compensation, benefits, work status, and work responsibilities will not change due to participation in a hybrid work schedule. The amount of time the employee is expected to work per day or pay period also will not change as a result of participation in a hybrid work schedule. All non-exempt employees must seek prior supervisor approval for any work over 40 hours (resulting in overtime).

Mileage Reimbursement

Mileage reimbursement will continue to be reimbursed at the rate allowable and will be calculated from the employee's assigned office or remote work location whichever is closer. While working remotely, employees are not reimbursed for mileage from their home to their assigned office.

Requesting Approval for a Hybrid Work Plan

The process for requesting a hybrid work plan requires a discussion with the employee's supervisor and may need to include other staff and teammates. Employees should speak directly with their supervisor if they would like to be considered for hybrid work privileges. If the supervisor

determines the employee has met all the eligibility criteria, the supervisor can work with the employee to create a schedule that balances the employee's request with the needs of the position and the team and office and work for their job position. The ELCFH presumption is that a recurring hybrid schedule is most efficient when a set schedule is created and easily communicated to other colleagues.

The hybrid work plan request created by the employee and supervisor and the needed documentation would then be reviewed by Executive Director for final approval. The Executive Director approval serves to ensure the policy is being consistently applied throughout the organization and the hybrid work plans are meeting the overall needs of the organization. The Executive Director maintains final decision-making authority.

Requests for approval of regular hybrid work shall be made in advance in writing by the employee to his or her supervisor on the approved form. The request shall include:

- The length of the remote work arrangement;
- The hours and days proposed;
- A description of how employee will accomplish the major components of the job;
- Affirmation that the employee has provided for and will assure the proper use and safeguard of ELCFH property and confidential information while working remotely;
- Affirmation that the employee has provided for and will adhere to Technology and Security requirements;
- Affirmation that the employee has reviewed and ensured a safe workspace and
- Affirmation that the employee understands that the hybrid schedule requires application and approval annually (at the start of the fiscal year).

Any approved hybrid work plan is never permanent, and may be altered, suspended or discontinued based on program need and/or employee performance.

Roles and Responsibilities

The employee's role is to:

- Consider the need, work conditions, and type of hybrid work arrangement that would meet position requirements along with the impact on clients/ providers and teammates
- Describe the benefits of this arrangement to supervisor
- Anticipate challenges and provide suggestions to address these issues
- Remain open to feedback and changes to the proposal
- Be accountable to coworkers, supervisors, clients, and outside agencies or vendors

- Maintain the required secure internet connection to allow for quality remote work
- Properly secure all client information and data and communications, both digital and paper
- Maintain a safe workspace free of hazards
- Communicate with supervisor to ensure expectations are met; and
- Regularly evaluate arrangement with supervisor and implement agreed upon changes
- Maintain contemporaneous time entry practices
- Understand those electing a hybrid work plan, may at some point be asked to forfeit their personal use of an assigned office space in favor of a shared or general workspace that best maximizes ELCFH use of building space and staff.

The supervisor's role is to:

- Ensure that hybrid work arrangements promote ELCFH values and goals of providing excellent services to clients and providers.
- Support the concept verbally and through personal modeling of consistent work practices
- Work collaboratively with employees to address challenges and/or obstacles
- Clearly communicate defined tasks and expectations
- Measure performance through results, behaviors, and collaboration
- Provide regular feedback on performance through evaluations, weekly or quarterly case review meetings, and periodic reevaluation of remote work plan
- Be willing to reverse a hybrid work plan if it is not serving the organization, office, team, clients, or individual's needs; and
- Set expectations for procedures and guidelines for hybrid work arrangements with all employees.
- Issue department specific memos [if needed] to address parameters within the collective work of that department team. Such memos will be approved as an operational procedure by the Executive Director and work in conjunction with the approved Hybrid Work Schedule policy.

Action Item 7.b: UPDATED ELCFH Policy FM2- ELCFH Compliance and Reporting for Internal Controls (two excerpts from currently approved policy provided showing needed revisions/ amendments) ; Finance Committee – 1.28.26

A. Signers on Bank Accounts

Authorized signatories for all bank accounts for the ELCFH are the Executive Director, Director-Child Development & Education Services, and the Chair (and/ or Board designee). In accordance with the cash disbursement policy and procedure, check signers are to ensure cash disbursed is appropriate use of ELCFH funds when validating payments. The ELCFH uses live signatures to endorse the checks.

It is the responsibility of the Executive Director to ensure that signatures can be gained from appropriate signatories so that payment can be made on time at no obligation to the ELCFH. It is the responsibility of the Finance Committee to ensure that adequate controls and safeguards have been established for proper purposes of disbursement of funds.

The Executive Director will be authorized to provide signature for checks and electronic transfers up to \$5000 for expenditures allowable within the approved budget. Expenditures exceeding \$5000 that are not regularly occurring (examples of regularly occurring are lease, employee health insurance benefit payments, annual insurance policies, and other items as included in the Board approved budget) must have written approval from an ELCFH Board member. ~~The Executive Director will be authorized to provide signature for checks up to \$20,000 for those expenditures that are regularly occurring and within the approved budget. Regularly occurring expenditures exceeding \$20,000 must have written approval from an ELCFH Board member.~~

B. Internal Controls

Each year, the ELCFH will perform a self-assessment of the Internal Controls within the organization. The self-assessment form will be provided by DEL annually. The self assessment form will help document the achievement of primary control objectives as defined in OMB Circular A-133, section 105. These objectives pertain to the compliance requirements for federal programs. In addition, the ELCFH will submit an annual internal control certification form that attests to the self-assessment, by the required due date.

The ELCFH has established the following to comply with the internal controls requirements:

1. All ledgers are posted timely
2. All financial reports are posted by the twentieth (20th) day after the month ends
3. Accrual basis ledgers are maintained consisting of general ledgers; journals cash receipts,

general journals, cash receipts, payroll journals, purchase journals, and cash disbursements.

4. Payroll data, sick time, personal leave, vacation and leave without pay is recorded by Director- Finance & IT Services.
5. Expenditures are charged to proper accounts.
6. Taxes are paid in a timely manner through the payroll service.
7. Checks are prepared and issued with approval of Executive Director after receipt of bill and matching with purchase order.
8. A trial balance is extracted each month.
9. Required/Monthly & Quarterly reports are prepared.
10. Books are closed and accounts are balanced at the end of each month.
11. A monthly financial report which includes a year to date accounting is completed by the Director- Finance & IT Services and submitted to the Executive Director, Finance Committee and the ELCFH Board.
12. Bank statements are reconciled on a monthly basis.
13. Required yearly reports are prepared.
14. Books and records are kept up-to-date and available for annual audit.
15. All funds received and disbursements made are allocated as to source of funds (i.e. School Readiness and VPK) and recorded in ledgers when received or disbursed.
16. Adequate records are maintained to ensure an effective system of control for accountability of funds and a detailed running inventory is maintained for all equipment purchase.
17. Executive Director, Finance Committee and Board receive a regular report showing budget expended to date and balance in each line item category. At beginning of program year, areas of the program will be advised as to total budgeted amount and amount to be expended for program operation on a monthly basis.
18. Upon receipt of funds from DEL, all obligations are liquidated within thirty (30) days.
19. All required Federal and State payroll tax deposits are paid within three (3) working days of the payroll period.
20. Most deposits are received via ACH. Monthly deposits occur for cash generated from snack purchases or extenuating circumstances (i.e. provider reimbursement for overpayments) and quarterly as needed for reconciliations between bank accounts.
21. All invoices - checks are prepared and issued with approval of Executive Director and checks are signed by the Executive Director or designated signer.

22. All supplies and equipment are made on the purchase order (PO) system.
23. All requests to purchase supplies or equipment are processed using the Purchase Order (PO) system to determine availability of funds; then submitted to Executive Director and/or Director with justification for expenditures and determination of needs. Purchase orders are generated and are distributed:
 - a. copy for vendor to process
 - b. copy for Front desk staff to check against delivery and submit to Finance to match with invoice for payment.
24. All ELCFH positions have an approved position description that is reviewed annually by management and signed by the respective employee/ supervisor.
 - a. Internal controls and potential for conflict of interest is carefully considered and reviewed for each of the approved ELCFH staff and management position descriptions..
 - b. Specific ELCFH staff functions of child eligibility determination, child care provider attendance processing and child care provider payment are completed through assigned staff in different ELCFH approved departments (as listed in the approved ELCFH Org Chart).

Action Item 8: ELCFH Position Statement: Local Definition of School Readiness

Dr. David Elkind (Tufts University), a renowned child psychologist, is quoted as saying:

“The skills a child needs to succeed in most kindergartens are not knowing numbers and letters, but rather...

- *being able to communicate,*
- *follow instructions,*
- *and work cooperatively with other children.”^{1,2}*

This is a shift to more traditional ideas of school readiness which tend to apply more weight on the ABC's, 123's, naming the days of the week and tying shoes.

The Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Heartland (ELCFH) has long held concern for the social and emotional development of children receiving childcare services in the service area of Charlotte, DeoSoto, Hardee and Highlands counties. Children navigating the effects of trauma and poverty can struggle in their early learning programs, leading to lost opportunities due to the inability to make friends with other children, inability to self-regulate big emotions, or lack of needed continuity due to program suspension or even expulsion. The ELCFH, believes that supporting children's development, assuring basic needs are met, and providing opportunities for supportive relationships are critical to later success in school.

We stand by the belief that the child's readiness for school is not solely the responsibility of the child, parent or preschool teacher- each has an important role!

Ready Children: Basic needs are met- food security, medical home, family stability, consistent housing. Continuity of care is experienced as a child is enrolled in an early learning program and able to make and maintain supportive relationships with adults and other children. Developmental needs of children are identified and addressed early. Children can communicate, follow instructions, and work cooperatively with other children as they prepare for kindergarten entry.

Ready Families: Parents understand their role as their child's first teacher. They are engaged in their child's program and have regular, open communication with their child's teacher. They support their children through daily predictable routines and bonding activities such as engaged conversation, reading aloud, playing games together.

Ready Schools: Early Learning Programs and Kindergarten classrooms understand how to teach individual children. Programs are developmentally appropriate/ hands-on (concrete), literacy focused and encourage parent participation.

¹ <https://especiallyforchildren.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/What-is-School-Readiness.pdf>;

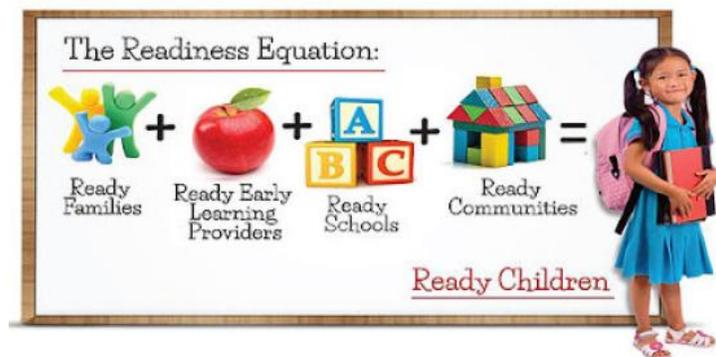
² “Some Misunderstandings of School Readiness” by David Elkind, Exchange Magazine, 03/08

Ready Communities: The immediate community offers support services to address family needs especially any basic need that is unmet, child developmental needs that exceed the expertise of the classroom, and provide families/ individuals with the overarching sense of belonging.

The ELCFH defines school readiness as the child’s ability to function within the classroom in a social-emotional capacity that promotes learning and positive interactions and supports continuity for the full term of the child’s program. From there, learning is completely possible and the stage is set to apply academic content.

Basic measurable elements to support social-emotional development as identified through developmental screening include:

- Number of children age birth to five who are eligible for screening vs the total number screened.
 - Number of children noted as “typically developing”.
- Number of children suspended / expelled (due to child issue, not parent issue)
 - Support provided to child experiencing suspension/ expulsion to move into a program with “goodness of fit”.
- Number of children with developmental concerns warranting early intervention who (with parent consent) receive needed support services.
- Anecdotal notes of ELCFH provided services/ activities and the outcomes for individual children.
- Success stories showcasing a child with a concern, what was done to address the concern/ support the child, and the final outcome.



(Image Source: Delaware Readiness Teams- <https://www.facebook.com/DELTEAMS/>)

Further food for thought on school readiness from nationally recognized entities:

The American Academy of Pediatrics, Council on Early Childhood, Council on School Health:

“School Readiness” (Technical Report, 8.1.19) states: *“All of a child’s early experiences, whether at home, in childcare, or in other preschool settings, are educational. When early experiences are consistent, developmentally sound, and emotionally supportive, children learn optimally and develop resilience for life. To focus only on the education of children beginning with kindergarten is to ignore the science of early development and to deny the importance of early experiences.”*³

Head Start states: *“School readiness is foundational across early childhood systems and programs. It means children are ready for school, families are ready to support their children’s learning, and schools are ready for children. Head Start views school readiness as children possessing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in school and for later learning and life. Physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development are all essential ingredients of school readiness.”*⁴

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC):

*“...discussions of school readiness must consider at least three critical factors:
(1) the diversity of children’s early life experiences as well as inequity in experiences;
(2) the wide variation in young children’s development and learning; and
(3) the degree to which school expectations of children entering kindergarten are reasonable, appropriate, and supportive of individual differences.”*⁵

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC- Dr. Dan Gartrell): *“People used to think children were ready for kindergarten if they could say the ABC’s, count, identify colors, and write their first name. Readiness was always more complicated than that, and new brain research is helping us understand what readiness really is. Readiness doesn’t mean just knowing the academic basics. It means a child has a willing attitude and confidence in the process of learning: a healthy state of mind.”*⁶

³ [School Readiness | Pediatrics | American Academy of Pediatrics](#)

⁴ [School Readiness | HeadStart.gov](#)

⁵ [PSREADY98.PDF](#)

⁶ [Readiness: Not a State of Knowledge, but a State of Mind | NAEYC](#)

ELCFH Board Meeting

Finance and Utilization Report February 25, 2026

Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Heartland, Inc.

School Readiness FY 25-26

January 2026 School Readiness YTD Expenditures

<u>% Spent at 58.3% of FY</u>	<u>Charlotte</u>	<u>DeSoto</u>	<u>Hardee</u>	<u>Highlands</u>	<u>Coalition Totals</u>
Salaries and Operating	46.7%	40.9%	43.7%	45.2%	45.2%
Direct Services	54.4%	42.1%	46.8%	49.4%	50.6%
Including Match	54.4%	42.1%	47.0%	49.5%	50.6%
Total Expenditures w/match	53.0%	41.9%	46.4%	48.6%	49.6%
Actual Including Match (Not from DEL WB due to R&R)				<u>NOA Restrictions</u>	<u>YTD of total Exp</u>
Direct Services Minimum				78.0%	82.6%
Non-Direct Services Maximum (includes Admin)				22.0%	17.4%
				100.0%	100.0%

Total SR Administration Spent all counties (max 5%): **4.2%**

January 2026 SR Child Count

<u>Charlotte</u>	<u>DeSoto</u>	<u>Hardee</u>	<u>Highlands</u>	<u>Coalition Totals</u>
591	153	162	441	1350

December 2025 SR Child Count

<u>Charlotte</u>	<u>DeSoto</u>	<u>Hardee</u>	<u>Highlands</u>	<u>Coalition Totals</u>
591	152	177	458	1378

VPK FY 25-26

January 2026 VPK YTD Expenditures

<u>% Spent at 58.3% of FY</u>	<u>Charlotte</u>	<u>DeSoto</u>	<u>Hardee</u>	<u>Highlands</u>	<u>Coalition Totals</u>
Direct Services	54.3%	55.6%	38.1%	54.5%	53.1%
Total Expenditures	53.7%	55.3%	38.3%	53.6%	52.5%
Administration (max 5%)	3.1%	3.6%	6.2%	4.9%	3.9%

Total VPK Administration Spent all counties (max 5%): **3.9%**

January 2026 VPK Child Count

<u>Charlotte</u>	<u>DeSoto</u>	<u>Hardee</u>	<u>Highlands</u>	<u>Coalition Totals</u>
802	164	83	407	1456

December 2025 VPK Child Count

<u>Charlotte</u>	<u>DeSoto</u>	<u>Hardee</u>	<u>Highlands</u>	<u>Coalition Totals</u>
783	162	62	385	1392



FY 25-26 January 2026 Data

	Charlotte		DeSoto		Hardee		Highlands		Coalition Total	
	Current	Prior	Current	Prior	Current	Prior	Current	Prior	Current	Prior
SR Children Served	594	591	153	152	162	177	441	458	1,350	1,378
Wait List Total as of 2/2/2026	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SR Providers	49	49	9	9	7	7	19	19	84	84
VPK Children	802	783	164	162	83	62	407	385	1,456	1,392
VPK Providers	32	32	4	4	5	5	20	20	61	61

As of 2/11/2026

Wait List Pull Data	WL Invite	WL Due	Mailed	Eligible	Ineligible	No Resp	Total	% Eligible
WL Pull #4 FY 25-26	09/30/25	10/30/25	153	54	34	65	153	35.3%
WL Pull #5 FY 25-26	10/31/25	11/30/25	132	64	35	30	129	48.5%
WL Pull #6 FY 25-26	11/25/25	12/25/25	119	41	37	41	119	34.5%
WL Pull #7 FY 25-26	12/31/25	01/31/26	123	52	56	15	123	42.3%
WL Pull #8 FY 25-26	01/30/26	02/28/26	155	0	0	0	0	0.0%

Eligible - not enrolled	0-5	SCH
Charlotte	135	60
DeSoto	40	14
Hardee	23	8
Highlands	130	47
Total	328	129

School Readiness OCA	Description	Number of Children Served Currently
BG1	At risk and foster care children	154
BG3	TANF eligible (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families)	1
BG3R	Relative TANF families (long term)	39
BG3W/BG5	Transitional (families who are moving out of scholarship services)	1
BG8	Working Poor (largest served category)	1,157
Total	Total unduplicated invoiced children for the current month	1,350
	YTD billed unduplicated child count (July 1 - January 31, 2026)	1,832

Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Heartland, Inc.

January 2026

FY 25-26 Direct Services Match Report - \$136,783

CCBOCC - Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners Total for FY 25-26 \$15,247

\$60,548 awarded for 10/01/24 through 09/30/25 - \$15,247 carry forward FY 25-26

Remaining Balance - \$0.00

CCBOCC - Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners Total for FY 25-26 \$54,411

\$72,548 awarded for 10/01/25 through 09/30/26 - \$18,137 carry forward FY 26-27

Remaining Balance - \$30,242

HAUW - United Way of Central Florida-Hardee - \$50,000 for 2026 - \$25,000 thru 06/30/26

Remaining Balance - \$20,833

HAUW - United Way of Central Florida-Hardee - \$20,141 Bridge Award thru Dec 2025

Remaining Balance - \$0.00

HIUW - United Way of Central Florida-Highlands - \$25,000 for 2026 - \$12,500 thru 06/30/26

Remaining Balance - \$10,417

HIUW - United Way of Central Florida-Highlands - \$9,475 Bridge Award thru Dec 2025

Remaining Balance - \$0.00

HEF - Emergency Fund - Year to Date \$9.19

FY 25-26 Program Match - Quality Activities - \$9,119

COPPERF - Copperfish Books - Book Drive \$1,623 in Books

CCPGM - Memorial Donations Ron Mills & Paypal Donation - Charlotte - Awarded \$246

Remaining Balance - \$246

DCUW - United Way of Suwannee County-DeSoto - Awarded \$5,000

Remaining Balance - \$4,625

HIUWLAP - United Way of Central Florida - Highlands - \$2,250 Bridge Award thru Dec. 2025

Remaining Balance - \$0.00

ELCFH Board Meeting

Board Chair and Agency Report February 25, 2026

Information Item 9: Board Chair Report ELCFH Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 10, 2025

Executive Committee Members Present: Nancy Ebrahimi-Driggers, *Board Vice Chair*
 Nancy Zachary, *Board Secretary*,
 Mary Stewart, *Board Treasurer*

Executive Committee Members Absent: John Stover, *Locally elected, Interim Board Chair* (Excused)

ELCFH Staff Members Present: Anne Brewer, Pam Hillestad, Beth Mueller, Olga Olvera,
 Kelly Wertenbach

AGENDA

Item	Content	Action
1.	The meeting commenced at 9:24 AM. Introductions were made. There were no changes to the agenda.	Meeting commencement
2. Action-Consent Agenda	The following items were presented for Committee member review and action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Executive Committee Meeting Minutes- 8.7.25 b. Board Membership Application for Amber Chudoba (PSB, Hardee County; <i>Recommended for approval by the Administrative Committee, 12.4.25</i>) c. SR Budget modification (<i>Recommended for approval by the Finance Committee, 9.24.25</i>) d. VPK Budget modification (<i>Recommended for approval by the Finance Committee, 12.10.25</i>) 	The date of the VPK Budget modification review and recommendation was corrected from 9.24.25 to 12.10.25. Nancy Ebrahimi-Driggers made a motion to approve the consent agenda items as presented; Nancy Zachary seconded. The motion carried.
3. Action ELCFH Employee Handbook policy	ELCFH Employee Handbook policy #3.12 which addresses requirements for ELCFH Employee Self Reporting of Arrest was presented with updates as recommended from the recent Krizner HR Law Boutique annual HR audit. This had been further reviewed and recommended for approval by the Administrative Committee on 12.4.25)	Mary Stewart made a motion to accept the updates ELCFH Employee handbook policy #3.12- ELCFH Employee Self Reporting of Arrest as presented; Nancy Zachary seconded. The motion carried.
4. Action	The ELCFH was awarded Hurricane Ian Disaster Relief Funding for Charlotte, DeSoto and Hardee Counties. The focus on the funding is to provide services and make subgrants available to	

Item	Content	Action
Contract proposals with approved single source vendors	<p>childcare providers in counties designated in the grant award for materials, supplies, furnishings, and equipment Other Child Care Supply Building, Mental Health Consultation or Services Quality Improvement Activities (not otherwise covered by other funding sources after Hurricane Ian). The funding authority is the US Department of Health and Human Services with DEL as the lead agency for ELCs. A budget stating the activities associated with this grant funding was provided and local partners such as DCF and Charlotte County government were engaged in discussion specific to childcare needs in the aftermath of Hurricane Ian. Approval was requested for three identified single source vendors, as approved for contracting consideration through the Single Source Procurement Process (DEL Program Guidance 240.23 Attachment A):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Child Care Biz Help B. The Discovery Source Inc. C. Devereux Advance Behavioral Health 	<p>Mary Stewart made a motion to approve contracting with Child Care Biz as presented; Nancy Ebrahimi-Driggers seconded. The motion carried.</p> <p>Mary Stewart made a motion to approve contracting with The Discovery Source Inc. as presented; Nancy Zachary seconded. The motion carried.</p> <p>Nancy Ebrahimi-Driggers made a motion to approve contracting with Devereux Advance Behavioral Health as presented; Mary Stewart seconded. The motion carried.</p>
5. Open Forum	No additional comments.	Anne Brewer
Adjournment	The meeting adjourned at 9:50 AM.	Anne Brewer

Meeting prepared by Anne Brewer, Executive Director

Date _____

Meeting minutes approved by Nancy Zachary, Board Secretary

Date _____

2026 Legislative Update- Early Learning

HB 765- Child Care and Early Learning Services (McFarland)

Related Bill SB 1690 – Early Childhood Education (Calatayud)

- Clarifies exemptions for before- and after-school programs and including a new definition of “school-age children.”
- Removes annual parental notification requirements regarding influenza virus and risks of leaving children in vehicles for large family childcare homes.
- Changes references from “family day care” to “family child care” and newly defines “large family childcare home,” restricting standard residential property insurance coverage for claims arising from these operations unless specifically provided.
- Updates the Department of Education direct-support organization’s definition to include early learning programs.
- Creates the Florida Endowment for Early Learning Foundation to solicit and manage funds for childcare and early learning initiatives, outlining administration, funding sources, and distribution of monies.
- Adds administration of the Center for Early Childhood Professional Recognition under the Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (TEACH) Scholarship Program to ensure statewide alignment of training and professional development standards.

SB 1090- Education (Grall); Related Bill HB 1071- Education (Trabulsy) : Replaces a five-year maximum term with a fixed two-year period during which noncompliant Voluntary Prekindergarten or school readiness providers are disqualified from receiving state funds, and updates program assessment and improvement requirements

SB 7036 Education (Education PreK-12 Committee);

Enhance and streamline educational accountability, flexibility, and instruction by revising charter contracts, expanding conditions for educational emergencies, updating epinephrine policies, refining prekindergarten screening, and creating new mathematics pathways.

SB 320 - Administrative Efficiency in Public Schools (Simon) ; Related Bill HB 963 (Smith): Revise sections governing Voluntary Prekindergarten to reduce or remove early learning coalition verification duties for public schools and adjust attendance record requirements.

ELCFH Allocations DRAFT- House and Senate

FY 26-27 School Readiness

Early Learning Coalition			2025-26 FINAL GAA Base Allocations	2025-26 Revert & Reappropriate Allocations	2025-26 Total Allocations (base, R&R)	
Florida's Heartland			\$ 12,097,460		\$ 12,097,460	
House Proposed #1 2.12.26 <i>No Compression Included</i>	House \$\$ Difference	House % Difference		Senate Proposed #1 2.13.26 <i>No Compression Included</i>	Senate \$\$ Difference	Senate % Difference
\$ 12,378,772	\$ 281,312	2.33%		\$ 12,097,460	\$ -	0.00%

FY 26-27 VPK

Early Learning Coalition	2025-26 Final GAA VPK Allocations	2026-27 House Proposed #1 2.12.26	HOUSE Difference Over Last FY
Florida's Heartland	\$ 4,809,494	\$ 4,784,828	\$ (24,666)

2026-27 Senate Proposed #1 TBD	SENATE Difference Over Last FY
\$ 4,784,828	\$ (24,666)

ELCFH FY 25-26 Focus Areas: Updates July 1, 2025– December 31, 2025

NOTE: The below listed seven focus areas are approved annually by the ELCFH Board. Each has approved activities/ budget line items that ultimately support the attainment of each goal.

FS 1 Direct Services: *The ELCFH will assure eligible children have access to affordable, quality based child care services.*

Update: 100% of 748 waitlisted children were invited in for SR services from July 1 – December 31, 2025. Updates on eligibility and enrollment are provided on the ELCFH Finance Report- Data.

CDE 2 Trauma Informed Care: *Contracted provider sites will have the resources and training needed to effectively and compassionately care for children who are processing traumatic situations.*

Update: A total of 138 backpacks have been distributed to children served through foster care or dealing with some level of trauma in the home and receiving child care services through the ELCFH. Ten *Tucker the Turtle Calming Kits* for the classroom have been provided to support children dealing with big emotions. Three pyramid model kits were provided to teachers to support positive classroom management.

CDE 3 Early Literacy: *Families and providers will have books readily available in the home and child care setting to support for regular reading routines.*

Update: The ELCFH provides high quality interesting take-home books to each child who visits the ELCFH offices. From July 1 – December 31, 2025, a total of 303 books were given to children age infant through school-age. The ELCFH maintains a library of social emotional and sensitive subject books to support children through “bibliotherapy”. A total of 137 books on tender topics were provided to individual children via their child care providers. Additionally, the ELCFH distributed VPK Calendars to all incoming VPK children, with virtual calendar access posted on the ELCFH website.

CDE 4 Kindergarten Transition: *Families will have access to developmental and vision screenings, as well as needed resources for successful Kindergarten transition. Teacher to teacher conversations will support family transition to kindergarten.*

Update: Virtual meetings were facilitated on January 9th (Charlotte and DeSoto) and January 30th (Hardee and Highlands) with the key focus on developmentally appropriate expectations of incoming kindergartners. Kindergarten teachers and VPK teachers were invited from all four counties to participate.

The ELCFH CDE team has successfully completed three of four scheduled K-Transition Community of Practice (CoP) calls with a total of 40 participants. Attendance has included preschool/ VPK teachers, along with a few private kindergarten teachers. The discussions have been highly productive and collaborative, focusing on shared challenges related to parent communication, establishing and reinforcing behavioral expectations for children entering kindergarten, and addressing misconceptions surrounding “academic kindergarten readiness.”

In addition, the ELCFH K-Transition Plan was shared with school districts and preschool programs across the ELCFH four county service area to promote regional alignment and consistency in supporting children and families during the transition to kindergarten.

A meeting has been scheduled for the 3rd quarter with representatives from the Charlotte County School District to present questions and themes collected from VPK teachers. The insights and feedback gathered during this meeting will be used to guide and inform the conversation during the final K-Transition CoP call. Because district kindergarten teachers are unable to attend evening sessions, this approach allows incorporation of teacher perspectives and ensure all voices are included in the collaborative dialogue.

The goal of this process is to strengthen alignment, improve communication, and continue bridging the gap between VPK and kindergarten programs across our service area.

CDE 5 Provider Trainings: *Contracted provider sites will have needed training facilitated by (or hosted by) the ELCFH to support them in all aspects of quality early learning programming as it specifically relates to SR/ VPK contracting.*

Update: The below shows training activity from July – December , 2025 and the number of participants per event:

Date of Training	Name of Training	# of Participants
7/31/25	The Magic of Music	21
8/8/2025	Curriculum (World of Tiny Stars)	3
8/8/2025	Lesson Plan Training (The Learning Tree School)	4
9/3/25-11/19/25	I/T CLASS Group Coaching	12
9/9/25	Let's Talk Parent Communication	10
9/25/25-12/11/25	PreK CLASS Group Coaching	12
10/3/2025	Play Based Learning (Eagles Nest)	23
11/11/2025	Infant Toddler Interactions (YMCA)	50
1/17/2026	Behavior Guidance for School Age After Care (YMCA)	60
1/22/2026	The Magic of Music	17
Participant Total		212

PS 6 Provider Capacity: *New/growing child care providers who contracted with the ELCFH for SR and/or VPK services will successfully maintain the provisions of the applicable contract.*

Update: ELCFH Management assures continued monitoring as mandated of contracted providers, both for contract compliance and health & safety (DCF) adherence. Two providers have been placed on contractual probation due to citations; 24 have received corrective action plans for more benign (paperwork) issues such as errors in attendance documentation and sign in/ sign out sheet processes. The ELCFH continues to facilitate ongoing sessions of Directors Meetings in Charlotte and Highlands to encourage networking. Directors are sharing ideas for needed discussion (ie staff/ parent handbooks, curriculum etc.). Child Care Business Network session are also provided to new and struggling providers to assure they have needed one on one information sessions to work through the SR and VPK contracts, and connections to needed mentors.

CDE 7 Child Screening: *SR funded children age birth to five years will be screened using the ASQ-3 and ASQ:SE. Developmental needs will be identified and interventions applied prior to kindergarten entry.*

Update: 565 (98%) of 577 [offered] screenings were completed for funded children age infant - 5 years up through the first six months of FY 25-26. A total of 194 (34%) children had some level of developmental concern noted and were either referred to Early Steps/ FDLRS for further evaluation, received additional screening, or had intentional planning through the support of the ELCFH imbedded in their early learning program.