

Policy: ELCPC-61.2.4	School Readiness Program Assessment Policy	
Coalition Plan: II.G.	Board Approved: 11/18/21 OEL Approved: 1 / 25 / 22	Effective Date: 1 / 25 / 22

References: 1002.82 F.S 1002.85 F.S.; Rules 6M-4.740 and 6M-4.741, F.A.C.;
Form OEL-SR 740

Purpose: To outline the Program Assessment Requirements and Quality Improvement Opportunities

Background:

The Florida Office of Early Learning has established program assessment requirements effective July 1, 2018, designed to increase quality and accountability in the School Readiness Program.

Research demonstrates that positive teacher-child interactions improve child outcomes starting in early learning. While providing quality childcare to Florida's most vulnerable population, School Readiness providers may receive additional funds (payment differential) per child enrolled in School Readiness based on their Composite Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) scores.

Policy:

I. Program Assessment

- a. Program Assessment Requirements. Effective July 1, 2019 School Readiness Contract year and subsequent years, all School Readiness providers serving children from birth to kindergarten entry must have a Program Assessment conducted and meet the contract minimum threshold to be eligible to participate in the School Readiness Program.
- b. Program assessments will be provided by the Coalition annually.
- c. Providers that have been determined ineligible to contract based on program assessment scores may request one additional assessment to be conducted by a certified reliable observer at the provider's expense (\$350 per assessment). All requests for additional program assessments

- must be submitted in writing.
- d. The Coalition shall notify providers of their Composite Program Assessment Score within 14 calendar days after the observation is completed.
 - e.—The Coalition shall waive the Contract Minimum Threshold if the coalition determines that a provider is essential to meet local child care capacity needs. Providers that have had the Contract Minimum Threshold waived must be on a Quality Improvement Plan. The Quality Improvement Plan strategies the provider must participate in CLASS Group Training and Certified Coaching Visits.

II. Exemptions

Providers meeting one of the following shall be exempt from the annual program assessment requirement:

- a. A provider that has not received one Class I or more than three of the same Class II School Readiness health and safety violations in a two year period and meets one of the following criteria:
 - a. Child care center with 20 percent or less of filled School Readiness child care slots out of the maximum capacity as defined in Forms OEL-SR-6202, OEL-SR-6204, and OEL-SR- 6206 as incorporated by reference in Rule 6M-4.620, F.A.C.
 - b. Family child care homes with two or fewer of filled School Readiness child care slots out of maximum capacity as defined in Forms OEL-SR-6202, OEL-SR-6204, and OEL-SR-6206 as incorporated by reference in Rule
 - c. Providers that offer only overnight School Readiness services.
 - d. Providers with no enrollment that have been determined by the Coalition to be essential in meeting local child care capacity needs.
- b. When a provider's filled School Readiness childcare slots meet or exceed the exemption threshold during the operating hours from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., per its provider type, the provider shall no longer be exempt under this section.
- c. The Coalition shall monitor filled School Readiness childcare slots monthly and notify a provider within 21 calendar days from the date of discovery if the provider's filled slots meet or exceed the exemption threshold.
- d. A provider must receive a program assessment within 30 calendar days of notification to continue contracting for School Readiness services.
- e. Exempt providers may opt to participate in Program Assessment requirements by submitting a request in writing to the coalition at least 60 days prior to contracting for the School Readiness Program. The coalition shall coordinate a program assessment within 30 days of receipt of the notice. The request to participate in Program Assessment shall constitute a waiver of the exemption and subjects the provider to all of the requirements of this rule.

f. Providers that receive a composite program assessment score as defined in Rule

6M-4.740, F.A.C., of a 5.00 shall be considered exempt from the annual program assessment requirement and shall have a program assessment conducted biennially.

III. Contract Minimum Threshold

For the 2021-22 School Readiness contract year, providers must have a program assessment conducted and meet the Contract Minimum Threshold prior to executing a School Readiness Contract. The provider must receive a minimum program assessment composite score of 3.50 (rounding two decimals). Effective July 2021.

For the 2022-23 School Readiness contract year, providers must have a program assessment conducted and meet the Contract Minimum Threshold prior to executing a School Readiness Contract. The provider must receive a minimum program assessment composite score of 4.00 (rounding two decimals) to participate in the School Readiness Program.

IV. Quality Improvement Plan

- a. For the 2021-22 School Readiness contract year, Providers that meet the minimum score for contracting but do not meet the Quality Improvement Threshold shall be placed on a Quality Improvement Plan for 12 months.
- b. The Quality Improvement Plan will include performance goals and quality improvement strategies designed by the coalition
- c. Providers currently on a Quality Improvement Plan may request one additional assessment that meets the requirements for selected classrooms to be conducted at the provider's expense by an observer to satisfy the requirements of the Quality Improvement Plan prior to the conclusion of the 12 month Quality Improvement Plan
- d. Providers currently on a Quality Improvement Plan will have a program assessment completed within 60 calendar days prior to the end of the 12-month Quality Improvement Plan term.
- e. Providers placed on a Quality Improvement Plan, shall not have a Quality Improvement Plan for more than two years within a five-year period. Providers that surpass this number will not be eligible to contract for the School Readiness Program for a period of up to five years as determined by the coalition.