



219010

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate	.	House
Comm: WD	.	
04/01/2011	.	
	.	
	.	
	.	

The Committee on Budget (Wise and Gaetz) recommended the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Delete lines 3721 - 3867

and insert:

Section 43. Section 411.01, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

411.01 School readiness programs; early learning coalitions.—

(1) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the "School Readiness Act."

(2) LEGISLATIVE INTENT.—

(a) The Legislature recognizes that school readiness programs increase children's chances of achieving future



219010

14 educational success and becoming productive members of society.
15 It is the intent of the Legislature that the programs be
16 developmentally appropriate, research-based, involve the parent
17 as a child's first teacher, serve as preventive measures for
18 children at risk of future school failure, enhance the
19 educational readiness of eligible children, and support family
20 education. Each school readiness program shall provide the
21 elements necessary to prepare at-risk children for school,
22 ~~including health screening and referral and an appropriate~~
23 ~~educational program.~~

24 (b) It is the intent of the Legislature that school
25 readiness programs be operated on a full-day, year-round basis
26 to the maximum extent possible to enable parents to work and
27 become financially self-sufficient.

28 (c) It is the intent of the Legislature that school
29 readiness programs not exist as isolated programs, but build
30 upon existing services and work in cooperation with other
31 programs for young children, and that school readiness programs
32 be coordinated to achieve full effectiveness.

33 (d) It is the intent of the Legislature that the
34 administrative staff for school readiness programs be kept to
35 the minimum necessary to administer the duties of the Department
36 of Children and Family Services ~~Agency for Workforce Innovation~~
37 ~~and early learning coalitions~~. The department ~~Agency for~~
38 ~~Workforce Innovation~~ shall adopt system support services at the
39 state level to build a comprehensive early learning system. The
40 department shall ensure the implementation and maintenance of
41 ~~Each early learning coalition shall implement and maintain~~
42 ~~direct enhancement services at the local level, as approved in~~



219010

43 ~~its school readiness plan by the Agency for Workforce~~
44 ~~Innovation~~, and ensure access to such services in all 67
45 counties.

46 (e) It is the intent of the Legislature that the school
47 readiness program coordinate and operate in conjunction with the
48 district school systems. However, it is also the intent of the
49 Legislature that the school readiness program not be construed
50 as part of the system of free public schools but rather as a
51 separate program for children under the age of kindergarten
52 eligibility, funded separately from the system of free public
53 schools, utilizing a mandatory sliding fee scale, and providing
54 an integrated and seamless system of school readiness services
55 for the state's birth-to-kindergarten population.

56 (f) It is the intent of the Legislature that school
57 readiness services be an integrated and seamless program of
58 services with a developmentally appropriate education component
59 for the state's eligible birth-to-kindergarten population
60 described in subsection (6) and not be construed as part of the
61 seamless K-20 education system.

62 (3) PARENTAL PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAMS.—
63 This section does not:

64 (a) Relieve parents and guardians of their own obligations
65 to prepare their children for school; or

66 (b) Create any obligation to provide publicly funded school
67 readiness programs or services beyond those authorized by the
68 Legislature.

69 (4) DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES ~~AGENCY FOR~~
70 ~~WORKFORCE INNOVATION~~.—

71 (a) The department ~~Agency for Workforce Innovation~~ shall



219010

72 administer school readiness programs at the state level and
73 shall ensure coordination at the local level ~~coordinate with the~~
74 ~~early learning coalitions~~ in providing school readiness services
75 on a full-day, full-year, full-choice basis to the extent
76 possible in order to enable parents to work and be financially
77 self-sufficient.

78 (b) The department ~~Agency for Workforce Innovation~~ shall:

79 1. Coordinate the birth-to-kindergarten services for
80 children who are eligible under subsection (6) and the
81 programmatic, administrative, and fiscal standards under this
82 section for all public providers of school readiness programs.

83 2. Focus on improving the educational quality of all
84 program providers participating in publicly funded school
85 readiness programs.

86 (c) The Governor shall designate the Department of Children
87 and Family Services ~~Agency for Workforce Innovation~~ as the lead
88 agency for administration of the federal Child Care and
89 Development Fund, 45 C.F.R. parts 98 and 99, and the agency
90 shall comply with the lead agency responsibilities under federal
91 law.

92 (d) The department ~~Agency for Workforce Innovation~~ shall:

93 1. Be responsible for the prudent use of all public and
94 private funds in accordance with all legal and contractual
95 requirements.

96 2. Provide final approval and every 2 years review the
97 implementation and delivery of direct services of ~~early learning~~
98 ~~coalitions and school readiness programs by local level service~~
99 providers plans.

100 3. Establish a unified approach to the state's efforts



219010

101 toward enhancement of school readiness. In support of this
102 effort, the department ~~Agency for Workforce Innovation~~ shall
103 adopt specific system support services that address the state's
104 school readiness programs. ~~An early learning coalition shall~~
105 ~~amend its school readiness plan to conform to the specific~~
106 ~~system support services adopted by the Agency for Workforce~~
107 ~~Innovation.~~ Specific system support services shall include, but
108 are not limited to:

- 109 a. Child care resource and referral services;
- 110 b. Warm-Line services;
- 111 c. Eligibility determinations;
- 112 d. Child performance standards;
- 113 e. Child screening and assessment;
- 114 f. Developmentally appropriate curricula;
- 115 g. Health and safety requirements;
- 116 h. Statewide data system requirements; and
- 117 i. Rating and improvement systems.

118 4. Safeguard the effective use of federal, state, local,
119 and private resources to achieve the highest possible level of
120 school readiness for the children in this state.

121 5. Adopt a rule establishing criteria for the expenditure
122 of funds designated for the purpose of funding activities to
123 improve the quality of child care within the state in accordance
124 with s. 658G of the federal Child Care and Development Block
125 Grant Act.

126 ~~6. Provide technical assistance to early learning~~
127 ~~coalitions in a manner determined by the Agency for Workforce~~
128 ~~Innovation based upon information obtained by the agency from~~
129 ~~various sources, including, but not limited to, public input,~~



219010

130 ~~government reports, private interest group reports, agency~~
131 ~~monitoring visits, and coalition requests for service.~~

132 ~~6.7. Coordinate~~ In cooperation with the Department of
133 Education and local level service providers ~~early learning~~
134 ~~coalitions, coordinate with the Child Care Services Program~~
135 ~~Office of the Department of Children and Family Services~~ to
136 minimize duplicating interagency activities, health and safety
137 monitoring, and acquiring and composing data pertaining to child
138 care training and credentialing.

139 ~~7.8.~~ Develop and adopt performance standards and outcome
140 measures for school readiness programs. The performance
141 standards must address the age-appropriate progress of children
142 in the development of school readiness skills. The performance
143 standards for children from birth to 5 years of age in school
144 readiness programs must be integrated with the performance
145 standards adopted by the Department of Education for children in
146 the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program under s.
147 1002.67.

148 ~~8.9.~~ Adopt a standard contract that must be used by the
149 local level service providers ~~coalitions~~ when contracting with
150 school readiness providers.

151 (e) The department ~~Agency for Workforce Innovation~~ may
152 adopt rules under ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54 to administer the
153 provisions of law conferring duties upon the department ~~agency~~,
154 including, but not limited to, rules governing the
155 administration of system support services of school readiness
156 programs, the collection of data, the approval of local level
157 service providers, ~~early learning coalitions and school~~
158 ~~readiness plans, the provision of a method whereby an early~~



219010

159 ~~learning coalition may serve two or more counties, the award of~~
160 ~~incentives to early learning coalitions,~~ child performance
161 standards, child outcome measures, the issuance of waivers, and
162 the implementation of the state's Child Care and Development
163 Fund Plan as approved by the federal Administration for Children
164 and Families.

165 (f) The department ~~Agency for Workforce Innovation~~ shall
166 have all powers necessary to administer this section, including,
167 but not limited to, the power to receive and accept grants,
168 loans, or advances of funds from any public or private agency
169 and to receive and accept from any source contributions of
170 money, property, labor, or any other thing of value, to be held,
171 used, and applied for purposes of this section.

172 (g) Except as provided by law, the department ~~Agency for~~
173 ~~Workforce Innovation~~ may not impose requirements on a child care
174 or early childhood education provider that does not deliver
175 services under the school readiness programs or receive state or
176 federal funds under this section.

177 (h) The department ~~Agency for Workforce Innovation~~ shall
178 have a budget for school readiness programs, which shall be
179 financed through an annual appropriation made for purposes of
180 this section in the General Appropriations Act.

181 ~~(i) The Agency for Workforce Innovation shall coordinate~~
182 ~~the efforts toward school readiness in this state and provide~~
183 ~~independent policy analyses, data analyses, and recommendations~~
184 ~~to the Governor, the State Board of Education, and the~~
185 ~~Legislature.~~

186 (i)(j) The department ~~Agency for Workforce Innovation~~ shall
187 require that school readiness programs, at a minimum, enhance



219010

188 the age-appropriate progress of each child in attaining the
189 performance standards adopted under subparagraph (d)7. ~~(d)8.~~ and
190 in the development of the following school readiness skills:

- 191 1. Compliance with rules, limitations, and routines.
- 192 2. Ability to perform tasks.
- 193 3. Interactions with adults.
- 194 4. Interactions with peers.
- 195 5. Ability to cope with challenges.
- 196 6. Self-help skills.
- 197 7. Ability to express the child's needs.
- 198 8. Verbal communication skills.
- 199 9. Problem-solving skills.
- 200 10. Following of verbal directions.
- 201 11. Demonstration of curiosity, persistence, and
202 exploratory behavior.
- 203 12. Interest in books and other printed materials.
- 204 13. Paying attention to stories.
- 205 14. Participation in art and music activities.
- 206 15. Ability to identify colors, geometric shapes, letters
207 of the alphabet, numbers, and spatial and temporal
208 relationships.

209
210 Within 30 days after enrollment in the school readiness program,
211 ~~the early learning coalition must ensure that~~ the program
212 provider shall obtain ~~obtains~~ information regarding the child's
213 immunizations, physical health, and special dietary needs
214 ~~development, and other health requirements as necessary,~~
215 ~~including appropriate vision and hearing screening and~~
216 ~~examinations.~~ For a program provider licensed by the department



219010

217 ~~of Children and Family Services, the provider's compliance with~~
218 ~~s. 402.305(9), as verified pursuant to s. 402.311, shall satisfy~~
219 ~~this requirement. The standard contract for school readiness~~
220 ~~services shall require a program that is not licensed by the~~
221 ~~department to obtain information regarding a child's~~
222 ~~immunizations, physical health, and special dietary needs.~~

223 ~~(k) The Agency for Workforce Innovation shall conduct~~
224 ~~studies and planning activities related to the overall~~
225 ~~improvement and effectiveness of the outcome measures adopted by~~
226 ~~the agency for school readiness programs and the specific system~~
227 ~~support services to address the state's school readiness~~
228 ~~programs adopted by the Agency for Workforce Innovation in~~
229 ~~accordance with subparagraph (d)3.~~

230 ~~(j)(1) The department Agency for Workforce Innovation shall~~
231 ~~monitor and evaluate the performance of each local level service~~
232 ~~provider ~~early learning coalition~~ in administering the school~~
233 ~~readiness program, ~~implementing the coalition's school readiness~~~~
234 ~~~~plan, and administering the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education~~~~
235 ~~Program. These monitoring and performance evaluations must~~
236 ~~include, at a minimum, onsite monitoring of the each coalition's~~
237 ~~finances, management, operations, and programs of each local~~
238 ~~level service provider.~~

239 ~~(k)(m) The department Agency for Workforce Innovation shall~~
240 ~~submit an annual report of its activities conducted under this~~
241 ~~section to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the~~
242 ~~Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the minority~~
243 ~~leaders of both houses of the Legislature. ~~In addition, the~~~~
244 ~~Agency for Workforce Innovation's reports and recommendations~~
245 ~~shall be made available to the Florida Early Learning Advisory~~



219010

246 ~~Council and other appropriate state agencies and entities.~~ The
247 annual report must provide an analysis of school readiness
248 activities across the state, including the number of children
249 who were served in the programs.

250 ~~(1)(n)~~ The department ~~Agency for Workforce Innovation~~ shall
251 work with the local level service providers ~~early learning~~
252 ~~coalitions~~ to ensure availability of training and support for
253 parental involvement in children's early education and to
254 provide family literacy activities and services.

255 (5) LOCAL LEVEL SERVICE PROVIDERS ~~CREATION OF EARLY~~
256 ~~LEARNING COALITIONS.~~—

257 (a) Eligible local level service providers ~~Early learning~~
258 ~~coalitions.~~—The Department of Children and Family Services shall
259 contract with appropriate local level service providers that
260 have the capacity to deliver school readiness services
261 including, but not limited to, determining child eligibility for
262 school readiness programs, disbursing school readiness funds,
263 providing training for parents as a child's first teacher,
264 providing child care resource and referral services and Warm-
265 Line services, providing data as requested by the department,
266 using the department's information system, tracking child's
267 attendance, and assisting the department with child screenings
268 and assessments as well as implementation of a statewide quality
269 rating system.

270 1. Local level service providers shall be selected through
271 a request for proposal every 5 years and may consist of early
272 learning coalitions, children's services councils, central
273 agencies, and any other local entities that demonstrate the
274 ability to provide local level services to their community,



275 which may consist of multiple counties.

276 2. The administrative staff for the local level service
277 providers delivering school readiness programs shall be kept to
278 the minimum necessary to administer the duties as determined by
279 the department.

280 ~~1. Each early learning coalition shall maintain direct~~
281 ~~enhancement services at the local level and ensure access to~~
282 ~~such services in all 67 counties.~~

283 ~~2. The Agency for Workforce Innovation shall establish the~~
284 ~~minimum number of children to be served by each early learning~~
285 ~~coalition through the coalition's school readiness program. The~~
286 ~~Agency for Workforce Innovation may only approve school~~
287 ~~readiness plans in accordance with this minimum number. The~~
288 ~~minimum number must be uniform for every early learning~~
289 ~~coalition and must:~~

- 290 ~~a. Permit 31 or fewer coalitions to be established; and~~
291 ~~b. Require each coalition to serve at least 2,000 children~~
292 ~~based upon the average number of all children served per month~~
293 ~~through the coalition's school readiness program during the~~
294 ~~previous 12 months.~~

295 ~~3. If an early learning coalition would serve fewer~~
296 ~~children than the minimum number established under subparagraph~~
297 ~~2., the coalition must merge with another county to form a~~
298 ~~multicounty coalition. The Agency for Workforce Innovation shall~~
299 ~~adopt procedures for merging early learning coalitions,~~
300 ~~including procedures for the consolidation of merging~~
301 ~~coalitions, and for the early termination of the terms of~~
302 ~~coalition members which are necessary to accomplish the mergers.~~
303 ~~However, the Agency for Workforce Innovation shall grant a~~



219010

304 ~~waiver to an early learning coalition to serve fewer children~~
305 ~~than the minimum number established under subparagraph 2., if:~~
306 ~~a. The Agency for Workforce Innovation has determined~~
307 ~~during the most recent review of the coalition's school~~
308 ~~readiness plan, or through monitoring and performance~~
309 ~~evaluations conducted under paragraph (4) (1), that the coalition~~
310 ~~has substantially implemented its plan;~~
311 ~~b. The coalition demonstrates to the Agency for Workforce~~
312 ~~Innovation the coalition's ability to effectively and~~
313 ~~efficiently implement the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education~~
314 ~~Program; and~~
315 ~~c. The coalition demonstrates to the Agency for Workforce~~
316 ~~Innovation that the coalition can perform its duties in~~
317 ~~accordance with law.~~
318
319 ~~If an early learning coalition fails or refuses to merge as~~
320 ~~required by this subparagraph, the Agency for Workforce~~
321 ~~Innovation may dissolve the coalition and temporarily contract~~
322 ~~with a qualified entity to continue school readiness and~~
323 ~~prekindergarten services in the coalition's county or~~
324 ~~multicounty region until the agency reestablishes the coalition~~
325 ~~and a new school readiness plan is approved by the agency.~~
326 ~~4. Each early learning coalition shall be composed of at~~
327 ~~least 15 members but not more than 30 members. The Agency for~~
328 ~~Workforce Innovation shall adopt standards establishing within~~
329 ~~this range the minimum and maximum number of members that may be~~
330 ~~appointed to an early learning coalition and procedures for~~
331 ~~identifying which members have voting privileges under~~
332 ~~subparagraph 6. These standards must include variations for a~~



219010

333 ~~coalition serving a multicounty region. Each early learning~~
334 ~~coalition must comply with these standards.~~

335 ~~5. The Governor shall appoint the chair and two other~~
336 ~~members of each early learning coalition, who must each meet the~~
337 ~~same qualifications as private sector business members appointed~~
338 ~~by the coalition under subparagraph 7.~~

339 ~~6. Each early learning coalition must include the following~~
340 ~~member positions; however, in a multicounty coalition, each ex~~
341 ~~officio member position may be filled by multiple nonvoting~~
342 ~~members but no more than one voting member shall be seated per~~
343 ~~member position. If an early learning coalition has more than~~
344 ~~one member representing the same entity, only one of such~~
345 ~~members may serve as a voting member:~~

346 ~~a. A Department of Children and Family Services circuit~~
347 ~~administrator or his or her designee who is authorized to make~~
348 ~~decisions on behalf of the department.~~

349 ~~b. A district superintendent of schools or his or her~~
350 ~~designee who is authorized to make decisions on behalf of the~~
351 ~~district.~~

352 ~~c. A regional workforce board executive director or his or~~
353 ~~her designee.~~

354 ~~d. A county health department director or his or her~~
355 ~~designee.~~

356 ~~e. A children's services council or juvenile welfare board~~
357 ~~chair or executive director, if applicable.~~

358 ~~f. An agency head of a local licensing agency as defined in~~
359 ~~s. 402.302, where applicable.~~

360 ~~g. A president of a community college or his or her~~
361 ~~designee.~~



219010

362 ~~h. One member appointed by a board of county commissioners~~
363 ~~or the governing board of a municipality.~~

364 ~~i. A central agency administrator, where applicable.~~

365 ~~j. A Head Start director.~~

366 ~~k. A representative of private for-profit child care~~
367 ~~providers, including private for-profit family day care homes.~~

368 ~~l. A representative of faith-based child care providers.~~

369 ~~m. A representative of programs for children with~~
370 ~~disabilities under the federal Individuals with Disabilities~~
371 ~~Education Act.~~

372 ~~7. Including the members appointed by the Governor under~~
373 ~~subparagraph 5., more than one-third of the members of each~~
374 ~~early learning coalition must be private sector business members~~
375 ~~who do not have, and none of whose relatives as defined in s.~~
376 ~~112.3143 has, a substantial financial interest in the design or~~
377 ~~delivery of the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program~~
378 ~~created under part V of chapter 1002 or the coalition's school~~
379 ~~readiness program. To meet this requirement an early learning~~
380 ~~coalition must appoint additional members. The Agency for~~
381 ~~Workforce Innovation shall establish criteria for appointing~~
382 ~~private sector business members. These criteria must include~~
383 ~~standards for determining whether a member or relative has a~~
384 ~~substantial financial interest in the design or delivery of the~~
385 ~~Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program or the coalition's~~
386 ~~school readiness program.~~

387 ~~8. A majority of the voting membership of an early learning~~
388 ~~coalition constitutes a quorum required to conduct the business~~
389 ~~of the coalition. An early learning coalition board may use any~~
390 ~~method of telecommunications to conduct meetings, including~~



219010

391 ~~establishing a quorum through telecommunications, provided that~~
392 ~~the public is given proper notice of a telecommunications~~
393 ~~meeting and reasonable access to observe and, when appropriate,~~
394 ~~participate.~~

395 ~~9. A voting member of an early learning coalition may not~~
396 ~~appoint a designee to act in his or her place, except as~~
397 ~~otherwise provided in this paragraph. A voting member may send a~~
398 ~~representative to coalition meetings, but that representative~~
399 ~~does not have voting privileges. When a district administrator~~
400 ~~for the Department of Children and Family Services appoints a~~
401 ~~designee to an early learning coalition, the designee is the~~
402 ~~voting member of the coalition, and any individual attending in~~
403 ~~the designee's place, including the district administrator, does~~
404 ~~not have voting privileges.~~

405 ~~10. Each member of an early learning coalition is subject~~
406 ~~to ss. 112.313, 112.3135, and 112.3143. For purposes of s.~~
407 ~~112.3143(3)(a), each voting member is a local public officer who~~
408 ~~must abstain from voting when a voting conflict exists.~~

409 ~~11. For purposes of tort liability, each member or employee~~
410 ~~of an early learning coalition shall be governed by s. 768.28.~~

411 ~~12. An early learning coalition serving a multicounty~~
412 ~~region must include representation from each county.~~

413 ~~13. Each early learning coalition shall establish terms for~~
414 ~~all appointed members of the coalition. The terms must be~~
415 ~~staggered and must be a uniform length that does not exceed 4~~
416 ~~years per term. Coalition chairs shall be appointed for 4 years~~
417 ~~in conjunction with their membership on the Early Learning~~
418 ~~Advisory Council under s. 20.052. Appointed members may serve a~~
419 ~~maximum of two consecutive terms. When a vacancy occurs in an~~



219010

420 ~~appointed position, the coalition must advertise the vacancy.~~

421 (b) *Limitation.*—Except as provided by law, the local level
422 service providers ~~early learning coalitions~~ may not impose
423 requirements on a child care or early childhood education
424 provider that does not deliver services under the school
425 readiness programs or receive state, federal, required
426 maintenance of effort, or matching funds under this section.

427 (c) *Program expectations.*—

428 1. The school readiness program must meet the following
429 expectations:

430 a. The program must, at a minimum, enhance the age-
431 appropriate progress of each child in attaining the performance
432 standards and outcome measures adopted by the department ~~Agency~~
433 ~~for Workforce Innovation.~~

434 b. The program must provide extended-day and extended-year
435 services to the maximum extent possible without compromising the
436 quality of the program to meet the needs of parents who work.

437 c. The program must provide a coordinated professional
438 development system that supports the achievement and maintenance
439 of core competencies by school readiness instructors in helping
440 children attain the performance standards and outcome measures
441 adopted by the department ~~Agency for Workforce Innovation.~~

442 d. There must be expanded access to community services and
443 resources for families to help achieve economic self-
444 sufficiency.

445 e. There must be a single point of entry and unified
446 waiting list. As used in this sub-subparagraph, the term "single
447 point of entry" means an integrated information system that
448 allows a parent to enroll his or her child in the school



219010

449 readiness program at various locations throughout a county, that
450 may allow a parent to enroll his or her child by telephone or
451 through an Internet website, and that uses a unified waiting
452 list to track eligible children waiting for enrollment in the
453 school readiness program. The department ~~Agency for Workforce~~
454 ~~Innovation~~ shall establish through technology a single statewide
455 information system that each local level service provider
456 ~~coalition~~ must use for the purposes of managing the single point
457 of entry, tracking children's progress, coordinating services
458 among stakeholders, determining eligibility, tracking child
459 attendance, and streamlining administrative processes for
460 providers and ~~early learning coalitions~~.

461 f. The department ~~Agency for Workforce Innovation~~ must
462 consider the access of eligible children to the school readiness
463 program, as demonstrated in part by waiting lists, before
464 approving a proposed increase in payment rates submitted by an
465 early learning coalition. In addition, early learning coalitions
466 shall use school readiness funds made available due to
467 enrollment shifts from school readiness programs to the
468 Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program for increasing the
469 number of children served in school readiness programs before
470 increasing payment rates.

471 g. The program must meet all state licensing guidelines,
472 where applicable.

473 h. The program must ensure that minimum standards for child
474 discipline practices are age-appropriate. ~~Such standards must~~
475 ~~provide that children not be subjected to discipline that is~~
476 ~~severe, humiliating, or frightening or discipline that is~~
477 ~~associated with food, rest, or toileting. Spanking or any other~~



219010

478 ~~form of physical punishment is prohibited.~~

479 2. Each local level service provider ~~early learning~~
480 ~~coalition~~ must implement a comprehensive program of school
481 readiness services in accordance with the rules adopted by the
482 agency which enhance the cognitive, social, and physical
483 development of children to achieve the performance standards and
484 outcome measures. At a minimum, these programs must contain the
485 following system support service elements:

486 a. Developmentally appropriate curriculum designed to
487 enhance the age-appropriate progress of children in attaining
488 the performance standards adopted by the department ~~Agency for~~
489 ~~Workforce Innovation~~ under subparagraph (4) (d) 7. ~~(4) (d) 8.~~

490 b. A character development program to develop basic values.

491 c. An age-appropriate screening of each child's
492 development.

493 d. An age-appropriate assessment administered to children
494 when they enter a program and an age-appropriate assessment
495 administered to children when they leave the program.

496 e. An appropriate staff-to-children ratio, pursuant to s.
497 402.305(4) or s. 402.302(7) or (8), as applicable, and as
498 verified pursuant to s. 402.311, or pursuant to the standard
499 contract requirements for a program that is not licensed by the
500 department.

501 f. A healthy and safe environment pursuant to s.
502 401.305(5), (6), and (7), as applicable, and as verified
503 pursuant to s. 402.311.

504 g. A resource and referral network established under s.
505 411.0101 to assist parents in making an informed choice and a
506 regional Warm-Line under s. 411.01015.



219010

507
508 The department shall coordinate with ~~Agency for Workforce~~
509 ~~Innovation,~~ the Department of Education, and local level service
510 providers ~~early learning coalitions shall coordinate with the~~
511 ~~Child Care Services Program Office of the Department of Children~~
512 ~~and Family Services~~ to minimize duplicating interagency
513 activities pertaining to acquiring and composing data for child
514 care training and credentialing.

515 (d) *Implementation.*—

516 1. ~~An early learning coalition may not implement the school~~
517 ~~readiness program until the coalition's school readiness plan is~~
518 ~~approved by the Agency for Workforce Innovation.~~

519 2. Each local level service provider ~~early learning~~
520 ~~coalition shall:~~ coordinate with one another to implement a
521 comprehensive program of school readiness services which
522 enhances the cognitive, social, physical, and moral character of
523 the children to achieve the performance standards and outcome
524 measures and which helps families achieve economic self-
525 sufficiency. Such program must contain, at a minimum, the
526 following elements:

527 a. ~~Implement the school readiness program to meet the~~
528 ~~requirements of this section and the system support services,~~
529 ~~performance standards, and outcome measures adopted by the~~
530 ~~Agency for Workforce Innovation.~~

531 b. ~~Demonstrate how the program will ensure that each child~~
532 ~~from birth through 5 years of age in a publicly funded school~~
533 ~~readiness program receives scheduled activities and instruction~~
534 ~~designed to enhance the age-appropriate progress of the children~~
535 ~~in attaining the performance standards adopted by the agency~~



219010

536 ~~under subparagraph (4)(d)8.~~

537 ~~e. Ensure that the coalition has solicited and considered~~
538 ~~comments regarding the proposed school readiness plan from the~~
539 ~~local community.~~

540

541 ~~Before implementing the school readiness program, the early~~
542 ~~learning coalition must submit the plan to the agency for~~
543 ~~approval. The agency may approve the plan, reject the plan, or~~
544 ~~approve the plan with conditions. The agency shall review school~~
545 ~~readiness plans at least every 2 years.~~

546 ~~3. If the Agency for Workforce Innovation determines during~~
547 ~~the review of school readiness plans, or through monitoring and~~
548 ~~performance evaluations conducted under paragraph (4)(1), that~~
549 ~~an early learning coalition has not substantially implemented~~
550 ~~its plan, has not substantially met the performance standards~~
551 ~~and outcome measures adopted by the agency, or has not~~
552 ~~effectively administered the school readiness program or~~
553 ~~Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program, the agency may~~
554 ~~dissolve the coalition and temporarily contract with a qualified~~
555 ~~entity to continue school readiness and prekindergarten services~~
556 ~~in the coalition's county or multicounty region until the agency~~
557 ~~reestablishes the coalition and a new school readiness plan is~~
558 ~~approved in accordance with the rules adopted by the agency.~~

559 ~~4. The Agency for Workforce Innovation shall adopt rules~~
560 ~~establishing criteria for the approval of school readiness~~
561 ~~plans. The criteria must be consistent with the system support~~
562 ~~services, performance standards, and outcome measures adopted by~~
563 ~~the agency and must require each approved plan to include the~~
564 ~~following minimum standards for the school readiness program:~~



219010

565 ~~1.a. Develop~~ a community plan that addresses the needs of
566 all children ~~and providers within the coalition's county or~~
567 ~~multicounty region.~~

568 ~~2.b. Develop~~ a sliding fee scale establishing a copayment
569 for parents based upon their ability to pay, which is the same
570 for all program providers and must be approved by the
571 department.

572 ~~3.e. Provide~~ a choice of settings and locations in
573 licensed, registered, religious-exempt, or school-based programs
574 to be provided to parents.

575 ~~4.d. Implement~~ specific eligibility priorities for children
576 in accordance with subsection (6).

577 ~~5.e. Implement~~ performance standards and outcome measures
578 adopted by the agency.

579 ~~6.f. Develop~~ payment rates ~~adopted by the early learning~~
580 ~~coalitions and~~ approved by the department agency. Payment rates
581 may not have the effect of limiting parental choice or creating
582 standards or levels of services that have not been expressly
583 established by the Legislature, unless the creation of such
584 standards or levels of service, which must be uniform throughout
585 the state, has been approved by the Federal Government and
586 result in the state being eligible to receive additional federal
587 funds available for early learning on a statewide basis.

588 ~~7.g. Deliver~~ direct enhancement services for families and
589 children. System support and direct enhancement services shall
590 be in addition to payments for the placement of children in
591 school readiness programs. Direct enhancement services for
592 families may include parent training and involvement activities
593 and strategies to meet the needs of unique populations and local



219010

594 eligibility priorities. Enhancement services for children may
595 include provider supports and professional development approved
596 in the plan by the department Agency for Workforce Innovation.

597 ~~8.h. Have The business organization of the early learning~~
598 ~~coalition, which must include the coalition's~~ articles of
599 incorporation and bylaws if the provider ~~coalition~~ is organized
600 as a corporation. If the provider ~~coalition~~ is not organized as
601 a corporation or other business entity, the provider ~~plan~~ must
602 include the contract with a fiscal agent. ~~An early learning~~
603 ~~coalition may contract with other coalitions to achieve~~
604 ~~efficiency in multicounty services, and these contracts may be~~
605 ~~part of the coalition's school readiness plan.~~

606 ~~i. The implementation of locally developed quality programs~~
607 ~~in accordance with the requirements adopted by the agency under~~
608 ~~subparagraph (4)(d)5.~~

609
610 The department Agency for Workforce Innovation may request the
611 Governor to apply for a waiver to allow the coalition to
612 administer the Head Start Program to accomplish the purposes of
613 the school readiness program.

614 ~~5. Persons with an early childhood teaching certificate may~~
615 ~~provide support and supervision to other staff in the school~~
616 ~~readiness program.~~

617 ~~6. An early learning coalition may not implement its school~~
618 ~~readiness plan until it submits the plan to and receives~~
619 ~~approval from the Agency for Workforce Innovation. Once the plan~~
620 ~~is approved, the plan and the services provided under the plan~~
621 ~~shall be controlled by the early learning coalition. The plan~~
622 ~~shall be reviewed and revised as necessary, but at least~~



219010

623 ~~biennially. An early learning coalition may not implement the~~
624 ~~revisions until the coalition submits the revised plan to and~~
625 ~~receives approval from the agency. If the agency rejects a~~
626 ~~revised plan, the coalition must continue to operate under its~~
627 ~~prior approved plan.~~

628 ~~7. Section 125.901(2)(a)3. does not apply to school~~
629 ~~readiness programs. The Agency for Workforce Innovation may~~
630 ~~apply to the Governor and Cabinet for a waiver of, and the~~
631 ~~Governor and Cabinet may waive, any of the provisions of ss.~~
632 ~~411.223 and 1003.54, if the waiver is necessary for~~
633 ~~implementation of school readiness programs.~~

634 ~~8. Two or more early learning coalitions may join for~~
635 ~~purposes of planning and implementing a school readiness~~
636 ~~program.~~

637 *(e) Requests for proposals; payment schedule.—*

638 1. Each local level service provider ~~early learning~~
639 ~~coalition~~ must comply with the procurement and expenditure
640 procedures adopted by the department ~~Agency for Workforce~~
641 ~~Innovation~~, including, but not limited to, applying the
642 procurement and expenditure procedures required by federal law
643 for the expenditure of federal funds.

644 2. Each local level service provider ~~early learning~~
645 ~~coalition~~ shall adopt a payment schedule that encompasses all
646 programs funded under this section. The payment schedule must
647 take into consideration the prevailing market rate, must include
648 the projected number of children to be served, and must be
649 submitted for approval by the department ~~Agency for Workforce~~
650 ~~Innovation~~. Informal child care arrangements shall be reimbursed
651 at not more than 50 percent of the rate adopted for a family day



219010

652 care home.

653 (f) *Evaluation and annual report.*—Each local level service
654 provider ~~early learning coalition~~ shall conduct an evaluation of
655 its implementation of the school readiness program, including
656 system support services, performance standards, and outcome
657 measures, and shall provide an annual report and fiscal
658 statement to the department ~~Agency for Workforce Innovation~~.
659 This report must also include an evaluation of the effectiveness
660 of its direct enhancement services and conform to the content
661 and format specifications adopted by the department ~~Agency for~~
662 ~~Workforce Innovation~~. The department ~~Agency for Workforce~~
663 ~~Innovation~~ must include an analysis of the local level service
664 providers' ~~early learning coalitions'~~ reports in the agency's
665 annual report.

666 (6) PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY.—The school readiness program is
667 established for children from birth to the beginning of the
668 school year for which a child is eligible for admission to
669 kindergarten in a public school under s. 1003.21(1)(a)2. or who
670 are eligible for any federal subsidized child care program. Each
671 local level service provider ~~early learning coalition~~ shall give
672 priority for participation in the school readiness program as
673 follows:

674 (a) Priority shall be given first to a child from a family
675 in which there is an adult receiving temporary cash assistance
676 who is subject to federal work requirements.

677 (b) Priority shall be given next to a child who is eligible
678 for a school readiness program but who has not yet entered
679 school, who is served by the Family Safety Program Office of the
680 department ~~of Children and Family Services~~ or a community-based



219010

681 lead agency under chapter 39 or chapter 409, and for whom child
682 care is needed to minimize risk of further abuse, neglect, or
683 abandonment.

684 (c) Subsequent priority shall be given to a child who meets
685 one or more of the following criteria:

686 1. A child who is younger than the age of kindergarten
687 eligibility and:

688 a. Is at risk of welfare dependency, including an
689 economically disadvantaged child, a child of a participant in
690 the welfare transition program, a child of a migratory
691 agricultural worker, or a child of a teen parent.

692 b. Is a member of a working family that is economically
693 disadvantaged.

694 c. For whom financial assistance is provided through the
695 Relative Caregiver Program under s. 39.5085.

696 2. A 3-year-old child or 4-year-old child who may not be
697 economically disadvantaged but who has a disability; has been
698 served in a specific part-time exceptional education program or
699 a combination of part-time exceptional education programs with
700 required special services, aids, or equipment; and was
701 previously reported for funding part time under the Florida
702 Education Finance Program as an exceptional student.

703 3. An economically disadvantaged child, a child with a
704 disability, or a child at risk of future school failure, from
705 birth to 4 years of age, who is served at home through a home
706 visitor program and an intensive parent education program.

707 4. A child who meets federal and state eligibility
708 requirements for the migrant preschool program but who is not
709 economically disadvantaged.



219010

710
711 As used in this paragraph, the term "economically disadvantaged"
712 means having a family income that does not exceed 150 percent of
713 the federal poverty level. Notwithstanding any change in a
714 family's economic status, but subject to additional family
715 contributions in accordance with the sliding fee scale, a child
716 who meets the eligibility requirements upon initial registration
717 for the program remains eligible until the beginning of the
718 school year for which the child is eligible for admission to
719 kindergarten in a public school under s. 1003.21(1)(a)2.

720 (7) PARENTAL CHOICE.—

721 (a) Parental choice of child care providers shall be
722 established, to the maximum extent practicable, in accordance
723 with 45 C.F.R. s. 98.30.

724 (b) As used in this subsection, the term "payment
725 certificate" means a child care certificate as defined in 45
726 C.F.R. s. 98.2.

727 (c) The school readiness program shall, in accordance with
728 45 C.F.R. s. 98.30, provide parental choice through a payment
729 certificate that ensures, to the maximum extent possible,
730 flexibility in the school readiness program and payment
731 arrangements. The payment certificate must bear the names of the
732 beneficiary and the program provider and, when redeemed, must
733 bear the signatures of both the beneficiary and an authorized
734 representative of the provider.

735 (d) If it is determined that a provider has given any cash
736 to the beneficiary in return for receiving a payment
737 certificate, the local level service provider ~~early learning~~
738 ~~coalition~~ or its fiscal agent shall refer the matter to the



219010

739 Department of Financial Services pursuant to s. 414.411 for
740 investigation.

741 (e) The office of the Chief Financial Officer shall
742 establish an electronic transfer system for the disbursement of
743 funds in accordance with this subsection. Each local level
744 service provider ~~early learning coalition~~ shall fully implement
745 the electronic funds transfer system ~~within 2 years after~~
746 ~~approval of the coalition's school readiness plan, unless a~~
747 ~~waiver is obtained from the Agency for Workforce Innovation.~~

748 (8) STANDARDS; OUTCOME MEASURES.—A program provider
749 participating in the school readiness program must meet the
750 performance standards and outcome measures adopted by the
751 Department of Children and Family Services ~~Agency for Workforce~~
752 ~~Innovation.~~

753 (9) FUNDING; SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM.—

754 (a) It is the intent of this section to establish an
755 integrated and quality seamless service delivery system for all
756 publicly funded early childhood education and child care
757 programs operating in this state.

758 (b)~~1.~~ The department ~~Agency for Workforce Innovation~~ shall
759 administer school readiness funds, plans, and policies and shall
760 prepare and submit a unified budget request for the school
761 readiness system in accordance with chapter 216.

762 ~~2. All instructions to early learning coalitions for~~
763 ~~administering this section shall emanate from the Agency for~~
764 ~~Workforce Innovation in accordance with the policies of the~~
765 ~~Legislature.~~

766 (c) The department ~~Agency for Workforce Innovation~~, subject
767 to legislative notice and review under s. 216.177, shall



219010

768 establish a formula for the allocation of all state and federal
769 school readiness funds provided for children participating in
770 the school readiness program, whether served by a public or
771 private provider, based upon equity for each county. The
772 allocation formula must be submitted to the Governor, the chair
773 of the Senate Ways and Means Committee or its successor, and the
774 chair of the House of Representatives Fiscal Council or its
775 successor no later than January 1 of each year. If the
776 Legislature specifies changes to the allocation formula, the
777 Agency for Workforce Innovation shall allocate funds as
778 specified in the General Appropriations Act.

779 (d) All state, federal, and required local maintenance-of-
780 effort or matching funds provided to a local level service
781 provider ~~an early learning coalition~~ for purposes of this
782 section shall be used for implementation of its approved school
783 readiness plan, including the hiring of staff to effectively
784 operate the provider's ~~coalition's~~ school readiness program. ~~As~~
785 ~~part of plan approval and periodic plan review,~~ The department
786 ~~Agency for Workforce Innovation~~ shall require that
787 administrative costs be kept to the minimum necessary for
788 efficient and effective administration of the school readiness
789 plan, but total administrative expenditures must not exceed 5
790 percent unless specifically waived by the department ~~Agency for~~
791 ~~Workforce Innovation~~. The department ~~Agency for Workforce~~
792 ~~Innovation~~ shall annually report to the Legislature any problems
793 relating to administrative costs.

794 (e) The department ~~Agency for Workforce Innovation~~ shall
795 annually distribute, to a maximum extent practicable, all
796 eligible funds provided under this section as block grants to



219010

797 the local level service providers ~~early learning coalitions~~ in
798 accordance with the terms and conditions specified by the
799 department ~~agency~~.

800 (f) State funds appropriated for the school readiness
801 program may not be used for the construction of new facilities
802 or the purchase of buses.

803 (g) All cost savings and all revenues received through a
804 mandatory sliding fee scale shall be used to help fund each
805 local level service provider's ~~early learning coalition's~~ school
806 readiness program.

807 (10) CONFLICTING PROVISIONS.—If a conflict exists between
808 this section and federal requirements, the federal requirements
809 control.

810 (11) SUBSTITUTE INSTRUCTORS.—Each school district shall
811 make a list of all individuals currently eligible to act as a
812 substitute teacher within the county pursuant to the rules
813 adopted by the school district pursuant to s. 1012.35 available
814 to a local level service provider ~~an early learning coalition~~
815 serving students within the school district. Child care
816 facilities, as defined by s. 402.302, may employ individuals
817 listed as substitute instructors for the purpose of offering the
818 school readiness program, ~~the Voluntary Prekindergarten~~
819 ~~Education Program~~, and all other legally operating child care
820 programs.

821 Section 44. Section 411.0102, Florida Statutes, is amended
822 to read:

823 411.0102 Child Care Executive Partnership Act; findings and
824 intent; grant; limitation; rules.—

825 (1) This section may be cited as the "Child Care Executive



219010

826 Partnership Act.”

827 (2) (a) The Legislature finds that when private employers
828 provide onsite child care or provide other child care benefits,
829 they benefit by improved recruitment and higher retention rates
830 for employees, lower absenteeism, and improved employee morale.
831 The Legislature also finds that there are many ways in which
832 private employers can provide child care assistance to
833 employees: information and referral, vouchering, employer
834 contribution to child care programs, and onsite care. Private
835 employers can offer child care as part of a menu of employee
836 benefits. The Legislature recognizes that flexible compensation
837 programs providing a child care option are beneficial to the
838 private employer through increased productivity, to the private
839 employee in knowing that his or her children are being cared for
840 in a safe and nurturing environment, and to the state in more
841 dollars being available for purchasing power and investment.

842 (b) It is the intent of the Legislature to promote
843 public/private partnerships to ensure that the children of the
844 state be provided safe and enriching child care at any time, but
845 especially while parents work to remain self-sufficient. It is
846 the intent of the Legislature that private employers be
847 encouraged to participate in the future of this state by
848 providing employee child care benefits. Further, it is the
849 intent of the Legislature to encourage private employers to
850 explore innovative ways to assist employees to obtain quality
851 child care.

852 (c) The Legislature further recognizes that many parents
853 need assistance in paying the full costs of quality child care.
854 The public and private sectors, by working in partnership, can



219010

855 promote and improve access to quality child care and early
856 education for children of working families who need it.
857 Therefore, a more formal mechanism is necessary to stimulate the
858 establishment of public-private partnerships. It is the intent
859 of the Legislature to expand the availability of scholarship
860 options for working families by providing incentives for
861 employers to contribute to meeting the needs of their employees'
862 families through matching public dollars available for child
863 care.

864 (3) There is created a body politic and corporate known as
865 the Child Care Executive Partnership which shall establish and
866 govern the Child Care Executive Partnership Program. The purpose
867 of the Child Care Executive Partnership Program is to utilize
868 state and federal funds as incentives for matching local funds
869 derived from local governments, employers, charitable
870 foundations, and other sources so that Florida communities may
871 create local flexible partnerships with employers. The Child
872 Care Executive Partnership Program funds shall be used at the
873 discretion of local communities to meet the needs of working
874 parents. A child care purchasing pool shall be developed with
875 the state, federal, and local funds to provide subsidies to low-
876 income working parents whose family income does not exceed the
877 allowable income for any federally subsidized child care program
878 with a dollar-for-dollar match from employers, local government,
879 and other matching contributions. The funds used from the child
880 care purchasing pool must be used to supplement or extend the
881 use of existing public or private funds.

882 (4) The Child Care Executive Partnership, staffed by the
883 Department of Children and Family Services ~~Agency for Workforce~~



219010

884 ~~Innovation~~, shall consist of a representative of the Executive
885 Office of the Governor and nine members of the corporate or
886 child care community, appointed by the Governor.

887 (a) Members shall serve for a period of 4 years, except
888 that the representative of the Executive Office of the Governor
889 shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

890 (b) The Child Care Executive Partnership shall be chaired
891 by a member chosen by a majority vote and shall meet at least
892 quarterly and at other times upon the call of the chair. The
893 Child Care Executive Partnership may use any method of
894 telecommunications to conduct meetings, including establishing a
895 quorum through telecommunications, only if the public is given
896 proper notice of a telecommunications meeting and reasonable
897 access to observe and, when appropriate, participate.

898 (c) Members shall serve without compensation, but may be
899 reimbursed for per diem and travel expenses in accordance with
900 s. 112.061.

901 (d) The Child Care Executive Partnership shall have all the
902 powers and authority, not explicitly prohibited by statute,
903 necessary to carry out and effectuate the purposes of this
904 section, as well as the functions, duties, and responsibilities
905 of the partnership, including, but not limited to, the
906 following:

907 1. Assisting in the formulation and coordination of the
908 state's child care policy.

909 2. Adopting an official seal.

910 3. Soliciting, accepting, receiving, investing, and
911 expending funds from public or private sources.

912 4. Contracting with public or private entities as



219010

913 necessary.

914 5. Approving an annual budget.

915 6. Carrying forward any unexpended state appropriations
916 into succeeding fiscal years.

917 7. Providing a report to the Governor, the Speaker of the
918 House of Representatives, and the President of the Senate, on or
919 before December 1 of each year.

920 (5) (a) The Legislature shall annually determine the amount
921 of state or federal low-income child care moneys which shall be
922 used to create Child Care Executive Partnership Program child
923 care purchasing pools in counties chosen by the Child Care
924 Executive Partnership, provided that at least two of the
925 counties have populations of no more than 300,000. The
926 Legislature shall annually review the effectiveness of the child
927 care purchasing pool program and reevaluate the percentage of
928 additional state or federal funds, if any, which ~~that~~ can be
929 used for the program's expansion.

930 (b) To ensure a seamless service delivery and ease of
931 access for families, an early learning coalition or the
932 Department of Children and Family Services ~~Agency for Workforce~~
933 ~~Innovation~~ shall administer the child care purchasing pool
934 funds.

935 (c) The Department of Children and Family Services ~~Agency~~
936 ~~for Workforce Innovation~~, in conjunction with the Child Care
937 Executive Partnership, shall develop procedures for disbursement
938 of funds through the child care purchasing pools. In order to be
939 considered for funding, an early learning coalition or the
940 Department of Children and Family Services ~~Agency for Workforce~~
941 ~~Innovation~~ must commit to:



219010

942 1. Matching the state purchasing pool funds on a dollar-
943 for-dollar basis; and

944 2. Expending only those public funds that ~~which~~ are matched
945 by employers, local government, and other matching contributors
946 who contribute to the purchasing pool. Parents shall also pay a
947 fee, which may not be less than the amount identified in the
948 early learning coalition's school readiness program sliding fee
949 scale.

950 (d) Each early learning coalition shall establish a
951 community child care task force for each child care purchasing
952 pool. The task force must be composed of employers, parents,
953 private child care providers, and one representative from the
954 local children's services council, if one exists in the area of
955 the purchasing pool. The early learning coalition is expected to
956 recruit the task force members from existing child care
957 councils, commissions, or task forces already operating in the
958 area of a purchasing pool. A majority of the task force shall
959 consist of employers.

960 (e) Each participating early learning coalition board shall
961 develop a plan for the use of child care purchasing pool funds.
962 The plan must show how many children will be served by the
963 purchasing pool, how many will be new to receiving child care
964 services, and how the early learning coalition intends to
965 attract new employers and their employees to the program.

966 (6) The Department of Children and Family Services Agency
967 ~~for Workforce Innovation~~ shall adopt any rules necessary for the
968 implementation and administration of this section.

969
970 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====



219010

971 And the title is amended as follows:
972 Delete line 285
973 and insert:
974 an electronic transfer benefit program; amending s.
975 411.01, F.S.; providing for the school readiness
976 programs to be administered by the Department of
977 Children and Family Services rather than by the Agency
978 for Workforce Innovation; revising legislative intent;
979 providing for the delivery of services through local
980 level service providers; replacing references to early
981 learning coalitions with local level service
982 providers; providing for criteria for local level
983 service providers; amending s.