

By the Committees on Appropriations; and Education Pre-K - 12

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to early childhood development;
3 amending s. 39.201, F.S.; providing an exception from
4 a prohibition against the use of information in the
5 Department of Children and Families central abuse
6 hotline for employment screening of certain child care
7 personnel; amending s. 39.202, F.S.; expanding the
8 list of entities that have access to child abuse
9 records for purposes of approving providers of school
10 readiness services; amending s. 383.141, F.S.;
11 revising the requirements for the Department of Health
12 to maintain a clearinghouse of information for parents
13 and health care providers and to increase public
14 awareness of developmental evaluation and early
15 intervention programs; requiring the clearinghouse to
16 use a specified term; revising the information to be
17 included in the clearinghouse; amending s. 391.025,
18 F.S.; renaming the "Infants and Toddlers Early
19 Intervention Program" as the "Early Steps Program";
20 revising the components of the Children's Medical
21 Services program; amending s. 391.026, F.S.; requiring
22 the department to serve as the lead agency in
23 administering the Early Steps Program; amending s.
24 391.301, F.S.; establishing the Early Steps Program
25 within the department; deleting provisions relating to
26 legislative findings; authorizing the program to
27 include certain screening and referral services for
28 specified purposes; providing requirements and
29 responsibilities for the program; amending s. 391.302,
30 F.S.; defining terms; revising the definitions of
31 certain terms; deleting terms; repealing ss. 391.303,
32 391.304, 391.305, 391.306, and 391.307, F.S., relating

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33 to requirements for the Children's Medical Services
34 program, program coordination, program standards,
35 program funding and contracts, and program review,
36 respectively; amending s. 391.308, F.S.; renaming the
37 "Infants and Toddlers Early Intervention Program" as
38 the "Early Steps Program"; requiring, rather than
39 authorizing, the department to implement and
40 administer the program; requiring the department to
41 ensure that the program follows specified performance
42 standards; providing requirements of the program to
43 meet such performance standards; revising the duties
44 of the department; requiring the department to apply
45 specified eligibility criteria for the program based
46 on an appropriation of funds; providing duties for
47 local program offices; requiring the local program
48 office to negotiate and maintain agreements with
49 specified providers and managed care organizations;
50 requiring the development of an individualized family
51 support plan for each child served in the program;
52 requiring the local program office to coordinate with
53 managed care organizations; requiring the department
54 to submit an annual report, subject to certain
55 requirements, to the Governor, the Legislature, and
56 the Florida Interagency Coordinating Council for
57 Infants and Toddlers by a specified date; designating
58 the Florida Interagency Coordinating Council for
59 Infants and Toddlers as the state interagency
60 coordinating council required by federal rule subject
61 to certain requirements; providing requirements for

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62 the local program office and local school district to
63 prepare certain children for the transition to school
64 under certain circumstances; amending s. 402.302,
65 F.S.; revising the definition of the term "screening"
66 for purposes of child care licensing requirements;
67 repealing s. 402.3057, F.S., relating to persons not
68 required to be refingerprinted or rescreened; amending
69 s. 402.306, F.S.; requiring the Department of Children
70 and Families and local licensing agencies to
71 electronically post certain information relating to
72 child care and school readiness providers; amending s.
73 402.311, F.S.; requiring school readiness program
74 providers to provide the department or local licensing
75 agencies with access to facilities, personnel, and
76 records for inspection purposes; amending s. 402.319,
77 F.S.; requiring certain child care providers to submit
78 an affidavit of compliance with certain mandatory
79 reporting requirements; amending s. 435.07, F.S.;
80 providing criteria for disqualification from
81 employment with a school readiness program provider;
82 amending s. 1002.82, F.S.; revising the duties of the
83 Office of Early Learning of the Department of
84 Education; requiring the office to coordinate with the
85 Department of Children and Families and local
86 licensing agencies for inspections of school readiness
87 program providers; amending s. 1002.84, F.S.; revising
88 provisions relating to determination of child
89 eligibility for school readiness programs; revising
90 requirements for determining parent copayments for

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91 participation in the program; amending s. 1002.87,
92 F.S.; revising school readiness program eligibility
93 requirements; amending s. 1002.88, F.S.; revising
94 requirements for school readiness program providers;
95 amending s. 1002.89, F.S.; providing for additional
96 uses of funds for school readiness programs; amending
97 ss. 402.3025, 413.092, and 1003.575, F.S.; conforming
98 provisions to changes made by the act; providing an
99 effective date.

100
101 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

102
103 Section 1. Subsection (6) of section 39.201, Florida
104 Statutes, is amended to read:

105 39.201 Mandatory reports of child abuse, abandonment, or
106 neglect; mandatory reports of death; central abuse hotline.—

107 (6) Information in the central abuse hotline may not be
108 used for employment screening, except as provided in s.
109 39.202(2)(a) and (h) or s. 402.302(15). Information in the
110 central abuse hotline and the department's automated abuse
111 information system may be used by the department, its authorized
112 agents or contract providers, the Department of Health, or
113 county agencies as part of the licensure or registration process
114 pursuant to ss. 402.301-402.319 and ss. 409.175-409.176.

115 Section 2. Paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of section
116 39.202, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

117 39.202 Confidentiality of reports and records in cases of
118 child abuse or neglect.—

119 (2) Except as provided in subsection (4), access to such

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120 records, excluding the name of the reporter which shall be
121 released only as provided in subsection (5), shall be granted
122 only to the following persons, officials, and agencies:

123 (a) Employees, authorized agents, or contract providers of
124 the department, the Department of Health, the Agency for Persons
125 with Disabilities, the Office of Early Learning, or county
126 agencies responsible for carrying out:

- 127 1. Child or adult protective investigations;
- 128 2. Ongoing child or adult protective services;
- 129 3. Early intervention and prevention services;
- 130 4. Healthy Start services;
- 131 5. Licensure or approval of adoptive homes, foster homes,
132 child care facilities, facilities licensed under chapter 393, ~~or~~
133 family day care homes, or informal child care providers who
134 receive school readiness funding under part VI of chapter 1002,
135 or other homes used to provide for the care and welfare of
136 children; or
- 137 6. Services for victims of domestic violence when provided
138 by certified domestic violence centers working at the
139 department's request as case consultants or with shared clients.

140
141 Also, employees or agents of the Department of Juvenile Justice
142 responsible for the provision of services to children, pursuant
143 to chapters 984 and 985.

144 Section 3. Subsections (2) and (3) of section 383.141,
145 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

146 383.141 Prenatally diagnosed conditions; patient to be
147 provided information; definitions; information clearinghouse;
148 advisory council.-

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149 (2) When a developmental disability is diagnosed based on
150 the results of a prenatal test, the health care provider who
151 ordered the prenatal test, or his or her designee, shall provide
152 the patient with current information about the nature of the
153 developmental disability, the accuracy of the prenatal test, and
154 resources for obtaining relevant support services, including
155 hotlines, resource centers, and information clearinghouses
156 related to Down syndrome or other prenatally diagnosed
157 developmental disabilities; support programs for parents and
158 families; and developmental evaluation and intervention services
159 under this part ~~s. 391.303~~.

160 (3) The Department of Health shall develop and implement a
161 comprehensive information clearinghouse to educate health care
162 providers, inform parents, and increase public awareness
163 regarding brain development, developmental disabilities and
164 delays, and all services, resources, and interventions available
165 to mitigate the effects of impaired development among children.
166 The clearinghouse must use the term "unique abilities" as much
167 as possible when identifying infants or children with
168 developmental disabilities and delays. The clearinghouse must
169 provide:

170 (a) Health information on conditions that may lead to
171 impaired development of physical, learning, language, or
172 behavioral skills.

173 (b) Education and information to support parents whose
174 unborn children have been prenatally diagnosed with
175 developmental disabilities or whose children have diagnosed or
176 suspected developmental delays.

177 (c) Education and training for health care providers to

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178 recognize and respond appropriately to developmental
179 disabilities, delays, and conditions related to disabilities or
180 delays. Specific information approved by the advisory council
181 shall be made available to health care providers for use in
182 counseling parents whose unborn children have been prenatally
183 diagnosed with developmental disabilities or whose children have
184 diagnosed or suspected developmental delays.

185 (d) Promotion of public awareness of availability of
186 supportive services, such as resource centers, educational
187 programs, other support programs for parents and families, and
188 developmental evaluation and intervention services.

189 (e) Hotlines specific to Down syndrome and other prenatally
190 diagnosed developmental disabilities. The hotlines and the
191 department's clearinghouse must provide information to parents
192 and families or other caregivers regarding the Early Steps
193 Program under s. 391.301, the Florida Diagnostic and Learning
194 Resources System, the Early Learning program, Healthy Start,
195 Help Me Grow, and any other intervention programs. Information
196 offered must include directions on how to obtain early
197 intervention, rehabilitative, and habilitative services and
198 devices ~~establish on its Internet website a clearinghouse of~~
199 ~~information related to developmental disabilities concerning~~
200 ~~providers of supportive services, information hotlines specific~~
201 ~~to Down syndrome and other prenatally diagnosed developmental~~
202 ~~disabilities, resource centers, educational programs, other~~
203 ~~support programs for parents and families, and developmental~~
204 ~~evaluation and intervention services under s. 391.303. Such~~
205 ~~information shall be made available to health care providers for~~
206 ~~use in counseling pregnant women whose unborn children have been~~

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207 ~~prenatally diagnosed with developmental disabilities.~~

208 (4) (a) There is established an advisory council within the
209 Department of Health which consists of health care providers and
210 caregivers who perform health care services for persons who have
211 developmental disabilities, including Down syndrome and autism.
212 This group shall consist of nine members as follows:

213 1. Three members appointed by the Governor;

214 2. Three members appointed by the President of the Senate;

215 and

216 3. Three members appointed by the Speaker of the House of
217 Representatives.

218 (b) The advisory council shall provide technical assistance
219 to the Department of Health in the establishment of the
220 information clearinghouse and give the department the benefit of
221 the council members' knowledge and experience relating to the
222 needs of patients and families of patients with developmental
223 disabilities and available support services.

224 (c) Members of the council shall elect a chairperson and a
225 vice chairperson. The elected chairperson and vice chairperson
226 shall serve in these roles until their terms of appointment on
227 the council expire.

228 (d) The advisory council shall meet quarterly to review
229 this clearinghouse of information, and may meet more often at
230 the call of the chairperson or as determined by a majority of
231 members.

232 (e) The council members shall be appointed to 4-year terms,
233 except that, to provide for staggered terms, one initial
234 appointee each from the Governor, the President of the Senate,
235 and the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall be

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236 appointed to a 2-year term, one appointee each from these
237 officials shall be appointed to a 3-year term, and the remaining
238 initial appointees shall be appointed to 4-year terms. All
239 subsequent appointments shall be for 4-year terms. A vacancy
240 shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term in the
241 same manner as the original appointment.

242 (f) Members of the council shall serve without
243 compensation. Meetings of the council may be held in person,
244 without reimbursement for travel expenses, or by teleconference
245 or other electronic means.

246 (g) The Department of Health shall provide administrative
247 support for the advisory council.

248 Section 4. Paragraph (c) of subsection (1) of section
249 391.025, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

250 391.025 Applicability and scope.—

251 (1) The Children's Medical Services program consists of the
252 following components:

253 (c) The developmental evaluation and intervention program,
254 including the Early Steps ~~Florida Infants and Toddlers Early~~
255 ~~Intervention~~ Program.

256 Section 5. Subsection (19) is added to section 391.026,
257 Florida Statutes, to read:

258 391.026 Powers and duties of the department.—The department
259 shall have the following powers, duties, and responsibilities:

260 (19) To serve as the lead agency in administering the Early
261 Steps Program pursuant to part C of the federal Individuals with
262 Disabilities Education Act and part III of this chapter.

263 Section 6. Section 391.301, Florida Statutes, is amended to
264 read:

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265 391.301 Early Steps Program; establishment and goals
266 ~~Developmental evaluation and intervention programs; legislative~~
267 ~~findings and intent.-~~

268 (1) The Early Steps Program is established within the
269 department to serve infants and toddlers who are at risk of
270 developmental disabilities based on a physical or mental
271 condition and infants and toddlers with developmental delays by
272 providing developmental evaluation and early intervention and by
273 providing families with training and support services in a
274 variety of home and community settings in order to enhance
275 family and caregiver competence, confidence, and capacity to
276 meet their child's developmental needs and desired outcomes ~~The~~
277 ~~Legislature finds that the high-risk and disabled newborn~~
278 ~~infants in this state need in-hospital and outpatient~~
279 ~~developmental evaluation and intervention and that their~~
280 ~~families need training and support services. The Legislature~~
281 ~~further finds that there is an identifiable and increasing~~
282 ~~number of infants who need developmental evaluation and~~
283 ~~intervention and family support due to the fact that increased~~
284 ~~numbers of low-birthweight and sick full-term newborn infants~~
285 ~~are now surviving because of the advances in neonatal intensive~~
286 ~~care medicine; increased numbers of medically involved infants~~
287 ~~are remaining inappropriately in hospitals because their parents~~
288 ~~lack the confidence or skills to care for these infants without~~
289 ~~support; and increased numbers of infants are at risk due to~~
290 ~~parent risk factors, such as substance abuse, teenage pregnancy,~~
291 ~~and other high-risk conditions.~~

292 (2) The program may include screening and referral ~~It is~~
293 ~~the intent of the Legislature to establish developmental~~

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294 ~~evaluation and intervention~~ services at all hospitals providing
295 Level II or Level III neonatal intensive care services, in order
296 to promptly identify newborns with disabilities or with
297 conditions associated with risks of developmental delays so that
298 families ~~with high-risk or disabled infants~~ may gain as early as
299 possible the services and skills they need to support their
300 infants' development ~~infants~~.

301 (3) The program must ~~It is the intent of the Legislature~~
302 ~~that a methodology be developed to~~ integrate information and
303 coordinate services on infants with potentially disabling
304 ~~conditions~~ with other programs serving infants and toddlers
305 ~~early intervention programs~~, including, but not limited to, Part
306 C of Pub. L. No. 105-17 and the Healthy Start program, the
307 newborn screening program, and the Blind Babies Program.

308 (4) The program must:

309 (a) Provide services to enhance the development of infants
310 and toddlers with disabilities and delays.

311 (b) Expand the recognition by health care providers,
312 families, and the public of the significant brain development
313 that occurs during a child's first 3 years of life.

314 (c) Maintain the importance of the family in all areas of
315 the child's development and support the family's participation
316 in early intervention services and decisions affecting the
317 child.

318 (d) Operate a comprehensive, coordinated interagency system
319 of early intervention services and supports in accordance with
320 part C of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education
321 Act.

322 (e) Ensure timely evaluation, individual planning, and

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323 early intervention services necessary to meet the unique needs
324 of eligible infants and toddlers.

325 (f) Build the service capacity and enhance the competencies
326 of health care providers serving infants and toddlers with
327 unique needs and abilities.

328 (g) Ensure programmatic and fiscal accountability through
329 establishment of a high-capacity data system, active monitoring
330 of performance indicators, and ongoing quality improvement.

331 Section 7. Section 391.302, Florida Statutes, is amended to
332 read:

333 391.302 Definitions.—As used in ss. 391.301-391.308 ~~ss.~~
334 ~~391.301-391.307~~, the term:

335 (1) "Developmental delay" means a condition, identified and
336 measured through appropriate instruments and procedures, which
337 may delay physical, cognitive, communication, social or
338 emotional, or adaptive development.

339 (2) "Developmental disability" means a condition,
340 identified and measured through appropriate instruments and
341 procedures, which may impair physical, cognitive, communication,
342 social or emotional, or adaptive development.

343 (3) "Developmental intervention" or "early intervention"
344 means individual and group ~~individualized~~ therapies and services
345 needed to enhance both the infant's or toddler's growth and
346 development and family functioning. The term includes
347 habilitative services and assistive technology devices,
348 rehabilitative services and assistive technology devices, and
349 parent support and training.

350 (4) "Habilitative services and devices" means health care
351 services and assistive technology devices that help a child

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352 maintain, learn, or improve skills and functioning for daily
353 living.

354 (5)(2) "Infant or toddler" or "child" means a child from
355 birth until the child's third birthday.

356 (6) "Local program office" means an office that administers
357 the Early Steps Program within a municipality, county, or
358 region.

359 (7) "Rehabilitative services and devices" means restorative
360 and remedial services that maintain or enhance the current level
361 of functioning of a child if there is a possibility of
362 improvement or reversal of impairment.

363 ~~(3) "In-hospital intervention services" means the provision~~
364 ~~of assessments; the provision of individualized services;~~
365 ~~monitoring and modifying the delivery of medical interventions;~~
366 ~~and enhancing the environment for the high-risk, developmentally~~
367 ~~disabled, or medically involved infant or toddler in order to~~
368 ~~achieve optimum growth and development.~~

369 ~~(4) "Parent support and training" means a range of services~~
370 ~~to families of high-risk, developmentally disabled, or medically~~
371 ~~involved infants or toddlers, including family counseling;~~
372 ~~financial planning; agency referral; development of parent-to-~~
373 ~~parent support groups; education concerning growth, development,~~
374 ~~and developmental intervention and objective measurable skills,~~
375 ~~including abuse avoidance skills; training of parents to~~
376 ~~advocate for their child; and bereavement counseling.~~

377 Section 8. Sections 391.303, 391.304, 391.305, 391.306, and
378 391.307, Florida Statutes, are repealed.

379 Section 9. Section 391.308, Florida Statutes, is amended to
380 read:

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381 391.308 Early Steps ~~Infants and Toddlers Early Intervention~~
382 Program.—The department shall ~~Department of Health may~~ implement
383 and administer part C of the federal Individuals with
384 Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which shall be known as the
385 “Early Steps ~~“Florida Infants and Toddlers Early Intervention~~
386 Program.”

387 (1) PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.—The department shall ensure that
388 the Early Steps Program complies with the following performance
389 standards:

390 (a) The program must provide services from referral through
391 transition in a family-centered manner that recognizes and
392 responds to unique circumstances and needs of infants and
393 toddlers and their families as measured by a variety of
394 qualitative data, including satisfaction surveys, interviews,
395 focus groups, and input from stakeholders.

396 (b) The program must provide individualized family support
397 plans that are understandable and usable by families, health
398 care providers, and payers and that identify the current level
399 of functioning of the infant or toddler, family supports and
400 resources, expected outcomes, and specific early intervention
401 services needed to achieve the expected outcomes, as measured by
402 periodic system independent evaluation.

403 (c) The program must help each family to use available
404 resources in a way that maximizes the child’s access to services
405 necessary to achieve the outcomes of the individualized family
406 support plan, as measured by family feedback and by independent
407 assessments of services used by each child.

408 (d) The program must offer families access to quality
409 services that effectively enable infants and toddlers with

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410 developmental disabilities and developmental delays to achieve
411 optimal functional levels as measured by an independent
412 evaluation of outcome indicators in social or emotional skills,
413 communication, and adaptive behaviors.

414 (2) DUTIES OF THE DEPARTMENT.—The department shall:

415 (a) Jointly with the Department of Education, shall
416 Annually prepare a grant application to the United States
417 Department of Education for funding early intervention services
418 for infants and toddlers with disabilities, from birth through
419 36 months of age, and their families pursuant to part C of the
420 federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

421 (b) ~~(2)~~ The department, Jointly with the Department of
422 Education, provide shall include a reading initiative as an
423 early intervention service for infants and toddlers.

424 (c) Annually develop a state plan for the Early Steps
425 Program.

426 1. The plan must assess the need for early intervention
427 services, evaluate the extent of the statewide need that is met
428 by the program, identify barriers to fully meeting the need, and
429 recommend specific action steps to improve program performance.

430 2. The plan must be developed through an inclusive process
431 that involves families, local program offices, health care
432 providers, and other stakeholders.

433 (d) Ensure local program offices educate hospitals that
434 provide Level II and Level III neonatal intensive care services
435 about the Early Steps Program and the referral process for the
436 provision of developmental evaluation and intervention services.

437 (e) Establish standards and qualifications for
438 developmental evaluation and early intervention service

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439 providers, including standards for determining the adequacy of
440 provider networks in each local program office service area.

441 (f) Establish statewide uniform protocols and procedures to
442 determine eligibility for developmental evaluation and early
443 intervention services.

444 (g) Establish a consistent, statewide format and procedure
445 for preparing and completing an individualized family support
446 plan.

447 (h) Promote interagency cooperation and coordination, with
448 the Medicaid program, the Department of Education program
449 pursuant to part B of the federal Individuals with Disabilities
450 Education Act, and programs providing child screening such as
451 the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System, the Office
452 of Early Learning, Healthy Start, and the Help Me Grow program.

453 1. Coordination with the Medicaid program shall be
454 developed and maintained through written agreements with the
455 Agency for Health Care Administration and Medicaid managed care
456 organizations as well as through active and ongoing
457 communication with these organizations. The department shall
458 assist local program offices to negotiate agreements with
459 Medicaid managed care organizations in the service areas of the
460 local program offices. Such agreements may be formal or
461 informal.

462 2. Coordination with education programs pursuant to part B
463 of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act shall
464 be developed and maintained through written agreements with the
465 Department of Education. The department shall assist local
466 program offices to negotiate agreements with school districts in
467 the service areas of the local program offices.

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468 (i) Develop and disseminate the knowledge and methods
469 necessary to effectively coordinate benefits among various payer
470 types.

471 (j) Provide a mediation process and if necessary, an
472 appeals process for applicants found ineligible for
473 developmental evaluation or early intervention services or
474 denied financial support for such services.

475 (k) Competitively procure local program offices to provide
476 services throughout the state in accordance with chapter 287.
477 The department shall specify the requirements and qualifications
478 for local program offices in the procurement document.

479 (l) Establish performance standards and other metrics for
480 evaluation of local program offices, including standards for
481 measuring timeliness of services, outcomes of early intervention
482 services, and administrative efficiency. Performance standards
483 and metrics shall be developed in consultation with local
484 program offices.

485 (m) Provide technical assistance to the local program
486 offices.

487 (3) ELIGIBILITY.—The department shall apply the following
488 eligibility criteria if specific funding is provided, and the
489 associated applicable eligibility criteria are identified, in
490 the General Appropriations Act:

491 (a) Infants and toddlers are eligible for an evaluation to
492 determine the presence of a developmental disability or the risk
493 of a developmental delay based on a physical or medical
494 condition.

495 (b) Infants and toddlers determined to have a developmental
496 delay based on informed clinical opinion and an evaluation using

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497 a standard evaluation instrument which results in a score that
498 is 1.5 standard deviations from the mean in two or more of the
499 following domains: physical, cognitive, communication, social or
500 emotional, and adaptive.

501 (c) Infants and toddlers determined to have a developmental
502 delay based on informed clinical opinion and an evaluation using
503 a standard evaluation instrument which results in a score that
504 is 2.0 standard deviations from the mean in one of the following
505 domains: physical, cognitive, communication, social or
506 emotional, and adaptive.

507 (d) Infants and toddlers determined to have a developmental
508 delay based on informed clinical opinion and an evaluation using
509 a standard evaluation instrument which results in a score that
510 is 1.5 standard deviations from the mean in one or more of the
511 following domains: physical, cognitive, communication, social or
512 emotional, and adaptive.

513 (e) Infants and toddlers determined to have a developmental
514 delay based on informed clinical opinion.

515 (f) Infants and toddlers at risk of developmental delay
516 based on an established condition known to result in
517 developmental delay, or a physical or mental condition known to
518 create a risk of developmental delay.

519 (4) DUTIES OF THE LOCAL PROGRAM OFFICES.—A local program
520 office shall:

521 (a) Evaluate a child to determine eligibility within 45
522 calendar days after the child is referred to the program.

523 (b) Notify the parent or legal guardian of his or her
524 child's eligibility status initially and at least annually
525 thereafter. If a child is determined not to be eligible, the

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526 local program office must provide the parent or legal guardian
527 with written information on the right to an appeal and the
528 process for making such an appeal.

529 (c) Secure and maintain interagency agreements or contracts
530 with local school districts in a local service area.

531 (d) Provide services directly or procure services from
532 health care providers that meet or exceed the minimum
533 qualifications established for service providers. The local
534 program office must become a Medicaid provider if it provides
535 services directly.

536 (e) Provide directly or procure services that are, to the
537 extent possible, delivered in a child's natural environment,
538 such as in the child's home or community setting. The inability
539 to provide services in the natural environment is not a
540 sufficient reason to deny services.

541 (f) Develop an individualized family support plan for each
542 child served. The plan must:

543 1. Be completed within 45 calendar days after the child is
544 referred to the program;

545 2. Be developed in conjunction with the child's parent or
546 legal guardian who provides written consent for the services
547 included in the plan;

548 3. Be reviewed at least every 6 months with the parent or
549 legal guardian and updated if needed; and

550 4. Include steps to transition to school or other future
551 services by the child's third birthday.

552 (g) Assess the progress of the child and his or her family
553 in meeting the goals of the individualized family support plan.

554 (h) For each service required by the individualized family

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555 support plan, refer the child to an appropriate service provider
556 or work with Medicaid managed care organizations or private
557 insurers to secure the needed services.

558 (i) Provide service coordination, including contacting the
559 appropriate service provider to determine whether the provider
560 can timely deliver the service, providing the parent or legal
561 guardian with the name and contact information of the service
562 provider and the date and location of the service of any
563 appointment made on behalf of the child, and contacting the
564 parent or legal guardian after the service is provided to ensure
565 that the service is timely delivered and to determine whether
566 the family requests additional services.

567 (j) Negotiate and maintain agreements with Medicaid
568 providers and Medicaid managed care organizations in its area.

569 1. With the parent's or legal guardian's permission, the
570 services in the child's approved individualized family support
571 plan shall be communicated to the Medicaid managed care
572 organization. Services that cannot be funded by Medicaid must be
573 specifically identified and explained to the family.

574 2. The agreement between the local program office and
575 Medicaid managed care organizations must establish methods of
576 communication and procedures for the timely approval of services
577 covered by Medicaid.

578 (k) Develop agreements and arrangements with private
579 insurers in order to coordinate benefits and services for any
580 mutual enrollee.

581 1. The child's approved individualized family support plan
582 may be communicated to the child's insurer with the parent's or
583 legal guardian's permission.

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584 2. The local program office and private insurers shall
585 establish methods of communication and procedures for the timely
586 approval of services covered by the child's insurer, if
587 appropriate and approved by the child's parent or legal
588 guardian.

589 (1) Provide to the department data necessary for an
590 evaluation of the local program office performance.

591 (5) ACCOUNTABILITY REPORTING.—By December 1 of each year,
592 the department shall prepare and submit a report that assesses
593 the performance of the Early Steps Program to the Governor, the
594 President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of
595 Representatives, and the Florida Interagency Coordinating
596 Council for Infants and Toddlers. The department must address
597 the performance standards in subsection (1) and report actual
598 performance compared to the standards for the prior fiscal year.
599 The data used to compile the report must be submitted by each
600 local program office in the state. The department shall report
601 on all of the following measures:

602 (a) Number and percentage of infants and toddlers served
603 with an individualized family support plan.

604 (b) Number and percentage of infants and toddlers
605 demonstrating improved social or emotional skills after the
606 program.

607 (c) Number and percentage of infants and toddlers
608 demonstrating improved use of knowledge and cognitive skills
609 after the program.

610 (d) Number and percentage of families reporting positive
611 outcomes in their infant's and toddler's development as a result
612 of early intervention services.

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613 (e) Progress toward meeting the goals of individualized
614 family support plans.

615 (f) Any additional measures established by the department.

616 (6) STATE INTERAGENCY COORDINATING COUNCIL.—The Florida
617 Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers shall
618 serve as the state interagency coordinating council required by
619 34 C.F.R. s. 303.600. The council shall be housed for
620 administrative purposes in the department, and the department
621 shall provide administrative support to the council.

622 (7) TRANSITION TO EDUCATION.—

623 (a) At least 90 days before a child reaches 3 years of age,
624 the local program office shall initiate transition planning to
625 ensure the child's successful transition from the Early Steps
626 Program to a school district program for children with
627 disabilities or to another program as part of an individual
628 family support plan.

629 (b) At least 90 days before a child reaches 3 years of age,
630 the local program office shall:

631 1. Notify the local school district in which the child
632 resides and the Department of Education that the child may be
633 eligible for special education or related services as determined
634 by the local school district pursuant to ss. 1003.21 and
635 1003.57, unless the child's parent or legal guardian has opted
636 out of such notification; and

637 2. Upon approval by the child's parent or legal guardian,
638 convene a transition conference that includes participation of a
639 local school district representative and the parent or legal
640 guardian to discuss options for and availability of services.

641 (c) The local school district shall evaluate and determine

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642 a child's eligibility to receive special education or related
643 services pursuant to part B of the federal Individuals with
644 Disabilities Education Act and ss. 1003.21 and 1003.57.

645 (d) The local program office, in conjunction with the local
646 school district, shall modify a child's individual family
647 support plan or, if applicable, the local school district shall
648 develop an individual education plan for the child pursuant to
649 ss. 1003.57, 1003.571, and 1003.5715, which identifies special
650 education or related services that the child will receive and
651 the providers or agencies that will provide such services.

652 (e) If a child is determined to be ineligible for school
653 district program services, the local program office and the
654 local school district shall provide the child's parent or legal
655 guardian with written information on other available services or
656 community resources.

657 (f) The local program office shall negotiate and maintain
658 an interagency agreement with each local school district in its
659 service area pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities
660 Education Act, 20 U.S.C. s. 1435(a)(10)(F). Each interagency
661 agreement must be reviewed at least annually and updated upon
662 review, if needed.

663 Section 10. Subsection (15) of section 402.302, Florida
664 Statutes, is amended to read:

665 402.302 Definitions.—As used in this chapter, the term:

666 (15) "Screening" means the act of assessing the background
667 of child care personnel, in accordance with state and federal
668 law, and volunteers and includes, but is not limited to:⁷

669 (a) Employment history checks, including documented
670 attempts to contact each employer that employed the applicant

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671 within the preceding 5 years and documentation of the findings.

672 (b) A search of the criminal history records, sexual
673 predator and sexual offender registry, and child abuse and
674 neglect registry of any state in which the applicant resided
675 during the preceding 5 years.

676

677 An applicant must submit a full set of fingerprints to the
678 department or to a vendor, entity, or agency authorized by s.
679 943.053(13). The department, vendor, entity, or agency shall
680 forward the fingerprints to ~~local criminal records checks~~
681 ~~through local law enforcement agencies, fingerprinting for all~~
682 ~~purposes and checks in this subsection, statewide criminal~~
683 ~~records checks through the Department of Law Enforcement for~~
684 ~~state processing, and the Department of Law Enforcement shall~~
685 ~~forward the fingerprints to federal criminal records checks~~
686 ~~through~~ the Federal Bureau of Investigation for national
687 processing. Fingerprint submission must comply with s. 435.12.

688 Section 11. Section 402.3057, Florida Statutes, is
689 repealed.

690 Section 12. Subsection (3) of section 402.306, Florida
691 Statutes, is amended to read:

692 402.306 Designation of licensing agency; dissemination by
693 the department and local licensing agency of information on
694 child care.—

695 (3) The department and local licensing agencies, or the
696 designees thereof, shall be responsible for coordination and
697 dissemination of information on child care to the community and
698 shall make available through electronic means ~~upon request~~ all
699 licensing standards and procedures, health and safety standards

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700 for school readiness providers, monitoring and inspection
701 reports, and ~~in addition to~~ the names and addresses of licensed
702 child care facilities, school readiness program providers, and,
703 where applicable pursuant to s. 402.313, licensed or registered
704 family day care homes. This information shall also include the
705 number of deaths, serious injuries, and instances of
706 substantiated child abuse that have occurred in child care
707 settings each year; research and best practices in child
708 development; and resources regarding social-emotional
709 development, parent and family engagement, healthy eating, and
710 physical activity.

711 Section 13. Section 402.311, Florida Statutes, is amended
712 to read:

713 402.311 Inspection.—

714 (1) A licensed child care facility shall accord to the
715 department or the local licensing agency, whichever is
716 applicable, the privilege of inspection, including access to
717 facilities and personnel and to those records required in s.
718 402.305, at reasonable times during regular business hours, to
719 ensure compliance with ~~the provisions of~~ ss. 402.301-402.319.
720 The right of entry and inspection shall also extend to any
721 premises which the department or local licensing agency has
722 reason to believe are being operated or maintained as a child
723 care facility without a license, but no such entry or inspection
724 of any premises shall be made without the permission of the
725 person in charge thereof unless a warrant is first obtained from
726 the circuit court authorizing such entry or inspection ~~same~~. Any
727 application for a license or renewal made pursuant to this act
728 or the advertisement to the public for the provision of child

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729 care as defined in s. 402.302 shall constitute permission for
730 any entry or inspection of the premises for which the license is
731 sought in order to facilitate verification of the information
732 submitted on or in connection with the application. In the event
733 a licensed facility refuses permission for entry or inspection
734 to the department or local licensing agency, a warrant shall be
735 obtained from the circuit court authorizing entry or inspection
736 before ~~same~~ ~~prior to~~ such entry or inspection. The department or
737 local licensing agency may institute disciplinary proceedings
738 pursuant to s. 402.310~~7~~ for such refusal.

739 (2) A school readiness program provider shall accord to the
740 department or the local licensing agency, whichever is
741 applicable, the privilege of inspection, including access to
742 facilities, personnel, and records, to verify compliance with
743 the requirements of s. 1002.88. Entry, inspection, and issuance
744 of an inspection report by the department or the local licensing
745 agency to verify compliance with the requirements of s. 1002.88
746 is an exercise of a discretionary power to enforce compliance
747 with the laws duly enacted by a governmental body.

748 (3) The department's issuance, transmittal, or publication
749 of an inspection report resulting from an inspection under this
750 section does not constitute agency action subject to chapter
751 120.

752 Section 14. Subsection (3) is added to section 402.319,
753 Florida Statutes, to read:

754 402.319 Penalties.—

755 (3) Each child care facility, family day care home, and
756 large family child care home shall annually submit an affidavit
757 of compliance with s. 39.201.

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758 Section 15. Paragraph (c) is added to subsection (4) of
759 section 435.07, Florida Statutes, to read:

760 435.07 Exemptions from disqualification.—Unless otherwise
761 provided by law, the provisions of this section apply to
762 exemptions from disqualification for disqualifying offenses
763 revealed pursuant to background screenings required under this
764 chapter, regardless of whether those disqualifying offenses are
765 listed in this chapter or other laws.

766 (4)

767 (c) Disqualification from employment under this chapter may
768 not be removed from, and an exemption may not be granted to, any
769 current or prospective child care personnel of a provider
770 receiving school readiness funding under part VI of chapter
771 1002, and such a person is disqualified from employment as child
772 care personnel with such providers, regardless of any prior
773 exemptions from disqualification, if the person has been
774 registered as a sex offender as described in 42 U.S.C. s.
775 9858f(c) (1) (C) or has been arrested for and is awaiting final
776 disposition of, has been convicted or found guilty of, or
777 entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to, regardless of
778 adjudication, or has been adjudicated delinquent and the record
779 has not been sealed or expunged for, any offense prohibited
780 under any of the following provisions of state law or a similar
781 law of another jurisdiction:

782 1. A felony offense prohibited under any of the following
783 statutes:

784 a. Chapter 741, relating to domestic violence.

785 b. Section 782.04, relating to murder.

786 c. Section 782.07, relating to manslaughter, aggravated

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787 manslaughter of an elderly person or disabled adult, aggravated
788 manslaughter of a child, or aggravated manslaughter of an
789 officer, a firefighter, an emergency medical technician, or a
790 paramedic.

791 d. Section 784.021, relating to aggravated assault.
792 e. Section 784.045, relating to aggravated battery.
793 f. Section 787.01, relating to kidnapping.
794 g. Section 787.025, relating to luring or enticing a child.
795 h. Section 787.04(2), relating to leading, taking,
796 enticing, or removing a minor beyond the state limits, or
797 concealing the location of a minor, with criminal intent pending
798 custody proceedings.

799 i. Section 787.04(3), relating to leading, taking,
800 enticing, or removing a minor beyond the state limits, or
801 concealing the location of a minor, with criminal intent pending
802 dependency proceedings or proceedings concerning alleged abuse
803 or neglect of a minor.

804 j. Section 794.011, relating to sexual battery.
805 k. Former s. 794.041, relating to sexual activity with or
806 solicitation of a child by a person in familial or custodial
807 authority.

808 l. Section 794.05, relating to unlawful sexual activity
809 with certain minors.

810 m. Section 794.08, relating to female genital mutilation.
811 n. Section 806.01, relating to arson.
812 o. Section 826.04, relating to incest.
813 p. Section 827.03, relating to child abuse, aggravated
814 child abuse, or neglect of a child.

815 q. Section 827.04, relating to contributing to the

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816 delinquency or dependency of a child.

817 r. Section 827.071, relating to sexual performance by a
818 child.

819 s. Chapter 847, relating to child pornography.

820 t. Section 985.701, relating to sexual misconduct in
821 juvenile justice programs.

822 2. A misdemeanor offense prohibited under any of the
823 following statutes:

824 a. Section 784.03, relating to battery, if the victim of
825 the offense was a minor.

826 b. Section 787.025, relating to luring or enticing a child.

827 c. Chapter 847, relating to child pornography.

828 3. A criminal act committed in another state or under
829 federal law which, if committed in this state, constitutes an
830 offense prohibited under any statute listed in subparagraph 1.
831 or subparagraph 2.

832 Section 16. Paragraph (i) of subsection (2) of section
833 1002.82, Florida Statutes, is amended, and paragraphs (s)
834 through (x) are added to that subsection, to read:

835 1002.82 Office of Early Learning; powers and duties.—

836 (2) The office shall:

837 (i) Enter into a memorandum of understanding with local
838 licensing agencies and ~~Develop, in coordination with~~ the Child
839 Care Services Program Office of the Department of Children and
840 Families for inspections of school readiness program providers
841 to monitor and verify compliance with s. 1002.88 and the health
842 and safety checklist adopted by the office. The provider
843 contract of a school readiness program provider that refuses
844 permission for entry or inspection shall be terminated. The, and

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845 ~~adopt a health and safety checklist may to be completed by~~
846 ~~license-exempt providers that does not exceed the requirements~~
847 ~~of s. 402.305 and the Child Care and Development Fund pursuant~~
848 ~~to 45 C.F.R. part 98.~~

849 (s) Develop and implement strategies to increase the supply
850 and improve the quality of child care services for infants and
851 toddlers, children with disabilities, children who receive care
852 during nontraditional hours, children in underserved areas, and
853 children in areas that have significant concentrations of
854 poverty and unemployment.

855 (t) Establish preservice and inservice training
856 requirements that address, at a minimum, school readiness child
857 development standards, health and safety requirements, and
858 social-emotional behavior intervention models, which may include
859 positive behavior intervention and support models.

860 (u) Establish standards for emergency preparedness plans
861 for school readiness program providers.

862 (v) Establish group sizes.

863 (w) Establish staff-to-children ratios that do not exceed
864 the requirements of s. 402.302(8) or (11) or s. 402.305(4), as
865 applicable, for school readiness program providers.

866 (x) Establish eligibility criteria, including limitations
867 based on income and family assets, in accordance with s. 1002.87
868 and federal law.

869 Section 17. Subsections (7) and (8) of section 1002.84,
870 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

871 1002.84 Early learning coalitions; school readiness powers
872 and duties.—Each early learning coalition shall:

873 (7) Determine child eligibility pursuant to s. 1002.87 and

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874 provider eligibility pursuant to s. 1002.88. ~~At a minimum,~~ Child
875 eligibility must be redetermined annually. ~~Redetermination must~~
876 ~~also be conducted twice per year for an additional 50 percent of~~
877 ~~a coalition's enrollment through a statistically valid random~~
878 ~~sampling.~~ A coalition must document the reason ~~why~~ a child is no
879 longer eligible for the school readiness program according to
880 the standard codes prescribed by the office.

881 (8) Establish a parent sliding fee scale that provides for
882 ~~requires~~ a parent copayment that is not a barrier to families
883 receiving to participate in the school readiness program
884 services. Providers are required to collect the parent's
885 copayment. A coalition may, on a case-by-case basis, waive the
886 copayment for an at-risk child or temporarily waive the
887 copayment for a child whose family's income is at or below the
888 federal poverty level and whose family experiences a natural
889 disaster or an event that limits the parent's ability to pay,
890 such as incarceration, placement in residential treatment, or
891 becoming homeless, or an emergency situation such as a household
892 fire or burglary, or while the parent is participating in
893 parenting classes. A parent may not transfer school readiness
894 program services to another school readiness program provider
895 until the parent has submitted documentation from the current
896 school readiness program provider to the early learning
897 coalition stating that the parent has satisfactorily fulfilled
898 the copayment obligation.

899 Section 18. Subsections (1), (4), (5), and (6) of section
900 1002.87, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

901 1002.87 School readiness program; eligibility and
902 enrollment.-

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903 (1) ~~Effective August 1, 2013, or upon reevaluation of~~
904 ~~eligibility for children currently served, whichever is later,~~
905 Each early learning coalition shall give priority for
906 participation in the school readiness program as follows:

907 (a) Priority shall be given first to a child younger than
908 13 years of age from a family that includes a parent who is
909 receiving temporary cash assistance under chapter 414 and
910 subject to the federal work requirements.

911 (b) Priority shall be given next to an at-risk child
912 younger than 9 years of age.

913 (c) Priority shall be given next to a child from birth to
914 the beginning of the school year for which the child is eligible
915 for admission to kindergarten in a public school under s.
916 1003.21(1)(a)2. who is from a working family that is
917 economically disadvantaged, and may include such child's
918 eligible siblings, beginning with the school year in which the
919 sibling is eligible for admission to kindergarten in a public
920 school under s. 1003.21(1)(a)2. until the beginning of the
921 school year in which the sibling is eligible to begin 6th grade,
922 provided that the first priority for funding an eligible sibling
923 is local revenues available to the coalition for funding direct
924 services. ~~However, a child eligible under this paragraph ceases~~
925 ~~to be eligible if his or her family income exceeds 200 percent~~
926 ~~of the federal poverty level.~~

927 (d) Priority shall be given next to a child of a parent who
928 transitions from the work program into employment as described
929 in s. 445.032 from birth to the beginning of the school year for
930 which the child is eligible for admission to kindergarten in a
931 public school under s. 1003.21(1)(a)2.

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932 (e) Priority shall be given next to an at-risk child who is
933 at least 9 years of age but younger than 13 years of age. An at-
934 risk child whose sibling is enrolled in the school readiness
935 program within an eligibility priority category listed in
936 paragraphs (a)-(c) shall be given priority over other children
937 who are eligible under this paragraph.

938 (f) Priority shall be given next to a child who is younger
939 than 13 years of age from a working family that is economically
940 disadvantaged. A child who is eligible under this paragraph
941 whose sibling is enrolled in the school readiness program under
942 paragraph (c) shall be given priority over other children who
943 are eligible under this paragraph. ~~However, a child eligible~~
944 ~~under this paragraph ceases to be eligible if his or her family~~
945 ~~income exceeds 200 percent of the federal poverty level.~~

946 (g) Priority shall be given next to a child of a parent who
947 transitions from the work program into employment as described
948 in s. 445.032 who is younger than 13 years of age.

949 (h) Priority shall be given next to a child who has special
950 needs, has been determined eligible as a student with a
951 disability, has a current individual education plan with a
952 Florida school district, and is not younger than 3 years of age.
953 A special needs child eligible under this paragraph remains
954 eligible until the child is eligible for admission to
955 kindergarten in a public school under s. 1003.21(1)(a)2.

956 (i) Notwithstanding paragraphs (a)-(d), priority shall be
957 given last to a child who otherwise meets one of the eligibility
958 criteria in paragraphs (a)-(d) but who is also enrolled
959 concurrently in the federal Head Start Program and the Voluntary
960 Prekindergarten Education Program.

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961 (4) The parent of a child enrolled in the school readiness
962 program must notify the coalition or its designee within 10 days
963 after any change in employment status, income, or family size or
964 failure to maintain attendance at a job training or educational
965 program in accordance with program requirements. ~~Upon~~
966 ~~notification by the parent, the child's eligibility must be~~
967 ~~reevaluated.~~

968 (5) A child whose eligibility priority category requires
969 the child to be from a working family ceases to be eligible for
970 the school readiness program if a parent with whom the child
971 resides does not reestablish employment or resume attendance at
972 a job training or educational program within 90 60 days after
973 becoming unemployed or ceasing to attend a job training or
974 educational program.

975 (6) Eligibility for each child must be reevaluated
976 annually. Upon reevaluation, a child may not continue to receive
977 school readiness program services if he or she has ceased to be
978 eligible under this section. A child who is ineligible due to a
979 parent's job loss or cessation of education or job training
980 shall continue to receive school readiness program services for
981 at least 3 months to enable the parent to obtain employment.

982 Section 19. Paragraphs (c), (d), and (e) of subsection (1)
983 of section 1002.88, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

984 1002.88 School readiness program provider standards;
985 eligibility to deliver the school readiness program.—

986 (1) To be eligible to deliver the school readiness program,
987 a school readiness program provider must:

988 (c) Provide basic health and safety of its premises and
989 facilities and compliance with requirements for age-appropriate

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990 immunizations of children enrolled in the school readiness
991 program.

992 1. For a provider that is licensed child care facility, a
993 large family child care home, or a licensed family day care
994 home, compliance with s. 402.305, s. 402.3131, or s. 402.313 and
995 this subsection, as verified pursuant to s. 402.311, satisfies
996 this requirement.

997 2. For a provider that is a registered family day care home
998 or is not subject to licensure or registration by the Department
999 of Children and Families, compliance with this subsection, as
1000 verified pursuant to s. 402.311, satisfies this requirement.
1001 Upon verification pursuant to s. 402.311, the provider ~~For a~~
1002 ~~public or nonpublic school, compliance with s. 402.3025 or s.~~
1003 ~~1003.22 satisfies this requirement. A faith-based child care~~
1004 ~~provider, an informal child care provider, or a nonpublic~~
1005 ~~school, exempt from licensure under s. 402.316 or s. 402.3025,~~
1006 shall annually post ~~complete~~ the health and safety checklist
1007 adopted by the office, ~~post the checklist~~ prominently on its
1008 premises in plain sight for visitors and parents, and shall
1009 annually submit the checklist ~~it annually~~ to its local early
1010 learning coalition.

1011 (d) Provide an appropriate group size and staff-to-children
1012 ratio, ~~pursuant to s. 402.305(4) or s. 402.302(8) or (11), as~~
1013 ~~applicable, and as verified pursuant to s. 402.311.~~

1014 (e) Employ child care personnel, as defined in s.
1015 402.302(3), who have satisfied the screening requirements of
1016 chapter 402 and fulfilled the training requirements of the
1017 office ~~Provide a healthy and safe environment pursuant to s.~~
1018 ~~402.305(5), (6), and (7), as applicable, and as verified~~

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1019 ~~pursuant to s. 402.311.~~

1020 Section 20. Subsections (6) and (7) of section 1002.89,
1021 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1022 1002.89 School readiness program; funding.—

1023 (6) Costs shall be kept to the minimum necessary for the
1024 efficient and effective administration of the school readiness
1025 program with the highest priority of expenditure being direct
1026 services for eligible children. However, no more than 5 percent
1027 of the funds described in subsection (5) may be used for
1028 administrative costs and no more than 22 percent of the funds
1029 described in subsection (5) may be used in any fiscal year for
1030 any combination of administrative costs, quality activities, and
1031 nondirect services as follows:

1032 (a) Administrative costs as described in 45 C.F.R. s.
1033 98.52, which shall include monitoring providers using the
1034 standard methodology adopted under s. 1002.82 to improve
1035 compliance with state and federal regulations and law pursuant
1036 to the requirements of the statewide provider contract adopted
1037 under s. 1002.82(2)(m).

1038 (b) Activities to improve the quality of child care as
1039 described in 45 C.F.R. s. 98.51, which shall be limited to the
1040 following:

1041 1. Developing, establishing, expanding, operating, and
1042 coordinating resource and referral programs specifically related
1043 to the provision of comprehensive consumer education to parents
1044 and the public to promote informed child care choices specified
1045 in 45 C.F.R. s. 98.33 ~~regarding participation in the school~~
1046 ~~readiness program and parental choice.~~

1047 2. Awarding grants and providing financial support to

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1048 school readiness program providers and their staff to assist
1049 them in meeting applicable state requirements for child care
1050 performance standards, implementing developmentally appropriate
1051 curricula and related classroom resources that support
1052 curricula, providing literacy supports, and providing continued
1053 professional development and training. Any grants awarded
1054 pursuant to this subparagraph shall comply with ~~the requirements~~
1055 ~~of~~ ss. 215.971 and 287.058.

1056 3. Providing training, and technical assistance, and
1057 financial support to ~~for~~ school readiness program providers,
1058 staff, and parents on standards, child screenings, child
1059 assessments, child development research and best practices,
1060 developmentally appropriate curricula, character development,
1061 teacher-child interactions, age-appropriate discipline
1062 practices, health and safety, nutrition, first aid,
1063 cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the recognition of communicable
1064 diseases, and child abuse detection, and prevention, and
1065 reporting.

1066 4. Providing, from among the funds provided for the
1067 activities described in subparagraphs 1.-3., adequate funding
1068 for infants and toddlers as necessary to meet federal
1069 requirements related to expenditures for quality activities for
1070 infant and toddler care.

1071 5. Improving the monitoring of compliance with, and
1072 enforcement of, applicable state and local requirements as
1073 described in and limited by 45 C.F.R. s. 98.40.

1074 6. Responding to Warm-Line requests by providers and
1075 parents ~~related to school readiness program children,~~ including
1076 providing developmental and health screenings to school

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1077 readiness program children.

1078 (c) Nondirect services as described in applicable Office of
1079 Management and Budget instructions are those services not
1080 defined as administrative, direct, or quality services that are
1081 required to administer the school readiness program. Such
1082 services include, but are not limited to:

1083 1. Assisting families to complete the required application
1084 and eligibility documentation.

1085 2. Determining child and family eligibility.

1086 3. Recruiting eligible child care providers.

1087 4. Processing and tracking attendance records.

1088 5. Developing and maintaining a statewide child care
1089 information system.

1090

1091 As used in this paragraph, the term "nondirect services" does
1092 not include payments to school readiness program providers for
1093 direct services provided to children who are eligible under s.
1094 1002.87, administrative costs as described in paragraph (a), or
1095 quality activities as described in paragraph (b).

1096 (7) Funds appropriated for the school readiness program may
1097 not be expended for the purchase or improvement of land; for the
1098 purchase, construction, or permanent improvement of any building
1099 or facility; or for the purchase of buses. However, funds may be
1100 expended for minor remodeling and upgrading of child care
1101 facilities which is necessary for the administration of the
1102 program and to ensure that providers meet state and local child
1103 care standards, including applicable health and safety
1104 requirements.

1105 Section 21. Paragraph (c) of subsection (2) of section

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1106 402.3025, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1107 402.3025 Public and nonpublic schools.—For the purposes of
1108 ss. 402.301-402.319, the following shall apply:

1109 (2) NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS.—

1110 (c) Programs for children who are at least 3 years of age,
1111 but under 5 years of age, shall not be deemed to be child care
1112 and shall not be subject to the provisions of ss. 402.301-
1113 402.319 relating to child care facilities, provided the programs
1114 in the schools are operated and staffed directly by the schools,
1115 provided a majority of the children enrolled in the schools are
1116 5 years of age or older, and provided there is compliance with
1117 the screening requirements for personnel pursuant to s. 402.305
1118 or ~~s. 402.3057~~. A nonpublic school may designate certain
1119 programs as child care, in which case these programs shall be
1120 subject to the provisions of ss. 402.301-402.319.

1121 Section 22. Subsections (1) and (2) of section 413.092,
1122 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1123 413.092 Blind Babies Program.—

1124 (1) The Blind Babies Program is created within the Division
1125 of Blind Services of the Department of Education to provide
1126 community-based early-intervention education to children from
1127 birth through 5 years of age who are blind or visually impaired,
1128 and to their parents, families, and caregivers, through
1129 community-based provider organizations. The division shall
1130 enlist parents, ophthalmologists, pediatricians, schools, the
1131 Early Steps Program ~~Infant and Toddlers Early Intervention~~
1132 ~~Programs~~, and therapists to help identify and enroll blind and
1133 visually impaired children, as well as their parents, families,
1134 and caregivers, in these educational programs.

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1135 (2) The program is not an entitlement but shall promote
1136 early development with a special emphasis on vision skills to
1137 minimize developmental delays. The education shall lay the
1138 groundwork for future learning by helping a child progress
1139 through normal developmental stages. It shall teach children to
1140 discover and make the best use of their skills for future
1141 success in school. It shall seek to ensure that visually
1142 impaired and blind children enter school as ready to learn as
1143 their sighted classmates. The program shall seek to link these
1144 children, and their parents, families, and caregivers, to other
1145 available services, training, education, and employment programs
1146 that could assist these families in the future. This linkage may
1147 include referrals to the school districts and the Early Steps
1148 ~~Infants and Toddlers Early Intervention~~ Program for assessments
1149 to identify any additional services needed which are not
1150 provided by the Blind Babies Program. The division shall develop
1151 a formula for eligibility based on financial means and may
1152 create a means-based matrix to set a copayment fee for families
1153 having sufficient financial means.

1154 Section 23. Subsection (1) of section 1003.575, Florida
1155 Statutes, is amended to read:

1156 1003.575 Assistive technology devices; findings;
1157 interagency agreements.—Accessibility, utilization, and
1158 coordination of appropriate assistive technology devices and
1159 services are essential as a young person with disabilities moves
1160 from early intervention to preschool, from preschool to school,
1161 from one school to another, and from school to employment or
1162 independent living. If an individual education plan team makes a
1163 recommendation in accordance with State Board of Education rule

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1164 for a student with a disability, as defined in s. 1003.01(3), to
1165 receive an assistive technology assessment, that assessment must
1166 be completed within 60 school days after the team's
1167 recommendation. To ensure that an assistive technology device
1168 issued to a young person as part of his or her individualized
1169 family support plan, individual support plan, or an individual
1170 education plan remains with the individual through such
1171 transitions, the following agencies shall enter into interagency
1172 agreements, as appropriate, to ensure the transaction of
1173 assistive technology devices:

1174 (1) The Early Steps ~~Florida Infants and Toddlers Early~~
1175 ~~Intervention~~ Program in the Division of Children's Medical
1176 Services of the Department of Health.

1177
1178 Interagency agreements entered into pursuant to this section
1179 shall provide a framework for ensuring that young persons with
1180 disabilities and their families, educators, and employers are
1181 informed about the utilization and coordination of assistive
1182 technology devices and services that may assist in meeting
1183 transition needs, and shall establish a mechanism by which a
1184 young person or his or her parent may request that an assistive
1185 technology device remain with the young person as he or she
1186 moves through the continuum from home to school to postschool.

1187 Section 24. This act shall take effect July 1, 2016.