

1                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to child care and early learning  
3           providers; amending s. 170.201, F.S.; providing an  
4           exemption for public and private preschools from  
5           specified special assessments levied by a  
6           municipality; defining the term "preschool"; amending  
7           s. 220.19, F.S.; defining the term "eligible child  
8           care facility"; authorizing specified tax credits for  
9           corporations establishing and operating, or making  
10          payments to, eligible child care facilities for their  
11          employees under certain conditions; specifying  
12          requirements for such credits; providing the maximum  
13          annual amount for all tax credits; requiring the  
14          Department of Revenue to approve applications for such  
15          credits before they are claimed; providing that  
16          certain corporations may be authorized to claim such  
17          credits on consolidated return basis; requiring  
18          eligible child care facilities to meet certain  
19          requirements to receive such credits; authorizing two  
20          or more corporations to jointly establish and operate  
21          an eligible child care facility; providing  
22          requirements for such joint establishment and  
23          operation; requiring payments to certain eligible  
24          child care facilities to meet specified conditions;  
25          providing application requirements; authorizing the

26 department to adopt rules; requiring certain decisions  
27 to be in writing and include specified information;  
28 requiring prior written verification by specified  
29 entity relating to licensing; amending s. 402.305,  
30 F.S.; revising licensing standards for all licensed  
31 child care facilities and minimum standards and  
32 training requirements for child care personnel;  
33 requiring the Department of Children and Families to  
34 conduct specified screening of child care personnel  
35 within a specified timeframe and issue provisional  
36 approval of such personnel under certain conditions;  
37 providing an exception; deleting a requirement that  
38 the department evaluate certain training requirements  
39 and testing procedures; prohibiting minimum standards  
40 from requiring more than two staff members with  
41 specified training to be present at all times when  
42 children are present; deleting provisions relating to  
43 educating parents about the importance of specified  
44 immunizations, a program to assist children in  
45 preventing and avoiding physical and mental abuse, and  
46 specialized child care facilities for the care of  
47 mildly ill children; amending s. 402.3115, F.S.;  
48 requiring the department and certain local  
49 governmental agencies to develop and implement a plan  
50 to eliminate duplicative and unnecessary inspections

51 of home providers; revising requirements for an  
52 abbreviated inspection plan for certain child care  
53 facilities; requiring the department to submit a  
54 report to the Governor and Legislature by a specified  
55 date; requiring the report to contain certain  
56 information and recommendations; requiring the  
57 department to adopt rules and revise policies based on  
58 such recommendations; requiring the department to  
59 revise a specified plan; authorizing the department to  
60 contract for the production of the report; amending s.  
61 402.316, F.S.; authorizing certain child care  
62 facilities to operate without a license; amending s.  
63 627.70161, F.S.; providing that specified insurance  
64 provisions apply to large family child care homes;  
65 amending s. 1002.55, F.S.; revising requirements for  
66 public school and private prekindergarten providers;  
67 amending s. 1002.67, F.S.; prohibiting a specified  
68 curriculum from including a certain program and  
69 electronic devices; providing an exception; amending  
70 s. 1002.68, F.S.; requiring the program assessment to  
71 be conducted in accordance with specified  
72 requirements; amending s. 1002.82, F.S.; revising the  
73 powers and duties of the Department of Education for  
74 the administration of the Child Care and Development  
75 Block Grant Trust Fund; amending s. 1002.83, F.S.;

76 | revising the appointment of members of the early  
 77 | learning coalition; amending s. 1002.89, F.S.;  
 78 | providing for specified financial support to child  
 79 | care providers and staff to be included in the school  
 80 | readiness program costs; amending s. 1002.945, F.S.;  
 81 | revising requirements for a child care provider to  
 82 | obtain and maintain a designation as a Gold Seal  
 83 | Quality Care provider; amending s. 1002.95, F.S.;  
 84 | authorizing early learning coalitions to support a  
 85 | specified scholarship program; amending s. 1008.25,  
 86 | F.S.; requiring, rather than authorizing, certain  
 87 | students to be eligible to receive certain reading  
 88 | interventions before kindergarten without first being  
 89 | referred to the local school district; amending ss.  
 90 | 39.101, 1002.57, and 1002.59, F.S.; conforming cross-  
 91 | references; providing an effective date.

92 |  
 93 | Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:  
 94 |

95 | Section 1. Subsection (2) of section 170.201, Florida  
 96 | Statutes, is amended to read:

97 | 170.201 Special assessments.—

98 | (2) Property owned or occupied by a religious institution  
 99 | and used as a place of worship or education; by a public or  
 100 | private preschool, elementary school, middle school, or high

101 school; or by a governmentally financed, insured, or subsidized  
 102 housing facility that is used primarily for persons who are  
 103 elderly or disabled shall be exempt from any special assessment  
 104 levied by a municipality to fund any service if the municipality  
 105 so desires. As used in this subsection, the term "religious  
 106 institution" means any church, synagogue, or other established  
 107 physical place for worship at which nonprofit religious services  
 108 and activities are regularly conducted and carried on and the  
 109 term "governmentally financed, insured, or subsidized housing  
 110 facility" means a facility that is financed by a mortgage loan  
 111 made or insured by the United States Department of Housing and  
 112 Urban Development under s. 8, s. 202, s. 221(d) (3) or (4), s.  
 113 232, or s. 236 of the National Housing Act and is owned or  
 114 operated by an entity that qualifies as an exempt charitable  
 115 organization under s. 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.  
 116 For purposes of this subsection, the term "preschool" means any  
 117 child care facility licensed under s. 402.305 that serves  
 118 children under 5 years of age.

119 Section 2. Section 220.19, Florida Statutes, is amended to  
 120 read:

121 220.19 Child care tax credits.—

122 (1) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section, the term  
 123 "eligible child care facility" means a child care facility as  
 124 defined in s. 402.302 that:

125 (a) Is licensed under s. 402.305; or

126 (b) Is exempt from licensure under s. 402.316.

127 (2) AUTHORIZATION TO GRANT TAX CREDITS; LIMITATIONS.—

128 (a)1.a. A credit of 50 percent of the startup costs of an  
129 eligible child care facility operated by a corporation for its  
130 employees is allowed against any tax due under this chapter for  
131 a taxable year.

132 b. An additional credit against such tax is allowed for  
133 the operation of an eligible child care facility by a  
134 corporation for its employees, which credit is in the amount of  
135 \$300 per month for each child or grandchild of such employee  
136 enrolled in the facility if such employee is a caregiver, as  
137 defined in s. 39.01(9), to such child or grandchild.

138 2. A credit is allowed against any tax due under this  
139 chapter for a taxable year for a corporation making payments to  
140 an eligible child care facility if the payments are made in the  
141 name of and for the benefit of an employee employed by the  
142 corporation whose child or grandchild attends the child care.  
143 The credit shall be in an amount equal to 100 percent of the  
144 amount of such child care payments up to a maximum credit of  
145 \$3,600 per child per year. The corporation may make payments  
146 directly to the facility or contract with an early learning  
147 coalition to process payments.

148 (b) The maximum credit amount for all approved child care  
149 costs incurred by the corporation in a taxable year is based on  
150 the average number of employees employed by the corporation

151 during such year. For an employer that employed:

152 1. One to twenty-five employees, the maximum credit is

153 \$50,000.

154 2. Twenty-six to fifty employees, the maximum credit is

155 \$100,000.

156 3. Fifty-one to seventy-five employees, the maximum credit

157 is \$150,000.

158 4. Seventy-six to one hundred employees, the maximum

159 credit is \$200,000.

160 5. One hundred one to two hundred employees, the maximum

161 credit is \$300,000.

162 6. Two hundred one to five hundred employees, the maximum

163 credit is \$500,000.

164 7. More than five hundred employees, the maximum credit is

165 \$600,000.

166 (c) The total amount of tax credits that may be approved

167 under this section is \$2.5 million annually.

168 (d)-(1) If the credit granted under this section is not

169 fully used in any one year because of insufficient tax liability

170 on the part of the corporation, the unused amount may be carried

171 forward for a period not to exceed 5 years. The carryover credit

172 may be used in a subsequent year when the tax imposed by this

173 chapter for that year exceeds the credit for which the

174 corporation is eligible in that year under this section after

175 applying the other credits and unused carryovers in the order

176 provided by s. 220.02(8).

177 ~~(e)(2)~~ If a corporation receives a credit for child care  
 178 facility startup costs, and the facility fails to operate for at  
 179 least 5 years, a pro rata share of the credit must be repaid, in  
 180 accordance with the formula:

$$A = C \times (1 - (N/60))$$

182 Where:

183 ~~1.(a)~~ "A" is the amount in dollars of the required  
 184 repayment.

185 ~~2.(b)~~ "C" is the total credits taken by the corporation  
 186 for child care facility startup costs.

187 ~~3.(c)~~ "N" is the number of months the facility was in  
 188 operation.

189  
 190 This repayment requirement is inapplicable if the corporation  
 191 goes out of business or can demonstrate to the department that  
 192 its employees no longer want to have a child care facility.

193 (f) A taxpayer that files a consolidated return in this  
 194 state as a member of an affiliated group under s. 220.131(1) may  
 195 be allowed the credit on a consolidated return basis.

196 (3) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.—

197 (a) A corporation may only claim a credit for the creation  
 198 or operation of, or payments to, an eligible child care  
 199 facility.

200 (b) The services of an eligible child care facility for



201 which a corporation claims a credit under subparagraph (2)(a)1.  
202 must be available to all employees employed by the corporation,  
203 or must be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, and  
204 must be used by employees employed by the corporation.

205 (c) Two or more corporations may jointly establish and  
206 operate an eligible child care facility according to this  
207 section. If two or more corporations choose to jointly establish  
208 and operate an eligible child care facility, or cause a not-for-  
209 profit corporation to establish and operate an eligible child  
210 care facility, the corporations must file a joint application,  
211 or the not-for-profit corporation may file an application  
212 pursuant to subsection (4) setting forth the corporations'  
213 proposal. The participating corporations may proportion the  
214 credits in any manner they choose; however, participating  
215 corporations may not receive more than \$600,000 in credits for  
216 all approved child care costs incurred by the participating  
217 corporations in any one taxable year.

218 (d) Child care payments for which a corporation claims a  
219 credit under subparagraph (2)(a)2. may not exceed the amount  
220 charged by the eligible child care facility for other children  
221 of like age and ability of persons not employed by the  
222 corporation.

223 (4) APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS.—Beginning January 1, 2024, a  
224 corporation may submit an application to the department for the  
225 purposes of determining qualification for a credit under this

226 section to be applied to a taxable year beginning on or after  
227 January 1, 2024. The department must approve the application for  
228 the credit before the corporation is authorized to claim the  
229 credit on a return.

230 (a) The application must include:

231 1.a. For a credit under sub-subparagraph (2)(a)1.a., a  
232 proposal for establishing an eligible child care facility for  
233 use by its employees, the total number of employees' children  
234 and grandchildren expected to be enrolled, and the expected date  
235 operations will begin. A credit may not be claimed on a return  
236 until operations have begun.

237 b. For a credit under sub-subparagraph (2)(a)1.b., the  
238 total number of children and grandchildren for whom child care  
239 will be provided at the eligible child care facility, and the  
240 total number of months the facility is expected to operate  
241 during the taxable year in which the credit will be earned.

242 c. For a credit under sub-subparagraph (2)(a)2., the total  
243 number of children and grandchildren for whom child care  
244 payments will be paid and the estimated total annual amount of  
245 such payments.

246 2. The taxable year in which the credit is expected to be  
247 earned. A corporation may apply for a credit to be used for a  
248 prior taxable year at any time before the date on which the  
249 corporation is required to file a return for that year pursuant  
250 to s. 220.222.

251 3. Written verification by the Department of Children and  
 252 Families or local licensing agency that the facility is an  
 253 eligible child care facility. Such verification must be attached  
 254 to the application.

255 (b) The department shall approve tax credits on a first-  
 256 come, first-served basis.

257 (5) ADMINISTRATION.—

258 (a) The department may adopt rules to administer this  
 259 section, including rules for the approval or disapproval of  
 260 proposals submitted by corporations and rules to provide for  
 261 cooperative arrangements between for-profit and not-for-profit  
 262 corporations.

263 (b) The department's decision to approve or disapprove a  
 264 proposal must be in writing, and, if the proposal is approved,  
 265 the decision must state the maximum credit authorized for the  
 266 corporation.

267 (c) All applications approved under this section require  
 268 prior written verification by the Department of Children and  
 269 Families or local licensing agency that the facility is an  
 270 eligible child care facility.

271 Section 3. Paragraph (g) of subsection (2) of section  
 272 402.305, Florida Statutes, is redesignated as paragraph (f),  
 273 subsection (18) is renumbered as subsection (17), and paragraph  
 274 (a) of subsection (1), paragraphs (a) and (e) and present  
 275 paragraph (f) of subsection (2), paragraph (a) of subsection

276 (7), subsections (9) and (13), and present subsection (17) of  
 277 that section are amended, to read:

278 402.305 Licensing standards; child care facilities.—

279 (1) LICENSING STANDARDS.—The department shall establish  
 280 licensing standards that each licensed child care facility must  
 281 meet regardless of the origin or source of the fees used to  
 282 operate the facility or the type of children served by the  
 283 facility.

284 (a) The standards shall be designed to address the  
 285 ~~following areas:~~

286 1. ~~the health, sanitation, safety, and~~ sanitary adequate  
 287 physical conditions surroundings for all children served by in  
 288 child care facilities.

289 2. The health and nutrition of all children in child care.

290 3. The child development needs of all children in child  
 291 care.

292 (2) PERSONNEL.—Minimum standards for child care personnel  
 293 shall include minimum requirements as to:

294 (a) Good moral character based upon screening as defined  
 295 in s. 402.302(15). This screening shall be conducted as provided  
 296 in chapter 435, using the level 2 standards for screening  
 297 provided set forth in that chapter, and include employment  
 298 history checks, a search of criminal history records, sexual  
 299 predator and sexual offender registries, and child abuse and  
 300 neglect registry of any state in which the current or

301 prospective child care personnel resided during the preceding 5  
302 years. The department shall complete the screening and provide  
303 the results to the child care facility within 3 business days.  
304 If the department is unable to complete the screening within 3  
305 business days, the department shall issue the current or  
306 prospective child care personnel a 45-day-provisional-hire  
307 status while all required information is being requested and the  
308 department is awaiting results unless the department has reason  
309 to believe a disqualifying factor may exist. During the 45-day  
310 period, the current or prospective child care personnel must be  
311 under the direct supervision of a screened and trained staff  
312 member when in contact with children.

313 (e) Minimum training requirements for child care  
314 personnel.

315 1. Such minimum standards for training shall ensure that  
316 all child care personnel take an approved 40-clock-hour  
317 introductory course in child care, which course covers ~~at least~~  
318 the following topic areas:

319 a. State and local rules and regulations which govern  
320 child care.

321 b. Health, safety, and nutrition.

322 c. Identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect.

323 d. Child development, including typical and atypical  
324 language, cognitive, motor, social, and self-help skills  
325 development.

326 e. Observation of developmental behaviors, including using  
 327 a checklist or other similar observation tools and techniques to  
 328 determine the child's developmental age level.

329 f. Specialized areas, including computer technology for  
 330 professional and classroom use and early literacy and language  
 331 development of children from birth to 5 years of age, as  
 332 determined by the department, for owner-operators and child care  
 333 personnel of a child care facility.

334 g. Developmental disabilities, including autism spectrum  
 335 disorder and Down syndrome, and early identification, use of  
 336 available state and local resources, classroom integration, and  
 337 positive behavioral supports for children with developmental  
 338 disabilities.

339 h. Online training coursework, provided at no cost by the  
 340 department, to meet minimum training standards for child care  
 341 personnel.

342  
 343 Within 90 days after employment, child care personnel shall  
 344 begin training to meet the training requirements. Child care  
 345 personnel shall successfully complete such training within 1  
 346 year after the date on which the training began, as evidenced by  
 347 passage of an in-person or online ~~a~~ competency examination.  
 348 Successful completion of the 40-clock-hour introductory course  
 349 shall articulate into community college credit in early  
 350 childhood education, pursuant to ss. 1007.24 and 1007.25.

351 Exemption from all or a portion of the required training shall  
352 be granted to child care personnel based upon educational  
353 credentials or passage of competency examinations. Child care  
354 personnel possessing a 2-year degree or higher that includes 6  
355 college credit hours in early childhood development or child  
356 growth and development, or a child development associate  
357 credential or an equivalent state-approved child development  
358 associate credential, or a child development associate waiver  
359 certificate shall be automatically exempted from the training  
360 requirements in sub-subparagraphs b., d., and e.

361 ~~2. The introductory course in child care shall stress, to~~  
362 ~~the extent possible, an interdisciplinary approach to the study~~  
363 ~~of children.~~

364 2.3. The introductory course shall cover recognition and  
365 prevention of shaken baby syndrome; prevention of sudden infant  
366 death syndrome; recognition and care of infants and toddlers  
367 with developmental disabilities, including autism spectrum  
368 disorder and Down syndrome; and early childhood brain  
369 development within the topic areas identified in this paragraph.

370 3.4. On an annual basis in order to further their child  
371 care skills and, if appropriate, administrative skills, child  
372 care personnel who have fulfilled the requirements for the child  
373 care training shall be required to take an additional 1  
374 continuing education unit of approved inservice training, or 10  
375 clock hours of equivalent training, as determined by the

376 department.

377 ~~4.5.~~ Child care personnel shall be required to complete  
378 0.5 continuing education unit of approved training or 5 clock  
379 hours of equivalent training, as determined by the department,  
380 in early literacy and language development of children from  
381 birth to 5 years of age one time. The year that this training is  
382 completed, it shall fulfill the 0.5 continuing education unit or  
383 5 clock hours of the annual training required in subparagraph 3.  
384 ~~4.~~

385 ~~5.6.~~ Procedures for ensuring the training of qualified  
386 child care professionals to provide training of child care  
387 personnel, including onsite training, shall be included in the  
388 minimum standards. It is recommended that the state community  
389 child care coordination agencies (central agencies) be  
390 contracted by the department to coordinate such training when  
391 possible. Other district educational resources, such as  
392 community colleges and career programs, can be designated in  
393 such areas where central agencies may not exist or are  
394 determined not to have the capability to meet the coordination  
395 requirements set forth by the department.

396 6.7. Training requirements ~~do shall~~ not apply to certain  
397 occasional or part-time support staff, including, but not  
398 limited to, swimming instructors, piano teachers, dance  
399 instructors, and gymnastics instructors.

400 ~~8. The department shall evaluate or contract for an~~



401 ~~evaluation for the general purpose of determining the status of~~  
 402 ~~and means to improve staff training requirements and testing~~  
 403 ~~procedures. The evaluation shall be conducted every 2 years. The~~  
 404 ~~evaluation shall include, but not be limited to, determining the~~  
 405 ~~availability, quality, scope, and sources of current staff~~  
 406 ~~training; determining the need for specialty training; and~~  
 407 ~~determining ways to increase inservice training and ways to~~  
 408 ~~increase the accessibility, quality, and cost-effectiveness of~~  
 409 ~~current and proposed staff training. The evaluation methodology~~  
 410 ~~shall include a reliable and valid survey of child care~~  
 411 ~~personnel.~~

412 7.9. The child care operator shall be required to take  
 413 basic training in serving children with disabilities within 5  
 414 years after employment, either as a part of the introductory  
 415 training or the annual 8 hours of inservice training.

416 ~~(f) Periodic health examinations.~~

417 (7) SANITATION AND SAFETY.—

418 (a) Minimum standards shall include requirements for  
 419 sanitary and safety conditions, first aid treatment, emergency  
 420 procedures, and pediatric cardiopulmonary resuscitation. The  
 421 minimum standards may not shall require more than two members of  
 422 ~~that at least one~~ staff ~~person~~ trained in cardiopulmonary  
 423 resuscitation, as evidenced by current documentation of course  
 424 completion, to must be present at all times when that children  
 425 are present.

426 (9) ADMISSIONS AND RECORDKEEPING.—

427 (a) Minimum standards shall include requirements for  
428 preadmission and periodic health examinations, requirements for  
429 immunizations, and requirements for maintaining emergency  
430 information and health records on all children.

431 ~~(b) During the months of August and September of each~~  
432 ~~year, each child care facility shall provide parents of children~~  
433 ~~enrolled in the facility detailed information regarding the~~  
434 ~~causes, symptoms, and transmission of the influenza virus in an~~  
435 ~~effort to educate those parents regarding the importance of~~  
436 ~~immunizing their children against influenza as recommended by~~  
437 ~~the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the Centers~~  
438 ~~for Disease Control and Prevention.~~

439 ~~(c) During the months of April and September of each year,~~  
440 ~~at a minimum, each facility shall provide parents of children~~  
441 ~~enrolled in the facility information regarding the potential for~~  
442 ~~a distracted adult to fail to drop off a child at the facility~~  
443 ~~and instead leave the child in the adult's vehicle upon arrival~~  
444 ~~at the adult's destination. The child care facility shall also~~  
445 ~~give parents information about resources with suggestions to~~  
446 ~~avoid this occurrence. The department shall develop a flyer or~~  
447 ~~brochure with this information that shall be posted to the~~  
448 ~~department's website, which child care facilities may choose to~~  
449 ~~reproduce and provide to parents to satisfy the requirements of~~  
450 ~~this paragraph.~~

451        (b)~~(d)~~ Because of the nature and duration of drop-in child  
452 care, requirements for preadmission and periodic health  
453 examinations and requirements for medically signed records of  
454 immunization required for child care facilities shall not apply.  
455 A parent of a child in drop-in child care shall, however, be  
456 required to attest to the child's health condition and the type  
457 and current status of the child's immunizations.

458        (c)~~(e)~~ Any child shall be exempt from medical or physical  
459 examination or medical or surgical treatment upon written  
460 request of the parent or guardian of such child who objects to  
461 the examination and treatment. However, the laws, rules, and  
462 regulations relating to contagious or communicable diseases and  
463 sanitary matters shall not be violated because of any exemption  
464 from or variation of the health and immunization minimum  
465 standards.

466        (13) PLAN OF ACTIVITIES.—Minimum standards shall ensure  
467 that each child care facility has and implements a written plan  
468 for the daily provision of varied activities and active and  
469 quiet play opportunities appropriate to the age of the child.  
470 ~~The written plan must include a program, to be implemented~~  
471 ~~periodically for children of an appropriate age, which will~~  
472 ~~assist the children in preventing and avoiding physical and~~  
473 ~~mental abuse.~~

474        ~~(17) SPECIALIZED CHILD CARE FACILITIES FOR THE CARE OF~~  
475 ~~MILDLY ILL CHILDREN.—Minimum standards shall be developed by the~~

476 ~~department, in conjunction with the Department of Health, for~~  
 477 ~~specialized child care facilities for the care of mildly ill~~  
 478 ~~children. The minimum standards shall address the following~~  
 479 ~~areas: personnel requirements; staff-to-child ratios; staff~~  
 480 ~~training and credentials; health and safety; physical facility~~  
 481 ~~requirements, including square footage; client eligibility,~~  
 482 ~~including a definition of "mildly ill children"; sanitation and~~  
 483 ~~safety; admission and recordkeeping; dispensing of medication;~~  
 484 ~~and a schedule of activities.~~

485 Section 4. Section 402.3115, Florida Statutes, is amended  
 486 to read:

487 402.3115 Elimination of duplicative and unnecessary  
 488 inspections; abbreviated inspections; reports.-

489 (1) The Department of Children and Families and local  
 490 governmental agencies that license child care facilities shall  
 491 develop and implement a plan to eliminate duplicative and  
 492 unnecessary inspections of child care facilities, family day  
 493 care homes, and large family child care homes.

494 (2)(a) ~~In addition,~~ The department and the local  
 495 governmental agencies shall develop and implement an abbreviated  
 496 inspection plan for child care facilities that:

497 1. Have been licensed for at least 2 consecutive years;

498 2. Have had no Class 1 and no more than two of the same ~~or~~  
 499 Class 2 deficiencies, as defined by rule, for at least 2  
 500 consecutive years;

501        3. Have received at least two full onsite renewal  
 502 inspections in the most recent 2 years;  
 503        4. Do not have any current uncorrected violations; and  
 504        5. Do not have any open regulatory complaints or active  
 505 child protective services investigations.

506        (b) The abbreviated inspection must include those elements  
 507 identified by the department and the local governmental agencies  
 508 as being key indicators of whether the child care facility  
 509 continues to provide quality care and programming and must be  
 510 updated every 5 years.

511        (3) By December 31, 2024, and every 5 years thereafter,  
 512 the department shall submit a report to the Governor, the  
 513 President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of  
 514 Representatives. The report must include, at a minimum,  
 515 information concerning:

516        (a) Training requirements and coursework offered by the  
 517 department to child care personnel. The report must include the  
 518 results of a reliable and valid survey of child care personnel  
 519 regarding such training and coursework. Such results must be  
 520 used to make recommendations regarding:

521        1. The availability, quality, relevance, scope, cost  
 522 effectiveness, and sources of current and prospective training.  
 523        2. The need for specialty training.  
 524        3. Approaches to increase inservice training.

525        (b) Licensing and regulation of child care facilities. The

526 report shall identify and make recommendations regarding:  
527 1. The elimination of unnecessary, vague, or redundant  
528 rules.  
529 2. Streamlined standards used to classify violations.  
530 3. The application of rules in a manner to eliminate  
531 subjectivity by licensing staff.  
532 4. Methods to simplify inspections.  
533 5. The elimination of duplicative and unnecessary  
534 inspections.  
535 (c) The plan developed and implemented under subsection  
536 (1).  
537 (4) The department shall adopt rules and revise policies  
538 based on the recommendations in the report.  
539 (5) The department shall revise the plan under subsection  
540 (1) as necessary to maintain the validity and effectiveness of  
541 inspections.  
542 (6) The department may contract for the production of the  
543 report required under subsection (3).  
544 Section 5. Subsection (1) of section 402.316, Florida  
545 Statutes, is amended to read:  
546 402.316 Exemptions.—  
547 (1)(a) The provisions of ss. 402.301-402.319, except for  
548 the requirements regarding screening of child care personnel,  
549 shall not apply to a child care facility:  
550 1. Which is an integral part of church or parochial

CS/CS/HB 1021

2023

551 schools conducting regularly scheduled classes, courses of  
552 study, or educational programs accredited by, or by a member of,  
553 an organization which publishes and requires compliance with its  
554 standards for health, safety, and sanitation; or

555 2. Which is directly operated by a private employer and  
556 only attended by children or grandchildren of employees of such  
557 private employer.

558 (b) However, Such facilities shall still meet minimum  
559 requirements of the applicable local governing body as to  
560 health, sanitation, and safety and shall meet the screening  
561 requirements pursuant to ss. 402.305 and 402.3055.

562 (c) Failure by a facility to comply with such screening  
563 requirements shall result in the loss of the facility's  
564 exemption from licensure.

565 Section 6. Section 627.70161, Florida Statutes, is amended  
566 to read:

567 627.70161 Family day care and large family child care  
568 insurance.—

569 (1) PURPOSE AND INTENT.—The Legislature recognizes that  
570 family day care homes and large family child care homes fulfill  
571 a vital role in providing child care in Florida. It is the  
572 intent of the Legislature that residential property insurance  
573 coverage should not be canceled, denied, or nonrenewed solely on  
574 the basis of the ~~family~~ day care or child care services at the  
575 residence. The Legislature also recognizes that the potential

576 liability of residential property insurers is substantially  
577 increased by the rendition of child care services on the  
578 premises. The Legislature therefore finds that there is a public  
579 need to specify that contractual liabilities that arise in  
580 connection with the operation of the family day care home or  
581 large family child care home are excluded from residential  
582 property insurance policies unless they are specifically  
583 included in such coverage.

584 (2) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

585 (a) "Child care" means the care, protection, and  
586 supervision of a child, for a period of less than 24 hours a day  
587 on a regular basis, which supplements parental care, enrichment,  
588 and health supervision for the child, in accordance with his or  
589 her individual needs, and for which a payment, fee, or grant is  
590 made for care.

591 (b) "Family day care home" means an occupied residence in  
592 which child care is regularly provided for children from at  
593 least two unrelated families and which receives a payment, fee,  
594 or grant for any of the children receiving care, whether or not  
595 operated for a profit.

596 (c) "Large family child care home" means an occupied  
597 residence in which child care is regularly provided for children  
598 from at least two unrelated families, which receives a payment,  
599 fee, or grant for any of the children receiving care, regardless  
600 of whether operated for profit, and which has at least two full-



601 time child care personnel on the premises during the hours of  
602 operation. One of the two full-time child care personnel must be  
603 the owner or occupant of the residence. A large family child  
604 care home must first have operated as a licensed family day care  
605 home for at least 2 years, with an operator who has held a child  
606 development associate credential or its equivalent for at least  
607 1 year, before seeking licensure as a large family child care  
608 home. Household children under 13 years of age, when on the  
609 premises of the large family child care home or on a field trip  
610 with children enrolled in child care, shall be included in the  
611 overall capacity of the licensed home. A large family child care  
612 home may provide care for one of the following groups of  
613 children, which shall include household children under 13 years  
614 of age:

615 (a) A maximum of eight children from birth to 24 months of  
616 age.

617 (b) A maximum of 12 children, with no more than four  
618 children under 24 months of age.

619 (3) FAMILY DAY CARE AND LARGE FAMILY CHILD CARE;

620 COVERAGE.—A residential property insurance policy shall not  
621 provide coverage for liability for claims arising out of, or in  
622 connection with, the operation of a family day care home or  
623 large family child care home, and the insurer shall be under no  
624 obligation to defend against lawsuits covering such claims,  
625 unless:

626 (a) Specifically covered in a policy; or  
 627 (b) Covered by a rider or endorsement for business  
 628 coverage attached to a policy.

629 (4) DENIAL, CANCELLATION, REFUSAL TO RENEW PROHIBITED.—An  
 630 insurer may not deny, cancel, or refuse to renew a policy for  
 631 residential property insurance solely on the basis that the  
 632 policyholder or applicant operates a family day care home or  
 633 large family child care home. In addition to other lawful  
 634 reasons for refusing to insure, an insurer may deny, cancel, or  
 635 refuse to renew a policy of a family day care home or large  
 636 family child care home provider if one or more of the following  
 637 conditions occur:

638 (a) The policyholder or applicant provides care for more  
 639 children than authorized ~~for family day care homes~~ by s.  
 640 402.302;

641 (b) The policyholder or applicant fails to maintain a  
 642 separate commercial liability policy or an endorsement providing  
 643 liability coverage for the family day care home or large family  
 644 child care home operations;

645 (c) The policyholder or applicant fails to comply with the  
 646 applicable ~~family day care home~~ licensure and registration  
 647 requirements specified in chapter 402 ~~s. 402.313~~; or

648 (d) Discovery of willful or grossly negligent acts or  
 649 omissions or any violations of state laws or regulations  
 650 establishing safety standards for family day care homes or large

651 family child care home by the named insured or his or her  
652 representative which materially increase any of the risks  
653 insured.

654 Section 7. Paragraphs (a) and (c) of subsection (3) of  
655 section 1002.55, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

656 1002.55 School-year prekindergarten program delivered by  
657 private prekindergarten providers.—

658 (3) To be eligible to deliver the prekindergarten program,  
659 a private prekindergarten provider must meet each of the  
660 following requirements:

661 (a) The private prekindergarten provider must be a child  
662 care facility licensed under s. 402.305, family day care home  
663 licensed under s. 402.313, large family child care home licensed  
664 under s. 402.3131, nonpublic school exempt from licensure under  
665 s. 402.3025(2), faith-based or corporation-provided child care  
666 provider exempt from licensure under s. 402.316, child  
667 development program that is accredited by a national accrediting  
668 body and operates on a military installation that is certified  
669 by the United States Department of Defense, or private  
670 prekindergarten provider that has been issued a provisional  
671 license under s. 402.309. A private prekindergarten provider may  
672 not deliver the program while holding a probation-status license  
673 under s. 402.310.

674 (c) The private prekindergarten provider must have, for  
675 each prekindergarten class of 11 children or fewer, at least one

676 | prekindergarten instructor who meets each of the following  
 677 | requirements:

678 |       1. The prekindergarten instructor must hold, at a minimum,  
 679 | one of the following credentials:

680 |           a. A child development associate credential issued by the  
 681 | National Credentialing Program of the Council for Professional  
 682 | Recognition; or

683 |           b. A credential approved by the Department of Children and  
 684 | Families as being equivalent to or greater than the credential  
 685 | described in sub-subparagraph a.

686 |  
 687 | The Department of Children and Families may adopt rules under  
 688 | ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54 which provide criteria and procedures  
 689 | for approving equivalent credentials under sub-subparagraph b.

690 |       2. Within 45 days after commencing employment, the  
 691 | prekindergarten instructor must successfully complete three  
 692 | emergent literacy training courses that include developmentally  
 693 | appropriate and experiential learning practices for children and  
 694 | a student performance standards training course approved by the  
 695 | department as meeting or exceeding the minimum standards adopted  
 696 | under s. 1002.59. The prekindergarten instructor must complete  
 697 | an emergent literacy training course at least once every 5 years  
 698 | after initially completing the three emergent literacy training  
 699 | courses. The courses in this subparagraph must be recognized as  
 700 | part of the informal early learning and career pathway

701 identified by the department under s. 1002.995(1)(b). The  
 702 requirement for completion of the standards training course  
 703 shall take effect July 1, 2022. The courses must be made  
 704 available online or in person.

705 Section 8. Paragraph (b) of subsection (2) of section  
 706 1002.67, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

707 1002.67 Performance standards and curricula.—

708 (2)

709 (b) Each private prekindergarten provider's and public  
 710 school's curriculum must be developmentally appropriate and  
 711 must:

712 1. Be designed to prepare a student for early literacy and  
 713 provide for instruction in early math skills;

714 2. Enhance the age-appropriate progress of students in  
 715 attaining the performance standards adopted by the department  
 716 under subsection (1); ~~and~~

717 3. Support student learning gains through differentiated  
 718 instruction that shall be measured by the coordinated screening  
 719 and progress monitoring program under s. 1008.25(8). However,  
 720 such program may not be used for direct student instruction; and

721 4. Prohibit student use of electronic devices for direct  
 722 student instruction. However, electronic devices may be used to  
 723 complete the coordinated screening and progress monitoring  
 724 program under s. 1008.25(8).

725 Section 9. Subsection (2) and paragraphs (a) and (f) of

726 subsection (4) of section 1002.68, Florida Statutes, are amended  
727 to read:

728 1002.68 Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program  
729 accountability.—

730 (2) Beginning with the 2023-2024 ~~2022-2023~~ program year,  
731 each private prekindergarten provider and public school in the  
732 Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program must participate in  
733 a program assessment of each voluntary prekindergarten education  
734 classroom. The program assessment shall measure the quality of  
735 teacher-child interactions, including emotional support,  
736 classroom organization, and instructional support for children  
737 ages 3 to 5 years. The program assessment must be conducted in  
738 accordance with the requirements of the assessment provider.

739 Each private prekindergarten provider and public school in the  
740 Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program shall receive from  
741 the department the results of the program assessment for each  
742 classroom within 14 days after the observation. Each early  
743 learning coalition shall be responsible for the administration  
744 of the program assessments which must be conducted by  
745 individuals qualified to conduct program assessments under s.  
746 1002.82 (2) (n).

747 (4) (a) Beginning with the 2023-2024 ~~2022-2023~~ program  
748 year, the department shall adopt a methodology for calculating  
749 each private prekindergarten provider's and public school  
750 provider's performance metric, which must be based on a

751 combination of the following:

752 1. Program assessment composite scores under subsection  
753 (2), which must be weighted at no less than 50 percent.

754 2. Learning gains operationalized as change-in-ability  
755 scores from the initial and final progress monitoring results  
756 described in subsection (1).

757 3. Norm-referenced developmental learning outcomes  
758 described in subsection (1).

759 (f) The department shall adopt procedures to annually  
760 calculate each private prekindergarten provider's and public  
761 school's performance metric, based on the methodology adopted in  
762 paragraphs (a) and (b), and assign a designation under paragraph  
763 (d). Beginning with the 2024-2025 ~~2023-2024~~ program year, each  
764 private prekindergarten provider or public school shall be  
765 assigned a designation within 45 days after the conclusion of  
766 the school-year Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program  
767 delivered by all participating private prekindergarten providers  
768 or public schools and within 45 days after the conclusion of the  
769 summer Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program delivered by  
770 all participating private prekindergarten providers or public  
771 schools.

772 Section 10. Paragraphs (j) and (l) of subsection (2) of  
773 section 1002.82, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

774 1002.82 Department of Education; powers and duties.—

775 (2) The department shall:

776 (j) Monitor the alignment and consistency of the standards  
777 and benchmarks developed and adopted by the department that  
778 address the age-appropriate progress of children in the  
779 development of school readiness skills. The standards for  
780 children from birth to kindergarten entry in the school  
781 readiness program must be aligned with the performance standards  
782 adopted for children in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education  
783 Program and must address the following domains:

- 784 1. Approaches to learning.
- 785 2. Cognitive development and general knowledge.
- 786 3. Numeracy, language, and communication.
- 787 4. Physical development.
- 788 5. Executive-functioning ~~Self-regulation~~.

789 (1) Contract for a voluntary open-source school readiness  
790 curriculum that meets the performance standards pursuant to  
791 paragraph (j) that shall:

- 792 1. Be available on the Internet at no cost.
- 793 2. Contain resources that support the use of the  
794 curriculum.
- 795 3. Contain resources for parent engagement.
- 796 4. Consist of aligned and effective professional  
797 development resources necessary to implement the curriculum with  
798 fidelity ~~Adopt a list of approved curricula that meet the~~  
799 ~~performance standards for the school readiness program and~~  
800 ~~establish a process for the review and approval of a provider's~~



801 ~~curriculum that meets the performance standards.~~

802 Section 11. Subsection (6) of section 1002.83, Florida  
803 Statutes, is amended to read:

804 1002.83 Early learning coalitions.—

805 (6) An ~~The~~ early learning coalition may appoint additional  
806 at-large ~~members who must be private sector business members,~~  
807 either for-profit or nonprofit, who do not have, and none of  
808 whose relatives as defined in s. 112.3143 has, a substantial  
809 financial interest in the design or delivery of the Voluntary  
810 Prekindergarten Education Program created under part V of this  
811 chapter or the school readiness program. The department shall  
812 establish criteria for appointing private sector business  
813 members. These criteria must include standards for determining  
814 whether a member or relative has a substantial financial  
815 interest in the design or delivery of the Voluntary  
816 Prekindergarten Education Program or the school readiness  
817 program.

818 Section 12. Paragraph (b) of subsection (4) of section  
819 1002.89, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

820 1002.89 School readiness program; funding.—

821 (4) COST REQUIREMENTS.—Costs shall be kept to the minimum  
822 necessary for the efficient and effective administration of the  
823 school readiness program with the highest priority of  
824 expenditure being direct services for eligible children.  
825 However, no more than 5 percent of the funds allocated in

826 paragraph (1) (a) may be used for administrative costs and no  
827 more than 22 percent of the funds allocated in paragraph (1) (a)  
828 may be used in any fiscal year for any combination of  
829 administrative costs, quality activities, and nondirect services  
830 as follows:

831 (b) Activities to improve the quality of child care as  
832 described in 45 C.F.R. s. 98.53, which shall be limited to the  
833 following:

834 1. Developing, establishing, expanding, operating, and  
835 coordinating resource and referral programs specifically related  
836 to the provision of comprehensive consumer education to parents  
837 and the public to promote informed child care choices specified  
838 in 45 C.F.R. s. 98.33.

839 2. Awarding grants and providing financial support to  
840 school readiness program providers and their staff to assist  
841 them in meeting applicable state requirements for the program  
842 assessment required under s. 1002.82(2)(n), child care  
843 performance standards, implementing the developmentally  
844 appropriate curriculum commissioned under s. 1002.82(2)(l)  
845 curricula and related classroom resources that support parent  
846 engagement curricula, providing literacy supports, providing  
847 reimbursements for background screenings, and providing  
848 continued professional development through the Teacher Education  
849 and Compensation Helps (TEACH) Scholarship Program under s.  
850 1002.95 and training aligned to the early learning professional

851 development standards and career pathways under s. 1002.995 ~~and~~  
 852 ~~training~~. Any grants awarded pursuant to this subparagraph shall  
 853 comply with ss. 215.971 and 287.058.

854 3. Providing training aligned with the early learning  
 855 professional development standards and career pathways under s.  
 856 1002.995, technical assistance, and financial support to school  
 857 readiness program providers, staff, and parents on standards,  
 858 child screenings, child assessments, child development research  
 859 and best practices, developmentally appropriate curriculum  
 860 commissioned under s. 1002.82 (2) (1), executive functioning  
 861 curricula, ~~character development~~, teacher-child interactions,  
 862 age-appropriate discipline practices, health and safety,  
 863 nutrition, first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the  
 864 recognition of communicable diseases, and child abuse detection,  
 865 prevention, and reporting.

866 4. Providing, from among the funds provided for the  
 867 activities described in subparagraphs 1.-3., adequate funding  
 868 for infants and toddlers as necessary to meet federal  
 869 requirements related to expenditures for quality activities for  
 870 infant and toddler care.

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

874 6. Responding to Warm-Line requests by providers and  
 875 parents, including providing developmental and health screenings

876 to school readiness program children.

877 Section 13. Paragraph (b) of subsection (4) of section  
878 1002.945, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

879 1002.945 Gold Seal Quality Care Program.—

880 (4) In order to obtain and maintain a designation as a  
881 Gold Seal Quality Care provider, a child care facility, large  
882 family child care home, or family day care home must meet the  
883 following additional criteria:

884 (b) The child care provider must not have had three or  
885 more of the same class II violations, as defined by rule of the  
886 Department of Children and Families, within the 2 years  
887 preceding its application for designation as a Gold Seal Quality  
888 Care provider. Commission of three or more of the same class II  
889 violations within a 2-year period shall be grounds for  
890 termination of the designation as a Gold Seal Quality Care  
891 provider until the provider has no class II violations that are  
892 the same for a period of 1 year.

893 Section 14. Section 1002.95, Florida Statutes, is amended  
894 to read:

895 1002.95 Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (TEACH)  
896 Scholarship Program.—

897 (1) The department may contract for the administration of  
898 the Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (TEACH) Scholarship  
899 Program, which provides educational scholarships to instructors  
900 ~~caregivers~~ and administrators of early childhood programs,

901 family day care homes, and large family child care homes. The  
 902 goal of the program is to increase the education and training  
 903 for instructors ~~caregivers~~, increase the compensation for child  
 904 instructors ~~caregivers~~ who complete the program requirements,  
 905 and reduce the rate of participant turnover in the field of  
 906 early childhood education.

907 (2) An early learning coalition may support the Teacher  
 908 Education and Compensation Helps (TEACH) Scholarship Program for  
 909 instructors by reimbursing child care providers for the child  
 910 care provider copayment portion of the program for each  
 911 instructor who completes a child development associate  
 912 credential in his or her service area which shall be funded in  
 913 accordance with s. 1002.89(4) (b).

914 ~~(3)-(2)~~ The State Board of Education shall adopt rules as  
 915 necessary to administer this section.

916 Section 15. Paragraph (b) of subsection (5) of section  
 917 1008.25, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

918 1008.25 Public school student progression; student  
 919 support; coordinated screening and progress monitoring;  
 920 reporting requirements.—

921 (5) READING DEFICIENCY AND PARENTAL NOTIFICATION.—

922 (b) A Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program student  
 923 who exhibits a substantial deficiency in early literacy skills  
 924 in accordance with the standards under s. 1002.67(1)(a) and  
 925 based upon the results of the administration of the final

926 coordinated screening and progress monitoring under subsection  
 927 (8) shall be ~~referred to the local school district and may be~~  
 928 eligible to receive intensive reading interventions before  
 929 participating in kindergarten. Such intensive reading  
 930 interventions shall be paid for using funds from the district's  
 931 evidence-based reading instruction allocation in accordance with  
 932 s. 1011.62(8).

933 Section 16. Paragraph (a) of subsection (4) of section  
 934 39.101, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

935 39.101 Central abuse hotline.—The central abuse hotline is  
 936 the first step in the safety assessment and investigation  
 937 process.

938 (4) USE OF INFORMATION RECEIVED BY THE CENTRAL ABUSE  
 939 HOTLINE.—

940 (a) Information received by the central abuse hotline may  
 941 not be used for employment screening, except as provided in s.  
 942 39.202(2) (a) and (h) or s. 402.302(16) ~~s. 402.302(15)~~.

943 Section 17. Subsections (3) and (4) of section 1002.57,  
 944 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

945 1002.57 Prekindergarten director credential.—

946 (3) The prekindergarten director credential must meet or  
 947 exceed the requirements of the Department of Children and  
 948 Families for the child care facility director credential under  
 949 s. 402.305(2) (f) ~~s. 402.305(2) (g)~~, and successful completion of  
 950 the prekindergarten director credential satisfies these

951 requirements for the child care facility director credential.

952 (4) The department shall, to the maximum extent  
 953 practicable, award credit to a person who successfully completes  
 954 the child care facility director credential under s.  
 955 402.305(2)(f) ~~s. 402.305(2)(g)~~ for those requirements of the  
 956 prekindergarten director credential which are duplicative of  
 957 requirements for the child care facility director credential.

958 Section 18. Subsection (1) of section 1002.59, Florida  
 959 Statutes, is amended to read:

960 1002.59 Emergent literacy and performance standards  
 961 training courses.—

962 (1) The department, in collaboration with the Just Read,  
 963 Florida! Office, shall adopt minimum standards for courses in  
 964 emergent literacy for prekindergarten instructors. Each course  
 965 must comprise 5 clock hours and provide instruction in  
 966 strategies and techniques to address the age-appropriate  
 967 progress of prekindergarten students in developing emergent  
 968 literacy skills, including oral communication, knowledge of  
 969 print and letters, phonological and phonemic awareness, and  
 970 vocabulary and comprehension development, consistent with the  
 971 evidence-based content and strategies identified pursuant to s.  
 972 1001.215(8). The course standards must be reviewed as part of  
 973 any review of subject coverage or endorsement requirements in  
 974 the elementary, reading, and exceptional student educational  
 975 areas conducted pursuant to s. 1012.586. Each course must also

976 | provide resources containing strategies that allow students with  
977 | disabilities and other special needs to derive maximum benefit  
978 | from the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program. Successful  
979 | completion of an emergent literacy training course approved  
980 | under this section satisfies requirements for approved training  
981 | in early literacy and language development under ss.  
982 | 402.305(2)(e)4., 402.313(6), and 402.3131(5) ss.  
983 | ~~402.305(2)(e)5., 402.313(6), and 402.3131(5).~~

984 | Section 19. This act shall take effect July 1, 2023.