

FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FINAL BILL ANALYSIS

This bill analysis was prepared by nonpartisan committee staff and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.

BILL #: CS/CS/CS/CS/HB 765	COMPANION BILL: CS/CS/SB 1690 (Calatayud)
TITLE: Child Care and Early Learning Services	LINKED BILLS: None
SPONSOR(S): McFarland and Basabe	RELATED BILLS: None
FINAL HOUSE FLOOR ACTION: 111Y's 0 N's	GOVERNOR'S ACTION: Approved

SUMMARY

Effect of the Bill:

The bill modifies existing laws related to child care regulation and early childhood education. The bill requires the Department of Children and Families and local licensing agencies to electronically disseminate certain information regarding all child care facilities. The bill requires exempt child care facilities to disclose their exempt status on their websites and on certain documents. The bill removes the requirement for child care homes to provide parents with information related to flu shots and leaving children in a vehicle unattended. The bill prohibits an insurer of residential property from cancelling, denying, or failing to renew residential property insurance solely on the basis that large family child care services are provided at the residence.

The bill authorizes the existing direct-support organization within the Department of Education (DOE) to benefit early learning programs. The bill establishes the Florida Child Care Fund within the DOE direct-support organization to support early learning and child care needs of Florida families. The bill requires the Division of Early Learning to annually report on the performance of the Florida Child Care Fund and the fund's fundraising activities by January 1 of each year, beginning January 1, 2027.

The bill establishes the Teacher Education and Compensation Helps Scholarship Program, subject to appropriation, to ensure statewide alignment of early learning training.

Fiscal or Economic Impact:

The bill will have an indeterminate, negative fiscal impact on state government.

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ANALYSIS

EFFECT OF THE BILL:

CS/CS/CS/CS/HB 765 passed as [CS/CS/CS/SB 1690](#).

The bill modifies existing laws regarding child care regulation and creates initiatives to improve access to early childhood education.

Child Care Regulation

Family Child Care Homes

The bill renames [family day care homes](#) "family child care homes" to emphasize the homes' core function of providing child care, making this change throughout the chapter. In the child care industry "family child care" is generally considered the more professional term, as it more accurately describes what early childhood educators do and emphasizes the focus on the child's care and development.¹ (Section [2](#))

¹ Rasmussen University, *Child care vs. Day Care: What's the Difference? (And Why it Matters)*, available at <https://www.rasmussen.edu/degrees/education/blog/childcare-vs-daycare/>. (last visited March. 13, 2026).

STORAGE NAME: h0765z

DATE: 6/15/2026

[Child Care Licensure Standards - Family Child Care Homes](#)

The bill removes the licensure requirement for family child care homes and [large family child care homes](#) to provide parents with information related to flu shots in the months of August and September, and information related to the potential for distracted drivers to leave children unattended in a vehicle during the months of April and September.² (Sections [2](#) and [3](#))

Disclosure Requirements for Exempt Child Care Facilities

The bill requires [exempt child care facilities](#) that are an integral part of a church or parochial school and those that are operated by a business that provides child care solely for the children of those employed by the business to disclose the facility's exempt status. Specifically, the bill requires an exempt child care facility to include on the facility's website, in promotional materials, and on facility-created documents and forms provided to families served by the child care facility, the following statement: "(Child care facility name) is a child care facility operating under an exemption pursuant to the laws of the State of Florida and is not subject to licensure or regulation by the Department of Children and Families." (Section [4](#))

Public Access to Child Care Information

The bill expands DCF and local licensing agency reporting obligations to require reporting for all child care facilities, rather than only licensed facilities, regarding licensing standards and procedures, health and safety standards for school readiness providers, monitoring and inspection reports, and annual data on child deaths, serious injuries, and substantiated abuse that have occurred in child care settings. This provision also includes reporting for exempt child care facilities that are an integral part of a church or parochial school and those that are operated by businesses that provide child care solely for the benefit of their employees. (Section [1](#))

Insurance and Child Care Homes

The bill extends certain insurance coverage protections for residential property currently applicable to family child care homes to large family child care homes.³ Specifically, the bill prohibits an insurer from cancelling, denying, or refusing to renew residential property insurance solely on the basis that large family child care services are provided at the residence. The bill excludes contractual liabilities that arise in connection with a large family child care home from residential property insurance policies unless specifically included in coverage.

This provision applies to an occupied residence in which child care is regularly provided for children from at least two unrelated families, which receives payments, fees, or grants for the children receiving care, whether or not operated for profit, and which has at least two full-time child care personnel on the premises during the hours of operation, one of whom must be the owner or occupant of the home. (Section [5](#))

Florida Child Care Fund

The [Florida Education Foundation](#) (Foundation) is a [direct-support organization](#) established within the Department of Education (DOE) to support public prekindergarten through 12th grade education. The Foundation also maintains the [Early Learning Fund](#).⁴

The bill establishes the Florida Child Care Fund (Fund) within the Foundation to support early learning programs for children from birth to age five. This creates an additional fund under the Foundation and expands the Foundation's current responsibilities to require the Foundation to support early learning programs in addition to supporting public prekindergarten through 12th grade education. The bill authorizes the Fund to be funded

² Ss. [402.313](#), and [402.3131](#), F.S.

³ [S. 627.70161](#), F.S.

⁴ The Early Learning Fund is used to finance projects to implement policy for early learning programs.

through legislative appropriations from the Child Care and Development Block Grant Trust Fund, state sources, and donations. (Sections [6](#) and [7](#)) The bill requires any bequests, gifts, grants, and donations made to the Fund from public or private sources and any legislative appropriations from the Child Care and Development Block Grant Trust Fund that are made to the Fund be deposited in the Early Learning Fund. (Section [7](#))

The purpose of the Fund is to provide direct services for [early learning programs](#); specifically, to fund families on early learning coalition (ELC) waitlists for [school readiness programs](#) and to fund donor-directed child care services in facilities that are not school readiness program providers. This differs from the purpose of the Early Learning Fund, maintained by the Foundation, which does not fund direct services, but instead funds projects intended to implement policy for early learning programs. (Section [7](#))

Funds deposited into the Early Learning Fund from the Florida Child Care Fund must be used to provide care for children from birth until the student is eligible to enroll in kindergarten in accordance with an allocation methodology to fund ELC waiting lists, or per the intentions of a donor. If a family on the waiting list receives funding from the Florida Child Care Fund, the ELC must apply a parent copayment in compliance with [s. 1002.84\(9\), F.S.](#)⁵ or [s. 1002.395\(2\)\(b\), F.S.](#)⁶ The ELC must fund school readiness program providers, and other child care providers selected by a donor, at the early learning reimbursement rate calculated pursuant to current law.⁷ If a donor-selected provider is not a school readiness program provider, DOE shall adopt a contract for use by the ELC with the provider to provide the funds. (Section [7](#))

By January 1 of each year, beginning January 1, 2027, the bill requires the [Division of Early Learning](#) to summarize the performance of the fund and the fund's fundraising activities for the previous fiscal year and identify the child care needs supported by the fund principal or earnings and those supported by private sources, bequests, gifts, grants, and donations. The report must also include outcome data, including the number of children served and any child outcomes, by each ELC, as well as the amount of funds spent on administrative expenses and fundraising and the amount of funds raised from private sources. The bill also requires the report to be published on DOE's website. (Section [7](#))

The Center for Early Childhood Professional Recognition

Subject to appropriation, the bill requires the program administrator contracted to administer the [Teacher Education and Compensation Helps Scholarship Program](#) to also establish and administer the Center for Early Childhood Professional Recognition to ensure alignment of early learning training statewide. (Section [8](#))

The bill makes conforming changes and updates cross-references. (Sections [9](#) through [32](#))

Th bill was approved by the Governor on June 12, 2026, ch. 2026-140, L.O.F., and will become on July 1, 2026.

FISCAL OR ECONOMIC IMPACT:

STATE GOVERNMENT:

The bill will have an indeterminate, insignificant negative fiscal impact on DCF to implement the modifications to the child care licensure standards in the bill, which can be absorbed within existing resources.

⁵ [S. 1002.84\(9\), F.S.](#), requires each ELC to implement, by rule, a parent sliding fee scale, that increases in relation to family income, and provides for the calculation of a parent copayment at the time of the eligibility determination and annual eligibility redetermination thereafter. An ELC may waive or temporarily waive the copayment under certain conditions.

⁶ [S. 1002.395\(2\)\(b\), F.S.](#), refers to tuition and fees for part-time tutoring services or fees for services provided by a choice navigator. A choice navigator is an individual who provides consultations on the selection of, application for, and enrollment in educational options addressing the academic needs of a student; curriculum selection; and advice on career and postsecondary education opportunities.

⁷ [S. 1002.84\(17\), F.S.](#)

The bill authorizes the existing DSO within the DOE to administer any bequests, gifts, grants and donations made to the Florida Child Care Fund from public or private sources and any legislative appropriations. The administration of this program can be absorbed within existing DSO resources.

Subject to appropriation, the bill requires the program administrator contracted to administer the Teacher Education and Compensation Helps Scholarship Program to also establish and administer the Center for Early Childhood Professional Recognition. The House proposed Fiscal Year 2026-2027 General Appropriations Act does not appropriate funding for this purpose.

PRIVATE SECTOR:

The bill will have an indeterminate, positive fiscal impact for early learning coalitions and child care providers due to increased funding for early learning programs and child care.

RELEVANT INFORMATION

SUBJECT OVERVIEW:

Child Care Licensure and Regulation

Child care is the care, protection and supervision of a child, for a period of less than 24 hours a day on a regular basis, which supplements parental care, enrichment, and health supervision for the child, in accordance with his or her individual needs, and for which a payment, fee, or grant is made for care.⁸ If a program meets the statutory definition of child care, it is subject to regulation by DCF or a local licensing agency, unless the statute specifically excludes or exempts it from regulation.⁹

The child care licensing program is a component of the services provided by DCF. The purpose of the program is to ensure a healthy and safe environment for children in child care settings and to improve the quality of their care. The program is accountable for the statewide licensure of Florida's child-care facilities,¹⁰ large family child care homes,¹¹ and the licensure or registration of family day care homes.¹²

Family day care homes must be licensed if the home is currently licensed under an existing county licensing ordinance or if the board of county commissioners passes a resolution that family day care homes be licensed. If not subject to licensure, a family day care home must register annually with DCF.¹³

Under Florida law, any county whose child care licensing standards meet or exceed the minimum state standards may designate by ordinance a local licensing agency in their county to license child care facilities.¹⁴ A county choosing not to administer its own licensing program or whose minimum standards do not exceed the state minimum standards, would require DCF to administer child care licensing in that county.

Currently, DCF is responsible for the licensure and inspection of child care facilities and homes in 63 of the 67 counties within the state. Four counties have elected to designate a local licensing agency to regulate licensing of child care facilities and homes in their areas; these counties include Broward, Palm Beach, Pinellas, and Sarasota.¹⁵

⁸ [S. 402.302\(1\), F.S.](#)

⁹ [Ss. 402.301](#) through [402.319, F.S.](#) regulate child care facilities in Florida.

¹⁰ [S. 402.305, F.S.](#)

¹¹ [S. 402.3131, F.S.](#)

¹² [S. 402.313, F.S.](#)

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ [S. 402.306, F.S.](#)

¹⁵ DCF, *About Child Care Licensure*, available at <https://www.myflfamilies.com/services/child-family/child-care/about-child-care-licensure>, (last visited March 13, 2026).

Child Care Providers

DCF and the local licensing agencies regulate three types of child care providers: family day care homes, large family child care homes, and child care facilities.

[Family day care homes](#) are occupied residences in which child care is regularly provided for children from at least two unrelated families and which receive payments, fees, or grants for the children receiving care, whether or not operated for profit.¹⁶

[Large family child care homes](#) are occupied residences in which child care is regularly provided for children from at least two unrelated families, which receive payments, fees, or grants for the children receiving care, whether or not operated for profit, and which have at least two full-time child care personnel, one of whom must be the owner or occupant of the home, on the premises during the hours of operation.¹⁷

Child care facilities are child care centers or child care arrangements that care for more than five children unrelated to the operator and receive a payment, fee, or grant for the children receiving care, wherever the facility is operated and whether it is operated for profit or not for profit.¹⁸ A child care facility does not include:

- Public schools and nonpublic schools and their integral programs, except as provided in [s. 402.3025, F.S.](#);
- Summer day camps;
- Bible schools normally conducted during vacation periods; and
- Certain operators of transient establishments, that provide child care solely for the guests of their establishment or resort, provided the child care personnel background screening requirements are met.¹⁹

Child Care Licensure Standards

DCF establishes minimum licensure standards for child care facilities, large family child care homes, and family child care homes.²⁰ Current law imposes requirements related to informing parents of certain risks to their children. During the months of August and September, large family child care homes and family child care homes must provide parents of children enrolled in the homes detailed information regarding the causes, symptoms, and transmission of the influenza virus and the importance of immunizing their children. Similarly, in April and September of each year, these homes must also notify parents of the potential for a distracted adult to fail to drop off a child at the child care home and instead leave the child in the adult's vehicle upon arrival at the adult's destination.²¹

Child Care Licensure Exemptions

Under current law, a child care facility that is an integral part of a church or parochial school or a child care facility operated by a business that solely provides child care for the children of those employed by the business and is accredited by, or is a member of, an organization that publishes and requires compliance with its standards for health, safety, and sanitation is exempt from the child care licensure requirements.²² However, though exempt from licensure the facility must meet the child care personnel background screening requirements.²³ Family child care homes that hold a certificate from the U.S. Department of Defense or the U.S. Coast Guard and meet applicable federal background screening standards are also exempt from licensure unless the provider elects to serve

¹⁶ [S. 402.302\(8\), F.S.](#)

¹⁷ [S. 402.302\(11\), F.S.](#)

¹⁸ [S. 402.302\(2\), F.S.](#)

¹⁹ *Id.*

²⁰ [S. 402.305\(1\), F.S.](#)

²¹ [Ss. 402.313\(9\)](#) and [\(10\)](#), and [402.313\(14\)](#) and [\(15\), F.S.](#)

²² [S. 402.316, F.S.](#)

²³ [S. 402.305, F.S.](#) and [s. 402.3055, F.S.](#)

children who are ineligible for care under federal military child care rules.²⁴ Current law does not require exempt child care facilities or family child care homes to disclose their exempt status.

[Public Access to Child Care Information](#)

DCF and local licensing agencies, or their designees are responsible for coordinating and disseminating certain child care information to the community.²⁵ Under current law, DCF and local licensing agencies must make available electronically all licensing standards and procedures, health and safety standards for school readiness providers, monitoring and inspection reports, and the names and addresses for licensed child care facilities, school readiness providers, and licensed or registered family day care homes. In addition, annual data on the number of deaths, serious injuries, and instances of substantiated child abuse that occurred in a child care setting must also be made available to the public.²⁶ Since current law only requires the reporting of this information specifically for licensed child care facilities, information for exempt child care facilities, including those that are an integral part of a church or parochial school and those that are operated by businesses for the benefit of their employees, are not included.

[Insurance and Child Care Homes](#)

Homeowners insurance is a type of property insurance which covers a home's structure, other structures, personal belongings, and pays for damage or loss by theft and perils which can include fire, and storm damage.²⁷ It also may insure the owner for accidental injury or death for which the owner may be legally responsible. Mortgage lenders usually require homeowners' insurance as part of the mortgage terms.²⁸ While homeowners' insurance can specifically refer to the insurance of a house, it also encompasses the insurance of other types of structures associated with personal residences, including tenants (renters) and condominium unit owners.²⁹ The potential liability of residential property insurers is substantially increased by the operation of child care services on the premises.

Florida law prohibits insurers from cancelling, denying or failing to renew, residential property insurance coverage solely on the basis that family day care services are being provided at the residence. Contractual liabilities that arise in connection with the operation of the family day care home are excluded from residential property insurance policies unless they are specifically included in such coverage.³⁰

A large family day care home is an occupied residence in which child care is regularly provided for children from at least two unrelated families where there is payment for the care provided and which has at least two full-time child care personnel on the premise during hours of operation.³¹ The residential property insurance coverage provisions in current law for family day care homes do not extend to large family day care homes.³²

²⁴ [S. 402.316\(2\), F.S.](#)

²⁵ [S. 402.306\(3\), F.S.](#)

²⁶ *Id.*

²⁷ Florida Department of Financial Services Division of Consumer Services, *Homeowners Insurance Overview: Coverage*, available at <https://www.myfloridacfo.com/division/consumers/understanding-insurance/homeownersinsuranceoverview#:~:text=Inspections>, and Florida Office of Insurance Regulation, *Homeowners' Insurance*, available at <https://flor.com/Sections/PandC/Homeowners/default.aspx> (last visited March 17, 2026).

²⁸ Florida Office of Insurance Regulation, *Homeowners' Insurance*, available at <https://flor.com/Sections/PandC/Homeowners/default.aspx> (last visited March 13, 2026).

²⁹ *Id.*

³⁰ [S. 627.70161, F.S.](#)

³¹ [S. 402.302\(11\), F.S.](#)

³² [S. 627.70161, F.S.](#)

Early Learning Programs

The [Division of Early Learning](#) (DEL) in the DOE administers early learning programs and services for children and families in Florida, in partnership with various early learning coalitions (ELCs).³³ The DEL delivers three programs, the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Program, the School Readiness Program, and Child Care Resources and Referral.³⁴ The ELCs administer these programs at the county and regional level.³⁵

Voluntary Prekindergarten Program

Florida's VPK Program is a free, state-funded educational program designed to prepare four-year-olds for kindergarten and beyond. Each child who resides in Florida who will have attained the age of four years old on or before September 1 of the school year is eligible for the VPK Program during either that school year or the following school year.³⁶ Parents can choose to enroll their child in school-year or summer VPK Programs provided by private child care centers or public schools.³⁷ Parents with students with disabilities may also enroll their child in specialized instructional services programs for children with disabilities, if the child is evaluated and determined eligible for the program.³⁸

School Readiness Program

Florida's School Readiness Program provides subsidies for child care services and early childhood education for children from low-income families; children in protective services who are at risk of abuse, neglect, abandonment, or homelessness; foster children; and children with disabilities.³⁹ The School Readiness Program offers financial assistance for child care to these families while supporting children in the development of skills for success in school. Additionally, the program provides developmental screening and referrals to health and education specialists where needed. These services are provided in conjunction with other programs for young children such as Head Start, Early Head Start, Migrant Head Start, Child Care Resource and Referral network, and the VPK program.⁴⁰ The School Readiness Program is a state-federal partnership between the DOE and the Office of Child Care within the federal Department of Health and Human Services.⁴¹

Direct-Support Organizations

Direct-support organizations (DSO) are statutorily created private entities that are generally required to be nonprofit organizations and are authorized to carry out specific tasks in support of public entities or public causes. The functions and purpose of a DSO are prescribed by its enacting statute, and, for the most part, by a contract between the agency and the DSO created to support the agency.

³³ Florida Department of Education, *Early Learning*, available at <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/early-learning/>, (last visited March 13, 2026).

³⁴ *Id.*

³⁵ Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida, *Our History*, available at <https://elcofswfl.org/about-us/our-history/> (last visited March 13, 2026).

³⁶ [S. 1002.53\(2\), F.S.](#) Parents of eligible four-year-olds with special needs have the option to enroll their child in VPK Specialized Instructional Services Education Program. Also see Florida Department of Education, *What is Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program (VPK)?*, available at <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/early-learning/parents/vpk-parents.stml>, (last visited March 13, 2026).

³⁷ *Id.* Also, see [s.1002.53, F.S.](#)

³⁸ [S. 1002.53\(2\), F.S.](#)

³⁹ Ss. [1002.81](#), and [1002.87, F.S.](#)

⁴⁰ DOE, *What is School Readiness (SR)?*, available at <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/early-learning/parents/school-readiness.stml>, (last visited March 17, 2026).

⁴¹ Section [1002.82\(1\), F.S.](#); U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child Care, available at https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/occ/OCC_Facst_Sheet.pdf, (last visited March 16, 2026).

Department of Education Direct-Support Organization

Current law authorizes the Department of Education (DOE) to establish a DSO for the benefit of public prekindergarten through 12th grade education in Florida. The DSO must:⁴²

- Be a not for profit corporation that is incorporated under the provisions of [chapter 617](#) and approved by the Department of State;
- Be organized and operated exclusively to receive, hold, invest, and administer property and to make expenditures to or for the benefit of public prekindergarten through 12th grade education in Florida; and
- Be certified by the State Board of Education, after review, to operate in a manner that is consistent with the goals and best interest of the DOE.

The State Board of Education may:⁴³

- Permit the use of property, facilities, and personal services⁴⁴ of DOE by the DSO;
- Prescribe, by rule, conditions with which the DSO must comply with in order to use property, facilities, or personal services of DOE. Such rules must provide for budget and audit review and for oversight by DOE; and
- Prohibit the use of property, facilities, or personal services of the DSO if the organization does not provide equal employment opportunities to all persons, regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or religion.

DOE established the [Florida Education Foundation](#) (Foundation) DSO.⁴⁵ The Foundation is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the Commissioner of Education which must include representation from business, industry, and other components of Florida's economy.⁴⁶ The Foundation is subject to an annual financial audit of its accounts and records.⁴⁷ The identity of donors who desire to remain anonymous must be protected and maintained in the auditor's report. All records of the Foundation other than the auditor's report, management letter, and any supplemental data requested by the Auditor General and the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability are confidential and exempt from public records.⁴⁸

[Early Learning Fund](#)

The Foundation maintains an Early Learning Fund (ELF) that was established through the Foundation and approved by the Foundation's Board of Directors.⁴⁹ The ELF is solely funded through private donations. Funds are not used for direct services for children, but instead are used to support projects focused on implementing policies for early learning programs.⁵⁰

[Teacher Education and Compensation Helps Scholarship Program](#)

The Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (TEACH) Scholarship Program provides scholarships to early childhood teachers/caregivers, and administrators of early childhood programs, family day care homes, and large family child care homes who are working towards an Associate, Bachelor, or Master's degree in early childhood

⁴² [S. 1001.24\(1\), F.S.](#)

⁴³ *Id.*

⁴⁴ Personal services include full-time or part-time personnel and payroll processing. [S. 1001.24\(1\)\(b\), F.S.](#)

⁴⁵ Florida Education Foundation, *Who We Are*, available at <https://www.floridaeducationfoundation.com/academics>, (last visited March 18, 2026).

⁴⁶ [S. 1001.24\(3\), F.S.](#)

⁴⁷ [S. 1001.24\(4\), F.S.](#)

⁴⁸ *Id.*

⁴⁹ Department of Education, *2026 Legislative Bill Analysis on HB 765*, on file with the Human Services Subcommittee; email correspondence with the Department of Education, January 23, 2026, on file with the Human Services Subcommittee.

⁵⁰ ELF funding may be used to support various projects including hosting meetings aimed at strengthening professional development of early childhood providers and/or workforce. *Source*: Meeting with DOE staff regarding SB 1690, on March 25, 2026.

education, a Florida Staff Credential, a Director Credential, a National Child Development Associate Assessment, or credential renewals.⁵¹ The goal of the program is to increase the education, training, and compensation for early childhood teachers and caregivers who complete the program requirements, and to reduce the turnover rate in the field of early childhood education.⁵²

The scholarships are available to teachers, directors, or family child care educators who:⁵³

- Are Florida residents;
- Have a high school diploma from an accredited school or a GED;
- Are employed by a licensed or license-exempt child care facility, in a licensed or registered family child care home, or by a licensed after school program;
- Work a minimum of 20 hours per week with a birth through pre-K population or in an after-school program for a minimum of 520 hours per year; and
- Have the sponsorship of the child care or after school program which employs them.

The scholarship provides:⁵⁴

- Cost for tuition and books;
- A per semester student access stipend for most scholars;
- A tiered-bonus structure for degree-seeking scholars who complete their contract;
- Counseling and administrative support; and
- A reimbursement to the center or family child care home for the paid release time provided to scholars.

Current law authorizes DOE to contract for the administration of the TEACH Scholarship Program.⁵⁵

Council for Professional Recognition

The Council for Professional Recognition is a nonprofit organization that supports early childhood education professionals and administers the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential.⁵⁶ The Child Development Associate credential is a widely recognized credential in early childhood education. It is based on a core set of competency standards that guide early childhood professionals toward becoming qualified educators of young children.⁵⁷ The Council for Professional Recognition works to ensure that the nationally transferable CDA is a credible and valid credential, and is recognized as an essential part of professional development in the profession of early childhood education.⁵⁸

⁵¹ [S. 1002.95, F.S.](#), and Florida Head Start Organization, *T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Scholarship Program, Scholarship Models*, available at <https://www.flheadstart.org/assets/docs/TEACH/TEACH%20model%20brochure%20-final%2011-27.pdf> (last visited March 16, 2026).

⁵² *Id.*

⁵³ Florida Head Start Organization, *T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Scholarship Program, Scholarship Models*, available at <https://www.flheadstart.org/assets/docs/TEACH/TEACH%20model%20brochure%20-final%2011-27.pdf> (last visited March 16, 2026).

⁵⁴ *Id.*

⁵⁵ [S. 1002.95, F.S.](#)

⁵⁶ Council for Professional Recognition, *Council for Professional Recognition Unveils Renewed Vision and Mission for Early Childhood Education*, available at <https://www.cdacouncil.org/en/press-release/council-for-professional-recognition-unveils-renewed-vision-and-mission-for-early-childhood-education/>, (last visited March 16, 2026).

⁵⁷ Council for Professional Recognition, *About CDA*, available at [https://www.cdacouncil.org/en/about/learn-about-the-cda/#:~:text=The%20Child%20Development%20Associate%2%AE%20\(CDA\)%20Credential%E2%84%A2%20is%20the,vital%20part%20of%20professional%20development.](https://www.cdacouncil.org/en/about/learn-about-the-cda/#:~:text=The%20Child%20Development%20Associate%2%AE%20(CDA)%20Credential%E2%84%A2%20is%20the,vital%20part%20of%20professional%20development.), (last visited March 16, 2026).

⁵⁸ *Id.*

Early Learning Professional Learning Standards and Career Pathways

Career Pathways address professional educator standards and competencies.⁵⁹ It is a progression of professional development and training which may include non-credit and credit coursework. DOE is required to develop early learning standards and career pathways. Specifically, DOE must:⁶⁰

- Develop early learning professional training and course standards to be utilized for school readiness program providers;
- Identify both formal and informal early learning career pathways with stackable credentials and certifications that allow early childhood teachers to access specialized professional learning that:
 - Strengthens knowledge and teaching practices;
 - Aligns to established professional standards and core competencies;
 - Provides a progression of attainable, competency-based stackable credentials and certifications; and
 - Improves outcomes for children to increase kindergarten readiness and early grade success; and
- Subject to appropriation by the Legislature, provide incentives to school readiness personnel and prekindergarten instructors who meet certain requirements and who possess a reading certification or endorsement or a literacy micro-credential and teach students in the school readiness program or the VPK Program or work in a child care or early learning setting.

⁵⁹ Rule 6M-4.735, F.A.C.

⁶⁰ [S. 1002.995, F.S.](#)