

September 30, 2016

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Dear Directors:

Pursuant to Chapter 216, Florida Statutes, our Long Range Program Plan (LRPP) for the Office of Early Learning is submitted in the format prescribed in the budget instructions. The information provided electronically and contained herein is a true and accurate presentation of our mission, goals, objectives and measures for Fiscal Year 2017-18 through Fiscal Year 2021-22. The internet website address that provides the link to the LRPP located on the Florida Fiscal Portal is

[http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/about\\_us.aspx](http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/about_us.aspx).

This submission has been approved by Rodney J. MacKinnon, Executive Director.



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Rodney J. MacKinnon

**RODNEY J. MACKINNON**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF EARLY LEARNING



# LONG RANGE PROGRAM PLAN

**Fiscal Years**

**2017-2018 through 2021-2022**

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## FLORIDA'S OFFICE OF EARLY LEARNING: MISSION

To administer and deliver a quality comprehensive early learning system of services

### GOALS, OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND PROJECTION TABLES IN OFFICE PRIORITY ORDER

#### **EARLY LEARNING SERVICES GOAL I:**

Oversee continuous quality improvement and accountability for Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten Education (VPK) Education Program, providing every 4-year-old child in the state a high-quality early learning opportunity while practicing careful stewardship of resources.

Objective 1: Provide for availability of information and outreach activities to all families with 4-year-old children and all providers of early education services so they may participate in the VPK Program, Chapter 1002, Florida Statutes (F.S.).

Outcome 1.A: Percentage of children who participate in VPK who are ready for school when they enter kindergarten based on the Early Childhood Observation System (ECHOS) results. This outcome cannot be measured at this time, as this tool is no longer used.

<b>Baseline FY 2006-07</b>	<b>FY 2016-17</b>	<b>FY 2017-18</b>	<b>FY 2018-19</b>	<b>FY 2019-20</b>	<b>FY 2020-21</b>
90.80%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Outcome 1.B: Percentage of all 4-year-old children served in the VPK program.

<b>Baseline FY 2006-07</b>	<b>FY 2016-17</b>	<b>FY 2017-18</b>	<b>FY 2018-19</b>	<b>FY 2019-20</b>	<b>FY 2020-21</b>
57.0%	78.2%	78.2%	78.2%	78.2%	78.1%

**EARLY LEARNING SERVICES GOAL II:**

Oversee continuous quality improvement and accountability of School Readiness and Child Care Resource and Referral programs, while practicing responsible stewardship of resources, to enable parents to get information about child care and high-quality, full-choice, affordable early learning opportunities for their children allowing them to work and achieve financial self-sufficiency, Chapter 1002, F.S., Rule 6M-9.300, Florida Administrative Code.

Objective 2: Provide high quality, affordable early learning and child care services to all eligible Florida families.

Outcome 2.A: Percentage of children who participate in only the School Readiness Program or both the School Readiness and VPK programs who are ready for school when they enter kindergarten based on Early Childhood Observation System (ECHOS) results. This outcome cannot be measured at this time, as this tool is no longer used.

Baseline FY 2006-07	FY 2016-17	FY 2017-18	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21
NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Outcome 2.B: Percentage of families receiving school readiness services who are offered child care resource and referral services.

Baseline FY 2006-07	FY 2016-17	FY 2017-18	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21
86.91%	69.98%	72.48%	74.98%	77.48%	79.98%

## LINKAGE TO PRIORITIES OF THE SCOTT ADMINISTRATION

The Office of Early Learning has reviewed the priorities of the Scott administration, which are as follows:

- Accountability budgeting.
- Reduce government spending.
- Regulatory reform.
- Focus on job growth and retention.
- World class education.
- Reduce taxes.
- Phase out Florida’s corporate income tax.

The Office of Early Learning links its goals and objectives to the current administration’s priorities as it seeks to ensure all eligible Florida families receive access to early learning services through Child Care Resource and Referral, School Readiness and VPK programs. These programs provide access to quality, affordable early education and child care for children between the ages of birth and 5 years, when children’s brains develop as much as 90 percent of their lifetime intellectual potential. The following table matches this administration’s priorities to the office’s statutory mandate and operational focus.

<b>Scott Administration Priority</b>	<b>Early Learning Operations</b>
Accountability budgeting Reduce government spending	Careful stewardship of Florida’s resources through monitoring activities of its fraud prevention and recovery unit is a principal focus for the Office of Early Learning.
Regulatory reform World class education	By promulgating rules deliberately and aggressively in a number of areas including creating a statewide standardized contract, a curriculum review and approval process, child performance standards, and child screening and assessment, the office continues to ensure consistent, quality services to Florida’s children and support the development of a world class education system.
Focus on job growth and retention	OEL’s School Readiness Program supports the state’s workforce with quality affordable child care and early education programs that aid families to gain economic self-sufficiency while preparing children from birth to 5 for educational success. Supporting professional development for Florida’s early education and child care providers continues to be a key initiative in the office’s operations and plans.

# **TRENDS AND CONDITIONS STATEMENT**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Office of Early Learning’s Long-Range Program Plan (LRPP) for fiscal years 2016–2018 through 2020–2022 is a goal-based, five-year planning document that identifies OEL’s goals, objectives and outcomes, structured around administration of early learning services—the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program and the School Readiness Program. OEL reviewed and evaluated past, current and projected performance data for all early learning services and activities. The evaluation used performance data and trends to adjust performance objectives and outcomes where necessary. The LRPP’s intended purpose provides strategic direction for the office to ensure its goals are attained and to serve as a resource for Florida citizens, policy makers and stakeholders.

## **OFFICE OF LEARNING’S PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **EARLY LEARNING SERVICES**

In 2001, the Florida Legislature transferred the Florida Partnership for School Readiness and the responsibility for administering school readiness programs to the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI). Effective January 2, 2005, the legislature established the Office of Early Learning (OEL) within AWI to serve as the state’s principal organization responsible for enhancing early childhood education for Florida’s children.

On June 14, 2011, Governor Rick Scott approved Senate Bill 2156 referring to Governmental Reorganization. As a result, on October 1, 2011, AWI was transferred to the Department of Economic Opportunity. As part of this transfer, the early learning division became a separate budget entity within the Department of Education with a direct report to the governor, becoming Florida’s Office of Early Learning.

During the 2013 session, the legislature passed new early learning legislation. Designed to improve quality and bring more accountability and transparency to the state’s early learning programs, House Bill 7165 took effect July 1, moving OEL into the Florida Department of Education within the Office of Independent Education & Parental Choice, consolidating operational and programmatic duties and responsibilities for the VPK Program in OEL.

OEL administers three major early learning programs— the VPK Program, the School Readiness Program and the Child Care Resource and Referral Program.

**Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program**—In December 2004, the legislature created the VPK Program to fulfill the constitutional requirement that

“[e]very four-year old child in Florida shall be provided by the State a high quality pre-kindergarten learning opportunity in the form of an early childhood development and education program which shall be voluntary, high quality, free, and delivered according to professionally accepted standards” (see Article IX, Section 1(b) of the State Constitution).

OEL administers operational and programmatic requirements of the VPK program, which is universally available to every 4-year-old child in the state. On July 1, 2016, a new law let parents whose children are born between Feb. 2 and Sept. 1 of a calendar year postpone enrolling their 4-year-old until the following year when their child is 5.

**School Readiness Programs**—In 1999, the legislature enacted the School Readiness Act (see Chapter 1002, F. S.). The act authorizes the establishment of school readiness programs administered at the local level by early learning coalitions and administered at the state level by OEL. School readiness programs are early childhood education and child care programs that are provided for specific populations of children based on need. As of 2014, this includes children who are economically disadvantaged (i.e., family income does not exceed 150 percent of federal poverty level), who have disabilities, or who are at risk of abuse, neglect or abandonment, homeless or victims of domestic violence. School readiness programs prioritize serving children from birth to 5 years of age.

**Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Program**— Mandated by federal and state laws, the CCR&R Program is a free service that helps families locate an early learning provider that meets their needs. The CCR&R state network office is housed in OEL. The program provides consumer education and customized child care listings to individuals seeking child care. CCR&Rs also provide training and technical assistance to child care providers, enhancing the quality of care and expanding the capacity for services. State CCR&R network staff provide technical assistance and training in areas including community outreach; consumer education; family engagement; quality customer service; staff development and program oversight; and recruiting and retaining child care providers.

**Early Learning Coalitions**—The OEL administers the VPK, school readiness and CCR&R programs at the state level and coordinates local service delivery through 30 early learning coalitions that provide services in each of Florida's 67 counties. Each coalition board is composed of at least 15 but not more than 30 members. The governor appoints the board chair plus two additional members for each coalition. Remaining members are appointed locally from the coalition's local community.

**Early Learning Advisory Council**—The 2004 legislation also created the Florida Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC), which is composed principally of the chairs of the early learning coalitions. The Governor appoints the advisory council chair. Two additional members are appointed by the presiding officers of the Florida Legislature. The advisory council submits recommendations to OEL on best practices, including recommendations relating to the most effective administration of the VPK Program and the School Readiness Program.

**Child Care Executive Partnership**—OEL also administers the Child Care Executive Partnership (CCEP) program—an innovative, public/private partnership program created by the Florida Legislature in 1996 to help employers meet the needs of their working parents by providing financial assistance to cover child care expenses. The CCEP helps private business and charitable foundations match federal and state funding on a dollar-for-dollar basis to provide child care services to participating employee families. Employers investing in employee child care increase the impact of child care assistance funds by 200 percent.



## **OFFICE PARTNERS**

### **LIST OF ALL TASK FORCES**

The OEL and staff members are involved with several initiatives, which include but are not limited to the Children and Youth Cabinet; the Governor’s Child Adoption and Permanency Council; the State Advisory Council on Early Education and Care; the Florida Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers; Florida's Transition Project for Infants, Young Children and Their Families; Help Me Grow Florida; Interagency Agreement to Coordinate Services for Children Served by More than One Agency; PreK Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Early Childhood; Florida Expanding Opportunities for Early Childhood Inclusion; Florida Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS); Florida Association for Information and Referral Services (FLAIRS); Military Child Care Collaboration; and Preventing Childhood Obesity State Team among others.

## **PLANNING APPROACH OF THE OFFICE OF EARLY LEARNING**

Working with early learning coalitions, providers, educators, policy makers, legislators, early child education advocates, parents, families and other early learning stakeholders, the OEL solicited input to guide development of its strategic plan. Concurrently, during the 2013 legislative session, the Florida Legislature passed House Bill 7165, which moved OEL into the Florida Department of Education and consolidated VPK responsibilities formerly assigned to a DOE bureau within OEL.

OEL adopted a strategic plan that incorporates its key principles—greater transparency, accountability and quality throughout the state’s early learning system. Simply stated, OEL increased accountability and transparency at state and local levels through clear, efficient governance to deliver quality early learning services for children and families.

OEL’s mission is to administer and deliver a quality comprehensive system of early learning services. Its vision is that every child in Florida has access to quality early learning services.

The office set forth four strategic goals. The first goal is to increase accountability at state and local levels to best serve Florida’s children and families. The second goal is to increase transparency at state and local levels to provide all early learning stakeholders with information that is relevant, accessible, timely and accurate. Goal three is to improve the quality of early learning programs. The fourth goal is to sustain a statewide early learning system with a clear governance structure to maximize efficient use of resources.

## **TRENDS AND CONDITIONS ANALYSIS**

### **EARLY LEARNING SERVICES**

Florida's early learning programs and services provide valuable early educational opportunities for families and their young children to help increase the likelihood of ongoing educational achievement and future success. The OEL is dedicated to ensuring accessible, affordable and high-quality early learning services for Florida's children and families by supporting the following primary goals for Florida's early learning system:

- Administer operational requirements of Florida's VPK Program in a timely and effective manner so that every 4-year-old child can receive a high-quality early learning opportunity.
- Oversee continuous quality improvement and accountability for quality, affordable early education and child care through the School Readiness Program, providing eligible working and underemployed families in Florida the opportunity to achieve economic self-sufficiency.
- Administer Child Care Resource and Referral programs to provide parents with consumer education on how to identify quality child care settings, full-choice of early learning opportunities for their children, and information on local community resources.

OEL is responsible for administering early learning programs and services at the state level. It is responsible for adopting and maintaining coordinated programmatic, administrative, and fiscal policies and standards for all local early learning coalitions. Florida's 30 early learning coalitions are responsible for planning and implementing early learning programs at the local level. In partnership with 30 early learning coalitions, the Redlands Christian Migrant Association and more than 11,100 child care providers, Florida's early learning programs serve more than 360,000 children and their families annually.

The following trends and conditions exist for administering and delivering Florida's early learning programs:

- Approximately 40 percent of the 1.3 million children younger than age 6 living in Florida are from low-income families who fall below 150 percent of the federal poverty level. According to the August 2014 Florida Demographic Database and the OEL Fact Book, school readiness programs serve approximately 25 percent of those children. Funding for school readiness programs has remained approximately constant.
- With current economic conditions, increased demand for child care (there is a monthly average of slightly more than 37,000 children on School Readiness Program waiting lists statewide), the rising cost of quality child care and increasing demands and requirements for child care providers, early learning coalitions must balance deciding whether to serve more children, pay more to providers or increase child care quality.
- With ongoing delivery of VPK and the demand for higher quality early learning educational programs, early learning coalitions are increasing monitoring and technical assistance activities to child care providers to ensure accountability and improve quality.
- Ongoing delivery of VPK has highlighted the need to ensure that there are enough willing, able and qualified providers and teachers to serve all of the families who want their children to participate in the program. There are administrative funding limitations at both state and local levels to systematically ensure that there are enough qualified early learning providers and teachers.

Partnering with the state's workforce system has filled some gaps, but additional funds are needed to ensure that there is a qualified early learning workforce to meet the demand.

- The current data system, the Enhanced Field System (EFS), cannot adequately support the administrative and programmatic needs of a statewide early learning system. EFS is a distributed data system that is more than 10 years old, outdated and independently maintained at each local early learning coalition or contractor site.

There are two initiatives currently in progress with modernizing the EFS application.

- Migrating as many of the distributed data systems from being hosted at each local coalition to the Northwest Regional Data Center (NWRDC). This will reduce the operating cost by going with one backup and disaster recovery solution. Also, the application has to run on Windows 2003 operating system, which is no longer supported. By hosting the data systems at NWRDC, the infrastructure has 2012 terminal servers in front of the operating system, which secures the data environment.
- Modernizing the current EFS application. The purpose of the EFS Modernization Project is to modernize the legacy system to function as a single statewide system rather than 30+ standalone environments. The modernization of the EFS system will provide a centralized information system allowing real-time access to critical program and financial data at both the state and local levels. This project will be completed at the end of June 2017.

EFS Modernization project goals and objectives:

- Centralized database
- System enhancements
- Increased security
- Automated attendance tracking component
- Automated reimbursement component
- Data and process consistency
- Automation of manual processes

## LRPP Exhibit II - Performance Measures and Standards

Department: Education	Department No.: 480000000
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Program: Early Learning	Code: 48220000
Service/Budget Entity: Early Learning Services	Code: 48220400

**NOTE: Approved primary service outcomes must be listed first.**

Approved Performance Measures for FY 2015-16 (Words)	Approved Prior Year Standard FY 2015-16 (Numbers)	Prior Year Actual FY 2015-16 (Numbers)	Approved Standards for FY 2016-17 (Numbers)	Requested FY 2017-18 Standard (Numbers)
Percentage of children "ready" for school when they enter kindergarten	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of 4-year-olds enrolled in Voluntary Prekindergarten	174,346	175,233	177,317	180,067

## LRPP Exhibit III: PERFORMANCE MEASURE ASSESSMENT

**Department:** Education

**Program:** Office of Early Learning

**Service/Budget Entity:** 48220400

**Measure:** 1.A. & 2.A. – Percentage of children ready for school

**Action:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Performance Assessment of <u>Outcome</u> Measure | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revision of Measure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Performance Assessment of <u>Output</u> Measure  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deletion of Measure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adjustment of GAA Performance Standards          |   |

Approved Standard	Actual Performance Results	Difference (Over/Under)	Percentage Difference
90.80%	N/A		

**Factors Accounting for the Difference:**

**Internal Factors** (check all that apply):

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personnel Factors           | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff Capacity              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Competing Priorities        | <input type="checkbox"/> Level of Training           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Previous Estimate Incorrect | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Identify) |

**Explanation:**

Tools do not exist for these measurements.

**External Factors** (check all that apply):

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resources Unavailable                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Technological Problems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legal/Legislative Change                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Disaster       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Target Population Change                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Identify)       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> This Program/Service Cannot Fix the Problem         |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Current Laws Are Working Against the Agency Mission |   |

**Explanation:**

**Management Efforts to Address Differences/Problems** (check all that apply):

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Training  | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personnel | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Identify) |

**Recommendations:**

Management working with DOE and Florida Legislature to identify performance measure assessment.

## LRPP EXHIBIT IV: Performance Measure Validity and Reliability

**Department:** Education

**Program:** Office of Early Learning

**Service/Budget Entity:** 48220400

**Measure:** Percentage of children ready for school

**Action** (check one):

- Requesting revision to approved performance measure.
- Change in data sources or measurement methodologies.
- Requesting new measure.
- Backup for performance measure.

**Data Sources and Methodology:**

Data source unknown at this time. Currently revising performance measure methodology.

**Validity:**

**Reliability:**

**LRPP Exhibit V: Identification of Associated Activity Contributing to Performance Measures**

Measure Number	Approved Performance Measures for FY 2016-17 (Words)		Associated Activities Title
1	Full Time Equivalent of Voluntary Prekindergarten children served		Provide Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Services
2	Full Time Equivalent School Readiness children served		Provide School Readiness Program Services
3			
4			
5			

EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF	FISCAL YEAR 2015-16		
	OPERATING		FIXED CAPITAL OUTLAY
SECTION I: BUDGET			
TOTAL ALL FUNDS GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT		1,025,447,803	135,000
ADJUSTMENTS TO GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT (Supplementals, Vetoes, Budget Amendments, etc.)		12,708,381	-135,000
FINAL BUDGET FOR AGENCY		1,038,156,184	0

SECTION II: ACTIVITIES * MEASURES	Number of Units	(1) Unit Cost	(2) Expenditures (Allocated)	(3) FCO
<i>Executive Direction, Administrative Support and Information Technology (2)</i>				
Provide School Readiness Services * <b>Number of children (FTE) served in School Readiness Program</b>	106,435	5,989.03	637,442,612	
Provide Voluntary Prekindergarten Services And System Support * <b>Number of children (FTE) served in VPK program (program year)</b>	154,399	28.78	4,444,237	
Provide Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Services * <b>Number of children (FTE) served in VPK program (program year)</b>	154,399	2,552.37	394,083,518	
TOTAL			1,035,970,367	

SECTION III: RECONCILIATION TO BUDGET			
PASS THROUGHS			
TRANSFER - STATE AGENCIES			
AID TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS			
PAYMENT OF PENSIONS, BENEFITS AND CLAIMS			
OTHER			
REVERSIONS			2,185,830
TOTAL BUDGET FOR AGENCY (Total Activities + Pass Throughs + Reversions) - Should equal Section I above. (4)			1,038,156,197

**SCHEDULE XI/EXHIBIT VI: AGENCY-LEVEL UNIT COST SUMMARY**

(1) Some activity unit costs may be overstated due to the allocation of double budgeted items.

(2) Expenditures associated with Executive Direction, Administrative Support and Information Technology have been allocated based on FTE. Other allocation methodologies could result in significantly different unit costs per activity.

(3) Information for FCO depicts amounts for current year appropriations only. Additional information and systems are needed to develop meaningful FCO unit costs.

(4) Final Budget for Agency and Total Budget for Agency may not equal due to rounding.



## **APPENDIX - GLOSSARY OF AGENCY'S UNIQUE TERMS AND ACRONYMS**

CCEP—Child Care Executive Partnership

CCR&R—Child Care Resource and Referral

ECHOS—Early Childhood Observation System

EFS—Enhanced Field System

ELC—Early Learning Coalition

OEL—Office of Early Learning

SR—School Readiness

VPK—Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program