



2024 EARLY LEARNING LEGISLATIVE SESSION WRAP UP

Fiscal Year 2024-25 Budget Highlights for Early Learning

\$1.7 billion for Early Learning programs

School Readiness (SR) Program Funding

- **\$1.2 billion** for SR – maintains current ELC level of funding and introduces New Funding

Current funding:

- \$70 million Gold Seal differentials
- \$40 million for SR Pay Differential Program
- \$30 million for SR Match Program, aligned to 70% State Median Income
- \$5 million Special Needs differentials
- \$950K for allocation of fraud restitution recoupment
- Authority to reallocate SR between coalitions with 14-day notice to House, Senate, and Governor's office

New funding:

- \$59.9 million in nonrecurring for SR Hold Harmless
- \$46.4 million in recurring GR for Provider Rate Increases
- \$40 million in nonrecurring placed in reserve for SR Expanded Services
- \$20 million in nonrecurring placed in reserve for SR Waitlist

- **\$34.3 million** for Partnerships for SR – maintains current levels and introduces New

Funding

- \$17 million for T.E.A.C.H.
 - Maintains current funding level in recurring funds; additional \$7 million in nonrecurring funds
 - **State level** contract with the Children's Forum
- \$4.5 million for Help Me Grow Florida Network
 - Maintains current funding level which includes \$1.8 million in recurring funds and Senate offers an additional \$2.7 million in nonrecurring funds
- \$3.9 million for HIPPY
 - Maintains current funding levels of \$1.4 million recurring and \$2.5 million nonrecurring
 - **State level** contract with University of South Florida
- \$3.5 million for implementation of SR program assessment and child assessment
 - Maintains current funding level in recurring funds; supports **state level** contracts for implementation (Teachstone, WELS, Brookes, QPS, and SR Regional Facilitator)
 - **State level** contract with the Children's Forum
- \$3 million for system of professional development
 - Maintains current funding level for **state level** contract (currently being competitively procured)



2024 EARLY LEARNING LEGISLATIVE SESSION WRAP UP

- \$700,000 for Jewish Pre-School Re-imagined & Young Adults
- \$500,000 for Florida Early Learning Corps Literacy Tutors
- \$500,000 for The Galileo Early Learning Center/Promoting Teacher Retention
- \$350,000 for Tiny Talkers Preschool Initiative
- \$325,000 for PEARLS
- \$71,000 for Brain Bag Literacy Program
- \$75,000 for Childcare Network Playgrounds for Military Communities - Bay County

Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program

- \$434.1 million for VPK Program – **ELC level**
 - School Year BSA increases from \$2,941 to \$3,029
 - Summer BSA increases from \$2,511 to \$2,586
 - Increases administrative costs from 4% to 5% (HB 5101)
- \$4.9 million for VPK program assessments and regional facilitators – Maintains current nonrecurring funds
 - \$2.8 million for VPK Child Care Program Assessments – ELC level
 - \$1.2 million for VPK Public/Non-Public Schools Program Assessments – ELC level
 - \$900K for VPK regional facilitators – **state level** contracted staff
- \$4.1 million to establish the Summer Bridge Program – **school districts** (HB 5101)
 - VPK students scoring below the tenth percentile on CSPM
 - Four hours of instruction per day for a minimum of 100 total hours

Additional Budget Investments

- \$300,000 – Customer Service Satisfaction Survey
- \$23 Million – School Readiness Plus Program (funded through HB 1267)

Back of Bill Sections

- Revert and reappropriate unexpended balances of ARPA Discretionary funds (not including the \$315M Discretionary Grant Program) for uses authorized in the ARP Act
- Revert and reappropriate unexpended balances of the Hurricane Ian Child Care Disaster funds, pursuant to budget amendment EOG #B2024-B0290, for the same purpose



2024 EARLY LEARNING LEGISLATIVE SESSION WRAP UP

2024 Policy Highlights for Early Learning

Six bills passed this session directly impacting Early Learning

HB 5101 – Education Conforming Bill

- Revises School Readiness allocation methodology to be based on proportionate share of estimated full-time enrollment equivalents, adjusted by a rate index to account for approved provider reimbursement rates.
- Requires the Department to adopt and coalitions to implement a sliding fee scale that increases a parent's contribution as family income increases.
- Provides early learning literacy skill instructional support through a Summer Bridge Program to VPK students who exhibit a substantial deficiency and scored below the 10th percentile on the final administration of the progress monitoring assessment.
- Increases the VPK administration percentage by 1 percent for a total of 5 percent, allowing coalitions to better support quality initiatives for VPK accountability.
- Beginning with the 2023-2024 program year, requires the Department to adopt a methodology for calculating each private prekindergarten provider's and public school provider's performance metric.
- Beginning with 2024-2025 program year, requires the Department to assign a designation to private prekindergarten providers or public schools within 45 days after the conclusion of the program.

HB 1267 – Economic Self Sufficiency

- Creates School Readiness Plus Program to extend benefits for School Readiness families from 85% to 100% of the State Median Income.
- Requires early learning coalitions to administer the program.
- Requires early learning coalitions to provide access to the benefit management and career planning tool.
 - Requires coalitions to consider family income and a required parent copayment that increases in relation to the family income when establishing the subsidy for the program.
- Provides \$23 Million for implementation of the program, with 5% for administrative costs. Holds the funds in reserve upon submission of a detailed allocation plan developed by the department in collaboration with the early learning coalitions.

HB 1361 – Education

- New Worlds Scholarship Accounts
 - Expands eligibility for New Worlds Scholarship Accounts to children in the VPK program who exhibit substantial deficiency in early literacy or mathematics skills on most recent progress monitoring.



2024 EARLY LEARNING LEGISLATIVE SESSION WRAP UP

- Requires school districts and private prekindergarten providers to notify parents of eligible students of the process to request and receive a scholarship when providing progress monitoring results.
- New Worlds Reading Initiative
 - Names University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning as the Administrator of the New Worlds Reading Initiative.
 - Requires the Department to provide named administrator with progress monitoring data for eligible PreK – 12 students within 30 days after close of each progress monitoring period.
- Creates New Worlds Tutoring Program to support school districts and schools in improving student achievement in reading and mathematics.
- Codifies the University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning in Statute with directive to:
 - Develop & administer program to improve achievement outcomes in early learning, literacy and mathematics
 - Provide professional learning for educators to improve the quality of instruction in early learning, literacy and mathematics, to include development of competency-based micro-credentials provided at low or no-cost, on-line or in-person
 - Provide TA and support to districts and schools in improving student achievement
 - Conduct & publish research on teaching and learning in early learning, literacy and mathematics as well as professional learning for educators
 - Administer the newly created New Worlds Tutoring Program
 - Collaborate with school districts on implementation of AI digital learning programs and award grant funds to eligible recipients (\$2M)

SB 7002 – Deregulation/School District Finance, Facilities, Administration and Oversight

- Allows newly hired VPK teachers/personnel 45 days from the date of hire to complete the required early literacy courses.

SB 7004 – Deregulation/Assessment and Accountability, Instruction, and Education Choice

- Allows School Districts to contract with private voluntary prekindergarten providers for provision of the Summer VPK Program.
- Revises coalition plan submission to Department from every 2 years to every 3 years (to align with CCDF plan cycle).
- Includes VPK students in school districts student progression plans.
- Expands the allocation of remedial and supplemental instruction resources to VPK students who have deficiencies in early literacy and early math.
- Expands requirements pertaining to parental notification to students in public school VPK programs that exhibit substantial deficiencies in early literacy and early math skills based upon the results of the midyear or final administration of the CSPM.



2024 EARLY LEARNING LEGISLATIVE SESSION WRAP UP

- Revises the administration of CSPM in Summer VPK programs to 2 times during the program rather than 3.

HB 7073 – Taxation

- Creates Child Care Tax Credit Program:
 - Provides tax credits to taxpayers who operates an eligible child care facility for the taxpayer’s employees (tax credit in the amount of 50 percent of startup costs and \$300 a month for each eligible child enrolled, with maximum tax credit amounts established); OR
 - Provides tax credits to taxpayers who makes payments to an eligible child care facility in the name and for the benefit of an employee employed by the taxpayer (tax credit in the amount of 100% of eligible payments up to max of \$3600 a year per eligible child, with maximum tax credit amounts established).
 - Maximum amount of tax credits available for Fiscal Years 2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27 is \$5 Million.