



## Message from the ELC

### This notice is about:

- |                                                                             |                                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Important Deadline                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Compliance with State Requirement    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Free Resource(s)                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development Opportunity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Readiness, VPK or other Contract Compliance | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Informational             |

Dear Early Education Partner,

As of the closing of the last state fiscal year, the percentage of School Readiness program dollars spent by the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe on direct services/child care slots continues to be one of the highest among Florida's 30 Early Learning Coalitions. In 2015, we enrolled every eligible preschool child from the waiting list resulting in our waiting list being eliminated for the first time ever. In Monroe County we eliminated the waiting list in 2013 and have kept it at zero ever since. In addition to clearing the waiting list, our 24/7 online application and telephone, text and e-mail follow-up with families continues to produce very low rates of attrition; allowing for more children than ever before to be retained in the School Readiness program during eligibility redetermination.

The great progress with enrollment and retention of children in the School Readiness program has created a waiting list of children 0 - 5 once again. The list is currently at 4,239 and grows daily as more families apply for child care services. To address the growing number of children 0-5 on the waiting list, an adjustment to the age groups being served is necessary effective November 1, 2016.

[Florida Statute 1002.87](#) requires Early Learning Coalitions to serve children in the School Readiness Program based on the following priorities:

1. a. a child younger than 13 years of age from a family that includes a parent who is receiving temporary cash assistance
2. b. at-risk child younger than 9
3. c. a child from birth to the beginning of the school year for which the child is eligible for admission to kindergarten who is from a working family who is economically disadvantaged

Note: There are several other priorities defined in statute, but based on funding availability we focus on just the first three.

In keeping with the spirit of the statute and our Board of Directors' priorities, effective November 1st, an eligible child from a Miami-Dade working family who is economically disadvantaged (Priority Group "c." above) will continue to benefit from the School Readiness Program until the child's sixth birthday. Parents will be responsible for payments for any services provided once the child turns 6 years of age. This will not impact children younger than 13 years of age from a family that includes a parent who is receiving temporary cash assistance or at-risk children younger than 9.

If we are once again able to eliminate the waiting list of children 0-5 we will revisit the eligibility priorities with the goal of expanding services to serve additional school aged children.

Providers and parents will receive additional information related eligibility periods for school aged who are currently participating in the School Readiness program. Our Child Care Resource and Referral staff are available to assist families who may need information about other resources available in the community.

We thank you for your partnership as together we strive to provide high-quality early care and education services to all the children of our communities.



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