

3.1.5 School Readiness Funded Provider License Policy

Date approved: 12/06/2010

Purpose: To establish a standardized policy statement requiring licenses for providers in Miami-Dade County who participate in the School Readiness program and receive funding from the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe (the "Coalition").

Policy Statement: With an effective date of January 1, 2011 (except for existing providers, who shall be required to comply by July 1, 2011), this policy statement sets the policy in Miami-Dade County for Providers applying to contract with the Coalition to provide School Readiness funded services. All Providers must be licensed by the Department of Children & Families ("DCF") in order to be eligible to enter into School Readiness contracts with the Coalition, except for: (i) Religiously-exempt faith-based organizations under ss. 402.316, F.S. ("Religiously-Exempt, Faith-Based Organizations"); (ii) Miami-Dade County School System programs, provided the programs are operated and staffed directly by the schools and meet all other requirements under ss. 402.3025, F.S. ("Miami-Dade County School System Programs"); and (iii) Informal providers, defined as unregulated child care arranged by the child's parent, either in the child's home or elsewhere, provided by relatives, friends, or neighbors ("Informal Providers"). Providers must satisfy eligibility requirements as set forth in the Provider Agreement for School Readiness Funded Services.

Rationale: To ensure a system of accountability for the health and safety of children and the accountability and management of tax payer funded services.

Procedures: Effective January 1, 2011 (except for existing providers, who shall be required to comply by July 1, 2011), the Coalition will accept School Readiness Provider Agreement contracts only from providers who are licensed by DCF. This requirement applies to after-school programs and school-age programs that are not operated and staffed directly by the school system; child enrichment providers; and summer camps. This requirement shall not apply to (i) Religiously-Exempt Faith-Based Organizations; (ii) Miami-Dade County School System Programs; and (iii) Informal Providers.

Unlicensed providers submitting a contract will have the contract returned to them unprocessed and notified in writing of the Coalition's decision. The provider will also receive notice of the right to appeal the decision. Appeals will be governed by the Coalition's Grievance Policy. If the Provider fails to appeal the action within 30 business days from receiving written notification of the Coalition's actions, the action becomes final.

Once the provider receives a valid license from DCF, it is eligible to reapply to provide School Readiness Funded Services. Coalition funds will not be used to reimburse any unlicensed provider who is not exempt pursuant to the terms set forth in this Policy Statement. Non-exempt unlicensed providers serving children do so at their own risk and expense.

A licensed provider whose license is revoked, suspended, or otherwise rendered invalid will not receive reimbursement for any period of time during which its license was revoked, suspended, or otherwise rendered invalid.

Parents of children enrolled with non-exempt unlicensed providers will be notified that the provider is not approved to provide school readiness services. Parents will be given Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) assistance to locate an approved provider and will receive a maximum of thirty (30) business days to secure alternate child care arrangements. Any parent

who wishes to maintain their child in the identified program may continue with the unlicensed program at their own expense and without benefit of funding from the Coalition.

Providers are responsible for submitting updated licenses to the Coalition. The School Readiness staff will track the license expiration dates of approved providers, notify providers in writing of an expired license and request a copy of the new license. Providers who fail to submit an updated license will be suspended from the School Readiness program until they provide a valid license.