

By Senator Taddeo

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1                   A bill to be entitled  
2       An act relating to the school readiness program;  
3       amending s. 1002.81, F.S.; revising the definition of  
4       the term "economically disadvantaged"; amending s.  
5       1002.84, F.S.; requiring early learning coalitions to  
6       adopt a payment rate schedule rather than a payment  
7       schedule; providing requirements for the payment rate  
8       schedule; requiring early learning coalitions to  
9       reimburse contracted school readiness program  
10      providers the minimum payment rate; providing that  
11      minimum payment rate reimbursements must be charged as  
12      direct services; amending s. 1002.85, F.S.; revising  
13      the required contents of early learning coalition  
14      plans; amending s. 1002.895, F.S.; conforming  
15      provisions to changes made by the act; directing the  
16      Division of Early Learning within the Department of  
17      Education to amend its Child Care and Development Fund  
18      Plan to identify certain personnel as essential  
19      workers for a specified purpose; requiring the  
20      division to annually collect certain data and include  
21      such data in a specified annual report; providing for  
22      the scheduled expiration of such directive; providing  
23      an effective date.

24  
25   Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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27       Section 1. Subsection (6) of section 1002.81, Florida  
28       Statutes, is amended to read:

29       1002.81 Definitions.—Consistent with the requirements of 45

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30 C.F.R. parts 98 and 99 and as used in this part, the term:

31 (6) "Economically disadvantaged" means having a family  
32 income that does not exceed 150 percent of the federal poverty  
33 level or 70 percent of the state median income, whichever is  
34 greater, and includes being a child of a working migratory  
35 family as defined by 34 C.F.R. s. 200.81(d) or (f) or an  
36 agricultural worker ~~who is~~ employed by more than one  
37 agricultural employer during the course of a year, and whose  
38 income varies according to weather conditions and market  
39 stability.

40 Section 2. Subsection (17) of section 1002.84, Florida  
41 Statutes, is amended to read:

42 1002.84 Early learning coalitions; school readiness powers  
43 and duties.—Each early learning coalition shall:

44 (17) Adopt a payment rate schedule that encompasses all  
45 programs funded under this part and part V of this chapter. The  
46 payment rate schedule must identify a minimum payment rate for  
47 each provider type and care level and must take into  
48 consideration the prevailing market rate or an alternative model  
49 ~~that has been~~ approved by the Administration for Children and  
50 Families pursuant to 45 C.F.R. s. 98.45(c), ~~include the~~  
51 ~~projected number of children to be served~~, and that must be  
52 submitted for approval by the department. Each early learning  
53 coalition shall reimburse the minimum payment rate to each  
54 contracted school readiness program provider, by provider type  
55 and care level, regardless of such provider's private pay rate.  
56 All minimum payment rate reimbursements must be charged as  
57 direct services under s. 1002.89. Informal child care  
58 arrangements must ~~shall~~ be reimbursed at not more than 50

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59 percent of the rate adopted for a family day care home.

60 Section 3. Subsection (5) of section 1002.85, Florida  
61 Statutes, is amended to read:

62 1002.85 Early learning coalition plans.—

63 (5) The department shall collect and report data on  
64 coalition delivery of early learning programs. Elements must  
65 ~~shall~~ include, but are not limited to, measures related to  
66 progress towards reducing the number of children on the waiting  
67 list, the percentage of children served by the program as  
68 compared to the number of administrative staff and overhead, the  
69 percentage of children served compared to total number of  
70 children under the age of 5 years below 150 percent of the  
71 federal poverty level or 60 percent of the state median income,  
72 whichever is greater, provider payment processes, fraud  
73 intervention, child attendance and stability, use of child care  
74 resource and referral, and kindergarten readiness outcomes for  
75 children in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program or  
76 the school readiness program upon entry into kindergarten. The  
77 department shall request input from the coalitions and school  
78 readiness program providers before finalizing the format and  
79 data to be used. The report must ~~shall~~ be implemented beginning  
80 July 1, 2014, and results of the report must be included in the  
81 annual report under s. 1002.82.

82 Section 4. Subsection (4) of section 1002.895, Florida  
83 Statutes, is amended to read:

84 1002.895 Market rate schedule.—The school readiness program  
85 market rate schedule shall be implemented as follows:

86 (4) The market rate schedule must ~~shall~~ be considered by an  
87 early learning coalition in the adoption of a payment rate

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88 schedule. The payment rate schedule must take into consideration  
89 the prevailing market rate and include the projected number of  
90 children to be served by each county and be submitted for  
91 approval by the department. Informal child care arrangements  
92 must ~~shall~~ be reimbursed at not more than 50 percent of the rate  
93 adopted for a family day care home.

94 Section 5. (1) As the lead agency for the Child Care and  
95 Development Block Grant Trust Fund, pursuant to 45 C.F.R. parts  
96 98 and 99, the Division of Early Learning within the Department  
97 of Education shall amend its Child Care and Development Fund  
98 Plan to identify child care personnel as essential workers for  
99 the purpose of such personnel's children being determined  
100 eligible for the school readiness program.

101 (2) (a) The division shall annually collect the total number  
102 of child care personnel in this state whose children were  
103 determined eligible for the school readiness program,  
104 disaggregated by county; the total number of such children  
105 served by the school readiness program, disaggregated by age;  
106 the total cost to serve such children; and whether such children  
107 being determined eligible for the school readiness program led  
108 to the retention of such child care personnel.

109 (b) The information collected pursuant to paragraph (a)  
110 must be included in the department's annual report required  
111 under s. 1002.82(7), Florida Statutes.

112 (3) This section expires on September 30, 2024, unless  
113 reviewed and saved from repeal through reenactment by the  
114 Legislature.

115 Section 6. This act shall take effect July 1, 2022.