



Early Care & Education Provider Contract Agreement 2010/2011

Early Care and Education Site Name (legal name on license or on license-exempt certificate): _____

Phone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____

Address _____ City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Contact Name _____ Email _____

License # _____ or if License Exempt check here: _____

Are you participating in the Look for the Stars Quality Improvement System? ____ Yes ____ No

Are you a Gold Seal Accredited provider? ____ Yes ____ No

If yes, list Accreditation _____ Accreditation Expiration Date _____

This is a binding Contract Agreement between you, as an Early Care and Education/Child Care Provider and the Early Learning Coalition of Sarasota County (ELC), and is in effect from July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011. This Contract Agreement holds the Provider responsible to adhere to the requirements and standards within their program, benefiting all children and families, as outlined in this Contract Agreement.

Please read carefully before signing

Providers who sign this Contract Agreement are eligible to receive funding for school readiness children, as long as they are in compliance with the conditions of the contract, meet minimum requirements set forth in this contract, have completed all SR provider paperwork, and are approved by the ELC. Non-compliance with any part of this contract may result in any of the following: non-payment of early learning coalition funding, the removal of scholarship children, the removal of at-risk children, and the suspension or termination of this Contract Agreement. The existence of this provider Contract Agreement does not however require or guarantee placement of children in the Provider's School Readiness program. Children are placed with providers based on parental choice, funding availability, current capacity, and compliance with required standards.

All VPK providers are encouraged to sign this Contract Agreement, but must sign the State of Florida VPK Education Provider Agreement, Form AWI-VPK 20, and adhere to all legislative mandates.

The services offered by the Coalition to providers to support their programs and enhance quality as well as those additional services offered through the Look for the Stars Quality Improvement System are outlined in this Contract Agreement. Please refer to the appropriate section at the end of this contract for the level of services that you are specifically entitled to.

Florida Statute Chapter 411.01, (revised in 2005), establishes requirements for all publicly funded school readiness programs. By accepting and signing this agreement, you are signifying that you will comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations of the Coalition.

Review and initial this box _____

Early Care and Education Providers meet the Department of Children and Families/Sarasota County Health Department licensing standards.

- Meet or exceed all Florida state child care licensing guidelines, as defined by Section 411.01, F.S.; Section 402.305, F.S.; FAC Chapter 65C-22 (Centers) and FAC Chapter 75C-20 (Family Homes).
- Post all Sarasota County Health Department licensing (SCHD) monitoring reports/corrective action for the past 6 months by the current Sarasota County Health Department license (SCHD licensed programs) or the license-exempt agency certificate (non-SCHD licensed programs).
- Correct all out of compliance items documented by the SCHD in a timely manner. (Note: An ad-hoc committee will review programs with excessive violations and recommendations will be made to the Coalition, which will make the final decision on the program's ability to continue to serve school readiness children.)
- The Provider will promote children's healthy development and protect children and staff from illness and injury. Provide a safe and healthy environment as defined by DCF, the Sarasota County Health Department, the Early Learning Coalition of Sarasota County and the Agency for Workforce Innovation.
- The Provider will maintain a safe and healthy environment that provides appropriate and well-maintained indoor and outdoor space.
- Provide proof of satisfactory Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Criminal Background Checks on all employees in compliance with current laws
- Afford parents unlimited access to their child and their caregivers during normal hours of provider operation.
- Allow ELC designated staff to make site visits to monitor licensing standards, quality improvements, compliance with the state mandated school readiness standards, VPK compliance, and ongoing child assessments. Technical assistance and other trainings can be arranged as needed.
- Report any evidence or suspicion of abuse, neglect or exploitation of children receiving child care services, as mandated by Florida Statute. Hotline number 1-800-96 ABUSE.

Early Care and Education Providers and staff, center-based and family-based, meet all state and locally mandated training requirements and provide for continued staff development.

Early Care and Education Providers establish an appropriate environment for children.

- To enhance the educational readiness of the child by preparing the child to enter school ready to learn and to support the child's school progress through developmentally appropriate practices.
- Offer a coalition-approved, research-based, developmentally appropriate school readiness curriculum, which aligns with early learning standards set forth by the Office of Early Learning.
- Provide programs that are inclusive and support the development of all children.
- Offer an approved character development component for children to develop basic values formatted to fit the needs of each program including faith based programs.
- Have a parent involvement component within the program.
- Establish guidelines that encourage all staff to obtain a minimum of an FCCPC or equivalent credential and pursue higher education as desired.
- The Provider will promote positive relationships among all children and adults to encourage each child's sense of individual worth and to foster each child's ability to contribute as a responsible community member. At a minimum the provider shall:
 - ✓ Develop and implement a child discipline policy that demonstrates the use of positive, realistic and developmentally appropriate guidance/discipline techniques.
 - ✓ The program is prohibited from using corporal punishment (i.e. spanking) or any discipline methods that hurt, humiliate or frighten children or any discipline techniques associated with food, rest, or toileting
 - ✓ Distribute a copy of the child discipline policy to 100% of the children's parents/guardians and staff.
 - ✓ Request assistance for a challenging child and notify the Coalition prior to making a decision to ask a child to leave the program

- Provide the following specific activities outlined in the school readiness legislation:
 - ✓ Activities to foster brain development in infants and toddlers
 - ✓ An environment rich in language and music, filled with objects of various colors, shapes, textures, and sizes to stimulate visual, tactile, auditory, and linguistic senses in the child
 - ✓ At least thirty (30) minutes of classical music and thirty (30) minutes of reading to the child spread throughout the day, as appropriate
 - ✓ Information to parents on brain development and the importance of 0-5 years on development.

Early Care and Education Providers conduct individualized and ongoing assessments of all children in care.

- The Provider will use ongoing formal and informal screening and assessment approaches with children birth to kindergarten entry to collect information on children's learning and development. Assessment results will be used to guide teaching and program improvement. The Provider will share screening and assessment information with parents/guardians.
- Provider will utilize the Ages & Stages, or other developmental screening and referral processes set forth by the ELC for children birth-kindergarten, minimally for school readiness scholarship children.
- Provider will participate with the Coalition's pre/post assessment program as required by the Coalition for designated scholarship children and should conduct formal pre/post assessments for all children
- The Provider will implement instructional assessment procedures for children birth to five that are linked with the program's curriculum. These procedures will measure each child's progress in attaining the age appropriate early learning standards adopted by the Agency for Workforce Innovation and/or the Florida Department of Education for children birth to kindergarten entry.
- Provider will offer or take advantage of offered vision and hearing screenings for children, birth-kindergarten, according to ELC guidelines.

Early Care and Education Providers support family involvement and cultural diversity.

- Provider will actively encourage parental involvement in each child's early care and education.
- Provider promotes a family friendly environment that helps to support families and positive parent interaction
- Provider will establish and maintain collaborative relationships with each child's family to foster children's development. At a minimum the Provider will:
 - ✓ Maintain documentation of a written policy informing parents/guardians of their rights to access their children and to the providers caring for their children during normal hours of operation or whenever the child is in care. This policy shall be distributed to 100% of parents/guardians and staff.
 - ✓ Provide parents/ guardians with a program handbook that includes information such as: philosophy and goals; calendar; attendance policy; parental access to children while in the Provider's care; child sign-in/sign-out procedures; age appropriate methods and experiences used to attain developmental goals; site emergency/disaster plans, child discipline policy, expectations for parent/family participation; and ways parents can promote learning at home and within the community to help their children be successful in an early education environment.
- Provider promotes family literacy activities.
- Provider involves families in many learning opportunities, so that learning is a positive experience for all children.
- Provider strives to provide multi-lingual staff whenever possible and always respect diversity in meeting the needs of children and their parents as well as provide a culturally sensitive environment.

Early Care and Education Providers operate professionally and meet all requirements as required by the ELC.

- Provider works towards goals identified in a Quality Improvement Plan as either part of the Look for the Stars QIS or a self -assessment process if not part of the QIS, and/or an accreditation track.
- Provider commits to work toward maintaining and improving the quality of their early child care center or home, and meet or exceed the state legislative requirements for school readiness and early learning

standards.

- Provider cooperates in completing Improvement Plan in response to any monitoring or assessment process, according to ELC guidelines.
- Providers have a disaster plan in place and staff is familiar with procedures to follow.
- Providers report any daily-unexcused absence of any identified at-risk children as required in the Rilya Wilson Act (BG1 or BG3R), by the end of the first business day, or after the seventh consecutive excused day to the Safe Children Coalition. All programs sign the reporting policy form as issued by the ELC.
- Providers ensure confidentiality of the child's records. Information associated with scholarship services shall only be available to the provider, the legal parent/guardian, and duly designated representatives of the Office of Early Learning, ELC, DCF and Department of Health, unless there is a court order requiring the opposite.
- Providers involved in school readiness program collect any parent fees, registration, activity, transportation, tuition and late-pick-up fees directly from the parent/guardian.
- Providers involved in the school readiness program submit the school readiness scholarship parent fees report with the monthly attendance sheets by the second working day of the following month.
- Providers will submit current information about their program to Child Care Resource and Referral. This information will be used to inform parents/guardians about the services the Provider offers.
- Provider will report any unusual incidents to the Coalition. An unusual incident is defined as any serious event involving the health and safety of children, and/or any event that is likely to place the Provider or the Coalition at risk or cause negative public reaction.
- Providers involved in school readiness program understand that falsifying records to obtain School Readiness Program funds is a criminal offense. Any suspected fraudulent activity will be referred to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) for investigation. Any Provider convicted of fraudulent activity is precluded from participating in the School Readiness Program.
- Providers will comply with child care licensing standards as well as early learning coalition policies and procedures and will stay informed by reading pertinent notices, coalition newsletters, attending scheduled provider meetings and/or coalition meetings, participating in training and other informational sessions and by accessing the SCHD and/or state licensing website, or ELC website to get current updates.
- Providers will have the ability to request a fair hearing when a situation cannot be resolved according to the Coalition's Grievance Policy.

Early Care and Education Providers follow attendance reporting requirements

Initial here _____ to acknowledge your understanding of attendance reporting requirements:

- Provider must maintain accurate attendance records for the children in care. Attendance records must include daily sign-in/sign-out sheets, in ink, with time of arrival and departure of each child listed and *parent/guardian/authorized designee full signature*.
- Sign-in/sign-out sheets may not be signed in advance or signed for the parent/guardian by child care staff. Using "white-out" on sign-in/sign-out sheets is not permitted. (Note: Attendance taken by Providers is a requirement of SCHD and must be continued.)
- Providers that use computerized attendance sheets need to be able to generate attendance reports with date, time, and some identifying component such as signature or PIN.
- Providers will provide original parent sign-in/sign-out sheets to ELC as requested for monitoring. Failure to maintain accurate sign-in/sign-out sheets may result in loss of payment for any days in question.
- Providers maintain, for audit purposes, original sign-in/sign-out sheets and copies of attendance records submitted to ELC for a minimum of five years (60 months). The Provider will not destroy any documents involved in an audit that relate to the School Readiness Program until authorized by the Coalition. Records must be kept even if the provider closes or is no longer serving school readiness children. Providers may be held responsible for any payments that may be disallowed by the State of Florida, Agency for Workforce Innovation.
- Providers allow Coalition designated staff to complete post-audit attendance reviews, which will include a comparison of the parent's sign-in/sign-out sheets and attendance forms for their child.

I have read and understand the terms and conditions of this Early Learning Provider Contract Agreement. I agree to the terms and conditions as outlined. I am legally authorized to obligate my business, an early learning program, to the terms and conditions of this agreement. I understand that signature of this agreement will allow for scholarship children to attend my program and I will receive payment for services rendered. Non-compliance with any part of this agreement however may result in any of the following: non-payment of early learning coalition funding, the removal of scholarship children, the removal of at-risk children, and the suspension or termination of this Contract Agreement. This Contract Agreement is in effect from July 1, 2010 and is valid through June 30, 2011. In the event the Office of Early Learning of the Agency for Workforce Innovation or the Early Learning Coalition of Sarasota County requires changes to this agreement, the Coalition reserves the right to amend this Contract Agreement. The Coalition can, with thirty (30) days notice, with or without cause, terminate this agreement. Notice from the Coalition will be delivered by certified mail, return receipt requested, or in person with proof of delivery. In the event funds to finance this agreement become unavailable, the Coalition may terminate the Agreement upon no less than twenty-four (24) hours notice in writing to the Provider. **Initial here** _____

With this signed Contract Agreement, the Coalition will offer the following services to all early care and education providers in Sarasota County:

- community wide workshops and trainings
- continuing education scholarships for teachers, with a one-time annual reimbursement up to \$100
- developmental screening for school readiness children
- hearing and vision screenings
- warm line *telephone* consultation
- access to resource room materials
- directors connection series

With this Contract Agreement along with a signed and returned Look for the Stars QIS contract form, the following additional services are offered through the community funded initiative to those providers who specifically choose to participate in the Look for the Stars program, including:

- mini-grants/quality materials
- coaching and technical assistance
- individualized consultations for special needs children and challenging behavior
- on-site trainings and consultation
- infant/toddler program support
- professional development consultations
- free materials/equipment
- literacy program enhancements
- targeted trainings and workshops
- sustaining payments
- retention bonus
- education scholarships for teachers
- DECA program training and support

The curriculum currently implemented at my site is: _____

The character development program currently implemented at my site is: _____

The tool used to screen children at my site is: _____

The instrument used to assess children at my site is: _____

Initial here _____ **If you can not identify each of the above contact the Coalition.**

Note: Providers who chose to participate in the Look for the stars QIS must also sign the Look for the Stars Agreement. Providers who chose not to participate must sign an opt-out statement indicating that decision.

I agree to adhere to the requirement and standards as outlined in this Contract Agreement per my signature below:

Signature of Authorized Provider Representative

Printed Name

Early Learning Coalition of Sarasota County Representative

Return signed agreement to Early Learning Coalition at address below.

PLEASE KEEP A COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS

Early Learning Coalition of Sarasota County
Child Care Provider Contract Agreement FY 2010-2011
1750 17th Street, Building L
Sarasota, FL 34234
941-954-4830