

May 2010



Dear Sarasota County Child Care Provider,

Enclosed is the 2010/2011 Early Learning Coalition Early Care and Education Provider Contract Agreement.

Please review the Contract Agreement carefully and make sure that you are complying with all of the requirements as outlined. **Every provider that serves school readiness scholarship children and/or is part of the Look for Stars Quality Improvement System must complete, sign, and return the Contract Agreement postmarked no later than June 14, 2010. Without a signed Contract Agreement in place the Coalition will not be able to process July payments.**

The state is currently working on establishing a unified contract for school readiness providers, as they have done for the VPK program. Until that contract is in place all providers serving school readiness children will continue to sign and return the Coalition's Contract Agreement and complete the paperwork required by the Coalition's Child Care Connection office.

Outlined in the Contract Agreement are the services offered to providers by the Coalition to support programs and enhance quality, as well as the additional services offered through the **Look for the Stars Quality Improvement System**. Please refer to the Contract Agreement for the level of services that your program is entitled to. Most of the services offered through the Coalition are available **only** to providers who have signed and returned the Contract Agreement. For that reason **all providers**, are encouraged to return the Contract Agreement.

As you know, a responsibility of the Coalition is to ensure that all child care sites meet or exceed licensing and state legislated standards. The Coalition is fulfilling that requirement through the environment rating scale assessments of school readiness and participating VPK providers, along with assessments of other providers that have specifically asked to be included in the process.

Legislative expectations for providers include use of the Florida Performance Standards to guide program practices, screening and assessment of children, implementation of an appropriate curriculum with a literacy component, and use of a character development program.

To ensure that these expectations are met, providers must list on the Contract Agreement the **curriculum** and **character development program** they are using and the **screening** and **assessment** tools they utilize. Providers who do not have these four program components in place **will be not be approved to serve school readiness scholarship children** until they can demonstrate that these four required elements are being appropriately implemented in their program. If a provider is using a curriculum that is not on the Coalition's approved list that provider must demonstrate that the curriculum being used meets all domains in the Florida Performance Standards.

For sites that serve school readiness scholarship children the Coalition's expectation is that they will engage in a process of **continuous quality improvement** to achieve a minimum level of demonstrated quality, defined as the *equivalent of the criteria* for a "3 star level site," even for those providers who are not fully participating in the Look for the Stars program.

We value and appreciate your commitment to quality care for children and look forward to continuing to work with you on this common goal.

Janet Kahn,
Executive Director