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The 2024 Florida Statutes (including 2025 Special Session C)

[Title XLVIII](#)
EARLY LEARNING-20
EDUCATION CODE

[Chapter 1002](#)
STUDENT AND PARENTAL RIGHTS AND
EDUCATIONAL CHOICES

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1002.83 Early learning coalitions.—

(1) Thirty or fewer early learning coalitions are established and shall maintain direct enhancement services at the local level and provide access to such services in all 67 counties. Two or more early learning coalitions may join for purposes of planning and implementing a school readiness program and the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program.

(2) Each early learning coalition shall be composed of at least 15 members but not more than 30 members.

(3) The Governor shall appoint the chair and two other members of each early learning coalition, who must each meet the qualifications of a private sector business member under subsection (6). In the absence of a governor-appointed chair, the Commissioner of Education may appoint an interim chair from the current early learning coalition board membership.

(4) Each early learning coalition must include the following member positions; however, in a multicounty coalition, each ex officio member position may be filled by multiple nonvoting members but no more than one voting member shall be seated per member position. If an early learning coalition has more than one member representing the same entity, only one of such members may serve as a voting member:

(a) A Department of Children and Families regional administrator or his or her permanent designee who is authorized to make decisions on behalf of the department.

(b) A district superintendent of schools or his or her permanent designee who is authorized to make decisions on behalf of the district.

(c) A local workforce development board executive director or his or her permanent designee.

(d) A county health department director or his or her designee.

(e) A children's services council or juvenile welfare board chair or executive director from each county, if applicable.

(f) A Department of Children and Families child care regulation representative or an agency head of a local licensing agency as defined in s. [402.302](#), where applicable.

(g) A president of a Florida College System institution or his or her permanent designee.

(h) One member appointed by a board of county commissioners or the governing board of a municipality.

(i) A Head Start director.

(j) A representative of private for-profit child care providers, including private for-profit family day care homes.

(k) A representative of faith-based child care providers.

(l) A representative of programs for children with disabilities under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

(5) If members of the board are found to be nonparticipating according to the early learning coalition bylaws, the early learning coalition may request an alternate designee who meets the same qualifications or membership requirements of the nonparticipating member.

(6) The early learning coalition may appoint additional members who must be private sector business members, either for-profit or nonprofit, who do not have, and none of whose relatives as defined in s. [112.3143](#) has, a

substantial financial interest in the design or delivery of the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program created under part V of this chapter or the school readiness program. The department shall establish criteria for appointing private sector business members. These criteria must include standards for determining whether a member or relative has a substantial financial interest in the design or delivery of the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program or the school readiness program.

(7) A majority of the voting membership of an early learning coalition constitutes a quorum required to conduct the business of the coalition. An early learning coalition may use any method of telecommunications to conduct meetings, including establishing a quorum through telecommunications, provided that the public is given proper notice of a telecommunications meeting and reasonable access to observe and, when appropriate, participate.

(8) A voting member of an early learning coalition may not appoint a designee to act in his or her place, except as otherwise provided in this subsection. A voting member may send a representative to coalition meetings, but that representative does not have voting privileges. When a regional administrator for the Department of Children and Families appoints a designee to an early learning coalition, the designee is the voting member of the coalition, and any individual attending in the designee's place, including the district administrator, does not have voting privileges.

(9) Each member of an early learning coalition is subject to ss. 112.313, 112.3135, and 112.3143. For purposes of s. 112.3143(3)(a), each voting member is a local public officer who must abstain from voting when a voting conflict exists.

(10) For purposes of tort liability, each member or employee of an early learning coalition shall be governed by s. 768.28.

(11) An early learning coalition serving a multicounty region must include representation from each county.

(12) Each early learning coalition shall establish terms for all appointed members of the coalition. The terms must be staggered and must be a uniform length that does not exceed 4 years per term. Appointed members may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. When a vacancy occurs in an appointed position, the coalition must advertise the vacancy.

(13) State, federal, and local matching funds provided to the early learning coalitions may not be used directly or indirectly to pay for meals, food, or beverages for coalition members, coalition employees, or subcontractor employees. Preapproved, reasonable, and necessary per diem allowances and travel expenses may be reimbursed. Such reimbursement shall be at the standard travel reimbursement rates established in s. 112.061 and must comply with applicable federal and state requirements.

(14) Each early learning coalition shall complete an annual evaluation of the early learning coalition's executive director or chief executive officer on forms adopted by the department. The annual evaluation must be submitted to the commissioner by August 30 of each year.

(15) Each school district shall, upon request of the coalition, make a list of all individuals currently eligible to act as a substitute teacher within the school district, pursuant to rules adopted by the school district pursuant to s. 1012.35, available to an early learning coalition serving students within the school district. Child care facilities as defined in s. 402.302 may employ individuals listed as substitute instructors for the purpose of offering the school readiness program, the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program, and all other legally operating child care programs.

(16) Each early learning coalition shall adopt a best-practices plan for transitioning prekindergarten students into kindergarten. The plan must provide for:

(a) Opportunities for prekindergarten students and their parents to visit schools in which they may be enrolled in kindergarten.

(b) Written information for parents on school registration and academic and social expectations for kindergarten.

(c) Meetings at least annually with school districts and charter schools in the coalition's service area to identify and address areas for improvement in transitioning prekindergarten students into kindergarten.

(d) Transferring prekindergarten student information for continuity in progress monitoring and the provision of supports.

The office shall provide guidelines for successful kindergarten transitions to early learning coalitions, school districts, charter schools, and parents to assist with the implementation of this subsection.

History.—s. 17, ch. 2013-252; s. 177, ch. 2014-17; s. 46, ch. 2016-216; s. 26, ch. 2020-144; s. 8, ch. 2021-9; s. 50, ch. 2021-10.