

# VPK Contract Orientation 2026-27

March 25, 2026

**WELCOME!**

**Please enter your name, your center name,  
and your email address in the chat.**

**THANK YOU!**



# ELC Staff Introductions

Melanie Stefanowicz, Chief Executive Officer

Richard “Rick” Cocchieri, Chief Financial Officer

Cheryl Carpenter, Chief of Early Childhood Education

Elizabeth “Beth” McBride, Chief of Programs Services

Brenda Griffin, Director of Early Childhood Education

Lexie Vazquez, Manager of Compliance



# THE TIMELINE

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A Very Wise Person

# 2026 -2027 VPK School Year



## Application

Parents begin applying for VPK Voucher January 1, 2026

Profile completed by Provider, March 6, 2026

VPK Contract and App initiated by the ELC

## Orientation

VPK Orientation for all Providers: March 25, 2026.  
\*Required for advanced payment\*

Provider updates and submits VPK Contract and App

ELC certifies Contract and App. Provider enrolls children by June 20, 2026

## Training

VPK Test Administrator Training opens. May 1, 2026

ELC approves enrollments once provider reaches 4 children

Enrollments must be approved by ELC July 10, to guarantee advance for August 2026

Enrollments must be in by July 15 to guarantee advanced payment for September 2026

## FAST TESTING

FAST testing window for PM 1 opens the first day of school, it takes 48 hours for an enrollment to show in Renaissance. All teachers administering the test must have documents uploaded to the Portal before testing begins. VPK FAST Star Early Literacy Test Administrator certificate should be uploaded to the portal upon completion.

## CLASS

CLASS assessments for all VPK rooms can begin 15 days after the start date of each class.

# PROVIDER PORTAL REMINDERS

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A complete profile today prevents delays

# Provider Portal Reminders

All providers must have a certified profile in the portal to begin contracting.

- A **completed W9** is required each year
- Update your **E-Verify**
  - Be sure to include your title and have it notarized

If you need help, please contact:  
[Angelica.Zavala@elcoswfl.org](mailto:Angelica.Zavala@elcoswfl.org) or  
[Yanely.Cruz@elcofswfl.org](mailto:Yanely.Cruz@elcofswfl.org)





# VPK ADVANCE PAYMENTS

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What the Law Allows

vs.

What Actually Happens

# What Florida Law & Rule Allow

## VPK ADVANCE

**Florida's Administrative Code Rule 6M-8.301 permits:**

- Advance payments **based on projected enrollment**
- Required **reconciliation to actual attendance**

**Florida's Division of Early Learning requires Coalitions to:**

- Ensure **accurate attendance-based reimbursement**
- **Recoup overpayments** and correct underpayments



# What This Means in Practice

## VPK ADVANCE

Advance  $\neq$  earned revenue

- Payments must be **trued up monthly and at year-end**
  - Fluctuations in:
  - Enrollment
  - Attendance
  - Withdrawals

➔ Result in **frequent recalculations and adjustments**



# Operational Impact on Providers

## VPK ADVANCE

**End-of-Year payments are often:**

- **Minimal or \$0**
- **Negative (repayment required)**

**This creates:**

- **Cash flow disruption**
- **Budget instability**
- **Confusion due to multiple adjustments**



# Operational Impact the Coalition

## VPK ADVANCE

### Intensive reconciliation workload:

- Monthly adjustments
- Year-end reconciliation
- Retroactive corrections
  - (5-year lookbacks required by DEL)

### Increased risk of:

- Errors
- Delayed payments
- Audit findings



# Recommended Approach: Payment Based on Actual Attendance

## VPK ADVANCE

### Provides:

- Predictable, accurate payments
- Reduced risk of repayment
- Clear audit trail

### Benefits to Providers:

- No large end-of-year financial surprises
- Payments **always** reflect **actual services delivered**
- Easier budgeting and cash flow planning



# VPK CERTIFICATES OF ELIGIBILITY

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Procedural Change

# VPK Certificate of Eligibility (COE)

## Procedural Change

### What is changing:

- The Coalition will **no longer verify every COE at enrollment**

### Providers are responsible for ensuring:

- COEs are **complete, accurate, and compliant**
- Documentation aligns with F.A.C. 6M-8.201
- Contract requirements



# VPK Certificate of Eligibility (COE)

## Procedural Change

### What is NOT changing:

- COEs remain **required for VPK enrollment**

### Documentation must be:

- Complete **prior** to attendance
- Available upon request

**Responsibility for COE accuracy now rests fully with the provider.**



# Provider Responsibilities & Compliance Expectations

## Procedural Change

### Providers Must Ensure COEs Are:

- Fully completed (all required fields)
- Signed and dated appropriately: **WET SIGNATURES**
- **Accurate**
  - **Provider Name/site**
  - **Correct VPK class**
  - **First Day of Attendance**

**Responsibility for COE accuracy rests fully with the provider.**



# Provider Responsibilities & Compliance Expectations

## Procedural Change

### Documentation Requirements:

- Maintain COE forms
- **All records must:**
  - Match across documents and the Provider Portal
  - Be retained for **5 years** per the contract
  - Be available on demand for monitoring purposes



**Responsibility for COE accuracy rests fully with the provider.**



STATE OF FLORIDA  
VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN (VPK) EDUCATION PROGRAM

**Child Certificate of Eligibility**

**I. CHILD CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY** *(Issued by Early Learning Coalition, through the Family Portal)*

1. VPK program year 2026-2027	2. Certificate number VPKXXXXXX-2026	3. Certificate issue date 1/23/2026	4. Parent email address parent@gmail.com
5. Parent name Parent Name	6. Primary contact number (239) 999-9999	7. Secondary contact number (239) 999-9999	
8. Child's full name Child Name	9. Child's date of birth 10/23/2021	10. County Collier	

**II. ADMISSION BY PROVIDER OR SCHOOL** *(Jointly Prepared by Provider or School AND Parent or Guardian)*

11. Name of provider or school Provider Full Contract Name		12. Telephone Provider Phone Number	
13. Address of VPK site Street Address, City, State, Zipcode		14. VPK class Class Letter (should match classrooms set up in contracting)	15. Date child will begin attendance Month/Date/Year
The provider or school certifies that it admits the child (item 8) for enrollment in the VPK Program and agrees to deliver the minimum instructional hours to the child.		I certify that I choose the provider or school (item 11) to deliver the VPK Program for my child and direct that program funds be paid to the provider or school for my child.	
16. Signature of authorized representative for provider or school Provider Wet Signature	17. Date Month/Date/Year	18. Parent signature Parent Wet Signature	19. Date Month/Date/Year

**NOTICE TO PRIVATE PROVIDER OR PUBLIC SCHOOL:** A private provider or public school must keep each original signed form for at least 5 years from the date of the last payment for that fiscal year or until the resolution of any related audit findings or any related litigation, whichever occurs last. A private provider or public school must permit the early learning coalition to inspect the original signed forms during normal business hours. If required by the early learning coalition, a signed copy of this certificate must be forwarded to the coalition or a qualified contractor acting on behalf of the coalition.

To find more information on VPK funding, visit the Division of Early Learning's website at <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/early-learning/parents/vpk-parents.stml>.

**VPK CERTIFICATE - EXAMPLE**



STATE OF FLORIDA  
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**Child Certificate of Eligibility**

**I. CHILD CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY** *(Issued by Early Learning Coalition, through the Family Portal)*

1. VPK program year 2025-2026	2. Certificate number VPK123456789-2025	3. Certificate issue date 08/10/2025	4. Parent email address parentemail123@email.com
5. Parent name Sally Sample	6. Primary contact number (123) 456-7890	7. Secondary contact number	
8. Child's full name Samuel Sample	9. Child's date of birth 09/01/2020	10. County Lake	

**II. ADMISSION BY PROVIDER OR SCHOOL** *(Jointly Prepared by Provider or School AND Parent or Guardian)*

11. Name of provider or school <b>ABC Learning Center</b>		12. Telephone <b>123-098-7654</b>	
13. Address of VPK site <b>123 Main St. Leesburg, FL 34748</b>		14. VPK class <b>AF25</b>	15. Date child will begin attendance <b>8/11/25</b>
The provider or school certifies that it admits the child (item 8) for enrollment in the VPK Program and agrees to deliver the minimum instructional hours to the child.		I certify that I choose the provider or school (item 11) to deliver the VPK Program for my child and direct that program funds be paid to the provider or school for my child.	
16. Signature of authorized representative for provider or school <i>Jane Doe Smith</i>	17. Date <b>7/29/25</b>	18. Parent signature <i>Sally Sample</i>	19. Date <b>7/29/25</b>

**NOTICE TO PRIVATE PROVIDER OR PUBLIC SCHOOL:** A private provider or public school must keep each original signed form for at least 5 years from the date of the last payment for that fiscal year or until the resolution of any related audit findings or any related litigation, whichever occurs last. A private provider or public school must permit the early learning coalition to inspect the original signed forms during normal business hours. If required by the early learning coalition, a signed copy of this certificate must be forwarded to the coalition or a qualified contractor acting on behalf of the coalition.

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**PROVIDER TO COMPLETE**

**PARENT TO COMPLETE**

**All sections must be filled out entirely**

**Name of provider/school must be complete name**

**Address must include city and zip code**

**Class must be listed as the class name assigned in the State Portal (AF25, BF25, CF25, etc)**

**Date child will begin attendance is the first day the child attends VPK**

**Signatures must be completed and dated on or before the first day of attendance**

# Monitoring & Accountability

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Trust is great, documentation is better.

-The Wisest Person

# Monitoring & Accountability

## Procedural Change

### What to Expect Going Forward:

- COE review will occur through:
  - Annual Monitoring
  - Targeted Reviews as needed
- **Reviews will include:**
  - Documentation completeness and accuracy
  - Alignment across records and Provider Portal
  - Retention compliance



**Responsibility for COE accuracy rests fully with the provider.**

# VPK Monitoring

## Realignment

### What to Expect Going Forward:

- Compliance Department under Business Services
- On-site training with Early Childhood Education staff on VPK monitoring to transition
- Starts in August

### Introduction:

- Lexie Vasquez – Compliance
- Richard Cocchieri – Business Services



# Florida's Assessment of Student Thinking

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FAST

# Florida's Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST)

## Progress Monitoring Windows

- **Progress Monitoring 1:** Within the first 30 instructional days
- **Progress Monitoring 2:** Within 40-60% of program completion
- **Progress Monitoring 3:** Within the last 30 instructional days

All teachers administering the FAST Assessments **must complete the VPK FAST Test Administrator training before administering the assessment.**

Training opens May 1, 2026.

Contact [Bronwyn.Gogia@elcofswfl.org](mailto:Bronwyn.Gogia@elcofswfl.org) for questions.

# FAST Training Requirements



- **Only** qualified test administrators are permitted to administer the assessment.
- These test administrators must have documentation uploaded to the Provider Portal before assessments begin.
- This training must be updated annually, after May 1.
  - **Certificate of Completion or updated DCF Training Transcript**
  - **Security Agreement**
  - **Prohibited Activities Agreement**



# THE TIMELINE

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The Most Wise Person

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Q & A

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