



Early Learning Coalition of the Nature Coast
Serving Citrus – Dixie – Gilchrist – Levy – Sumter Counties

Provider Alert #28

Date: May 15, 2008

Subject: FY2008-2009 School Readiness Reductions

The 2008 legislative session closed on May 2, 2008. Based on the HB 5001-General Appropriations Act and information the Coalition received today, the Nature Coast Coalition will likely realize a \$136,906 reduction in the School Readiness budget. Since this reduction must be addressed immediately staff will present a variety of information to the Administrative Committee on Monday May 19, 2008 beginning at 2:00 PM in the Citrus County Office and then to the Executive Committee at 3:00PM.

Understanding that the short notice may place a hardship on providers to attend the meeting, I am requesting that you review the information below, which is the same information that will be presented to the Administrative Committee and the Executive Committee.

The following Budget Reduction Exercise is intended to offer the Administrative Committee members a variety of options for absorbing the school readiness budget reduction.

This exercise may work best if the Administrative Committee members follow the steps listed below:

- Study each reduction option listed in the chart below and evaluate the impact of each option
- Prioritize the reduction options based on the evaluation of the impacts completed in step 1
- Determine the number of units in each priority reduction up to \$136,906

Budget Reduction Exercise

Priority	Description of Reduction Option	Cost Associated with the Reduction by Unit	Total Number of Units	Number of Units Reduced	Total	Comments
	Eliminate two (2) Education Specialist positions by reducing the number of Provider Observations from four (4) times per year to two (2) times per year and eliminating the following provider services: Training Technical Assistance Private Child Assessments	\$81,060.00	1			
	Reduce staff salaries	\$6956	*10			
	Eliminate or reduce Employee Personal Leave Time (PLT) 160 Hour Employees 200 Hour Employees	\$158.20 \$147.03	120 160			
	Eliminate or reduce employee benefit bank allocations	\$1.00	64,320			
	Eliminate or reduce 3% merit and 1% COL raises	\$5,171	4			
	Eliminate or reduce Coalition retirement contribution	\$ 5,957	5			
	Eliminate or reduce quality initiative funding	\$1.00	144,187			
	Eliminate or reduce Coalition staff development	\$1.00	4,000			
	Eliminate participation in the association of ELC	\$3,900	1			
	Reduce the number of children served	\$3,263	42			

*Note: the maximum number of units listed in staff salaries is ten (10) which is equal to ten percent (10%) of each staff member's salary. The maximum may be increased as seen appropriate by the Committee.

The committee members will be provided with the following points of consideration:

Education Specialist: A work study of the Education Specialist position with regard to the duties and responsibilities of the position coupled with the number of students enrolled and the number of classrooms in each county has been completed. If the two (2) Education Specialist positions are reduced and the corresponding provider services are reduced the case load for each region can be increased throughout the fiscal year as follows:

Increase Case Load	Citrus	Sumter	Tri-County
Children	16	15	16
Classrooms	0	0	0

Staff Salaries: The calculation of the cost associated with the staff salary reduction includes the 1-4% merit and cost of living increase. If the maximum number of units (10) is reduced in staff salaries and the maximum number of units of four (4) is reduced in the merit and cost of living increase the total reduction to staff salaries will equal 14%.

Personal Leave Time: The Coalition combines employees sick and vacation time into Personal Leave Time. If the time is reduced by the maximum number of units each employee will the same number of personal leave time hours; however, the employees must use, lose, or carry over the time.

Benefit Bank: The current budget for FY2008-2009 provided level funding for each employee's benefit bank in the amount of \$4,020.00. Some of the available supplemental benefit premiums will not increase this year; however, if the medical premium increases employees will have to bear the costs of the increase through a payroll deduction. Any reductions in the benefit allocation as a result of this Budget Reduction Exercise must also be absorbed by employees through a payroll deduction or a reduction in insurance coverage.

Merit and Cost of Living Raises: The current budget for FY2008-2009 includes \$20,684 of funding to staff merit and cost of living raises.

Retirement Contribution: Currently the Coalition maintains a retirement program. The Coalition automatically contributes 5% of each employee's salary to the fund and matches up to an additional 5%.

Quality Initiatives: The current budget for FY2008-2009 provided \$144,187 to quality initiative programs. This is \$93,504 less than funded in FY2006-2007 and \$196,813 less than funded in FY2005-2006.

Staff Development: The current budget for FY2008-2009 includes \$4,000 of funding for staff to attend training and conferences. The training and conferences assist the Coalition in maintaining up-to-date information and knowledge of early learning programs.

Association of Early Learning Coalitions: The current budget for FY2008-2009 includes \$1,500 of funding for the Coalition's membership in the Association of Early Learning Coalitions. In addition a travel budget of \$2,400 is included in the budget.

Number of Children Served: The cost associated with each unit in the number of children served is based on the current daily cost per child multiplied by 261 school days. This cost is estimated as the daily cost fluctuates each month based on the number of children served, the number of days served each month, the number of hours served each day (full time or part time) and the parent fees associated with each child's service.

COALITION STAFF WOULD LIKE TO SHARE THE THOUGHTS OF PROVIDERS WITH REGARD TO REDUCING THE SCHOOL READINESS BUDGET WITH BOTH COMMITTEES.

To do so, we are requesting providers to complete the budget exercise as follows:

- Please indicate your priorities FOR reducing the budget. Please evaluate each budget reduction option in the chart above and number them in order of priority in the left had column of the chart (# 1 being the first area to reduce)
- Determine the number of units that should be reduced up to the maximum number indicated in the column titled "Total Number of Units" (column 4)
- Multiply the "Number of Unites Reduced (column 5) by the cost associated with the unit (column 3)
- Include any comments that you would like the committees to consider prior to voting on the reduction
- Submit your completed exercise to Sonya Bosanko at sbosanko@elc-naturecoast.org by **MONDAY MAY 19, 2008 AT 12:00PM**. Information received by **12:00PM** will be presented to both committees.
 - If you do not have access to email you may fax your completed exercise to (352)563-5933 or you may call in your results to Sonya Bosanko at any of the following numbers:
 - To call in your results today or on Monday please call 352-563-9939 Ext. 224
 - To call in your results on Saturday or Sunday please call Sonya at one of the following numbers:
 - Cell 352-302-4633
 - Home 352-465-3147

THE COALITION ENCOURAGES PROVIDERS TO ATTEND THE MEETINGS ON MONDAY MAY 19, 2008 IF POSSIBLE OR TO CALL INTO THE MEETINGS AT 1-800-503-2899 ACCESS CODE # 4937505.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact Sonya Bosanko at sbosanko@elc-naturecoast.org or at any of the numbers listed above.