



# Early Learning Coalition of the Nature Coast

Serving Citrus-Dixie-Gilchrist-Levy-Sumter Counties

Provider Alert #3  
September 21, 2007

As you are aware, the ELC-Nature Coast Board engaged in an exercise to reduce the Coalition's school readiness budget by 4%. As a result of the exercise, the Coalition's Quality Initiative Programs suffered a significant budget decrease. Specifically, the Teacher Incentive Payment Program (TIP Program) realized a 20.5% reduction. Consequently, the program can not support all eligible TIP Program applicants for FY2007-2008.

After receipt of all TIP applications, staff conducted an analysis on actual TIP costs (previous calculations were based on projected costs). The following was noted:

Citrus County: Approximately 47% or 39 applicants can be served (49% or 44 teachers will be placed on the TIP Program waiting list).

Dixie County: 100% or 9 applicants can be served.

Gilchrist County: Approximately 82% or 28 applicants can be served (18% or 6 teachers will be placed on the TIP Program waiting list).

Levy County: 100% or 33 applicants can be served.

Sumter County: Approximately 81% or 30 applicants can be served (19% or 7 teachers will be placed on the TIP Program waiting list).

**Total: Approximately 71% or 139 applicants can be served. Consequently 29% or 57 teachers will be placed on the TIP Program waiting list.**

The above calculations are based on each County's reduced TIP Program budget and the program's current implementation process which includes participation of early learning program owners. Keeping in mind the primary objective of the program, which is to promote continuity of care, it does not appear appropriate to serve program owners who do not have a significant turn over rate while eligible teachers are placed on the waiting list.

As a result, Coalition staff will be recommending the following TIP Program eligibility priorities:

### **Priority One:**

Existing TIP Program teachers will be served as funding allows (this does not include program owners who are also teachers). If funding cannot support all existing teachers, the teachers shall be placed on a priority one waitlist in the order the applications are received.

**Priority Two:**

New TIP Program applicants will be served as funding allows (this does not include program owners who are also teachers). If funding cannot support all existing TIP Program teachers, the new TIP Program applicants shall be placed on a priority two waitlist in the order the applications are received.

If this recommendation is approved, early learning program owners will no longer be eligible to participate in the TIP Program and a total of 84% or 146 eligible applicants will be served (27 applicants will be placed on the waitlist). In addition, the following surpluses would be realized and reallocated to other quality initiative programs:

Dixie County \$4,907  
Levy County \$3,425  
Sumter County \$3,746

Please provide your comments on the recommendation listed above to [sbosanko@elc-naturecoast.org](mailto:sbosanko@elc-naturecoast.org) by **September 25, 2007** or mail your comments to:

Sonya Bosanko  
1564 North Meadowcrest Blvd.  
Crystal River, FL 34429

---

Recently the ELC-Nature Coast Board engaged in discussion with regard to philosophical barriers in preparing young children for school. The majority of the Board agrees that the lack of the traditional family unit in many American homes places a significant obstruction in children's development and consequently their ability to learn and prepare for school.

During the discussion the ELC-Nature Coast Board noted that many children in the school readiness program are from homes with absent fathers. The Board also noted that male instructors are rare in the early education industry leaving minimal opportunity for school readiness children to interact with men.

The ELC-Board recognized that society often holds a negative stance with regard to men working with young children and that the pessimistic position may discourage men from working in the early learning industry. As a result, the ELC-Nature Coast Board voted to explore strategies that can be incorporated within the school readiness program to reduce the negative stance on men working with young children and to offer protection to men who choose to. Specifically, the Board is conducting research on equipping all early learning programs with surveillance cameras.

In an effort to assist the Board with this issue, I am respectfully requesting early learning providers to submit a list of pros and cons with regard to surveillance cameras in all early learning classrooms, and a general statement of support or opposition. Your comments will be presented to the Board during the November 2007 Board meeting. Please submit your comments by email to [sbosanko@elc-naturecoast.org](mailto:sbosanko@elc-naturecoast.org) on or before **October 17, 2007** or mail your comments to Sonya Bosanko at the address listed above.

---

The Coalition recently discovered a potentially serious issue with regard to the attendance reporting of school readiness children. As a result of this issue, Coalition staff will be recommending a revision to the current system of attendance auditing. The recommendation will strengthen the attendance auditing process and will include personal contact with parents.

The Coalition is respectfully reminding early learning providers of the following:

1. Parents must certify their child's enrollment in the school readiness program by signing their children in and out each day or signing an ELCNC 40: School Readiness Student Attendance Verification Form available on the Coalition's website at [www.elc-naturecoast.org](http://www.elc-naturecoast.org)
2. Verification of attendance does NOT include sign in and out records when a person other than the child's parent or legal guardian signs a child in and out of the school readiness program.
3. Providers must only claim reimbursement for attendance, holidays, and absences that are allowable under the Coalition's policy and procedures. To review the Coalition's policy and procedures please visit [http://www.elc-naturecoast.org/images/ELPOP\\_8-07.pdf](http://www.elc-naturecoast.org/images/ELPOP_8-07.pdf)

If you have any questions or concerns with regard to any part of this Provider Alert, or if you do not have access to the internet to review the Coalition's policy and procedures, please contact Sonya Bosanko at [sbosanko@elc-naturecoast.org](mailto:sbosanko@elc-naturecoast.org) or 352-563-9939 Ext. 224

I look forward to your comments.

Sonya Bosanko