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## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Early Learning Coalition Executive Directors  
School District Superintendents

**FROM:** Cari Miller

**DATE:** July 21, 2023

**SUBJECT: 2023 Legislative Highlights for Early Learning**

### **Contact Information:**

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**DPS: 2023-118**

The 2023 Legislature passed, and Governor DeSantis signed into law, several bills that impact early learning. These bills are effective July 1, 2023, unless otherwise noted. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an overview of the early learning components of the bills.

### **Section (s.) 1002.995(1)(c), Florida Statutes (F.S.), Early learning professional development standards and career pathways (*HB 5101*)**

- Expands the micro-credential stipend eligibility for staff who work in a child care or early learning setting, not just those who work at School Readiness (SR) and Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) contracted providers.

### **Section 1002.68, F.S., Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program accountability (*SB 2502*)**

- Postpones the adoption of the VPK provider performance metric methodology to the 2023-24 program year.
- Postpones the assignment of the VPK provider performance metric to the 2024-25 program year.
- Temporarily removes section (5)(a) allowing VPK providers who score below a 4.0 on CLASS to continue to be eligible to contract for the 2023-24 program year. This provision, however, will be reinstated for the 2024-2025 fiscal year and providers who fail to meet the minimum program assessment composite score may become ineligible to participate in the program.

### **Section 1002.82(2)(q), F.S., Department of Education; powers and duties (*HB 443*)**

- Requires the Department to create an online, forward facing provider search that integrates with the online portal under s. 1001.10(10), F.S.

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**Section 1002.945, F.S., Gold Seal Quality Care Program (*HB 443*)**

- Clarifies that providers must not have 3 or more of the same class II violations to keep their Gold Seal designation.

**Section 1002.59(1), F.S., Emergent literacy and performance standards training courses (*HB 7039*)**

- Requires the standards for courses in emergent literacy skills be grounded in the science of reading and correlate with content students will encounter in grades K-12.

**Section 1002.67, F.S., Performance standards and curricula (*HB 7039*)**

- Requires VPK curriculum to be content rich and sequential knowledge building in early literacy.

**Section 1003.485, F.S., The New Worlds Reading Initiative (*HB 7039*)**

- Expands New Worlds Reading Initiative to prekindergarten children not yet on grade level as determined by the coordinated screening and progress monitoring (CSPM) system.

**Section 1008.25(6)(b), F.S., Public school student progression, student support, coordinated screening and progress monitoring, reporting requirements (*HB 7039*)**

- Allows for VPK students who exhibit a substantial deficiency in early math skills based upon the results of the administration of the final CSPM to be referred to the local school district where they may be eligible to receive intensive mathematics interventions before participating in kindergarten.

CM/km

cc: VPK School District Contacts