



Request for Proposal

for

Program Quality

and

Workforce Development

For the period July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

Date Available: March 27, 2024

Closing Date and Time: April 17, 2024 at 4:00 PM

Inquiries and proposals should be directed to:

Cathie Odom

Finance Director

Early Learning Coalition of Duval

6500 Bowden Road, Suite 290

Jacksonville, FL 32216

(904) 208-2040 EXT. 238

RFP@elcduval.org

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SECTION I – INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The Early Learning Coalition of Duval (the Coalition) invites qualified local agencies or facilities to submit proposals to support early learning child care centers and family child care homes, the children and families they serve. If all children are to be ready for kindergarten and be ready to read, then:

- center directors must effectively carry out the instructional leader role;
- every child care program's composite score will be a 5.0 on the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) Assessment tool;
- every classroom must implement a comprehensive curriculum that focuses on literacy with special attention to phonological awareness with fidelity;
- every classroom must have a physically and emotionally safe environment, which includes sufficient consumables to effectively implement the curriculum, computer technology that enables the child to be proficient using a mouse when entering kindergarten, multiple opportunities to engage in hands-on learning experiences that support development of learning success skills (e.g., collaboration and teamwork, problem-solving, communication and connections, creativity, and emerging literacy and language skills);
- every child must have a physical and emotionally safe home environment;
- every family is prepared to help their child transition into kindergarten that includes meeting with the kindergarten teacher to share their child's strengths and weaknesses as they leave prekindergarten and enter kindergarten.

The Coalition invites proposals that describe the services that will be provided to participating early learning child care centers, family child care homes and families to demonstrate the above six key learning factors coupled with indicators of success for each learning factor. In order to be considered, written proposals using the format described herein must be received by 4:00 P.M. Eastern Standard Time on April 17, 2024, at the Early Learning Coalition of Duval, Inc. office at 6500 Bowden Road, Suite 290, Jacksonville, Florida 32216.

1.2 Background

In 1999, the Florida Legislature passed the School Readiness Act. The Act created the Florida Partnership for School Readiness. In addition, the Act called for the creation of local school readiness coalitions whose goals were to improve the readiness of children when they enter school.

With specific membership designated by Florida Statutes, 57 school readiness coalitions were formed throughout the state covering all 67 counties.

In 2001, the Florida Partnership for School Readiness was transferred from the Executive Office of the Governor to the Agency for Workforce Innovation for administrative purposes. The funds for the Pre-Kindergarten, subsidized Child Care, Even Start, First Start, Migrant Pre-Kindergarten, and other programs were managed by the Agency for Workforce Innovation and distributed through the local coalition.

In early 2005, the State passed Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) legislation, which placed local responsibility for the VPK program with the local school readiness coalitions. The coalitions have been renamed “Early Learning Coalitions” to reflect their greater role in meeting the early care and education needs of children and their families. To date, through the merging of Coalitions, there are now 30 Early Learning Coalitions throughout the state. Coalitions now fall under the direction and funding of Florida’s Office of Early Learning (OEL), a part of the Florida Department of Education.

The Coalition is charged with assessing the early care and education resources available in our community and developing local plans to address identified needs of children and their families. The Early Learning Coalition of Duval, Inc. plans, funds and administers a system of services designed to help ensure that children are ready for school when they enter kindergarten. In addition, the Coalition helps give parents support services to enable them to be stable and strong.

The Coalition’s budget for School Readiness and VPK combined is over \$80 million. We normally have between 500 and 600 active providers. This budget is funded by a mix of federal, state, and local grants. The Coalition is charged with using this funding effectively and efficiently to achieve program goals.

1.3 Statement of Purpose

The objective of this Request for Proposal (“RFP”) is to identify an agency (or agencies) with expertise in a state or nationally recognized research-based certified coaching model focused on early childhood best practices. The intent of the RFP is to select an agency (or agencies) to provide a high level service at a reasonable cost to the Coalition.

The Total contract amount for approximately 100 child care centers and family child care homes during the 2024-2025 term may not exceed \$1,500,000. Awards may be made to one agency or to multiple agencies depending on the number of providers served and budget constraints.

1.4 Prohibition of Lobbying

Any company or lobbyist, paid or unpaid, for a company is prohibited from having any private communication concerning the procurement process or any response to the procurement process with any Coalition Board Member, the Chief Executive Officer, or

any employee of the Coalition after the issuance of this RFP and until completion of the contract award. A proposal from any organization will be disqualified when the company (or a lobbyist, paid or unpaid, for the company) violates this condition of the procurement process.

1.5 Conflict of Interest

All companies must disclose the name of any officer, director or agent who is also a Coalition employee. All companies must disclose the name of any Coalition employee who owns, directly or indirectly, any interest in the company's business or any of its branches. All companies must disclose any business relationships or family relations with any officer, board member, subcontractor, or employee of the Coalition.

1.6 Public Information

All submitted proposals and included or attached information shall become public record upon their delivery to the Coalition in accordance with Chapter 119, Florida Statutes. If the contractor has questions regarding the application of Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, to the contractor's duty to provide public records related to this proposal, contact the custodian of public records at publicrecords@elcduval.org.

1.7 Right to reject Proposals and Waive Non-Material Irregularities

The Coalition reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, waive any irregularities and technicalities contained therein, and may, at its sole discretion request a clarification of other information to evaluate any or all proposals. Contractors may be required to submit evidence of qualifications or any other information as the Coalition may deem necessary.

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SECTION II – SCOPE OF SERVICES

2.1 Statement of Work

The Coalition desires to receive proposals for the selection of an agency (or agencies) to provide early learning child care centers and family child care homes support in the areas mentioned in 1.1 Introduction. The initial one-year term will begin July 1, 2024. Following the terms of the service agreement, at the sole discretion of the Coalition, the contract between the Coalition and the contracted agency (or agencies) may be extended up to an additional three-year term.

2.2 Services to be Provided

The Coalition is seeking an agency (or agencies) to provide full services, training, and ongoing support for up to approximately 100 early learning child care centers and family child care homes (1) to develop and/or strengthen the six key learning factors listed on page 3 coupled with indicators of success for each of the six learning factors; (2) specify the ways in which implementation fidelity will be monitored and feedback provided to child care centers and family child care homes; and (3) specify annual expected child, teacher, director, and family outcomes and the ways in which they will be measured.

All direct service staff must be Level 2 background screened. All direct service staff must be a certified CLASS® observer or will become CLASS® certified in all three assessment tools within the first 90 days of hire. Direct service staff working with center directors must have documented expertise in instructional leadership, the change process, and using data to inform classroom practices or will register to become certified from a Coalition approved coaching model within 6 months.

It is intended that the contracted agency (or agencies) will deliver total and complete services as requested by the coalition. The agency (or agencies) will agree to provide all necessary expertise and services professionally and diligently in regards to the work authorized by the Coalition within the child care centers and family child care homes.

To support improvement efforts and monitor progress, the selected agency (or agencies) will be an active member of a multi-agency early learning success team chaired by the Coalition. The Learning Success Team will meet regularly, share data, develop implementation framework(s), identify challenges, monitor progress, work collaboratively to refine services as needed to achieve expected outcomes and leverage existing resources.

Coalition staff will notify the agency (or agencies) awarded with a list of the eligible child care providers. The agency (or agencies) will schedule the time with the provider and notify the Coalition's designee.

2.3 Compensation

The method of compensation will be based on a cost reimbursement contract. Each invoice shall be submitted by the 10th of each month.

2.4 Site Visit Requirements

The agency (or agencies) will follow and submit a child care center and/or family child care home site visit schedule to the coalition's designee as appointments are made. The agency (or agencies) should take into account child care facility hours as to not disrupt daily operations and health and safety of the children.

2.5 Primary Point of Contact

The agency (or agencies) shall identify a specific individual as a primary point of contact. This individual will be responsible for the agency (or agencies) work product. The primary point of contact shall be available within one business day to accomplish the following:

- Attend meetings
- Respond to telephone calls
- Respond to specific inquires

2.6 Work papers

The agency (or agencies) shall retain all work papers for a period of at least 5 years. In addition, the agency (or agencies) will provide the Coalition and/or its assignees access, free of charge, copies of any or all work papers for a period of at least 5 years.

2.7 Support Personnel

Coalition support personnel shall be made available by the Coalition to provide assistance to the agency (or agencies). Coalition support personnel will perform specific duties to support the programs.

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SECTION III – SELECTION METHOD AND INSTRUCTIONS

3.1 Bidding Instructions

3.1.1 Application Timetable

Date Advertised/Available: March 27, 2024

Deadline for Receipt of Written Questions: April 3, 2024

Deadline for Answers to Contractor Questions: April 8, 2024

Deadline for Receipt of Proposals (No Exceptions): April 17, 2024, 4:00 p.m.

3.1.2 Proposal Submission

For the purpose of this proposal the terms respondent, applicant, proposer, vendor and contractor are used interchangeably and mean a person(s) or organization(s) submitting a response to this solicitation.

Where to Submit the Proposal:

Hard copy responses to this Request for Proposals must be submitted in a sealed envelope to:

Cathie Odom, Director of Finance
Early Learning Coalition of Duval, Inc.
6500 Bowden Road, Suite 290
Jacksonville, FL 32216

**Please mark on your mailing envelope containing your response in
LARGE LETTERS:**

**SEALED RESPONSE – DO NOT OPEN
RFP2024-01**

Email responses are sent to RFP@elcduval.org.

The Coalition reserves the right to request a best and final offer from any Proposer to incorporate changes which will support a better understanding of the regulations, or which any regulatory changes may require.

The Coalition reserves the right to make any and all determinations exclusively which it deems are necessary to protect the best interests of its early learning program and the families who are served by the Coalition either directly or through anyone of its Contractors. The absence of the Coalition setting forth a specific reservation of rights does not subject other areas of the Contract resulting from this RFP to mutual agreement.

3.2 Proposal Evaluation

3.2.1 Evaluation Process

A Selection Committee will evaluate the proposals and select the agency (or agencies) to be awarded from the submissions. All proposals received will be reviewed in accordance with the criteria listed in this RFP. The Selection Committee may request a presentation by any or all agency (or agencies) to clarify proposed plans and details, as part of the review and evaluation process. The Selection Committee may also ask additional questions to clarify the submitted proposal(s).

Any awards that exceed \$65,000 must be presented to the ELC Board of Directors for contract approval.

The Coalition reserves the right to reject any and all proposals submitted. The Coalition further reserves the right to inspect the facilities, organization, and review evidence of the financial condition of an agency (or agencies) to assess their ability to perform the contract before awarding a contract.

3.2.2 Evaluation Criteria

Each proposal will be evaluated based on the following criteria, which are listed in their order of importance:

- **Clear and specific annual expected child, teacher, director, and family outcomes including the ways in which they will be measured**
- **Quality of proposed services designed to strengthen and/or improve the six key learning factors (page 1)**
- **Quality of the implementation fidelity and feedback plan for child care centers and family child care homes**
- **Quality of the proposed sustainability plan(s)**
- **Experience in providing quality early learning programs**
- **Expertise of Personnel**
- **Agency experience providing the kinds of services proposed in the RFP**
- **Availability of resources that could be leveraged with this RFP**
- **Budget**

3.3 Proposed Contract Terms and Administrative Rules

In the event any of the provisions of this proposal are violated by the agency (or agencies), the Chief Executive Officer or a designee will give written notice to the agency (or agencies) stating the deficiencies. The agency (or agencies) will have 10 days to correct the deficiencies. If the agency (or agencies) does not make the corrections within 10 days,

then recommendation will be made for immediate termination of the contract. If the contract is terminated, the Coalition may pursue any and all legal remedies as provided herein and by law.

The Coalition reserves the right to terminate any contract resulting from this RFP, at any time and for any reason, upon giving 30 days prior written notice to the other party. If the contract should be terminated without cause the Coalition will be relieved of all obligations under the contract. The Coalition would only be required to pay the agency (or agencies) for contract services actually performed as of the date of termination. Access to any and all accounting records, tax returns, tax return work papers and audit work papers will be provided to the Coalition immediately after the termination of the contract, at no additional charge.

The agency (or agencies) will have the option to terminate the contract without cause, upon successful completion one term. Cancellation of the contract by the agency (or agencies) may result in removal of the agency (or agencies) from consideration for future opportunities to contract with the Coalition for a period of three (3) years.

In the event that the awarded agency (or agencies) should breach this contract, the Coalition reserves the right to seek remedies in law and or in equity. Default would result in removal of the agency (or agencies) from consideration for additional opportunities for a period of three (3) years.

All agency (or agencies) responses to this RFP will receive written notification of the status of their proposal.

3.4 Acceptance/Rejection of Proposals and Waiver of Minor Irregularities

Proposals not received at either the specified place, or by the specified date and time, or both, will be rejected and returned unopened to the prospective Applicant by the Coalition. The coalition will retain one unopened copy for use in the event of a dispute.

The Coalition reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or to waive minor irregularities when to do so would be in the best interest of the Coalition. Minor irregularity is defined as a variation from the Request For Proposal terms and conditions which does not affect the price of the proposal, or give the prospective Applicant an advantage or benefit not enjoyed by other prospective Applicants, or does not

adversely impact the interest of the Coalition. At its option, the coalition may correct minor irregularities but is under no obligation to do so whatsoever.

All proposals submitted timely and correctly that are responsive will be accepted by the Coalition. The Coalition reserves the right, however, to reject any or all proposals received, or cancel this RFP, based on the best interests of the State of Florida. The Coalition reserves the right to make a final selection without further discussion of the responses submitted.

- A non-responsive proposal shall include, but not be limited to, those that:
- i) are irregular or are not in conformance with the requirements and instructions contained herein;
 - ii) have improper or undated signatures;
 - iii) fail to utilize or complete prescribed forms;
 - iv) are conditional proposals;
 - v) are incomplete proposals;
 - vi) are not received on or before the closing deadline;
 - vii) propose a set of services which cannot be completed within the contract period / will require additional funding to implement.

THE RESPONSIVENESS OF A PROPOSAL SHALL BE DETERMINED BASED UPON THE DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED WITH THE PROPOSAL. A NON-RESPONSIVE PROPOSAL WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

The Coalition may waive minor irregularities in the proposals received where such are merely a matter of form and not substance, and the corrections of such ARE NOT PREJUDICIAL to other respondents.

Variations which are *not minor* **will not** be waived.

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SECTION IV – TERMS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Federal and State Tax

The Coalition is exempt from federal taxes; in addition, the Coalition is exempt from State and County tangible personal property taxes, sales taxes, and intangible taxes. The Coalition's Chief Executive Officer will sign an exemption certificate submitted by the successful agency (or agencies). The agency (or agencies) doing business with the Coalition will not be exempted from paying sales tax to their suppliers for materials to fulfill contractual obligations with the Coalition, in addition, the successful agency (or agencies) will not be authorized to use the Coalition's tax exemption number in securing such materials.

4.2 Legal Requirements

It shall be the responsibility of the agency (or agencies), child care centers and family child care homes to be knowledgeable of all federal, state, county and local laws, ordinances, rules and regulations that in any manner effect the items covered herein. Lack of knowledge by the agency (or agencies) will in no way be a cause for relief from responsibility.

The agency (or agencies) doing business with the Coalition will be required to attest to compliance with the following federal and state rules and regulations:

- Equal Employment Opportunity (EO 11246 as amended by EO 11375 and supplemented by regulation 41 CFR part 60)
- Copeland "Anti-Kickback" Act (18 USC 874 and 40 USA 276c)
- Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 USC 327-333)
- Rights to Inventions Made Under a Contract or Agreement (37 CFR part 401)
- Clean Air Act (42 USC 7401 et seq) and Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 USC 1251 et seq), as amended
- Debarment and Suspension (EO 12549 and EO 12689)
- Certification Regarding Lobbying (29 CFR Part 93 and 45 CFR Part 93)
- Drug free Workplace Certification (29 CFR Part 98 and 45 CFR Part 82)
- Nondiscrimination & Equal Opportunity Assurance (29 CFR Part 37 and 45 CFR Part 80)
- Certification Regarding Public Entity Crimes, section 287.133, F.S.
- Conflict of Interest
- Public Records
- Additional terms and conditions can be located on our website: http://elcduval.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/terms_conditions.pdf

4.3 Agreement

A professional services agreement will be negotiated for any work to be performed as a result of this RFP. The RFP, the proposal, and the resulting agreement will constitute the complete agreement between the agency (or agencies) and the Coalition. This RFP alone, is in no way an agreement, obligation, or contract and in no way is the Coalition responsible

for the cost of preparing the proposal. One copy of the proposal will be retained for official files and becomes a public record.

4.4 Trade Secret and Confidential Materials

If the application includes material which is deemed a trade secret (as defined by Section 812.081, FS) or other confidential material exempt from the provisions of Chapter 119, FS, which the agency (or agencies) does not wish to become public record, the following statement should be included in the application:

“Trade Secrets as defined by Section 812.081, Florida Statutes, or other confidential materials contained on applicable pages of this application shall not be used or disclosed, except for evaluation purposes. However, if a contract is awarded to this offer or as a result in connection with the submission of this program, the Coalition shall have the right to use or disclose the information designated as trade secrets or confidential to the extent provided in the contract. This restriction does not limit the Coalition’s right to use or disclose the information designated as trade secrets or designated as confidential which is obtained from another source.”

Any exemption claimed will be limited to the pertinent documents and must be supported by a statutory exemption. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, nothing contained in the application shall be deemed or interpreted to restrict or prevent the Coalition from complying with the disclosure requirements of Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, when material is incorrectly identified as a trade secret or confidential information. By submitting an application, the applicant covenants not to sue the Coalition and waives any claim against the Coalition arising under Chapter 119, Florida Statutes or in connection with or as a result of any disclosures by the Coalition in connection herewith.

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Attachment A - Application for Funding

2024-2025

Please limit your responses to 10 pages not including attachments. Use Times Roman, 12 point font size, single space and 1 inch margins.

Name of Agency: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City/Zip: _____ **Website:** _____

Contact Name/Title: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____ **Federal ID Number:** _____

Agency Overview

Please describe your agency including the following information: mission statement, vision, history, accomplishments and resulting successes, future plans, and how the program(s) for which you are requesting funds fit into the overall scope of the agency. Provide information that clearly establishes your agency's capability to operate the program(s) for which you are seeking funding. Provide a brief timeline for program implementation and describe your agency's ability to operate and oversee program services.

Executive Summary

Explain briefly the programmatic (design) elements of the program. Include staff experience/background, programmatic history and fiscal management information.

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Program Narrative

Answer each question separately. Centers include private, faith-based, nonprofit and family childcare homes (FCCHs).

- 1. Explain how the program will support a center's Director as the instructional learning leader.**
- 2. How will the program incorporate innovation and technology?**
- 3. How will the program promote sustainability within each center once services have been completed? How will the program address the issue of staff turnover to assure best practices continue to be implemented?**
- 4. Will the program follow a Certified Coaching model? If so, please explain the model and how it is followed to fidelity.**
- 5. How many centers/FCCHs does the program plan on serving? What is the anticipated frequency of service delivery?**
- 6. How will the program utilize best practices in emergent literacy, specifically in the area of phonological awareness?**
- 7. How will the program support the center's improvement in or accountability of CLASS[®] scores. Be specific.**
- 8. Describe the manner in which the program will focus on the learning environment; including classroom spaces that are physically and emotionally safe, and curriculum implementation.**
- 9. Describe how the program will prepare families to transition their four-year-olds to kindergarten.**

Community Involvement and Inter-Agency Efforts

Research shows that every child needs a physical and emotionally safe home environment to succeed. How will the neighborhood or the overall community contribute to the success of this program? How does this program utilize existing community resources to assist families and children in their home environment? How does this program build on the strengths of the community it serves? Describe your interactions with other agencies to effectively carry out this program.

Outcomes and Objectives

Describe how your agency plans to achieve each of the outcomes listed below:

- 1. Seventy-five percent (75%) of the Workforce Development Providers currently participating in the Guiding Stars of Duval Quality Rating and Improvement System will complete the star rating tool with a Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) composite score of 4.0 or higher needed to qualify for a 3, 4, or 5-star rating.**
- 2. Ninety (90%) percent of teachers and/or classrooms receiving support will show improvement in the quality of their interactions and instructional skills as measured by the Infant, Toddler, and Pre-K Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) tools and center composite scores.**
- 3. Eighty (80%) percent of the school readiness directors and/or owners being served participate in coaching, small and large group training, and communities of practice experiences to develop leadership skills and create a workplace culture that is supportive of teachers' efforts to learn and utilize best practices and provide an effective learning program.**

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**Attachment B - Sample Budget Template
2024-2025**

Personnel Expenses

Salary & Wages	Yearly Salary	FTE	Amount
Total Salaries		0.00	\$
Payroll Taxes & Benefits			
FICA			
Workers Compensation			
Unemployment Compensation			
Group Insurance - Health/Life			
Annuity - 403(b)			
Employee Misc.			
Total Benefits			\$
Total Salaries and Benefits			\$

Operating Expenses

Special Contracts & Consultants			
Total Special Contracts & Consultants			\$

Programmatic Supplies & Assistance			
Program Supplies			
Parent Voucher - School Readiness			
Parent Voucher - Working on qualifying			
Summer VPK Program			
Parent Gap Scholarships			
Total Programmatic Supplies & Assistance			\$

Office Expenses			
Utilities			
Postage			
Copying Costs			

Telephone			
Cellular phone service - annual costs			
Office Supplies			
Total Office Expenses			\$

Capital Outlay

Rental & Maintenance Contracts

Rent			
Total Rental & Maintenance Contracts			\$

Insurance Expenses

General liability & Umbrella Ins			
Commercial Property Insurance			
Liability Insurance			
Total Insurance Expenses			

Professional Development

Meals-Per Diem			
Other travel costs			
Workshops/Conferences			
Employee Training			
Total Professional Development			\$

Other Operating Expenses

Printing Costs			
Background Screening			
Software / Licenses			
Mileage			
Miscellaneous expenses			
Total Other Operating Expenses			\$

Indirect Costs

\$

TOTAL BUDGET 2024-25 \$