



**Request for Proposals for Early Childhood Books  
RFP Number: RFP-2526-2**

**Early Learning Coalition of Duval  
6500 Bowden Road Suite 290  
Jacksonville, FL 32216  
[www.elcduval.org](http://www.elcduval.org)**

**The Early Learning Coalition of Duval (“ELC”)**, a Florida not-for-profit organization dedicated to quality early care and education in Duval County - Florida, is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) seeking the purchase of **Early Childhood Books**. The purpose of this Request for Proposals (hereinafter referred to as “RFP”) by the Early Learning Coalition is to procure a contract for Early Childhood Books with a forecasted amount not to exceed \$350,000.00.

**ANTICIPATED RFP TIMETABLE / IMPORTANT DATES**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>ADDRESS</b>
Request for Proposals Advertised	Thursday, March 12, 2026	N/A	<a href="http://www.elcduval.org">http://www.elcduval.org</a> and Florida Administrative Register.
Last Day to Submit Questions to the Coalition	No later than Thursday, March 19, 2026	5:00 PM	<a href="mailto:RFP@elcduval.org">RFP@elcduval.org</a> <b>SUBJECT “QUESTIONS - RFP #2526-02”</b>
ELC Responses to Questions Posted	No later than Tuesday, March 24, 2026	5:00 PM	ELC website <a href="http://www.elcduval.org">http://www.elcduval.org</a>
Electronic Proposals must be received	No later than Thursday, April 2, 2026	5:00 PM	<a href="mailto:RFP@elcduval.org">RFP@elcduval.org</a> <b>SUBJECT “RFP #2526-02 – Early Childhood Books”</b>
Evaluation Concluded and Intent to Award Posted*	Wednesday, April 15, 2026	10:00 AM	Posted on the ELC website <a href="http://www.elcduval.org">http://www.elcduval.org</a>
Contract Award Communication	Monday, April 20, 2026	After 10:00 AM	Contract Awarded. Communication via email
Anticipated Effective Date of Contract	May 1, 2026	N/A	N/A

***These dates subject to change based on the need of additional information or evaluation.***

*\*Respondents to this solicitation or persons acting on their behalf may not contact, between the release of the solicitation and the end of the 72-hour period following the agency posting the notice of intended award, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and state holidays, any employee or officer of the executive or legislative branch concerning any aspect of this solicitation, except in writing to the procurement officer or as provided in the solicitation documents. Violation of this provision may be grounds for rejecting a response.*

Respondents will be competing against each other for selection to provide the commodities and/or services as more fully described in the RFP submission and scopes of the RFP. Upon receipt of all the proposals, the ELC will review and decide based on the evaluation criteria set forth in this RFP. Any contractor interested in providing the commodities and/or services requested in this RFP must respond to this RFP.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Early Learning Coalition of Duval was established legislatively in 1999 and is mandated by the Florida Legislature Chapter 1002.84 of Florida Statutes, to provide early learning programs to children and families in Duval County, which include the School Readiness Program and Voluntary Pre-kindergarten Program. These programs must be developmentally appropriate and research-based, involve parents as their child's first teacher, serve as preventive measures for children at risk of future school failure, enhance the educational readiness of eligible children, and support family education. The ELC has two locations and serves more than 10,000 families per year. The ELC has a staff of over 120 employees and maintains a budget of nearly \$99M annually. The ELC's primary goal is to provide quality early care and voluntary pre-kindergarten education services that prepare children to be "school ready" upon entry into kindergarten. The ELC has also partnered with Kids Hope Alliance and Miami-Dade Family Learning Partnership to provide the Reach Out and Read Program ® to area doctors' office within Duval County.

## **PUBLIC ENTITY CRIMES**

A person or affiliate who has been placed on the convicted vendor list following a conviction for a public entity crime may not submit a bid on a contract to provide any goods or services to a public entity, may not submit a bid on a contract with a public entity for the construction or repair of a public building or public work, may not submit bids on leases of real property to a public entity, may not be awarded or perform work as a contractor, supplier, subcontractor, or consultant under a contract with any public entity, and may not transact business with any public entity in excess of the threshold amount provided in s. 287.017 for CATEGORY TWO for a period of 36 months from the date of being placed on the convicted vendor list.

## **MULTIPLE AWARDS**

The ELC may award one or more Contractors or Vendors the contract for the commodities requested in RFP. The ELC's Board of Directors, in its sole discretion, may elect not to award a Contract to any Respondent under this RFP.

## RFP SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The ELC is a not-for-profit corporation in the State of Florida and is seeking to purchase **Early Childhood Books**. The Contractor shall be responsible for preparing an effective, clear, and concise proposal. The ELC requests a proposal for products and services based on the specifications described in this section and the Scope of Services. The Contractor shall not be limited to the requested items in the required segments.

- A cover letter introducing the company and the individual(s) who will be the primary contact person(s), along with telephone number and email address.
- Company's address, telephone number, fax number and website address should also be included.
- Federal Taxpayer Identification Number (Employer Identification Number (EIN) or Social Security Number (SSN)).
- A statement of the contractor's understanding of the products to be provided and/or services to be performed.
- A reference list should be attached to the proposal, with client names, contact people, and phone numbers. References must be within the previous five (5) years.
- The proposal should be signed and dated by an authorized representative of the Contractor on company letterhead and all required attachments.

All responses to this RFP should be in writing and should be sent via **email to [RFP@elcduval.org](mailto:RFP@elcduval.org) with subject "RFP #2526-02 – Early Childhood Books" no later than 5:00 pm EST on Thursday, April 2, 2026.**

No proposals will be accepted after the submission deadline. **Hard copy and/or faxed proposal submissions will not be accepted.** Questions and/or comments may be addressed by contacting Cathie Odom, Director of Finance, at [RFP@elcduval.org](mailto:RFP@elcduval.org), with subject "QUESTIONS – RFP#2526-02". **Telephone inquiries will not be accepted.**

All materials submitted in response to the solicitation document will become the property of the Coalition and will be returned only at the ELC's option and at the expense of the contractor submitting the proposal. One electronic copy of a submitted proposal will be retained for official files and becomes public record. **Any material that a contractor considers as confidential but does not meet the disclosure exemption requirements of the Florida Sunshine Law should not be included in the contractor's proposal as it may be made available to the public.**

Upon receipt of all proposals, the ELC will review and decide based on the scores from the evaluation criteria process. Selected Contractor(s) will be required to enter into an agreement with the ELC to guarantee the product/service specifications, prices quoted, and value-added services described, as well as to ensure adherence to all applicable state and/or federal laws. The ELC may adjust its estimated investments based on the needs of the ELC and funding appropriations made by the legislature.

## GENERAL SCOPE OF SERVICES REQUIRED

The ELC intends to provide books and book bundles to support early learning and Reach Out and Read® programs within the ELC's service area. Each proposal must address the following:

- A. Books for children birth to twelve years old.
- B. Exhibit developmentally appropriate content.
- C. Offer Spanish and Spanish bilingual titles.
- D. Offer a variety of content options and titles. Books interested in purchasing include but are not limited to:
  - Social/Emotional Development
  - Character Development Books
  - Teacher Resource Books
  - Board Books
  - Picture Books
  - Alphabet Books
  - Interactive Books
  - Puzzle Books
  - Any other age-appropriate titles as identified by the ELC

A Request for Proposal (RFP) is needed to secure one or multiple vendors to secure items listed above to support early learning providers and doctors' offices by providing age-appropriate books.

**Within a maximum of 10 pages each proposer will respond and describe a plan to meet the following:**

- Previous experience providing quality books for nonprofit organizations; including any issues and resolutions on final outcomes.
  - Warehouse specifications and capacity.
  - Evidence to support durability, longevity and quality of products and materials listed in the proposal. Submitted evidence must include details specifying longevity (in years) of products by citing previous experience, data from the manufacturer or a combination of both.
  - Access to full vendor catalog is required. Prices must include all shipping and handling.
- a. **Packing Slips:** Provide the ELC with duplicate packing slips if items are shipped directly to providers and/or doctors' offices. Packing slips must include the Coalition's Purchase Order (PO) number.

- b. **Drop Ship items:** Drop ship items if requested, by 4:00 pm (EST) to the designated shipping location; signature required by recipient. Inside delivery required. Vendors should provide a ‘default plan’ for providers or offices, who will inevitably be told by freight companies that inside delivery is not available, such as a vendor telephone number.
- c. **Shipping Charges:** NO Shipping charges. Prices should reflect delivery fee, if any.
- d. **Proof of Delivery:** Proof of delivery of items to a provider’s center, a family child care home or a doctor’s office, must be provided to the ELC within twenty-one (21) days of receipt. All orders must be delivered to the respective recipients.
- e. **Discounts:** The best possible discount on materials should be submitted to ELC because of the potential in the volume of materials that will be purchased.
- f. **Backorder items:** The ELC will accept back orders within reason if a projected availability date is supplied and guaranteed.
- g. **Return or Exchange of items:** Do not accept the return or exchange of any items by providers or doctors’ offices. Such transactions should be facilitated only by the ELC.
- h. **Damage Items:** If a provider or office contacts vendor because of a damaged item, please direct them to the ELC. This is the only way to match any credits that may be received and to ensure replacement with the same item. ELC will facilitate the exchange process.
- i. **Purchase Orders:** Early Learning Coalition providers or doctors’ offices will not place their own orders. Orders will be approved by the ELC staff or Reach Out and Read designated staff, using an ELC issued PO.

## EVALUATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

The ELC shall evaluate each response that is properly submitted. After submission and review of responses, interviews may be requested. Selection of a respondent to provide the commodities and/or services will be based on the following criteria and RFP scoring:

### Scoring Factors -

Was the proposal submitted in presentable/professional manner?	0-10
Was the proposal submitted clear and concise?	0-10
Does the vendor have relative experience in the market?	0-20
Does the vendor have the capacity to fulfill the request?	0-20
Is the estimate/cost the best value for ELCD?	0-40

**TOTAL EVALUATION POINTS 100**

- Evaluation of those proposals receiving a score of 80 points or more of the total maximum possible score will be considered for award first, then other bids with less points will be considered thereafter. The ELC intends to award no more than three (3) contracts.
- Prior experience/brief background of the company and indicate the prior experience of your firm, which you consider relevant to your ability to successfully manage a contract for the services defined by this RFP. Include sufficient detail to demonstrate the relevance of this experience to the size and scope of the locations that you are bidding. Proposals submitted should include, in this section, descriptions of a minimum of one qualifying relevant experience to include project/client descriptions, costs, and starting and completion dates of projects/contracts successfully completed. Also, include the name, address, email, and phone number of the official responsible for the customer organization.

While the order of these factors does not generally denote relative importance, the ELC acknowledges that selecting best value contractors primarily requires a balanced combination of (1) reasonable rates, and (2) strong experience and demonstrated expertise in providing commodities and/or services. The ELC reserves the right to consider such other relevant factors as it deems appropriate to hire the best value Contractor of the commodities and/or services. The ELC may or may not seek additional information from Respondents prior to selecting.

This RFP does not commit the ELC to select any contractor, award any work order, pay any costs incurred in preparing a response, or procure or contract for any services or supplies. The ELC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all submittals received, cancel or modify the RFP in part or in its entirety, or change the RFP guidelines, when it is in the best interests of the ELC to do so.

## **AWARD PROCESS**

The contract will be awarded by written notice to the responsible and responsive vendor(s) whose proposal(s) is determined to be the most advantageous to the Coalition, taking into consideration the price and other evaluation criteria as set forth in this request for proposal.

The Coalition reserves the right to review all items listed on any price invoice to evaluate components that include, but are not limited to, product quality, durability, and developmental age-appropriateness.

The Coalition reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive any informality of proposals, and to accept in whole, or in part, each proposal as may be deemed in the best interest of the Coalition.

## **AWARD PERIOD**

Once the proposal award has been issued, one or more contracts shall be signed by the Coalition for a period of three (3) years with an optional three-year renewal. Price quotes must be guaranteed for the term of the contract and any renewal years as proposed. The yearly price increase may be no greater than 10 percent. The contract will be effective as of May 1, 2026, or the date of execution by both parties, whichever is later.

## **OFFER EXTENDED TO ALL EARLY LEARNING COALITIONS**

The Early Learning Coalition of Duval encourages and agrees to the successful proposer(s) extending the pricing, terms and conditions of this solicitation or resultant contact(s) to other Early Learning Coalitions at the discretion of the successful proposer(s).

## **REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS**

### **Attachment 1 - Statement of Insurance Coverage**

Proposer must submit a statement of insurance coverage.

### **Attachment 2 - Assurances and Certifications**

Proposer must sign and submit all attached Assurances and Certifications.



## ATTACHMENT 1 - STATEMENT OF INSURANCE COVERAGE

## ATTACHMENT 2 – ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

- A. Debarment and Suspension Certification (29 CFR Part 95 and 45 CFR Part 74)
- B. Certification Regarding Lobbying (29 CFR Part 93 and 45 CFR Part 93)
- C. Drug free Workplace Certification (29 CFR Part 98 and 45 CFR Part 82)
- D. Nondiscrimination & Equal Opportunity Assurance (29 CFR Part 37 and 45 CFR Part 80)
- E. Certification Regarding Public Entity Crimes, section 287.133, F.S.
- F. Conflict of Interest
- G. Public Records
- H. Terms & Conditions

### A. CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION, AND OTHER RESPONSIBILITY MATTERS – PRIMARY COVERED TRANSACTION.

The undersigned Contractor certifies to the best of its knowledge and belief, that it and its principals:

1. Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by a Federal department or agency; verification through <https://www.sam.gov/>
2. Have not within a three-year period preceding this Agreement been convicted or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;
3. Are not presently indicted or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a government entity (Federal, State or local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph A.2. of this certification; and/or
4. Have not within a three-year period preceding this application/proposal had one or more public transactions (Federal, State, or local) terminated for cause of default.
5. Where the Contractor is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such Contractor shall attach an explanation to this Agreement.

### B. CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING – Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements. The undersigned Contractor certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

1. No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any

Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan or cooperative agreement.

2. If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employees of Congress, or employee of a Member of Congress in connection with a Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall also complete and submit Standard Form – LLL, “Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying,” in accordance with its instructions.
3. The undersigned shall require that language of this certification be included in the documents for all subcontracts at all tiers (including subcontracts, sub-grants and contracts under grants, loans and cooperative agreements) and that all sub-recipients and contractors shall certify and disclose accordingly.
4. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this Agreement was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this Agreement imposed by 31 U.S.C. 1352. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

### **C. CERTIFICATION REGARDING DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE REQUIREMENTS.**

Pursuant to the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 and its implementing regulations codified at 29 C.F.R. 98, Subpart F. I, the undersigned Contractor, attest and certify that the Contractor will provide a drug-free workplace by the following actions.

1. Publishing a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the Contractor’s workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violation of such prohibition.
2. Establishing an ongoing drug-free awareness program to inform employees concerning:
  - a. The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace.
  - b. The policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace.
  - c. Any available drug counseling, rehabilitation and employee assistance programs.
  - d. The penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace.
3. Making it a requirement that each employee to be engaged in the performance of the resulting contract be given a copy of the statement required by paragraph C.1 of this certification.

4. Notifying the employee in the statement required by paragraph C.1 of this certification that, as a condition of employment under the contract, the employee will:
  - a. Abide by the terms of the statement.
  - b. Notify the employer in writing of his or her conviction for a violation of a criminal drug statute occurring in the workplace no later than five (5) calendar days after such conviction.
5. Notifying the ELC in writing ten (10) calendar days after receiving notice under subparagraph 4.b. from an employee or otherwise receiving actual notice of such conviction. Provide such notice of convicted employees, including position title, to every Contract officer on whose Contract activity the convicted employee was working. The notice shall include the identification number(s) of each affected Contract.
6. Taking one of the following actions, within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving notice under subparagraph 4.b., with respect to any employee who is so convicted.
  - a. Taking appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination, consistent with the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended.
  - b. Requiring such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a Federal, State or local, health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency.
7. Making a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of this entire certification. The workplace could be a child care center, a family child care home, a training facility or the ELC offices.

**D. NON DISCRIMINATION & EQUAL OPPORTUNITY (29 C.F.R. PART 37 AND 45 C.F.R. PART 80).**

As a condition of the Agreement, the Contractor assures that it will comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the following laws:

1. Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), (Pub. L. 105-220), which prohibits discrimination against all individuals in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, or belief, and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States or participation in any WIA Title I-financially assisted program or activity;
2. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Pub. L. 88-352), as amended, and all requirements imposed by or pursuant to the Regulation of the Department of Health and Human Services

(45, C.F.R. Part 80), to the end that, in accordance with Title VI of that Act and the Regulation, no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which the Applicant receives Federal financial assistance from the Department.

3. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Pub. L. 93-112) as amended, and all requirements imposed by or pursuant to the Regulation of the Department of Health and Human Services (45 C.F.R. Part 84), to the end that, in accordance with Section 504 of that Act, and the Regulation, no otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which the Applicant receives Federal financial assistance from the Department.
4. The Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (Pub. L. 94-135), as amended, and all requirements imposed by or pursuant to the Regulation of the Department of Health and Human Services (45 C.F.R. Part 91), to the end that, in accordance with the Act and the Regulation, no person in the United States shall, on the basis of age, be denied the benefits of, be excluded from participation in, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which the Applicant receives Federal financial assistance from the Department.
5. Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 (Pub. L. 92-318), as amended, and all requirements imposed by or pursuant to the Regulation of the Department of Health and Human Services (45 C.F. R. Part 86), to the end that, in accordance with Title IX and the Regulation, no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity for which the Applicant receives Federal financial assistance from the Department.
6. The American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Pub. L. 101-336), prohibits discrimination in all employment practices, including, job application procedures, hiring, firing, advancement, compensation, training, and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment. It applies to recruitment, advertising, tenure, layoff, leave, fringe benefits, and all other employment-related activities, and;
7. The Contractor also assures that it will comply with 29 C.F.R. part 37 and all other regulations implementing the laws listed above. This assurance applies to the Contractor's operation of the WIA Title I – financially assisted program or activity, and to all agreements the Contractor makes to carry out the WIA Title I – financially assisted program or activity. The Contractor understands that the AWI and the United States has the right to seek judicial enforcement of the assurance.

## **E. CERTIFICATION REGARDING PUBLIC ENTITY CRIMES, SECTION 287.133, F.S.**

The Contractor hereby certifies, through the duly appointed undersigned representative, that neither it, nor any person or affiliate of the Contractor, has been convicted of a Public Entity Crime as defined in section 287.133, Florida Statutes, nor placed on the convicted vendor list, suspended vendor list, or discriminatory vendor list all of which are located at [https://www.dms.myflorida.com/business\\_operations/state\\_purchasing/state\\_agency\\_resources/vendor\\_registration\\_and\\_vendor\\_lists/convicted\\_vendor\\_list](https://www.dms.myflorida.com/business_operations/state_purchasing/state_agency_resources/vendor_registration_and_vendor_lists/convicted_vendor_list).

*The Contractor understands and agrees that it is required to inform the ELC immediately upon any change of circumstances regarding this status.*

## **F. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The Contractor represents that the execution of this Contract does not violate the ELC's Conflict of Interest and State of Florida Code of Ethics, Section 112.311, F.S. The Contractor agrees to abide by and be governed by these conflict of interest laws throughout the course of this Contract and in connection with its obligations hereunder.

## **G. PUBLIC RECORDS**

To the extent required by the Florida Public Records Act, Chapter 119, F.S., Vendor shall maintain and allow access to public records made or received in conjunction with this contract.

## **H. TERMS & CONDITIONS**

Additional terms and conditions can be located on our website: <https://www.elcduval.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Duval-Terms-and-Conditions-1.30.25.pdf>

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**By signing below, the Contractor certifies the representations outlined in parts A through H above are true and correct.**

### **Contractor Acknowledgement:**

Name of Business/Contractor: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_