

Early Learning Programs Estimating Conference
School Readiness Program
Executive Summary
August 8, 2024

For the first time since 2004, the Early Learning Programs Estimating Conference met on August 8, 2024, to adopt a new School Readiness Program forecast through Fiscal Year 2029-30. The forecast incorporated historical School Readiness FTE data through FY 2022-23, FY 2023-24 FTE data through June 2024, a birth forecast from the July 2024 Demographic Estimating Conference, and an FTE forecast from the July 2024 PreK-12 Education Estimating Conference.

Program Eligibility...

The criteria for the traditional School Readiness program includes:

- Gross income must be at or below 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for initial eligibility and at or below 85 percent of the State Median Income (SMI) for continued eligibility;
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) must work or participate in an educational activity such as attending college or trade school at least 20 hours per week; and,
- Families must pay a copayment for child care based on income and family size.
- The School Readiness Match (SRMT) Program extends services to low-income families up to 85 percent of the SMI, including those families who were initially above 150 percent of the FPL.

Children in eligible low-income households can participate in the program's range of services from birth through the age of 12. Children generate FTE by "Care Level" - Infant, Toddler, 2 Year Old, Preschool 3, Preschool 4, Preschool 5, and School Age. During the month in which a child receiving services has a birthday, FTE is prorated across two care levels as needed.

Reported 2023-24 Data...

Enrollment data reported through June results in an estimated 111,239.27 FTE, an increase of 2,016.73 (1.8%) over FY 2022-23. Of this, all Care Levels increased year over year except Infant, which declined by -37.80 FTE, or -0.7%. Growth across the levels ranged from 155.94 (0.8%) in Preschool 3 to 529.82 (2.8%) in Preschool 4.

Forecast Methodology...

FTE forecasts are dependent on the underlying forecasts for each Care Level. To forecast Infant FTE, average historical rates of Infant FTE relative to births was applied to the Demographic Estimating Conference birth series. Historical progression trends from each of the Care Levels between Infant and Preschool 5 were used to forecast cohorts moving through these respective levels. Finally, average historical rates of School Age FTE relative to non-scholarship Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) FTE were applied to the Education Estimating Conference non-scholarship FTE forecast series to produce the School Age FTE forecast.

FY 2024-25 through FY 2029-30 Forecast...

Forecasted growth over the prior year ranges from a high of 2,453.52 (2.21%) in FY 2024-25 to a low of 1,124.07 (0.93%) in FY 2029-30. Infant through Preschool 5 participation is shaped by actual and forecasted births from the Demographic forecast, while School Age participation is influenced by cohort patterns in the FEFP forecast. The final year of the forecast, FY 2029-30, is expected to reach 122,411.73 FTE.

Historical and Forecasted Total School Readiness FTE			
Fiscal Year	Total FTE	Change from the prior fiscal year	% Change from the prior fiscal year
FY 2021-2022	106,442.19	1,920.37	1.84%
FY 2022-2023	109,222.54	2,780.35	2.61%
FY 2023-2024 Estimate	111,239.27	2,016.73	1.85%
FY 2024-2025 Forecast	113,692.79	2,453.52	2.21%
FY 2025-2026 Forecast	116,041.18	2,348.39	2.07%
FY 2026-2027 Forecast	118,182.60	2,141.42	1.85%
FY 2027-2028 Forecast	119,870.51	1,687.91	1.43%
FY 2028-2029 Forecast	121,287.66	1,417.15	1.18%
FY 2029-2030 Forecast	122,411.73	1,124.07	0.93%