

Early Learning Programs Estimating Conference
School Readiness Program
Executive Summary
March 6, 2025

The Early Learning Programs Estimating Conference met on March 6, 2025, to adopt a new School Readiness Program forecast through FY 2029-30. The forecast incorporates final FY 2023-24 School Readiness FTE data; FY 2024-25 FTE data through January 2025; updated demographic data reflecting the latest Demographic Estimating Conference results; the latest 5-year American Community Survey (2019-2023) data; and an FTE forecast from the February 2025 PreK-12 Education Estimating Conference.

Children in eligible low-income households can participate in the program’s range of services from birth through the age of 12.¹ The FTE are linked to “Care Level” (Infant, Toddler, 2 Year Old, Preschool 3, Preschool 4, Preschool 5, and School Age) and three different forecasting methodologies are tailored to those levels of care. To forecast Infant FTE, average historical rates of Infant FTE relative to births are applied to the Demographic Estimating Conference birth series. Historical progression trends from each of the Care Levels between Infant and Preschool 5 are 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 are applied to the Education Estimating Conference non-scholarship FTE forecast series to produce the School Age FTE forecast.

Final enrollment data reported for FY 2023-24 resulted in an estimated 111,414.82 FTE, an increase of 175.55 over the prior forecast and 2,192.28 (2.0%) over FY 2022-23. For the current year (FY 2024-25), strong enrollment data reported through January suggests a revised total of 115,418.23 FTE, an increase of 1,725.44 over the prior forecast and 4,003.41 (3.6%) over FY 2023-24.

For the remainder of the forecast, each year’s total is expected to grow over the prior year, with increases ranging from a high of 2,306.53 (2.0%) in FY 2026-27 to a low of 1,170.04 (1.0%) in FY 2029-30. The final year of the forecast, FY 2029-30, is expected to reach 124,000.40 FTE.

Historical and Forecasted Total School Readiness FTE				
Fiscal Year	Total FTE	Change from the prior forecast (8/8/2024)	Change from the prior fiscal year	% Change from the prior fiscal year
FY 2022-2023	109,222.54		2,780.35	2.6%
FY 2023-2024	111,414.82	175.55	2,192.28	2.0%
FY 2024-2025 Forecast	115,418.23	1,725.44	4,003.41	3.6%
FY 2025-2026 Forecast	117,511.32	1,470.14	2,093.09	1.8%
FY 2026-2027 Forecast	119,817.85	1,635.25	2,306.53	2.0%
FY 2027-2028 Forecast	121,551.88	1,681.37	1,734.03	1.4%
FY 2028-2029 Forecast	122,830.36	1,542.70	1,278.48	1.1%
FY 2029-2030 Forecast	124,000.40	1,588.67	1,170.04	1.0%

¹ 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.