

BYLAWS FOR
SANTA ROSA COUNTY SCHOOL READINESS COALITION, INC.
dba EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF SANTA ROSA COUNTY

ARTICLE I
NAME, AUTHORIZATION, LOCATION

- 1.1 NAME: The name of the organization shall be the Santa Rosa County School Readiness Coalition, Inc. dba the Early Learning Coalition of Santa Rosa County hereinafter referred to as the Coalition. The Coalition may adopt one or more fictitious names for purposes of community awareness if such names are duly registered with the State of Florida.
- 1.2 AUTHORITY: The Coalition is authorized by the provisions of Florida Statute and applicable rule.
- 1.3 LOCATION: The Coalition shall have offices within Santa Rosa County as the members may determine or as the operations of the organization may require.

ARTICLE II
PURPOSE, INTENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 PURPOSE OF THE COALITION: The purpose of the Coalition shall be to carry out the duties and responsibilities invested and entrusted to the Coalition pursuant to the provisions of the School Readiness Program, Florida Statutes Chapter 1002, Part VI, as amended from time to time, and the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program, Florida Statutes, Chapter V, as amended from time to time in Santa Rosa County as authorized by Florida law. Collectively these programs shall be referred to as “early learning programs.” The Coalition recognizes the primacy of parents as their children’s first teachers and the importance of children entering the education system ready to learn and seeks to assist parents by providing opportunities for the at-risk birth-to-kindergarten population to enhance their chances for educational success by participating in quality early learning programs that can better prepare the children for school. The purpose is also to operate as a non-profit provider of programs including, but not limited to, programs funded through any federal, state, or private programs, which promote the school readiness of children ages birth through age 12.
- 2.2 INTENT OF THE COALITION: The Coalition recognizes that early learning programs increase children’s chances of achieving future educational success and becoming productive members of society; therefore, the Coalition subscribes to the following:
 - 2.2.1 It is the intent of the Coalition that early learning programs: be developmentally appropriate and research based, involve parents as their child's first teacher, provide preventative measures for children at risk of future school failure,

enhance the educational readiness of eligible children, and support family education. Each program shall provide the elements necessary to prepare at risk children for school including health screening and referral and an appropriate educational program.

- 2.2.2 It is the intent of the Coalition that school readiness programs shall operate on a full day, year-round basis to the maximum extent possible to enable parents to work and become financially self-sufficient. Private and Public Voluntary Pre- kindergarten programs shall be offered according to Florida Statute.
- 2.2.3 It is the intent of the Coalition that early learning programs shall not exist as isolated programs but shall build upon existing services and work in cooperation with other programs for young children, and that programs shall be coordinated with integrated funding to achieve full effectiveness. Furthermore, the Coalition shall not co-mingle systems relating to school readiness and voluntary pre- kindergarten. The voting members of the Coalition shall make decisions that are specifically related to each program area.
- 2.2.4 It is the intent of the Coalition that the early learning programs coordinate and operate in conjunction with the district school system. It is also the intent of the Coalition that early learning programs not be construed as part of the system of free public schools but rather as a separate program for children under the age of kindergarten eligibility, funded separately from the system of free public schools, utilizing a mandatory sliding fee scale for school readiness services provided to low income and otherwise eligible children, and providing an integrated and seamless system of early learning services for the state's birth-to-kindergarten population.

2.3 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COALITION: The Coalition shall develop and oversee a plan for implementing early learning programs that meets the requirements of applicable Florida statutes and the performance standards and outcome measures established by the State. The plan must include a written description of the Coalition's effort to meet the educational goal of readiness to start school, including all provisions required by statute, exercising all authorities not otherwise reserved in statute. Prior to implementation of any programs, the Coalition shall submit the plan to the Division of Early Learning for approval. The plan shall be reviewed as needed and shall be revised upon approval of the Coalition. The bylaws are a part of the Coalition's plan and any amendments to them constitute an amendment to the plan.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

3.1 NUMBER OF MEMBERS: The Coalition shall have at least 15 but not more than 30 members. The Governor of the State of Florida shall appoint the Chairperson and two other members of each early learning coalition, who must meet the same qualifications as private-sector business members appointed by the Coalition as required by Florida Statute. All members,

except Advisory Members, shall be voting members. If members of the board are found to be nonparticipating according to the Coalition bylaws, Sections 3.6.3 and 3.6.4, the Coalition may request an alternate designee who meets the same qualifications or membership requirements of the nonparticipating member.

- 3.2 MANDATED MEMBERS: Mandated members shall serve continuously while in their respective positions. A member who no longer serves in the mandated position shall notify the Chairperson in writing and that seat shall remain vacant until a replacement is named by the respective organization. Mandated members are as follows:
 - 3.2.1 Department of Children and Families regional administrator or his/her permanent designee who is authorized to make decisions on behalf of the department
 - 3.2.2 A local workforce development board executive or director or his or her permanent designee
 - 3.2.3 A county Health Department director or his or her designee
 - 3.2.4 A Children's Services Council or Juvenile Welfare board chair or executive director, if applicable; Not applicable in Santa Rosa County
 - 3.2.5 An agency head of a local licensing agency as defined in s. 402-302, if applicable; Not applicable in Santa Rosa County
 - 3.2.6 A president of a Florida College System institution or his/her permanent designee
 - 3.2.7 A district superintendent of schools or his or her designee who is authorized to make decisions on behalf of the district
 - 3.2.8 A Department of Children and Families child care regulation representative
 - 3.2.9 A Head Start director

- 3.3 REPRESENTATIVE MEMBERS: Terms for these members shall be in accordance with Section 3.6.
 - 3.3.1 A representative of private for-profit child care providers, including private for-profit family day care homes. A qualified candidate shall be defined as an administrator, owner, director, or management level staff member of a center or home serving Coalition-funded children. Qualified candidates interested in serving shall submit a letter of interest with a resume within the timeframe established by the Coalition. Candidate credentials shall be reviewed by the Executive Committee. Following said review, a recommendation shall be made to the Coalition for consideration and a vote.
 - 3.3.2 A representative of faith-based child care providers. A qualified candidate shall be defined as an administrator, director or management level staff member of a center serving Coalition-funded children. Qualified candidates interested in serving shall submit a letter of interest with a resume within the timeframe established by the Coalition. Candidate credentials shall be reviewed by the Executive Committee. Following said review, a recommendation shall be made to the Coalition for consideration and a vote.
 - 3.3.3 A representative of programs for children with disabilities under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Qualified candidates interested in serving shall submit a letter of interest with a resume within the timeframe

established by the Coalition. Candidate credentials shall be reviewed by the Executive Committee. Following said review, a recommendation shall be made to the Coalition for consideration and a vote.

3.4 GUBERNATORIAL APPOINTED MEMBERS AND LOCALLY APPOINTED MEMBERS: Terms for these members shall be in accordance with Section 3.6.

3.4.1 The Chair and two other members appointed by the Governor of the State of Florida. These members must each meet the qualifications of a private sector business member under Section 3.4.3 and shall be referred to as gubernatorial appointees. In the absence of a gubernatorial appointed Chair, the Commissioner of Education may appoint an interim chair from the current membership of the board of the Coalition.

3.4.2 One member appointed by a board of county commissioners or the governing board of a municipality. Qualified candidates are appointed at the discretion of the board of county commissioners or the governing board of municipality. This member shall be referred to as a local appointee.

3.4.3 The Coalition may appoint additional private sector business members, either for-profit or nonprofit, who do not have, and none of their relatives has (as defined in s.112.3143) a substantial financial interest in the design or delivery of the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program or the School Readiness Program. To meet this requirement, the Coalition shall appoint additional members from a list of nominees. Candidate credentials shall be presented to and reviewed by the Executive Committee. Following said review, a recommendation shall be made to the Coalition for consideration and a vote. These members shall be referred to as local appointees. Private sector local appointees serving the Coalition must own or be employed by a business located or providing services in Santa Rosa County, Florida.

3.5 ADVISORY MEMBERS: Terms for these members shall be in accordance with Section 3.6. The Coalition may appoint optional members from each county served by the coalition. Advisory members are non-voting members and are not counted as part of the quorum and may include:

3.5.1 A parent of a child or children served by the Coalition at the time the parent begins the term. Candidates interested in serving shall submit a letter of interest with a resume within the timeframe established by the Coalition. Candidate credentials shall be reviewed by the Executive Committee. Following said review, a recommendation shall be made to the Coalition for consideration and a vote.

3.6 MEMBERSHIP TERMS: Service on the Coalition requires a commitment of time including attending regularly scheduled coalition meetings, serving on a committee, and becoming educated about many aspects of early childhood development and school readiness issues.

- 3.6.1 The terms of all gubernatorial appointees will be set by the Governor. The terms of local appointees and representative members must be staggered and must be of a uniform length. Local appointees and representative members may serve a maximum of two consecutive four-year terms. When a vacancy occurs in a local appointee private sector position, the Coalition must publicly notice the vacancy. Vacancies occurring on the Coalition board prior to expiration of any term may be filled in the same manner as the original appointment for the balance of the term. Members filling unexpired terms may serve only one additional four-year term except in cases where the term served was less than one year. If the term served was less than one year, then the member fulfilling the term will still be eligible to serve two additional four-year terms.
 - 3.6.2 Any representative or local appointee member may be removed by two-thirds (2/3) vote of a quorum of the members whenever, in their judgment, the best interests of the Coalition would be served. The Chairperson, prior to the next Coalition meeting, shall give notice of removal in writing to the member.
 - 3.6.3 Absences by representative, local appointee, and/or optional members from three (3) consecutive meetings or four (4) meetings within a twelve-month period without due cause and notification to the Chairperson are equivalent to resignation from the Coalition.
 - 3.6.4 Absences by mandated members from three (3) meetings within a twelve-month period without due cause and notification to the Chairperson may be notified by the Chairperson that their membership is not in good standing, and the agency representative or supervisor shall be asked to appoint a designee to serve in the current member's place. Absences by gubernatorial appointees from three (3) meetings within a twelve-month period without due cause and notification may be addressed through notification to the Governor's office regarding the absences so that new appointments may be made at the pleasure of the Governor.
 - 3.6.5 Any member may resign by giving written notice to the Chairperson. Such resignation shall take effect at the time specified in the notice and the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective. Any mandated member who wishes to resign shall appoint a designee to serve in his/her place.
 - 3.6.6 Members will not receive any compensation for their services and are considered volunteers.
- 3.7 SUNSHINE LAW: All board members shall follow and strictly adhere to Florida's Government in the Sunshine Law, Florida Statutes, Chapter 286.

ARTICLE IV MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 POWERS AND DUTIES: The powers, management, and control of the Coalition, and all of its operations, shall be vested in the Board as outlined in Florida Statute.

- 4.1.1 Each voting member is a local public officer who must abstain from voting when a voting conflict exists. For the purpose of tort liability each member or employee of the Coalition shall be governed by s. 768.28. Each member of this Coalition is subject to ss. 112.313, 112.3135, and 112.3143.
 - 4.1.2 A quorum is required to conduct business for the Coalition. A majority of the voting membership of the Coalition shall constitute a quorum. If less than a majority of the members is present at said meeting, a majority of the members present may adjourn the meeting without further notice.
 - 4.1.3 A voting member of the Coalition may not appoint a designee to act in his or her stead. A voting member may send a representative to coalition meetings for information purposes only, but that representative shall not have voting privileges and shall not be counted as a part of the quorum. When a mandated member appoints a designee to the Coalition, the designee is the voting member of the Coalition, and any individual attending in the designee's place, including the mandated member, does not have voting privileges.
 - 4.1.4 An individual board member does not have the authority to direct the Executive Director or his or her staff in either policy or non-policy making issues or decisions.
 - 4.1.5 Non-voting members are authorized to participate in all discussions regarding Coalition business and services. Although not authorized to vote, non-voting members shall serve in an advisory capacity on the Coalition Board and on respective committees.
 - 4.1.6 The Executive Director shall manage the day-to-day operations of the Coalition's administrative office, report to and advise the Board on all matters material to the performance of its responsibilities, ensure implementation of Board decisions, fulfill all other duties and obligations assigned under these Bylaws, and any other tasks, duties, or obligations which may be assigned by the Board during the course of employment. The Executive Director shall oversee all other Coalition staff and may establish procedures by which the Coalition staff fulfills their respective duties.
- 4.2 MEETINGS: Regular meetings shall be held at a time and place to be decided by the members.
- 4.2.1 The Chairperson or designee may call a meeting of the Coalition Board. Any method of telecommunications may be used to conduct meetings, including establishing a quorum, provided the public is given proper notice of a telecommunications meeting and reasonable access to observe, and when appropriate, participate. Meetings conducted in-person shall be held at locations readily accessible within the service delivery area.
 - 4.2.2 The agenda and order of business at all Coalition meetings shall be prepared by the staff of the Coalition and approved by the Chairperson, or in his or her absence, the Vice-Chairperson or other Coalition officer.
 - 4.2.3 All board members must address the Chairperson before speaking during Coalition meetings. The public shall be given an opportunity to comment at all board meetings but shall not be allowed to speak at other times during the meeting unless addressed by the Chairperson.

- 4.2.4 Minutes of all Coalition meetings shall be maintained. These minutes shall be provided to members prior to or at the time of the subsequent meeting.
 - 4.2.5 Notice of meetings will be provided in a manner designed to provide reasonable and actual notice to members and the public or as otherwise required pursuant to Florida Statute 286.011 or legislative exception 286.0111.
 - 4.2.6 The Annual Meeting of the Coalition may be held each year in the second quarter of the fiscal year.
- 4.3 PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY: Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern the Coalition in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the Coalition may adopt. However, the failure to strictly comply with the provisions of Robert's Rules of Order shall not affect the validity of any action taken by the Coalition in conformity with these bylaws unless it can be affirmatively demonstrated that the failure to follow Robert's Rules of Order directly resulted in a lack of understanding of the action being proposed or other injustice occurred.

ARTICLE V OFFICERS

- 5.1 APPOINTMENT AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS: A voting Coalition member in good standing shall be eligible for nomination and/or appointment to office of this Coalition. The Governor will appoint the Chairperson of the Coalition who shall serve for a term of not more than four consecutive years or until a successor is appointed.
- 5.1.1 A Nominating Committee, appointed by the Chairperson and approved by the members, shall convene at least biennially for the purpose of certifying the eligibility of candidates for the elected offices of Vice-Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer, and to prepare an official slate of nominees. Any person so nominated shall have given prior consent to nomination and election as an officer.
 - 5.1.2 Each elected officer shall be installed and take office effective May 1 of each year and shall serve for a term of two years or until a successor is duly qualified and elected. Elected officers may serve in the same position for a maximum of four consecutive terms.
 - 5.1.3 If an office is vacated prior to the completion of a one-year term, a member in good standing may be appointed by the Chairperson and approved by the members to fill the vacancy until the term ends.
- 5.2 OFFICERS OF THE COALITION: Coalition officers shall be as follows:
- 5.2.1 Chairperson: The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Coalition. The Board Chair provides governance leadership to support and sustain the operations of the Coalition; presides over and facilitates board and committee

meetings; and works with the Executive Director to ensure that Coalition policies are followed, and Board action is implemented. The Chairperson shall appoint chairpersons of all committees, shall appoint Coalition officers to fill vacancies until nominations can be presented, and shall cast the determining vote in case of a tie in Board and Executive Committee meetings.

- 5.2.2 Vice-Chairperson: The Vice-Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Chairperson in his or her absence, enforce Roberts Rules of Order, and have such other responsibilities as may be designated by the Chairperson.
- 5.2.3 Treasurer: The Treasurer, in cooperation with the Coalition staff, shall keep an account of monies received and expended for the use of the Coalition and will make a report at each meeting. The Treasurer shall also work with Coalition staff to ensure proper reporting of Coalition funds and have such other responsibilities as may be designated by the Chairperson. The Treasurer shall serve as chairperson of the Finance Committee.
- 5.2.4 Secretary: The Secretary, in cooperation with the Coalition staff, shall ensure that notice required by these bylaws is given, keep records of all proceedings of the Coalition in cooperation with the staff, keep the records of attendance, and report correspondence to the Coalition at each meeting. Correspondence shall be conducted relative to the nomination of required membership and other business as called upon by the Chairperson. The Secretary may perform any other duties incidental to the office of Secretary (roll call and establish attendance) or when called upon by the Chairperson and have such other responsibilities as may be designated by the Chairperson.
- 5.2.5 Terms. The Chairperson serves at the pleasure of the Governor. A term of office for Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary shall be defined as two years. Officers may be re-elected for up to four terms in the same office and are eligible to serve in any other office for up to four terms. Following four terms in an office, members must refrain for serving in that office for at least one year.

ARTICLE VI COMMITTEES

- 6.1 ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEES: The Chairperson may at any time establish committees as deemed necessary.
- 6.2 STANDING COMMITTEES: Standing committees shall include the following:
 - 6.2.1 Executive Committee consisting of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary, one member from the finance committee and two at-large board members. The Finance Committee shall elect their representative member to serve on the Executive Committee and the Nominating Committee shall nominate two at-large board members to serve on the Executive Committee. In emergency situations to ensure continuity of Coalition operations, the Executive Committee shall have the authority to vote for the board and present the vote to the next full board meeting for consent.

6.2.2 Finance Committee chaired by the Treasurer.

6.2.3 Only voting members of the Coalition shall serve as committee chairpersons and shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the Coalition, notwithstanding the duties of the Treasurer as Finance Chairperson as outlined in 5.2.3. Committee chairpersons may serve for a term of two consecutive years or until a successor is appointed and may be reappointed for up to four terms as chair of a specific committee. Following four terms as chair of a specific committee, members must refrain for serving as chair of the committee for at least one year.

6.3 MEMBERSHIP: Each committee shall consist of the committee Chairperson, the Coalition Chairperson who serves as a voting ex-officio member, and at least two (2) additional voting members of the Coalition. Representatives of local businesses and organizations the community may be appointed as needed to serve at the committee level as members at large to carry out the work of the committee but shall not have voting rights at the board level. The committee Chairperson shall cast the determining vote in case of a tie.

6.4 MEETINGS: Each committee shall meet as necessary at meeting times designated by the committee Chairperson. Notice of meetings will be provided in a manner designed to provide reasonable and actual notice to members and the public or as otherwise required pursuant to Florida Statute 286.011 or legislative exception 286.0111.

6.5 MINUTES: Minutes of committee meetings shall be maintained and shall be presented to the full Board on or before the next regularly scheduled meeting if official action is required by the Coalition.

ARTICLE VII PROGRAM

7.1 PROGRAM PARTICIPATION: The Coalition shall administer Early Learning Program and shall make every reasonable effort to accommodate the needs of eligible children

7.1.1 The Coalition is responsible for ensuring that the School Readiness and Voluntary Prekindergarten programs meet the program expectations and implementation guidelines as outlined in Florida Statutes.

7.1.2 The Coalition is responsible for implementation of all Division of Early Learning approved learning and developmental standards.

7.1.3 The Coalition will be guided by the Plan submitted periodically to the Division of Early Learning for approval. Plan amendments will be submitted as needed.

7.1.4 The Coalition will develop and implement policy, monitor program status and ensure the management of the systems

necessary to improve the quality of early care and education programs in Santa Rosa County.

ARTICLE VIII RECORDS AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 FISCAL YEAR: The fiscal year of the organization shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30.
- 8.2 AUDIT: An independent audit of the books and records of the organization shall be conducted annually, in accordance with the Federal Single Audit Act. The audit report shall be presented to the members within a timely manner, consistent with the Coalition's Annual Audit Plan filed with the State.
- 8.3 FISCAL AGENT: The Coalition is a legally established corporate entity and shall act as its own fiscal agent. The Coalition may employ an outside entity to provide accounting services.
- 8.4 CHECKS AND DRAFTS: All checks, drafts, and other orders for the payment of money, notes, or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of the Coalition shall be signed by such officer(s) and/or agent(s) of the Coalition as determined by resolution of its members.
- 8.5 DEPOSITS: All funds belonging to the Coalition shall be deposited in a timely manner to the credit of the Coalition in such banks, savings and loans, and other depositories as the members may select.
- 8.6 RECORD KEEPING: Correct and complete books and records related to Coalition operations are the responsibility of the Coalition board. All records shall be kept and maintained at the principal office of the Coalition or of the office of the Secretary and will be subject to inspection by any member of the Coalition or the public upon written request and at a reasonable time.
- 8.7 REIMBURSEMENT RATE: The Coalition shall adopt a reimbursement rate schedule that encompasses all programs funded by the Coalition in accordance with the provisions of the School Readiness Act and all other applicable law.
- 8.8 SLIDING FEE SCALE: The Coalition shall adopt a sliding fee scale which shall be used to help fund the local school readiness program in accordance with the provisions of the School Readiness Act and all other applicable law.

ARTICLE IX CONTRACTS

- 9.1 **CONTRACTS:** The Coalition may authorize any officer or agent of the Coalition to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the Coalition, and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

ARTICLE X BYLAWS

- 10.1 **IMPLEMENTATION:** These bylaws shall become effective immediately upon adoption. The Coalition's interpretation of the bylaws shall be considered the correct interpretation when reached by majority vote. The Coalition's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are a part of the Coalition's Plan and any amendments to them constitute an amendment to the Plan.
- 10.2 **AMENDMENTS:** These bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed and new bylaws may be adopted by a quorum present at any regular meeting or at any called meeting of the members, provided that notice of the meeting at which said alteration, amendment, or repeal of the bylaws to be considered has been provided to each member of the Coalition at least fourteen (14) days prior to said meeting and further provided that copies of the proposed amendments, alterations or deletions shall have been forwarded with notice of said meeting.

THESE BYLAWS were adopted at a duly scheduled and noticed meeting of the Coalition on October 20, 2005.

Revised:
October 2006
August 2007
February 2008
May 2010
January 2011
February 2014
September 2015
March 2016
May 2020
November 2021