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GOVERNOR SIGNS BILL TO ENHANCE EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS

~“Success in Early Learning Act” to improve efficiency of children’s education~

TALLAHASSEE – Governor Charlie Crist today signed HB 879, enhancing the quality of Florida’s early learning programs. By streamlining administrative functions, the “Success in Early Learning Act” allows early learning coalitions and providers to spend more time focused on delivering quality programs for Florida’s children.

The bill, sponsored by Representative Kurt Kelly (R-24) and Senator Don Gaetz (R-4), will provide Voluntary Prekindergarten providers the authority to assign substitute instructors, when necessary, and will allow early learning coalitions to operate more efficiently by conducting their board meetings using technology. In addition, the new law will allow coalitions and providers to spend less time working through administrative challenges and spend more time focused on providing the highest quality early learning programs for the children of Florida.

“This bill is an excellent next step in our continued effort to strengthen Florida’s families by investing in our children’s education,” said Monesia T. Brown, Director of the Agency for Workforce Innovation. “On behalf of all Florida’s children, I thank Senator Gaetz and Representative Kelly for sponsoring this important legislation.”

“Florida’s children deserve every opportunity to have a world-class education,” said Representative Kelly. “More than 125,000 young Floridians enrolled in the Voluntary Prekindergarten program will be better prepared to learn and succeed in school next year.”

The Agency for Workforce Innovation is the state’s lead workforce agency and directly administers the state’s various workforce and unemployment programs and the Office of Early Learning.

The Office of Early Learning works to support families and ensure children have quality care and early learning opportunities. The Agency provides state-level support and direction for early learning professionals and practitioners. The state’s 31 early learning coalitions work within communities providing early learning support services to families and child care providers.

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