

Dear Manatee County Parents and VPK Providers,

VPK funding is in jeopardy! We need to engage all early learning partners and stakeholders to educate legislative members on the implications of reductions.

Please take a moment to phone or email members of the House and Senate appropriations who will be addressing the VPK budget and express your concern for VPK funding. All members can be contacted on these important funding decisions regardless of whether or not they serve your district/area. In addition to these committee members, please contact local representatives and senators representing Manatee County to make them aware of your concerns. It will be important for all members to be aware of this issue as it moves forward.

The names, phone numbers, and a link to the email address of the committee members and elected officials are listed below. Please share this information broadly and ask that phone calls and emails be sent by **Tuesday 3/23** of next week.

Also, please find below sample emails that can be used by VPK providers and parents to express concerns about the proposed VPK funding reductions. Please encourage everyone to individualize their messages and educate members on their personal concerns and what reductions would mean from their perspective. Recommend that parents use their child's name and include the name of their VPK provider.

Thank you for your assistance with this important matter,

The Early Learning Coalition of Manatee County

PARENT SAMPLE CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Representative/Senator XX:

I'm writing to you as a parent and as a consumer of a very important program in our community – Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK). I am writing to ask for your support to maintain the VPK per child funding at \$2575 in order to ensure continued high-quality programs for children. In both the House and Senate budget proposals, the VPK program would receive a 15% reduction, while K-12 funding remains almost unchanged.

This year, I made a conscious decision to enroll my child in a center that provides VPK and the one I selected has an excellent reputation for quality. In my opinion, this center personifies the reason that VPK was created in the first place. I am very concerned about some of consequences that will happen if budget reductions are passed. I wonder whether my child's center would still be able to offer the same caliber of care or if they will even continue to participate in the program.

I appreciate that you have a tremendous job this session. However, I ask that you reconsider the reductions to the VPK budget and the funding that supports child participation so that children continue to receive a high-quality educational foundation, ensuring future academic success.

Sincerely,

PROVIDER SAMPLE CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Representative/Senator XX:

I am writing to ask for your support to maintain the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) per child funding at \$2575 in order to ensure continued high-quality programs Florida voters envisioned. With anticipated growth and potential funding reductions, Florida could become the largest program in the nation with one of the lowest rates for per child spending.

The House and Senate PreK-12 Appropriations committees have proposed reductions in VPK per child funding of nearly 15% while most areas of the K-12 budget were held harmless or only reduced by less than 1%. As a Florida small business owner and dedicated family advocate, I ask that you carefully consider the implications of VPK budget reductions to my business, the impact to the families I serve and the children we prepare for kindergarten. I appreciate the difficult decisions the legislature is making this session, but ask that you also consider the difficult decisions I might face if the proposed reductions become effective. The reductions will be damaging to my business and will negatively impact the families, children we serve and our local economy.

To offset this reduction, it has been proposed that the ratio be increased to permit 24 children in one classroom with two teachers. It is important to understand that due to space limitations, most facilities would not be able to accommodate 24 children in a classroom based on the state's licensing restrictions. This means that the substantial reduction would impact VPK providers' ability to meet the high quality standards and may mean that we cannot afford to participate in the VPK Education Program.

I am proud to offer VPK and hope I can continue to offer this valuable service to families in my community. With the support of the legislature and a commitment to children, we can ensure that every four-year-old in our great state is given the opportunity to learn and thrive.

Thank you for the hard work you do for our businesses and families in Florida.

Sincerely,

APPROPRIATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Senate Policy and Steering Committee on Ways and Means

Senator JD Alexander (R) (CHAIR)	District 17, Lake Wales	alexander.jd.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5044
Senator Ted Deutch (D) (VICE CHAIR)	District 30, Delray Beach	deutch.ted.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5091
Senator Thad Altman (R)	District 24, Melbourne	altman.thad.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5053
Senator Carey Baker (R)	District 20, Eustis	baker.carey.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5014
Senator Michael S. "Mike" Bennett (R)	District 21, Bradenton	bennett.mike.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5078
Senator Victor D. Crist (R)	District 12, Tampa	crist.victor.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5068
Senator Alex Diaz de la Portilla (R)	District 36, Miami	portilla.alex.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5109
Senator Mike Fasano (R)	District 11, New Port Richey	fasano.mike.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5062
Senator Don Gaetz (R)	District 4, Destin	gaetz.don.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5009
Senator Rudy Garcia (R)	District 40, Hialeah	garcia.rudy.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5106
Senator Dan Gelber (D)	District 35, Miami Beach	gelber.dan.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5121
Senator Mike Haridopolos (R)	District 26, Melbourne	haridopolos.mike.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5056
Senator Anthony C. "Tony" Hill, Sr. (D)	District 1, Jacksonville	hill.tony.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5024
Senator Charlie Justice (D)	District 16, St. Petersburg	justice.charlie.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5075
Senator Alfred "Al" Lawson, Jr. (D)	District 6, Tallahassee	lawson.alfred.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5004
Senator Evelyn J. Lynn (R)	District 7, Daytona Beach	lynn.evelyn.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5033
Senator Joe Negron (R)	District 28, Palm City	negron.joe.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5088
Senator Durell Peaden, Jr. (R)	District 2, Crestview	peaden.durell.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5000
Senator Nan H. Rich (D)	District 34, Crestview	rich.nan.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5103
Senator Gary Siplin (D)	District 19, Orlando	siplin.gary.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5190
Senator Eleanor Sobel (D)	District 31, Hollywood	sobel.eleanor.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5097
Senator John Thrasher (R)	District 8, Jacksonville	thrasher.john.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5030
Senator J. Alex Villalobos (R)	District 38, Miami	villalobos.alex.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5130
Senator Frederica S. Wilson (D)	District 33, Miami Gardens	wilson.frederica.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5116

		flsenate.gov	
Senator Stephen R. Wise (R)	District 5, Jacksonville	wise.stephen.web@flsenate.gov	(850) 487-5027

House Full Appropriations Council on Education and Economic Development

Rivera, David (R) (CHAIR)	District 112, Miami	email	(850) 488-7897
Reagan, Ron (R) (VICE CHAIR)	District 67, Sarasota	email	(850) 921-7747
Saunders, Ron (D)	District 120, Tavernier	email	(850) 488-9965
Adams, Sandra (R)	District 33, Oviedo	email	(850) 488-0468
Bogdanoff, Elynn Setnor (R)	District 91, Fort Lauderdale	email	(850) 488-0635
Brisé, Ronald A. (D)	District 108, North Miami	email	(850) 488-4233
Chestnut IV, Charles S. (D)	District 23, Gainesville	email	(850) 488-5794
Flores, Anitere (R)	District 114, Miami	email	(850) 488-2831
Galvano, Bill (R)	District 68, Bradenton	email	(850) 488-4086
Gibbons, Joseph A. (D)	District 105, Pembroke Park	email	(850) 488-0145
Glorioso, Richard (R)	District 62, Plant City	email	(850) 488-0807
Grimley, Denise (R)	District 77, Sebring	email	(850) 488-3457
Hays, D. Alan (R)	District 25, Umatilla	email	(850) 488-0348
Poppell, Ralph (R)	District 29, Titusville	email	(850) 488-3006
Proctor, William L. (R)	District 20, St. Augustine	email	(850) 488-2977
Skidmore, Kelly (D)	District 90, Boca Raton	email	(850) 488-1302
Thompson, Geraldine F. (D)	District 39, Orlando	email	(850) 488-0760
Weatherford, Will W. (R)	District 61, Wesley Chapel	email	(850) 488-5744

ELECTED OFFICIALS THAT REPRESENT MANATEE COUNTY

Governor Charlie Crist

Email: Charlie.Crist@MyFlorida.com

Address: The Honorable Charlie Crist
Office of Governor Charlie Crist
State of Florida
The Capitol
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Phone: Citizen Services Hotline: 850-488-4441

Executive Office of the Governor Switchboard: 850- 488-7146

For individuals with hearing loss or speech disability: 1-850-922-7795 (TTY)

OR 711 (Florida Telecommunication Relay)
Fax: (850) 487-0801

Senator Mike Bennett – District 21

Email: bennett.mike.web@flsenate.gov

Address: Tallahassee: The Honorable Mike Bennett
322 Senate Office Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100
District: Wildewood Professional Park, Suite 90
3653 Cortez Road West
Bradenton, FL 34210

Phone: Tallahassee: 850-487-5078
District: 941-727-6349
Fax: State Wide: 800-500-1239-
District: 941-727-6352

Senator Nancy Detert – District 23

Email: detert.nancy.web@flsenate.gov

Address: Tallahassee: The Honorable Nancy Detert
318 Senate Office Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100
District: 417 Commercial Court, Suite D
Venice, FL 34292
Phone: Tallahassee: 850-487-5081
District: 941-480-3457
Fax: State Wide: 866-247-4076
District: 941-480-3549

Senator Arthenia Joyner – District 18

Email: joyner.arthenia.web@flsenate.gov

Address: Tallahassee: The Honorable Arthenia Joyner
210 Senate Office Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100
District 508 W. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Suite C
Tampa, FL 33603-3415

Phone: Tallahassee: 850-487-5059
District: 813-233-4277
Fax: State Wide: 888-263-7871
District: 813-233-4280

Representative Keith Fitzgerald – District 69

Email: Keith.Fitzgerald@myfloridahouse.gov

Address: Tallahassee: The Honorable Keith Fitzgerald
House of Representatives
The Capitol
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

District: 1660 Ringling Boulevard, Suite 310-311
Sarasota, FL 34236-6808
Phone: Tallahassee: 850-488-7754
District: 941-955-8077

Representative Bill Galvano - District 68

Email: Bill.Galvano@myfloridahouse.gov

Address: Tallahassee: The Honorable Bill Galvano
House of Representatives
The Capitol

402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

District: 1023 Manatee Avenue West, Suite 715
Bradenton, FL 34205

Phone: Tallahassee: 850-488-4086
District: 941-708-4968

Representative Ron Reagan - District 67

Email: Ron.Reagan@myfloridahouse.gov

Address: Tallahassee: The Honorable Ron Reagan
House of Representatives
The Capitol

402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

District: 7011 15th Street East, Suite B-1
Sarasota, FL 34243-6205

Phone: Tallahassee: 850-921-7747
District: 941-727-6447

Representative Darryl Rousson – District 55

Email: Darryl.Rousson@myfloridahouse.gov

Address: Tallahassee: The Honorable Darryl Rousson
House of Representatives
The Capitol

402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

District: 302 Manatee Avenue East
Bradenton, FL 34208-1901

Phone: Tallahassee: 850-488-0925
District: 941-708-8570