



EARLY LEARNING COALITION
OF POLK COUNTY
Heart of Education

2026-2027 Training Incentive Program (TIP) Participation Agreement

All Participants in the Training Incentive Program (TIP), must agree to the following terms. Completing the TIP registration and enrollment and/or paying the registration fee is considered to be in agreement with these terms. The person who is enrolling in and participating in TIP is considered “the Participant”.

SECTION A: ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION

1. The Early Learning Coalition of Polk County (“the Coalition”) reserves the right to approve or deny each Participant’s registration request.
2. **Eligible Staff:** Only instructional and administrative staff listed in the Provider’s School Readiness Quality Performance System (QPS) or Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten application (including instructors and directors) are eligible for this program.
Exclusions: QPS rosters do not include substitutes, floaters, or staff who are not instructional or administrative. Substitute teachers listed on the VPK application are **not eligible**.
 - **NOTE on Eligibility:** If unsure of your eligibility status, please contact the Coalition.
3. **Employment Requirement:** To receive the stipend, Participants must be employed by a contracted Provider at the time of registration, throughout the duration of the course, and at the time that the stipend payments are made.
4. Participants will inform the Coalition of any changes that occur during this program, such as banking, place of employment, phone, email, and address. It is the responsibility of the Participant to keep contact and employment information up to date in the Learning Management System (LMS) within Webauthor. This information will be used to distribute stipend payments, certificates, etc.

SECTION B: REGISTRATION IN THE PROGRAM

5. Participants must enroll for the 2026-2027 Training Incentive Program Orientation and Program and sign the Participation Agreement **prior to December 1, 2026**. Failure to do so will result in ineligibility for TIP and the related stipend.
6. Each participant will have to complete the following steps for registration:
 - a. **Step 1.** TIP Orientation – On-Demand Training
 - i. Review Program details
 - ii. Complete the Participation Agreement
 - iii. Submit banking information for stipend payment
 - b. **Step 2.** TIP Enrollment – On-Demand Training
 - i. You cannot enroll in the Program until you complete the Orientation.
 - ii. Pay \$20.00 enrollment fee
 1. No refunds will be issued due to enrolling if ineligible, inability to complete the program, or not remaining employed by an eligible Provider.

SECTION C: TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

7. The TIP program runs from **July 2026** to **June 2027**.
8. All eligible trainings must be completed between **June 1, 2026, and May 31, 2027**.
9. **IMPORTANT BENCHMARK DATES**

The following benchmarks must be met to remain eligible.

December 1, 2026	Training Incentive Program (TIP) Registration complete This includes online Orientation and Program Registration
February 1, 2027	Benchmark 1: At least 15 training hours submitted and approved
April 1, 2027	Benchmark 2: At least 30 training hours submitted and approved
June 1, 2027	Benchmark 3: At least 40 training hours submitted and approved

10. Participants will not be eligible for any stipends provided by the Coalition (and/or partner agencies) if all requirements are not met.

SECTION D: COURSE POLICIES & RESTRICTIONS

11. **Repeated Courses:** The exact same course(s) may not be taken again, if taken in the past, unless written approval is provided by the Coalition.
12. **Prior Non-Completion:** If a Participant registered for but did not complete the 2025-2026 Training Incentive Program, they may be placed in a hold status for TIP and selected courses for 2026-2027.
13. **Course Performance:** There may be requirements for each course, including online attendance, in person attendance, course participation, completion of assignments, completion of assessments/testing, achieving mastery, and other items/requirements as determined by the Coalition or select partner agencies. It is the Participant's responsibility to read and understand the policies outlined in the selected course(s)/trainings.
14. Failure to complete courses upon registering, and without cancelling in a timely manner, may result in the Participant being placed in a **Hold status**. This may limit access to available courses until the issue is resolved and may result in the Participant being ineligible for the stipend. This will be handled on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Coalition.

SECTION E: ACCEPTED TRAINING

Please note updates to these policies.

15. Only training and courses offered by the Early Learning Coalition of Polk County will be accepted for the Training Incentive Program.
 - a. **Exceptions:** Exceptions will only be accepted if pre-approved in writing by Coalition staff. This must be confirmed prior to the start of the course or training. Documentation related to the course may be required.
 - b. **College/University Credits:** Any course taken at an accredited college or university during the 2026-2027 program year can earn **10 training hours for each credit hour** completed. This must be shown on a valid transcript with dates and course names included. Acceptable college courses are those directly related to early childhood education.

SECTION F: TRAININGS NOT ACCEPTED

16. The following training topics **will not** be approved:
- CPR, First Aid, feeding, medical, and other physical care related topics
 - Initial DCF trainings that are required for employment
 - VPK training required to hold the position of Director, Lead, or Aide
 - USDA Food Program trainings
 - Staff meetings
 - In-house training offered by a Provider only for their staff
 - Any other training not expressly pre-approved by the Coalition in writing

SECTION G: CERTIFICATE SUBMISSION & DOCUMENTATION

17. In order to receive credit, Participants must upload completion course/training certificates and other verification documents to the **Early Childhood Staff PD** tab in their WebAuthor account. Coalition staff will determine whether each certificate will be accepted or rejected.
18. **Data Matching:** When entering the information for certificates to be reviewed, the training name and dates must be exactly as shown on the certificate. Failure to do so may result in the certificate being rejected and returned for edits.
19. **Review Authority:** Coalition staff retain final authority to accept or reject any submitted certificate.
20. **Warning:** Any false documentation submitted may permanently disqualify you from this and any future incentive programs with the Coalition.

SECTION H: STIPEND PAYMENTS & BANKING INFORMATION

21. Stipend distribution dates will be determined by the Coalition.
22. Final stipend amounts may vary based on available funding.
23. **Profile Updates:** Participants must inform the Coalition of any changes that occur during this program, such as banking, place of employment, phone, email, and address. It is their responsibility to keep contact and employment information up to date in the Learning Management System (LMS) within Webauthor. This information will be used to distribute stipend payments, certificates, etc.
24. **Changing Bank Details:** To submit new banking information, the completion of an additional Participation Agreement in full is required.
25. **Inaccurate Banking Fees:** If the banking information provided is inaccurate and the Coalition must reissue a stipend for any reason, a \$50.00 fee will be deducted from the Participant's completion stipend for each incident.
26. Final Stipend payments will be made to eligible Participants by **July 30, 2027**.

SECTION I: CONTACT INFORMATION

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