



Early Childhood Educator INCENTIVE\$ FLORIDA PROGRAM

MYTHS AND FACTS

MYTH: INCENTIVE\$ administration is too expensive:

FACT: Actually, the same funding formula applies to the ECE INCENTIVE\$ program as applies to School Readiness and VPK funding to coalitions. The Forum is allowed up to 5% for administration while the remainder is used to support the staff time and resources to operate the program. The program staff performs the following functions in operating the program:

- Processes incoming applications, verifying eligibility, and collecting the necessary documentation to determine which tier the applicant is eligible to receive (transcripts, certifications, etc.). When six months of service is complete, the counselor contacts the center to ensure that the applicant has remained in the employment of the program, verifies salary / wage level, and collects any other educational documentation that might have occurred during that period that might affect the amount that the applicant is eligible to receive. Once verified, the counselor processes the request for payment based on their eligible tier level and the check is sent to administration for processing. Note that the fiscal office is responsible for collecting W-9 information from each applicant as they are subject to issuance of IRS form 1099 for income tax purposes. Each participant in INCENTIVE\$ is communicated with, at a minimum, of twice yearly and usually more often.

MYTH: It is permissible to set up a locally-designed INCENTIVE\$ program.

FACT: INCENTIVE\$, through its affiliation with Child Care WAGE\$® is a licensed program issued by the Child Care Services Association (CCSA) in North Carolina and the Children's Forum holds the license in Florida. As the licensee, the Forum agrees to follow established protocols and adhere to the model fidelity to produce the results intended; moreover, the Forum is monitored for quality assurance on an annual basis and must submit a self-study every two years to maintain licensure.

Data for the program is maintained in a database provided by CCSA and reports are generated evaluating both the efficacy of the program and whether or not the intended results are achieved. Since it is a licensed and registered product of CCSA, the application, tools, scales, and related materials can be used only by the licensee. Local programs may be designed that do not use the name or resemble any of the collateral materials used by INCENTIVE\$ or Child Care WAGE\$® Florida. INCENTIVE\$ is very different from efforts aimed at rewarding practitioners with financial incentive payments for completion of formal training.

MYTH: Any salary incentive program should work and produce the same results.

FACT: INCENTIVE\$ is an education-based, wage incentive program that has years of research demonstrating its effectiveness. It is intended to increase the education of the early childhood workforce and increase staff retention. It has been successful in accomplishing this goal. Most recently, a Workforce Report was completed in Miami-Dade County showing that early childhood educators who took advantage of scholarships and participated in INCENTIVE\$ had higher CLASS scores than those who did not which is another positive indicator of the success of the program. Education and retention are making a difference for young children and the results are evidenced in the classroom.

For additional information about ECE INCENTIVE\$ Florida, please contact the Children's Forum toll free at 888-352-4453. You may also visit the ECE INCENTIVE\$ Florida website at: <http://incentives-fl.org/>