

Inspiring Progress, Elevating Learning

2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT



A Message from Steve & Bimal



Greetings, can you believe it's 2025 already? This past year was incredibly productive and rewarding for the Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc. As we continue to experience record growth in several of our service communities, we recognize that many families continue to face obstacles while searching for affordable childcare.

The continuation of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) provided additional financial support for providers in the form of stabilization grants. These timely payments assisted our early childhood programs while they faced many challenges brought on during the COVID years. Our staff did an incredible job working through hundreds of grant applications from our provider community.

Our staff and Board of Directors provided consistent support and assistance to our families, providers, and the community. During the past year, we have continued to focus on several key community initiatives and programs including Nemours Brightstart, Loving Start, LENA, Transition to K, and the START caregiver program to name a few. We also brought our 17th Annual Early Learning Conference back to a face-to-face format.

Our Promise Institute continues to offer popular and relevant training opportunities to our teachers and directors throughout the calendar year. With a focus on apprenticeships and credentialing, we have expanded partnerships and offerings, and more teachers are graduating annually than ever before. Our staff continues to prioritize their postsecondary education so that our organization can continue to be the leading Early Learning experts within our communities.

We hope you enjoy reviewing the narrative and data reports that outline this year's performance and achievements in our Annual Report. We are guided by our 2022-2027 Strategic Plan and focused on our mission to serve children, families, providers, and our communities.

We're excited to see how much we can accomplish during the next year, and we thank you for your involvement and commitment to the next generation of learners.



Steve Knobl

Steve Knobl, Ph.D.
Executive Director



Bimal Bhojani

Bimal Bhojani
Board Chairman

Mission & Vision

At the Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, we believe in creating a supportive community for children to be successful in school and life. Because every child deserves a quality education from day one.

What We Stand For

Confidence

With years of knowledge and expertise, we are here to provide an invaluable resource to children in our community.

Commitment

We believe that every child, caregiver, and teacher deserves the best resources for their success.

Advocacy

With unbridled support and compassion, it is our goal as an organization to represent those in need of guidance and direction.

Inclusivity

We encourage and accept all walks of life so that we can prosper together as a community.

Total Impact



11,147
Children



8,693
Families



4,360
Educators



287
Providers

Board of Directors

Bimal Bhojani
BOARD CHAIR, GOVERNOR APPOINTEE

Jacob Horner
GOVERNOR APPOINTEE

Manuel "Manny" Santana
GOVERNOR APPOINTEE

Amy Anderson, MD, Provost
PASCO-HERNANDO STATE COLLEGE

Maryam Belavilas, MD
PRIVATE SECTOR

Kurt Browning
SUPERINTENDENT OF PASCO COUNTY
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Lisa Campos
PRIVATE SECTOR

Trang Chitakone
PASCO COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Kimberly Harrison
PRIVATE SECTOR

Adam Horn
PRIVATE SECTOR

Roberto Hursey
PRIVATE SECTOR

Anna Jensen, ESE Director
HERNANDO COUNTY SCHOOLS

Jan Jones
FAITH-BASED PROVIDER
REPRESENTATIVE

Walter D. Joseph, M.Ed.
PRIVATE SECTOR

Patrick McHugh
PRIVATE SECTOR

Elizabeth Narverud
HERNANDO COUNTY BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS

Chantal Porte
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Tim Sabba
PRIVATE FOR-PROFIT CHILD CARE
PROVIDER REPRESENTATIVE

David Slovut, MD
PRIVATE SECTOR

Tanya Stanton
HERNANDO COUNTY HEAD START

Neil Thompson
PRIVATE SECTOR

Jessica Weightman
PASCO-HERNANDO WORKFORCE BOARD

Rebecca Wilkinson-Shields
PRIVATE SECTOR

Daniel Wright
PRIVATE SECTOR

Outreach Opportunities

Early Learning Conferences

Two Early Childhood Conferences were held: Catch the Energy, a virtual event, and Release the Potential, an in-person gathering. Together, these conferences reached over 624 early childhood professionals. Keynote speakers shared strategies to inspire educators' creativity, helping them reenergize both their classrooms and themselves.

A Loving Start

A Loving Start for new moms expanded with a new personalized title and message, in a new book through Gardner Media, "Snuggle," by Steve Metzger. In partnership with 5 local hospitals across Pasco and Hernando Counties, we distributed over 2,000 books to support new moms' journeys in building language development and relationships with their infants from birth.



S.T.A.R.T. Program

The S.T.A.R.T. (Support, Teach, Acknowledge, Respect, and Trust) program, offered in partnership with United Way of Pasco and Florida Medical Clinic, provides families with free resources such as the Circle of Security virtual workshop and family engagement events. A total of 37 families benefited from the workshop supporting 71 children across three cohorts.

Transition to Kindergarten

In collaboration with Pasco and Hernando libraries, two Transition to Kindergarten events were hosted, reaching over 118 families. A new Career Day event with Marchman Technical College introduced 78 children to career paths with hands-on experiences in cosmetology, culinary, automotive, technology, and more. The Coalition distributed over 350 copies of The Night Before Kindergarten to VPK classrooms to ease the transition.

Spotlight on Providers

"SPOTLIGHT on Providers," published its annual edition for the provider community. This publication highlights programs, successes, and current events, and is distributed electronically. Providers can contribute practical strategies to share with fellow practitioners.



Provider Supports



The Promise Institute envisions empowering early childhood educators to pursue continuous professional growth and learning. Over the past year, more than **83 training sessions were provided to over 4,360 early childhood educators**, covering a comprehensive range of professional development services. These included specialized courses for infants and toddlers, preschool-focused training, and administrative courses. Additionally, professional development opportunities are made available year-round to providers, educators, and families.



Early Childhood Credentialing Programs

Funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), ELCPH collaborated with Pasco County Schools and Pasco Hernando State College to offer programs for early childhood educators to earn their Florida Staff Credential and Operations of a Child Care Center Credential.

52 Apprentices obtained an Early Childhood Professional Credential

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION APPRENTICESHIP

This program allows individuals currently employed in early childcare to gain practical experience while completing required coursework.

17 Students earned Early Childhood Professional Credential

600-HOUR EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

Launched in Fall 2022, this 18-week program provides students with weekly classes and hands-on field practice.

96 Educators received Florida Director Credential

FLORIDA DIRECTOR CREDENTIAL COURSE

This eight-week course prepares educators for managing early childhood centers, covering essential topics like time management and educational planning.

69 Educators enrolled **14** Educators supported by United Way of Hernando County

CHILDCARE EDUCATION INSTITUTE CDA PROGRAM

This online program allows educators to complete the required 120 hours of CDA coursework at their own pace.

T.E.A.C.H Wrap

To support higher education, the Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties provides financial assistance to early educators and sponsors who are accepted into the T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship program. This funding helps early educators pursue degrees in the field of early childhood education.

8 WRAP scholarships provided

\$3,091.54 Total paid out to Educators and Sponsoring providers

LENA Grow

LENA Grow empowers educators by enhancing their professional development, providing data-driven insights into each child's unique experiences, and supporting a variety of quality improvement systems and assessment tools that emphasize the significance of adult-child interactions.

18 Educators completed the program

10 Classrooms participated

Early Literacy

The Early Literacy Initiatives were developed to support families and providers in increasing the number of children entering kindergarten equipped with the readiness skills for future reading success. In collaboration with Pasco and Hernando County Libraries, the ELCPH took part in Virtual Storytimes to strengthen literacy efforts. Additional programming also extends to state and national reading events, such as Literacy Week and Read for the Record.

22 Virtual events **11,512** Children participated & books distributed

Making Accreditation Possible (MAP)

The Making Accreditation Possible (MAP) program has expanded to support providers on their path to accreditation, with dedicated coaching and assistance from Coalition staff. The Coalition also covers application and related fees. Recruitment is underway for additional School Readiness Providers interested in achieving Gold Seal Accreditation.

14 Gold Seal Providers Accredited

ARPA

American Rescue Plan Act Discretionary Funds

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) provided over \$7.8 million in various grant opportunities to stabilize and enhance early childhood education programs.

Stabilization Subgrants

Grants allocated by a formula to address the financial burden facing providers in Pasco and Hernando and support the stability of the childcare market.

221 Providers Received - \$2,181,658 Distributed

Recruitment and Retention

Provided tiered stipends based on length of employment, helping to retain experienced educators and directors in early childhood programs.

1,811 Educators Impacted - \$1,974,730.53 Spent

Equipment & Supplies

Offered up to \$20,000 for providers to purchase necessary equipment and supplies to maintain a safe and well-equipped learning environment.

149 Providers Received - \$1,690,051.34 Spent

Curriculum Expansion

Assisted programs in expanding their curriculum offerings by providing financial support to purchase curricula and training for educators.

71 Providers Received - \$834,027.27 Spent

Upskilling

Offered comprehensive training plans covering critical topics to enhance the skills and knowledge of early childhood education staff.

488 Educators Participated - \$651,550 In Stipends Received By Educators

Early Learning Software & Technology

Supported the purchase of essential early learning software and technology to promote quality educational experiences. MarcoPolo for Educators and Families purchased for all providers across Pasco and Hernando.

90 Providers Received - \$446,370.35 Spent

Business Administration Software

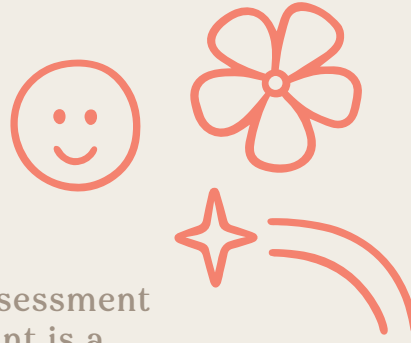
Provided financial assistance for business software expenses, helping early childhood education programs manage operations effectively.

68 Providers Received - \$156,417.17 Spent

In addition, The Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties launched advertising campaigns to promote programs. This campaign utilized outdoor billboards, digital ads, commercials, television, radio, and in-store promotions, achieving over 6.3 million impressions across Pasco and Hernando counties. Combined media efforts raised program awareness, drawing in families and early childhood educators.



Provider Services



CLASS Observations

The CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) assessment is a research-based tool used by Coalition staff to evaluate and improve teacher-student interactions. Focusing on Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support, CLASS helps create nurturing, engaging environments that foster children’s social, emotional, and academic growth.

- 118 School Readiness (SR) CLASS Observed Providers
- 211 Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) CLASS Observed Providers
- 671 Classrooms Assessed
- 140 Coaching Opportunities Provided

Total No. of Providers by Provider Type

PROVIDER TYPE	TOTAL PROVIDERS	SR ONLY	VPK ONLY	BOTH
Licensed Private Centers	199	32	37	130
License-Exempt Centers	11	9	1	1
Large Family Child Care Homes	13	10	0	3
Family Child Care Homes	14	14	0	0
Private Schools	6	1	5	0
Public Schools	44	0	44	0

Monitoring

The Contract and Compliance team at the Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties monitors contracted School Readiness (SR) and Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) programs to ensure compliance with contract requirements.

School Readiness (SR) Provider Monitoring Sample of 138 contracted SR Providers monitored

Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Provider Monitoring 211 VPK Providers monitored

Inclusion

The Inclusion Department manages all Inclusion/Warm Line requests, utilizing the Brookes Ages and Stages Developmental Screening System to help parents and providers identify children’s developmental needs. The Coalition offers a Warm Line and informs Early Childhood programs about available support, including technical assistance, coaching, and training on children with developmental delays, disabilities, social-emotional concerns, and special health needs.

Staff provide on-site support in positive behavior strategies, individualized learning plans, and environmental adaptations, and assist families with community referrals as needed.

- 102 Referrals made to partnering agencies
- 115 Warm Line Requests
- 249 ASQ3 and ASQ-SE2 screenings completed
- 940 Technical assistance support provided



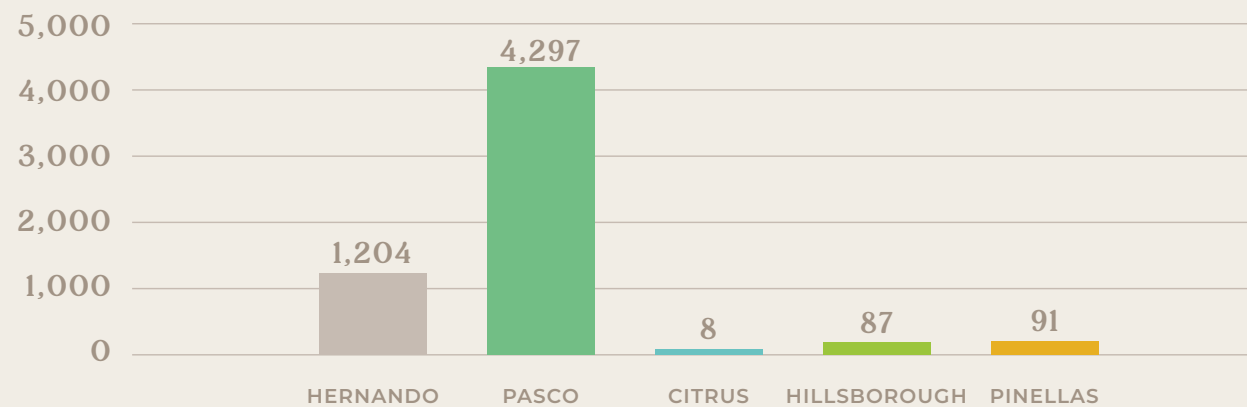
Children & Families Served



Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) is a free, confidential service designed to assist families in finding quality early learning programs for children from birth to age five and school-age programs. CCR&R offers information on child development, recommended developmentally appropriate practices, provider listings, community resources, consumer education, and available financial assistance options.

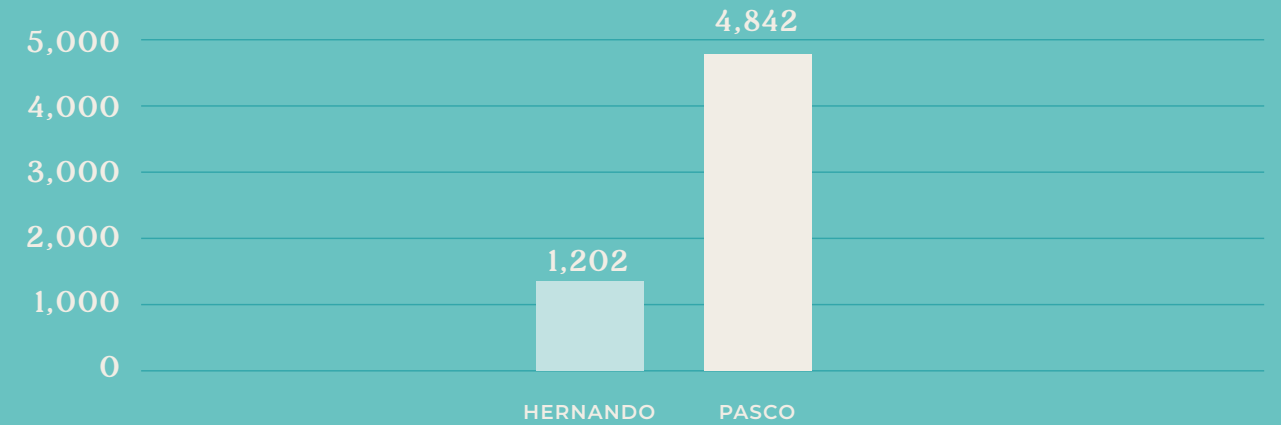
School Readiness

The School Readiness Program offers financial assistance for quality early education to low-income families with children from birth to 12 years old. In 2023-2024, 5,501 children attending childcare providers in Pasco and Hernando Counties were served in School Readiness Programs, and another 186 children in the neighboring counties of Citrus, Hillsborough, and Pinellas were served.



Florida VPK

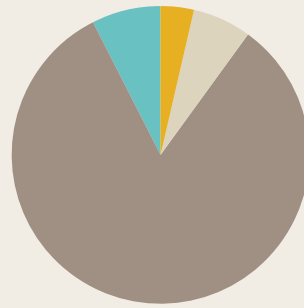
Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) is a free program available to all four-year-olds born on or before September 1 who reside in Florida. The program's goal is to provide experiences for young children to assist them in becoming ready for kindergarten. In 2023-2024, the Coalition served 6,044 children in the VPK Program in Hernando and Pasco Counties.



An additional 45 children were enrolled in the VPK Specialized Instructional Services (VPK-SIS) program. This program is an alternative option to the VPK traditional classroom setting and provides children with an IEP with funding to be used towards services identified in the IEP such as applied behavior analysis, speech-language pathology, occupational therapy, and more.

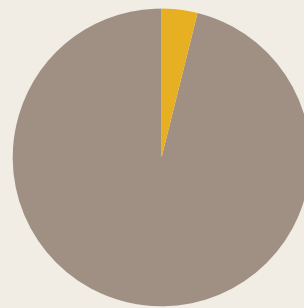


Fiscal Summary



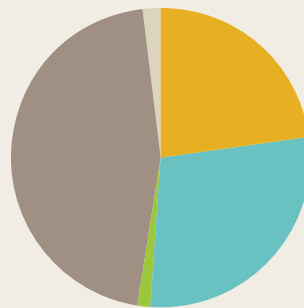
School Readiness Expenditure

Administration- 4.1%
 Quality- 6.6%
 Direct Services for Children – 81.4%
 Non-Direct Expenditures – 7.9%



VPK Expenditures

Administration – 3.82%
 Direct Cost Slots – 96.18%



2022-2023 Operating Budget

VPK – 24.34%
 SR Local Match Funds – 0%
 School Readiness – 25.02%
 ARPA – 48.5%
 Local Grants – .12%
 Donations – 2.02%



The Year In Photos





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