

# School Readiness

Children who are ready for kindergarten are primed for success. School readiness programs are offered to income-eligible families and others to ensure they receive the best start possible on their education journey. School Readiness offers developmental screening and age-appropriate curriculum to prepare preschoolers for Kindergarten. When children attend good preschools, parents are free to work or to complete their education.



**5,164** children received services at **230** different early learning programs in any given month.\*



\* data anomalies due to challenges with the statewide information system.

## Early Childhood Specialists

The Early Childhood Specialists have conducted provider training sessions, completed technical assistance visits, conducted teacher observations and assessments, provided one-on-one coaching support for teachers, and supported providers in implementing best practices around all four counties.

Additionally, the ECS team supported and coached over **250** providers through the implementation of the new web-based statewide data system, Florida's Early Learning Provider Services Portal, where they completed the Provider Profile and their SR/VPK contracts.

## Child Care Resource & Referral



Child Care Resource & Referral is an income-based free service which helps families find quality childcare. CCR&R also assists families in choosing before and after school programs or summer education programs. We received **9,937** requests for child care information from families regarding School Readiness, Voluntary Prekindergarten and child care services.

# Voluntary Prekindergarten



The VPK program is free for all Florida families. In 2002, voters approved a ballot initiative for a high-quality prekindergarten program for every 4-year old (and sometimes 5-year olds). There are no income requirements to attend up to 540 hours of preschool during the regular school year, or 300 hours of summertime preschool. The VPK program helps preschool children get ready for kindergarten which is the start of their education journey. **8,790** children attended **233** different VPK programs in our 4-county region.

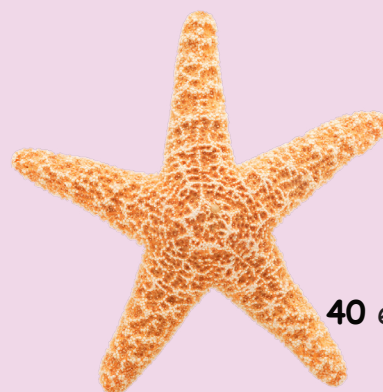
## Professional Development

Our coalition recognizes that professional development is an important component of quality early care and education for young children. The State of Florida has adopted the Florida Core Competencies for Early Care and Education Practitioners. The program defines a set of knowledge and skill standards that are necessary for those who work directly with children. We support that effort by offering a variety of training opportunities.

**745** teachers participated in **84** trainings.



## Southwest Florida Stars



Southwest Florida Stars is a voluntary Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) used to improve and communicate the level of quality in early childhood programs. Southwest Florida Stars rates child care centers and family child care homes through a process of site visits and off-site data collection resulting in a 1 to 5 star rating.

**40** early learning programs voluntarily participated in the rating system. **14** programs reached a 5-star rating.



## Literacy Buddy Program

The Literacy Buddy Program works with volunteers to provide books to 3, 4 & 5 year old children in preschools overseen by our coalition. The program also encourages children to take their first steps toward reading and writing by corresponding with their adult volunteer. The books provided by the volunteer are for the child to keep. The exchange of books and letters happens three times during the school year.

**1,271** children wrote letters to **912** adult volunteers to tell them about their interests and received a total of **3,813** books.

## Inclusion

### Warm Line

866-863-1366

Inclusion Warm Line is a free support, information and referral service for families of children with special needs or disabilities in our 4-county region.

The Inclusion Coordinator is available for on-site environmental technical assistance, educational support for programming, teacher and challenging behavior observations.



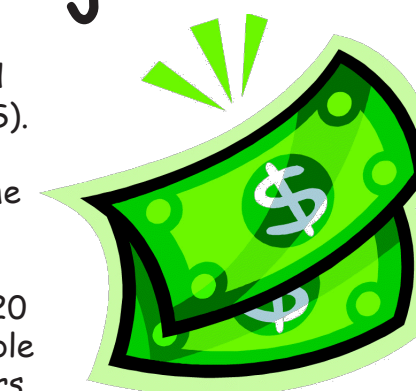
Our Inclusion Coordinator provided technical assistance to community child care providers and teachers through **434** phone conferences, **135** on-site visits, **166** observations, **40** collaborative conferences with other agencies, and **126** family conferences.

## Performance Funding Project

This project offered additional School Readiness funding to Providers based on improvements in quality using the Classroom Assessment System (CLASS). When training activities were met, providers expected to realize a tiered reimbursement of **4-10%** extra per School Readiness child depending on the CLASS score.

The Performance Funding Project has prepared providers for the 2019-2020 contracting year. All providers must reach a minimum CLASS score to be able to contract with the Early Learning Coalition for School Readiness. Providers will be placed in tiers and will be eligible for tiered reimbursement in addition to regular School Readiness payment.

**35** Providers participated in 2018 - 2019.





# A Message From Our CEO

Dear Friends,

Our 2018-2109 Annual Report provides information about the type and amount of work of our early learning coalition. As you can see from the numbers of children and providers served during this year, we reach many individuals throughout our service delivery area.

This was a year of many firsts! In conjunction with our partners from the Florida Office of Early Learning, a modernized statewide data base system entered the final phases of implementation. Everything from family enrollments, to provider contracts and payments are now managed through the Portal.

During this year, School Readiness programs were assessed for program quality with the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). This tool assesses the interactions between adults and children in early learning programs, a key indicator of program quality. CLASS scores will be used in the future for programs to receive higher payments for child care where they demonstrate quality.

Another first was the Coalitions' Business Breakfast in May designed to engage our community in the important work of early learning as a foundation to a lifetime of learning and later on, working.

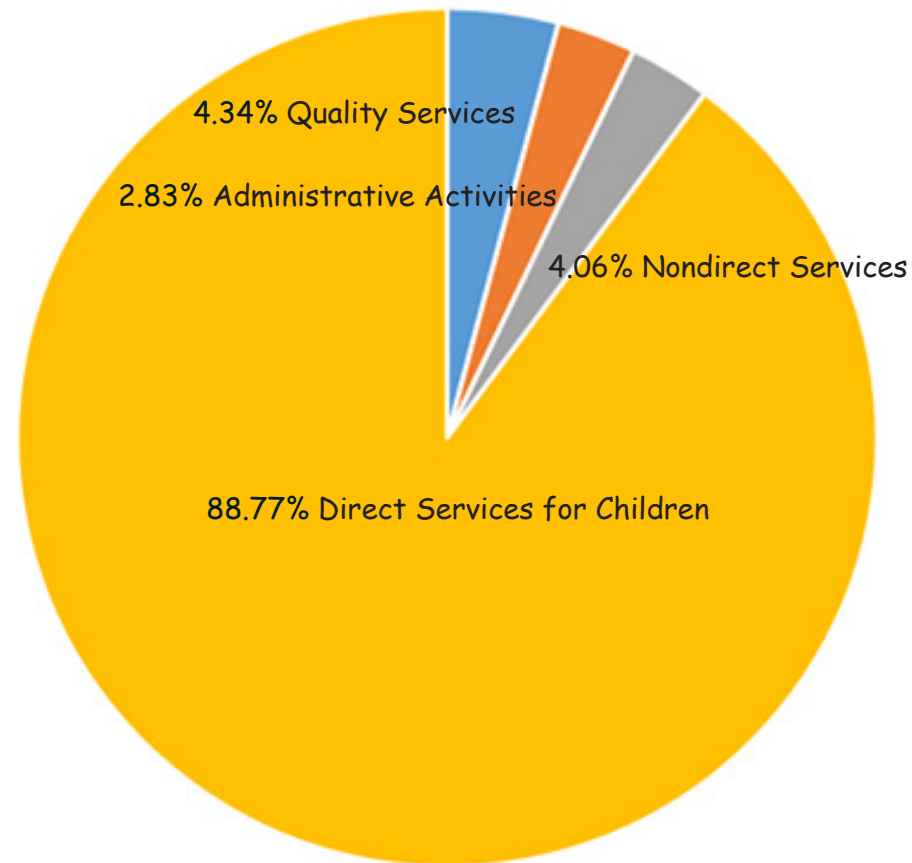
Behind the scenes for all this and more is an incredibly hard working staff team and an equally dedicated, engaged Board of Directors. We are fortunate to have great staff and volunteers who support the work. I am grateful for the efforts of all those associated with the Coalition and look forward to our continued effort to raise the quality of early learning programs in our community in the coming year.

Susan E. Block, Ed.M.

## 2018 - 2019 Fiscal Year

### Details of Expenditures

Administrative Activities:	\$1,318,331
Quality Services:	\$2,025,067
Nondirect Services:	\$1,890,674
Direct Services for Children:	\$41,378,225
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$46,612,297</b>



# Board of Directors



## Our Board Chair

Dear Early Learning Supporters,  
As you read about the successes of the Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida, I hope you will consider how you might join the effort to provide the best possible foundation for Southwest Florida's youngest citizens. The early learning experience is of critical importance to each child. The support of our community ensures that we are able to meet early learning needs in our community.

Interested in serving as part of the Coalition? We welcome your participation as a Literacy Buddy or as a volunteer to our board. For more information, please contact us at [ELCofSWFL.org](http://ELCofSWFL.org).

Victor Mraz  
Board Chair

### 2018-2019 Board Members

- Victor Mraz** – Board Chair, *Blue Chip Financial of Southwest Florida*
- Marshall Bower** - Board Vice-Chair, *The Foundation for Lee County Public Schools*
- Doug Szabo** – Board Treasurer, *Henderson, Franklin, Starnes & Holt, P.A.*
- Selina Jefferson** - Board Secretary, *Mount Hermon Ministries/Dew of Hermon Early Learning Center*
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- Scott Bass** – *Glades County School District*
- Damaris Boone** – *Redlands Christian Migrant Association*
- Rita Dellatore** – *Kid City Early Learning Academy, LLC*
- Yara Duchesne** - *Redlands Christian Migrant Association*
- Nate Halligan** - *Busey Bank*
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- Kimberly Ross** – *Ross Dynasty Cares*
- Dr. Kelly Roy** - *Florida Southwestern State College*
- Cindy Whetsell** - *Florida Department of Health, Collier County*

Susan Block, Ed. M.  
Chief Executive Officer  
Ex Officio



EARLY LEARNING  
COALITION  
OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

# Annual Report 2018 - 2019



*Nurturing the young children of Southwest Florida and those who care for them!*

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