



EARLY LEARNING COALITION
OF POLK COUNTY

STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2028

Heart of Education



Board Members

Legislatively Mandated Members

Karie Barquin, *Head Start Director designee*

Kathryn Bevilacqua, *Board of County Commissioners appointee*

Stacy Campbell-Domineck, *Workforce Development Director*

Dr. Mary Clark, *President of community college or designee*

Nancy Ebrahimi, *Department of Children and Families designee*

Frederick Heid, *District Superintendent of Schools or designee*

Dr. Joy Jackson, *County Health Department Director*

Representative Members

Tammi Haas, *Representative of Faith-Based Child Care Provider*

Jobe Ream, *Representative of Private Child Care Provider*

Dr. Emily Shaffer, *Representative of Children with Disabilities*

Private Sector Business Members

Terry Brigman, *Retired*

Nicholas Emanuel, *Citrosuco North America, Inc.*

Dr. Jane Ierardi, *Nemours Children's Health System*

Benjamin LeFrancois, *GrayRobinson, P.A.*

Rickey Maxey, *Retired*

Lori Shea, *Lakeland Regional Medical Center*





Message from the CEO

The Early Learning Coalition of Polk County is proud to be our community's state designated lead agency in supporting Early Childhood Education with the goal of having all children ready for school! Preparing children for kindergarten is a life-altering process that culminates within four short years! We purposefully value every interaction we have in guiding and supporting activities targeting our youngest children. We also recognize our impacts on children effect every aspect of society today, tomorrow, and forever.

This responsibility is accepted by each one of the ELC's team members along with our board of directors, our partnering early learning providers, our families and parents, and many other valued associates throughout our community. This strategic plan is intended to provide guidance and direction to varying initiatives leading this organization to becoming more effective, efficient, and higher performing. It truly is and should forever remain a "work in progress" and the efforts toward strategic improvement shall always be reflective of supporting our communities' greatest hope for the future... it's children.



EARLY LEARNING COALITION
OF POLK COUNTY



Mission

We will lead community efforts in supporting the success of children.

Vision

Children will be prepared for school and life success.



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Core Beliefs

- Decisions should be made in the best interests of children
- The Coalition should be an enjoyable workplace
- Provider success is critical
- Employees will offer exceptional service
- Professionalism and respect to all



Five Focus Areas of the Strategic Plan

1. Children
2. Providers
3. Staff
4. Business Practices/Fiscal
5. Family/Community



Focus Area 1: Children

GOAL 1:

The ELC will work to maximize the number of children who are emotionally secure.

Strategy:

Children needing social/emotional supports will receive them from teachers, directors, and parents.

Metric:

The number of developmental screenings resulting in a failed score will decrease.

Activities:

1. Develop and implement the “support system.”
2. Monitor screenings at 3 and 6 month intervals to verify completion and ensure teachers are implementing resources and supports from the ELC.
3. Implement parent training component for all children.



GOAL 2:

The ELC will identify and support the physical health needs of the children.

Strategy:

The ELC will track and monitor the progress of services provided by outside agencies.

Metric:

The ELC will develop a plan to support every child identified with physical health needs.

Activities:

1. The ELC will develop a committee to design the process/plan.
2. The ELC will collaborate with appropriate agencies to provide necessary support.
3. The ELC will develop a process to involve parents.



GOAL 3:

The ELC will ensure our children have the support needed to reach their cognitive potential.

Strategy:

ELC staff will use VPK progress monitoring assessment data to drive instructional supports.

Metric:

ELC Polk's final assessment scores (PM1-PM3 progress) will improve each year (as a county average).

Activities:

1. Progress monitoring scores will be reviewed by ELC staff at each checkpoint.
2. The top 3 areas of need will be identified and the appropriate supports will be provided.
3. A process will be developed to ensure the lowest performing classrooms receive the greatest level of support.



Goal

1

Focus Area 2: Providers

GOAL 1:

The ELC will work with providers to support them in becoming successful and sustainable businesses.

Strategy:

The ELC will develop and implement a business framework for provider success.

Metric:

The ELC will work with providers to utilize a rating scale to identify strengths and areas of improvement for each provider.

Activities:

1. ELC staff will roll out the business framework and work to create buy-in from providers.
2. The ELC will develop a recognition program for success.
3. ELC staff will identify areas in need of improvement and provide strategies for remediation.



GOAL 2:

The ELC will support providers in creating optimal learning environments for children.

Strategy:

ELC staff will develop a classroom observation form to implement quarterly.

Metric:

1. ELC staff will track improvements in CLASS scores.
2. ELC staff will track observation progress/improvements (on observation forms).

Activities:

1. ELC staff will create and utilize an observation tool (for curriculum & instruction.)
2. ELC staff will track data and progress of observations.
3. ELC staff will provide notifications related to improvement plans and recognize successes.



GOAL 3:

The ELC will provide support to early learning educators to enhance the level of professionalism in the field.

Strategy:

The ELC will provide appropriate guidance and opportunities for professional development.

Metric:

The ELC will increase the number of early learning educators becoming credentialed in the field.

Activities:

1. The ELC will determine the current level of credentialed staff.
2. The ELC will collaborate with partners to establish an action plan.
3. ELC staff and partners will implement a plan and review outcomes.



GOAL 1:

ELC staff will continually work toward a positive organizational culture.

Strategy:

1. The ELC will conduct internal and external surveys.
2. ELC staff will track retention rates and review exit interviews.

Metric:

1. Internal and external survey results will be reviewed and discussed.
2. Exit interview data will be collected, reviewed, and discussed.

Activities:

1. The ELC will hire an external company to survey staff.
2. ELC leadership will communicate survey results to all staff.
3. Results of surveys and exit interviews will be addressed.



GOAL 2:

The ELC will support the workplace wellness of its employees.

Strategy:

The ELC will implement a voluntary employee wellness program.

Metric:

ELC leadership staff will review the level of participation in the wellness program.

Activities:

1. The ELC will offer a variety of professional development/training opportunities for employees.
2. Incentives for participation will be offered, as available.



Goal

3

Focus Area 3: Staff

GOAL 3:

The ELC will maximize employee retention in the areas we have control over.

Strategy:

The ELC leadership team will implement a semi-annual review of employee surveys and exit interviews.

Metric:

All departments and levels of staff will be represented in semi-annual meetings to address the findings.

Activities:

1. Data will be compiled for leadership meetings.
2. Identified issues will be addressed through relevant action plans.



Goal

1

Focus Area 4: Business Practices/Fiscal

GOAL 1:

The ELC will operate with excellent fiscal stewardship.

Strategy:

The ELC will develop a process to measure expenditures semi-annually by a rating scale.

Metric:

All expenditures will go through a post-review process.

Activities:

1. A workgroup will be created to develop a rating scale.
2. The workgroup will establish baseline information for purchases.
3. Semi-annual reviews will be conducted.



GOAL 2:

The ELC will continually evaluate and update processes to improve efficiency.

Strategy:

Each department will present opportunities to improve efficiency to a review committee.

Metric:

The Review Committee will meet twice per year to review presentations.

Activities:

1. Departments regularly review processes and identify inefficiencies.
2. Departments will make recommendations for improvement.
3. The review committee vets recommendations and presents to the ELC lead team.



GOAL 3:

The ELC will provide every employee the opportunity to become highly competent.

Strategy:

Activities will be developed to determine employee effectiveness and ways to improve.

Metric:

Each department will conduct monthly data reviews to develop areas for employee effectiveness.

Activities:

1. Each department lead will determine goals for their departments and determine what data will be used, how it will be pulled, and where it will come from; supervisors will identify measurable data points.
2. “Peer review” will be implemented as appropriate.
3. Training plans will be developed and implemented as needed.
4. Ongoing supports will be provided to staff, as needed, and all supports will be documented, tracked, and monitored.



GOAL 1:

The ELC will educate the community on our programs and services.

Strategy:

The ELC will develop an outreach plan to increase awareness.

Metric:

The ELC will monitor the completion of activities in the outreach plan.

Activities:

1. The ELC will expand awareness events throughout the community.
2. ELC staff will develop educational trainings (in person and virtual).
3. The ELC will develop community tools (i.e., posters, pocket cards, first books, etc.) to be used in outreach activities.



GOAL 2:

The ELC will increase VPK enrollments.

Strategy:

ELC staff will identify and target the enrollments of 4-year-old children who don't obtain a VPK certificate.

Metric:

VPK enrollment numbers will increase.

Activities:

1. ELC staff will conduct VPK presentations throughout Polk County, especially in low enrollment areas.
2. The ELC will conduct a study to determine which children are not attending VPK and the reasons why.
3. The ELC staff will partner with community agencies to increase VPK awareness and get information out to families.



GOAL 3:

The ELC will develop community partnerships that can specifically support the needs of our children.

Strategy:

The ELC will work to identify the priority needs of children and families and develop partnerships needed to support them.

Metric:

Partnerships will be developed to support the top 5 identified barriers to success.

Activities:

1. ELC staff will create and distribute a survey to identify needs/barriers to success.
2. ELC staff will identify the top 5 areas of need.
3. ELC staff will align with partners to address needs.





Strategic Plan Goals & Strategies

Focus Area 1: Child

1. The ELC will work to maximize the number of children who are emotionally secure.
2. The ELC will identify and support the physical health needs of the children.
3. The ELC will ensure our children have the support needed to reach their cognitive potential.

Focus Area 2: Providers

1. The ELC will work with providers to support them in becoming successful and sustainable businesses.
2. The ELC will support providers in creating optimal learning environments for children.
3. The ELC will provide support to early learning educators to enhance the level of professionalism in the field.



Focus Area 3: Staff

1. ELC staff will continually work toward a positive organizational culture.
2. The ELC will support the workplace wellness of its employees.
3. The ELC will maximize employee retention in the areas we have control over.

Focus Area 4: Fiscal

1. The ELC will operate with excellent fiscal stewardship.
2. The ELC will continually evaluate and update processes to improve efficiency.
3. The ELC will provide every employee the opportunity to become highly competent.

Focus Area 5: Family/Community

1. The ELC will educate the community on our programs and services.
2. The ELC will increase VPK enrollments.
3. The ELC will develop community partnerships that can specifically support the needs of our children.



2023

- Initial planning
- Draft Strategic Plan
- Present to Board
- Present to Staff
- Establish committees & work plan

2024-
2027

- Implement work plan
- Continue committees as needed
- Monitor performance & make adjustments as needed
- Provide updates to Board & staff

2028

- Review outcomes for data-driven decision making
- Celebrate successes
- Monitor performance & make adjustments as needed



Committee 1

Support system for social/emotional needs

Committee 2

Monitoring physical health

Committee 5

Employee wellness program

Committee 6

Employee survey

Committee 9

Outreach plan

Committee 10

Partnerships with community agencies

Children



Staff



Family



Providers



Fiscal



Committee 3

Provider business framework

Committee 7

Rating scale for expenditures

Committee 4

Professionalism & credentials of ECE workforce

Committee 8

Efficiency recommendations





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