

ELCAC NEWSLETTER

The Early Learning Coalition of Alachua County

Scribbles

Newsletter CONTENT

CEO Prepares for School Readiness Funding Impact

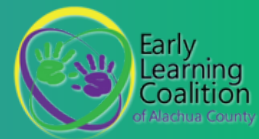
- The State of Florida is facing a \$78 million shortfall in School Readiness (SR) funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-2026
- Alachua County was directly impacted with an 11% reduction, resulting in a \$1.34 million deficit.
- *We are actively assessing and adjusting local strategies to minimize the impact on families and providers, while continuing to advocate for restored funding.*

“We are actively reviewing and adjusting our local strategies to minimize the impact on families and early learning providers, while continuing to advocate for the restoration of critical funding to support quality early childhood education in our community. We are also seeking local partnerships to help close the funding gap and ensure children and families continue to receive the support they need.”



Xavier White, CEO

- CEO Message
- Important Highlights Children’s Forum
- Calendar of Events
- School Readiness & Florida VPK
- Professional Development
- Child Development
- Provider’s Corner
- Advocacy in ECE
- Family Engagement
- Join us on Social Media



4424 NW 13TH ST
GAINESVILLE, FL 32609
(352) 375-4110

IMPORTANT Highlights

ELCAC recognizes the detailed feedback The Children’s Forum assessors provide in their observations via Program Assessment reports (Teach Stone - The Classroom Assessment Scoring System® (CLASS) reports).

- Alachua County Early Childhood Educators benefit from the CLASS dimensions notes found in their CLASS observation reports, which fully support the score given and provide examples and quotations from the observation.
- These observation details have guided many educators to increase their teacher-child interactions, resulting in better child outcomes and Program Assessment Scores.
- Below is a quote from one provider regarding their CLASS observations:

“We analyzed our scores and comments from last year several times throughout the year. We took the comments from each dimension and talked through how we could make positive changes. The teachers worked hard to change the layouts of their classrooms to provide a better learning environment.”

In fact, their Program Assessment score did increase, showing improvements for teacher-child interactions and child outcomes!

ELCAC appreciates The Children’s Forum assessors’ hard work and all Early Childhood Educators implementing positive changes! We can see that they are motivated in their daily work by the knowledge and desire to make a positive impact for young children.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Provider Meetings

- Thursday, July 10th: 1-2p
- Thursday, August 7th: 1-2pm
- Thursday, Sept. 11th: 1-2pm

ELCAC Backpack- Giveaway

FREE backpacks with supplies
July 12, 2025, 9-11 am
MLK Multipurpose Center

Newberry Family Fun Day

- Saturday, July 19, 2025
10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Easton Newberry Sports Complex, 24880 NW 16th Ave
Newberry, Florida 32669
Cost: Free

Federal Updates FFY 2026 Appropriations Process Underway:

- The Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee is scheduled to mark up the FFY 2026 appropriations bill on July 21, 2025.
- This bill will determine funding levels for key federal programs, including:
 - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
 - Other education, health, and labor programs

First Day of Alachua County Public Schools will be

Tuesday, August 11, 2025



A MESSAGE FROM:
CARI MILLER
CHANCELLOR OF EARLY LEARNING

Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, pursuant to **State Board of Education Rule 6M-8.622, Florida Administrative Code**, “*Kindergarten Readiness*” is defined as meeting the expected developmental learning outcome as demonstrated by children scoring a Unified Scaled Score (USS) of 707 or higher on the coordinated screening and progress monitoring assessment administered at the end of the

“*Kindergarten Readiness*” is defined as meeting the expected developmental learning outcome as demonstrated by children scoring a Unified Scaled Score (USS) of 707 or higher on the coordinated screening and progress monitoring assessment administered at the end of the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) program. This definition was used to determine Kindergarten Readiness for all public school students who enter kindergarten based on the results of the initial FAST progress monitoring (PM1) as required by section 1008.25(9)(a)6., Florida Statutes

This is a **new, more rigorous Kindergarten Readiness cut score** compared to previous years. The previous cut score for Kindergarten Readiness was a USS of 690 or higher. The **new cut score of 707 USS or higher** is being applied for the first time for 2024 FAST PM1 Kindergarten Readiness results. Therefore, 2024-25 Kindergarten Readiness results are a baseline year and cannot be compared to previous Kindergarten Readiness results.

Professional DEVELOPMENT

Tuesday, July 22nd from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

- *Making Sense of Sets and Numbers (MATH 1):* Learn how to set up your classroom and plan fun math activities that make sense to young learners. Course Reference Number: 11328

Tuesday, July 22nd from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

- *Counting and Operating with Numbers (MATH 2):* You'll gain early math knowledge and practical information about how to structure the classroom environment and plan activities to integrate math concepts and skills throughout the learning day. Course Reference Number: 11329

Wednesday, July 23rd from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

- *Patterns, Measurement and Data (MATH 3):* You'll gain early math knowledge and practical information about how to structure the classroom environment and plan activities to integrate math concepts and skills throughout the learning day. Course Reference Number: 1133

Note: These **VPK** trainings are appropriate for directors and teachers of 4-and 5-year-old children.

Wednesday, July 23rd from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

- *Shapes and Spatial Relationships (MATH 4):* Course participants will gain early math knowledge and practical information about how to structure the classroom environment and plan activities to integrate math concepts and skills throughout the learning day. Course Reference Number: 11331

Register on the Florida Early Childhood Professional Development Registry using the Course Reference Number under “Instructor Led Courses Enroll”:

<https://childcaretraining.myflfamilies.com/studentsite/admin/signin>.

Training Location:

ELC Alachua Training Room
4424 NW 13th St, Gainesville, FL 32609.

For Information Contact:

DeWaynique Barton, Lead TPD Coach
dbarton@elcalachua.org

Child Development

According to the National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (NECTAC), every child learns at their own pace, in their own way. For children with developmental delays, that path may look different, but it is no less meaningful, and no less filled with potential. ELCAC want to take a moment to acknowledge the strength, dedication, and love it takes to support these incredible children.

What We Know:

- Developmental delays can affect speech, motor skills, social interaction, or learning, sometimes in just one area, and sometimes in several.
- Progress may be gradual, but every milestone is a step forward.
- What children need most is consistent support, patience, and encouragement.

To Our Parents:

- You are your child's strongest advocate and greatest comfort.
- We see your sleepless nights, your small daily victories, and your unwavering commitment.
- Please know, you are not alone. We're here to partner with you.

To Our Teachers:

- Your creativity, flexibility, and heart make the difference.
- The moments you slow down, adapt to a lesson, or offer a kind word, those are building foundations that last a lifetime.
- You are helping children feel seen, safe, and capable.

What We Can Do Together:

- Celebrate progress, not perfection.
- Foster inclusive environments where every child feels like they belong.
- Share strategies and insights between home and school.
- Keep the lines of communication open, honest, and compassionate.

★ ***“Children are not a distraction from more important work. They are the most important work.” C.S. Lewis***

Advocacy in Early Learning

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC):

“Being a strong advocate means being an informed advocate. This is your place to learn more about federal laws and policies that impact children, families, and educators each and every day.

At NAEYC, we are working tirelessly to make these laws and policies better and stronger, and we need your help! Explore the sections below to learn more about important early childhood policy issues and processes, including what different laws do, how they work, how they support you—and how you can support them!

For more information, check out the resources at the bottom of each page, and don't hesitate to email advocacy@naeyc.org. Don't forget—knowledge is power, so let's build it up together.”

<https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/public-policy-advocacy/build-your-public-policy-knowledge>

National Women's Law Center:

“When child care is affordable and accessible, it gives both parents and children the tools they need to thrive—which is why everyone deserves access to high-quality child care.

With significant investments and strong policies, our child care system can work better for children, families, and child care providers—but only if implemented effectively at the federal, state, and local levels.

Child care providers—overwhelmingly women and predominantly immigrant women of color, care for the next generation and deserve fair pay and good working conditions.”

<https://nwlc.org/issue/child-care-early-learning/>

Partners & Provider's Corner

Congratulations!

Russell Scoates

Small World Daycare and Learning Center

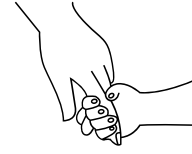


Congratulations to Russell Scoates, who is a graduate of our BLI Early Learning Masterclass and now a new graduate of the 2025 Florida Early Childhood Advocacy fellowship program, directed by the [Children's Forum](#)!

Your leadership, passion, and unwavering dedication to advocating for young children and their families continue to inspire everyone around you. The care and commitment you bring to this work not only uplift the lives of the children you serve but also strengthen the entire community.

Your efforts have already made a meaningful difference, and we are excited to see how your continued contributions will shape a brighter, more inclusive future for all. It is an honor to support and collaborate with someone so deeply committed to early childhood education and family well-being.

Family Services & Family Engagement



BUILDING BRIDGES:

"The Power of Family Engagement in Early Childhood Education"

Why Does Family Engagement Matte?

1. Boosts Child Development:

- Children thrive when there is a strong connection between home and school. Engaged families help reinforce learning, build social-emotional skills, and boost confidence.

2. Improves Educational Outcomes:

- Studies show that children with involved families are more likely to attend school regularly, perform better academically, and develop a love for learning.

3. Strengthens Communities:

- Family engagement fosters a sense of trust, collaboration, and shared responsibility. It creates a support network that benefits not only children, but educators and communities as a whole.



ELCAC Highlights



Xaviera White
Chief Executive Director



Kelli Williams
Chief Administrative Officer



Terrie Robinson
Chief Programs Officer



Angela Moore
Chief Family Services Officer

Ready-2- Learn Rally

Get ready to cheer on our community's youngest learners at ELC of Alachua County's **Ready-2-Learn Rally on Saturday, July 12, 2025, from 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM at the MLK Jr. Multipurpose Center!**

This pep rally-themed event will feature free backpacks stuffed with school supplies, fun carnival-style games, community vendors, and plenty of energy as we help families kick off the school year with excitement and support.

Get ready to cheer on our community's youngest learners at ELC of Alachua County's Ready-2-Learn Rally on Saturday, July 12, 2025, from 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM at the MLK Jr. Multipurpose Center! This pep rally-themed event will feature free backpacks stuffed with school supplies, fun carnival-style games, community vendors, and plenty of energy as we help families kick off the school year with excitement and support.

Marco Polo Highlights

ELC of Alachua would like to highlight the following providers for enhancing their classroom instruction by using MarcoPolo Learning!

- 1 Caring and Sharing Learning School
- 2 Tiny Little Blessings, LLC
- 3 First United Methodist Preschool (FUMPRS)

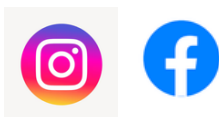
Teacher Tip: Get your account connected, attend teacher training, and add your families so they have FREE access too.



ELCAC Newsletter Editors

Terrie Robinson - Brandi Thomas - Ambrea Smith - Faith Nobles

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Google Review



**CLICK HERE
TO JOIN ELCAC BOOK
CLUB!
A FREE BOOK EVERY
MONTH FOR
CHILDREN
0-5YRS**