



A Message From Our Chief Executive Officer

A Message from the Chief Executive Officer

Well, that was a whirlwind! It seems as if I was just writing to you about the 16-17 year, and here I am again with the 17-18 message. This past year has been filled with new initiatives, challenges, and opportunities; all aimed at increasing the resources needed for our children, families, and providers to succeed.

The Coalition is pleased to announce the formation of the From Cradle to College™ Foundation, created for the sole purpose of supporting the Coalition and families of Manatee County. The first fundraising event held in April at the fairground saw 400 people attend to see Sheriff Rick Wells get roasted by family, friends, and colleagues. The evening was a major success with over \$20,000 raised by the Foundation.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the Coalition staff, all of whom have worked diligently this past year on implementing new programs, such as WAVE Fitness and our STEAM machine, both programs visiting our School Readiness and VPK classes to provide enhanced learning activities. Our Family Services and Provider Relations staff have worked with the Office of Early Learning to test and implement the state-wide portal system for determining eligibility and provider payments, and we continue to strive to be the best Coalition in the state.

The Nemours Reading BrightStart! and Early Steps to School Success programs continue to expand and show promising outcomes for our children. Our famous NEXTGEN Family Magazine continues to grow in readership and advertising revenue.

These are just a few of the highlights for the year 17-18, and I encourage you to read this annual report for more information about the Coalition and how we wisely spend your hard-earned tax and donated dollars. You may view and access other important information about our Coalition and all our programs on our web site at www.elc-manatee.org.

Finally, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to our volunteer Board of Directors and thank them for their years of valuable service. Their leadership and guidance are what ensures the Coalition mission and vision for Manatee County's children is attainable.

Sincerely,

Paul A. Sharff
Chief Executive Officer



**Early Learning
Coalition**
OF MANATEE COUNTY
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*The information contained in this annual
report is based on data collected from
July 1, 2017- June 30, 2018*

'The STEAM Machine'

'The STEAM Machine' has been visiting childcare centers providing one-hour sessions that focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and/or Mathematics.

Promoting STEAM education gives children the opportunity to attain essential skills to connect ideas and integrate knowledge across disciplines, all the while capturing their attention.

ELC has partnered with the School District of Manatee County as 'The STEAM Machine' program continues to grow.



Books For Kids

The ELC of Manatee County was excited to partner with Books For Kids, a project of the Rotary Club of Lakewood Ranch. Their mission is to raise the reading levels of local elementary school students by helping with reading comprehension and by providing "Books For Kids."

Their team of more than 100 community volunteers are professionally trained to go into Title 1 schools, read to children, and engage students in book discussions which foster reading comprehension and critical thinking skills. Each student in the classroom is then given a book to take home.

This year, volunteers from Books For Kids plan to visit about 100 classrooms in Manatee and Sarasota County schools and distribute more than 14,000 books. This will bring the total number of books distributed in the program's six-year history to nearly 50,000.



Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall's Early Learning Institute

The Early Learning Coalition collaborated with the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall in its Early Learning Institute. The Institute provided a professional development session for the teaching staff of six of our classrooms once, and for four of those a second round. For each session, the Institute's teaching artist and its Education Program Director introduced the lessons they would teach the classroom children using storybooks. The teachers then participated in the activities their children would later encounter. Then the teaching artist visited each classroom three times, with three separate lessons using one book.

In Fall 2017, the Van Wezel staff used the book, *Goodnight Moon*, to teach social-emotional lessons. In February 2018, those children visited the Van Wezel for this production and one for *Runaway Bunny*. In Spring 2018, the children learned several lessons from the book, *The Gruffalo*. Six classrooms were bussed to the Van Wezel to participate in a live professional arts production of the same book. During the summer, the children were taught using the book, *Giggle, Giggle, Moo*. The children are invited to view the professional production of this book in early Fall 2018.

About the Early Learning Coalition

Early Learning Coalition of Manatee County, Inc.

The Early Learning Coalition of Manatee County is a 501(c)(3) non-profit agency that in the years since its creation, continues to mature and evolve in many aspects: organization, fiscal management, visibility, and strength and involvement of board members.

The growth of the Coalition as the leader in early education and care in Manatee County is reflected in the decisive steps made by the Board: strategic planning to foster goals and objectives, innovative programs, and a continual emphasis on improving the education and care provided to our children.

Our Mission

To provide and coordinate the services of School Readiness programs in an efficient manner, in order to help all children develop the skills needed to achieve future educational success; to support the role of parents as their children's first and most important teachers; and to continue to improve the quality of services available in the community.

Our Vision

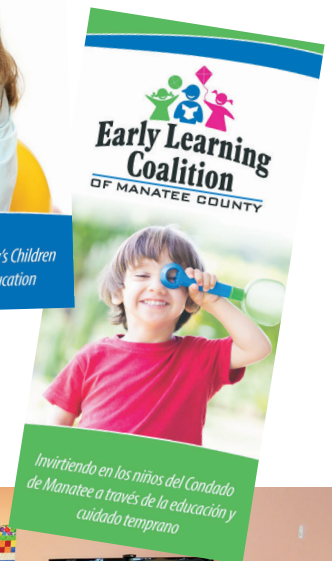
To provide and support high-quality school readiness opportunities for all children and their families, understanding that it is in the first years of life that a child's future educational success is determined.

Our Programs and Services:

- Child Care Resource and Referral
- Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK)
- School Readiness
- Early Literacy Initiatives
- Quality Initiatives
- Professional Development
- Developmental Screening & Intervention
- Family Engagement and Parenting
- Inclusive Child Care
- Community Outreach



Find out more about the Early Learning Coalition and its services and programs by picking up our brochure in English or Spanish at the ELC Office.



The ELC lobby is open, airy and inviting to families. The open space and variety of toys, books, and games provides a safe place for children to play and interact with each other.



Child Care Resource and Referral

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) is the "front door" to the Early Learning Coalition's multiple services. *It is a free marketing tool for legally operating providers in Manatee County, as the information they provide is updated immediately in our database, allowing anyone looking for Manatee County child care options to request a list of providers and the services they offer.* Parents are educated on how to identify quality care, informed about different types of care and are encouraged to continue looking for quality once their children are placed in a child care facility. These services are provided at no charge.

While CCR&R helps families find child care, it also provides information about other valuable community resources. This information is available in our lobby, on our website and at community events in which the ELC participates.

Promoting Early Literacy

As part of the initiative for Family Literacy Opportunities, the Coalition received over 42,000 low cost books from grant opportunities through First Book.

A book is given to every child that comes to the office and at every community event that the Coalition participates in. Bookmarks labeled with "I'm a Reader" are provided with each book. Parents receive a "Reading Tips for Parents of Preschoolers" that offers fun ways they can help their child(ren) become happy and confident readers.

Children's books are present in the lobby of the Coalition office for parents to read to their children while they wait for their appointment. Other literature is present in the lobby and staff offices encouraging the development of literacy at home.

Over 37,000 books were distributed during Every Child a Reader and Literacy for the Holidays; at outreach events such as the Manatee County Fair and Lakewood Ranch Halloween Boofest; to Manatee County School District as part of the Grade Level Reading program, and to United Way to help with the summer learning loss program.

The Early Literacy Coordinator implemented the Raising A Reader program at seven early learning centers, East Coast Migrant Head

Start, and two elementary schools, serving 355 children and providing training to 32 early childhood teachers and directors. Raising A Reader is an evidence-based early literacy and family engagement program that helps parents build the habit of book sharing. Each week a child brings home a bag of high quality books. To help sustain the habit of borrowing and sharing books at end of the program families are connected to their local library.

Those We Serve

*In the 2017-2018 fiscal year
the Early Learning Coalition
of Manatee County provided
1,114 child care referrals*



Our Programs & Services

Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK)

Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) is free for all four-year-old children in Florida. Families do not have income requirements or restrictions.

The VPK program is designed to provide four-year-olds access to quality prekindergarten educational experiences and prepare Florida's children for kindergarten by developing the skills they need to become good readers and successful students.

VPK includes standards for literacy skills, strict accountability, appropriate curricula, substantial instruction periods, manageable class sizes, and qualified instructors. Parents have the option of enrolling children in a school-year program consisting of 540 instructional hours, a summer program consisting of 300 instructional hours, or a Specialized Instructional Services (SIS) program which takes place outside the traditional classroom setting and is designed for 4-year-olds with special needs.

Those We Serve

*In the 2017-2018 fiscal year,
the Early Learning Coalition
of Manatee County served
2,769 Children
122 VPK Program Providers*



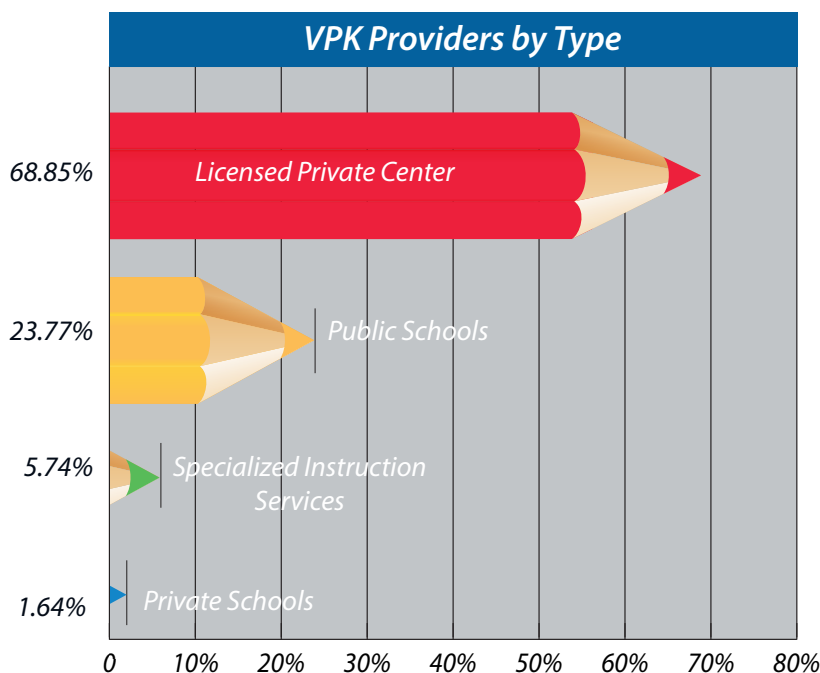
FREE For All Four-Year-Old Children
Residing In Florida
Regardless of Family Income



GRATIS Para todos los niños que
residen en la Florida
sin tener en cuenta el ingreso familiar



Total Percentage of VPK Payments by Program Type



School Readiness - Child Care Funding Assistance

The School Readiness Program offers financial assistance to low-income families for early child education and care so families can become financially self-sufficient, and their young children can be successful in school in the future.

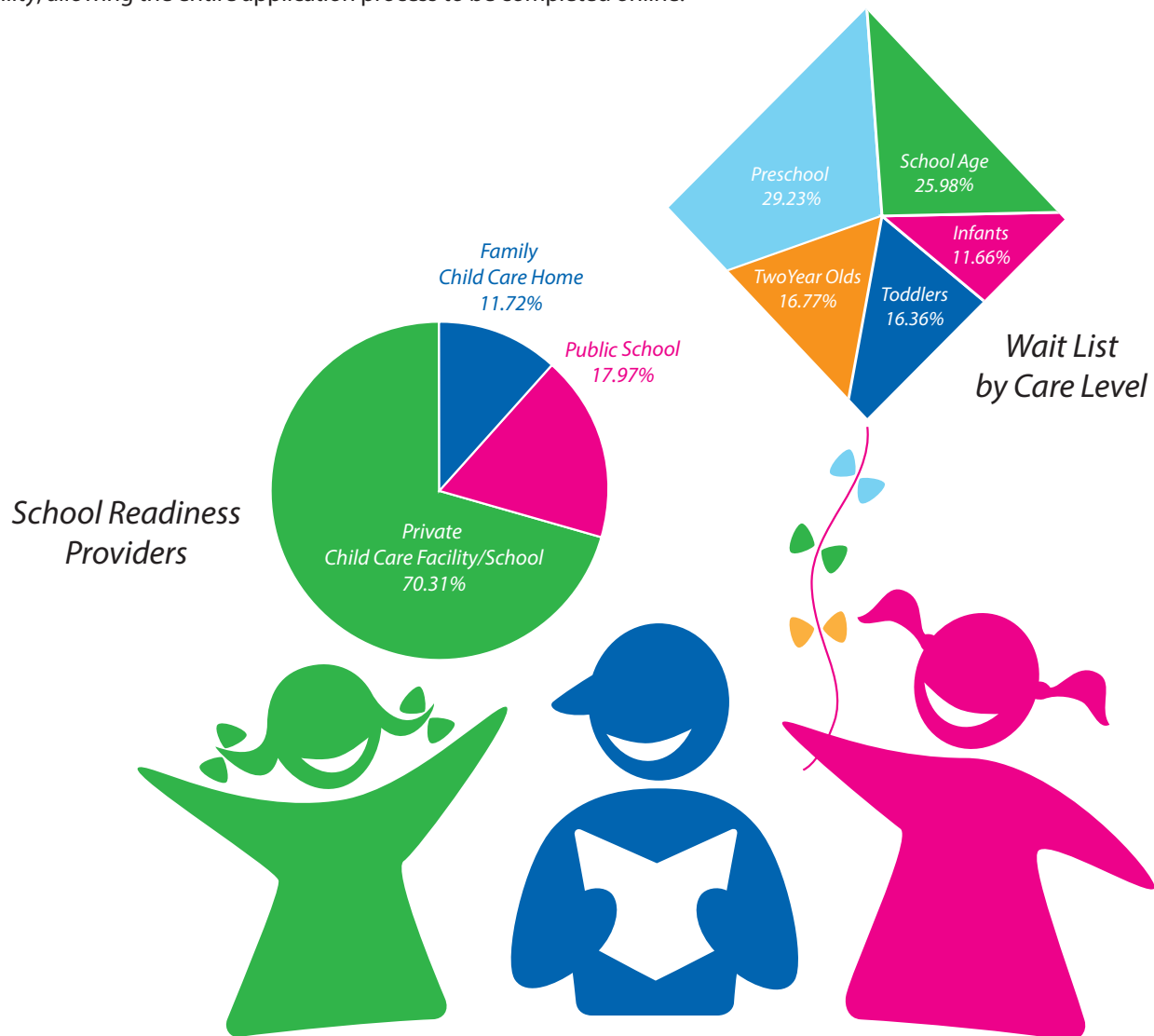
The program considers a child's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development; involves parents as their child's first teacher; prepares children to be ready for school; and gives parents information about child development and other topics of interest.

Family Portal

In 2015, the Office of Early Learning (OEL) introduced the Family Portal, which is a comprehensive statewide system where parents can apply for VPK and School Readiness online. The Family Portal can be accessed using any smart phone, tablet, or computer with internet access. Families can upload documents supporting eligibility, sign applications electronically, manage their waiting list status and revalidation for school readiness, and print out VPK certificates of eligibility, allowing the entire application process to be completed online.

Those We Serve

*In the 2017-2018 fiscal year,
the Early Learning Coalition
of Manatee County's
School Readiness served
4,163 Children
128 Program Providers*



Our Programs & Services

Developmental Screening and Early Intervention

Early detection of potential developmental delays allows children to reach their fullest potential and enter kindergarten ready to learn.

The ELC helps to expand child care options for children with disabilities and their families by supporting the inclusion of children with special needs in early childhood settings. Services are available to early care and education providers to increase staff knowledge and competence in serving children with disabilities or behavioral challenges. These services include training, onsite technical assistance, community resource information and environmental adaptations. A toll-free Warm Line is available to parents and early care and education providers needing information related to the disability or special health care needs of children, birth to five years of age.

Coalition staff participates in the Healthy Start Manatee community meetings. The ELC Inclusion Specialist is a Certified Passenger Safety Technician and participates in car seat safety checks. An ELC staff member is a member of the Florida Association of Infant Mental Health.

The ELC partners with the Manatee County School Board and local agencies to participate in community events.

Child Development staff completed 2,444 Ages and Stages Questionnaires developmental screenings. Of these 2,444 developmental screenings, 889 demonstrated potential development delays and families were provided with Individual Early Care Plans which include age and skill specific activities for families to use at home. The families of 23 children were identified as needing further evaluation and were provided assistance in coordinating referrals to other community agencies.

Early Intervention Outcomes

Child Screenings	2,444
Child Assessments	1,964
Community Referrals	23

Professional Development

The Coalition offered school readiness program providers, staff, and parents training and technical assistance in the following areas:

- Early Learning Standards
- Child Screenings and Assessments
- Developmentally Appropriate Curricula and Character Development
- Teacher-Child Interactions
- Age-Appropriate Discipline Practices
- Health and Safety
- First Aid/CPR/AED
- Relationship Building

Highlights of professional development activities included:

- One session of What About the Kids? A Community Conversation About Children and the Opioid Epidemic
- One session of Core Competencies for Early Care and Education Practitioners
- One session of Early Learning Bill Implementation
- Two sessions of Five Steps to Freedom for Business Owners

- One session of Six Strategies to Double Your Business Profits in the Next Year
- One session of Motivating Millennials
- One session of Developing Family Routines that Enhance Children's Learning
- One session of The Positive Impact of Essential Oils in Preschool
- One session of Mind in the Making Facilitator Training
- One session of Introduction to Mind in the Making
- Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards
- Annual Early Childhood Conference for Providers
- Coalition staff presented workshops at the AELC Symposium in February, 2017

2017-2018 Professional Development Statistics:

- 141 sessions provided on 76 individual topics
- 1812 student contacts
- **365.5 training hours**

Early Steps To School Success (A Save the Children Program)

The Early Steps to School Success program (A Save the Children program) brought the love of learning to the families of Manatee County after it was launched in the Fall of 2015. The program has served 57 children in our home visiting component and 110 in our Raising a Reader component. Our trained Early Childhood Coordinators brought book exchanges, developmental screenings, educational activities, and fun directly into the families' homes.

Coordinators focused on language, social and emotional, cognitive, and physical development. Parents were encouraged to implement new skills with their child in between visits and to support their child's growth, preparing them for school. Parent-child groups occurred once a month to connect the families in the program. Our Coordinators also worked directly with teachers and parents of pre-K students to encourage reading at home. Book bags were sent home weekly and parents were encouraged to read, sing, or share a story with their child. All services were FREE.

Nemours Reading BrightStart! Program (NRBS!)

NRBS! is a literacy intervention program dedicated to the prevention of reading failure in young children. Started in 2005 through the generous funding of the Nemours Foundation (a large pediatric health system), NRBS! is based on the premise that because child health and learning are intricately linked, therefore reading failure is a major child health issue.

The ELC implemented its Practice-Based Coaching program using NRBS! in November 2015. The coalition presented each provider with a Nemours Reading BrightStart! Lesson Plan Kit, Manipulatives Kit, and book set. Each teacher was assigned a coach to serve as an essential resource for the program. These coaches made regular visits to each classroom to maintain the fidelity of the program and to facilitate the professional learning and teaching-practice improvement of the classroom teachers by offering individualized curricular support.

During the 2017-2018 year, ELC served 30 classrooms in 12 programs. The 35 participating teachers indicated overwhelmingly that they enjoyed use of this program. ELC prescreened 262 children in four-year-old classrooms. 236 were post-screened using the Get Ready to Read-Revised Screening Tool, with the balance dropping due to attrition. Results of the post-screening found that 221 children scored ready for kindergarten, a success rate of 94%.

ELC prescreened 166 children in three-year-old classrooms. 151 were post-screened using the Get Ready to Read-Revised Screening Tool, with the balance dropping due to attrition. Results of the post-screening found that 137 children scored as making age-appropriate progress on their paths to being ready for kindergarten, a success rate of 91%.

Deputy Friendly

The Deputy Friendly program began in January 2016 as a pilot and continues to expand. This collaboration with the Manatee County Sheriff's Department, is designed to humanize children's perceptions of law enforcement officers and their work, and improve rapport between children and law enforcement.

The program is designed for children aged three to five and involves monthly visits by the deputies to school classrooms, a book for centers to add to their library, and follow-up activities conducted by the teachers. Deputy Friendly continues to reach 41 classrooms throughout Manatee County.

Kindermusik

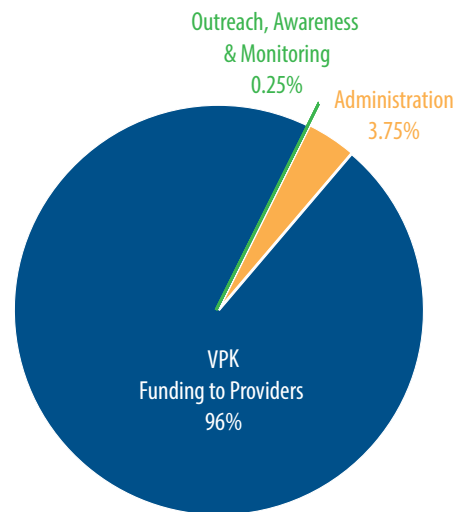
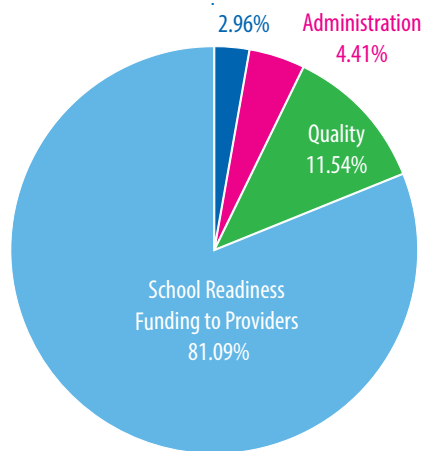
Kindermusik is dedicated to using the power of music to help children grow during the years most critical to brain development. Each kit includes developmentally appropriate, safety-tested instruments and manipulatives to enhance music-based learning activities. Currently 80 children ages one to five are using the program at Palma Sola Early Learning Academy.



Our Programs & Services

2017-2018 Total Funding

The Early Learning Coalition of Manatee County (ELC) received federal and state funding in excess of \$16,000,000 during this fiscal year. Over 78% of School Readiness funds and 96% of Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) funds were spent directly on child care services through our local child care providers and school district. Our overall administrative costs for these programs were 4.41% and 4% respectively. *The ELC was awarded additional local grant dollars in excess of \$2,414,000.*



A Heart Felt Thank You To Our Community Partners

American Red Cross
 Angus Graham Family Foundation
 Anna Maria Oyster Bar
 BMO Harris Bank
 Bradenton Police Department
 BrightHouse/Spectrum Network
 CareerSource Suncoast
 Children's Forum
 Children's Medical Services
 Community Foundation of Manatee County
 Community Foundation of Sarasota
 Department of Children and Families Child Care Licensing
 Early Childhood Court
 East Coast Migrant Head Start
 Easter Seals of Southwest Florida
 Family Network on Disabilities
 First Book
 Florida Association for the Education of Young Children
 Florida Department of Education
 Florida Department of Health in Manatee County
 Florida Family Child Care Home Association
 Florida Occupant Protection Resource Center
 Florida Office of Early Learning
 Florida Prepaid College Board
 Florida Sheriff's Youth Ranch - Sarasota-Manatee
 Florida Winefest & Auction
 From Cradle to College™ Foundation
 FSU Autism Institute
 Gulfcoast Early Steps
 Healthy Start Coalition

Hernando DeSoto Historical Society
 Home Child Care Providers Association of Manatee County
 HOPE Family Services
 Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital
 Kiwanis Club of Bradenton
 Lakewood Ranch Community Fund
 Lions Club of Bradenton
 Manatee Children's Services
 Manatee Community Foundation
 Manatee County Chamber of Commerce
 Manatee County Chapter of Florida Association for the Education of Young Children
 Manatee County Children's Services Advisory Board
 Manatee County Housing Authority
 Manatee County Juvenile Justice Strategic Planning Committee
 Manatee Educational Television (METV)
 Manatee Education Foundation
 Manatee Hope
 Manatee Infant Mental Health Association
 Manatee County Public Library System
 Manatee County Sheriff's Office
 Manatee Performing Arts Center
 Manatee Sunrise Kiwanis Club
 Michael Saunders Community Foundation
 MLK Day of Service
 Palmetto Police Department
 Parenting Matters
 Patterson Foundation
 People Assisting the Homeless (PATH) Coalition
 Pinellas County Schools Child Care Worker Training Program

Pittsburgh Pirates Organization/Bradenton Marauders
 Police Athletic League of Manatee
 Raising a Reader Network
 Rays Baseball Foundation
 Redlands Christian Migrant Association
 Rotary Club of Lakewood Ranch
 Safe Children's Coalition
 Save the Children Network
 School District of Manatee County
 Service Club of Manatee
 SOLVE House
 Southern Early Childhood Association
 South Florida Museum
 State College of Florida and the Foundation for SCF
 Step Up Suncoast
 Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading
 Suncoast Partnership to End Homelessness
 Take Stock in Children
 The Giving Partner
 Training and Technical Assistance Support Center, UCF
 Turning Points /Galvano One Stop Center
 Twiga Foundation
 UF Lasting Center
 United Way Suncoast
 Volunteers of America
 WAVE Fitness
 Whole Child Manatee
 William G. & Marie Selby Foundation
 Women's Resource Center



Transition to Kindergarten

The Early Learning Community Task Force (Early Learning Coalition of Manatee County, Manatee Community Action Agency Head Start/Early Head Start, and the School District of Manatee County) in partnership with the South Florida Museum and The Patterson Foundation, developed and implemented four evenings of fun, food, and information about transitioning from preschool to kindergarten.

Families and their rising kindergartners from four Title I schools, and the community preschools feeding into those schools, came to the South Florida Museum on four separate evenings in May 2018. When families and preschool directors and teachers arrived,

they went to the Planetarium and saw a video, "Miss Luanne's Front Porch," featuring Luanne Howe from the School District outlining the learning areas to experience throughout the evening.

This series hosted over 400 people in four 1.5-hour sessions. As a continuation, the rest of the 1500 kindergarten readiness bags were distributed to the prekindergarten classes in the School District selected sites, Head Start selected Sites and School Readiness and/or VPK programs at private providers in the selected school areas.



6th Annual ELC Golf Classic

The 6th Annual ELC of Manatee County Golf Classic hosted by State Representative Jim Boyd was held at IMG Academy Golf Club on November 3rd and was again a resounding success.

The event is the Coalition's largest fundraiser and has become a big favorite in the local golf calendar, with 100 players taking part. ELC would like to thank our Title Sponsor - US Sugar - and our other major sponsors for their fantastic support as significant funds were raised to support ELC programs and the children in our community.



Fairy Tale Follies

ANOTHER highly successful "Fairy Tale Follies" event took place in the past year as part of the ELC's partnership with the Manatee Performing Arts Center (MPAC).

On December 14th, almost 600 excited children, most of whom were VPK students, attended a stage production of Disney favorites, such as *Beauty and the Beast* and *Frozen* – complete with artificial snow falling from the ceiling at the grand finale. Books and backpacks were given to each child.

ELC would like to thank everyone at MPAC for partnering on these fantastic events that give many of the children their first opportunity to attend the theatre – we look forward to more shows next year!

THANK YOU TO OUR 2017/2018 BOARD MEMBERS



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