

*Giving children the necessary tools, gives them the chance to succeed.*

### ***Mission Statement***

*To identify and meet the needs of children and families to lay the foundation for lifetime success by: maximizing each child's potential, preparing children to enter school ready to learn, and helping families achieve economic self-sufficiency.*



## ***Annual Report 2012-2013***

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## A Message from our Executive Director



The past year has been one of change and challenges. The most significant and impactful of which was the new statutes governing both School Readiness (SR) and Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK). Among the many things the new statutes changed were SR eligibility priorities, Coalition minimum and maximum spending categories and Provider accountability and monitoring requirements. These statutory changes will ultimately also result in new statewide contracts for both SR and VPK, a standardized list of approved curricula for SR programs, and a new standardized monitoring tool for ensuring Providers are in compliance with state requirements. I mention all this because the transition has been ongoing and it has wrought changes to our processes and will continue to do so in the coming year. The adaptability, forbearance and understanding of all parties, particularly our Providers, throughout this process have been greatly appreciated, and I hope it will continue into the coming year.

Other changes we have imposed upon ourselves this year included our move to new offices. Before the end of the year our Eligibility Department had already moved, and although it happened in January the rest of the Coalition completed their move as well. We look forward to the opportunities moving to larger, renovated and more efficient offices will afford. One immediate return on investment was to bring Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) services in house. Although we enjoyed our relationship with United Way 2-1-1, we felt our clients and community would be better served if we provided CCR&R services ourselves.

Another major milestone we achieved this year was to work our School Readiness wait list down from a high of 1,200 to zero. Our staff worked hard to see everyone and offer much needed services and I am proud that we achieved this milestone in December. We will continue as funding allows to keep our wait list cleared. As for now the only delay in receiving services is the time it takes to contact the parents to make an appointment.

As always our funding this year was limited, but we continued working to find ways to reduce spending and work more efficiently in order to help more working families receive financial assistance for childcare. Again this year, over 83% of our School Readiness funding went directly to child care slots, which is well above the state required 78% minimum.

The Coalition understands the importance of providing quality early learning programs for our children. Our staff is committed to assisting the child care providers in our community by offering trainings, technical assistance and resources. We praise our providers for their dedication and hard work in meeting the needs of children and their parents, all the while striving to better prepare our children for school. We will all continue to help our children “learn how to learn”, so they enter Kindergarten as ready as they can possibly be.

I would like to close by thanking our Board Members, staff, community partners, child care providers and donors who have so supported us this past year. All of your support for this Coalition ensures our success in serving the children of Escambia County. This is a community effort that will not be nearly as successful as it has been without the support and contributions of each of you.

Thank you all for investing your time and resources into the futures of our children.

**Bruce Watson**

**Executive Director**

## Programs and Services



### Health Screenings and Education

The ELCEC continued partnership with the Escambia County Health Department (ECHD), to administer and assist providers with height, weight, hearing, vision and BMI screenings, as well as, health and nutrition classes. With these services, we were able to identify and meet the needs of several children in the community by providing referrals for eye glasses and ENT services. This service also provides early dissemination of information, such as health and food safety alerts by local, state, and federal agencies. This service is particularly of value during high health stress times, i.e. H1N1, normal flu, and other localized health outbreaks. The ECHD delivered their services at both Provider sites and at the Subsidy office site. This helped us deliver our services in a more economical manner, while still maintaining the high level of service we feel our community deserves.



### Child Care Food Program

The ELCEC continued partnership with the Department of Health (DOH) to be their service provider to promote, monitor, reimburse, and train local licensed child care homes that are participating in the DOH Child Care Food Program. This program helps to meet the nutritional needs of the children they care for. Our staff provides these services to a three (3) county area to ensure the children in our community have healthy, nutritious meals and snacks. We reimburse providers approximately \$20,000 monthly for their meal preparations and ingredients. In some cases, these are the most, if not only, nutritious meals these children receive.

## Programs and Services



### Child Screenings and Assessments

This year the ELCEC took the developmental child screening process back in house. In support of this a dedicated full time Inclusion Specialist was added to the staff. This person is now the coordinator for all developmental child screenings, which is a good fit as they are also the coordinator for all subsequent referrals for children with developmental concerns. The Inclusion/Behavioral coordinator responded to 78 warm-line calls; made 29 referrals to agencies; created 47 behavior plans and 481 technical assists to early education and care providers and parents. In support of this we have pushed for even more Providers to do their Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ) on line, vice paper. Also this year, along with all the other Coalitions, we initiated the Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Pre and Post Assessment Program. We are pleased to report we had 100% participation.



### Pensacola State College (PSC) Health Professionals Opportunity Grant (HPOG)

The ELCEC is the funding and oversight conduit for child care services provided under a Federal grant to PSC to promote the education of students in a variety of health profession curricula. Under this grant a child care grant is provided to students while enrolled in their course of study. PSC contracted ELCEC under this grant to provide this care using licensed providers in our community.



### Childcare Resource & Referral (CCR&R)

The ELCEC operated this service in multiple venues, but the most effective was our contract with United Way. United Way's 2-1-1 service handled both calls specific to our Coalition, and those concerning child care in general throughout their ten county northwest Florida service area. Approximately 1100 families requested referrals to local child care sites for care and assistance for their children. Once the client is assisted with CCR&R they are questioned further to ensure all their needs are met as a family, not just their child care needs. We have found that those clients requesting CCR&R normally have additional questions which 2-1-1 has ready access to the appropriate answers. This partnership is greatly valued and recognized throughout the community. In addition to contracting for services, our subsidy eligibility department offers assistance to clients with parenting information and community solutions when they are in the office for child care assistance. Multiple questions are fielded with great success. Additionally, Child Care Resource and Referral information for local providers was updated at 100%. This is valuable to our success throughout the community to ensure accurate, up-to-date information.



## Programs and Services



### School Readiness Eligibility Services

The ELCEC operates under the direction of the Florida Office of Early Learning (OEL). In turn we work with private, faith-based and public school programs, in addition to licensed and registered family child care homes to serve children from birth to five years of age. The ELCEC offers eligibility determination services in several ways: appointments, walk-ins, and drop off/pick up for paperwork. We have partnered with the local workforce board to make available specific times for their clients to visit our location without appointments to alleviate duplicate travel and paperwork issues. This process has proven to be beneficial to both agencies and our mutual clients. Follow-ups of client issues have diminished and workflow has been aligned to more closely match client needs. Within the eligibility appointment, we offer child care resource and referral services, community needs information, family guidance, and general family well-being services. At the end of appointment we promote early literacy by inviting every child to pick an age appropriate book from our “Word Garden”. The Word Garden is also centrally located and has been furnished and decorated to appeal to adults and children alike, which helps it to serve several purposes as both a waiting area, a children’s play area, as well as serving as a small library.



### Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK)

The ELCEC offers a program designed to prepare four-year-olds for kindergarten and build the foundation for their educational success. The program allows a parent to enroll his or her eligible child (four years old by September 1 and residing in Florida) in a free VPK program. The program is voluntary for children and providers. The ELCEC offered enrollment in this program in two ways: One was a dedicated enrollment office at the ELCEC main office, and the other was Providers were able to initiate the eligibility process at their locations. This approach has been very successful in expediting the enrollment process, and made it much easier for parents to get their children enrolled.

## Programs and Services



### Quality Initiatives

The ELCEC revisited their Professional Development Department and new requirements handed down by the Office of Early Learning. With all the changes, they restructured their department and became the Program Assessment and Training Department (PAT). They had 20 early learning classrooms participate in a Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG) project. ELC loaned a laptop computer to all participating programs and funded the TSG subscription for each child participating. We had 44 early learning classrooms receive an age-appropriate environmental rating scale free of charge.

The ELCEC continues to monitor License Exempt providers one time annually, all family child care homes once annually, at least 80% of VPK Providers monitored once annually, and all VPK POP providers are monitored quarterly. In addition, all contracted providers receive a quality program review two times annually.

The PAT department performed a number of professional development opportunities to all programs. We offered the Reading Stars program to providers. This program was a summer program that focused on literacy concepts that were taught during the school year. The goal was to retain all the literacy skills learned going into the upcoming school year. The Imagination Library program continues to provide books to approximately 700 children birth through five in our community. A Math With Out Tears workshop was offered to all low performing VPK sites. A Music/Movement workshop focusing on pre-literacy and pre-math was presented at 11 sites to 233 children.

The ECLEC had three Americorps volunteers on their team. These volunteers provided 19 Financial Literacy classes to 97 participants. We continued our Car Seat Safety program in which we provided brand new car seats for a small \$25 donation. Families are taught by a certified car seat technician how to correctly and safely buckle their children into their car.



## Programs Year Summary

The Coalition partnered with several community organizations to support our children, families and the professional staff in early learning programs. In partnership with local Rotary Clubs, Escarosa Coalition Of the Homeless and the AmeriCorps volunteers, we endeavored to reach out to homeless families with preschool children (P-Kids). As homeless preschool children were identified, resource support was offered to the families along with a durable bag filled with basic child necessities. Services were offered in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties.

The Coalition partnered with the Department of Children and Families, Circuit One, to coordinate the Strengthening Families program in our community. Early childhood staffs were introduced to the five protective factors that support families. Select Coalition staff members continued to be dedicated to support the protective services program.

Coalition business was conducted through three standing Committees: Executive /Finance Committee, Eligibility and Provider Payment Committee and the Resource Development Committee. The Resource Development Committee was created this year by combining the Parent and Child Services Committee and the Provider Recruitment Committee. A Board Member chairs each Committee.

The Coalition continued to offer Continuing Education Units (CEU's) for professional development as an IACET approved agency.

All center directors in Escambia County hold a Director's Credential with over a quarter of those directors holding an A.A. degree or higher in early childhood education. Fifty-three (53) local early learning programs are accredited through NAEYC, APPLE or NAFCC.

Coalition Board members and staff continued to represent the Coalition in many agencies, clubs, organizations, and other venues in our community. Through Board member involvement in bi-monthly Board meetings, committee meetings, workgroup meetings and special activities, our Coalition Board's vision continued to help shape our community. Coalition staff represented the agency throughout the year in many events, fairs, workshops and meetings. The Coalition remains a United Way partner agency. Our collaborating community partners include: Department of Children and Families, Baptist Health Care, Sacred Heart Hospital, the Rotary Club, Healthy Kids, Escarosa Coalition Of the Homeless, Healthy Start of Escambia County, ECARE, Workforce Escarosa, Families First Network, United Way, Barnes & Nobles, Wal-Mart, International Paper, YMCA, PNC Bank and the Pensacola Lions Club.

Our challenges remain in continuing our gains in school readiness scores, helping parents to be their child's first teacher, implementing a Quality Rating Improvement System, and providing services for our children and families with the limited financial resources available.

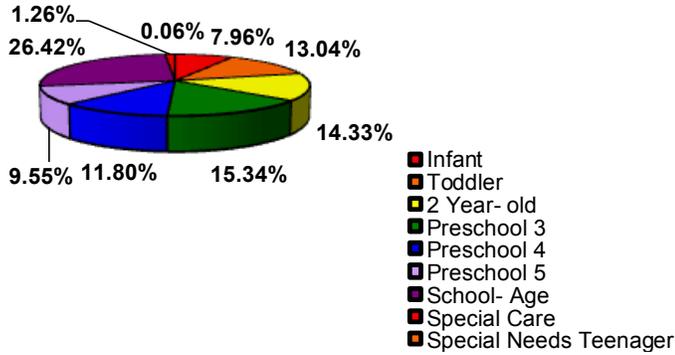
# Program Funding Levels

Number of unduplicated School Readiness (SR) children and families

SR Children	SR Families
4752	2558

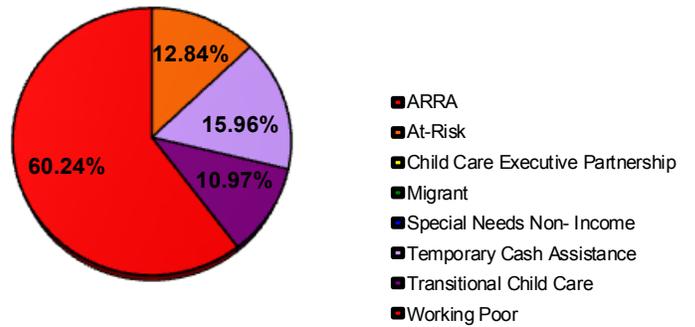
School Readiness:

Percentage of total payments (including match) by care



School Readiness:

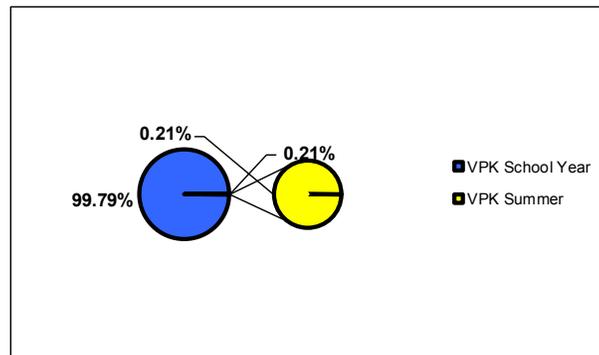
Percentage of total payments (including match) by funding category



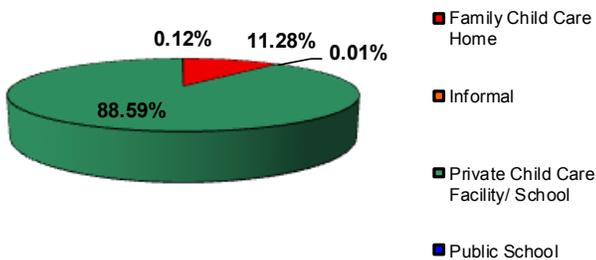
Number of unduplicated Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education children and families

VPK Children	VPK Families
2632	2586

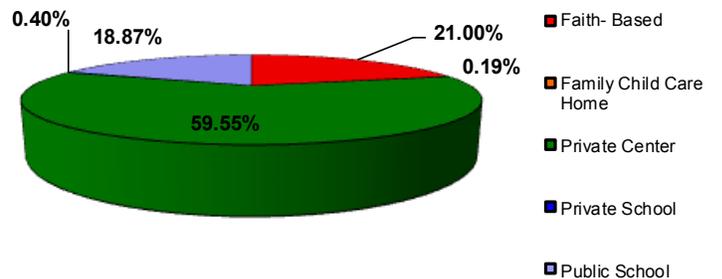
Total percentage of VPK payments by program type



Participating School Readiness providers by provider type



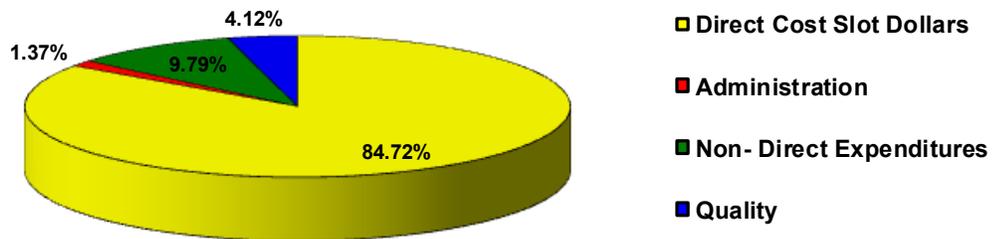
Participating VPK providers by provider type



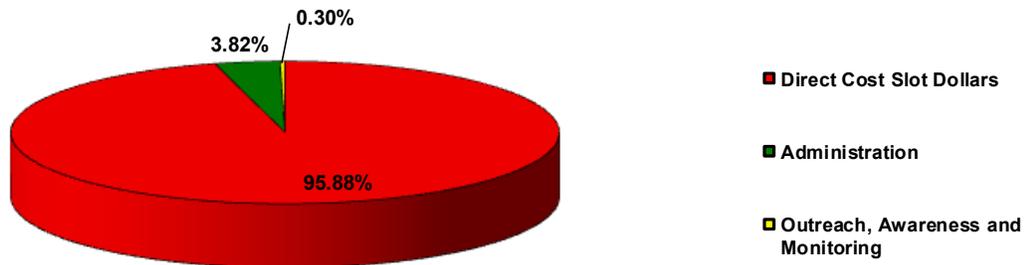
# Financials

During the 2012- 2013 fiscal year the ELCEC's total School Readiness Program operating budget was \$12,550,297.82 . The ELCEC's total Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program operating budget was \$5,538,397.00 . Below is a breakout of expenditures by category.

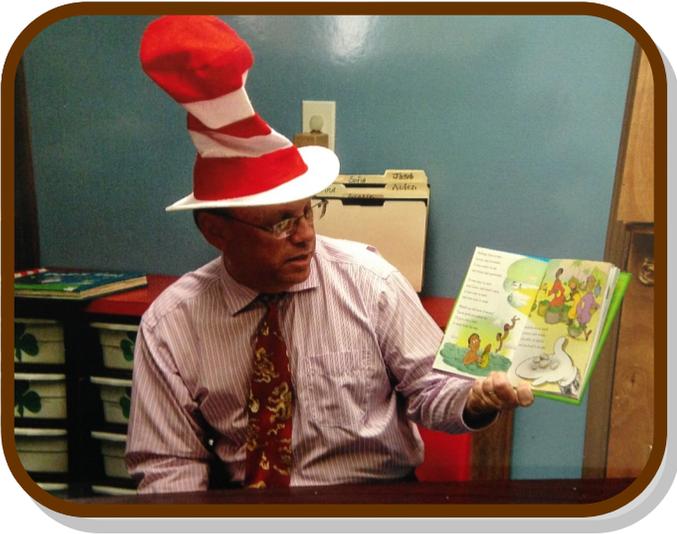
### School Readiness Expenditures by Category



### VPK Expenditures by Category



## Events in Our Community



ELC Escambia Executive Director Bruce Watson  
Pensacola Mayor Ashton Hayward  
participating in Read Across America 2013



ELC Escambia Staff Members participating  
in United Way's Day of Caring  
Clean-up project at the  
Independence for the Blind



ELC Escambia County participating  
in the Relay For Life

# Early Learning Coalition of Escambia County Staff Directory

Main Administrative Office: 850-607-8198

Main Eligibility Office: 850-439-5515

## Administrative Office

Employee Number	Employee Title	Email	Phone Number
Bruce Watson	Executive Director	<a href="mailto:Bwatson@elcescambia.org">Bwatson@elcescambia.org</a>	850-607-7620
David Whipps	Information Systems Administrator	<a href="mailto:Dwhipps@elcescambia.org">Dwhipps@elcescambia.org</a>	850-439-5519
Dawn Engel	Executive Assistant	<a href="mailto:Dengel@elcescambia.org">Dengel@elcescambia.org</a>	850-607-7689
Kathy Gimbel	Administrative Assistant	<a href="mailto:Kgimbel@elcescambia.org">Kgimbel@elcescambia.org</a>	850-607-8198
Matt Moseley	Program Integrity Specialist	<a href="mailto:Mmoseley@elcescambia.org">Mmoseley@elcescambia.org</a>	850-607-8347
Rency Warren	Food Program Manager	<a href="mailto:Rwarren@elcescambia.org">Rwarren@elcescambia.org</a>	850-607-8422
Wendy Gibson	Program Integrity Specialist	<a href="mailto:Wgibson@elcescambia.org">Wgibson@elcescambia.org</a>	850-332-5280

## Finance Department

Employee Number	Employee Title	Email	Phone Number
Becki Rutchland	Finance Director	<a href="mailto:brutchland@elcescambia.org">brutchland@elcescambia.org</a>	850-332-7847
Becky Springer	Reimbursement Specialist	<a href="mailto:Bspringer@elcescambia.org">Bspringer@elcescambia.org</a>	850-607-7587
Clay Gillis	Reimbursement Specialist	<a href="mailto:CGillis@elcescambia.org">CGillis@elcescambia.org</a>	850-607-7795
Gloria Wilson	Provider Contracts Administrator	<a href="mailto:Gwilson@elcescambia.org">Gwilson@elcescambia.org</a>	850-607-8049
Lee Ann Chapman	Reimbursement Specialist	<a href="mailto:Lchapman@elcescambia.org">Lchapman@elcescambia.org</a>	850-607-8290
Millie Fre	VPK Reimbursement Specialist	<a href="mailto:Mfre@elcescambia.org">Mfre@elcescambia.org</a>	850-607-8386

## Eligibility Department

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Debbie Taylor	Eligibility Specialist	<a href="mailto:Dtaylor@elcescambia.org">Dtaylor@elcescambia.org</a>	850-466-2854
Dushey Spivey	Customer Service Specialist	<a href="mailto:Dspivey@elcescambia.org">Dspivey@elcescambia.org</a>	850-439-5516
Hope Wilson	Eligibility Triage Specialist	<a href="mailto:Hwilson@elcescambia.org">Hwilson@elcescambia.org</a>	850-439-5515
Lauren Graves	Administrative Assistant	<a href="mailto:Lgraves@elcescambia.org">Lgraves@elcescambia.org</a>	850-466-3184
Melissa Stankard	Eligibility Specialist	<a href="mailto:Mstankard@elcescambia.org">Mstankard@elcescambia.org</a>	850-466-2238
Nate Wilson	Record Maintenance Specialist	<a href="mailto:Nwilson@elcescambia.org">Nwilson@elcescambia.org</a>	850-466-2197
Nina Daniels	Eligibility Specialist	<a href="mailto:Ndaniels@elcescambia.org">Ndaniels@elcescambia.org</a>	850-466-2442
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Pam Wirick	Child Care Resource & Referral	<a href="mailto:pwirick@elcescambia.org">pwirick@elcescambia.org</a>	850-332-5153
Rosia Thigpen	VPK Eligibility Specialist	<a href="mailto:Rthigpen@elcescambia.org">Rthigpen@elcescambia.org</a>	850-607-8556
Sandra Myers	Record Maintenance Specialist	<a href="mailto:Smyers@elcescambia.org">Smyers@elcescambia.org</a>	850-466-2048
Sarah Whipps	Protective Service Eligibility Specialist	<a href="mailto:Swhipps@elcescambia.org">Swhipps@elcescambia.org</a>	850-439-5518
Topeka Robinson	Eligibility Specialist	<a href="mailto:Trobinson@elcescambia.org">Trobinson@elcescambia.org</a>	850-466-2514
William Busch	Eligibility Specialist	<a href="mailto:Wbusch@elcescambia.org">Wbusch@elcescambia.org</a>	850-466-2682

## Program Assessment & Training Department

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Joyce Griffin	Assessment and Training Specialist	<a href="mailto:Jgriffin@elcescambia.org">Jgriffin@elcescambia.org</a>	850-607-8112
Justine Olan	Outreach Specialist	<a href="mailto:Jolan@elcescambia.org">Jolan@elcescambia.org</a>	850-607-8129
Kandee Johnson	Assessment and Training Specialist	<a href="mailto:Kjohnson@elcescambia.org">Kjohnson@elcescambia.org</a>	850-607-8148
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Eligibility Fax: 850-466-3783

# Board of Directors

## 2012-2013

Leona Bailey	Governor Appointed
Julia Benford	FCCH Provider Representative
MaryAnn Bickerstaff	Children with Disabilities Representative
Alexis Bolin	Vice Chair—Governor Appointed
Julie Booth-Moran	Private Sector
Jewel Cannada-Wynn	Private Sector
Karen Capps	Health Department Representative
Robert Cothran	County Commissioner Designee
Judy Dickinson	Head Start Representative
Richard Dodd	Private Sector
Hardy Eubanks	Treasurer—Private Sector
Pat Franklin	Department of Children and Families Designee
Brenda Hardy	Private Child Care Representative
Kermit “Skip” Housh	Chair—Governor Appointed
Susan Morgan	Community College Designee
Linda Moultrie	School Board Representative
Susan Nelms	Regional Workforce Representative
Kismet Rideau	Private Sector
Roger Thompson	DCF Licensing—Private Sector
Edna Williams	Private Sector
Lori Winterberry	Faith-Based Provider Representative