



The
**Early Learning
Coalition** of the
Big Bend Region

Annual Report

2009 -2010



Proudly serving Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison,
Taylor and Wakulla Counties.

Board of Directors



A Message from the Board Chair, Larry DiPietro

In this past year the Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region has been challenged by difficult economic times, political uncertainty and increasing demand for services. I am proud of our staff and volunteers who have continually risen to the challenge. They've done more with less. They've fought for the interests of our children and families both locally and statewide. When funding for early learning programs was threatened, they were at the Capital telling our story and protecting our mission.

2009-2010 saw many new initiatives in quality and services. The ELC continues to be a leader in developing new strategies to promote and support quality care and to measure successful outcomes. While our work is far from done, I am confident that our team, under the capable and energetic leadership of Lauren Faison, is equal to the task. I would be remiss in not recognizing the contribution of our Board of Directors and community partners who have given generously of their time and resources. Their commitment and dedication has increased our visibility, helped us become stronger advocates and ultimately improved the lives of children and families in our community.



Board of Directors

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Broad & Cassel

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Department of Children and Families

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Kaleidoscope Limited

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Panhandle Area Educational Consortium

Angel Trejo
Sunrise Arc

Janice Sumner
United Country Realty

Ed Feaver
Chiles Foundation

Vision

To provide leadership and advocacy that builds a community where ALL children are prepared for success in school.

About Us



A Message from the CEO, Lauren Faison

2009-2010 was an exciting time for the Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region. We were able to maximize our efficiencies and effectiveness as an organization without compromising our services to our parents and providers.

During the course of the year, we achieved many of our goals including fully implementing *Quality Counts*, the region's first Quality Rating System for child care programs. Utilized as a consumer education tool, the rating system provides families with programmatic information that helps them select the right program for their child. In addition, it gave our contracted child care programs objective information that they can use to make improvements.



The ELC continued to partner with many community agencies and partners included Whole Child, our local Workforce Boards, the Department of Children and Families and their contracted partners, Healthy Start Coalitions, our local school districts, area human service organizations, and of course our network of over 300 early learning providers. These partnerships allowed us to maximize our resources to serve more children and families than ever through the School Readiness and Voluntary Prekindergarten Programs.

2010-2011 will bring more challenges, but I am confident that with the dedication of our Board of Directors and talented staff, we will embrace every opportunity to have a positive, long lasting impact on the children, families, and early learning partners we serve.

During 2009-2010 the ELC employed 58 full-time staff working in one of our 5 service centers



Gadsden Service Center



Leon Service Center



Madison Service Center

Mission

To ensure that ALL children are prepared for success in school.

Community Collaborations

The ELC proudly partnered with a variety of community organizations and partners.



The United Way continued supporting the ELC in 6 of the 7 served counties and provided over \$50,000 in support.



The ELC partnered with the local Whole Child affiliates to connect families to services they needed and to proactively work on behalf of families with young children.



The ELC worked closely with WFSU on the 3rd Annual Family Child Care Home Conference which hosted over 200 child care providers from the Northern Panhandle region in addition to other early literacy initiatives.



The ELC continued a strong partnership with our local Workforce Plus partners by providing tuition assistance for children of qualifying workforce customers and by providing current Workforce clients with the opportunity to volunteer with the ELC.



The ELC partnered with the Department of Children and Families, providing child care services to children determined at risk and children in foster care. In addition, ELC staff and DCF child care licensing staff worked in partnership to facilitate effective communication regarding child care programs.



The ELC partnered with Moms Like Me and Whole Child Leon to launch this area's first child care rating system called *Quality Counts*. Moms Like Me regularly posted information and links for families regarding how to utilize ELC services to assist them in connecting them to the child care services they needed.



The ELC worked collaboratively to assist with Children's Week event held during the legislative session. The ELC supported children's advocacy efforts by helping to plan outreach events and by collecting thousands of children's handprints and artwork from across the state to hang in the Rotunda building at the Capital during Children's Week.

Fiscal Summary

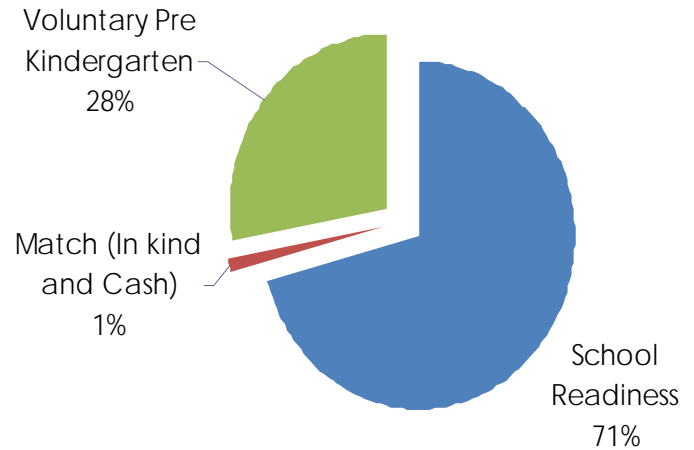
The ELC's primary funding is through a grant award with the Agency for Workforce Innovation, Office of Early Learning.

Budget By Program	
School Readiness	\$18,951,647
Voluntary Prekindergarten	\$7,502,057
Match (In Kind and Cash)	\$253,744
Total	\$26,707,448

Voluntary Prekindergarten (Includes ARRA dollars)	
VPK Administrative	\$280,176
VPK Summer	409,751
VPK Fall	6,801,841
VPK Outreach	\$10,289
Total	\$7,502,057

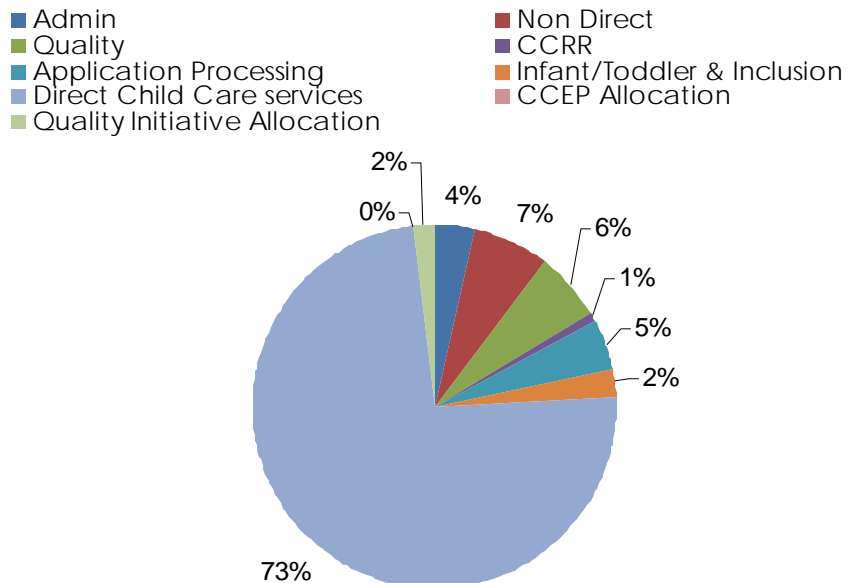
School Readiness (Includes ARRA dollars)		
Admin	\$698,606	3.8%
Non Direct	\$1,241,041	6.7%
Quality	\$1,147,203	6.2%
CCRR	\$174,053	0.9%
Application Processing	\$864,739	4.7%
Infant/Toddler & Inclusion	\$444,822	2.4%
Direct Child Care Services	\$14,005,352	75.4%
Subtotal Base Allocation	\$18,575,816	100.0%
CCEP Allocation	\$20,533	
Quality Initiative Allocation	\$355,298	
Total Award	\$18,951,647	

Budget by Program



Match	
United Ways Funds Received during 09-10	\$50,392
CHSP Funds Received during 09-10	\$76,072
Private Contributions for 09-10	\$127,280
Total	\$253,744

School Readiness Program



Family Services

The ELC is proud to provide a wide variety of services to children and families in the Big Bend Region and connect them to quality early learning program and other needed services.

The ELC connected families to the care that they needed.

The ELC:

- Provided over **2,022** customized referrals to families looking for child care services.
- Provided \$ **14,005,352** in child care tuition assistance to **3,735** families and **6,505** children.
- Provided **\$7,221,881** in Voluntary Prekindergarten services to **3,146** families and **3,207** four year old children.

The ELC helped identify children in need of early intervention services.

The ELC:

- Conducted hearing, vision, and developmental screening on **3,998** School Readiness children ages 0-5.
- Referred over **200** children for further testing and evaluation.
- Helped **37 children** and their families receive over **600 hours** of play therapy and mental health services.
- Conducted training on infectious diseases, medication administration, immunizations, speech development, impetigo, asthma, and allergies for over **250** for network providers .

The ELC put books into the hand of families with young children.

The ELC:

- Opened **3** additional Word Garden Libraries in our Gadsden, Madison and Taylor County offices.
- Collected over **13,000** new and gently used children's books.
- Distributed over **11,000** children's books to families in Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Taylor and Wakulla Counties.

The ELC implemented the region's first quality rating system for child care.

The ELC:

- Partnered with Whole Child Leon, and Moms Like Me to implement the area's first rating system for child care programs.
- Entitled 'Your Guide to Big Bend Child Care', *Quality Counts* was intended as a tool to educate parents on how to choose quality child care for their children.
- The *Quality Counts* initiative uses a flower rating scale to rate child care providers on their; Health and Safety; Curriculum, Screening and Assessment; Family Engagement; Program Administration; Staff Qualifications. Programs can also elect to have an additional component rated, called 'Learning Environments'.

Provider Services

The ELC contracts with early learning providers in the Big Bend Region through the School Readiness and Voluntary Prekindergarten programs.

The ELC supports a variety of providers through our Provider Network.

The ELC:

- Contracted with **293** School Readiness providers including, Family Child Care Homes, Registered Family Child Care Homes, Licensed Child Care Centers, Licensed Exempt Center, Public Schools and Private Schools.
- Contracted with **161** Voluntary Prekindergarten providers including, Licensed Child Care Centers, Licensed Exempt Center, Public Schools and Private Schools.

The ELC supported provider's quality improvement efforts.

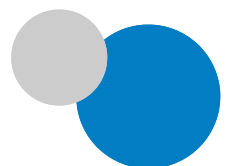
The ELC:

- Conducted a total of **198** pre/post environmental rating scale assessments.
- A total of **992** technical assistance visits were made to **152** providers, totaling **1,602** hours of technical assistance given.
- Distributed over **\$50,000** in early learning materials to contracted child care programs. Materials included block accessories, tricycles, dramatic play items, paint brushes, easels, puzzles, resource books, multicultural items, children's books and much more.

The ELC supported teacher's professional development.

The ELC:

- Developed a unique distance education program that integrated knowledge, skills and technology that assisted early education professionals in furthering their knowledge in the field.
- Offered on-line courses with a range of in-service hours, from **5** hour courses to **20** hour courses. Courses were offered to professionals at no cost for in-service credit.
- Provided 15 distance education courses totaling **230** hours of on-line training. A total of **403** early care and education professionals completed on-line coursework through the distance education program.
- Facilitated **2** professional development conferences, including "*A Conference of our Own*" for over **200** family child care home providers and a *Director's Forum* with over **75** participants in attendance.





The
**Early Learning
Coalition** of the
Big Bend Region



www.elcbigbend.org

Leon Service Center/ Administrative Office

Northwood Centre
1940 North Monroe Street, Suite 70
Tallahassee, FL 32303

Gadsden Service Center

233 East Jefferson Street
Quincy, FL 32351
(850) 627.2924

Madison Service Center

309 South West Range Street
Madison, FL 32340
(850) 973.2512

Taylor Service Center

318 North Clark Street
Perry, FL 32347
(850) 584.5679

Wakulla Service Center

3278 Crawfordville Highway, Suite G
Crawfordville, FL 32327
(850) 617.4586