



MEDIA ALERT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF PASCO AND HERNANDO COUNTIES, INC. RECEIVES \$3K DONATION FROM SUNCOAST SCHOOLS FEDERAL CREDIT UNION OF WEST HERNANDO

The donation is for the required MATCH funding project.

The Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc. was presented with a \$3,000 donation check on Thursday from **Suncoast Schools Federal Credit Union(SFCU) —West Hernando Branch**, 3037 Commercial Way (U.S. 19), Spring Hill, 34606.

The donation will help keep an estimated twelve (12) children enrolled in the School Readiness program for an additional month. This program prepares children to become ready for school, and provides parents with information on child development and other topics of interest. The School Readiness program offers financial assistance to working or in school, income eligible families to help pay for child care.

“We’re proud to give back to the community we live and work in,” said Denise Cintino, SFCU West Hernando Branch Manager. “We’re invested in supporting quality Early Childhood Education, and giving our children a future where they can succeed.”

The funds donated by **SFCU** serve as a MATCH donation to the Coalition.

The Coalition is required to raise \$83,251 for Hernando County and \$232,427 for Pasco County (total of \$315,678) in “MATCH” funds this year alone, or risk losing that amount from its 2012-2013 School Readiness budget.

“It’s quite a challenge to raise that amount of donations in these tough economic times,” said Jim Farrelly, Executive Director. “It’s also the challenge of competing for a small portion of available dollars. Non-profits need the funding to keep their missions alive and continue to best serve the community.”

The Coalition launched a MATCH donation website in August to create a simpler and more convenient way for members of the community to donate through MATCH funding and memorial gifts.

Community members interested in donating any amount should visit www.phelc.org/donation.

For more information about the ELC and its services, visit www.phelc.org.

The Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc. is one of 31 Early Learning Coalitions in Florida. It works to ensure that programs and services are available to assist families with young children during their formative years. Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) program is for all children who are four-years old on or before September 1st. School Readiness provides assistance for low-to-moderate income working families by paying a portion of the childcare costs on a sliding fee schedule. Starting as separate organizations in 2000, Pasco and Hernando counties joined forces to form the Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties in 2005. The non-profit serves over nine thousand children between infancy and five years old, working with over 300 providers in the counties.

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