



ELP STRATEGIC PLAN (FY2026 - FY2029)

Vision: Young children in York County enter school ready to learn.

Mission: ELP mobilizes people, leverages resources, and empowers social, emotional and early literacy programs that help prepare children, birth to age 5, for school success.

Assumptions: (1) Families armed with books help deter the effects of poverty. (2) Literacy develops along a trajectory building off previous phases, and the language abilities at the age of 3 and 4 are strong predictors of literacy skills through the early grades and beyond. (3) Children are born with all the neurons or building blocks they will ever have, and by exposing children to language, cadence, and short, repetitive phrases (such as with reading books), those synapses or bridges can be built. (4) Reading exposure prior to kindergarten shows a meaningful, measurable impact on how children's brains process stories and future reading success. (5) Social-emotional skills help children manage emotions, build healthy relationships, and show empathy and understanding. Loving relationships provide young children with a sense of trust, safety and confidence which teaches young children how to form friendships, communicate emotions and deal with challenges into adulthood.

Partnerships/Resources/Inputs: ELP staff (Executive Director, Program Coordinator), ELP Board of Directors, Community Volunteers, Piedmont Medical Center (NICU, Women's Tower), OB/GYN offices, York County School Districts, York County Pediatric Offices and Community Health Clinics (pediatricians, nurse practitioners), training for volunteers/medical staff, Winthrop University, York County Library, York County First Steps, York County Community Foundation, Junior Welfare League (York County Chapter), Head Start York County, Corporate Sponsorships, Foundation and Corporate Funding (excellent sourcing via SCDE Grant Listings).

READ

Goal 1: Provide books to all children in York County and create more opportunities to incorporate group readings in non-traditional areas

- **Reach Out and Read (ROR):** provide new, developmentally and age-appropriate books for each child, birth to age five, during each well-child visit, offer anticipatory guidance and tips to parents, and "prescribe" reading on a daily basis.
 - At least biannually, the board will discuss metrics obtained through the ROR program including the practices, medical staff trained, books distributed, etc.

- Necessary Consideration of Local Factors: Changes in independently owned practices lead to a need to proactively nurture relationships with practices and calls for collaboration with ROR regional.
- At least quarterly, contact any pediatric office in York County that is not already a ROR partner.
- Implement pediatric dental practice programing for book distribution purposes.
- Assessment: Books distributed, zip codes of practices, etc.
- **Community Books/Books in Every Home Program:** provide age-appropriate, varied language, and relevant books that reflect all children throughout York County.
 - Support partnerships that restock books in the community (*i.e.* Junior Welfare League effort in laundromats).
 - Support the four York County school districts by supplying book giveaways at least once per year through family literacy programs.
 - Distribute books at York County Library workshops.
 - Participate In community events: various event examples include York Christmas parade, Earth Day events, Community Run, etc.
 - Goal of participating in at least 4 events a year.
- **Programs with Daycares and Headstart:** Continue distribution through these centers and grow these community relationships.
 - Assessment: number of books given out, number of events attended etc.

BOND

Goal 2: Support parental relationships with early literacy efforts

- **Wee Read:** encourage parents with babies in the NICU to talk and read to their child to promote skin-to-skin bonding and provide a blanket and book with reading tips.
 - Continue to support the Wee Read program at Piedmont by providing NICU parents literacy information.
 - Consider collaboration with local mental health programs that address parenting stress: *i.e.* consider partnering with NAMI workshops.
 - At least biannually the board will discuss metrics obtained through the Wee Read program including participation, volunteers, etc.
- **Expectant Parents, Books for Baby Bumps:** continue expansion of early literacy literature/education to expectant parents.
 - Assessment: Numbers of books distributed, participating practices, hospitals participating, partnerships with other organizations that serve pregnant women such as Palmetto Women's, etc.

GROW

Goal 3: Raise the awareness of the importance of early literacy by providing books and sustaining the work of ELP into the future

- **Board Advocacy:** for the board to be aware and advocate for early literacy efforts:
 - At least annually, the board will discuss state reporting for all school districts in York County.
 - At least annually, the board will discuss proposed state legislation that may impact early childhood/education.
 - Annually, all board members will be provided with a packet for advocacy on behalf of the organization (i.e. ELP's elevator pitch, ELP's why, infographic, etc.).
 - Examine whether board outreach to local leaders would be helpful to the organization.
- **Fortify Existing Relationships:** Continue to work with school districts, First Steps, Headstart, Winthrop, and Day Cares that take state vouchers to continue these important relationships.
- **Ensure evidence-based statistics are maintained on programs:** measure and review books provided, studies regarding early literacy importance, zip code statistics regarding local literacy issues, etc.
- **Endowment/Fundraising:** support the future sustainability of the organization by:
 - Grow the endowment principal by at least \$5,000 annually.
 - Continue to explore grant opportunities.
 - Have at least one fundraiser annually for board engagement and community outreach.
 - Assessment: Funds raised.
- **Organizational Needs:** Continue to address the logistical needs, including governing documents, of the organization to continue achieving our goals.
 - Continue to leverage social media through at least 15 posts monthly
 - Focus on donor recognition, best practices, outreach, organization goals, and the love of reading/fun of literacy.
 - At least biannually, the board will receive an update on social media hits, likes, outreach, etc.
 - Ensure organization documents such as job descriptions and duties, meeting minutes, and program statistics are maintained.