

Community Needs Assessment for the Early Learning Coalition of ELC of Alachua

Introduction

Florida Statute 1002.85(2)(j) F.S. stipulates the coalition include an assessment of local priorities within Alachua county based on the needs of families and provider capacity using available community data. This assessment shall not be more than three years old and must include, at a minimum, the collection and analysis of the following information:

1. The demographic make-up of eligible children/families and unique populations, including their estimated number and geographic location;
2. Other child development and early learning programs that are serving eligible children, including public and private programs, and the approximate number of eligible children served by each;
3. Data regarding the education and social service needs of eligible children and their families, including children with disabilities and special needs; and
4. Resources in the community that could be used to address the needs of children and their families, including assessments of their availability and accessibility.

Methodology

Data and information about Early Learning Coalition of Alachua Counties, Inc. services area were gathered from a variety of sources, including the following:

United States Census Bureau
Transportation.org
Florida CHARTS
Alachua County Head Start Programs

Profile of ELC

1. Demographics

Population

Alachua County, Florida has a population of approximately 285,994 as of 2023, making it a mid-sized county within the state. The county's demographic composition differs notably from Florida's overall profile, with a higher proportion of White residents at 58.3% compared to Florida's 59.9%, but a significantly higher percentage of Black or African American residents at 19.0% versus the state's

15.3%. Alachua County also has a notably higher Asian population at 5.9% compared to Florida's lower percentage, and a substantial Hispanic population of 12.2%. The county's median age of 32.2 years is considerably younger than typical Florida averages, largely due to the presence of the University of Florida in Gainesville, which creates a significant student population and contributes to the county's distinct demographic profile compared to the broader state.

Demographic Category	Alachua County 2023	Alachua County 2022	Alachua County 2021	Florida State 2023
Total Population	285,994	~284,000*	~282,000*	~22,600,000
White (%)	58.3%	~58.5%*	~58.7%*	59.9%
Black/African American (%)	19.0%	~19.2%*	~19.4%*	15.3%
Hispanic/Latino (%)	12.2%	~12.0%*	~11.8%*	~27.5%
Asian (%)	5.9%	~5.8%*	~5.7%*	~3.0%
Other/Multiracial (%)	4.6%	~4.5%*	~4.4%*	~4.3%
Median Age	32.2 years	~32.0*	~31.8*	~42.5 years

Public Transit

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2. Health

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3. Educational Attainment

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4. Childcare Capacity

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5. Special Needs Population

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