

Community Literacy Collaborative: Executive Summary

Initiative Overview

The Community Literacy Collaborative represents a comprehensive, evidence-based approach to transforming literacy outcomes across Alachua County through a coordinated community response model. This initiative addresses the critical need for systematic literacy improvement by establishing a sustainable framework that addresses literacy throughout the community as an essential infrastructure that impacts economic development and quality of life across all populations.

Strategic Foundation

Building on findings from the Alachua County Comprehensive Literacy Needs Assessment (ACCLNA), the initiative tackles longstanding challenges of fragmented efforts and underserved populations through three core priority areas:

Enhanced Awareness and Communication - Developing unified messaging strategies that position literacy as fundamental economic infrastructure, emphasizing collective community benefit rather than targeted intervention.

Focused Support - Directing resources toward demonstrably effective programs both in-school and out of-school, with particular attention to populations identified as having the highest need.

Expanded Professional Learning - Building sustainable local capacity through evidence-based training for educators, community organization staff, and volunteers.

Organizational Structure

The initiative employs a four-team collaborative model involving the School Board of Alachua County, Alachua County Public Schools, Board of County Commissioners, and Children's Trust of Alachua County, community-based programs, stakeholders, and allied partners:

- **Team 1: Design, Training, and Evaluation** - Expert-led development of evidence-based programs and rigorous evaluation protocols
- **Team 2: Implementation and Partnership Support** - Direct programming coordination across demographics with community organizations in alignment with the ACPS
- **Team 3: Community Advisory Council** - Strategic guidance and advocacy from target population representatives
- **Team 4: Coordination and Strategic Communication** - External engagement, internal coordination, and accountability management

Key Assets and Approach

The framework leverages Alachua County's exceptional resources including University of Florida expertise in literacy curriculum (for example UFLI, Great Leaps, New Worlds), the Alachua County Library District's established community presence for enrichment and adult literacy, and proven methodologies from high-performing local partners. Professional capacity building through contracted specialists ensures program quality while developing long-term local sustainability and replicability for ongoing success.

Two primary program structures will serve the community in out of school time:

- **Literacy Support Programs** - Resources and support services to increase literacy access and confidence in home settings
- **Literacy Skill-Building Programs** - Direct instruction focused on literacy improvement and grade level reading achievement

Addressing Historical Challenges

The initiative directly confronts coordination deficits, resource misalignment, organizational silos, population access gaps, and effort fragmentation that have limited previous literacy improvement efforts. The structured collaborative approach creates formal coordination mechanisms while respecting organizational autonomy and expertise.

Implementation Timeline

Round One Implementation begins Summer 2025 with creation of the framework draft, followed by the scheduling of community workshops to ratify the framework and recruit partners by the end of the Fall. Beginning Winter 2025 contracted experts will focus on curriculum development and training, with Team 4 developing tools and messaging. Spring 2026 launches training for ACPS and community partners, leading to full implementation in Fall 2026.

Expected Impact

This framework positions Alachua County as a replicable model for community-wide literacy improvement. Success will be measured through individual literacy gains and community-level indicators including economic development, civic engagement, and quality of life improvements. The collaborative structure ensures accountability to participants and funders while building sustainable systems for long term impact. The initiative creates conditions for measurable, sustainable progress across all demographic groups by combining local expertise with proven methodologies and systematic coordination—transforming literacy from a collection of individual programs into comprehensive community infrastructure.

Budget Outline

The initial \$250,000 allocated by BOCC is being outlined for the following activities:

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| Contracted Literacy Experts for curriculum, training, and evaluation development | \$100,000 |
| Development of virtual literacy hub | \$10,000 |
| Development of physical literacy hubs with ACLD | \$40,000 |
| Initial Capacity building contracts with CAPP agencies | \$100,000 |

After the implementation of Round One training and development, additional funding may be requested to augment the investment of the CTAC in order to achieve common identified goals and create impact that can be replicated to a wider community-based program group.