

# Serving Up Five Days of Smiles

In an effort to serve up a much-needed plate of love and gratitude, The Early Learning Coalition of Sarasota County launched a countywide teacher appreciation campaign. In August 2021, we successfully delivered boxed lunches to 765 teachers and fresh fruit, crackers and take-home snacks to 3,600 children.

ELC employees and board members visited 110 childcare sites in 5 days, resulting in a plate full of heartwarming smiles from North Port to Newtown. As part of this large-scale undertaking, each childcare site received a hand-delivered thank you card personally signed by every ELC employee, as well as a copy of either “Because I Had A Teacher,” by Kobi Yamada or “Thank You Teacher,” by Eric Carle.

A big thank you to All Faith’s Food Bank for feeding our children and to Publix Catering for the superb, seamless collaboration. This effort allowed us to send a tangible message of gratitude to our dedicated and devoted preschool teachers who often remain in the shadows, especially when compared to their K-12 counterparts. Regrettably, early educators go unrecognized and overlooked, despite their Herculean efforts to care for our most vulnerable population, whether in the midst of a pandemic or during the best of times.

\*The Early Learning Coalition of Sarasota County prepares local infants, toddlers and preschool children for lifelong success through access to quality early learning programs. Serving more than 4,000 children and 175 childcare providers every year, the Coalition administers and oversees the local integrated system of early care and education across Sarasota County. We strive to give the area’s littlest learners a high-quality, well-rounded, enriching childcare experience, an early leap into literacy and a strong start to Kindergarten.































