

Elizabeth's Early Learning Center

NEWSLETTER

A nurturing community where every child can discover, learn, and shine.

Introducing the EELC Pep Squad

Our PEP (Positively Engaged Parents) Squad has been busy, busy, busy this summer! They've planned activities to show our love for our EELC teachers, and coordinated fun activities for our school, including a Hillcats event, Read-A-Thon, Foam Party (pictured here), Family Movie Night, and much more! If you're interested in learning more about the EELC PEP Squad, please contact Diana Weeks, EELC board member, at dbweeks0602@gmail.com.





Meet Pam Thomas, M.Ed. EELC's New Executive Director

My first month as Executive Director of Elizabeth's Early Learning Center has been such a warm and welcoming experience. From day one, everyone—staff, families, and especially the kids—has made me feel right at home. It's clear that this is a place full of care, dedication, and heart, and I'm so grateful to be part of it.

One of the best parts so far has been getting to meet all the wonderful children and their families. The kids have already brought so many smiles and sweet moments to my days, and it's been such a joy getting to know the people who love and support them. I'm really looking forward to the year ahead and all the fun, learning, and growth we'll share together!

Founded in 1997, Elizabeth's Early Learning Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. To learn more, please visit our website at eelc.org.



Roard of Directors

In Memoriam

Elizabeth Morton Forsyth

Stella Tanner

President Catherine Tanner Brown

> Vice President Jan Walker, MS

> > <u>Treasurer</u> H.B. Hunter

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Stefanie B. Copp, Ed.D.

Gary E. Harvey, R.A.

Joanne Hosni, MD

Ben Larkins

Zachary Phillips, MBA

Jessica Tennant

W. Eric Thomas

Diana Weeks

Jessica Welsh, MD

Executive Director, Ex-Officio Pam Thomas, M.Ed.

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Angie McFadden is EELC's New **Operations Coordinator**

McFadden has accepted a new position at EELC - Operations Coordinator! Angie capably stepped into the Interim Director role for several months and will now continue her leadership journey at EELC in this new role. Congratulations Angie!



Introducing The Quiet Corner

Pam Thomas, EELC Executive Director, has introduced an open-door policy for teachers to visit her office and enjoy the Quiet Corner. Pam witnessed the success of Quiet Corner while utilizing this technique in her previous positions with Lynchburg City and Danville Public Schools. Teachers and staff are welcome to visit, chat, eat some chocolate, or take a quiet break.







Save the Date for EELC's 4th Annual Kentuck Derby Gala - May 2, 2026

EELC's popular annual special event - the EELC Kentucky Derby Gala - will return on Saturday, May 2, 2026! This year, we will be celebrating the Run for the Roses at a new venue - Tresca! Sponsorship opportunities are now available, and tickets will go on sale in March 2026. All proceeds will benefit the EELC Scholarship Fund. We hope to see you there!

EELC HERO Nikki Elswick



There are HEROES among us at EELC! One of our children suffered a medical emergency that was life threatening. Thanks to the quick actions of his teacher, Nikki Elswick, he received CPR and emergency care that saved his life! A HUGE thank you to Nikki and all those supporting HEROES that day.



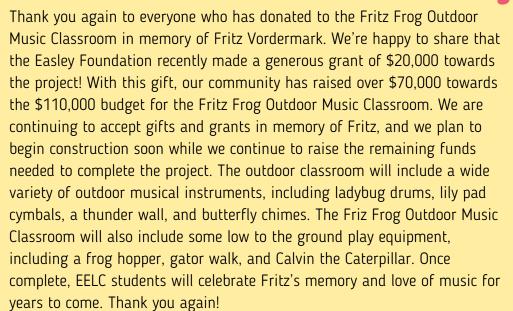
EELC Updates as We Grow Forward

- Surveillance cameras with both audio and video capabilities have been installed in all classrooms, as well as common areas throughout the school. These are in addition to the external cameras that cover the parking lot and playground areas.
- What's that BUZZ? A new classroom is opening for our toddlers, and it's called the Honey Bees! This classroom is located where the Rainforest classroom used to be. Stop by to check out the fresh look and new décor of honeybees!





Fritz Frog Outdoor Music Classroom Update





Anonymous (3)

Mr. & Mrs. Rick Anderson

Ms. Julie Bost

Jed & Cathie Brown

Barbara Campanella

Mr. Samuel P. Cardwell

Dr. & Mrs. R. Drake Covey

Mrs. Arlene Domaleski

Dr. & Mrs. Paul Fitzgerald

Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Frantz

Ms. Elizabeth Harris & Mr.

Mark Fox

Mr. & Mrs. Gary E Harvey

Ms. Tifanie Hoffman

Mr. & Mrs. H.B. Hunter

Mr. & Mrs. Jamil A. Khan

Mr. Gene Koster & Ms. Gabbie Nosari

Liz & Chip Lamb

Mr. Benjamin Larkins

Mrs. Elizabeth B. Laundon

Todd Leap & Mark Little

Mr. Charles Lee

Stephan Lenik & Liza Gijanto

Mrs. Anne McKenna

Mr. & Mrs. Pat McNamara

Mrs. Shirley R. Moring

Mr. & Mrs. Alex Newmark

Dr. & Mrs. Richard Niles

Mr. & Mrs. William Nolley

Dr. & Mrs. Thomas W. Nygaard

You Are Our Sunshine! Thank You to Our Donors! November 1, 2024 - August 7, 2025

Ms. Debra Payne

Mr. & Mrs. Zachary Phillips

Dr. & Mrs. Ed Polloway

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Mrs. Nancy Sykes

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In Honor

Mr. & Mrs. Steve Crank in honor of Jane Gerdy

Mr. & Mrs. Charles Doremus in honor of Jane & Tom Gerdy

Mr. & Mrs. Donald M. Giles in honor of Mr. & Mrs. William Harris

Mrs. Elizabeth T. Johnston in honor of Matt & Gordon Vordermark

Mr. Gage McAngus in honor of Kum-Ba-Yah Nature Center

Mr. & Mrs. Dennis F. McMurran in honor of Annie Gordon Vordermark

Mr. & Mrs. John Morgan in honor of Holland Coleman

Mr. & Mrs. Randy Nelson in honor of Jane Gerdy

Mr. & Mrs. Zachary Phillips in honor of Chloe & Blair Phillips

Dr. & Mrs. Ed Polloway in honor of Jane Gerdy

Ms. Kim Price in honor of Cathie

Dr. Geeta Rakeram & Mr. Godfrey Myaing in honor of Elsie Chambers

Dr. & Mrs. Michael Valentine in honor of Jane Gerdy

Mr. George D. Vermilya, Jr. in honor of Chloe & Blair Phillips

Mrs. Joy G. Zogby in honor of Jane Gerdy









Thank You to Our Donors! November 1, 2024 - August 7, 2025

In Memory

Mr. and Mrs. Frank H. Adams in memory of Stella Tanner

Anonymous in memory of Elizabeth M. Forsyth

Cathie & Jed Brown in memory of Stella Tanner

Karen & Jeff Brown in memory of Stella Tanner

David & Ashley Brown in memory of Stella Tanner

Mr. & Mrs. Hunsdon Cary in memory of Fritz Vordermark

Mr. & Mrs. Todd Elder in memory of Stella Tanner

Mr. Christopher Haddock in memory of Fritz Vordermark

Mr. & Mrs. Gary E. Harvey in memory of Tyler Kelty-Lee Harvey

Mrs. Elizabeth T. Johnston in memory of Fritz Vordermark

Mr. & Mrs. Geoffrey Kershner in memory of Fritz Vordermark and in tribute to his family

L. G. Flint in memory of Fritz Vordermark

Beatriz C. Lecusay-Diaz & Jose Diaz in memory of Fritz Vordermark

Mr. & Mrs. Dennis F. McMurran in memory of Fritz Vordermark

Dr. & Mrs. Ed Polloway in memory of Fritz Vordermark

Ms. Jennifer Sittason in memory of Fritz Vordermark

Mr. Richard L. Stallings in memory of Fritz Vordermark

Frank & Beth Tanner in memory of Stella Tanner

Diana & Rodney Weeks in memory of Gigi Stella Tanner

Corporations and Foundations

The Easley Foundation

















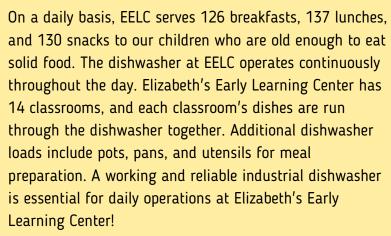


Meet Maria Kraje, EELC's New Curriculum Coordinator

Maria Kraje is excited to join Elizabeth's Early Learning Center as the Curriculum Coordinator. She has over 10 years of experience working in early childhood education. Most recently, Maria has served our region as an Infant and Toddler Specialist with the Virginia Infant and Toddler Specialist Network, where she provided CLASS support and coaching to many different childcare centers. She is passionate about providing quality care that fosters individualized growth through strong relationships and positive interactions. Welcome to EELC, Maria!

Behind the Scenes - EELC Food Service

EELC recently replaced our commercial-grade dishwasher, which stopped working completely after 20+ years of loyal service and many repairs. Thank you to Foster Fuels for supporting EELC with a \$1,500 gift towards the \$6,888 cost of purchasing a new dishwasher!













Continuing Education & Training for EELC Teachers

As part of the EELC Grow Forward Plan, we are providing our teachers and staff with ongoing professional development opportunities, including Child Protective Services (CPS) Mandated Reporter Training and Q&A, and MANDT training, consisting of prevention, de-escalating, and intervening in potentially aggressive behaviors. EELC continues to develop our comprehensive training plan for teachers. Pictured here are teachers in "What is ABA and How Does it Help with Challenging Behaviors" and "Learning Through Play" trainings held on August 11, 2025, before the new 2025-2026 school year starts.



Scholarship Fund Update for the New School Year

In keeping with the vision and mission of EELC and our founder Elizabeth Forsyth, EELC has awarded over \$225,000 in scholarship dollars for the 2025-2026 school year!

Thank you for supporting the EELC Scholarship Fund. Your gifts make a difference in the lives and education of children in our community!

Last Day of School Pictures!







Give Now to Support the EELC Scholarship Fund

Did you know that many of EELC's children are on need-based scholarships? EELC's Scholarship Fund provides partial to full tuition assistance to families that qualify so that all children may have access to quality early education, regardless of their ability to pay. When you become a monthly donor by making your gift recurring, you'll automatically join EELC's Sunshine Club! The Sunshine Club is dedicated to making quality early childhood development more affordable for our community. Your monthly gift will help sustain EELC's Scholarship Fund. Your generosity enables all children to enjoy age-appropriate instruction in a warm, safe, and caring environment full of sunshine!

A Letter of Appreciation from an EELC Family

It's always a good day when we receive a thank you note or praise from an EELC family. Below is an email we recently received from a family who has had three children at EELC over the years, and is now moving out of the preschool stage of life. We hope you enjoy this message as much as we did!

I can't believe this is our last day with our EELC family! You, and so many there, have been a part of our lives for a whole decade! Your patience and kindness with my children, and us as parents, is endless and genuine. From warm greetings and caring conversations to quality educational curriculum, structure, experiences, and learning through play opportunities, we have experienced everything you could hope for in early childhood education through Elizabeth's.

To all the teachers and staff who have cared for our Hunter, Reese, and Kylie over the last ten years, thank you so much for what you do and the impact you had on our littles' lives. I wish I could thank each and every one of you in the way you deserve. We love you and appreciate you more than we can express!

It's been a tough year - but **what a testament** to the amazing people and organization that you have there that so many EELC families understand, love, and trust you all to continue to provide excellent care for the loves of our lives. We are a forever devoted and proud EELC family!

Thank you again for being a wonderful part of our lives and we look forward to crossing paths again.

With love and gratitude,
The Read family
- Ricky, Laura, Hunter, Reese, and Kylie

www.eelc.org

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Elizabeth's

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developmental needs of children social, emotional, and cognitive on providing for the physical, in a safe environment. We focus affectionate and personalized care provides every child the Elizabeth's Early Learning Center,

in an age-appropriate manner.



halp Needed to Spruce up Playground

Thank you! Diana Weeks, EELC board member, at dbweeks0602@gmail.com. special outdoor paint needed for this project, please contact you would like to volunteer or donate funds to purchase the are several examples of what we would like to accomplish. If painting a Twister gameboard on the concrete. Pictured here playground! Our next big project is retracing the bike paths and The EELC PEP Squad is working on sprucing up the EELC



