

# Triad Early Childhood PTA

Clear Creek, Gilpin, and Jefferson Counties  
CO



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

One way of increasing family engagement and leadership is to start early. The Triad Early Childhood Council, the Early Childhood Council for the counties of Clear Creek, Gilpin, and Jefferson, did just that, and implemented the Triad Early Childhood PTA. The goal of the PTA is to helping parents and families of children aged 0-5 who are cared for at licensed child care and preschool sites get an early experience with family engagement and leadership.

Members of the Triad Early Childhood Council and its key staff, including the Executive Director and the School Readiness and Transition Specialist, began the planning and implementation of the Triad Early Childhood PTA by first contacting the childcare and preschool sites participating in the School Readiness Quality Improvement Program. These sites were asked to recommend parents, who would then attend an organizational meeting. The Jefferson County Council PTA facilitated the organizational meeting, and assigned two of its board members to provide assistance.

Membership in the Triad Early Childhood PTA is open to anyone in the Triad area (Clear Creek, Gilpin, and Jefferson counties) who supports the mission and purposes of PTA and who is interested in increasing engagement for families of young children. The Triad Early Childhood Council sponsors PTA memberships for any families who are not able to afford the cost of dues. Because the Triad Early Childhood PTA unit is not based in school like most PTAs, connecting with targeted parents must be done by reaching out to the child care and preschool providers. A major incentive for providers to encourage families to join is that part of the licensing requirements for all licensed early childhood sites is to promote family engagement.

While the Triad Early Childhood PTA has only been in existence for a few months, the Triad Early Childhood Council and the Jefferson County Council PTA will do an ongoing evaluation. To some extent, the child care providers' evaluations will show in their rating in the Colorado Shines Quality Rating and Improvement System. Additionally, the growth of membership in the Triad Early Childhood PTA and the future involvement of its members in PTA and in the K-12 system will be evaluated.

One direct outcome of the Triad Early Childhood PTA will likely be evidenced by the licensed childcare and preschool sites receiving higher ratings in the Colorado Shines Quality Rating and Improvement System. Additionally, the Triad Early Childhood Council knows that engaged parents and families are critical to student success, and that early participation in PTA will lead to increased involvement in the K-12 system, and lead to better student achievement.