The Early Learning Community (ELC) used an Action Research model, that assists educators in using a wide variety of investigative, analytical and evaluative, research methods designed to diagnose problems or weaknesses in their classrooms — whether organizational, academic, or instructional—and help educators develop practical solutions to address them quickly and efficiently. Further, we incorporated into Action Research, collaboration between early childhood agencies, technology, literature, and conference presentations to bring about professional growth in teacher candidates in college, educators in practicum field placements, administrators in preschools and in ourselves, as college faculty members and community experts. The structure of this book is organized into three parts. In Part I, the initial challenges that stimulated the idea of the ELC are described. An explanation of the stages in setting up the ELC is provided to guide our audience, should they choose to replicate this model. In Part II, six case studies that represent common teaching challenges experienced by teacher candidates during Practicum illustrate the ELC in action. In Part III, participants' findings about the ELC, along with conclusions and recommendations for future early childhood professional development programs are made.
1: Setting up the Early Learning Community (ELC)

2: Case Studies

3: Reflections

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