

Minutes

Early Learning Coalition of Broward County, Inc.

Community Partners System Gathering

3/25/08

10:00 a.m.

6301 NW 5th Way, Suite 3400
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309

Attendees:

Kerry Allen, Julie Bergstrom, Willie Cameron, Gayle Cline; Brittney Cox, Claudia Dean, Ana Maria Garcia, Glisell Garcia, Jill Gelman, Ilene Gevirtz, Yanick Goutier, Jayne Hafer, Maria Hernandez, Teresa Kelly, Monica King, Shawn Lamarche, Gloria Leonard, Nicole Mancini, Louise Marine, Dee Navares, Doreen Moskowitz, Jill Mosovich, Julia Musella, Anita Platt, Gilbert Rincon, Chris Sieber, Janet Thomas, Melissa Trentham, Wendi Siegel, Charlene Swanson, Carol Wasserman, Mary Jean Woika

Staff in Attendance:

Lisa Feeney, Sr. ECE Program Specialist, Janice Carter, ECE Program Specialist, Leticia Boswell, ECE Program Specialist, Inez Webb, Administrative Assistant

I. Welcome and Call to Order

K. Lee Tirpak

The meeting was called to order at 10:08 a.m.

II. Introductions

Self-introductions were made. Kerry Allen, Facilitator was introduced to the group.

III. Review and Approve Agenda

The agenda was approved by consensus.

IV. Review and Approve Minutes – 2/20/08

The minutes were approved by consensus.

ECHOES and DIBELS Assessments & the Relationship to Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS)

Florida Legislated for VPK a 540 hour program during the school year and 300 hours during the summer, with accountability for the dollars being spent. The Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) became the policy maker to identify tools to evaluate all children coming to the Kindergarten program in Florida. A new screening tool was identified, which is the Early Childhood Observational System (ECHOS). Every school district is responsible for the implementation of the FLKRS.

A PowerPoint handout was provided highlighting the ECHOS/DIBELS and their relationship to the FLKRS rate.

- **Readiness Rate**

- Accountability of dollars as a result of the FLKRS.
- Identify tools to evaluate all children entering kindergarten.
- The School District is responsible for providing child assessments in kindergarten.

- **FLKRS Kindergarten Screening**

- Uses the subsets of the ECHOES and DIBELS which reflects the VPK standards.
- Private providers must go to the School District to complete the DIBELS assessment.

- **Alignment with VPK Standards**

- Screening contains a subset of 19 ECHOES items aligned with the VPK standards which looks at how children get along with their peers and adults; curiosity and vocabulary development.
- Emergent Literacy is a new domain which supports children along the developmental continuum; learning to read and write in the primary grades.
- VPK standards were published in 2005, as mandated by the Florida Legislature. The Department of Education (DOE) must review the standards and make appropriate updates.
- Kindergarten teachers receive ECHOS training which includes scenarios and examples to be implemented in their classrooms during the administration of the tool.
- Kindergarten teachers spend the first 30 days of Kindergarten observing children to complete ECHOS. At the end of the 3rd week Kindergarten children in public schools are tested on the DIBELS in their schools, if a child attends private school, the child is brought to a testing site to complete the DIBELS. The administration of the FLKRS and how to serve all children is the responsibility of each local school district. The score for a child who has been in VPK is tied back to the child care provider from which they came.

- **Low Performing Providers (LPP)**

- The highest FLKRS score is 300. The State Board of Education sets the minimum rate each year as follows: “The minimum rate must not exceed the rate at which more than 15 percent of the kindergarten readiness rates of all private pre-kindergarten providers and public schools delivering the Voluntary Pre-kindergarten Education Program in the state would fall below the minimum rate.” Section 1002.69 (6)(b) Florida Statutes.
- Providers who score below the target are rated as Low Performing Providers (LPP). Only 15% of providers state-wide can be in a low performing status.
- Second year LPP’s are required to follow a state-mandated curriculum.

- **Discussion**
 - Alternative to removing children from their classroom to be tested for DIBELS.
 - Accounting for the absent child when Assessments are administered; for further information contact Dr. Ellen Breslow (754) 321-2204 at Broward County Public Schools (BCPS).
 - Creating an awareness of testing, and consistency of testing.
 - Centers that accept children with disabilities.
 - Migrant population with children.

- **Updating Providers**
 - A new language assessment is being developed for Florida only and will eventually replace DIBELS.

- **Areas of Concern**
 - Some centers offer VPK but do not have enough children to receive Readiness rates.
 - What happens to centers that have a low rate for the second year?
 - Some providers may be pre-screening children and rejecting those unlikely to pass the FLKRS. It was noted that providers cannot dismiss children who have been enrolled in the VPK program without going through Family Central, Inc.
 - VPK Teachers are in need of more training.
 - Why are so many children not being counted or tested?

- **Providers Participation**
 - Providers were invited to attend a meeting on Friday, April 25, 2008, focusing on School Readiness Early Learning (SREL).
 - Providers should examine their attendance data, which may be disputed with the Department of Education.
 - Providers may refer assessors to where the child is located.
 - Contact legislature.
 - Sign up for the Florida Children, Inc.
 - Invite Senator, school board members and county commissioners to visit centers.

Action Items:	Person Responsible	Deadline
1. Getting FLKRS assessors into the private schools	ELC – Lisa Feeny	
2. Train-the-trainer Course offered to eligible providers to teach VPK Standards to staff	DOE -Kerry Allen	

VI. System Celebrations and Updates

Children's Council Service

- Budget Cuts and Children's Services meeting - Saturday, April 5, 2008, from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Sheridan Vocational School, 5400 Sheridan Street, Hollywood, FL 33021. For more information, please call 954-377-1000. To RSVP your participation, please register on the Broward Training Collaborative site: training.cscbroward.org no later than April 2, 2008.

Family Central, Inc.

- VPK enrollment: 119 Summer and 366 Fall; 310 certificates issued for summer and 4,475 for Fall.
- Trash to Treasure /Creative Re-use Center (hand-out provided): Recycling center has opened in Broward County with materials that can be used in the classroom; membership is \$60 per year for 12 visits; open to the child care centers in the community.

Broward County Child Care Licensing & Enforcement (BCCCL&E)

- Early Childhood Association (ECA) flyer handed out to gain support to pass Bill for continuation of funding to ensure that VPK programs meet the legislative mandate approved by the taxpayers in Florida. Names were collected, and will be passed on to ECA who is working on a campaign to support the Bill.
- The Transition to Kindergarten subcommittee of the SREL Committee, which is part of the Children's Strategic Plan will hold its first meeting on March 28, 2008 at 9 a.m., at the Community Foundation of Broward located at 1401 East Broward Boulevard.
- BCCCL&E and Broward Association for the Education of Young Children will present a proclamation on April 8, 2008, at the County Commissioner meeting acknowledging the "Week of the Young Child". Displays will be in the lobby of the Governmental Center from April 11-18, 2008, and several other activities will take place.

Child Care Provider News

NE Focal Point Inter-Generational Child Care Center:

- Held a successful Egg Hunt on Thursday, March 20, with the help of Nicole Mancini from the School Board.
- Started their Teaching Problem Solving (TOPS) program, 15 parents attended the parent group.
- A grant in the amount of \$25,000 was awarded to the school from Sun Sentinel for the center's music program.
- \$10,000 grant was received from the Community Development Foundation for the center's computer program.
- Thanked Nova South-Eastern, FCI and SBBC for their support.

Nova South-Eastern University

The Association for Rehabilitation Centers (ARC) recycling program for computers is open to the public; Pentium 3 and above are accepted; visit their website: www.arc.org

Early Learning Coalition of Broward, Inc.

- VPK Low performing providers for FY 2006/2007, Broward has 34 providers; six (6) are in their 2nd year and will be required to use state-mandated curriculum.
- 14 VPK providers scored 300; partners suggested that providers who achieve the score of 300 should be given some recognition.

Action Items:	Person Responsible	Deadline

VII. Old Business

None

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline

VIII. New Business

Partners

Kerry Allen, Facilitator, Department of Education is interested in training providers to teach VPK Standards to their teachers – Possible date of training will be in June 2008.

Ms. Allen is also interested in having Mary Jean Woika – NSU attend training in Orlando.

Contact information: Telephone # (305) 646 7466 or email kallen@elcmdm.org

VPK on-line Emergent Literacy is on the DCF web-site cost is \$10.00, Kerry has the course in hard cover book with the DVD, also in Spanish.

IX. Public Comments

Partners

None.

Action items:	Person responsible:	Deadline:

X. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40am

Next Meeting: April 16, 2008

These minutes contain the action items of the Community Partner Systems Gathering. They do not contain all items discussed. A tape recording of the meeting is held in the Coalition office. Submitted by: Inez Webb