

Minutes

Early Learning Coalition of Broward County, Inc.

ECE Community Partners System Gathering

2/11/09

10:00 a.m.

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

Attendees:

Penny Bernath, Willie Cameron, Nicole Carter, Sharon Cohen, Claudia Dean, Ana Maria Garcia, Joe Gervase, Ilene Gevirtz, Elizabeth Gonzalez, Yanick Goutier, Maria Hernandez, Debbie Kay, Monica King, Angelina Michel, Ilene Miller, Julia Musella, Anita Platt, Gilbert Rincon, Terri Shermett, Chris Sieber, Michelle Sponder, Charlene Swanson, Carol Wasserman, Mary Jean Woika, Khalil Zeinieh

Staff in Attendance:

K. Lee Tirpak, Chief Program Officer, Lisa Feeney, Sr. ECE Program Specialist, Janice Carter, Leticia Strasser, ECE Program Specialist, ECE Program Specialist, Marcie Westover, CRRD Assistant, Inez Webb, Administrative Assistant

I. Welcome and Call to Order

K. Lee Tirpak

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 a.m.

II. Introductions

Self-introductions were made: Attendees announced their name, agency or organization, position held and gave a brief description of their job functions.

III. Review and Approve Agenda

The agenda was approved by consensus.

IV. Review and Approve Minutes –1/14/09

The minutes were approved by consensus, after corrections were made on Page 2 and Page 4:

1. All instances of VPK Conference & Celebration changed to VPK/Pre-school Conference

V. Old Business		Partners
None.		
Action Items:	Person Responsible	Deadline
VI. System Celebrations and Updates		Partners
<p><u>The Early Learning Coalition of Broward County, Inc.</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. Peggy Goldstein presented the Program Evaluation Research project proposed by Florida Atlantic University, at the monthly Coalition Board meeting on Monday, February 9, 2009. The Coalition Board passed the proposal which will allow research on Broward children to evaluate the effectiveness of its early childhood programs; Voluntary Pre-kindergarten and School Readiness. 2. The Children Forum identified part of the package (\$105 million Child Care and Development Block Grant) that must be included in the Economic Stimulus Bill to help working families with child care expenses. This information is being distributed to partners via email. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Director of One Step at a Time Learning Academy shared the response to a letter that she wrote to South Florida Representative in Congress, Alcee Hastings. 3. The Coalition Board voted to waive the matching requirement for ELC 3 Quality Improvement Supports contracts with Family Central, Inc. and School Board of Broward County (SBBC), for the matching Mini-Grants distributed to participating providers, to help centers and homes attain quality improvement plan goals and benchmarks during the remainder of the 2008-2009 contract year. Approval is effective as of February 10, 2009. 4. Additional Funds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Care Executive Partnership application funding totaling \$423,234 for use in slots and related costs. 5. 2006-2008 Termination Data: a handout responding to the discussion from previous meeting that many centers were closing because of hardship. Monthly, six months and annual comparisons were made indicating reasons which may have resulted in centers closing, and also showed the total amount of children affected. The data further indicated that the highest number of children were terminated because of Non-Compliance with Policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non Compliance with Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ FCI explained that this category includes applicants who do not comply with Work Force One requirements and/or submit incomplete applications: 60% unreturned packets; 20% non-compliant with Work Force One; 10-15% incomplete information and does not respond to follow up efforts. <p><u>Community Relations & Resource Development:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children’s Week exhibiting Hand Art-work will be displayed in Broward, March 9-13, 2009, and in Tallahassee March 30 through April, 6, 2009. This year the exhibits will be given to our local legislatures. • FCI will encourage providers’ participation by emailing the information to them. 		

Professional Development

February 1, 2009, Mailman Segal Institute for Early Childhood Studies conducted building Literacy Tool Kit training at Nova Southeastern University for Early Childhood directors. Topics covered directors mentoring and implementing Early Childhood literacy in their center. Eighteen directors attended, thirty-five were placed on the waiting list. Penny Bernath will continue to follow up and give mentorship support to directors who participated, and need further assistance.

School Readiness Early Learning Committee (S.R.E.L) Workforce Sub-Committee

1. On January 8th, 2009, members of the S.R.E.L. Transition Sub-committee met with the Executive Committee of School Board of Broward County (SBBC) Elementary School Principals. A presentation was made to them outlining the benefits of coordinating kindergarten transition efforts between the elementary schools and the pre-schools in their community. The principals were very receptive to this, and will recommend that the Transition Sub-committee be approved to present before the full group of principals; this presentation will take place in February or March 2009.
2. S.R.E.L Book drive with Borders brought in over 1,000 participants; the staff has been wonderful trying to solicit the donations from their customers.

Comments:

The Director of One Step at a Time Learning Academy stated that she tried to help children transition to kindergarten by contacting the Principal's office at the North Lauderdale Elementary school, however she did not get a response. The S.R.E.L committee is addressing this issue collectively.

Family Central, Inc.

VPK/Pre-School Conference

1. The VPK/Pre-school Conference will be held September 12, 2009. The target is 700 attendees. The committee is seeking volunteers to make presentations, supply resource materials and offer scholarships for CEU; community partners are asked to get involved. The new location will be announced at a later date.
2. A new Pre-conference director tract will be added to the agenda for Friday, September 11:
 - Joe Gervase, Lakeshore Learning will be sponsoring the pre-conference.
 - Penny Bernath will be presenting KidVision VPK for teachers and directors.

VPK Outreach

- VPK outreach registration begins March 2, 2009, for the 2009/2010 school year and March 16, 2009, for summer 2009. The first list of providers will be posted by the end of February 2009.

Provider Forum

- The Provider Forum held on January 29, 2009, at Family Central, Inc., was attended by 150 providers. The discussion on "providers surviving in the present economic crisis" evolved into brainstorming sessions; ideas were shared on how to look at VPK and budgets. Providers welcomed the opportunity to speak, and anticipate attending similar sessions in the near future.
- Providers were very enthusiastic about the show of support by the Coalition, FCI and other agency representatives.
- FCI reported the best attended providers meeting in 4 years.

Follow-up to FCI-WorkForce One Presentation at previous Partners System Gathering:

- In February 2008, FCI and Work Force One gave a presentation at the System Gathering regarding the Eligibility Requirements for School Readiness, Work Force One and TANF. The necessity for accurate completion of paperwork was explained. Consequently, the Eligibility Department has seen a decline in work previously created by providers who had no knowledge where to refer parents with certain issues. FCI managers further helped providers to track and complete attendance so that adjustments can be made prior to submission.
- Positive feedback from providers who attend Board meetings, Systems and sub-committee meetings.

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

- Faith-Based child care organization and accrediting agencies questioning the county's ability to register their organizations as a local licensing agency versus registration by state, according to Section 402, Florida Statutes.
- Licensing is responding to a number of Public Record requests, Channel 10 inquiry by a provider, and CBS news asking for updated child care facility inspection reports from September to present; categorizing on-going inspections reports and getting the information out to Broward county citizens.
- Senate Bill 1510–Progressive Discipline: Consistent enforcement of non-compliance throughout the State. Progressive Discipline is being tied to the State Gold Seal Accreditation (Gold Seal Quality Care), based on the statutes for violations of child care standards within a two year time frame. With the passage of chapter 2006-91, Laws of Florida, the legislature required the Department of Children and Families to link the occurrence of licensing violations to a child care provider's Gold Seal Quality care designation. (The Goal Seal Quality Care program is administered statewide by DCF pursuant to section 402.281, F.S., and the Florida Administrative Codes.) Under the law, providers that are designated as a Goal Seal Quality Care provider, child care facility, large family child care home , or family child care home must meet additional criteria:
 - Class 1 violations within the 2 years preceding its application for designation as a Goal Seal Care provider states that Commission of a class I violation shall be grounds for termination of the designation as a Gold Seal Quality Provider.
 - Provider must not have had three or more Class II violations within the 2 years preceding its application for designation as Gold Seal Quality Care provider
 - The provider must not have been cited for the same class III violation three or more times within the 2 years preceding its application for designation as a Gold Seal Quality Care provider.

Mr. Willie Cameron will be meeting with Legal Counsel and the Department's managers to look at the statutes and a proposed Agreement procedure between local licensing agencies and the State. Providers will be informed of the agreement, when receiving one of the mentioned categories of violations and, providing the State documentation of the violation(s) after all appeal processes have been concluded. The State will then notify the provider of their intent to terminate the provider designation as a Gold Seal Quality Care program and the appeal procedures to the Department. The County will be reviewing the State's proposed Agreement for local licensing agencies, the County Ordinance, categories of violations and its policies and procedures for the issuance of class I violations based on the standards.

Nova Southeastern University (NSU)

- Dr. Charlene Swanson stated that the information on Progressive Discipline can be found on the www.myfl.com/childcare “What’s New”.
- Special Needs - 10 hour Training is offered on-line, CEU’s are available.

Action Items:	Person Responsible	Deadline
Email provider letter regarding collection of Children’s Hands for Children’s Day to FCI and participants	Marcie Westover/ELC	Week of February 11, 2009

VII. Workshop: QRIS Quality Counts – Branding in Broward County
 Lisa Feeney/ELC
 Anita Platt/BCCCL&E

QRIS Quality Counts – Branding in Broward

Children’s Service Council and ELC staff attended meeting at Children’s Trust in Palm Beach County to examine marketing strategies to use identical QRIS branding across the Miami, Broward and Palm Beach counties, and eventually across 7 counties.

- Miami gave permission for Broward to use “Quality Count Ribbon” logo.
- Technical Assistants will help centers to improve quality
- A list of potential marketing materials have been generated, Ms. Anita Platt will be meeting with the Graphics Department, in Broward County to create a design.

Comments & Discussion

- Quality Improvement is a great idea; lots of advertising for Miami, but Broward lack sufficient funds.
- C-QuELL providers are not trained on the tool, therefore not prepared for the rating based on the quality improvement.
- Providers thrive on improving quality because education could always be better. This free program is great, allowing centers to always improve.
- Funds for Broward is limited, however, Technical Assistants will help centers to improve. One of the two centers rated, scored at a 3-star on the second assessment, which was given at the end of an 18 months period.
- Quality is the objective of the assessment; “star rating” appears as if centers are competing against each other.
- Why is it necessary to obtain quality improvement and achieve another accreditation when centers already have accreditation such as Apple?

Suggestions

- Quality improvement gives support to teachers and offer incentive in mini-grant, \$750.00 (SBBC), curriculum materials and PERKS.
- QRIS can be marketed as continuous quality; introducing providers as a “Participating Quality Star Center”, omitting the use of the “star symbol”.
- Engage provider in the developmental stage by creating a consistent system across counties. The

funding community is ready to participate once the program is initiated and introduced as quality improvement.

- Working with the providers in stages will shift the culture gradually: Shifting the culture can begin at the Resource and Referral level, beginning the new contract year, incorporating the message in every part of the system
- Incentive packages can be added to the process
- Some providers may require Portfolio training to help them understand the process, and making it more user-friendly.

Presentation for Next Meeting

1. Mary Jean Woika has agreed to present the “ECE Internet Connections” at the March meeting
2. *Navigating Budget Cuts To Best Serve Broward’s Children & Families*; developed by CSC & Broward County staff to inform leaders of population indicators

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Use “Quality Counts”: Omit “Stars” symbol	ELC staff	

VIII. New Business

A survey to evaluate outcome of the meeting was handed out to attendees.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
ELC staff will send via email for online survey	ELC staff	February 28, 2009

IX. Public Comments

None

Action items:	Person responsible:	Deadline:

X. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12.30 p.m.

Next Meeting: March 18, 2009

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