

# Minutes

## Early Learning Coalition of Broward County, Inc.

### ECE System Community Partners Gathering Provider Forum

#### QUALITY COUNTS

Early Care and Education Continuous Quality Improvement

2/17/2010  
10:00 a.m.

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

**Attendees:**

Ellen Breslow, Willie Cameron, Eleanor Fuhr, Ilene Gevirtz, Jill Gelman, Yanick Goutier, Maria Hernandez, Pamela James, Angelina Michel, Ilene Miller, Anita Platt, Monica Pujol, Chris Sieber, Michele Sponder, Melissa Trentham, Carol Wasserman, Khalil Zeinieh

**Staff in Attendance:**

K. Lee Tirpak, Chief Program Officer; Lisa Feeney, Sr. ECE Program Specialist; Inez Webb, Administrative Assistant

**Child Care Providers:**

Stacy Angier, Audrey Gajus, Ana Maria Garcia, Elizabeth Gonzalez, Jayne Hafer, Danielle Liebman, Helen Magnuson, Layne Polakoff, Wendi Siegel, Althea Spence, John Spence, Tracey Spence

I. Welcome and Call to Order

K. Lee Tirpak

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m.

II. Introductions

Self-introductions were made: Attendees announced their name and agency or organization.

Ms. Tirpak briefly stated that the Coalition continues to seek ways for the providers to express their concerns; thus, three forums will be held for providers this year.

III. Review and Approve Agenda

The agenda was approved by consensus.

IV. Review and Approve Minutes – 1/20/2010

The minutes were approved by consensus, with no corrections.

<p>V. Topics:</p> <p>(1) What Support do Providers need to Build/Improve the Quality of care they provide?</p> <p>(2) What Support do Providers need to Implement the Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum (DAC) their Facility uses?</p> <p>(3) Update on Effect of the Economy on Families &amp; Children served; resources needed; new programs offered; impact of families from Haiti</p>	<p>Facilitator: Stacy Angier</p>
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- (1) What Support do Providers need to Build/Improve the Quality of care they provide?**
- Directors need assistance from Broward County Child Care Enforcement and (BCCLE) Licensing staff to reinforce regulations by using situations from other centers so that teachers will understand the implications.
  - Conduct workshops to demonstrate findings and the benefits of following licensing procedures.  
**Response:** BCCLE conducts such reviews whenever the situation warrants a follow-up; presently Licensing personnel are unavailable for additional hours.
  - Centers request that Procedural and/or Policy changes to Ordinance be sent in writing or other reliable form of documentation.
  - How can centers take advantage of training funded by the Coalition, regardless of Quality Rating System (QRS) participation or being a Low Performing Provider (LPP)?  
**Response:** In the past, assistance to Low Performing Providers was based on the VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate set by the State Board of Education, and required the completion of an improvement plan funded by the state. Currently no funds are available.  
**Response:** In February, the Coalition Board approved funding for assistance with Creative Curriculum training; registration will be on a first come, first serve basis, and open to all Providers serving children receiving financial assistance from school readiness fund. The coalition has determined that Quality Rating is the baseline for services based on a nationally proven model to qualify providers for technical assistance and supports. Centers benefit from QRS because of the additional support given to fit each center's needs.
  - The Coalition Board will be advised of the desire for more community based workshops.
  - How is the funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Stimulus Funds) being spent as part of the Child Care and Development Fund?  
**Response:** American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds are designed to prevent further dis-enrollment and help retention. As of July 2009, 1,487 children were served from the waiting list through these funds. Additionally, Quality dollars are being used to ensure that all providers desiring to participate in Quality Counts are able to receive a pre-assessment or rating.
- (2) What Support do Providers need to implement the Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum (DAC) their Facility uses?**
- Centers need similar kinds of supports offered to the VPK LPP, giving them tools to improve their program.  
**Response:** Kerry Allen, Regional Facilitator will be present at the March System meeting to answer questions related to VPK training opportunities.
  - Centers need similar training to what the Broward County Public School (BCPS) offers their VPK teachers.

- Need more information regarding assessment changes.
- Directors were trained to implement the “It’s Okay to Play in VPK”, however their services was never requested.
- Program goals are to implement DAC and not teach to the test.
- Readiness rating scores should be reported within a range, and more children should be tested using a different tool.

**Responses:** Last year the assessment was administered during regular school hours at Broward County Public Schools (BCPS). Private schools participation in the assessment involved going to a BCPS location for the ECHOES to be administered to a maximum of 5 children per session. Parents were not able to take children individually during the day; therefore a fair amount of children did not get tested. Concerns will be taken to the Coalition Board.

- Centers shared that the QRS program empowered teachers to use the resources already available by having Mentors working with them in all the classrooms to implement DAC. The program encourages networking, hands-on approach and teaches self-control and monitor regulations.
- Providers expressed positive feedback about the QRIS and thanked the Coalition for helping.

**(3) Update on Effect of the Economy on Families & Children served; resources needed; new programs offered; impact of families from Haiti**

- Directors opt not to take a salary
- Directors suggested continuing to serve families free of charge until parents regain employment.
  - Rewards: when parent regains employment; children continue to use childcare center and now pay in full.
  - One director experienced a family naming a child after her for their kindness.
- Centers offer bread pantry with baked goods to families who are in need.
- QRS program is helping to cover contractual cuts; support for BCPS, Licensing & Quality Improvement System.
- Center discontinue program for At-Risk children; continuation for the child’s development, centers offer to waive fees until parents regain employment
- Increase in social behavioral issues; discounted care being given to families
- One Director has adopted a teenage mother and 12-month child to assist in the Haiti relief effort, offering childcare and a home for the family.
- Children are not given nutritious meals and diapers; centers have to provide for them.
  - Some families need to be educated in Nutritional information: Contact USDA for free posters to centers: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/>
- Centers qualify for assistance with families from Haiti under the Coalition’s Disaster Impact prioritization, for further information contact Family Central, Inc., at 954 724 2409 or the Coalition
- One Step at a Time Child Care located in North Lauderdale is accepting children for Haiti Relief; contact Ana Maria at (954) 825 5211.
- Abundant Life Child Care is forming various teams to support the relief efforts, contact Stacy Angier at (954) 979 2665.
- Request for subject matter to be indicated on emails sent to providers.
- Collect plastic bottle caps, laminate and use as tools for teaching colors; also Math skills; centers can host workshops to show others how to utilize this tool
- The gift card offered to purchase curriculum was beneficial to VPK providers because centers were

able to purchase specific items that are needed for the specific school.

Providers thanked the Coalition staff for coordinating the Provider Forum.

The Coalition is working with Broward Collaborative and the Children’s Services Council (CSC) to create workshops using local expertise and community resources and to get update on approved trainers and areas where providers need support and network opportunities.

Action Items:	Person Responsible	Deadline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community based workshops ideas will be taken to the Coalition Board.</li> <li>ELC staff will meet with BCPS to express concerns regarding administering the ECHOES assessment at BCPS next year</li> <li>Bottle Cap workshops will be planned</li> <li>Distribution of Nutritional Low Cost Meal Information</li> </ul>	<p>Stacy Angier</p> <p>ELC staff Elizabeth Gonzalez/Interested providers FCI</p>	<p>TBD</p> <p>May 2010</p> <p>TBD</p> <p>March 2010</p>

VI. Old Business

**VPK Pre-School Conference**

The VPK/ Preschool Conference and Pre-Conference will be held October 23, 2010, at Piper High School in Sunrise; the committee is sending out vendor and presenter application, setting up workshops, and contacting potential keynote speakers.

Providers asked if CEU’s can be offered for the Pre-conference; the committee will check into the cost.

Action Items:	Person Responsible	Deadline
(1) Check cost of CEU’s for Directors at Pre-Conference	FCI/Carol Wasserman	March 2010
(2) Broward Collaborative, CSC and ELC initiative on provider support and network	ELC/K. Lee Tirpak	April 2010

VII. System Celebrations and Updates

Partners

**Family Central, Inc. (FCI)**

- Thanks to the providers who participated in the ARRA survey; additionally, there may be phone calls to verify information on the survey.
- Nutritional information will be included in Resource and Referral and Redetermination packets; the information will also be placed in FCI lobby area.
- FCI will be Census Central for the county 2010 Census; providers are asked to inform parents and teachers of the importance of answering all questions and the confidentiality of the information given.
- FCI will prepare and schedule a presentation regarding the Eligibility Determination process pertaining to referrals to the providers. FCI is also considering a workshop giving instructions on how to complete Provider Agreements; an email will be sent with further information.
- Provider Agreement

- What can be done to decrease the processing time of the Provider Agreement?  
**Response:** This is a lengthy process which has to utilize the current resources allocated: FCI is planning to offer an instructional workshop, as mentioned above.
- FCI staff was commended for their patience throughout the process of completing provider agreements.
- The telephone number given to contact Protective Services has to be checked, providers are not getting through; contact Angela Lawrence at FCI.
- FCI is reviewing the process for participating in the CCEP; changes will be announced at a later date.

The services of the library resource mobile unit have expanded to different centers. The van is now visiting more sites to deliver and pick up resource materials, centers that are interested in being a drop off site, contact Dee Nevares at 954-724-3955 for more information.

6. VPK Registration for the School Year begins March 1, 2010; summer begins March 15, 2010. Please inform parents that registration is on-going. FCI is looking for sites in the North East area of the county.
  - Inform parents that the complete application can be downloaded from [www.elcbroward.org](http://www.elcbroward.org) or [www.familycentral.org](http://www.familycentral.org)
7. FCI was re-accredited by the Council on Accreditation
8. Due to the use of ARRA funds, 1,487 have been removed from the waiting list
9. A grant was awarded to FCI from The National Fatherhood Institute; services provided under this grant will ensure sensitivity to fathers who parent as head of household.

### **Broward County Child Care Licensing & Enforcement**

Previously everyone was made aware of the State Rule revisions to the Florida Administrative Codes 65C-22 (Child Care Facility) and 65C-20 (Family Child Care Homes) standards that went into effect January 13, 2010. The revised state rules/standards will be enforced by Child Care Licensing and Enforcement Section which are now more stringent than the County's standards in those areas. The County will send out a mailing of the revised state rules/standards to all child care facilities affected, via US mail within a couple of weeks.

### **The Early Learning Coalition of Broward County, Inc**

1. Public may now sign up prior to the start of any Coalition Board meeting and speak to a topic before the end of the meeting.
2. Julia Musella showed a Power Point presentation to the Board to demonstrate what's happening in the child care system which will be presented at the March System Meeting.
3. Agency for Workforce Innovation is in the process of setting up three workgroups to utilize the AARA funds for Professional Development:
  - Child Development Screening tool and training
  - Child Pre/Post Assessment tool
  - Program Assessment tool.
4. The Coalition is spreading the ARRA funds over a 2 year period. The Coalition staff is reviewing the mid-year budget for additional funds; recommendations were made to hold some ARRA funds for slots to avoid a reduction in slots next year, if at all possible.

5. Important to encourage clients to complete the 2010 Census so Broward will begin receiving their fair share of Federal funds.
6. Funds for the Provider Curriculum Training was approved by the Coalition Board

**Comments and Concerns**

- (1) Some providers questioned family pre-qualification for School Readiness funds. Providers were asked to report suspicions of fraud to FCI.
- (2) Attendance: How can centers indicate that a child stopped attending their program and is terminated? Who is responsible to terminate a child for not attending? FCI will work on an efficient process and inform providers.
- (3) Are Providers losing School Readiness children because some centers are soliciting clients by not charging the Parent fee? It is the centers responsibilities to collect the appropriate parent fee. Concerns with the way other provider’s are conducting business with the School Readiness program, should be directed to FCI.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
(1) Check telephone number for Protective Services on distributed documents.	FCI	March 2010
(2) Presentation on Resource & Referral and Eligibility Determination	Gilbert Rincon	TBD
(3) FCI talk with Coalition on the Fatherhood grant	Khalil Zeinieh	TBD
(4) Implement process to report termination from program due to ongoing absence	Gilbert Rincon	TBD
(5) Review the State/Federal Policy on Parent fees	FCI	March/April 2010

	VIII. New Business	Partners
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None.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline

IX. Public Comments
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None.

X. Adjourn
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The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Next Meeting: March 17, 2010

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