

Minutes

Early Learning Coalition of Broward County, Inc.

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

ECE System Community Partners Gathering
Soref Jewish Community Center
6501 W. Sunrise Blvd, Plantation, FL 33313

11/18/09
10:00 a.m.

Attendees:

Penny Bernath, Sharon Cohen, Marjie Cohn-Dolan, Kimberly Diluzio, Jill Gelman, Ilene Gevirtz, Yanick Goutier, Debbie Kay, Bethany Marcusson, Angelina Michel, Ilene Miller, Naomi Parker, Anita Platt, Gilbert Rincon, Grace Roque, Wendi Siegel, Melisa Trentham, Carol Wasserman, Khalil Zeinieh

ELC Staff:

K. Lee Tirpak, Chief Program Officer, Lisa Feeney, Sr. ECE Program Specialist, Janice Carter, ECE Program Specialist, Jessica Novak, ECE Program Specialist, Inez Webb, Administrative Assistant

Child Care Providers

Stacy Angier, Julie Bergstrom, Talia Branch, Veronica Blackman, Vanessa Coxley, Ana Maria Garcia, Meg German, Joy Gordon, Jayne Hafer, Mari Kelley, Danielle Liebman, Helen Magnuson, Julia Musella, Louis Nagel, Layne Polakoff, Monica Pujol, Leonard Robinson, Noreen Rosenthal; Wendi Siegel, Dianne Singley, Sharon Smith, Karla Walker, Melisa Weinkoff, Natalie Williams, Natalie Williams

I. Welcome and Call to Order

K. Lee Tirpak

The meeting held at the Soref Jewish Community Center, Plantation was called to order at 10:40 a.m.

II. Introductions

Self-introductions were made: Providers announced their name, child care center and location; other attendees announced their name and agency, or organization.

III. Review and Approve Agenda

The agenda was approved by consensus.

IV. Review and Approve Minutes – 10/14/09

The minutes were approved by consensus, no corrections were made.

V. Child Care Provider Forum

Facilitators:
Stacy Angier & Julia
Musella, Provider Reps.

Lisa Feeney, introduced the members on the panels, and outlined the ground rules for the discussion.

(1) Accessibility of Resources for Children with Challenging Behaviors vs. Expelling Young Children from Programs

- Train teachers to address challenging behavior in a developmentally appropriate manner.
- Centers lack sufficient resources to address children's needs.
- FDLRS forms may be filled out appropriately; however, findings from referrals made to FDLRS are reported to parents, not shared with the teachers; therefore does not help the teacher to solve the problem, unless there is communication with the teachers.
- When filling out a referral to FDLRS for a child with challenging behavior, providers need to complete a Behavior Observation.
- Many parents refuse to acknowledge that their child may have a behavior problem, therefore the problem continue to go unchecked.
- Evaluation of the learning environment should precede making referrals to FDLRS.
- There are several mental health institutions and centers that offer support to provider:
 - Henderson Mental Health
 - Chrysalis Center
 - For more information about these programs: Contact Wendi Siegel: wendis@bellsouth.net
- Challenging behavior is not new, however new approaches are necessary; Florida Atlantic University offers a course study on the subject. The TOPS program at FCI "I Can Problem Solve" will also help in this area. Parent education is necessary.
- Examine the center's philosophy on behavior:
 - Discipline first, by teaching of appropriate behavior for young children
 - Discipline is not a reprimand or punishment; nor is it reactive, but proactive

Comments

- A good first step guide and resource book from the VPK Pre-school Conference is *Challenging Behavior in Young Children*, which directors can use to help train.
- The training and education resources that community partners currently have available to share with the centers will be sent to the centers via email.
- Whatever is being used now does not work.

(2) Actual Impacts of the Revised VPK 80/20 Absence Rule on VPK programs:

- Centers are losing money by accepting VPK children; e.g. This year, there was a reduction of \$117.00 annually per child. A center with 50 VPK children received \$5,850 less this year than last year. Centers had to cut consumables to fill the gap.
- Full Time Equivalency (FTE) formula can be useful to reconcile book-keeping.
- Parents need to lobby so that the legislators will be knowledgeable of the issues.
- Some parents do not understand that centers are in a financial bind.

- The absence policy for the H1N1 flu is being used excessively to get excused absence, how should this be handled?

Comments

- Attendance policies are at the discretion of the center; most schools use a 3-day per month formula.
- Ms. Angier stated that she discussed Rule change with AWI/OEL Department of Education Representative.
 - Funds need to be released in a timely manner so that private providers can be reimbursed in a timely manner.
 - Centers need to speak cooperatively to the initiator of the rule change at AWI/OEL

(3) Impact of resurgence of Academic Expectation on Developmentally Appropriate Practices on ECE Programs:

- Invite parents to one hour a day classroom activities
- Curriculum night: Parents and children participate in mini-mock day activities, followed up with a contest
- Blog current issues to each family on a weekly basis
- Email weekly progress to parents and attach summary of work week
- Parent is given home-work file to be returned upon completion; the opportunity is used to explain the importance of play and to test how well the parent understands the concept.
- Share article and resources with parents regarding appropriate interaction with children
- Post articles on bulletin boards for parents
- Continually explain the concept to parents; give activities such as cooking and measuring; everyday stuff
- Use opportunities at open-house to educate parents
- Refer to VPK Standards – page 12, reiterate the state’s guideline that is required for funding
- Directors can help to educate staff with updated practices
- “It’s Okay to Play in VPK” handbook was designed for parents to apply while doing normal, everyday activities.
- Make a video or PowerPoint presentation for parents to take home; show what the children are actually gaining from the activity.
- Parents who ask for homework, are given the opportunity to check-out books from the library, when the book is returned, parents tell what the child has learned
- Directors can keep updated, and share the information with teachers who cannot afford to pay for training
- Parents and teachers need to have similar concept of how children develop. KidVision VPK is a virtual site with creative fun ways to help teachers understand and learn how to meet the standards; other online services can be utilized while taking advantage of this resource.
- “It’s okay to play in VPK” could also be done for the FLKRS staff

(4) What are the effects of the Current Economic Climate in the child care program?

- Centers network for parents who are unemployed
- Share children’s clothing, toys and furniture
- Various entities in the community give food assistance to the needy:
 - Touch-at-heart; Gateway feeding program at Deerfield Baptist
 - Feeding South Florida at Village Methodist every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month, bags of

groceries are given to families who are in need

- Center reduced price of care to the School Readiness Rate during parents unemployment, as parents regain employment they return to regular rate
- Provide Drop-in service while parents are on job interview
- One center reported that child care service for parents was discontinued for parents two weeks after being laid off.
 - Family Central, Inc. (FCI) responded: Families have 30 days paid child care to conduct job search; an additional 30 days of child care have been approved by the Coalition for families who continue to be unemployed; regulations are governed by Federal and State policies. This information is included in the provider packages, along with redetermination information from WorkForce One.

Comments

- FCI is willing to pass on the information for centers that would like to network and/or provide drop-in child care or other services.
- A motion was made at the last Coalition meeting to have “Comments from the public” after each agenda item have been discussed by Board members, providers are encouraged to attend the meeting and let their voice be heard. Ms. Wendi Siegel’s commented at the last Board meeting that members would leave the meeting prior to the “comments’ on the Agenda. The item will be taken to the Executive Committee for approval.

Action Items:	Person Responsible	Deadline
(1) Resources on Challenging Behavior will be sent to centers	ELC Staff	12/9/09
(2) Training and Education resources will be sent to centers	ELC Staff Providers	
(3) Private providers will advocate for Rule change		

VI. System Celebration and Updates **Partners**

ELC

Quality Counts: Quality improvement system continues with the providers as part of the system.

- There is a new initiative funded by the Children’s Service Council to give Technical support to the centers. This training program called Positive Behavior Supports gives Coaches and Mentors the tool to convey using positive behavior in the classroom. This is a pilot program; more information will be available at the next ECE Systems meeting.

VPK Pre-school Conference

- (1) Teacher appreciation pins are available for \$2 and \$3 to raise funds for 2010 VPK/Preschool Conference.
- (2) Dr. Pam Phelps will speak at an informal gathering at FCI on Tuesday December 1, 2009, 9am-12 noon. The presentation will demonstrate the theme series materials that accompany the Beyond Centers and Circle Time Curriculum – RSVP is required.

- (3) Quarterly provider meeting at FCI – Quality Counts will be held December 10, 2010 at Village Methodist –David Garcia will be the guest speaker, the topic will be on positive behavior.
- (4) Find information on FCI training calendar or call Bethany (954) 724 6987.

BAEYC

A Professional Development Workshop on Early Childhood-Grade 2 “Sensory Play for Every Day” will be held on Sunday, February 7, 2010, at David Posnack JCC, Davie from 1:00pm – 4:30pm. Cost for admission is \$10 for BAEYC/JECP Members, \$15 for non-members and \$20 at the door for everyone; .35 CEU’s will be offered free for NAEYC/BAEYC members; \$15 additional for all others.

Action Items:	Person Responsible	Deadline

	VII. New Business	Partners
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Referencing a letter that was received in the Provider package regarding Class 1 Violations affecting Gold Seal Accreditation; this refers to the State, not Broward County. Bill Clarke, Broward County Licensing Enforcement will demonstrate by making a comparison at the next provider meeting.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline

VIII. Public Comments

None.

IX. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12.00 p.m.

Next Meeting: December 9, 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