

Minutes

Early Learning Coalition of Broward County, Inc.

ECE System Community Partners Gathering

3/18/09

10:00 a.m.

6301 NW 5th Way, Suite 3400

Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309

Attendees:

Kerry Allen, Penny Bernath, Willie Cameron, Ethel Edwards, Sharon Cohen, Jill Gelman, Joe Gervase, Ilene Gevirtz, Yanick Goutier, Jody Hibber, Monica King, Joyce Krzemienski, Anita Platt, Layne Polakoff, Gilbert Rincon, Chris Sieber, Wendi Siegel, Mark Spence, Melisa Trentham, Jenny Turnquest, Carla Walker, Carol Wasserman, Mary Jean Woika, Khalil Zeinieh

Staff in Attendance:

K. Lee Tirpak, Chief Program Officer, Lisa Feeney, Sr. ECE Program Specialist, Janice Carter, ECE Program Specialist, Leticia Strasser, ECE Program Specialist, 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 and agency or organization.

III. Review and Approve Agenda

The agenda was approved by consensus.

IV. Review and Approve Minutes – 2/11/09

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

V. Old Business

Partners

None.

Action Items:	Person Responsible	Deadline
<p style="text-align: center;">VI. Workshop: Navigating Budget Cuts to Best Serve Broward's Children & Families</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Mandy Wells/ Children's Service Board (CSB) Sue Gallagher/Children's Services Council (CSC)</p>	
<p>Sue Gallagher and Mandy Wells were introduced to the group: Ms. Wells gave an overview of the services offered by CSB and CSC and expressed that both agencies desire to work with each other while facing the budget cuts.</p>		
<p>Funding priorities have changed significantly due to the budget cut. These changes are not reflected in the data and do not cover all needs across the county (hand-out provided).</p>		
<p>The Broward Children's Community Strategic Plan is implemented through thirteen committees working collaboratively in the community to address children's needs. This presentation is an effort to show the inter-connection of the system elements, and how decision-making and budget decisions in one area affect other areas. The following data was presented:</p>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children Living below the Poverty Level: Overall child population decreased from 2005-07; however, there was an overall increase in the general population from 2000-08; poverty level for children is expected to be higher in 2008-09. Poverty is one of the largest community risk factors for children. 2. Homeless Children: The future projections are of great concern: Broward County Public School reported a growing percentage of homeless children defined as; without a home, sharing a home, or living in a motel. The homeless division conducted a study in January 2009, which shows that a large number of children are homeless. This obviously ties to the economy. 3. Health Coverage: Data in 2008 showed over 130,000 children in Broward, receiving public health insurance; with the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) Bill passed, we are hopeful that more needy kids will be insured. 4. Birth Mothers with Poverty Risk Factors: Three poverty risk factors have been identified: Unmarried; under 20; and less than a high school education, these children are also at risk for low birth weight and school failure. 5. Rates of Abuse/Neglect: The data does not reflect the present increasing trend. Approximately 9,000 children have been identified as victims of abuse and neglect in 2004-08. A significant increase from 2007-08, and an escalation in the number of allegations in 2008/09, comes along with the stresses in the economy. The Abuse and Neglect committee focus on this area of outcome and is working to mitigate risk, secure in-home placement and get better outcome to a situation which will obviously increase. 6. Children in Out of Home Placements: Less than 1,500 children were in Foster Care and group homes in June 2008, which reflects a declining trend. Decrease is likely to continue due to the network of community support, careful assessment of risk and family strengthening programs that are in place to help keep children in their homes. 7. Rates of Delinquency: The number of youths referred for arrest in Broward are continually lower than Florida. The Juvenile Justice Strategic Plan committee is working on these numbers; the slight decrease may be attributed to specific intervention or changes in law enforcement of issuing civil citations rather than arrests. 		

8. **Behavioral Health Needs & Special Needs:** This is a priority funding area for the county, based on public safety; unfortunately only a small percentage of the needs are being met. One in every five children has moderate to severe behavioral health issues.
- **Special Health needs** could be a range of definitions depending on the type of need: CSC developed and funded a business plan in 2005, since then a number of community assets such as Special Needs Advisory Committee (SNAC) has been a driving force to provide a range of services, funding a workgroup and forging a special health needs unit at 211, which will triage and point to the right direction for special needs services.
 - **Substance Use for Youths** has steadily decreased in alcohol use with slight uptick in 2007; the sub-committee reported an increase in poly-users, nicotine and prescription drugs. The Florida youth abuse screening is done every 2 years and looks at past 30 days use.
9. **Unemployment for Youth:** Youths who have been working or looking for work, categorized by race and ethnicity rates: African-American blacks from 2001-07 has consistently higher unemployment than other groups. The current rate of unemployment is on the increase in the adult population, therefore youths can anticipate even a higher percentage. The Youth employment committee is working on strategies to increase employment and employability.
- **Rate of Unemployment:** The overall unemployment in 2008 was estimated at 68,334; this has increased in 2009. Unemployment contributes significant risk factors; therefore access to available service is critical.
10. **Food Stamps Recipients:** Overall, Department of Children and Families have seen a 25% increase in food stamps recipients; indicators show there is a significant gap between the number of households below poverty who receive foods stamps, and those who are not receiving food stamps.
11. **Continuum of Care:** Understanding continuum of care, especially in a budget crisis dispels the early childhood philosophy that prevention may be a softer value. Look at the return of investment e.g. Behavioral health funded by CSC, targeted into prevention areas which help mitigate and reduces the need for further intervention and treatment which is funded by the county, and helps mitigate the need for residential service which is often funded by DCF.
- **Cost of Continuum of Care:** CSB estimated 21,000 children served per year with treatment and intervention programs; CSC served 82,000 children in targeted prevention programs.
12. **Funding our System of Care:** The system interconnects, if one area of support is impacted it will influence the entire system.
13. **Aspects of Needs:** Each of these nodes is funded by different entities in each area. Some of the Major funders and the services they provide are identified in “Safety Needs” (see hand-out, page 6 - 8). Each system of care identifies the major funders and their level of intervention, (prevention and treatment or residential).
- Safety Needs
 - Basic needs
 - Physical Health
 - Emotional/Behavioral Health
 - Family Support
 - Social/Recreational
 - Educational
14. **Guiding CSB & CSC – Shared Principles:** The presentation of the Indicators gives an understanding of the complex system of care that guides this group to make budget decisions. Shared Principles means that CSC & CSB are both interested in preserving the leverage capacity to

get dollars in the community, both entities have a process of prioritizing the needs in the community and ensure that the funds are addressing those priority needs. Both entities believe and practice in a participatory budget process, some of which will be gathered in the April Children's Budget Summit; the value of safeguarding the system of care, understanding that we do not operate in silos; sustaining and maintaining connections, and commit to outcomes and effectiveness in what needs to be accomplished.

15. **FY 08-09 Funding Cuts:** Snapshot of how local funding is affected by Federal and State budget cuts as they trickle, and how they affect our local situation. Funders need to consider being flexible, unless there is a definite restriction where dollars cannot be spent. Situations may occur where a Federal or State funded issue result in a huge gap or short fall, therefore becomes a need that is left in the community.
16. **FY 09-10 Budget Scenario:** Potential 20% Budget Cuts: Coordination of our priorities is essential so that Funders are talking with each other and not cutting programs in the dark. Additional meetings are planned to organize and capture the amount of funds circulating in each of these areas. Budget time-lines are also critical in information sharing, since it differs from state to county.

April 2008 & 2009 Budget Summit

Last year funders convened with community members to obtain feed-back on budget cuts, using an overview of community indicators; break-out sessions were held to identify priorities and strategies for the funders to consider. This was a good first step in having communication on how to best deal with budget cuts.

This year funders are again asking for data and suggestions on how to deal with budget cuts and the stimulus package in the economic crisis. CSC staff met with the chairs of the Strategic Plan committees to find out what would be the most effective mechanism to communicate with funders about what is happening in the community, what should be happening, and how to make improvements. More time will be devoted to the Stimulus Plan and its implications. Contact has been made with Tallahassee to get the latest updates about the Stimulus package. Agenda items will include a presentation on "common system practices to save money in Broward."

The Children's Budget Summit will be held Saturday, April 18, 2009, 8:30am – 12:30pm at Nova High School Auditorium; an email blast will be sent.

B. ECE Internet Connections

Ms. Mary Jean Woika pointed out helpful child care resources below, which is available on the websites shown in the hand-outs given:

- Education in Child mental health
- Information regarding brain development and young children
- Research on best practices for early childhood center
- Leadership activities from McCormick Tribune Center for Early Childhood Studies
- Information from Frank Porter Graham on the ECERS and ITERS plus other information
- Economic refund and child care policy
- Studies regarding workforce issues (mainly in California), free articles download and books

available for purchase.

- Trends in early childhood around the USA
- Social emotional (great training modules) presenter information including hand-outs
- Studies regarding early childhood mainly in California, free articles download and books available for purchase
- Importance of play, environment
- Australia early childhood (equivalent to our NAEYC)
- Head Start websites that include research/outcomes, child health, training and technical assistance, Social/emotional development, and infant/toddler care

Comments

Early child care professionals who do not have their certificates (20 hour, 10 hour) listed on their Florida Department of Children and Families Transcript, will have until June 2010 to get this listed. For further information contact: Policy Unit Supervisor (850)488-4900, [Mike Boland@dcf.state.fl.us](mailto:Mike.Boland@dcf.state.fl.us) or [Samantha J Wass de Czege@dcf.state.fl.us](mailto:Samantha.J.Wass_de_Czege@dcf.state.fl.us) or (954)759-5443, [Melissa h.trentham@dcf.state.fl.us](mailto:Melissa.h.trentham@dcf.state.fl.us)

Action Items:	Person Responsible	Deadline

VII. System Celebrations and Updates	Partners
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Provider Report

Wyndham Learning Center reported creating new teacher positions as the center expanded its facility to care for four infants. The use of “Craig’s List” to fill the positions yielded numerous qualified applicants.

Professional Development

KidVision VPK hired marketing personnel. An additional virtual field trip “Going to kindergarten” will go on-line in April 1, 2009. Free CEUs are now available.

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

Ms. Anita Platt announced that a candidate has been chosen for the position of Rater.

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

1. On Friday, March 27, 2009, at 9:00am the S.R.E.L Committee meeting will be held at Village Methodist, North Lauderdale, to discuss Children’s Budget Summit presentation. Email reminders and agenda will be sent out.
2. Due to the favorable response at the Funders meeting, the format of the meeting will be changed to get more community participation.
3. SREL Transition Sub-committee: In response to the presentation the committee gave to 139 Broward elementary school principals, C-QuELL, FCI coaches and SBBC mentors are in the process of contacting the elementary schools near technical assistance locations, to solicit their involvement to smooth the transition process into Kindergarten. Debbie Kay, from C-QuELL, received an invitation to speak at one of their staff meetings.

Family Central, Inc. (FCI)**1. VPK Outreach**

- VPK 2009-10 registration began on March 2, 2009; 3,597 certificates were issued; summer registration began March 16, 2009. Registration is progressing smoothly with a steady flow of applicants.

2. VPK/Pre-School Conference

- The VPK/Pre-school Conference will be held September 12, 2009, at South Plantation High School.
- Pre-conference is scheduled for Friday, September 11, 2009. 9am – 12:00noon.
- Volunteers are still needed
- CSC has offered funds for scholarships
- The registration fee for the conference is \$25.00; 1.5 CEU's will be given.

Health Department

- The Public Health Nurse Early Intervention Program (PHNEIP) which was funded by the Health Department will not be funded for the next fiscal year. Health assessment services and educational sessions to child care centers will end, however the Immunization Outreach Program will fill the gap by being available to child care centers and will assess health records. The program will continue to provide immunizations at locations within the community and at health clinics; in addition to providing immunizations on site, depending on the number of children that are out of compliance. The department will continue to work closely with BCCCL&E while still connected to child care centers.
- Ms. Edwards will send an email to the Coalition for distribution to the child care centers, providing an alternate contact number.
- Kindergarten Immunization Assessment levels were at it's lowest in Broward county (2008-09, 90% to 70%), also compared to other counties in the state. The cause of the decrease is undetermined at this time. The schools have been examining children entering kindergarten with temporary immunization assessments, upon the return of the assessment levels, the department will be able to identify the origin of the problem, and will keep partners informed.

Department of Education (DOE)

- New language assessment will be introduced in the public school in August 2009, by the Kindergarten teachers; the DIBELS is no longer being used. Assessment will be done by the kindergarten teachers and children will not be timed.
- VPK version of this assessment will be introduced and given to providers in 2010-11 for use to inform instruction.
- Ms. Kerry Allen, VPK Regional Facilitator will meet with FCI-VPK leadership and the Coalition to discuss introduction of the VPK Training Management System, housed at Department of Children and Families, for use by VPK providers to enroll in VPK Face-to-Face trainings as well as DOE on-line training courses.

School Board of Broward County (SBBC)

- Joyce Krzemienski replaced Claudia Dean as the Pre-school, Early Intervention Program Coordinator with the SBBC. Ms. Krzemienski has begun working with South Broward High

school to negotiate the cost for the VPK/Pre-school conference set for September 12, 2009, and will also meet with staff to get acquainted with her new position.

- Ms. Krzemienski briefed the partners on her work experience and educational background, also her goals and passion for early childhood education.

The Early Learning Coalition of Broward County, Inc.

1. In 2009, 58 centers in Broward County were deemed Low Performing Providers (LPP), in past years the Coalition applied for, and received grants to assist LPPs to improve; however, this year funds are not available. The DOE have packaged free on-line resources which are available to these providers.
2. The Executive/Finance meeting is scheduled for March 25, 2009. Financial decisions for the Coalition are on hold, and will be dependent on the Stimulus package.
3. The Coalition Board meeting will be held Monday, April 13, 2009 at 8:30am.
4. A noticeable trend in the utilization of SR funds reports less turnover in school readiness; families are staying in the program longer.
5. Mid-Year reallocation for dollars for Quality activities is on hold until May/June when utilization and stimulus dollars are known.
6. Child Care Executive Partnership (CCEP) has changed board personnel. Recognition was given to Ms. Wendi Siegel for serving on the CCEP Executive Board for the past several years. A member is being sought to fill one position, anyone interested in serving, may contact the Coalition.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Email Immunization Outreach Program information to ELC	Ethel Edwards/Health Department	

VIII. New Business

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline

IX. Public Comments

None		
Action items:	Person responsible:	Deadline:

X. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12.05 p.m.

Next Meeting: April 15, 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