



Approved on January 12, 2024, Program Review Committee Meeting

Early Learning Coalition of Broward County, Inc.

Program Review Committee Meeting Minutes

August 28, 2023, at 2:00 PM

Zoom Meeting

Members in Attendance	Chair, Monica King; Dawn Liberta; Cindy Arenberg-Seltzer; Renee Podolsky; Ellie Schrot; Richard Campillo
Members Absent	Laurie Sallarulo; Melody McDonald
Staff in Attendance	Renee Jaffe, CEO; Judith Merritt, COO; Christine Klima, CAO; Howard Bakalar, CPO; Melody Martinez, Board Liaison; Amy Moore, Sr. Director of Family Services and Provider Relations; Allison Metsch, Sr. Director of Education & Quality; Ancel Pratt, III, Sr. Director of Communications & Outreach; Kasey LaFrance, Contract Administration Manager.
Others in Attendance	Sharonda Bailey; Beverly Batson

Item	Action/Discussion
Welcome & Call to Order	Chair Monica King called the meeting to order at 2:02 PM. The roll was called, and a quorum was established.
Consent Agenda	
1. Approve June 02, 2023, Committee meeting minutes.	There was a Motion to move Consent Agenda by Renee Podolsky and Seconded by Dawn Liberta. Unanimously approved. Motion Passes.
Regular Committee	
1. PRC241RB1 – School Readiness Enrollment/Redetermination Update (Goal 1 of Strategic Plan)	Amy Moore provided updates on School Readiness enrollment and redetermination. ELC Broward is continuing to enroll families in School Readiness services. Last FY, we enrolled a total of 5,171 children. Because there are still unknowns about the level of and the timing of funding we will receive from DEL for childcare slots for FY 2024. We reviewed the range of options to choose in setting enrollment strategies for FY 2024.
2. PRC241RB2- VPK Enrollment Update (Goal 2 of Strategic Plan)	Amy Moore provided updates on VPK. Last FY, we ended with 13,959 enrollments, and currently, we have approved 14,202 applications. The reimbursement/finance team has just begun putting enrollments in the system for children; we currently have enrolled a little over 9,464 children.
3. PRC241RB3- Education/Quality (Goals 3 and 4 of Strategic Plan)	Allison Metsch reported on Education and Quality. DEL released instruction for the Coalitions to apply for their allocations for the \$305million ARPA Discretionary pool that DEL is expected to award in September. Broward received approximately \$19.3 million of these funds.
a. ARPA Discretionary Funds Update	We are currently building another module in the CRM, and Hubert is taking the lead across the state.
• Increasing/Building Supply of Child Care	Currently we are taking a deeper dive into our special needs capacity. Staff will utilize the Florida Special Needs Rate Matrix of Services tool to determine levels of
• Training, Professional	

- Learning Activities, Workforce Initiatives
- Local Initiatives/Pilot Projects to Improve Kindergarten Readiness
- Community Outreach and Family Engagement
- Mental Health/Special Needs Supports
- Equipment, Supplies, Classroom/Child Care Materials
- Curriculum
- School Readiness Learning Computer Software

Approval of Procurement for qualified trainer/trainings

need/intervention/reimbursement for facilities serving these children.

Ellie Schrot would love to volunteer to be in a team to work on this initiative.

Allison Metsch updated on Training and Professional Learning Activities. All classes will resume CLASS, providers saw benefits. In addition, we want to expand what we offer to providers. Stipends will be made available to encourage/reward successful training completion.

A Motion was made by Cindy Arenberg-Seltzer to recommend to the Executive Committee subject to budget authority being recommended by Finance that they provide the budget for the procurement of trainers to conduct professional learning activities related to improving teaching environments and children’s learning experiences, including trainings related to children’s mental health and special needs. Seconded by Renee Podolsky. The Motion was unanimously approved. Motion Passes.

CEO added that this committee reports to executive committee.

Allison Metsch provided an update on Workforce Initiatives, local initiatives/pilot projects to improve kindergarten readiness.

Community Outreach and family engagement:

Staff will continue its Bookworms program, partnering with Scholastic to send free books to Broward families. Baby Bookworms will promote parent bonding/reading to infants.

Museum of Discovery and Science, we want to have a family come and explore the museum for free.

Parent bootcamp, staff are excited to host information and experiential training for new parents. They will focus on child development, parent-child communication, and the common rewards/challenges of first-time parenting.

Mental Health/Special Needs Supports:

Allison shared that ELC plans to partner with United Way of Broward County to co-host this year’s Mental Health Conference in May. United Way has been hosting this very successful conference for eight years.

The statewide Help Me Grow is growing, and more money exists to expand. We are hoping to become an official Help Me Grow partner. We are waiting for more info on this.

Staff will create Behavior Baskets to support teachers and students by providing educational material to each contracted school that helps improve students’ positive classroom behavior, encourage students to self-regulate their emotions, communicate using visuals, and relieve stress and anxiety.

Mental Health Consultants:

ELC plans to contract with up to six Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants (ECMHC). They have specialized training in early childhood development. They will

not be providing the clinical work to the child, even though they have the expertise. They work in conjunction with the educator, the program, and the parent; they will look at the child and what the classroom needs.

Allison shared that providers with a 2024-2025 CLASS score of at least 5.2 or higher and have increased their score by .2 or higher on their previous SR or VPK composite score will receive a one-time dollar incentive. The funds will be used for equipment and/or classroom materials at recognized early childhood material vendors.

ELC will transform its former call center space into a model classroom, which will be used as training for early learning educators and directors. This will allow for a hands-on experience to practice and implement content and for parent engagement opportunities.

DEL and the Florida Legislature have launched a curriculum study through its designated ARPA discretionary categories. Providers will be reimbursed for any State-approved curriculum upon completing an application form that DEL has created and receipts proving the purchase of materials. Then, they will be part of a fidelity study with one of the universities of the State, and they will be surveyed on how using this curriculum is helping them in the classroom. Hubert and his team are working on this.

At the June PRC meeting, committee members approved the concept of ELC staff procuring learning software that could help children achieve proficiency in literacy/math skills, which would help indicate they were kindergarten-ready. We continue to filter our local data and are expecting DEL to allow us to compare it to statewide data soon to try and determine where this software can best be utilized. Currently, we are waiting for DEL to answer some contracting questions, which will determine whether we can utilize the ARPA discretionary funds to enter into multi-year contracts with software vendors, as we do not want to begin a large technology project and have to end it just as providers are achieving proficiency with it.

There was a Motion to approve the Continuation of the Children's Forum's INCENTIVE\$ Wage Supplements, pending the Availability of Funds by Dawn Liberta and Seconded by Cindy Arenberg-Seltzer. Unanimously approved. Motion Passes.

The Age of Learning Program has recently been used in Palm Beach County. For FAST Assessments, VPK students have been able to go from an average of children scoring in the 50th percentile during the first assessment to the upper 70th percentile on the third assessment. The program staff at the ELC of Palm Beach attribute much of this progress to the technological supports being instituted.

Monica King asked if this was a subscription to an online platform. Allison responded that it was and that we would give access to the schools and we would be paying for a subscription.

In procuring technology aids, ELC Broward will advertise a product that:

It is geared to progress at the pace of each individual child; involves childcare educators, involves parents/caregivers, addresses the literacy and math domains that should help children's FAST scores rise; and could potentially raise the CLASS scores of the classrooms using the technology.

	<p>This technology procurement will be subject to the availability of stimulus funds.</p> <p>There was a Motion to Approve Concept of Procurement of Education Technology Aids by Cindy Arenberg-Seltzer and Seconded by Melody McDonald. Unanimously approved. Motion Passes.</p>
4. PRC241RB4- Advocacy/ Communications/ Outreach Update	<p>Ancel Pratt gave an overview of outreach and advocacy updates. ELC participated in over 12 community events, from resource fairs to back-to-school events. We also actively engaged families who came to our table about the SR, VPK, childcare resources and referrals, and other services we provide.</p> <p>We are currently focusing on promoting VPK enrollment to the community via community events, emails, and online marketing. We ran a targeted campaign to SR families whose children are now eligible for VPK. In just two weeks of running that campaign, we facilitated over 800 VPK page views, which we are confident will translate to higher VPK registrations by the end of the campaign.</p> <p>From July 1 through August 4, our VPK page saw 2,553 unique pageviews, a 30% increase from the previous year (1,963 unique page views).</p> <p>As for Advocacy, we have begun crafting the agenda based on issues identified locally and through the AELC.</p>
Unfinished Business	None
New Business	None
Matters from the Chair	None
Matters from the Committee	None
Public Comments	None
Next Meeting	TBD
Adjourn	The meeting adjourned at 2:59 PM.

These minutes contain the action items of the Board meeting of the Early Learning Coalition of Broward. They do not include all of the Committee's discussions or comments on each matter or issue raised during the meeting. A tape recording of the meeting is held in the Coalition office. Corrections from the Committee will be taken before approval at the next meeting.