



Early Learning Coalition of Broward County, Inc.
Program Review Committee Meeting Minutes
December 16, 2022, at 1:00 PM
Hybrid Meeting

Members in Attendance	Chair, Laurie Sallarulo (Virtual, 1:33 PM); Dawn Liberta; Monica King; Renee Podolsky (Virtual); Beverly Batson; Melody McDonald;
Members Absent	Cindy Arenberg-Seltzer; Richard Campillo
Staff in Attendance	Renee Jaffe, CEO; Christine Klima, CAO; Judith Merritt, COO; Howard Bakalar, CPO; Hubert Cesar, CIO; Melody Martinez, Board Liaison (Virtual); Lizbeth Juan, Executive Assistant (Virtual); Amy Moore, Senior Director of Family Services and Provider Relations; Allison Metsch, Senior Director of Education & Quality; Ancel Pratt, III, Senior Director of Communications & Outreach; Celcia Hall, Outreach Specialist (Virtual); Debbie Kay, Inclusion Manager; Ayme Hamoui, Director of Education Program Assessment; Gracy Haladijian (Virtual); Marjorie Rizzo, Education Manager 'Above & Beyond'
Others in Attendance	Ellie Schrot (Virtual), Board Member; Cynthia Reynoso, CSC;

Item	Action/Discussion
Call to Order	Monica King, PRC Chair called the meeting to order at 1:06 PM.
Roll Call	Melody Martinez, Board Liaison: The roll was called, and a quorum was established.
Consent Agenda a. Approve April 20, 2022, Committee meeting minutes b. Approve September 22, 2022, Committee Meeting Minutes	There was a Motion to move both Consent Agendas by Dawn Liberta and Seconded by Renee Podolsky. Unanimously approved. Motion Passes.
Regular Committee a. PRC232RB1 – School Readiness Enrollment/Redetermination Update (Goal 1 of Strategic Plan) b. PRC232RB2 – VPK Enrollment (Goal 2 of Strategic Plan)	<p>Amy Moore provided updates on both School Readiness and enrollment/Redetermination. ELC Broward is continuing to enroll families in School Readiness services. Since July 1, 2022, we have currently enrolled 3,062 children. Thanks to the Board’s approval of new staff, we have been able to assign fewer cases to staff, which in turn has allowed our staff to conduct more follow-ups with our families about their cases. We have devised new outreach strategies and have since introduced texting and our Revation phone system so that we can text with our families. Additionally, through that texting service, clients can submit their documentation through a secure link.</p> <p>DEL releases the VPK application on January 1st. This year, the Conference has predicted a school year participation rate of 73 percent of all eligible 4 year-olds, or 15,491 children, which generally falls in line with where Broward was pre-pandemic. This year, we have stayed almost exactly level with last year's</p>

<p>c. PRC232RB3 – Education/Quality (Goals 3 and 4 of Strategic Plan)</p> <p>1. Broward Above and Beyond Update</p> <p>2. Referrals for Children with Special Needs Progress Update</p>	<p>enrollment.</p> <p>CPO shared that last year, the legislature increased Base Student Allocation (BSA) by \$317 and agreed to give a premium allocation with non-continuing funding of \$631.80 in additional BSA to any VPK provider who agreed to pay their staff at least \$15 per hour. We missed a good opportunity to market this because the details concerning the actual amount, the specific payment requirements, and the process for registering for the premium were not released by DEL until the first week of VPK in Broward.</p> <p>Allison began the Broward Above and Beyond update by welcoming Marjorie Rizzo, the new Broward Above and Beyond Education Manager to the team.</p> <p>She shared that the data received from surveys stemming from some of the Above and Beyond sites is being utilized to add two additional staff positions devoted to processing the paperwork necessary for childcare staff to receive their quarterly and other stipends, one additional coach, who will be used to expand the current cadre of providers from 50 to 55, along with the creation of a new Child Development Associate Academy. This will be offered to the community for a nominal fee.</p> <p>The feedback from directors is that now they are able to get people in their classrooms, however, they have shared that they need help because the new hires aren't as familiar with conducting a classroom which is where our goal for our coaches comes in. We are hoping to have our coaches spend more time at the schools to prevent turnover.</p> <p>As discussed at the board meeting, with additional available stimulus funds we will be hiring two additional Inclusion Specialists, two additional Family Engagement Specialists, a and four Peer Support Specialists who will provide emotional and navigational support to families who have either discovered or have been informed that their children may be experiencing developmental issues, and an additional coordinator.</p> <p>Ellie shared that she is excited about the peer specialists and her vision for working closely with them. she has a new staff position who will be tracking the ELC referrals so the individual hired to that position can provide feedback on what happened with those referrals. Laurie feels that the addition of the new inclusion, peer, and child client specialists, will be a great step towards engaging the families that could benefit from these early intervention services.</p> <p>Howard provided a quick update between ASQs and VPK. After a conversation with Board Member Ellie Schrot, CEO, Renee Jaffe brought it to Chancellor Mears and he was receptive to piloting a new program where we take a look at ASQs in VPK classrooms because right now ASQs are only in School Readiness classrooms. We will be piloting this in 5 schools with roughly 250 children. This will allow us to</p>
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	see the similarities and differences between the VPK and School Readiness populations.
Unfinished Business	None
New Business	None
Matters from the Chair	None
Matters from the Committee	None
Public Comments	There was no discussion.
Next Meeting	TBD
Adjourn	Meeting adjourned at 1:42 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.

DRAFT

ITEM #:	PRC233RB1/Program Review Committee Meeting
MEETING:	Program Review Committee
MEETING DATE:	04/11/2023
SUBJECT:	School Readiness Enrollment/Redetermination Update
FOR ACTION:	No
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	None
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	None
AS RECOMMENDED BY:	N/A
ELC STAFF LEADS	Amy Moore, Howard Bakalar

Background

In FY 2019-20, the Office of Early Learning (OEL), gave ELC Broward additional funding to clear its waitlist for child care for income eligible families. At the time, there were thousands of children waiting for child care. OEL and its successor, the Division of Early Learning (DEL) continued to fund the elimination of the waitlist. Last year, with some staffing additions and modifications, ELC was able to enroll a record 4,255 children—almost double the amount of children from the year before. Last April, the ELC staff announced it had finally cleared the waitlist, and both the Board and DEL encouraged continued enrollment of income eligible families.

Current Status

ELC Broward is continuing to enroll families as they complete their initial applications for School Readiness services. Since July 1, 2022, **we have enrolled approximately 4,279 children already this fiscal year.** We continue to receive hundreds of applications each week and are processing the initial applications in approximately ten days. Approved families receive funding notifications immediately upon approval of their initial School Readiness application.

Though we continue to enroll new families into School Readiness services we have observed what may be a plateau in weekly enrollments. This comes at a good time, as we have been directed by the Division of Early Learning to stop aggressively enrolling clients. With that direction, we will “take our foot off the accelerator” and begin the process of managing our enrollments more closely with our attrition. Our current attrition rate hovers between 20-25% per month. This equates to approximately 340 children who fall out of the system each month.

ITEM #:	PRC233RB2(a)/ Program Review Committee Meeting
MEETING:	Program Review Committee
MEETING DATE:	4/11/2023
SUBJECT:	Broward Above and Beyond Update
FOR ACTION:	No
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	None
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	None
AS RECOMMENDED BY:	N/A
ELC STAFF LEADS	Allison Metsch

Background

During the 2021 – 2022 Fiscal Year, the Division of Early Learning (DEL) distributed federal stimulus grant dollars to focus on recruiting, retaining, and upskilling the childcare workforce. The ELC board then approved the development of an ad hoc board committee to work with staff to plan the best way to use these dollars. With the consensus of that committee, we created the Broward Above and Beyond initiative. The focus of the initiative is to provide intensive and personalized coaching and technical assistance, along with quarterly stipends and other bonuses, to 50 childcare centers and to provide mentoring to new and current staff. We provide quarterly stipends, bonuses for employee referrals, site specific trainings and an in-depth director program called Directors in Action. We also are focused on upskilling our childcare community and created Career Guidance Counselors to support and connect educators to TEACH (scholarships used for CDA classes, college tuition, etc.) and INCENTIVE\$ (wage supplements awarded to child care educators for reaching certain educational levels) to promote a career ladder.

In November, because a substantial portion of the CRSSA stimulus dollars remain unspent throughout the state, DEL offered additional CRRSA funding for Coalitions to expand local initiatives, if desired. Broward ELC expanded both in staffing (additional Inclusion Specialist and other special needs staff), in stipend administrators, and in coaches.

Current Status

Our staff just celebrated their one year anniversary with Above and Beyond program.

- a. **One Education Stipend Specialist “S” is devoted to processing the paperwork necessary for child care staff to receive their quarterly and other stipends.** Because of the back and forth necessary with so many instructors concerning submission of tax information, etc. and submission of updates, Above and Beyond coaches were spending too much of their time helping process paperwork instead of coaching. It was frustrating for our staff, and it was definitely frustrating for child care staff waiting for their payment.
- b. **One additional coach was added to lessen the case load of each Above and Beyond staff.** We had added two more schools to our program. The coaches continue to support the centers and are gearing up to provide specific trainings to support DEL’s ARPA Building A World CLASS Workforce initiative.
- c. **Creation of the Child Development Associate (CDA) Academy.** Because the first major step for the vast majority of child care instructional staff is the 120 hour CDA course, we have decided to

create the capacity in-house to provide this intensive instruction. To minimize duplication/competition with other providers of CDA courses, we will provide our classes completely in-person (both in English and in Spanish). We feel strongly that this approach will build a more skilled workforce. Our first cohort begins on April 10th. The inaugural class will take place on site at a provider's location.

- d. **Our two Career Guidance Specialists have been working with educators to apply for TEACH and INCENTIVE\$ dollars.** This is the first time we have been “boots on the ground” and helping our community with awareness and subsequent guidance in the application process for both these programs. This year we have provided guidance and support to approximately 300 educators (employed at least 90 days) at an Above and Beyond center. Our specialists provided hands on computer support for navigating to the application portal, promoting signing up for INCENTIVE\$ for those staff with a CDA or higher and helped qualifying educators to sign up for TEACH. We have learned that there is a desire for classes for English Language Learners to upskill and improve their comprehension skills as well shared information on approved evaluation agencies for foreign degree translations which overall impacts their career trajectory.
- e. **CLASS Scores at our Above and Beyond sites demonstrate high quality thanks to the individualized on-site coaching and technical assistance.** The 2022 – 2023 fiscal year was the first time that all VPK classrooms had to be observed throughout the state. Since this was new to several VPK providers we worked hard to prepare our programs for CLASS observations. In addition to the varying trainings, we offer to the community, our Above and Beyond sites received intensive support in their VPK classrooms. The CLASS tool is scored on a scale of 1 to 7. We are proud that as of April 1st, the Above and Beyond VPK classrooms have a collective average of 5.5 on CLASS. We also prepared and worked with these sites for their School Readiness (SR) observations. We saw an increase in those Above and Beyond sites that had a SR Scores from last year to now. The average SR CLASS score moved from a 5.15 to 5.38.

Thanks to the varying support of the education team through onsite coaching, onsite walk throughs and technical assistance and trainings, we saw our county SR CLASS average increase from 5.02 to 5.16.

Next Steps

With the change and appointment of a new Chancellor for the Division of Early Learning (DEL), it looks like the money allotted for this initiative will end as of June 30, 2023. Although the extra dollars we used for stipends and training bonuses may sunset, we are committed to all Broward sites being high quality Above and Beyond schools. Because of the very positive feedback we received from the Above and Beyond sites, we have decided to shift our staffing plans to apply the lessons learned from Above and Beyond to all of Broward. Starting in the new fiscal year, all sites that want to participate in the support we offer will be assigned a specific coach. This new model will allow for more schools to have onsite support for training, coaching and technical assistance. Each coach will hold a caseload, continue CLASS assessments and provide trainings to their sites based on individualized need.

We look to next year to continue to provide intensive onsite support and individualized training to any Broward provider that requests assistance.

ITEM #:	PRC233RB2(b)/Program Review Committee Meeting
MEETING:	Program Review Committee
MEETING DATE:	4/11/2023
SUBJECT:	Referrals for Children with Special Needs
FOR ACTION:	No
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	None
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	None
AS RECOMMENDED BY:	N/A
ELC STAFF LEADS	Allison Metsch

Background

All School Readiness children are required to be screened upon entry into their program and annually when they complete their redetermination. The tool currently used is the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, which is used from ages 3 months to 60 months. Best practice is for parents/families to complete the screening themselves, however, if they choose not to, they can opt-out or ask their childcare provider to complete it.

Current Status

To increase our reach, we have used stimulus funds to hire 2 additional Inclusion Specialists and 1 Inclusion Coordinator. Every day our of 9 Inclusion Specialists (IS) and 1 Family Engagement Specialist review screening results from all School Readiness sites. Children’s results that present with a concern in any of the 5 domains of development: communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, and personal-social, are followed up on by the IS team. Each IS reaches out to the family and the provider, and through conversation they offer an observation of the child in his/her classroom, a referral, and/or a re-screen later. We always provide strategies to help the child strengthen performance in specific domains.

We have found that through creation of a stronger connection with the family, the number of referrals has increased. Taking the time to explain the screening, the results and possible next steps have shown to benefit the process. Sometimes the family is most comfortable with a re-screen which gives the child time to “adjust” or “catch up”. With the increase of staffing, we can reduce each IS’s individual case load and reach more families than before.

Our staff has been hosting Friday live zoom sessions called Behavior Bites. Each week educators are able to join this zoom for immediate help and ask burning questions regarding behavior issues. Each week we also have a topic and tidbit which is shared on our website in English and Spanish. [Behavior Bites Tidbits \(English and Español\) | Early Learning Coalition of Broward County, Inc. \(elcbroward.org\)](#)

Next Steps

As our 2 new Inclusion Specialists continue to acclimate and train, we look forward to increasing our reach throughout the community. We are currently looking to hire 2 Peer Support Specialists (PSS) to

work in coordination with our IS's. The PSS's role is to provide one-on-one peer support to help families process the realities and logistics of the referral and possible subsequent evaluation process. We expect that families that are currently hesitant for a host of reasons to move forward with evaluations will do so with the gentle support of folks who have been there. We hope that these two Peer Supports will provide another layer of empathy, sympathy, and real-life experience to navigate the system of care for young children with special needs.

ITEM #:	PRC233RB3/Program Review Committee Meeting
MEETING:	Program Review Committee
MEETING DATE:	04/11/2023
SUBJECT:	Communication Update
FOR ACTION:	No
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	None
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	None
AS RECOMMENDED BY:	N/A
ELC STAFF LEADS	Ancel Pratt III

Background

In the last year, ELC Broward has focused on strengthening our communications, outreach, and advocacy/elected official engagement. We changed our internal staffing to create the position of Senior Director of Communications and Outreach, and then put that person in charge of a team that consists of a Communications Manager and an Outreach Specialist.

Current Status

From a communications standpoint, we have changed the look and messaging of newsletters, improved engagement on social media marketing, updated the ELC’s website, and introduced a new video series with our Inclusion Team (Behavior Bites). We also used stimulus funds to contract with an external agency to help promote our services through various media avenues. ELC Broward saw an increase in social media followers by 24% this FY year, and overall traffic to its School Readiness page by 26% by utilizing social media ads.

On the outreach front, we made ourselves not just present, but participatory in a number of events in the past year, including multiple back to school events, the Junior Achievement event, community baby showers organized by Healthy Start Coalition, and various city celebrations. We are gearing up for back to school, working with the health department to promote immunization, re-establishing relationships with existing community partners (i.e., Broward College, Broward County Community Action Agency), and fostering new community partnerships (i.e., Technical Colleges). We're projected to be attending many community events between March and August. We have also been successful engaging community partners by physically visiting Title 1 school sites and bringing paper flyers for administrators to pass on to families about available services.

In terms of Elected Official and other leader engagement, we held our first State of Childcare luncheon this year, which brought out many of Broward County’s legislative delegation and municipal partners. We also had a very successful Broward Days and Children’s Week run (except for flights), becoming much more closely involved and aligned with our city, county, and state leaders. We also have been inviting elected officials to monthly CEO Childcare visits, have done presentation at cities about match funding, tagging elected officials on social media, and have successfully pitched cities to promote our services via their municipality’s marketing channels. Finally, we are busy right now requesting cities give proclamations for Provider Appreciation Day, which will fold into our Provider Appreciation event at the Museum of Discovery and Science on May 17th.