



Early Learning Coalition of Broward County, Inc.

PRC Meeting Agenda

April 16, 2026, at 11:30 AM

Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 851 8053 1829

Passcode: 092475

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85180531829?pwd=rLUiFunLzKobGDvB1WzmwLUG9y3QtG.1>

Members are reminded of conflict-of-interest provisions. In declaring a conflict, please refrain from voting or discussing and declare the following information: 1) Your name and position on the Board, 2) The nature of the conflict, and 3) Who will gain or lose as a result of the conflict. Please also fill out form 8B prior to the meeting.

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1.	Call to Order		Maria Hernandez, PRC Chair
2.	Roll Call		Melody Martinez, Board Liaison
3.	Consent Agenda 1. Approve September 5, 2025, Committee meeting minutes	2	Maria Hernandez, PRC Chair
4.	Regular Business		
	1. PRC262RB1- School Readiness Enrollment/Redetermination Update (Goal 1 of Strategic Plan)	8	Amy Moore, Vice President of Family Services & Customer Services
	2. PRC262RB2- VPK Enrollment Update (Goal 2 of Strategic Plan)	10	
	3. PRC262RB3- Education/Quality (Goals 3 and 4 of Strategic Plan)	11	Allison Metsch, Vice President of Education
	4. PRC262RB4- Approve Children’s Forum Incentive\$ Sub Recipient Budget Reduction Amendment	14	
	5. PRC262RB5- Broward Estates and Gulfstream Space Update	15	
	6. PRC262RB6 - Outreach/Advocacy Update	16	Ancel Pratt III, Sr. Director of Communications
	• FYI:		
5.	Unfinished Business New Business		
6.	Next PRC Meeting: TBD		
7.	Adjourn		

Please Note: Agenda is subject to revisions and additions at the discretion of the Chair of the Coalition. Notification will be sent of any such revisions or additions. **Members of the Public:** Please sign up at the entry desk for public comments to be made on any particular agenda items no later than five minutes after the Coalition meeting has been called to order.

“As per [§286.0105, Fla. Stat.](#) Any person who decides to appeal any decision of the Board with respect to any matter considered at this meeting will need a record of the proceedings and for such purpose, may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made which record includes testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.”



Early Learning Coalition of Broward County, Inc.
Program Review Committee Meeting Minutes
September 5, 2025, at 11:30 AM
[Zoom Meeting](#)

Members in Attendance	Chair, Maria Hernandez; Krystie Castillo; Amy Hauser; Dawn Liberta; Renee Podolsky; Ellie Schrot
Members Absent (Excused)	Cindy Arenberg-Seltzer
Members Absent (Unexcused)	
Staff in Attendance	Renee Jaffe, CEO; Christine Klima, CAO; Howard Bakalar, CPO; Hubert Cesar, CIO; 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; Alesia Davis, Director of Family Services; Gracy Haladjian, Dir. of Family & C.S.
Others in Attendance	

Item	Action/Discussion
Welcome & Call to Order	Chair Maria Hernandez called the meeting to order at 11:30 AM. The roll was called, and a quorum was established.
Consent Agenda 1. Approve May 20, 2025, Committee meeting minutes	A Motion was made by Dawn Liberta and Seconded by Renee Podolsky to approve the Consent Agenda. The Motion was unanimously approved. Motion Passed.
Regular Committee 1. PRC261RB1 - School Readiness Enrollment/Redetermination Update (Goal 1 of Strategic Plan)	<p>School Readiness Update</p> <p>Amy Moore reported on School Readiness enrollment and redetermination. Based on the proposed budget, the target service level is 14,319 children, with 3,260 on the waitlist as of August 28, 2025. The average wait time for funding is about six months, and the earliest application date is March 20, 2025.</p> <p>The FY25/26 goal is to retain 75% of children through redetermination. In July, 75% of 1,579 children due for redetermination were retained, keeping the Coalition on track. Currently, 72 children are enrolled in SR PLUS, and attrition will be monitored beginning in October.</p> <p>About 600 children are receiving services through the Vulnerable Population program, which is above original projections. Effective September 1, 2025, the School Readiness copayment schedule will be applied to this program to help manage costs.</p> <p>Since July 1, 2025, DEL's new copayment policies have been fully implemented, setting SR copayments at 3–6% of gross income and SR PLUS at 8–10%. Beginning October 1, 2025, the income eligibility threshold will increase to 55% of the State Median Income, which is expected to grow the waitlist depending on available funding.</p> <p>Chair Maria Hernandez asked whether the 600 children served in the Vulnerable Population program are exclusively from the child welfare system or if other children are included within that group.</p>

2. PRC261RB2- VPK Enrollment Update (Goal 2 of Strategic Plan)

Amy Moore clarified that these children are not in the formal child welfare system. Instead, they are considered a vulnerable population because they are receiving primary services from agencies contracted with the Children’s Services Council (CSC) to provide family strengthening services and other special services. While these children are not officially in the child welfare system, they remain vulnerable due to the circumstances that led them to receive support from these agencies.

Chair Maria Hernandez congratulated Amy and her team, commending them for ending the year strong and maintaining 75% of families. She acknowledged the challenges faced last year and earlier this year, and expressed appreciation for the team’s dedication and hard work.

Amy Hauser asked whether the Step Up for Students scholarship affects ELC enrollment for new families, specifically questioning if the scholarship funds are considered income or categorized differently, and if this would impact a family’s eligibility for ELC services.

Amy Moore explained that Step Up for Students funds are not considered income and therefore do not affect a family’s eligibility for ELC services. She noted that for children under age 5—the primary population served—Step Up can complement the School Readiness program. For example, if a child is enrolled in a private childcare arrangement, Step Up may cover a portion of the day, while School Readiness pays the provider for care outside of what Step Up covers.

VPK Enrollment

Amy Moore provided updates on VPK. For 2024–2025, 14,305 school-year and 519 summer applications were approved, resulting in 12,755 children actually enrolled in school-year programs and 315 in summer, for a total of 13,070. This exceeded the Estimating Conference projection of 11,912. Statewide, participation continues to trend downward, with only a slow rebound since COVID, and is still below pre-pandemic levels. Locally, enrollment is about 400 children lower than this time last year, and approved applications are down by 1,351. While this may indicate a challenging year, staff remain confident in meeting projections and continue outreach through community events and social media campaigns.

For 2025–2026, 12,389 school-year and 95 summer applications have been approved. The Estimating Conference projected 11,269 participants for Broward. With 9,925 students currently enrolled, additional applications pending, and some programs yet to start, enrollment is on track to meet the state projection.

Renee Podolsky asked about the reason for the low enrollment, noting it appears to be due to a decrease in applicants.

CPO Howard Bakalar responded that while there may be several contributing factors, possible reasons include families leaving Broward County due to affordability challenges and, particularly for VPK, families who may be undocumented or hesitant to sign up despite eligibility.

CEO Renee Jaffe added that the issue of low enrollment is a statewide challenge, also being experienced by school districts. A partnership is being explored with the Superintendent to survey kindergarten parents about the choices they made prior to kindergarten, including barriers to VPK participation. Factors assumed to contribute include the high cost of living, the limited three-hour VPK schedule, and general

affordability issues. At present, data is anecdotal, but efforts are underway to obtain more concrete information.

Committee members discussed whether enrollment is on track compared to last year and noted that lower numbers are also being seen in schools across the county. Staff explained that the state estimating conference projected a decline of about 1,000 children this year, and current enrollment aligns proportionately with that estimate. Additional factors, such as the timing of religious holidays and the beginning of the school year, were also cited as contributing to the enrollment decline.

Krystie Castillo added that, similar to public schools, enrollment declines are also being influenced by an increase in families opting for homeschooling. With rates high and circumstances unpredictable, it is difficult to pinpoint exact reasons, but homeschooling appears to be a growing trend contributing to lower enrollment.

3. PRC261RB3-

Education/Quality (Goals 3 and 4 of Strategic Plan)

- a. CLASS update (School Readiness and VPK)
- b. VPK Performance Accountability Update
- c. Developmental Support
- d. Help Me Grow
- e. CDA Academy
- f. Bootcamp

CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) Update

School Readiness

Allison Metsch reported on Education and Quality. As required by the Division of Early Learning, all ELCs use the CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) to assess providers with more than 20% School Readiness (SR) enrollment or a CLASS 1 violation. The tool measures teacher–child interactions and classroom management. For SR, ELC observes 50% of each care level, and providers receive a score between 1 and 7. Providers scoring below 4.0 cannot contract with the ELC. Scores of 5.0–7.0 qualify for Quality Performance Incentive (QPI) differential payments of 7% and 10%.

Staff reported that Broward’s SR CLASS scores remain above the state average and have increased from the previous school year.

Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK)

Beginning in July 2022, the Division of Early Learning required all VPK classrooms—school year and summer, including public school classes—to be observed using the CLASS tool. Unlike School Readiness, no payment differential is tied to VPK CLASS scores.

Staff reported that Broward’s VPK scores are once again higher than the state average and have improved from the previous school year.

VPK Performance Accountability Update

The new VPK progress monitoring system holds providers accountable for quality instruction that supports kindergarten readiness. School-year programs test children three times using the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) Star Early Literacy—PM1 (first 30 days), PM2 (mid-year), and PM3 (final 30 days). Summer programs test at the beginning (PM1) and end (PM3). Results help programs target support for children needing extra help.

A provider’s designation is based on:

- **Quality classroom instruction (50%)** – CLASS Composite Score
- **Child achievement (20%)** – % of children demonstrating readiness on PM3
- **Learning gains (30%)** – % showing a growth rate of 12+ points from PM1 to PM3

Broward Results:

- 77% of providers scored *Excellent or Above Expectations*
- 16% scored *Meets Expectations*
- 5% scored *Incomplete* (not enough data)
- 2% scored *Below Expectations (9) or Unsatisfactory (2)*

Staff noted they are working with the 7% of providers in the last two categories to ensure compliance with state Improvement Plans and to support progress this year.

Developmental Supports

Funded through AD Henderson, ELC's Peer Support Specialists assist families referred for evaluation or further assessment through Child Find. They guide families through the referral process by completing forms, providing reminders, answering questions, and offering support after screenings, evaluations, and staffing meetings. This empathetic approach has helped build trust, improve follow-through, and ensure children receive needed services. Both FDLRS and Early Steps have praised the program for its positive impact.

In FY 2024–2025:

- **57%** of families with children ages birth–2 followed through with referrals (up from 55% last year).
- **73%** of families with children ages 3–5 followed through with referrals (up from 61% last year).

Chair Maria Hernandez asked when we started this program.

Allison replied that this is the third year of the program. Chair Maria Hernandez asked whether there has been a noticeable increase in parents being more engaged and following through. Allison confirmed that engagement has improved, though she did not have specific data available at the moment, and invited Ellie Schrot to comment further on the partnership.

Ellie explained that a designated service coordinator works closely with ELC referral families and navigators, maintaining daily communication about families and referrals. She suggested that, moving forward, it may be helpful to analyze why some families do not follow through—for example, whether due to work conflicts or other barriers—in order to design more targeted interventions.

Allison stated that while efforts are made to track families who do not engage, some cases result in what was described as a “passive goodbye,” where families stop responding and essentially disappear. A small percentage of families may move, but overall, once families are engaged, they tend to remain open to the process. Staff emphasized that they continue to monitor and remain aware of patterns to inform future interventions.

Ellie Schrot added that she would like to continue that discussion. This way, she can see if there are any changes she can make in her program or their approach to help improve family engagement.

Allison added that yes, they will continue to monitor it.

Help Me Grow

In Fiscal Year 2024–2025, ELC received funding to launch Help Me Grow in Broward County and met all requirements in half the expected time. The initiative led to new partnerships with Bluebird Kids Health, Ambetter Health, New World Reading, and the Greater Fort Lauderdale Diaper Bank, while also expanding collaboration with 211 Broward as a direct referral source for families. The first Books, Balls & Blocks event is set for Saturday, September 20, 2025, at Deerfield Beach Community Cares, and staff continue weekly pediatrician visits and outreach at back-to-school events.

<p>4. PRC261RB4- Incentive\$ Program</p>	<p>CDA Academy The Child Development Associate (CDA) Academy hosted weekly professional development sessions and graduated 91 educators last year. The CDA credential requires a high school diploma and 120 training hours. The current cohort includes 34 students who are in the process of completing their hours, with a graduation ceremony planned later this year.</p> <p>Bootcamp The New Educator Bootcamp completed its second year with three cohorts and 69 graduates. The weeklong training is designed for preschool educators with less than one year of experience, with stipends provided to both participants and their schools. The first session of the new fiscal year is tentatively scheduled for November, with the date to be confirmed. Program outcomes to be tracked include participant satisfaction, director-reported improvements in staff interactions with children, and educator retention at 3, 6, and 12 months post-training.</p> <p>Children’s Forum INCENTIVE\$ Sub Recipient Budget Reduction Amendment FY 2026 CPO Howard Bakalar reported that the INCENTIVE\$ program, updated in FY 2022 with a higher stipend scale, currently serves about 450 participants from over 200 childcare centers. Semi-annual supplements average \$750.</p> <p>Funding, which had more than doubled with stimulus dollars in 2020, was reduced to \$958,974 in FY 2025 after those funds ended. Due to reductions in School Readiness funding, staff will present to the Program Review Committee on September 5, 2025, a proposal to gradually return to pre-COVID funding levels by reducing the FY 2026 budget by \$250,000 through an amendment with the Children’s Forum.</p> <p>A Motion was made by Ellie Schrot and Seconded by Dawn Liberta to Recommend Reduction of Children’s Forum Sub Recipient Agreement for Administering the INCENTIVE\$ Program to Finance/Executive Committees . The Motion was unanimously approved.</p>
<p>5. PRC261RB5- Outreach/Advocacy Update</p>	<p>Outreach/Advocacy Update Ancel Pratt reported that the Communications and Outreach team continues to promote core programs and advocate for sustainable School Readiness funding. With the FY 2025–26 base allocation set at \$97 million, below both Senate and House proposals, paid promotions have been paused and resources redirected to VPK outreach. Advocacy efforts with state legislators and local leaders are ongoing.</p> <p>Bookworms Bookworms ended last year strongly, spending almost \$263,000 of the amended \$275,000 contract. This year, due to budget cuts, approximately \$50,000 has been spent to date, with spending now being scaled back to align with a \$100,000 plan. Staff noted that because the program is flexible, it can be expanded later in the year if additional funds become available.</p> <p>Website Performance Midway through Q1, landing page traffic is pacing similarly to last year, with VPK traffic nearly double. While this indicates strong interest and effective targeting ahead of peak enrollment, it does not explain the year-over-year decline in actual VPK enrollments, which may be tied to fewer young families living in Broward.</p>

	<p>Advocacy & Governmental Relations</p> <p>On August 28, 2025, ELC Broward partnered with State Rep. Marie Woodson (HD 105) to host a Childcare Provider Townhall, where she announced plans to pursue legislation increasing base allocations for high-performing Coalitions. A childcare site visit with State Rep. Christine Hunschofsky is scheduled for September 30, 2025, to highlight the impact of early learning and School Readiness funding.</p> <p>As part of the “Kindness Counts” campaign, VPK and other preschool classrooms and municipal partners will participate in activities such as student artwork displays in October and classroom visits from city officials. On October 21–22, ELC Broward will host a Kindness Book Reading and children’s activity in the Model Classroom, with full details to be included in the upcoming Board Engagement Package.</p> <p>Community Outreach</p> <p>Summer outreach concluded with participation in multiple community resource and back-to-school events. At the City of Sunrise’s Back to School Splash, ELC staff engaged with three Sunrise commissioners and conducted an on-site interview with State Senator Dr. Barbara Sharief. A recap video of the event is available.</p> <p>Chair Maria Hernandez commended Ancel for his active participation in United Way public policy meetings, ensuring early learning needs are represented in the public policy agenda, and thanked him for his advocacy.</p>
Unfinished Business	
New Business	
Matters from the Chair	None
Matters from the Committee	None
Public Comments	None
Next Meeting	First week of December
Adjourn	The meeting adjourned at 12:08 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.

ITEM #/MEETING:	PRC262RB1/ Program Review Committee Meeting
MEETING DATE:	April 16, 2026
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

Background Information:

At the start of FY25/26, Broward’s School Readiness (SR) base allocation was approximately \$4 million less than the FY24/25 SR base funding. This decrease would require the SR enrollments to reduce from an average of 15,000 children per month in FY24/25 to about 14,319 in FY 25/26. In late August, DEL restored about \$2 million through a new mechanism approved as part of the GAA’s “back-of-the-bill” process, which allowed reversion and reappropriation of \$63 million in unspent funds from other Coalitions in FY2025. Despite the initial reduction, no slot reductions were necessary, however new enrollments were temporarily frozen from July 2026 to October 2026, in order to reduce the number of children enrolled. During this time, there were approximately 3,000 children on the SR Waitlist.

Current Status

School Readiness Enrollment:

Since October 2025 when the enrollment freeze was lifted, we have enrolled 2,957 children from SR the waitlist, and only 412 children remain on the list. The waitlist has been reduced to the point where Priority 3 children (ages 0 to 5) are waiting less than one month for services. Current SR enrollment is approximately 15,500 children.

Initial enrollment activity and the agency’s attrition rate have kept enrollments stable and aligned with budgetary projections. Through the close of Q3 of this fiscal year, the attrition rate remains on target, with 75% of families retained in services out of the 12,165 children due for redetermination during the same period.

Provider Match Program:

The Division of Early Learning (DEL) has elected to discontinue funding for the School Readiness Provider Match program beginning in the 2026-2027 fiscal year. This program provides a 50/50 cost-sharing arrangement between DEL and participating childcare small businesses, who each contribute half the cost of childcare for referred employees (who are eligible for SR). Currently, 201 children across 142 participating providers are served through the Provider Match program. In response to DEL’s decision, ELC will sustain the program for the 2026-2027 fiscal year through base School Readiness funds.

Going forward beyond the 2026-2027 fiscal year ELC Broward is considering sunseting the program. This approach is informed by the anticipated continuation of low waitlist times for families seeking standard School Readiness services, which reduces the urgency the Provider Match program was originally designed to address.

School Readiness Plus:

In the state’s School Readiness Plus childcare program currently, 90 children are enrolled. Statewide, 723 children are enrolled in this program, which serves families whose income falls between 85% and 100% of the State Median Income (SMI) and who are over-income for the standard School Readiness program.

Vulnerable Population:

Over the past several months, the ELC has been collaborating with CSC’s team to review and refine the Vulnerable Population childcare program. This program was established to support families participating in primary services through a network of CSC-funded agencies and CSC-identified referral sources. Over time, program utilization shifted such that the greatest demand came not from families in crisis, but from families seeking affordable childcare options. Through productive dialogue with CSC, new program parameters were established to ensure services remain focused on the most vulnerable families. Specifics related to the new parameters will be shared at the PRC meeting.

SR Funding for FY26/27:

As the agency enters Q4 of this fiscal year, planning is underway for service goals in the coming fiscal year. With the legislature not yet reconvened to establish the state budget, planning is based on stable funding assumptions that would support flat enrollments, smaller-scale initial enrollments, and continued progress toward attrition targets.



ITEM #/MEETING:	PRC262RB2 / Program Review Committee Meeting
MEETING DATE:	April 16, 2026
SUBJECT:	VPK Enrollment Update
FOR ACTION:	No
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	None
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	None
AS RECOMMENDED BY:	N/A
ELC STAFF LEADS	Amy Moore

Background Information:

Florida’s Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) Program is free for all 4-year-old children living in the State of Florida. During the school year, 540 instructional hours (usually 3 hours per school day) are allotted for VPK learning. While the vast majority of families who take advantage of VPK do so during the school year, Summer VPK is also available in a much smaller number of preschools and School District sites. During the summer, 300 hours are allotted for learning.

For the 2024-2025 program year, the ELC approved 14,305 school-year applications and 519 summer applications. This resulted in 12,755 children enrolled in the school-year program and 315 in the summer program, for a total of 13,070 children in VPK. This exceeded the Florida VPK Estimating Conference projections updated on August 20, 2025, which estimated 11,912 participants combined.

Current Status:

For the 2025–2026 program year, the agency has approved 13,300 VPK certificates, including both school-year and summer programs. Current enrollment stands at 11,771 students, which is projected to exceed the Florida Statewide Estimating Conference projection of 11,119 full-time equivalent (FTE) participants for Broward County.

Early indicators for the 2026–2027 program year show continued growth. The agency has approved 7,552 VPK certificates compared to 7,246 at the same point in the prior year, an increase of 4%.

While enrollment data for 2026–2027 is not yet available, current approval trends indicate steady demand and fair positioning for the upcoming program year. The current data reflects targeted outreach and advertising efforts continue to positively impact application volume and enrollment.



ITEM #/MEETING:	PRC262RB3 / Program Review Committee Meeting
MEETING DATE:	April 16, 2026
SUBJECT:	Education & Quality Update
FOR ACTION:	No
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	N/A
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	None
AS RECOMMENDED BY:	N/A
ELC STAFF LEADS	Allison Metsch

A. CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) Update

School Readiness

As required by the Division of Early Learning, all ELCs must use the CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) tool to assess School Readiness (SR) Providers who have more than 20% School Readiness enrolled children and/or those who have received a CLASS 1 violation. The tool looks at the interactions between the children and the teachers, and overall classroom management. We observe 50% of each care level, and schools receive a composite score between 1 and 7; any school scoring less than a 4.0 cannot contract with the ELC. A provider may receive an additional Quality Performance Incentive (QPI) differential payment for each enrolled School Readiness based on their score. Scores between 5.0 and 7.0 will receive their respective differentials of 7% and 10%.

To date, we have completed 788 of an estimated 900 School Readiness observations. Our current county-wide average is 5.55.

Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK)

In July 2022, the Division of Early Learning required that all VPK classrooms be observed also using the CLASS tool, both during the school year and summer. We observe every VPK classroom in the county, including our public-school classes. There is no payment differential currently associated with the VPK CLASS score.

To date, we have completed 616 of an estimated approximately 800 VPK observations. We are comfortable with this number, and we are confident we will have all VPK CLASS scores completed on time. The current countywide VPK CLASS score average is 5.69.

At the end of the fiscal year, we will provide an update on our final averages and comparison to previous years.

B. VPK Performance Accountability Update

In July, we will receive our county's new VPK Performance Accountability rates. This will be the second year that the Division of Early Learning (DEL) will release the scores using this metric. The metric holds VPK providers accountable for quality instruction which leads to children learning growth and readiness for kindergarten. To track progress, school year programs test their children three times during the school year (PM1 within the first 30 days, PM2 at midyear, and PM3 in the last 30 days). Each assessment provides information for the program to prompt support for their students.

In combination with the CLASS score and how much growth children demonstrate from PM1 to PM3, the school's designation is calculated.

- The quality classroom instruction score uses the CLASS Composite Program Assessment Score. (50%)
- The child achievement score is calculated as the percentage of eligible children who demonstrate kindergarten readiness on their progress monitoring 3 (PM3). (20%)
- The learning gains score calculates learning gains as a growth rate of 12 points or more between their PM1 and PM3. (30%)

Last year we were proud to share that majority of our VPK providers were performing at a high level.

- 77% of our VPK Providers scored at either Excellent or Above Expectations
- 16% of our VPK Providers scored at Meet Expectations
- 5% of our VPK Providers scored with an Incomplete, meaning there wasn't enough data to complete the metric
- 2% of our VPK Providers scored at Below Expectations (9) or Unsatisfactory (2)

DEL will calculate the performance metrics and corresponding designations for each VPK provider within 45 days of the program end.

We will work with Broward County Public School to offer VPK students the Summer Bridge program. Summer Bridge is a FREE summer program offered by the school district to help VPK students who scored below the 25th percentile on the PM3 Star Early Literacy assessment.

C. Developmental Supports

Funded through AD Henderson, ELC's Peer Support Specialists (PSS) provide support for those families who have been referred for an evaluation or further assessment through Child Find. Our Peer Support Specialists continue to support families through the referral process. Hearing that an evaluation is recommended for your child can feel overwhelming for parents. Our PSS's support families both emotionally by listening and acknowledging their feelings and logistically by reminding them of appointments. We have submitted a proposal to continue this program for another 2 years.

Our data from fiscal year 2024 – 2025 demonstrated:

- Children birth to age 2
 - *84% of scheduled appointments were attended by families.*
 - *57 % of families followed through with their recommended referral. This is a slight increase from the prior year which was 55%.*
- Children ages three- to five-year-old
 - *83% of scheduled appointments were attended by families.*
 - *73 % of families of children ages 3 - 5 years old who have been referred by a specialist followed through with their recommended referral. This is an increase from the prior year which was 61%.*

Looking at July 2025 to February 2026, a little over halfway through the current fiscal year our data trends up.

- Children birth to age two
 - *70% of scheduled appointments attended by families*
 - *26% of families followed through with their recommended referral*
- Children ages three- to five-year-old
 - *82% of scheduled appointments were attended by families*
 - *50% of families followed through with their recommended referrals*

D. Help Me Grow

We are more than midway through our second year of Help Me Grow. We have been focusing on engaging physicians through targeted in-person visits and presentations to increase awareness of developmental screenings, referral pathways, and available community resources for families. Activities include hosting lunch-and-learn sessions, maintaining ongoing communication with participating practices, and building connections with new physicians. The Help Me Grow model requires each affiliate to have a voluntary physician champion. The champion is a steward of the program and represents our community to help spread the word, currently we have partnered with 2 physicians. We will be hosting our next Books, Balls and Blocks event on April 30th at the South Regional Library. The event gives caregivers an opportunity to explore their child development, ask questions and complete the Ages and Stages Questionnaire.



E. 3T's Tune In, Talk More, Take Turns

The Early Learning Coalition of Broward has proudly supported the 3T's initiative since 2020. The 3T's—Tune In, Talk More, and Take Turns—are a research-based, three-step approach designed to help parents strengthen their child's brain development from birth through age three through everyday conversation. This fiscal year, PNC awarded us a \$1,000 mini-grant to expand these resources for our families. We are planning two family engagement events focused on sharing the 3T's. Our first event, scheduled for late April, will feature food, a brief presentation, and a hands-on activity to encourage meaningful conversations and interactions for families and children throughout the day.

F. A Day in K

This June the ELC will host its 3rd annual **Day in K (K for kindergarten)** event at the Museum of Discovery and Science. This year, the plan is to host the event twice, so more kids can experience this great event. Together, approximately 4,000 soon-to-be Kindergarteners and their families are expected to attend one of the two scheduled A Day in K events. Children will get a glimpse of what kindergarten will be like through engaging, fun, hands-on experiences and activities. Families will have the opportunity to get more kindergarten and school related information and resources including bus/transportation information, available afterschool activities, immunization information, special needs resources, etc. as well as access to many community resources.

G. Provider Appreciation Event

This year we are celebrating Provider Appreciation Day on May 20th at 10:30am during our monthly PLAN (provider Learn and Network) Meeting. The theme for this year is a celebration for VPK's 20th Anniversary. We will be celebrating with our providers with some fun trivia and memories.

H. Bootcamp

We held our first New Educator Bootcamp in January, through a funding partnership with the Annual Early Learning Coalition (AELC) and PNC Bank. We had 14 educators in attendance. This is a weeklong training for preschool educators employed for less than 1 year in this field. The school and educators both commit to the educator attending the full week of training. The educator receives a stipend for attending and the provider receives a stipend for the cost of coverage to have one less staff at the school for a week. We are planning our next bootcamp for the end of April. We continue to receive positive feedback from directors and educators on the benefits of attending.

I. Early Learning Landscape

We are currently finalizing plans and logistics for our Early Learning Landscape Project. This collaboration between the Florida Chamber Foundation and ELC Broward, funded by The Broward Workshop, its members, and partners including CSC and the Community Foundation of Broward, aims to better understand Broward's early learning landscape and inform a future roadmap. The study will use surveys, focus groups, and ELC internal data, along with additional data sources such as ALICE, housing, demographics, population trends, and the Chamber Foundation's Scorecard and Gap Map. Results will be synthesized into a comprehensive report outlining current conditions, challenges, promising practices, and future recommendations. We are working on a tight timeline and expect to have activities done by mid-June. We will keep you posted through our next steps.

ITEM/MEETING	PRC262RB4/ Program Review Committee
DATE:	April 16, 2025
SUBJECT:	Children’s Forum INCENTIVE\$ Program
FOR ACTION:	Yes
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Recommend Reduction of Children’s Forum INCENTIVE\$ Program for FY27 Pending Finance and Executive Committee Approval
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	\$259,000 decrease FY 2027 Budget
AS RECOMMENDED BY:	Staff
ELC STAFF LEAD	Allison Metsch

Background

Early Childhood Educator INCENTIVE\$, formerly known as Child Care WAGES® in Florida, rewards early childhood educators with financial incentives based on their education and continuity of employment. By helping to retain the early childhood workforce, INCENTIVE\$ provides children with more stable teacher-child relationships and better educated teachers. INCENTIVE\$ addresses individual professional development efforts and low wages, but does not affect budgets, regular wages, or parent fees within the childcare program.

For over 20 years, the Coalition has partnered with the Children’s Forum, the sole licensee in Florida for the North Carolina-Based Child Care INCENTIVE\$® Program as a sole-sourced vendor to administer the program in Broward County. In FY 2022, the INCENTIVE\$ program rolled out a new, higher stipend scale and changed program participation rules to encourage more Directors to support their staff in applying to the program. The program currently has approximately 275 active participants from about 150 childcare centers in Broward. Semi-annual wage supplements range from \$225 up to \$5000, and the average semi-annual supplement paid is approximately \$525.

When stimulus funding became available in 2020, the Coalition more than doubled the funding for the INCENTIVE\$ program to over \$1 million and gradually reduced it down to approximately \$709K in the two years after the stimulus funding sunsetted.

Current Status

In the absence of the non-recurring stimulus funding and with ELC Broward experiencing reductions to our overall School Readiness funding, staff is recommending another reduction beginning FY 26/27. This recommendation was made following careful consideration and extensive budget-related conversations, taking into consideration which quality/education efforts are core to our mission and current education model and the overall cost to fund them.

We will take a closer look at other comparable programs that provide wage supplements to early childhood educators. For example, Miami-Dade County’s locally administered wage supplement program uses a different wage scale than the Children’s Forum.

Our highest participation rates are among educators who have earned a National CDA credential. We also want to better understand the types of programs educators use to obtain a National CDA. There are many options available, including short-term and weekend-based courses. While these programs may be convenient, they often do not offer the depth or quality of instruction needed to fully prepare educators for work in early childhood classrooms. Over the next fiscal year, we will model several wage and programmatic scenarios and compare them to similar opportunities across South Florida.

Recommended Action from Staff:

Recommend Reduction of Children’s Forum INCENTIVE\$ Program pending Finance and Executive Committee Approval

Supporting Documentation

- None

ITEM/ MEETING:	PRC262RB5 / Program Review Committee Meeting
DATE:	April 16, 2026
SUBJECT:	School Board of Broward County Lease Agreement for Space at Broward Estates
FOR ACTION:	Yes
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Approve programmatic change to conclude the current lease with Gulfstream Early Learning Center for Excellence and enter into a new lease with Broward Estates Early Learning Center.
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	N/A
AS RECOMMENDED BY:	Staff
ELC STAFF LEAD	Allison Metsch

Background

Since the School Board of Broward County, Florida (SBBC) opened the Gulfstream Early Learning Center for Excellence in 2018, the Coalition has leased dedicated office space in the facility to provide eligibility counselor services for families, which also includes shared access to larger common areas that are used for provider training.

In school year 2025 – 2026, SBBC repurposed Broward Estates Elementary to Broward Estates Early Learning Center. As with Gulfstream, SBBC inquired about our interest in renting space at this location. Although maintaining operations at both locations was considered, the overall need and financial realities do not support leasing space at both sites at this time.

Current Status:

During our use of the Gulfstream location, family demand for eligibility services at that site remained consistently low. After evaluating utilization, fiscal impact, and programmatic needs, staff recommends concluding the current lease with Gulfstream Early Learning Center for Excellence and entering a new lease with Broward Estates Early Learning Center.

The proposed partnership with SBBC will provide the ELC with a dedicated classroom located centrally within the county, reserved exclusively for ELC use.

The new location will serve as a centralized hub for community CDA training and is strategically positioned to address the growing need for increased professional development opportunities in the central region of the county. This transition directly supports upcoming CLASS 2.0 training requirements and strengthens our ability to meet provider needs efficiently while ensuring responsible use of organizational resources.

Recommended Action from Staff:

Approve programmatic change to conclude the current lease with Gulfstream Early Learning Center for Excellence and enter into a new lease with Broward Estates Early Learning Center.

Supporting Documentation

- None

ITEM #/MEETING:	PRC262RB6 / Program Review Committee Meeting
MEETING DATE:	April 16, 2026
SUBJECT:	Q3 Outreach/Advocacy Update
FOR ACTION:	No
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	None
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	None
AS RECOMMENDED BY:	N/A
ELC STAFF LEADS	Ancel Pratt III, Amy Moore

Background Information:

The Communications and Outreach team continues to drive awareness and engagement across all core programs, leveraging strategic digital campaigns to boost enrollment while actively advocating for sustainable early learning funding at both the state and municipal levels.

Current Status:

VPK Enrollment & Promotion

To drive sign-ups for the upcoming school year, the communications team launched a paid Google Ads campaign.

- As of April 10, 2026, we have successfully reached 7,552 approved VPK applications.
- This represents a 4% year-over-year increase compared to the 7,246 at the same point in the prior year.
- The team plans to resume paid promotions in Q4 to capture the final wave of enrollments.

VPK Weekly Update 4/10/26

Tracy Norelien
To: VPKupdates
Cc: Armara Rodriguez, Sheena Green
4:41 PM

2026-2027			
Status	School Year	Summer	Grand Total
Approved	7,497	55	7,552
Rejected	599	24	623
Submitted- Pending Review	29	1	30
Grand Total	8,125	80	8,205
Enrolled			

VPK Daily Update 4/11/25

Armara Rodriguez
To: VPKupdates
Cc: Tracy Norelien, Sheena Green
4/11/2025

2025-2026			
Status	School Year	Summer	Grand Total
Approved	7,183	63	7,246
Rejected	653	42	695
Submitted- Pending Review	5	0	5
Grand Total	7,841	105	7,946
Enrolled			

School Readiness (SR) Outreach

Following the Re-Ob funds award and Family Services' great work at drastically reducing our waitlist over time, we immediately escalated grassroots outreach. To ensure additional families are aware of our services and to help ensure funds are swiftly deployed to families in need. We resumed physical flyer drop-offs to providers and are building a targeted Q4 Google Ads campaign to increase school readiness awareness in the community.



Bookworms Program

We launched targeted, paid Facebook advertisements in March 2026. This digital push was highly successful, effectively doubling our Bookworm submissions compared to the previous month.

- By the close of Q3, we successfully invoiced \$152,234.71, spending down 76% of our \$200,000 Bookworms budget.
- We are pacing perfectly to exhaust the entire budget by the end of Q4.

Advocacy & Governmental Relations

Advocacy efforts remained strong during the legislative session.

- Amy Moore and Ancel Pratt III traveled to Tallahassee to attend Children's Week.
- The team met with members of the Broward Legislative Delegation to provide friendly reminders regarding our budget needs.
- To personalize the impact of these funds, we presented the delegation members with "Thank You" posterboards custom-created by local childcare providers situated within their respective districts.
- We look forward to re-engaging directly with these elected officials in their home districts over the summer.



Municipal Match Funding

School Readiness municipal match request letters have been distributed, and we are currently responding to requests to complete specific match grant applications for various cities. We are working closely with the Admin team to ensure all interactions and data are properly updated in our CRM.

- *Highlight:* Following a presentation by Ancel Pratt III at the December 2025 North Lauderdale City Council meeting, the commission was highly receptive to our impact data. As a direct result, the city agreed to a 50% increase in their match funds, which was formally approved during their January 2026 (Q3) meetings.

