

Board of Directors Minutes - 04/05/07



Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe
Board of Directors Meeting – Minutes of April 5, 2007 at 8:00AM

- BOARD ATTENDANCE:** O. Verdeja Jr. (Chair), Y. Johnson (Vice Chair), C. Chapell, P. Johnson, M. Hill, J. Russell, S. La Villa, G. Schwartz, D. Lawrence, Y. Perkins, N. Hernandez Hendrix, W. Harvey (Board Attorney), N. Vitti (newly appointed board member as of 4/5/07), D. Williams Jr. (newly appointed board member as of 4/5/07), D. Park (newly appointed board member as of 4/5/07)
- STAFF ATTENDANCE:** E.Torres, J. Armbrister, P. von Fuchs, M. Manrara, L. Barreiros, B. Carrick, W. Salter, D. Chang, R. Philippe, M. Williams, S. Palenzuela
- GENERAL ATTENDANCE:** K. Kerr, M. Woodson, G. Gregg, R. Moreno, A. Sejeck, R. Moreno, D. Blomberg, L. Blair, M. Binelo, B. Elbaum, C. Abbott, L. Carmona Sanchez, M. Loret de Mola, L. Santamaria, B. de la Sierra, E. Humes-Newbold, M. Abety, T. Diaz, I. Perez, E. Aldonado, V. Fernandez, J. Fernandez, Z. Laffitte, E. Rivera, D. Hensley, C. Maclean, J. Layzer, J. Leinfelder, K. Suarez-Espinosa, P. Saunders, L. Ramos, J. Gonzalez, R. Signori, M. Quevele, L. Dinehart, C. Bleiker, L. Manfra

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION	RECOMMENDATION/ACTION
WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Octavio Verdeja, chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. ▪ Pamela von Fuchs called roll and a quorum was established with nine (9) voting members. ▪ O. Verdeja stated that he and Evelio Torres went to Tallahassee to fight the \$8M cut. Fifty-seven providers took a bus and went to Tallahassee and made some great noise; the \$8M was not cut. O. Verdeja requested that Mr. de la Sierra stand up and show the t-shirt the providers wore that day. [Mr. de la Sierra proceeded to pass out a green t-shirt and a photograph of the providers to board members]. He then thanked the providers. ▪ O. Verdeja indicated that he and E. Torres are trying to get health benefits for providers. He will probably speak more to it in May. He doesn't know how it's going to pan out and how the coalition will get the money but they're working on it. ▪ E. Torres stated that the provider rate increase looks like it will go through; they've been working on it since January. He has met with a number of providers to ensure input was received on the best way to structure the rate increases and are proposing a rate increase for both Dade and Monroe counties. He expects the final sign-off by the Agency for Workforce Innovation in the next week or so and hopefully effective May 1st. Hopefully next year the coalition will be able to look at increases again. ▪ O. Verdeja acknowledged Pat Johnson and her six or seven year board term. He thanked her for her service—taking the coalition from its infancy to now. 	
APPROVAL OF MINUTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • O. Verdeja called for the approval of the meeting minutes from 2/15/07 • Yesenia Perkins moved to approve the minutes of 2/15/07 • Motion is seconded by G. Schwartz • Motion unanimously passed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Y. Perkins moved to approve the minutes of 2/15/07 • Motion was seconded by G. Schwartz • Motion unanimously passed



CEO REPORT

- E. Torres provided an update on the coalition. In terms of strengths: group of dedicated staff, adequate financial resources, committed providers, willing community partners, attracting talented potential employees, low staff-turnover, staff are open to change and learning from the past in efforts to move forward, the service delivery system in Monroe is cohesive and is a positive model for the rest of the state.

Opportunities for improvement: internal control, infrastructure, function as a government agency even though the coalition is a non-profit, contract performance and monitoring, Monroe county capacity, customer service concerns (to the coalition, the County, tracking), public relations and communications (not a lot of brand equity), no performance measurement system (at the coalition and statewide), priorities are not clear to the staff, board engagement, enforcing contractor/s accountability, reinforcing the core mission of the coalition.

Commissioner Seijas has committed to work on acquiring \$770,000 for the local match as that is the shortfall. She is talking to the County Manager as well as her colleagues. E. Torres fully anticipates that she'll be able to come up with the local match.

A corrective action plan in response to the monitoring report has been sent to AWI; they accepted the first draft of the report. Staff meets twice per month to stay in line with the plan. The goal for the next time the state visits is that the coalition will have met all of the requirements.

Accomplishments include: meeting all of the board members, providers in all areas of the county, parents, elected officials; center visits; strengthening the infrastructure and level of accountability (with both contractors and internally); reestablishing committee meetings, creating a performance report card; obtaining Plan approval (a credit to the staff, particularly Juanita Armbrister); conducting a program evaluation; increasing the number of children served; substantial compliance (however not full-compliance) with assessments requirements; finalizing the 2007-2008 assessment plan.

- David Lawrence stated that Evelio Torres is off to a wonderful start and exceeded expectations.
- Silvia La Villa acknowledged Maggie Manrara's ability to explain complex financial details clearly.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS
Litigation Committee**

- Gerald Schwartz stated that litigation with Family Central is at a standstill. They voluntarily withdrew from the coalition's RFP application process. Litigation is pending and G. Schwartz hopes, over the next couple of months, to amicably



<p>Program Committee</p>	<p>resolve differences and come to a resolution. With attorneys Al Davis and Walter Harvey's help, he is confident they will come to an amicable settlement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nora Hernandez Hendrix said that the program committee has met twice already and is a seven (7) member committee thus far, comprised of four (4) board members and three (3) providers. The committee has reviewed a number of reports and the staff has done an excellent job of teaching the committee in order for it to make sound recommendations to the board. The School Readiness (SR) plan was reviewed and endorsed and the committee will continue to work with staff in monitoring it. <p>Regarding the issue of creating separate program-silos, mostly due to funding streams, the committee will continue to work with staff to maximize resources and expand services in the community.</p> <p>Once the board establishes regularly scheduled meeting dates, the program committee will do the same. The desire is to have the meetings one week before the full board meeting and that is a pending issue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ E. Torres stated that the only resolution related to the program committee is the ITN (Invitation to Negotiate) for the programs that are currently run in-house. 	
<p>Nominating Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yvonne Johnson indicated that the nominating committee met as some board members' terms are up, namely Pat Johnson. The board thanks her for her service all of these years. Also, Sara Herald and several names have been submitted as optional members as well as current board member positions. A quorum was not established so the committee could not vote but the members present were polled and there was unanimous agreement on the names she will submit as chair. Sara Herald's term is up and the committee agrees she should be reappointed. She has agreed she would like to serve for another term. Two additional private sector names are also being recommended: Bud Park to serve again and Harve Mogul who is head of United Way; he also served on the board a couple of years ago. <p>Also, the committee recommends the following for optional membership: Judge Cindy Lederman who works with the juvenile judicial system and David Williams who works for Informed Families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ David Lawrence asked for clarification on optional membership. ➤ Walter Harvey responded that an optional member is a board member that does not fit the category of private sector member or mandatory member under the statutes. Yes, optional members are full board member that do not have a vested interest in Voluntary Prekindergarten or School Readiness services. 	



- Y. Johnson continued saying that Harve Mogul, although he heads a public entity qualifies as a private sector member because United Way is one of the top 25% employers in the Miami-Dade county region, thus fitting the private sector definition under the statutes.

The representative for Miami-Dade schools was Dr. Jones who will be stepping down. Dr. Crew has nominated Nikolai Vitti as his replacement. The committee is submitting his name for approval as well.

- N. Vitti stated that he is the Knowledge Management Officer and a member of the cabinet [Miami-Dade County Public Schools]. He just finished his internship through Harvard. Dr. Crew asked N. Vitti to serve because he wants to bring coalition matters closer [to the superintendent's office].
 - D. Lawrence inquired about knowledge management.
 - N. Vitti replied that it entails a lot of different work but mainly it's capturing the knowledge that goes with all of the initiatives the district is undertaking now.

- D. Lawrence moved to approve all of the nominees to the board of directors
- Gerald Schwartz seconded
- Motion unanimously passed

- E. Torres added that Judge Lederman was unable to attend the board meeting because she is also on the board of the Community Based Alliance. Today is their board meeting as well. The meetings are held every first Thursday of every month at 8am.
- E. Torres went on to say that a number of board members requested that regular board meeting dates be scheduled. A survey will be sent out to determine which Thursday of the month is most convenient for board members. Before anything is finalized, the coalition will ensure there is general consensus.
- Y. Johnson mentioned that Morgan Hill's [Connie Chapell's] term will end in June and her name has been resubmitted by the Monroe county providers that she represents. The nominating committee will submit her name again after it has been opened up to general advertisement as done previously.
- W. Harvey said that these names will also be forwarded to Tallahassee as part of an amendment to the Plan.
- D. Williams introduced himself to the board. He is the community relations director of Informed Families. He is also chairman of the board to a magnet school.
 - E. Torres commented that he has known D. Williams for a number of years and he has never stopped working on behalf of kids.

- D. Lawrence moved to approve all of the nominees to the board of directors
- Motion was seconded by G. Schwartz
- Motion unanimously passed

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<p>Provider Services Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ W. Harvey stated that Connie Chapell is the representative of Monroe providers and her term will expire in June. The coalition must go through the process of advertising her seat to see if providers would like her to continue serving. Morgan Hill is the governor's appointee; her term has expired however it continues until the governor either replaces or reappoints her. ▪ Silvia La Villa reported that the last provider services committee meeting was successful. Providers had an opportunity to express themselves and prioritize their needs. The coalition and providers are working towards a true partnership. There are concerns about assessments but the most important thing is that communication should be open in every process. 	
<p>Audit Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ O. Verdeja stated that the board needed to review Motions 032707-09 [To approve the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the contracting of a company to meet our internal auditing needs], 032707-10 [To approve the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the contracting of a company to meet our external auditing needs] and 032707-11 [To accept the Audited Financial Statements and Reports on Compliance and on Internal Control for the Fiscal Year Ended June 20, 2006]. The audit committee met and accepted the audit. Motion 9 relates to putting out a RFP for internal audit needs. Motion 10 is to put out a RFP for external audit needs and Motion 11 is to approve the audited financial statements which the audit committee has already approved. 	
<p>RESOLUTIONS 032707-09 through 032707-11</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G. Schwartz moved to approve Resolution 032707-09: To approve the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the contracting of a company to meet our internal auditing needs, Resolution 032707-10: To approve the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the contracting of a company to meet our external auditing needs and Resolution 032707-11: To accept the Audited Financial Statements and Reports on Compliance and on Internal Control for the Fiscal Year Ended June 20, 2006 • Motion was seconded by M. Hill • Motion unanimously passed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G. Schwartz moved to approve Resolutions 032707-09, 032707-10 and 032707-11 • Motion was seconded by M. Hill • Motion unanimously passed
<p>Finance Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ J. Perkins asked M. Manrara to speak to the issue of net assets. The state asked the coalition to return a large portion of the net assets the coalition thought it would be able to keep—approximately \$1.2M prior to the end of May. From the last board meeting, members know that the coalition had an anticipated surplus and is trying to use as much of it as possible. The increase in the number of children enrolled has helped and if the coalition stays above the enrollment target through the end of the year then as much of the anticipated surplus will be used as possible. 	

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RESOLUTIONS 032707-01 through 032707-05

- Ramiro Moreno asked if there was any way for the zero to five category to be broken down by age.
 - M. Manrara replied yes, there will be analysis of that in much finer detail. One of the consulting contracts is to actually work with someone who will identify the data elements related to the ready pool, waiting list and number of children leaving etc.

- J. Perkins requested a motion to ratify Resolutions 032707-01 through 032707-05 and Resolution 032707-06 will be addressed by O. Verdeja.
- Y. Johnson moved to approve Resolution 032707-01: To approve the contract between the ELC and DTI Integrated Business Solutions, Resolution 032707-02: To approve the contract between ELC and CWI Communications, Resolution 032707-03: To approve the contract between the ELC and Kokopelli Associates LLC, Resolution 032707-04: To approve the amendment to the assessment contract between the ELC and Florida International University (FIU), Resolution 032707-05: To approve the amendment to the Early Reading First (ERF) contract between the ELC and Florida International University (FIU)
- Motion was seconded by G. Schwartz
- Motion unanimously passed

- E. Torres stated that in January, it was discussed that the coalition's programs could be scaled up to serve more kids in more centers. The coalition contracted with Jean Layzer who reviewed the programs, looked at the annual report and spoke to staff and stakeholders. The conclusion of Jean's report will be released this month. The recommendation is to try and find a way to collaborate with partners in the community to leverage SR dollars in addition to the dollars that are received from other resources to serve more children and centers. Five ITNS propose to accomplish that. The evaluation component will be extremely important. There are four service components: assisting centers with accreditation, inclusion services for children with special needs, training and technical assistance for screenings and assessments, and vision and hearing—essentially health screenings.

RESOLUTION 032707-06 through 032707-08

- J. Perkins requested a motion to ratify Resolutions 032707-06 [To approve the Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) the ELC's contracting of programs currently performed in-house], 032707-07 [To approve the Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) the contracting of a company to develop and implement a web-based performance dashboard], and 032707-08 [To approve the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the contracting of a company to meet our temporary staffing needs].
 - D. Lawrence inquired about a performance dashboard.
 - E. Torres replied that a dashboard is a software system that will provide the community and stakeholders with performance information regarding

- Y. Johnson moved to approve Resolutions 032707-01, 032707-02, 032707-03, 032707-04 and 032707-05
- Motion was seconded by G. Schwartz
- Motion unanimously passed

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contracts, assessments. The colors of red, green and amber will indicate the level of performance. To acquire more detail one can click on links and it will give the nuts and bolts of the data.

- G. Schwartz moved to approve Resolutions 032707-06: To approve the Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) the ELC's contracting of programs currently performed in-house, 032707-07: To approve the Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) the contracting of a company to develop and implement a web-based performance dashboard, and 032707-08: To approve the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the contracting of a company to meet our temporary staffing needs
 - Motion was seconded by Jackye Russell
 - Motion unanimously passed
- J. Perkins requested a motion to ratify Resolutions 032707-12 [To ratify the contract between the ELC and Belmont Research Associates], 032707-13 [To approve the contract between the ELC and Belmont Research Associates], 032707-14 [To ratify the contract between the ELC and Christopher Norwood] and 032707-15 [To approve the use of reserve "old monies" or the Florida Partnership Net Assets [FPNA] to acquire curriculum materials].
 - D. Lawrence inquired about the contract with Chris Norwood.
 - E. Torres reported that Chris Norwood was hired on a contract basis to help manage the quality initiatives project. He is working under the direction of the CFO and with staff and community partners in undertaking this enormous project and spending all of the dollars.
- J. Russell moved to approve Resolutions 032707-12- To ratify the contract between the ELC and Belmont Research Associates, 032707-13: To approve the contract between the ELC and Belmont Research Associates, 032707-14: To ratify the contract between the ELC and Christopher Norwood and 032707-15: To approve the use of reserve "old monies" or the Florida Partnership Net Assets [FPNA] to acquire curriculum materials
 - Motion was seconded by M. Hill
 - Motion unanimously passed
- J. Perkins stated the audit committee needed its bylaws approved by the full board and they were reviewed and approved by the audit committee.
- G. Schwartz moved to approve the Audit Committee Bylaws: Policies and Procedures
 - Motion was seconded by J. Perkins
 - Motion unanimously passed

- G. Schwartz moved to approve Resolutions 032707-06, 032707-07, 032707-08
- Motion was seconded by Jackye Russell
- Motion unanimously passed

- J. Russell moved to approve Resolutions 032707-12, 032707-13, 032707-14 and 032707-15
- Motion was seconded by M. Hill
- Motion unanimously passed

- G. Schwartz moved to approve the Audit Committee Bylaws: Policies and Procedures
- Motion was seconded by J. Perkins
- Motion unanimously passed

RESOLUTION 032707-12 through 032707-15



CFO REPORT

- O. Verdeja stated the finance committee needed their bylaws approved by the full board; they were already reviewed and approved by the finance committee.
 - M. Hill moved to approve the Finance Committee Bylaws: Policies and Procedures
 - Motion was seconded by Y. Johnson
 - Motion unanimously passed

 - O. Verdeja said the board needs to establish a bylaws committee and Alan Eckstein has expressed interest in chairing it. Since he is not present, O. Verdeja said he would wait to discuss that until the next board meeting.

 - M. Manrara thanked everyone for their warm reception and congratulatory emails. As far as expenditure, the coalition is on track. Strategic planning sessions have been set up with some of the committees to begin budgeting for next year. She also must thank the staff from CDS (Child Development Services) as the coalition is really moving forward in addressing the needs of the community—the slot utilization has been increasing substantially since December. Then, the coalition was serving 26,000 students, and now, is projected to be at 31,000 by the end of this month.
- As enrollment is increased, there is the dilemma of matching but M. Manrara is confident that will be accomplished in April. Enrollment is being watched carefully as the coalition does not want to disenroll. As a result of underenrollment in the first six (6) months of the year, the coalition needs to catch up and use the funds. There is much discussion on the quality initiatives; the providers are seeing the benefits—curricula, materials, providing something for every child that is served under the SR grant. The hope is that everything will be purchased and paid for by May 31st. There are still some nay-sayers at the state who do not believe it can be accomplished by that date, but M. Manrara is confident that the coalition will.
- All of the ITNS will be put into numbers to better assist in the budgeting process. Additionally, workshops will be set up to help increase knowledge on funding structures, how to spend the dollars, funding constraints.
- D. Lawrence stated that the new director of the Department of Human Services moved swiftly to resolve a problem with a provider trying to have her own child registered. She also had the moral courage to write a letter of apology noting the lessons to be learned and that the coalition will see a higher level of performance.
- Discussion ensued about upcoming board meetings. O. Verdeja reiterated that a survey will be sent out to solicit preference of a series of meeting dates. The June 14th board meeting date will not work because he and E. Torres will be in Deerfield Beach.

- M. Hill moved to approve the Finance Committee Bylaws: Policies and Procedures
- Motion was seconded by Y. Johnson
- Motion unanimously passed

- O. Verdeja said the board needs to establish a bylaws committee and Alan Eckstein has expressed interest in chairing it. Since he is not present, O. Verdeja said he would wait to discuss the committee until the next board meeting.



<p>Public Comments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Karen Kerr inquired about the mini-grants and curriculum offered. As a Miami-Dade SR provider for 17 years, this is the first year she's had less than 30 children, she has four (4) children and therefore does not qualify for the curriculum fair or the mini-grant. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ E. Torres responded by saying a snap-shot of centers was taken in January. The coalition did not look at the names of any centers, but based the materials and services offered to providers solely on the number of SR children served in January. There was a minimum number of children required to receive a curriculum but everyone qualifies for center materials. ➤ Meeting participants echoed that mini-grants are given in Monroe county. ➤ K. Kerr suggested it would have been better to take an average of the number of CDS kids. ▪ B. de la Sierra acknowledged the providers who went to Tallahassee. ▪ Linda Carmona-Sanchez thanked the coalition on behalf of the providers for the quality initiatives project. She stated it is unprecedented and she has never seen the coalition move forward in such a proactive way. ▪ In response to a provider's inquiry regarding assessments, Juanita Armbrister acknowledged that the coalition appreciates the providers who have been doing the Ages & Stages Questionnaires however the process is not complete yet. The process is in two-phases: screen the child first and bring the information back to the coalition so scoring can be completed and entered into a database. Letters will then go out to parents and the providers. In this way, providers can speak to parents as well. The NEED staff will also sit down with parents of any child that has a red flag. The end result is the coalition will ensure referrals are given and followed-up with the necessary services. ▪ E. Torres and Bethany Sands agreed that a kit for providers would be helpful in completing assessments and should be considered as the coalition moves forward. ▪ O. Verdeja acknowledged Phyllis Tynes-Saunders. He added that he has been on the board for a year and a half and this is the most optimistic he's been. ▪ Meeting adjourned at 9:45am. 	
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Signed and approved by:

S. Herald, Board Secretary

Date