

Board of Directors Minutes - 06/11/07



Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe
Board of Directors Meeting – Minutes of June 11, 2007 at 8:00AM

BOARD ATTENDANCE: O. Verdeja Jr. (Chair), Y. Johnson (Vice Chair), R. Beasley, J. Russell, S. Herald, M. Hill (8:18 am), D. Park, D. Lawrence (8:13 am), Y. Perkins, N. Hernandez Hendrix (8:17 am), G. Schwartz, N. Seijas, A. Weller, H. Mogul, D. Williams Jr., M. Bryant, C. Chapell, N. Vitti (8:31 am), S. La Villa, A. Eckstein, W. Harvey (Board Attorney).

BOARD NOT IN ATTENDANCE: C. Lederman, D. Armstrong, J. Robinson

STAFF ATTENDANCE: E. Torres, J. Armbrister, M. Manrara, A. Parrino, N. Ali, T. Carbajal, A. Gonzalez, B. Carrick, B. Sands, W. Salter, A. Soto, M. Williams, F. Altare, T. Alonso, K. Molinario, R. Philippe, D. Chang, S. Ausley, A. Ojeda,

GENERAL ATTENDANCE: M. Woodson, M. Binelo, C. Abbott, M. Angola, H. Angola, E. Enriquez, D. Blomberg, A. Seijack, M. Loret de Mok, M. Alonso, M. Abety, R. Signori, E. Rivera, R. Moreno, N. Montaner, P. Tynes-Saunders, K. Suarez, L. Carmona Sanchez, J. Leinfelder

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION	RECOMMENDATION/ACTION
WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Octavio Verdeja called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.▪ Nadira Ali called roll and a quorum was established with sixteen (16) voting members.▪ O. Verdeja moved around some agenda items by moving up the motion 060707-06, the Wesley House contract approval up, and moving the motion 060707-05 to follow, allowing more time to look at the Budget. He Stated that the Coalition was very fortunate not to have 8 million cut. They have had an incredible year of collaboration with a significant part of that attributed to Evelio Torres. E. Torres has done a phenomenal job in bringing community and partners together. O. Verdeja thanks E. Torres, the providers and the board members. He especially thanked Jessie for her all her time. O. Verdeja also thanked the county for their time and Commissioner Natacha Seijas for their partnership with the Coalition. O. Verdeja continued by saying that there is a need to improve the quality of early care and education and the readiness rates. Miami-Dade County was below average so they need to work to be at or above the average. The Coalition also needs to secure funds for executive partnership.▪ N. Seijas also gave her thanks and complimented the staff on the great job they have done.	
APPROVAL OF MINUTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ O. Verdeja called for the approval of the meeting minutes from 5/03/07▪ Sara Herald moved to approve the minutes of 05/03/07	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• S. Herald moved to approve the minutes of 05/03/07

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Motion is seconded by Gerald Schwartz ▪ Motion unanimously passed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion was seconded by G. Schwartz • Motion unanimously passed
CEO REPORT	<p>E. Torres began by complimenting the incredible staff at the Coalition who have been putting in long hours and done an excellent job over the last 6 months. The budget for the fiscal year seemed to be headed in a good direction. There was a surplus which has been difficult to manage so the Coalition purchased curriculum materials for centers, equipment and provided grants in Monroe County. Enrollment was opened as much as the Coalition could tolerate. They did not want to deobligate the dollars from the surplus and they tried to serve as many kids as they could. At the time of the board meeting, enrollment was closed except for mandatory categories. The Coalition's agreement was to serve 29,302 children and they were serving a little bit over 30,000. They will probably reopen enrollment at the end of July, early August. The Coalition was focused more on the categories of kids and the actual numbers being served; looking at numbers in different categories and adjust on a monthly basis.</p> <p>The Coalition has been meeting with the County on a regular basis looking at the numbers. They have had a relatively small error rate. However, mistakes were being quickly corrected. The Local Match has been an issue and there was a projected short fall of \$770,000 but the County provided \$400,000. The Coalition was working with AWI so there should not be a problem in regards to the shortfall.</p> <p>The bigger issue was the CCEP Match for next year. The County could not provide the Match. Therefore, E. Torres went to The Children's Trust to request the match. The purpose of the Match is to serve kids whose families are at 200% of the poverty level. The reason the Coalition has the CCEP is to encourage corporations and local organizations to serve some of their own staff that may qualify. If The Children's Trust came through, the Coalition could serve 2000 kids give or take.</p> <p>In terms of the invitations to negotiate: the Coalition had an award pending for the health screening. They received two proposals and were looking at awarding the contract to an entity that serves a little over 3,000 kids. The Coalition will combine that with some work Miami Children's Hospital is doing because they have offered some of their slots. The Coalition released the Quality and Accreditation ITN and the Assessments and Inclusion ITN was released June 8, 2007. An evaluation ITN is planned for January 2008 in which the Coalition will look at its programs and determine the results and outcomes.</p>	

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	<p>⇒ O. Verdeja asked if the internal audit will be released to which Maggie Manrara informed him that it would be next.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ E. Torres continued with the QRIS that was released by Children's Trust. The Coalition submitted a proposal but had not heard back yet. The Coalition will combine it with its own efforts to promote the Quality Rating System. There was already work being done with the program with the Children's Forum, in which the Trust provided \$750,000 and the Coalition provided \$250,000 to provide incentives and stipends for teachers remaining in place. <p>In regards to accreditation, Miami-Dade is at 27%. E.Torres presented the school readiness numbers from April since he did not have the May numbers. However he predicted it would probably be around the same range of 33,000.</p> <p>The inquiry waiting list includes children being placed in the ready pool. When enrollment opens again, their eligibility will already be determined so they would automatically go into one slot and will be served. The number fluctuates on a daily basis.</p> <p>The Coalition is working on a marketing campaign to promote VPK in partnership with the Children's Trust. They are spending a total of \$300,000; \$200,000 which is from the Children's Trust. The Coalition has a goal of at least 20,000 children for the next school year. E. Torres continued with the number of VPK Eligible not paid. Miami-Dade County has the highest number of kids that have a certificate and are not enrolled. The Coalition is trying to encourage families to get children enrolled.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">⇒ S. Herald suggested getting in touch with Orange County to find out what they do process wise that Miami-Dade might want to emulate since Orange County is similar in size and have very low numbers of children not enrolled.⇒ N. Seijas Stated that from what she learned at the last providers meeting, eligibility certificates were turned in to the school system by many parents and never given back which confused people. It became an issue for some who sat and waited because they didn't understand the process.⇒ Roseline Philippe Stated that she had discussions with Duval County and in terms of the process Miami-Dade uses, there is nothing really different. It needs to be understood that Miami-Dade is the only county that has 100% participation from the school district. The issue is figuring out how we can do registration in	
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	<p>concert with the school district.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The VPK children served of estimated four-year olds State average was 54.4%. The Coalition is trying to increase the number of children served to 20,000 for next school year.▪ E. Torres continued with the preliminary readiness rates that were released by the State. The final rates would be released on June 19-2007. Any provider scoring 200 or below would require assistance to get their score up. 23% of providers scored 200 or below in Miami-Dade County.<ul style="list-style-type: none">⇒ Dave Lawrence commented that the scores are deceptive. He Stated it depends on what children are in the centers. It doesn't speak to the progress of an individual child which is crucially important but rather speaks to a snapshot of where they stand at a particular point in time. The State needs to do appropriate assessments along the course of the year or they will never know how children are advancing. They still don't have data in the State on progress of each child and they don't know several critical factors that influence why a child is going a particular way. Although it is the State's effort at accountability, it is a very deceiving number.⇒ Silvia La Villa stressed that there are many factors that are extremely important. An indicator is awareness, for example, a child learning English is not part of the snapshot. It is after the fact and damaging. Other scores the State deals with are rated differently and other loopholes looked at before the scores are released, but that doesn't seem to be the case in early childhood education.⇒ D. Lawrence Stated that there is a stereotypical cliché. For example, the stereotypical child in Pinecrest will do better than the stereotypical child in a poorer neighborhood. Centers in some ways cherry pick who is in the center because it is to their advantage who are in the readiness rates to have children who will score higher because they have gotten more of the basics in their first 3 years of life.⇒ S. Herald wanted to see in the package something stating that out of the low performing centers, how they can tell how these accredited centers are relative to the non accredited centers. If this tool is a measurement at all, she wanted to see if it made a difference relative to the scores children received to know if they are on the right track with continuing to push accreditation.	
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	<p>⇒ S. La Villa Stated the snapshot doesn't look at all indicators of accreditation but instead looks at some teaching strategies in particular.</p> <p>⇒ S. Herald responded that if they are looking to give technical assistance to the low performing centers, it would be helpful to know whether or not the accredited centers on average scored much higher. Then the technical assistance might be towards accreditation if there is a tie in between the two.</p> <p>⇒ Nikolai Vitti Stated that as a board we have to focus on how we will help these low performance centers. It is what it is. It is the board's responsibility to look at the data. The students being judged on same criteria and figure why they might be lower but take into consideration the quality of instruction. They can't change the short comings of students but quality of Instruction can be.</p> <p>⇒ D. Lawrence countered that it is the obligation of the Coalition to do something so that its better when children come into an early learning program. We need to know correlation between various sorts of accreditation and to see what is working and what is not. Very distinct plateau in terms of accreditation for a significant period of time.</p> <p>⇒ R. Moreno from REM Learning center Stated that the rating also impacts children with special needs and it is also something to be concerned about.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Yesenia Perkins asked what the population survey was for the program population. E. Torres responded that it was 639 for Miami-Dade County. 32% providers scored between 250–300. Seventeen providers scored between 290–300. Ten providers scored at perfect readiness rate. He added that the funding is different and the Coalition only receives about ninety thousand dollars from the State. The Coalition is developing a plan to assist centers on the low end. However, they have to make a decision on which group do we focus on since there is not much money.▪ Nora Hernandez Hendrix asked at what point is the child assessment done. R. Philippe Stated that it is done in kindergarten in August and September.<ul style="list-style-type: none">⇒ N. Hernandez Hendrix Stated that it seemed to be more of an assessment of the child and not the provider. They need to be careful to not jump to conclusion about providers.⇒ Linda Carmona Sanchez Stated there are a lot of flaws in the system. There are also special needs children not diagnosed until 1st grade that are being assessed using the same instrument. This	
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	<p>tool that will have negative impact on providers in the community since it is published information. However it is a first step and they need to put something together as a legislative platform to create changes they want.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yvonne Johnson Stated that the board brought up issues that speak to the fact that as a Coalition talking about school readiness that they can't focus exclusively on the educational centers. We need to reach out to the parents. Special needs need to be identified early and have more resources can be directed their way. What can we do to help children performing poorly? Perhaps when data is presented, can offer explanations. Not necessarily reflection of center but children not necessarily having advantages. ▪ N. Seijas said it is a message that needs to be looked at and addressed. How do we reach parents and grandmothers and expand children's ability to have a better score? It is not an issue that can be addressed now, but for agencies such as the Coalition, The United Way, and The Children's Trust to brainstorm together and bring back to the board. ▪ Karen Molinario presented the winners for the Goodnight Gorilla Contest: New Horizons Preschool and The Thinking Child. She also gave thanks on behalf of Miami-Dade Family Learning Partnership who is donating a classroom library to each of the centers. 	
CFO REPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ M. Manrara informed the board that the senior staff had a retreat in which they identified the high priority items. The Coalition worked with Finance Committee to review the Budget so she presented the consensus of what should be done for next year. <p>She gave an explanation of the funding from the State: the biggest funding is the School Readiness Grant for \$119 million dollars. The Coalition must spend at least 70% of the base allocations in payments to providers (children), 19% for non direct allocation (administration) and the remainder on quality issues. The 19% is split with 5% for the Coalition and 14% on central agencies of other contractors. The Coalition received \$1.3 million less than last year because of Child Executive Partnership Program. If they receive match and authorization, the grant will be a total of \$121 million which was the same level as last year.</p> <p>To the contrary, VPK is funded based on enrollment. The more students enrolled, the more funding the Coalition receives. The major sources of revenue are School Readiness and VPK. The Coalition expects to have increase in revenue for VPK and have made it a priority to put in resources for the awareness of families and work with them.</p>	

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	<p>The focus of the Coalition for 2007-2008 is to be able to contract out more services previously held in house this past fiscal year. The aim is to increase number of children served by engaging contractors. The Coalition wants to increase funding for childcare services for children, to which they are budgeting \$88 million. The second priority is the rate increase for providers, effective July 1, 2007. For Miami-Dade County is 6% depending on different care levels and 9.8% for Monroe County.</p> <p>The Coalition also plans to increase payment for Gold Seal payments which is a premium given to providers if they meet accreditation requirement. 20% of the rate the Coalition pays for the child. Increasing amount of dollars given to providers in order to serve children. The change is that the State previously looked at Gold Seal Payment as part of the 70% going to direct services. However, the Gold Seal is now considered part of quality allowing the Coalition to put more money into providers.</p> <p>By having a different organizational structure, they will have a reduction in number of positions from one hundred to fifty.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">⇒ N. Sejas asked what the advantage of the outsourcing will be to the staff and what is cost of consulting vs having staff in house?⇒ E. Torres said it is the same arrangement they have for example, with Miami Dade County. Some Coalitions have taken on the responsibility for becoming the central agency. The Coalition will be bringing Inclusion and Assessment together instead of having separate programs.⇒ M. Manrara said that at the end of the year, the Coalition will look at the scope and quality to determine if they have reached more centers and provided more direct support to evaluate and conclude if it was an effective idea to contract the services out.⇒ S. Herald Stated that if there is a correlation between accredited centers and the scores, then we could use some money from Quality Initiative to enhance 90 thousand because the centers are serving all of the same kids. <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ M. Manrara agreed, stating that it is a priority to concentrate on the VPK programs. Many are run by Dade County Public Schools and the Coalition is looking at the centers they are serving and determining how effective the measures being used are.<ul style="list-style-type: none">⇒ D. Lawrence Stated that the larger picture is how to do more universal programs as opposed to a boutique program over here	
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	<p>and over there? If the Coalition is diminishing these employees then he hopes that there is a plan to do right by those 50%.</p> <p>⇒ E. Torres responded that it will be staggered. The Coalition will work with the selected provider so that Coalition staff are given hiring consideration. He believes it will happen as an automatic process since the staff are already trained.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ D. Lawrence asked why Monroe will be receiving a higher rate increase as opposed to Miami-Dade, to which E. Torres Stated that it is due to the cost of care in Monroe County and lack of availability of childcare. Real eState is too expensive making it a challenge to open up a center; therefore providers are hanging on by a thread.▪ S. Herald commented on the decrease in revenue relative to the match, stating that she doesn't see The Children's Trust as the answer. Purpose of the County's money was supposed to jumpstart getting additional private money. She felt the Coalition has made no effort to market this and didn't think going to the Trust is long term solution. The Coalition needs to have a strategy in place to market to private institutions and needs to get the community engaged.<ul style="list-style-type: none">⇒ M. Manrara responded that as part of the application for the CCEP the Coalition needed to have a letter of commitment and business plan to address what coalition will try to do to bring in business partnerships which have been included this in the budget.⇒ S. Herald Stated she would like a presentation on the strategy the Coalition plans to use to make this happen.⇒ Y. Perkins believed it is also contributed to lack of identity previously and that this year the Coalition will be better prepared to present itself.▪ E. Torres Stated that they will put together a summary of the Coalition's efforts to help staff find jobs and will provide it to board.▪ M. Manrara added that the last thing the budget includes is a 3% increase for cost of living for the staff.<ul style="list-style-type: none">⇒ D. Lawrence asked what the compensation philosophy is on how the staff receives the cost of living increase because it doesn't recognize merit and non-merit. E. Torres informed him that they have it included in the budget but the Coalition is working on finalizing salary administration guidelines and that the cost of living will be across the board. The Coalition is looking at how the United Way and The Children's Trust handles the cost of living increases to emulate them.▪ M. Manrara continued with the VPK priority that includes outreach activities and	
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	<p>monitoring tools to work with providers and provide more assistance to parental involvement. VPK is an area they want to concentrate on expenditures and on the implementation of performance dashboard system to be able to quantify things the Coalition is planning to do, how they are performing and meeting goals.</p> <p>The majority of expenditures in addition to the payments for providers is in the central agency to do resource and referral and payments and eligibility. The ITNs: transitional contractual service to take care of contracts needed until ITN contracts begin kicking in; Health Screening ITN; Assessment and Inclusion ITN, Evaluation ITN. Other initiatives include Wages: to help accreditation and professional development of teachers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ L. Carmona Sanchez pointed out that the 20% premium providers receive only applies to School Readiness and not VPK. The numbers that are not optimal goes back to the fact that VPK during school year is only 3 hrs long which is discouraging to many parents. ○ G. Schwartz moved to approve Resolution 060707-05 to approve the budget for fiscal 2007-08 year ○ Motion seconded by Y. Johnson ○ Motion unanimously passed. 	
NOMINATING COMMITTEE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Y. Johnson Stated that nominating committee would like to recommend the reappointment of Connie Chapell. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alan Eckstein moved to reappoint Connie Chapell. ○ Motion seconded by Morgan Hill ○ Motion unanimously passed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A. Eckstein moved to reappoint Connie Chapell. ▪ Motion seconded by M. Hill ▪ Motion unanimously passed
FINANCE COMMITTEE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Y. Perkins moved to approve Resolution 060707-01 to approve the Commercial Lease between Gonzon Key West Ventures LLC and Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe; ○ Motion seconded by Y. Johnson. ○ Motion unanimously passed. ○ Y. Perkins moved to approve Resolution 060707-02 to approve the Contract between Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe and Hearing and Speech Center of Florida, Inc. ○ Motion seconded by N. Hernandez Hendrix ○ Motion unanimously passed. ○ Y. Perkins moved to approve Resolution 060707-03 to approve the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Y. Perkins moved to approve Resolution 060707-01. ▪ Motion seconded by Y. Johnson. ▪ Motion unanimously passed. ▪ Y. Perkins moved to approve Resolution 060707-02. ▪ Motion seconded by N. Hernandez Hendrix ▪ Motion unanimously passed. ▪ Y. Perkins moved to approve Resolution 060707-03. ▪ Motion seconded by Y. Johnson

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	<p>contract between the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe and M Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Motion seconded by Y. Johnson o Motion unanimously passed. o Y. Perkins moved to approve Resolution 060707-04 to approve the extension of the contract between the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe and Antonio Ojeda, to August 31, 2007 at a rate of \$50 per hour plus travel expenses; Resolution 060707-06 to approve the contract between Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe and Wesley House Family Services, Inc.; Resolution 060707-07 to approve the School Readiness Contract between Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe and Miami-Dade County; Resolution 060707-08 to approve the Voluntary PreKindergarten Contract between Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe and Miami-Dade County. o Motions seconded by G. Schwartz o Motions unanimously passed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ W. Harvey Stated that the board approves the final recommendation of the resolution from the Finance Committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Motion unanimously passed. ▪ Y. Perkins moved to approve Resolutions 060707-04, 060707-06, 060707-07, 060707-08. ▪ Motions seconded by G. Schwartz ▪ Motions unanimously passed.
MONROE ADVISORY COMMITTEE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Y. Perkins Stated the committee met on May 24, 2007. They also had a roundtable discussion that same day. Attendee included Ron Saunders, Monesia Brown, Cynthia Lorenzo, and Morgan McPearson. The committee is trying to obtain community support for VPK and other programs. They came up with an idea on a task force that represents Monroe in regards to Federal Poverty Level Guidelines. Specifically because of the cost of living: poverty level county specific. First time Monroe met at that level and it was put together/developed through Wesley House. The task force has been asked to make appearances in Tallahassee and Washington to address this issue and will report back to the Board on its progress. 	
GOVERNANCE AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A. Eckstein Stated the committee met with E. Torres and W. Harvey. The first matter was the Governance Leadership Policies. He asked Board to review to have a vote for next meeting. Its purpose was to fill the gap of policies not established, clarify previous policies. The bylaws have not been revisited and he thinks it should be done on a yearly basis. He also asked board to read and review and let him know any suggestions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o G. Schwartz moved to appoint Dave Lawrence, Bud Park, and David Williams to the Governance and Bylaws Committee. o Motion seconded by Y. Johnson o Motion unanimously passed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ G. Schwartz moved to appoint Dave Lawrence, Bud Park, and David Williams to the Governance and Bylaws Committee ▪ Motion seconded by Y. Johnson ▪ Motion unanimously passed

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PROGRAM COMMITTEE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ N. Hernandez Hendrix Stated the program committee met the previous week. The discussion was centered on the Provider Agreement, the Coalition plan to the State, and the development of the Matrix. Although the committee wanted to recommend the bylaws to the Board for approval, the language needed to be worked on. Therefore, the bylaws will be brought back to the next board meeting.	
LOGO SUBCOMMITTEE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">o N. Hernandez Hendrix moved to go with the results of the poll.o Motion seconded by S. Herald.o Motion unanimously passed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ N. Hernandez Hendrix moved to go with the results of the poll▪ Motion seconded by S. Herald▪ Motion unanimously passed
PUBLIC COMMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ L. Carmona Sanchez Stated thanks to collaboration of the Coalition and partners in community, they will be starting the summer employment program with the South Florida Workforce, in which they identified over 70 childcare centers in which 250 youth were recruited to help as support staff. <p>Meeting Adjourned.</p>	

Signed and approved by:

S. Herald, Board Secretary

Date