



# Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting  
August 4, 2008; 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.  
Early Learning Coalition Board Room

**Board Attendees:** Octavio A. Verdeja Jr.(Chair); Yesenia Perkins (Treasurer); Jane McQueen via conference call; Harve Mogul; Dabney G. Park, Ph.D.; The Hon. Natacha Seijas; David Williams, Jr.; Dr. Gina Cortes-Suarez; Roderick Beasley; Alan Eckstein, Esq., P.A.; P. Morgan Hill; David Lawrence Jr.; Ann Karen Weller, R.N., B.S.N.; Silvia La Villa, Ed.D.; Gilda P. Ferradaz on behalf of Alan Abramowitz; The Hon. Isis Garcia-Martinez; Irene Taylor-Wooten; Valtena G. Brown; Walter Harvey (Board Attorney)

**Board Absentees:** Yvonne T. Johnson, M.D., (Vice Chair); Connie Chapell; The Hon. Cindy Lederman; Gerald K. Schwartz, Esq.; Daniel Armstrong, Ph.D.

**Staff Attendees:** Evelio Torres (President/CEO); Angelo Parrino; Blythe Robinson; Jackye Russell; Melody Thelwell; Alina Soto; Mary Williams; Fred Hicks; Bethany Sands; Vivian Wright; Teri Carbajal; Nadira Ali

**General Attendees:** Doug Blomberg, Wesley House Family Services; Ana Sejeck, ECIF; Eddie Rivera, AWI; Rick Signori, Miami-Dade County; Jesse Leinfelder, The Children's Trust; Maritza Alonso, DHS; N. Reyes; Arlene Estrada MDC/CDS; Phyllis Tynes Saunders, DHS; Betty Key, MDCPS; Modesto E. Abety, The Children's Trust; Sara B. Herald

<b>I. Welcome and Introductions</b>	<b>Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr., Chair</b>
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- Chairman, Octavio Verdeja called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.
- Nadira Ali called roll and a quorum was established with ten (10) voting members.
- O. Verdeja mentioned that numbers for VPK registration are great and to look out for the radio and T.V. ads. He also encouraged everyone to go out and vote on August 26 for the reauthorization of The Children's Trust. **The Nominating Committee will be convening in September to make recommendations for Treasurer, Secretary, and Vice Chair.**

O. Verdeja presented an award to Sara Herald in recognition for all her years of service to the Board. S. Herald thanked everyone and stated she



has been working out of town with a consulting company. However, she did not want to serve on a Board she could not actively participate on. She stated it has been a pleasure working with this Board since everyone who sits on it is very passionate about getting things done right.

## **II. Approval of Minutes**

**Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr.**

- O. Verdeja called for the approval of the meeting minutes from 06/23/08.
  - Alan Eckstein moved to approve the minutes of 06/23/08.
  - Motion was seconded by Harve Mogul.
  - Motion was unanimously passed.

## **III. Governance & Bylaws Committee Report**

**Alan Eckstein, Esq., P.A.**

- A. Eckstein stated the meeting was held on July 29, 2008. They did not have a quorum present but moved forward with the general consensus on the issues brought up. One issue brought up was attendance at committee meetings can be by telephone conference and that it would count towards a quorum. The committee agreed on this and decided to move forward with language concerning the issue.

Another issue addressed was designating the Finance Committee as a standing committee of the Board. Walter Harvey suggested an Article 9 be added to the bylaws to reference standing and special committees. The Governance & Bylaws committee decided to move forward with this as well and will discuss the language at the next committee meeting so it can be brought to the Board.

Thirdly, they discussed the representation of the Head Start director. W. Harvey stated they would be changing the language in the bylaws to clarify how the Head Start director appointment differs from the other appointments of provider representatives.

There was also discussion about the reappointment of Dr. Silvia La Villa's position on the Board. The issue was that community input should be sought after the first term without automatically reappointing her for the position. It would provide more input to the Nominating Committee and when a person's term comes up, input should be sought from both Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties in order to provide more flexibility for the Board in making decisions.

In addition, Linda Carmona Sanchez led a discussion regarding provider representation stating there should be a representative on the board that takes information from the majority of providers. David Lawrence stated that with 1300 licensed providers, it would be difficult to get full input from everyone. The Hon. Natasha Seijas stated that the issue is addressed by having a Provider Services Committee. A. Eckstein stated the



Governance & Bylaws committee agreed and they would not be taking any action on the issue at the present time.

Lastly, they discussed the AWI opinion letter. L. Sanchez was very interested in implementing it with advisory committees. A. Eckstein stated they were many potential conflicts involved that needed to be considered. The committee agreed it was going to take a lot of thought and process before a decision could be made and the issue was tabled for now.

#### **IV. Finance Committee Report**

**Yesenia Perkins, Treasurer**

- Yesenia Perkins stated the Finance Committee had no motions to pass for this particular meeting. She went through the financial statements and noted that in the September Board Meeting they will have the closeout number that will include the pending reconciliation and invoices from the last fiscal year. They would like to discuss at the retreat on what they can do to increase the Coalition's unrestricted funds.

Additionally, according to the Finance Department, the Coalition will be hitting their target very close to zero variance. The budget will have less than a \$50,000 deficit. Evelio Torres thanked the County, Wesley House and all of the Coalition's partners for their help in being able to balance the budget so closely.

Angelo Parrino stated the Coalition had a review by OPPAGA which does programmatic and financial reviews. They discovered the Coalition was not appropriately charging the administrative functions to the appropriate line item. It was happening at the sub recipient level. When they met with Miami-Dade County they had billed everything under non-direct instead of under administration so it was easy to correct. Moving forward, it will be billed correctly. There were no additional dollars used and the Coalition is still well below administrative percentage mandates.

Y. Perkins continued going over the rest of financial statements which consist of the census of children served for Miami-Dade and Monroe counties. There were 3800 children on the waitlist for Miami-Dade and 808 children enrolled in Monroe County for the month of June. There was no waiting list reported at the time. Since there is closed enrollment, there will probably be a waitlist starting for them.

#### **V. Monroe County Visit**

**The Hon. Natacha Seijas**

- Commissioner Seijas stated she was pleased and honored to go down to Monroe County on July 24<sup>th</sup>. They had the pleasure of having Y. Perkins and A. Eckstein to escort them around most of the time and thanked them. It was very enjoyable and enlightening. She was also very impressed with the Wesley House facilities. Additionally, they met with Superintendent Randy Acevedo. She stated they were anticipating about



the same student population. He was committed to trying to find a way to set up a Children's Trust in Monroe County.

Additionally, they spent time with the taskforce at Wesley House and Doug Blomberg. The taskforce has big plans that they are putting together. In some instances, the taskforce felt Monroe was isolated. As they brought forth the numbers from both counties and compared them, the problems were still the same. She also stated the Mayor would like to do during his term.

Commissioner Seijas felt great about the trip and encouraged anyone from the Board to take a day to go down to Monroe as well.

<b>VI. Program and Strategy Committee Report</b>	<b>Silvia La Villa, Ed.D.</b>
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- Motion to approve Resolution 080408-01 to authorize the President and CEO to approve the Coalition plan amendment and the request to submit to the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) for approval.
  - D. Lawrence moved to approve resolution 080409-01.
  - Motion was seconded by A. Eckstein.
  - Motion was unanimously passed.
- Motion to approve Resolution 080408-02 to authorize the President and CEO to approve the request to execute a Provider Agreement with Early Care and Education Providers doing business with the Coalition.
  - A. Eckstein moved to approve resolution 080408-02.
  - Motion was seconded by R. Beasley.
  - Motion was unanimously passed.
- S. La Villa stated she wanted to point out that the second resolution is an example of what the Coalition has done to listen to providers. It took two years to put together the contract that was being brought forth. But it has taken an extreme number of processes to get to the document in front of the Board. She personally thanked Jackye Russell for her expertise and patience to all of their demands.

<b>VII. CEO Report</b>	<b>Evelio C. Torres</b>
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- E. Torres gave an update on enrollment. Miami-Dade was expecting a huge drop, however the drop did not materialize so enrollment remains to be closed. The number is still at 29,641. As school age children eligibility expires, the numbers will drop. The Coalition believes it is very telling of the economy. Enrollment in Monroe is the highest it has been in three years. The Coalition had no choice but to close enrollment for the first time in five years and are starting to build up a waitlist.

The Coalition is also seeing the highest number of children they have ever seen for at risk children. The number of children on the waitlist for



Miami-Dade is 3,839 and about 1,000 in the ready pool. There was a spike in Resource & Referral numbers for the month of January. Families are all getting into the waiting list. Miami-Dade County is also working on reorganizing the Child Care Resource and Referral.

In regards to accreditation, Fred Hicks has been working very hard to clean up the numbers as much as possible. It is a difficult process since a number of sources have to be called just to get clean numbers.

E. Torres continued with the VPK numbers. The last number paid for Miami-Dade County in June was 12,351. Additionally, there were 15,082 certificates of eligibility issued for Miami-Dade County for the new school year. The goal is 20,000 children but E. Torres believed the Coalition would have about 18,000 children. E. Torres stated the marketing dollars really paid off because they have seen a nice increase.

Monroe County also received the Klaus-Murphy Trust grant for \$25,000 which supports child care teachers to enroll in a Florida Keys Community Colleges. They could either enroll in a one year certificate program equivalent to the CPA or the AS degree program. The grant also provides tuition and book assistance, childcare assistance, and transportation assistance.

E. Torres stated the University of Miami will be presenting at the next Board Meeting regarding the new partnership they have with the Coalition.

VIII. Public Comments	Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr.
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- O. Verdeja stated he wanted to thank S. Herald again for all she has done for the Board and all her efforts that have made the Coalition the way it is today.

IX. Adjourn	Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr.
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