



Board of Directors Meeting  
August 6, 2012; 8:00 a.m.  
ELC Board Room

- Board Attendees:** Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr. (Chair); Esther Jacobo (Treasurer); The Hon. Cindy S. Lederman (Vice Chair); Lucy C. Pineiro, Esq. (Secretary); Modesto E. Abety-Gutierrez; Theresa Axford; Roderick E. Beasley (by phone); Doug Blomberg; Yolanda Borroto; Commissioner Heather Carruthers; Gina Cortes-Suarez, Ed.D.; Alan Eckstein, Esq. (by phone); Shaleen Fagundo; Helene J. Good; Yvonne T. Johnson, M.D.; David Lawrence, Jr. (by phone); Harve Mogul, represented by Jessica Scher; Ann Karen Weller, R.N., B.S.N.; David Williams, Jr. (by phone); Magaly Abraham, Ed.D. (by phone); Lisa Martinez
- Board Absentees:** Commissioner Barbara Jordan; Jane McQueen
- Staff Attendees:** Evelio Torres (President/CEO); Blythe Robinson; Angelo Parrino; Christina Vila; Tarnell Carroll; Jackye Russell; Pamela Hollingsworth; Fred Hicks; Bethany Sands; Mercy Castiglione; Oderay Veliz; Christina Sabater; Mary Williams; Kristina Alonso; Christine Hughes; Jose Hernandez; Nicole Lopez; Humberto Franquiz; Eddy Copin; Aileen Martinez; Georgia Thompson; Carol Brogan; Fiorella Altare; Milton Silvera; Sandra Gonzalez; Kendra Link
- General Attendees:** Santiago Echemendia, Board Attorney; Linda Carmona, AECE; Jeff Hurst, DCF; Maria Alcazar, Great Discoveries Learning Center; Matty Loretde Mola, Learning Care Group; Alison Gonzalez, FIU; Lisa Pittman, The Children's Trust; Laura Haim, United Way; Joy Gordon, New Mirawood Academy; Ardeen Estrada, Miami Dade County; Manuel Fermin, Healthy Start Coalition; Juliette Bernard, Miami Dade County; Wendy Salomon, Family Central; Graciela Pineiro, YMCA; Jorge A. Gonzalez; Aurora Fundadora, Kiddy Academy; Rosa M. Insenul, FCCC; Edgar Fernandez, SFACCP; Rachel Spector, The Children's Trust; Joseph Smith, Bluestar Learning; Kildane Bery, Bluestar Learning; Sonia Lopez, CNC; Leroy Jones, NANA; Norman Herdocia, AECE; Meagan Helica, CFEE; Gloria Delgado, Kid's Love; Katherine Delgado, Bright Stars Learning Center; Maritza Alonso, CDS; Brian Sheaffer, YMCA; Carolyn Hayes, Our Little Hands of Love; Danelys Duran, Precious Time; Bill de la Sierra, Kidworks Academy; Ana E. Gonzalez, Latina Early Childhood; Alyssa Zamora, Pineiro Law Office

I. Welcome and Introductions

Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr., Chair



- Chairman Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr., called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.
- Christina Vila called roll and a quorum was established with twenty-one (21) voting members.
- O. Verdeja announced that if anyone has a conflict of interest on any item, to see Christina Vila for a conflict of interest form.
- O. Verdeja congratulated Dave Lawrence for being selected as an Education and Community Leadership Scholar for the University of Miami School of Education.
- D. Lawrence spoke about ReadingPals, an early learning initiative from The Children's Movement, the United Way and other partners aimed at engaging, training and deploying volunteer "reading pals" in 10 Florida regions to increase the number of students who are reading at grade level by the end of third grade. The focus of the initiative will be working with students in lower-performing schools to encourage and enhance early literacy.
- O. Verdeja recognized Manuel Fermin, CEO of the Healthy Start Coalition of Miami-Dade. Manny coordinated the Family Summer Kick-Off that took place on June 9. E. Torres thanked him for his partnership and the work he does for the community.
- O. Verdeja stated that the Board Retreat had been scheduled for October 1, but now has to be moved to accommodate the Superintendent. He called for a new date from the Board, asking if November 5 worked.
  - D. Lawrence said he would be out of town but could call in.
  - The Board agreed to hold the Retreat on Nov. 5.
- O. Verdeja announced that Senator Elyn Bogdanoff would be joining the meeting. Sen. Bogdanoff currently holds the position of Executive Director for the Florida Association for Child Care Management.

## II. Approval of Minutes

Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr., Chair

- O. Verdeja called for the approval of the meeting minutes from June 4, 2012.
  - C. Lederman moved to approve the minutes.
  - G. Cortes-Suarez seconded motion.
  - Motion was unanimously passed.

## III. Nominating Committee Report

Yvonne Johnson, M.D.

- Y. Johnson provided an update from the Nominating Committee interviews on August 1 for the position of Representative of Programs for Children with Disabilities under the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
- Y. Johnson stated they interviewed five (5) candidates.
- Y. Johnson recommended Helene Good as the Board's nominee.
- H. Good has been an advocate for children and adults for 30 years.
- H. Good stated CCDH is a capacity-building project.
- Y. Johnson called for the motion to approve this appointment.



- D. Lawrence moved to approve the motion.
- Motion seconded by C. Lederman.
- Motion unanimously passed.
- Y. Johnson recommended to the Board that the Bylaws Committee consider adding a Parent Representative position to the Board of Directors.
  - C. Lederman moved to approve the motion.
  - D. Lawrence seconded the motion.
  - Motion unanimously passed.

#### IV. Executive Committee Report

Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr., Chair

- O. Verdeja stated that the two resolutions brought to the Executive Committee would be presented during the Finance Committee Report.
- O. Verdeja stated that E. Torres would provide more information about the new Funding Formula during the CEO Report.

#### V. CEO Report

Evelio Torres, CEO

- Please refer to [www.elcmdm.org](http://www.elcmdm.org) for the presentation.
- E. Torres gave information about the new funding formula released by the Office of Early Learning.
- H. Carruthers asked if the term "equity" had been clearly defined.
- E. Torres stated that equity is not defined in the statute.
- O. Verdeja commented on the schedule of the funding reductions, stating his concern if they change the formula. The \$22 million is the amount that has to be reallocated, and they decided to do it in 6 years to make it easier. The money could get cut off in one year.
- L. Martinez asked for final language so the Board can clearly advocate the next steps and show a clear position on the issue.
- C. Lederman stated that there were procedural issues in the way the money was allocated and stated that litigation is still a possibility.
- O. Verdeja stated that the impact is not in percentages but in 6,000 less children we will be serving.
- O. Verdeja stated the 19 Coalitions would be wiped out if they lost the 6,000 children we would be losing.
- S. Fagundo asked if there had been any response from the Governor's office.
- E. Torres responded that there has been nothing else other than they have paid attention to letters and phone calls.
- Y. Johnson asked if we would have to disenroll children.
- E. Torres stated we are looking at the numbers and have planned two years in advance. We are trying not to disenroll children already in the program, but instead serve 1,000 less children. We will make every effort possible not to disenroll children.
- D. Lawrence asked if we should look into wise legal action.
- S. Echemendia stated he had not been asked to look into litigation yet.
- D. Lawrence stated we are putting significant pressure on the funding formula.
- E. Torres reviewed the Government Efficiency Task Force Report.
- S. Fagundo described the fingerprint identification process currently in use.



- E. Torres discussed DOE's VPK Child Assessment.
- D. Lawrence asked Sen. Bogdanoff her opinion on the VPK Child Assessment.
- Sen. Bogdanoff stated she was presenting her opinion as the Executive Director of FACCM.
- FACCM has taken as aggressive position that there should be only one assessment tool, recognizing that providers are split as to which assessment tool is best.
- L. Pineiro asked what would happen to the assessments.
- E. Torres stated that once it is chosen, we would have to implement it and provide support to our providers.
- L. Pineiro asked if they would use the rule-making process to decide. If so, that is the time when everyone needs to object and show why this is not the appropriate tool.
- B. Robinson stated she would check to see if they were using the rule-making process.
- M. Abety voiced his concerns for English Language Learners.
- S. Fagundo stated that providers feel this is a done deal.
  
- E. Torres provided an update on Monroe County.
  
- E. Torres provided an update on the Communications Department, including community events and outreach efforts.

#### VI. Finance Committee Report

Esther Jacobo

- E. Jacobo reviewed the financial statements.
- E. Jacobo stated that we still have not closed out our budget from last year, but we are still on track. We will have it ready for the next meeting.
- Executive resolution 071312-01 authorizing the President and CEO to negotiate and execute a contract with Morrison, Brown, Arqiz and Farra, LLC to provide external auditing services. The contract amount will not exceed \$60,000.00, subject to approval for legal sufficiency and form.
  - A. Eckstein moved to approve the motion.
  - Motion seconded by H. Carruthers.
  - Motion passed unanimously.
- Executive resolution 071312-02 authorizing the President and CEO to negotiate and execute a contract with Goldstein Schechter and Koch, P.A. to provide sub-recipient financial monitoring services. The contract will not exceed \$150,000.00, subject to approval for legal sufficiency and form.
  - A. Eckstein moved to approve the motion.
  - Motion seconded by D. Blomberg.
  - Motion passed unanimously.
- Resolution 072412-01 approval of budget amendment #1 decreasing the approved annual budget for fiscal year 2012-2013 of \$173,227,935.00 by \$2,575,954.00 for a new budget total of \$170,651,981.00.
- No public comments were made.
  - C. Lederman moved to approve the motion.
  - Motion seconded by H. Carruthers.
  - Motion unanimously passed.

#### VII. Elynn Bogdanoff

State Senator, District 25; Executive Director, FACCM



- Sen. Bogdanoff stated she has been the Executive Director of FACCM since May1, 2012.
- FACCM is very aggressively working on issues that concern providers, including funding and pre- and post-assessment.
- Sen. Bogdanoff stated that they have another funding formula based on zip codes because even counties have different communities.
- Sen. Bogdanoff stated she has worked to raise the profile of FACCM.
- Sen. Bogdanoff stated that there are too many definitions of quality and there should only be one. Accreditation should define quality, and the one definition would be the gold standard.
- Staff changes are taking place in the Governor's office, and they have lost their point of contact.
- Sen. Bogdanoff stated that OEL needs to focus on the needs of children 0 to 5.
- Sen. Bogdanoff stated that the goal of her organization is to continue working with ELCs as a partner.
- The best feedback comes from the providers.
- C. Lederman thanked her for coming and spoke of the ELC's frustrations with FACCM prior to her holding her position.
- C. Lederman stated that FACCM holds the potential to help the children of our communities and asked Sen. Bogdanoff if they were going to stand up for quality.
- Sen. Bogdanoff stated they have not found a program that reaches the pinnacle of quality. They want accreditation to define quality. As an industry, we do not have a clear definition of what quality is, and there is a lack of consistency in accrediting bodies.
- C. Lederman stated that in order for us to agree, the qualifications need to be much higher than currently required for APPLE Accreditation.
- Sen. Bogdanoff stated that APPLE and NAEYC are high-ranked products. There are problems with the process and not the product. The product itself has tremendous components.
- D. Lawrence stated that if we straighten this out for the state, we would give a great future to our children.
- D. Lawrence asked Sen. Bogdanoff to keep us closely posted on this issue.
- Sen. Bogdanoff stated that the industry needs to join in a statewide collaborative effort to define quality and create a process everyone can agree with.
  
- O. Verdeja opened the meeting for Public Comments.

### Public Comments

- Linda Carmona asked Sen. Bogdanoff how she saw FACCM collaborating with other provider organizations throughout the state.
- Sen. Bogdanoff stated that she wanted to meet with leaders and major players in the industry to create a collaborative to talk about the issues. She recognizes these people as the advocates for the childcare community. The industry needs to lead the charge instead of bureaucrats. FACCM is a perfect tool to say what we want as an industry.
- M. Abety stated that it would be difficult to expect a definition from FACCM to be the standard.
- Sen. Bogdanoff stated FACCM would be the tool and the standards would come from the industry.
- Lisa Pittman, Children's Trust, asked Sen. Bogdanoff how they would be incorporating research about how to measure quality into childcare programs.
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- Sen. Bogdanoff stated that the research is out there. They hope to take hold of the research and fit it into a design that everyone can agree with.
- Joy Gordon, a provider, asked if quality would be the deciding factor in how children are served in the future. She stated she was part of the committee that rated the Accreditations and was surprised to see APPLE come out on top.
- J. Gordon also asked how the definition of quality will better serve children.
- Sen. Bogdanoff stated that everyone is searching for the definition of quality. Is it the facility itself? Or what happens with the child? She stated that the concerns with APPLE are more about process than product, but the product can always be improved.
- O. Verdeja thanked Sen. Bogdanoff for her time.

#### VIII. Program & Strategy/Provider Services Committee Report

David Williams, Jr., the Hon. Cindy S. Lederman, Gina Cortes- Suarez

- C. Lederman stated we are required to implement a new sliding fee scale every year once the federal government publishes the Federal Poverty Level guidelines.
- The updated scales for both Miami-Dade and Monroe are in the packet and we need Board approval to submit a plan amendment adopting the scales for both counties. The impact of the new scale will be a slight increase in the number of families who may qualify for childcare as the income amounts families may earn and remain eligible have increased from last year.
  - E. Jacobo moved to approve the motion.
  - Motion seconded by L. Pineiro.
  - Motion passed unanimously.

#### Provider Appeal: Bluestar Learning Center

- S. Echemendia read the list of violations by the provider, including one Class 1 violation for inadequate supervision.
- C. Lederman stated this was the case where the child was left unsupervised on the playground with the father even though there is a court order prohibiting contact.
- Owner stated he changed the director as soon as they could and that this was the only thing that could have been done to correct the situation.
- L. Pineiro stated the owner could not say what happened when asked at the Committee meeting.
- Owner stated he was asking the Board to overturn the decision for his community.
- Owner stated he brought a community representative to speak.
- S. Echemendia stated he could speak, but it would not go on the record.
- O. Verdeja asked the owner whether the director had been fired or relocated within the program.
- Owner stated she had been fired.
- C. Lederman stated that some endangerment is too severe. The Committee felt that based on the history of 11 violations that School Readiness funds should be revoked.
- Leroy Jones stated that Bluestar is one of his clients.
- He believes 1 year is a harsh punishment. They cannot stay open if they are not receiving funds.
- D. Lawrence stated he did not find it appropriate to give them a second chance.



- S. Echemendia stated there was no evidence on the record to reverse the committee's decision.
- L. Pineiro read the list of violations.
- D. Lawrence motioned to ratify the Committee's decision to revoke School Readiness funds.
  - Motion seconded by L. Pineiro.
  - Motion passed unanimously, with E. Jacobo's recusal.

#### IX. Quality Counts Year End Report

Christine Hughes, Ph.D.

- The report was not presented at the Board Meeting.
- For the presentation, please view the CEO Report at [www.elcmdm.org](http://www.elcmdm.org).

#### X. Public Comments

Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr., Chair

- Maria Alcazar, Great Discoveries Learning Center, wanted to appeal the decision made by the Program & Strategy and Provider Services Committees.
- She did not send in the appeal or follow the formal process. Board decided she could present at the next meeting.
- J. Russell stated she would continue to receive payment through the grievance process until her case is heard and decided on.
- M. Alcazar stated none of the parents had been notified and she still had children at the center.
- S. Echemendia stated he and J. Russell would talk to the provider after the meeting.
- M. Abety stated his concern on the impact we may have on some communities with little quality care. He asked if we could track violations that have come before us, and whether we as a Coalition can strengthen the efforts to involve surrounding centers with technical support.
- C. Lederman stated we are trying to educate parents on how to choose quality care.
- E. Torres stated we look at other options on what is available in the community. ELC Staff also go out to the centers with technical assistance visits and goodwill ambassador visits.
- Bill de la Sierra, Kidworks USA, stated he heard comments around the state where other Coalitions have had funding reduced and the Executive Director decided they would serve fewer children. Evelio has done a great job getting the community involved and not accepting that we will accept losing 6,000 children. There is a grassroots effort being put together. We will put pressure on Governor's office. Please respond to calls and emails. We need to get this thing reversed.
- Linda Carmona stated that the funding formula was presented to the Governor in January and we were not informed until June. The impact of that is severe and does not show transparency on the body that came up with the formula.
- L. Carmona asked that we remember that testing should be to guide instruction and come up with a better instructional formula based on testing the teachers, not the children, to create a better educational outcome. Testing 5 times a year is not appropriate.
- OPPAGA is measuring gold seals and the accrediting bodies did not come out on top.



- L. Carmona encouraged the Board to revisit these joint committee meetings. She stated it's hard to see the directors lose their business; probations for 6 months really are not feasible; we need to find better ways to make sure quality is provided in all communities.
- O. Verdeja stated that no one on this board likes making decisions like these. It would be much worse if something happens to a child.

**XI. Adjourn**

**Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr., Chair**

**DRAFT**