



Minutes

Nominating Committee Meeting
May 19, 2009; 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
Early Learning Coalition Board Room

Committee Attendees: Yvonne T. Johnson, M.D. (Chair); Cindy Lederman; Dave Lawrence; Jane McQueen; Irene Taylor-Wooten; Silvia La Villa, Ed.D.

Staff Attendees: Evelio Torres; Leeana Pena

General Attendees: L. Piñeiro, Esq.; Jane Sanchez; M. Loret De Mola

I. Welcome and Introductions

Yvonne T. Johnson, M.D., Chair

- Chairman, Yvonne Johnson called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

II. Approval of Minutes

Yvonne T. Johnson, M.D.

- Y. Johnson called for the approval of the meeting minutes from 11/24/08.
 - Cindy Lederman moved to approve the minutes of 11/24/08.
 - Motion was seconded by D. Lawrence.
 - Motion was unanimously passed.
- Y. Johnson called for the approval of the meeting minutes from 04/06/09.
 - Cindy Lederman moved to approve the minutes of 04/06/09.
 - Motion was seconded by D. Lawrence.
 - Motion was unanimously passed.

III. Private Business Sector Position

Yvonne T. Johnson, M.D.

- Y. Johnson stated they all received a number of candidates for the April meeting that was postponed. It was brought to their attention that those candidates had to be recommended by a chamber of commerce. Of those candidates that submitted applications, there was only one that was recommended which was Lucy Piñeiro, recommended by the Hialeah Hispanic Chamber who they would interview.
- Y. Johnson thanked L. Piñeiro for coming and asked her to tell a little bit about herself.
- L. Piñeiro stated she is a lawyer and she started her career in dependency court in 1989. She was the staff attorney for Guardian At Litem program for 5 years, managing attorney for Department of Children and Families and then as a private attorney Children's Health Network. In her 20 years she was a public servant representing abandoned and abused kids. Since January, she is now in private practice doing family law and other areas. She stated it is very different as



opposed to non-profit. In the private sector, it is more challenging because there is not as much freedom to challenge authority.

- L. Piñeiro was asked what qualities she would bring to the ELC Board. She answered that throughout her 20 years experience; time and time again she would be involved with at-risk children. One of the first documents she would look at is their school attendance which would her volumes about what was going on with that child's life. No one thought about the education structure and what it would mean to that child's life. There were ninth and tenth graders reading at a second grade level. There was a big movement to try to place children in day cares that were providing meaningful educational and social skills to children. They would have all dependent kids in gold seal schools, which hasn't been accomplished yet but is a mission. She also brings a personal perspective. She adopted a son with developmental delays. She put him in a Gold Seal accredited and Apple Accredited school and as of next year he will start the 2nd grade gifted program. From a personal perspective, she sees what a good solid educational program can do for a child.
- D. Lawrence asked what her service on the board could mean for the children in this community with similar or worse challenges than her son, Michael. What does she think the strengths and weaknesses of the Coalition may be and how does the Coalition make things happen for the Michael's in this world?
- L. Piñeiro answered that one of the strengths she brings to the board is advocacy. There has to be a real message particularly with people who don't speak the language and aren't as educated. She thinks they need to let the community know what the Coalition is all about and what can be done. Requiring schools to participate in quality rating systems to ensure all children are held accountable and must provide children with the best education opportunity available. More public awareness needs to be done. Some parents just go to the school closest to their home as a matter of convenience or necessity. We just have to keep being present, questioning authority and not take no for an answer. We can do much more and have to do much more.
- C. Lederman stated she has known Lucy for many years and thinks she is remarkable with incredible integrity and unafraid to tell you what she thinks.
- S. La Villa asked what L. Piñeiro's interest in joining the board was. L. Piñeiro stated that that one thing aside from the love and nurturing that we give our children that guarantees success is education. Unless our kids learn to read and write, they will end up in jail. She saw it all the time at juvenile: children that had lack of self esteem, getting in trouble. They did not have the skills or know how to find a job. Whatever they can do for their kids is give them an education. And what they do with that will be their choice. But at least they will know that their children have been given an education.
- S. La Villa asked how L. Piñeiro views the mission of the Coalition and how she would support it. L. Piñeiro stated the Coalition has a great mission and vision. She likes that the mission goes further than addressing just school readiness. She believes in it and likes it and will not defraud the mission or vision of the Coalition.



- Y. Johnson stated there was some concern brought up regarding L. Piñero's association with the Florida Association of Child Care Management and their position on Bill 501 which supported elimination of Coalitions. She asked how Lucy sees that in terms of a conflict. L. Piñero stated that there needs to be honesty and communication and coordination between the providers, ELC and FAACM. This Coalition is very different from other Coalitions around the state. What they hear from other providers around the state is that their Coalitions don't listen to what they have to say. She hopes to bring everyone together and have a clean slate. She does know having heard from other providers that the Coalitions work very differently. She would hope that they could meet with FAACM and some of the providers and start fresh. Some of the other Boards are not as organized or as passionate and reach out to providers as this one and it's important.
- D. Lawrence stated the FAACM thing concerns him. He agreed there should be 20 coalitions instead of 30. His worry is that there is no reason for the Coalition to exist without quality. There is an attack on the quality rating system. They want the permission to do right by their children. The reality is there is litigation preceding that would take away the right from the people of Miami-Dade County to do right by their children. L. Piñero stated her message to them is this Coalition is different so they need to come together and stop fighting. Their concerns are there is no uniform quality rating system. Depending on what County they are in, different rules apply. What they are asking for is for some uniformity. D. Lawrence stated the word uniformity is code word for lack of quality. He agrees there should be one quality rating system throughout the state and thinks L. Piñero would be able to help.
- D. Lawrence moved to submit L. Piñero's name for appointment to the ELC Board.
 - Motion seconded by C. Lederman.
 - Motion was unanimously passed.
- R. Moreno commented on the issue brought up about FAACM. The problem in itself is the failure of the Jacksonville Coalition to have any respect for the providers. Providers went to the ELC of Jacksonville to discuss issues and were treated as second class citizens. They did not have any input. FAACM did not push the bill to remove all the Coalitions. They believe there are too many Coalitions and too many people with different thoughts and ideas. The providers want to know they are working under the same set of rules and guidelines.

IV. Private Child Care Representative Position	Yvonne T. Johnson, M.D.
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- Y. Johnson stated there are three candidates for this position: S. La Villa, M. Loret De Mola and J. Sanchez.
- S. La Villa stated she would like to continue to serve on this board to continue to raise the standard with quality. She strongly believes that without the Coalition there would be no bar to rise to. They have also started an Infant and Toddler Taskforce through the Provider Services Committee. It has taken off quite well and they are trying to raise the awareness of it.



- D. Lawrence stated they went through a terrible time in this Coalition where providers were not listened to. One of the things he admired about S. La Villa is that she spoke up about listening to providers from the beginning.
- Y. Johnson stated L. Carmona Sanchez sent an email saying the Provider Services Committee recommended S. La Villa to remain on the Board for that position as well. She continued with the next candidate, M. Loret De Mola and asked her to tell about herself and why she wants to join the board.
- M. Loret De Mola stated she has been working in the child care industry for about 20 years in different positions. For the last 10-12 years she has been running 14 academies from Homestead to Deerfield Beach. She started a child care home when her son was born. D. Lawrence asked in Miami-Dade County, how many child care sites are there. M. Loret De Mola stated 4: La Petite Academy. D. Lawrence asked how many children they have in child care with ages infant to 5. She answered in South Dade, there are 257 and 2 of those centers are accredited and the other two are going through accreditation this year.
- Y. Johnson asked if she has ever been involved with the Coalitions in Broward. M. Loret De Mola stated yes, she attended meetings. She also participates in committees and goes to the Provider Services Committee Meetings as well. She stated a couple years ago, she was at a meeting with Evelio in which the Coalition was about to lose funding. She immediately organized a bus of providers to go to Tallahassee to advocate to not lose funding.
- D. Lawrence asked what she can contribute to ELC, what difference she could make and why she wants to be on the board. M. Loret De Mola stated she thinks she is bringing to the table the fact that she is in touch with a lot of different providers internally and externally. She does attend meetings that are done by providers to brainstorm and see what their needs are. She had input from people around Florida and around the country. The focus on what is happening plus her experience would be a good asset to the Coalition.
- C. Lederman asked what M. Loret De Mola's opinion is on Florida Child Care Licensing Plan. M. Loret De Mola stated there are some things that she believes are required by DCF and the Coalition should be more in line with each other. When they go and inspect the centers, sometimes it is not equal. She thinks they need to look more towards quality.
- Y. Johnson asked what percentage of the children in her centers are school readiness only. M. Loret De Mola stated most of the children in her centers are school readiness and subsidized.
- D. Lawrence stated it seems in conflict that she is a director at an upscale corporate academy. But the objective she has given here is that she has mostly subsidized children. So what makes the schools upscale? M. Loret De Mola stated it is the quality of the program they provide no matter whether the children are subsidized are not.



- Y. Johnson asked about her involvement in other provider organizations and how does she see that in terms of her relationship with the Early Learning Coalition. M. Loret De Mola stated she resigned from the Board of Directors of FACCM because she was in disagreement with what they were doing to the Coalitions and what they were doing to providers.
- M. Loret De Mola asked what the Board is looking for in this position. D. Lawrence stated human beings who are willing to learn, grow, contribute and can make a difference with children and care deeply about quality. This isn't just about keeping safe; it's about helping them be successful in life.
- Y. Johnson thanked Jane Sanchez for joining them and asked her to tell them a little bit about herself and her reasons for wanting to join the Board. J. Sanchez stated she looked at this opportunity because she was very involved in the community when she was a teacher and director in Miami Dade County Public Schools and she misses it a lot. She wants to become more involved in the community.
- D. Lawrence asked her to tell them about their business. J. Sanchez stated she is licensed for 150 children and at the moment she has 75 ages 3 months to school age. The center has been in operation since 2005 and she started it. She does not have accreditation as yet. That is one of her two goals this year. She already applied for the apple accreditation and is in the process of getting her portfolio together for accreditation.
- Y. Johnson asked what she would bring specifically to the ELC Board. J. Sanchez stated she would not bring a whole lot to the Board herself. But she would bring a lot to the people who they are serving. Her experience as an educator, her time. She does a lot of volunteer work and a lot of work in the community. She thinks that what she could bring to the Board is her time, skills and experience. Y. Johnson asked what she did before this. J. Sanchez stated before she was a director instructor for Miami Dade County Public Schools. They ran a lab where they trained adult student to become child care teachers and also high school students. She worked a little with the after school program and wrote a little bit of curriculum. D. Lawrence asked she has a background in early childhood and what made her go into that field. J. Sanchez stated she really wanted to be an elementary special Ed teacher but she got another job offer as a teacher assistant and everything went from then on. She started working with very challenging adults that lost the opportunity and came back wanting to do something with their life. At the same token she also worked with children.
- Y. Johnson asked how she can make sure she will stay connected with other providers around the county in order to represent them and the broad population they serve. J. Sanchez stated getting more involved in the associations, networking, and working with the different centers as a group and with the community. It's been her experience working with other child care centers that they need a lot of support in the center itself from the outside and she thinks she can offer that as a volunteer.
- Y. Johnson thanked all the candidates for their participation.



- D. Lawrence moved to reappoint Silvia La Villa.
- Motion was seconded by C. Lederman.
 - D. Lawrence stated these other people have something good to offer. He has no doubt about that. He stated Silvia could make sure that they know they thought highly of them and make sure they continue to get involved and there will be other opportunities in the future.
 - Y. Johnson stated she heard from several of the child care representatives and she thinks they also need to put a lot of emphasis on their choice which is Silvia.
 - Motion unanimously passed.
- L. Carmona Sanchez thanked the ELC Board for really reaching out to providers in this process. The Alliance for Early Care and Education tried to support the effort by polling their members as well. Just an overwhelming thank you for the process and to the way it was carried out with integrity.
- D. Lawrence stated he was reading through the minutes where several board members including Silvia made allegations that L. Piñeiro was general counsel for FACCM. That is not true; she is not counsel for FACCM. She uses her background to answer questions to the Board but she is not legal counsel. She makes it a point not to give legal advice. Y. Johnson stated they will make that correction to the minutes.
- Y. Johnson stated they have decided to submit S. La Villa's name for continuation on the Board. They wanted to emphasize to the other candidates that they were very happy and enthusiastic to see that they submitted their names. They thought highly of them both and would like to encourage them to remain involved in organizations in bringing their expertise and involvement they both have. They know there is going to be more opportunities to serve on the Board but also to serve the community through the ELC. She thanked them very much.

V. Board reappointments	Yvonne T. Johnson, M.D.
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- Motion to reappoint Ann-Karen Weller.
 - D. Lawrence moved to reappoint Ann-Karen Weller.
 - Motion was seconded by I. Taylor Wooten
 - Motion was unanimously passed.
- Motion to reappoint Jane McQueen.
 - D. Lawrence moved to reappoint Jane McQueen.
 - Motion was seconded by I. Taylor Wooten
 - Motion was unanimously passed.
- Motion to reappoint Yvonne Johnson.
 - D. Lawrence moved to reappoint Yvonne Johnson.
 - Y. Johnson abstained.
 - Motion was seconded by I. Taylor Wooten
 - Motion was unanimously passed.



- Y. Johnson stated they will be submitting the names of L. Piñeiro, S. La Villa, Y. Johnson, A. Weller and J. McQueen to the Board.
 - D. Lawrence moved motion.
 - Motion was seconded by C. Lederman.
 - Motion unanimously passed.

VI. Public Comments

Yvonne T. Johnson, M.D.

- R. Moreno stated there is nothing that can move an elected official like community involvement. The 10,000 letters they brought to Tallahassee made a significant impact. If they want to make a difference in legislation, every child has 15-20 adults that childcare providers are in touch with can become the most awesome lobbying force. We need to get them united and to work towards that goal. That could be the key to pushing ELC's efforts over the edge.
- E. Bezos stated that providers have seen a drastic change since Evelio has come on board. With his leadership he has put a great team together that have been very receptive to providers. They are very indebted to the work he has done.
- S. La Villa thanked the Alliance for doing the process of polling providers.

VII. Adjourn

Yvonne T. Johnson, M.D.
