



# ELC News Alert

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Issue 12

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## ELC Mission & Vision

### Mission

To promote high-quality school readiness, voluntary pre-kindergarten and

## President's Message



I am pleased to welcome the sixth cohort of providers into Quality Counts (QC). A total of 19 North Miami-Dade center-based programs make up cohort #6.

The group attended a reception and training workshop hosted by the Early Learning Coalition on September 30, 2009. Systems partner, Family Central, Inc., will provide technical assistance and support to the participating providers.

Over the next several weeks, North Cohort 6 will complete its self study profile and take part in Infant and Toddler Environment Rating Scale- and Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-training at the United Way Center for Excellence. Additionally, the group will work with the Quality Counts Career Center to gain entry into The Registry and access WAGES and Scholarships (for all eligible staff). This process will culminate in a formal environmental rating by Devereux Foundation assessors. Finally, a baseline rating will be set that paves the way for a year of quality improvement as well as access to grants and awards.

The next QC selection for the South sector of Miami-Dade County is scheduled for November. If you are interested in learning more about Quality Counts, please call 305-646-7242 or visit the Coalition's website at [www.elcmdm.org](http://www.elcmdm.org).

As always, I remain at your service.

Sincerely,

Evelio C. Torres  
President & CEO  
Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe

## Important Announcements

**[Check out the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe on Facebook and Twitter!](#)**



Click here to follow us on Twitter.



Click here to become a fan on Facebook.

after school programs, thus increasing all children's chances of achieving future educational success and becoming productive members of society. The Coalition seeks to further the physical, social, emotional and intellectual needs of Miami-Dade and Monroe County children with a priority toward the ages before birth through age 5.

## Vision

To ensure a comprehensive and integrated system providing for all families and their children, beginning before birth to 5 years, the affordable opportunity to enter school ready to learn and succeed in life.

## Upcoming Board & Committee Meetings

For a complete list of upcoming Coalition meetings and events, please visit our website at [www.elcmdm.org](http://www.elcmdm.org).

Finance  
October 26 at 8:00 a.m.

ELC Board Room

Program & Strategy  
October 29 at 1:00

For continuous updates on all of the ELC's latest news and events, join now!

## The ELC's Presentation on the 2009 Market Rate is Now Posted on our Website

The Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) released the 2009 Market Rate for early care and education providers. To review the Coalition's presentation on the rate from September 30th's Program & Strategy Committee meeting, please visit our website at [www.elcmdm.org](http://www.elcmdm.org).

## Helpful Information for Early Care and Education Centers in Preparation for Flu Season

New federal guidelines were released to help early care and education programs respond to influenza during the 2009-2010 influenza season.

\* Child Care and Early Childhood Guidance  
<http://www.flu.gov/professional/school/childguidance.html>

\* Technical Report for State and Local Public Health Officials and Child Care and Early Childhood Providers  
<http://www.flu.gov/professional/school/childtechreport.html>

\* Preparing for the Flu: A Communication Toolkit for Child Care and Early Childhood  
<http://www.flu.gov/professional/school/childtoolkit.html>

## Afterschool Providers: Now is your Chance to Register for The Florida Standards for Quality Afterschool Programs Seminar

The Florida Afterschool Network (FAN) is pleased to announce it has received sponsorship from AWI's Office of Early Learning to host 15 regional seminars throughout Florida featuring The Florida Standards for Quality Afterschool Programs.

**WHO:** Afterschool providers from all venues, serving children grades K-5

**WHAT:** Participants will receive a print copy of *The Florida Standards for Quality Afterschool Programs* and will be introduced to all seven categories and 45 elements

**WHEN:** Saturday, October 24, 2009; 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**WHERE:** Trinity Church  
17801 NW 2nd Ave.  
Miami, FL 33169

p.m.  
ELC Board Room

Board  
November 2 at 8:00  
a.m.  
ELC Board Room



Registration is FREE to all afterschool providers who register through FAN's website at [www.myfan.org](http://www.myfan.org) or by submitting the registration flyer available for download at <http://www.elcmdm.org/events/trainings/MiamiRegForm.pdf>.

## ELC Board of Directors

As seen in previous news alerts, we have featured our board members to familiarize our community with the dedicated professionals who serve on the Coalition's board of directors. In this issue, it is our pleasure to highlight Board Director **Jane McQueen**.



Jane W. McQueen is the director of the Miami-Dade CAA Head Start/Early Head Start program. This program provides services to 6,528 children ranging in age from infants to five-years-old. Under Mrs. McQueen's leadership, the program has earned the distinction of being a "National Program of Excellence." Miami-Dade's Head Start/Early Head Start program is the largest program in the Region IV Hub; which is comprised of eight states.

The program's mission statement is "To develop the social competency of young children, promote school readiness, and to serve as a catalyst to empower families for growth and change." Since becoming the director, Mrs. McQueen has been responsible for several initiatives which have had a positive impact on services for children and families. Two such initiatives have been the Child Welfare Project and the annual Infant and Toddler Conference. Determined to provide quality services for all children, Head Start/Early Head Start has sought to obtain accreditation for all of its centers. To date, 28 of the program's 43 centers have attained NAEYC accreditation.

October is national Head Start Awareness month. Miami-Dade is proud to celebrate 44 years of the program's existence as it continues to provide excellent services to all the community's children and families with the help of 14 delegate agencies.

Mrs. McQueen has served on the Early Learning Coalition since its inception; having served at one time as the board of directors' secretary. In addition to the ELC, she serves on various other program boards and holds membership in other professional and civic organizations. She holds a masters of education in administration and management and is a graduate of the Johnson & Johnson Management Fellows Program at the John E. Anderson Graduate School of Management at UCLA.

## Team Member Spotlight

This month, the spotlight shines on another valued team member and the important work she accomplishes in bringing quality early childhood education to our community. In this issue, it is our pleasure to highlight **Sandra Gonzalez**, Quality Counts Implementation Manager.

Sandra Gonzalez joined the ELC on January 31, 2008 as the Quality Counts (QC) implementation manager. She is primarily responsible for ensuring the QC program is implemented thoroughly and appropriately by all its partners, problem-solving issues and/or concerns that occur during program implementation, training new partners and providers entering QC, and continuous program evaluation.



A true champion for children, Sandra's prior professional experience includes working in the child welfare system for nine years (six of those at the supervisory level). Despite the highly stressful environment and tremendously difficult emotional strain, her commitment to the children she served was steadfast and tireless. Sandra also served as an elementary-school teacher for five years in Colombia. She taught different subjects to her second- and third-graders, including language arts, math, science, and social studies, all in spoken English.

Sandra believes in the profound impact the Quality Counts program has on the enhancement of quality in early childhood care and education. Her participation, particularly through training, is just one more positive way in which she touches the lives of children. "It's a privilege to contribute to the growth and success of the program," she says. "Establishing meaningful relationships with our Quality Counts partners and providers, and supporting all facets of their program improvement are two of many aspects of my job of which I'm most proud."

Her fellow ELC team-members' friendliness and eagerness to assist, has only made her role and experience at the Coalition more gratifying, "It's great to work in a professional and comforting environment where everyone is respected and able to carry out their responsibilities to their fullest potential," Sandra says.

The greatest source of pride and joy for Sandra however, is her family with whom she spends all her free time. She and her husband have three children: Joshua, Nicholas, and Hannah. Together they enjoy all kinds of outdoor activities and travel as much as they can.

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## Our Partners

Much of our success is attributed to the contributions of our valued partners. After all, they play a key role in helping us bring high-quality early care and education programs and services to our children. In this issue, it is our pleasure to highlight **Miami-Dade County, Department of Human Services, Child Development Services Bureau**.



Miami-Dade County, Department of Human Services, Child Development Services (CDS) bureau assists parents and families with eligibility determination and placement of children in a network of licensed child care facilities throughout Miami-Dade County.

Miami-Dade County's CDS also manages the Early Learning Coalition's Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R), the gateway for family services. Other services include developmental screening and assessment services to identify children at-risk for developmental delays, inclusion training and technical assistance for child care teachers and providers, and payment-processing for School Readiness and Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) payments.

For more information on Miami-Dade County, please visit <http://www.miamidade.gov/dhs/children.asp>.

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## Miami-Dade County News Briefs

*School Readiness (SR) Updates*

## Providers: Check Your Attendance and Enrollment Online

Providers now have the ability to check their attendance and enrollment information online through Miami-Dade County's secure web portal. Providers need only a username and password to enter this site and receive up-to-date information, including the enrollment and termination dates of children enrolled at your facility. Once providers receive a username, password, and training, they will also be able to submit all attendance rosters electronically. In order to obtain a username, password, or additional information, please contact Ed Nelson at 305-514-6023 or [enelson@miamidade.gov](mailto:enelson@miamidade.gov).

## Post-Attendance Audits

Miami-Dade County has begun conducting post-attendance audits at provider sites. Providers are reminded of their responsibility to provide copies of attendance rosters and daily sign-in/sign-out sheets upon request from the post-attendance auditors.

## Providers: Please Complete and Submit Your ASQ Forms Promptly!

We are requesting your assistance in the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) screening-process implemented by Miami-Dade County. Please complete, review and return your ASQ forms promptly, following the instructions included in your ASQ packet.

In October 2009, Miami-Dade County will present workshops on how to complete the Ages and Stages Questionnaires. Please contact 305-270-2905 (South) or 305-953-6007 (North) for more information.

## *Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Updates*

### How to Register for VPK Trainings

Please visit our VPK website at <http://www.vpkhelp.org/resources/trainings.html> to learn the 13 steps to successfully register for VPK trainings. Courses include VPK Educational Standards, Integrating the Standards, and Emergent Literacy for the VPK Classroom. Instructions on how to cancel your registration or obtain your certificate, transcript, and/or CEUs are also available.

### 2008 VPK Education Standards Training

Tuesday, October 20, 2009; 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

DCF Reference # 502

Miami-Dade College-Homestead Campus

500 College Terrace, Bldg. G, Room 307

Homestead, FL

Thursday, October 22, 2009; 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 pm

DCF Reference # 501

St. John the Apostle School

479 E 4th Street, School Cafeteria

Hialeah, FL

\*\*2008 VPK Education Standards is for VPK teachers and directors who have never taken the 2005 VPK Standards training.

## Monroe County

### School Readiness Child Health Screening Project is Now Underway

Our community partner, Florida Keys Area Health Education Center (FKAHEC) will be providing FREE comprehensive child health screenings to approximately 450 School Readiness (SR) preschool children on-site at 19 SR centers and 29 family child care homes Keys-wide. Financial assistance will be available for follow-up medical/specialty care for SR children whose parents are uninsured or underinsured.

Non-subsidized private pay children may participate in the health screenings for a nominal \$10 fee. Funding for this project is made available by a grant from the Human Services Advisory Board of the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners and additional support from the ELC.

### ELC Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony at the Gato Building in Key West

The ELC recently hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Monroe County's Gato Building, the new location of the ELC office in the Keys. This event highlighted the importance of quality early care and education as well as partnerships in the community. Special guest speakers included Key West Mayor Morgan McPherson and Monroe County Commissioner Heather Carruthers. President and CEO Evelio Torres presented plaques to recognize ELC Board Director Alan Eckstein and Key West Mayor Morgan McPherson for their commitment to the children in their community.

Following the ribbon-cutting event, a joint meeting of the ELC Program Policy & Strategy Committee and Provider Services Committee was held. ELC Board of Directors David Williams, Dr. Gina Cortez-Suarez, Dr. Silvia La Villa and Lucy Piñero, and Program Policy & Strategy Committee Vice-Chair Elizabeth Bezos traveled to Key West for the occasion.

### The Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony at the Coalition's New Monroe Office Location



#### Pictured left to right:

Alan Eckstein, ELC Board Director  
Lucy Piñero, ELC Board Director  
Heather Carruthers, Monroe County Commissioner  
Dr. Silvia La Villa, ELC Board Director  
Dr. Gina Cortez-Suarez, ELC Board Director  
Evelio Torres, ELC President & CEO  
Morgan McPherson, City of Key West Mayor  
David Williams, ELC Board Director

## The Coalition's Team in Monroe County



Pictured left to right:

Amber Eby, Upper-Keys Classroom Mentor  
Trina Rodriguez, Lower-Keys Classroom Mentor  
Mary Williams, Managing Director - Monroe County  
Elizabeth Bellon, Administrative Assistant

### *Save the Date*

#### **Early Education Provider Workshop**

Saturday, October 17, 2009; 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.  
First Baptist Church, 200 62nd St. Ocean, Marathon

\*Light-Breakfast Refreshments Provided / Lunch on-Your-Own

Sponsored by Wesley House and the Early Learning Coalition, this workshop will discuss a variety of topics. DCF Licensing Rep. Lisa Barry-Toth will provide an update on new rules and regulations for centers. President and CEO of the Alliance for Early Care & Education, Linda Carmona-Sanchez, will present an overview of her organization. ELC STEPS Specialist Miriam Altman will present the newly revised Birth to Three Standards training in the afternoon session.

Please RSVP to Laurie Dunn at 305-809-5000 no later than October 12, 2009.

#### **Monroe County Advisory Committee Meeting**

Monday, October 19, 2009; 1:00 p.m.  
Monroe County School District Board Room, 241 Trumbo Road, Key West

Please join ELC staff, ELC Monroe board members and our community partners as we discuss important information of interest and concern to our early education and care provider community. This is the first quarterly meeting of the new program and school year. Provider participation is strongly encouraged.

\*Note: Participation via school district videoconferencing is available at Marathon High School, Room 2106; and Coral Shores High School, Library Media Center Conference Room, Tavernier. To participate via conference call, the call-in number is 1-888-813-8477, passcode 143130.

**Lights on Afterschool in Bayview Park**  
Thursday, October 22, 2009; 3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Bayview Park, Key West

Sponsored by the Boys and Girls Club and Wesley House, all are invited to join the celebration to highlight the importance of afterschool programs. There will be a brief ceremony followed by refreshments and lots of activities and games for the children. Other programs are welcome to set up a display booth and/or provide a children's activity.

For additional information, please contact Dan Dombroski at 305-296-2258