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[Early Learning Coalition](#)

[VPK](#)

[Department of Economic Opportunity](#)



Upcoming Board and Committee Meetings

Finance
Wednesday, April 24
8:30 a.m.
ELC Board Room

Program & Strategy
Monday, April 29

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ELC News Alert

Issue 4
April 2013



President's Message

Dear Partners:

The 2013 legislative session will come to a close in just a few short weeks. Once again this year we had an early learning bill that will make major changes to Florida's early learning system. The difference this year is that right from the very beginning, Early Learning Coalitions, provider organizations, and other advocates had a seat at the table. The end result of many weeks of debate and language refinement leaves us with a good (but not perfect) House bill. The [Senate bill](#) is almost identical to the [House version](#). Both bills should come closer together over the next few days. A summary of the final bill will be available on the legislative updates section of our website soon.

We will continue to advocate for additional dollars to serve more children and to support providers in their efforts to improve their programs. We will also continue to find efficiencies to reduce the number of children on our waiting list.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to let me know.

I remain at your service,

Evelio C. Torres
President & CEO

Important Announcements

Registration Now Open: "Children First: Envisioning Our Future" Conference

On May 10 and 11, 2013, the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe and our community partners are hosting "Children First: Envisioning our Future," Miami-Dade's annual conference for early education professionals. Join us as we present current research and best practices in early childhood education. The conference is open to a wide variety of potential participants, including directors, care providers, teachers, support staff and administrators, as well as a wide variety of interest

3:30 p.m.
ELC Board Room

Board

Monday, May 6
8 a.m.
ELC Board Room

For a complete list
of upcoming
Coalition meetings
and events,
please visit our
website at
www.elcmdm.org.

Contact Us

Miami-Dade
2555 Ponce de Leon
Blvd.
5th Floor
Coral Gables, FL 33134
305-646-7220
305-447-1608 (fax)

Monroe
1100 Simonton Street
Suite 1-204
Key West, FL 33040
305-296-5557
305-296-5588 (fax)

info@elcmdm.org

Join Our Mailing List!

areas.

Attendees will be able to gain CEUs and in-service hours, as well as be eligible for prizes and giveaways.

Participants will be able to attend seminars in :

- School readiness
- Quality learning environments
- Support for administration
- Curriculum
- Child development
- Inclusion
- Family partnerships
- And more!

Join us for two days of professional development for Miami-Dade's early childhood education community. To register for the conference, please visit <http://register.qccareers.org/steps/step1?event=656>.

ELC Team Member Appointed to NAFCC Accreditation Council



Georgia Thompson has been appointed a member of the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) Accreditation Council. She will begin her 3-year term starting August 1, 2013. Georgia is one of 12 who will serve on the Accreditation Council nationally. She has been cited as an "emerging leader" by the NAFCC Board.

The role of the Accreditation Council is to ensure quality, integrity and accountability for the accreditation system. The Council develops and approves the policies that govern the accreditation system and reviews and revises the Quality Standards for NAFCC Accreditation. The Council meets via conference call periodically and once in person annually at the NAFCC Conference, which will be held in Scottsdale, Arizona, from July 17-20 this year.

Georgia looks forward to working with the NAFCC and continuing to support FCCH providers in attaining high quality in their programs.

Congratulations, Georgia!

Step Up For Students: Scholarship Opportunity to Share with Parents



Florida has help for schoolchildren who are low-income, in foster care or homeless. Today, more than 50,000 low-income students in Florida are receiving a Step Up For Students Scholarship.

Many families still don't know this option exists, but Florida has the nation's largest K-12 scholarship program giving low-income families the ability to choose the school that best meets their children's needs. Families who qualify for the free or reduced-price school lunch program, children who are in foster care, or who are homeless could be eligible.

Applications for the 2013-14 school year have started. Renewal families were

invited to start applying early February and new families in early March. Please visit www.StepUpForStudents.org to apply. To learn more, please visit the [website](#), call 877-735-7837 or email info@sufs.org.

Summer Camp Listing Application

The Department of Children and Families, Office of Child Care Regulation and Background Screening, has released a new Summer Camp Listing Application. This list can reach hundreds of potential new campers.

To add your camp, visit myflorida.com/childcare. Once there, click "Add Camp Listing" on the homepage. All you need to add a listing is your background screening OCA number for your camp.

Receive FREE Books through Read Conmigo

Read Conmigo sponsored by Infinity Auto Insurance is an award winning bilingual literacy program. Launched in 2011, the program has already distributed more than 300,000 books to participating families. The goal is to have each child's parent in grades kindergarten through 5th grade register for the program on ReadConmigo.org.

Read Conmigo is offering to host FREE family literacy events at your school. During these events, teachers and counselors work alongside Read Conmigo representatives to register families for the program as well as provide practical training on how to use the Read Conmigo tools.

Register today for an event at your school to ensure your students have the opportunity to receive FREE bilingual books. Subscribing opens the door to a vast library of eBooks, activities, games and more.

To register, please visit <https://www.signup4.net/>.

Board Representatives Available to Answer Your Questions

The Early Learning Coalition would like to make it easier for you to reach your Provider Representatives on the board of directors. The following board members represent provider areas on the board:

- Shaleen Fagundo: Representative of private for-profit child care providers, including private for-profit family day care homes
- J. Abilio Rodriguez, Ph.D.: Representative of faith-based child care providers
- Helene J. Good: Representative of programs for children with disabilities under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

To contact your provider representative, please email board@elcmdm.org.

From the Desk of Champagne Girtten, Project Director, Children's Legal Advocacy Project at Legal Services of Greater Miami, Inc.



This section of the News Alert is designed to inform and remind providers and parents of their legal rights regarding the educational needs of their children. It is provided by the Children's Legal Advocacy Project at Legal Services of Greater Miami, Inc., a private, not-for-profit law firm that provides free civil legal services to the low-income populations in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties.

The Top Ten Items in an IEP

If your child has been tested and found eligible for special education, the next step is an Individual Education Plan (IEP). It is important to make sure the IEP you make with your child's school is the best plan for your child's needs. The following are some items that should be included in an IEP.

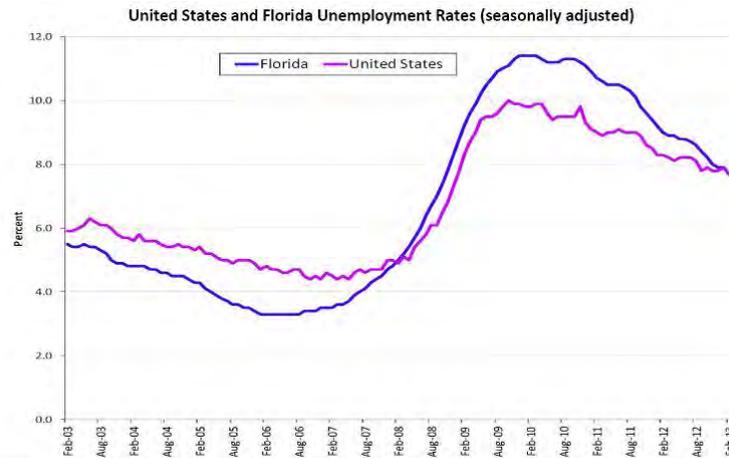
1. **Information about your child's current performance:** From test scores, classroom behavior, etc.
2. **Annual Goals:** Should be specific, measurable and broken down into smaller goals. Can be about schoolwork, behavior, or social skills.
3. **Measurable Progress:** How progress will be measured for each goal, and who will be responsible for measuring that progress.
4. **Related Services:** Such as any devices your child may use or training for the teachers.
5. **Interaction with non-disabled students:** To what extent and when your child will interact with the rest of the student body, whether that is in gym, lunch, or in a regular classroom.
6. **Testing:** Whether your child will participate in standardized testing such the FCAT, and whether they will have any accommodations during the test such as extended time.
7. **Dates and Places:** The dates and places services will be provided and the length of time they will last, such as physical or speech therapy.
8. **A statement of the child's wishes when he or she turns 14 and afterwards.**
9. **A statement of the transition services needed after high school when the child turns 16 and afterwards.**
10. **A statement at age 17 that the child has been notified of any rights that transfer to him or her at age 18.**

If your child is not progressing on their goals, or something is missing from the IEP, you can ask for an interim IEP meeting to change the goals. Remember you can always seek the assistance of an attorney.

Florida Releases Its Employment Figures for February

Florida's seasonally adjusted unemployment dropped to 7.7 percent in February 2013, the lowest it has been since October 2008 when it was 7.4 percent. There were 729,000 jobless Floridians out of a labor force of 9,427,000. Nationally, the unemployment rate was 7.7 percent in February.

In December 2012, Monroe County (4.2 percent) had the state's lowest unemployment rate. The unemployment rate for Miami-Dade County was 9.4 percent.



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics Program, in cooperation with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Labor Market Statistics.

For more information, visit the Department of Economic Opportunity's [website](#).

Programs Information

VPK Agreement Deadlines

The Coalition is accepting VPK Agreements for the School Year 2013-14 program. To submit a VPK Agreement, please visit the Provider Portal at <http://providers.elcndm.org>. Additional information regarding the VPK program can be found below:

VPK 2013-14 School Year Program

The deadline for submitting a VPK agreement to provide the School Year program to those seeking pre-payment is **May 15, 2013**. The deadline for those not seeking pre-payment is **June 1, 2013**. Please visit the [Provider Portal](#) to submit your 2013-14 School Year VPK Agreement.

Please use the timeline below as a reference.

April 1	Deadline for Summer 2013 VPK Agreements
May 15	Deadline for Prepayment School Year 2013-14 Agreements
June 1	Deadline for School Year 2013-14 Agreements

VPK Assessment Period 3

Florida statute requires all private and public VPK providers to use the Florida VPK Assessment as a pre- and post-assessment. The Coalition is requesting providers to administer Assessment Period 1 (AP1), Assessment Period 2 (AP2) and Assessment Period 3 (AP3) in order to track child development over the course of the year.

Assessment Period 3 should commence three weeks before programs close their VPK programs. Data must be entered into the Online Reporting System by July 31, 2013.

VPK Absence Policy

When calculating a child's program attendance, the following are not included in the calculation:

- Days before a child's first day of attendance
- Days after a child's last day of attendance

The number of payable hours is either:

- A. Hours attended divided by 0.8, or
- B. The number of hours the child was enrolled

You are paid A or B based on which is less. This ensures a provider's payment is not for more hours than are offered.

Ages and Stages Questionnaire - 3 Update

Miami-Dade County has implemented the ASQ-3 online system where all ASQ-3s must be entered into the Miami-Dade County website. County staff provides trainings to assist providers in accessing the County website; offers assistance inputting the AQS-3 child data online; and has provided training to more than 800 providers, including individual trainings at their centers.

Beginning July 1, 2013, the Early Learning Coalition will provide ASQ-3 online entry on the ELC website. ELC staff will provide training and assistance to all providers on-site and online. A Screening Specialist will also be available at each of the new service centers opening across Miami-Dade County. This transition will be relatively easy for all and will provide valuable information to both providers and families regarding each participating child's development.

If you need assistance with the current online system, please call 786-469-4517 to schedule an appointment for individualized training at your facility. If you still need an ASQ-3 kit, please call 786-469-4517.

For more information on child screening, contact Bethany Sands at 305-803-1272 or bsands@elcmdm.org.

ELIS: Early Learning Information System



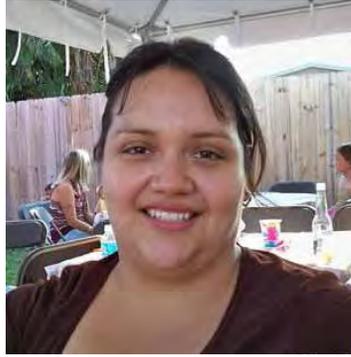
ELIS Launch Delayed

The Office of Early Learning announced ELIS is delayed for 90 days from its scheduled release date of July 1, 2013. Hewlett Packard, the developers of the ELIS system, has been asked to present a status report before the Florida Legislature.

Please check our [website](#) for more news and updates in the coming months.

ELC Team Member Spotlight

Liliana "Gaby" Murillo joined the ELC team in November 2010 as an Administrative Assistant and Finance Clerk. Gaby is responsible for reviewing and auditing all travel expense reports for the Coalition; managing and maintaining restitution payments to ensure timely reimbursement to OEL; entering all cash receipts into the system; and assisting the Controller. One of the most rewarding parts of her job is having



the opportunity to volunteer at community events, getting valuable information out into the community.

Gaby currently plans to attend Miami Dade College during the summer to pursue a degree in Business Administration. She believes education is extremely important, a principle she works hard to instill in her four children.

"I am always telling my children they must do well in school and get an education for a bright future," she said. "Now I want to go back and finish so they see just how important it is to have a degree."

In her time away from the office, Gaby enjoys spending time with her children, taking them to football, baseball and cheerleading practice and games. They love having dance parties at home. The family also spends time together traveling around Florida.

Monroe County News

Ongoing Registration Underway for 2013-14 VPK School Year and 2013 Summer Program

Ongoing registration will begin on Monday, April 22, at all Wesley House locations:

- Key West: Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- Marathon: Tuesday and Thursday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- Tavernier: Monday and Wednesday, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Evening hours are available by appointment. For additional information, please call 305-296-5557 or 305-809-5000.

Stay tuned for information regarding the new VPK online registration system to be announced shortly.

Free Online Training Available for In-Service Hours

The **Online Introduction to the Pre-K CLASS Tool** (available in English or Spanish) for 3 and 4 year old teachers is a self-paced online program that provides an overview of effective teacher-child interactions as defined by the CLASS tool and the ways that these interactions help children learn. This course takes approximately 2 hours to complete and participants will receive 2 in-service hours.

*Note: Only 25 slots are available for this training.

Registration is 1st come, 1st served. The deadline to register for these courses is **Friday April 26, 2013**.

To register or for questions, please contact Amber Keller at 786-897-1933 or by email at akeller@elcmdm.org.

Save the Dates:

April 24 - CAFÉ Parent Training on "Powerful Interactions"
St. James Children's Center
87500 Overseas Hwy., Islamorada
5 p.m. - 6 p.m.

April 16 - CuddleBugs Baby Shower

Key West Marriott Beachside Hotel, 2nd Floor
3841 N. Roosevelt Blvd., Key West
11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Expectant moms, women trying to conceive, new moms and babies: You're invited as our guests of honor! Let Lower Keys Medical Center shower you with attention, pamper you with gifts and entertain you with activities and refreshments. We will provide information about pregnancy, labor and delivery, newborn care and breastfeeding. You will leave with a wealth of knowledge about pregnancy, birth and parenting your newborn CuddleBug. See [attached flyer](#) for details.

May 18 - First Aid/CPR in English

Wesley House Family Services
1304 Truman Ave., Key West
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
To register, contact Laurie Dunn at 305-809-5000.

May 21 - CAFÉ Parent Training on "Is my Child Ready?"

Kreative Kids
4711 Overseas Hwy., Marathon
5 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Quality Counts

Save the Date

April 25 - Introduction to Quality Counts 2.0 Information Session

ELC Board Room
2555 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Suite 500, Coral Gables, FL 33134
Spanish Session: 9 a.m. - 11 a.m.
English Session: 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.

Quality Counts Now on Facebook

You can find the Quality Counts program on Facebook. Be sure to Like the page for news, updates and information on high quality early education.

Find their page by searching for [Quality Counts Miami](#) on Facebook.

Assistance Available for QC Renewal Process

Is your early learning program going through the Quality Counts renewal process? If you need assistance with your Self-Study or the Quality Counts Portal, contact the Quality Counts Department. Please call 305-646-7220 and ask for a Quality Counts Navigator.

Free Resources Available to Programs in Miami-Dade Through Shared Resources Florida

Shared Resources is a free, membership-based website that offers an array of resources and tools for program directors, owners, and teachers to enhance the business and educational environment of centers and family child care homes.

Program Benefits:

- Cost savings on child products, books, office supplies and more

- Quick links to DCF Regulations
- Helpful templates
- Free printable posters
- Community message boards

Classroom / Teacher Benefits:

- Free online training for teachers
- Literacy activity ideas
- Physical activity ideas and videos
- Parent handouts
- Teacher resources

To access the site, visit www.sharedresourcesfl.org.

- Click on "Interested in becoming a member?" and enter requested information.
- A login and temporary password will be emailed within two business days.

Shared Resources Florida is brought to you through the collaboration of the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Early Childhood Initiative Foundation, and Quality Counts in partnership with The Children's Trust.

Free CLASS™ Online Trainings Available

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System™ (CLASS™) is playing a significant role in Quality Counts and across the early childhood community in Florida.

The Florida Office of Early Learning has purchased subscriptions to online programs to provide information on the CLASS™ tool. The ELC has free online subscriptions available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Limited quantities are available.

All you need to access these trainings are:

- Activation key - provided by ELC
- Computer access
- Email account
- High-speed Internet connection
- Flash player (latest update)

Introduction to the Pre-K CLASS™ Tool

This 2-hour program includes an overview of effective teacher-child interactions as defined by the CLASS™ tool and the ways these interactions help children learn.

Duration: Two hours, self-paced; available for one month from initial activation
Available in English or Spanish

For more information about these programs, please visit <http://www.teachstone.org/training-programs/>.

To receive subscriptions, contact Carol Brogan, ELC Quality Counts Implementation Manager, at cbrogan@elcmdm.org.

Licensing News and Updates

From the Desk of Suzette Frazier, Regional Safety Program Manager Department of Children & Families Child Care Licensing



This section of the News Alert is designed to inform and remind providers of the licensing requirements of the Department of Children & Families. This licensing corner is a new and innovative way for providers to stay connected to child care licensing and will serve as a guide to new regulations, information about recalls, licensing updates and much more.

New Background Screening Requirements for Summer Camps

Florida law requires all summer camp owners, operators, employees and volunteers who assist more than 10 hours per month to comply with Level 2 Background Screening. Although summer camps are exempt from licensure, the Department of Children and Families is responsible for ensuring background screening requirements are met.

To process your Level 2 Background Screening for owners, employees and volunteers of your camp, we will need to register you as a provider in our system. Once you are registered, you will receive an email verifying registration and be provided a DCF Agency Identifier called an ORI and a DCF LiveScan provider number called an OCA. These two numbers must be used to process background screens for your program.

Once your program is registered, you may have your employees and volunteers fingerprinted at any of the LiveScan Vendors listed on our website.

If you have already registered your summer camp program, you do not need to register again. You can find LiveScan Vendors and other helpful information on the Background Screening [website](#).

For more information, please contact DCF at 850-717-4454 or background_screening@dcf.state.fl.us.

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