



ELC News Alert

SEPTEMBER 2009

Issue 11

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ELC Mission & Vision

Mission

To promote high-

President's Message



I am pleased to announce that we were recently awarded a national grant from the IBM KidSmart Early Learning Program to provide 50 new computers for use in early learning centers throughout Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties.

The Coalition was chosen as one of only three recipients in the State to benefit from this worldwide initiative. Distribution of the Young Explorer computer units is scheduled to begin in late September and early October. Early care and education providers are being selected based on their children's identified needs and assessment information, as well as geographical location and the sponsor's criteria.

In September the Coalition also launched the first in a series of book distributions in partnership with Reading Is Fundamental (RIF). The Coalition will be distributing books to 28,000 children in 385 early care and education centers throughout Miami-Dade and Monroe counties. Children will choose from a selected list of books to build their own personal libraries. The purpose of the program is to motivate children to develop a love of reading and to encourage parents to read to their children daily.

As part of the program, the ELC welcomed guest reader and Emmy award-winning journalist María Celeste Arrarás. Ms. Arrarás shared her book [The Magic Cane](#) with children attending Kidworks USA. She is the mother of three and a strong advocate for education and early literacy.

For more information on these projects and others, please visit our website at 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

[The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe is now on Facebook and Twitter!](#)



Click here to follow us on Twitter.

quality school readiness, voluntary pre-kindergarten and 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.

Finance



Click here to become a fan on Facebook.

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

Providers, You Still Have time to Participate in CCEP!

The Child Care Executive Partnership (CCEP) program is designed to ensure that the children of your employees are provided safe, high-quality, developmentally appropriate and enriching child care. Thanks to this program over 300 additional children were served in Miami Dade County.

Similar to the School Readiness grant, your employees may qualify for this program by earning low to moderate wages. The eligibility requirements are the same, except that employees may earn up to 200% of poverty level. For example, a family of four can earn up to \$42,400 and still be eligible for participation.

As the provider you will be reimbursed at 50% of your School Readiness rate after an assessed parent-fee, and *may* be eligible for a tax credit for the remaining 50% (up to \$50 per month) for each child enrolled in your facility (please check with your tax professional). Tax benefits, increased employee morale, and higher productivity make the CCEP an exciting work-life benefit for your employees. Moreover, participation is available to eligible employees with **children through age 12**.

It's easy to participate, just print out a CCEP Provider Participation Agreement from the website indicated below and fax it to Alina Soto at (786) 888-9282. For those providers who presently have children in the CCEP program, there is no need to send new enrollment paperwork--your families will continue to be covered through their eligibility. If you are participating in the program for the first time, please visit http://elcmdm.org/our_services/ccep.html for instructions on how to enroll families.

Please note that this program is subject to funding availability. As always, we will continue to explore new and improved ways to serve you, our providers and most valued partners.

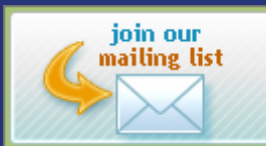
The Coalition Launches the Kick-Off Week of its First Book Distribution in Partnership with Reading Is Fundamental (RIF)

September 28 at
8:00 a.m.
ELC Board Room

Audit
September 28 at
10:00 a.m.
ELC Board Room

Program & Strategy
September 30 at
10:00 a.m.
ELC Board Room

BOD
October 5 at 8:00
a.m.
ELC Board Room



Evelio Torres, ELC President and CEO ; Blythe Keeler Robinson, ELC Senior Director of Programs; and Lucia C. Piñero, ELC Board Director, discuss the value of distributing books to children in Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties.

María Celeste Arrarás, award-winning journalist and TV host, asks children attending Kidworks USA in Hialeah about their reaction to her book, The Magic Cane. Arrarás spoke about the great benefits of reading to children at an early age.



Children were given the opportunity to select their own book. The book distribution was made possible by a \$125,000 grant given to the ELC by Reading Is Fundamental, Inc.

Children from Kidworks USA hold up their new books and explain why they chose them. The Coalition will be distributing books to 28,000 children in Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties.



[OPPAGA Reports Limited Information is Available to Assess Statewide Demand and Outcomes for After School Programs](#)

A recent Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) report highlights that after-school

program data is limited and outcomes are difficult to assess. Moreover, the agency does not make specific recommendations.

To read the report in its entirety please visit our website at www.elcmdm.org.

Learn How you Can Become Involved in the CAPP Council's Family Strengthening Initiative

The Florida Child Abuse Prevention and Permanency (CAPP) Council's goal is to ensure that all children live in safe, nurtured, and stable environments that promote their wellbeing. Poverty and stress are two risk factors that increase the likelihood of neglect and abuse inflicted on children. In light of the current economic state, job loss has contributed to these factors and as a result, CAPP is currently working to implement the Family Strengthening initiative.

Three components are at the heart of the Family Strengthening initiative: promoting five protective factors, parenting support materials and training for early education staff, and public education. It has been reported that the Florida Department of Children and Families' child abuse hotline has received an inflated number of calls this year. Immediate action is necessary to increase the consistency of parenting messages, assist early care and education staff in guiding parents regarding developmentally appropriate parenting information, and encourage parents to seek support and assistance when needed.

The Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) will be collaborating on early childhood training needs as it relates to the initiative. Additional details are forthcoming but in the interim, please contact your local CAPP to learn how you can help.

The Business of Family Child Care - A Webinar Series

The National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) is offering a seven-part live webinar series, The Business of Family Child Care. The webinar will cover the business topics of record keeping basics, advanced record keeping and taxes, contracts, marketing, legal/insurance, and business planning and money management. The series will provide family child care providers with the knowledge and tools to be successful!

For more information and to access the link to register, please visit the "Updates and News" section on our homepage at 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>

Seminar for Afterschool Providers on The Florida Standards for Quality Afterschool Programs

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

Registration is FREE to all afterschool providers who register through FAN's website at 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 Rick Beasley.



Rick Beasley has served as the executive director of the South Florida Workforce since August 2005. In this position, he oversees workforce programs in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties with an operating budget of \$60 million. He is in charge of one of the nation's most dynamic "melting pots" - a diverse socioeconomic region. His vision for South Florida Workforce is to create a model for the nation by establishing a world-class labor force that fosters economic growth.

South Florida Workforce's overarching strategic priority is to support

economic development that leads to higher-skilled, better-paying jobs that improve South Florida's quality of life and strengthen the economy. Aligning workforce development with economic development is work Beasley is familiar with.

Mr. Beasley has provided leadership for a number of important workforce initiatives including the development of a Performance Management Tool (PMT) / Balance Scorecard, deployment of the SFW Mobile Workforce Assistance Centers, the South Florida Workforce State of the Workforce report and the creation of the Employed Worker Training program.

Prior to joining The South Florida Workforce, he was the director of the Missouri Department of Economic Development, Division of Workforce Development. In this position, Beasley was responsible for managing Missouri's workforce development system and advising key policymakers on a broad range of workforce and economic development issues. In total, Rick oversaw more than 500 employees, while administering a \$127 million budget to provide employment and training assistance to Missouri job seekers and employers.

Under Beasley's leadership, the Department of Economic Development-Division of Workforce Development received the Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity in recognition for outstanding work. He led the development and release of GreatHires.org, the state's new job bank and case management system. The system proved so efficient, the agency expanded it to incorporate all employment and training programs. Beasley was also instrumental in revamping the organization's structure, providing better service delivery and more efficient program coordination.

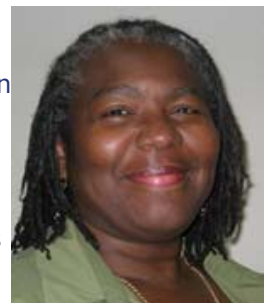
Beasley held several management positions in state government as well as the private sector before being appointed to the Missouri Department of Economic Development. He served as the staff director of the Missouri Training and Employment Council, the State's Workforce Investment Board. Additionally, Beasley served as the One-Stop Career Center coordinator for the division.

Rick Beasley holds a bachelor of science in economics from Lincoln University and a master's in public administration from the University of Missouri - Columbia.

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 **Roseline Philippe**, VPK Program Director.

Roseline Philippe, VPK Program Director, has been employed with the Coalition since November of 2005. She is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) program in Miami-Dade County. This includes planning for the recruitment of children and providers; coordinating VPK-related activities between Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Head Start, private providers, and Miami Dade County, the Coalition's contracted agency; determining provider eligibility to participate in VPK, etc; and serving as the ELC's liaison between the State, Department of Education, and other coalitions, regarding VPK.



Together, the VPK team has developed procedures to simplify the application process for providers. "I feel we have an opportunity to help providers improve their programs," says Roseline. She also emphasizes that the department's goal is always to assist. VPK monitors, for example, do not visit centers with the intention to seek out problems; rather they meet with providers and their staff to offer technical assistance.

Roseline makes a point of realizing how her professional contributions translate into the bigger picture, "I always see the work that my team and I do as touching the lives of

children and preparing our future generation."

Prior to joining the ELC, Roseline was a Head Start center director for 11 years, managing the daily operations of numerous centers. Moreover, she has worked in the field of education since 1984, teaching various age groups from pre-K to adults. She is an admitted political junkie and is actively involved with the local Democratic Party. Her heart, she says, truly lies in her community. She serves on several boards in the city of North Miami, in addition to a few non-profit organizations that collaborate with the Haitian community here and in Haiti.

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 **Florida International University (FIU), College of Education**.



The College of Education at Florida International University is one in which candidates, faculty, and staff embrace the shared experiences of a diverse, international, professional-learning community. The College, therefore, strives to facilitate diverse learning environments where knowledge becomes the means to foster goal attainment for all those involved in the learning process. This process necessitates the highest ethical standards, while emphasizing inquiry as the means-ends connection to enhancing reflective intelligence in a changing social, political, cultural and technological world.

The Coalition has partnered with FIU to help administer inclusion services and provide technical assistance in the Quality Counts program.

For more information on Florida International University (FIU), College of Education, please visit <http://education.fiu.edu/>.

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.

Post-Attendance Audits to be Conducted in September

Miami-Dade County will begin conducting post-attendance audits at provider sites in September. 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.

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.

Update Your DCF Child Care Training Transcript

VPK providers who took Department of Education (DOE)-approved instructor-led courses can now update their Department of Children & Families (DCF) child care training transcript by faxing, scanning and/or mailing copies of their certificates of completion to Kerry Allen, VPK Regional Facilitator, South Region, by **June 30, 2010**. Accompanying forms with submission instructions and additional information can be located on the ELC website at <http://elcmdm.org/downloads/VPKCertificatesCompletion.pdf>.

Monroe County

The ELC's Trina Rodriguez is Featured in *The Citizen's* September 2nd Front Page Photograph

In the September 2, 2009 edition of Key West's *The Citizen*, the Coalition's Trina Rodriguez was featured in the front page's leading photograph reading to children at The Learning Center on Trumbo Road. This special event was part of the Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) book distribution in which the Coalition disseminated books to 1,292 children in 41 early care and education centers in Monroe County. Reading Is Fundamental, the nation's largest literary organization, provided \$125,000 in grant money to distribute a total of 28,000 books in 385 centers throughout Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties.

To download and view the photograph, please visit *The Citizen's* e-edition webpage at <http://secure.floridakeys.com/keysnews/enews/index.cfm>. The cost is only \$0.50 an issue.

Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) "Care to Read" Literacy Training in the Keys



The national Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) organization provided the first of a two-part free emergent literacy training in Marathon on August 15, 2009. The second training session will be held on September 12, 2009. Upon completion, participants will receive literacy materials and books to take back to their classrooms. This training was provided in conjunction with the RIF book distribution grant that was awarded to the ELC.

New VPK Rates for 2009-2010

The new Monroe County VPK rates for 2009-2010 are as follows:
\$ 4.80 per hour - School Year Program
\$ 7.36 per hour - Summer Program

*Note: The difference from the 2008-2009 rates is due to the application of the annual district cost differential (DCD) by county.

VPK New 80-20 Attendance Policy

The Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) has issued new attendance policies for VPK. Beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, no more than 20% of a child's absences will be paid. This means for the 540 hour school-year program, only 108 hours will be paid for absences. **For programs offering three (3) hours of VPK instruction daily, this means only 36 days will be paid for absences for the entire year.** As providers, it is critical to work with parents to help them understand the importance of children attending school on-time every day.

New Reading Assessments for FLKRS

In the 2009-2010 school year, the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR) will replace the DIBELS measures portion of the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS). FAIR includes measures of letter naming and phonemic awareness, which are included in the VPK Education Standards. *Note: The ECHOS will continue to be used as part of the FLKRS assessment.

VPK teachers can prepare for the changes in the assessment by ensuring that lesson plans and activities align with the 2008 VPK Standards. Sample lesson plans are available at the following website: <http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/plans.asp>. Moreover, instructional strategies linked to specific standards are available at the following website: <http://www.brightbeginningsfl.org>.

Quality Counts

The ELC and The Children's Trust Participate in the CAA Head Start/Early Head Start Annual In-Service Training Conference

The Coalition's Quality Counts (QC) team and The Children's Trust participated in the CAA Head Start/Early Head Start Annual In-Service Training Conference on August 19, 2009. The ELC presented to a standing-room-only audience and fielded questions on such topics as the ERS assessments and the development of quality improvement plans. The ELC's QC team also took part in a poster presentation exhibit that sparked great interest in the Head Start teaching staff. The conference culminated in a luncheon with more than 1,200 Head Start staff in attendance. Luncheon participants were serenaded by a children's gospel choir and inspired by keynote speaker Geoffrey Canada, president and CEO of the Harlem Children's Zone who challenged listeners to expect nothing short of excellence from the children we serve.

There are currently 72 Head Start/Early Head Start programs participating in Quality Counts with more programs anticipated to enter next year. Head Start is one of 16 QC partners and provides technical assistance using its own staff and resources.