



**Policy Council  
September 15, 2021  
(English and Spanish)  
5:30 p.m.  
Meeting Minutes**

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**I. Call to Order**

Ms. April Williams presided over the meeting. The meeting was called to order at 5:40 p.m.

**II. Roll Call**

The following participated in the meeting:

| <b>2021-2022 Members</b>         | <b>Representing</b>  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Yanibel Cayetano                 | Children of The New Sun Academy                              |
| yessenia Mayorga                 | It's A Small World VII                                       |
| Gerladine Orrico                 | Kids Small World Learning Center                             |
| Anais Valdez (Secretary)         | Kinderkids Academy III                                       |
| Nikia James                      | Lincoln Marti - 102  |
| Yener Dupotey                    | Lincoln Marti - 905  |
| Victoria Yanez                   | Little Red School House                                      |
| Jasmin Johnson (Vice Chair)      | Miami Gardens Learning Center                                |
| Kanetra Jones                    | My Little Angels   |
| Maria Rodriguez                  | New Aladdin Learning Center                                  |
| Daphne Pierre- Louis (Volunteer) | Pink and Blue Children's Academy                             |
| Maria Soto (Chair)               | Springview Academy   |
| Pamela Pinkston                  | Step Above Academy   |
| Sheldrika Johnson (Treasurer)    | The Carter Academy II  |
| <b>2020-2021 Members</b>         | <b>Representing</b>  |
| April Williams                   | Miami Gardens Learning Center                                |
| Lizette Fontilus                 | Little Red School House                                      |
| Dr. Mara Zapata                  | ELCMDM Board   |
| <b>EHS Staff</b>                 | <b>Position</b>  |
| Belkis Torres                    | VP for EHS   |
| Cecilia Nariznis                 | Mental Health Manager  |
| Lucretia Jones                   | Director of Child Development and Education Support Services |
| Salvatore Martorano              | EHS Compliance Manager                                       |
| Sandrina Seraphin                | Director of Family and Community Engagement                  |
| Tatiana Larionova                | Nutrition Manager  |
| Vanessa Bongiorno                | EHS Finance Manager  |

**III. Action Item:**

**A. August 18, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

April Williams asked for a motion to approve the August 18, 2021 meeting minutes.

- Dr. Zapata moved to approve
- April Williams seconded the motion
- No discussion
- Motion passed 2 in favor and 0 opposed

## B. Elections of Officers

Ms. Torres reviewed each of the responsibilities for each position the following were elected:

- Chair: Maria Alejandra Soto
- Vice-Chair: Jasmin Johnson
- Secretary: Anais Valdez
- Assistant Secretary: Kanetra Jones
- Treasurer: Sheldrika Johnson
- Parliamentarian: Vanessa Sullivan
- Appointed Board Representative: Mara Zapata

Members were asked to complete the Code of Conduct.

## C. Resolution-09152021 (Self-Assessment)

Ms. Torres reviewed the purpose of the Self-Assessment and the timeline for conducting the Self-Assessment

Ms. Torres asked for a motion to approve the Resolution 09152021 (Self-Assessment).

- Sheldrika Johnson moved to approve
- Yessenia Mayorga seconded the motion
- No discussion
- Motion passed 13 in favor and 0 opposed

## IV. Reports

### A. Final June 2021 Expenditure Report

Final monthly expenses for the month of June 2021 were \$996,225.53. Twenty-nine percent (29 %) of total monthly expenses were used for salaries and fringe; A total of \$553,088.66 or 55% went to contractual services, \$531,759.43 went to providers, and \$21,329.23 to other contractual services, 8% was used for supplies; and 6% covered other expenses, which includes rent and utilities. The program had expensed or obligated 91% of the budget to date and had \$1,638,859.37 remaining.

### July 2021 Expenditure Report

Preliminary monthly expenses for the month of July 2021 were \$1,061,815.16. Thirty-one percent (31 %) of total monthly expenses were used for salaries and fringe; A total of \$564,373.40 or 53% went to contractual services, \$539,722.56 went to providers, and \$24,650.84 to other contractual services, 11% was used for supplies; and 14% covered other expenses, which includes rent and utilities. The program had used 95% of the budget to date and had \$639,248.28 remaining. These funds were/are obligated and pending final invoices to liquidate. The program will close the year with a balanced budget and final numbers will be presented in October.

### B. July 2021 Credit Card Report

There were no credit card expenses for the month of July.

### C. August 2021 Meal Report

Number of meals served in **August**:

- Breakfasts - 8,141 (98.7%)
- Lunches - 8,241 (99.9%)
- Snacks - 8,187 (99.3%)

At five schools, none of the meal services reached 100% due to children either being dropped off late or picked up early, or both:

- Lincoln Marti 905

- Miami Gardens Learning Center
- Rainbow Intergenerational
- Springview Academy

#### **D. August 2021 Enrollment Report**

During the month of August, there was a total of 572 allocated slots and 536 enrolled.

- Eight of the allocated slots were awarded to Rainbow for this school year however, the program is still recruiting for the center and the partner is actively searching for teaching staff.
- The remaining 36 vacancies are from current partners. The team is doing everything possible to recruit eligible families for the vacancies.

#### **E. August 2021 Attendance Report**

- During the month of August, the program offered ONLY in-person services to children. The average monthly attendance was 74.66%. The program did not meet the 85% threshold.
- Most of the reason's children were out were due to COVID exposures and centers closing, children/ families being sick, doctor's appointments, and a few families being out of vacation.
- Ms. Torres opened the floor to comments regarding the opportunity to receive virtual services should a site need to close because of COVID.

#### **F. Board Meeting Updates**

The Board Meeting was held on September 7, 2021. The Board Chair, Matthew Bruno, presided over the meeting. The following items were discussed:

- The former Board Chair, Adrian Alfonso, was recognize for his years of service on the Board.
- Mr. Mark Wilson, President and CEO of the Florida Chamber, presented on chamber initiatives to unite and unify the business community to push early learning outcomes. His presentation included the Florida 2030 blueprint and the strategies to reach the goal of improving Florida's talent pipeline and making the state the 10th largest economy in the world. The Florida Gap Map, showing elementary school reading levels were shared to emphasize the importance of quality early learning and raising awareness among business leaders.
- Dr. Brittany Birken, Principal Adviser at the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, shared about the work the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta is doing to improve economic mobility and resilience for low-income families. Her presentation included data on the impact of the federal benefits cliff and the challenges families may face in achieving long-term gains. She shared that efforts for change include, mapping the benefits cliff, leading the congressional charge to maximize employment and engaging in partnerships to support community and state efforts to improve economic security for families.
- Mr. Burno shared the passing of Ms. Edeline Fleurant, Early Head Start Policy Council Vice Chair, and Ms. Karina Chacon Diaz, teacher at The Creative Learning Center in Kendall.
- Ms. Stephanie Scuderi was appointed as Vice-Chair to the Strategic Planning Committee.
- Dr. Jonathon Gueverra, President of the College of the Florida Keys, was appointed to the Monroe Advisory Committee.
- It was announced that the Early Learning Coalition staff continues to hold monthly provider meetings via Zoom to provide updates from the different ELC departments. Providers are also invited to attend the monthly Provider Services Committee meeting where they have the opportunity to participate in an Early Education Partners Roundtable with their provider representatives.
- The Finance Committee reported the following:

- The financials are in good standing and we are foreseeing the year ending with a balanced budget.
- There is no waitlist for School Readiness in Miami-Dade or Monroe County. Children are being brought in every two weeks in Miami-Dade and daily in Monroe. The Title V program will end in September.
- The Policy Council report was presented via a recorded video by the Policy Council Chair, Kisline Timothee.
- Program, Policy & Strategy Committee reported the following:
  - Resolutions for the Early Head Start Self-Assessment and Changes to the Program Scope were approved.
- Professional Development Institute's Child Development Associate (CDA) course enrollment is almost closed and program begins soon.
- The Early Childhood Apprenticeship and Internship Program will launch on November 1.
- The Children First Equity and Inclusion Series will be featured at the Built to Thrive 21 Summit sponsored by The Children's Movement of Florida September 21.
- The Division of Early Learning (DEL) Disaster Relief Funding deadline will be extended again.
- The next round of Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSAA) Grants will be geared toward retention and recruitment of Providers.
- The Provider Services Committee reported the following:
  - An Early Head Start program compliance summary was shared. The significance of the program's recent non-compliance was emphasized.
  - An update on the Apprenticeship & Internship Programs were given.
  - It was shared that education initiatives are being prioritized at next legislative session.
  - Plans to engage individuals with disabilities in the workforce and early childhood education field.
- Governance and Bylaws Committee reported the following:
  - Changes to the bylaws were presented and approved by the Board.
- Monroe Advisory Committee reported the following:
  - Recent reports on Monroe County rent crisis were shared and current discussions include wages of local employees.
  - Providers in Monroe County continue to face challenges with teacher retention and wages.
  - It was reported that COVID cases among children in Monroe County has increased and the virus has been fatal among some prominent community figures.
- The meeting concluded with Community Presentation by Mr. Evelio Torres, Chief Executive Officer and President of the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe.

**V. Updates:**

- **Vaccination for Head Start Staff**  
Members were informed of a communication from the Office of Head Start informing programs that all Head Start employees and identified contractors must be vaccinated against COVID-19 by January 2022. In the communication, the Office of Head Start acknowledges Health and Safety as a key component of the program. Having a vaccinated workforce is a way to keep children safe since they are not eligible for the vaccine. More guidance will be coming out during the next weeks on program expectations.
- **Corrective Action Plan Update**  
Ms. Torres informed the new 2021-2022 members of a noncompliance that the program received due to a teacher briefly leaving a child on the playground. It was explained that all incident involving abuse or child safety is reported to the Florida Child Abuse Hotline and the Office of Head Start Region IV.

Because this was not an alleged incident, the program was given a noncompliance. Consequently, the program created and implemented a corrective action plan that addressed the incident and focused on preventing the incident from occurring again. The program successfully completed the corrective action plan and had a meeting with the Head Start Regional Office. The program is awaiting the final decision from the Office of Head Start which is expected to be issued the end of September beginning of October.

- **Program Information Report**

All Head Start programs are required to submit a report at the end of August called the Program Information Report. This report provides information on the work that the Head Start program did the previous year. The report in the packet is a summary of the information in the report. The three sections in the summary provides information on the children served their demographics and health services. The second section is information on the families served, and the final section provides information on the staff you provided the Head Start services during the year.

- **Health and Safety Screener**

The Office of Head Start requires that a Health and Safety Screener is conducted within 45 days of the start of each program year. The Child Care Partners and Education Services staff conducted the screeners together virtually. The Child Care Partners completed the screeners at their schools, entered their scores in our database, ChildPlus, and uploaded supporting documents, such as policies and procedures, proof of training, and staff background checks and health exams. The results included in the policy council packet are the preliminary results entered. The education services staff conducted a verification meeting with each partner through Zoom to confirm the screener results and supporting documents. All results have now been verified and finalized. The program is happy to report that 6 partners were at 100% compliance and many others have shown improvement from the last screener. The top findings in the screener were:

- 3HR- Background checks are conducted for all staff at least once every five years; health exams must be periodically completed (8 findings)
- 2HR- All staff have background checks, sex offender registry checks, criminal history checks including fingerprint checks, and initial health exams. (7 findings)
- 7HR- All staff are trained in and implement hygiene practices related to toileting, hand washing, diapering, safe food preparation, and exposure to blood and body fluids (6 findings)
- 6HR- Direct service staff are trained in first aid, CPR, prevention and control of infection diseases, use of safe sleeping practices, preventing and identifying Shaken Baby Syndrome, abusive head trauma, sun safety and medication administration (including the special needs of children with health issues), and respond to specific medical emergencies, including asthma and allergies. (6 findings)

All partners with findings must submit a program improvement plan by October 1<sup>st</sup> indicating what processes will be put in place to ensure the findings do not reoccur.

- **Li'l Foodies Cook Along Virtual Cooking Demo**

Li'l Foodies Cook Along Virtual Cooking Demo for the entire family will be live on Zoom this Friday, September 17th at 4 pm. Five (5) participants will be eligible to win a \$50 Publix Gift Cards. Join with Zoom link here:

[https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEscuiqTkoGNcAa3g\\_toJGfzTum\\_eQkWS0](https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEscuiqTkoGNcAa3g_toJGfzTum_eQkWS0)

Flyers with more details and recipes:

English <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ey-NfV4dwN5eaI8Wb886YKZor8hznyO/view?usp=sharing>

**VI. Reminder**

Ms. Torres shared that all meetings are the third Wednesday of the month at 5:30 p.m. except December and July when there isn't a meeting. She also said that in October there will be a Governance overview on Saturday, October 2, 2021 from 8:30 to 12:30 in place of the usual meeting. A flyer was added to the meeting packet with the registration link and the Zoom link. Members were encouraged to invite the officers from their parent committee.

**VII. Adjournment**

Ms. Torres asked for a motion to adjourn.

- Anais Valdez moved to adjourn.
- Dr. Mara Zapata seconded the motion to adjourn.
- Meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

Draft