



ELC Annual Board Meeting
November 1, 2021, 10:00 am
2555 Ponce De Leon Blvd., Ste 210
Coral Gables, FL.
Zoom Meeting ID: 943 7056 0454
Passcode: 11012021

Board Attendees: Matthew Bruno; Rick Beasley; Daniel Armstrong; Iris Strachan; Loreen Chant; Bob Eadie; Jenni Roig; Raeann Bacchus; Joycelyn Lawrence; Gladys Montes; Alex Soto; Richie Tandoc; Denisse Barrera; Aaron Slavens; Marisol Diaz; Sandi Bisceglia; Eileen Fluney; Lisa Taylor; Stephanie Scuderi; Chereen Coile; Jane McQueen; Mara Zapata; David Lawrence Jr.

Board Absentees; James Haj; Chuck Mohr

Staff Attendees: Evelio Torres; Angelo Parrino; Mercy Castiglione; Pam Hollingsworth; Michelle Meilan; Jacqueline Dominguez; Fred Hicks; Ahmed Mitwalli; Miguel Alfonso; Paloma Lopez-Barcena; Anabel Espinosa; Ana Sejeck; Belkis Torres; Ileana Vallejo; Diana Lane; Johnetta Nuby-Powell; Ana Rodriguez; Aileen Suazo; Lisney Badillo; Casie Hines; Larisa Salerno; Laurie Dunn; Vanessa; Aguilera-Viera; Lissandra Curbelo; Matthew Zaldivar; Lucy Schrack; Natalia Gamundi; Isabel Afanador; Thalia Daumy; Vernise Casimir; Dialina Quintanal; Jose Hernandez; Kristine Gregory; Jessica Parra

General Attendees: Bob de la Fuente; Priscila Hazrun; Lorena Suarez; Juana Guevera; Carlos Garcia; Maria Alvarez; Iris Marquez; Mercedes Medina Ollie Anderson; Dina Westburg; Antoinette Patterson; Ben Hill; Melissa Lorenzo; Ada Cuevas; Andres Rico; Brittany Freire; Maggie Casanova; Ruby White; Gaby Quintero; Silvana Diaz; Maria Rossiter; Sue Ellen Bennett; Denia Chavez; Danish Williams; Rosalyn Laney; Merline Pierre; Nolo Martinez; Danielle Luchtenburg; Maya Mcelrath; Carol Wick; J. Abilio Rodriguez; Betty Suarez; Audrey Hernandez; Maria Elena Delgado; Chary Esteban; Paula Viquez; Danays Diaz

I. Welcome & Introductions

Matthew Bruno

- M. Bruno called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.
- C. Pollard called roll and quorum was established with twenty (20) voting members.
- M. Bruno shared that translation services were available for the meeting.
- M. Bruno announced that a copy of the board attendance roster is included in every board packet.

II. Approval of Minutes

Matthew Bruno

- M. Bruno called for the approval of the minutes from October 4, 2021.
 - R. Beasley moved to approve the minutes.
 - L. Chant seconded the motion.
 - Motion passed unanimously.

Mission: To promote high-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.





III. Chairman's Report

Matthew Bruno

- M. Bruno acknowledged Ms. Jackye Russell on her recent retirement from the Coalition. E. Torres and other board members shared words of congratulations.
- M. Bruno congratulated Board Member and Executive Director of CareerSource South Florida, Mr. Rick Beasley who received the Toni Jennings Workforce Development Professional of the Year Award.
- M. Bruno announced special guest Mr. Jerry Plush, CEO of Amerant Bank, Ms. Carol Wick of Sharity Global and Dr. H Nolo Martinez of Mano-Y-ola.
- M. Bruno introduced S. Bisceglia, ELC Board Member representing the Keys to provide a brief background about the Keys gift bags received by board members. A video message from the Islamorada Chamber of Commerce Executive Director, Judy Hull was captured by Social Media Specialist, Carlos Garcia and shared with attendees. Ms. Hull shared words of appreciation for the work being done at the Coalition.
- M. Bruno shared that he attended the Florida Annual Chamber Annual Meeting with E. Torres and other board members where key leaders in the Florida business community came together to discuss education, workforce training needs, legislation and the state of the current and future economy.
- M. Bruno announced that the Coalition staff continue to hold monthly provider meetings via Zoom to provide updates and answer questions from providers. It was stated that the agenda for the monthly Provider Services committee has also been modified to include representatives from the Family Child Care Home associations.

IV. Chairman's Partner Spotlight

Iris Marquez, Little Innovators Early

- E Torres introduced Ms. Iris Marquez of Little Innovators Early Learning Academy who was recognized for the November Chairman's Partner Spotlight. Ms. Marquez shared information about her early learning center and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) initiatives. E. Torres thanked her for her innovative leadership and service to children and families.

V. Finance Committee Report

Loreen Chant

- L. Chant stated that the Finance Committee met on October 29 and approved the following resolutions:
 - Resolution 11012021-02 – Performance Bonus Pay – Belkis Torres
Authorize the President and CEO to approve a one-time Performance-Based Incentive payment to Early Head Start Partners.
 - Resolution 11022021-03 – Performance Bonus for Partners – Belkis Torres
Authorize the President and CEO to implement the Performance Bonus for Early Head Start Partners policy and procedure.
 - Resolution 11012021-04 – Amended Budget FY2021-2022 – Alex Sanchez
Authorize the President and CEO to approve the Early Learning Coalition's First Amendment to the Annual Budget for fiscal year 2021-2022.
 - Resolution 11012021-05 – Citrus Amendment – Pamela Hollingsworth
Authorize the President and CEO to negotiate and execute an amendment to Contract C21-01 with Citrus Health Network, Inc. for Developmental Services.



- L. Chant asked for a motion to approve the resolutions in a block vote.
 - Motion to approve by R. Beasley
 - Motion seconded by M. Zapata
 - Motion passed unanimously.

- The following updates were given:
 - Ending the first quarter of the fiscal year, the financials are in good standing. The SR and VPK programs are showing a projected surplus, which is a continuous challenge throughout the state. It is still early in the year and changes may occur.
 - Snapshots were presented for Miami-Dade and Monroe and children are still being brought in every 2 weeks in Miami-Dade and daily in Monroe. The Title V refugee program numbers were shared and services have successfully transitioned to Youth-Co-Op.
 - The Coalition facilitated the table top exercise in October. We received a recommendation to upgrade our incident response plan with the ELC's comfort level regarding paying a ransomware to 'eligible' recipients not prohibited by the US Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC). Board input is needed to contribute to the response plan and ensure ELC's preparation in the event of a cyber threat.
 - The EHS credit card report for September had no charges.

VI. Community Partnership

Jerry Plush, CEO, Amerant Bank

- Mr. Jerry Plush, CEO of Amerant Bank, the 2nd largest community bank in Florida, presented information on the banks over 40-year history of giving back and serving the community. Mr. Plush shared many initiatives the bank is involved in to empower people and promote economic mobility such as supporting bank leadership involvement in community organizations and partnering with and hiring a talented, diverse and supported workforce to bring the best service to customers.

VII. Strategic Planning Committee Report

Loreen Chant

- L. Chant stated that the Strategic Planning Committee met on October 29 and the following updates were given:
 - The Committee has worked hard to outline new initiatives that the Coalition and board members will focus on to continue to raise the quality of service for children and families.
 - Ms. Carol Wick reviewed The Coalition's 2017-2022 strategic plan and there were continued discussions surrounding the proposed systems improvements; utilizing a team approach, including ensuring all recommendations have clearly defined goals, outcomes aligned with the organization's mission and vision and ways to measure success.

VIII. Program, Policy & Strategy Report

Gladys Montes

- G. Montes stated that the Program, Policy and Strategy Committee met on October 26 and approved the following resolution:



- Resolution 11012021-01 – School Readiness Plan Amendment – Mercy Castiglione, Lisney Badillo, Jacqueline Dominguez
Authorize the President and CEO to submit a School Readiness Plan amendment for approval to the Florida Department of Education’s Division of Early Learning, for updates to the Finance, Contracts, and Human Resource Policies.
- G. Montes asked for a motion to approve the resolutions in a block vote.
 - Motion to approve by M. Zapata
 - Motion seconded by R. Beasley
 - Motion passed unanimously.
- The following updates were given:
 - Average daily attendance for Early Head Start was 76% in September. Low attendance was attributed to classroom closures due to COVID exposure. Compared to August, there were increases in the number of meals served. There has been no update to program compliance.
 - The Division of Early Learning (DEL) released an update regarding screening of children in the School Readiness Program. The updates require increased communication with partners and families and expands service delivery to more children in the program. Revisions to Citrus Health Network’s contract have been made to align with rule changes.
 - The Professional Development Institute shared The Early Education Internship Program will kick-off in November with a reception being held at Kids for Kids Academy on November 8th.
 - The Apprenticeship program is in the final stages of the application process.
 - ELC Talks on the topic of childhood trauma took place on October 22nd.

IX. EHS Policy Council Report

Jasmine Johnson, Vice Chair

- Ms. Jasmin Johnson, 21-22 Early Head Start Policy Council Vice Chair and a representative of Miami Gardens Learning Center, provided the Policy Council Report via a pre-recorded video (<https://youtu.be/7PxKQsTfras>). It was reported that Policy Council had an overview training during October instead of the regularly scheduled meeting. The training provided an overview of the Head Start program, each service area, the process for selecting and enrolling children, program governance, the role of the Policy Council members, and all of the reports that will be presented to the Policy Council members.
- A special call meeting was held on October 18 to discuss two resolutions. The following resolutions were approved:
 - the disbursement of performance bonuses to partners; and
 - the policy and procedure to give partners a bonus when funds are available.



X. Provider Services Committee Report

Rick Beasley

- R. Beasley stated that the Provider Services Committee met on October 28 and the following updates were given:
 - Discussion continued on opportunities to engage TANF recipients in the workforce and early childhood education field. The benefits cliff is a concern for many recipients and the work continues to address the challenge.
 - An update on the Apprenticeship & Internship Programs was also given. The Apprenticeship program is in the final application phase and all partners are aligned. The Internship program will launch in November in partnership with CareerSource South Florida, Miami Dade College, Florida Department of Children and Families and Kids for Kids Academy.
 - Information on how board members can engage in local chambers for the benefit of early childhood initiatives was shared.
 - As stated in the chairman's report, providers participated in an Early Education Partners Roundtable with their provider representatives. Retention of early education professionals and enrollment are still an ongoing challenge. Many beneficial resources were shared by provider representatives.
 - We continue to provide opportunities for our valued Family Child Care Home partners to join the roundtable.
 - The Coalition continues sending ongoing communications to providers related to important items and a copy of the alerts are included in every Provider Services meeting packet.

XI. Monroe Advisory Committee Report

Sandi Bisceglia

- S. Bisceglia stated that The Monroe Advisory Committee met on October 12 and the following updates were given:
 - Refresher trainings have been provided to address the decline in at-risk referrals and to educate and inform community partners of available services. At-risk referrals have increased.
 - The goal of the Early Education Internship program is to expand to Monroe County in the future.
 - Slots have been allocated for Monroe County participants in The Apprenticeship program.
 - The Coalition has assessed 9 classrooms and rated 3 early learning programs in Monroe County as of 10/5/2021. No programs have scored below the contract threshold. COVID continues to delay assessments but we are still on track.
 - There were 302 children in Monroe receiving School Readiness services and 445 enrolled in VPK. Waitlist applications continue to be pulled daily.
 - The Professional Development Institute (PDI) begins Child Development Associate (CDA®) Courses on November 6th. Seven (7) applicants are from Monroe County.



- Visits were made to child care centers in the Keys to encourage and support partners. Interviews, photos and videos were taken to publicize on social media. A video was created by social media specialist, Carlos Garcia of time spent with childcare partners and shared with attendees.
- There has been a decline in COVID cases in Monroe County that end in hospitalizations. About 15 to 20% of new cases are minors but no reports of pediatric hospitalizations.
- Updates were also provided by Partners:
 - Enrollment has improved for some providers but the challenge of retaining staff continues. The possibility of partnering with the College of the Florida Keys to engage future educators could assist with efforts.
 - The issue of teacher retention is also a challenge for the District. Pre-K numbers are up but Head Start is slightly down. The District continues to focus on CLASS standards, literacy efforts and the bridge from Pre-K to Kindergarten. A Focus Area 2 monitoring is expected in January 2022.
 - Committee member, Jeff Hurst shared a presentation from the Department of Children and Families. The presentation included licensing information beneficial to child care partners.
 - The DCF initiative HOPE Florida was also shared.

XII. Public Comments

Matthew Bruno

XIII. Adjourn

Matthew Bruno



**ELC Strategic Planning Retreat
November 1, 2021, 11:00 am**

I. Welcome & Introductions

**Matthew Bruno
Carol Wick, Sharity Global
Evelio Torres**

- M. Bruno convened the Strategic Planning Retreat.
- E. Torres shared mission and non-mission critical initiatives associated with the Coalition.

<https://www.elcmdm.org/Content/Uploads/elcmdm.org/files/Meeting%20Packages/Presentation%20CEO%20V9.pdf>

II. Monroe County Needs Assessment

**Dr. Nolo Martinez, Mano-Y-ola
Maya McElrath, Mano-Y-ola
Danielle Luchtenburg, Mano-Y-ola**

- Dr. Nolo Martinez, Maya McElrath and Danielle Luchtenburg shared the report of the Monroe County Needs Assessment. The findings included information on teacher recruitment and retention, school readiness, after-school care, disability services and program awareness. It was stated that more survey participation is needed to more accurately assess the community's needs.

<https://www.elcmdm.org/Content/Uploads/elcmdm.org/files/Meeting%20Packages/ELCMDM%20-%20Topic%20Specific%20CA%20on%20Monroe%20County.pdf>

III. ELC Strategic Plan

- A. Initiatives Accomplished/ Systems Improvements Evelio Torres
Carol Wick, Sharity Global

C. Wick presented the strategic initiatives formulated at the Strategic Planning Committee meetings.

<https://www.elcmdm.org/Content/Uploads/elcmdm.org/files/Meeting%20Packages/Strategic%20Initiatives%20rev19.pdf>

The following systems improvements were shared and assigned to board committees to help lead the initiatives.

- Expanding Services in Monroe County- Assigned to the Monroe Advisory Committee
- Board Engagement- Assigned to Executive Committee
- Advocacy & Public Policy- Assigned to Legislative Committee
- Building Resilient Infrastructure- Assigned to Provider Services Committee
- Parent Engagement- Assigned to Program, Policy and Strategy Committee



- Suggestions for accomplishing initiatives included:
 - Collect additional surveys in Monroe County
 - Improve reimbursement rates
 - Board members present at Children’s Fair
 - Connect with other community members
 - Record board member volunteer hours
 - “Zip Code Champions”
 - Creation of menu of activities for board members to get involved
 - Townhall discussion added to Provider Services meeting
 - Provide provider incentive programs and retention bonuses

IV. Next Steps

**Loreen Chant
Carol Wick, Sharity Global**

- It was shared that each initiative will be brought before the assigned committees to further develop and align with the Coalition’s mission.

V. Public Comments

Matthew Bruno

VI. Adjourn

Matthew Bruno