



Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting
February 4, 2019; 8:00 a.m.
David Lawrence Jr. Community Meeting Room

Board Attendees: Adrian Alfonso; Rick Beasley; Maurice Kemp; matthew Bruno (via conference call); Heather Carruthers; Loreen Chant; Bob Eadie; Alan Eckstein (via conference call); Jenni Roig; James Haj; Gladys Montes; Abilio Rodriguez; Judy Schaechter; Alex Soto; Iris Strachan' Aaron Slavens (via conference call); Marisol Diaz

Board Absentees: Theresa Axford; Gilda Ferradaz (excused); Philip Gassman; Gerald Schwartz

Staff Attendees: Evelio Torres; Ileana Vallejo; Laurie Dunn; Sandra Gonzalez; Fiorella Altare; Jackye Russell; Angelo Parrino; Belkis Torres; Michelle Meilan; Erika Erched; Cassie Allen; Jacqueline Oilo; Mercy Castiglione; Anabel Espinosa; Vanessa Aguilera; Victor Caballero;

General Attendees: Bob de la Fuente (Board Counsel); Juanita Walker (Sheyes of Miami)

I. Welcome and Introductions

Adrian Alfonso

- A. Alfonso called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.
- L. Sanabria called roll and a quorum was established with sixteen (16) voting members.
- A. Alfonso thanked Coral Gables High School for allowing the ELC to host their annual Health & Wellness Fair there on January 18. The event had biometric screenings, teeth whitening, chair massages, Zumba and meditation all onsite. It was a huge success and the ELC employees truly found it helpful. A. Alfonso also thanked Trish Turner and her HR department for organizing the event.
- A. Alfonso stated that on January 30, 2019 at 9:00am, the Early Learning Coalition celebrated Literacy Week. This year everyone read Chika Chika Boom Boom, by Bill Martin Jr for children 0-3 and and Planting a Rainbow by Lois Elhert for our pre-k students. All the children received a copy of the book. A. Alfonso thanked Gerald Schwartz, Gilda Ferradaz, Iris Strachan, Maurice Kemp, Jenni Roig and Ablio Rodriguez for participating in the event.

II. Approval of Minutes

Adrian Alfonso

- A. Alfonso called for the approval of the meeting minutes from December 2018.
 - R. Beasley moved to approve the minutes.
 - J. Schaechter seconded the motion.
 - Motion was passed unanimously.



III. Executive Committee Report

Adrian Alfonso

- A. Alfonso stated that on December 19th, the Executive and Finance Committee met and approved two resolutions:
 - Resolution 12192018-01 - Authorize the President and CEO to make a qualified nonelective contribution, from ELCMDM funds, to the ELC's 401k plan to remedy the failed 2017 401k Actual Deferral Percentage and Actual Contribution Percentage non-discrimination testing. Fiscal Impact: A total amount of \$232,253.70 within 12 months of the end of the plan year or before December 31, 2018.
 - Resolution 12192018-02 Ratify in writing the ELCMDM's board of director's August 6 vote to authorize the President and CEO to approve the transition of The Neighborhood Place for Early Head Start Program to the Early Learning Children's Foundation. Fiscal Impact: The amount of \$9,789,273 for fiscal year 2018-2019.
- A. Alfonso stated that if there were no questions, they would take a block vote.
 - B. Eadie moved to approve the resolutions.
 - H. Carruthers seconded the motion.
 - Motion unanimously passed.

IV. Finance Committee Report

Bob Eadie

- B. Eadie stated that Finance Committee met on January 30 and the following items were reviewed:
 - Financials are still an estimate as the EFS Modernization is still not operational.
 - The VPK module on EFS Mod is working; the payments department will be using it this upcoming pay cycle and are starting reconciliation. The School Readiness portion is being tested internally and by some providers. Staff will begin using it for the January payments. Staff received confirmation that the VPK attendance reconciliation process needs to be completed in February. As soon as EFS mod is up and running we will see exactly how much we will need to recoup from providers that have been overpaid. OEL stated that the funds need to be recouped within 70 days. This means that in some cases we will have to hold 2 months of payments for some providers. Staff will speak to OEL to try to extend that deadline.
 - EHS is in line with the budget but the request for additional permanent funding was declined.
 - Resolution 02042019 is to approve the Evaluation Committee's recommendation to award a contract for RFP#ELCMDM2018-07 (Procurement Software) to the selected vendor. Also, authorize the President and CEO to negotiate and execute a contract with the selected vendor.
 - B. Eadie moved to approve the resolutions.
 - H. Carruthers seconded the motion.
 - Motion unanimously passed.



- Authority of Disposition
 - A. Eckstein moved to approve the disposition.
 - J. Schaechter seconded the motion.
 - Motion unanimously passed.
- The EHS credit card report was included in the packet for board members to review.
- Two small grants are being considered for non-renewal due to the administrative costs.

I. Provider Services Committee Report

Rick Beasley

- R. Beasley stated that the Provider Services Committee met on January 31 and reviewed the following cases:
 - Shining Light Childcare Development Center – The Contracts dept. received notification from the Performance Funding Specialists that the provider has fallen below the required 60% instructor retention rate. Per the ELFPF contract, the childcare facilities are required to sustain “60% of instructors/directors retention rate and no more than 40% instructor/director turnover during the contract term or their contract shall be terminated”. As of 12/13/2018 provider is at a 57% instructor retention rate. Unfortunately, there was not much the committee could do in this case and had to follow procedure and terminate the provider from the Performance Funding Project.
 - Tyne Family Day Care Home - Liability policy expired 6/14/18 and renewed on 10/23/18 resulting in an approximate 4 month and 7 day gap in coverage. After reviewing all documents and hearing, the providers’ testimony the committee decided to place the provider on a 6 month Corrective Action Plan.
 - Children’s Academy #6 - 4/14/2018, ELT recommended Termination due to six (6) class 2 violations in the same standard for the Outdoor Play Area/Fencing. Provider appealed however, case was put on hold as the provider was appealing most violations with DCF. In addition to the previous violations presented to ELT on 4/14/18, the provider received an additional nine (9) class 2 violations in the same standards. Provider received non-compliances with Loss Prevention and Compliance for DCF License on site was expired and was out of ratio, 1 staff 9 children. In addition, the SR Sign in/out forms for the months audited were not on site. Provider was given 72 hrs.to provide the SR sign in/out forms requested. Provider did not comply. After reviewing all documents and hearing, the providers’ testimony the committee decided to terminate the provider’s contract and revoke eligibility for 5 years.

II. Programs, Policy & Strategy Committee Meeting Report

Judy Schaechter

- J. Schaechter stated that the Programs, Policy and Strategy committee met earlier this morning and discussed the following items:
 - School Readiness Plan - OEL requires the coalition to submit the following SR Program Plan Elements that have changed based on revisions to statutory requirements and rules.
 - B. Eadie moved to approve the School Readiness Plan.
 - H. Carruthers seconded the motion.
 - Motion unanimously passed.



- The Federal Food Program reports was reviewed and no big discrepancies were found.
- During the month of January, the Early Head Start Program conducted various focus groups as part of their self-assessment. Board members from the Early Learning Coalition and the Early Learning Children's Foundation participated in the focus groups along with staff, childcare partners, and community partners. Their task was to analyze program data, find program strengths and opportunities for improvement, identify possible underlying causes for some of the challenges, and make recommendations. The following nine (9) challenges were found to be opportunities for improvement:
 - Ensuring that all developmental and social-emotional Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQs) are completed within the first 45 days of the child's entry in school.
 - Helping parents of children with special needs understand the Individualized Family Support Plan (IFSP).
 - Decreasing the number of families who deny social-emotional support services for their children.
 - Decreasing the number of missing well-baby checkups for certain months.
 - Increasing childcare centers' implementation of family style dining.
 - Decreasing the teacher turnover rate.
 - Increasing the waitlist at some of the centers.
 - Providing additional professional development for the Family Advocates so that they can better understand the requirements of the program.
 - Developing a process for attaining the non-federal share.
- Staff used each of these items and their recommendations to develop a program improvement plan.
 - H. Carruthers moved to approve the Self-assessment Plan.
 - B. Eadie seconded the motion.
 - Motion unanimously passed.
- The Recruitment and Selection Plan was developed by Early Head Start to increase community awareness about the program, encourage families to apply for services, and ensure the neediest and most at-risk families in the community are selected for the program.
- Some of the targeted population are infants and toddlers who:
 - Are currently homeless
 - Are in foster/kinship care
 - Are part of a family with prior DCF history
 - Are on TANF
 - Are on SSI
 - Are from low income families
 - Are from Domestic violence/Incarcerated Parents/At-Risk/Substance Abuse
 - Have and IFSP or diagnosed disabilities
 - Have teenage parents
 - Come from families impacted by Gun Violence
- As part of the recruitment plan, staff will be attending community events and working with community partners to share information with their clients about the program. Social media will be used to recruit families.
 - H. Carruthers moved to approve the Recruitment Plan.
 - B. Eadie seconded the motion.
 - Motion unanimously passed.



III. Legislative Committee Report

Alex Soto

- A. Soto stated that the Legislative Committee met on January 28 and discussed the following items:
 - It is unsure if the Performance Funding Project will continue due to House Bill, 1091. The bill requires providers to be assessed and meet certain benchmarks. Funding for these assessments were given but are not recurring dollars.
 - The Funding formula has come up again and there is the possibility that there will be bill. Someone has been hired to develop the formula and it appears it will take money away from Miami Dade/Monroe County.
 - The legislative visits are being scheduled locally and the Legislative Committee will be traveling to Tallahassee when the legislators are in session.
 - The Legislative agenda was reviewed and changes were made.
 - J. Schaechter moved to approve the Legislative Agenda.
 - B. Eadie seconded the motion.
 - Motion unanimously passed.

IV. Monroe Advisory Committee Report

Heather Carruthers

- H. Carruthers stated that the Monroe Advisory Committee met on January 29 and the following items were discussed:
 - Evelio stated that the VPK readiness preliminary rates were just released to the providers. The providers can only view the rates during the verification and dispute process. Once this period is exhausted, the rates will be made public and we are hoping to see good results in Monroe County. Jan 21-Feb OEL starts their resolution process and sends letters out. Final readiness rates will be released in March 2019
 - Evelio met with John Padgett prior to this meeting. John is very interested in VPK and has 2 goals he is focusing on.
 - 1) To ensure that as many eligible children in Monroe County take advantage of VPK. Heather Carruthers did a great job as our campaign spokesperson this year and we hope she continues to be our spokesperson again this coming year.
 - 2) To start doing research on curriculum that achieves best scores across the State. Evelio will be asking the Board of Education if they have any data on this and we will be asking providers and schools throughout the state what curriculum, they use that produces the best VPK readiness rates. Then we will have a conversation regarding whether this would be something the providers in Monroe would like to use. If we provide the curriculum for them along with professional development then we could measure the improvement in the readiness rates. We are still in the preliminary stages of this research.
 - He stated that we will be asking providers that achieved scores lower than what they expected to reach out to us so that we can work together to improve those scores. Rodney McKinnon also



wanted to remind everyone that this year no additional VPK providers would be placed on probation because of the scores. Working with OEL to ensure everyone understands the process and how many years are left before they go into probationary status if they continue to receive low scores.

- Evelio gave an update on the status of the state data system. EFS Mod and the VPK module is now fully functional and we are now in the process of finalizing payment adjustments. The hope is that by the end of this week we will be able to test the system on the school readiness side. . The payments on the SR have been much more complicated because of different payment rates and differentials like Gold Seal and PFP but we are hoping that it will be up and running for the February billing cycle so the providers can report their January attendance by Feb 5. Then the reconciliations will start. The plan for the reconciliations is that we will do the month of Jan and then do the month of July at the same time and then do the month of Feb and August...2 months at a time. OEL wants a shorter period to make those adjustments but we want to stretch it as much as it is possible in case providers owe money so we do not have to collect it in 1 or 2 months. Our goal when we meet with OEL in a couple of weeks is to discuss this period. We are being mindful of fiscal years ending and tax implications. We will try to work with these providers with these considerations earlier .For providers that feel like the ELC owes them money, we would like them to identify themselves and we will work with them so we can get these reconciliations first.
- Legislative priorities that are going to the Board of Directors meeting on 1st Monday in February
 - Goal 1: Support and fund the State Wide Early Care and Education Performance and Effectiveness Standards. The new requirements under 1091, we have non re-occurring funding from 2018--- 3.5 million dollars in total for PFP. We have a commitment from the current director of the OEL that we will have this funding for 2018-2019 fiscal year under the current director, if there is a change in administration there is no commitment. For the 2020-2021 year, there is no commitment so we do not know if there will be any money. For now, though the money is there and the commitment from the current director is there. Our goal is to work with the legislature to be sure that now that the law has been passed that creates standards and creates a performance funding program (a tiered reimbursement process) that now the funding follows this program. We are first trying to secure funding or SR.
 - Goal 2: Increase school readiness funding as we have every year and to push for additional funding to serve more children.
 - Goal 3: Support the TEACH scholarship in Monroe. Currently we have 16 teachers in Monroe that are taking advantage of the TEACH scholarship so they can get advanced degrees.
- 2018 accomplishments: we processed more than 150, 000 calls in the call center in South Dade. Wait time is 1 minute or less. All new staff have to spend a week at a call center. All calls are recorded and the Supervisor can listen in and determine any need for additional training.
- The funding formula is coming up again this year from a new legislator that is very involved and really cares about early learning. Evelio will be having a conversation with her.
- Sandra Gonzalez gave an update that there were two distinct sliding fee scales but the EFS mod system would only allow for one and they had to use the one for Miami Dade. This affects Monroe



families in how much their parent fee is. We are hoping this can be changed or adjusted this coming year. Evelio agreed this is very unfair to the families.

- Beth Barrett requested a formal communication from the ELC explaining the use of the one sliding fee scale for both Miami-Dade and Monroe.
- Laurie let everyone know that the Key West office has been experiencing problems with Comcast and they have had either spotty or no service lately. The IT department is working with us to help get this resolved so the office is able to help clients.
- Enrollment - Currently the number of children in the VPK program is **570** for this school year. Enrollment for the next year opened on January 2, 2019 and there are currently 48 children already enrolled. There continues to be no wait list of pending School Readiness applicants for Monroe County, and we continue to send invitations to families to enroll their children. There has been an increase in numbers of people coming into Monroe offices to apply for childcare.
- Quality Counts/PFP - Amber Keller passed her reliability test and is now a certified Toddler CLASS observer. Michele Morgan and Christine Picanso are also certified. Christine is attending Pre K CLASS Observer training this week and is UF TA coach certified. Amber and Chris have a scheduled plan of visits to all PFP centers. (9 centers with 49 classrooms total)
- Outreach Activities - 340 ELC families were given vouchers through Holiday Helpers this year (100 in the lower keys, 110 in the middle keys and 130 in the upper keys). Wesley House did a great job organizing this event. \$50 Publix gift cards were distributed to 221 SR preschool teachers in the County.
- Supports and Trainings - Collaboration with PDI to offer a monthly training in Marathon with one in Spanish once a quarter in Key West. These will begin once MMCI classes are completed. The competency test that was scheduled on Feb 9 was cancelled due to low numbers. Even though we had 17 people registered, Miami Dade College stated they needed higher numbers in order for it to be feasible to send down a proctor. Laurie and Michele will be trained as proctors in an effort to have local individuals to accommodate the needs of the people needing to test.
- Teen Parent - We currently have 1 teen parent in Key West and 1 in Key Largo.
- Grants/Conferences/Meetings - Next conference is April 27, 2019 at Hawk's Cay. The theme is Building a Strong Foundation.
- Projects - 1st quarterly Directors meeting was Oct 6 at Kreative Kids. Topics of discussion were Provider Association, trainings, staff retention, creation of a substitute pool and a local quarterly newsletter that will give everyone the opportunity to share items to trade or create wish lists. The 1st quarterly Directors meeting for Family Child Care Homes was on Nov 2. With some of the same topics discussed as they related to home care. Working with Miami ELC staff to bring the WAGES program to Monroe. Currently distributing books for Literacy Week to all SR providers.
- Miscellaneous - Staff are providing TA to schools in preparation of the CLASS assessment. Laurie has been attending TATS meetings working on the Interagency Agreement to ensure smooth transitions for children. The updated version will be available for staff signatures soon. Also working with the Children's Work Group and Monroe County Community Alliance team to strengthen local



collaboration of all the community resources. Arelis Gutierrez is no longer with the ELC and Wilhelmina Martin has stepped in to help in the Key West office 2 days a week. Laurie commended the Monroe staff on all working so well together and accomplishing so much work.

- **Child Care Provider Update – Sue Ellen Bennett, Provider Representative** - Sue Ellen explained her phone lines are down so if anyone is trying to get in touch with them they can call her cell phone. Lindsay with the new center in Islamorada said their enrollment is increasing and they are doing very well. Providers are reporting concerns about payments and are worried what will happen if they owe money once the payment situation is reconciled. A couple of centers are looking for teachers. St. James is looking for a part time substitute person. Teachers are hard to find in the Keys as we have a very small pool of people to hire from. Two Teachers at St. James are using the TEACH scholarship. Stated that the WAGES program is needed in the Keys and appreciates us trying to get it into Monroe. Thanked staff for the Publix gift cards and said it was a good thing to receive them after Christmas or any time is helpful. Next Directors meeting will hopefully be in March. Directors really appreciate the opportunity to get together. In Monroe, we are fortunate that we all know each other and work very well together. Explained the need for local staff to be trained as proctors for the competency exam, to support the needs of teachers in the Keys. Happy to hear about the next conference being at Hawks Cay. Teachers appreciated having the last one at a hotel because it was on a more professional level and they felt appreciated. Invited everyone to their annual fundraiser fish fest at the Caribbean Club on Sunday March 3rd.
- **District Head Start/VPK Update – Marla Russell, Early Childhood Coordinator/Supervisor** - Head Start enrollment numbers---- 179 Made up of 74-- 3 year olds and 105--- 4 year olds. Eight of which are non-voucher students. VPK enrollment (which includes 97 Head Start 4 year olds) is at 270 with the district. ESE Pre-K has increased by 35 students since our last meeting in Sept. 105 Pre-K stand-alone ESE students (which does not include IEP students in VPK and Head Start) There are 16 students with IEP's in VPK , 14 in Head Start and approx. 26 in referral. They are now day 2 of celebrating literacy week. Purchased books for literacy week. There are activities going on at each school related to literacy week. Teachers in the public school are keeping a reading log of how much they read to the students every day. ELA (English Language Arts) Curriculum Specialist has recommended reading a minimum of 3 books a day to students. State mandates they review curriculum every 3 to 5 years and this next year is an adoption year. Last, go round the teachers selected DLM Express because it has a strong math component and had a component for differentiation because our populations here are very diverse. DLM has letters in Spanish and Creole. They have three schools in the Upper, Middle and Lower Keys that are piloting Creative Curriculum this year. The teachers feel that this edition of Creative Curriculum is the best edition because of the improvements made and how the differentiation piece is there. Round two of CLASS observations. Contracted with a retired principal to do observations in VPK and Head Start classrooms. Offering an MMCI training closer to the end of school on Saturdays. It is free and open to anyone who would like to take it.
- **DCF Licensing Update – Mitzi Cater, Family Services Counselor** - Mitzi said she has been working with inspecting School Readiness providers in the school and that HR is working with her to gather all the documents she requires so she can see them when she goes to do an inspection. The school district is still in the process of getting their fingerprints into the Clearinghouse. Now waiting on the registration to move forward. Actively working on all the places she needs to inspect and trying to complete everything before she retires in July.



V. CEO Report

Evelio Torres

- a. House Bill 1091 and Performance Funding Program Refresher Fiorella Christie
- b. Travel Policy Mercy Castiglione

<https://www.elcmdm.org/Content/Uploads/elcmdm.org/files/Meeting%20Packages/minutes/CEO%20Report%2002042019%20final.pdf>

VI. Public Comments

Adrian Alfonso

VII. Adjourn

Adrian Alfonso