Early Head Start

The Neighborhood Place for Early Head Start

Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe
Early Head Start

- EHS staff has moved to temporary space at Miami Gardens service center
- One time $855,500 start up award approved
  - The use of the dollars is very restricted to specific activities
- Kerry Allen has been appointed as the interim director
- Contract conversations with providers have started and are going well
Early Head Start

• Intense training for staff has begun:
  ▫ community resources
  ▫ EHS performance standards

• Other high-priority work in progress:
  ▫ developing interim policy council
  ▫ adapting and building policies and procedures
  ▫ service plans

• The initial group of 318 children to be served have been identified
Leading for Equity Institute
Poverty Simulation & Family Engagement

UniTE! Miami 2015
Wrap-Up Report
Leading for Equity Institute

• October 2014: 2 day institute held for ELC extended leadership team
• Intensive work to develop a better understanding of factors impacting systemic racism leading to:
  ▫ Institutional racism
  ▫ Structural racism
• How does systemic racism affect our work and what is our role as Leaders for Equity?
  ▫ Internal policies and practices
  ▫ Our work with the children and families we serve
  ▫ Community outreach
  ▫ Catalyst for change
Leading for Equity: Strategic Plan

January 2015
- Small group of ELC programs staff began to develop a roadmap for Equity work with a clear focus on children and families

February
- Larger group of ELC staff spanning positions, departments, education, ethnicity spent 3 days intensively drafting a strategic plan

February/March
- Meetings with diverse community stakeholders to deepen partnerships and form an external Advisory Council

March
- Draft is finalized

April
- Present draft plan to ELC leadership for modification and approval
Family Engagement

The Poverty Simulation: UniTE! Miami (Unified Toward Equity)

• Designed to educate participants about the realities of poverty through an interactive, hands-on experience.
• The task at hand was to sensitize ELC staff to the realities faced by families living in poverty and create a community agenda for action.

Date: January 30, 2015
Location: ELC Board Room, Main Office
Participants: 74
Volunteers: 29
Total: 103
Goals

Increase understanding of stereotypes

Improve customer service

Increase connections and coordination with other staff in different departments and other agencies to lessen bureaucratic obstacles

The long-term goal is to involve community partners and the community at-large to build a cadre of “Community-Changers”
The Experience

• Participants were divided into “families” and were seated in groups in the center of the room
• Participants experienced a month of poverty, which was separated into four 15–20 minute week intervals
• Each family was given a budget and instructed to go about “living” in a community; paying bills, navigating services, illness and life’s challenges in a real world simulation
• The objective for each family was to maintain shelter and provide for the necessities of their family
Benefits of Participation

• Affords an opportunity for participants to experience what it is like to learn about community resources, ask for help, create social bonds, how to get by with limited means and what choices and limited opportunities make up the experience of poverty.

• Increase awareness about poverty in the community, bring people together to address poverty more effectively and affect how participants relate to families living in poverty.

• Provides an opportunity for the community to understand that poverty impacts everyone and encourage those who participate to take ACTION.
Next Steps

Host
- A series of Poverty Simulations throughout the community and beyond. (ELC has been invited to deliver the Poverty Simulation at two separate conferences in the Fall of 2015)

Facilitate
- Work sessions to continue to share ideas, information and resources related to poverty

Develop
- A Community Advisory Council

Strengthen
- Community Impact- ongoing, organized and inclusive action to build a more equitable community
READY4K!

Literacy texts for VPK Families
2015-2016 school year
READY4K!

• Promote Literacy by breaking down information into small actionable steps for parents
• Provide continuous encouragement and support to families over an extended period of time
• Leverage technology to reach as many parents/families as possible
• The VPK Online Registration has been modified to enable parents to opt-in to READY4K!
• Texts will begin August 17th (1 week before MDCPS classes)
• Enrolled families (est. 22,000) will receive 3 texts weekly:
  ▫ Fact
  ▫ Tip
  ▫ Activity
Initial READY4K! Partners

- Stanford University
- Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe
- Miami-Dade County Public Schools
- VPK Providers
READY4K!: The Science

- Two year randomized study lead by Stanford University - Ben York and Dr. Susanna Loeb
- ELC Dr. Christine Hughes to provide support locally

- Study Design:
  - Children randomly selected into the study on enrollment
  - Once in study, random assignment into groups

- Child Outcomes: To determine if receiving the texts improves children’s early academic skills in VPK and Kindergarten
  - VPK Assessments: AP1 and AP3
  - FLKRS scores in Kindergarten
READY4K!: The Methodology

• Surveys:
  ▫ **Parents**
    • Determine if they use the texts and what they think of them
  ▫ **Providers/Teachers:** (If there are children in their VPK class who receive the texts)
    • Determine if they use/know the content of the texts
    • If they incorporate it into their daily instruction or connection to the child’s home experience, and
    • How it may affect parent’s behavior or involvement in school
READY4K!: The Methodology

• Parent Focus Groups:
  ▫ To gain a more in depth understanding of
    • How parents used the texts
    • Parent recommendations on improving the texts, and
    • What other supports/resources could be provided to support their child’s literacy development
VPK Readiness Rate
Status Report

- **February to March 31, 2015: Provider Verification of Enrollment Data**
  - Children must attend at least 70% of 540 hours or 378 hours during the school year or 70% of 300 hours or 210 hours during the summer for their Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS) scores to be included in your rate.

- **April 15, 2015: ELC approve/disapprove enrollment data attendance submissions.**

- **Early May 2015: Preliminary 2013-14 VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rates will be available**
  - Providers will verify and dispute their preliminary VPK Readiness Rate.

- **May 2015: State Board of Education approval of rule and release of the final 2013-14 Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rates.**
  - Rates are posted based upon the scoring cut-off Providers on Probation (POPs) will be identified.
  - POPs must acknowledge their Readiness Rate and complete the VPK Program Improvement Plan within ten days of acknowledging their rate.
  - Third and fourth year POPs must submit a Good Cause Exemption (GCE) to the Office of Early Learning.
  - Upon approval of their GCE, POPs are able to continue to offer VPK in the coming year.
  - POPs whose GCE is denied will be banned from providing VPK for five years.
Child Screening
Child Screening Requirements

As per Chapter 1002, Florida Statutes:

- All children in the School Readiness program must be screened:
  - within 45 days of enrollment in School Readiness AND
  - annually in their birth month
Child Screening Requirements

As per ELC’s Provider Contract:

- “The Provider agrees to participate in the SR child screening process designed to identify children in need of further evaluation for special needs. The Provider agrees that all SR children aged birth to five years, who have parent’s/guardian’s consent will receive the Coalition approved screening tool (Questionnaire) **within 45 days** of child’s entry into the program and **annually** as long as the child remains in the program. The Provider agrees that children identified with special needs are referred to the needed therapeutic services.”

- “The Provider agrees to share the screening and assessment results with the child’s parents within 30 days of receipt of results. The Provider agrees to submit all results to the Coalition timely. The Provider will retain copies of the screening and/or assessment results for a minimum of five years.”
Past Due ASQs

• As of March 2015, 345 providers in Miami-Dade are past due on at least 1 child

• Represents 967 children who have not had the required ASQ done

• Provider Portal generates monthly emails to all providers who are past due for a child’s ASQ

• Currently, no consequences for providers
Past Due ASQs

Based on March 2015:

- 294 providers (85%) have < 5 children past due
- 36 providers (10%) have 5-10 children past due
- 15 providers (4%) have 11+ children past due
- Max. past due = 27
Past Due ASQs

So far in Fiscal Year 2014-2015:

1012
• providers have been on the list at least once

309
• providers have been on the list for 2 or more months in FY 14-15

82
• providers have been on the list for 6 months in FY 14-15 (max.)
Recommendations

- Monthly Auto Past Due Notice language will be strengthened to reference the breach of contract and potential for withholding of SR payment or contract termination

- If a provider has past due ASQs for a 2nd consecutive month, Coalition will notify provider that SR payment is being withheld for all children until provider comes into compliance

- If a provider has payment withheld twice and appears on the past due list a 3rd time in one fiscal year, SR contract will be terminated
These children do not have a current ASQ-3 screening in the ELC Provider Portal and are now PAST DUE.

Please complete an ASQ-3 screening on these children and enter it in the ELC Provider Portal immediately.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Initial</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>Birthday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>ANTOINE</td>
<td>Nov 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>JOSEPH WHITE</td>
<td>Jul 08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you have already entered ASQ-3 screenings for these children on the Provider Portal or if the system has incorrect children listed, please contact a Screening & Assessment Specialist at the ELC at 305-646-7220.
Fiscal Review / Loss Prevention

Presented by
Ana Rodriguez
Fiscal Review / Loss Prevention Manager
Section 1002.91, Florida Statutes

Each early learning coalition shall adopt an anti-fraud plan addressing the detection and prevention of overpayments, abuse, and fraud relating to the provision of and payment for school readiness program and Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program services and submit the plan to the office [of Early Learning] for approval.
The term “fraud” means an intentional deception, omission, or misrepresentation made by a person with knowledge that the deception, omission, or misrepresentation may result in unauthorized benefit to that person or another person, or any aiding and abetting of the commission of such an act. The term includes any act that constitutes fraud under applicable federal or state law.
Section 1002.91, Florida Statutes

An early learning coalition may **suspend or terminate** a provider from participation in the school readiness program or the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program when it has **reasonable cause** to believe that the provider has committed fraud.

If suspended, the provider shall **remain suspended until the completion of any investigation** by the office, the Department of Financial Services, or any other state or federal agency, and any subsequent prosecution or other legal proceeding.
Section 1002.91, Florida Statutes

The early learning coalition may not contract with a school readiness program provider or a Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program provider who is on the United States Department of Agriculture National Disqualified List.

In addition, the coalition may not contract with any provider that shares an officer or director with a provider that is on the United States Department of Agriculture National Disqualified List.
Reporting

Anyone can report suspected fraud to the Loss Prevention unit.

Cases are tracked from referral to resolution.

Upon receiving the referral, a designated specialist reviews the case and discusses recommended course of action with the manager.

If the case is accepted for preliminary investigation, the fraud specialist gathers all appropriate and substantial information to conclude whether or not the case warrants a more in-depth investigation.
Investigations Include

Parents

• Household Composition
• Employment
• Residence
• Income Verification

Providers

• Accuracy of information submitted by provider on the contracts.
• Provider capacity versus attendance records.
• Accuracy of sign in/out sheets and attendance verification forms.
• Presigned attendance records.
• Health and safety violations reporting.
Provider Fraud Overpayment Can Occur If:

- Overpayment is caused by an intentional act on the part of the provider in an attempt to receive additional payments or reimbursement to which they were not entitled to.
- There was an intent to defraud that may result in an overpayment.
- Information is concealed to obtain School Readiness payments.
- Attendance records are falsified or altered.
- Assisting or aiding any person in committing any of the above acts.
- Operating or attempting to operate a child care facility without having procured a license.
- Operating or attempting to operate a child care facility or family day care home under a license that is suspended, revoked, or terminated.

Any person who commits an act of Fraud is subject to the penalties provided in Florida Statute Section 414.39 and Section 1002.91.
Partners

- Department of Children and Families
- Department of Financial Services/Division of Public Assistance Fraud
- Florida Dept. of Health, Bureau of Child Care Food Program
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Provider Rate Increase
Provider Rate Increase

• After discussions with the Finance Committee and the Program and Provider Services Committee, a reimbursement rate increase for child care providers is being proposed

• The maximum it will cost is approximately $3.6 million per year

• If approved increase will be funded with existing grant dollars

• Increase must be approved by the Office of Early Learning

• Waiting list has been eliminated in Miami-Dade and Monroe and the plan is to continue enrolling children through at least the end of the current fiscal year, so this is a good time for the board to consider the increase and to seek approval from OEL
Provider Rate Increase

• Only providers in good standing will be eligible for the increase

• After discussions with the Program Committee, proposal is that if a provider is on a corrective action plan/probation they will be considered not to be in good standing

• When providers, who do not receive the increase, come into full compliance and are no longer on a corrective action plan, they will be eligible for the increase, including any funds withheld

• Guidance from OEL:
  ▫ MDM may withhold a provider rate increase via a corrective action notice
  ▫ Once the provider comes into compliance withheld funds may be released
  ▫ If the provider is subsequently terminated prior to coming into compliance MDM will not pay the withheld funds
  ▫ If the provider is currently on probation the MDM could amend the corrective action notice to indicate the same
Quality Counts
Quality Counts Grant Proposal

- The Children’s Trust released two Request for Proposals for Quality Counts
  - One was for countywide administration of the program and the other for the Professional Development Network which was divided into six zones
  - Under the current system both services are combined under one contract managed by the ELC
- The ELC was the only bidder for the administration (which includes subcontracts with WELS, United Way, Devereux and CCDH)
- Proposals for the Professional Development Network (PDN) were submitted by:
  - 1) The ELC - with Family Central, Florida International University, Citrus Health Network and University of Miami as partners)
  - 2) The United Way of Miami
  - 3) Miami Dade College
Quality Counts Grant Proposal

- The ELC and the United Way received the highest score for the PDN
  - The Children’s Trust board will now consider the recommendation that the United Way be awarded the two zones (central) they applied for and the ELC the other four
- ELC leadership met with Charles Auslander and his staff to discuss the challenges and opportunities of implementing the new QC model
  - Staff recommendation is that we accept both the admin. And PDN grants (pending final decision by the TCT board)
- Quality Counts is a program that should continue to evolve as public policy and community needs change and as more research on early learning becomes available
  - Over the next 6 – 9 months we will work with The Children’s Trust, the United Way, and other QC partners to seek stakeholder and community input to guide future program design
Legislative Update
Budget

• There is a difference of approximately $5 billion between the Senate and the House budgets.

• The Senate budget includes $2.8 billion of federal funds for the expansion of health care coverage.

• The Senate budget also includes $2.2 billion for continuation of the Low-Income Pool Program, a program scheduled to expire June 30.

• The House budget does not include funding for health care coverage expansion or funding to extend the Low Income Pool (LIP) Program.

• Regular legislative session ends on May 1
  ▫ Uncertainty remains as to how and if the budget issues will be resolved by that date.
2015 Legislative Session

• The Early Learning Health and Safety bills, SB 7006 and HB 7017, did not move this week
• An amendment regarding contract termination was filed on the House side; this provision clarifies the ability of coalitions to terminate a contract for cause and emergency situations where the health, safety and welfare of children are at risk
• It is anticipated that the amendment will be passed as the bill is presented on the House floor
• It will then be up to the Senate
2015 Legislative Session

• There is an effort to include proviso language in the appropriations bill that would allow the Office of Early Learning to allocate previous year unspent program dollars at the beginning of the next fiscal year.

• This will help avoid the growing fund balance of approximately $60 million for which OEL has no spending authority.
2015 Legislative Session

- The range of nonrecurring dollars for the School Readiness program is between $5 million (House) and $15 million (Senate)
  - These dollars are from the OEL fund balance mentioned earlier

- There is some reluctance in the House to allocate nonrecurring dollars to recurring expenses like child care subsidies

- ELCs have provided assurance that just like with the ARRA dollars, we will be able to manage the non recurring dollars without having to disenroll children
2015 Legislative Session

• There is recognition that there are some opportunities for improvement with the Performance Funding Pilot project funded by the legislature at $10.5 million in 2014

• It is highly likely that the pilot will be funded for a second year without the research study requirement, but with some other accountability measures.

• Pilot gets the system one step closer to policy that will allow us to pay for performance/tiered reimbursement
2015 Legislative Session

• If the Early Learning Health and Safety bill passes this year, quality will be addressed in 2016

• If the Early Learning Health and Safety bill does not pass this year, health and safety is very likely to be readdressed next year and quality may be addressed in 2017