



MINUTES

Monroe County Advisory Committee Meeting

Thursday August 15, 2024; 1 P.M.

Meeting ID: 838 9431 0004

Passcode: 219748

Committee Attendees: Sandi Bisceglia, Marla Russell, Gilda Ferradaz, Mayor Holly Raschein, Dr. Carla Fry; Lisa Taylor; Suellen Bennett; Aleda Jacobo

ELC Staff: Pam Hollingsworth, Sandra Gonzalez, Victor Caballero, Lisney Badillo, Michelle Meilan, Fiorella Altare Christie, Kris Gregory, Anabel Espinosa, Laurie Dunn, Michele Morgan, Wilhelmina Lopez-Martin, Ana Sejeck, Cindy Cabrera, Sheyla Perez, Lisney Badillo, Ahmed Mitwalli, Andrea Penton, Katherine Quintero, Lissandra Curbelo

General Attendees: Jeff Hurst, Laura Toman, Nilda Bernaldez, Michelle Lane, Leanna Woods, Jennifer Walker, Kelly Ulrich, Betty Ibargo, Diana Freitez, Mackenzie Keller

I. Welcome & Introductions

Sandi Bisceglia, Chair

- A. S. Bisceglia called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.
- B. Quorum was established.
- C. S. Bisceglia and A. Sejeck recognized the 6 teachers in Monroe that recently graduated from the CDA program.
 - M. Keller addressed the incoming CDA students and thanked everyone for supporting her during the program.

II. Approval of Minutes

Sandi Bisceglia, Chair

Approval of March 27, 2024 Meeting Minutes

- Motion to approve by M. Russell
- Motion seconded by H. Raschein
- Motion unanimously passed

III. Chair Updates

Sandi Bisceglia, Chair

- A. S. Bisceglia – Continued presence up and down the Keys at Chamber meetings.

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.



- B. The Futures Project Roadmap Strategic Plan--- Very extensive work going on. A document that will be used with legislatures, chambers and influential advisors who can support progress. The workgroup System transformation is working on 4 key areas intensely:
 - 1) Increasing funding levels for early learning programs.
 - 2) Expanding program eligibility to match Florida's economic reality.
 - 3) Document the true cost of quality care.
 - 4) Move towards a fully funded high quality early learning system.
- C. California Learning Exchange Report -A contingency of 12-15 people traveled to Los Angeles last week and spent several days touring the city and county early learning care systems and meeting with Executive Directors and staff. There are 500,000 children under the age of 5 in LA. Trying to import and export ideas to help each other. P. Hollingsworth appreciated how they saw a focus on assets rather than deficits. She shared how there are a lot of life changing infant maternal health initiatives going on in LA.

It was a wonderful learning and listening trip and the group will debrief soon and use what they learned to further their work. Especially in the area of dual language learning.
- D. Scholarship Opportunities- E. Torres had to attend another meeting so this discussion was tabled for the next Monroe Advisory meeting.

IV. Partner Updates

- A. District Head Start/Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Update M. Russell, Early Childhood Supervisor

M. Russell – School just started yesterday and is going well. There are:
178 children enrolled in Head Start
55 blended (Head Start/VPK)
ESE Pre K total is 62 currently (last year it was 98)
Total enrolled stand-alone VPK is 202
There is a total of 257 children using a VPK voucher

The school district has an initiative focusing on dual language program assessment (DLLPA) . This tool looks at how dual language learners are being assessed. They are reaching a majority of the Spanish and Creole speaking population but recognize that there are several other languages in the program. The District also has an initiative through the social workers to teach K-12 parents English.
- B. S. Bennett (Provider Rep) –St. James just opened today. She stated that all the providers she spoke to are doing very well with enrollment and staff and are very busy starting off the new year. 1 center in Marathon has space for infants available and St. James has a couple of openings in VPK. The only concern was the problem with competency testing being readily available in Monroe. One of her teachers could not



register for a local test and had to drive to Vero Beach in order to complete her testing on time.

- C. J. Hurst- Ian Flerry is now the Program Director for the Office of Licensing. There are now 5 Supervisors and 5 Leads up and running.
DCF just trained over 2000 people getting ready for the school year.
All licensing renewals need to be completed online. If it says processing in CARES, you need to contact a licensing specialist to work through the glitches.
A big safety concern now is the heat. Some safety tips:
- 1) It is important for not only children but staff to stay hydrated. Serve water instead of milk or juice.
 - 2) Have a first aid kit handy on the playground.
 - 3) Alternate playground times to avoid high heat.
 - 4) Be cautious of water play. Always make sure staff are very close to the children.
 - 5) Document all you do for ELC or licensing specialists to show kids are monitored and being kept safe.
 - 6) Check out outdoor equipment---if hot, do not go out on it.
 - 7) Have appropriate staff to be able to respond to any emergency within seconds.

PDI is working on a heat safety training. J. Hurst will share a document with tips listed above to share with all providers.

V. Monroe County Updates

Laurie Dunn

- A. Enrollment data –L. Dunn showed enrollment data for Monroe County in February.
SR –300
VPK--- 74 in July but this number will increase with the new VPK year
At Risk Referrals -32 children.
- B. Class Assessment—F. Christie showed the graph on how providers in Monroe scored on the CLASS. There were 62 classroom assessments completed (SR and VPK) and they all passed with 21 programs scoring between a 5 and a 7.
- C. The next DCF competency test is on August 17th and is currently full. Having an established schedule is still a challenge but ELC staff are working closely with Miami-Dade College to ensure there are more opportunities for testing in the Keys.
S. Bisceglia discussed the possibility of forming a task force to take on the challenges and road blocks of testing in Monroe. J. Hurst will bring up the topic at the next DCF meeting then get back with L. Dunn and they will discuss next steps.
- D. Outreach Activities- L Dunn shared information and pictures of outreach activities
National Night Out on August 6, in 4 areas of the Keys
--Discussed descriptions and dates of upcoming events between August and December to include all holidays in all areas of the Keys.



VI. Professional development Institute Update

Ana Sejeck

- A. A. Sejeck shared pictures of the National CDA graduation ceremony at FIU on June 22. There were 154 graduates with 6 being from Monroe. They received a stipend of \$10,000 each upon their graduation. Keynote speaker was Andrew Davis, CEO for Council for Professional Recognition with a virtual greeting from Cari Miller, Chancellor Division of Early Learning.
- B. The next CDA class starts at the end of August and will be for 120 hours over the course of 9 months.
- C. There is also a CDA on Demand course for Infant/Toddler with the support of Teachstone.
- D. The next Super Saturday is on Saturday, September 28th and is STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) focused. Teachstone kits will be raffled off at the end of the training.
- E. On December 14 will be Super Saturday: Monroe Takes Over – Teaching from the Heart. It will be CLASS focused with a variety of trainings that offer strategies for teachers. There will be also be raffles and possibly a virtual vendor fair.

VII. Monroe Inclusion and Assessment Updates

Dr. Anabel Espinosa

- A. Developmental Screenings --A. Espinosa shared a chart of the amount of ASQ 3 and ASQ SE (Social emotional) completed this past quarter in Monroe. The numbers of screenings completed in Monroe increased for this quarter and is way above the benchmark.
- B. Only one provider was out of compliance with a screening. Monroe staff works closely with partners to ensure all ASQ's are completed timely.
- C. BPIECE ---Currently we have 2 new providers in Monroe County that certified in the BPIECE program. 1 provider is working with Inclusion staff to obtain the special needs rate.
- D. Warmline numbers decreased but this is typical during the Sumer months.
- E. A. Espinosa shared pictures of the Miami inclusion staff on their 2nd annual road trip to the Keys and visited 10 providers, recognized screening super stars and completed Ambassador visits. They are excited to return next Summer.

X. New Business

Sandi Bisceglia, Chair

Annual Board of Directors Meeting: Monday October 7, 2024 from 10 am – 12 pm. at the Marathon Mosquito Control Building.



XI. Public Comments

Sandi Bisceglia, Chair

H. Raschein stated that she will work with members of the Fiscal Cliff Collaborative to set up a meeting soon and come up with a plan to engage Chambers and the business community to understand the challenges and work on solutions.

XII. Adjourn

Sandi Bisceglia, Chair

- Meeting adjourned by S. Bisceglia at 2:15 pm

Next Meeting Date: November 14th at 1 pm.