



Monroe County Advisory Committee Meeting

January 18, 2024

Meeting ID: 858 1582 7363

Passcode: 463817

MINUTES

Committee Attendees: Sandi Bisceglia; Aleida Jacobo; Sue Ellen Bennett; Marla Russell, Gilda Ferradaz; Mayor Holly Raschein;

Board Attendees: Laurie Joasil; Chuck Mohr

Attendees: Jeff Hurst, Brandi Jordan, Judy Leggett, Laura Toman, Kelly Ulrich, Jerlyn Matthews, Nilda Bernaldez, Leanna Woods, Roxanne Pineiro

ELC Staff: Evelio Torres, Angelo Parrino, Sandra Gonzalez, Pam Hollingsworth, Victor Caballero, Lisney Badillo, Michelle Meilan, Fiorella Altare Christie, Ahmed Mitwalli, Kris Gregory, Anabel Espinosa, Laurie Dunn, Michele Morgan, Wilhelmina Lopez-Martin, Amber Keller, Karel Davila, Dessiree Aguilera, Lissandra Curbelo, Sheyla Perez, Andrea Penton, Ana Sejeck, Vanessa Aguilera

I. Welcome & Introductions

Sandi Bisceglia, Chair

- A. S. Bisceglia called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.
- B. Quorum was established with 5 members.

II. Approval of Minutes

Sandi Bisceglia, Chair

Approval of August 15, 2023 Meeting Minutes

- Motion to approve by M. Russell
- Motion seconded by A. Jacobo
- Motion unanimously passed

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. Chair Updates

Sandi Bisceglia, Chair

S. Bisceglia shared how the Future's Project is going into its second phase now called The Roadmap Advisory Board that she will be a part of. Children's Week in Tallahassee is the week of February 23, 2024.

S. Bisceglia reported we had a very well attended meeting with the Chamber CEO's in the Keys and a number of participants who are influencers in the community. Mayor H. Raschein chaired the meeting and will now be the facilitator of a group called The Fiscal Cliff Collaborative that is starting in Monroe. The title shows sense of urgency for those families on the financial or benefits cliff. The group is hoping to be mentored from a member of the group in Miami that is similar to this. They are looking to possibly meet again after the legislative session.

E. Torres reported he was happy to see that the business community is very engaged and concerned about their employees who might miss work due to lack of childcare. The business community has a big stake in this issue. The ELC is meeting with community partners to try and establish a scholarship fund in Monroe that would help families who are over income but still need affordable childcare. In Miami-Dade families who meet that criteria can receive funds through the Children's Trust; however, this does not extend into Monroe. The ELC is working with municipalities and the Community Foundation of the Florida Keys (CFFK) to get a scholarship set up. One possibility would be to see if individual child care sites could also set up their own scholarships.

Mayor H. Raschein encouraged the ELC to apply for the Health and Human Services grant that is given to non-profits to help meet the challenge.

S. Bisceglia thanked E. Torres for recognizing Mayor H. Raschein who has committed to being the "face" of the Fiscal Cliff Collaborative because we needed a leader with her reach and expertise.

IV. Legislative Updates

Victor Caballero we have been doing the rounds locally and in Tallahassee urging our leaders to address the outdated school readiness income eligibility threshold as well as the provider reimbursement funding formula. Good things are going on in the capitol. This session we will prioritize the unique needs of children and helping families overcome the fiscal cliffs of public assistance programs. He shared information on important dates in the legislative session. He explained several priority bills that we are currently tracking in the House and the Senate.

- SB 916 and HB 929 that is advocating to increase the threshold allocating funds. –both passed unanimously (bi-partisan).
- SB 1026 states a VPK instructor in the Summer can have a CDA as opposed to a BA/BS/Teachers certificate.
- HB 427—Extending VPK to 8 hours as opposed to 3.



V. Partner Updates

A. District Head Start/Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Update M. Russell, Early Childhood Supervisor explained that several things are going on in the District and they are trying to streamline it to areas that private providers can use or would be interested in. Many things happening in Florida that are affecting Pre-K in a positive manner. Looking at targeting students with deficiencies and providing supports to parents to collaborate and work together. Many recent mandates are focusing on mental health and disabilities. Recently implemented a literacy block through a program called Brain Spring that is based on multi-sensory learning. Ties together all the senses and is a great resource for teachers and a supplement to Creative Curriculum. The 6 hour training costs about \$200 per teacher.

B. S. Bennett (Provider Rep) commented on the Summer Boost program in the school district saying it was a great thing for the children who got to experience going to the “big school” and preparing them for kindergarten. She asked about the possibility of the ELC offering the Brain Spring training and E. Torres stated we may be able to do it but we would need to do some research on it once the information is shared by M. Russell.

S. Bennett reported that most providers overall are doing well. They are busy completing required trainings. Super Saturday trainings are appreciated.

Most directors reported they prefer virtual due to travel and being swamped with trainings. P. Hollingsworth reported that a key note has already been booked. A. Sejeck explained that the Super Saturday sessions are recorded and available to watch on the PDI website.

C. J. Hurst (DCF) announced that the Southernmost Region is now fully staffed with 5 supervisors who each have a lead. Meaning they now have additional people in the Florida Keys. He went over the 2 new trainings that all staff (even those previously exempt) must take before June 30, 2024 to be in compliance. The courses are available for free on the DCF child care training website. L. Dunn reported that the information on the new requirements have been shared with all Monroe partners.

VI. Monroe County Updates

Laurie Dunn

A. Monroe County Needs Assessment- L. Dunn showed the report breakdown and showed the ELC efforts in the areas where they could address some challenges. It was determined that moving forward the Monroe Advisory members would continue to focus on and build upon the areas we have had some progress. We will include the addition of the Fiscal Cliff Collaborative and track progress as well.



- B. Enrollment data –S. Gonzalez showed enrollment data for Monroe County in July.
- SR --273 children
 - VPK--- 461 children
 - At Risk Referrals -33 children

S. Gonzalez announced that the ARPA Discretionary funds application is still available to anyone that has not yet applied. F. Christie will share a list of people in Monroe who have applied so that L. Dunn can contact anyone not on the list and remind them they still have time to apply.

S. Gonzalez said eligibility staff made visits to the ELC's in Palm Beach and Orange County to take a look at their eligibility processes and see if we could find ways to increase SR enrollment. Staff was able to make some adjustments and have been contacting families who were denied services and asking them to reapply so they can take another look at their applications. There is no wait list and we currently have space for more children.

- C. Outreach Activities- L Dunn shared a list of Outreach activities throughout the Keys that Monroe staff have attended in November and December and several more they will take part in from January through March.

There is a competency exam scheduled for this Saturday January 20, 2024 in Marathon that reached capacity as soon as registration opened. With the new training requirements in place it is important to have competency exams available locally on a regular basis.

PDI helped set up an Adult/Pediatric First Aid/CPR class in Marathon on January 27, 2024 that is free to anyone that signs up through the PDI website. The class is already full so the Monroe team is working with PDI to set up another one in February. A training in Spanish is also needed. A private instructor is offering it in Spanish this weekend in Key West but the charge is \$85 a person. A. Sejeck reported that she will locate a contractor for Monroe.

VII. Professional development Institute Update

Ana Sejeck

Super Saturday is held 4 times a year and has been very successful.

The CDA class is now half way through. There are 6 participants from Monroe County. PDI will be hosting the very first in-service training in person this Saturday January 20 at Miami Senior High. It will be a day full of presenters including E. Torres.



VIII. 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. We are below plan but this data is based on historical benchmarks. These numbers are tied to enrollments and redetermination. We have seen improved compliance with screenings being completed timely. Trendline has not changed since 2021 but based on current enrollments she recommended we use a more current average of 9.3 screenings per month.
- B. Only one provider was out of compliance with a screening. 97.4 of Monroe providers come back into compliance within the 10 day campaign given the relationship providers have with Monroe staff.
- C. BPIECE --Currently there are 7 providers in Monroe County that certified in the BPIECE program. Recruitment efforts continue.
- D. Warmline numbers fluctuate monthly and are addressed timely.

X. New Business

Sandi Bisceglia, Chair

S. Bisceglia thanked everyone who joined us today and was happy that many partners were able to join in.

XI. Public Comments

Sandi Bisceglia, Chair

E. Torres thanked everyone for all their hard work.

XII. Adjourn

Sandi Bisceglia, Chair

- o Meeting adjourned by S. Bisceglia at 2:55 pm

• **Next Meeting Date: March 27, 2024 at 1 pm.**