



MINUTES

Monroe County Advisory Committee Meeting

August 16, 2022

Meeting ID: 968 4009 9378

Passcode: ELC081622

Committee Attendees: Sandi Bisceglia; Aleida Jacobo; Sue Ellen Bennett; Lisa Taylor; Marla Russell.

Committee Absentees: Gilda Ferradaz

Attendees: Christine Patterson, Fiorella A Christie, Anabel Espinosa, Sandra Gonzalez, Pamela Hollingsworth, Cindy Cabrera, Laurie Dunn, Michele Morgan, Jose Hernandez, Michelle Meilan, Evelio Torres, Ana Sejeck, Angelo Parrino, Mercy Castiglione, Jeff Hurst, Jennifer Walker, Ana Sejeck, Jerlyn Matthews, Brandi Jordan, Chuck Mohr, Fred Hicks, Mercy Castiglione, Pamela Malval, Leanna Woods, Kay Velardi and Nilda Bernaldez

I. Welcome & Introductions

Sandi Bisceglia, Chair

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

II. Approval of Minutes

Sandi Bisceglia, Chair

Approval of May 17, 2022 Meeting Minutes

- o Motion to approve by M. Russell
- o Motion seconded by S. Bennett
- o Motion unanimously passed

III. Chair Updates

Sandi Bisceglia, Chair

S. Bisceglia attended the Monroe County School District meeting where an increase of 500 students county wide was reported. Effects on preschool population enrollment is not known at this time.

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.



The Florida Chamber handout shows that 28% of students in the state are in free and reduced lunches. Monroe County is 40%.

S. Bisceglia attended the Key Largo Chamber meeting where she presented information about the services the ELC provides. She provided flyers to the 150 people in attendance. Evelio Torres will be attending as a guest speaker at a chamber luncheon in the near future.

The ELC annual meeting is scheduled for October 3rd from 10 am to 2 pm at the Mosquito control building in Marathon.

IV. Partner Updates

- A. District Head Start/Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Update Marla Russell, Early Childhood Supervisor reported that the MCSD has 434 pre-k children enrolled in Head Start, VPK, Head Start and VPK blend and in Pre-k ESE. They are seeing school enrollment increase. 224 children are using VPK vouchers.
- B. S. Bennett (Provider Rep) reported that many schools are having a hard time recruiting teachers including herself. She has spent money on advertising (Indeed, Zip Recruiter, the college, Career Source) only for 2 candidates to show up. She reported that this is a national crisis in the field of early education.
- C. Jeff Hurst (DCF) reported that DCF is short of investigators. Investigators must travel from Miami for inspections or licensing but they are limited in what they can do. He asked that everyone recognize their challenges but understand they are doing their best to support everyone's needs.

V. Florida Chamber Foundation's Path to Prosperity

Evelio Torres

E. Torres shared the Florida Chambers scorecard that identifies the 10 root causes of poverty. The lack of affordable housing across the state has been a challenge for many families but especially in Monroe County. Being able to identify the needs, the causes for poverty and the challenges can help attack the problem and Florida on the road to prosperity with one goal being to cut childhood poverty in half by 2030.

VI. Monroe County Update

Laurie Dunn and Sandra Gonzalez

- A. Enrollment data Enrollment Date- S. Gonzalez shared that the SR enrollments have increased to 301. VPK enrollments show 20 but this number was pulled during the Summer when VPK was complete. The number will be much higher when it is next pulled. At risk referrals are currently at 37.



- B. Monroe Conference: Be the Star of Your own Life! September 24th at Marathon High School from 8 am to 2:30 pm. Registration starts at 7:30 m. Dr. Pamela Phelps of the Creative Preschool in Tallahassee and author of “Beyond Cribs and Rattles” and “Beyond Centers and Circle Time” will be the key note speaker. She has over 50 years of experience working with children and families. Flyers are going out on multiple social media platforms. Registration is available online and is currently up to 76 participants.
- C. L. Dunn reported that the United Way is working on a “Success by Six” grant to help pay for families who are just outside the income eligibility guidelines to qualify for school readiness services. Details of the grant will be shared at the next meeting. She also gave a brief over view on 4 programs/agencies she is currently working on future collaboration with:
- MOVE (Monroe Occupation and Vocational Experiences): This is through the MCS D and is coordinated by Caroline Bleske. It is an internship for Juniors and Seniors to match them with a career they are interested in. If a child care site has a paid position available and can offer a maximum of \$15 an hour. Hours will be based on the student’s school schedule. A contract would be signed between the business and the student. The goal is to teach students how to be successful in their chosen career. L Dunn has shared this information with all of the contracted providers and can act as a liaison to offer support.
 - TAPP (Teen Parent Program)—This is a contract between the ELC and the MCS D to pay child care for a child of teen parent while they are enrolled in school. They must attend an hour-long educational training (with an ELC staff member) once a month for a total of 10 sessions.
 - AMPACT (AmeriCorps in Action)- Goal is to train and place 10 tutors in Miami-Dade/Monroe. 5 have been placed in Miami-Dade but none in Monroe yet due to the challenge of recruiting interested parties. The stipend is paid through AMPACT based on the hours they work, plus there are other benefits such as tuition assistance and help paying off school loans. L. Dunn is helping them identify areas to market and advertise within the Keys. Two sites have signed up to have a tutor placed once they are recruited, trained and cleared.
 - Children’s Movement of Florida—Approached the ELC to help identify areas of the Keys in which to conduct “Let’s Talk Sessions” where they can meet with teachers and parents. The goal is to create roadmap for the future of early learning policy and funding in Florida.
- D. CLASS Updates were provided by F. Christie. Assessment measures along with program assessment threshold requirements were explained
- E. ARPA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) numbers were provided by F. Christie. \$60,848,200.29 has been approved. Number of programs receiving the grants is 965; with 314 additional applications pending. A detailed chart of Monroe approval amounts by provider is included in the Monroe Advisory Committee packet.



VII. VPK Readiness Rates

Cindy Cabrera

Cindy Cabrera provided VPK readiness information including scores for Monroe County providers. She reviewed an example of the Readiness Rate calculation

VIII. Monroe Inclusion and Assessment Updates

Anabel Espinosa

Aileen Suazo, Screening and Evaluation Manager gave an update in the place of Dr. Anabel Espinosa. Dr. Espinosa and a staff member recently conducted some on site visits in the Keys to determine the needs of some of partners. A. Suazo shared that there are currently 3 children in the VPK SIS program using their VPK dollars to receive therapeutic services. There are new providers in the Keys that offer the much-needed services.

The numbers of screenings have declined during the month of April due to classrooms being closed due to staff shortage.

IX. New Business

Sandi Bisceglia, Chair

X. Public Comments

Sandi Bisceglia, Chair

XI. Adjourn

Sandi Bisceglia, Chair

- Motion to adjourn by M. Russell
- Motion seconded by S. Bennett

General Announcements:

Monroe County Conference: September 24, 2022 8 A.M. to 2:30 P.M.

ELC Board of Directors Annual Meeting Date: October 3, 2022 10:00 A.M. to 12:30 P.M.

Next Monroe Advisory Meeting Date: October 11, 2022 at 1 P.M.

Monroe Partner Visit: December 2, 2022 at 10 A.M. (Partner to be announced)