



**Strategic Planning Committee Meeting**  
**Monday, April 20, 2015**  
**2:00-3:00 PM**

**Attendance:**

Dr. Mara Zapata, Chair  
Dr. Abilio Rodriguez  
Alex Soto  
Helene Good  
Shaleen Fagundo (via telephone)  
Dr. Judith Schaechter (via telephone)  
Charles Auslander (via telephone)  
Gladys Montes (via telephone)

**Summary:** The Strategic Planning Committee met to review pertinent information related to the ELC's current Strategic Plan. Michele Watson was introduced as the facilitator for the strategic planning process.

Staff shared background information on how the current Strategic Plan was centered on its priority of placing children first. Staff then proceeded to provide an update of progress of the ELC's priority initiatives and secondary initiatives to give board members an understanding of work efforts. Staff followed up with information regarding reducing the waitlist for the School Readiness program and there was some discussion about the impact of the proposed reimbursement rate increase.

Information was then shared regarding current capacity for the School Readiness program and based on current data from the University of Florida, both Miami and Monroe counties had more available child care slots than children, except for the middle keys.

Information was also shared showing the ELC's Payment Rates compared to the rest of the country including DC. The data highlighted how depressed the market is due to the low payment rates and that it is difficult to be able to afford quality on the School Readiness Provider Payment Rate alone.

Staff and the private provider representative then shared that many times when payment rate increases have come up in the past, providers have chosen to serve more children instead of receiving a rate increase. This led to more information being shared regarding the breakout of where School Readiness children are attending and the actual cost of their care. This data shows that many parents are having to pay beyond the required co-payment to make up the difference between

what the ELC reimburses and the provider's private pay rate. Discussions also took place regarding how at this time there are no barriers to entry for providers which makes it difficult for the ELC to direct parents to quality child care settings since the ELC contracts with every provider who expresses an interest.

The CEO shared information regarding funding sources and provided a breakout of ELC spending. Of note was the fact that the coalition spends 85% of funding in child care slots, while the state mandate is 78%. This allows the ELC to consider potentially reducing the percentage funded in child care slots to utilize money in other areas such as quality or outreach and awareness. The CEO shared that he has had two occasions in the community within the last week when someone has told him that the ELC is not known despite the fact that it is so large. Discussion followed about the ELCs substantial community presence in the work that it does and that outreach in the community may be a good investment, especially if the ELC wants to encourage private funding to support programs and initiatives.

This information created a discussion about how the ELC can promote quality with parents and how the ELC can support providers through technical assistance. Topics included helping providers identify other funding through grants, creating provider budgeting tools, completing needs assessments by zip codes, creating a mentor/mentee system and conducting grant-writing workshops for providers.

In order to accomplish this and determine other potential priorities Angelo Parrino was asked to prepare information for the Strategic Planning Committee that outlines how much money a reduction in child care slot percentages could free up to prioritize some of these other activities.

Focus groups with parents and providers will be conducted over the next few weeks. Board members will be contacted individually by Michele Watson who is conducting a brief board survey.

The Strategic Planning Committee then requested that staff put together an agenda for the April 27<sup>th</sup> conference call to continue discussing the ELC's Strategic Planning efforts.