



Board of Directors Meeting  
April 6, 2009; 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.  
ELC Board Room

**Board Attendees:** Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr. (Chair); Yesenia Perkins (Treasurer); Yvonne T. Johnson, M.D., (Vice Chair); Gerald K. Schwartz, Esq.; Modesto E. Abety; Rick Beasley; Gilda Ferradaz on behalf of Jacqui Colyer; Alan Eckstein, Esq.; David Lawrence, Jr. (attended via conference call); The Hon. Cindy Lederman; Harve Mogul; The Hon. Natacha Seijas; Ann-Karen Weller, R.N.; David Williams, Jr.; Daniel Armstrong, Ph.D.; Connie Chapell; Silvia La Villa, Ed.D.; Irene Taylor-Wooten; Jane McQueen, Ed.D.; Walter Harvey (Board Attorney)

**Board Absentees:** Gina Cortes-Suarez; P. Morgan Hill; Dabney G. Park, Ph.D.; Valtena G. Brown

**Staff Attendees:** Evelio Torres (President/CEO); Angelo Parrino; Blythe Robinson; Leeana Pena; Alina Soto; Jackye Russell; Fred Hicks; Mary Williams, ELC Monroe (attended via conference); Pam Hollingsworth; Roseline Philippe; Yvette Medina; Esther Young; Jose Hernandez

**General Attendees:** Daisy Hensley, Miami-Dade County; Matty Loret de Mola, La Petite Academy; Linda Carmona, AECE; Edith Humes-Newbold, Miami-Dade County; Maritza Alonso, Miami-Dade County; Evelyn Borrell, Florida International University; Doreen Moskowitz, OEL/AWI; Lisa Pittman, The Children's Trust; Doug Blomberg, WHFS; Armando R. Guerra, AECE; Nichel Guerra, AECE; Rossana Velasquez, Lago Mar Preschools; Louis Manfra, Florida International University; Suzanna Hartnan, Florida International University; Daryl Greenfield, University of Miami; Ileana Acosta, DHS/CDS; Ily Martinez, DHS/CDS; Ruth L. Wessling, Faith Lutheran School; Ratya Elbaum, University of Miami; Ana C. Caravia, Florida International University; Jerome Levitt, MDCPS; Elizabeth Bezos, Rainbow Children's Academy/AECE; Linda Pulaski, The Learning Tree PreSchool; Tawnia Turner, Turner's Kindergarten; Phyllis Tynes-Saunders, DHS; Antoinette Patterson, One World Learning Center; Marie Woodson, DHS; Wanda Ellis, Kid's Choice, Inc.; Ana Sejeck, The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation

<b>I. Welcome and Introductions</b>	<b>Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr., Chair</b>
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- Chairman Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr., called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.
- Leeana Pena called roll and a quorum was established with twelve (12) voting members.



## II. Approval of Minutes

Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr., Chair

- O. Verdeja called for the approval of the meeting minutes from 03/02/09.
- A. Eckstein noted that J. Colyer is regional for DCF, not The Children's Trust as noted in the meeting minutes. He also found two grammatical errors in the meeting minutes.
  - C. Lederman moved to approve the minutes of 03/02/09.
  - Motion was seconded by A. Eckstein.
  - Motion was unanimously passed.
- O. Verdeja stated there would be three presentations taking place and asked for the Board's cooperation to run through the agenda quickly.
- O. Verdeja informed the Board that he and E. Torres attended a meeting in Tallahassee with Harry Dunkinson of Broward. Together they gave a presentation on how the ELC engages with their partners.
- O. Verdeja stated that the ELC should be expecting stimulus dollars within a very short time. He stated that the plan was to invest some of that money into new technology for providers and another portion of that money would be used for quality.
- O. Verdeja stated that Bill 501 and Bill 2570, which were planning to eliminate and/or consolidate coalitions, were slowly dying. This is great news for the ELC.
- N. Seijas, Chair of the Provider Services Committee, provided an update on the meeting that was held with the Health Department. She stated their rates would be adjusted on a sliding scale according to how many children a child care facility cares for.

## III. Finance Committee Report

Yesenia Perkins

- Motion to ratify the Finance Committee's recommendation that the current enrollment plan be continued in anticipation of receiving the Federal stimulus funds and/or surplus State School Readiness funds to cover projected deficit in the School Readiness program.
  - C. Lederman moved to approve the motion.
  - Motion was seconded by A. Eckstein.
  - Motion was unanimously passed.
- Y. Perkins stated that the resolution should clarify that it would affect this fiscal year.
  - C. Lederman moved to approve the amendment.
  - Motion was seconded by A. Eckstein.
  - Motion was unanimously passed.
- Y. Perkins reviewed the financial statements.
- Y. Perkins reviewed the budget breakdown for School Readiness and VPK. She stated there was an anticipated shortfall of -2%. However, the stimulus dollars being received before the end of the fiscal year would cover that. She stated if the stimulus dollars did not cover that, they would roll into the next year. She stated E. Torres was still working on getting an exact figure.



- Y. Perkins reviewed the waitlist and ready pool reports for Miami-Dade and Monroe.
- E. Torres stated the waitlist continues to increase and we are not seeing attrition as previously anticipated. He stated that usually this time of year when enrollment is closed, you see a decrease but that's not the case this year. However, families are being served. E. Torres stated that had the stimulus dollars for the ELC been received at the same time as AWI, we would have been able to open up enrollment. However, because AWI received the stimulus dollars before the ELC, opening enrollment wasn't possible at this time. He stated that the children referred by AWI are going into care immediately.
- E. Torres stated the stimulus dollars were first expected in March. However, the money was now expected in mid-to late April.
- E. Torres stated the big question is what happens in year two when the stimulus dollars go away and we still don't have 27 million dollars if the State legislature doesn't replace the non-reoccurring dollars. He stated this was a concern and the ELC was already planning ahead.
- L. Carmona Sanchez noted that the waitlist category of 9-year-olds was decreasing. She asked if this was alarming to the ELC.
- E. Torres stated we should continue to see the 9-year-olds increasing. He stated the entire community should be concerned about the number of children in the 9-12 age group that are not in care. However, that it comes down to the same issue of not having the dollars to place them. He stated some of these children may be siblings, but that's not the case for all of them.
- D. Armstrong requested that a report be generated to show how many children over those who are 9-12 are special needs.

#### **IV. Program & Strategy Committee Report**

**David Williams, Jr.**

- E. Bezos stated that a regular Program & Strategy Committee meeting was held. Points such as enrollment and stimulus-spending were discussed. However, a lot could not be accomplished because there was low attendance by the Board members on the committee and the providers on the committee cannot vote. She recommended that the ELC review the Board members who are a part of that committee or perhaps add more so that the committee could reach quorum. Another recommendation is to move the Program & Strategy Committee to advisory status so that recommendations could move along to the Board more quickly.
- D. Williams stated that a special Program & Strategy Committee meeting took place to discuss stimulus-spending. The following recommendations for stimulus-spending were made:
  - I. School Readiness Slots to expand access to care for children;
  - II. Technology and Training: provide computers and computer-training to providers. This will assist providers in participating in the electronic attendance submission process that will be implemented by Miami-Dade



County Child Development Services (CDS) and provide greater access to The Department of Children and Families online child care and Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) training courses;

- III. Professional Leadership Development to prepare providers to advocate for improvements in all areas of early education and care and attend national conferences and meetings with legislators;
- IV. Expansion of Care Waivers to allow families to access School Readiness services for extended periods of time not currently permitted under the current School Readiness funding regulations.

- Motion to approve the recommendations for the spending priorities for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (stimulus) funding.
  - N. Seijas moved to bring the recommendations to the Board for further discussion.
  - Motion was seconded by H. Mogul.
- Y. Perkins asked for clarification on recommendation IV.
- E. Torres explained this was in the event that a family loses their employment, the family would be able to extend the period of time their children are in care. He stated right now it was a 30-day period and this would allow them additional time. He stated this would only occur if the dollars were available. The recommendations are listed in order of priority and it would be difficult to get to recommendation IV.
- N. Seijas stated she didn't feel comfortable voting on something that was putting technology and professional leadership development before expansion of care waivers.
- M. Alonso explained that there are eligibility requirements for the expansion of care waivers. She stated that by allowing the expansion of care waivers, children that were meeting eligibility on the wait list would not be able to enroll.
- M. Alonso stated that technology and training was placed as a higher priority because one of the initiatives we have is moving to automated electronic attendance for providers. In doing so, they would address a lot of the concerns providers have regarding early payment. With this recommendation, providers would be able to have computers.
- N. Seijas stated that although it was a very good explanation, she feels we should be taking care of the children. Then, address enhancing how the quality, how providers get paid, etc.
- O. Verdeja stated that by having so many recommendations you then get into an issue of prioritizing them. This also makes him question if there are other recommendations on how to use the stimulus dollars that haven't yet been thought of.
- C. Lederman stated her concern that none of these dollars would be used towards quality.



- E. Torres stated that these priorities address just the dollars that are dedicated for slots and other activities. There is a federal requirement for quality and that would be aside from these priorities. The Program & Strategy Committee made these recommendations based on putting something in place that would last beyond the stimulus dollars. Many of these priorities address sustainability.
- D. Armstrong expressed his concern for the future. He stated that he sees a point somewhere in 2011 where the ELC would have gotten used to the stimulus dollars and suddenly find we have none. We may be meeting short-term needs but won't have anything to look to for the future. He suggested the Program & Strategy Committee come up with an analysis of where each of these recommendations would leave us in future years.
- D. Williams stated that the recommendations would be taken back to the Program & Strategy Committee.

#### **V. Governance & Bylaws Committee Report**

**Alan Eckstein, Esq.**

- A. Eckstein stated the Governance & Bylaws Committee met to discuss the possibility of giving providers voting rights on the committee. He stated the providers are asking to serve on the Provider Services Committee, the Legislative Committee and the Program & Strategy Committee. R. Moreno, D. Williams, D. Park, W. Harvey, L. Carmona Sanchez, E. Torres and he were all in attendance. He stated that the change previously made in the bylaws to allow committee members to call in and make quorum was wonderful. He stated there was a great deal of discussion on whether providers would be allowed to vote on standing committees. The committee decided not to make a recommendation to the Board but to pass the issue directly to the Board for consideration.
- A. Eckstein stated this issue was considered by the Governance & Bylaws Committee in the past and a recommendation was made to the Board to allow providers to vote on advisory committees and task forces, which was approved by the Board. He acknowledged that provider input and relationships with the providers is essential. He stated that anything decided on this issue will set a precedent and would be difficult to reverse should there be need to in the future. He stated that although providers are only asking for voting rights on three committees that it would set a precedent for provider voting rights on all standing committees (Finance, Governance & Bylaws, etc). He stated that as Board members, we have fiduciary duties and although Board members do vote on every issue brought forward, recommendations from standing committees are taken to heart. If voting rights are given to providers, each recommendation would have to be looked into. It would take away the reliance Board members currently have with each committee. He stated his personal recommendation is not to allow providers to vote on standing committees but to continue as previously set forth, that providers could vote on advisory committees and task forces.
- D. Williams stated his concern is that there is a conflict of interest for providers voting on any committee.



- M. Abety stated that there are voting and non-voting members serving on the Board. He stated that he would recommend allowing providers to be added to the committee structure.
- A. Eckstein stated that the issue brought forth by the providers was to vote on standing committees. Providers were already participating on standing committees but with non-voting rights.
- W. Harvey explained that the providers are asking for a change in the bylaws. They would like the Program & Strategy Committee and the Finance Committee to be of advisory or task force status for them to be able to vote on. He stated that the third committee they are requesting to vote on is the Legislative Committee, but this is a special committee.
- S. La Villa stated that providers participate in committees, especially the Program & Strategy and Provider Services Committees and there was a strong feeling that the ELC would benefit from what they bring to the table. She explained that she is a non-voting member, and although it can be defeating at times she continues to participate.
- L. Carmona Sanchez recognized that this is a difficult decision for the Board to make. However, partnership is about trust and being recognized as equals. She understands that Florida statute specifically excludes providers from voting on the Coalition Board and they are not looking to change that. Currently, only three provider representatives are required to serve on the Board. She stated that providers recognize that they can participate on the three committees they requested and have purposely excluded themselves from serving on the Governance & Bylaws and Finance committees. She stated that providers want to have rights to vote on the Program & Strategy, Provider Services and Legislative Committees so that they can be partners. She gave the example of the support providers have given the ELC on House Bill 501.
- E. Bezos stated a major issue was moving an agenda forward without a quorum. She stated that although providers can give input, it really doesn't validate their position as partners. She stated that while she understands A. Eckstein's concern of the Board's reliance on committee recommendations, today was a good example of that not happening. The Program & Strategy Committee came up with a recommendation for stimulus-spending and Board members decided to bring it back to the Committee for further discussion.
- N. Seijas stated she finds it difficult to hear that providers feel there is no partnership or trust because anything brought to the Provider Services Committee is immediately addressed. She stated that all providers are welcome to provide input, to speak, to challenge any issue, etc.
- H. Mogul suggested that the committees' reports include what the provider input is on any recommendation.
- J. McQueen stated that her position on the Board was previously a voting position. When that changed, it didn't matter because she is still given the



opportunity to provide her input. She feels providers still have the ability to do even though they cannot vote.

- N. Seijas moved not to change the standing committees to an advisory or task force committee status which would allow providers to vote on these committees, but to leave the standing committees as currently stated in the bylaws.
  - Motion was seconded by H. Mogul.
  - Motion was opposed by M. Abety.
- O. Verdeja stated he does value the comments from providers as well as the general audience and the process to allow everyone to speak will not change.

<b>VI. Alliance for Early Care and Education</b>	<b>Linda Carmona Sanchez</b>
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- Presentation is available on the ELC website.

<b>VII. The Billion-Dollar Bet on a Community's Future</b>	<b>David Lawrence, Jr.</b>
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- Presentation is available on the ELC website.

<b>VIII. Child Assessment Presentation</b>	<b>Dr. Louis Manfra, F.I.U.</b>
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- Presentation is available on the ELC website.

<b>IX. CEO Report</b>	<b>Evelio C. Torres, CEO</b>
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- E. Torres stated AWI created a task force to identify potential cost savings that could result from the consolidation of ELCs and other administrative efficiencies. They determined the most the State could save was 3.9 million dollars. He stated the immediate assumption was that these savings would go to fund slots and that is not the case.
- E. Torres stated that the general consensus is that it's important to retain a level of local control.
- E. Torres thanked D. Lawrence and The Children's Trust for all their support.

<b>X. Public Comments</b>	<b>Yvonne T. Johnson, M.D.</b>
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- Y. Johnson requested a moment of silence to recognize the untimely passing of ELC's colleague from CDS, Maria Binelo.

<b>XI. Adjourn</b>	<b>Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr., Chair</b>
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