

Early Learning Coalition of Broward County, Inc.

PRC Meeting Agenda

August 28, 2024, at 11:00 AM

Zoom Meeting

Members are reminded of conflict-of-interest provisions. In declaring a conflict, please refrain from voting or discussing and declare the following information: 1) Your name and position on the Board, 2) The nature of the conflict, and 3) Who will gain or lose as a result of the conflict. Please also fill out form 8B prior to the meeting.

PAGE		
1.	Call to Order	Monica King, PRC Chair
2.	Roll Call	Melody Martinez, Board Liaison
3.	Consent Agenda 1. Approve May 21, 2024, Committee meeting minutes	2 Monica King, PRC Chair
4.	Regular Business 1. PRC251RB1 - School Readiness Enrollment/Redetermination Update (Goal 1 of Strategic Plan) 2. PRC251RB2 - VPK Enrollment Update (Goal 2 of Strategic Plan) 3. PRC251RB3 - Online Provider Search Tool 4. PRC251RB4 - Education/Quality (Goals 3 and 4 of Strategic Plan) a. ARPA Discretionary Funds Update • Help Me Grow Florida • Learning Technology Services • CLASS Observations Update 5. PRC251RB5 - Outreach/Advocacy Update	6 Amy Moore, Sr. Director of Family Services & Howard Bakalar, CPO 8 9 Allison Metsch, Sr. Director of Education & Quality Initiatives; Howard Bakalar, CPO 10 12 Ancel Pratt III, Sr. Director of Communications & Howard Bakalar, CPO
5.	Unfinished Business New Business	
6.	Next PRC Meeting: First week of December	
7.	Adjourn	

Please Note: Agenda is subject to revisions and additions at the discretion of the Chair of the Coalition. Notification will be sent of any such revisions or additions. **Members of the Public:** Please sign up at the entry desk for public comments to be made on any particular agenda items no later than five minutes after the Coalition meeting has been called to order.

“As per [§286.0105, Fla. Stat.](#) Any person who decides to appeal any decision of the Board with respect to any matter considered at this meeting will need a record of the proceedings and for such purpose, may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made which record includes testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.”



Early Learning Coalition of Broward County, Inc.
Program Review Committee Meeting Minutes
May 21, 2024, at 3:00 PM
[Zoom Meeting](#)

Members in Attendance	Chair, Monica King; Cindy Arenberg-Seltzer (late); Krystie Castillo; Richard Campillo; Dawn Liberta; Renee Podolsky; Ellie Schrot
Members Absent	Melody McDonald; Laurie Sallarulo;
Staff in Attendance	Renee Jaffe, CEO; Judith Merritt, COO; Christine Klima, CAO; Howard Bakalar, CPO; Hubert Cesar, CIO; Melody Martinez, Board Liaison; Lizbeth DelVecchio, Executive Assistant & Special Projects Coordinator; Amy Moore, Sr. Director of Family Services and Provider Relations; Allison Metsch, Sr. Director of Education & Quality; Ancel Pratt, III, Sr. Director of Communications & Outreach
Others in Attendance	

Item	Action/Discussion
Welcome & Call to Order	Chair Monica King called the meeting to order at 3:01 PM. The roll was called, and a quorum was established.
Consent Agenda 1. Approve April 2, 2024, Committee meeting minutes	There was a Motion to move the Consent Agenda by Dawn Liberta and Seconded by Richard Campillo. Unanimously approved. Motion Passes.
Regular Committee 1. PRC243RB1 – School Readiness Enrollment/Redetermination Update (Goal 1 of Strategic Plan)	<p>Amy Moore provided updates on School Readiness enrollment and redetermination. ELC Broward is continuing to enroll families in School Readiness services. So far, for this FY, we have enrolled 3,560 new children. AS of this morning we have 685 children on the waitlist. The pace of redetermination has slowed down. Our attrition rate continues to average about 26%. However, the pace of new enrollments consistently overcomes attrition month to month.</p> <p>Howard Bakalar, CPO, added that we surpass every other coalition to enroll new children. Our efficient waitlist and enrollment process moves families from their initial application to enrollment quickly, which has a benefit to the overall childcare system locally and statewide. Maintaining children in the program contributes to the stability and our overall enrollment census. We expect to have approximately 16,000 children in care by July, compared to 15,168 children in the last payment cycle in April.</p> <p>Cindy Arenberg-Seltzer asked if there is any benchmark to the attrition rate. Is 26% standard around the state? Is it normal?</p> <p>Amy Moore added that we don't have state figures to compare them to. However, in comparison to ourselves, our attrition rate was approaching 29% during the summertime, when we stopped enrolling completely. Subsequently, we partnered with our communication and outreach department, where we send additional reminders to families from our ELC email address; even though they do get reminders from the state, we noticed a better response from parents submitting</p>

	<p>documentation. We noticed that over the last two quarters, we landed around 26%. If 26% attrition is our average, considering how many children we have in services, we haven't seen it move to much lower than that percentage point over the last two quarters. We want to reduce it as much as possible, so we are reaching out to families and reducing caseloads to keep our attrition rate in check. We see that our enrollments have outpaced that attrition, so it's not significantly impacting the numbers of our overall census.</p> <p>Cindy Arenberg-Seltzer asked if we are able to get out of EFS reasons for the case closures or the attrition?</p> <p>Amy Moore replied that yes, we are able to see. We don't have many families falling out because they are over income. We see families get to their redetermination date and no longer meet the specifications. We do have the ability to track that.</p> <p>Cindy Arenberg-Seltzer added that maybe at some point, we could see where we are and what the most common reasons are, just to see if it's anything we need to worry about.</p> <p>Howard and Amy said that we will bring a more detailed attrition report at the next PRC meeting.</p>
<p>2. PRC243RB2- VPK Enrollment Update</p>	<p>Amy Moore provided updates on VPK. Last FY, we ended with 13,959 enrollments. As of May 16, we have approved 15,283 applications.</p> <p>We are on track to meet the estimated conference enrollment for both program year 2023 and 2024.</p> <p>For the 2023-2024 school year, the VPK Estimating Conference forecasts 14,211 VPK children enrolled in Broward County. Currently, we have 13,760 children enrolled, representing 97% of the estimate. For 2024-2025 school year 13,817 is estimated.</p> <p>While enrollments for 2024-2024 have yet to commence, we anticipate meeting or surpassing that estimate.</p>
<p>3. PRC244RB3- Education/Quality (Goals 3 and 4 of Strategic Plan)</p> <p>a. ARPA Discretionary Funds Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainings • A Day in K • School Readiness Learning Computer Software <p>b. CLASS Observations Update</p>	<p>Training and Professional Learning Activities:</p> <p>Allison Metsch reported on Education and Quality. We are currently working with 10 external contractors to supplement trainings facilitated by our staff. Our trainings are via Zoom and in person at various times and even on both weekend days. We have a high number of providers who want to participate in our training. Due to the high amount, we are experiencing issues in which educators share Zoom links with each other without official registrations. This leads to problems for those who did register. We will be increasing the amount of training offered through Zoom, in addition to several in-person training courses and on-site Making the Most of Classroom Interactions (MMCI) at several schools across the country to support the high demand for training.</p> <p>We are nearing the end of our latest Broward Bonuses and Stipend program for educators. We hosted a large webinar on May 4th called May the CLASS Be With You,</p>

- School Readiness
- VPK

and had about 2,500 educators. It was such a hit that we temporarily crashed the system to apply for stipends. And, PNC launched a new and free 3 T's training and we offered it to our Educators who couldn't attend the large Saturday training. We used it as part of our Bonus plan.

A Day in K:

We have partnered with the Museum of Discovery and Science (MODS) and have planned an event called A Day in K, which will take place June 11. Families will come with their future kindergartners and have a glimpse of what an actual day in kindergarten will be like while offering parents guidance on how to prepare their children for kindergarten. There will be activities for parents and children.

Renee added that one of our vendors, MarcoPolo will be at A Day in K and is donating 500 subscriptions to a new tool they have. It's called Kindergarten Transition, and it has activities that parents can do with their kids to prepare them for Kindergarten.

Childcare Classroom Management and Learning Technology Services:

We are working with two vendors, MarcoPolo and Age of Learning. We had our kickoff meeting with both groups and will be launching our Sharing information of the two technologies with our providers. They are two different technologies; one is more like the FAST VPK assessment that we use, as it's adaptive. The other is meant for the teacher to build up her language, and it asks questions for them to get engaged with the children.

CLASS Update:

Allison shared that the CLASS scores up to date. So far, our education team has observed approximately 359 School Readiness providers and 1089 classrooms since July 1, 2023. Our current School Readiness CLASS average is 5.40. Last FY, our CLASS average was a 5.16.

Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK):

To date, our education team has observed 895 VPK classrooms. 45 of the classrooms were at Public Schools, and 387 were private provider VPK sites. Our current CLASS average for VPK is 5.50; last FY, our CLASS average was 5.32.

Howard Bakalar added that in our strategic plan, our 5 year goal was to reach an average of 6, which we thought was a huge stretch goal.

Howard Bakalar shared that ELC Staff has been facilitating discussions about business skill trainings they most need to help them be successful. Providers were interested in some real concrete everyday skills and supports. ELC worked closely with BLI to ensure the program series was able to pivot in the face of the pandemic. The vast majority of the responses concerned help with Human Resources management issues and employment law.

There was a discussion regarding overtime in childcare centers. Krystie Castillo shared that training will be necessary.

A **Motion** was made by Ellie Schrot and **Seconded** by Renee Podolsky Approve the program concept to move forward with a procurement for Business Skills Training

4. PRC243RB4- Update on 211 Broward services

	Courses and Supports for Childcare Directors and Administrators. Unanimously approved. Motion Passes.
Unfinished Business	<p>Ellie Schrot wanted to follow up on the special needs categories and the FL special needs rate metrics of services tool.</p> <p>Howard replied that it was presented at the PLAN meeting to the childcare providers the introduction to the matrix to get them used to it and informed them that it would be a regular thing. Also, anyone already in the system will be grandfathered in, and current special needs rates will not be altered.</p>
New Business	<p>Howard shared that our enrollment budget for next year is looking good. In the last couple of weeks, DEL has clarified that they have been holding two pots of money for waitlists and to help sustain enrollments in ELC. The second pot of money is \$40M, and we are hoping to get a portion of that because the budget does not sustain our 16K or so children. Some legislators seem to be thinking of holding those dollars until the 4th quarter of next year. We don't want to be in the predicament of having to disenroll.</p> <p>There was a discussion on what could happen and what we could do to help.</p>
Matters from the Chair	None
Matters from the Committee	None
Public Comments	None
Next Meeting	TBD
Adjourn	The meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM by Renee Podolsky.

These minutes contain the action items of the Board meeting of the Early Learning Coalition of Broward. They do not include all of the Committee's discussions or comments on each matter or issue raised during the meeting. A tape recording of the meeting is held in the Coalition office. Corrections from the Committee will be taken before approval at the next meeting.

ITEM #/MEETING:	PRC251RB1 / Program Review Committee Meeting
MEETING DATE:	8/28/2024
SUBJECT:	School Readiness Enrollment/Redetermination Update
FOR ACTION:	No
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	None
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	None
AS RECOMMENDED BY:	N/A
ELC STAFF LEADS	Amy Moore, Howard Bakalar

Background Information:

During FY23/24, our team successfully enrolled 4,277 children from the School Readiness waitlist. These enrollment activities enabled us to meet our overall target for the total number of children served within our system. We continued to enroll steadily throughout the year to approach a consistent census of almost 16,000 children in care.

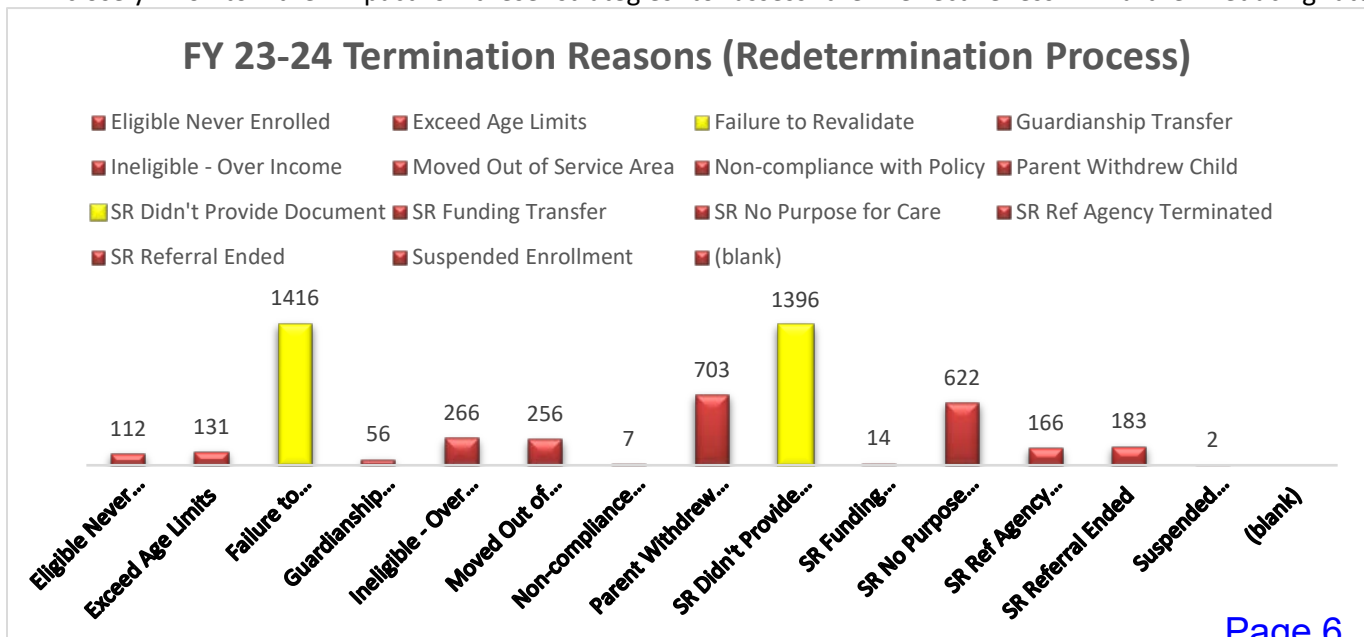
By maintaining a steady pace of enrollments, we've ensured that our system can support a stable amount of children in care at any given time.

Current Status:

Enrollment from the School Readiness application list continues. Families now experience no more than a month wait (2 weeks, presently) between the approval of their SR application and subsequent funding notification to submit documents for enrollment. So far this fiscal year we have selected 1,791 children from the wait list resulting in 408 children enrolled. As of August 23, 2024, there are 715 children on the waiting list following the recent selection of 620 children for enrollment into childcare services.

In our last Program Review Committee (PRC) meeting, we discussed the need to address attrition. While we aimed for a lower attrition rate last fiscal year, we successfully stabilized the rate through focused outreach. The primary factors contributing to children exiting our system during the redetermination process are families either not submitting documentation or failing to provide all required documents. To address this, we've implemented extensive communication strategies involving direct outreach through calls, texts, and emails from both case workers and our communications team. These efforts have proven effective in managing attrition levels.

This year we plan to further refine our outreach by coordinating targeted communications at 30, 15, and 5-day intervals before families' redetermination deadlines, followed by direct contact from their assigned Family Services Specialist. We will closely monitor the impact of these strategies to assess their effectiveness in further reducing attrition.





We are currently awaiting final guidance on the new SR Plus program, which aims to mitigate the benefits cliff for families by allowing them to continue receiving services up to 100% of the State Median Income (SMI), compared to the current exit threshold of 85% SMI. Although the rulemaking for this program has yet to be finalized, its impact on our overall attrition rate and enrollment numbers remains to be determined.

Enrollment from smaller programs, such as at-risk and other mandated categories, also continues and remains steady. Our approach moving forward is to maintain a steady pace of new enrollments from the waitlist to balance attrition while avoiding aggressive growth in our overall numbers. This strategy allows us to sustain our current level of service while remaining adaptable to any financial developments or changes in funding capacity.

ITEM #/MEETING:	PRC251RB2 / Program Review Committee Meeting
MEETING DATE:	08/28/2024
SUBJECT:	VPK Enrollment Update
FOR ACTION:	No
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	None
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	None
AS RECOMMENDED BY:	N/A
ELC STAFF LEADS	Amy Moore, Howard Bakalar

Background Information:

Florida’s Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) Program is free for all 4-year-old children living in the State of Florida. During the school year, 540 instructional hours (usually 3 hours per school day) are allotted for VPK learning. While the vast majority of families who take advantage of VPK do so during the school year, Summer VPK is also available in a much smaller number of preschools and School District sites. During the summer, 300 hours are allotted for learning.

For the 2023-2024 program year, we approved 15,272 school-year applications and 632 summer applications. This resulted in 13,824 children enrolled in the school-year program and 397 children enrolled in the summer program, bringing the total number of children participating in VPK for FY 2023-2024 to 14,221.

Current Status:

As of August 21, 2024, we have approved 13,565 VPK school-year applications for the 2024-2025 program year, along with 160 summer applications. Currently, 9,576 students are enrolled in the VPK program for FY 2024-2025.

Given that the program year has just begun, we anticipate approving additional applications and seeing further increases in enrollment numbers.



ITEM #/MEETING:	PRC251RB3 / Program Review Committee Meeting
MEETING DATE:	8/28/2024
SUBJECT:	Online Provider Search Tool
FOR ACTION:	No
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	None
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	None
AS RECOMMENDED BY:	N/A
ELC STAFF LEADS	Amy Moore, Howard Bakalar

Background:

Under the DEL Grant Agreement for School Readiness, the Coalition provides Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) services to all Broward families, regardless of income. These services help families identify and select the most suitable child care and early education options based on their needs, such as special education services, specific hours of operation, or proximity to a parent’s work or school. However, due to limitations within the DEL’s statewide Provider Portal, parents can only request these searches by phone. Coalition Customer Service staff then conduct the search and email the results when the report is ready. During peak hours, the DEL system can take up to an hour to generate search results.

To address these challenges, with DEL approval the Coalition leveraged ARPA Discretionary Funding over a 2.5-year period to release a Request for Proposals (RFP) for software that would add online search functionality, enhancing the CCR&R process. The goal was to empower busy parents to enter their own search criteria, receive results quickly, and obtain follow-up services from CCR&R Counselors at their convenience.

On December 1, 2023, the evaluation committee for procurement #PR24-5065 recommended Webauthor.com LLC’s software platform as the selected solution.

Current Status:

After collaborating with Webauthor to design the provider search tool, we successfully launched this tool on our website. The tool now enhances the pre-existing CCR&R online request process by enabling parents to conduct their own searches and download lists of providers that match the criteria entered into the online intake form. Families still have the option to request contact from a Childcare Resource and Referral Specialist for further consumer information or additional provider lists. Since the tool’s release on July 1, 2024, over 300 provider searches have been completed.

Subsequent to our launch of Webauthor, DEL has introduced a separate search tool through its chosen vendor, Wonderschool, which offers a broader search capability for both early care and education providers as well as K-12 schools. However, Wonderschool has had issues launching its early care module, and has not yet to see significant adoption as DEL continues to refine that platform.

Meanwhile, we remain focused on enhancing our provider search tool, with plans to incorporate additional technological improvements, such as AI-driven insights to further assist families during their search.

ITEM #/MEETING:	PRC251RB4 / Program Review Committee Meeting
MEETING DATE:	08/28/2024
SUBJECT:	Education & Quality Programming Update
FOR ACTION:	No
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	N/A
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	None
AS RECOMMENDED BY:	N/A
ELC STAFF LEADS	Allison Metsch, Howard Bakalar

Education and Quality Programming Update

1. Help Me Grow Florida

Help Me Grow® Florida (HMGF), administered by the Florida Children’s Forum, provides free information for parents on child development and ensures children and families are connected to needed community-based services and supports, when necessary to address developmental and behavioral needs. Working with community partners and child healthcare providers, caregivers are engaged and educated about child development, and encouraged to utilize simple developmental and behavioral screenings provided through HMGF. Screening results are analyzed and shared, and referrals are made to appropriate community resources, including Early Steps and FDLRS, when necessary.

In July 2024, the Children’s Forum published a Request for Applications (RFA) to bring the program to Broward County. The ELC engaged in conversation with community partners such as Children’s Services Council of Broward County, Children’s Diagnostic and Treatment Center (CDTC), FDLRS and 211 Broward on their intent to apply for the RFA. We submitted our application August 19th and will hear at the end of August whether we were successful.

The proposed HMG program will allow the ELC to expand its highly effective special needs programming to identify and link more young children/families in Broward to early intervention services. It would add two staff people who would promote developmental screenings, Our application was submitted on August 19th and we look forward to the result on August 30th.

2. Learning Technology Services

As discussed in previous PRC meetings, the ELC procured for learning technology to enhance VPK children’s learning as measured by FAST scores. MarcoPolo Learning, Inc was the highest-scoring vendor, and the Board approved the award at the December board meeting. At the January PRC meeting, staff proposed contracting with both MarcoPolo and the second highest scorer in procurement, Age of Learning, Inc. This proposal was approved at the March ELC Board meeting.

We have kicked off working with both Age of Learning, Inc. and Marco Polo Learning. We have approximately 175 VPK providers that are participating. VPK sites were told they can choose one of the two to implement. We hosted several zoom overview meetings in which both vendors were given the opportunity to present their product. Both entities have started onboarding VPK directors and educators. The current support being offered is in learning each site and how to navigate the system. The goal is for VPK children to complete their Progress Monitoring (PM) 1, within the first thirty days of the program, which will set their baseline for this instructional year. Then the sites will start to implement each program as prescribed by their developers. We will monitor how children’s scores progress at PM2 and PM3 and will present data later in the year comparing these scores with prior year scores.

3. CLASS Observations Update

School Readiness

As required by the Division of Early Learning, all ELC’s use the CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) tool to assess School Readiness (SR) Providers who have more than 20% School Readiness enrolled children and/or those who have received a CLASS 1 violation. The tool looks at the interactions between the children and the teachers, and overall classroom management. We observe 50% of each care level and schools receive a composite score between 1 and any

school scoring less than a 4.0 cannot contract with the ELC. A provider may receive an additional Quality Performance Incentive (QPI) differential payment for each enrolled School Readiness child based on their score. If you score between a 4.5 to 4.99, the differential is 4%. If you score between a 5 to 5.99, the differential is 7% and lastly, scoring between a 6 to 7 is a 10% differential.

Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK)

In July 2022, the Division of Early Learning required that all VPK classrooms be observed also using the CLASS tool, both during the school year and summer. We observe every VPK classroom in the county, including our public-school classes. There is no differential currently associated with the VPK CLASS score.

However, the CLASS score is going to be used as part of the new Performance Metric that will include VPK CLASS scores and our VPK FAST scores to assign VPK Programs a designation of accountability. Currently DEL is still working on the specific formula that will be used.

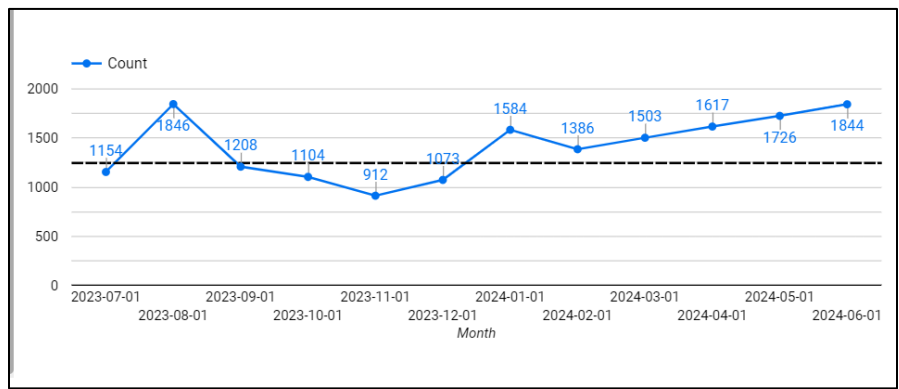
We are proud to share that for both SR and VPK we have seen an increase in our overall scores and score about the state average. #browardisthebest

	School Readiness		VPK	
	FY 23	FY24	FY23	FY24
Broward CLASS scores	5.03	5.40	5.32	5.52
State CLASS scores	4.95	5.11	5.08	5.21

ITEM #/MEETING:	PRC251RB5 / Program Review Committee Meeting
MEETING DATE:	8/28/2024
SUBJECT:	Outreach/Advocacy Update
FOR ACTION:	No
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	None
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	None
AS RECOMMENDED BY:	N/A
ELC STAFF LEADS	Ancel Pratt III, Howard Bakalar

Background Information:

With funding from DEL, and encouragement of ELC executive staff in Q4 of FY23/24, the Communications and Outreach team pushed its hardest with engaging in outreach events and paid advertising to increase awareness, engagement and application submission for School Readiness Program. Q4 of FY 23/24 saw some of the ELC’s largest SR application submissions and SR landing page traffic.



Current Status:

Outreach concluded FY 23/24 on a strong note, participating in numerous community events and leveraging key partnerships to elevate awareness of ELC Broward services. Despite turnover, the team quickly onboarded a new Outreach Specialist, enabling participation in a number of Outreach events and service flyer drops to community partners.

The momentum continued into Q1 FY 24/25, by participating in 12 Community events, 14 BCPS flyer drops, and over 60 childcare provider drops, resulting in some of the highest website traffic (SR landing page), call volume, and office visits we’ve seen.

