

Early Learning Coalition of Broward County, Inc.

PRC Meeting Agenda

December 5, 2024, at 10:00 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 August 28, 2024, Committee meeting minutes	2 Monica King, PRC Chair
4.	Regular Business 1. PRC252RB1 - School Readiness Enrollment/Redetermination Update (Goal 1 of Strategic Plan) 2. PRC252RB2 - VPK Enrollment Update (Goal 2 of Strategic Plan) 3. PRC252RB3 - Education/Quality (Goals 3 and 4 of Strategic Plan) a. Help Me Grow Florida Update and Special Needs Services Array b. CLASS update (School Readiness and VPK) c. VPK Performance Accountability Update 4. PRC252RB4 - Outreach/Advocacy Update	9 Amy Moore, Sr. Director of Family Services & Customer Services; Howard Bakalar, CPO 11 12 Allison Metsch, Sr. Director of Education & Quality Initiatives; Howard Bakalar, CPO 16 Ancel Pratt III, Sr. Director of Communications & Howard Bakalar, CPO
5.	Unfinished Business New Business	
6.	Next PRC Meeting: Last Week of February 2025	
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
August 28, 2024, at 11:00 AM
[Zoom Meeting](#)

Members in Attendance	Chair, Monica King; Cindy Arenberg-Seltzer; Dawn Liberta; Melody McDonald; Renee Podolsky; Ellie Schrot
Members Absent	Laurie Sallarulo; Krystie Castillo; Richard Campillo
Staff in Attendance	Renee Jaffe, CEO; Christine Klima, CAO; Howard Bakalar, CPO; Hubert Cesar, CIO; Melody Martinez, Board Liaison; 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; Erica Accilon, Outreach Specialist 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 May 21, 2024, Committee meeting minutes	There was a Motion to move the Consent Agenda by Dawn Liberta and Seconded by Ellie Schrot. Unanimously approved. Motion Passes.
Regular Committee 1. PRC251RB1 - School Readiness Enrollment/Redetermination Update (Goal 1 of Strategic Plan)	<p>Amy Moore provided updates on School Readiness enrollment and redetermination. During FY 23/24 our team enrolled 4,277 children from the school readiness waitlist. ELC Broward is continuing to enroll families in School Readiness services at a steady pace. So far, for this FY we have selected 1,791 children from the waitlist, resulting in 408 children enrolled. As of August 23, there are 715 children on the waitlist. We are approaching a consistent census of between 15,500 and 16,000 children in care. Families are now experiencing approximately 2 weeks of wait time between applying for childcare subsidies and being notified to submit their documentation.</p> <p>While we did aim for a lower attrition rate last FY, we successfully stabilized the rate. Even though we did not meet the percentage that we were aiming for, we did, however, stabilize the rate and ended the year with a 27% attrition rate. However, the pace of new enrollments consistently overcomes attrition month to month. We did this by working with our communications department. They sent targeted emails to customers due for redetermination, and that helped stabilize what our percentage was. We fell below where we wanted to be, so to help with that this FY, we plan to work with the communication team to send out a communication to parents at 30,15, and 5-day intervals before families' redetermination deadline.</p>

Cindy Arenberg-Seltzer asked what the providers are saying anything when the children in their care don't successfully redetermine.

Amy Moore replied that we have not heard from the provider community or have any data on this. We do contact the provider if the parent is not responding to confirm we have the parents correct contact information.

Provider Rep Melody McDonald added that the families that don't redetermine are usually those that are school ages that go to aftercare or are moving away. She didn't have anyone that doesn't redetermine that continues care.

Cindy Arenberg-Seltzer added that the attrition chart is great, and she can see that everything is being done from the coalition's part. Maybe it would help to get that information from the providers, as Melody McDonald just provided, which shows that we don't have to worry about what happened to the families. Maybe the next level is the connection with the providers.

Amy Moore replied that we can partner with the providers, whether it's through the PLAN meetings or other communications. She also appreciated that Cindy recognizes that the Coalition is doing everything they can do. Additionally, we had a call with DEL that morning, and they commended us as a coalition for all the communication with do for our parents to redetermine because they also get notifications from DEL.

Howard Bakalar, CPO, added that we will make more efforts to do more focused groups formal and informal with our providers now that stimulus funds are gone, so we can see how everyone is recovering.

Amy Moore gave an update on enrollment. We are still awaiting final guidance on the new SR Plus program, and this aims to eliminate or soften the benefits cliff for families by allowing them to continue services up to 100% of the SMI, compared to the current threshold of 85%.

Enrollment from smaller programs, such as at-risk and other mandated categories remain steady. Our approach moving forward is to maintain a steady pace of new enrollments from the waitlist to balance attrition while avoiding aggression 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.

Cindy Arenberg-Seltzer asked if the SR Plus Program funding could be spread to other categories if it wasn't being utilized for its intended population.

Howard Bakalar replied that its new money coming in from the Workforce It is not being treated like the rest of SR funding. It is separated, and it is a strange funding source to successfully utilize. We are hopeful that if this funding continues, some fixes will be made to allow us to better spend it.

2. PRC251RB2- VPK Enrollment Update (Goal 2 of Strategic Plan)

Cindy Arenberg-Seltzer asked if we, as ELC, will comment to try and help the rule be effective.

Renee Jaffe, CEO, replied that the rule was approved by the state board earlier this month. All coalitions, including ours, sent in recommendations. They are still working on improving guidance, but it has not started. They have to create the coding in the system.

Amy Moore provided updates on VPK. Last FY, 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 in the summer program. As of May 16, we have approved 15,283 applications. This brings the total number of children participating in VPK for FY23-24 to 14,221.

We are on track to meet the estimating conference enrollment for both program years 2023 and 2024.

As of August 21, 2024, we have approved 13,565 VPK school-year applications for the 24-25 program and 160 summer applications. There are currently 9,576 students enrolled in the VPK program for FY24-25. Since the program just started, we are anticipating approving additional applications and seeing further increases in enrollment numbers.

Our Communication Team is also watching our enrollment numbers so that we can do a targeted outreach campaign to advertise VPK for those families who may not have been able to take advantage of it yet.

Cindy Arenberg-Seltzer added that she doesn't remember seeing before the approved application vs. the enrolled, is that the typical gap, where you have 1400 children who were approved not show up for the school year, and nearly half of the summer not show?

Amy Moore replied that yes, after the pandemic, we fall almost the same in VPK every year as we did in the previous year. We reach out to those families who don't use their VPK certificate and let them know they still have time to use it. VPK lands about the same every year, and it is the standard. Many families said they don't see the benefits of VPK because of the hours and the number of slots that are available at their chosen providers.

Melody McDonald asked if public schools accept VPK certificates.

Renee Jaffe replied yes, we have a contract with the school district with VPK; around 52 public schools sites do VPK.

Renee Podolsky asked if there are children who are there for the preschool years and then go somewhere else for VPK, because of the hours they drop off.

Howard Bakalar, CPO, replied that there are providers that don't provide VPK, so if you are in a school that does not provide VPK they will try and keep you in their 4-year-old classroom without VPK. VPK is not always a money maker for folks.

Cindy Arenberg-Seltzer asked if we know if a VPK will limit a number of VPK students that they will take.

Allison Metsch replied that there are specific rules regarding the number of kids in a classroom. There can't be more than 20, and if there are more than 20, there needs to be a lead teacher and an assistant teacher. It depends on whether they have the staff and what the capacity is. There are definitely specific qualifications for the site. You wouldn't have to have that for a private 4-year-old classroom.

Cindy Arenberg-Seltzer asked for clarification: if a provider has the capacity for 40 kids but will only let 20 VPK certificate children in, and the other 20 won't be a VPK classroom, but a 4-year old classroom instead, could this benefit to them in that what they need to provide in the VPK certificate classroom is a higher expectation than in a 4-year-old classroom.

Allison Metsch said yes that is correct.

Melody McDonald added that she currently has one in her VPK class who got the certificate and is not using it right now because they are a school-readiness child. He will be free anyway, so they are waiting to use it in the summer because they might not be free for the summer. Other parents come in thinking it's the whole day and not 3 hours, so they decide not to do it because they can't pick up their child. There are different reasons.

3. PRC251RB3- Online Provider Search Tool

Online Provider Search Tool

Amy Moore reported on the Online Search Tool. Child Care Resource and Referral has not changed in the last 20 years. There are challenges within the DEL's statewide Provider Portal, and to address these challenges, ELC Broward utilized remaining stimulus funds to procure a better CCR&R tool. Webauthor was the successful applicant in this process.

After collaborating with Webauthor to design the provider search tool, we successfully launched this tool on our website. The tool enhances the pre-existing CCP&R online request process by enabling parents to conduct their own search 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 release on July 1, 2024, over 300 provider searches have been completed. Subsequent to our launch of Webauthor, DEL has introduced a separate search through its chosen vendor and released a program called Wonderschool that offers a broader search capability for both early care education providers as well as K-12 schools. However, the release has

experienced quite a few issues launching its early care module and has not seen any significant adoption by DEL. DEL continues to refine that platform, so we remain focused on enhancing our provider search tool that we have available here in Broward County, such as AI-driven insight to further assist families during their search.

Cindy Arenberg-Seltzer said a great job on this. Her only concern is that the state will prohibit the use of it. Now they have launched their failed system and you won't be able to use your system that works. Hopefully, we can do something from that happening. We have to make the legislatures aware that it doesn't work and that we have a system that works for us.

Ellie Schrot asked if community partners can access this as well, and sometimes parents ask us for information related to centers that might be a good fit related to special services.

Staff responded that this tool was really meant for end users, and suggested that CDTC could support individuals in navigating the tool, if they wanted. There is a section where they can add special needs, and it will generate a list of providers that meet that need. The parents need to enter the information as themselves.

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

Help Me Grow Florida:

Allison Metsch reported on Education and Quality. Over the summer, we applied to become a Help Me Grow Florida affiliate. We submitted our application on August 19th and will hear at the end of August whether we were successful. This is another great resource for families; we would bring screening to additional families across the county.

Learning Technology Services:

We have kicked off working with both MarcoPolo and Age of Learning and have the approximately 175 VPK providers that are participating. VPK sites were told they could choose one of the two to implement. We hosted several Zoom overview meetings in which both vendors were given the opportunity to present their products. This offering is only VPK, and we are hopeful to see if there is Progress Monitoring improvement based on the data. The current support being offered is in learning each site and how to navigate the system. Our centers are currently in Program Monitoring (PM) 1, and our goal is to have it completed within the first thirty days of the program, which will set their baseline for this instructional year. Then, start implementing each program as prescribed by their developers. We will monitor the scores and present data later in the year.

CLASS Observations Update:

Our CLASS scores for FY 23-24 have improved from the prior year. For school readiness, our current CLASS score is 5.40, up from 5.03 last FY. For VPK, our current CLASS score is 5.52, up from 5.32 last FY.

The state's school Readiness score was 5.11, and ours was 5.40. For VPK, the state's score was 5.21, and ours was 5.52.

<p>5. PRC251RB5- Outreach/Advocacy Update</p>	<p>Additionally, Allison reported that the peer support specialist program for which we received funding from AD Henderson for 2 staff that help families go through the process of a referral and walk them through it was going well. Since we started the program, we have seen an increase in referrals and in their follow-through. We are holding the parents’ hands and reminding them of the process, and we have seen an improvement. We had a survey, and 92% of the families strongly agreed that the help was helpful. 113 families attended an evaluation out of 184 referred. This is between January – June. There is a 61% follow-through rate for the 3-5 year-old, and it's an increase because last year we saw a 41%.</p> <p>For Early Steps kids, last year, we had a 33% follow-through rate, and this year, we have a 55% follow-through rate.</p> <p>We are working to help families and even have a contract with Uber for those families that need transportation. We haven’t seen a big need for that so far, so we will wait and see if it continues to be a low need. It has been a special program that we have seen positive results.</p> <p>Ellie Schrot thanked the staff and gave Kuddos on this as this has helped families, and it is proven to be so successful with the peer support workers. Maybe we can replicate this around the county for other programs.</p> <p>Monica King also expressed Kudos to the team.</p> <p>Outreach/Advocacy Update</p> <p>Ancel Pratt provided an update on outreach and Advocacy. This past FY we had more landing page traffic to each one of our programs. Outreach concluded FY 23/24 on a strong note, participating in 36 outreach events and leveraging key partnerships to elevate awareness of ELC Broward services. Last year number of School Readiness applications that were submitted in July 2023 was 1154, and this year, we had 2100 applications. With outreach and advertising, we were able to increase the numbers.</p>
<p>Unfinished Business</p>	
<p>New Business</p>	<p>Renee Jaffe added that we had the executive director and the deputy director of the Association of Early Learning Coalitions here about a week ago. They are doing a tour around the state. We did a presentation on all our programs and how we do things in Broward, and she said that no one in the state does the things we do. After she left, she asked us to do around 10-15 training on all the programs that we have here for all the other coalitions at the Association’s October conference.</p>
<p>Matters from the Chair</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Matters from the Committee</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Public Comments</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Next Meeting</p>	<p>First week of December</p>
<p>Adjourn</p>	<p>The meeting adjourned at 11:59 PM by Dawn Liberta</p>

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:	PRC252RB1 / Program Review Committee Meeting
MEETING DATE:	12/5/2024
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:

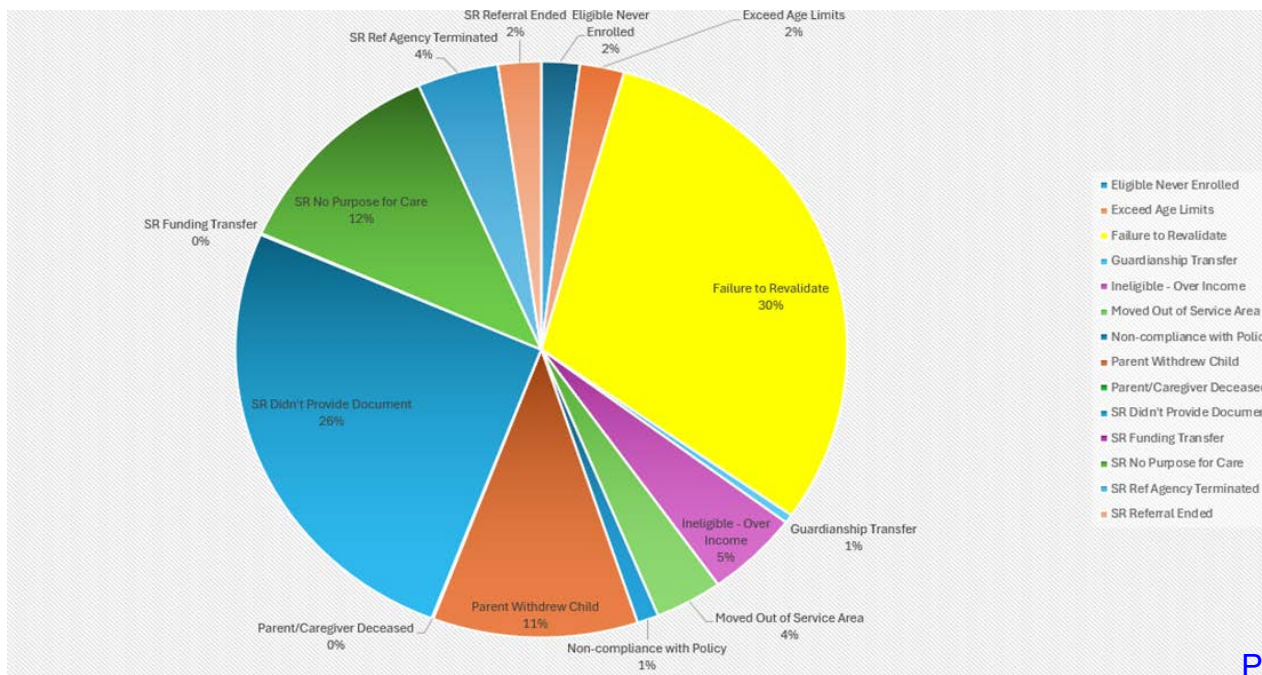
During FY23/24, our team successfully enrolled 4,277 children from the School Readiness waitlist. These enrollment activities enabled us to meet our overall target for the total number of children served within our system. We continued to enroll steadily throughout the year to approach a consistent census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

After more than two years of enrollment from the School Readiness (SR) application waiting list, we are no longer selecting families for initial enrollment from this list. To date in this fiscal year, we have selected 2,851 children from the waitlist, which has resulted in 1,816 children successfully enrolled in the program. As of November 25, 2024, there are 1,812 children on the waiting list.

Given that we have stopped enrolling families from the waitlist, we continue to analyze data related to attrition to understand trends and identify areas for improvement. Following a collaborative meeting with the Miami-Dade Early Learning Coalition, we learned that they categorize attrition differently. Specifically, the termination code “Failure to Revalidate” refers to families who failed to submit any documentation required for the redetermination process, meaning the family never even began the process. This is a distinct category compared to other termination reasons, where the parent did engage in the process but either did not complete it or was found ineligible. With this in mind, we chose to dive deeper into our own attrition data to compare families who failed to start the redetermination process (“Failure to Revalidate”) with those who either did not complete it or were found ineligible. The following graph illustrates our findings for the first quarter of this fiscal year.



In the same period, we terminated 1,234 children, which accounts for 29% of children who were due for redetermination. When we exclude the 375 children (30%) who were terminated for “Failure to Revalidate” (i.e., they did not begin the redetermination process), the remaining attrition rate is calculated based on families who either did not complete the process or were determined to be ineligible. Of these, 859 children (approximately 20%) were terminated for reasons such as failure to provide necessary documents or being found ineligible for continued services. This gives us an attrition rate of 20% for these families.

At this point in the fiscal year, it is too early to draw definitive conclusions about ongoing trends. However, it is worth noting that the data from the previous fiscal year (2023-2024) shows similar attrition rates, suggesting that this pattern may continue.

While we will continue to report the overall attrition numbers, the breakdown of these figures allows us to focus our efforts on specific areas that we can control. For instance, we plan to further investigate the subgroup of families who fail to submit required paperwork for redetermination. We will explore potential trends related to the age of children or other demographic factors that might impact the likelihood of families completing the process.

Our data also suggests that the attrition rate due to families being over-income remains relatively low compared to other reasons for termination. Early feedback across the state suggests that there is underutilization of funds allocated for the School Readiness PLUS (SR PLUS) program. Broward County leads the coalitions with the highest enrollment in the program, currently serving 14 children. In total, approximately 50 children are being served across all 30 coalitions statewide.

Our subsidized childcare program strategy has evolved in response to the current slowdown in new enrollments from the waiting list. We are now focused on maintaining care for eligible families, managing a growing waiting list, and providing resources to families seeking affordable childcare options while they await enrollment into SR Readiness services. Enrollment in smaller programs, such as at-risk and other mandated categories, remains steady. However, given the recent halt in new enrollments from the waiting list, we will closely monitor whether any of our smaller SR programs or local funding initiatives experience an increase in enrollments. The effects of our halt in new enrollments from the waitlist not only has potential impacts on other SR programs there has and will continue to be anticipated impact on locally funded programs. For example, our locally funded Vulnerable Population program, supported by CSC funding, has maintained stable new enrollments this fiscal year, with minimal fluctuations month-to-month. However, with the gradual slowdown in initial SR enrollments and the eventual halt in new enrollments into School Readiness, the duration of children's stays in the Vulnerable Population program will extend longer than usual. As a result, with children remaining in the program for a longer period, overall enrollment for the program will increase as we continue to accept new referrals.



ITEM #/MEETING:	PRC252RB2 / Program Review Committee Meeting
MEETING DATE:	12/05/2024
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 14,232 VPK school-year applications for the 2024-2025 program year, along with 172 summer applications. Currently, 12,343 students are enrolled in the VPK program for FY 2024-2025.

As the school year progresses, we anticipate further enrollment, as eligible children continue to join the program throughout the year. Additionally, the 2025-2026 program year applications will become available to families on January 1, 2025. In anticipation of the increased volume of applications that typically occurs during this time, we have developed an operations plan to ensure a smooth and efficient application process. This plan is designed to accommodate the seasonal surge in applications while maintaining high levels of service and support for families as they navigate the application process.

ITEM #/MEETING:	PRC252RB3 / Program Review Committee Meeting
MEETING DATE:	12/5/24
SUBJECT:	Education & Quality Supports Special Needs System Update
FOR ACTION:	No
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	N/A
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	None
AS RECOMMENDED BY:	N/A
ELC STAFF LEADS	Allison Metsch, Howard Bakalar

A. Education and Quality Supports Special Needs System Update

Background Information

At the last ELC Board meeting, a question was asked about how the ELC and the special needs system of care were addressing families of young children with special developmental, behavioral, or other needs, post-COVID. Staff were asked to give an update at its next Program Review Committee meeting.

Current Status:

ELC Staff Supports

In the last three years, ELC Broward has grown its Inclusion staff and has grown its relationships with the community of service providers. We have grown from 9 Inclusion staff in 2022 to 16 staff in 2024. This has given us the ability to better respond to concerns in the classroom. Whether through ASQ screenings or through our Warm Line, where educators call for assistance with children, ELC Broward has been addressing the needs in our partner centers, providing strategies for both educators and parents to use with their children.

Behavior Bites

In addition to the Warm Line and ASQ screens, ELC Broward is now in its second year of offering Behavior Bites. Behavior Bites is a free weekly resource/forum for educators who have questions about how to respond to specific behaviors they are seeing in their classrooms. Conducted through Zoom every Friday, ELC Broward has English, Creole, and Spanish speaking staff available to answer all questions.

Behavior Bites Tidbits

Soon after Behavior Bites began, we launched Behavior Bites Tidbits, which is a series of short videos featuring our Inclusion staff. These short videos, available in English, Spanish, and Creole, explore different child behavior/developmental issues and give information and advice as to what to look for, as well as effective strategies that may help to address these issues. These videos are available on our website, and they are also run on a loop in the ELC lobby for our parents' viewing pleasure.

Behavior Bites for Parents

Earlier this year, ELC Broward launched Behavior Bites for Parents, which mirrored the model we use for Behavior Bites for Educators. Response to this service has not been overwhelming, but we continue to explore when the best times/days of the week are for parent response to maximize this resource. We are also trying multiple communication methods to let parents know this service exists and to make them feel comfortable utilizing it. We fully understand that many parents are hesitant to ask questions about something they may be seeing in their children's behavior/development.

Trainings, Trainings, and More Trainings

There is constant turnover in childcare facilities. In focus groups conducted with our Providers, they pointed continually to their new staff's inability or inexperience in dealing with behavior issues in the classroom. In order to help remedy this, ELC staff provide constant training for schools and/or onsite modeling. Our staff are assigned to specific facilities to provide customized support in response to each school's specific challenges. We are also still committed to hosting CLASS trainings and provide monthly overviews in English and Spanish via zoom. We hosted our first Spanish New Educator Bootcamp. The full week of training was facilitated in Spanish. Our CDA Academy continues, and we will be finishing two all-Spanish cohorts of about 28 graduates. We also do other community trainings specifically for new

directors called Directors in Action (DIA) and CLASS Through the Administrative Lens. DIA is a monthly series for new directors to learn about leadership. CLASS Through the Administrative Lens is designed for school leaders to understand CLASS feedback to improve and maintain the quality of classroom interactions. During ARPA we launched a training titled Behavior is Communication. The training provides detailed information on how behavior is communicative in nature and ways to recognize appropriate replacement behaviors for maladaptive behaviors exhibited in the classroom. We will be launching this training again this school year since it was so well received. This is also in addition to other onsite trainings on implementation of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) and the Ages and Stages Social Emotional Questionnaire (ASQ-SE3) with fidelity and individualized trainings such as, Full Circle Classroom Strategies which explains how creating developmentally appropriate learning environments and implementing a structured and consistent classroom routine and schedule can reduce challenging behaviors.

Help Me Grow Florida

As was discussed at the last meeting, ELC Broward had applied to Help Me Grow Florida (HMGF) to become an affiliate. Being an HMGF affiliate would allow us to expand our developmental screening services to serve the general population of families with young children, rather than only those families receiving childcare subsidies. HMGF believes in building partnerships with pediatricians and other primary care providers serving families with young children to promote both knowledge of and focus on developmental stages for young children. Families are encouraged and guided to utilize the developmental screens ASQ and ASQ SE which are found on their statewide website and additional screens such as the Pediatric Symptom Checklist (PSC) and the Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers (M-CHAT-R/F) are available in person. Funding from HMGF will allow ELC Broward to provide outreach to families to utilize these screens. We will also provide follow-up and guidance for families whose screens show possible developmental concerns. We are excited to announce we were the successful applicant in HMGF's RFP process. Contract execution is imminent, and services are set to begin immediately upon signing. ELC will have two staff focusing on expanding our relationships with families, healthcare providers, and referral sources.

Other System Supports

Mobile Eye Exams

Through the involvement of the AD Henderson Foundation in the system of care, more than 700 Pre-K children in Pre-K through (1,500 pre-k through 3rd grade) were able to get free vision exams, and free glasses and replacement glasses, if necessary. This service is provided through Miami Lighthouse for the Blind.

Mobile Hearing Screenings

Initiated through AD Henderson funding this year, approximately 300 hearing screenings are being conducted for children ages 3-8 in more than 15 childcare facilities. This service is being provided by the Center for Hearing and Communication.

Expanded Assessment Options

Nova Southeastern University's Unicorn Children's Foundation Developmental Assessment Clinic conducts assessments for children exhibiting behaviors associated with autism spectrum disorder. Services are free for low-income families. The Clinic has just received a grant to hire an additional licensed clinical psychologist, which will allow them to serve an additional 50-75 families, bringing total capacity to 135-150 annually.

Peer Support Specialists

Funded through AD Henderson, ELC's Peer Support Specialists provide support for those families who have been referred for an evaluation or further assessment through Child Find. These Specialists keep families focused, engaged, and present in the process, as the process of having your child assessed/evaluated comes with many emotions and possible roadblocks. Both FDLRS and Early Steps continually sing the praises of the Peer Support Specialists, as we have seen more families follow through with referral appointments.

Other Classroom Supports

Childcare providers report having help with individual children in the classroom through parents' insurance paying for

Registered Behavior Technicians (RBTs) and Board-Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs). Depending on each child's individual needs, therapy is provided to the child, both in the classroom and possibly one-on-one. These professionals

collaborate and work with classroom teachers to support the child's progress and goals.

B. CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) 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 7, 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.

To date, we have completed 389 of an estimated approximately 1000 School Readiness observations. Our current average score is 5.59.

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 payment differential currently associated with the VPK CLASS score.

To date, we have completed 241 of an estimated approximately 950 VPK observations. We are comfortable with this number, and we are confident we will have all VPK CLASS scores completed on time. The current VPK CLASS score average is 5.57.

C. VPK Performance Accountability Update

The State Board of Education approved a new Rule 6M-8.622, Florida Administrative Code, Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Provider Performance Metric and Designation on August 21, 2024, with a September 24th effective date. The new rule details procedures for DEL to calculate each VPK provider's accountability using performance metric and assignment of performance designation. The rule outlines the methodology, and three components and metrics used to calculate and assign the performance designations, which includes quality, achievement and learning gains. New VPK program accountability will be applied at the end of the 2024-25 VPK program year. DEL is required to calculate performance metrics for each VPK provider and assign each provider a performance designation within 45 days after the conclusion of the VPK school year and summer programs, respectively.

Florida's Committee for Early Grade Success has been working for the past few years to create a more accurate scoring system for Kindergarten Readiness. The prior measurement relied on a combination of data obtained during the VPK school year and during the first 30 days of kindergarten.

The new VPK provider progress monitoring holds providers accountable for quality instruction which leads to children learning growth and readiness for kindergarten. To track progress, school year programs test their children three times using the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) Star Early Literacy. The first progress monitoring (PM1) occurs in the first 30 days of the program year, progress monitoring 2 (PM2) occurs at the midway point and progress monitoring 3 (PM3) occurs the last 30 days of the program (PM3). In summer, students are tested at the beginning of the program (PM1) and at the end (PM3). Each assessment provides information for the program to prompt support for their students. If students need extra help, the program can direct resources to help them before kindergarten.

The FAST STAR Early Literacy is scored on a Unified Scaled Score (USS) between 200 to 1100. Children in Florida who receive a score of 707 or higher at PM3 demonstrate kindergarten readiness. This is in combination with the CLASS score and how much growth children demonstrate from PM1 to PM3, determine the school's designation.

- The quality classroom instruction score uses the CLASS Composite Program Assessment Score. (50%)
- The child achievement score is calculated as the percentage of eligible children who demonstrate kindergarten readiness on their progress monitoring 3 (PM3). (20%)
- The learning gains score calculates learning gains as a growth rate of 12 points or more between their PM1

and PM3. (30%)

Using the data from the 2022 – 2023 VPK year for **informational purposes only**, we are proud to report that the majority of our schools either meet expectations or are higher in their designation. We are also seeing the correlation between a higher CLASS score and a higher program designation.

Program Designation	Provider Performance Metric	# of Providers In category	Average CLASS Score of Providers in category	Final Metric Average
Excellent	61 – 100	153	5.74	70
Above Expectations	46 – 60	177	5.34	53
Meets Expectations	28 – 45	117	5.00	38
Below Expectations	16 – 27	26	4.70	22
Unsatisfactory	0 – 15	6	4.43	14

We will be conducting workshops beginning in January for our Providers to understand the Performance Accountability scoring. We are also working with both Age of Learning, Inc. and Marco Polo Learning, the two technology resources we have contracted with to enhance VPK children’s learning. We have 101 in Age of Learning and 87 in Marco Polo. Both programs have been doing a mix of on-site and zoom trainings. The majority of our VPK programs have just completed their Progress Monitoring 1. We will use this data, once it is available, to set the baseline for the participating schools and track subsequent learning through the additional Progress Monitoring (PM 2 and PM3). We will be looking at data from schools that participated in one of the technologies, those that did not participate and a general review to see how we can best support our county.

ITEM #/MEETING:	PRC252RB4 / Program Review Committee Meeting
MEETING DATE:	12/05/2024
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

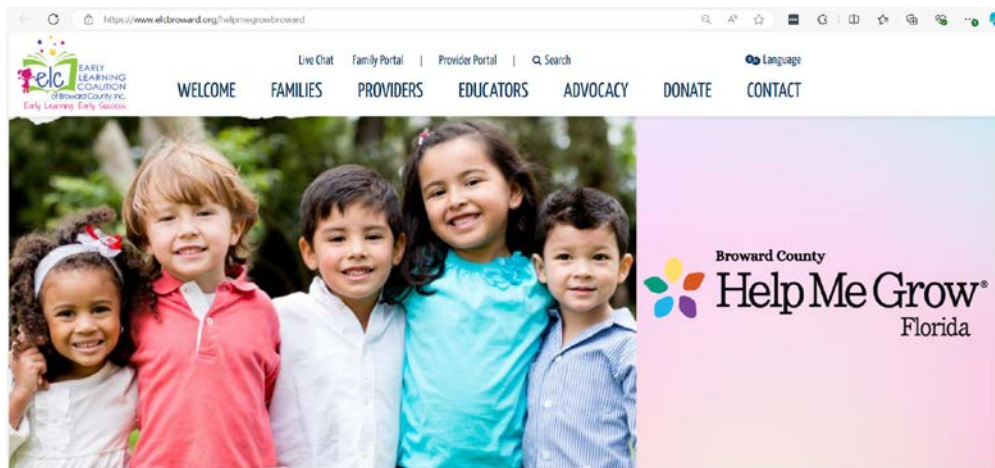
Background Information:

The Communications and Outreach team has shifted its focus this fiscal year in light of budget challenges from the State of Florida. Outreach efforts are focused on building awareness of ELC services and strengthening relationships with community stakeholders. The team has also successfully secured additional School Readiness match grants through local relationship building and by presenting at various municipal commission meetings.

Current Status:

Help Me Grow (HMG) Program Activation

ELC Broward is thrilled to become the newest affiliate of the **Help Me Grow Florida** network. As discussed, this free program connects children, families, and caregivers to critical developmental resources. Services include free access to developmental and behavioral screenings, coordination with care specialists for individualized support, and parenting tips and activities tailored to support child development.



ELC Broward will host a [Help Me Grow landing page](#) (expected activation: December 2024) that provides parents and caregivers with resources to promote their child’s healthy development. The Communications and Outreach team has attended online training sessions to prepare for this initiative and will collaborate closely with the Education team to ensure success.

Family Engagement Month

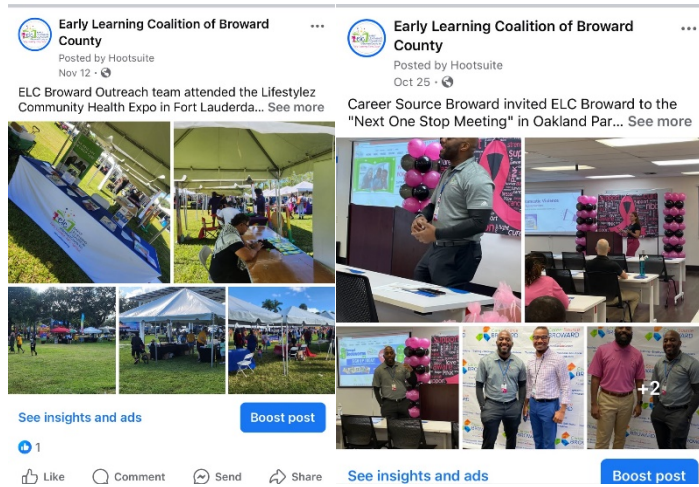
In November, the team celebrated **Family Engagement Month** with an engaging social media campaign designed to inspire parents and caregivers. Highlights included tips for interactive learning and promoting meaningful connections between families and childcare providers. Below are links to featured social media posts from the campaign:

- [Link 1](#)
- [Link 2](#)

- [Link 3](#)

Community Outreach Efforts

The Outreach team has been busy engaging with the community, attending events, and meeting with partners to share information about ELC services. These outreach efforts have been instrumental in strengthening our connections with community stakeholders and ensuring families know about the resources available to them.



Broward Bookworms Program

Our Broward Bookworms program, which provides free books to children 5 and under, is off to a strong start this year! For the first time, our vendor, Scholastic, is offering bilingual Creole books in addition to English and Spanish options. This ensures that more families can receive books in the language that works best for their home.

In just three months, the program has processed 4,921 order requests, equating to approximately 24,000 books now in the hands of Broward kids to promote early literacy. This milestone represents 65% of our Bookworm budget and demonstrates our commitment to fostering a love for reading and learning across diverse communities.

