



**FINAL OFFICIAL
MEETING MINUTES
Miami-Dade County
Mayor's School Readiness Taskforce**

Stephen P. Clark Center
111 NW 1st Street
29th Floor Conference Room
Miami, Florida 33128

December 9, 2011
As Advertised

Harvey Ruvin, Clerk
Board of County Commissioners

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**CLERKS SUMMARY AND OFFICIAL MINUTES
MAYOR'S TASK FORCE MEETING ON
SCHOOL READINESS IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY
DECEMBER 9, 2011**

The Task Force convened in a meeting on December 9, 2011, at 10:15 a.m. in the Stephen P. Clark Center, 111 NW 1st Street, 29th Floor Conference Room, Miami, Florida. The following members were present: Makola M. Abdullah, Modesto Abety, Vance Aloupis, Susan Angulo, Sandra Anselme, Eddie Berrones, Helen Blanch, Richard Chisholm, Lucia Davis-Raiford, Julie Edwards, Tonya Ferguson, Milagros Fornell, John Goodwin, Daryl Greenfield, Gail Gregg, Esther Jacobo, David Lawrence, Jr, Judge Cindy Lederman, Jesse Leon, Lisa Martinez, Jane McQueen, Iraida Mendez-Cartaya, Gladys Montes, Rose Mary Moreno, Susan Neimand, Janice Nelson, Carolyn Nelson-Goedert, Kaney Ratteray, Terry Rutherford, Franklin Sands, Ana Sejeck, Honorable Rebeca Sosa, Evelio C. Torres, Phyllis Tynes-Saunders, Renee Ward, Ann-Karen Weller, and William Zubkoff.

The following staff members were present: Deputy Mayor Lisa Martinez and Deputy Clerk Cindy White.

- **Welcome and Overview of Process**

Deputy Mayor Lisa Martinez welcomed everyone to today's meeting, noting this was the final meeting of the Task Force and each sub committee of the Task Force would present their final recommendations.

Commissioner Sosa commended Deputy Mayor Lisa Martinez for the incredible job she accomplished overseeing this Task Force.

- **Committee #1 Presentation of Recommendations and Feedback**

Ms. Gladys Montes, representing Committee #1, gave a Power Point presentation, covering the recommendations of that committee.

It was noted Committee #1's focus areas were on Implementation Model; Process Improvement; Professional Development; Regulatory Requirement; and Alternative Approaches for 2012-2013.

The following 24 recommendations were presented:

- #1 Different models serving HS/EHS families should be analyzed in other regions including approaches to:

- tracking academic data
 - staffing plan/transition of county employees
 - research based curricula
 - tracking and analysis of family data
 - financial stability/sustainability
 - compliance with federal standards
 - quality assurance process;
- #2 The capacity of current and new delegate agencies or organizations should be assessed to serve all children and families currently being served by the grantee.
- #3 The quality service delivery should be maximized by developing a tracking system for children and family outcomes including:
- early learning exposures and transitions between early childhood programs
 - assessment data (baseline/outcome)
 - partnership with M-DCPS to assign Identification Number either at birth or at entry into early care system (ie CHEER System – Child Health Education Enrichment and Reporting System)
 - participate in the Quality County Program (with a focus on accreditation);
- #4 The quality service delivery should be maximized by developing a tracking system to support professional development of staff including:
- educational plans
 - progress toward goals
 - integrate with participation in Quality Countys (ie Professional Development Registry
- #5 A cohesive salary schedule for all staff should be created
- #6 A standard rate per child should be established across all agencies
- #7 Programmatic and management monitoring processes should be improved (considering some participation from outside agency to monitor/evaluate)
- #8 Hiring and retention practices should be improved
- #9 Opportunities for research-based innovative practices should be provided
- #10 Annual reports should be provided to the community including family goals and children’s outcomes
- #11 Functionality of the Child Plus System should be improved
- #12 The registration process should be automated using Child Plus

- #13 An eligibility process should be created
- #14 Comprehensive services should be provided
- #15 Educational opportunities for administrators and practitioners should be increased
- #16 A continuous system linked to public assistance should be developed
- #17 A comprehensive training program should be developed based on the HS/EHS standards and individual needs of all staff
- #18 A strategic training plan should be created based on:
 - changes in performance standards
 - information that addresses critical areas such as infants/toddlers, home-based programs, assessments/screenings, CLASS, early literacy, and second language learners.
- #19 Transition should be ensured to meet the needs of various governing bodies including but not limited to the Policy Council, the Board of County Commissioners, Head Start, etc.
- #20 Funding sources should continue to be leveraged.
- #21 100% of slots currently provided by the grantee should be transferred to delegates
- #22 Responsibilities for monitoring and technical assistance should be maintained with grantee and the use of technology be increased
- #23 "Back office" operations including training, assessment and evaluation, and accounting/reimbursement responsibilities should be outsourced
- #24 The committee should continue to meet to examine VPK and School Readiness.

Deputy Mayor Lisa Martinez thanked all members of Committee #1 for their recommendations and introduced Modesto Abety who would present Committee #2's recommendations.

- **Committee #2 Presentation of Recommendations and Feedback**

Ms. Modesto Abety, representing Committee #2, gave a Power Point presentation, covering the recommendations of that committee.

The following recommendations related to Budgetary Issues and Staff Qualifications were presented:

- #1 The cost per child should be standardized to produce the following desired results:
 - potentially serve more children
 - ensure equitable allocation of funds
 - ensure optimal quality education for every child
 - provide accountability of funds for Miami-Dade County
 - maximizing funds for Direct Services vs. Administrative Costs (with a cap on administrative costs)

- #2 Salary schedules should be standardized with qualifications and classifications for all staff (administrators, teachers, social workers, etc.) to produce the following desired results:
 - equal qualifications that are justifiable
 - efficient use of funds
 - maximization of county dollars
 - provide structured environment for students
 - provide quality academic environment for students
 - accountability of funds for Miami Dade County

- #3 Program expectations should be standardized to produce the following desired results:
 - assurance that all children receive uniform quality services
 - ensure consistent delivery of services
 - ensure optimal compliance to Federal regulations
 - ensure no discrimination among children & families

- #4 The use of community resources should be maximized for health, mental health and disability services to produce the following desired results:
 - assurance that all children receive uniform quality services
 - ensure co consistent delivery of services
 - ensure optimal compliance to Federal regulations
 - ensure no discrimination among children & families

- #5 Maintenance services should be privatized to produce the following desired results:
 - maximization of county dollars
 - standardized prices of contracted services
 - cost saving measure

#6 There should be a full delegation of program to produce the following desired results:

- maximize county resources
- serve more children
- level of services maintained in targeted areas
- quality of services maintained
- possible phasing in of full delegation system
- work within Federal allocation for Head Start/Early Start Program
- continue to explore other hybrid models that could better serve the community

The following recommendations related to Governance:

#1 Principles of governance should be outlined to produce the following desired results:

- democracy
- fair representation
- participation by parents
- effective communication
- always promote quality in governance
- constant evaluation and improvement of services for children

#2 A "Resolution Committee" should be established to produce the following desired results:

- reinforce principles
- achieve timely consensus when disputes occur
- ensure follow-thru for an effective program

#3 An alternative Policy Council should be composed of the following: HS-4(d), 4 (G), Home base (1/1), EHS (1/1) currently enrolled parents; BCC – 2, CAA – 1, former parents – 1/1, community representatives 3 – 3, for a total of 23 members, to produce the following desired results:

- fair composition
- democracy
- fair representation
- participation by parents
- revision of composition as needed

The following recommendations related to Community Outreach and Program Coordination:

#1 Technology and community events should be used to maximize service delivery to children and families utilizing the following strategies:

Strategy #1 - Smart phones should be used in order to achieve the following benefits:

- capturing data
- cost efficiency
- greater access

Strategy #2 – more children events and ad campaigns should be held in order to achieve the following benefits:

- capturing data instantly with the use of Smart phones
- effective in reaching targeted population
- audience will respond to celebrity appearances at these events

Strategy #3 – non-traditional distribution places such as stores and churches should be used in order to achieve the following benefits:

- reach more unaware people
- reaching current parents
- informed community encourages participation
- added morale support

#2 Information sharing & community outreach to parents regarding services should be used utilizing the following strategies:

Strategy #1 – Create an incentive system to encourage continuous participation and learning in order to produce the following benefits:

- a win win for provider and provide
- opportunity for corporate and social services community to work together

Strategy #2 – more incentives for early child development in order to achieve the following benefits:

- early learning starts at home
- readiness of children allows efficient teaching

Strategy #3 – parents should be brought back to school in order to achieve the following benefits:

- educated parents = educated children
- easier to share home-based strategies for learning

Strategy #4 – academic data between VPK, Head Start, and School Readiness programs should be shared in order to achieve the following benefits:

- fewer repeats of assessments
- children are able to progress quicker
- informed educators
- create a network of services in place/needs of planning

The following recommendations related to Process Improvement and Proximity of Facilities:

- #1 A single point of entry should be developed for all children in order to achieve the following benefits:
- easy access for families
 - cost benefit due to in-house recruitment
- #2 Eligibility in School Readiness should be expanded from 6 months to a year in order to achieve the following benefits:
- family to stabilize situation
 - children to have continuity in care and education

Recognition of Taskforce Members

Mayor Carlos Gimenez expressed appreciation to all Task Force members for their participation and noted all recommendations would be reviewed by his staff to facilitate implementation as soon as possible. He commended Deputy Mayor Lisa Martinez and other members of his staff for their efforts and expressed his gratitude for having such talented individuals on his management team.

Commissioner Sosa noted children and education were an extremely sensitive issue to her. She commended members of the Task Force for developing viable recommendations to serve more children throughout their educational process, and noted she was willing to work with Mayor Gimenez on this issue.

Mayor Gimenez concurred with Commissioner Sosa and noted the Task Force was created for the benefit of the children. He further noted many useful recommendations were made for technology and tracking children within the education system. He stressed the importance of having an educated community and work force. He reiterated his appreciation to all the members of the Task Force for their valuable input.

Mayor Gimenez and Deputy Mayor Lisa Martinez presented each Task Force member with a Certificate of Appreciation.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the Task Force meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.



Mayor's Task Force on School Readiness
December 9, 2011

Prepared by: Cindy White

EXHIBITS LIST

NO.	DATE	ITEM #	DESCRIPTION
1	12/09/11		Committee #1 Recommendations
2	12/09/11		Committee #2 Recommendations
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***Mayor's Task Force
on School Readiness
Committee #1
Recommendations
and Feedback***

Focus Areas

Implementation Model

Process Improvement

Professional Development

Regulatory Requirement

Alternative Approaches for 2012-2013

Implementation Model

Recommendation #1

Analyze the different models serving HS/EHS families in other regions including approaches to:

- Tracking Academic Data (formative/summative/ longitudinal -Birth -3rd grade) in collaboration with higher education institutions
- Staffing plan/ transition of county employees
- Research based curricula
- Tracking and analysis of family data
- Financial stability/ Sustainability
- Compliance with federal standards
- Quality Assurance Process

Implementation Model

Recommendation #1 (Continued)

Benefit:

- Generate a model based on sound research.

Challenge:

- Completing process on time to enter into contract negotiations.
- Without the opportunity to consider other options and having adequate information beyond the full delegation model and other implementation models, some are concerned that we cannot confidently achieve the desired outcome which is serving more children more effectively.

Implementation Model

Recommendation #2

Assess the capacity of current and new delegate agencies or organizations to serve all children and families currently being served by the grantee.

Benefit:

- Services are maintained in the target area.

Challenge:

- Prior to embracing a new implementation model, it is important to assess the capacity of the community to absorb the children currently being served by CAA/Head Start.
- Properly preparing/building capacity of preschools within current geographic areas, so that they will be qualified to apply/participate in the Head Start/Early Head Start Program

Process Improvement

Recommendation #3

Maximize quality service delivery by developing a tracking system for children and family outcomes including:

- Early learning exposures and transitions between early childhood programs
- Assessment data (baseline/outcome)
- Partnership with M-DCPS to assign Identification Number either at birth or at entry into early care system. (i.e. CHEER System- Child Health Education Enrichment and Reporting System)
- Participate in the Quality Counts Program (with a focus on accreditation)

Benefit:

Ability to create policies and procedures based on the tracking information that address the needs of families and children. Ability to coordinate resources and services in the community.



Process Improvement

Recommendation #4

Maximize quality service delivery by developing a tracking system to support professional development of staff.

- Educational plans
- Progress toward goals
- Integrate with participation in Quality Counts (i.e. Professional Development Registry)

Benefit:

Data on workforce qualifications and professional development needs. Ability to project costs to meet the workforce requirements stated by the performance measures. All HS/EHS organizations will meet educational standards for 2013.

Process Improvement

Recommendation #5

Create a cohesive salary schedule for all staff.

Recommendation #6

Establish standard rate per child across all agencies.

Recommendation #7

Improve programmatic and management monitoring process. (consider some participation from outside agency to monitor/evaluate)

Process Improvement

Recommendation #8

Improve hiring and retention practices.

Recommendation #9

Provide opportunities for research-based innovative practices.

Recommendation #10

Provide annual reports to the community including family goals and children's outcomes.

Recommendation #11

Improve functionality of the Child Plus System.



Process Improvement

(for School Readiness & VPK)

Recommendation #12

Automate the registration process using Child Plus.

Recommendation #13

Create an eligibility process.

Recommendation #14

Provide comprehensive services.

Process Improvement

(for School Readiness & VPK)

Recommendation #15

Increase educational opportunities for administrators and practitioners

Recommendation #16

Develop a continuous system linked to public assistance.

Professional Development

Recommendation #17

Develop a comprehensive training program based on the HS/EHS standards and individual needs of all staff.

Recommendation #18

Create a strategic training plan based on:

- Changes in Performance Standards
- Information that addresses critical areas
 - Infant/Toddlers
 - Home-Based Programs
 - Assessments/Screenings
 - CLASS
 - Early Literacy



Second Language Learners

Regulatory Requirements

Recommendation #19

Ensure transition meets the needs of various governing bodies including but not limited to the Policy Council, the Board of County Commissioners, Head Start, etc.

Recommendation #20

Continue to leverage funding sources.

Alternative Approaches for 2012-2013

Recommendation #21

Transfer 100% of slots currently provided by the grantee to delegates.

Benefit: Decrease costs of operation regarding salaries and benefits.

Recommendation #22

Maintain responsibilities for monitoring and technical assistance with grantee. Increase use of technology.

Alternative Approaches for 2012-2013

Recommendation #23

Outsource “back office” operations including training, assessment and evaluation, and accounting/reimbursement responsibilities.

Benefit: Separating training/technical assistance from monitoring ensures that the monitoring will be reliable.

Challenge: Developing the system in a timely manner.

Alternative Approaches for 2012-2013

Recommendation #24

This committee continues to meet to examine VPK and School Readiness.



***Mayor's Task Force
on School Readiness
Committee #2
Recommendations
and Feedback***

Budgetary Issues and Staff Qualifications



Recommendation #1

Standardize Cost Per Child

Desired Results:

- Potentially Serve More Children
- Ensure Equitable Allocation of Funds
- Ensure Optimal Quality Education for Every Child
- Provide Accountability of Funds for Miami Dade County
- Maximizing Funds for Direct Services vs. Administrative Costs (with a cap on administrative costs)

Implementation Challenges:

- Economy of Scale
- Lack of consistency in “Cost of doing Business” in Miami Dade County



Recommendation # 2

Standardize salary schedules with qualifications and classifications for all staff (administrators, teachers, social workers, etc.)

Desired Results:

- Equal qualifications that are justifiable
- Efficient use of funds
- Maximization of County Dollars
- Provide Structured Environment for Students
- Provide Quality Academic Environment for Students
- Accountability of Funds for Miami Dade County

Implementation Challenges

- Varying effects for Delegates and Staff
- Discouragement of Qualified Staff
- Approval Process by Decision Making Bodies
- Economy of Scale



Recommendation # 3

Standardize Program Expectations

Desired Results:

- Assurance that all Children Receive Uniform Quality Services
- Ensure Consistent Delivery of Services
- Ensure Optimal Compliance to Federal Regulations
- Ensure No Discrimination Among Children & Families

Implementation Challenges:

- Program Oversight

Recommendation # 4

Maximize the Use of Community Resources for Health, Mental Health and Disability Services

Desired Results:

- Assurance that all Children Receive Uniform Quality Services
- Ensure Consistent Delivery of Services
- Ensure Optimal Compliance to Federal Regulations
- Ensure No Discrimination Among Children & Families

Implementation Challenges

- Parental Compliance
- Program Oversight

Recommendation # 5

Privatization of Maintenance Services

Desired Results:

- Maximization of County Dollars
- Standardized Prices of Contracted Services
- Cost Saving Measure

Implementation Challenges:

- Lack of consistency in “Cost of doing Business” in Miami Dade County



Recommendation # 6

Full Delegation of Program

Desired Results:

- Maximize County Resources
- Serve More Children
- Level of Services Maintained in Targeted Areas
- Quality of Services Maintained
- Possible phasing in of Full Delegation System
- Work within federal allocation for Head Start/Early Start Program
- Continue to explore other hybrid models that could serve the community better.

Implementation Challenges:

- Tight timelines
- Creating Continuity Among Multiple Providers
- Gaining Consensus from All Decision Making Bodies
- Maintaining Facilities in Targeted Areas
- Development of Plan for Service Recovery in the Event of a Service Provider Default.
- Possible unanticipated costs to be incurred in implementing full delegation model

Governance



Recommendation #1

Outline Principles of Governance

Desired Results:

- Democracy
- Fair representation
- Participation by parents
- Effective communication
- Always promote quality in governance
- Constant evaluation and improvement of services for children

Implementation Challenges:

- Consensus amongst stakeholders
- More central participation by parents in the Countywide needs assessment

Recommendation #2

Establish "Resolution Committee"

Desired Results:

- Reinforces principles
- Achieves timely consensus when disputes occur
- Ensures follow-thru for an effective program

Implementation Challenges:

- Identifying informed, productive committee members
- Time
- Distribution of accurate information
- Eliminating biased agendas

Recommendation #3

Alternative Policy Council Composition

- (HS-4(D), 4 (G), Home base (1/1), EHS (1/1) currently enrolled parents; BCC-2, CAA-1, Former Parents-1/1, Community Representatives 3-3. Total 23 Members

Desired Results:

- Fair Composition
- Democracy
- Fair representation
- Participation by parents
- Revision of composition as needed

Challenges:

- Consensus amongst decision makers
- There is a current new composition that was recently voted on by the BCC and the Policy Council has not approved it yet.

Community Outreach and Program Coordination



Recommendation #1

**Using Technology and Community
Events to Maximize Service Delivery
to Children and Families**



Strategy #1

Use of Smart Phones

Benefits

- Capturing data
- Cost efficiency
- Greater access

Implementation Challenges

- Costs
- Time
- Effort



Strategy #2

Hold More Children Events & Ad Campaigns

Benefits:

- Capturing data instantly with the use of smart phones
- Effective in reaching targeted population
- Audience will respond to celebrity appearances at these events

Implementation Challenges

- Money
- Time
- Effort of Finding the right Celebrity



Strategy #3

Use of Non-Traditional Distribution Places Such as Stores and Churches

Benefits:

- Reach More Unaware People
- Reaching current parents
- Informed Community Encourages Participation
- Added morale support

Implementation Challenges:

- Creating Relationships with Non-Traditional Outlets

Recommendation # 2

**Using Information Sharing & Community
Outreach to Parents Regarding Services**

Strategy #1

Incentive System to Encourage Continuous Participation and Learning

Benefits:

- A Win-Win for Provider and Providee
- Opportunity for Corporate and Social Services Community to Work Together

Implementation Challenges:

- Money
- Time
- Must be Conditional to Prescribed Learning

Strategy #2

More Incentives for Early Child Development

Benefits:

- Early Learning Starts at Home
- Readiness of Children Allows Efficient Teaching

Implementation Challenges:

- Changing Mind-Set About Early Learning

Strategy #3

Bringing Parents Back to School

Benefits:

- Educated Parents = Educated Children
- Easier to Share Home-Based Strategies for Learning

Implementation Challenges

- Assessing Parents' Educational Abilities
- Money – Who's Going to Pay for it?

Strategy # 4

Sharing Academic Data Between VPK, Head Start, and School Readiness Programs

Benefits:

- Fewer Repeats of Assessments
- Children are Able to Progress Quicker
- Informed Educators
- Create a Network of Services in Place/Needs of Planning

Implementation Challenges

- Money to Integrate System
- Creating a System that All Providers May Use

Process Improvement and Proximity of Facilities



Recommendation #1

Develop a Single Point of Entry for All Children

Benefits

- Easy Access for Families
- Cost Benefit Due to In-House Recruitment

Implementation Challenges

- Knowledgeable Staff
- Sensitivity to Family Needs

Recommendation # 2

Expand The Eligibility in School Readiness from 6 Months to a Year

Benefits:

- Family to Stabilize Situation
- Children to Have Continuity in Care and Education

