



ANNUAL REPORT 2008-2009

INTRODUCTION

MISSION

The mission of the Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach County is to ensure a comprehensive, integrated system of early education and care, including but not limited to, Voluntary Prekindergarten, that prepares children for success in school and responds to the needs of children and families of Palm Beach County. All early education and care services will be accessible, affordable, of the highest quality and will support parents in their role as the primary influence in their child's learning and development.

VISION

It is the vision of the Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach County, Inc., to manage, improve, and evaluate an integrated and quality seamless service delivery system for all state and federally funded early care and education programs serving children from birth to five years of age, or until the child enters kindergarten.

HISTORY OF THE COALITION

The Palm Beach County School Readiness Coalition (SRC) incorporated in 1999 and submitted its School Readiness Plan Application in May 2000 was required to receive funding from the Florida Partnership for School Readiness. Following a year of start-up, hiring and orienting new staff, the SRC Board proceeded with its plans to quickly innovate and improve service delivery. The intention was to go beyond the traditional "subsidized child care program" services. The SRC's mission statement was: "To manage, improve, and evaluate an integrated and quality seamless service delivery system for all publicly funded early care and education programs serving children from birth to 5 years of age, or until the child enters kindergarten."

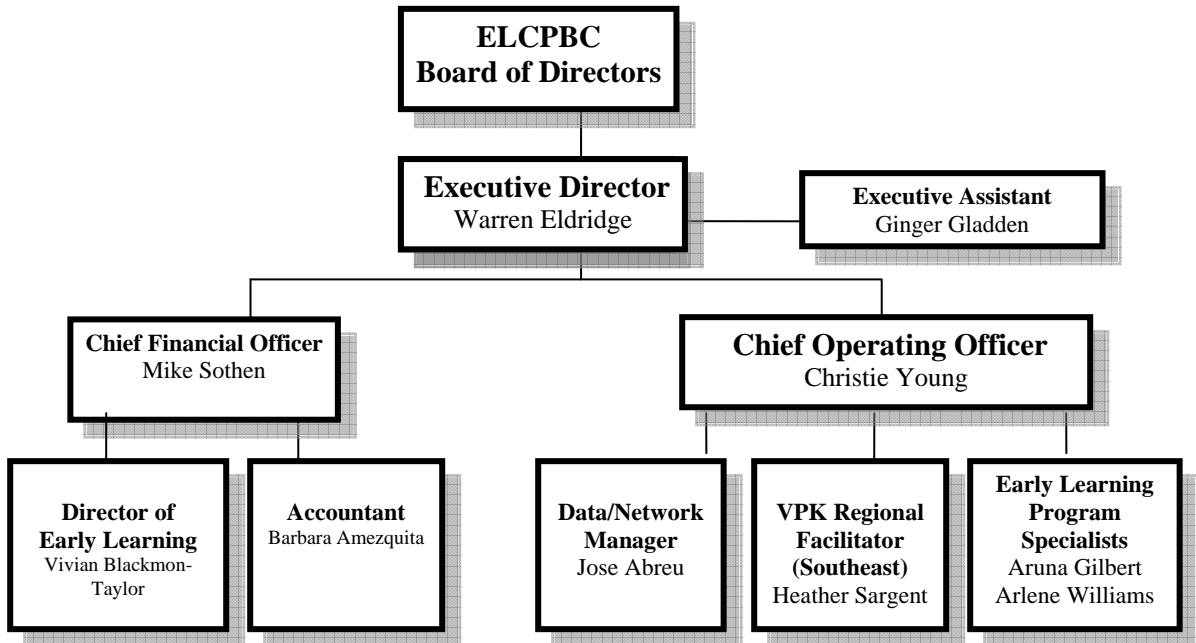
As it set out to achieve its mission, the SRC engaged a consultant in 2001 to conduct an operational review of the Coalition's central agency, the School District of Palm Beach County. The resulting report identified strengths to build on and areas for improvement.

In January 2005 legislation changed the name of the SRC to the Early Learning Coalition and added the administration of the “Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Program” (VPK) as a function of the Coalition. The Voluntary Prekindergarten Program was implemented by the Coalition for the 2005- 2006 fiscal year. During this time, the Coalition provided most VPK services with the exception of provider payments and enrollment into VPK for children in the School Readiness Program. These services were performed by Family Central, Inc. Family Central, Inc., began providing all VPK services in March of 2006 and continued to do so through fiscal year 2008-2009.

The Coalition has a 21 member board of directors. The Board consists of representatives from primary agencies in the Coalition’s service delivery area that work with children including the Department of Children and Families, Palm Beach County School District, Workforce Alliance (regional workforce board), the Palm Beach County Health Department, Palm Beach Community College, the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners, Head Start, a representative of private child care providers, a representative of faith based child care providers, a representative of programs for children with disabilities under the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Children’s Services Council, the child care local licensing agency, and private sector business members.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF PALM BEACH COUNTY, INC.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Individuals mandated by Legislation:

Mr. Perry Borman	Southeast Regional Director, Department of Children and Families
Ms. Gaetana Ebbole	Chief Executive Officer, Children Services Council of Palm Beach County
Dr. Marsha Fishbane (Treasurer)	Medical Director of School Health, Palm Beach County Health Department
Mr. John O’Malley, P.G., R.S. (Interim)	Director, Division of Environmental Health and Engineering, Palm Beach County Health Department
Mr. Patrick Cannan	Director, Public Affairs Palm Beach County Workforce Alliance, Inc.
Dr. Carmen Nicholas	Director, Palm Beach County Head Start
Ms. M.J. Steele (Superintendent Designee)	Director, Department of Early Childhood Education School District of Palm Beach County.

Appointments mandated by Legislation:

Shelley Vana	Palm Beach County Commissioner, District 3
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Representatives mandated by Legislation:

Dr. Roanne Moreno	Director of Institute of Excellence in Early Care and Education, Palm Beach Community College
Nicole Matlock (Private Child Care Provider)	Director, Kids Club
Wanda Baldwin (I.D.E.A. Representative)	Early Steps Program Coordinator, Children’s Medical Services, Easter Seals Florida
Dr. Barbara Weinstein (Central Agency Representative)	President and CEO, Family Central, Inc.

Private Sector Appointments:

Kenneth Kahn (Economic Council of Palm Beach County)	President, LRP Publications
Leondrae D. Camel (PBC western area representative)	Owner, Camel Funeral Home
Traver Gruen-Kennedy (Gubernatorial Appointee) Chair	
Philippe Jeck (Northern Palm Beach County Chamber of Commerce)	Partner, Jeck, Harris, Raynor and Jones, PA
Kristen Pressly (Gubernatorial Appointee) Vice Chair	Director of Legal Services, The Breakers

Alvin Leeks (Private Sector Business)	Director, Nationwide Retirement Solutions
Christina Worley CPA/PFS (Gubernatorial Appointee)	Managing Member, Castle Wealth Management
Kerry Perl (Private Sector Business) (Economic Council of Palm Beach County)	



Trust that little voice in your head that says
"Wouldn't it be interesting if..."; And then do it.

Duane Michals

PROGRAMS

Overview of Program Components

(a) School Readiness Program

The Coalition contracted with Family Central, Inc., to provide the School Readiness services described below:

(i) Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R)

Child Care Resource and Referral is the initial point of entry for families to access programs administered by the Coalition (School Readiness and Voluntary Prekindergarten services) or other early care and education programs in Palm Beach County. It is the critical nexus between the family and the network of early care and education providers and family services. CCR&R services are provided according to the standard levels of service defined by the Agency for Workforce Innovation, Office of Early Learning. The CCR&R process for Palm Beach County is described in detail in section B3.

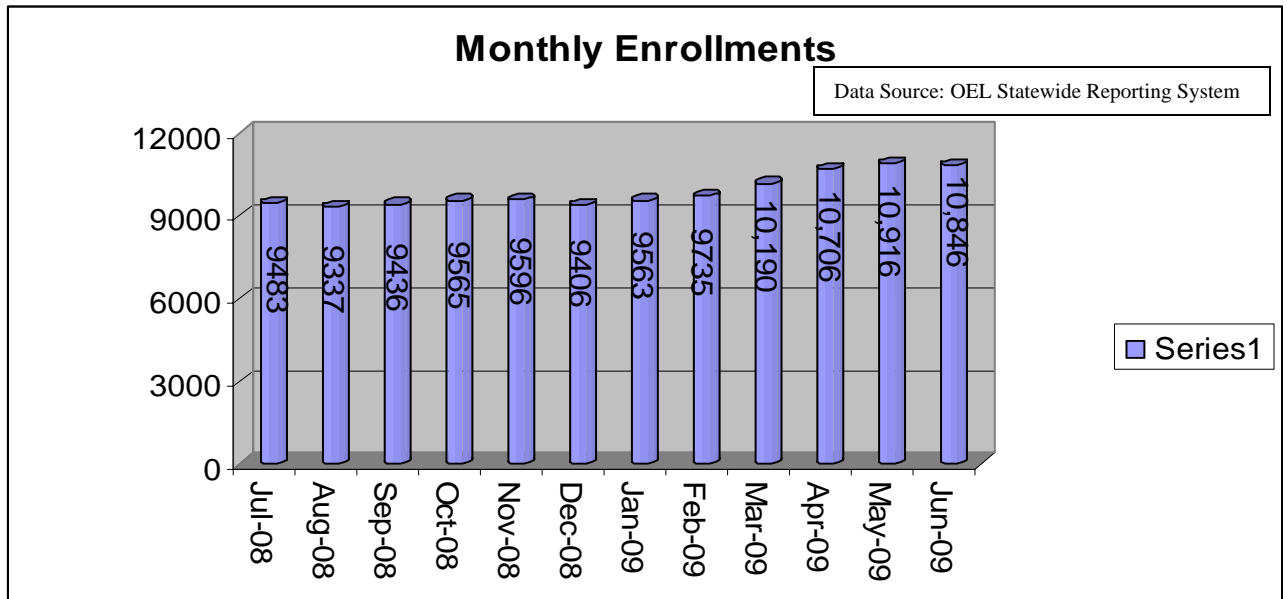
(ii) Eligibility and Enrollment

Family Central, Inc., the Coalition's contractor, determined eligibility for School Readiness services in accordance with the policies of the Agency for Workforce Innovation Office of Early Learning and the Coalition.

Parents determined eligible for school readiness subsidy are given child care consumer information and child care referrals based on their individual needs. They are assessed a parent fee and enrolled with the provider of their choice. Enrollment information is entered into the Enhanced Field System (EFS), the State mandated software system.

Parents are offered a family needs assessment and are referred to additional support services such as programs providing food vouchers, housing assistance, inclusion services, and Florida KidCare as needed. Florida KidCare is the state's health insurance program for uninsured children under age 19. Eligibility for Florida KidCare is based on the child's age and family income. Parents are also provided with an acknowledgment form explaining their right to choose a provider, and a parent checklist for selecting a provider.

2008 – 2009 MONTHLY ENROLLMENTS



Eligibility and Payment Highlights:

- **Eligibility determination was performed for over 12,270 children.**
- **Redeterminations resulted in over 8,000 children being eligible to continue care.**
- **During the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year 9955 VPK parent interviews were conducted.**
- **10,101 unduplicated children were served in the VPK program during July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009. This includes VPK children served for 07-08 Summer Program and 08-09 School Year and Summer Programs.**

(iii) Child Care Payment Reimbursement

Child care provider reimbursements for subsidized child care and VPK are processed through the EFS system.

The Client Information Services Department (CIS) within Family Central, Inc., is responsible for processing all provider payments. In addition, this department performed fiscal analysis, funding tracking and parent fee management.

Child Care Payment Reimbursement Highlights

(Includes all School Readiness funding sources):

- **Over 753 individual providers received payments in the amount of \$68,336,928.84**
- **For School Readiness Services: 683 individual providers received a total of \$45,174,069.91 in payments**
- **For VPK services: 290 providers received payments totaling \$23,162,858.93**

(iv) Child Care Services

- **Service Agreements**

Child care providers caring for children eligible for School Readiness funding are required to sign a Service Agreement or apply for a voucher certificate. In the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year all participating providers signed a Service Agreement. A total of 753 providers have a Service Agreement and were paid for subsidized child care during the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

- **Monitoring and Compliance Services**

Service Agreement monitoring was conducted to ensure child care providers followed state and local rules and regulations regarding school readiness child care services. Family Central, Inc., conducted monitoring of 686 Service Agreements during 2008-2009, which resulted in 95 follow-ups being conducted.

- **Post Audit Attendance Monitoring**

A Post Audit Attendance Monitoring (PAAM) is completed on a minimum of 50% of the providers each contract year. During 2008-2009, 401 School Readiness providers received a PAAM. This represents 58.71% of the Service Agreement providers. In addition 195 VPK providers received a PAAM.

- **Technical Assistance**

Family Central staff provided technical assistance to providers to ensure the standards for school readiness and VPK were met. The Infant Toddler Specialist with Family Central, Inc., also provided numerous trainings and technical assistance to providers.

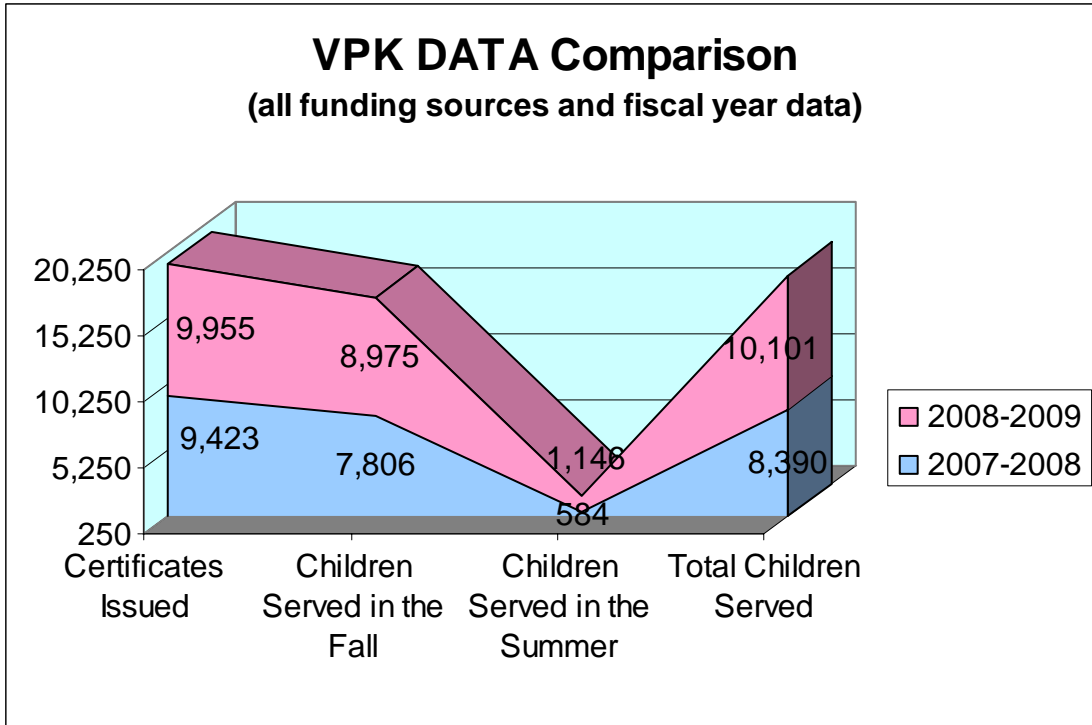
- Technical Assistance Highlights:**
- Family Central staff conducted over 1400 training and technical assistance hours dedicated to observing teacher child interactions and noted areas of program growth.
 - 87 trainings were held providing 284 in-service hours to approximately 1575 participants.
 - The inclusion specialist provided over 550 hours of support and technical assistance.

(b) 2008-2009 Voluntary Prekindergarten Program Year Data

The Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten Program (VPK) is a statewide program which was approved by the Florida Legislature in 2004 and signed into law on January 2005. The data reflected in the program year is different than the data provided previously for the fiscal year. This is due to in the fiscal year the summer program for 07-08 and 08-09 is included. The program year includes only children served from August 2008 to June 2009.

Certificates Issued	School Year Enrollment	Summer Enrollment	Total Enrollment for the Program Year
10,369 (data includes numbers listed as enrolled and numbers listed as eligible not served)	8,969	549	9,518

Data extracted on September 10, 2009 from FactBook:
<http://www.floridajobs.org/earlylearning/factbook/>



(Fiscal year data derived from EFS)

(c) Quality Initiatives

In Palm Beach County, quality initiatives were provided and funded through the leadership and vision of the Children’s Services Council (CSC) and assistance from the Coalition’s system partner agencies: Palm Beach Community College, and the School District. More information on these quality initiatives and programs will be covered under the Analysis section below.

(i) Professional Development

A number of professional development initiatives have been launched through the leadership of the Children’s Services Council to stimulate, guide, reward, and recognize educational gains made by child caregiver staff. Scholarships, career coaches to assist child care staff, participation in the Child Care WAGE\$@ FLORIDA Project (education-based salary supplements to early childhood teachers working with children ages birth to five), and professional development requirements incorporated into the 4 Star Quality Improvement system (tied to quality enhancement payments) are a partial list of the professional development initiatives in operation in Palm Beach County.

(ii) Quality Improvement System

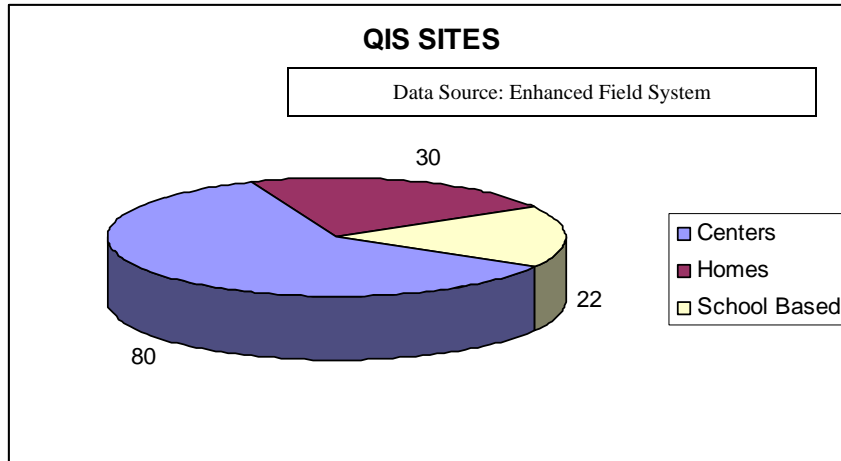
The Quality Improvement System (QIS) in Palm Beach County is a voluntary rating system that supports continuous improvement in early care and education programs by using a clearly defined four-star method of quality standards so children enter school eager and ready to learn. The QIS is funded by the Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County in partnership with Family Central, Inc., Palm Beach Community College and the School District of Palm Beach County. Providers participating in the QIS receive professional support and financial incentives such as: grants for materials and equipment, educational scholarships for staff, wage supplements for staff, early learning coaching/networking, technical assistance, financial awards and the Continue to Care initiative for children. There were 132 providers in the QIS system serving over 6600 children throughout the 08-09 Fiscal Year.

The goals of the Palm Beach County 4-Star Quality Improvement System are:

1. Positive outcomes for children
2. Increased consumer awareness and demand for high quality child care
3. Improved professional credentials within the early childhood field
4. Improved staff retention

As one of the QRIS pioneers in the state, Palm Beach County joined with 7 counties to form the Multi-County Collaborative. The purpose of this Collaborative was for the counties to come together to align the standards of their respective systems to ensure consistency in measuring program quality, and articulate the standards for quality to child care providers and parents throughout Florida. This collaborative has now expanded to include 15 counties.

In our quest for continuous quality improvement, the System is striving to yet a higher level of quality. Effective October 1, 2009 Children Service's Council will be launching Quality Counts, a 5 star Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) for child care centers and school-based sites. Family Child Care will take place the following year.



(iii) SEEK Scholarship Program

Seeking Excellence in Education and Knowledge (SEEK) is a grant scholarship program funded by the Children’s Services Council and administered by Palm Beach Community College (PBCC). PBCC has contracted with Family Central, Inc., to process scholarships for conferences, workshops, and non-PBCC courses. Scholarships were provided to child care center and school district teachers, aides, and directors, and family child care home providers. In the 2008-2009 year 1,603 scholarships were granted totaling \$140,539.25

(iv) Developmental Screenings and Assessments and Early Intervention Services

- The developmental screening process is one component of providing quality child care. Providers are assisted in identifying developmental delays and parents are given referrals to community services, which provide children with more timely interventions. In the 2008-2009 fiscal year the Coalition used the Early Screening Inventory-Kindergarten (ESI-K) and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire to complete screenings on children receiving school readiness services. A total of 6,726 children were screened this fiscal year. An additional 2,882 children were not required to be screened for one of the following reasons: the parent refused to consent to a screening, the child was previously screened, or the child was already receiving services. As procurement for these services took place during this fiscal year. Family Central Inc., conducted developmental screenings until February 28, 2009 and then subsequently the ITN was awarded to Home Safe who continued this work from March 1, 2009 to current.

(v) Developmentally Appropriate Curricula

The School Readiness Act of 1999, as amended, Florida Statute 411.01, requires that the school readiness program must meet certain expectations. One of these expectations is that the early learning coalition must implement a comprehensive program of school readiness services that enhance the cognitive, social, and physical development of children to achieve the performance standards and outcome measures adopted by the Agency for Workforce Innovation. At a minimum, these programs must contain the following elements:

- a.** Developmentally appropriate curriculum designed to enhance the age-appropriate progress of children in attaining the performance standards adopted by the Agency for Workforce Innovation.
- b.** A character development program to develop basic values.

Curricula approved by the Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach County:

1. Beyond Centers & Circle Time
2. Creative Curriculum 4th Edition
3. DLM Early Childhood Express
4. Doors to Discovery
5. High Scope
6. Scholastic Early Childhood Program
7. Montessori

The following are curricula supported through training funded by the Children's Services Council and provided by Palm Beach Community College:

1. Beyond Centers and Circle Time
2. Creative Curriculum 4th Edition
3. High Scope
4. Montessori

The Coalition initiated the roll-out of the curriculum process during the fiscal year of 2007-2008. Through surveys the Coalition received information regarding which child care sites are currently using a developmentally appropriate curriculum and which sites were not. In addition information is being gathered in regards to the training providers have received if using a developmentally appropriate curriculum.

The Coalition's process includes:

- Phase 1: Identification of a developmentally appropriate curriculum. Family Central, Inc. during annual program monitoring of all providers will ensure that the provider has a developmentally appropriate curriculum pre-approved by the Coalition. (2008-2009)
- Phase 2: Indicating an articulated training plan for ensuring that all teaching instructors receive the appropriate curriculum training to facilitate implementation of the curriculum guided by the Birth to Five State Standards. (2009-2010)
- Phase 3: Monitoring to ensure that the pre-approved curriculum was implemented with the Florida State Standards embedded. (2010-2011)

The Coalition has implemented Phase 1 and 2 during the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year.

Quality Assurance Plan:

In January 2008 the Coalition and its service provider Family Central Inc., developed a quality assurance plan to be attached as an addendum to the provider's Service Agreement. Four town hall style meetings were held countywide with providers to roll out this new initiative.

The plan focused on increased accountability, specifically in regard to provider responsibilities identified in the Service Agreement/voucher agreement. Providers were assured that the requirements in the current Service Agreements were not changing, however, there was now an increased expectation for prompt and continuous compliance with all requirements.

Providers will continue to receive and have access to technical assistance and trainings to assist in remedying any deficits. Providers have an opportunity to correct deficiencies when cited, in accordance with corrective action plans, the number of follow-up visits to ensure compliance would be reduced, in most cases to one, thereby expecting and ensuring prompt adherence to agreement requirements. For continued or recurring agreement noncompliance, a new option is offered to providers in lieu of termination of the agreement: the opportunity to voluntarily choose to enter into a compliance plan, which requires that the provider identify the factors that contributed to the continued or recurring noncompliance in order to take action to correct the deficiencies and ensure continued success.

For providers on a Compliance Plan who fail to adhere to their plan at any time throughout the duration of their Service Agreement/voucher agreement, Family Central, Inc., may terminate the agreement and the provider becomes ineligible to provide school readiness services for a period of one year.

The following is being provided to child care providers to assist with this new Quality Assurance Plan: the Coalition funded an additional position to Family Central Inc.: Provider Compliance Coordinator, which allows for the following:

- Individual attention and support to struggling providers, increasing their level of commitment to meeting and maintaining compliance with requirements.
- Assistance to providers in identifying the systemic problems that contribute to deficiencies and assistance to develop meaningful and effective Compliance Plans.
- Provide information to providers to ensure they understand the importance of complying with the requirements and the potential consequences for continued/recurring noncompliance, which may include termination of the Service Agreement/voucher agreement and ineligibility to provide school readiness services for a period of one year.
- Promotion of positive outcomes for providers with a Compliance Plan.
- Ability to conduct additional monitoring when necessary.
- Promote a shared interest and commitment to quality services that meet local and state requirements.

Major Program Changes/Initiatives

The State of the Child: 2009 School Readiness Update published by the Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County outlines what school readiness means:

“When people talk about children being ‘ready to learn’ they often refer to ‘school readiness.’ Some people believe this means knowing ones ABC’s and numbers before entering school, but the true meaning is much broader than that. It is not only a child’s cognitive abilities, but his ability to adapt to new surroundings and other children. School readiness is about whether a child is socially, emotionally, and physically ready for school. While it is wonderful if a child knows his ABC’s, if he is unable to sit and listen, to follow directions, or to build healthy relationships with new peers and his teachers, his ability to learn will be hindered.”

With this in mind this past year for the Coalition has been a productive year, as we engaged not only in ensuring that we continue to serve our county's most vulnerable but, that we served with the premise of ensuring that the programs we provided were designed and implemented as a part of a community system ensuring quality and affordable child care. The Coalition continues to work with various system partners to ensure that quality affordable childcare is not merely an abstract concept.

- The Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County and the Coalition issued a joint ITN in September 2008 for the Healthy Beginning Entry Agency. The Healthy Beginnings (HB) System of Care is a blueprint created to help at-risk families attain CSC's identified outcomes of: healthy births, reduced child abuse and neglect, and children birth to five years eager to learn and ready for school. As the Early Learning Coalition serves a similar child population through subsidized child care and its supportive services, the Coalition, in partnership with the Children's Services Council, support these outcomes for children and build a strong system of care, while maximizing resources and eliminating duplication of services. Healthy Beginnings Entry agencies will engage the family, identify their needs and strengths, and coordinate intervention services. Services will be available to eligible participants within a coordinated, integrated and culturally responsive system that includes outreach, a comprehensive screening & assessment process, education and referral and linkage to direct services. In December 2008, the ITN was awarded to Home Safe who began providing the developmental screening services for the Coalition on March 1, 2009.
- Personal and Professional Development (PD2): PD2 is a unique community collaborative of many diverse system partners who as a group move the work of personal and professional development forward, drive the design and development of the system, build capacity, decrease duplication look at gaps and unique needs of other populations and builds consistent messaging to partners.

The Coalition is an active partner in this system working to develop a career ladder for Palm Beach County practitioners. In addition to the work being completed to initiate a career ladder the Coalition has also been an active partner in working towards ensuring all school readiness providers are in the training registry. For the 2009-2010 Fiscal Year the Coalition will require that all providers acquire registry based training to fulfill their training requirement for the Service Agreement.

- Curriculum Implementation: The Coalition has convened a community committee to lead the implementation of a developmentally appropriate curriculum in all childcare facilities providing school readiness services. During this past Fiscal Year the committee successfully rolled out Phase One of the curriculum implementation. Each provider receiving school readiness funds is monitored annually to ensure that they have a developmentally appropriate curriculum. In addition the committee provided feedback to Family Central Inc., in regards to designing a training template for Phase II of this process.

- Continue To Care (CTC): The CTC scholarship program was developed to provide childcare services over the long-term for high-risk children. CTC-HB (Healthy Beginnings) and CTC-Q (QIS) scholarships are efforts to provide continuity of care in quality childcare setting for young children in order to prepare them to enter school ready to learn. The new addition to this scholarship is the CTC-A scholarship. CTC-A, for afterschool scholarships, refers to the portion of the CTC Scholarship Program in which the children to be served will be eligible through age 12 and up to the completion of the school year in which they turn age 12. There will be a shared cost to the parent based on the fee determined by CSC. CTC-A provides for afterschool programs in accordance with the Palm Beach County School District's annual calendar. Children will be eligible to receive part time care during regular school days and full time care during summer, early release days and school closure days. Funding from this scholarship program comes from the Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County, Florida with the Coalition acting as the fiscal agent and Family Central, Inc. as the service provider.

- Family Central Inc., was awarded the RFP for School Readiness and Voluntary Prekindergarten Services as well as the Invitations to Negotiate for Quality Support Services and Quality Assurance Compliance Monitoring Services and therefore continues to be the service provider for the Coalition after procurement for such services. In January 2009 the Coalition entered into contracts with Family Central, Inc. based on the redesign of the service delivery method. .

Quality Supports which includes training and technical supports to providers, Quality Assurance which includes monitoring, and Core Services including eligibility and enrollment were all services awarded through competitive bid to Family Central, Inc.

Quality Supports services for providers transitioned from primarily (child) classroom-based parallel training and technical assistance to cluster based technical assistance trainings based on deficits derived in service agreement monitoring. Several new projects were initiated including web based meetings and trainings, series trainings, development of implementation plans for training participants and a warm line to provide curriculum support to providers.

As a result of the Quality Assurance procurement, several new projects were initiated by Family Central Inc. (FCI) such as the merging of the Post Audit Attendance Monitoring (PAAM) and service agreement program monitoring. In addition, FCI also initiated random program monitoring in addition to routine monitoring.

- Agreement with 211: This Fiscal Year a new process to reduce duplication of service between 211 and FCI resulted in an Affiliation Agreement which outlines 211's responsibility in referring child care inquiries to FCI and FCI to refer inquiries for "other services" to 211.

Curriculum Implementation

Our County has been fortunate to have partnerships in place to identify the needs and supports necessary to improve the quality of early care and education. Through professional development opportunities, QIS System, the Registry and other initiatives, our community is taking the lead in enhancing school readiness.

The expectations of the Office of Early Learning will be administered and implemented through the Early Learning Coalition in a phase in process. To ensure all children enter school ready to learn, the Early Learning Coalition is initiating the first phase by requiring programs to declare a curriculum that has been either identified by our local committee as developmentally appropriate or approved by the local curriculum review committee. During the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2009 program monitoring completed by Family Central, Inc., included monitoring for a developmentally appropriate curriculum.

The Coalition has the capacity to train in the following curricula High/ Scope, Creative Curriculum: Teaching Strategies Inc., Montessori, Beyond Centers and Circle Time, and Programs for Infant/Toddler Care (West/Ed.) through Palm Beach Community College, credit and non credit courses and through Family Central, Inc.

The Coalition in the 08-09 Fiscal Year monitored providers to ensure that they were using a developmentally appropriate curriculum during the regular program monitoring. If providers were not using developmentally appropriate curriculum the provider was given the choice of submitting the curriculum they were using to be reviewed by the curriculum review committee or initiate using a curriculum pre-approved by the Coalition. Family Central, Inc. offers workshops on how to submit a curriculum for approval in addition to workshops on how to choose a curriculum for your facility. The service agreement for 08-09 outlined the curriculum process and requires this element as a mandatory requirement for all providers receiving school readiness funds.

Simplified Point of Entry and CCR&R Process

The Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach County, Inc., utilizes a simplified point of entry process for family access to all services supported by the Coalition. Family Central's Childcare Assistance, Reimbursement and Education Department (CARE) has blended parent counselor positions, with 38 members of CARE now certified Level 2 Resource and Referral Specialists. The blending of the resource and referral services with eligibility services provides a simplified point of entry for all parents using these services.

CCR&R telephone services were available 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM on Monday and 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM Tuesday – Friday, with extended evening and Saturday hours during peak enrollment periods. At least two parent counselors were available to take phone calls during operating hours; another two counselors were assigned to serve walk-in customers.

Parent Counselors are knowledgeable on the full range of child care options. Their goal is to pass this information on to parents that will assist them in selecting affordable and high quality child care. The Resource and Referral staff provide consultations, consumer education and referrals for parents seeking child care. Parents are provided with a packet that includes their customized child care listings and brochures on how to choose quality child care as well as other customized information on specific resources that might be helpful to them. Parents are directed to the local licensing entity to obtain information about health and safety inspections.

Parents who request financial assistance are pre-screened to determine potential eligibility. They are also advised of subsidies for which they may be eligible, the application process and the estimated wait time to access subsidy. Based on the pre-screening parents are placed on the Waiting List if appropriate. There is one wait list for families who access R&R services.

Outreach and collaboration with agencies such as the Refugee Program, Redlands Christian Migrant Association, East Coast Migrant Association, and Head Start is used to cross-check wait lists and to secure enrollments for eligible children when openings are available.

Child Care Resource and Referral functions include:

- Maintaining the wait list for potentially eligible families and on a monthly basis reviewing the state-developed Simplified Point of Entry and Unified Wait List System.
- Assisting parents in identifying child care needs and accessing all available services.
- Providing parent education on elements of quality child care and learning and developmental standards.
- Providing education on how to choose a child care provider.
- Maintaining a database of current child care providers in the Enhanced Field System database (EFS)

Families and Children Served by State Funding Only

The following is a breakdown of the number of families and children served by billing groups during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009. The data reported are for the school readiness program only and is a duplicated number since there are children who change funding groups within the same fiscal year. The total unduplicated school readiness children served with State funding only is 15, 214 children (8,280 families).

Eligibility Category/Funding Code		# Families Served	# Children Served
Office of Early Learning			
BG1:	At-Risk Protective Service, Foster Care	2,098	3,745
BG3:	T.A.N.F. W.A.G.E.S Non-Working	896	1,670
BG3R:	T.A.N.F. At-Risk	172	274
BG3T:		1	1
BG3W:	T.A.N.F. W.A.G.E.S Working	8	20
BG5:	T.C.C. Working 1 st Year	455	904
BG5N:	Non-Working	12	22
BG5T:	T.C.C. Working 2 nd Year	158	318
BG7:	Working Poor Migrant Farm Workers	21	36
BG8:	Working Poor	4,842	8,986
BG8OP:	One Parent Working	1	1
CCPP:	Purchasing Pool	2,661	4,828
CF:	Migrant (not income eligible)	12	20

Number of School Readiness Providers by Provider Type (State funding)

Private Center/School	Public School	Family Day Care Home	Informal Care	Total (unduplicated)
306	106	248	3	663

School Readiness Children Served by Provider Type (State funding)

Private Center/School	Public School	Family Day Care Home	Informal Care	Total (unduplicated)
12,931	1,833	2,164	4	15,214

Unduplicated Count of Children Served (all funding sources)

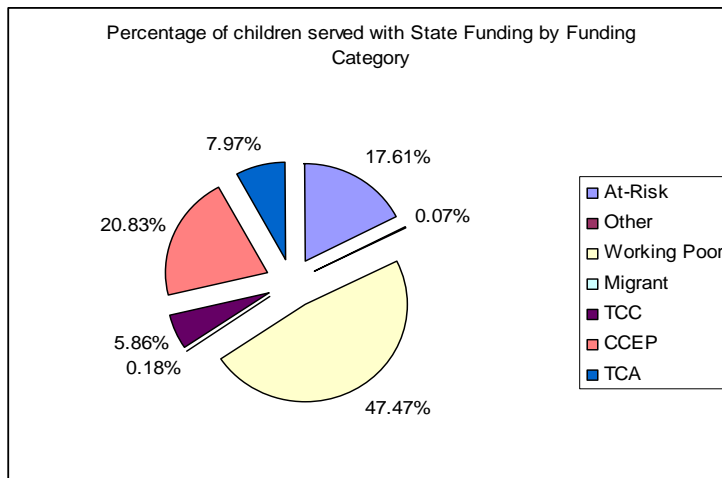
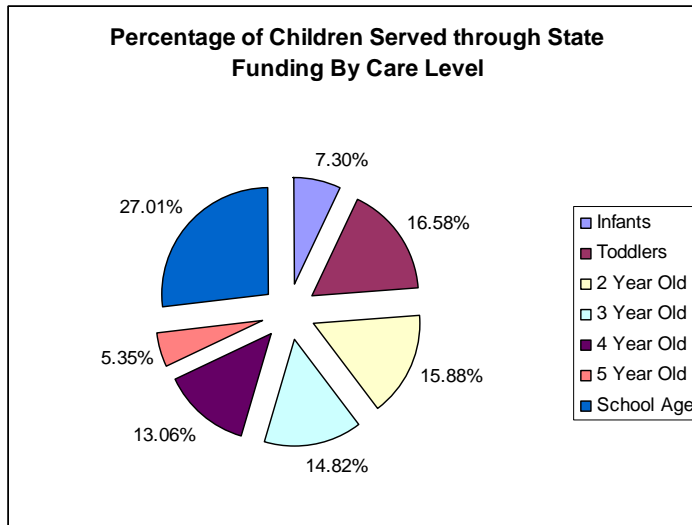
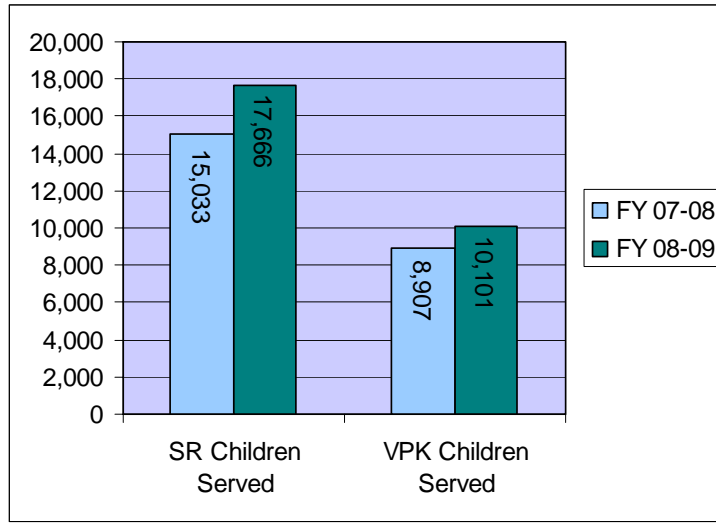
The Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach County served 26,626 unduplicated children in the School Readiness program (17,666) and VPK Program (10,101) in the FY 2008-2009. Funds to serve these children included local, state and federal dollars.



"Leadership should be born out of the understanding of the needs of those who would be affected."

Marian Anderson

**Comparison of children served in Fiscal Years 07-08 and 08-09
(All funding sources)**



Program Performance

Florida has implemented a statewide kindergarten screening for the past five years. The laws passed to implement Florida's VPK program required the Department of Education to select screening instruments that were aligned to the VPK Education Standards adopted by the State Board of Education. The FLKRS replaced the School Readiness Uniform Screening System (SRUSS) which previously was given to determine the readiness of students entering kindergarten.

The FLKRS purports to measure VPK child outcomes, that is, what students should know and be able to do by the end of the VPK program as defined by the VPK Education Standards. The VPK standards address the areas of physical health, approaches to learning, social and emotional development, language and communication, emergent literacy, cognitive development, general knowledge, and motor development.

The FLKRS screening instrument includes selected measures from the Early Childhood Observation System™ (ECHOS™) and the first two measures of the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills™ (DIBELS™) for kindergarten. Specifically, the DIBELS measures Letter Naming Fluency (LNF) and Initial Sound Fluency (ISF) to gather information on a child's development in emergent literacy.

The DIBELS™ are a set of standardized, individually administered measures of early literacy development. They are designed to be short (one minute) fluency measures used to regularly monitor the development of pre-reading and early reading skills. Letter Naming Fluency measures a student's proficiency in naming uppercase and lowercase letters. Students are presented with a page containing letters in random order and are asked to name as many letters as possible within one minute.

Initial Sound Fluency measures a student's ability to recognize the beginning sound(s) in a spoken word. Students are shown pictures of objects and asked to identify the picture that begins with the sound presented by the examiner. Students are also asked to produce the beginning sound for an orally presented word that matches one of the pictures. Students are shown 16 pictures and allowed five seconds to provide a correct response.

Scores for both measures are reported in the following categories:

- Above Average/Low Risk — the child's performance was at or above the 60th percentile;
- Moderate/High Risk — the child's performance was moderately below grade level and additional intervention is needed

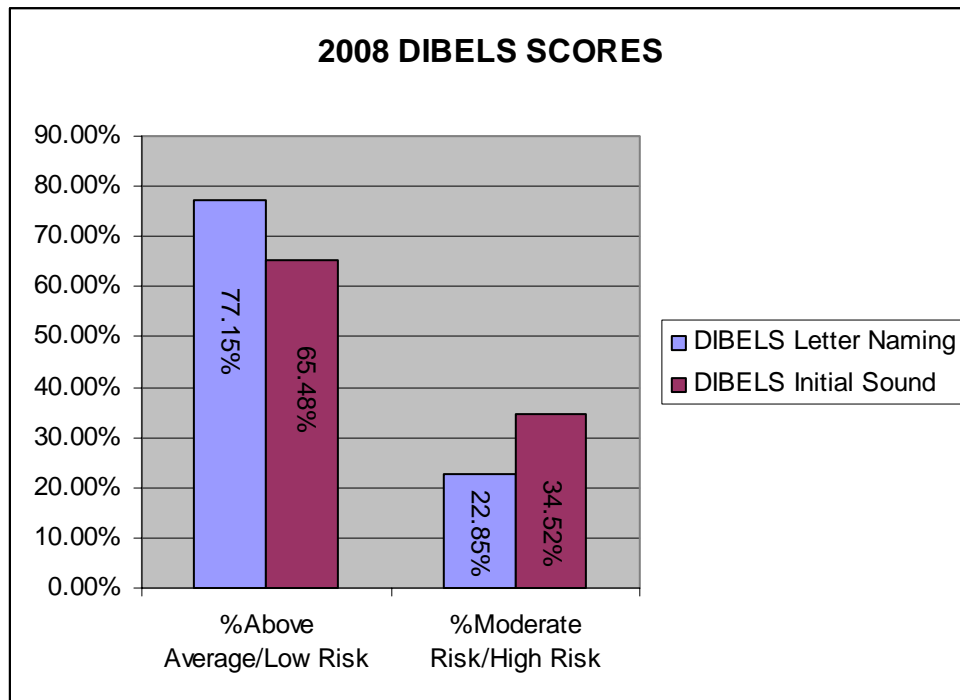
The ECHOS™ is an observational instrument that can be administered through a combination of individual, small group and whole class activities. This allows the teacher flexibility to elicit behaviors in more than one instance or setting, so that a student's score is truly a reflection of the student's abilities and strengths. Scores are reported in the following readiness categories:

- Consistently Demonstrating/Emerging Progressing — the child demonstrated what he or she should know and be able to do at the beginning of kindergarten;
- Not Yet Demonstrating — appropriate skill development was not yet demonstrated during the screening.

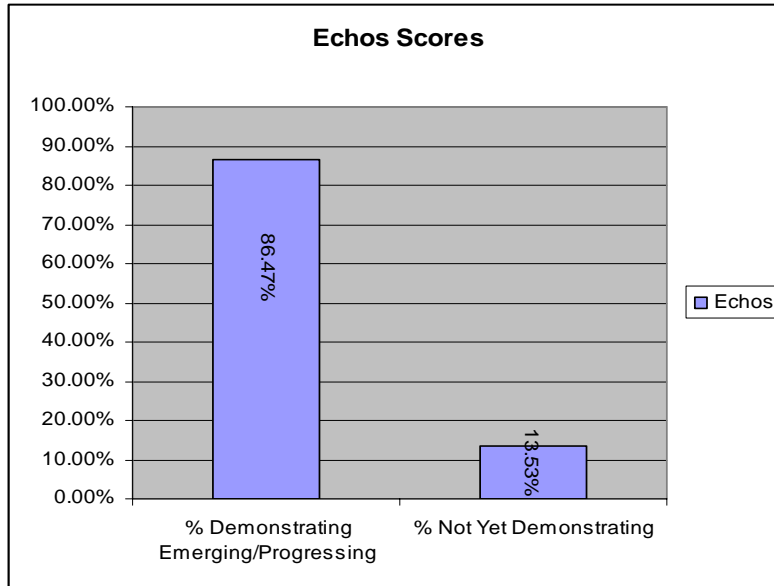
2008-2009 DIBELS SCORES:

DIBELS LETTER NAMING: 11,233 children in Palm Beach County were screened.

DIBELS INITIAL SOUND: 10,887 children in Palm Beach County were screened.



ECHOS: 11,621 children in Palm Beach County were screened.



C. ANALYSIS

The Coalition works in coordination with the following agencies:

- Children’s Services Council
- Early Care and Education Partners
- Palm Beach Community College
- Palm Beach County Health Department
- The Department of Children and Families
- Family Central, Inc.
- Florida Atlantic University
- Palm Beach Atlantic University
- School District of Palm Beach County
- Redlands Christian Migrant Association
- Local Governments: Palm Beach County provides matching dollars for child care direct services provided to working poor families with initial eligibility of family income which is not greater than 150% of the Federal Poverty Level.

Community Partnerships

⇒ **Health Agencies:** The Palm Beach County Health Department provides immunizations and physicals to the families of School Readiness eligible children. It is also the local child care licensing entity.

- ⇒ **School District:** The School District provides school age care, after care and after school programs as well as school year and summer Voluntary Prekindergarten programs.
- ⇒ **Child Welfare Agencies:** The Coalition works in collaboration with the Department of Children and Families to serve at risk children.
- ⇒ **Palm Beach County Head Start:** One of the Early Learning Coalition's partners working collaboratively to include children with special needs and disabilities and to ensure enrollment of four year old into the Voluntary Prekindergarten Program
- ⇒ **Child Care Executive Partnership Program:** Private businesses provide matching funds to assist in providing child care for their employees.
- ⇒ **Education and Training Coordination:** This initiative is funded and managed by the Children's Services Council and implemented by Palm Beach Community College and the School District of Palm Beach County. Elements of this collaborative initiative include:
 - Early Learning Coaches – Mentoring Program
 - Training and Training Coordination
 - Interagency Training Council: This local council convenes and develops a plan for integrated professional development activities and an articulated career ladder for child care professionals.
 - Professional Development: Workgroups convene to develop career and professional development coordinated with the Quality Rating System.
 - Trainers & Training Registry: This is an electronic tracking system for quality child care training, trainers and trainees.



The Foundation of every state is the education of its youth.
Diogenes Laertius

⇒ **Parent Education Services:** Parent education services are coordinated in Palm Beach County through the Palm Beach Parenting Education Center which provides parenting, education training, information, and resources to increase the knowledge and skills of Family Life Educators, parents and caregivers. The Parenting Education Center operates an initiative called Parenting Matters that specifically provides information and services to parents in the communities where they live and in their spoken languages. Included are Parenting Matters kits for new parents, parenting education classes, the Palm Beach County Parenting Warm line (available 24 hour per day, 7 days per week), and outreach to parents through schools, churches, businesses and family events.

⇒ **The Quality Improvement System (QIS):** The Quality Improvement System (QIS) was initiated and funded by the Children's Services Council. This provider improvement system was modeled after the Picower Quality Child Care Initiative, a project with the objective of increasing the overall quality of child care providers in Palm Beach County. There are six areas or pathways that QIS participants strive to improve, which are assessed using star ratings, with four stars being the highest possible rating.

⇒ **Grants and Contributions**

The Coalition applied for grants from private sources to be used in our Child Care Purchasing Pool, to increase the number of children the Coalition can serve. The Coalition was able to secure \$22,000 in grant dollars for use in Fiscal Year 2008-2009. Grants were received from Wachovia Foundation in the amount of \$20,000 and from Bank Atlantic Foundation in the amount of \$2,000. With these additional dollars the Coalition was able to increase the number of children being served and achieved the following outcomes:

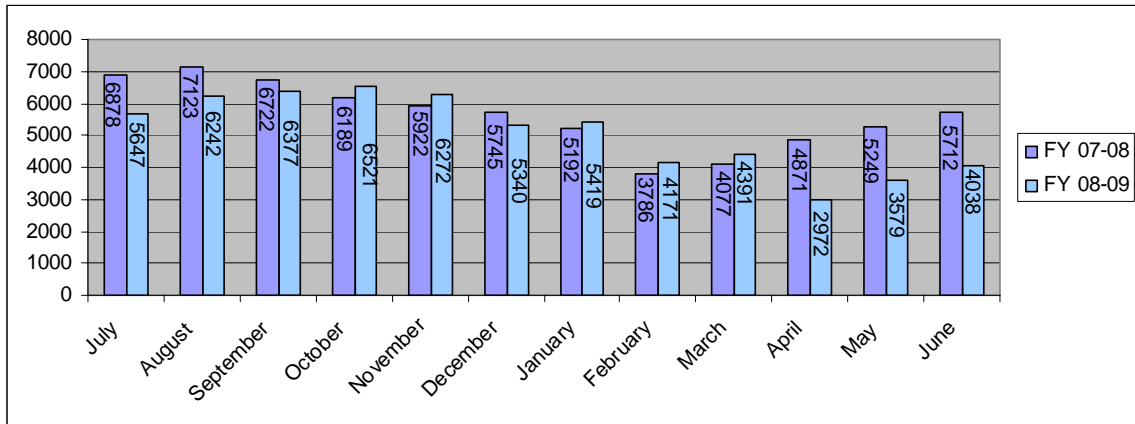
- Serve some of the children off of the waitlist.
- Foster collaborative efforts that leverage our community investments.
- Prepare an increasing number of children for school.
- Increased the ability for families to be able to sustain independence by having the ability to work.

No additional grants were received for the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year.

PROGRAM ISSUES:

There were no fiscal deficits in the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year.

MONTHLY SUBSIDIZED CHILD CARE WAITLIST FOR THE 2008-2009 FISCAL YEAR



Data source: OEL Statewide Reporting System

D. FISCAL

1.

The following is a financial analysis for the School Readiness Program for the period ending June 30, 2009

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Percent Utilized</u>
Administrative	953,026	953,026	100.00%
Direct Services	3,119,701	3,119,701	100.00%
Child Care Slots	27,772,980	27,772,980	100.00%
Infant and Toddler	267,897	267,897	100.00%
Quality Initiative	1,414,180	1,414,180	100.00%
Gold Seal	3,194,067	3,194,067	100.00%
CCEP	4,096,180	4,096,180	100.00%
Total	40,818,031	40,818,031	100.00%

The following is a financial analysis for the VPK Program for the period ending June 30, 2009.

	Budget	Actual	Percent Utilized
Administrative	193,201	193,201	100.00%
Enrollment	759,635	759,635	100.00%
Monitoring	0	0	NA
VPK Slots	22,599,018	22,599,018	100.00%
Total	23,551,854	23,551,854	100.00%

The Coalition was able to utilize 100% of School Readiness funds to serve children in Palm Beach County. The Coalition worked with Family Central, Inc., to efficiently manage slot utilization in order to expend CCEP dollars to serve the maximum number of children. In addition, the Coalition met all of its School Readiness earmarks and restrictions for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009.

The Coalition was able to utilize 100% of VPK funds to serve children in Palm Beach County. As of June 30, 2009, VPK administration, enrollment, and monitoring expenditures totaled \$952,836 which was 4.22% of total VPK slot expenditures. The Coalition met all of its VPK earmarks and restrictions for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2009. The Coalition also spent \$79,288 on VPK outreach and VPK monitoring services through the VPK Outreach and Awareness grant. The Coalition successfully monitored over 75% of its VPK providers and provided technical support during the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2009.



Do not go where the path may lead; go instead where there is no path and leave a trail

Ralph Waldo Emerson

SUMMARY

The Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach County Inc., regards its collaboration with system partners as the most important aspect of the work the Coalition does. These partnerships enable the Coalition to work collaboratively to ensure that the child care needs of families are met. These partnerships raised the bar for providing quality in child care environments and ensuring that a family's needs are met as an integrated system. These partnerships are our greatest success in Palm Beach County.

Evidence of the strength of these partnerships can be seen in the following examples:

- The Child Care Executive Partnership (CCEP) is an innovative public/private partnership program that was created by the Florida Legislature in 1996 to help employers meet the needs of a growing segment of their workforce-working parents. This exciting program leverages a relationship between businesses and families that want to work and succeed. Participation in this program expands the availability of child care options for working families by providing incentives for employers to contribute to meeting the needs of their employees' families by matching public dollars available for childcare. The Children's Services Council's dollar for dollar Child Care Partnership Program (CCPP) match continues to provide local businesses with an additional incentive to consider the Child Care Executive Partnership (CCEP) program. The CCEP Program success in Palm Beach County is due to this match funding. Other communities have experienced remarkable decreases or have had to cease the program all together.
- The Coalition in collaboration with Department of Education and Family Central, Inc., convened trainings for all Low Performing Providers to include: Education Standards Training and Phonological Awareness: 32 providers attended these trainings.
- As of the end of June 30, 2009, there were 80 Child Care Centers, 22 schools and 30 Family Child Care participants in the Quality Improvement System (QIS) program.
- 1603 SEEK (Seeking Excellence in Education and Knowledge) scholarships were granted in the amount of \$140,539.25. This program was funded by the Children's Services Council and administered by Palm Beach Community College.

Success Story:

- Temple Beth Zion preschool said “We learned today that we are now an accredited school. I cannot adequately express to you the gratitude we feel towards our coach, Eileen Krame...As we waited to hear the results of the verifier’s visit, one of the teachers commented that, ‘no matter what happens, the improvements we made because of accreditation were all good’...”
- Connie Williams, family child care provider from Delray Beach was among 17 child care providers honored at the second annual National Child Care Providers award ceremony. The Washington DC event was attended by members of Congress, along with Paula Kerger, President and CEO of Public Broadcasting System. Connie serves School Readiness funded children and is a local advocate for children.



*I saw the angel in the marble and carved until
I set him free.
Michelangelo*