

Children's Services Council  
**PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, February 26, 2015 - 4:30 p.m.

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**1. Call to Order**

Chair Weber called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Present: Greg Langowski; Tom Lynch; Tom Weber

**2. Minutes of January 22, 2015 PRC Meeting**

**A motion by Langowski/Lynch to approve the Minutes of the January 22, 2015 Program Review Committee Meeting was approved by unanimous vote.**

**3. A. Consent Agenda:**

- a) Additions, Deletions, Substitutions: None
- b) Items to be Pulled from Consent Agenda – there were no Agenda Items pulled for discussion
- c) Adoption of Consent Agenda

**A motion by Lynch/Langowski to approve the Consent Agenda was approved by unanimous vote.**

- 1. Warrants List-Program Reimbursements – Approved by Consent
- 2. Late Penalties Assessed – For informational purposes only; no action required
- 3. Resolution #15-003 and #15-004 Authorizing Child First and Mental Health RFP Recommendations – Approved by Consent

**B. Business Agenda**

1. Early Learning Coalition Early Head Start Partnership Grant and CSC Collaboration

Tom Lynch asked whether the amount of \$275,000 was the annual cost. Randy Palo, Director of Program Performance stated that the amount of \$275,000 was the amount that was being estimated for the balance of the current fiscal year. He stated that the annualized amount was identified in the Fiscal Impact section of the agenda item, and that it would be up to \$621,000, which was mostly Head Start slots for child care.

**A motion by Lynch/Langowski to approve collaboration with the Early Learning Coalition on the Early Head Start Partnership grant, providing funds to compliment the grant award in an amount not to exceed \$275,000, effective February 17, 2015 through September 30, 2015 was approved by unanimous vote.**

**C. Investing for Results Update – N/A**

**D. System of Care Update – N/A**

**E. Evaluations**

1. Summer Slide to Summer Climb – Andy McAusland, Program Officer (CSC); Dr. Lisa Lindeman, Director of Research & Evaluation, Prime Time Palm Beach County

Andy McAusland, Program Officer distributed a Research Brief and reading logs completed by children enrolled in the summer reading project(s). He stated that the children were BRIDGES participants and summer camp programming participants. Tom Lynch asked Dr. Williams-Taylor whether the information had been distributed at the Early Childhood Cabinet, Dr. Williams-Taylor stated that it had not.

Dr. Lisa Lindeman, Director of Research & Evaluation, Prime Time Palm Beach County stated that the summer reading partnership consisted of two integrated interventions: all ten BRIDGES sites around Palm Beach County worked with parents to help children read more at home, and Prime Time worked with summer camp practitioners training them to read with children during the day. She stated that the goal was to decrease summer learning loss, and that although they hoped to see reading gains, the main objective was to mitigate summer learning loss. Tom Lynch asked how many summer camps had participated, Dr. Lindeman stated that there had been 10 summer camp sites.

Dr. Lindeman stated that BRIDGES had worked with parents and families at weekly BRIDGES events, on average there were 6-8 BRIDGES events, per site, over a span of 6 weeks. She stated that at the BRIDGES sites parents were encouraged to read to the children, in addition to supporting the children to read independently. She stated that the summer camp practitioners attended a three hour reading strategies training conducted by Prime Time, and they then read to children, utilizing the learned strategies. She stated that the practitioners read to the children at least 30 minutes, twice per week. She stated that it was not intended to act as a curriculum, but was intended to supplement whatever curriculum the summer camp had in place.

Dr. Lindeman stated that at least 435 parents had participated through BRIDGES. She stated that half of those parents had attended 5 or more BRIDGES events, with the average attendance being 4 events. She stated that 90% of parental representation was from mothers, with 6% being fathers and the balance were grandparents. She stated that 60% completed surveys in English, although some may have had help with the survey. She stated that there was a good percentage of participants who did not read English/were not native English speakers. She stated that 26% of participants had a vocational degree/certificate, or a college degree.

Dr. Lindeman stated that 580 youth participated through BRIDGES, of whom 330 submitted home reading logs. She stated that students colored in a square for reading independently for 10 minutes, or entered an X if a parent read to the child. She stated that they had received more than 1,200 reading logs for the 330 youth. She stated that the information from the reading logs

indicated that, on average, the children spent 22 minutes per day reading. She stated that the recommendation was for them to read 20 minutes per day, therefore the goal had been met.

Dr. Lindeman stated that they had used the STAR Early Literacy Assessment to measure literacy, to gauge the impact of the study. She stated that the tool measured a wide range of literacy skills and was computer adaptive. She stated that the children could take the assessment online, and the questions they were given were based on how well they had answered preliminary questions. She stated that they had seen a difference in those youth who had started off above average for their grade level vs. youth who had started off below average. She stated that those who had started above average had maintained their score. She stated that the scores showed 'regression to the mean', a statistical artifact, showing a score closer to the average. She stated that they had seen gains from those students who had begun as below average. She stated that the results for those children had surpassed what they would have expected from the regression to the mean statistical phenomenon.

Dr. Lindeman stated that she had reviewed the relationship between how much time the children spent reading vs. literacy scores. She stated that reading at home was associated with improvement in their scores. She stated that every hour of reading was associated with a gain of 4 points on the STAR assessment. She stated that the STAR published natural norms of a gain of 3.7 points per week during the school year, so a gain of 4 points per hour of reading was a decent gain. She stated that a child reading 20 minutes per day for 6 weeks was a gain of 56 points, putting them further along the scale in a meaningful way.

Dr. Lindeman stated that the study had shown that the more likely a child was to rate a session as too hard, the more minutes per week the parent was reading to the child (versus the child reading independently). She stated that even though this was associated with a small, non-significant decline in the scores, the more parents read to their children, the more children read independently. She stated that the parents were encouraging reading. She stated that, on the whole, parent involvement was linked to improvements in reading skills. She used a comparison of taking two steps forward and  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a step back, the conclusion was not that the parents should stop reading to the children.

Dr. Lindeman stated that they had asked children how much they liked to read, how many books they would read if they could read anything they wanted, and asked them to rate the summer reading sessions. She stated that the Research Brief contained responses to other questions posed, and in general, attending a participating summer camp led to greater enjoyment of reading sessions, and greater enjoyment in general. She stated that it was statistically significant, and had a small effect.

Dr. Lindeman stated that BRIDGES had been highly successful in engaging parents and children. She stated that they had received a lot of feedback from the parents, and parental comments were included on the back of the Research Brief. She stated that parents were enthusiastic and dedicated in supporting home reading. She stated that significant learning gains had occurred for 43% of the youth, taking into account 'regression to the mean'. She stated that more than 60% of children in the study overcame summer learning loss by either maintaining or gaining.

Dr. Lindeman stated that recommendations included: continuation of parent engagement, and emphasis on summer reading. She stated they had received much feedback regarding book choice, and it was evident that challenging books were highly desired. She stated that they also recommended that summer camps make use of community resources and expertise.

Tom Lynch asked whether the children in the BRIDGES were the same children in summer camp. Dr. Lindeman stated that there were children enrolled in both. Mr. Lynch asked whether the children enrolled in both would get a double dose on those days, Dr. Lindeman confirmed that this was the case. Mr. Lynch asked whether the summer reading program results could be compared with other camps that had not participated. Dr. Lindeman stated that they had requested the reading learning records from the School District and were still waiting for those results. Mr. Lynch asked if there was a way to tie it into the library system results, to compare this reading program to the library's summer reading program. Dr. Lindeman stated that it could be a goal for the upcoming summer. She stated that for the study in question they had wanted to have a comparison group and had used summer camps that had not been participating, however, even those summer camps had quite a lot going on with regard to reading strategies. She stated that there were many interventions occurring throughout the county.

Dr. Lindeman stated that they had relied on parent consent forms for the study, and they had had many forms come back illegible. Andy McAusland stated that it was not the fault of the School District, they had been unable to match consent forms to program participants. Tom Lynch stated that one reason a child's scores had declined when a parent read to them could be tied to a language barrier. Dr. Lindeman stated that it was a working hypothesis. She stated that moving forward they wanted to glean more information from the parents. Mr. McAusland stated that they had tested Pine Grove Elementary and Village Academy, but had not included those results in the study. He stated that the same phenomenon was also prevalent, kids whose abilities started high had marginal loss, whereas kids whose abilities were low upon outset had shown significant gains.

Tom Lynch asked whether they planned to study more than 580 children for the summer of 2015. Dr. Lindeman stated that they did intend to. Mr. Lynch asked what was the maximum number they could handle. Andy McAusland stated that they were in discussions with Marc Baron of CSC's Business Analytics, and were considering not capturing so many grades but focusing on one grade, and capturing more children in that one grade which could then be extrapolated to the other age groups. He stated that the design was in the process of being finalized. Dr. Lindeman stated that it would be helpful because children in different grade levels responded a little differently.

Tom Lynch stated that he had found from previous studies that the decline over the summer was less, but then the growth was much faster come November. Dr. Lindeman stated that they had wanted to look at those results and would consider it for a future study. Tom Weber reiterated that the decline associated with parental reading was mostly in first graders and suggested a mentor or someone to help them, because that was the age group that would be most impacted moving forward. Dr. Lindeman stated that they currently had an idea on the table for the upcoming summer program which was to provide parents with other strategies to use. She stated that one strategy already utilized was to do a "picture walk". Andy McAusland stated that there would be a liaison between the BRIDGES and the School District in the upcoming summer and that

liaison had not been present during the past year. He stated that she would be key because she would be informing some of the trainings from the District's perspective.

**F. Presentations – N/A**

**G. Announcement**

Tom Sheehan, General Counsel, stated that they had unfortunately lost the quorum for the Council meeting and the Prevention Partnerships for Children, Inc. Board meeting at the last minute. He stated that those meetings had been rescheduled to Monday, March 2, 2015 at 8:15 a.m., and would be held at the County Commission building, 12<sup>th</sup> floor, McEaddy Room. He stated that this information would be posted on the CSC website, and Council members would also be notified. He stated that there had been a presentation scheduled to occur at the Council meeting (of 2/26) which would now be rescheduled to the March Council meeting.

**4. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:53 p.m.