

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES COUNCIL OF PALM BEACH COUNTY**  
**COUNCIL MEETING**  
**Thursday, March 26, 2015, 5:00 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Langowski called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m.

Present:

Thomas Bean  
Vince Goodman  
Kathleen Kroll  
Greg Langowski  
Thomas E. Lynch  
Dennis Miles  
Shelley Vana  
Thomas P. Weber

Excused: E. Wayne Gent, Debra Robinson, M.D.

- A. Invocation – A moment of silence was observed
- B. Pledge of Allegiance – led by Vince Goodman
- C. Presentations

Chair Langowski stated that the agenda had been revised whereby the Early Childhood Collaboration presentation would take place at a later meeting because some presenters had not been available.

- 1. GOLD Child Observation System – Erin Gallagher and Barbara Becraft – Early Learning Coalition; Child Care Providers

Karen Brandi, Director of System Performance introduced Erin Gallagher, Director of Early Head Start at the Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach County. Ms. Brandi stated that Ms. Gallagher, a former CSC employee, had assumed the Director position at ELC in February, 2015. She stated that the teaching strategies GOLD was a child assessment which supported the Strong Minds network.

Erin Gallagher stated that the new Early Head Start partnerships sites would soon be joining ELC and utilizing the GOLD assessment. She stated that GOLD had begun two years previously as a pilot project at six sites. She stated that it was an online system where providers could log in and enter notes about the children. She stated that it included observation of children doing what they naturally did, which was to play. She stated that it could be used as children began to walk and talk, or for an older child who was beginning to

share, stack and count. She stated that another feature of GOLD was that it aligned all the state early learning standards, and federal Early Head Start and Head Start standards. She stated that not only did it give information to ELC but also to the providers themselves how the classrooms were performing, and how the children moved through the classrooms. She stated that it could give insight how to bridge children to the next level of learning.

Barbara Becraft, Ph.D. stated that she led the assessment team at ELC and that her team served the providers in their own locations. She stated that GOLD was an authentic and informative child assessment system. She stated that it showed what a child was able to do and what they knew by simply allowing them to do it. She stated that it worked for children ages 0 to 5. She stated that it was helpful for teachers working with VPK students as they became emerging readers and think symbolically. She stated that it represented real moments in the life of a classroom that made learning visible.

Dr. Becraft stated that it was a formative tool because it was an assessment cycle beginning with observation and documentation, upon which the information could be used to get to know the children better and plan more intentionally for their growth and development. She stated that it could be used to make intentional decisions about next steps in the learning of individual children as well as groups and whole classes. She stated that the main purpose of piloting GOLD was to gain interest in the community, build relationships with providers, and to help them succeed. She stated that they were very grateful to the centers that had begun the pilot with them.

Dr. Becraft stated that at the end of the pilot they had expanded to 56 sites. She stated that they had a goal to build proficiency with teachers and providers as their number of sites grew, and another goal was to invite 50 new Strong Minds participating locations each year to utilize GOLD. She stated that they currently had 4,056 active child portfolios in the program. She stated that they could retain all of a child's milestones and learning from age 0 to 5 in an electronic format.

Dr. Becraft introduced Juan Atkins from Atkins TLC (child care center) and stated that he had joined GOLD as part of the fourth cohort. Juan Atkins stated that Atkins TLC had been a community partner since 1976 and that they always embraced cutting edge technologies to allow them to give the children the best opportunities available. He stated that his location was in a Title I area, and there was the perception that the children would not have many of the same opportunities that others would have, but GOLD provided the type of mechanism in order to provide them such feedback. He stated that GOLD was a contemporary instrument of choice to facilitate child care worker efforts in many ways including:

- Information gathering of a child's skills and abilities
- The ability to make informed instructional decisions for the children served
- Encourage parental involvement in a child's growth and development
- Improvement of the educational staff's understanding of how children learn and grow.

Mr. Atkins stated that the overall result was that the children could become more competitive, and they were thankful for the opportunity. He stated that they embraced GOLD, they were supportive of its existence, and they encouraged it to continue to grow.

Dr. Becraft introduced Ali Eger from Opportunity Inc. and stated that Opportunity Inc. was part of the first cohort in the GOLD pilot. Ms. Eger thanked the Council for allowing her center to be part of GOLD. She stated that Opportunity, Inc. started GOLD in April, 2013, and had introduced the program to parents in August, 2013 at an open house. She stated that as the year progressed the teachers gained confidence and proficiency in using GOLD and began sharing the benefits with the parents. She stated that due to the interest shown by the parents Opportunity Inc. had asked to open the parent portal aspect of GOLD earlier than originally planned. She stated that at the open house in August 2014 they had introduced the parent portal and had conducted a parent workshop a few weeks later. She stated that they had provided access to the system for 96 families, and Dr. Becraft had attended the workshop and explained some of the developmental milestones that parents could watch for by using the system.

Ms. Eger stated that parents who were using the portal found it very beneficial, but Opportunity, Inc. had wanted to involve more parents in its usage. She stated that they had conducted another workshop in March, 2015 and had provided a laptop or Ipad to every parent in attendance. She stated that they had had staff available to work one-on-one with each family to help them log on and become familiar with every aspect of the tool. She stated that the teachers had begun receiving messages from the parents through the tool the very next day.

Ms. Eger described a situation where a mother was resident in the US with her child but the father was resident overseas, and the father had expressed to Opportunity, Inc. how much it meant to him to be able to observe, through GOLD, how his child was learning and growing. She stated that parents had approached the teachers with questions about lesson plans and in her experience parents had never had these types of questions before GOLD. She stated that through GOLD they were able to monitor when parents clicked on suggested learning activities to do at home, to support the learning plan. She stated that not a single parent had forgotten items for field trips this year, as GOLD had a messaging system and calendar function.

Ms. Eger stated that parents were utilizing the portfolio documentation, and had expressed that they didn't know their child was able to do some of the things documented. She stated that it was not only written documentation but video clips and pictures. She stated that parents were able to upload things they had done as a family outside of school for the class to share.

Dr. Becraft introduced Nicole Simpson, parent of a preschooler at Opportunity, Inc. A video clip of Ms. Simpson's 9-month-old daughter Kuala was shown. Ms. Simpson stated that she wished that GOLD had been available with her other two children because she loved to be able to collaborate with the teacher and know what was going on. She stated that she also

liked to be able to share moments with the teachers, such as capturing her daughter's first word.

Erin Gallagher invited Council members to visit a GOLD childcare site.

## 2. Minutes

### A. Minutes of March 2, 2015 Council Meeting

**A motion by Lynch/Goodman to approve the Minutes of the March 2, 2015 Council Meeting as presented was approved by unanimous vote.**

## 3. Individual Appearances – Agenda Items – N/A

## 4. Council Committees:

### Program Review Committee

Tom Weber stated that the Program Review Committee approved the PRC Consent Agenda including the Warrants List and Resolutions #15-008 and #15-009. He stated that there had been a presentation from the Early Learning Coalition in addition to a presentation regarding year two of the home visitation evaluation.

**A motion by Miles/Goodman to approve the PRC agenda in its entirety was approved by unanimous vote.**

### Finance Committee

Tom Lynch stated that the Finance Committee had reviewed the year-end audit report provided by external auditors Keefe McCullough. He stated that Keefe McCullough had given a full presentation and the audit report included an unmodified opinion, the highest possible. He stated that there had been no material weaknesses, no non-compliance issues, and all the federal programs had no material weaknesses. Mr. Lynch congratulated Chief Financial Officer Bill Cosgrove, Controller Jen Diehl, and their staff. He stated that it was now time for CSC to select a new audit firm.

Mr. Lynch stated that the Finance Committee had approved the February 28, 2015 financial statements. He stated that there was an RFP currently open to secure a financial service advising firm and the deadline for responses was April 1, 2015. He stated that the selection committee would review the RFP responses and a selection would be recommended around mid-April. He stated that there was also an RFP due to be released April 1, 2015 (with response deadline by May 4, 2015) for an external auditing firm for the next five years.

**A motion by Goodman/Weber to approve the Finance Committee report, financial statements ending February 28, 2015 and Comprehensive Annual Financial Report year ended September 30, 2014 was approved by unanimous vote.**

## 5. Business/Consent Agenda

### A. Consent Agenda Management

#### 1. Additions, Deletions, Substitutions

Agenda Item 5G(2) (Reference #4) was deleted from the agenda.

#### 2. Items to be Pulled for Discussion – There were no Agenda Items pulled for discussion purposes.

#### 3. Adoption of the Consent Agenda and Walk-in Warrants List

**A motion by Goodman/Lynch to approve the revised Consent Agenda [with the deletion of Agenda Item 5G(2)] and Walk-in Warrants list was approved by unanimous vote.**

### B. CSC Funded Programs – Current – N/A

### C. CSC Funded Programs – Future – N/A

### D. Planning & Development – N/A

### E. Personnel – N/A

### F. Financial

#### 1. Warrants List – Approved by Consent

### G. Administration

#### 1. Revised Resolution #15-002 Authorizing Tiered Reimbursement for Strong Minds Network – Approved by Consent

#### ~~2. Resolution #15-007 Authorizing Expansion of Janitorial Services~~ – This agenda item was deleted.

#### 3. Resolution #15-010 Authorizing Match Funding for Swim Lesson Vouchers – Approved by Consent

#### 4. Proclamation Declaring April, 2015 as Child Abuse Prevention Month – Approved by Consent

## 6. Business/Non Consent Items – N/A

## 7. Walk-In Items – N/A

## **8. Chief Executive Officer's Report**

### **1. CSC to Co-Sponsor "First 1,000 Days" Summit**

Lisa Williams-Taylor, Ph.D. stated that CSC would be working with the Florida Association of Healthy Start Coalitions and the MIECHV (maternal, infant, early childhood home visiting) program to co-sponsor the First 1,000 Days Summit. She stated that the summit would be at the Palm Beach County Convention Center, and 500-600 people were expected to attend. She stated that it would be a mix of funders, policy-makers, and providers, with many national speakers and approximately 50 break-out sessions.

### **2. Teen Outreach Program (TOP®) Update**

Dr. Williams-Taylor stated that Council member Dr. Robinson had asked several questions at a previous Council meeting which they would like to address in a short presentation. Vashti Rutledge, Program Officer stated that she had presented at the January Council meeting together with presenters from the Housing Partnership, Children's Home Society, and Urban League. She stated that Dr. Robinson had had questions regarding the impact on academics for students whose TOP® club was conducted as part of the school day vs. those children whose TOP® club was in an afterschool setting. She stated that out of 33 TOP® clubs there were 16 clubs that occurred during course instruction time. She stated that, of those 16 clubs, 8 clubs had been able to use a tool allowing them to take the lesson within the TOP® curriculum and align the lesson with the (classroom) particular reading lesson standard. She stated that that left 8 clubs where the TOP® club was not intentionally connected to the course standards, but the work was nevertheless done in collaboration with the teacher and the school.

Ms. Rutledge stated that Evaluation Analyst Amy Lora, Ph.D. had looked at GPAs and FCAT scores to look for differences in TOP® clubs. She stated that, across the board, there were no statistically significant differences in the grades of the TOP® participants, regardless of when they attended their TOP® club. She stated that there was only one club where students were pulled from various classes, and many students *had been identified by the school* to participate in TOP® because the school had seen it as an opportunity to address any potential issues that may have prevented the child from participating fully in class. She stated that anecdotally they were able to identify children who were on the honor roll for the first time and whose grades had improved, but when it was examined from a more rigorous standpoint the grades evened out and were not statistically significantly different.

### **3. CSC Staff to Present at Build Initiative 2015 QRIS National Meeting**

Dr. Williams-Taylor stated that Karen Brandi, Director of System Performance, and Nicole Lopez, Program Officer had been asked to present at the Build Initiative 2015 QRIS National Meeting.

### **4. CSC Staff Contributed to Chapin Hall Publication**

Dr. Williams-Taylor stated that Laura Fleischman, Ph.D. had worked together with Chapin Hall in the publication of a longitudinal study. The publication was entitled "Cycling through Preconception, Prenatal, and Interconception Care".

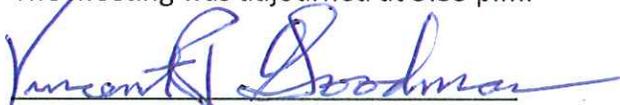
**9. Legal Reports**

**10. Individual Appearances – Non-Agenda Items – N/A**

**11. Council Comments**

**12. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:33 p.m.



Vincent Goodman, Secretary



Lisa Williams-Taylor, Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer