

Children's Services Council
PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

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

1. Call to Order

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

Present: Thomas Bean, Vince Goodman, Greg Langowski, Tom Lynch, Dennis Miles (arrived 4:33 p.m.), Tom Weber.

2. Minutes of February 26, 2015 PRC Meeting

A motion by Langowski/Goodman to approve the Minutes of the February 26, 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 – Agenda Item 3A(4) (Reference #5) was pulled for discussion purposes
- c) Adoption of Consent Agenda

A motion by Goodman/Lynch to approve the Consent Agenda with the exception of Agenda Item 3A(4) 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 #15-008 Authorizing an Amendment to Agreement with Mike Levine – Approved by Consent
- 4. Resolution #15-009 Authorizing Family Child Care Home Technical Assistance Contract Change

Randy Palo, Director of Program Performance stated that the Agenda Item addressed technical assistance specifically to the family child care *homes*. He noted that CSC already had a contract with the School District for technical assistance to child care *centers*. He stated that in February there had been an agenda item regarding CSC collaboration with an Early Head Start grant that also contained a technical assistance component, and they wanted to consolidate the technical assistance with the Early Learning Coalition (ELC) and Family Central had no complaint in this regard. He stated that Family Central had also agreed that the timeframe for the changeover should be short (April 15) because there were many new positions opening up with ELC as a result of this, allowing their current staff to apply for those positions.

Mr. Palo stated that they were trying not to keep coming to the Council with incremental amounts of money, and when ELC had a clear picture of its entire budget they would be able to determine the impact of these changes. He stated that funding would be available from the Family Central contract that was terminating approximately 6 months early. He stated that within ELC's contract with Family Central there were also some CSC funding for scholarships. He stated that this would result in further savings to CSC.

Vince Goodman asked how the technical assistance would be provided in the homes, and asked whether computers would be provided. Mr. Palo stated that family child care home programs were conducted in the home of the child care provider, and the technical assistance was not necessarily computer-based. Karen Brandi, Director of System Performance stated that the assistance was to help the family child care provider to provide best practices in child development, curriculum, and behavior management. She stated that the technical assistance did not involve computers, but was assistance around what was known to be best practice.

Mr. Goodman asked how a program became part of the Strong Minds network. Ms. Brandi stated that the program had to meet some pre-entry criteria regarding i) being in good standing with licensure; and ii) being in compliance with ELC to provide subsidized child care, and/or if providing Head Start services, being in compliance with regard to those agreements. She stated that by meeting those minimal requirements of quality it showed a level of intentionality in being able to support an increased level of quality. She stated that the program would submit an application, and upon determining that the program had met the minimum standards outlined above, assessors were then sent to the program. She stated that the assessors used two research-based tools to assess the current level of quality. She stated that one tool was used for infants and toddlers, and one for preschool-age children. She stated that tool assessed the environment, such as looking at the interaction of teachers with children, how teachers handle behavior management situations, whether appropriate materials are provided (meeting all safety and health standards). She stated that national standards had been used in setting thresholds, and there were three categories. If thresholds were met they entered the system as "in network" status. She stated that if they missed the threshold by a fine margin they entered the system as "promising", and if they needed more extensive assistance to meet the thresholds they entered the system as "emerging". She stated that different levels of technical assistance was provided at each status level. She stated that provided they wanted the help and were willing to accept it, there were different levels of resources to provide it to them to ensure quality, and better outcomes for children.

Tom Weber stated that it was a good plan, and suggested to Mr. Eldridge that the costs should net out for the first year. Mr. Eldridge stated that they were expecting a savings of \$800,000 by providing the services in-house. He stated that the start-up costs over the past 10 years had actually decreased because the cost of technology had decreased and there were less fixed costs to assume upon startup.

Tom Lynch stated that he was concerned, but happy that ELC had recognized that the Provider they were contracting with was not operating at an optimum performance level and that ELC was in the process of correcting it. He stated that ELC was now assuming more responsibility. He stated that he would be supportive, but that he wanted to build something in which would require an

evaluation in September to be brought to the Council in October for a full review. Mr. Eldridge stated that it may take 30 to 60 days to get the evaluation in-hand. Mr. Lynch stated that he would like a review by November, 2016, Mr. Eldridge agreed this would be acceptable.

A motion by Lynch/Goodman to approve Resolution #15-009 authorizing the Chief Executive Officer to terminate the agreement with Family Central, Inc. for Family Child Care Home Technical Assistance Specialists effective April 15, 2015 and to transfer the technical assistance services into the existing Early Learning Coalition CSC Scholarships Initiative agreement, with a report to be presented to the Council by November, 2016 was approved by unanimous vote.

B. Business Agenda – N/A

C. Investing for Results Update – N/A

D. System of Care Update

1. Early Learning Coalition Update – Warren Eldridge, Chief Executive Officer, Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach County

Warren Eldridge, Chief Executive Officer, Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach County stated that in December of 2014, the Board of Directors of the Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach County (Coalition) voted unanimously to streamline services, save significant financial cost and provide respectful customer service for the children and families in Palm Beach County.

Mr. Eldridge stated that as of July 1, 2015 the Coalition will directly provide the services of Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R), Provider Payments, and Eligibility & Enrollment instead of subcontracting these services through other agencies. He stated that the Coalition's cross-trained staff will be trained to provide high quality customer service using 21st Century technology in a family-friendly environment. He stated that by using the most up-to-date technology, Coalition staff will have more time to spend directly with the parents, and with the new system in place, parents will not have to make multiple trips to the Coalition offices in order to provide their documentation.

Mr. Eldridge stated that these movements towards direct service provision would produce an estimated annual savings of \$1.4 million, and stated that this amount is equivalent to providing services for 375 children.

Mr. Eldridge stated that the Coalition will be undergoing another customer service satisfaction study by the SRA Research Group, Inc. which was estimated to take place in September 2016, and that they would provide the survey results to the Council upon request. He stated that in order to make the process easier for parents there will be several community-based locations throughout the county, serving all areas including West Palm Beach, Belle Glade, Lake Worth, and Riviera Beach. He stated that the Coalition will also have roving staff in the community to work with families throughout the county.

Mr. Eldridge stated that the Coalition wanted to ensure that its Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) system provides parents with the most accurate information in a timely fashion in order to help parents make informed decisions regarding which child care setting is best for their individual child's specific needs. He stated that the Coalition will be implementing a call center to assist in this process.

Mr. Eldridge stated that the Coalition had been working with community partners including the Children's Services Council, the Department of Children and Families, CareerSource Palm Beach County, BRIDGES, and Lutheran Services Florida. He stated that they had been coordinating feedback/focus groups with their child care providers, Healthy Beginnings, and after school providers.

Mr. Eldridge stated that the Coalition's Early Head Start program was well underway. He stated that the Early Head Start program was the federal grant the Coalition had received to serve an additional 150 children in the highest need Zip codes of the county. He stated that the children in the Early Head Start program will range in age from birth to 3 years old.

Mr. Eldridge stated that during the transition time the Coalition has a rare opportunity to provide parents/families in need of high quality early education with these services, but in a new and improved way that would be both respectful and reliable. He stated that together with the Coalition's local partners, they would continue to build community-wide commitment for comprehensive, high-quality early learning environments that benefit the children and families of Palm Beach County.

E. Evaluations

1. Home Visitation Evaluation: Year 2 Report

Debra Gotlib, Director of Program Performance stated that the Metis evaluation was a four-year evaluation, and that year two had been completed. She stated that they had reported on year one in March, 2014, and that it had looked at individual home visitation programs, had compared home visitation programs, and had evaluated outcomes in three home visiting programs. She stated that the three programs evaluated in year one were: Health Families of Florida, Nurse Family Partnership, and Healthy Beginnings Nurses.

Ms. Gotlib stated that in year two the evaluation had looked at the Healthy Beginnings System of care within the context of the three home visiting programs. She stated that it had looked at quality and effectiveness of the system, strategies for how fathers were engaged, and client input regarding Healthy Beginnings services specific to home visitation.

Ms. Gotlib stated that prior to 2009 there had been no centralized intake or assessment and funded agencies had each performed their own outreach. She stated that from 2009 to the present there were two entry points performing outreach, intake, screening, assessment, and referral. She stated that three screening tools were used, the screens were performed by OB/GYNs, the entry agency Home Safe, and child care settings. She stated that the screens were

then passed to the entry agencies Healthy Mothers/Healthy Babies, and Home Safe. She stated that some referrals were to agencies within the HB system, and some were to external providers. A slide of available services/agencies was shown.

Ms. Gotlib stated that the evaluation had included a paper survey to staff at the entry agencies, staff at the home visiting programs, and CSC staff. There had been another survey for clients of the home visitation programs. She stated that the staff survey had included 133 responses, and the client survey 231 responses. She outlined the key findings:

- HB is high quality
- Screening and assessment process is high quality
- Service planning is high quality (to get the client to the correct program)
- Compared to the previous model, duplication of services had decreased and accessibility of services had increased
- Partners in the system had positive thoughts and beliefs
- Fathers were being engaged
- Clients are satisfied, although have some unmet needs
- Clients believed they were benefiting from the services in which they participated.

Amy Lora, Evaluation Analyst showed slides outlining survey responses with the responses broken out showing CSC staff response and HB provider response. She stated that indicators within the high quality category were communication and collaboration, with the majority of respondents indicating that communication and collaboration had improved. She stated that system effectiveness also contributed to high quality, and the majority of respondents had indicated that they system was effective in identifying family strengths and identifying concrete family needs.

Ms. Lora stated that the second finding had been around positive impacts (with respect to service delivery) which were experienced among HB providers. She stated that those areas which had been impacted the most were: use of data, accountability, and quality of service delivery. She stated that those areas which had been impacted the least were the family voice, involving fathers in services, and staff retention.

Ms. Lora stated that the final finding that had emerged had been the engagement of fathers. She stated that the areas that were most impacted in this regard, as perceived by HB staff, were that fathers were being welcomed, they were being invited to participate, and that women were asked whether fathers wanted to be involved. She stated that the areas least impacted regarding father engagement were: more effort around providing co-parenting services was needed, and more outreach to fathers was needed.

Ms. Lora stated that over 200 clients had responded to the survey and one main emerging theme was client satisfaction. She stated that clients were overwhelmingly satisfied with their home visitors, in particular:

- The home visitor understood the family's strengths and needs
- The home visitor was easy to understand
- The home visitor listened to the opinions of the clients
- The home visitor respected the beliefs of the clients.

Ms. Lora stated that the survey respondents self-reported benefits from program participation. She stated that 88% of respondents felt they were better parents, 79% had felt that their child's growth and development had been positively impacted and that they were better equipped to cope with feelings. She stated that across 8 domains (of social-emotional wellness, physical wellbeing, self-sufficiency) aligned with CSC's child outcomes, clients had overwhelmingly reported positive impacts.

Ms. Lora stated that the final finding was that clients had felt they were largely satisfied with their needs being met. She stated that 64% of clients reported no unmet needs. She stated that among those that had expressed unmet needs, the unmet needs were described as: basic needs, childbirth education, nutrition help, help getting public assistance, parenting help, and breastfeeding help.

Debra Gotlib stated that the evaluation recommendations with reference to the HB system were:

- To enhance ongoing communication amongst providers to include challenges and successes
- To support providers in improving service delivery practices and sharing of resources.

She stated that they had not had the recommendations for very long but had already started thinking about how to implement them, and were exploring incorporating them into the quarterly HB leadership meetings.

Ms. Gotlib stated that the second key recommendation was regarding father engagement, incorporating co-parenting and outreach. She stated that there were ongoing efforts to engage fathers: each of the home visitation programs had curriculum to engage fathers, in addition they intended to provide tools and training regarding co-parenting for those parents who didn't live in the same household. She stated that they intended to enhance the entry agency's role with respect to fathers to engage fathers on the front end.

Ms. Gotlib outlined the direction of the Metis evaluation for the next two years stating that in year three it would look at the Prenatal Plus program, a single program within the HB nurses. She stated that the program had begun in June, 2013, and that it would look at fidelity and outcomes. She stated that in year four the evaluation would review all three home visitation programs once again, and would compare outcomes.

Vince Goodman asked how fathers were engaged. Ms. Gotlib stated that all three agencies already had curriculum that engaged fathers. She stated that there were specific modules where the provider worked separately with the father, not together with the mother. She stated that Healthy Families also worked with fathers by engaging them on the front end, and adjusting their schedules so they could visit when the father would be there. She stated that Nurse Family Partnership tracked father involvement, it was part of their assessment tool.

F. Presentations – N/A

4. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:04 p.m.