Classrooms, infants through VPK.

The mission of Opportunity Inc. is to empower children of low-income working families to achieve future academic and life success by providing the best early childhood educational programming and support services.

Provider Highlight
GOLD Pilot Implementation

Cyndy Sanders, a teacher at Opportunity, Inc., in West Palm Beach jumped right in and took a leading role in her program by offering her help to fellow teachers and making the most of the online resources that GOLD has to offer.

“We are so excited about using GOLD online. It will give us a much better perspective on the progress of our students and for individualizing lesson plans. In the short amount of time we have been using GOLD, I have found myself “thinking outside of the box” more often when it comes to meeting the needs of my students.” Cyndy stated to Opportunity, Inc., Director, Ali Eger.

Opportunity Inc., is one of six early childhood programs currently participating in the Teaching Strategies GOLD Online Assessment Pilot. They are currently implementing GOLD in all of their

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The Work of the Coalition

The Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach County, Inc. strives to enhance the quality of children’s education in child care providers by:

- Contracting for subsidized child care services with 835 School Readiness providers:
  - School Readiness
    - Child Care Centers: 311
    - Family Child Care Homes: 229
  - School Based: 146
  - Informal: 1
  - Afterschool Programs: 148

- Monitoring contracted child care providers specific to maintaining business practices that align to Federal, State and local requirements.
- Acquiring information in regards to the quality of programs offered to children by contracted child care providers.
- Screening children to identify developmental milestones, and providing support for children who indicate a developmental delay. -Offering Professional Development (PD) to practitioners to support continuous quality improvement initiatives.
- Providing information to parents and community partners through the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) hotline.
- Completing eligibility and enrollment for subsidized child care. Eligibility is completed in accordance with the policies of Florida’s Office of Early Learning and other state and local funders who fund care subsidy and scholarships. Administration of subsidies are completed for working poor and children deemed eligible by the Department of Children and Families. Additional funding is received from the Children’s Services Council (CSC), through the Continue to Care (CTC) Scholarship, as well as funding from the School District enrollments through the Teenage Parent Program and in addition CSC also provides funding for Emergency Child Care.
- Providing Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) services for all eligible four year olds.
- Conducting Post Attendance Audit Monitoring (PAAM).
- Completing payments to child care providers.

Snapshot of FY 2012-13

The numbers:
- 33,392 unduplicated children were served through the Coalition funding (includes School Readiness, Continue-to-Care, VPK, and other subsidies that pass through the Coalition)
- 7,311 was the largest number of children waiting for child care assistance in a single month (November 2012). The wait list fell below 700 during March 2013 through enrollment efforts which resulted in care for more than 4,000 children who had previously been on the waiting list.
- $56,598,091.32 was paid to providers for subsidized child care services funded through the Coalition.
- $26,297,431.20 was paid to providers for the VPK program services.
- CCR&R counselors conducted more than 14,653 interviews with 10,966 individual parents.
- 737 providers held at least one type of Service Agreement.
- 307 providers held a VPK Provider Agreement.
- 98 trainings were offered to providers.
- 12,022* VPK certificates were issued for the 2012-2013 program year.

This number includes summer enrollments processed as of June 30, 2013.
- 917 providers received either an on-site, desk audit or follow up monitoring.
The Resource Library housed at Family Central, Inc. is designed to provide parents, teachers and the community with information to assist in a child’s education. The Resource Library has valuable resources for patrons such as books, games, computers, laminating services and copying services. Patrons of the library have access to over 13,000 items which can be viewed from the library and Family Central, Inc. websites. The library also provides opportunities for Model Teaching, which is an interactive story time based on the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards. As well as an electronic newsletter which highlights activities and materials available in the library.

Professional Development

The Coalition understands that teachers play an important role in planning, supporting and guiding children to learn. It is important that teachers are provided with supports and information in regards to observing, listening and understanding how children learn. The Coalition in collaboration with system partners continue its work in ensuring adequate training is accessible to teachers. The Coalition recognizes the importance of children being in an environment that supports learning and provides adequate teacher child interactions. The Coalition engages with the Children’s Services Council’s initiatives for Professional Development (PD). The Coalition sits on the PD governance committee ensuring access to high quality trainings. Coalition trainings are all delivered in accordance with the Palm Beach County Registry which provides a standard for the delivery of quality training.

Supporting Parents as their Child’s First Teacher

Year 1 Implementation

3 cohorts of programs introduced to GOLD between March and September 2013
- Cohort 1—6 programs, 403 children
- Cohort 2—10 programs, 664 children
- Cohort 3—13 programs, 800 children

Cohort 1 completed their first data checkpoint on July 31, 2013. While we expected 65% of the children active in GOLD would have enough data for a checkpoint, programs returned completed data for 91% of their children.

What is GOLD? The Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment is a web based application that allows early education practitioners to observe the children they work with and enter the data to be matched with readiness criteria aligned with state standards. Teaching Strategies GOLD is designed on a cycle of ongoing observation, documentation, portfolio-building, and reporting with the data system available to practitioners to increase their knowledge base and planning efforts. The data system will also generate reports for use at the program level and can provide neighborhood/zip code/county wide information for other planning entities.

The Coalition in collaboration with the Children’s Services Council initiated a pilot with a small group of child care providers in May 2013 with an initial goal to finalize child data by July 31, 2013. A second group of 10 providers have been trained and will begin implementing GOLD in August of 2013. Within the first months of the GOLD pilot the following milestones have been met: an entry process has been created, quarterly newsletter distributed, 3 rounds of training offered, IT support process established, technical assistance given on site, by phone, by e-mail and online conferencing.

In addition as of June 30, 2013, there are 360 children with active portfolios in GOLD, 45 teachers using GOLD to generate over 389 documented child observations. What does this all mean? This means teachers are identifying time in their schedule to observe and collect facts about their children’s current skills and abilities. This is an important first step of the ongoing assessment cycle.

Supporting Quality Education

Teaching Strategies GOLD

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**Who did we serve?**

The Coalition served 27,340 unduplicated children in the School Readiness Program totaling $51,746,031.90 and 11,611 children in the Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten program totaling $26,208,885.76. Funding included local, state and federal dollars.

The following represents the number of families and children served through State funding categories during the past fiscal year ending June 30, 2013. The numbers are duplicated due to children changing funding groups within the same fiscal year. For the past fiscal year the unduplicated State funded children served is 16,185.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUNDING CATEGORY</th>
<th># of FAMILIES</th>
<th># of CHILDREN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At Risk</td>
<td>2,108</td>
<td>3,634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Care Purchasing Pool (CCPP)</td>
<td>1,889</td>
<td>2,934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional Child Care (TCC)</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA)</td>
<td>885</td>
<td>1,530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Poor</td>
<td>6,285</td>
<td>10,665</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional Local Funding:
In this past fiscal year 2012-2013 the Coalition received 750,557 from the School District of Palm Beach County to fund 232 children in the Teen Parent Program. In addition, the Coalition received $35,883.22 from the Children’s Services Council to provide temporary financial assistance for child care to 32 children, due to a short term crisis or situation.
School Readiness Payments

Voluntary Prekindergarten
Percentage of Total Payments
by Provider Type

- Faith-Based: 19.03%
- Family Child Care: 0.06%
- Private Center: 68.46%
- Private School: 1.65%
- Public School: 10.80%

A total of $26,208,885.76 was spent on payments to VPK Providers.

Voluntary Prekindergarten
Payments by Program Type

- VPK School Year: $25,688,993.50
- VPK Summer: $519,892.26

### TOTAL SCHOOL READINESS PAYMENTS BY CARE LEVEL

- School-Age: 29.56%
- Preschool 5: 5.70%
- Preschool 4: 13.23%
- Preschool 3: 15.53%
- 2 Year-old: 14.41%
- Toddler: 14.08%
- Infant: 7.48%

### TOTAL SCHOOL READINESS PAYMENTS BY FUNDING CATEGORY

- Working Poor: 57.05%
- Transitional Child Care: 5.58%
- Temporary Cash Assistance: 7.63%
- Migrant: 0.05%
- Child Care Executive Partnership: 16.68%
- At-Risk: 13.01%

#### The Early Learning School Readiness Plan

The Early Learning Coalition adheres to the Florida’s Office of Early Learning School Readiness Plan Template. The Coalition Plan guides and directs the administration of the School Readiness services implemented in Palm Beach County. The Early Learning Coalition Plan was revised and approved by the Florida’s Office of Early Learning in November 2011. In May 2011, the Florida’s Office of Early Learning conducted a programmatic audit on the elements within the Coalition’s Plan. The Office presented the final audit report which indicated no findings and/or corrective actions for the programmatic elements identified in the Coalition’s Plan. All plan amendments have been approved by FLOEL.
In this past fiscal year 2012-2013, the Continue To Care program funded by the Children’s Services Council served 5,146 unduplicated parents and 7,797 unduplicated children totaling $18,186,145.15.

The Coalition receives funding from the Children’s Services Council to administer the Continue to Care (CTC) program. The CTC program was developed to ensure that at-risk children have access to continued quality child-care.

The CTC Program was developed to fund child care services for the following specific groups or billing groups of children:

- Continue To Care Quality (CTC-Q): scholarships provide continuity of child care services for children who are enrolled at a Quality Counts site. Quality Counts is a voluntary quality rating improvement system for child care providers.

- Continue To Care Maternal (CTC-M): scholarships provide child care financial assistance to children in families referred by Healthy Beginnings System providers. The scholarship may only be used at Quality Counts sites.

- Continue to Care Afterschool (CTC-A): scholarships provide child care financial assistance for school age children. The scholarship may only be used at qualifying after-school programs.
The Coalition was able to utilize federal, state and local resources to maximize contracted dollars to effectively serve children in Palm Beach County. A summary of the total amounts expended from July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013 is provided below:

### School Readiness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funder</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Direct Services</th>
<th>Program Services</th>
<th>Administration</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Florida’s Office of Early Learning</td>
<td>Subsidized Child Care</td>
<td>28,131,913</td>
<td>3,936,943</td>
<td>1,419,925</td>
<td>33,488,781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child Care Partnership</td>
<td>2,816,844</td>
<td>24,947</td>
<td>3,617</td>
<td>2,845,408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Businesses</td>
<td>Child Care Partnership -Match</td>
<td>519,607</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>519,607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The School District of Palm Beach County</td>
<td>Teen Parent</td>
<td>750,557</td>
<td>40,994</td>
<td>9,107</td>
<td>800,658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Children’s Services Council of Palm Beach County</td>
<td>Continue to Care</td>
<td>22,201,216</td>
<td>1,100,122</td>
<td>261948</td>
<td>23,563,286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child Care Partnership -Match</td>
<td>2,296,575</td>
<td>24,947</td>
<td>3,617</td>
<td>2,325,139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total School Readiness</td>
<td></td>
<td>56,716,712</td>
<td>5,127,953</td>
<td>1,698,214</td>
<td>63,542,879</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Coalition maximized local resources for the School Readiness program and utilized 99.67% of the operating budget with Florida’s Office of Early Learning totaling $36,334,189. In addition, the Coalition fully met all minimum and maximum earmarks required by the contract:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funder</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Direct Services</th>
<th>Program Services</th>
<th>Administration</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Florida’s Office of Early Learning</td>
<td>Subsidized Child Care</td>
<td>24,111,922</td>
<td>84.00%</td>
<td>28,131,913</td>
<td>24,111,922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child Care Partnership</td>
<td>1,339,551</td>
<td>14.05%</td>
<td>4,704,247</td>
<td>4,704,247</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum Requirements:</th>
<th>Actual:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Care Services</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funder</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Direct Services</th>
<th>Program Services</th>
<th>Administration</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Florida’s Office of Early Learning</td>
<td>Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten</td>
<td>26,317,028</td>
<td>778,303</td>
<td>232,646</td>
<td>27,327.977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outreach and Monitoring</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>62,695</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>62,695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten</td>
<td></td>
<td>26,317,028</td>
<td>840,998</td>
<td>232,646</td>
<td>27,390,672</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Coalition utilized 98.9% of the operating budget, $28,193,240, with Florida’s Office of Early Learning for Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten and 100% of the budget, $62,695, for Outreach and Monitoring. In addition, the Coalition fully met all maximum earmarks required by the contract:
Mission:
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 five years of age, or until the child enters kindergarten.

Vision:
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 the 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.

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