



PRESIDENT'S SUMMARY

December 17, 2021

- I. **Dr. Blechman's Celebration of Life** – Our team facilitated Dr. Wil's memorial service via Zoom. Approximately 200 people attended virtually, and the family was so very appreciative of our help to accomplish this. It was a wonderful tribute to his life and his amazing contributions on behalf of children and their well-being.
- II. **Senator Ausley** – Lorraine asked me to meet with her, her aide, and Courtney Atkins (Whole Child Leon). The meeting was a brainstorming session about how to make an impact as a pilot locally for the early learning workforce. I took the ideas and developed a concept paper to create a resource center called Early Learning WORKS that is designed to support those working in ECE as well as creating economic incentives for communities. I later developed talking points around the concept. Senator Ausley plans to work with the appropriations process to determine if the funds can be earmarked through DEL and legislative appropriations.
- III. **South City Foundation** – I was invited to visit Sheltering Arms, an organization in Atlanta that operates 13 early childhood programs and are a part of the Educare system and designed to serve vulnerable children. The visit also included visiting a Purpose-Built Community in South Atlanta. It was very enlightening and an example of what is planned for Southside Tallahassee (that will include a \$14M early learning / child development center). I'm not sure what our role will be, but I was definitely impressed with what has been accomplished.
- IV. **Build Back Better Plan** – All eyes are on President Biden's Build Back Better Plan for child care and early learning. The proposals are far-reaching and inclusive of assistance for families in paying no more than 7% of their income for child care, universal prekindergarten for three- and four-year-olds, requirement for teachers to obtain a bachelor's degree (though there are waivers for states and this is a phase-in process), improved compensation for early childhood educators, expanded child care tax credit, among other provisions. A good summary along with state responsibilities is available at the First Five Years Fund: <https://www.ffyf.org/faq-on-the-child-care-and-preschool-provisions-in-the-build-back-better-act/>.
- V. **Help Me Grow Legislative Ask** – We are also requesting funding to take the Help Me Grow program statewide (currently in limited number of counties). The total for Help Me Grow to go statewide is estimated at an additional \$2.6M over our existing allocation.

- VI. INCENTIVE\$ Miami** – We were distressed to hear that Miami will discontinue their INCENTIVE\$ investment as of 9/30/21. The reason given for this decision is that they want to go in a different direction and increase their investment in scholarships. I'm not sure how or if they're replacing direct supports to the early educators as they have not disclosed this.