



Strategic Plan Progress

March 13, 2020

...because kids can't wait!

Vision

Connected and engaged communities supporting children for lifelong success.

Mission

Through collaboration, the Forum builds and supports systems to promote positive experiences and outcomes for young children.

Guiding Principles: Good public policy is informed by research. The use of sound research to increase awareness and advocacy on children's issues and the field of child care and early learning is fundamental. Our guiding principles, therefore, are informed by research and best practices:

- Parents are the primary educators of their children; yet some parents face barriers that seriously limit their ability to be effective parents. Proven programs and adequate resources must be available to assist parents in achieving the best possible outcomes for their children.
- The foundation for physical, social and emotional capabilities is largely set during children's first few years of life and is essential to their future cognitive and academic success as well as their ability to function well in society.
- Children have the right to warm, responsive, and nurturing care from their parents and caregivers.
- Children are entitled to high quality early learning experiences including before and after school enrichment provided not only by their parents but by compassionate, knowledgeable, and trained practitioners as well.
- Families of children with disabilities and special health care needs have unique challenges and should have access to services and adequate resources designed to meet their needs and assistance to navigate systems that can help support them.
- Formal education and ongoing professional development for practitioners are critical to the optimum development of children given the correlation between practitioner knowledge, skills, and practices and improved child outcomes for later success.
- Compensation parity for early childhood and afterschool practitioners must be promoted to positively impact recruitment, retention, quality and commitment to the field.
- Collaboration with other local, state, and national organizations/agencies is the most effective strategy for supporting children, families, and practitioners to achieve shared goals.
- Professionalism, accountability, honesty, respect, integrity and excellence are minimum expectations for Forum staff and members of the board of directors.

Adopted as edited by the board of directors, October 2010 Reviewed and affirmed by the board of directors, December 2012, March 2014, October 2014, December 2016, March 2017, September 2019

STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS 2019-20

Goal 1: The Forum will provide innovative, responsive assistance, support and professional development educators, stakeholders, and families at the local, state and national levels.

Objectives	January - March 2020
<p>Serve as the hub to provide responsive guidance, professional development supports, outreach, resources, technical and scholarship assistance to programs and educators in Miami-Dade County through the Early Learning Career Center.</p>	<p>The Early Learning Career Center continues to provide guidance and assistance to childcare programs in Miami-Dade with assistance from the Professional Development Specialists (PDS), who support the workforce through ongoing career advisement and scholarships. The Career Center has collaborated with system partners to continue conducting outreach visits with the goal of ensuring that all childcare programs are aware of the scholarships being offered regardless of participation in a Quality Improvement System (QIS). We are also assisting programs with understanding the data requirements in the Children’s Forum Portal that are in place for those holding SR contracts. The Career Center will continue to focus on expanding scholarship opportunities in the community and meeting the professional development needs of the workforce, as well as, continue to collaborate with system partners.</p>
<p>Provide scholarships to improve compensation, education, and retention in the field of early care and education through the Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) Early Childhood® Scholarship Program. The results will be reported to policymakers and funders.</p>	<p>T.E.A.C.H. Program Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● T.E.A.C.H. displayed and presented at 8 conferences since July 1, including 3 statewide or local conferences attended by staff and 52 local provider opportunities attended by T.E.A.C.H. ambassadors. ● We have spent 63% of our scholarship dollars. ● T.E.A.C.H. has finished another monitoring review by OEL and are waiting for the final report.

Objectives	January - March 2020
	<p>Current T.E.A.C.H. data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4,874 current active scholars ● 305 current pending scholars ● 4,172 applications have been received since July 1 ● 6,929 web hits for February
<p>Operate and manage the Palm Beach Registry Services for the Children’s Services Council and the Miami-Dade Registry for The Children’s Trust.</p>	<p>Palm Beach Registry: New Practitioner Applications - 77 Miami Registry: We currently have 214 QIS participating centers going through our Portal process.</p>
<p>Provide services under contract with the Department of Children and Families by (1) evaluating applications of recognized accreditation associations for inclusion in the state’s Gold Seal Quality Care program and maintain the Gold Seal database, and (2) evaluating applications of early childhood training providers for eligibility as Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC) training program providers.</p>	<p>Gold Seal Quality Care Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Facility: 1,724 · Large Family Child Care Homes(LFCCH): 74 · Large Family Day Care Home(LFDCH): 66 <p>Total: 1,864 Programs with a Gold Seal Designation</p> <p>Gold Seal Associations Updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 15 Accrediting Associations approved for Gold Seal · National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) and National Accreditation Commission (NAC), and Green Apple Accreditation of Children Services (GAACS) renewal applications have been approved for

Objectives	January - March 2020
	<p>another 5 years.</p> <p>Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 32 FCCPC training sites · 1 program is currently inactive at this time · Pasco Hernando State College submit an application to be an approved trainer. Application is in a pending status.
<p>Develop and deliver high quality training through summits, workshops, conferences, etc..</p>	<p>Forum staff participate in relevant conferences and provide presentations as opportunities are provided. Several staff are planning presentations for the National T.E.A.C.H. Symposium.</p>
<p>Maintain the Forum's status as an authorized provider for International Association of Continuing Education and Training (IACET).</p>	<p>IACET certification is maintained and updated as needed to remain current.</p>

Goal 2: The Forum will generate and disseminate valid, reliable and current best practices, data and research informing decision-making and measuring outcomes.

Objectives	January - March 2020
Disseminate relevant research studies and policy briefs to various audiences to include practitioners and policy makers to inform the field and improve practices.	The Forum continues to share appropriate research to various audiences to include social media outlets and via email distributions through newsletters and websites.
Include research and evaluation components to test efficacy of proposed strategies and measure outcomes for early childhood educators and ultimately the children they serve in grant proposals.	All of the Forum's projects have an evaluation to ensure that the strategies employed are effective. The most recent Workforce Study for Miami-Dade County shows that the strategies through the Thrive By Five, Early Learning Career Center are making a positive difference for the workforce and the children they serve.

Goal 3: The Forum will provide collaborative leadership to promote effective policy advocacy for children and families.

Objectives	January - March 2020
Facilitate, participate, and serve on various local, state, and national level leadership initiatives to promote effective public policy and best practice.	The Forum continues to serve in leadership roles at both state and national levels to include the T.E.A.C.H. National Advisory Council, State Professional Development Steering Committee, One Goal Summer Conference Planning Committee and Children's Week.
Engage in advocacy efforts that promote the philosophy of the organization following applicable guidelines under state and federal regulations.	The Forum continues to serve in a leadership role on the Early Learning Consortium to promote effective policies serving young children.
Present and display at local, state, and national conferences on relevant topics demonstrating the expertise of Forum staff and value of programs administered.	The Forum exhibited at the Capitol during Children's Week. Forum staff also exhibited at local conferences that were substantial in

Objectives	January - March 2020
	number to dictate staff presence. Staff were also represented at the FHSA Conference in Orlando.
Support the board of director's priority to effectively engage business leaders in early childhood policy in Florida.	The Forum hosted two No Small Matter screenings (December 5 and January 28) and discussions in Tallahassee. Contact cards were also distributed at these screenings to attendees who wanted to be involved in future ECE conversations.
Maintain and expand shared services agreements with partners such as FHSA.	The Forum continues to maintain shared services agreements with FHSA. The agreement with FLAEYC was discontinued.

Goal 4: The Forum will maintain a sustainable marketing and outreach plan to educate stakeholders and the public about the value of high quality early learning, school age, and early intervention services.

Objectives	January - March 2020
Assess the needs of the field and secure funding to support the mission of the organization on an ongoing basis.	The Forum secured \$120,000 in funding from DCF to facilitate event planning services for five regional training sessions in Florida. These training sessions are 1.5 days and intended for DCF Child Welfare Supervisors.
Write and promote news, stories, and op-eds in various media throughout the state.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wil Blechman was featured on WFSU 88.9 for our No Small Matter screening and discussion on December 5. ● Phyllis wrote an editorial regarding why legislators should consider an Early Learning-20 system when it comes to teacher salaries and public education settings. The editorial was sent to Florida dailies and was published in the Palm Beach Post, the Gainesville Sun, and the Ocala Star Banner.
Promote advocacy, effective policies and practices through the Forum communications.	The Forum's advocacy messages and position are represented in the social media outlets as well as fact sheets and issue papers. Those are distributed on a routine basis to stakeholders and policy makers.
Engage the field through the Forum's membership	The Forum's membership program was featured in the Spring edition of

Objectives	January - March 2020
program.	the Forum's newsletter. The article discussed new and reduced membership options for early learning educators. Future social media and e-blast promotions to attract new Forum members are planned. As of February 28, the Forum enrolled or renewed 113 members in December, January and February for a total of \$4,995.
Maintain a presence on social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube) to increase partnerships, build awareness of programs/services and receive online donations.	Help Me Grow Florida social media platforms are active and receive engagement from followers. HMG has 1530 likes on Facebook, 1510 followers on Instagram, and 486 followers on Twitter (YTD). The Children's Forum currently has active accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube social media accounts. As of February 28, we have 2,706 likes on Facebook, 5,729 followers on Twitter, 330 followers on Instagram, and 56 subscribers on YouTube. Some Forum programs have their own active Facebook pages including T.E.A.C.H. (2,389 likes), INCENTIVE\$ (332 likes), and Early Learning Career Center (568 likes).
Write and disseminate a quarterly newsletter to promote collaboration among providers of services for young children.	The Spring edition of the Forum's e-newsletter was distributed on February 26, 2020. It was distributed to Forum program participants, members, employees, board members, ELC directors, partners and friends. The newsletter featured Phyllis's op-ed on Why legislators should consider an Early Learning-20 System, an article on a Thrive by Five participant, an article to promote our membership program, and information on CLASS assessments and observer payments.
Promote and expand professional development systems throughout the state to provide career pathways for early childhood and afterschool educators.	Forum staff facilitated the Professional Development Systems rewrite and led efforts to do so. The standards, competencies, and career pathway are now in the Office of Early Learning awaiting rule development.
Bring positive recognition to the Forum for the quality and excellence of the work.	The Forum continues to be recognized as a leader and convener with advocacy efforts and policy conversations.

Goal 5: The Forum will increase awareness of compensation disparities for the early care and education workforce.

Objectives	January - March 2020
Provide wage and salary stipends through the successful implementation of the Early Childhood Educator INCENTIVE\$ Florida Program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Active participants: 2,480 ● Participating child care programs: 863 ● 529 INCENTIVE\$ financial payments were issued during this time period ● Six-month supplement average: \$469.00, the average six-month incentive is equivalent to at least \$.45 cent an hour
Maintain an active website and other communications strategies for the public on the salary and compensation issues of the ECE workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● January 2020 - ELC of Pinellas Conference (exhibit table only) ● February 2020 - ELC of Broward Conference (presentation and exhibit table)

Goal 6: The Forum will provide collaborative leadership to improve systems of care, education, and healthy development for children.

Objectives	January - March 2020
Enhance the Professional Development Registry to serve as a resource for training and scholarship management, and to inform decision-making.	The PDR continue to be refined and the portal is being used as an entry point for T.E.A.C.H., ECE INCENTIVE\$, membership, and the Registry.
Maintain websites that will serve as the information and resource hub for the early learning field.	The Forum maintains several websites, specifically for all of our programs as well as for some of the early learning coalitions.
Provide leadership and administration of the Help	Meetings and outreach by the State Coordinating Office (SCO) to

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Me Grow Florida project to increase the access and availability of services for children and families.	<p>promote the work of the Children’s Forum and HMGF as well as to advocate for the children and families in Florida include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participating in quarterly/monthly workgroup meetings including the Early Steps Child Find workgroup, the FL ECCS Social-Emotional Development workgroup, the ECCS Data workgroup, and the ECCS Policy workgroup. ● Pilot project discussions with Reach Out and Read ● Partnership discussions with Florida HealthyKids/KidCare ● Working with early childhood experts to plan presentations for HMGF Annual Meeting 2020 <p>Data Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Received 4,634 calls (7/1/20-1/31/20- receive call data monthly) ● Served 4,623 children (7/1/20-2/27/20) ● Served 4,112 families (7/1/20-2/27/20) ● Conducted 5,332 screenings (7/1/20-2/27/20) ● Made 3,145 referrals (7/1/20-2/27/20) ● Held 696 family and community events (7/1/20-2/27/20) ● Held 869 healthcare provider events (7/1/20-2/27/20)
Support diversity in the early learning and afterschool workforce.	The programs operated by the Forum demonstrate the efforts to ensure diversity in the recipients of services and programs. The Pipeline report provided an opportunity to showcase those efforts.

Goal 7: The Forum will be administered in a cost effective and efficient manner ensuring adequate resources are available to carry out the mission of the organization.

Objectives	January - March 2020
Respond to relevant Invitations To Negotiate or Request for Proposals that are consistent with the strategic plan goals. Assure that the potential revenue, social capital and/or return on investment justifies the allocation of resources	The Forum just completed a grant application through the Early Educator Investment Collaborative under an agreement with the University of North Florida as a competitive national competition. The Forum also applied to provide meeting services through DCF for child welfare training. We received that contract.
Increase unrestricted revenue.	The Forum has secured POs from ten (10) ELCs to conduct CLASS assessments and we anticipate several more. There is also another ELC who is interested in potentially contracting services this Spring, as well. The POs total contracted services for 891 assessments, however we expect that number to increase. To date, the Forum has conducted assessments 239 this fiscal year. We are actively recruiting more assessors, especially individuals who are bilingual. We have the greatest need in South Florida and the Panhandle. We also plan to market our services to Head Start grantees.
Provide monthly financial reports to the Board ensuring board members are informed on the financial status of the Forum.	Completed.
Maintain positive audit results and monitoring reports that reflect the quality of our work.	The Forum was just audited by the Office of Early Learning's contractor, Thomas Howell & Ferguson. We may have one finding regarding cost allocation but we haven't seen the final report yet. We continue to strive to be in total compliance with all funding organizations.
Maintain quality assurance practices to ensure the ongoing quality improvement of services.	The Forum continues to self-evaluate in all of our programs and to allow feedback from participants to improve services as needed.
Strengthen the internal culture of the Forum through staff recognition and professional development	A bi-monthly edition of the <i>Forum Focus</i> newsletter is distributed internally to Forum employees and includes information such as conferences

opportunities.

employees attended, vacations they took, updates on their family members, Shout Outs to other employees on a job well done, new employee recognition, program updates, and Forum celebrations and observances.