

AGENDA

Learning Laboratories for Early Learning and Education Systems Change Conference

Miami-Dade, Florida, Mississippi, Washington, Hawai'i

March 23-26, 2009

**THE BILTMORE HOTEL
1200 Anastasia Avenue
Coral Gables, Florida 33134**

Telephone: 305-913-3105

Fax: 305-913-3147

“Partnerships to Transform Learning and Education through Community Involvement, Institutional Change, and Early Childhood Development”

In communities and states across the country, concern continues to grow that all children are not being given the opportunity to realize their full potential. As a result, the nation's social and economic future continues to be jeopardized. Leadership and innovation in four key locations around the country provide opportunities for some bold investments aimed at reversing the trajectory and life opportunities for all children.

Learning Laboratories for Early Learning and Education Systems Change Conference

Introduction: Why we do this work.

This conference in Miami is the second in a series of networking conferences - supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Learning Lab initiative - designed to connect the work in Hawaii, Washington, Mississippi and Florida as part of a movement to improve the health, education, and well-being of society's most vulnerable children. The agenda for the conference has been developed in consultation with the Learning Lab site directors from each state, the resource team of consultants, and Kellogg Foundation staff. The planning process began with a pre-conference meeting, also held in Miami, where participants initiated a dialogue about equity (racial, socio-economic, cultural) and explored personal and professional implications for making equity – and vulnerable children - an explicit goal of their work. Participants had some powerful insights and suggested we continue the exploration at the March conference. The conversation about conference planning revolved around striking the right balance between sharing specific innovations and policy developments - "the what" - and learning about the process by which these innovations and policies were developed - "the how." Finally, the Learning Lab site directors asked for structured time to work with their individual teams to do strategic action planning to advance their state-level work and to incorporate new learnings from the conference into their strategy; they also wanted some social time to network informally with colleagues from other sites while enjoying the cultural diversity and energy of Miami.

This conference represents a new way of working. Unlike conferences that have nebulous goals and focus on passive individual learning, the Learning Labs Conference embodies an edge and sense of urgency born of our collective designers' and participants' commitment to improving the life chances of the nation's most vulnerable children. It uses a call-to-action to urge the participating site teams to focus sharply on issues of equity in all aspects of their work and to keep the faces of the most vulnerable children clearly in mind as they shape their state goals and objectives. As such, the participating state teams are expected to have done pre-conference reflecting and planning so as to have a clear sense of the current status of their work as well as their long-term goals. At this conference it is hoped that each team will learn from colleagues at the host site, gain insight into dilemmas that may be impeding their progress, and sharpen their plan for accelerating their local work in the coming year. Each team will have an experienced facilitator as a resource person to help the team create the conditions necessary for the candid and sometimes difficult conversations that produce real insight. The conference has been designed to support intellectual risk-taking, promote shared learning and expertise, and provide structured time for the collaborative action planning that leads to advancements in policy development, systems change, and programmatic innovation that significantly improve educational opportunity, healthy child development, and overall child well-being.

Composition and Work of State Learning Labs Teams

As this conference is about creating a learning community, we want to share our thinking about the state teams. Each Learning Lab state director is bringing a team that will advance and accelerate their respective work in their own states. This required each state team to have a clear understanding of the current status of their own work ("where we are now") and the objectives they want to accomplish in the next phase of their work ("where we want to go next"). Each state's understanding of "where we want to go next" is what drove the selection of the participants they invited to attend the conference. As such, each state has brought a group of leaders that will enable them to achieve their policy, systems change, and programmatic objectives in the year ahead. It is expected that each Learning Lab site has come to the meeting with real work to be done and has brought a team of leaders capable of advancing that work.

To achieve the conference objectives, we, the conference planners, will create a safe environment for intellectual risk-taking, candid sharing of ideas and honest discussion. As such, the conference will work to create an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect, develop structures and processes to support deep learning conversations, and provide external facilitation where appropriate. Each site team will have an external facilitator as a resource, and site teams will have time to meet in mixed groups as well as in site team groups to explore new ideas, process new knowledge, and do strategic planning for their state work. Equity (racial, ethnic, and socio-economic) and meeting the needs of vulnerable children will be common themes that will be weaved throughout the conference.

Conference Objectives

The specific objectives of the Learning Lab conference include:

- Position equity (racial, socio-economic, ethnic) and vulnerable children as a priority of the Learning Labs initiative.
- Accelerate child policy development, systems change, and programmatic innovations that produce measurable improvements in the healthy development, well-being and learning of children.
- Share learning and challenges within and across the Learning Lab sites.
- Connect initiatives learnings across sites to accelerate child policy development in the Learning Lab states and nationally.

MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS

Project Directors

Ana Sejeck and Don Pemberton; Florida; Gale Flynn, Hawai'i and Tammi Chun, Hawai'i; Nina Auerbach, Washington; Lana Seivers, Mississippi

WKKF Staff

Greg Taylor, Valorie Johnson, Jenefer O'Dell, Sue Kellay, Jerry Schmidt, and Teri Byrd

Consultants

Lastinger Center for Learning: Don Pemberton, Alyson Adams, Pedro Bermudez, Magdi Castaneda, Jeffrey Dow, Philip Poekert

Early Childhood Initiative Foundation: Karen Liederman

Ka Honua Momona International: Noelani Lee

Makaha Studios: Solomon Alfapada, John Allen, Dee Bailey, Chad Brown, Recco Eli, Keoni Fernandez, Brittany Gomes, Ric Gresia, Sam Kapoi, Billie Lueder, Darcie Scharfenstein, Nick Smith, Kit Wynkoop

Monday, March 23, 2009

3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Registration – (Hotel Lobby)
5:00 p.m. – 6:15 p.m.	<p>State Team Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Mississippi</u> – Facilitator: Jeffrey Dow (Deering Room) • <u>Washington</u> – Facilitator: Alyson Adams (Flagler Room) • <u>Florida</u> – Facilitators: Magdi Castaneda, Philip Poekert (Prado Room) • <u>Hawaii</u> – Facilitator: Pedro Bermudez (Marbella Room)
6:15 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.	<p>Reception – (Country Club Terrace)</p> <p>Participants to sign up for Tuesday SITE VISITS</p>
7:15 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	<p>Dinner – (Country Club Ballroom)</p> <p>Welcome and Remarks</p> <p>Ana Sejeck, Project Manager, Ready Schools Miami, The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation;</p> <p>Don Pemberton, Co-Director, Ready Schools Miami, University of Florida, Lasting Center for Learning; and Greg Taylor, Vice President for Programs, W.K. Kellogg Foundation</p> <p>Makaha Studios Opening Video</p> <p>Keynote Address: Victories for Children</p> <p>David Lawrence, Jr., President and CEO, Early Childhood Initiative Foundation</p> <p>Introduction: Don Pemberton, Co-Director, Ready Schools Miami, University of Florida, Lasting Center for Learning</p>

Tuesday, March 24, 2009

7:30 a.m.	<p>Conference Registration – (Granada Lobby)</p> <p>READY SCHOOLS MIAMI AS A CATALYST FOR CHANGE</p>
7:30 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.	Breakfast Buffet – (Granada Loggia)
8:00 a.m. – 8:10 a.m.	<p>Biltmore Academy Student Performance - (Granada Ballroom)</p> <p>Originally founded in Coral Gables in 1926, The Biltmore School is the oldest operating preschool in Miami Dade County. The school enjoys a tradition of educational excellence that has provided guidance to children for close to 80 years.</p> <p>The Director, Gina Romero, and Biltmore staff members are actively involved in "Project Zero" sponsored by Harvard University that promotes creative thinking, encourages children to be self-reliant, and empowers them to think "outside the box" through a challenging curriculum incorporating instruction that maximizes the multiple intelligences, individual learning styles, and modalities.</p> <p>The Biltmore School is very fortunate to have an Atelierista working with their children and teachers. They strongly believe that active collaboration with other schools inspired in the Reggio Emilia Philosophy which is an important factor in establishing relationships that will foster growth and lead to mutual growth, camaraderie, and professional development. Children representing 19 different countries from across the globe bring a unique cultural diversity to The Biltmore School.</p>
8:10 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	<p>Welcome and Remarks</p> <p>Alberto Carvalho, Superintendent of Miami-Dade County Public Schools</p> <p>Introduction: David Lawrence, Jr., President and CEO, Early Childhood Initiative Foundation</p>
8:30 a.m. – 8:50 a.m.	<p>Theory of Change: How Did We Get Here?</p> <p>Donald Pemberton, Co-Director, Ready Schools Miami, University of Florida, Lasting Center for Learning</p>

Tuesday, March 24, 2009 (Continued)

8:50 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.	Impact of Theory: Reflective Dialogue Facilitators: Pedro Bermudez and Jeffrey Dow, Lastinger Center for Learning
9:15 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Ready Schools Miami; Historical Perspective and Expedition Overview Ana Sejeck, Project Manager, Ready Schools Miami, The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation
9:45 a.m.	Board buses for site visits (Lunches are provided at each site)
SITE VISIT ONE Limited to 30 participants	United Way Center for Excellence in Early Education, 3250 Southwest Third Avenue, Miami, FL 33129 - Quality Counts: Improving the Quality of Early Learning Experiences. The session opens with a facilitated conversation to surface participants' guiding questions for the investigation of early learning quality improvement. Seminar presenters will use resource documents and experience to provide national context for their work. Participants will learn about the work of the Early Learning Coalition, explore national best practices in quality improvement of early learning, learn about Quality Counts – Miami's QRIS model, examine the cutting-edge WELS data management computer system, tour the United Way Early Learning Center of Excellence (a state-of-the-art early learning and training center), and dialogue with experts and peers from other states.
SITE VISIT TWO Limited to 30 participants	Lillie C. Evans Elementary School, 1895 NW 75TH Street, Miami, FL 33129 - Transforming Teaching and Learning: Creating Master Teachers through Job-Embedded Professional Development. The session opens with a facilitated conversation to surface participants' guiding questions for the investigation of job-embedded professional development and its impact on teacher leadership and student achievement. Participants will tour Lillie C. Evans Elementary School where they will explore national best practices in teacher professional development in elementary schools and early learning centers; learn about new models of higher education engagement in the early learning and public school systems; review the University of Florida's Master Teacher Program (job-embedded graduate degree program); discuss Ready Schools University and dialogue with teachers, the school principal, and district and university personnel. Participants will explore how high-quality teaching and teacher leadership can advance equity and support the achievement of vulnerable children.
SITE VISIT THREE Limited to 30 participants	Riverside Elementary & Community School, 1190 SW 2nd Street, Miami, FL - The Children's Trust: Mobilizing a Community to Improve Accessibility, Availability, and Affordability of Services Essential to Child Well-Being. The session opens with a facilitated conversation to surface participants' guiding questions about targeted resource allocation and community support for increasing availability, accessibility, and affordability of children's services. Participants will examine how a dedicated funding source can work to eliminate the non-academic barriers to student success. They will learn how The Children's Trust uses child well-being data to guide program funding decisions, examine parent visitation and after-school programs, explore the implications of a lack of essential services to healthy child development and learning, and discuss how to promote equity and support the needs of the most vulnerable children by improving their access to critical services. Participants will tour a school-based Health Connect Clinic and meet with parents to learn first-hand the power of a targeted use of dedicated funds to improve child well-being and support healthy child development.
1:30 p.m.	Buses return to hotel
2:00 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.	State Team Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Mississippi</u> – Facilitator: Jeffrey Dow (Deering Room) • <u>Washington</u> – Facilitator: Alyson Adams (Flagler Room) • <u>Florida</u> – Facilitators: Magdi Castaneda, Philip Poekert (Prado Room) • <u>Hawaii</u> – Facilitator: Pedro Bermudez (Marbella Room)
5:00 p.m.	Board Buses for Reception and Dinner at Jungle Island
9:00 p.m.	Board Buses for return to hotel

Wednesday, March 25, 2009

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	Breakfast Buffet – (Granada Loggia)
	INCORPORATING EQUITY IN SYSTEMS CHANGE AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT
8:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.	Presentation of Site Visit Highlights – (Granada Ballroom) Makaha Studios
8:45 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Reflections Reports: Themes, Suggestions, and Modifications
9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	The Kellogg Commitment to Equity and Excellence: Focusing on the Most Vulnerable Children Greg Taylor, Vice President for Programs, W.K. Kellogg Foundation
9:30 a.m. – 9:40 a.m.	The Learning Labs Initiative: The WKKF Context Valorie J. Johnson, Program Director, W.K. Kellogg Foundation
9:40 a.m. – 10:10 a.m.	Reflective Dialogue: The Institutional Response to the Challenge Facilitators: Pedro Bermudez and Jeffrey Dow, Lastinger Center for Learning
10:10 a.m.– 10:20 a.m.	A Call to Action: The Learning Labs Site Response
10:20 a.m.– 10:30 a.m.	Closing Moves – Ana Sejeck
10:30 a.m.– 10:45 a.m.	Break - (Granada Loggia)
10:45 a.m. - Noon	State Team Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Mississippi</u> – Facilitator: Jeffrey Dow (Deering Room)• <u>Washington</u> – Facilitator: Alyson Adams (Flagler Room)• <u>Florida</u> – Facilitators: Magdi Castaneda, Philip Poekert (Prado Room)• <u>Hawaii</u> – Facilitator: Pete Bermudez (Marbella Room)
Noon – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch – (Center Terrace and Granada Loggia)
1:15 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.	Consultancy Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Mississippi</u> – Facilitator: Jeffrey Dow (Brickell Room)• <u>Washington</u> – Facilitator: Alyson Adams (Valencia Room)• <u>Florida</u> – Facilitators: Magdi Castaneda, Philip Poekert (Majorca Room)• <u>Hawaii</u> – Facilitator: Pedro Bermudez (Tuttle Room)
3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	World Café: Creating a Shared Experience - (Granada Ballroom)
4:45 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Site Directors' Meeting - (Anastasia Room) Jeffrey Dow, Facilitator
6:00 p.m.	Dinner on your own

Thursday, March 26, 2009

8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	Breakfast Buffet - (Granada Loggia)
8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Discovering Gloria – Unleashing Greatness - (Granada Ballroom) Introduction: Donald Pemberton, Co-Director, Ready Schools Miami, University of Florida, Lasting Center for Learning Discovering Gloria: Unleashing Greatness. Presented by students and teachers of Duval Elementary School and Fine Arts Center. This Center is located in an underserved high-poverty neighborhood; the parents, educators, university partners and students in this community discovered the richness of their culture and of their individual talents. The nurturing of the talents of teachers, students, and community produced some of the largest learning gains in the state of Florida, with Duval Elementary School raising its state grade from "F" to "A." The presentation will also pay tribute to the legacy of Gloria Merriex, a talented teacher who combined math, music, movement, and culture to lead her students to the top math achievement scores in Florida.
	Closing Ceremonies: Making Our Commitment Public
9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Break - (Granada Loggia)
10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	Closing Comments - (Granada Ballroom) Ana Sejeck, Project Manager, Ready Schools Miami, The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation
10:15 a.m.– 10:30 a.m.	Conference Goals and Initiative Aspirations Valorie Johnson, Program Director of W.K. Kellogg Foundation
10:30 a.m.– 11:00 a.m.	Reflections and Call to Action Greg Taylor, Vice President for Programs, W.K. Kellogg Foundation
11:00 a.m.- 11:15 a.m.	Site Directors' Goals Ana Sejeck, Project Manager, Ready Schools Miami, The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation
11:15 a.m.– 11:30 a.m.	Closing Video Makaha Studios
11:30 a.m.	Lunches to Go - (Granada Loggia)