

# Early Learn Environment WG Agenda

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3/10/2026

## Welcome

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- Ice Breaker: What is the most creative excuse a child has ever given you?
- **Attendees:** Maritza Cuevas, Jane DiFortuna, Vanessa Vargas, Nellie Suarez, Pilar Brzyski, Emma Tello, Lisette Martinez, Arjana Topallaj, Claribel Medrano, Alyssa Bianco, Charlene Gordon, Maryalice Fegeley

## Updates

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- Mayoral Announcement
  - Regarding early childhood
  - Will report back after the event
- Annual Event Debrief
  - 31 orgs and 53 partners tabled
  - 300 families registered / 340 attended
  - 23 families joined SIA newsletter
  - Many of the families attended had children under 3 y/o
  - Some families who attended came from outside SI (other boroughs, NJ, etc.)
  - Set-up went quickly / well organized
- Upcoming Events
  - Baby Shower w/ Healthy Families
    - 5/15/2026
    - Gerard Carter Center
    - Provide activity for the children to be engaged in
      - Arts & crafts
    - 35 families registered so far
  - UFT & SIA Back to School Event
    - August 13, 2026 @ PS 18
    - Will have SIA section, like at previous events

## Discussion

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- Annual Event – Part 2
  - Jami offered to have a part 2 of the annual event due to low attendance caused by weather and ICE concerns
  - Can hold the event outdoors – change the vibe
  - Be strategic in timing
  - Families are always looking for community events
  - Get possible dates from Jami to get a better idea of the theme, etc.
  - Will get the bouncy house
  - More forward w/ planning at next meeting
- Transitioning Activities
  - UFT/SIA Back to School BBQ Event
    - Looking to combine We Got Your Back event into BBQ
  - We Got Your Back Events
    - PS 74, PS 10 and PS 18
  - Educators Activate
    - Part of SIA SC literacy initiative
      - PS 44, PS 74, PS 18
      - KS WG is looking into local orgs and businesses that can support literacy in the community
      - Host book fairs/giveaways
        - Usually organized within the schools by the schools
      - Little free libraries
        - Maritza will send information on how to get free libraries
        - Littlefreelibrary.org
        - SIA can provide books for little libraries if needed
        - Map of libraries on website and mobile app
      - Reach out to Barnes & Noble
      - Have deli owners give incentives to kids coming in: if they get good grades or read xyz, they get a prize (free candy or snack, etc.)
      - Literacy guides in books that we give away
      - LINC literacy zones – Arjana can send more information
- Help Me Grow
  - Have entered planning and growth stage
  - Help Me Grow Committee
  - BEMI Trainings

- All trainings are via Zoom
- Reach out to Vanessa for Zoom links
- If interested, but unable to attend – can reach out for recordings

## Closing

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- Next Meeting: April 7, 2026, from 9:30am - 11am