Introduction and Opening Remarks
Meeting was called to order by Mr. Olness at 11:35 AM. There were nine members present. Introductions were made by those in attendance.

Alliance Business – Mr. Olness
July meeting minutes were tabled until the September meeting as there was not a quorum of 10 members present.

Mr. Cooper suggested that the Alliance consider changing their name to the Orange County Children’s Leadership Alliance. Since members are unable to vote on the name change during the August meeting it will be placed on the September agenda for consideration. Dr. Ellis shared that she felt the name change would broaden the mission of the Alliance.

Mr. Cooper explained to the group that the Alliance must continue to function within the Sunshine Laws as Statute requires.

There was discussion about the strategic plan and the need to keep the forward momentum with identifying work groups and will keep this as an agenda item for future
meetings. Dr. Ellis indicated there is a need to get focus back on the strategic plan and expand membership.

**Department of Children and Families** - Mr. Cooper
Mr. Cooper reported that the Department continues to look at Out of Home Care (OHC) trends. Under the leadership of Secretary Butterworth the goal was to reduce OOC 50% by 2012. The Department has gotten close to that goal; however, there has been an increase in last 18 months as well as an increase in Child Abuse Investigations. Substance abuse is the number one reason that children are coming into care. The Department continues to be involved with Mayor Jacobs’ Task Force and conducting research on prevention initiatives. Mr. Cooper discussed food stamp trends reporting that in 2007 65,000 households received food stamps and in 2011 200,000 households are receiving food stamps. There was discussion about the Second Harvest Food Bank’s Demonstration Project and what impact the outreach has had on the increase in food stamp benefits. Mr. Cooper explained that the project produces a fraction of the applications generated through the other 250 community partner sites in the area. The Department is beginning to see a plateau as the application rate stabilizes. Mr. Cooper shared that Secretary Wilkins will be visiting sometime in September. The date has not been determined at this point. Mr. Cooper would like for the Secretary to attend an Alliance meeting and suggested that the next meeting be scheduled to accommodate his visit to the area.

Mr. Cooper explained he is leading two statewide projects. The first being the Child Protective Investigation Redesign and the second being the Hotline Redesign. These projects stem from the Barahona Tragedy in South Florida. Mr. Cooper announced there has been a new Table of Organization developed for the Department which is moving the agency from a Matrix type of Model to an Operational Excellence Targeted Management Model. There will be three Regional Deputy Directors. One will be responsible for Family Safety, Adult Services and Child Care. The second responsible for the Access Program and the third will manage the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Program. There will be two Operations Managers for Access and Family Safety. Sharron Washington will be managing family safety in Circuit 9 and 5. Mr. Cooper indicated he will be sending out a Community Letter regarding the changes in the near future.

**Community Based Care of Central Florida (CBCCF)** - Nicole Bailey
Ms. Bailey provided a written report for the group. CBCCF’s focus on diverting children from foster care continues. In the month of June there were 202 children diverted from the dependency system and in July there were 259 children diverted from the system. This is an increase in large due to the partnership with the Department and community providers. In June there were 93 children staffed for services, 45 removed from their homes, and 25 placed in foster care. During the month of July there were 52 children staffed for services, 36 removed from their homes and 18 placed into foster care. Each Child Protective Investigations Service Center has a Diversion Case Manager who is certified and assists in identifying and making appropriate service referrals for families. CBCCF has also been focused on safely reducing the number of children in OHC.
In the month of June there were 79 cases closed and during the month of July there were 117 cases closed. Ms. Bailey announced that there will be a ceremony at Leu Gardens on September 14, to launch the Open your Hearts and Homes campaign to support children in foster care. Additional information will be provided to Alliance members.

**Children’s Cabinet of Orange County**- Karen Willis
Ms. Willis updated the group on the impact studies being conducted by the cabinet. She reports that there will be a final report by the end of the month and it will be circulated to the members.

Dr. Ellis updated the group on the Certification of Child Welfare Workers. The goal is to implement a certification plan by October 1, 2011. The certification will focus on Department employees as well as Community Based Care Providers. Dr. Ronneau is focusing on the transition between new certification and the certification of existing employees. Mr. Cooper commented that it is a third party credentialing effort to up skill the workforce. Dr. Ellis indicated it will be a similar process that is used by the Florida Drug and Alcohol Abuse Association’s certification of substance abuse providers. Dr. Ellis will continue to update everyone as the project progresses. The group is looking at ways to embed curriculum into UCF course work or to use existing course work in the certification process. The certification is being implemented to create a higher level of professionalism among employees.

Mr. Cooper mentioned there would be an Educational Summit with Bill Sublette and former Governor Bush participating on August 23, 2011.

There is a possibility that the September meeting will be rescheduled in an effort to coordinate a meeting with the Secretary; however, there will be more information provided at a later date.

Pastor Thompson announced the 11th Annual Gospel Rave. This is an anti drug and alcohol event held in partnership with the Orange County Drug Free Community and the Orange County Sherriff’s Office.

Mr. Cooper reminded the group that the Statewide Children’s Cabinet Meeting will be held at UCF at 1:00 on August 31, and continuing on September 1. First Lady Scott is the Chief Child Advocate and will be in attendance at the meeting.

The next Alliance meeting is scheduled for September 14, 2011 @ 11:15 at the heart of Florida United Way Building.
MINUTES APPROVED

Dick Batchelor, Co-Chair, Bill Sublette, Co-Chair