



## Finance & Operations Committee Meeting

Thursday, March 5, 2026  
3150 S.W. 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue – 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
The Children's Trust – Training Room  
9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

### Board of Directors

Kenneth C. Hoffman  
Chair  
Pamela Hollingsworth  
Vice-Chair  
Matthew Arsenault  
Treasurer  
Laurie Weiss Nuell  
Secretary

Laura Adams  
Islamiyat Nancy Adebisi  
Daniel Armstrong, Ph.D.  
Alex Auguste  
Daniel Bagner, Ph.D.  
Hon. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall, Ph.D.  
Cathy Burgos  
Silvia Castellanos  
Norie del Valle  
Lourdes Diaz  
Gilda Ferradaz  
Gioia Ploy Gentile  
Hon. Norman S. Gerstein (Ret.)  
Lourdes P. Gimenez  
Valrose Graham  
Mindy Grimes-Festge  
Osmani Gonzalez  
Hon. Keon Hardemon  
Malou C. Harrison, Ph.D.  
Ilia Molina  
Benjamin Nussbaum  
Clara Lora Ospina, Psy.D.  
Hon. Orlando Prescott  
Hon. Alex Rizo  
Hon. Isaac Salver  
Alfred Sanchez  
Miriam Soler Ramos, J.D.  
Luis E. Suarez, J.D.

David Lawrence Jr.  
Founding Chair

James R. Haj  
President & CEO

County Attorney's Office  
Legal Counsel

## AGENDA

### 9:30 a.m. **Welcome and opening remarks**

Matthew Arsenault  
*Committee Chair*

### 9:35 a.m. **Public Comments**

Matthew Arsenault  
*Committee Chair*

### 9:40 a.m. **Approval of January 8, 2026 Finance & Operations Committee minutes summary** *(Addl. Items packet, Pg. 3)*

Matthew Arsenault  
*Committee Chair*

### 9:45 a.m. **Presentation of ACFR 2024-2025**

Matthew Arsenault  
*Committee Chair*  
  
Eddy Castañeda, CPA  
*Director*  
*Forvis Mazars, LLP*

### 10:15 a.m. **Resolutions**

Matthew Arsenault  
*Committee Chair*

**Resolution 2026-A:** Authorization to negotiate and execute contract renewals with five vendors, identified herein, for advertising creative, public relations, media buying, and community outreach, in an amount not to exceed \$2,216,000.00, for a term of 12 months, commencing October 1, 2026, and ending on September 30, 2027, with two annual renewal options at the sole discretion of The Children's Trust. *(Pgs. 4-6)*

**Resolution 2026-B:** Authorization to pay SIJ Holdings, LLC d/b/a The McClatchy Company, LLC, parent company of the Miami Herald, for services rendered by the Miami Herald to advertise The Children's Trust's Truth in Millage rate, board vacancies, and other advertisements related to funding announcements, activities, initiatives, events, and programs, and to waive the formal competitive procurement process **[2/3 vote]**. In addition, authorization to enter into agreements with SIJ Holdings, LLC d/b/a The McClatchy Company, LLC, parent company of the Miami Herald,

The public is allowed to comment on a specific agenda item but must register with the Clerk of the Board prior to being allowed to comment.

for Silver Knight and Spelling Bee sponsorships. In a total amount not to exceed \$70,000.00, for a term of 12 months, commencing October 1, 2026, and ending September 30, 2027. *(Pgs. 7-8)*

**Resolution 2026-C:** Authorization to release competitive solicitations for program evaluation and community research services, in an amount not to exceed \$1,600,000.00, to externally evaluate Trust-funded initiatives and community impact, for a term of 16 months, commencing June 1, 2026, and ending September 30, 2027, with up to four annual 12-month contract renewals, subject to annual funding appropriations. Authorization to secure additional funding for these services from other sources through partnership agreements, grant applications, and other mechanisms of fund development. *(Pgs. 9-11)*

10:55 a.m. **CEO Report**

- Legislative Update
- Champions for Children Ceremony, April 16, 2026

James R. Haj  
*President & CEO*

11:00 a.m. **Adjourn**

**Reminder:**  
**Next Committee Meeting: Thursday, May 7, 2026**



**Finance & Operations Committee Meeting  
Summary of Actions Taken  
January 08, 2026  
9:30 a.m.**

**These actions were taken by the Finance & Operations Committee meeting held on January 08, 2026:**

**\*Please note that the number of board members fluctuate based on arrival and departure of some of them throughout the meeting.**

**Public comments – none.**

**Motion to approve October 10, 2025, Finance & Operations committee meeting minutes was made by Benjamin Nussbaum and seconded by Hon. Norman Gerstein. Motion passed unanimously, 8-0.**

**Resolution 2026-A: Motion to recommend the resolution to the Board of Directors on January 26, 2026, was made by Alex Auguste and seconded by Hon. Norman Gerstein.** Authorization to release a competitive solicitation for the Innovation Fund, in an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000.00, to support projects that test new ideas and strategies addressing community needs and that have not been previously implemented in Miami-Dade County, for a one-year contract period beginning October 1, 2026, with no contract renewals. **Motion passed unanimously, 8-0.**

**Resolution 2026-B: Motion to recommend the resolution to the Board of Directors on January 26, 2026, was made by Cathy Burgos and seconded by Hon. Norman Gerstein** Authorization to release a competitive solicitation to identify an entity to operate The Children's Trust Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) program, in a total amount not to exceed \$260,000.00, to facilitate youth leadership and civic engagement programming of the YAC, for a term of 12 months, commencing July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027, with four annual contract renewals, subject to annual funding appropriations. **Motion passed unanimously, 8-0.**

**Resolution 2026-C: Motion to recommend the resolution to the Board of Directors on January 26, 2026, was made by Alex Auguste and seconded by Dr. Daniel Armstrong.** Authorization to contract with a new subcontractor to replace SquareWorks Consulting, LLC, the subcontractor approved in Resolution #2023-67, by the Board of Directors on July 10, 2023. **Motion passed unanimously, 8-0.**

**Resolution 2026-D: Motion to recommend the resolution to the Board of Directors on January 26, 2026, was made by Hon. Norman Gerstein and seconded by Thamara Labrousse.** Authorization to approve revisions to Section 2009 of the procurement policy pertaining emergency funding and all delegations of authority reflected therein. The updated policy change will take effect on February 1, 2026, and will remain in effect unless edited and approved by the Board in the future. **Motion passed unanimously, 8-0.**

**Meeting adjourned at 10:26 a.m.**

## The Children's Trust Board Meeting

**Date: March 16, 2026**

**Resolution: 2026-A**

---

**Strategic Framework Priority Investment Area:** Community Engagement, Awareness, and Advocacy: Public Awareness, Outreach, and Program Promotion.

**Strategic Framework Headline Community Results:** This investment supports all headline community results.

**Recommended Action:** Authorization to negotiate and execute contract renewals with five vendors, identified herein, for advertising creative, public relations, media buying, and community outreach, in an amount not to exceed \$2,216,000.00, for a term of 12 months, commencing October 1, 2026, and ending on September 30, 2027, with two annual renewal options at the sole discretion of The Children's Trust.

**Budget Impact:** Funding in the amount of \$2,216,000.00 is projected to be available in FY 2026-2027.

---

**Description of Services:** This resolution authorizes The Children's Trust to negotiate and execute contract renewals with multiple vendors across the communications and community outreach services listed in the table below for the third year of a five-year funding cycle, with two annual renewal options remaining at The Children's Trust sole discretion.

These combined efforts enhance The Children's Trust's digital presence, improve community engagement, and effectively promote its mission and services. Communications and community outreach efforts include general and strategic campaigns and initiatives that reach various community stakeholders, service providers, families, youth, and the public. Communications services to be funded include:

- Advertising creative, which involves the development and execution of effective advertising campaigns in multiple languages, and the creation of various communications assets for multimedia public awareness and marketing campaigns.
- Specialized media buying and community outreach efforts focusing on African American and Haitian American communities, utilizing specific media expertise and community connections to develop multilayered outreach strategies and targeted media buys.
- General media buying, a critical component, encompasses comprehensive media plans, negotiation for the best rates, and analysis of media buys to ensure goals are met and added value is achieved.
- Public relations services are vital for securing earned media placements, managing The Trust's community reputation, and increasing awareness of Trust-funded programs and initiatives.

Resolution 2026-A- Community Engagement, Awareness, & Advocacy, Public Awareness, Outreach, & Program Promotion - Multiple Communications Services (Communications and Parenting/Book Club budgets)

March 16, 2026

Most of the services outlined above are also provided under separate contract agreements to support communications and community outreach services specifically for The Children’s Trust’s Book Club through the Parenting budget, as noted in the table below.

<b>Contract</b>	<b>Vendor</b>	<b>From Communications Budget</b>	<b>From Parenting/ Book Club Budget</b>	<b>Funding Amount Not to Exceed</b>
Advertising Creative	Agencia Central, LLC	\$390,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$450,000.00
African American and Haitian Creole Media Buy and Community Outreach	Armstrong Creative Consulting, Inc. and The Creative Esquire, LLC	\$261,000.00 \$115,000.00	\$100,000.00 \$65,000.00	\$361,000.00 \$180,000.00
General Media Buying	WOW Factor Marketing Group, Inc.	\$1,125,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$1,175,000.00
Public Relations Services	Alfredo J. Balsera, P.A. d/b/a Balsera Communications	\$50,000.00	n/a	\$50,000.00
<b>Total Funding Amount Not to Exceed:</b>				<b>\$2,216,000.00</b>

**Background:** In the Children’s Trust’s 23-year history, trilingual communications in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole and community outreach have been key components in making the public aware of the programming and resources available from The Children’s Trust. The ability to spread awareness of The Children’s Trust’s mission and role in the community is critical to the organization’s success and essential to bring the services, programs, and resources it funds to the children and families of Miami-Dade County.

As The Children’s Trust’s positive impact grows, so must its communication efforts. In recent years, communications and community outreach have increased positive brand awareness, with record attendance at community events, record numbers of attendees to Trust solicitation information sessions, and other significant increases in exposure and recognition.

Funds proposed for each contract are at the same levels as FY 2025-2026.

**Procurement Policy:** Per the procurement policy, Section 2001, purchase of operational goods and services greater than \$50,000.00, requires a formal competitive procurement process. On November 3, 2023, The Children’s Trust released multiple competitive requests for proposals (RFPs) to secure vendors for various essential communications and community outreach services. On March 18, 2024, The Children’s Trust board approved the funding recommendations from the competitive requests for proposals, RFPs #2024-05, 2024-06, 2024-08, and 2024-09, for a five-year funding cycle. After a comprehensive review process, staff recommended the five vendors identified herein for funding. This request for approval

represents the third contract year in the current funding cycle. Recommendations for renewal are based on successful performance in the first and second contract years.

**Geographic Area:** Countywide

The foregoing recommendation was offered by \_\_\_\_\_ who moved its approval. The motion was seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

The Chairperson thereupon declared the resolution duly passed and adopted this **16<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2026.**

THE CHILDREN'S TRUST  
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

BY \_\_\_\_\_

SECRETARY

Approved by County Attorney for form and legal sufficiency \_\_\_\_\_

## The Children's Trust Board Meeting

**Date: March 16, 2026**

**Resolution: 2026-B**

---

**Strategic Plan Priority Investment Area:** Community Engagement, Awareness, and Advocacy: Public Awareness, Outreach, and Program Promotion

**Strategic Plan Headline Community Results:** This investment supports all headline community results.

**Recommended Action:** Authorization to pay SIJ Holdings, LLC d/b/a The McClatchy Company, LLC, parent company of the Miami Herald, for services rendered by the Miami Herald to advertise The Children's Trust's Truth in Millage rate, board vacancies, and other advertisements related to funding announcements, activities, initiatives, events, and programs, and to waive the formal competitive procurement process **[2/3 vote]**. In addition, authorization to enter into agreements with SIJ Holdings, LLC d/b/a The McClatchy Company, LLC, parent company of the Miami Herald, for Silver Knight and Spelling Bee sponsorships. In a total amount not to exceed \$70,000.00, for a term of 12 months, commencing October 1, 2026, and ending September 30, 2027.

**Budget Impact:** Funding in the amount of \$70,000.00 for this resolution is projected to be available in FY 2026-2027.

---

**Description of Services:** The Children's Trust publishes advertisements across various printed media outlets to effectively reach a broad audience throughout the year about key Trust-related activities. The Children's Trust is also required by statute to advertise in a newspaper of general circulation in the county. As part of The Trust's overall approach, the Miami Herald and El Nuevo Herald are among the publications utilized to disseminate essential announcements, including those related to the Truth in Millage (TRIM) rate, board vacancies, funding opportunities, and community activities, initiatives, events, and programs. The Miami Herald extends its nonprofit advertising rate to The Children's Trust:

The Miami Herald Silver Knight Awards Ceremony is among the nation's most highly regarded student awards programs. It recognizes outstanding high school students who have unselfishly applied their knowledge and talents to contribute significant service to their communities.

The Miami Herald Spelling Bee offers South Florida schools the opportunity to participate in the Scripps National Spelling Bee program. The champion represents their county in the annual Scripps National Spelling Bee near Washington, D.C.

The costs associated with the services and sponsorships outlined above are noted in the table below.

<b>Service/Sponsorship</b>	<b>Budget Not to Exceed</b>
Various Media Advertisements (as needed) in The Miami Herald and El Nuevo Herald	\$32,500.00
The Miami Herald Silver Knight Awards sponsorship	\$30,000.00
The Miami Herald Spelling Bee sponsorship	\$7,500.00

**Background:** The Miami Herald has published print and online advertisements for The Children’s Trust since 2003. The Trust has also sponsored the Silver Knight and Spelling Bee events for nine and 14 years, respectively. The Trust’s relationship with the Miami Herald as a valuable and helpful advertising partner offers a beneficial return on its investment.

**Request for Procurement Waiver (requires approval of a 2/3 vote of board members present):** Per the procurement policy, Section 2000, purchase of operational goods and services greater than \$10,000.00 requires a formal competitive procurement process. This resolution seeks to waive that requirement for services rendered by the Miami Herald to advertise The Children’s Trust’s Truth in Millage rate, board vacancies, and other advertisements related to funding announcements, activities, initiatives, events, and programs, as outlined in Section 2000-I, which requires approval of a 2/3 vote of board members present. A waiver is being sought because the competitive procurement process is impractical as The Trust must adhere to certain statutory requirements, and the Miami Herald is the only major newspaper company in Miami-Dade County that publishes daily and in two languages. Additionally, the Miami Herald extends its nonprofit rate to The Children’s Trust.

**Geographic Area:** Countywide

The foregoing recommendation was offered by \_\_\_\_\_ who moved its approval. The motion was seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

The Chairperson thereupon declared the resolution duly passed and adopted this

**16<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2026.**

THE CHILDREN’S TRUST  
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

BY \_\_\_\_\_

SECRETARY

Approved by County Attorney for form and legal sufficiency \_\_\_\_\_

# The Children's Trust Board Meeting

Date: March 16, 2026

Resolution: 2026-C

---

**Strategic Framework Priority Investment Area:** Learning & Quality Improvement: Program Evaluation & Community Research; Thrive by 5 Early Childhood Development; and Health & Wellness.

**Strategic Framework Headline Community Results:** This investment supports all headline community results.

**Recommended Action:** Authorization to release competitive solicitations for program evaluation and community research services, in an amount not to exceed \$1,600,000.00, to externally evaluate Trust-funded initiatives and community impact, for a term of 16 months, commencing June 1, 2026, and ending September 30, 2027, with up to four annual 12-month contract renewals, subject to annual funding appropriations. Authorization to secure additional funding for these services from other sources through partnership agreements, grant applications, and other mechanisms of fund development.

**Budget Impact:** Funding for this resolution is allocated for FY 2025-2026 and is projected to be available in FY 2026-2027.

---

**Description of Services:** This resolution authorizes The Children's Trust to release competitive solicitations for program evaluation and community research services. These requests for proposals (RFPs) relate directly to evaluating the implementation and impact of Trust investments in multiple service areas, including but not limited to:

- Thrive by 5's Quality Improvement System (QIS), which is currently funded for \$47.5 million annually, with 361 participating providers and more than 2,500 teachers, serving up to 32,376 young children.
- HealthConnect in Our Schools (HCiOS), which is currently funded at \$26 million annually to serve 267 Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) and 15 charter schools attended by more than 200,000 students.
- Overall program participants' input through surveys, observations, and focus groups.
- Collection and integration of community-level data about the well-being of children in Miami-Dade County.
- The overall economic impact and return on investment of having an organization like The Children's Trust in Miami-Dade County.

Each major initiative of The Children's Trust has an evaluation framework that specifies the theory of change, a program logic model, and key evaluation questions. The program evaluation and community research services to be procured will be used to answer those key questions. Data may include information on staffing, participants, services received, program implementation, impact on participants, costs, and the community. Expert services to be procured include, but are not limited to:

- Primary data collection through observations, surveys, focus groups, interviews, and other methods.
- Data preparation, cleaning, and modeling to prepare for analysis.

- Quantitative and qualitative analysis of newly collected and existing Trust and other community datasets, such as from Miami-Dade County Public Schools, the Early Learning Coalition, the US Census, and the like.
- Results sharing through development of compelling learning products, including engaging and clear data visualizations, dashboards, reports, and presentations tailored to specific audiences and purposes. Some potential audiences may include The Trust Board of Directors, service providers, federal and state policymakers, other philanthropic organizations, property taxpayers, current and future program participants, and the like.

In addition, staff seeks authorization to secure additional funding for program evaluation and community research services from other sources through partnership agreements, grant applications, and other mechanisms of fund development.

All funding recommendations will be returned to the board for approval following the application review process.

**Background:** The Children’s Trust is a learning organization that values data-informed discussion and decisions. This resolution aligns with The Children’s Trust’s strategic framework and board guidance across multiple areas. The investments proposed in this resolution represent repurposed efforts from current annual investments of \$2,239,358.00 in early childhood and in research/evaluation budget lines.

The Thrive by 5 QIS is one of The Trust’s largest investments and has been recognized nationally as an innovative, multifaceted strategy to improve the quality of early learning for young children since its inception in 2018. It is a well-developed integrated system of supports that tracks data at the child care provider, teacher, and child levels, that has a high readiness for program evaluation and complex data analyses that can tell us more about what combination of components contribute meaningfully to different outcomes. Previously funded early childhood community research was not specifically designed to evaluate a major Trust investment, as will be sought in this work. The five-year funding cycle for the current early childhood community research initiative is ending in September 2026, so these funds can be redirected to support the evaluation of Thrive by 5 QIS.

HCIOS began a new five-year funding cycle in July 2025, to implement a tiered model of care that offers various levels of support based on the needs of students at different schools, rather than a one-size-fits all model. The strategic planning process for HCIOS involved collaboration with the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade, M-DCPS, numerous health experts, and community stakeholders. The goals were to expand the reach to more schools and students, explore more efficient delivery methods, and identify the necessary funding from The Trust and other sources to achieve these goals. One of the major recommendations was to incorporate a formal external evaluation of program implementation and impact to assess the effectiveness of new service model and ensure the best deployment of services across schools.

With The Trust’s 25-year anniversary on the horizon, program evaluation and community research related to program participants’ input, community data about child well-being, and the overall economic benefits The Trust brings to the community can all contribute meaningfully to conveying our impact within Miami-Dade County.

**Procurement Policy:** This request for release of competitive solicitations for program evaluation and community research falls under Section 2001, Formal Competitive Procurement Process for Operational Goods and Services.

**Geographic Area:** Countywide.

The foregoing recommendation was offered by \_\_\_\_\_ who moved its approval. The motion was seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

The Chairperson thereupon declared the resolution duly passed and adopted this **16<sup>th</sup> day of March 2026.**

THE CHILDREN'S TRUST  
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

BY \_\_\_\_\_

SECRETARY

Approved by County Attorney for form and legal sufficiency \_\_\_\_\_