

GATEWAY SCHOOL READINESS COALITION
Thursday, April 4, 2002
Minutes

Members Present: Chris Bond, John Burns, Randy Cox, Hugh Giebeig, Brenda Graham, Jean Graham, Sandy Looney, Pam Norman, Jeannette Peters, Nancy Roberts, Sheryll Walker, John Wheeler

Members Absent: Mike Deming, JoAnn Hendricks, Lorenzo Mills, Carol Milton, Gil Roser, Marilyn Rossborough, and Francesca Whitener

Others Present: Anna Friar (Chatterbox Daycare), Michele Ward (SV4Cs), Lisa Holliday (SV4Cs), Sherry Bullard (Children's Workshop), Donna Epridania (Florida Partnership Contract Manager), Kirkland Spraggins (Florida Partnership Contract Manager), Prudence Pate (GSRC Executive Director), and Kelli Strawder (GSRC Admin Assist.)

Welcome: Nancy Roberts, Chair, welcomed the members and guests.

Guest: John Richmond of Saxon Publishers, Inc. presented a flyer on Early Childhood Phonics curriculum for review.

A concern was expressed by Jeannette Peters following the presentation that in the future, the Coalition deny any last minute request for solicitation by sales representatives. It was requested that these types of presentations be placed on the agenda in advance. The members concurred and requested that the record reflect said concern.

A quorum was declared.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the regular meeting held March 7, 2002 were submitted for review and approval. A motion was made by Chris Bond and seconded by John Burns to approve the minutes. **The motion passed unanimously.**

The minutes from the Finance and Contract Committee meeting held March 13, 2002 were presented. Jeannette Peters expressed concern that the committee(s) recommended that the dollars from the first quarter Central Agency contract be used for enhancements. John Burns replied that the Executive Committee received the recommendation, but the dollars were placed into slots on the Contract Amendment.

Financial Report: John Burns presented the financial reports for March 1, 2002 through March 31, 2002. The monthly Expenditure Report for February 1, 2002 through February 28, 2002 was also presented. A motion was made by Jeannette Peters and seconded by Hugh Giebeig to approve the Financial Report and Expenditure Report as presented. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Executive Director's Report: The monthly report was presented by Prudence Pate to include the following information:

- **STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION**

The Florida Partnership for School Readiness Board met on March 18, 2002 in Tallahassee for a Strategic Planning Session. The session was held to identify the major Partnership goals and to articulate the direction of this year's efforts. Specific objectives aligned with these components were determined, along with targeted activities. The plan will be completed for formal adoption at a future board meeting.

- **FLORIDA PARTNERSHIP FOR SCHOOL READINESS BOARD MEETING**

The FPSR Board Meeting was held on March 19, 2002 in Tallahassee, FL. The following information was discussed:

- Minutes from the January 15, 2002 Board Meeting and February 22, 2002 Conference Call were distributed.
- Future Meetings were announced as follows:
 - Tuesday, May 21, 2002 Orlando, FL (location TBA)
 - Tuesday, July 16, 2002 Hyatt Regency, Tampa, FL
 - September 26, 2002 Radisson Hotel, Orlando, FL
- Report of the Florida Partnership Executive Director was distributed.
- The Florida Partnership for School Readiness will include in the new Coalition Plan a section for services to school-age children. Local school readiness coalitions wishing to serve school age children can request authority to serve this population by completing this section of the Coalition Plan. Upon approval of the Coalition Plan, the local school readiness coalition can serve children under the age of kindergarten entry and school-age children in the manner described in the Coalition Plan.
- TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) Compliance and Re-Authorization report was given by the Partnership Contract Manager, Donna Epreddania indicating that these clients are to priority to be served within seven (7) days of referral.
- As a result of the Budget Action Plan submitted to the Partnership last month, the Gateway School Readiness Coalition was approved to receive the amount of the shortfall plus 90% to total \$787,641. (This amount was included in the contract amendment.)
- A draft of the revised Coalition Plan was made available at the Partnership meeting. A workgroup was formed to review the draft for approval in May 2002. The final revision is scheduled to be available by September 2002. Coalitions are to operate under current plan until new plan is submitted and approved.
- Coalition Funding Agreement – The board adopted the policy that funding will be moved to coalitions in the 2002-2003 fiscal year using a funding agreement, which will replace the current contract documents. A draft was distributed. This draft is pending legal review and review by the Comptroller.
- Migrant children in Florida are provided school readiness services through the local coalitions and central agencies, through school districts and through a statewide contract for services with the Redlands Christian Migrant Association (RCMA). This complementary system of services provides flexibility to serve families in their current environment and to follow them

throughout Florida as they move with the agricultural seasons and crops. RCMA is the only organization based in Florida that has specialized in serving the children of migrant and seasonal farm worker families. They are uniquely qualified to address the cultural and language barriers, social isolation, health-related problems and educational challenges of population at high-risk of school failure. The board approved to seek a Sole Source method of procurement for a three-year contract with RCMA for services to migrant children and families. Annual review and re-negotiation of the contract will be required.

- Invitation to Negotiate for Resource and Referral – ITN to be released by April 1, 2002 and a contract to be executed by July 1, 2002.
- Request for Proposal (RFP) for Quality Initiative – *Emergency Conference Call was held on April 2, 2002 for the board to reconsider this issue.* The board approved a reconsideration of the action. After lengthy discussion with public input, a vote was taken to move forward with Option 2, which includes:
 - Development of an RFP for a statewide quality services contractor
 - Continuation of local funding through the selected statewide quality services contractor to central agencies for one year.
 - Development of a written plan between the coalition and central agency for how quality services will be delivered.
 - Transition to direct administration of quality services funds by local coalitions in year two.
 - Development of a more flexible and responsive system for training and technical assistance with the statewide contractor.

- **PRIVATE PROVIDER’S MEETING**

A meeting of the private child care providers was held on March 21, 2002. The purpose of the meeting was to give providers an overview of school readiness and answer questions concerning the next fiscal year. A copy of the minutes was distributed.

- **COALITION MEMBER FILES**

A request was made of all coalition members to complete the necessary missing documents and return to staff. It was noted that the Statement of Financial Interest could be obtained from the Supervisor of Elections Office in the county of residence. The form should be completed and filed with the Supervisor of Elections office, and a copy forwarded to Gateway School Readiness Coalition staff.

- **MEMBERSHIP TERMS**

Members were reminded that membership terms for private sector members, John Burns and Lorenzo Mills, expire June 30, 2002. According to the By-Laws (Section 5) *Extension may be requested of a current member. Upon review and approval of the Nominating Committee, the request will be sent to the Coalition for approval. An extension must be for a period of at least one (1) year and not more than three (3) years.* and (Section 7), *Representative and appointed members may serve a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms.* Requests for extension need to be submitted to the Executive Director this month.

- **MULTI-COUNTY GRANT AMENDMENT**
Grant amendment was approved. The materials were ordered and paid. The \$20,000 has been expended.
- **MONITORING**
Monitoring will take place with the Alachua County coalition the week of April 15, 2002. Randy Cox and Francesca Whitener will be assisting the Executive Director in this task. It was additionally noted that the Gateway School Readiness Coalition would begin looking at the monitoring tool for adoption and scheduling monitoring in the coalition area before June 30, 2002.
- **PRE-K CONTRACT ADDENDUM**
Contract Addendums have been signed and received by Hamilton and Lafayette County as of April 3, 2002. In order to pay February invoices, Contract Addendums from Columbia needed to be signed and forwarded. Addendums from Suwannee and Union County were received at the meeting.
- **MIGRANT INVOICE**
Invoices for PreK Migrant (Suwannee, Lafayette, and Hamilton) can be submitted for payment for the 3rd Quarter.
- **MONTHLY PROGRAM REPORTS**
A Monthly Program report was not received by Columbia County for the month of February. The Executive Director noted that programs should be reporting funded enrollment, current enrollment, fees assessed, and fees collected. It was further noted that funded enrollment numbers do not change during the contracted period.

Contract Manager Report: Donna Epridania was present in the absence of Michael Reneke. She talked with the coalition regarding parent fees. Information from St. Lucie County was shared with the members. St. Lucie pays providers 100% allocation and the providers actually write a check to the Fiscal Agent for monthly parent fees. They also have in place a policy for collection and a policy for hardship cases.

Infant/Toddler Quality Improvement Report: Michele Ward, SV4Cs, presented the coalition with the quarterly report for the Infant/Toddler program. She indicated that 10 centers were being served. Each year, all centers are assessed to determine need for assistance.

County Distribution and Contact: After some discussion, this item was deleted from the agenda, but not before a recommendation was made that the coalition consider developing a web site. This idea will be researched and addressed at a later date.

Comments:

John Burns requested information concerning a Technical Assistance meeting to be held in April 2002. The Contract Manager stated that we would receive information as soon as it was made available.

Anna Friar requested that the coalition remember the needs of school-aged children when working and negotiating contracts for the new fiscal year. She also requested that the coalition help providers meet the quality of services to provide wrap around care and extended day care for next year.

Lisa Holliday, SV4Cs, stressed to the coalition the successful activities completed through the Quality Initiative dollars.

Brenda Graham asked if ESE PreK students are required to pay parent fees. The answer was no.

John Burns announced that he would be visiting SV4Cs on Wednesday, April 10, 2002 to learn how the various programs functions. This is an effort on his part to learn more about School Readiness and the factors involved.

New Business:

- Jeannette Peters shared information regarding an opportunity through Early Head Start for available expansion money. She requested that the coalition authorize the Executive Director authority to sign a letter of support for this application. A motion was made by John Burns and seconded by Hugh Giebeig for Jeannette to submit notification of interest and application. **The motion passed unanimously.**

May Agenda:

- Nominating Committee – 2002-2003 Slate of Officers
- Schedule of Committee meetings, tasks, and deadlines relating to the new fiscal year (new contract).
- Monitoring tools

A motion was made by John Burns and seconded by Sheryll Walker to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

The next meeting will be held Thursday, May 2, 2002 at 9:00 a.m., at the Columbia County School Board Administrative Office, SOS Building (Student Outreach Service Center), Room 153, 528 West Duval Street, Lake City, Florida.