

**Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Gateway
Board Meeting Minutes
Coalition Training Room, Suite 140
Lake City, Florida
March 2, 2005**

Members Present:

Chris Bond, John Burns, Cindy Kent for Jeanne Duffy, Hugh Giebeig, Ray Logan, Carol Milton, Pam Norman, Prudence Pate, Nancy Roberts, John Wheeler and Paula Williams.

Others in Attendance:

Kim Service (Wee Care Day Care), Sam Sweazy (AWI-OEL), Francesca Whitener (SV4C's), Thomas F. Logan, Ph.D. (Executive Director), LaShone T. Surrency (Deputy Director), Shannon Bryant (Finance Director), Carrie Sapp (Program Manager), Jamie Witzman (Enrollment Manager), Jessie Tampoc (IT Manager) and Heidi Moore (Executive Assistant).

Members Absent:

Charles Carroll, Mike Deming, Anita Franklin, Sandy Looney, Richard Mitchell, John Pierce, Jennifer Roberts, David Rountree and Sheryll Walker.

Welcome and Call to Order

John Burns called the meeting to order at 9:20 a.m. Mr. Burns welcomed everyone and introduced our visitors.

- Update on Board Membership – A spreadsheet was given to the Board that tracks the new requirements for Board membership. It shows the voting and non-voting members.

Note: Due to the new legislation defining a quorum as being the majority of “voting” members, the Board did not meet these criteria. Therefore anything requiring a vote would have to be completed at the next board meeting.

Minutes

John Burns started the meeting with a review of the minutes from the previous board meeting. Prudence Pate corrected the minutes to read that John Burns did not *suggest* the Board Action be tabled but did in fact table the Board Action.

Financial Report

John Burns explained that since the March Board meeting was rescheduled earlier this month, the financial report for February and March will be given at the April Board meeting.

Staff and Committee Reports

Executive Director's Report

- Personnel Update – Claudia Zamora resigned her position as Program Specialist. Stacey Nettles has joined us as fiscal/administrative assistant and Melissa Brady has joined us as Program Specialist.
- Amending the Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws –
 - When VPK was added to School Readiness as the Coalitions' missions, the legal mandate changed in terms of how the former School Readiness Coalitions should describe themselves. The first thing this change required was that Coalitions change their names Early Learning Coalitions instead of School Readiness Coalitions. As a result our existing corporate structure had to be amended to reflect that change.
 - Lily Johnson, The Gateway attorney, prepared the documents for the change.
 - The by-laws had to change as well to reflect the revised structure of the Board.
 - John Burns wants the members to review the documents and he will call for a vote at the April meeting.
 - Carol Milton asked if there was still a By-Laws Committee and John Burns stated that this was given directly from the Executive Committee to the attorney, Lily Johnson.
 - Nancy Robertson thinks that there may be additional changes as AWI continues to work because they said that they will be providing some guidance for By-laws revisions.
 - Dr. Logan stated that he did have a draft guidance that he gave to Lily but we don't have a final version. He also said it was a good idea that we wait until April to vote on them.
- VPK Provider meeting (March 1, 2005)
 - We had about 30-35 providers come to the meeting including school board representatives.
 - Dr. Logan showed a PowerPoint from AWI on some of the issues.
 - Dr. Logan shared information with the providers that he received at the DOE standards meeting. The legislation call for DOE to establish standards for children's progress and development within the VPK program. As of April 1, DOE has to have in place standards for children's growth and development. They have created a new category called Emergent Literacy.
 - The committee who created this which included Dr. Logan will reconvene after April 1 to put the language into the standards that will make sense to the Providers.
 - Chris Bond told the Board that the Provider meeting was very well given and had an incredible amount of information for the providers.

- The Florida Center for Reading Research website address is www.fcrr.org. They have rated all the supplementary reading programs that are commonly used by PreK programs. If you click on their website you will get a summary of the programs to see how they rated them. In about a month, on their website, they will have ratings of global curriculums.
- Many of the Board members attended the DOE/AWI meeting along with Dr. Logan. This meeting brought together school board superintendents or their designees and executive directors from the Coalitions.
 - They did suggest that the Governor's office and the Legislature were talking about a fix on the participation of school boards in the school-year VPK program. Unfortunately, Union County is not presently at their class size reduction goal and will not be able to participate in the coming school year as a school-based program. The state school board will meet in mid March, and hopefully by then there will be some kind of an agreement to allow counties that have currently met their class size reduction quota to participate in the school year program but Dr. Logan made it clear that this by no means certain.
 - They also said the start-up dollars will be coming this week. All of the expenses incurred to this point will be shifted to the VPK cost center once we establish one.
 - They were given a piece of paper with next steps for Coalitions. Dr. Logan suggested the ADHOC VPK committee might be able to begin working on these six steps on the implementation of VPK.
- Coalition Plan – Dr. Logan would like to get the Boards approval to submit this. All of the sections have been reviewed by the Quality Committee and returned to Dr. Logan with their comments. The Plan is due in the OEL/AWI office on March 15, 2005. The Quality Committee will give their final approval on the Plan in their meeting immediately following this Board meeting.

Deputy Director's Report

- Rilya Wilson Act – ELC-FG provided Partnership for Strong Families with a spreadsheet to track the at-risk children. PSF has given one to ELC-FG of all of their at-risk children. We are in the process of comparing the two spreadsheets to ensure both groups have the same information. If not, the information will be send back to PSF and they will send us a termination notice for the children no longer eligible under protective services. ELC-FG does not want to disenroll these children if they are eligible under another funding group. These children will be reviewed on a case by case basis. John Burns wants to make sure there is not a gap in care if these children are eligible.
- Children's Week – 10th Anniversary "Celebrating Parents and Children". LaShone and Carrie and the Program Department would like to present a Children's Day in the field next to the office. Board members, parents and providers will be encouraged to bring children at no cost. We would also like to have key officials as keynote speakers. The event will be scheduled from 9am – noon on April 8. We may extend the time depending on the response.
- Knowledge Point (HR) Software – This software provides information on the laws as it pertains to personnel issues.

- Preschool Screenings – Chris Bond collaborated with FDLRS on the preschool screenings. We received a schedule and will be assisting with screenings and providing a Resource and Referral information table and will also present an eligibility intake process for future enrollment.

Finance Director's Report

Because this meeting is on the second of the month, the figures are not available yet. Shannon provided the Board with a budget analysis through the month of January.

- Shannon explained that the Coalition is projected to run a surplus since the enrollment in the first seven months of the year was lower than anticipated.
- We are managing that surplus by enrolling ALL children from the waiting list as well as walk-ins.
- We are also looking into reallocating some of the monies budgeted for slots into quality projects.
- We are on track with admin. spending.
- We are going to spend significantly under the allowed amount on non-direct services and probably eligibility.
- Gilbert Rincon has emailed us and confirmed that we are allowed to spend as little as 70% in slots but has recommended we stay above 74% if we chose to redistribute those funds.
- Prudence Pate asked if the figures reflect the attendance policy change from allowing five absences to seven. The impact of the change has not been calculated as it just became effective in February attendance reimbursement. Dr. Logan states that we will have an internal report on the last couple of months in terms of how many non-excused absences we have had in order to give us some idea of what will happen when we begin to excuse more of those than we did in the past.
- Dr. Logan reminds the Board that the number of enrolled and reimbursed children in February will be considerably higher.
- The money will not be moved until the impact of all factors has been taken into consideration.
- Nancy Roberts asked if there has been any thought given to extending the time for reconciling reimbursements in light of the new attendance policy. Prudence Pate believes that would be a change in the language in the contract from 30 days to perhaps 60 days. John Burns would like the Finance Committee to look into that. A PPA (Prior Period Adjustment) would be able to address those situations.

Program Manager's Report

- Carrie Sapp informed the Board of the events of the Program Department.
- They had the second annual sign language workshop to which they had about 80 participants.
- They had another 3-Hour Fundamentals of Child Care workshop.
- Andrea Ritch presented a workshop called Recycle it into Artwork and the response was so great that we had to schedule a second workshop so that the people that we had to turn away could participate.
- CPR/First Aid classes are being taught on a regular basis.
- Carrie also provided a list of upcoming events.

- The pre-test with the LAP 3 has been completed and the reports have been given to all of the teachers. The response on the reports by the teachers has been very positive.

Enrollment Manager's Report

- Jamie Witzman reported that as of Monday, the unduplicated enrollment count was 2192. 204 income eligible children have been enrolled since February 1st. All eligible children are being enrolled.
- The Enrollment staff received training on administering the Ages & Stages Questionnaire.
- The BG1 unduplicated enrollment is 179 in comparison to last month's count of 176.
- The VPK count is rising. We have 38 providers and 134 children expressing interest.

IT Manager Report

- Jessie presented his website statistics. There are many more people visiting the website than previously.
- We have also created a child developmental screen database so we can hold all the screening information and create reports with the data.

Executive Committee Report

- The Executive Committee met and reviewed the Organizational Chart.
- John Burns reiterates that the Board has already discussed the amending of the Articles of Incorporation and revising the By-Laws and Board Membership.
- The Executive Committee did approve, in compliance with the directive from AWI, that effective February 2nd we would have three excused absences and then anything after three would require a note up to seven. The Executive Committee reviewed it and approved it. Prudence Pate interjected "contingent upon Board approval." John Burns explained that this was already enacted and since there was not a quorum present, the Board will have to approve it in April. Dr. Logan explains that under the new regulations, a quorum is defined as the majority of the "voting" members. Prudence Pate wanted to make sure the language in the form that was sent to providers was approved by the State. Dr. Logan stated that we borrowed the language from the regulations. Dr. Logan will have Sam Sweazy look at it today for approval. Prudence explained that in the previous policy the word "extraordinary" was defined at a different level than now. She is concerned that no one has defined its meaning in this policy. Dr. Logan stated that our interpretation of the regulation is that except in the one case of the home stay that the documentation required is a more technical form of documentation. The only extraordinary circumstance absence that the state mentions that would allow an informal documentation is home stay for illness. We offered to the providers a sample of how you might document home stay for illness. Prudence just wants to make sure that we are protecting ourselves in saying that that form will be interpreted by the people that will come back and audit as appropriate documentation.
- Shannon's report on the budgets showed minimums and maximums, and there is no way we will exceed them according to John Burns. We just wanted clarification on what the minimums and maximums were according to Gilbert Rincon. We are currently utilizing 85% of our budget on slots.

- The Executive Committee is going to work with the Quality Committee on the numbers and will have something more definitive by the next board meeting. We will know exactly where those funds are going and what we are going to be doing with them.

Finance Committee Meeting

- The Committee talked about the Audit and all the items Marian Powell shared. The corrections have been implemented.
- They talked about the Coalitions fixed assets and how the small dollar amount items need to be eliminated from the report.
- We have our cost allocation plan coming up and the Committee will be working on it closely with Shannon.
- John Burns told the Board that there were very minor insignificant findings at the Fiscal Monitoring Exit Interview but nothing in writing.

John Burns asked if there were any items for the April Agenda. Prudence Pate submitted the Articles of Incorporation for approval.

Hugh Giebeig made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Prudence Pate seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.