

*Gateway Coalition Board Meeting Minutes  
Columbia County School Board  
February 5, 2004*

Members Present: Chris Bond, John Burns, Randy Cox, Kathy Daughtery, Hugh Giebeig, Raymond Logan, Sandy Looney, Carol Milton, Pam Norman, Jeanne Duffy, Nancy Roberts, Gil Roser, Paula Williams

Members Absent: Richard Mitchell, Sheryll Walker, John Wheeler

Welcome and Call to Order

Randy Cox, Chair, recognized the visitors and community participants – Anita Franklin and Alan McKinney (DCF) and Nancy Howe (FCF – Regional Inclusion Specialist). Randy asked if anyone would like to address the board during public comment and Anita Franklin and Alan McKinney asked to be heard.

Minutes

The minutes were presented for review and approval. A motion to approve was made by Carol Milton and seconded by Hugh Giebeig. *The minutes were approved unanimously as presented.*

Presentation – Coalition Audit Report by Powell and Jones, CPA

Richard Powell, Powell & Jones, CPA, presented the final audit report of the Gateway School Readiness Coalition, Inc. The Coalition received an unqualified opinion, which indicates that the financial records were in order. Records reflect almost a 50% increase in program services. Total expenses were \$7,203, 030. The Coalition was able to show a net asset increase of \$193, 467 as compared to \$17, 529 from the prior year.

The only reportable findings were that two county school board contracts had not been monitored during the contract year; however, the monitoring was completed subsequent to year-end. The second reportable finding stated that employees were not covered by insurance under an employee blanket dishonesty policy (fidelity bonding). Prior to completion of the audit, the finding was corrected and all employees are covered.

Randy Cox asked Mr. Powell to address the FDIC limit since the Coalition bank balance often exceeds the \$100,000 limit. The auditor recommended that the Coalition have the funds designated as state funds to ensure protection of the funds. John Burns indicated he has spoken with the bank and all processes are in place.

Financial Report

Shannon Bryant, Finance Director, presented the financial report to the board in the absence of John Wheeler, Treasurer, as follows:

- The Coalition has made the complete transition to the new accounting system.
- Earned interest was not reported under revenue because bank statement has not been received.
- The Outside Services Purchased in the amount of \$11, 187.50 during the month of January was due to the last payment to Evelyn Perkins.

- Increase in travel and meeting expenses are largely due to advances to employees traveling in February.
- Randy Cox inquired as to job vacancies. Prudence Pate responded that there are currently three Coalition Analysts positions open. Three individuals have been offered these positions. Two have accepted and the third is pending. Prudence Pate further indicated a vacancy in the Finance Department.

#### Staff and Committee Reports

Prudence Pate reviewed the minutes from each Committee meeting. The minutes of all committee meetings were attached in the board packet.

- **Monitoring Committee**  
Prudence Pate shared that Leesa Lynn had installed the monitoring tool on the network. Staff will be utilizing a laptop to enter the data and complete the monitoring at the sites.
- **Finance Committee Meeting**  
Randy Cox complimented Shannon Bryant for finding about \$100,000 that involved "certified forward dollars." Prudence Pate shared that Coalitions statewide are projecting huge deficits. The At-Risk Case load management continues to be an issue, which will be addressed later in the meeting. Pam Norman asked for clarification regarding the availability of Infant/Toddler Quality funds. Prudence Pate indicated that there are remaining funds that need to be expended. Randy Cox recommended that the finance committee address a plan for expending these funds.
- **Executive Committee Meeting**  
A meeting has been scheduled with Dwight Stansel for February 26, 2004 to discuss Workforce in our area. Randy Cox asked John Burns to participate with Prudence Pate since he will be out of town. Prudence Pate shared that Shannon Bryant has accepted the position of Finance Director. Nancy Roberts requested a correction regarding the time of the meeting in the minutes.
- **Quality Committee Meeting Minutes**  
Carol Milton asked that the minutes be corrected to indicate that she was present at the meeting held January 16, 2004 for the last half of the meeting.
- **UPK Preparedness Ad Hoc Committee Minutes**  
Prudence Pate shared that we are serving about 40% of the pre-k children across the counties in every district except Lafayette. The committee found that if every provider becomes accredited, the Coalition would not have a capacity issue for the implementation of UPK. Jeanne Duffy asked if the Head Start programs were surveyed. Prudence Pate shared that the information had not been received to date; however, the committee is aware that the Head Start capacity is vital information in the survey and will be included in the total. Michael Reneke recommended to the Coalition that they access the tax identification number of accredited providers and compare with a local map to help focus on areas for accreditation. Transportation for services will be a major issue for our area. Michael Reneke recommended that we try to identify a person locally that could

be certified as an validator for accrediting entities to assist with the backlog of facilities waiting to be accredited.

#### Monthly Report of the Executive Director

*Assessments:* Assessments should be completed on each child within 45 days of enrollment into the School Readiness program. Providers need to complete and submit scores for each child enrolled in 03-04 as soon as possible. Assessment materials are available for checkout at the Coalition office. All interested providers will have the opportunity to be trained in the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test by calling Carrie Cox to schedule. The Coalition staff will assist providers upon request.

Prudence Pate shared the Training Needs Assessment with Board Members. Board members were asked to complete the survey and return by March.

Prudence Pate shared the SRUSS results by County.

Jamie Witzman from the Florida Children's Forum conducted a Technical Assistance visit with staff in the area of Resource & referral. A report was made available to board members for review of the visit.

The Board Meeting for March will need to be changed to March 11, 2004 due to a required statewide meeting for Coalition staff on March 4<sup>th</sup>. The meeting location has been changed to the Union County Courthouse in the County Commissioners Board Meeting Room.

#### Program Manager Report

Melissa McGee provided an update on the status of the CEU application. The site visit possible dates are February 23 or March 26, 2004. Prudence Pate shared that the pre-school screenings are being conducted this year jointly by the Coalition and FDLRS/Gateway rather than through school boards as in the past. Pam Norman asked if a connection would be made with FDLRS/NEFEC for Union County. Prudence Pate indicated that she would follow up on this. Pam Norman shared that President Bush has proposed to totally cut the Even Start Funds.

#### Partnership Coalition Analyst Report

Michael Reneke introduced Betty Wallace, Coalition Analyst, to Board members. Regarding the vacancy of the Executive Director of the Florida Partnership for School Readiness, Michael indicated that Gladys Wilson is the only person in a director position still in the Partnership Office, and that no decision has been reached to date.

#### Action Items

##### *Board Action Item #2004-003 At-Risk Referral Processing Policy*

Prudence Pate presented the draft policy to the Coalition to include background information regarding the At-Risk cases. The Coalition currently has 211 At Risk children enrolled; however, DCF database indicated that 76 of those cases had been closed. At the direction of Prudence Pate, staff has been working diligently reviewing these cases through file review and contact with DCF caseworkers to verify the status and validity of each open case. The Analysts have implemented the draft policy for the past

two weeks pending board approval. Prudence Pate worked closely with Randy Cox in the development of this policy.

Discussion ensued between Randy Cox and Kathy Daugherty regarding the best way to handle the validation of at-risk cases between the Coalition and the Department (DCF). A motion to approve the policy as presented was made by Hugh Giebeig and seconded by Sandy Looney.

Discussion continued with John Burns asking for clarification regarding the understanding of DCF staff that the Coalition cannot monitor these cases on a daily basis. He expressed his feeling that we are spending taxpayers' dollars without being able to depend on another entity such as DCF to notify us that cases have been terminated. The Coalition has staff to implement this policy and we should proceed. Prudence Pate verified that some of the issues pertaining to the validity of referrals belong to Coalition staff as well as DCF, particularly regarding the acceptance of referrals with complete dates and appropriate signatures. Kathy Daugherty recommended that Prudence Pate send her a list of children once a month for her to validate the active cases.

Michael Reneke shared that there is another group (WAGES) that also needs to be addressed. Prudence replied that the Coalition is aware of this and will proceed with a process upon completion of this policy. Michael also has concerns about the date of termination indicated in the policy. This came from a discussion regarding the ability of the Coalition to terminate an at-risk case effective on the termination date of the referral versus a ten-day notice from such date. Randy Cox asked Michael to respond in writing regarding his concern about the date of termination.

Participants from DCF present at the meeting took part in the conversation indicating that the Coalition staff should notify DCF staff that a referral is due to terminate, as was done in the past by the Central Agency. John Burns addressed the comment indicating that he would be opposed to Coalition staff having an additional responsibility of tracking and notifying DCF of a referral terminating in an effort to request a new referral. The board expressed consensus with John on this issue.

Discussion continued regarding the requirement of a Supervisor signature on the referral. Hugh Giebeig asked if there would be an issue by requiring a Supervisor to sign the referral. Kathy Daugherty stated that two supervisor positions would soon be vacant. She will notify Prudence Pate of assigned acting supervisors.

Question was called and the motion was approved unanimously.

*Board Action Item #2004-004 – GSRC Computer Usage Policy*

Leesa Lynn, Data Management Specialist, presented the proposed Computer Usage Policy. A motion to approve was made by John Burns and seconded by Nancy Roberts. The motion was approved unanimously.

A motion to adjourn was made by Hugh Giebeig and seconded by Nancy Roberts.

The meeting adjourned at 11:14 a.m.