

**Gateway School Readiness Coalition  
Board Meeting Minutes  
Gateway School Readiness Coalition Training Room, Suite 140  
Lake City, Florida  
February 9, 2005**

**Members Present:**

Chris Bond, John Burns, Charles Carroll, Anita Franklin, Ray Logan, Sandy Looney, Richard Mitchell, Pam Norman, Prudence Pate, John Pierce, Jennifer Roberts, Nancy Roberts, Sheryll Walker , John Wheeler and Paula Williams.

**Others in Attendance:**

Maria Ellis (Wee Care Day Care), Fred Ward (Lafayette County School Board), Marian Jones (Powell & Jones), 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:**

Mike Deming, Jeanne Duffy, Hugh Giebeig, Carol Milton and David Rountree.

**Welcome and Call to Order**

John Burns called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. Mr. Burns welcomed everyone and introduced our visitors.

John Burns turned the floor over to Dr. Logan. Dr. Logan explains that due to the merging of VPK with School Readiness with regard to the Board, we are required to have a Community College representative and a County Commission nominee on our Board. Charles Carroll will represent Lake City Community College. Carol Milton, who has been on the Board for some time speaking on disability issues, will now become our County Commission from Hamilton County. Under the new law, there are member who were voting members before that are considered non-voting member now. Any Board member that represents a potential funded entity such as a child care facility, and early learning facility or a school board facility cannot vote under the new legislation.

The Board Chair under the new law which went into effect on January 2, 2005 will be appointed by the Governor. Several nomination were sent to his office, however we do not know the results for some time. Dr. Logan has been informed by AWI and the Office of Early Learning that the voting members of the current Board have the power to choose and interim Chair who will preside over the Board until the Governors appointment. Richard Mitchell nominated John Burns as the Interim Chairman of the Board. Prudence Pate seconds the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**Minutes**

John Burns started the meeting with a review of the minutes from the previous board meeting. John Wheeler motioned to approve the minutes as written and Raymond Logan seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

## **Financial Report**

- John Wheeler reported that according to the report it looks as though we are losing money. The reasoning is because we work on a reimbursement for our expenditures.
- John Wheeler directed the Board to the Income Statement. The interest is to be paid back to AWI and it is now being done on a quarterly basis as opposed to annually. The payments to providers are increasing because enrollment is increasing. The Inclusion Conference was an expenditure but it was a great success. John explains that the staff has been traveling to conferences for trainings.

## **Staff and Committee Reports**

### *Executive Director's Report*

- Status of amending Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws – The Articles of Incorporation and the By-Laws need to be amended to include the new structure and to change our name. Dr. Logan will meet with Lily Johnson, The Coalition attorney on February 14<sup>th</sup> to go over the By-laws on how they need to be altered to meet the requirements under the new law.
- Parent and Provider Pre-Application – The Office of Early Learning issued an online application form for VPK so that people can pre-apply for VPK. We are taking pre-applications from parents and providers. The pre-applications will have a deadline of May 1, 2005. Guidance will come from the Office of Early Learning to determine verification of eligible providers.
- Publicizing VPK – Jamie created a letter and sent it along with the applications to all 161 providers in our database. We are running ads in the newspapers of all five counties we serve and the local Radio station (Mix 94.3). There is also a flyer running on the cable announcements. Dr. Logan stated we are allowed to do promotion and advertising under the VPK program.
- Next VPK Provider meeting – March 1, 2005. The information we have gathered to that point will be shared with the providers at that meeting. Dr. Logan will have been to 2, 2-day meetings prior to the Provider meeting and hopes to have more information to share with them.
- School Board participation – It does not appear by the way the bill has been written, that any school boards will be eligible for participation this fall.
- Summer: 300 hours –The summer program begins the summer of 2006. Legislature is supposed to be reviewing this hour requirement. The criteria for the summer program are different than the school year program and no one is sure why.
- Start-up funding – AWI has some funds that they will earmark for VPK. There is no start-up dollars for providers however there will be start-up dollars for Coalitions for advertising. There are several VPK meetings that cannot be paid for with Readiness dollars. These expenditures are to be set aside as VPK and reimbursed when the funding is made available.
- DOE VPK Standards meeting and AWI/OEL meeting – The DOE meeting will discuss the Performance Standards and is on February 17 and 18. Dr. Logan and Barbara Sanders

have been invited to this meeting. The AWI/OEL meeting will be February 24 & 25<sup>th</sup> for Executive Directors and 3 other members from each Coalition including a school board representative. Prudence Pate would like to attend that meeting.

- Head Start Participation – The question is whether children that receive Head Start Funding can receive VPK funding as well. The answer has not been determined.
- Coalition Plan – The first section has been completed. The entire Plan needs to be submitted by March 15<sup>th</sup>. The Quality Committee will meet after this meeting to work on the next section. The final version will be distributed to the Board at the next meeting before it is submitted.

#### *Deputy Director's Report*

- Rilya Wilson Transition Meeting in Gainesville – LaShone met with people from Partnership for Strong Families and Childcare Resource and we are in the process of starting a tracking system to compare the names of children they have and the names of children we have to one master list.
- Children's Week – April 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>. It has been going on for the past 10 years and focuses on issues that deal with parents and children. LaShone and the Program staff want to organize a local event They would invite our parents, providers and children to participate as well as city officials.

#### *Finance Director's Report*

- Fiscal Monitoring Exit Interview Summary – The monitoring team from the Office of Early Learning raised seven preliminary findings on their report. The first one was that exempt employees need to complete a form signed by themselves and their supervisor. A form was implemented immediately. The second finding was with regard to interest payments to AWI. These had been done previously on an annual basis, however now it is required quarterly. This has been rectified. There was a disallowed expenditure of \$15.17 for bottled water. The system was removed immediately. Another finding was with regard to Florida Children's Forum membership. It was paid through September 2006 which is not allowed so it was refunded and will only be paid within the current year. The Nextel bill was still in the former Executive Directors name and that was rectified. The other 2 were with regard to provider payments which were also corrected. John Burns reiterates that all of these were very minor.
- Presentation of FY 2003-2004 Audit – Marian Powell supplied everyone with a copy of the Coalition Audit. She went over the Audit with the Board. She stated that the management and expenses are very low and it is a tribute to the organization. That out of \$7,519,000 only \$357,000 was spent on administration. Last years findings were included and they have been corrected and they reported that this was cleared. We are in compliance with the auditing standards. They reported immaterial findings in their management letter. The letter also stated that we were materially in compliance with our federal grant. Ms. Powell stated that we have excellent accounting records. She further stated that Shannon does a fantastic job and her reporting is so clean and organized. They had some recommendations that they felt would enhance our files. They would like us to add verbiage into our agreements with regard to drug convictions and welfare convictions. There were 3 out of the 54 files reviewed that they could not determine the retention of income verification. Dr. Logan explained that we were going to implement a self-auditing

system to verify documentation. Ms. Powell also recommended that we have a more detailed form for the provider monitoring with regard to corrective action plans.

*Program Manager's Report* – Carrie reported on several training that her department has attended and will be sharing that information with providers. She also reported on the Inclusion Conference. We had 165 participants and she wanted to thank all the Board members that attended for their great support. Carrie reported on the Lap-3 Assessment Pilot Program. The entire department has been diligently assessing four year olds. The results will be shared with the Board upon completion. John Burns wanted to thank Lake City Community College for the facility for the Inclusion Conference.

*Enrollment Manager's Report* – Jamie Witzman reported the EFS unduplicated enrollment as of February 8<sup>th</sup> as 2070 and in January we invoiced for 2007. Letters are being sent out today to begin enrolling children from birth to five from the UWL. There are 187 children on this list. The BG-1 enrollment is at 174 since January 1, 2005 and as of January 31, 2005 it was at 176. Jamie informs the Board of the pre-application numbers. The parent pre-applications are at 32 with three more since Monday when the numbers were compiled. She explains that the provider numbers appear to be low but in comparison to our parent applications the numbers are good. She attributes the strong response to the provider meeting.

*IT Manager Report* – Jessie supplied the Board with our website statistics. There is a phenomenal increase in hits to the website. Many of them are our own staff; however there are still quite a few from the public. There was a considerable increase in January and even more in February. He also equates this increase to VPK and the provider meeting.

The new website address is [www.elc-fg.org](http://www.elc-fg.org). The old address will still take you to the new website for about four years. The new email addresses will reflect the first letter of the staff's name followed by the last name and then @elc-fg.org.

*Quality Committee Report* – Nancy Roberts reported that the committee met for almost three hours and they focused on part one of the Plan. They made some revisions which were provided to the Board. The staff spent a lot of time on the Plan as well. There will be another meeting after the Board meeting to continue with the other parts of the Plan. Nancy also told the Board that once the final recommendations are in place for VPK, they must be incorporated into the Plan. Dr. Logan stated that we will get guidance from AWI for integration of the Plan.

### **Proposed Board Action**

*Item #2005-005 Provider Services Contractual Agreement Amendment (Reimbursement for absences)*

John Burns directs the Board to the actual agreement which changes the number of allowed absences from 5 days to 3 days a month. As a result, the Provider contract needs to be changed. The notification was given to the Coalition approximately two weeks ago. The amended contracts will be done by March 1, 2005. Prudence Pate was concerned that notification was not made publicly or in a timely fashion. Dr. Logan explains that you can still approve a variance for good cause. We can still reimburse a provider for children for more than 3 absences if we get notification from the provider. Several Board members are concerned with the impact of this Amendment. John Burns suggests this Board Action be tabled until the

next Board meeting to give members more time to investigate its origin and if there is any way to provide additional input to this Amendment. Dr. Logan is concerned that this came out on February 1, 2005 and becomes effective as of that date.

Prudence Pate made a motion to adjourn the meeting. John Wheeler seconded the motion.  
Meeting adjourned at 11:37 a.m.