

GATEWAY SCHOOL READINESS COALITION
Thursday, September 5, 2002
Minutes

Members Present: Chris Bond, John Burns, Randy Cox, Hugh Giebeig, Carol Milton, Pam Norman, Jeannette Peters, Nancy Roberts, Gil Roser, Sheryll Walker, John Wheeler, Francesca Whitener.

Members Absent: Mike Deming, Brenda Graham, Jean Graham, Sandy Looney and Marilyn Rossborough.

Others Present: Sharon Jones (SV4Cs), Michelle Seasholt (SV4Cs), Lisa Holliday (SV4Cs), Michele Ward (SV4Cs), and Michael Reneke (Florida Partnership for School Readiness).

Providers/Representatives Present: Sylvia King (A Special Place), Mark and Mary Rice (Kiddy Korner), Marcia Benton (Aunt Marcia's), Charalee Bullard (Children's Workshop), Anna Friar (Chatterbox Child Care), Jessie Durden (Love and Learn), Janet Balance (Pride & Joy).

Welcome: John Burns, Chair, welcomed members and guests. **A quorum was declared** and the meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the regular board meeting held July 25, 2002 were submitted for review and approval along with the minutes for the Contract Committee meetings held on July 30, 2002, August 14, 21, 28, and 30, 2002. Minutes from the Provider Assessment Tool Committee meetings held on August 21, 2002 and on August 28, 2002, and the Executive Committee meeting minutes from August 28, 2002 were submitted. The Executive Committee meeting scheduled for August 21, 2002 was cancelled. A motion was made by Hugh Giebeig and seconded by Jeannette Peters to approve the minutes as submitted. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Financial Report: Randy Cox, Treasurer, presented the financial reports for July 1, 2002 through August 2002. A needed correction was noted regarding a typo on page 3. A motion was made by Chris Bond and seconded by Sheryll Walker to approve the report as presented with the correction. **The motion passed unanimously.**

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

- The Executive Director reported that in collaboration with SV4Cs the Coalition will be providing a Unified Waiting List Training Session on September 10, 2002 at The Academy (SV4Cs). Providers are encouraged to attend and requested to call the Coalition office to register.
- A correction was made to the Gateway Coalition approved Market Rate in order to reflect the correct payment rates for Registered Homes. The Market Rate Schedule was then redistributed once the corrections were made.
- Fraud issues were discussed in a meeting held August 14, 2002 at SV4Cs with Coalition staff, Central Agency Eligibility staff, Francesca Whitener, and Jeannette Peters. After some discussion it was determined that the issue may become a policy making decision for the coalition; therefore, the meeting was adjourned.
- The Fiscal/Administrative Assistant participated in a Microsoft word training provided by SV4Cs staff.

- New Coalition office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Executive Director, Partnership Contract Manager, and Jeannette Peters (Head Start), participated in a Plan Revision Training session provided by the Florida Partnership for School Readiness on August 27, 2002 in Tallahassee.
- The Provider Assessment Tool Committee has conducted three meetings and will be completing the Provider Assessment Tool drafts within the next month to be presented to the Coalition Board for approval.
- Several committee meetings were held throughout the month, at which Coalition staff members were present.
- Invoice training was provided to the school districts by the Coalition Executive Director with the assistance of Nolan Townsend (SV4Cs).
- Plan Amendments were completed for Coalition approval.
- The Coalition office will begin having regular monthly Staff meetings on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. The first meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 18, 2002. Executive Committee members are welcome to attend.
- The Executive Director will attend a Grant Writing / Fundraising Training scheduled for Thursday September 12, 2002 and on Friday, September 13, 2002. The training will be conducted by the Brehon Institute for Family Services, Inc., located in Tallahassee, FL.
- Objectives for September:
 1. Attend Director's Meeting
 2. Conduct Unified Waiting List Training
 3. Attend Grant Writing and Fundraising Training 9/12, 9/13, 2002
 4. Attend Coalition Chair & Executive Director TA Meetings 9/25/02
 5. Partnership Board Meeting 9/26/02
 6. Continue draft of Provider Assessment Tool
 7. Begin draft of Coalition Revised Plan

Coalition Contract Manager Report: The monthly report was presented by Roger Williams to include the following information:

- The Contract Manager spent the month of August working on Contracts & Amendments.
- The contract and Migrant amounts were approved; however; the amendment to the Hamilton County contract for Migrant dollars has not been received and approved. The Contract Manager reported that he would have the amendments to our Coalition Chair, John Burns this week for signature.
- The 10 Month Central Agency Contract has been completed.
- The Coalition upgraded from Quick Books 2000 to Quick Books Pro 2002. This additionally allows for multi-party use.
- The Coalition has begun reconstruction of their accounting software program, Quick Books Pro 2002, by entering the new OCA categories and entering bills that will reflect Accounts Payable accurately, and allow for a truly accrual based accounting process. This restructure will also allow Coalition staff to produce a more analytical, detailed report, for board review.

- The Coalition administration will be operating on a cost reimbursement basis this fiscal year. A system for documenting administrative expenditures will be completed this month for use in invoicing the Partnership. The August invoice will be adjusted to include administrative cost reimbursement for the month of July. The July invoice did not request reimbursement for coalition operating expenditures.
- Approval was given by the Contract Committee for funds to be shifted from the Central Agency 10 month contract to the 2-month contract. This shift in funds did not change the total annual contract amount.
- There are still a lot of questions concerning parent fees and reimbursements. These topics are to be discussed at the upcoming Rules Development Workgroup meeting in Tallahassee, on September 5 2002. The Executive Director noted that the public is invited to all workgroup meetings and public hearings of the Rules Development process. The Contract Manager will be attending the last of the three Public Hearings in Orlando.

Central Agency Spending Trend and Enrollment Report: The report was presented by Francesca Whitener to include the following information:

- Funds were shifted from the Central Agency 10-month contract to the 2-month contract.
- The Central Agency is not deducting Match, and are using up slot dollars.
- Great concern over the still increasing At-risk and WAGES referrals.
- Several providers (three or four) are requesting to renegotiate their contracts with the Central Agency in light of the newly approved Market Rate. The Central Agency requests the direction of the Coalition. After some discussion it was determined that this matter is presented to the Contract Committee for review.

Monthly Program Reports: The Monthly Program report was presented by Kelli Strawder. Topics of the report were covered in the Central Agency Spending Trend and Enrollment Report.

Florida Partnership Contract Manager Report: The report was presented by Michael Reneke to include the following topics:

- Spending Trend projections will be shared on a monthly basis.
- The Coalition needs to look at the process of children served which are no longer eligible.
- Final allocation figures will be released by the Partnership Board at the September 26th board meeting. For the Gateway School Readiness Coalition, the uncontracted amount is \$149,410.
- Two OCAs were developed to address the non-federal eligible families. At this time, the coalition does not have any dollars allocated to the new OCAs.
- Coalition Plan
 - The Partnership will conduct an early review process for all plans submitted by October 15 2002. Those plans will be submitted to the Partnership board for approval at the board meeting in December.
 - Plans submitted by the December 31, 2002 deadline will be submitted for board approval at the February board meeting.
 - Plan review committee will be a panel of 5 people to include 1 staff member, 1 board member, 3 community members. Anyone can apply to participate in the plan review process. Requires several hours per week, and excludes review of own coalition plan.
 - Each section of the plan is ranked by individual panel members and a consensus is built by the panel to submit for board approval.

- A lengthy discussion ensued concerning the clarification of various sources of dollars as follows:
 - *Holdback* – based on expenditures from last year (\$149,410); approximately \$4.8M statewide. These are uncontracted dollars.
 - *Lapsed* – dollars unexpended for slots last year – approximately \$4M statewide. Roger Williams asked Michael Reneke if the Partnership board would address the method by which those dollars would be distributed. Michael responded with the following points:
 - Traditionally, dollars not drawn down have not been distributed
 - It is not likely that these dollars would be reallocated to the coalition
 - May be used for coalitions who overspent
 - Too early for decision to be made in allocating these dollars
 - Suggests that the coalition present to the Partnership children served, average cost of care, etc. in an effort to argue the need to draw down a portion of the reserve. This information should be sent to Michael who will forward to Evelyn Perkins.
 - Randy Cox received clarification from Michael Reneke that these dollars may possibly be used for coalitions who overspent, even with budget relief dollars.

FDLRS Screening: Tabled to the next Coalition Board Meeting

Action Items:

- Proposal 2002-029: Coalition Goal and Conference.
 The Executive Committee met to begin development of proposed Coalition goals for the current fiscal year. The Committee recommends that the Coalition approve the planning and implementation of a Gateway School Readiness Coalition, Inc. Conference/Training through an ad hoc committee as follows:
 1. Sheryll Walker (Chair)
 2. Francesca Whitener
 3. John Wheeler
 4. Nancy Roberts
 5. Marilyn Rossborough
 6. Carol Milton

The Conference will consist of a free, one-day training for providers in the Gateway School Readiness Coalition area. A motion to approve was made by Chris Bond, and seconded by Nancy Roberts.

The motion passed unanimously.

The Partnership Contract Manager offered possible participation by Partnership staff in implementing this conference. Possible Partnership participation may include:

- Travel expenses
- Documents
- Financial

(Please utilize the Partnership Contract Manager in securing support in any of the above areas.)

It was further mentioned that the focus is to target ages 3, 4, and 5 year olds and the Performance Standards.

- Proposal 2002-030: Coalition Plan Amendment.
A motion was made by Francesca Whitener, and seconded by Jeannette Peters to approve the Coalition Plan Amendment for submission to the Florida Partnership for School Readiness.
The motion passed unanimously.

- Proposal 2002-031: Quality Initiative Plan.
The Quality Initiative Plan was completed and signed by the Coalition Chair on August 15, 2002. The Plan was presented to the Coalition on September 5, 2002. A motion was made by Sheryll Walker and seconded by Jeannette Peters to approve the Quality Initiative Plan as presented and have the Plan Writing Committee meet with Central Agency staff to review the Plan for possible recommendations/amendments to be approved by the Coalition. The committee is charged with acquiring input from Coalition members for presentation to the committee and Central Agency staff for possible implementation into the plan.
The motion passed unanimously.

- Proposal 2002-032: Revised Standing Committee List.
Due to the election of new Coalition officers, it was necessary to revise the Standing Committee List to accommodate for those in Executive Board positions. A motion to approve the Revised Standing Committee List was made by Hugh Giebeig, and seconded by Gil Roser.
The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion Items:

- The Executive Director presented the Coalition with a summary of the Coalition's role in the Central Agency's contract with the Florida Children's Forum to provide Resource and Referral services. The Coalition is asked to appoint a Coalition member to serve on the Resource and Referral Advisory Committee. Chris Bond volunteered to serve on this committee as representative of the Coalition. The committee meets quarterly.

Comments:

- New Business:
 - **Local Match:**
 - Match has traditionally been reduced from the BG8 category by 6% until match was met (usually February or March).
 - The match amount has not changed since 1999-2000 and has carried forward year to year.
 - The Coalition established this year that match would be taken from in-kind. Michael Reneke indicated to the Coalition that may not be possible. Budget Proviso language requires maintaining the same level of cash match (not in-kind) as previous years.
 - This will cause the payment reimbursement to be held up; therefore, Michael suggested we process the Coalition's July invoice with the match deducted from BG8. The Coalition will absorb this cost instead of reducing it from the Central Agency reimbursement.
 - Michael will research the issue and work with the Coalition Contract Manager in developing a solution.

- It was clarified that cash match would not be taken from the centers. The Coalition feels very strongly that the centers should not be paying cash match from their reimbursements.
 - The Coalition invoice will be adjusted to reflect a 6% reduction in BG8. The cost of this reduction will be covered with Coalition advance dollars.
 - It was further recommended that the Central Agency not make any changes in process for making payment.
 - Further discussion included the Coalition's willingness to double in-kind match to eliminate the cash match. This information was given to Michael, who stated that the Coalition could expect next year's match requirement to be substantially higher.
 - A further request was for Michael to research the possibility for rural areas to use in-kind for cash match.
- **At-Risk Eligibility Status of Children**
- Randy Cox reported his findings after reviewing the status of At-Risk children. He received a printout of At-Risk children from the Central Agency. Upon review and research, the following information was discovered:
 - a) *244 children on list*
 - b) *72 currently active*
 - c) *76 Foster Care: Must be case by case approval – indicated by Francesca Whitener, (SV4Cs CEO) that all 76 have approval*
 - d) *There is a definite need for a communication process to be developed for notifying the Central Agency when At-Risk cases are closed.*
 - e) *70% of the cases on list are questionable*
 - f) *50% of the cases on list are not eligible*
 - g) *At-Risk population is a higher cost to the coalition – no parent fee*
 - Roger Williams suggested the implementation of a monthly report from the Central Agency (Sandy Swilley) to Randy Cox for review. The report (list) would then be forwarded to DCF Supervisors for in-depth review of current open status for supervision.
 - Francesca Whitener suggested that the list include the referring case worker.
 - It was noted that the same problem is evident with WAGES, which is 100% reimbursement. This could be making the difference in the current over enrollment status.
 - Eliminated and/or control of these problems will help reduce the Coalition cost of care, and afford the Coalition the opportunity to serve more children.
 - At the direction of John Burns, Coalition Chair, the Coalition agreed to establish corrective measures to address these issues:
 - a) Coalition staff and board members (Prudence Pate, Roger Williams, Francesca Whitener, and Randy Cox) meet, research, and develop a process to address the issue of At-Risk.
 - b) Implement same process for WAGES to include Mike Deming (Suwannee, Lafayette, and Hamilton) and John Chastain (Columbia and Union) from the Workforce Agencies.

- **Central Agency:**

Francesca Whitener announced that they were asked to submit a full proposal for the Early Reading Literacy Grant. There were 750 applicants, and is now down to 250 nationally. The grant is for the amount of \$250,000. The number of recipients is 50. The grant is being written with Hamilton County. Francesca indicated that all counties were contacted in regards to participating, and Hamilton County was the only one interested.

A motion was made by Francesca Whitener and seconded by Randy Cox to adjourn. **The motion passed unanimously** and the meeting adjourned at 11:10.

The next meeting will be held, Thursday October 3, 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.