

Gateway School Readiness Coalition Meeting Minutes
Gateway School Readiness Coalition Training Room, Suite 140
Lake City, Florida
September 15, 2004

Members Present: John Burns, Kathy Daugherty, Ray Logan, Pam Norman, Prudence Pate, Jennifer Roberts, Nancy Roberts, David Rountree, Sheryll Walker, John Wheeler and Paula Williams.

Others in Attendance: Thomas F. Logan, Ph.D. (Executive Director), LaShone T. Surrency (Deputy Director), Shannon Bryant (Finance Director), Carrie Sapp (Program Director), Carla Eatmon (Enrollment Manager), Heidi Moore (Executive Assistant).

Members Absent: Chris Bond, Randy Cox, Mike Deming, Jeanne Duffy, Hugh Giebeig, Sandy Looney, Carol Milton, Richard Mitchell and John Pierce.

Welcome and Call to Order

John Burns called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m. Mr. Burns welcomed everyone and asked if there were any public requests to speak that he should put on the agenda for the end of the meeting. There were no requests. John welcomed Jennifer Roberts, operator of Lighthouse Christian Academy in Lafayette County, as a new board member.

Minutes

John Burns started the meeting with a review of the minutes from the previous board meeting. Ray Logan motioned to approve the minutes and Pam Norman seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Financial Report

John Wheeler stated that there are two parts; the first two pages are the general ledger, the third page is the summary. John Wheeler advised the Board to review the ledger at their convenience and, if they had a question regarding an expenditure, to contact the Coalition so that we could look into it. Sheryll Walker asked if there was a pending legal issue, due to a recent payment made to the Coalition law firm, Norris & Johnson. Shannon stated that this was from previous issues and that they had not invoiced the Coalition since April.

- Income Statement – Shannon provided notes to explain certain line items. Interest was a negative figure because this has to be paid back to the Partnership. John Wheeler asked the Coalition what the Wal-Mart grant money was spent on. Carrie informed the Board that literacy books were bought with this money. John Wheeler went on to the expenses. The provider payment figure is low due to the school year not having started yet. Payroll is low because some positions were not filled. The Blue Cross payment reflected adjustments due to incoming and outgoing staff for a three month timeframe.

Shannon Bryant reported that the Annual Audit Plan, which was due to the Partnership by August 31st for the prior fiscal year, had been turned in. The Partnership had some questions that she is working on now. The contract for Powell & Jones needs to be renewed, or the Coalition needs to find another firm. Shannon gave an update on the Quality Mini Grants. Approximately \$22,000 has been submitted by providers, which makes the project about 10% complete.

Local Cash Match

The Coalition is required to solicit a 6% local cash match or obtain waivers from each of the Coalition's five counties plus the local United Way. The waivers have been obtained from all parties.

Staff and Committee Reports

Deputy Director's Report

LaShone T. Surrency reviewed her report with Board members regarding the following topics:

- Enrollment – EFS Unduplicated enrollment based from August 1-31, 2004 is 2054. As of August 31, 2004, unduplicated enrollment is 1954. The Coalition has been trying to place children from the Unified Wait List, however many of these children are either no longer eligible or cannot be located. We have been continuing down the wait list beginning with the 4 year olds and on down to the 2 year olds until the slots have been filled. There is no waiting list for 3 and 4 year olds at this time.
- Personnel Update
 - Resignation
 - David Prince-Data Management Specialist
 - Cynthia Ortiz-Analyst
 - New employees
 - Dr. Thomas F. Logan, Executive Director
 - VanLeesa Lynn, Data Management Specialist (part time)
 - Amanda Wiggins, Fiscal Assistant
 - Claudia Zamora, Program Technical Assistant
 - Andrea Ritch, Program Technical Assistant
- Meetings and Activities-
 - ECA in Orlando, September 30 – October 2, 2004
 - Florida Children's Forum Annual Leadership Conference in Orlando, October 19-21, 2004
- Hurricane Preparedness Precautions

There have been many precautions taken to minimize the consequences of potential hurricane damage. Sheryll Walker suggested Peoples Bank provide us a lock box for these important items (e.g., computer data back-up tapes) during the hurricane at no charge. John Burns agreed to contact Peoples Bank with regard to this matter and didn't think this would be a problem.
- GSRC Annual Report

LaShone T. Surrency along with GSRC staff has completed the Annual Report with the exception of the Letter from the Chairman and the Summary Report. John Burns and Prudence Pate agreed to collaborate on these items before the deadline date to complete the report for submission by October 1, 2004.

- The Program Department also provided DECA screening training. This is to be utilized for pre and post testing of children's social and emotional development.
- Another CPR class was given to providers.
- The Provider contracts for the 2004-2005 fiscal year have all been received and are being entered into EFS.
- Dr. Logan is noted how important the screening of children is.

Partnership Coalition Analyst

Due to the changes at the Partnership, Gateway has been given several names as contacts for Coalition Analysts. Due to their short staffing, an Analyst may not be available for Board Meetings unless specifically requested. Sheryll Walker wanted to make sure than we document all correspondence with regard to this issue.

Executive Committee

- John Burns reported to the Board that they approved that staff be paid for absences caused by Hurricane Frances.
- The Committee decided that it was imperative to have an active member on the Executive Committee. Since we have been unable to contact Randy Cox, the Executive Committee has nominated and appointed Sheryll Walker to the Committee for the remainder of this fiscal year. Sheryll Walker wanted the Board to understand that there may be some issues that will arise that she may not be able to vote on due to daycare center affiliation.
- The Data Management position is open. Dr. Logan will interview a candidate Friday, September 17, 2004 who has already been interviewed by the initial interview team.
- Dr. Logan wanted the Board to be aware that the Finance Director will now be a direct report to the Executive Director to be changed on the organizational chart. The Executive Director has the authority to make such a change.
- The Taylor County School Readiness Coalition has approached the Gateway Coalition to explore the possibility a merger of the two coalitions. Dr. Logan has had conversations with Taylor County Board and staff and has discussed such issues as Gateway now being its own Central Agency. John Burns stated that Taylor County needs to just join us as another county in our Coalition and become part of our Coalition. That would be the way it would need to work. We cannot have them hire us to do their administration. John Burns spoke to State Representative Dwight Stansel with regard to the merger. Mr. Stansel stated is was a good idea and said we definitely needed to make it happen because it will strengthen our Coalition. The Executive Committee voted unanimously to bring this topic to the whole Coalition, because they wanted to seek support for the merger from the whole Coalition Board. The Executive Committee is recommending to the Coalition Board that we enter into serious negotiations with Taylor County with the end being that Taylor County becomes a part of Gateway School Readiness Coalition. John Burns asked for discussion. Prudence Pate stated that she had spoken to Sharon Hathcock, chair of the Taylor County Board, when she was still Executive Director. The plan then was that they were going to merge with Gadsden/Leon and that they would maintain their current status. Prudence stated that Sharon was very adamant about this at that time. Dr. Logan has recently spoken to Sharon Hathcock, and she stated that she realized that things could not remain the way that they currently are. Prudence was concerned that they would be joining us against their will. John Burns feels that once they learn how our organization is run, that

Gateway is devoted to serving the children, that Taylor County will realize that they will be a lot better off. John knows that this process will not happen overnight, but they need to understand that this merger has to be a complete merger and not just in pieces. Prudence wants to make sure they understand that they will not be able to maintain their coalition the way they do now. John Burns encourages Dr. Logan to have a conversation with Gladys Wilson, Interim Director of the Partnership, with regard to the merger. Sheryll Walker wants to make sure that the integrity of Gateway is not strained due to the physical distance of Taylor County. Dr. Logan stated that Gateway could have a satellite office in Taylor County to alleviate that concern. Taylor County is very similar in nature to Suwannee County. Dr. Logan feels that we could learn a lot from Taylor County and that Gateway would benefit from the merger as well as Taylor County. Prudence Pate wants them to be aware of the facts of the merger and the changes that will have to take place. Gateway needs to handle all of the counties in the same manner. The next step is for Dr. Logan to complete the "merger survey" that was sent by Sharon Hathcock and send it back to Ms. Hathcock. Sharon Hathcock has noted that their next Board meeting is on October 7th at noon in Perry, and she has already suggested that she might want Dr. Logan to come and present to the Board the possibilities of the merger. Dr. Logan will ask Sharon about bringing a delegation of people from Gateway. Sheryll Walker thinks that is a good idea so that they get a better picture of our organization. John Burns thinks Nancy Roberts should be a part of the delegation, and the Board agreed. Nancy Roberts reiterated that the Coalition represents all of our counties equally and that in some instances this has presented issues for some of the school districts. The Executive Committee made a motion to direct Dr. Logan and whomever he sees fit from the Board to strongly pursue adding Taylor County to the Gateway School Readiness Coalition. Prudence Pate seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Program Quality Committee Report

- The Quality Committee reviewed the Quality Mini-grants to make sure that the providers understood how the monies were to be spent. There were a couple of concerns that were resolved.
- The Committee agreed that the CDA recipients who dropped out of the program were to be sent letters to inform them that they owed the Coalition for the scholarship.
- Wee Care has been funded for accreditation (NAEYC) and then changed the program to which they applied (now they are pursuing an "Apple" accreditation). Gateway has made it clear to Wee Care that they will not fund another accreditation, since they have funded one already.

Proposed Board Action

Item #2004-021 Proposed Early Care & Education Program Referral Form

This form would be utilized in the event that computer generated forms were not possible such as in the event of a hurricane. The form will be in triplicate. Prudence Pate made a motion to accept the Proposed Early Care & Education Program Referral Form. Nancy Roberts seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Information and Discussion Items

John Burns turned the floor over to Dr. Logan. Dr. Logan stated that he was honored to be here and more importantly was having a good time. He has not had a bad moment or regret and he appreciated the opportunity. He informed the Board of his background. He thanked the Board for this opportunity.

Prudence Pate inquired as to the status of Randy Cox. She was told that Mr. Cox has not responded to any correspondence. Kathy Daugherty stated that she has contact with him and will have him contact someone from the Coalition.

Motion to adjourn by Ray Logan; second by Sheryll Walker.

Meeting adjourned at 10:48 a.m.