

**Gateway School Readiness Coalition Meeting  
Minutes  
Thursday, December 11, 2003**

**WELCOME**

Chairman, Randy Cox, called the meeting to order at 9:39 a.m. and welcomed the visitors in attendance. A request was made to acknowledge anyone that would like to address the Board or speak to any agenda items. No response was received.

**MINUTES**

The minutes were presented and Executive Director, Prudence Pate, noted several corrections to the minutes as follows:

- pg. 2 "Coalition sought",
- pg. 3 "many terminations were due to noncompliance",
- pg. 5 "the recommendations",
- pg. 6 Mary Ann should be Mary Anne, and Mary Anne stated, Janet Balance (correct last name)

Hugh Giebeig made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. The motion was seconded by Chris Bond. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

Treasurer, John Wheeler, apologized for not providing the September travel expenditure report as promised at the October meeting. Prudence indicated that she would send the report out by email immediately upon return to the office.

John then presented the October expenditure report to include the following:

- Fixed Assets Additions – none in October. We are utilizing fixed assets that we have assumed.
- Travel expenses - \$3,559. 75
- Occupancy Expenses -\$6,260 without the new building (training center)
- State Farm Insurance payment - \$245
- Outside Services Purchased- Contract with computer services is almost completed. Evelyn Perkins will be providing her final bill at the end of December to include October, November & December.
- Payroll Expenses - \$54,854
- Quality – \$6,129.38 was spent largely on speakers and supplies for the November conference.
- Fixed Assets – None
- There are currently three different insurance policies for the three office facility units. We have been able to combine these into one policy in order to decrease the cost of insurance.

Discussion concerning the October financial report included the following comments:

- Randy Cox commented that the hotel costs for conferences and meetings are very high, but he has indicated to the staff that he would prefer they stay at better facilities to ensure their safety.
- Sheryll Walker asked for clarification concerning the code UC noted on the financial report. Shannon Bryant indicated that this expense was for Unemployment Compensation.

John Wheeler then presented the November expenditure report to include the following:

- No outside consulting services.
- No fixed asset additions.
- Travel \$3,928 – Staff had to participate in a lot of meetings and trainings. Travel requirements are expected to decrease. Sheryll Walker also indicated that a lot of the travel that staff has participated in has been required.
- General Operating Expenses – The Coalition office added payment for rental of Suite 140 and expenses to include lights, water, etc.
- Project Safety Net – No longer provide this program.
- No insurance payment in this month since they are paid quarterly and/or semi-annually.
- Payroll- \$48,322.00 - decreased due to the loss of two positions.
- Quality - \$29,585 - Prudence Pate noted this was a low amount due to the fact that some of the counties have turned in no quality invoices to date for this fiscal year. Invoices are expected to be received in the month of December.

Discussion concerning the November financial report included the following comments:

- Raymond Logan asked for clarification regarding the expenditure for shirts and how many were purchased. The invoice to Hunter Printing indicates this may have been costly. Prudence Pate clarified that this expenditure included one shirt per employee plus costs for printing of awareness materials for the Coalition fair booth. She indicated that the detail information concerning this expenditure needed to be corrected in the accounting system to include itemization of all purchases billed on the invoice in question. The shirts actually cost about \$34 each. Sheryll Walker indicated that it was probably more costly the first time since they actually had to set up the logo and layout. Randy Cox asked the Executive Director to send out an email to clarifying the itemization of the invoice.
- Ray Logan further questioned the purchase of USDA calculators. Sheryll Walker indicated that this expense was for the November conference. She further explained that all the centers that contract with USDA for meals have to calculate portions for children. The calculator assists them in doing this and will even help the centers figure out how much food to buy so there is no waste. This calculator was purchased to go along with the session at the conference.
- Other expenditures questioned were regarding books and professional resources for all the conference participants. Sheryll Walker indicated that it is important for participants to take resources back from the conference to their centers for implementation in their school readiness programs. Materials of this nature are too costly for the centers to purchase. The Committee felt very strongly that the materials to support the training should be provided to the participants. Chris Bond further shared that the state is looking at how we do professional development. She really likes how the Coalition is providing training and giving the resources to ensure that the training is implemented.

- Randy Cox asked about the expenditure to Kennedy Communications. Prudence Pate shared that this expenditure was used to set up the new office and move all the servers.
- Richard Mitchell asked if the accounting system would give a financial statement. John Wheeler indicated that we would be going to a new accounting system in January that will allow us to provide such information. Reports presented today are temporary reports until the new system is in place.

## STAFF AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Executive Director's Report

Prudence Pate presented the Executive Director's Report for the months of October and November as follows:

- Personnel Update – The following staff are no longer employed with GSRC: Mary Anne Norris (Finance Director), Sophia Spaulding (Analyst), Susan Reed (Analyst), Laura Trowell (Analyst), and Rhaiza Faulkner (Administrative Assistant)
  - Current vacancies (posted on GSRC website at [www.fl-gsrc.org](http://www.fl-gsrc.org))
    - Finance Director
    - Analysts (3)
  - New employee – The Coalition welcomes Rosalee Borah as an Administrative Assistant. Rosalee has years of experience working in the Administrative capacity as an office manager, secretary, legal secretary, and social service work.
- Fair Booth – The staff enjoyed working the fair booth and reported positive feedback from the public. Thank you to all who participated and assisted in making this a successful endeavor.
- Coalition Audit by Auditor General – The Auditor General report has been completed and was presented as part of the board packet. The Coalition was cited with four findings to include: Coalition and Central Agency Expenditures, Coalition Travel Costs, Coalition Competitive Procurement Requirements, and Coalition Tangible Personal Property Accountability. Prudence explained that two of the four findings were related to activity occurring at SV4Cs under the previous contract. The other two findings have since been corrected and noted. A response was required to be submitted to the Auditor General. A copy of the response was also enclosed in the board packet. John Wheeler commented that he was present at the exit interview and felt that the auditors were pleased with our performance and accomplishments. Randy Cox commented that the Executive Director and staff did an outstanding job with their audit.
- Provider Meetings
  - October 7, 2003
    - Speaker was Sandy Looney – Child Care Licensing
  - November 4, 2003
    - Speaker was Latriva Varnum (Columbia County Schools) – Project CATCh (Columbia Acting Together for Children) and PALS (Positive Attachment & Learning to Succeed) Training
  - December 9, 2003
    - Providers were given presentation regarding the recommendations by the Universal PreK Council
  - Next meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 13, 2003 – Columbia County – Additional information will be distributed at a later date.

- Rotary Club
  - Spoke to the Suwannee County Rotary Club on Monday, October 27, 2003
- OPPAGA Meeting
  - John Burns and I attended a meeting hosted by OPPAGA (Office of Program Performance and Government Accountability) to review the preliminary findings of the School Readiness Programs. This process was required by the legislature for review of the Partnership and local coalitions.
- CPA Audit - The Coalition's audit was conducted in October by Powell & Jones CPA. The review is complete and we are waiting on the exit interview and final report.
- Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test Training
  - Staff and providers completed training on the PPVT in October
  - Staff was trained to train those staff who were not available on that date
  - Additional training is scheduled for January 2004
- Enrollment Process - A memo was shared as a result of action taken at the last Executive Committee meeting noting a decision to maintain full capacity at all times in programs characterized by quality, single-care level, and fixed programmatic costs. This process will affect school-based and accredited programs. For this process to be implemented, the program must meet 3 of the 4 set criteria.
- Enrollment Update (Chart Attached)
  - November invoice will note 2201 children (48 of those are duplicate count – children served in more than one billing group during the month)
  - Unduplicated number from invoice is 2153
  - Staff tracking report of enrollment indicated 2168 at the end of November (difference of 15)
  - First week of December notes 72 terminations with 7 reinstated and 12 new children added.
    - Terminations – result of employment verifications
    - New children – single-care level programs and referrals
  - Randy Cox asked Kathy Daughtery (DCF) if they were required to implement the Rilya Wilson Act. She indicated they were, but only for those children already in care.
- Finance Committee Meeting
  - Friday, December 12, 2003 at 12:00 pm – GSRC Office
    - Monthly review of Coalition financial operations for 03-04
    - Utilization of funds
    - Spending trends and annual projections
- Monitoring Update – Prudence asked LaShone Surrency, Deputy Director, to address the board regarding monitoring. LaShone indicated that staff members were conducting post-attendance monitoring by comparing attendance sheets for reimbursement against the sign-in and out sheets for parents at the school readiness sites. Her department plans to start a more formal monitoring process in January.
- Resource & Referral Evaluations - LaShone Surrency, Deputy Director updated the Coalition board members on the R&R Evaluations. She indicated that the Florida Children's Forum is working toward standardized certification for Coalition Analysts concerning information distributed to the public. Certification is a required component in the R&R Children Forum's contract. She noted that on March 23rd and 24th, the Florida Children's Forum will be at the

Coalition office to monitor resource and referral activities. As part of contract requirement, mock calls are made to coalition staff of resource and referral for monitoring purposes. The first mock telephone call to resource and referral occurred in July approximately a week prior to LaShone Surrency working for the Coalition. This call did not go very well. Lashone indicated she conducted intensive training on all staff and requested the Forum to conduct another mock call. They did and the second call went very well. Additional mock calls with other analysts with all analysts have since been successful.

- EFS Web-Based - LaShone Surrency and Leesa Lynn, Data Management Specialist presented the board with an overview of the EFS Web-Based program being implemented in a few months. LaShone thanked the Board for the opportunity to attend trainings such as EFS Web-Based. She and Lisa recently spent a full week in an overview and page navigation training and were able to have input on the web-based system. The state is trying to consolidate 27 databases into one big database that will be available on the web out of Tallahassee. One of the problems at the coalition level relates to analysts putting information in the database with the database not requiring identification of the operator. The new system will require a log in and track the person making the entry in the database and the information being entered. Coalitions will have the option of determining frequency of provider payments. Providers will be able to go on-line to see if their payment has been processed. Providers will have access to enter their attendance each month; however, they will not have access to make any other entries. The rest of the information for their center will be a read-only view. Lisa shared that all providers who do not have web access will be accommodated by the Coalition in that the training room will be available for providers to access the system. Carol Milton asked about the need to provide computer access out to all districts so providers in different districts would not have to travel to Lake City to access the web-based program. Prudence Pate indicated that we would definitely be interested in collaborating with districts to make this service available to providers. Randy Cox asked if the Coalition would train providers. Lisa indicated that the Coalition would actually train our own providers after Lisa and LaShone have completed a train-the-trainer session. Randy Cox asked if there was a cost to us. Prudence Pate indicated that there would be no cost to us. The state used enhancement money to pay for the implementation and training of web-based EFS. Randy Cox asked for clarification concerning signatures on attendance sheets if they are completed on-line. LaShone Surrency indicated that the state is determining now if the password for the provider will be sufficient for solving this problem.
- Coalition Office Network – Leesa Lynn addressed the board concerning an update related to technology and networking in the Coalition office. Leesa shared that the Coalition currently has four servers (EFS, Blackbaugh Server for accounting, Application Server that houses email and data, and an update terminal server that allows us to have a secure remote access into the network). Leesa indicated that efforts are being made to eliminate dial-up costs when staff members are working at the outreach sites or out of town. Randy Cox asked about wireless options. Leesa would like to propose this in the future for approval by the Coalition Board. One of the Outreach sites has wireless connectivity so the coalition staff purchased a wireless card for the laptop to allow access. Leesa noted that the Coalition now has a new website address [www.fl-gsrc.org](http://www.fl-gsrc.org). Additionally, the move to the new facility has been completed. All the file servers are in a gated area and Leesa and Prudence are in the process of finalizing back-up procedures for all data. Leesa stated that she plans to offer training for staff in some of the new software packages in the near future. The coalition is now on a T-1

line, which has increased the level of productivity and time-management for all staff. Prudence Pate commended Lisa and LaShone for a job extremely well-done and noted to the board their long hours and dedication to the Coalition and its operation.

- OMB Circular Training – Shannon Bryant, Accountant I, gave report to the board concerning training attended by her and Heidi Moore. The OMB Circular Training was a three-day training consisting of federal regulations and accounting procedures. Shannon noted that the training was very informative and informational for implementation at the Coalition level, particularly concerning federal and state regulations.
- Upcoming Dates
  - Friday, December 12, 2003 – 12:00pm – Finance Committee Meeting – GSRC Office
  - Thursday, January 8, 2004 – 9:00am – Coalition Board Meeting – Columbia County
  - Saturday, January 10, 2004 - Gateway School Readiness Coalition Conference – Camp Weed
  - Tuesday, January 13, 2004 – 6:00pm – Provider Meeting

### **Operations Manager Report**

Carrie Cox, Quality Specialist, reported for Melissa McGee, Operations Manager. Carrie reported on training her and Melissa had completed over the past two months, which included the following:

- Infant/Toddler Symposium
- Beyond Centers and Circle Time – Pam Phelps has developed a new curriculum that Carrie Cox and Melissa McGee must train providers in for a minimum of 30 hours prior to April 1, 2004.
- STEPS – Florida Transition Project – The Coalition is partnering to create and make available a resource directory for the community to include all services available in the community.
- CEU – This is a high need and demand of providers. Staff has been trying for months to get through the certification process to have credentials for administering CEU credits. Melissa McGee recently attended training on the CEU process and will have the application prepared and completed in January. At that point, a site visit will be conducted on January 24, 2004 as part of the application process. If successful, approval and certification to administer CEU credits will be received by March.
- Grant Award – “Coalitions Coming Together” – Received grant for the maximum amount of \$35,000. Under this grant, the Coalition is implementing the PALS program. This program is a violence prevention module, which helps providers understand why children are behaving the way they are. The first training has been held with many providers in attendance. The second training is scheduled for January.
- November Conference Report – Carrie shared that evaluations received from providers in attendance at the November conference were all very positive. We had great participation and are looking forward to the one in January.
- Report of January Conference – much of the work has already been completed for the January conference. Sheryll Walker, Nancy Roberts, Carrie Cox, and Melissa McGee will continue to complete the planning and purchasing of the conference scheduled for Saturday, January 10, 2004.

### **Executive Committee Report**

The Executive Committee met on November 12, 2003. The minutes of the meeting were reviewed and attached in the board packet.

### **Partnership Coalition Analyst Report**

Michael Reneke addressed the coalition and discussed the following items:

- Responses had to be sent to OPPAGA and the Auditor General's office by December 19<sup>th</sup>.
- One of problems is that the State Partnership is not monitoring subcontractors like they need to be. A tool has been developed and is currently being piloted. The Coalition needs to be aware that this is coming. Most of the monitoring has been limited to financial issues.
- The State Partnership has hired two new Coalition Analysts in the North Region. Michael will have Gateway, Alachua and Putnam once the new staff is trained.
- Michael's office has been moved from DCF in Gainesville to the new Service Center in Alachua.
- Financially the Coalition is still projecting a deficit. He still has concerns about TCC and Wages children that we are serving. Michael recommends that we work with partners to develop a policy concerning the management of serving these children.
- Michael addressed the Coalition concerning the need for the community to be aware of the model with which the Gateway School Readiness Coalition has formed. This Coalition is the only one that is rural, multi-county, and its own central agency.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### ***Board Action Item #2003-084 - GSRC Employees as Recipients of School Readiness Funds***

Prudence shared that they have employees that are actually recipients of school readiness funds. All information is accessible on the computer for others to review. There is a confidentiality clause signed by each employee upon hire; however, this policy would serve as further safety of confidential information for employees who are also clients. Hugh Giebeig made a motion to approve the proposal as submitted and John Wheeler seconded. Discussion included the question by Richard Mitchell concerning potential problems if we begin this process. Prudence Pate stated there is no awareness of potential problems and this procedure should be implemented to protect the confidentiality of all employees. As long as the parent fees are correct in the data base, no problems should be incurred. The motion was approved unanimously.

#### ***Board Action Item #2003-085 Universal PreK Preparedness Committee***

Prudence Pate shared the power point presentation on Universal PreK. Discussion ensued during the presentation as follows:

- Randy Cox stated that he would like for us to work together to develop our own recommendations. We need a lot more community involvement than what we currently have. In central Florida, they have a very large and vocal group of private day care facilities. They have a large voice and they are being heard so he wants to ensure that we have our own voice too.
- Prudence Pate shared that capacity will be our problem because children will have to be placed in accredited facilities.
- Randy Cox shared that the state is projecting the need for 16,000 new teachers.
- Prudence Pate stated a lot of discussion is around the recommended hours of the direct instruction program each day.

- Michael Reneke clarified that the numbers of children they are talking about serving is doubling what is currently being served. We don't have enough Gold Seal centers or space in the school districts to serve the proposed number of children. Universities currently can't provide enough teachers to meet the demand.
- Richard Mitchell shared that it is very important for us to form a committee. The presentation of the UPK Council will actually be the recommendation that goes to the legislature. Senator Garcia from Miami will probably lead this. The push will be that everyone be funded at the same amount. Senator Mitchell has concerns that the rural districts will be left out.
- Recommended that we work with NEFEC and ISRD to try to present small and rural issues right now as they go through the committee process.
- Nancy Roberts questioned the overall impression concerning the role of the Coalition.
- Prudence Pate indicated that based on her interpretation and information from meetings she had attended, the Coalition would still be in existence and the funding would continue to flow through this mechanism.
- Nancy Roberts indicated that NEFEC may be taking a stance of eliminating the Coalitions.
- Richard Mitchell stressed the importance of the Coalition making our voice heard now.
- Prudence Pate indicated that the proposal included a change in the make-up of Coalition Board. No new administrative costs would be allocated at the State level.
- Michael Reneke shared that the state has never been fully staffed to implement current system.

A motion was made by Nancy Roberts to form the committee and seconded by Pam Norman. The motion was approved unanimously.

Chairman, Randy Cox, asked for volunteers to serve on this committee and includes:

- Raymond Logan
- Chris Bond
- Richard Mitchell
- Nancy Roberts
- Sheryll Walker
- Pam Norman
- Jessie Durden
- Carol Milton

#### ***Board Action Item #2003-086 Meeting Calendar***

A change was made in the April meeting to April 8 and the location was changed to Columbia County. Prudence Pate indicated that if the Board would give her the authority, she would confirm the meeting locations based on availability. Pam Norman made a motion to approve the tentative calendar with the change of date in April to the 8<sup>th</sup> and to give the Executive Director the authority to change locations for meeting dates as needed. The motion was seconded by Sheryll Walker. The motion was approved unanimously.

#### **COMMENTS**

- Hamilton County School Superintendent, Charles Blalock, joined the meeting and thanked everyone for coming and meeting with us today. He thanked the Coalition for what they do for



the children and the district with the School Readiness program. He was very glad to have the Coalition in our county.

- Prudence Pate shared that Paula Williams had forwarded an email to her about the parent night that was held in Hamilton County for pre-k parents and children. The e-mail was positive comments from parents who attended the parent night and expressed their appreciation for the work in the School Readiness programs. Prudence Pate had been invited, but was unable to attend due to a provider meeting.

### **New Business**

None

### **Agenda Items for January 2004**

- Conference information
- Meeting calendar

### **Public Comment**

- Jessie Durden indicated that if you want to know something, you need to be involved. She has been to all meetings, and has learned a lot. Prudence Pate shared that we appreciate her involvement.
- Randy Cox commented on the growth of the Coalition and how proud he is of the accomplishments staff has made in the past year. He commended the Executive Director and coalition staff for their dedication, hard work and accomplishments.

### **ADJOURN**

Ray Logan made a motion to adjourn and John Wheeler seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.