

Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Gateway, Inc.
Board Meeting Minutes
Columbia County School Board, Room 130
Lake City, Florida
March 8, 2006

Members Present:

John Burns, Charles Carroll, Marianna Cotter for Anita Franklin, Hugh Giebeig, John Hewett, Linda Johns, Raymond Logan, Marion McCray, Carol Milton, Jennifer Roberts, Nancy Roberts, David Rountree, Sheryll Walker, Michele Ward, John Wheeler and Paula G. Williams.

Others in Attendance:

Deirdre Raggins (AWI-OEL), Marge Campany (DOE-OEL), 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), Heidi Moore (Executive Assistant) and Deborah Sharpe (Family Services Analyst).

Members Absent:

Chris Bond, Mike Deming, Sandy Looney, Richard Mitchell, John Pierce and Kathleen Townsend,

Welcome and Call to Order

John Wheeler called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. John Hewett led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Wheeler asked Carrie Sapp to tell the Board a little about the upcoming conference on April 22nd at the Lake City Community College. The keynote speaker is Lisa Murphy (aka "The Ooey Gooney Lady"). The conference is a lot of work but a lot of fun. The members are invited to volunteer or attend.

Board Meeting Minutes (2/8/2006)

John Wheeler instructed the members to review the minutes. David Rountree made a motion to accept the minutes. Hugh Giebeig seconded the motion. The minutes were approved without objection.

Executive Committee Minutes (3/6/06)

John Wheeler reported that there were many items for discussion. One of the items will be presented as a Board Action.

- Mr. Wheeler requested that Dr. Logan reported on the issues with regard to the Hamilton County Schools. The Program Department has begun monitoring the VPK programs. In monitoring the White Springs classroom it was discovered that the instructors' CDA renewals had lapsed, which would put them out of compliance technically. The Executive Committee advised Dr. Logan to meet with the School Board superintendent to emphasize the importance of keeping the CDA's current and work with them on getting them up to date. Deirdre Raggins stated that she believed there was an extension afforded to those teachers with expired CDA's. She will follow up and report on her finding.

- John Wheeler reported that Board Member Richard Mitchell would like to resign from the Board as his personal schedule no longer affords him the time to participate. The Board would need to replace Mr. Mitchell in order to maintain the mandated number of private sector members. Mr. Mitchell agreed to remain on the Board until a replacement is found. The Board would prefer to find a representative from Union County. Linda Johns and the Union County superintendent are thinking of possible candidates. David Rountree suggested we place emphasis on finding a minority member to enhance diversity on the Board.
- Carrie Sapp of the Program Department requested a modification to the Organizational Chart. She felt it would benefit her department to designate one of her Program Specialist's as a "Senior" Program Specialist. The Committee approved.
- Dr. Logan explained that the staff has been working on several sections of the new Plan. It will be submitted to the Quality Committee at their meeting immediately following the Board meeting for their input and comments. The goal is to have a Draft by the end of the month for the review of the Quality Committee and then present the Plan to the Board at the April Board meeting. The completed version is due to Tallahassee by May 1st.
- Mr. Wheeler explained that AWI is concerned that the informal daycare settings, which are not being monitored by DCF, need to be monitored by the Coalitions. ELC-FG has fewer than eight registered homes and informal providers. Dr. Logan is on the AWI Health & Safety work group along with AWI and DCF staff to prepare very specific guidance on how Coalitions will inspect those centers, which are not being expected by anyone.
- The Coalition continues to pursue empty space in Westfield Square. One of the larger suites is supposed to be vacated in June. John Burns will negotiate with the landlord as that becomes available.

Financial Report - February

- John Burns highlighted the points of interest on the income/payables statement for School Readiness.
 - The annual audit was paid under professional fees.
 - There have been several expenditures for the upcoming Conference in April.
 - The postage was higher this month due to the quarterly lease fee.
 - The miscellaneous category was utilized for insurance costs to be reimbursed by a former employee.
- Mr. Burns then explained the VPK payables/income statement.
 - The payment from OEL was not received until March 3rd; therefore there was a zero figure in February. The checks for February were cut in February *and* the March checks were cut in February as well.
 - The Coalition purchased VPK curricula for our resource library.
 - The postage figure was higher due to mail outs for summer VPK.
 - Several staff member attended training in Orlando, which is why there were travel expenses.

Board Action

- 2006-001 –Transferring Early Learning Funds between Counties – Dr. Logan reminded the Board that there are several Coalitions' that were forced to merge. Gateway has always been a five county Coalition. The budget has always been used to serve the children in whatever county there was a need. The state gives us a budget for each county at the beginning of the year, but the money would be transferred among the counties on an as needed basis. In the past, AWI was not concerned because we were treated as a single Coalition with a single budget. The merged Coalitions are having difficulties "sharing" their monies between counties for the good of the children, so AWI initially suggested that anytime there was a shift of funds that the entire Board needed to approve. After further discussion with AWI it was determined that the Board can approve a standing order that money could be shifted from county to county as need dictated as long as it was reported to the Board on a monthly basis.

The Board discussed the issues and agreed. John Wheeler reiterated that we will not be doing anything different from what we have done in the past. This is only to formalize the process for AWI. The Action passed unanimously.

Coalition Board Orientation

Hugh Giebeig made a presentation on Children's Health Issues.

Executive Director Report

- Most of Dr. Logan's report items were discussed as the minutes of the Executive Committee.
 - Dr. Logan explained that the School Readiness enrollment numbers are being held steady so as to eliminate the possibility of a budget deficit. Unfortunately this has caused the waiting list to grow.
 - Background screening – DCF traditionally required people in child care to redo their background clearance every 5 years at the local and state level but not at the federal level. The current VPK law requires the FBI screens every five years, which is discrepant from DCF requirements. Most VPK providers are technically out of compliance due to this issue. There is talk of a "fix" this legislative session so that DCF and VPK will have the same standard. Deirdre Raggins stated that AWI is currently working on a draft PI to address this issue. Dr. Logan has chosen not to alarm the providers until a final determination is made.
 - Dr. Logan was at an Executive Directors' meeting in Orlando where they discussed a new program monitoring scheme being developed by AWI. It will rotate through the Coalitions every three years. We just had our AWI review last year, and currently we are number 25 out of 31 for the new review, which could take a couple of years to get to us.
 - Dr. Logan sat in on the meeting for Coalition chairs. There was much discussion with regard to the lack of funding for VPK administration.
 - Dr. Logan is still pursuing large employers to participate in the CCEP program. ClientLogic has returned the surveys and Dr. Logan will be meeting with them to discuss the match funds. Gold Kist has declined for this year.

Staff Reports

The staff reports are included in the packet for the review of the Board. John Wheeler informed the Board that if they have questions they should feel free to contact the staff.

Hugh Giebeig made a motion to adjourn the meeting. David Rountree seconded the motion.
Meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.