



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING MINUTES
October 27, 2016**

Meeting: Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting

Day/Date/Time: Thursday, October 27, 2016 at 8 a.m.

Location: Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc.
15506 County Line Road
Spring Hill, FL 34610

Board of Director Members Present: Dr. Steve Kanakis, Chair; Dr. Amy Anderson, Cynthia Cook, Cathy Dofka, Gus Guadagnino, Pat McHugh, Angela Porterfield, Dr. Lori Romano, Sam Shrieves

Board of Director Members Present via Phone: Florence Buono, Mary Beth Wehnes, Jessica Weightman

Board of Director Members Excused: Josh Kelly, Beth Narverud, Diane Rowden

Board Members Unexcused: None

Coalition Staff Present: Carolyn Casler, Bev Doucet, Pattie Eacobacci, Jim Farrelly, Rachel Hardy, Jak Jakubauskas, Betsy Kier, Ljubica Sevic, Audrey Stasko

Guests Present: Ms. Lynn Mahs, Wee Kids of Pasco

I. Welcome and Call to Order – Dr. Steve Kanakis, Chair

Dr. Kanakis called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc. Board of Directors to order at 8:01 a.m. and thanked everyone for attending.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited followed by introductions.

II. Action Items

- **Adoption of Agenda**

Dr. Kanakis requested a motion to adopt the agenda. Ms. Porterfield so moved and Mr. McHugh seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. **(Action Item #1617-06)**

- **Approval of Minutes, July 28, 2016 Board Meeting**

Dr. Kanakis requested a motion to approve the minutes of the July 28, 2016 Board Meeting as presented. Mr. McHugh so moved and Ms. Porterfield seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. **(Action Item #1617-07)**

- **Treasurer's Report – Mr. Gus Guadagnino, Chair**

- A. Financial Statements – July - September, 2016**

Mr. Guadagnino requested that Ms. Hardy present the verbal explanation of the financial reports covering July through September. Ms. Hardy reported that all spending was well within the required minimum and maximum percentages. She reported that \$3,000 had been raised for Match bringing the year to date total to over \$12,000. This amount does not include the in-kind donations from slots which would bring the total amount raised to nearly \$20,000. Ms. Hardy reported the surplus has grown, due to an additional \$716,000 received from OEL for the School Readiness grant for Direct Services. These additional funds will help to eliminate the wait list.

Dr. Kanakis requested a motion to approve the Financial Statements for July through September. Mr. Shrieves so moved and Ms. Dofka seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. **(Action Item #1617-08)**

III. Remarks from the Chair/Executive Committee Report – Dr. Steve Kanakis, Chair

- **Executive Committee Report**

Dr. Kanakis presented the (attached) action items the Executive Committee had acted on since the January Board meeting.

- **Approval, Community At Large Board Member**

Mr. Farrelly provided brief backgrounds on the two (2) candidates that applied for this position which expires November of 2019. Mr. Tom Ketterer is an administrator with Shriner's Hospital and has a good business reputation with a record of community service. Ms. Kathleen Casper is a Port Richey resident who is an attorney, has worked in the non-profit sector and has had a career as a teacher. He reported the Executive Committee has recommended Ms. Casper for this vacant position.

Dr. Kanakis requested a motion to approve Ms. Casper to the Board of Directors as the Community at Large Member for Pasco County. Mr. McHugh so moved and Mr. Shrieves seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. **(Action Item #1617-09)**

- **Review/Approval, Revisions to Personnel Policy (as required by OEL)**

Mr. Farrelly explained the Executive Committee has approved the changes contained in the policy as required by OEL. He explained the policy has also been updated to reflect what is currently being utilized, but there are no substantive changes to the policy.

Dr. Kanakis requested a motion to approve the Personnel Policy and Procedures as presented. Ms. Porterfield so moved and Dr. Romano seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. **(Action Item #1617-10)**

- **Review/Approval, (New) Supplemental Sliding Fee Scales for Pasco/Hernando**

Ms. Kier explained the scales are a part of the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) implementation. These scales will be used when the client's income level is over 200% of the federal poverty level, but still below the 85% state median income level to determine if the client is still eligible or if services should be terminated. These scales will be updated annually as are the federal scales.

Dr. Kanakis requested a motion to approve the Supplemental Sliding Fee Scales. Mr. Shrieves so moved and Mr. McHugh seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. **(Action Item #1617-11)**

- **Discussion, Letter to Fellow Members from Board Member Gus Guadagnino**

Mr. Guadagnino stated it was important for members to not only be available to set policy, but to also be cheerleaders for the Coalition. The Coalition's two (2) largest events are the Conference and Storybook Forest. If members do not attend, how can there be cheerleaders. If a Board member is not able to attend, he suggested they send a representative. Members need to step up and be visible to support staff which is vital to any community-oriented organization.

Ms. Porterfield stated she supports Mr. Guadagnino 110% and appreciates that he took the lead on Board involvement and urges him to continue leading to support the Coalition, the community and the dedicated staff "who can pull off an international conference."

Mr. Guadagnino explained that Board members are not called upon to be involved, they need to make a better effort to involve themselves. Mr. McHugh stated that Coalition staff members volunteer an incredible amount of hours and the Board owes it to staff to be at these events. He stated that Ms. Doucet's work on the conference was nothing short of outstanding and those who missed the conference are less for it.

Ms. Cook stated she attended the conference and thought it was phenomenal. Dr. Romano stated that as leaders, members have to take a stand and was grateful for the reminder of faithful service. However, there will be some prioritizing and honoring of many different

commitments as members cannot be all to all. She stated there is a need to cement the K-12 world to such events in a larger way.

Dr. Kanakis thanked the members and stated their points were well taken.

- **Strategic Planning KPI Team Reports**

- Parent Outreach & Education

Ms. Dofka reported that Hernando Schools have been doing Parent Outreach and Education by providing packets that include information on the VPK program as well as other preschool activities along with related brochures from other agencies.

Ms. Dofka explained that a parent liaison will be taking these informational packets to local VPK providers and child care centers and information has also been placed on the school district's Facebook page. She reported that the Advisory Board for ESE includes a pre-K parent and policies and procedures for determining gifted students prior to attending kindergarten have changed. Also, trainings are available for parents on behavior preparedness and getting ready for school.

Dr. Romano added that informational packets on available programs are being distributed to new mothers after delivery.

Mr. Farrelly announced this report was the final segment of the Coalition's Strategic Plan. He explained that outreach will be a key element as Year of the Young Child kicks off in January. Early education in a child care setting is an important element as children spend so much time with early educators and parents continue to be encouraged to move away from terms like baby-sitting and daycare.

- **Sunshine Stars Provider Presentation - Ms. Lynn Mahs, Wee Kids of Pasco**

Mr. Farrelly introduced Ms. Mahs and explained Wee Kids offers both School Readiness and the VPK program. Wee Kids was also one of the first 5-star Sunshine Star providers.

Ms. Mahs explained she has been in business for twenty-four (24) years and has seen a number of changes over the years. She has been part of Sunshine Stars since its inception and explained that parents are now calling her center telling her they would like to enroll their children into a 5-star center. She has enrolled an additional 10-12 students due to her star rating. She stated the process was not difficult and her teachers were very involved. Ms. Mahs stressed the importance of the Professional Development aspect, but explained she is losing trained teachers to higher paying positions. She stated the state's reimbursement is not keeping up with rising center costs and salaries causing a problem when trying to hire qualified staff, which is one of the requirements of the Sunshine Stars program.

Discussion followed that included finding funds for teachers to further their education; parent involvement; pre-service programs for students looking for careers in Special Education; and staff retention.

Dr. Kanakis thanked Ms. Mahs for coming. The Board also agreed that having a provider attend quarterly meetings should be added to the agenda.

IV. Utilization Reports - Ms. Betsy Kier, Assistant Executive Director

Ms. Kier reported that School Readiness enrollments continue with an additional 300 children being placed within the next two (2) weeks. She anticipates the wait list to be at zero by December.

She reported that VPK enrollment numbers are up for September exceeding enrollment numbers from this time period last year.

V. Committee Updates:

- **Finance and Audit Committee – Mr. Gus Guadagnino, Chair**

On behalf of Mr. Guadagnino, Mr. Farrelly reported there were no financial issues; the Coalition is running a \$3 million surplus and enrolling hundreds of new children.

- **Ad Hoc Fundraising Committee Update - Mr. Pat McHugh, Chair**

Mr. McHugh reported that he and Ms. Weightman are a committee of two (2) who have the annual obligation to raise over \$300,000 for Match funds. He reported the committee is working on hosting another Spelling Bee event. The last Spelling Bee raised about \$7,000, but the committee needs additional assistance. Mr. McHugh requested interested Board members contact him through Mr. Farrelly.

VI. Executive Director Report – Mr. Jim Farrelly

A. Coalition Update

Mr. Farrelly distributed a copy of the Sunshine Stars Provider Manual to the Board members present. He explained this is the second year for this program and the Coalition is always interested in improving the program. He explained that VPK-only providers are also interested in becoming star providers, but at this time, the program is only open to School Readiness providers. It would be costly to the Coalition to add VPK providers as this is a staff intensive program. Currently there is a waiting list of School Readiness providers who are interested in participating. Sunshine Stars has been extremely successful and has increased the quality of participating centers.

Mr. Farrelly distributed copies of the Coalition's Annual Report for FY 2015-16 to the Board and an additional copy to use as a recruiting tool for new members from the business community.

Mr. Farrelly reported the 9th Annual Early Learning Conference was a huge success with over 1,000 attendees and Florida's first international conference. Keynote speaker, *Tampa Bay Times* Columnist/Bureau Chief Ernest Hooper was a big hit, but an even bigger hit was the presentation by Dr. Kanakis and his son, Alec. Through Ms. Doucet's efforts, the conference raised \$15,000 while not expending any Coalition funds. Mr.

Rodney MacKinnon of Florida's Office of Early Learning was also in attendance and was amazed at the scope and organization of the conference.

Mr. Farrelly reported that Judge Lynn Tepper will make a presentation at the January Board meeting.

The wait list currently has 493 children, down from last week's count of over 700 children. Over 1,200 slots have been opened since July 1st and Mr. Farrelly expects walk-ins to be able to receive services by December.

Mr. Farrelly reported that new sponsorships with the Coalition are on the rise as evidenced by the interest Florida Lottery, Suncoast Credit Union and Premier HealthCare have shown. All donations from sponsorships go toward Match.

B. Foundation Update

Mr. Farrelly stated that a flyer for the upcoming CARnival is included with the Board packet. The event will be held on Sunday, November 13, 2016 from 11 am - 4 pm. This year, more games for the children are being planned along with a transportation theme that will include pony rides as well as a train ride.

C. Update, School Readiness Eligibility Criteria

Ms. Kier explained that the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) has new criteria that must be implemented to comply with federal guidelines as the re-determination period has changed to twelve (12) months. OEL will provide training on the new rules for implementation however, for special circumstances, OEL will provide technical assistance. Mr. Farrelly stated eligibility for School Readiness has changed dramatically with the change to twelve (12) month eligibility. Even if a family should lose their eligibility, they would still have three (3) months of service available to them.

VIII. Public Input

Dr. Kanakis stated it is important for this Board to create a legacy for children. The Board needs to attract individuals who are passionate about the mission and children and who want to be involved.

IX. Adjournment

Dr. Kanakis requested a motion to adjourn; Mr. Guadagnino so moved and this meeting of the Board of Directors of the Early Learning Coalition adjourned at 9:34 a.m. without further discussion.

Respectfully submitted by:

Ramute "Jak" Jakubauskas
Administrative Assistant I