



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING MINUTES
January 22, 2009**

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

Day/Date/Time: Thursday, January 22, 2009 – 8:30 a.m.

Location: Office of the Early Learning Coalition
15506 County Line Road
Spring Hill, FL 34610

Board of Director Members Present: Lisa Hammond, Chair; Susan Arnett, Sister Roberta Bailey, Curt Bromund, Elizabeth Callaghan, James Cook, Denise Gill, Dr. Steve Kanakis, Dave Meglay, Nicole Miller, Jean Rags, Beth Rawls, Mary Beth Wehnes, Patricia Wisman

Board of Director Members Excused: Steve Davis, Dr. Burt Harres, Sonya Jackson, Joe Mascaro, Lydia Pinkowski

Coalition Staff Present: Pattie Eacobacci, Jim Farrelly, Nicole Flechas, Nicole Gonzalez, Ramute “Jak” Jakubauskas, Betsy Kier, Maryrose Wersan

Guests Present: Melissa Burnett, MFCS-Head Start; Jack Hamilton, AWI; Joanne Hurley, Pasco County School Board; Tom Scheffey, CDS

I. Welcome and Call to Order - Ms. Lisa Hammond, Chair

Ms. Lisa Hammond, Chair, called the meeting of the Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc. Board of Directors to order at approximately 8:40 a.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present. Ms. Hammond welcomed Ms. Joanne Hurley, Pasco County School Board member.

II. Action Items

- **Adoption of Agenda**

Ms. Hammond requested that the agenda be reviewed for adoption. Ms. Rags moved to accept this motion and Mr. Cook seconded. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. (**Action Item #0809-1**)

- **Approval of Minutes, November 18, 2008 Board Meeting**

Ms. Hammond requested a motion to approve the November 18, 2008 minutes. Mr. Meglay moved to accept this motion and Mr. Cook seconded. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. (**Action Item #0809-2**)

- **Treasurer's Report - Ms. Jean Rags, Coalition Treasurer/Board Member**

Monthly Statement of Financials – October 2008

Ms. Rags reviewed the October Financials and reported an increase in fees for the additional office space. She also explained that all coalitions saw an increase in workmen's compensation insurance for fiscal year 2008-2009. Ms. Hammond requested a motion to approve the October Financial Report. Mr. Cook moved to accept this motion and Ms. Miller seconded. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. (**Action Item #0809-3**)

- **Monthly Statement of Financials – November 2008**

Ms. Rags reviewed the November Financials and again reported an increase in fees due to expansion. She indicated that expenses for staff attending conferences/meetings will be included in next year's budget as well as advertising costs to cover the printing of the annual report. Ms. Rags also explained that the Coalition is now required to carry glass coverage. Ms. Hammond requested a motion to approve the November Financial Report. Mr. Meglay moved to accept this motion and Mr. Cook seconded. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. (**Action Item #0809-4**)

III. Remarks from the Chair and Executive Committee Report - Ms. Lisa Hammond

Ms. Hammond stated the Executive Committee had met and discussed readiness rates; membership term expirations occurring in June; and Mr. Farrelly's performance review. Ms. Hammond stated that Mr. Farrelly had stellar reviews and thanked him for his service.

The tremendous shortfall faced by the State's budget, for both this year and next, was discussed. The Coalition did holdback 4% of the budget which the State took back and the Board is expecting another 5-10% give back within the next week. There was a brief discussion on possible legislative actions and Mr. Farrelly spoke of attending a luncheon that included Florida Senator Mike Fasano. Mr. Farrelly stated there were

approximately 650 children on the wait list and CDS will work quickly to get these children qualified once a waiting list is opened. He also informed the Board that some VPK providers will be losing approximately \$400-\$500, per child, because of the budget cuts, beginning February 1, 2009.

Additional discussion followed on the wait list and the decrease in VPK rates for providers. The new rates from OEL will be going into effect 2/1/2009. The school year rates will be: Hernando County – from \$4.76 per hour to \$4.66 per hour. Pasco County – from \$4.83 per hour to \$4.73 per hour. The summer sessions will also be affected: Hernando County – from \$8.57 per hour to \$7.14 per hour. Pasco County – from \$8.70 per hour to \$7.25 per hour.

Mr. Farrelly stated that some providers will no longer offer VPK while the quality of service may suffer at other centers. The providers will be informed of these tentative new rates.

Further discussion followed on the low VPK scores at some schools. Ms. Gill shared that she has been contacted by some of these providers and was told their lower scores were because of the number of children enrolling at their centers that are behind having little or no skills. She believes that the Coalition should lobby State leaders on their behalf. Ms. Hammond responded by saying that business owners have more clout and a stronger voice than the Coalition. Ms. Arnett added that emails and phone calls from constituents will also obtain a politician's attention as economic development is a huge issue for the state.

Ms. Hammond suggested that Ms. Gill make arrangements with Mr. Farrelly to be placed on the agenda for a future Board meeting to discuss the standards center directors have to maintain. She also recommends placing an item on the Executive Committee meeting agenda to discuss the possibility of giving voice to this issue.

Mr. Farrelly stated the Coalition has made strong statements including notifying OEL that VPK reimbursements should not be reduced. As members of AELC, coalition executive directors have advocated the legislature, have met with State representatives, have written positions and have dialogued on behalf of providers.

IV. Finance and Audit Committee – Mr. Jim Cook, Chairperson

A. Recommend Approval of Expenditures over \$5,000

Mr. Cook stated the Committee had met and reviewed the Fiscal and Accounting Policies for the final time and been updated on FDIC and financial sweeps relating to the Coalition's bank account.

Mr. Cook requested a motion to approve the four (4) recommended expenditures over \$5,000.00 for January and February's rent as well as January and February's invoices for United Healthcare. Ms. Rags moved to accept this motion and Ms. Arnett seconded. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. **(Action Item #0809-5, #0809-6, #0809-7, and #0809-8)**

V. Executive Director Report – Mr. Jim Farrelly

Mr. Farrelly welcomed Joanne Hurley of the Pasco County School Board to the Coalition’s Board of Directors meeting.

A. Fiscal and Accounting Policies, 4th Reading

Mr. Farrelly stated this policy is ready for approval. It is the result of five (5) audits and financial reviews. Mr. Cook made a motion to accept the Fiscal and Accounting Policies and Ms. Rags seconded. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. **(Action Item #0809-9)**

B. By-Laws, 1st Reading

Mr. Farrelly stated that all changes were highlighted in yellow and had been approved by the Program Committee. Ms. Hammond requested the By-Laws return to the next Board meeting for second reading.

C. Approval of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Between Redlands Christian Migrant Association and the Coalition

Mr. Farrelly reminded the Board they had approved a similar agreement for two (2) other Head Start programs. These MOU’s are required by the Federal government. Ms. Hammond requested a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between Redlands Christian Migrant Association and the Coalition. Dr. Kanakis moved to accept this motion and Ms. Rags seconded. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. **(Action Item #0809-10)**

D. Coalition Update

Mr. Farrelly informed the Board that the Coalition had received notification, at the same time the announcement regarding reductions in VPK reimbursement rates arrived, that we had been awarded an additional \$1,044,289 in VPK funds this week. The Coalition now has more funds to award to providers if they enroll children, but providers will be reimbursed at the lower level, effective February 1, 2009. Discussion followed on the additional funds, centers capped at the number of VPK children they may enroll, and the possibility of returning unspent funds.

Mr. Farrelly has learned that Florida Representative Greg Evers of District 1 filed a bill to disband all state coalitions and invest those responsibilities in OEL and AWI. Mr. Farrelly stated that the coalition in his area had very high administrative rates. There is also some interest in reducing coalitions from 31 to 25 by July. Representative Evers is still looking for a co-sponsor for the bill and currently there is no counterpart bill in the Senate.

Mr. Farrelly distributed copies of WEDU's "Be More Awards" program booklet. The Coalition was in the top five (5) of two (2) categories due to the endeavors of Nicole Gonzales, Communications Specialist and Shannon Dewey, Mobile Outreach Specialist. The winners were a child's foundation and Big Cat Rescue.

Mr. Farrelly thanked Mr. Meglay for his involvement in procuring a \$2,000 donation from the Seven Springs Rotary Club. He also thanked Ms. Arnett who was instrumental in saving the Coalition thousands of dollars by providing the counsel of a payroll specialist for Ms. Wersan to assist in recreating unemployment tax reports going back to 2004.

Mr. Farrelly reported that Coalition staff had met with the auditors this week and the audit will be presented at the February Board meeting. All requirements from last year's audit were corrected with three (3) minor corrections for this year. The first was lack of match; second was deposits were not fully insured through the FDIC; and last was some journal entry confusion. The report will be presented to a joint Executive/ Finance/Audit Committee meeting and then to the entire Board in February.

Mr. Farrelly stated that the Coalition had received the latest Readiness Rates. There had been a large increase in providers offering VPK (20% increase) and an average rate increase of 4%. However, there was an increase in low performing providers, to 19 centers. Mr. Farrelly will schedule a full presentation of Readiness Rates at the February Board meeting.

Mr. Farrelly thanked Board members and Coalition staff for their support in helping him through his first year.

VI. Central Agency Utilization Reports – Tom Scheffey

Mr. Bromund stated that Mr. Scheffey would present the report.

Mr. Scheffey gave a brief overview of the reports for November and December. He stated that 3-month re-determinations are being done and has resulted in drop-outs from the program. He stated there were surplus funds in both Pasco and Hernando counties and the wait list as of Friday was 641 children.

VII. New/Unfinished Business

None

VIII. Public Input

Ms. Arnett announced that Pasco County will be receiving \$317,000 from the McKinney Homeless Act which is a considerable increase from last year's award of \$77,000. This will provide basic needs and direct services only.

IX. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn this meeting of the Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc. Board of Directors was made by Ms. Rags. With no further discussion the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Ramute “Jak” Jakubauskas
Administrative Assistant