



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
MEETING MINUTES  
March 25, 2010**

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

**Day/Date/Time:** Thursday, March 25, 2010 – 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, Elizabeth Callaghan, Jo Ann Carman, Jayne Goldstein, Dr. Steve Kanakis, David Lambert, Karen Livengood, Joe Mascaro, Dave Meglay, Nicole Miller, Pat Mulieri, Beth Rawls, Teresa Suarez

**Board of Director Members Present via Telephone/Video Conference:** None

**Board of Director Members Excused:** Bonnie Clark, Sonya Jackson, Debi Martoccio, Mary Beth Wehnes

**Board of Director Members Absent:** None

**Coalition Staff Present:** Kim Borrego, Sheila Chambers, Shannon Dewey, Pattie Eacobacci, Jim Farrelly, Nicole Gonzalez, Marie Grace, Ramute “Jak” Jakubauskas, Betsy Kier, Bill Kleinsorge, Ljuba Sevic, Kim Williams

**Guests Present:** Rob Aguis, Pasco County Schools; Jennifer Chiger, Little Achievers; Cassandra Clayton, Happy Land; Norma Danatella, Precious Beginning; Maureen Gilbertson, Wee Care; Brittany Gillette, Kids Under Construction; Cynthia Glower, Day Care Provider; Mary Grey, PLACE; Gloria Harris, Learning Tree Preschool; Shane Harris, Learning Tree Preschool; Joan Houck, Genesis School; Gerry L. Hudson, Little People Christian Day Care; Judy Little, Little Family Daycare; Jackie Maness, Longleaf Learning Center; Laurie Mykel, ABC Academy; Kevin Nissen, Little People’s Preschool; Missy Nurrenbrock, Genesis School; Rita S. Robinson, Ellie’s Daycare; Lachelle Statler, First Class; Wesley A. Ward, FCCDC; Toni Watkins, Sacred Heart ECC; Karen M. Zavrel, Little Leprechauns

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

Ms. Lisa Hammond, Chair, called the monthly meeting of the Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc. Board of Directors to order at approximately 8:45 a.m. Introductions were made.

**II. Action Items**

- **Adoption of Agenda**

Ms. Hammond requested a motion to adopt the agenda. Mr. Meglay moved to accept this motion and Ms. Mulieri seconded. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. **(Action Item #0910-34)**

- **Approval of Minutes, January 28, 2010 Board Meeting**

Ms. Hammond requested a motion to approve the January 28, 2010 minutes. Ms. Mulieri moved to accept this motion and Mr. Meglay seconded. There was no discussion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. **(Action Item #0910-35)**

- **Approval of Minutes, February 25, 2010 Board Meeting**

Ms. Hammond requested a motion to approve the February 25, 2010 minutes. Ms. Mulieri moved to accept this motion and Mr. Meglay seconded. There was no discussion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. **(Action Item #0910-36)**

- **Treasurer's Report – Ms. Elizabeth Callaghan, Chair**

- A. Monthly Statement of Financials – December, 2009**

Ms. Callaghan stated there were three (3) account deficit areas to be brought to the Board's attention. The first was the deficit in salaries for the month due to the former Financial Director not allocating enough funds for this category; Contract Services was due to the additional accounting services provided by CDS and Professional Fees was due to the increase in fees to the annual audit because of additional procedures.

- B. Monthly Statement of Financials – January, 2010**

For the January Financials, Ms. Callaghan reported the deficit in Office Supplies was due to the purchase of a new server and Contract Services was again due to additional accounting services provided by CDS.

Ms. Callaghan distributed a Fiscal Year End Projection report (attached) and stated these were the projected expenses through June, 2010. She informed the Board that even though there were deficits within certain line items, overall the bottom line is positive with a projected surplus in the administrative budget of \$37,325.

Ms. Hammond requested a motion to accept the Monthly Statement of Financials for December, 2009. Mr. Meglay so moved and Ms. Mulieri seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried.  
**(Action Item #0910-37)**

Ms. Hammond requested a motion to accept the Monthly Statement of Financials for January, 2010. Ms. Arnett so moved and Mr. Meglay seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried.  
**(Action Item #0910-38)**

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

Ms. Hammond stated the Executive Committee had met and discussed several items including being brought up to date on the budget, today's second presentation on the Coalition's internal monitoring tools, a proposed collaboration with Lacoochee Library, and VPK Readiness Rates. The age range of children was also discussed and it was decided to schedule a special meeting in April solely to continue the age range discussion.

### **IV. Program Committee – Mr. Dave Meglay, Chair**

- **Committee Update**

Mr. Meglay stated that the Program Committee had met and discussed the centers that have been evaluated and are currently under a Corrective Action Plan (CAP). He stated that having the center directors/owners write their own CAP has resulted in higher percentage scores during re-assessments.

Mr. Meglay introduced Ms. Sheila Chambers, Provider Specialist.

- **Presentation, Provider Monitoring – Ms. Sheila Chambers, Provider Specialist**

Ms. Chambers distributed copies of this morning's PowerPoint presentation (attached) for the Board to follow as she presented the second session on the Coalition's monitoring tools.

Ms. Callaghan inquired about the type of training provided to Provider Specialists and if there was a training manual or guidelines on the monitoring tools and their use. Ms. Kier described the type of training Provider specialists undergo and stated she will begin to work on a manual with staff and input from the Program Committee.

Mr. Meglay requested input and suggestions from the Board members that would result in more involvement from the providers with trainings and development of tools.

**V. Finance and Audit Committee – Ms. Elizabeth Callaghan, Chair**

- **Committee Update**

Ms. Callaghan stated the Finance and Audit Committee had met on February 17, 2010 and discussed using Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) to pay for certain monthly invoices provided there were no additional fees. She stated that the Coalition has stopped transferring families into ARRA funds for School Readiness and back into School Readiness funds because ARRA funds can be carried over into the next fiscal year, but School Readiness funds must be expended by the end of June, 2010.

She informed the Board that the Committee had discussed medical insurance for Coalition staff. Currently a stipend is offered, but the Coalition does not know if these funds are being used for health insurance. Staff will verify with the Coalition's attorney and inquire if asking for proof of insurance is a possibility. Another option would be to investigate if it would be more cost effective to have all staff on the insurance plan.

Ms. Callaghan reported that at the March 17, 2010 Finance and Audit Committee meeting, the Fiscal and Accounting Policies were reviewed for the third time including newly added verbiage for check writing. These policies were approved by the Committee and will be presented to the Board for approval. Ms. Callaghan stated that Mr. Kleinsorge is currently making adjustments into QuickBooks which must be done before transferring to the SAGE financial system can begin and both systems will be run for one month before the final transfer to SAGE on July 1, 2010.

- **Approval, Amendment to VPK Budget**

Ms. Callaghan reported that the Amendment to the VPK budget, even though it de-obligated funds, did not change the bottom line for VPK because of the addition of ARRA funds to the budget.

Ms. Hammond requested a motion to approve the Amendment to the VPK Budget. Dr. Kanakis so moved and Ms. Mulieri seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. **(Action Item #0910-39)**

**VI. Quality Committee – Dr. Steve Kanakis, Chair and Mr. Joe Mascaro, Vice Chair**

Dr. Kanakis reported that during February's Quality Committee meeting, \$16,412 in incentive dollars had been approved for providers and \$16,519 had been approved at the March meeting. Dr. Kanakis reported that the Committee had agreed to allocate, if necessary, \$65,000 from the Quality budget to slots to help offset the wait list.

**VII. Discussion, Age Range for School Readiness Services**

Mr. Farrelly distributed a file folder containing the information that had been sent to Board members. Mr. Farrelly informed the Board that the Coalition's current wait list contains over 500 children and may be at 1,000 by the end of the year if something is not done. He reminded the Board that this Coalition serves birth – 12 years and that more Coalitions are now serving younger children. He stated the Board can continue to

accept long wait lists or consider other options, including restricting the age range for eligibility.

- **Video Presentation Brain Development in Young Children**

At this time, Mr. Farrelly presented a Healthy Start video posted on YouTube which offered a perspective on early education, “Change the First 5 Years and You Change Everything.”

- **Review, Coalition Mission and Guiding Beliefs**

Mr. Farrelly suggested the Board consider switching the Coalition’s current Mission Statement with the Vision Statement. Discussion followed that included a suggestion to hold a workshop to fine tune the Mission and Vision statements, the need for extreme sensitivity with any changes, if changes would affect the Coalition’s By-Laws, and whether the Coalition would best serve the 0-5 age range in helping prepare them for school or the 5-12 age range.

Ms. Callaghan motioned to adopt the current Vision Statement as the Mission Statement. Mr. Mascaro seconded the motion. All were in favor with the exception of Mr. Lambert; the motion carried.

Mr. Farrelly informed the Board that a special Board meeting to continue the age range discussion has been scheduled for Monday, April 19, 2010 from 1-4 p.m. It will be hosted by Pasco Hernando Community College with a panel presentation of experts in the field. Mr. Farrelly suggested that the Board members be prepared for the May Board meeting to consider a recommended change in the age range, an implementation date, how to deal with siblings, the phase in process and the displacement of older children. He recommends having a decision no later than June so that implementation can begin with the new fiscal year; allowing the Coalition time to advise providers and families.

Ms. Hammond requested the Board to review materials presented prior to the April Board meeting and stated that if any additional information was needed for their review, to contact Mr. Farrelly. She requests a consensus on how to vote at the May meeting that includes a decision of what age range the Coalition should serve based on the financial constraints. Ms. Hammond stated there are no foregone conclusions; all options are on the table.

Mr. Farrelly reiterated that if the Board has requests for any statistics, etc., he would gladly supply the information. Ms. Hammond encouraged the Board to consider all options by reviewing the age distribution on the wait list and the information on what other Coalitions are doing.

**VIII. 2008-2009 VPK Readiness Rates – Ms. Betsy Kier, Assistant Executive Director and VPK Staff**

Ms. Kier stated a brief presentation will be done on the VPK 08-09 Readiness rates by Kim Williams. She stated the Coalition had some Low Performing Providers (LPP), whose scores were below the minimum required. She also stated that the Coalition had more providers participate in the VPK program this year.

Ms. Williams introduced herself and distributed a hand out. She stated that 175 providers participated, with 163 offering a school year program and 12 provided summer VPK programs. A total of 5,492 children were served. Of these providers, 146 passed and 4% did not receive a score as there were not enough children enrolled in their program. Twenty-one (21) or 12% were LPPs and eleven (11) providers scored a perfect 200. Of the twenty-one (21) LPPs, one center has since closed, three (3) are on their second year as LPPs and will be required to purchase a curriculum, and one (1) provider is an LPP for the third year. This provider will no longer be allowed to offer VPK services if they do not meet the minimum for the coming year.

Discussion followed on the trainings required and the costly VPK curriculum purchases which are not subject to reimbursement through the School Readiness Quality incentives budget.

Further discussion followed on how the LPPs are determined through an assessment of kindergartners within the first thirty (30) days of school, the testing process and the tools used. Further discussion followed on the number of children with special needs in the program and children with language barriers. Ms. Rawls stated that Pasco Elementary School, which is in its third year as an LPP, has the highest concentration of non-English speaking children in the area. One of the tests administered to the children, the FAIR-K, is not available in Spanish.

**IX. Executive Director Report – Mr. Jim Farrelly, Executive Director**

- **Coalition Update**

Mr. Farrelly distributed the finalized Annual Audit report to the Board for their records. He welcomed Mr. Bill Kleinsorge as the Coalition's new Financial Director. He informed the Board that the Florida legislature will be discussing both School Readiness and VPK program funding. Senator Fasano recently toured the Coalition's new mobile outreach van and discussed with Mr. Farrelly that he believed School Readiness funds may be held harmless, however, VPK funds may be cut by as much as \$400, an approximate 15% decrease per child.

Mr. Farrelly informed the Board that the Coalition's School Readiness wait list is ongoing. He stated the Coalition is again participating in the state-wide Week of the Young Child with the Hanging of the Hands in Tallahassee. A sample of what the providers have submitted is on display in the Conference Center.

- **Data Security Policies, 1<sup>st</sup> Reading**

Mr. Farrelly informed the Board that AWI requires these policies to be in place. The wording has been used by other Coalitions and the policies have been reviewed by the Coalition's attorney. The policies: Workstation Security Policy, E-Mail Use Policy and Acceptable Use Agreement for Internet and other Electronic Resources, will be brought back to the May meeting for a second reading.

- **Approval, Lacoochee Library Grant**

Mr. Farrelly explained the Lacoochee area is one of the Coalition's targeted communities for services and explained this library services grant is through Pasco County Government.

Ms. Hammond requested a motion to approve the Lacoochee Library Grant. Ms. Arnett so moved and Mr. Lambert seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. (**Action Item #0910-40**)

## **X. Utilization Reports – Ms. Betsy Kier, Assistant Executive Director**

Ms. Kier reported that enrollment numbers are looking better than originally predicted. Hernando County served eight (8) fewer children than last month and will have a \$220,000 surplus at the end of the year. VPK in Hernando shows an increase of 44 children due to the recent newspaper inserts. Ms. Kier stated that a direct mail post card with VPK information would be distributed in the near future.

In Pasco County, Ms. Kier reported that 57 less children were served in School Readiness and a surplus of \$101,000 is being predicted for the end of the year. VPK enrollment dropped by 44 children, primarily because a provider had a 6-hour per day program that ended in January.

Mr. Farrelly stated that the Coalition needs to spend its School Readiness dollars, but it cannot be overspent. The wait list in Hernando consists of approximately 225 children; Mr. Farrelly recommends opening 150 slots which will leave \$100,000 in the budget. Pasco County has 400 children on the wait list and he recommends opening 300 slots which will leave \$150,000 in the budget. These projections will be re-evaluated on an ongoing basis. There is projected to be \$400,000 remaining in the ARRA funds which can be carried over into next fiscal year.

Ms. Arnett moved to approve the Executive Director's recommendations to open slots in both Pasco and Hernando Counties. Ms. Mulieri seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried.

## **XI. New/Unfinished Business**

Ms. Arnett announced that United Way's Prosperity Campaign showed a 40% increase in their free tax preparation program which resulted in over \$1 million dollars to

families through the Earned Income Tax Credit. She also announced that training grant dollars are available to employed workers through the Workforce Board.

Ms. Rawls announced that Pasco Schools, in collaboration with Early Head Start, opened a pod of four (4) classrooms for 1-3 year olds at the New River Elementary School.

## **XII. Public Input**

At this time, Ms. Hammond inquired if any of the guests had any comments they would like to make to the Board. The following providers spoke to the age range issue:

Mr. Kevin Nissen of Little People's Preschool stated that a typical center will have 105 children and if funding is cut for the school-aged children, centers will not be able to accept additional younger children. Dollars from these school-aged children are used to support the School Readiness program as providers have not seen a raise in many years. He urged the Board to find other ways to save dollars rather than cutting services to the school-agers.

Ms. Toni Watkins of Sacred Heart stated that many parents do not know where to take their children and may end up taking them to a "flop house" where children will not be encouraged to learn. She encouraged the Board to give parents options.

Ms. Cassandra Clayton of Happy Land Daycare had the following message:

*"I received a letter from the legal department on March the 12th stating that the Coalition's School Readiness Provider Monitoring Tool is an unauthorized document and is illegal. So, this Coalition believes it is doing a fine job with your assessment tool, but you need to go back to the board. That tool is unauthorized and was unauthorized before my funding for School Readiness was pulled and I speak for all the providers here that this is not only a victory it is a victory for God.*

*I think I told you on October 22<sup>nd</sup> when I stated that I didn't want you feeling sorry for me, I dreamed this was going to happen. I said that God had a plan that there were some things going on in this Coalition board that needs to be exposed and this is God's victory. So I don't know if the Board is aware of this letter, but I was in contact with AWI on Monday and I was assured that this Board of this Coalition had this letter since March 17<sup>th</sup>."*

Ms. Hammond thanked Mrs. Clayton and stated Mr. Farrelly will bring it to our attention at the next Board meeting.

Mr. Farrelly stated that the letter was brought to the attention of the Program Committee at its March meeting. He further noted that Mrs. Clayton's verbal summary of the letter is an absolute and total misrepresentation of the correspondence from the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI).



Ms. Hammond again indicated that the letter would be discussed at the Board's next regular meeting.

Ms. Clayton distributed a packet of correspondence.

Mr. Shane Harris of the Learning Tree Preschool inquired if the April 19 meeting would be open to the public and if information from the providers could be sent directly to the Board. Ms. Hammond assured him the meeting would be open to the public and requested that providers send all information to Mr. Farrelly who will in turn ensure that every member of the Board receives that information. Mr. Harris stated he believed a number of providers will go out of business, including Gold Seal accredited centers.

Ms. Judy Little, a Home Daycare Provider, requested the Board consider the small businesses and how changes will directly affect their centers and the children served.

Ms. Norma Danatella of Precious Beginning stated she had been a LPP for two (2) years and had all subsidized children in her care whose families were at the bottom of the economic scale. She stated the stigma of being a LPP is not attached to the public school programs the way it is to private providers and now the opening of the new program at New River Elementary will be in direct competition with private providers. Ms. Hammond stated this new program at New River Elementary is not funded by the Coalition and encouraged providers to speak to their government officials such as Senator Fasano as they control the funding.

Ms. Missy Nurrenbrock of Genesis School distributed information on the FAIR-K assessment tool (attached) and stated that children with language differences and special needs children were being given this assessment. Providers have appealed to the DOE stating this is a flawed test.

Ms. Gloria Harris of Learning Tree Preschool stated her Gold Seal accredited center is up for renewal. However, they have no room for additional School Readiness children if funding is cut for school-aged children and if VPK funding is cut. The VPK dollars are necessary for them to stay in business.

Ms. Tammy Brinker of the YMCA spoke to the importance of funding before and after school programs as some of these children and their families have no other options.

Ms. Laurie Mykel of ABC Academy stated she had just begun a school-aged program due to the demand and at great expense because of their different needs for classroom and playground equipment. If this program is cut, centers will not only lose the school-agers but may also lose their siblings.

Ms. Maureen Gilbertson of Wee Care inquired about the possibility of evening meetings. She stated that providers are passionate about the children not about the money. She is concerned about the safety of children, about a 9-year old having to be home by himself. A number of children in this age range are not mature enough to be left home by themselves.

Ms. Marita Robinson of Ellie's Daycare stated she had researched sexual predators and found there are 280 registered sex offenders in Hernando and 730 in Pasco County. She does not believe that children being left home alone will be safe.

Mr. Wesley Ward a FCCDC provider stated that his retirement income and life savings has been invested in his daycare. Standard expenses continue to rise, but not reimbursement. He would like to suggest a sliding scale and urges the Board not to put kids out on the street.

Ms. Hammond thanked all the providers for their input. She reminded everyone that of the upcoming meeting on Monday, April 19, 2010 from 1-4 p.m. to continue the discussion on age range.

### **XIII. Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn this meeting of the Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc. Board of Directors was requested by Ms. Hammond. Mr. Meglay so moved. Without further discussion the meeting was adjourned at 11 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Ramute "Jak" Jakubauskas  
Administrative Assistant