



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, November 15, 2017 at 8 a.m.
15506 County Line Road
Spring Hill, FL 34610

Committee Members Present: Pat McHugh, Chair; Neil Thompson

Committee Members Present via Phone: Kathleen Casper, David Meglay

Committee Members Excused: Angela Porterfield

Coalition Staff Present: Carolyn Casler, Jim Farrelly, Rachel Hardy, Jak Jakubauskas, and Betsy Kier

Others Present: Bimal Bhojani, Kids R Kids

I. Call to Order – Pat McHugh, Chair

Mr. McHugh called the regularly scheduled Executive Committee meeting to order at 8:01 a.m. and welcomed attendees.

II. Public Comment on any Action Items

None.

III. Review/Adoption, Draft Minutes from October 18, 2017

Mr. McHugh requested a motion to approve the minutes from the October 18, 2017 Executive Committee meeting as presented. Mr. Thompson so moved and Ms. Casper seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried.

IV. Review/Approval, Executive Summary to Accountability Report

Mr. Farrelly explained this is an annual evaluation of the Coalition's programs which takes months of preparation. Ms. Kier spearheads this audit with the assistance of Compliance Coordinator, Ms. Kelli Rodriguez.

Ms. Kier distributed the (attached) summary page and explained some of OEL's findings which included recruitment for governor appointed Board members, reimbursement of fingerprinting costs, verification of education requirements, suspected fraud notification and VPK assessment training for providers.

Ms. Kier reported there were very few findings and a Corrective Action Plan will be submitted by December 2, 2017. Mr. McHugh stated he also received a copy of the report and was over whelmed by how positive it was.

Mr. McHugh requested a motion to approve the Executive Summary to Accountability Report. Mr. Thompson so moved and Mr. Meglay seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried.

V. Review/Approval, Participation in Performance Funding Project (OEL) FY 2018

Mr. Farrelly explained the PFP program will be different this year and Ms. Casler will present an overview about rewarding providers for participating. Ms. Casler explained that OEL provides the funding for the fifteen (15) providers that are participating in this program. Providers have to meet training requirements to receive funds. This year OEL has allotted an amount to use as a stipend for teachers and not owners, who complete the teaching strategies.

Ms. Hardy distributed the (attached) information and further explained that PFP participants receive a differential which goes to the provider. Another group of funds has been set aside for the teachers who do the actual work with the children. An amount of \$16,162 has been set aside for this Quality Support and OEL has provided a model to distribute the funds. However, the Coalition must adopt the program plan in order to use the Quality Support funds, if not adopted; these funds may not be used for anything else. OEL has issued very strict restrictions on these funds and the Coalition does recommend using the funds based on the OEL model.

After a brief discussion, Ms. Kier noted that last year seven (7) providers were in the PFP program, but the Coalition was only aware of two (2) of these providers who shared the funds they received with their teachers. Ms. Casler reported that a number of Sunshine Stars providers are participating to continue improving their quality standards.

Mr. McHugh requested a motion to approve the participation in the PFP program for FY 2018. Mr. Thompson so moved and Mr. Meglay seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried.

VI. Recommendations, Staff Incentive Awards

Mr. Farrelly explained that for the past three (3) years the Board has allocated \$45,000 annually to be used to reward staff members who perform above and beyond. For the first time this fiscal year, recommendations are being made for a total of six (6) employees primarily for their efforts on the Coalition's 10th Annual Early Learning Conference. One individual is also being recommended for an additional amount due to extra work related to the successor Executive Director search.

Mr. McHugh requested a motion to approve the Staff Incentive Award recommendations. Mr. Thompson so moved and Mr. Meglay seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried.

VII. Best Practices Program Recommendation - Provider Representative, Bimal Bhojani

Mr. Farrelly remarked that in ten (10) years, this is the first time a Provider Representative has come to the Board with a program recommendation.

Mr. Bhojani stated he has been in business for nine (9) years and as an owner/provider faces a losing battle. He explained that parents expect their children to be taught by teachers, but that is not the case as many individuals have no formal training. Many providers do the required FBI background clearance, make sure the individual has current CPR training, but many individuals (80%) fail to complete the required 45 hour on-line training. Many times, a staff person goes out to lunch and does not return to work.

He stated there needs to be a standardized framework. He proposes an on-site training program utilizing a Coalition staff person for the training which would be performed in a real environment such as his own center for at least a 2-week period. The individual would also have to complete the required 45 hour on-line training prior to working in a classroom.

Mr. Bhojani envisions three (3) training centers across Pasco and Hernando Counties with Coalition staff to train prospective employees. He does not believe the industry will improve unless there are standards. He believes that other center owners will contribute a percentage of their School Readiness funds to this program as it would benefit them by saving them a great deal of money in the future.

Ms. Casper stated she is excited about the idea, but would like a tour of Mr. Bhojani's center before making any decision. Mr. Bhojani stated parents want their children to learn, but there has to be a training module. Ms. Casper stated that partnering with a Board Provider Representative could be considered a conflict of interest.

Mr. Farrelly stated that from an administrative perspective the concept is good and would do a great deal to improve the quality of teachers as they are minimally prepared, at best. The concept will be examined and discussed by management to bring back to this Committee and to Dr. Knobl.

Mr. McHugh stated that it sounds like a good plan, but it should be kept voluntary. The Committee's consensus was to proceed with the plan.

VIII. Review/Approve, School Readiness Program Plan

Ms. Kier reported that OEL has requested an updated Coalition Plan. The plan is mostly comprised of current policies and procedures, by-laws, Board member listing, organizational charts, provider payment rates, sliding fee scales, etc. The plan has been submitted to OEL

for review and they may require that some of the policies be updated. The entire 254-page plan is posted on the Coalition's website and flash drives containing the entire plan are available.

Mr. McHugh requested a motion to approve the School Readiness Program Plan. Mr. Thompson so moved and Mr. Meglay seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried.

IX. Transition Planning to Successor Executive Director

Mr. Farrelly reported the transition is going well and he is meeting regularly with Dr. Knobl. As a former Board Member, Dr. Knobl is aware of what the Coalition does, but the meetings have been more detailed. They have reviewed staffing patterns and how business is done. Mr. Farrelly explained this Coalition has a different approach than in Hillsborough. It is highly personal and more customer service oriented. The Board was also discussed and Dr. Knobl plans to get to know each member individually.

Mr. Farrelly explained that one of the first issues faced by Dr. Knobl will be the Coalition's membership in the Association of Early Learning Coalitions (AELC). He reported the annual membership dues have increased dramatically this year due to increased administrative costs for AELC. Membership in AELC will be on the January agenda for consideration. Also being discussed with Dr. Knobl are program concerns and YOTYC and where it will lead to in the future.

Dr. Knobl will be the Associate Executive Director as of January 1, 2018 and will become the Executive Director upon Mr. Farrelly's departure. Mr. Thompson inquired when Dr. Knobl's news release will appear in the paper. Ms. Jakubauskas stated it is scheduled to appear in the *Tampa Bay Times* on Friday, November 17, 2017.

X. Update, School Readiness Waitlist

Mr. Farrelly reported the waitlist has increased to over 700 children. He stated the September financials had shown a deficit of approximately \$7,000, but the October financials report a deficit of approximately \$102,000. He explained this amount will be taken care of by natural attrition. The waitlist will remain open until a projected surplus is shown on the financials and the waitlist continues to grow by about 75 children per week.

Mr. Farrelly reported that even with the high number of children on the waitlist, the Coalition continues to serve historically high numbers of children. Ms. Hardy reported that as of the end of September, there were 5,215 in VPK and 3,837 in School Readiness.

Mr. Bhojani inquired when the waitlist may be opened. Mr. Farrelly stated he hopes in January and Ms. Hardy stated it would depend on a reduction in enrollment. With the current 12-month enrollment, there is less natural attrition. Ms. Kier explained that if a child transfers from another ELC into this area, that child must be placed through automatic enrollment and not on the waitlist.

XI. Public Comment

None.

XII. Adjournment

Mr. McHugh adjourned this meeting of the Executive Committee at 8:56 a.m. without further discussion.

Respectfully submitted by,

Jak Jakubauskas
Administrative Assistant I