



**Quality Committee Meeting Minutes
January 13, 2009 - 4 p.m.
15506 County Line Road, Suite 104
Spring Hill, FL 34610**

Committee Members Present: Dr. Steven Kanakis, Chair; Sister Roberta Bailey, Denise Gill, Joe Mascaro, Lydia Pinkowski, Beth Rawls

Committee Members Excused: Toni Watkins

Coalition Staff Present: James Farrelly, Nicole Flechas, Ramute “Jak” Jakubauskas

Others Present: Tom Scheffey, CDS

I. Welcome and Call to Order

Dr. Steven Kanakis, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. All members, staff and guests introduced themselves. The committee reviewed the draft minutes from the December 9, 2008 meeting. Ms. Rawls indicated a grammatical error using the word “then” instead of “than” in the first sentence of the first paragraph on page two (2).

Dr. Kanakis asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 9, 2008 meeting with the stated correction. Ms. Rawls moved to approve the minutes with the correction and Mr. Mascaro seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried.

II. 2008-2009 Quality Initiatives: Ms. Nicole Flechas, Quality Manager

- **Quality Initiatives Spending Update**

Ms. Flechas informed the Committee that the Quality Budget has been expended by 24% with 41% of the budget committed. Mr. Farrelly commented that the Committee should expect the budget to be expended to 50% with commitments in excess of 50%. There was discussion on one-third of the \$120,000 Quality Budget being tied up in incentives for providers. Mr. Farrelly noted that this is the reason why the current percentages are not higher. Another reason is because of the situation with State funds. He explained to the Committee that the Quality Budget funds had been frozen in December pending the State’s budget resolution as to where the Coalition will be financially.

Mr. Mascaro inquired whether we had only spent 5% of initiatives because of a lack of applications. Ms. Flechas responded that the Coalition has received twelve (12) additional applications, for approximately \$15,000 of incentive funds. These have not yet been brought to the Committee and additional applications are expected.

Mr. Farrelly informed the Committee that the Coalition has already pulled \$160,000 out of the overall Coalition budget, but he has heard the amount to be returned to the State could be as high as \$750,000 or as low as \$230,000. Coalition staff hopes to have more information within the next 2-3 weeks. Mr. Farrelly emphasized this is current year money.

Dr. Kanakis replied that he believes it prudent to maintain Quality funds to help improve children's education, but he also believes the Coalition should spend the funds after we hear from the State. Ms. Pinkowski stated that funds for the VPK program will be slashed.

Sister Roberta asked for further clarification on the budget in regards to the committed and expended columns. Both Ms. Flechas and Mr. Farrelly explained that the "committed" indicated pending purchases/contracts and "expended" reflected the actual dollars spent. Ms. Rawls and Mr. Mascaro stated their agencies also use this same format with their budgets.

III. 2008-2009 Quality Enhancement Initiatives: Ms. Nicole Flechas, Quality Manager

- **Status of Applications**

Ms. Flechas reported that ten (10) applications had been received and were being finalized while two (2) others had incomplete information that staff was working on with the providers. These applications represent approximately \$15,000 in Enhancement Initiatives.

Ms. Flechas stated these applications are not being presented to the Committee for review because of the freeze, but providers are still submitting applications and staff will continue to assist our providers with their paperwork.

Ms. Pinkowski stated that a contingency plan may need to be implemented for spending any leftover funds in the Quality Budget. The Coalition does not want to return any unspent dollars to the State. Ms. Rawls indicated that the Head Start program also has a backup plan of how to spend leftover dollars. Mr. Farrelly remarked the dollars could be spent on slots as there are 600 children on the VPK waiting list. Ms. Pinkowski replied that if the funds are transferred to pay for additional slots, what happens next year when the slots can not be sustained.

Ms. Rawls indicated that purchasing curricula and training materials can soak up funds quickly as well as monitoring tools for providers. Ms. Pinkowski suggested discussing, at next month's Committee meeting, the types of things the Coalition can do at the last

minute even if it involves warehousing items on-site for future trainings. Dr. Kanakis directed Ms. Flechas to prepare such a contingency plan.

Dr. Kanakis commented that providers should take another look at the Creative Curriculum which was web-based. He believes they did not take advantage of a good teaching tool that offered trainings.

Ms. Rawls remarked that she believes the legislature is coming close to finalizing the budget; the House and the Senate have met and the special session may end early.

IV. Public Input

None

V. Adjournment

Dr. Kanakis requested a motion to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Pinkowski so moved. Without any further discussion, Dr. Kanakis adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:25 p.m.

The next meeting of the Quality Committee will be held on Tuesday, February 10, 2009 at 4 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Ramute "Jak" Jakubauskas
Administrative Assistant