



**Quality Committee Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2009 - 4 p.m.
15506 County Line Road, Suite 103
Spring Hill, FL 34610**

Committee Members Present: Dr. Steven Kanakis, Chair; Jo Ann Carmen, Karen Livengood, Joe Mascaro, Teresa Suarez

Committee Members Excused: Sister Roberta Bailey

Coalition Staff Present: James Farrelly, Nicole Flechas, Ramute Jakubauskas

Others Present: None

I. Welcome and Call to Order

Dr. Steven Kanakis, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m. All members and staff introduced themselves. The Committee reviewed the draft minutes from the July 14, 2009 meeting.

Dr. Kanakis requested a motion to approve the minutes from the July 14, 2009 meeting. Mr. Mascaro moved to approve the minutes and Ms. Carmen seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried.

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

- **Provider Applications**

Ms. Flechas informed the Committee that three (3) applications have been received; one (1) for curriculum assistance and two (2) for the general provider grant. All centers are in compliance with the new monitoring tool and only assessments performed by the Coalition are now eligible for 2009-2010 incentive funding.

Dr. Kanakis requested a motion to approve the distribution of funds for the provider applications submitted. Ms. Suarez moved to approve the motion and Mr. Mascaro seconded. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried.

III. Discussion, Infant/Toddler Therapist Position

Mr. Farrelly informed the Committee of the Coalition's constant issues and challenges in regards to finding counselors and therapists to work effectively with young children. The Coalition has experienced a number of negative experiences including failure to keep appointments and billing errors. During FY 08/09 the Quality Committee spent \$46,000 on counseling and \$56,000 has been budgeted for FY 09/10. He explained that out of the \$46,000, only about \$25,000 was actually spent on children. The remaining funds were spent on travel and paperwork.

Mr. Farrelly stated the Coalition can provide better care for these children by bringing the counseling service in-house. He explained that a group had been brought together that included Ms. Flechas, the Coalition's Inclusion Specialists and Dr. Kanakis. The job description, Infant/Toddler Therapist, was drafted based on their roundtable discussions.

Mr. Farrelly explained that the Executive Committee, at their August meeting, felt that a salary of \$70,000 should be funded by the Quality Budget which would include salary and benefits. Dr. Kanakis further explained the therapist would be a second level of treatment after the Inclusion Specialist has worked with the child in the classroom. The therapist would provide 4-6 sessions, per child, and then refer to a Medicaid provider or another insurance provider for additional treatment, if deemed necessary.

Mr. Farrelly stated the Quality dollars would be going to direct patient care and would offer better, quality service. This would be a full-time position and the therapist would see approximately 2-3 children per day in collaboration with Inclusion staff.

Ms. Suarez inquired what the focus of the position would be – behavior support or connections to community services. Ms. Flechas responded it is solution focused, a crisis prevention intervention focusing on therapy for a child and their family.

Ms. Flechas believes the salary range would be between \$40-\$60,000 annually based on education, a specific license would be required (LMHC, LMFT, LCSW), and experience with infants and toddlers will also be required. Ms. Flechas explained the mileage/travel reimbursement policy. Mr. Mascaro inquired where the counseling would be done and was informed the therapist would travel to the child's environment, either the school or the home.

Ms. Suarez suggested changing the position title from Infant/Toddler Therapist to Infant-Child Therapist; Ms. Carmen suggested one of the requirements should be experience with Play Therapy and Ms. Suarez suggested adding "Desired Qualifications" to the job description and include familiarity with Positive Behavior Support (PBS).

IV. Realignment of Quality Budget

Ms. Flechas explained the proposed Budget realignment with the addition of the \$70,000 for the Infant-Child Therapist position. In addition, the Quality Budget is being realigned to ensure sufficient funds are available to purchase additional pre and post assessments. She explained the majority of the budget was based on last year's budget which did not include the assessments that will be done this year for VPK children as well as for School Readiness. A budget realignment of \$5,500 is necessary for the pre and post materials. Funds will be shifted from contracts with The Harbor, Lifespan and Independent Living. \$70,000 would be removed from the Quality Budget and transferred to the General Operating Budget for the additional salary expense. Future Quality budgets will reflect the reduced amount for contracted services. Mr. Farrelly explained that \$70,000 now would become an additional Administrative expense.

Dr. Kanakis requested a motion to approve the realignment of the Quality Budget. Mr. Mascaro so moved and Ms. Suarez seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstention and the motion carried.

V. Spending Update

Ms. Flechas informed the Committee that currently 4% of the budget has been expended and 21% is committed. She explained that under the Screening and Assessments line item, 81% of this line item has already been expended by purchasing the required pre and post assessments. Ms. Flechas currently has six (6) new provider applications to review for the next Quality Committee meeting and additional reminders regarding the incentive programs will be going out to providers. Ms. Livengood believes that more centers will begin the application paperwork process now that school has resumed and teachers have their classrooms and lesson plans prepared. A discussion followed on curriculum assessments.

VI. Discussion, November Early Education Conference (November 7, 2009)

Ms. Flechas informed the Committee that Crews Lake Middle School in Shady Hills has been reserved and it can accommodate up to 300 attendees. Currently eighteen (18) workshops have been scheduled and the keynote speaker will be Pam Phelps. There is a \$15 fee which includes breakfast and lunch. CEU's (.6) will be offered. A brief discussion followed on fundraising ideas to generate additional funds for the Coalition. Ms. Flechas stated that several Coalition vendors will also be participating and have donated items for raffle prizes.

Mr. Farrelly announced that Ms. Flechas has resigned from the Coalition. She recently passed her licensing exam and is now a LMHC who will begin doing private work.

VII. Public Input

None

VIII. Schedule Next Meeting Date – October 13, 2009

The next scheduled meeting of the Quality Committee will be Tuesday, October 13, 2009 at 4 p.m. at the Coalition's main site. Ms. Suarez indicated she would not be able to attend.

IX. Adjournment

Dr. Kanakis requested a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Mascaro so moved. With no further discussion, Dr. Kanakis adjourned the meeting at approximately 5 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Ramute "Jak" Jakubauskas
Administrative Assistant