



**Quality Committee Meeting Minutes
March 9, 2010 - 4 p.m.
15506 County Line Road, Suite 103
Spring Hill, FL 34610**

Committee Members Present: Dr. Steve Kanakis, Chair; Sister Roberta Bailey, Jo Ann Carman, David Lambert, Karen Livengood, Joe Mascaro, Co-Chair

Committee Members Excused: Teresa Suarez

Coalition Staff Present: Kim Borrego, James Farrelly, Nicole Gonzalez, Jak Jakubauskas, Betsy Kier

Others Present: None

I. Welcome and Call to Order: Mr. Joe Mascaro, Co-Chair

Mr. Mascaro called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m. All members and staff introduced themselves. The Committee reviewed the draft minutes from the February 9, 2010 meeting.

Mr. Mascaro requested a motion to approve the minutes from the February 9, 2010 meeting. Dr. Kanakis moved to approve the minutes and Mr. Lambert seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried.

II. 2009-2010 Quality Initiatives: Ms. Kim Borrego, Program Quality Manager

• Provider Applications

Ms. Borrego presented the Quality Enhancement Initiatives (attached) and informed the Committee that this month fifteen (15) providers submitted twenty-seven (27) applications for a total of \$16,519.21 in reimbursements. Reimbursements to date total \$63,052.37 with approximately \$100,000.00 remaining in the Quality line items.

Mr. Mascaro inquired about the discrepancy in the amount requested for **16-Feb**. Ms. Borrego informed him that the provider had purchased items such as blank DVDs, snacks, candles, photo developing and had requested reimbursement for office computer repair. These are not considered reimbursable expenses.

Mr. Mascaro requested a motion to approve disbursement of funds for the applications presented. Sister Roberta moved to accept the motion and Ms. Livengood seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried.

III. Spending Update: Ms. Kim Borrego, Program Quality Manager

Ms. Borrego informed the Committee that the Quality Budget is 34% expended and 40% committed. She explained that lower differences this month are primarily due to the adjustment of the Infant/Toddler Therapist's salary being returned to the Quality Budget and unspent Quality Initiatives. The Committee was reminded that last month Dr. Kanakis agreed that \$65,000 of the Quality Budget could be moved to slots.

IV. Discussion, Review Budget to Transfer Funds to School Readiness Slots

Ms. Borrego explained that she has gone over the line items and believes that, if necessary, \$95,000 could be moved to slots. The majority of the funds would be from the Infant/Toddler Therapist salary line item.

Mr. Farrelly explained there is \$50,777 available in one line item alone to transfer to slots and that the \$65,000 agreed upon at last month's Quality Committee meeting was a conservative figure. Dr. Kanakis inquired if the Coalition still had a wait list. Mr. Farrelly stated there was and the Coalition may consider opening the wait list in the spring on a one in, one out basis. He explained the need for the Coalition to spend out the School Readiness dollars by the end of the fiscal year leaving a zero balance and saving the ARRA funds which may be carried over into next fiscal year. Currently, the Coalition is predicting a balance of approximately \$500,000 in ARRA funds that will be carried over.

Mr. Farrelly informed the Committee that he has spoken with Senator Fasano who is working "hold harmless" School Readiness funds for the coming year. Senator Fasano chairs the Finance Committee and has fought for Early Learning. Otherwise, cuts were being projected that could impact 650 children in Pasco and Hernando Counties alone. Mr. Farrelly explained the Coalition's current wait list contains approximately 500 children and is growing.

A discussion followed on Governor Crist attending a meeting of the Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC). He did not give any indication of changing ratios for VPK. Sister Roberta informed the Committee that a discussion is under way to change the ratio to 1-12 from 1-10 and to fund the providers per class rather than per child.

Mr. Farrelly suggested waiting until next month's Quality Committee meeting before making any final decision on transferring Quality dollars to School Readiness slots. Mr. Lambert inquired if the funds were not spent would they be returned to the state. Mr. Farrelly stated that all of the funds would be spent by utilizing them for School Readiness.

V. Public Input

Mr. Farrelly explained to the Committee that the age range discussion will continue over the next several months and a packet of updated reports and information has been

sent to the Board for their review. He explained that years ago when funds were available, all the Coalitions served birth-12. Now the majority of Coalitions are pulling away from birth-12 due to their growing wait lists.

Mr. Farrelly stated the Coalition's vision is to ensure that children succeed in school and that may be best accomplished by fully serving a younger age group. He explained that any changes to the age range policy would be phased in slowly. Mr. Farrelly informed the Committee that the ELC of Pinellas currently has 3,500 children on its wait list and this Coalition may have 1,000 children by July 1st.

Discussion followed on serving various age ranges and programs available for school-aged children such as PLACE and summer camps.

Mr. Farrelly stated that a video will be presented at March's Board meeting illustrating the importance of early education in birth-5 and the research trend investigating the importance of brain development in young children. Mr. Farrelly is also advising the providers of the age range discussions and inviting them to communicate their thoughts and ideas to the Board.

Discussion followed on income-based eligibility. Ms. Kier informed the Committee that the current 150% poverty level can be lowered by the Coalition through an amendment to the Coalition's plan and receiving approval from AWI. She reminded the Committee that the Coalition is mandated to serve Protective Services and TANF clients through age 12.

Mr. Mascaro explained Career Central's training programs to the Committee.

V. Schedule Next Meeting Date – April 13, 2010

The next Quality Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 13, 2010 at 4 p.m.

VI. Adjournment

Mr. Mascaro requested a motion to adjourn the meeting; Dr. Kanakis so moved and Mr. Lambert seconded. With no further discussion, Mr. Mascaro adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Ramute "Jak" Jakubauskas
Administrative Assistant