



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING MINUTES
September 24, 2009**

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

Day/Date/Time: Thursday, September 24, 2009 – 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, Jo Ann Carman, Dr. Burt Harres, Dr. Steve Kanakis, Karen Livengood, Joe Mascaro, Dave Meglay, Nicole Miller, Beth Rawls, Mary Beth Wehnes

Board of Director Members Present via Telephone Conference: Teresa Suarez

Board of Director Members Excused: Elizabeth Callaghan, Jayne Goldstein, Sonya Jackson, Jack Mariano, Janis McKnight

Board of Director Members Absent: None

Coalition Staff Present: Sheila Chambers, Pattie Eacobacci, Jim Farrelly, Nicole Flechas, Nicole Gonzalez, Ramute “Jak” Jakubauskas, Betsy Kier, LuAnn LaCava, Mayna White

Guests Present: Jack Hamilton, AWI/OEL; Debbie Pfenning (on behalf of Sonya Jackson)

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

Ms. Lisa Hammond, Chair, called the meeting of the Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc. Board of Directors to order at approximately 8:35 a.m. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

II. Action Items

- **Adoption of Agenda**

Ms. Hammond requested a motion to adopt the agenda. Mr. Meglay moved to accept this motion and Dr. Kanakis seconded. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. (**Action Item #0910-16**)

- **Approval of Minutes, August 27, 2009 Board Meeting**

Ms. Hammond requested a motion to approve the August 27, 2009 minutes. Mr. Meglay moved to accept this motion and Mr. Mascaro seconded. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. (**Action Item #0910-17**)

- **Treasurer's Report - Ms. Susan Arnett**

Monthly Statement of Financials – July, 2009

Ms. Arnett presented the July Financials in Ms. Callaghan's absence and directed the Board to the first line item on page two (2) for School Readiness. She informed the Board the \$73,152 listed within parenthesis was revenue. Under Dues, Subscriptions and Fees is included a \$500 expenditure for membership in the National Association of Childcare Resource & Referral Agencies. This membership has been paid for by CDS in the past. Ms. Hammond requested a motion to approve the July 2009 Financials. Dr. Kanakis moved to accept this motion and Dr. Harres seconded. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. (**Action Item #0910-18**)

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

Ms. Hammond informed the Board that the Executive Committee had met last week and Mr. Farrelly will speak to the items discussed in his report. She reported that Mr. Farrelly's annual evaluation has been completed and will now go to the Executive Committee for review and then to the Board for approval at the October Board Meeting.

Ms. Hammond informed the Board that a provider has failed the Coalition's monitoring procedure and under the direction of the Program Committee, the provider was informed their contract with the Coalition would be terminated. The provider has filed a grievance and asked for a review. The provider's current status will be maintained until the grievance is reviewed. The grievance will be reviewed by the Executive Committee, as an Ad Hoc Committee, within the next thirty (30) days. Mr. Farrelly will gather the information to present to the Executive Committee.

Dr. Kanakis stated he would like to tour this provider's facility to "hear the other side." Mr. Farrelly informed the Board that the Coalition has received a three (3) page grievance that lists eight (8) points. Administration will respond to these eight (8) points, provide background information and invite the owner/director to attend the public meeting where they will have an opportunity to present their perspective and answer the Committee's questions.

Ms. Hammond stated the Board's goal is to be objective and rely on the criteria of the monitoring assessment tools. Every provider contracted with the Coalition is held to these criteria and standards. The documentation will be reviewed by the Executive Committee, as the Ad Hoc Committee, who will make a recommendation to either terminate the contract or place the provider on a Corrective Action Plan. The Ad Hoc Committee will then inform the Board of their recommendation for the Board's final decision at the October Board meeting.

IV. Program Committee – Mr. Dave Meglay

Mr. Meglay reported the Coalition was awarded \$13,400 for VPK Outreach and Awareness. The Program Committee has recommended spending \$3,800 on 95,000 inserts in the *St. Petersburg Times* throughout Hernando and Pasco Counties. Additionally, \$6,025 will be spent on a direct postcard mailing to be sent to approximately 16,000 households in Hernando and Pasco Counties with children ages 0-5. \$3,500 will be spent on printing costs for the VPK Parent Handbook and VPK flyers.

Discussion followed on the content in the inserts, other possible advertising venues including Brighthouse; inserts to be included with utility bill mailings, Chamber newsletters, and the *Suncoast News* and *Pasco Shopper*. Ms. Arnett suggested collaborating with the local Economic Development Councils and sending press releases. Ms. Rawls suggested a flyer to be distributed within the Pasco school system.

Mr. Farrelly recommended the Board approve the current proposal and Mr. Meglay stated the Program Committee will investigate other advertising avenues for next year. Ms. Hammond requested a motion to approve the VPK Outreach and Awareness Plan as presented. Sister Roberta so moved and Ms. Miller seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried.

V. Executive Director Report – Mr. Jim Farrelly

- **Coalition Update**

Mr. Farrelly announced that last year at this time, the Coalition had served 2,800 School Readiness children in Pasco and 1,100 in Hernando. This year, 3,500 have been served in Pasco and 1,500 in Hernando; an increase of 20%.

Mr. Farrelly distributed the Coalition's latest organizational chart (attached) and introduced the Coalition's newest staff members. Ms. Mayna White, formerly a Place Program Manager with Pasco Schools; Ms. Sheila Chambers, formerly with CDS and the ELC of Polk County; both are joining the Coalition as Provider Specialists. He announced that Ms. LuAnn LaCava has been transferred from Provider Specialist to the Curriculum Specialist position. Mr. Farrelly also announced that Ms. Nicole Flechas, Quality Manager, has resigned.

Mr. Farrelly informed the Board that the Coalition's field offices are doing well and that the eligibility and reimbursement staff members recently completed an assertiveness training conducted by Mr. Vince Vanni.

He stated the new van is halfway through production and the Coalition hopes to have it here by the end of October to begin outfitting the cabinets and graphics. Ms. Maria Simpson, the new Mobile Outreach Specialist, will begin training with Ms. Shannon Dewey in mid-October. Mr. Farrelly announced the vans are already being scheduled for three (3) events on December 12, 2009.

Mr. Farrelly informed the Board that beginning next month, video conferencing will be available for those with video cameras on their computers. This new system will also be utilized for provider trainings. The system has the capacity to host twenty-five (25) audio participants and six (6) video participants.

Mr. Farrelly announced that the Coalition's Foundation will have its first annual fundraising event on Saturday, December 12, 2009 (rain date will be December 13) at Sunlake High School off S.R. 54. This will be a 1K walk and run and also a 5K walk and run. The Coalition will provide tee shirts for the participants along with water and fruit. Registration will be available through the Coalition's website as well as Active.com. Ms. Rawls requested an informational flyer to distribute throughout the Pasco middle and high schools.

- **Recommendation, Infant-Child Therapist Position with Referral Policy**

Mr. Farrelly informed the Board this is a new position. Last year the Quality Committee spent \$46,000 in funds for mental health counseling for 89 children. \$24,000 was the amount actually spent on direct services. Mr. Farrelly requested and received input from the Quality Manager, the Inclusion Specialists and Dr. Kanakis on the possibility of establishing a new position. Their ideas were presented to both the Executive Committee and the Quality Committee which has approved that \$70,000 be taken from the Quality budget for this new position. The Therapist would work with the Inclusion Specialists offering Solution Focused Therapy to children. The Therapist would provide 4-6 sessions and if further assistance is required, the child would be referred for additional treatment. Mr. Farrelly informed the Board the salary for this position will now fall under the General Administration Budget.

Ms. Hammond requested a motion to approve the Infant-Child Therapist Position. Ms. Arnett so moved and Mr. Meglay seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. Ms. Arnett suggested renaming the Referral Policy document.

- **COOP Plan Amended – 1st Reading**

Mr. Farrelly informed the Board this plan is state mandated to be done annually in the event of a disaster. The plan has been reviewed by the Executive Committee and Ms. Hammond requested her contact information be added to the Cover Sheet.

Ms. Hammond requested a motion to approve the COOP Plan with the addition of her contact information. Dr. Kanakis so moved and Mr. Meglay seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried.

- **Personnel Policies & Procedures – Revised – 2nd Reading**

Mr. Farrelly stated the changes to the “Drug Free Workplace Policy” have been made as recommended. Ms. Hammond requested a motion to approve this change to the Personnel Policies and Procedures. Dr. Harres so moved and Ms. Miller seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried.

- **Grievance Policy – Revised – 2nd Reading**

Mr. Farrelly stated there are now two (2) Grievance Policies, one is for staff and will be found in the Personnel Policies and Procedures and the second is for contractors, etc.

Ms. Hammond requested a motion to approve the Grievance Policy for staff. Ms. Arnett so moved and Dr. Kanakis seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried.

Mr. Farrelly stated the second Grievance Policy was for contractors, etc. Ms. Hammond requested a motion to approve the Grievance Policy for non-employees. Dr. Kanakis so moved and Mr. Mascaro seconded the motion. Discussion followed: Ms. Arnett inquired if the grievance form had been tested; Mr. Farrelly replied that yes it had. Ms. Suarez questioned “employee” on the second policy. The wording on the policy will be changed from “participant” to “provider” and the wording relating to “employee” will be deleted and “volunteer” will be added. The new wording will be: “providers, contractors and volunteers.”

With these new changes, Ms. Hammond requested Dr. Kanakis to withdraw his motion to approve and Mr. Mascaro also withdrew his second to the motion. This policy will be brought back for a third reading.

- **Board Member Fingerprinting Policy – 1st Reading**

Mr. Farrelly informed the Board this policy is for all new and prospective Board and staff members and will be carried out at the Coalition’s expense of approximately \$65 per screening. These screenings will be done annually to prevent any embarrassment to the Board. Ms. Rawls announced the Pasco school system has a new monitoring system that constantly updates district level staff’s records with information regarding any infractions. A letter can be generated for the Coalition’s records from the school system’s human resource department for Pasco school-based Coalition Board members. This policy will be brought back for a second reading.

- **Executive Summary of Monitoring Report, Three (3) Year Performance Review (OEL/AWI)**

Mr. Farrelly reported this review was performed in April and some of the observations made included Board member attendance and being required to have two (2) pending applications for Governor Appointees. He reported that the compliance issues were all old issues from the prior administration.

- **Executive Summary of Monitoring Report, VPK and School Readiness Eligibility Review (OEL/AWI)**

Mr. Farrelly reported this review was performed in May and the investigators, that included Ms. Pat Weyer, of AWI, traveled to the CDS field offices. Ms. Weyer's comment after reviewing the files was "almost world class." The Coalition is in the process of putting Corrective Action Plans together for both reviews.

Mr. Farrelly informed the Board that after attending an executive directors meeting in Orlando he has learned that many of the Coalitions are no longer having monthly meetings, but are now holding them either bi-monthly or quarterly. He suggests that, after careful review, that the Coalition go with a bi-monthly meeting schedule. This would mean six (6) meetings per year versus the ten (10) annual meetings being held now. The meeting months, based on the business of the Coalition, would be January, March, May, July, September and November. Monthly committee meetings, including Executive, would continue and special meetings of the full Board could be called, if necessary.

Ms. Hammond requested a motion to approve the new Board meeting structure with the six (6) meetings as noted by Mr. Farrelly with continued monthly committee meetings. Dr. Harres so moved and Mr. Meglay seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried.

Discussion followed on the provider who submitted an appeal for grievance and possibly postponing the hearing until the November meeting. Mr. Meglay stated the provider's appeal should be brought to a meeting in October. Ms. Wehnes suggested having the new Board meeting schedule begin in January, 2010. Ms. Hammond requested amending the previous motion to include beginning the new Board meeting structure in January, 2010. Dr. Harres so moved and Mr. Meglay seconded the amended motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried.

Dr. Harres informed the Board members that when replying to emails that concern the entire Board, they should reply directly to an individual instead of using the "reply all" to the entire group which may be misconstrued as a violation of Florida Sunshine Laws.

VI. Utilization Reports – Ms. Betsy Kier

Ms. Kier reported that VPK numbers were higher due to the beginning of school with 3,173 children being served in Pasco and 1,111 being served in Hernando. In August of 2009, there was an increase of 107 children in Pasco being served in the School Readiness program over last year. There is still a zero wait list in both counties.

Ms. Kier announced that the ARRA funding program is moving slowly and a new column will be added to the reports to reflect the numbers served for these slots. Currently, there are less than twenty (20) children being served in these new programs. A press release is being prepared on the ARRA funds and flyers will be sent to the providers.

Mr. Farrelly explained in Hernando last month with ARRA funds, the Coalition was projecting a deficit of about \$500,000 by year end. With dramatic changes in enrollment, the Coalition is currently projecting a year end deficit of about \$31,000. In Pasco County, the deficit was approximately \$600,000, but now is \$200,000. He explained that dollars, from a utilization aspect, are good and do not require a wait list as we go into October.

Ms. Hammond requested a “total” page for next month’s utilization report to the Board.

VII. Public Input

Ms. Arnett announced that the Pasco County Commissioners restored the \$300,000 for outside agency funds. She thanked Mr. Farrelly for his involvement in preparing materials to present to the Commissioners. Ms. Arnett recommended the Coalition send thank you letters to Commissioners Cox, Hildebrand and Mariano who voted to restore these funds. She also attended a meeting in Lacochee where a library/community resource center is being considered for this area which could hold a great deal of potential for the Coalition. Ms. Arnett also suggested that the Board consider a membership for the Coalition in the local Economic Development Council.

VIII. 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. With no further discussion the meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Ramute “Jak” Jakubauskas
Administrative Assistant