



Early Learning Coalition of Lake County  
Innovative services for Children of Lake County

These minutes summarize the key issues of the Board meeting of the Early Learning Coalition Lake County, Inc. An audio recording of this meeting is available upon request.

Mr. B. E. Thompson, Vice- Chair, called the meeting to order 9:08 a.m. Mr. Thompson commented he had received a call from Mr. Pruitt stating he would not be available to attend the meeting.

**The following members were in attendance:** Mr. B. E. Thompson, Ms. Sandra Stura, Mr. Hays Ginn, Ms. Jeanie Rowin, Ms. Marie Carlberg, Dr. Barbara Howard, Ms. Cheryl Ridley, Ms. Porcha Green, Ms. Nancy Allison, Ms. Sherry Olszanski, Commissioner Linda Stewart and Dr. Hugh Brockington. **The following members were absent:** Mr. Will Pruitt, Ms. Stephanie Ellis, Ms. Donna Gregory, Ms. Michele Rawls, Ms. Marsha Carpenter and Ms. Darnell Stewart. **The following staff was present:** Ms. Leshia Buchbinder, Mr. Bill Hartman and Ms. Patricia Pierce. **Guests present:** Ms. Carol Hoban, Ms. Betsy Harrington, Ms. Cindy Winkle, Ms. Alison Petrie, Mr. Robert Willingham and Mr. Eddy Workinger.

Ms. Buchbinder commented that do not have a quorum at this time. Mr. Thompson asked Ms. Buchbinder to proceed with the Executive Director's report pending the arrival of additional members.

Ms. Buchbinder commented that the Executive Director's report is large in volume; however most of the items are discussion only. A copy of the School Readiness (SR) Services issued in April 2009 is enclosed and remains static; however in correspondence from Ms. Brittney Birken, we are still waiting on the final budget approval from the state. Ms. Buchbinder further commented that some of the general revenue reductions that were previously identified as possible cuts were actually done at the state level instead of the Coalition level. This was good news for all Coalitions. Ms. Buchbinder commented that the Coalitions will now be responsible for more printing of brochures, VPK forms, etc. that previously were provided by the state; resulting in higher printing expenditures in future months.

Ms. Buchbinder reported on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and that the Coalition will receive \$350,000 stimulus funds to be used for slots and that 19% of the funds will be allowed to cover administrative costs. Ms. Buchbinder stated that the Coalition will use the current surplus administrative dollars first, and then use ARRA funds for additional children slots. Ms. Buchbinder also reported that if we are unable to use all the funds by the end of the fiscal year, the funds will revert back to the state at the end of the fiscal year; however we will be able to retrieve those funds effective July 1, 2009 and will have the next 12 months to use the remaining ARRA dollars.

Ms. Buchbinder stated that at the last board meeting the issue of providing extended child care services for families where only one parent is working and the other parent is on unemployment had been addressed. Ms. Buchbinder commented that she is checking to see if there is some provision now or could it be established for these families to receive subsidized care for six months. Ms. Buchbinder said this is still being researched and we would try to spend the surplus money prior to using any new funds. Ms. Allison requested that the Coalition inform private providers when this has been finalized. Ms. Buchbinder also commented that she and Ms. Close had met with Ms. Cheryl Ridley of the Workforce Central in Leesburg to discuss referrals for their clients who may be eligible for services provided by the Coalition. Ms. Buchbinder stated that flyers were given to Ms. Ridley that indicated the poverty income guidelines for specific family size to help identify those who may qualify for services. These funding flyers will be distributed throughout Lake County. Ms. Buchbinder stated that we still have an open wait list for subsidized child care. Ms. Olszanski commented that the flyer will also be done for the Spanish speaking families. Ms. Buchbinder reported that Mr. Hartman has been out in the community distributing the funding guidelines to various agencies,

doctor offices, etc. We will also be asking companies like Wal-Mart and Publix for their assistance in distributing the information to their employees. At this time we have space for 100 or more children.

Ms. Buchbinder proceeded with the VPK update stating that there will be no more reduction of student allocations at this time. The current allocation is \$2,575 per student for the school year and \$2,190 for the summer session. There was a statewide reduction of \$500,000 for Outreach and Awareness, but this did not affect Coalitions at the local level. Therefore, the Coalition will need to use our own resources and technology to provide the information for parents and providers.

Ms. Buchbinder reported that the state approved the funds for the ELIS software that will replace the EFS program which has been used for several years. The current system has been very challenging in uploading data. We won't see any changes for several months, but when it is completed it will interact with DCF and other agencies reporting programs.

Ms. Buchbinder reported on legislative updates stating that the Regular Session ended on May 1, 2009. Ms. Buchbinder commented on SB1676 stating that the VPK Language for the 80/20 rule was passed. Ms. Buchbinder also stated that on the SB2570 regarding the consolidation of Coalitions, there has been no movement. No one at the state level would comment on this bill being dead, but it is possible it could be added to another piece of legislation in the future. Ms. Buchbinder commented that the letters written and submitted by Lake County Commissioners and others regarding the educational piece did help Legislators understand more about Coalitions. Ms. Buchbinder also reported in reference to the required 6% match, that the provisional language had been amended to say the BG8 6% match is at the state level and not at the local level.

Ms. Buchbinder commented that at the previous meeting the Board authorized the Coalition to establish a protocol for the distribution of excess computers. It was suggested that donations be made through the Coalition's Foundation. Ms. Buchbinder reported that she had some dialogue with Mr. Stephen Lee, ELCLC's attorney, regarding the computer equipment. Mr. Lee's opinion was that going through the Foundation may not be the best way to proceed, as it may appear that we are trying to get around something. Ms. Buchbinder stated that she also contacted Ms. Michele Reid to determine the proper protocol for giving away equipment to our providers. Ms. Reid commented that there are no established guidelines at this time to give excess equipment to our providers and we should do a public sale or donate items to other nonprofits. Ms. Stura suggested that a public sale be posted listing what items are available, and the suggested price. Ms. Stura further commented that a sale should be held very early in the morning so providers would be able to come, and posted as a "first come, first served basis.

Ms. Buchbinder made reference to a letter that was sent to all providers in April notifying them that a provider increase was submitted to the Board and was approved at the March 2009 Board meeting. The letter advised providers that the rate increase was approved by the state on April 1, 2009 for providers serving infants/toddlers and two year old children. Ms. Nancy Allison thanked Ms. Buchbinder and the Coalition Board for the much needed increase. Ms. Buchbinder further commented that she will have some dialogue with Mr. Pruitt and Ms. Olszanski to discuss a rate increase in parent fees to bring providers closer to the market rate. Parent fees have remained the same and if funds are available it may be possible to bump fees up \$1.00. Ms. Buchbinder will meet with Ms. Olszanski to determine what rate of fees that parents might afford.

Ms. Buchbinder made reference to the letter enclosed from the Children Services Council stating that the Coalition was recommended for a grant in the amount of \$10,000 for the Big Blue Bus beginning October 1, 2009. The recommendation will go to the CSC Board in September or October. The Coalition continues to submit grant requests; one was sent to Orlando Sentinel Family Fund in the amount of \$17,000 as well as requests to Community Foundation of South Lake County, Mattel and Wal-Mart. Mr. Thompson commented that CSC staff met with Commission Conner who expressed his concerns with the reductions in funding in the previous year and stated that the Commissioners will seek additional funding sources for next year.

Ms. Buchbinder noted the draft copy of the standard grant agreement between AWI and ELCLC for the 2009-2010 VPK program included in the packet. Ms. Buchbinder pointed out Attachment A (page 130) which references language pertaining to the required notification by providers regarding transferring of a child, abuse, VPK class schedules, changes to teachers, facility closures and temporary substitute instructors. Also in the pack is an Addendum (page 133) to the VPK Provider Agreement, for private and public providers, regarding program performance and probation status. Ms. Buchbinder asked members to review the information on their own; if Attachment A and the Addendum are approved at the state level, the VPK Provider Agreement will be on the June Board meeting agenda as an action item. The Coalition is still waiting on notification of the final 2009-2010 VPK Grant Award. When notification is received, it will be presented to the board.

Ms. Buchbinder commented on her upcoming leave of absence. The specific dates are to be determined depending on the anticipated birth of her child. Ms. Buchbinder submitted a notice to Board members and the State naming Ms. Laura Close as the contact person for any issues with AWI/OEL. Ms. Gail Adderley will be the contact person regarding issues relating to program invoices, budgets, etc. A notice will also be sent to all agencies partnering with the Coalition. Ms. Buchbinder added that in case of emergencies, she will be available by phone.

Ms. Buchbinder proceeded with the VPK program updates. The 2009-2010 Fall roundups were held with approximately 64 providers; 78% were private providers as well as one charter school. Child Care Choice Services reported they have issued over 1500 vouchers.

Mr. Buchbinder asked members to review the information included in the Quality Improvement Campaign (QIC) update portion of the board packet. Ms. Buchbinder commented on the upcoming Provider Appreciation Dessert Night scheduled for May 15, 2009 and invited Board members to attend. Ms. Buchbinder pointed out the large group of resource items that were displayed on the stage area stating that these items were provided by Mr. Brad Kaplan (Kaplan Early Learning Company) at a 30% reduction in price as they were used for a display at a recent Kaplan presentation. These items will be distributed to those providers attending the May 15, event. Additional resources that are needed by providers are being ordered.

Ms. Buchbinder commented on the various trainings being held by the Coalition in the next few weeks. Ms. Hoban also commented on various trainings held by CCCS, specifically the behavior specialist training set for May 27, 2009. Ms. Buchbinder stated that the Uniting for Children Conference (UFC) in April went well; however the numbers were lower than last year. There were 185 attendees with 180 evaluation forms submitted at the end of the day. The majority of the comments said the conference was really good, and attendees liked the new location and thought it worked very well. The format of this year's UFC evaluation was changed to indicate specific sessions the person attended; this will enable the Coalition to share the results with presenters. There were 56 vendors and presenters this year which was down from previous years. We anticipated that Lisa Murphy would bring in more; however she had presented in our area before so there was some providers who may have already attended her trainings. Ms. Buchbinder also commented that the current economy may have contributed to the low attendance. Ms. Buchbinder commented that overall the conference was successful. Ms. Buchbinder commented that the Coalition will ask the Committee to come together again to review what was done this year and begin discussion on a keynote and closing speaker as well as dates for next year's conference. Ms. Allison suggested that for next year's UFC conference we plan for more VPK workshops. Ms. Buchbinder commented that the Coalition is looking to bring in Dr. Jean Feldman to do a training maybe in the Clermont area on January 10, 2010. A minimum registration fee could be requested. This has been done for a few trainings in the past and teachers still wanted to attend. The Coalition can determine the location and advertise to draw more attendees.

Ms. Buchbinder commented that the first Parents and Kids Day event held on April 5, 2009 went very well with approximately 100 parents and children participating. There were five vendors distributing information. The event also included an Easter egg hunt that was divided into 2 age categories; the younger children had their space and the older children had their special area. Ms. Buchbinder commented that the older children were finished very quickly so they went to help their younger siblings. Ms. Buchbinder commented that she looks forward to doing this

event again next year but maybe find another location that will not have the sticky nettles. Ms. Buchbinder stated overall the event was a big success.

Ms. Buchbinder discussed correspondence from AWI/OEL regarding the Notice of Proposed Rules that had been received on April 29, 2009 regarding CCR&R updates, and Reenrollment for Good Cause and Extreme Hardship in the VPK program. Also referenced was an Advance Payment and Reconciliation for the VPK Program, as well as Substitute Instructors (page 147). Ms. Buchbinder commented that these rules can still be commented on except the piece regarding VPK substitute instructors.

Ms. Buchbinder referred to the Amendment to the AWI/ELC grant for 2008-2009 that is included in the board packet for review. The amendment addresses the federal reporting guidelines and invoicing instructions for the ARRA funds. Ms. Buchbinder stated that the amendment does not require board action.

Ms. Buchbinder referred to additional information in the packet such as the recent submission of ELC's Plan Amendment that was approved on April 1, 2009 by the state relating to board membership. The Coalition still have several vacant positions for private sector that includes two governor appointees. Ms. Buchbinder asked members to talk with their contacts to see if anyone may be interested in applying for a private sector seat. The applicant must be either the owner or in a management position with no direct financial interest and must not have any close relatives that would benefit from his/her position on the Board. The ELCLC Nomination Form is on the Coalition's website. Ms. Rowin commented that about three weeks ago she received a call from the Governor's office regarding her recent submission for appointment. Ms. Rowin commented that the office stated that they were behind on reviewing applications. Ms. Buchbinder stated that she has not received notification of any appointments at this time. Ms. Buchbinder further commented that Mr. Pruitt has submitted his letter of interest to the Governor's office to continue serving on the Coalition Board. Mr. Pruitt will remain as Chair of the Board until a response is received from the Governor.

Ms. Buchbinder discussed the November Desk Audit that was held in November 2008 and the correspondence from AWI dated April 24, 2009. Ms. Buchbinder commented on the findings that were submitted at the time of the audit, and there was no change. The letter stated that there are no questioned costs.

Ms. Buchbinder discussed the Annual Cost Allocation Plan Certification Form that is due on May 15, 2009. There is no change to the plan and no board action is required.

Ms. Buchbinder continued to discuss the KPMG audit that was done for period of July 1 through January 31 2009. Ms. Buchbinder reviewed the findings with the Board and commented that one finding was due to a missing signature on a Request for Expenditures (RFE) that had two sheets, and the top sheet was signed but not the second sheet. Another finding related to a purchase at Office Depot which included free pizza coupons that the Coalition would use as gifts for providers, however they were billed to the Coalition. This resulted in a disallowed expenditure being charged to a grant. Ms. Buchbinder commented that the mistake was fixed immediately and the expenditure was reclassified to an appropriate account. The enclosed letter from KPMG suggested the Coalition develop stronger internal control and more oversight by management.

Ms. Buchbinder proceeded with the ELC/CCCS correspondence information. Ms. Buchbinder referred to the notification letter dated April 1, 2009 to Ms. Olszanski regarding the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter fiscal year monitoring to begin in May, 2009. Ms. Patsy Grant will perform the monitoring that will include a review of CCR&R files to ensure the new state forms are being used for ELC reports as well as a review of the OCA allocation payments. Ms. Buchbinder commented that a review of the results can be used to help remove some of the duplication of services.

Ms. Buchbinder commented that Ms. Weyer requested to come again in the summer. Ms. Buchbinder will send a request to Ms. Weyer to schedule the visit for August or September to perform the SR/VPK eligibility audit when she returns from her leave of absence.

This concluded the Executive Director's report. At this time Mr. Thompson commented that we now have the required quorum and to proceed with the Action Items 410-417.

Mr. Thompson asked to pull action items 412, 415 and 416 for discussion. Mr. Thompson asked for discussion on the remaining items. There was none. Ms. Rowin moved to approve items 410,411, 413, 414, and 417. Mr. Ginn seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Mr. Thompson proceeded with discussion items.

Action item 412: SR/VPK 2009-2010 Proposed Budget. Mr. Thompson asked Ms. Buchbinder to discuss a line item in the SR/VPK budget relating to the Board. Ms. Buchbinder commented that funds are available for travel to specific meetings attended by board members, such as the ELAC meetings that were attended by Mr. Pruitt and Mr. Biddle in Tallahassee. Ms. Buchbinder commented that Ms. Rawls and Ms. Allison traveled for a meeting held in Michigan and used some of the \$2,000 funds allocated for Board travel. Ms. Buchbinder stated that forms are available for members to request travel expenditures.

Ms. Buchbinder also reported that the Coalition is looking at various options to provide more cost effective benefits for employees. Ms. Buchbinder said she has some discussions regarding health and dental and life insurance costs. Ms. Buchbinder commented on the level of the life insurance policies for staff that the Coalition owns. The rates are high and some members have waived this benefit due to the requirement of medical exams. The policy is for \$100,000 at this time, but the Coalition is looking at a possible reduction in the level of coverage, or maybe even changing the coverage to the equivalent of one year of salary in the event of death or accidental death or dismemberment. Ms. Olszanski commented that LifeStream pays for the initial \$25,000 of coverage and anything over that is paid by the employee. Ms. Olszanski suggested looking elsewhere for a more manageable amount or a blanket policy. Ms. Rowin commented that most carriers don't require a health check on group policies. Ms. Buchbinder commented that Blue Cross/Blue Shield would offer savings through Faison Group. Mr. Ginn commented that typically individual policies are portable and employees could continue the policy after employment with the Coalition.

Mr. Thompson asked for additional discussion. There was none. Mr. Ginn moved to approve the budget as submitted, seconded by Ms. Rowin. Ms. Buchbinder asked members to note that the budget remained static from 2008 and changes were just moving unused funds to other line items. The same amount of funds remained in slots. The May allocations for June will be available in the August Board report. Final budget is pending state notification.

Action item 415: LifeStream Contract renewal. Mr. Thompson abstained. Ms. Buchbinder reported that this is the second and final renewal of the current contract. At the end of this period, the Coalition will be required to go through the whole procurement and ITN process for the next fiscal year. Ms. Buchbinder referred to two amendments relating to Certification Regarding Immigration Status as required by the Agency for Workforce Innovation. These amendments will apply to all three current contracts with LifeStream. Ms. Rowin moved to approve the contract renewal as submitted, seconded by Mr. Ginn. Motion carried.

Action item 416: Consideration for Board membership: Mr. Thompson reported that the Coalition had received an application for Board membership. The Nominating Committee reviewed the application for Mr. Eddy Workinger, and after verification that there would be no conflict of interest, is recommending Mr. Workinger for membership to the ELCLC Board. Ms. Rowin moved to approve the nomination for membership, seconded by Mr. Brockington, Motion carried.

Ms. Buchbinder acknowledged Mr. Workinger who attended the meeting as a visitor. Ms. Buchbinder welcomed Mr. Workinger to the Board and said we are excited to have him serve on the Board. Ms. Buchbinder said his term would be effective with the June 3, board meeting. Ms. Buchbinder commented that there are still four vacancies on the Board.

There was no further discussion on action items.

Ms. Buchbinder proceeded to review the Fiscal Analysis for March 2009, that there is 27.9% of the SR budget available for the remaining three months of the fiscal year. Ms. Buchbinder reported that if the \$3900 of CCEP funds are unspent, they will have to be de-obligated. Ms. Buchbinder stated that employers have been approached to see if they would be willing to assist their employees by paying 50% of their childcare expenses and the Coalition would assist with the remaining 50%. The CCEP funds must be expended by the providers. Ms. Buchbinder explained that with CCEP parents come in at a higher income level; employers can agree to pay 50% of the child care fee for the parent and the Coalition can subsidize the remaining fees. Unfortunately employers don't want to contribute for child care for their employees. Parents attending Kiddie Castle and LRMC have previously been able to use some of the funds. At this time there is no wait list. Ms. Buchbinder commented that next year the Coalition will not have an application on file for CCEP unless we have the option to do the application without naming a specific candidate.

Ms. Buchbinder reported the Coalition is working to see if there is enough dollars to offer mini grants to providers. The increase for the providers with infants and toddlers will help spend down some of the funds during the next couple of months. There are two trainings in June and some of the funds will be used to provide resources. Ms. Buchbinder commented that it may be possible to offer mini grants for "unregulated" centers to provide health and safety items as required by the state. Ms. Buchbinder reported that there are approximately 2400 children in SR and almost 2100 in VPK. Ms. Buchbinder referred to the backup documents in the packet on page 212 through 219 indicating the number of children in care and the related expenditures. Ms. Buchbinder also commented that the number of CCCS referrals is down, AWI referrals are down and the TCC system provides no care while the parent is applying.

Ms. Buchbinder commented that the monthly situation report and utilization charts for SR are included in the pack starting on page 220 for review by the board members. Ms. Buchbinder reported that there were 100 terminations during the month of April. During the month of March 2009 there were 311 first time certifications, and 164 terminations. The sooner we get children off the wait list the more children we are serving. Ms. Buchbinder reported that KCI has contracted with the Coalition to provide \$33,000 as match dollars to help get children into care. VPK utilization information is included in the packet as well. Ms. Buchbinder encouraged members to take some time to review the information and to call here if they have any questions.

Mr. Thompson asked Ms. Buchbinder to proceed with the Committee Reports. Mr. Ginn reported that there was no action with the Professional Development Committee. Ms. Buchbinder commented that the end of the semester is approaching quickly and applicants are required to submit their final document by May 29, 2009. A meeting will be scheduled with the Committee to review the applications for completion of documents, review of transcripts and authorize release of payment prior to June 30, 2009.

Ms. Buchbinder reported that there was no movement on the remaining committees. Ms. Allison inquired about the Screening/Assessment & Quality Program Committee. Ms. Buchbinder commented that we are still waiting on the information regarding the Infant-Preschool Play Assessment Scale (I-PAS). The Coalition will continue to use the FSAT and when the I-PAS information is received a review of the materials will be done by the Screening and Assessment Committee. Ms. Buchbinder stated that the IPAS is user friendly and is currently being used by Volusia County. Ms. Hoban commented that the FSAT is not a bad tool, but it is very important that users receive the proper training. Ms. Buchbinder said she still sees some challenges and would like to re-evaluate the tool to get data for the state. The State may be looking at Pre and Post tests for all children.

Ms. Buchbinder quickly reviewed the Program Reports that were included in the Board packet. Ms. Buchbinder highlighted the Program Outreach Report which indicated three visits made during April with the Big Eagle Bus and more requests have been received for the month of May. The report also indicated a grant award from the Orlando Sentinel Family Fund in the amount of \$17,000 to be used for the Big Blue Bus program including maintenance and

fuel. Funds previously received from the Community Foundation of South Lake County will be used to do some updates and repairs on the small bus. Ms. Buchbinder also commented that Mr. Hartman was invited to speak on a live radio talk show on WKIQ 1420. Mr. Hartman promoted the Coalition programs, spoke about the VPK roundups as well as the Parents' and Kids' Day event on April 5, 2009. The presentation went well and it may be possible to do monthly updates as well.

The Quality Operations report was included highlighting that there were 95 new children served in April as well as comparisons for February and March 2009. The report also indicated that the number of provider visits was slightly up for April. Ms. Buchbinder also commented on the report dated May 5, 2009 indicating that 10% of the 106 SR providers have not attended any scheduled trainings and are currently out of compliance based on the state requirement as written in the contract. Some Coalitions are suggesting termination of those providers who do not meet the meeting requirement. Ms. Buchbinder commented that most of these providers are family day care homes. Ms. Buchbinder commented that three additional meetings have been scheduled specifically to allow those providers at risk of non-compliance, to attend before the end of the year to meet their requirements. The members discussed what options would be available and do we really want to terminate providers. Dr. Brockington commented that if a provider is not fully meeting the requirements, they should be shut down. Ms. Buchbinder commented that this issue may be included on the June action items depending on the results of the additional trainings available. There may be other issues for termination, to include a one year waiting period to reapply as a provider. The Coalition will work with parents. Ms. Stura commented that the Coalition should notify parents now, but should use caution in what we say. Ms. Rowin agreed that notifying parents now may put pressure on the provider to do what is necessary to remain viable. Ms. Buchbinder said a letter could be drafted stating that the status of the provider is provisional pending a June 30 contract obligation. Ms. Rowin asked what the ramification would be on the parent's side if they leave before the provider has a chance to meeting the requirement. Ms. Rowin suggested that a "last chance" date be determined and then notify parents.

Ms. Buchbinder referred to the VPK program update, stating that a total of 1,336 vouchers for the 2009-2010 VPK Program were handed out to parents between April 20th and April 24<sup>th</sup> at the roundups held at various locations throughout Lake County.

The Big Blue Bus monthly report was included in the packet for review by the Board members.

Ms. Allison commented that the packet did not include any Behavior Specialist Reports. Ms. Buchbinder commented that she will look to see if they were submitted and get them out to the Board. VPK Provider Booklets are available for members.

Mr. Thompson called for any Old Business. There was none.

Mr. Thompson called for any New Business. Ms. Buchbinder stated that typically the Coalition has cancelled the July meetings over the past three years due to a Board retreat or dinner meeting. Ms. Buchbinder asked if the Board members wanted to meet in July even though she will be on leave or cancel the meeting. Ms. Rowin moved to cancel the July 2009 meeting, seconded by Mr. Ginn. Motion carried.

Mr. Thompson said that due to the absence of the Board Chair, there is no report. There was no other business.

Mr. Brockington moved to adjourn at 10:29 a.m. seconded by Mr. Ginn. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Patricia Pierce  
Executive Assistant

Approved at June 3, 2009 meeting