



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

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

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Thompson called the meeting to order at 9:05 a. m. and determined a quorum was present. The following members were in attendance: Mr. B.E. Thompson, Ms. Michele Rawls, Ms. Jeanie Rowin, Ms. Nancy Allison, Dr. Hugh Brockington II, Ms. Marie Carlberg, Ms. Marsha Carpenter, Ms. Donna Gregory, Mr. Hays Ginn, Dr. Barbara Howard, Ms. Darnell Stewart, Mr. Eddy Workinger and Ms. Dawn Mainville. The following members were absent: Mr. Will Pruitt, Ms. Sherry Olszanski, Ms. Linda Stewart, Ms. Cheryl Ridley, and Ms. Porcha Green. The following staff members were present: Ms. Lesha Buchbinder and Ms. Patricia Pierce. The following guests were present: Ms. Denise Lancaster, Ms. Cindy Winkle, Ms. Betsy Harrington, Ms. Blaire Peterson, Ms. Renet McCall, Ms. Doreen Chatelier, Ms. Maureen Jergins, Mr. John Vance, Leesburg Sunrise Rotary and Dr. Walter Zielinski, Beacon College.

**CONSENT CONSIDERATIONS**

Mr. Thompson presented Action Items 486, Draft Minutes of the October 7, 2009 Board meeting and asked if anyone had questions or comments. Being none, there was a motion to approve the minutes as presented and a second. Motion carried.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

Mr. Thompson asked Ms. Buchbinder to proceed with item 487, the Executive Director's Report. Before starting the Executive Director's report, Ms. Buchbinder requested to present item 486A that was distributed at the meeting. This item is an amendment to the Coalition's Plan Amendment previously submitted to the State requesting approval for the Coalition to research, select and implement a new tool that will provide better data for the pre and post tests on SR children. Ms. Buchbinder reminded the Board that OEL is in the process of designing a statewide assessment system for pre and post assessments of SR children. Ms. Buchbinder stated that she has spoken to OEL about the concern of the investment of SR dollars for a tool that might be replaced by a statewide system. Ms. Buchbinder reported that the State suggested an alternative option for Lake ELC would be to utilize the current pre and post results of SR providers as an indicator of school readiness. The State further commented that this would be acceptable and the Coalition would be in compliance with the Federal requirement. Ms. Buchbinder reported that Ms. Rawls, Chair of the Screening and Assessment Committee, has contacted many providers and felt that there are enough providers doing the pre and post that will assist the Coalition in obtaining the numbers as required for the random sampling. After some discussion, Ms. Buchbinder requested to have the Coalition Plan Amendment 4.2.2 added to the agenda as Action Item 486A. There was a motion to approve Action Item 486A as presented and a second. Motion carried.

Ms. Buchbinder stated that she had received two new applications for perspective Board membership. Ms. Buchbinder introduced Ms. Maureen Jergins and Mr. Eric English and thanked them for coming to the meeting. Ms. Buchbinder also announced that Ms. Darnell Stewart representing DCF, will be retiring in November and this will be her last official board meeting. Mr. Thompson congratulated Ms. Stewart and thanked her for her many years of service on the ELCLC Board.

Ms. Buchbinder continued with the Executive Director's report beginning with several pages in the Board packet providing a State overview of statistics regarding the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. The report indicated expenditures totaling 28% of the \$14.2 billion that state agencies are expecting to receive under ARRA. Using ARRA funds, Florida created or retained nearly 22,500 full time jobs representing more than 33,500 workers, which translates into 64,000 direct or indirect jobs. Ms. Buchbinder also reported that there are 10,000 children in summer youth in programs as a result of ARRA dollars. The report also indicated that 18 state agencies spent \$4 billion in ARRA funds as of September 30, 2009.

Also included in the report was an overview indicating the \$1.8 billion that has been awarded to date to AWi. Total expenditures were reported at \$1.56 billion, including expenditures for Unemployment Compensation, Early Learning programs and Workforce Services. Ms. Buchbinder stated that 14.1 million ARRA dollars went to the Office of Early Learning, in partnership with 31 Early Learning Coalitions. Ms. Buchbinder reported that 24,000 children are in SR programs at this time as a result of ARRA funds. Ms..

Buchbinder commented that in Florida, 1,599 jobs were created in public or private school positions. Ms. Buchbinder continued with a review of various budget requests for 2001-2011 that have been prepared by AWI/OEL. Ms. Buchbinder reviewed the request as they related to the SR and VPK budgets for 2010-2011

Ms. Buchbinder commented that one of the budget request was for additional funding for ELIS, Early Learning Information System. The report addressed the replacement of the current Enhanced Field System (EFS) data program with the ELIS. The report indicates that ELIS will save millions of dollars annually by providing a more efficient collection and reporting process resulting in reduced payment errors, reduced audit costs through electronic processing of case files, submission of attendance records and conducting eligibility redeterminations via the internet, Ms. Buchbinder commented that in addition to a more efficient system, ELIS will also help reduce the number of parent visits to CCCS. The new system will also allow providers to maintain their own profile data via the internet.

Ms. Buchbinder reminded Board members that the current three year contract period with LifeStream will be ending next year and that the Coalition will begin the ITN process for the next three years in December. Ms. Buchbinder referred to the draft Intent to Negotiate (ITN) timeline for December 2009 through July 2010 that was included the Board packet. Ms. Buchbinder commented that a decision to utilize an ITN needs to be done first and then the selection of Board members needed to sense on the ITN procurement committees, which will include an Evaluation Committee and a Negotiation Committee. Ms. Buchbinder asked members to consider serving on the Committees. Ms. Buchbinder encouraged members to review the draft timeline and to call her if they have questions. Ms. Buchbinder briefly reviewed information from AWI's Purchasing Procedures Manual that which outlined the specifics of each procurement method. Ms. Buchbinder commented that this will be on the December agenda as an action item.

Ms. Buchbinder proceeded to discuss a situation regarding a private registered child care home that has a contract with the Coalition. Ms. Buchbinder stated that the Coalition was notified that the provider has no liability insurance for her center. Ms. Buchbinder provided several pages from the contract for members to see the guidelines on this issue. During a follow-up with the provider, we were told that she will not purchase the required insurance until she had a child enrolled for care. Ms. Buchbinder stated that the ELCLC SR contract specifically states that liability insurance is required. A lengthy discussion was held on the subject and Ms. Buchbinder inquired as to when the Coalition should terminate a provider for non compliance. Ms. Buchbinder asked if the Coalition should handle the termination as needed or would the Board prefer to authorize the termination of a contract at a Board meeting. Several Board members stated that all providers should have to comply with the liability insurance policy for the safety of the children and the Coalition. Mr. Thompson asked the two provider representatives seated on the Board if they agreed with the comments made regarding the insurance requirement and both agreed. Two additional providers that attend Board meetings regularly commented that they agree with the decision as having liability insurance is important. Mr. Thompson asked for a motion. A motion was made that Ms. Buchbinder have the authority to terminate the contract. Furthermore it was suggested that wording of the motion read that Ms. Buchbinder, Executive Director, is given the authority going forward to terminate a provider's contract as needed for failure to comply with the contract's requirement to have current liability insurance at their facility as the situation occurs. The motion was seconded. Motion carried.

Ms. Buchbinder raised another important issue concerning family child care homes regarding the Coalition's Health and Safety Checklist. Ms. Buchbinder reported that a provider is in violation of the checklist if it fails to having a barrier or fence if it borders a street or water hazard. Ms. Buchbinder stated that currently we have a few Registered Family Child Care Homes that do not have a barrier for a variety of reasons and asked the Board for guidance on how to handle this type of situation. Ms. Buchbinder commented that the Board previously approved the Coalition's Health and Safety Checklist for unregulated providers and that this document specifically addresses the issue of "fences or barriers" being required if children play outdoors and if the facility borders a street or water hazard, etc. Ms. Buchbinder commented that one exception would be if the registered child care home only serves infant/toddlers who would not be going out to play, or if the facility was in an apartment complex where there was no road adjoining the building. Dr. Brockington stated that this requirement should be addressed case by case according to the location and age or other exceptions on the list. Dr. Brockington commented that perhaps the Coalition could develop a list of potential exceptions to the rule. Ms. Rowin suggested having an addendum to the contract regarding this regulation.

Ms. Buchbinder mentioned that a year ago the Coalition started a campaign "Let's Get Licensed" and the response was very minimal. Ms. Buchbinder began a discussion on the number of registered homes versus licensed facilities in Lake County stating that Registered Homes are required to have an onsite visit by DCF. Ms. Buchbinder commented that one of the concerns that she has discussed with DCF is the possibility of adults being on the premises who have not had the proper background screening. There was a lengthy discussion about the differences between licensed and registered homes including the difference in reimbursement rates for those who hold SR contracts. Ms. Carpenter, DCF Licensing Representative, reported

that DCF does not conduct onsite visits to a registered facility unless they receive a call regarding abuse or ratio issues. Ms. Carpenter discussed the many differences between registered and licensed facilities, the number of monitoring visits conducted in a year, the trainings and degrees that are required, i.e. First Aid/CPR for example. Ms. Carpenter discussed the requirements for background screenings, ratios and more. Ms. Buchbinder explained to the board that she is working with Ms. Carpenter to see whether or not Coalition staff can play a role in identifying whether or not the adults present within a registered home have been appropriately screened. Ms. Buchbinder explained to the board that several counties throughout the State have local ordinances against registered homes, requiring all family child care homes to be licensed. Ms. Buchbinder questioned whether or not the Board wanted to engage the Lake County Commission on such an effort. After much discussion the Board directed Ms. Buchbinder to follow up with Commissioner Stewart to determine if this was something that the County would want to look into.

Ms. Buchbinder continued with the 2009-2010 VPK program and referenced the summary on page 33 regarding the previous discussion on the lower enrollment numbers for VPK providers. The listing provided a breakout of the numbers of unused VPK vouchers. This information was requested at the October meeting following a discussion on why providers are seeing a lower VPK then in previous years. Ms. Buchbinder referred to the QIC updates commenting on the fourth quarter report for the Mobile Resource Unit, stating that the Big Blue Bus had a goal of serving 1500 children and that we have met or exceeded that requirement at 116%.

Ms. Buchbinder also reported on the upcoming single audit by Greenlee, Rice, Kurras and Brown in November and the State eligibility audit scheduled for December 2009. Ms. Buchbinder commented that the Coalition is to receive a copy of the draft audit review by November 20 and the Board's Audit Committee consisting of Ms. Mainville, Ms. Carlberg and Ms. Rowin, will meet to review the draft document prior to the December Board meeting. Once reviewed by the committee it will be presented to the Board for review and approval. Ms. Buchbinder also informed the board that the 2009-2010 financial audit will be done in January by KPMG.

Ms. Buchbinder also reported on the Day in the Park event held on October 29, at Hickory Point. Ms. Buchbinder thanked those Board members who volunteered their time to help out at the snow cone and popcorn machines. Ms. Buchbinder reported that 1,137 children had pre-registered to attend but the sign-in sheets totaled 950 children with 429 teachers/chaperones representing 14 public schools and 24 private providers. There were 130 volunteers from Kiwanis clubs, Rotaries, residents from various communities in Lake County and other civic groups

#### **FISCAL /UTILIZATION REPORT**

Ms. Buchbinder proceeded with the Fiscal Report and Utilization Reports for September 2009. Due to time constraints, Ms. Buchbinder asked members to review the enclosed fiscal and utilization reports on their own and to contact her if they have any questions or concerns.

#### **COMMITTEE UPDATES**

##### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Mr. Ginn reported he had met with Ms. Close in October to review seven applications for the Professional Development Reimbursement Program for the fall 2009 semester. Mr. Ginn reported that several candidates had information missing from their applications and Ms. Close would contact them to get what was needed. Mr. Ginn commented that the number of applications received for the spring and fall semesters were lower than previous years.

##### **SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE**

Ms. Buchbinder commented that the Committee had not met and that the current status of the pre and post test assessment tool had been discussed in Action Item 486A.

##### **CURRICULUM ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Ms. Carlberg reported that the Committee did not meet. Members are waiting on the arrival of additional curriculum materials to be reviewed and then a meeting will be scheduled.

### PROVIDER GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

Dr. Brockington reported that the Committee did not meet in September and October due to the critical issues of other committees that some of the Provider Growth & Development committee members participate in. Dr. Brockington stated that a meeting of the Provider Growth & Development Committee will be scheduled in November.

### PROGRAMMATIC REPORTS

Ms. Buchbinder asked members to review the programmatic reports at their leisure and to contact her with any questions

Ms. Buchbinder presented an article regarding Mr. Ginn that mentioned the Coalition and that recently ran in the Lake Magazine. Ms. Buchbinder reported that Ms. Laura Close had written a great article that was published in the Healthy Living magazine and copies of the publication are available for members to take with them. Ms. Buchbinder was pleased with this article as it was more informative and emphasized that parents play an important role in the education of their children. This type of article will get the attention of the parents and it was something that they might want to keep for future reference. Ms. Buchbinder commented that the Coalition is planning on doing more of this type of outreach in the future. Ms. Buchbinder also commented on the Education Guide of Florida for 2009 which list information about Lake County VPK for families.

### OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Thompson called for old business. There was none.

### NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Thompson called for any new business.

Ms. Buchbinder commented on the request by the Board at the October meeting to obtain more information on the Dolly Parton Imagination Library that was discussed. Ms. Buchbinder introduced Mr. John Vance of the Leesburg Sunrise Rotary who provided a video presentation regarding the Imagination Library. Mr. Vance informed the members that Leesburg Sunrise Rotary is in partnership with Beacon College and other organizations to raise funds to support a local literacy initiative at the Leesburg Library called the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. Mr. Vance stated that the Imagination Library is a program in which participating children will receive a book each month at their home to encourage parents to plan quality reading time with their children. Mr. Vance commented that there are currently 110 children registered in which has exceeded their expectation. Information about the initiative has been placed in various magazines such as the Going Places and there are three other states operating the program through the AAA organization. Ms. Buchbinder provided a listing of some of the books that were purchased and distributed to children. Ms. Buchbinder shared the estimated cost per child as well as the amount of immediate funds that are needed by the Imagination Library to continue through the end of the program year. Ms. Buchbinder commented that there are limited funds available that could be used to help support the Imagination Library program if the Board approved the partnership.

Ms. Rowin inquired if there might be a conflict of interest resulting due to the fact that Ms. Buchbinder is a member of the Leesburg Sunrise Rotary. Mr. Thompson commented that he thought there was not a conflict of interest as Ms. Buchbinder is not a voting member of the Board. Mr. Thompson further commented that the initiative is appropriate and fits into our mission to serve children birth to five with early education, Mr. Thompson asked if Ms. Buchbinder wanted to make a recommendation to the Board. Ms. Buchbinder requested that the Board authorize the Coalition to provide financial support to the program for the purchase of additional books as needed through June 30, 2010 not to exceed a total of \$3,000.

A motion was made that research be done to ensure that there is not a conflict of interest, and if no conflict is present, that the Coalition be authorized to provide financial assistance to the Friends of Library not to exceed \$3,000 for the program year ending June 2010 for the purchase of children's' books. The motion was seconded. Motion carried.

Mr. Thompson suggested that there may be grants available to grow this initiative to all of Lake County instead of just one zip code and that the Coalition would be pleased to help in that process.

In closing, Ms. Buchbinder presented a book from the Association of Early Learning Coalitions that describes all the various services that Coalitions are providing for children and families. Ms. Buchbinder pointed out that Lake County's Big Blue Bus Program and the Professional Development Reimbursement Program were mentioned in the book.

Ms. Buchbinder reminded members that in December we will continue with Phase 2 of the Board Retreat. Ms. Buchbinder commented that in light of the conversation regarding registered homes, maybe the Board should consider adding a new goal to the Coalition's Goals and Objectives regarding an initiative to get registered homes upgraded to licensed facilities.

Before closing the meeting, Ms. Buchbinder reported that LifeStream recently received \$10,000 in match dollars from the City of Clermont.

Ms. Carpenter informed the Board that two new staff had been added to DCF Licensing to serve the Lake County area. Ms.

Winkle reported that "Our House" will be holding a book fair in mid November and invited members to attend. There was

no further discussion. Mr. Thompson moved to adjourn at 10:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Patricia Pierce  
Executive Assistant

Approved December 2, 2009