



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

Board Minutes August 7, 2008

These minutes summarize the key issues of the Board meeting of the Early Learning Coalition Lake County, Inc.

The following members were in attendance: Mr. Will Pruitt, Mr. B. E. Thompson, Ms. Nancy Allison, Ms. Michele Rawls, Ms. Jeanie Rowin, Mr. Jeff Biddle, Mr. Hays Ginn, Ms. Sherry Olszanski, Mr. Hugh Brockington, Ms. Linda Stewart, Ms. Porcha Green, Ms. Cheryl Ridley, Ms. Peggy Campbell, and Ms. Andrea Edgington.

The following members were absent: Ms. Gayla Clark, Ms. Sandra Stura, Ms. Marsha Clark, and Ms. Cynthia Freeman. **The following guests were in attendance:** Ms. Gail Elleby, WKU, Ms. Marie Carlberg, Ms. Cindy Winkle, Ms. Marina Bromfield, Ms. Donna Gregory and Mr. Bill Hartman. **Staff members present:** Ms. Leshia Coffield and Ms. Patricia Pierce.

The meeting was called to order at 8:15 a.m. Mr. Pruitt welcomed everyone and Ms. Coffield verified a quorum was present.

Ms. Coffield opened the meeting with several presentations. Ms. Marina Bromfield, Director of Miss Corrie's Playschool, was presented a certificate in recognition of achieving a perfect score on the Kindergarten Readiness Rates for 2006-2007. Ms. Nancy Allison and Ms. Cindy Winkle were presented certificates in recognition of their recent graduation from colleges. Ms. Allison was awarded a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education while Ms. Winkle received a Bachelor's degree in Applied Science. Ms. Coffield also commented that Ms. Kathleen Belton, owner of Belton's Family Child Care Home was unable to attend the meeting, however, Ms. Belton also achieved a perfect score of 300 on the Kindergarten Readiness Rates for 2006-2007. In addition to achieving a perfect score, Ms. Belton will also receive an award for obtaining her AAS Degree specializing in Early Childhood Education. Ms. Cindy Winkle and Ms. Kathleen Belton were participants of the Coalition's Professional Development Program. Mr. Pruitt made a few comments on how the professional development reimbursement program was implemented and the success it has been through financial assistance to Lake County providers who are in the process of continuing their education, which improves the quality of care for the children in their facilities.

Mr. Pruitt proceeded with the Board Agenda, presenting **Action Items number 296 through 299** that were sent out prior to the board meeting. Mr. Pruitt called for questions or discussion on any of the consent items; there were no questions. Mr. Biddle moved to approve action items 296-299 seconded by Ms. Jeanie Rowin. Motion carried.

Mr. Pruitt asked Ms. Coffield to proceed with the **Executive Director's Report** that was included in the packet. Ms. Coffield reported that the Coalition will host the August Provider Meetings on August 14 in our new offices. The meeting will be for School Readiness providers at 11:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. and the VPK providers at 12:30 and 7:30 p.m. VPK providers will be signing their contracts for the 2008-2009 school year. Ms. Coffield remarked that now we are in the office location, the Coalition will save dollars by holding meetings and trainings in our new facility instead of paying rental fees for public locations and other venues.

Ms. Coffield commented that now that the Early Education Specialists are in house the providers will be able to visit their specialist along with the Resource Room when they visit the Coalition. Ms. Coffield commented on implementing some incentives whereby providers can earn "Resource Bucks" for attending meetings, trainings, etc. and will be able to use those "Resource Bucks" to purchase items that will be available for purchase for their centers from the Resource Room.

Ms. Coffield commented that the LifeStream renewal contracts #1, #3 and #4 have been fully executed and we are now in the second year of the contract.

Ms. Coffield proceeded to inform the members that the Coalition has received letters of *"Intent to Contract"* from three new providers who want to be validated to participate in the school readiness program this year. This letter of intent to contract has allowed the Coalition to prepare the new providers with the knowledge to successfully qualify under the new standards. This process was developed in part from the board approved minimum quality standard requirement. Ms. Coffield stated that "Building Blocks" in Sorrento was the first provider to submit their letter. The Quality team was able to assess the facility, offer a few suggestions and guide the owner and director in better understanding the assessment tool. The facility met the materials and furnishing requirements to the highest levels in most cases based on the ITERS and ECERS tool. Ms. Coffield said the commitment of the provider to be successful led our team in seeing quality health and safety standards being met for all children. Another visit will be scheduled when children are in the center to validate teacher interaction. Ms. Coffield mentioned that The Children's Enrichment Center in Tavares has an expected opening date of August 11, 2008. The facility is not fully completed, and the Director will have the quality team do their assessment within the next 30 days to secure a school readiness contract.

The third provider is in Oxford and associated with the Coalition in Sumter County. The Galaxy of Learning is already opened. The Coalition is in the final stages of confirming their contract pending their assessment and Health and Safety check.

Ms. Coffield said that we are expecting letters from two more facilities. These providers will all be invited to attend the SR Provider Orientation meeting on August 21, 2008 to learn all about the services we offer. Ms. Coffield pointed out the enclosed 2006-2009 plan amendments that had recently been approved AWI. Also included in the Executive Director's report is the extensive OPPAGA report from the Florida Legislature. Ms. Coffield encouraged members to review this document at their leisure and contact her if they have any questions.

Ms. Coffield did a brief report on the recent three year-self assessment audit that had been completed by AWI in July, 2008. The preliminary report indicated some findings relating to Coalition Governance, commenting that the Coalition does not have a full board membership. The Coalition currently has three vacancies. Ms. Coffield commented on the difficulty in securing new members for the board. Notices are sent to all the Chambers in Lake County soliciting candidates for memberships. Ms. Coffield commented on the difficulty finding people who will commit to the time and responsibilities of serving on a board. Ms. Rowin commented that she knew someone who may be interested in serving on the board and will make that contact. Also, the preliminary report addresses the educational service delivery, Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R), and the Operations and Program Management.

Ms. Coffield gave a brief report on the preliminary results of the SR/VPK Eligibility Review that was conducted in July as well. Ms. Coffield commented that there were a few eligibility files which were missing signatures on DCF documents and upon review of some TANF files, some children had been dually enrolled. Ms. Coffield also stated that there were some discrepancies in calculating income for parents over a six month period, as well as some discrepancies regarding the "purpose of care" for some children. Ms. Coffield stated that she is working with CCCS to ensure that these issues are resolved and that if necessary additional policies and procedures will be put in place to ensure compliance.

Moving on, Ms. Coffield continued to discuss the eligibility review preliminary findings in regards to the VPK Program. Ms. Coffield commented that there were several files in which children were enrolled into the program after the beginning of the year and the proper delayed enrollment documentation could not be located in the file, as well as the notification to parents regarding the number of hours remaining in the program. A preliminary finding was noted regarding some of the VPK provider files missing backup documentation, which has been resolved. Additional preliminary findings included CDA's and FBI/FDLE which were or soon to be expired.

The Financial audit was also completed by KPMG. Preliminary results were identified relating to policy and procedures, back-up documentation of one missing receipt and a procurement procedure to extend existing contracts. Ms. Coffield stated that a response to all the findings had been prepared and submitted by the August 1, 2008 deadline; however, the Coalition had not received any response prior to the board meeting.

Ms. Coffield briefly reviewed the 3rd quarter monitoring of CCCS and the responses that were submitted to the Coalition. Also included in the packet was a schedule of the upcoming monitoring dates and times.

Ms. Coffield reported on the current status of board membership. Ms. Cheryl Ridley was named as the new representative for Mr. Gary Earl in a letter dated July 22, 2008. Ms. Coffield introduced Ms. Ridley and welcomed her to the Board. Ms. Coffield also reported that there are now 3 vacancies for private sector positions on the Board. Ms. Coffield asked members to let her know if they think of someone who may be interested in serving on the board; however, the candidate must be aware that they can have no financial gain or work in a position that would be a conflict of interest if serving on the ELCLC Board.

Mr. Pruitt asked Ms. Coffield to proceed with the **Financial Report**. Ms. Coffield pointed out that the packet contained the fiscal analysis for the months of May and June as there was no Board meeting in the month of July due to the annual Board Dinner. Ms. Coffield encouraged members to review the fiscal documents and utilization reports at their leisure and contact her with any questions.

Due to the July meeting being cancelled Ms Coffield reviewed the June Fiscal Report, as well as the July Fiscal Report. Ms. Coffield began by discussing the challenges this past year in regards to securing the amount of match needed to expend the entire SR allocation for child care slots. The reduced matching funds available resulted in fewer slots for the children which increased the amount of unspent dollars. Although new funds were secured from Kids Central Inc. in March, it was not enough to completely utilize the remainder of the budget. Ms. Coffield commented that going forward the Coalition, as well as LifeStream, would be looking for other ways to secure new match dollars or donations. Ms. Coffield continued to review the fiscal reports for June & July and stated that in September we would have the final numbers for the fiscal year.

Due to the Board Retreat scheduled immediately following the Board meeting, Ms. Coffield referenced the Utilization Reports in the packet prompting members to review the reports at their leisure and to contact her if they had any questions.

Mr. Pruitt proceeded to Committee Reports.

Professional Development Committee:

Mr. Ginn commented that there was no meeting in July 2008. Ms. Cindy Winkle, Our House Child Development Center, thanked the Board and the Professional Development Committee for their support in her continued education. However, Ms. Winkle requested that the Committee do more review on the program guidelines, stating that there needs to be more explanation about how and when payments are to be made. Also, Ms. Winkle asked for additional details in the guidelines on exactly who qualifies, and clarifying if an applicant receives other funding, would they be qualified for the ELCLC financial assistance, and also asked for more information about the rubric. Mr. Ginn commented that the committee could take a look at those areas.

Screening & Assessment Committee:

Ms. Edgington said there was no report at this time.

Provider Growth & Development Committee:

Mr. Biddle commented that the Committee members now have a better understanding of what the goal is for this committee. Mr. Biddle and the members are all in favor of proceeding with sending a survey to providers asking

pertinent information as to how what type of assistance they may want from the Coalition. The survey includes questions that ask if providers want help with, business plans, government regulations or other areas such as marketing to help expand their centers. The survey also includes classes from the Business Resource Center, local Chamber membership,

software accounting training etc. Ms. Winkle commented that maybe providers would want help with some executive planning or help with doing fundraising for additional items that they can't afford through regular payments. Mr. Biddle said the survey is a guide to give the committee some ideas of how to proceed. Mr. Biddle commented that the representative who spoke from the Leesburg Chamber at the annual dinner helped him understand the concept of the Chamber initiative and thinks it can be a good way to proceed. Mr. Biddle commented that if this works with the Leesburg Chamber, maybe the Board should consider going to South Lake Chamber as well. Ms. Rowin offered to approach the Chamber Alliance to do a presentation and also offered to go to South Lake as well. Ms. Rowin said she would schedule a date and time, and asked if Ms. Coffield to do the presentation.

There was no report from the Curriculum Advisory Council.

Ms. Coffield stated that the monthly Program Reports are in the packet for review by members at their leisure and said they could contact her if they have any questions.

Old Business:

Ms. Coffield commented that as a result of the eligibility audit in July, an issue was raised with one faith-based provider regarding their accreditation as the word "provisional" was on their certificate. Ms. Coffield said there was some conflict regarding legislative HB 879. The legislation did not say anything about a center being provisional, only that if they have proper documents and are licensed, they are eligible. Ms. Coffield also stated that she had worked with Mr. Pruitt, the Church Director and the State and the issue had been satisfactorily resolved.

New Business:

There was no new business.

Mr. Pruitt asked for motion to adjourn. Mr. Thompson moved to adjourn seconded by Ms. Rowin.
Meeting ended 9:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Patricia Pierce
Executive Assistant

Approved via teleconference September 11, 2008