



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

The following members were in attendance: Mr. Will Pruitt, Mr. B.E. Thompson, Ms. Nancy Allison, Dr. Hugh Brockington II (via phone), Ms. Marie Carlberg, Ms. Marsha Carpenter, Oscar Palau for Ms. Donna Gregory, Mr. Hays Ginn, Dr. Barbara Howard, Ms. Sherry Olszanski, Ms. Cheryl Ridley, Ms. Darnell Stewart, Ms. Linda Stewart, Mr. Eddy Workinger and Ms. Dawn Mainville. The following members were absent: Ms. Porcha Green, Ms. Michele Rawls and Ms. Jeanie Rowin. The following staff members were present: Ms. Lesha Buchbinder, Mr. Bill Hartman and Ms. Patricia Pierce. The following guests were present: Ms. Cindy Winkle, Ms. Doreen Chatelier, Ms. Cindi Butler and Ms. Nakia Myles.

CONSENT CONSIDERATIONS

Mr. Pruitt presented action items 471-485 and asked if any items needed to be pulled for discussion. Mr. Thompson moved that items 484 and 485 be pulled. Mr. Pruitt asked if there were any questions on items 471-473. Being none, Mr. Pruitt called for a motion to approve items 471-473. Mr. Thompson moved to approve Action Items 471-473, seconded by Dr. Brockington. Motion carried.

Mr. Pruitt requested that Ms. Buchbinder review Action Items 484 and 485 that were added to the agenda after the packet was sent on Friday. Ms. Buchbinder commented that Action Item 484 refers to the VPK Statewide Provider Agreement Addendum, which was signed by Providers and Public School system as part of the 2009-2010 VPK provider agreement. The addendum requires that there be written policies and procedures for overpayment of providers and written procedures for the end of program provider verification process. Ms. Buchbinder stated that Item 485 is a recommendation to approve revisions to the VPK monitoring procedures. Ms. Buchbinder stated that she has prepared a summary for the board of the current status and the recommended changes. The entire updated VPK Monitoring Policies and Procedures will be provided at the November Board meeting if the revisions are complete. Ms. Buchbinder stated that the current VPK monitoring policy requires onsite pre and post on 100% of VPK providers. This includes classroom composition, size, ratio, curriculum, program and instructor credentials, attendance records and parent verification forms. Ms. Buchbinder stated that the revised policy that will require monitoring of 100% of VPK providers at least once annually with a 30 day follow-up for any provider who is out of compliance. Ms. Buchbinder commented that based on last year's monitoring results, and the fact that we have seen a reduction in administrative funding, she feels that the onetime visit with follow up for providers out of compliance will be both beneficial and efficient. Ms. Buchbinder stated that the second change actually refers to the Public School addendum which allows the School District if they choose, to conduct their own monitoring of district sites under the guidance and auspice of the Coalition. Ms. Buchbinder stated that the Coalition will be responsible for providing the monitoring tool and required training, as well as the follow up once the monitoring is complete. The recommendation also requests the allowance of a desk audit on a statistical random sampling for the validation of attendance and parent verification forms rather than 100% while on site. Ms. Buchbinder stated that the statistical random sample will represent a provider's compliance, and if necessary payment adjustments and a 30 day follow up will be completed. Ms. Buchbinder stated that by conducting a desk audit on attendance and parent verification forms Ms. Hyton can spend more time focusing on curriculum, ratio, credentials, etc. Due the streamlining of budgets, this new process will help the Coalition keep expenditures within the 4.85% administrative budget which is allowed by the program.

Mr. Pruitt asked if there were any questions on item 485. Being none, Mr. Pruitt called for a motion to approve. Mr. Thompson moved to approve Action Item 485, seconded by Dr. Brockington. Motion carried.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Ms. Buchbinder proceeded with the Executive Director's report. Ms. Buchbinder stated that there are pieces of the report that will need additional time for discussion, therefore, if there was no opposition, the Board Retreat Phase II would be held following November Board meeting. Ms. Buchbinder stated that only a few Board members have submitted their Board Self-Evaluation forms and encouraged members who have not completed the forms, to please do so and they will all be tallied and a summary will be prepared for the November meeting.

Ms. Buchbinder proceeded to review a report included in the packet that was done by RAND Education in reference to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. The report states that NCLB falls behind in meeting its goals for high quality preschool education and its potential to increase school readiness. Ms. Buchbinder stated that she will forward a soft copy of the report to members and encouraged them to take time to read the report.

Ms. Buchbinder continued with a review of a letter to Governor Crist from Richard Warfel, President of FACCM. The letter refers to concerns he had that occurred during the September ELAC meeting. Ms. Buchbinder reported that the Governor requested that Dr. Birken respond to Mr. Warfel's letter on AWI's behalf. The letter expressed concerns of some statements supposedly made by a member of ELAC regarding FACCM and stressed the importance of continued collaboration and the continued support of Providers. Also included in the pack for review is a letter to the Governor from Mr. Harry Duncanson responding to Mr. Warfel's letter to the Governor. Dr. Birken's letter also supported the collaboration between AWI, DCF, DOE and that avenue.

Ms. Buchbinder reported that Ms. Kathryn Sutherin, owner of Collina Kids Academy in Lake County, is a member of FACCM and is currently serving as the treasurer. Ms. Buchbinder reported that she had the opportunity to meet several times with Ms. Sutherin and had some good dialogue addressing issues and concerns of FACCM and issues regarding local control. Ms. Sutherin has enlightened the Coalition why FACCM and providers are concerned and how we can continue to collaborate for the good of all programs. Ms. Sutherin has been able to take those concerns back to FACCM and it has opened up the door for some good dialogue. Ms. Buchbinder has shared the discussions with Dr. Birken in hopes that legislators will build support with Early Learning Coalitions and what we are doing for the children. Ms. Buchbinder encouraged members to read all the information and to contact her with any questions on the issues.

Ms. Buchbinder continued with the Coalition's QIC update for October. Ms. Buchbinder referred to some ERS evaluations and a report in the packet regarding recent scores and corrective action plans on providers who were out of compliance in September. Recent assessments had been completed based on the new policies and those scores as of October 6 were indicated on the report. A letter was sent to the two low performing providers and a copy of the letter was included in the packet indicating what was required based on the school readiness contract. The letters also indicated that it is their responsibility as providers to take advantage of our technical assistance to raise their scores. We do see that based on data received so far, that there will be an additional focus on Family Child Care Homes. Because of the nature of the facility, the curriculum for these facilities must be for infant/toddlers and pre-K as they serve both age categories of children. Resources available to children must also represent children of all ages served, not just infants/toddlers or preschool children.

Ms. Buchbinder reviewed the ELCLC training calendar, and several flyers for SR/VPK provider meetings, Enrichment Sessions and the upcoming Parents and Providers seminars. The first of three sessions will be held on October 24, 2009. Ms. Buchbinder reported that a special First Aid/CPR training was held at the Coalition for 15 ELC and Child Care Choice Services staff. Ms. Buchbinder reminded the Board that the Day in the Park event will be held on October 29th. Ms. Buchbinder provided signup sheets and instructions for members who would like to volunteer for

this wonderful event for the children. Ms. Buchbinder commented that it will be an amazing site to see kids enjoying the art stops and having a great time. The Coalition has received several donations from area businesses to help support the event.

Ms. Buchbinder referred to the letter from AWI stating they had received the ELCLC annual Audit Plan and that it had been approved. An official audit report will be submitted by to the Coalition by the mandatory due date. Ms. Buchbinder commented that she would like for the Coalition's Audit Committee serve as the Audit Review Committee and would like to meet in December prior to the Board meeting. Ms. Campbell was on the Audit Committee, so Ms. Carlberg may serve on the committee if she wishes, and Ms. Rowin. This year's audit will be completed by Greenlee, Kurras, Rice, and Brown. Ms. Buchbinder continued with the report and commented on the correspondence sent to Ms. Olszanski on October 1, from Patsy Grant regarding the 1st Quarter monitoring for ELC4 contract. The schedule is to have phase 1 completed in November which consists of review of 125 child files and records, and phase 2 which is the attendance validation, completed in December 2009. The results of the 1st quarter monitoring for 2009-2010 test month for August (Exhibit B) was included in the packet for review as well as the LSBC journal entries for the first quarter 2009-2010 (Exhibit A). Ms. Buchbinder commented that in an effort to reduce duplication she is in the process of working with CCCS to determine if there is a way to consolidate the monitoring efforts of the Coalition and CCCS.

Ms. Buchbinder continued to discuss some communication she had with Ms. Gayla Clark regarding the IDEA Board of Directors position. Ms. Buchbinder commented that she had contacted Ms. Clark to discuss her position on the ELCLC Board as the designee had missed several meetings. Ms. Buchbinder commented that if she or a designated staff representative are no longer able represent their agency on the Board, to please release her position on the Board to allow the Coalition to find someone that will fill the seat based on as a representative from IDEA. Ms. Clark has recently submitted her resignation letter. Ms. Buchbinder commented that this position is a mandated seat for a member who qualifies under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Ms. Buchbinder commented that she has requested clarification from Ms. Michele Reid as to what organizations would fall into that category in order to seek a replacement and found that a representative from Lake County School Board ESE Department would qualify for the position. Ms. Buchbinder stated that since the Coalition already has a representative on the board from Lake County Schools she will convene with the Nominating Committee to determine if the committee wanted to consider other agencies. Ms. Buchbinder commented that if needed she will contact Ms. Susan Moxley, Superintendent of the School Board, to see if a representative from the Lake County School – ESE program would be appropriate.

Ms. Buchbinder proceeded with dialogue regarding the VPK program, stating that there are currently 1,899 children currently enrolled in VPK, with 520 vacant slots. Ms. Buchbinder commented that she can run a report by zip codes if the board wants more information as to what areas have the most children enrolled and/or vacancies. Ms. Buchbinder commented that the low numbers may be due to economy or lack of transportation to bring children to and from the VPK program only. Ms. Winkle commented that in some cases there is only one parent working have only one vehicle and transportation is an issue, but there are some parents out there that think this is the program is not important enough to participate. Mr. Pruitt asked Commissioner Stewart if Lake Transit could provide transportation services for child care. Ms. Buchbinder commented that Lake Transit does offer some child care services for parents who meet a certain criteria. Commissioner Stewart commented that she will look into this to see what assistance would be available.

Ms. Allison inquired about the ARRA dollars to see if the funds could be used for something in addition to the unemployment piece. Ms. Buchbinder reminded the board that the funds are for our working poor parents and those parents receiving unemployment compensation. Ms. Buchbinder commented that there is 19% allowed for administrative costs which if not used as such could be used to for direct services. Lake County also has approximately \$13,000 allocated for quality, but the funds are primarily to be used for slots. Ms. Buchbinder commented that Ms. Lancaster at CCCS is looking at families who may qualify and could come off the wait list or

could be rolled-over from other programs. Mr. Thompson asked if children would be eligible for wrap around services with ARRA dollars. Ms. Buchbinder commented that yes, they could, but also keeping in mind that we don't want to over enroll with ARRA dollars as it is a two year allocation. Members discussed researching the number of vouchers that were distributed to see how many were actually enrolled. Ms. Chatelier asked if we could contact parents to inquire as to why they didn't use their vouchers. Ms. Buchbinder commented that parents may have lost the vouchers and didn't think they could get a replacement. Ms. Chatelier also commented that perhaps the roundups for VPK were held too early in the year. Ms. Buchbinder stated that she will work with CCCS to determine if a report could be created to track the number of unused vouchers. Ms. Buchbinder continued with a report from the 2008-2009 ELCLC Annual Report. Ms. Buchbinder stated that the report indicated that SR numbers show 3,647 unduplicated children received services for the 08-09 program year, while the VPK program reported 2,359 children for the program year. Ms. Buchbinder continued with a summary of the annual report.

FISCAL /UTILIZATION REPORT

Ms. Buchbinder proceeded with the Fiscal Report and Utilization Reports for August 2009.

Ms. Buchbinder referred to the funding allocations for General Revenue, School Readiness and VPK which indicated the total expenditures for August and the balances remaining for the program year. Ms. Buchbinder referred to the total expenses for ARRA for August totaling \$10,971.20 or 1.4% of the total grant award. To date, \$790,357 has been allocated to provider payments and awarded to LifeStream; \$185,392 is unallocated under ELCLC and \$13,439 is for ARRA Quality Initiative assigned to the Coalition. Ms. Buchbinder reported that a total of \$773,376.32 in ARRA dollars or 97% is available for the remaining 22 months of the fiscal year. Ms. Buchbinder commented that a minimum of 50% must be spent within the current fiscal year. Ms. Buchbinder also reviewed the expenditures and balances remaining for the Administrative Budget, Quality Dollars, Education Program and the Infant/Toddler program.

Ms. Buchbinder asked members to review the enclosed utilization and SIT reports at their leisure; however, Ms. Buchbinder did point out on page 16 of the Clinicians' Report, that CCCS has added another Behavioral Specialist with a background in Psychology. Ms. Buchbinder asked Ms. Olszanski if there were any other changes in the LifeStream or CCCS organizational chart that she wanted to report. Ms. Olszanski commented that Ms. Denise Lancaster will oversee the day to day operations as Program Supervisor and that Mr. Thompson at LifeStream, will serve as Program Manager and report directly to Ms. Olszanski. Ms. Lancaster will report directly to Mr. Thompson. Ms. Buchbinder referred to page 17, the SIT report regarding enrollments and ARRA dollars. Ms. Myles asked about BG1 children not being able to go to licensed facilities. Ms. Buchbinder commented that the state requires that all BG1's must be enrolled in a licensed facility. Parents could contact their caseworker and make a request that the child be allowed to go to a non licensed facility. However, there have been cases where the social worker refused the request. Ms. Buchbinder thanked Ms. Myles for addressing that issue.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Mr. Ginn reported that the Committee did not meet in September. The Committee was scheduled to meet immediately following the September 7 Board meeting, however, due to more important concerns with another Committee meeting, the Professional Development Committee was rescheduled to meet October 20th to review seven applications.

SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

Ms. Buchbinder reported that Ms. Rawls was not able to attend the meeting and she will give the report for the Committee. Ms. Buchbinder commented that she had the opportunity to have some dialogue with OEL regarding the amendment that had been submitted regarding Lake's pre- and post assessment tool. Ms. Buchbinder reported that she had spoken with Ms. Michele Watson regarding the proper way to move forward with amending the ELC Plan in relation to the pre and post tool, but not expending significant dollars since the state is moving forward with the

selection and implementation of a statewide assessment system. Ms. Buchbinder reported that she originally inquired to Dr. Birken, then to Ms. Watson about the best way to proceed so that we avoid duplication of effort and not select a tool that is in complete opposite of what the state is considering.

Ms. Buchbinder also commented that she has spoken with Ms. Watson for assistance in the language for the amendment and it was decided that the best way to proceed would be to identify a random sample of our SR population and utilize the assessment tools already being utilized by our SR providers. Ms. Buchbinder commented that our providers will be contacted to see what each one is using and if they would be willing to share their data.

Ms. Chatelier commented on whether or not Lake County Schools use the High Scope COR as their assessment tool. Ms. Carlberg reported that the school system is currently using another tool as their pre and post. Ms. Buchbinder reported that the Department of Education has selected 200 Providers to conduct do pre/mid/post assessments on their VPK children. Ms. Buchbinder commented that the Coalition will be hosting a training session on Friday (October 9) for the providers chosen from Lake County.

CURRICULUM ADVISORY COUNCIL

Ms. Carlberg reported that the Committee held two meetings. The first meeting was to review some curriculum for children ages four and five years to be used in the classroom that had already been approved at the State level. Ms. Carlberg stated the committee felt the curriculum was appropriate and made the recommendation to accept the DAP list as mentioned in Action Item 472. Ms. Carlberg also reported that the Committee has developed an evaluation tool that will be used going forward to evaluate curriculum for Infant/Toddlers and Pre-K to determine its appropriateness and whether or not it should be approved for use by Lake County SR Providers. This evaluation tool was recommended in Action Item 473. Ms. Carlberg stated that all curriculum reviews will use the tool to evaluate content and strategies of curriculum. Ms. Carlberg said that if a Provider submits a curriculum for review by the Committee and it is approved, it could benefit other providers who are seeking a new tool. Ms. Buchbinder stated that it is encouraging to see more curriculums being approved for our providers.

PROVIDER GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

Dr. Brockington reported that due to a scheduling conflict the Committee did not meet in September.

PROGRAMMATIC REPORTS

Due to time constraints, Ms. Buchbinder asked members to review the enclosed reports at their leisure and to contact her with any questions.

OLD BUSINESS

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

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Pruitt called for any new business.

Ms. Buchbinder requested to present some new business. Ms. Buchbinder reported that she is a member of the Leesburg Sunrise Rotary which meets every Tuesday morning in downtown Leesburg. Ms. Buchbinder commented that Leesburg Sunrise Rotary is in partnership with Beacon College and other organizations which support a local literacy initiative at the Leesburg Library called the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. Ms. Buchbinder referred to the brochure in the packet with more information on the program which promotes literacy. Ms. Buchbinder stated that the Imagination Library is a program in which participating children receives books. Ms. Buchbinder said that this initiative falls in line with the Coalition's mission and was asked by members of the Rotary to consider assisting with the funding. Ms. Buchbinder commented that with Board approval she would determine if the use of Quality dollars or the Coalition's reserved funds would be an option. Ms. Carlberg asked if a sample of the books to be reviewed

would be possible. Ms. Buchbinder said that she would look into the request. Ms. Buchbinder commented that at this time there are 105 children enrolled in the program and receiving books. Ms. Buchbinder asked members if they would be interested in getting more information or perhaps a presentation in November. It may be possible to get a list of the title of the books and the estimated cost per child.

Ms. Buchbinder also reported on another early learning program called Music Together. Leesburg Rotary began this program with \$1,000 and the only other programs close to Lake County are operating in Oviedo, Gainesville and Tampa. This initiative is a music program where families can participate for 30-45 minute sessions to learn music. The program is open to children as young as 6 to 8 months of age. This program has curriculum that is site approved. Ms. Buchbinder explained that the challenge with this program is that an organization has to receive a license to operate the program and that there is a significant amount of overhead to run the program. Another challenge is that the program is a fee based program and parents may not be able to afford to participate and providers may not be able to afford to pay for their children. One of the ideas offered by the members of the Rotary participating in the planning of the program is that the license be piloted at our local Montessori program in which the classes could be offered to both the children who attend the Montessori program as well as other children who are interested. Another option was that the Coalition hold the license and the program be operated at multiple locations around the county. Ms. Buchbinder stated the estimated cost per child would be \$37.00, not including the cost of the teacher. Mr. Thompson asked if parents with children at Magic Moments or Kiddie Castle for example, could afford to pay for their children to attend the classes? Ms. Allison and Ms. Chatelier both stated parents couldn't afford the cost. Mr. Thompson asked if a subsidy would be an allowable expense. Ms. Buchbinder stated that she is not sure what the purpose of the Coalition's participation would be. Mr. Workinger commented that his child participates in a program that is similar to this one and his child really enjoys the program. Ms. Green requested that more information be provided.

There was no further discussion.

Mr. Thompson moved to adjourn at 10:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Patricia Pierce
Executive Assistant