



**APPROVED BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES OF
December 17, 2009**

Members Present

Christina Worley
Tana Ebbole
Ken Kahn
Dr. Marsha Fishbane
Perry Borman
Philippe Jeck
Dr. Roanne Moreno
Dr. Barbara Weinstein
Patrick Cannan
Nicole Matlock
Wanda Baldwin
Commissioner Vana
Kathy Adams
Dr. Carmen Nicholas
Kristy Pressly
Leondrae Camel
Howard Burnston

Members Absent

Helene Rosen
John O'Malley
MJ Steele

Guests

Ilene Silber
Beverly Sears
Tracy Crawford
Terrie Ellis
Beverly Beguesse
Karen Deringer
Sally Laws
Gail Fabian
Juanita Bentley
Elizabeth Jackson
Barry Miller
Reinier Potts
Tijuana Williams
Ann de las Pozas
Ainsworth Geddes
Kathy Haight
Nate Nichols
Jorge Perez

Ex-officio

Warren Eldridge
Vivian Blackmon-Taylor
Mike Sothen
Christie Young
Ginger Gladden

These minutes summarize key action items of the meeting of the Board of Directors for the Early Learning Coalition. They do not include all issues discussed. A transcript of the meeting by recorded audiotape is the official record and is available to all interested parties.

CALL TO ORDER

Kathy Adams called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. A quorum of voting members was established.

CHANGES, ADDITIONS, DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

Items VIII B, D, E will be included in the Executive Director's report.

Christina Worley motioned, Dr. Fishbane seconded, and the Board unanimously voted to approve to move items VIII B, D, E to the Executive Director's report.

CHAIR COMMENTS

The Board members introduced themselves to the new Board Chair, Kathy Adams. Mrs. Adams gave special recognition to past chair Traver Gruen-Kennedy and also reminded the Board members of the Board retreat scheduled for Friday, January 29, 2010 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP RECOMMENDATION

Philippe Jeck reported that the Nominating Committee is submitting their recommendation to the Board to consider Howard Burnston of Gunster, P.A. as an Early Learning Coalition Board member.

Philippe Jeck motioned, Tana Ebbole seconded, and the Board unanimously voted to approve the Nominating Committee's recommendation to elect Howard Burnston as a Board member representing the private sector.

Howard Burnston joined the table of Board members for the duration of the meeting.

PRESENTATION

Rampell and Rampell, P.A. presented the annual audit report for ELCs fiscal year ending June 30, 2009. Christina Worley congratulated Mike Sothen of the Coalition for a clean audit and also thanks to Rampell and Rampell for their hard work in completing the audit report.

Christina Worley motioned, Dr. Fishbane seconded, and the Board unanimously voted to approve the annual audit report.

Christina Worley motioned, Ken Kahn seconded, and the Board unanimously voted to authorize the treasurer, Dr. Fishbane to sign the 990 tax document.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Mr. Eldridge also reported that CSC and ELC met to look at the Quality Counts and Quality Improvement System. The goal was to find out if there is an impact and if there are positive changes to the program for growth. A more in depth study of the outcomes will be presented at the Board retreat.

Mr. Eldridge and M.J. Steele of the Palm Beach County School District have spoken and have researched more thoroughly Title 1 funds with the State.

Mr. Eldridge met with the Agency for Workforce Innovation along with the Chairs of the state's 31 Early Learning Coalitions. The ELC Chairs continue their pursuit of requesting reinstatement of grant revenue that was decreased last year. The funds were replaced with non-recurring stimulus funds. The Chairs are gubernatorial appointees and maybe their efforts can make a difference.

Warren Eldridge attended the Florida Chamber of Commerce's event in Orlando. Of importance is that the Chamber has adopted early care and education as one of their platforms this year.

Kathy Adams reported that the Palm Beach County Early Childhood Cabinet had its first meeting. The purpose of the Cabinet is to support the achievement of child well-being outcomes in Palm Beach County. The Cabinet will meet twice annually with additional meetings as needed.

Mr. Eldridge mentioned that he met with Family Central and the family child care providers on a Friday night in December for two hours. Mr. Eldridge commended the providers for their dedication in attending the meeting knowing many of them had a training to attend the next morning.

CONSENT ITEMS

- A. Approval of Early Learning Coalition Plan Amendment (Curriculum)
- B. Approval of Board of Directors Meeting Minutes of September 17, 2009
- C. Approval of Board of Directors Executive Committee Meeting Minutes November 19, 2009
- D. Finance Report

Tana Ebbale motioned, Christina Worley seconded, and the Board unanimously voted to approve the Consent Items.

OLD BUSINESS

Legislative Update

Legislative Priorities:

The Early Childhood Challenge Grant has not passed but the Coalition is including it on its legislative priorities to show how important it is to draw down these federal funds. The State is at a point where it does not have additional money to draw down federal funds. The Coalition will need to make sure that it is in step with its partners to make sure the VPK program receives

funding. The Coalition is also in support of afterschool funding because there are more and more children entering this program. Also, the Coalition supports Healthy Start (looking at determining the best way to work with the whole family beginning with prenatal). Finally, the Coalition is in support of streamlining the State system regarding duplicate performance standards.

Warren Eldridge reported that the State of Florida Early Learning Caucus met for the first time. The Early Learning Caucus was founded by Representative Ari Porth. The Children's Services Council in Broward was very active in developing the Caucus. Warren Eldridge attended this meeting. Rep. Porth shared details on the "Protecting Florida's Most Vulnerable Citizens Act." This bill is to support that background checks are completed before caregivers of children and the elderly begin work.

Mr. Eldridge discussed the statistic that 75% of 17 to 24 year old Americans do not qualify to serve in the Army because of school failure, criminality and/or physical fitness. Lieutenant General Kerrick is in support of a federal initiative to inspire our young people to do better. The Coalition would like to utilize him as a spokesperson for advocacy of early childhood education programs. Dr. Barbara Weinstein and Chairperson Kathy Adams agreed to meet with Lieutenant General Kerrick along with Warren Eldridge.

VPK Update

Warren Eldridge reported that VPK enrollment increased by 20% for the third year in a row.

Family Central Monitoring Report

Warren Eldridge provided an update on the Agency for Workforce Innovation's comments on Family Central, Inc. (FCI) which were communicated on May 21, 2009. This verbal communication contained compliance issues relating to VPK provider files. Since that time, FCI and the Coalition prepared and submitted a correction action plan to the State. The Coalition has completed a monitoring of VPK school year and summer files and all compliance matters have been addressed. Currently, the State has not issued a written report but has accepted the Coalition's corrective action plan.

Child Care Provider Visits

Warren Eldridge mentioned the Coalition will begin scheduling child care provider site visits for the Board members in three to four months.

Fundraising Committee

The members of the fundraising committee include Christina Worley, Kristy Pressly, Ken Kahn and Howard Burnston. Vivian Blackmon-Taylor and Ann de las Pozas will contact the committee members in January to schedule the initial meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Market Rate Report presented by Vivian Blackmon-Taylor

Vivian Blackmon-Taylor reported on the market rates. Topics discussed were Gold Seal designation, comparison of Gold Seal rates, market rates, maximum payment rates and rate frequency/central tendencies (mean, median and mode).

Christina Worley inquired if we have looked at the three accrediting agencies and are they comparable in terms of what they are requiring. Ms. Blackmon-Taylor responded that there are differences. The Coalition will have a crosswalk as to what the different standards of the accrediting agencies are so that everyone can see the differences and similarities between them.

Dr. Carmen Nicholas mentioned that NAEYC has 9% of providers with Apple having 27% of providers which is a big difference. There was a time when NAEYC accreditation was the standard. Providers have sought other accreditations due to the increasing costs of the NAEYC accreditation. Is the Coalition aware of the requirements of the programs of the NAEYC accreditation?

Christina Worley would like to know the costs for each of the accreditations being offered. Barbara Weinstein mentioned that the costs are different and the requirements are very different. Also, the time of the accreditation is very different. The Apple accreditation is quicker. Yet they still get the 20% increase in pay. Tana Ebbole requested to lay it out side by side the similarities and differences. Ms. Ebbole also would like to know the percentages three years ago and five years ago so that the Board could see changes in patterns.

Nicole Matlock mentioned that the NAEYC accreditation requires the teachers have bachelor's degrees. The private providers cannot afford to pay a teacher \$40,000. Providers cannot afford medical benefits like the School Board. The private providers chose Apple because it is easier to complete but it is still a lot of work to do.

Howard Burnston inquired if the Coalition knows the various results that we get from the various Gold Seal providers. Warren Eldridge replied that the State has never done an outcome study as it relates to Gold Seal. The first outcome study that Mr. Eldridge has seen was last month from Quality Counts. It's expensive and a risk to have someone come in and do an analysis of your program. If the Board will direct me I would like to send a letter to the State (DCF and AWI) asking for an outcome study. The Board requested that Mr. Eldridge write a letter to the State.

Warren Eldridge reported he would like to hire a professional who develops surveys relating to rates and send it out to the provider community in order to get feedback from the providers. This will take time. It will take many months to finalize. This is something we want to get right. We want to make sure we are paying for quality when paying these rates.

Ms. Blackmon-Taylor explained again that the 75th percentile is not the mean or average. 75th percentile is that 75% are at or below the market rate and 25% are above the market rate.

Tana Ebbole inquired what is the relationship between what we pay, what providers charge and the calculated market rate? How far are we off? Ms. Blackmon-Taylor responded that what we are paying is lower than the market rate. The Mean and Median is a good indication of what the providers are paying. Those who are getting the 20% payment they are much closer to the mean, median and mode but they are still not at the market rate.

Tana Ebbole said the intent of Gold Seal is to focus on quality. However, if Gold Seal does not even pay the market rate it's not being spent for quality it's being spent for base operations. Mr. Eldridge wants to know how we can ensure that we are paying for quality and paying providers the appropriate rate. How do we get there? This is why we are taking the time to meet with the Board, to get feedback from the providers, and visit child care facilities.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Dr. Carmen Nicholas commented that the Head Start expansion program was started in December and they started with 119 children.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Elizabeth Jackson has concerns regarding Quality Counts and that some children are leaving one school for another. Warren Eldridge replied that parents are given parental choice and that the parents are given all the information available to them to make a choice. Part of Quality Counts is Continue to Care. With Continue to Care, scholarship funds are offered to Quality Counts providers only. Kathy Adams said the centers that have the Quality Counts program have a dramatic increase in improving child outcomes. That is what we are focusing on with local tax dollars to make that kind of child outcome impact.

Elizabeth Jackson commented on the sign in and out sheets that are required. The electronic system is given a grace period of four days with only printed first and last names required. Those

who submit the sheets manually have to provide the sheets with signatures when the monitoring personnel come into the facility. They would like to revisit the signatures and grace period on manual submissions.

Terrie Ellis on behalf of Palm Beach County Child Care Director's Association requests a meeting to review school readiness service agreements for changes, clarifications and deadlines.

Tracy Crawford of the Palm Beach County Child Care Director's Association mentioned that the providers work hard for Gold Seal but are now having to undertake QIS without receiving funding. They would like to be guaranteed funding if they follow QIS requirements.

NEXT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

February 18, 2010

ADJOURNMENT

Tana Ebbole motioned, Christina Worley seconded, and the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m.