

EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF SARASOTA COUNTY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

School Board of Sarasota County, Brown Awning Building, Rooms A-B
The Landings, 1960 Landings Boulevard, Sarasota
20 SEPTEMBER 2006

MINUTES

1. ATTENDANCE.

a. Voting Members Present:

Kim Binkley-Seyer (Chair)	Jill Jacoby	Tami Conetta	Laura Bauman
Laura Benson	Janice Mee	Lisa Glenn	Bill Little
Raymond Kaiser	Chris Kofler	David Hicks	Nora Patterson

b. Non-Voting Members Present:

Dr. Norman Goldstein	Ken Modzelewski	Hope Kinney	Lori White
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c. Absent (Voting):

Lois Natiello	Cyndi Reynolds	Steve Spangler
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d. Absent (Non-Voting):

Sue Loncaric

e. Staff:

Janet Kahn	Mike Miller	Linda Mason	Dianne Rose
Mary Wolf			

f. Visitors:

Jackie Fountaine	Eva Balcar	Barbara Waldron	Jamie Arnold
Claudia Malecki	Tiffany Timms	Amber Kelly	

2. CALL TO ORDER. The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm and welcomed Claudia Malecki and four members of her CDA class from the YMCA's Gold Seal Project.

3. CONSENT AGENDA. The consent agenda was unanimously approved (*motion – Laura Benson; 2nd – Chris Kofler*).

4. CHAIR REPORT. Kim will be attending a Chair's Advisory Council Retreat on 28-29 September to address AWI's plans for development and implementation of a quality rating system for providers across the state. This QRS system will ensure consistency across the state in evaluating providers and would also offer families a consistent system to judge the quality of sites when they need to select a provider for their children. Kim also updated the Board regarding the state's effort to replace the state's database system, EFS (Enhanced Field System). It is called ELIS (Early Learning System), and after a four year development process, will hopefully be launched in 2010. Kim urged the staff to participate fully during this period to make sure that whatever is implemented will meet our needs. Kim expressed her appreciation to the staff for closing out FY2006 successfully, and for ensuring that all of the Coalition's financial targets were met. Kim also noted that the Coalition is working on an application for a Junior League funding which is due by the end of the month.

5. PRESENTATIONS.

a. Status of Statewide QRS (Quality Rating System). Janet reported that this project has been worked on at a variety of state level meetings the last several months with a good representation of stakeholders providing input. It is being championed by Lt. Governor Jennings, an original member of the Florida Partnership for School Readiness Board, and was also moved along with the expression of interest of the Coalition Chairs' Advisory group. Several coalitions have already developed their own local quality rating system, including Hillsborough, Palm Beach and Broward, that have had programs in existence for several years. Other Coalitions are in various stages of development. The Lt. Governor and AWI want to develop a single standard state-wide system to provide consistency in understanding by

families. The current proposal, Sunshine State Stars, (*five-level system of quality designation that takes into account a site's environment, training level of staff, curriculum used, parent involvement program, and administration*) will be presented at the Chairs' meeting later this month for approval and recommended next steps. This subject has also been discussed locally by the Quality Childcare Council (QCC). Kim is confident that this will be taken up at the next legislative session and implemented in some form.

- b. Update on the local QCC. Bill (*Chair of the QCC*) gave a quick recap of the history of the Council, which first began as an idea this past January, and has quickly grown into a strong community effort to improve the quality of all child care providers in Sarasota County. Three "Task Forces" have been initiated to establish current baselines and action plans for how we can make improvements overall:
- Quality Systems Task Force (*will follow the state's development of the QRS and its adaptability to Sarasota County so that a local system will be in place that includes assessments/ratings, incentives and awards, and will reflect a united effort by all funders involved*)
 - Evaluation and Accountability Task Force (*will look at child outcomes over time in the context of what is already being tracked by the ELC, county and the school district*)
 - Communications Task Force (*will perform a few brief surveys of the general public, child care providers, and parents, possibly as part of the Kindergarten registration process, and to develop an appropriate marketing campaign to raise expectations of what quality child care and the importance of investment in early education*)

The next meeting of the QCC is 5 December, 9:30 am, in Room 219 of the Blue Awning Building at the Landings. The meeting is "open" to the public, and interested Board Members are encouraged to come and participate.

6. DISCUSSION ITEM.

a. Plans for Board Retreat. Tammy offered Board Members two possible November dates for the Retreat at the Northern Trust Building's 11th floor – either November 13th (Monday) or the 28th (Tuesday), each date from 4-8 pm. Board Members reached consensus on 13 November. Cheray Keyes-Shima will facilitate for the Retreat, which will have a strategic focus on contemporary issues affecting our business of serving families and children, along with those issues affecting child care providers and their ability to care for the children. Members are encouraged to submit ideas for issues to address at the Retreat to Tami or Kim. The focus of the Coalition Board retreat will be to develop a very specific Action Plan with goals and outlined action steps to address identified childcare needs of the Sarasota County community.

7. ACTION ITEMS.

- a. Confirmation to accept Nominating Committee's recommendation of renewal of Board Member terms expiring in October. The Nominating Committee's recommendation to accept Dr. Norman Goldstein as the "*representative of programs for children with disabilities*" and Sue Loncaric as the "*representative of faith-based child care providers*", each for another three years (Oct 2006 – Sep 2009) on the Board, was passed unanimously (*motion – Nora Patterson; 2nd – Bill Little*). Raymond Kaiser's membership expires on 1 October, and although he declined to seek a renewal of his term, but did agreed to continue to participate through the November Retreat to lend his unique experience and perspective to those important Board discussions. Raymond also used the occasion to commend the Board and Executive Director on the significant progress made toward goals he supported four years ago when he relieved Giovanna Deveny as Coalition Chair. Raymond has always wanted the Board to recognize and address issues affecting the school readiness of the whole community in Sarasota, and he feels that this is now being done.

(PUBLIC COMMENT: Jackie Fontaine mentioned that attendees at the Family Home provider state conference in July were informed that the state's new QRS would be

“voluntary”, but that sites which did not participate might not be authorized to enroll School Readiness children.)

8. OLD BUSINESS.

- a. FY2006 Financial Wrap-up. Mike presented his latest financial indicator figures (*July and August*) to the Board which showed that the Coalition had begun the new fiscal year (FY07) on a very positive note. He also explained the “13th Invoice” process, during which each coalition wraps up the previous fiscal year with any final adjustments and documentation of late bills. Final “13th” SR and VPK invoices for FY07 were forwarded to the state on 15 September. Mike also mentioned that the VPK program had expanded this year from 54 to 71 providers and from 1,100 to 1,400 children enrolled this year, as compared to last year. Janet thanked and acknowledged Mike for his work on reconciling the end of year VPK payments. It was an arduous task due to pre-payments through out the year, with a complicated final reconciliation. All of our VPK providers have enthusiastically agreed to a reimbursement process for this year.
- b. Plan Approval Status. Our Plan is on conditional approval. But AWI has asked for more input in certain areas. Several AWI issues deal with situations which we do not feel are appropriately part of our charter (*i.e. staff following up with families after providing information on community social service referrals*), nor are we funded to perform them. Janet will meet with our Coalition Analyst, Doreen Moskowitz, next week to draft appropriate changes.
- c. County Grant Status. Janet announced that the BCC will make their final decision on the grant package at their meeting on 5 October. The HSAC (*Human Services Advisory Council*) had previously recommended approval of our basic annual package (\$425,000 for BG8 and CCEP matching funds) and have just approved the renewal of our \$30,000 for provider staff training and support, matched by the ELC, along with an additional \$30,000 to serve families whose children are enrolled in the School Readiness program, but who become ineligible when their income rises above the 200% of FPL (up to 225%). We will work with county staff to craft the most appropriate use of these funds to reach the largest number of families. Details to follow. This is a program we have worked toward for some time.

9. ANNOUNCEMENTS. None.

10. ADJOURNMENT. The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 pm. The next meeting will be 18 October 2006.

Kim Binkley-Seyer, Chair