

**EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF SARASOTA COUNTY**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**BOARD RETREAT**  
**May 19, 2009**  
**Minutes/Summary**

**ATTENDANCE**

a. Voting Members Present:

Tami Conetta	Laura Bauman	Mike Breton	Amy Farrington
David Hicks	Jill Jacoby	Chris Kofler	Bill Little
Janice Mee	John Stump	Cheryle Williams	

b. Non-Voting Members Present:

Lisa Williams	Connie Snyder	Sonia Figaredo-Alberts
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c. Absent (Voting):

Steve Spangler	Kathryn Stuckey	Pauline Tracy
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d. Absent (Non-Voting):

Hope Kinney	Sonia Figaredo-Alberts
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e. Staff:

Janet Kahn	Mary Wolf	James Pawlak
Linda Mason	Valerie Walton	

f. Other participants:

Lois Natiello	Raphael Gomez	Jennifer Ourednik
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**Retreat Overview:**

Following opening remarks by the Chair regarding ELC's history, the Executive Director informed the board on possible action areas. The board also discussed results from the most recent Building Better Boards Online Service Assessment (Jan 09) and notations were reviewed to further enhance board communications and participation. The consultant recommended retaking the BOSA in 2010 to compare results with this assessment.

The board then reviewed pre-retreat survey results and broke into three groups, using pre-retreat issues/opportunity responses to form organizational goals for future action by staff and board. 10 organizational goals were produced by the three groups. Retreat participants then reconvened in a general dialogue and identified three overarching goals. They then voted to prioritize their group work of 10 goals as strategies. These goals and their strategies are captured as followings:

**GOAL 1: Communications (850 points) - Community, Families, Business**

- Strategy 1: Spread awareness to HR & workforce groups for a common understanding of the importance of early learning.
  - *Obstacles* – Constraints on people, time, money. Identifying objects of the message. Limitation of state funding.
  - *Resources* – Synergies of partnerships. Existing message and good marketing materials. Utilize chamber as catalyst. Mobilize service groups.
- Strategy 2: Identify \*‘‘unreachable’’/high need constituents and target a message to bring them to the table. \*not just low income.

- *Obstacles* – Where/who are they? How to reach them? Overcoming stigma. Time and money.
  - *Resources* – Existing tools are capable but possible interns/research opportunity.
- Strategy 3: Educate the community on the value of early care & education for all children and continue to support childcare providers.
    - *Obstacles* – Time, money, perceptions, mike.
    - *Resources* – Good information.
  - Strategy 4: Engage business community and educate businesses on the direct benefits to their bottom line now and in future workforce of quality early care and education.
    - *Obstacles* – Time, money, perceptions, mike.
    - *Resources* – Information/research on benefits of ELC to business long term. Board to present at community business and organizations.
  - Strategy 5: Connect to business community in meaningful way.
    - *Obstacles* – Apathy, economy, manpower.
    - *Resources* – Speakers bureau, media resources, community connectors/relationships. Consumables.
  - Strategy 6: Family education and outreach.
    - *Obstacles* – Reaching populations who are typically hard to reach. (Ex. In home care by family members, complacent parents/families). Financial support.
    - *Resources* – An Army! Consumables. Bi-lingual communicators. Data (hard facts). PR support (professional & a committee).

**GOAL 2: Sustainability** (520 points) - Programs, Advocacy, “Systems, Partnerships

- Strategy 1: Sustainability (not just \$\$) to support current and future quality early child care and education.
  - *Obstacles* – Economy (inc. competition for funding). Community interest/knowledge of programs.
  - *Resources* – Consumables. Staff. Community support.
- Strategy 2: Review efficiency of use of funding sources to make the dollars go further (pooling w/other common interest groups)
  - *Obstacles* – Isolated, “silo” nature of organizations. Finding and identifying collaborators. Encourage/reward meshing. Categorical funding streams from Federal sources.
  - *Resources* – A champion to tackle new way of thinking.
- Strategy 5: Promote including of all children and families
  - *Obstacles* – Time, money, perceptions, mike.
  - *Resources* – LEAF, VPK, Look for the Stars.

**GOAL 3: Manage Resources** (210 points)

- Strategy 1: Evaluate ebb & flow of our resources vs. demand for services with the ultimate goal of serving every child.

- *Obstacles* – Funding for evaluation phase funding universal service phase.
- *Resources* – USF Business/Social work researcher and existing entry/exit strategies can be refined.

The executive director indicated a workgroup will convene over the summer, using these three goals to identify strategies, tactics and activities for review, assignment of members and action in September.

**Post-retreat survey:**

21 board and staff members responded to a post-retreat evaluation survey. Two retreat goals had been established:

- a. Promote board/staff exchange of information, shared experiences and worthwhile interactions.
- b. Surface and refine important issues and opportunities to inform future work of the organization.

20 of 21 responded that goal **a.** was met either “well” or “very well”. 21 of 21 also said that goal **b.** was also met either “well” or “very well”. In addition, 20 of 21 were either “likely to” or would “definitely” recommend the consultant/facilitator.

Helpful comments were also captured in a separate retreat evaluation summary of what may have been done differently, and additional areas of requested learning or actions not covered by the retreat. This summary may be used to continue engaging board and staff in realizing ELC’s goals.

*Minutes and Summary submitted by Third Wave Consulting*

*Next meeting is the regular Board meeting on June 17, 2009*

***Ready for Learning, Ready for Life!***