

EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF SARASOTA COUNTY
The Landings, 1960 Landings Boulevard, Sarasota
Blue Awning Building, Room 101
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING & QUALITY COMMITTEE
Joint meeting of the Staff Development and Training Committee and Quality Initiative Committee
November 26, 2007

MINUTES

ATTENDEES

Wendy Harris	Janet Kahn	Kathy Stuckey
Jill Jacoby	Dianne Rose	Kathleen Sullivan
Kerri Dieffenwierth	Mary Wolf	Debbie Bowler
Jackie Fountaine	Erin Lawrence	Elma McKay

CALL TO ORDER.

The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson Wendy Harris at 9:35 a.m.

OLD BUSINESS.

QRIS update-

- Janet announced all requested funding was received from Wachovia. That means that all required matching dollars have been raised and we are now ready to proceed with implementation in January.
- Providers were previously surveyed and there is a very high level of interest in being a part of the QRIS.
- The Coalition plans to release an RFP and contract with an agency to conduct the ECERS/ITERS on participating providers.
- The timing of when to release the information publicly on the actual star designation is still an issue being decided. It will depend on the baseline assessments and where the spread falls. If the ratings were released immediately, there would be a designation for centers that are working on increasing their rating.
- The goal is for every site to become a 3 star rating or higher after a designated period of time; otherwise they won't be eligible to serve scholarship children, among other issues. To achieve a 3 star, the site must have at least an overall score of 4 or higher on their ECERS, the environmental portion of the point accumulation, as well as other elements in place.
- Meetings will be conducted to inform providers about the process in more detail and will start in January and continue through the Spring. These meetings will be voluntary but participation in the QRIS will eventually be mandatory if the centers serve scholarship children.
- Community involvement, an important component, will be fostered by having strong sites mentoring weaker-scoring sites, opening sites for tours, serving scholarship and/or at risk children, speaking at conferences etc. as well as informing the local community about quality child care.

- Sustaining progress over time is an important element as all funding sources want to know that progress is steady and maintained, especially at a three-year reexamination.
- The 1st year funding provides resources for 140 child care providers out of the approximately 250 in Sarasota County, including family child care homes to participate in some manner. The initial goal is to determine a star rating for a minimum of 100 sites, including an ECERS/ITERS assessment. It is ideal that 50% of the classrooms at each site are randomly evaluated, but at the least, 2 randomly-selected classrooms at smaller sites and 4 at larger sites should be evaluated.
- Education of parents will be an important element, focusing on the importance of quality child care and the need to use the QRIS not just as an overall rating, but as an indicator of strength or weakness in the particular center and how that impacts their child's learning.

DECA update- Kathleen reported that the DECA committee will meet on 14 December 2007. Mary stated that they are bringing in a trainer to conduct infant and toddler training sometime in February for a 1-day lecture.

Planning for 7th Annual Provider Conference, "Fear Busters-" Mary addressed the issue of not having presenters for a few of the breakouts: Sensory Play, Blocks, and Circle Time. Also, the titles without a breakout leader listed underneath are still tentative. She stated that the conference invitation and a tentative schedule would be sent out the first week in December.

- Kathy Stuckey said she will speak with Priscilla in South County about conducting the Circle Time breakout or otherwise gain commitment from one of her students to do this.
- Tammy Tener, a FCCH provider is conducting a math breakout and is willing to also speak about implementing curriculum within a FCCH.
- Kathleen suggested switching Beth and Tammy's math breakouts so that Beth would be free during the first breakout to help answer questions during the "licensing updates/certification/professional development" breakout.
- Mary said that Chuck Alexander is not available for the unit blocks; will contact a Dr. Drew, "Mr. Block." Janet said that Ilene Berson might know someone that can do the blocks, and Ilene may agree to do a workshop if we cannot find another volunteer.
- Mary will contact Claire Cannon to reconfirm her involvement in the "Grow it! Creating a Preschool Garden" breakout.
- Kerri suggested Sonia Azar with 40 Carrots for the Sensory table, and that Claire Carter may be interested if Sonia isn't available.
- Janet asked if the exhibit tables will be done this year. Dianne suggested that how-to's on science and math activities be put on the tables. Mary said that the outdoor activities person may have activities as well. Kathleen suggested Colleen Cox with Church of the Palms do an exhibit table, and Jackie suggested GWiz as another idea. So we would just have a few selected ones.

- Kathleen asked how the providers' own personal fears of math or science may interfere with the children's learning will be addressed. This topic can be incorporated into the keynote and we can enclose articles on the topic in a supplementary information section in the training binder.
- Mary brought up a vendor of ready-to-use computers that might be interesting to include as part of the conference. The committee decided to stick with last year's decision that there would be no outside vendors, although our conference speakers are allowed to offer their items.
- Wendy asked about ECA of Sarasota; the committee decided that since they are a professional association it would be appropriate for them to have a table along with the other associations for Family Child Care Homes: SPICE, HCCPS.
- The issue of a closing keynote was addressed.
 - Kathleen suggested the keynote be a session of turning what was learned into lesson planning, but Mary mentioned that people were more likely to want to leave on a high note instead of another instructional session.
 - Dianne suggested singing songs to take back to the classroom, and karaoke was also suggested as an option to incorporate into a closing session.
 - GWiz, first suggested as an exhibit table possibility, was thrown in as a suggestion for the keynote.
 - Mary suggested "Music by Mar" or Jack Hartman for possible closing keynote. Also, an inspirational speaker is still a possibility.
- The committee agreed that it would be appropriate to send out a flyer for the preschool fair, sponsored by the Moms Club, that is following the conference with the conference invitations as a source of information, but the directors would contact the Moms Club person directly if interested.

NEW BUSINESS.

There was no new business.

OTHER DISCUSSION.

There was no other discussion.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Janet announced that Sandy Zook is leaving the coalition December 21 to move back to Kansas City and that Erin Lawrence will be taking over the position.

ADJOURNMENT.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m. The next meeting will be on Monday, December 17, 2007, Room 218 at 9:30am at The Landings.

Erin Lawrence