

EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF SARASOTA COUNTY

The Landings, 1960 Landings Boulevard, Sarasota
Blue Awning Building, Room 219

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT and TRAINING COMMITTEE

**Joint meeting of the Staff Development and Training Committee and Quality Initiative
Committee**

September 24, 2007

MINUTES

ATTENDEES		
Elma McKay	Janet Kahn	Jackie Fountaine
Wendy Harris	Dianne Rose	Mary Wolf
Sandy Zook		

CALL TO ORDER.

The meeting was called to order by the Co-Chairperson Elma McKay at 9:45 a.m.

OLD BUSINESS.

- QRIS update- Janet announced that the Coalition is close to receiving all the needed funding, so it is holding off on the implementation of the pilot. The grant from Wachovia is pending but the County one went through with partial funding, pending the commission meeting and final approval. If all of the funding needed does not come through, the Coalition will still do a small pilot with only 10 sites as planned, but the full grant would allow for all centers and half the family child care homes to participate. Providers are looking at the QRIS as something beneficial, based on a recent telephone survey.
- Curriculum- Janet also announced that after completing the year end report to the state, 90% of child care centers are using appropriate curriculum, but only 50% of family child care homes are using appropriate curriculum. Last year 15 family child care home providers attended a mandatory curriculum training and half are still not using appropriate curriculum.
- SCTI mentors also did visits over this past summer to family child care homes that accept scholarship children, but who do not participate in Coalition or community training, and do not attend Association meetings or events. Mentors did a 3 hour observation and completed a checklist to evaluate the FCCH. The results were surprisingly positive overall.
- DECA update- Dianne reported that there was a meeting the previous week, and they evaluated the DECA enhancement tools the Florida Center was already using for the Building Better Behavior project. The committee wants to create two distinct tools, one for infants and toddlers, and one for preschool. The committee made headway on the tools, and the next meeting should finalize the tools they will use. It is a five point progressive checklist, so if you score a five, you are also doing 1,2, 3 & 4. Janet asked if this is the tool SCTI will use in their trainings, and Dianne responded she was pretty sure it was. Children First is also doing a DECA infusion beginning with an environmental checklist. Each classroom has an observation notebook for the teacher to log situations that occur. Dianne also said she is considering sending out the DECA checklist before her VPK visits.

NEW BUSINESS.

- Planning for 7th Annual Provider Conference-
 - Conference Title- The group had been considering a focus on math and science because those are two areas teachers often struggle with, and it is important for teachers understand there is more to math and science than test tubes and the element chart. Then staff had thought that we could expand the conference themes to include several topics that teachers “fear” and therefore a variety of sessions could be utilized. Mary suggested naming the conference **fear factor**. The group liked this suggestion as it would be catchy and easily recognized due to the TV show of that title. Elma suggested **fear factor: Early Childhood Style**. Another idea was **fear factor: You can overcome it**. Or a combination: **fear factor: Early Childhood Style. You can overcome your fears!**
 - Focus- Janet wants to emphasize that many teachers do include math and science already, but do not realize they are doing it. Another focus is to structure the conference to allow for follow up and self reflection. It was also decided the date for the Conference will be the usual last Saturday of the month in January, so it would be January 26, and the Pine Shores Church needs to be reserved.
 - Keynote- The committee is leaning towards staying with the format of having two keynotes, one in the morning and a closing one. There could be one on math and one science keynote speaker. Suggestions:
 - Dr. Diana Grobowski- She encourages teaching science to young children through literacy and hands on activities and experimentation, and providers enjoy her presentations. The Committee will research if she can broaden the message to include all age groups, not just addressing pre-k teachers.
 - Elma suggested an individual whose expertise is blocks. She could not remember his name but he works at the Creative School in Tallahassee with Pam Phelps. He could bring pictures showing blocks being used indoors and outdoors and also speak about allowing children to build on projects for multiple days, not always taking the blocks down at the end of every day. Dianne stated that it is important to also speak about utilizing block play in centers with limited space. In a small classroom other center areas could be adjusted to accommodate children’s engagement in a block project.
 - Break Out Sessions- The group brainstormed what was successful last year and also thought about sessions that would fit under the title- things that teachers may have a fear of doing.
 - Circle Time- was very popular last year, and should be emphasized again.
 - Reading Books- some teachers are nervous or afraid to read books aloud to children, are unsure how to ask questions or what questions to ask, and don’t feel comfortable using finger puppets or flannel boards as another way to tell a story. One idea was to have teachers give a handout to the parents about the books the group is reading, so parents can also ask questions about the book to their child.
 - Talking to Parents- Some teachers have a fear of talking to parents, and do not know how to get parents connected with what is happening in the classroom.
 - Working with children whose first language is not English
 - Helpful Trainings- Have a group of teachers as a panel to discuss trainings that have been helpful to them over the year and things they have learned and brought to their classrooms from involvement in community trainings, sponsored events and other community programs.

- Mentor Coaching- will be done by Elma for the Directors to assist them in overcoming the fear of training teachers. The group will discuss issues such as overcoming generational gaps and assisting new hires become acclimated to prevent turnover.
- FCCH Curriculum Breakout- perhaps have a High Scope trainer come to present that curriculum for FCCH only. No one could think of the trainers name, but Jackie was going to find out who the trainer is in our area.
- Consider local math and science teachers who are enthusiastic and creative to come in and show appropriate and creative ideas for using math and science with children.
- GWiz does workshops also.
- Miss Valerie is a private tutor in the community and used to work with Children First has an extensive curriculum and science background.
- Jill, Eva and Venise will do a breakout on new certifications and what it all means.
- Water Tables- Having an outdoor session using the water tables. Water tables will be left up throughout the conference as an interactive table.
- Interactive Tables-
 - Cooking table
 - Water tables- suggested placing them outside for teachers to interact with during breaks. Also perhaps having a breakout session outside with the water tables.
- Door Prizes- Unit blocks could be given away as a door prize to go along with the theme
- For the next meeting, ELC staff will bring all of the templates from last year's conference and we can begin to insert the suggested workshops and finalize some of the details.

OTHER DISCUSSION.

- It was announced that there should be an online course coming in mid-October for teaching to second language learners.
- Elma noted that some teachers are very apprehensive and fearful about continuing their education at a college. This fear could be addressed (although not at the conference) by having the local community college host field trips for teachers to visit the campus. This would help teachers realize college is not a scary place and that taking classes at a college is something that is achievable for them.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Elma handed out a brochure and announced that she is now a national trainer and will be going on a speaking tour. She will be in Atlanta on October 16th, then Memphis, and will be in Tampa on November 15th. She will be touring most of the country primarily speaking in public schools. Her topic of discussion is "Diversity in the Classroom: Beyond Race and Gender." Everyone congratulated Elma on this accomplishment.

ADJOURNMENT.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:58am. The next meeting will be on Monday, October 29, 2007 at 9:30am at The Landings.

Sandy Zook