



The Coalition's Mission is to provide leadership and advocacy that builds a community where all children are prepared for success in school

Board Meeting
Tuesday, September 15, 2009
11:30am – 1:30pm
Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region
325 John Knox Road, Building L, Suite 201, Tallahassee, FL 32303

Board Members Present:

Chris L. Jensen, Jr.
Larry DiPietro
Jeremy Cohen
Dr. Barbara Sloan
Linda Nelson
Maureen Daughton
Kim Kelling Engstrom
Ed Feaver
Sarah Glass
Lesia Johnson
Shelia Shelton
Janice Sumner
Rodney Reams
Angel Trejo

Guests Present:

Steve Gardner, Agency of Workforce
Innovation, Office of Early Learning

Board Members Absent:

Monesia Brown
Dr. Elsie Burton
Bob Gabordi
Willy Gamalero
Marlon Hunter
Traci Leavine
Catie McRae
Jeanne Martin
Kim Moore
Maria Pouncey
Carrie Rubenstein

Staff Present:

Chris Duggan, Chief Executive Officer
Lauren Faison, Chief Operating Officer
Sam Sweazy, Vice President Program Services
Kara Smith, Human Resources Director
Molly Lord, Community Partnerships Director
Megan Gocs, Executive Assistant

1. Welcome and Roll Call

Chris L. Jensen Jr., Chairman, welcomed committee members, staff and guests. Roll call was taken at 11:41am, but quorum was established at 12:15am.

2. Special Action Items

**a. Approval of Larry DiPietro as Interim Board Chairman
Action Item #2009-13**

Chris J. presented this Special Action Item to the Board.

After completing his four year term as Governor Appointed Chairman of the Board of the Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region (ELC), Chris L. Jensen, Jr. has decided to resign, effective close of business September 15, 2009, because of personal and professional commitments. Chris L. Jensen, Jr. recommended that the Board appoint Larry

DiPietro as the Interim Board Chairman as of September 16, 2009, until the Governor appoints a new Board Chair. Larry DiPietro has submitted an application to the Governor to be considered for appointment as the next Coalition Board Chairman.

The motion to approve Larry DiPietro as the Interim Board Chairman until a Chair is appointed by the Governor was made by Maureen Daughton. This motion was seconded by Ed Feaver. This motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

b. Approval of New Board Members

Action Item #2009-14

Maureen D. presented this Special Action Item to the Board.

Per the By-Laws, Board membership includes private sector membership. After stepping down from the position of Board Chairman, Chris L. Jensen, Jr. has indicated that he would like to serve on the Board in a private sector seat. If approved, he would be eligible for a four year term.

Angel Trejo, a Consultant/Project Director at Sunrise Arc, has also indicated that he would be interested in serving on the Board in a private sector seat. If approved, he would be eligible for a four year term.

According to Section 411.01 (5) of Florida Statutes, Early Learning Coalitions must have a Head Start Director on their Board. As Eric Scott, the Taylor County Head Start Director completed his membership term, the Coalition needs a new Head Start representative on the Board. Sharon Gaskin, the Executive Director of North Florida Child Development Inc., has indicated that she would be interested in serving on the Board. If approved, she would be eligible for a four year term

The motion to approve the memberships of Chris L. Jensen, Jr., Angel Trejo and Sharon Gaskin was made by Barbara Sloan. This motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

c. Approval of Continuation of Executive Committee

Action Item #2009-15

Chris J. presented this Special Action Item to the Board.

In this period of transition, it was requested that the Board approve to continue with the current Executive Committee through to the December 8, 2009, Board Meeting. This action would allow continuity through the change of leadership.

The Executive Committee to be approved was, Larry DiPietro as Interim Chairman, Rodney Reams as Vice Chairman, Ed Feaver as Secretary, Maureen Daughton, Dr. Elsie Burton and the position of Treasurer would be vacant until such a time one was appointed.

The motion to approve the agenda for this meeting was made by Larry D. This motion was seconded by Shelia S. This motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

3. Consent Agenda

a. Approval of Agenda

b. Approval of Minutes for the Meeting of June 16, 2009

c. Approval of 2009 – 2010 Board Meeting Calendar

The motion to approve the agenda for this meeting, the minutes for the June 16, 2009, Board Meeting, and the 2009 – 2010 Board Meeting calendar was made by Larry D. This motion was seconded by Barbara S. This motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

4. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

5. Coalition Reports

a. Chairman's Report

Chris J. presented his Chairman's Report to the Board. He informed the Board about a meeting he recently attended hosted by Loranne Ausley that included local business leaders and David Lawrence from the Children's Trust. The purpose of the meeting, along with other such meetings around the State, was to build a consensus on prioritizing children's issues.

Chris J. asked Larry D. to speak about the recent Early Learning Advisory Council meeting he attended in Orlando. Larry D. presented on the meeting and what was discussed, including, how different Coalitions operate, pending legislation, working with other State agencies and working in the sunshine. He also informed the Board that while he was in Orlando, he met with Harry Duncanson, the new Chair of the Early Learning Advisory Council.

b. Chief Executive Officer's Report

Chris Duggan provided the Board with her Chief Executive Officer's update. She informed the Board that she attend an Early Learning Taskforce Meeting in Tampa on September 3, 2009. This was a joint meeting between the Office of Early Learning, the Legislative Committee of the Early Learning Advisory Council and the Early Learning Association. After a review of last year's legislative advocacy efforts, the group worked through identifying this year's state legislative priorities. All parties were in agreement that this year's top priority would be to improve funding for School Readiness as well as Voluntary Pre Kindergarten (VPK).

A Coalition staffing update was provided to the Board. Kara Smith has joined the Coalition as the Human Resources Director. She comes to the Coalition from Kansas where she was employed with Atmos Energy as a HR Generalist. In relation to the position of Provider Services Director, Carrie Pafford has accepted this position and will be starting in the coming weeks. The Coalition is also in the process of hiring a Quality Assurance Director and a Compliance Specialist.

Chris D. provided a Family Services update. She informed the Board that the Coalition is only enrolling new customers with valid authorizations for child care from Workforce, the Department of Children and Families or their contracted partners. Otherwise, the Coalition is not enrolling income eligible placements from the waitlist due to utilization projections.

The Coalition is continuously working to enhance the provision of Child Care Resource and Referral Services (CCR&R) to families in the Big Bend Region. During this fiscal year, the ELC has redirected one full time staff member to focus on providing quality CCR&R through phone calls, emails, and face to face interviews. This change has allowed

Family Support Services staff to focus on the provision of services to customers visiting one of the Coalition's Family Service Centers.

The ELC has also been working with the Tallahassee Democrat and the Family Forum Magazine to share child care information and develop an on-line referral system for families seeking child care information. An integral component of the new ELC website that is currently under construction, is the development of an interactive child care resource and referral section that will provide information on child care and how to select quality child care. During the month of August, it was estimated that 1,006 child care referrals were handled by the Coalition.

Quality Improvement continues to be a primary focus of the Provider Services Department. Staff are current conducting pre-assessments of all child care providers in the Coalition's network and are completing the Environmental Rating Scales on providers who have volunteered to participate in the Coalition's Quality Improvement System. All pre-assessments will be completed during the month of October. As a provider's pre-assessment is completed, Coalition staff are conducting on-site consultations to review pre-assessment findings and to review a program improvement plan.

During the week of July 27, 2009, the Office of Early Learning Fraud Prevention and Eligibility Monitoring Unit conducted its annual monitoring of the Coalition's eligibility processes. After two days of reviewing records the team conducted a preliminary exit interview with the Coalition management team. During the exit interview, the team highlighted best practices, opportunities for improvement, and questions related to specific customers. Staff were left with a list of follow-up requests for additional information and/or clarification for some specific customers. Staff were given ten days to respond and have successfully met that deadline. After the response is thoroughly reviewed, the monitoring team will issue a final report citing any unresolved issues or comments.

Chris D. informed the Board that Linda Nelson, a Board member, is assisting Coalition staff in the process of identifying key performance indicators and a comprehensive reporting system. The projected completion date for the project is December 2009.

After reviewing quotes from four technology vendors, the Coalition has selected ThinkCreative, Inc. as the vendor to design and develop the new ELC website. Lauren F. provided the Board with more information in relation to the new ELC website, including various key elements that they website will have. These include, video clips, blogs for parents and child care providers, photo libraries, and a "dashboard" of performance measurements. The projected launch date for the website is November 1, 2009.

Chris D. provided the Board will an up to date copy of the current ELC organizational structure.

c. Treasurer's Report

Larry D. provided the Treasurer's Report to the Board. He reported on the number of children served, funds expended in total and per county, Gold Seal payments, wait list numbers and 2009 – 2010 projections and utilization plan.

6. Action Items

a. Credit Card Authorization – Action Item #2009-17

These next three Action Items were presented by Larry D.

In conjunction with the change of banking relationships to Tallahassee State Bank, management and staff recommended that the Coalition obtain credit cards for key employees. In a previous Internal Control Assessment by the Agency of Workforce Innovation Office of Early Learning (AWI-OEL), it was recommended that the Coalition eliminate using a debit card to minimize risk. This Action Item was recommended for approval by the full Board by the Finance Committee on August 25, 2009.

The motion to approve Action Item #2009-17 authorizing credit cards for key employees was made by Ed F. This motion was seconded by Maureen Daughton. This motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

b. Approval for Credit Card Expenditures up to \$5,000 on the Credit Card held by the Chief Executive Officer – Action Item #2009-18

In a previous fiscal monitoring by AWI-OEL, it was noted that travel expenditures by the Chief Executive Officer need to be approved by someone other than direct reports. As the credit card is to be used primarily for travel expenditures, blanket approval by the Board for the limit of \$5,000 per billing cycle would satisfy this requirement without impeding daily operational activity. This limit is equal to the check signing limit currently in place for the Chief Executive Officer. This Action Item was recommended for approval by the full Board by the Finance Committee on August 25, 2009.

The motion to approve Action Item #2009-18 approving credit card expenditures up to \$5,000 on the credit card held by the Chief Executive Officer was made by Shelia S. This motion was seconded by Linda N. This motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

c. Operating Budget for the Fiscal Year 2009 – 2010 – Action Item #2009-19

At the June 16, 2009 Board Meeting, the Board approved a continuation budget for the 2009 – 2010 fiscal year, pending receipt of the final Notice of Awards from the State of Florida. The final awards from the State of Florida have been received and staff have developed the operating budget for the 2009 – 2010 fiscal year based on historical information and projected needs. This Action Item was recommended for approval by the full Board by the Finance Committee on August 25, 2009.

The motion to approve Action Item #2009-19 the operating budget for the 2009 – 2010 fiscal year was made by Maureen D. This motion was seconded by Kim Kelling Engstrom. This motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

d. Modification to Gold Seal Policy: Adding July 1st Deadline for Payment for Gold Seal Services – Action Item #2009-20

Jeremy Cohen presented this Action Item to the Board.

Until December 2008, the Board did not have a formal policy addressing Gold Seal payments for contracted child care providers. The Board has now reviewed the Gold Seal Program and has approved a policy that sets guidelines for providers participating in the Gold Seal Program. The policy states that each year the Board will review Gold Seal payments as part of the normal budgeting process.

During the budget development process, a need was identified for an amendment to the Gold Seal policy specifying a period for providers to qualify to receive Gold Seal payments. Effective July 1, 2009, in order to be considered for Gold Seal payments during the next fiscal year, providers must obtain their Gold Seal certification by July 1 of the current year to be eligible for Gold Seal payments during the fiscal year. Additionally, prior to July 1, providers must provide to the Coalition a copy of their Gold Seal certificate from The Department of Children and Families. This will ensure the availability of funds and will facilitate a more effective budgeting process. This Action Item was recommended for approval by the full Board by the Program Policy and Strategy Committee on September 4, 2009.

The motion to approve Action Item #2009-20 in relation to the modification to the Gold Seal policy, adding July 1st as the deadline for Gold Seal services was made by Maureen D. This motion was seconded by Larry D. This motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

7. Hot Topic: Child Care Executive Partnership (CCEP)

Chris D. provided the Board with information in relation to CCEP. CCEP is a public/private partnership that matches funding for child care costs to help businesses hire and maintain effective and reliable employees, build a stronger and dependable work force, to help children enter school ready to learn and empower families to work and contribute directly to economic stability. She also informed on how the matching works, why businesses should participate, how businesses can participate, how the funding works and how board members can help.

Chris D. also mentioned that three child care providers have expressed an interest in participating in the program.

Chris J. suggested approaching the Fringe Benefits Management Company and the Florida Housing Finance Authority about participating in the program.

8. Committee Reports

a. Advocacy and Resource Development Committee

Maureen D., the Chair of the Advocacy and Resource Development Committee, provided an update on the 1st Annual Ready for School Sock Hop that took place on Saturday, August 29, 2009.

b. Executive Committee

This committee did not having anything to update the Board on.

c. Program Policy and Strategy Committee

This committee did not having anything to update the Board on.

d. Finance Committee

This committee did not having anything to update the Board on.

e. Audit Committee

This committee did not having anything to update the Board on.

9. Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, December 8, 2009 11:30am – 1:30pm

The next Board Meeting is set for Tuesday, December 8, 2009 from 11:30am – 1:30pm.

Chris J. thanks the Board for everything they did during his tenure as Board Chairman and welcomes Larry D. as the Interim Board Chairman until the Governor appoints a new Board Chairman.

Meeting adjourned at 1:05pm.

Minutes recorded by: _____
Megan Gocs, Executive Assistant

Minutes Approved: Tuesday, December 8, 2009

Committee Chair's Initials: _____

Board Secretary Initials: _____

A digital recording of this meeting is available at the office of the Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region.