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

## Executive Committee Meeting

Friday, June 4, 2010

11:00am – 1:30pm

Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region

325 John Knox Road, Building L, Suite 201, Tallahassee, FL 32303

### **Committee Members Present:**

Larry DiPietro, Chair  
Rodney Reams  
Ed Feaver  
Dr. Elsie Burton  
Willy Gamalero  
Maureen Daughton

### **Staff Present:**

Chris Duggan, Chief Executive Officer  
Lauren Faison, Chief Operating Officer  
Kathy Hayes, Controller  
Sam Sweazy, Vice President of Program Services  
Megan Gocs, Executive Assistant

### **Committee Members Absent:**

n/a

### **Guests Present:**

Brian Crumbaker, Hopping Green & Sams

#### **1. Welcome and Roll Call**

Larry DiPietro, Chair, welcomed committee members, staff and guests. Roll call was taken and quorum was established at 11:00am.

#### **2. Approval of Agenda**

The motion to approve the agenda for this meeting was made by Ed Feaver. This motion was seconded by Dr. Elsie Burton. This motion was approved.

#### **3. Approval of Minutes for April 9, 2010 and June 30, 2010**

When the Executive Committee reviewed the minutes for April 9, 2010, Ed F. requested that one change be made to the minutes. He asked that it be noted that staff of the Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region (ELC) do not transport children, families or child care providers in their personal vehicles.

The motion to approve the minutes for the Executive Committee Meetings of April 9, 2010 and April 30, 2010 with the change as noted above, was made by Willy Gamalero. This motion was seconded by Maureen Daughton. This motion was approved.

#### **4. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

## **5. Coalition Reports**

### **a. Chair's Report**

Larry D. informed the Executive Committee that the ELC now has an executed lease with Northwood Center. He also informed the committee that on June 3, 2010, he, Chris Duggan and Ed F. attended the Forum to Examine the Impact of Legislative Session on Children at Tallahassee Community College. He also informed the committee that he will be traveling to Tampa on June 17, 2010, for the Association of Early Learning Coalitions Meeting.

### **b. Chief Executive Officer's Report**

Chris D. presented a report of her recent and upcoming travel to the committee. She informed the committee that Larry D. approved her travel to Tampa for the Rule Development Meeting on May 14, 2010, prior to her travel. The committee reviewed her travel and made no comments or objections to her past or future travel arrangements. The motion to approve the Chief Executive Officer's recent and upcoming travel was made by Willy G. This motion was seconded by Maureen D. This motion was approved.

Chris D. provided the committee with an update on how the Leon County office move is progressing. The Board of Directors will be provided with more information as we have more information in hand.

Chris D. spoke to the Executive Committee about her resignation from the position of Chief Executive Officer of the ELC, which she presented in writing to the Board and staff on May 27, 2010. As stated in her letter of May 27, 2010, her resignation will be effective close of business June 30, 2010. Chris D. informed the committee that she has accepted an offer from the Agency for Workforce Innovation's Office of Early Learning to serve as a contracted consultant focusing on the development and implementation of Early Learning Projects financed by the ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) funds. Chris D. thanked the Board of Directors for their support and efforts during her tenure as Chief Executive Officer of the ELC.

## **6. Executive Transition**

### **a. Action Items**

Larry D. presented this item to the committee.

Since starting with the ELC in 2005, Lauren Faison was identified by the Chief Executive Officer as someone who had the experience, knowledge and leadership skills to be a possible future leader of the ELC. In consultation with the past Board Chair, Chris L. Jensen, Jr., and the current Board Chair, Larry D., Chris D. has had a succession plan in place identifying Lauren F. as the next potential Chief Executive Officer of the ELC.

As the current Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the ELC, Lauren F. has been responsible for all business operations, information technology and outreach for the ELC. Additionally, she has been actively involved in Board and Committee Meetings; planning and implementing the provision of all School Readiness, Voluntary PreKindergarten and Child Care Resource and Referral services; grant writing and developing agency policies and procedures.

On May 27, 2010, Chris Duggan, the ELC's current Chief Executive Officer, submitted her resignation effective June 30, 2010. Per the Coalition By-Laws, the Executive Committee is *'responsible for personnel issues relation to the Chief Executive Officer, including but not limited to: recruitment, salary and benefit package, yearly evaluation, and compliance with any needed improvement plan'*.

The Board Chair, Larry DiPietro, proposed that the Executive Committee approve the appointment of Lauren Faison as the next Chief Executive Officer of the ELC, with an effective start date of July 1, 2010. If approved, this action item will be presented to the Board for approval at the Board Meeting on June 15, 2010.

The committee discussed the legality of the Board of Directors appointing the next Chief Executive Officer based on a succession plan. Staff were informed that Rob Sniffen, the ELC's employment attorney, is aware of the proposed succession plan and is in full support of it. Brian Crumbaker, the ELC's Board Counsel also addressed this issue with the committee, and was in support of the plan. The committee were informed that the ELC is not obligated to go through a process of external advertisement for position vacancies.

The committee discussed that if Lauren F. was appointed as the next Chief Executive Officer, who would be appointed to fill her position as Chief Operating Officer. Chris D. informed the committee that an analysis of the current structure of the ELC will need to be undertaken to determine whether this position needs to be filled, or whether the current duties of this position can be distributed to other staff.

The committee requested a time to meet with Lauren F. to have a question and answer session with her to discuss her vision and mission for the ELC before proposing to the Board that she be appointed at the next Chief Executive Officer of the ELC. Staff were directed to set up a meeting with Lauren F to meet with the Executive Committee.

After discussing the matter, subject to no objections raised at the Executive Committee's question and answer session with Lauren F. on June 8, 2010, Maureen D. made a motion to approve the appointment of Lauren F. as the Chief Executive Officer of the ELC effective July 1, 2010, approving Larry D. to negotiate a contract with Lauren F. This motion was seconded by Elsie B. This motion was unanimously approved by the Executive Committee.

Larry D. presented the committee with a draft copy of the Chief Executive Officer's employment agreement for committee review. Upon reviewing the agreement, several committee members had reservations and concerns about the current draft of the agreement. Larry D. told the committee to send Chris D. any suggestions that they might have, and she will forward them to the ELC's employment attorney.

#### **Approval of increased credit card limit for Lauren Faison**

Based on the proposed appointment of Lauren F. as the Chief Executive Officer, the Executive Committee was asked to recommend to the Board of Directors that the limit of her ELC credit card be increased from \$1,500 to \$5,000 to be in line with the limit of the current Chief Executive Officer's credit card limit. This recommendation is based on operational need and follows Board policy. If the Board approves this recommendation, Lauren F.'s new credit card limit of \$5,000 will be effective July 1,

2010. The motion to approve an increased credit card limit for Lauren F. based on her appointment as Chief Executive Officer was made by Maureen D. This motion was seconded by Elsie B. This motion was approved.

**Approval of Kara Smith, Director of Human Resources as an additional credit card holder**

Given that Chris D. is a current credit card holder, and that there will be one less credit card holder after she finishes with the ELC, staff have determined that there is an operational need to have another ELC credit card. The Executive Committee was asked to recommend to the Board that Kara Smith, the Director of Human Resources, be an additional credit card holder. If the Board approves this recommendation, the Coalition will apply for an additional credit card for Kara S. with a limit of \$1,500. The motion to approve Kara S., Director of Human Resources as an additional credit card holder was made by Ed F. This motion was seconded by Willy G. This motion was approved.

**Approval for Sam Sweazy, Vice President of Program Services, to sign checks on behalf of the Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region**

With the resignation of Chris D., in order to maintain operations, the ELC needs an additional executive level staff member to have authority to sign checks on behalf of the Coalition. The Executive Committee was asked to recommend Sam Sweazy, the Vice President of Program Services, to have the authority to sign checks on behalf of the ELC effective July 1, 2010. The motion to approve Sam Sweazy, Vice President of Program Services, to sign checks on behalf of the ELC was made by Maureen D. This motion was seconded by Ed F. This motion was approved.

**7. Chief Executive Officer Resignation Package**

**a. Special Action Item**

On May 27, 2010, the ELC's Chief Executive Officer, Chris D., submitted her letter of resignation effective June 30, 2010. Per the ELC's By-Laws, the Executive Committee is responsible for *'personnel issues related to the Chief Executive Officer, including, but not limited to, recruitment, salary and benefit package'*.

On June 1, 2010, Larry D. met with Chris D. to discuss various items, including her potential resignation package. In recognition of Chris D.'s nine years of service to the ELC, and the accomplishments she achieved for the Coalition during her tenure, Larry D., as Board Chair, recommended extending a resignation package to her that included her projected accumulated leave balance of 293.45 hours as of June 30, 2010, which includes both sick and annual leave, plus an additional 6 weeks paid salary up until August 11, 2010. The Executive Committee was asked to consider this recommendation.

The committee discussed this recommendation.

The committee were informed that Rob Sniffen, the Coalition's employment attorney, was consulted on the terms of this proposed employment contract.

Willy G. inquired about the budget for the 2010 – 2011 fiscal year, and whether the resignation package would be paid out during this or next fiscal year. He advised the committee that he would prefer to have the funds taken out of the 2009 – 2010 budget. Ed F. inquired about whether the ELC has the funds available to extend this package.

The committee discussed paying out both annual and sick leave. Kara S. informed the committee that if the ELC was to include sick leave in the resignation package, that this would be outside the Coalition's current policy, therefore, this must be noted as an exception to the rule. Several of the committee members expressed their concerns about the associated risks with paying out sick leave, and the precedent that might be created. The committee discussed various options and scenarios. After thorough discussion, the committee agreed to provide Chris D. with a resignation package of 80 hours annual leave, per Coalition policy, plus an additional 8 weeks of paid salary to be paid out on or before June 30, 2010.

The motion to approve a resignation package for Chris D. which included 80 hours of annual leave per ELC policy, plus an additional 8 weeks paid salary, which will be paid out on or before June 30, 2010, was made by Willy G. This motion was seconded by Ed F. This motion was approved.

The committee asked for the new Chief Executive Officer's employment agreement to spell out the terms of a resignation package.

## **8. Committee Reports**

### **a. Finance Committee**

Willy G. informed the Executive Committee that the Finance Committee met on May 27, 2010 to review the ELC's operating budget for the 2010 – 2011 fiscal year. The Finance Committee approved this budget as presented. The Executive Committee was provided with a copy of this budget and the earmarks and restrictions for the 2010 – 2011 fiscal year. The committee discussed the budget, and were informed that this budget with the earmarks and restrictions would be provided to the Board at their next meeting on June 15, 2010.

### **b. Program Policy and Strategy Committee**

Elsie B. presented this report to the committee.

On April 30, 2010, a sub-committee of the Program Policy and Strategy Committee met to discuss the ELC's priorities for enrollment for the School Readiness Program. The sub-committee reviewed data on current waitlist and enrollment numbers, and held a lengthy discussion about the ELC's mission in relation to School Readiness services and how that relates to the large number of school age children that the ELC is currently serving. After an informative discussion on funding streams, the number of children ages 0-5 currently on the ELC's waitlist, and current enrollment numbers, the sub-committee recommended the enrollment priorities be revised.

Elsie B. informed the Executive Committee that on May 18, 2010, the Program Policy and Strategy recommended that starting July 1, 2010, the Board approve the following new enrollment priorities for School Readiness services. These provides are:

1. TANF Recipients (Ages 0-12) – children listed on child care authorizations from local Workforce partner agencies.
2. Children at risk of abuse or neglect (Ages 0-12) – protective services, foster children and children listed on child care authorizations from the Department of Children and Families.

3. Low Income Working Families (Ages 0-8) – families who are working or going to school at least part-time and whose income does not exceed 150% of the federal poverty level.

Implementation of the proposed revised enrollment priorities would result in the ELC no longer funding care for children ages 9-12 through the School Readiness Program in the funding stream for low income working families. All of the 9-12 year old children currently being served from low income working families are being funded through the ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) funds. When these families recertified with the ELC during the past six months, families were told that they may only receive six months of care due to the limited ARRA funding. With approval of the revised enrollment priorities, those families would not be recertified for tuition assistance for the 2010-2011 school year. The committee was informed that 200 children will be affected when the ARRA funds are depleted.

**c. Advocacy and Resource Development Committee**

Maureen D. informed the committee that board members, community members and staff are working on planning the next Back to School Dance which has been set for September 10, 2010. She informed the committee that Monesia Brown, one of the Chairs of the Back to School Dance Committee, will be making a sponsorship push at the Board Meeting on June 15, 2010.

**d. Audit Committee**

Rodney R. informed the committee that on May 20, 2010, the Audit Committee engaged Thomson Brock Luger & Company for the ELC's 2009 -2010 fiscal audit.

**9. Action Items**

**a. Approval of the 401K Resolution**

In conjunction with bringing payroll and benefits in-house, the ELC initiated a 401K Plan with John Hancock. During the course of the setup of this plan, the ELC's broker, Allen, Mooney and Barnes Investment Advisors, LCC, indicated that staff did not need a Board resolution to initiate the plan. Therefore, staff took all necessary steps to implement the 401K Plan and began making contributions on behalf of employees starting April 2010. Recently staff were notified by the Coalition's Third Party Administrator, Thomas Howell Ferguson, that a Board resolution was required to adopt the 401K Plan. The Executive Committee was asked to recommend that the Board approve the adoption of the ELC's 401K Retirement Plan with John Hancock.

The motion to approve the 401K resolution was made by Willy G. This motion was seconded by Maureen D. This motion was approved.

**b. Approval of the Paid Time Off Policy**

After reviewing the current Annual Leave and Sick Leave Policies, management believe that by combining these policies into a Paid Time Off Policy will streamline the accounting process and enrich the employee benefit package by not limiting the reasons employees can use leave. The Executive Committee was asked to recommend the presented Paid Time Off Policy to the Board for approval. Approving this policy will rescind the current Annual Leave and Sick Leave Policies.

The committee were informed that the Coalition's employment attorney has reviewed this amended policy. Maureen D. asked when this policy will take effect. Kara S. informed her that this policy will take effect July 1, 2010. Staff will be informed of this change once if and when this policy has been approved by the Board. Ed F. asked whether staff have been consulted on the change. Chris D. told the committee that she would have Kara S. email staff to see if they support the change.

The motion to approve the Paid Time Off Policy was made by Maureen D. This motion was seconded by Willy G. This motion was approved.

**10. Proposed Policies for Board Approval**

The committee briefly discussed the proposed policies for Board approval.

Meeting adjourned at 1:06pm.

Minutes recorded by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Megan Gocs, Executive Assistant

Full Committee Approval Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Chair's Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

Board Secretary Initials: \_\_\_\_\_