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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*

## Program Policy and Strategy Committee Meeting

Thursday, December 2, 2010

9:00am to 11:00am

Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region

Northwood Centre, 1940 North Monroe Street, Suite 70, Tallahassee, FL 32303

### **Committee Members Present:**

Dr. Elsie Burton, Chair  
Ed Feaver  
Catie McRae  
Jeanne Barker  
Jeanne Martin  
Maria Pouncey

### **Staff Present:**

Lauren Faison, Chief Executive Officer  
Kathy Douglas, Distance Learning & Research Director  
Carrie Pafford, Director of Provider Services  
Sam Sweazy, Administration Officer  
Megan Gocs, Executive Assistant

### **Committee Members Absent:**

Sarah Glass  
Lesia Johnson  
Traci Leavine  
John Grosskopf  
Sharon Gaskin

### **Guests Present:**

n/a

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

Dr. Elsie Burton, Chair, welcomed committee members and staff. Roll call was taken and quorum was established at 9:05am.

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

The motion to approve the agenda for this meeting was made by Jeanne Barker. This motion was seconded by Jeanne Martin. This motion was approved.

### **3. Approval of Minutes for May 18, 2010**

The motion to approve the minutes for the Program Policy and Strategy Committee Meeting of May 18, 2010 was made by Ed Feaver. This motion was seconded by Catie McRae. This motion was approved.

### **4. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

## **5. Action Items**

### **a. Approval of Telecommuting Policy**

Staff are currently in the process of reviewing all Coalition policies and procedures. Currently the Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region (ELC) does not have a policy in relation to telecommuting. Telecommuting is defined as a voluntary work arrangement whereby selected employees are allowed to perform the normal duties and responsibilities of their position, through the use of computers or other telecommunications, at home or another place apart from the employees' usual and official place of work. This policy clarifies which employees are eligible to telecommute. The Program Policy and Strategy Committee were asked to review this policy and recommend it for Board approval. The motion to approve the telecommuting policy was made by Jeanne B. This motion was seconded by Jeanne M. This motion was approved.

### **b. Approval of Volunteers and Interns Policy**

Currently the ELC does not have a policy in relation to volunteers and interns. This new policy will address how the ELC will utilize and manage volunteers and interns. The Program Policy and Strategy Committee was asked to review this policy, and recommend it for Board approval.

Ed F. commented on the proposed policy. He believes that this policy needs some room for flexibility so that the ELC has the option to provide an intern with remuneration should they choose. Ed F. also asked for two slight amendments in the language used in relation to covering the cost of screening, and the language used in the sentence on background screening.

The motion to approve the volunteers and interns policy was made by Jeanne M. This motion was seconded by Catie M. This motion was approved.

## **6. Presentation**

### **a. Distance Learning Services**

Elsie B. introduced Kathy Douglas, the ELC's Distance Learning and Research Director to the committee. Elsie B. informed the committee that she asked Kathy D. to provide a presentation to the committee on the ELC's Distance Learning Program.

The ELC offers a unique distance education model that integrates knowledge, skills and technology to assist child care professionals in obtaining their continuing education units to fulfill National CDA and Florida Child Care Professional Credential renewal hours; in-service hours to meet licensing requirements and National CDA 120 formal education requirements. The ELC also provides courses for child care providers who are looking to further their knowledge and skills in the early education field.

The ELC supports a project approach that teaches child care providers how to use the skills and knowledge that they have acquired in the course to apply them in real life situations in the classrooms in which they teach. The ELC provides students enrolled in the Distance Learning Program with textbooks and materials to supplement their online experience, and to provide them with additional resources that they can use and reference in their classrooms.

Kathy H. informed the committee, that as the course instructor, she makes herself available to students via email, phone and in person to assist with any learning or technical needs that they might have.

The ELC offers beginner, intermediate and advanced classes. Some of the courses being provided this year include; Social and Emotional Development; Literacy for Little Learners; Transforming Your Teaching; and The Language of Art. Kathy D. provided the committee with a complete overview of The Language of Art course.

Since the programs inception on July 1, 2009, 351 early learning professionals through the seven counties of the Big Bend Region have completed courses through the ELC's Distance Learning Program. During the 2009 – 2010 fiscal year, 403 certificates were presented to early learning professionals who completed one of twelve online courses provided.

Of the above information, Ed F. requested an analysis of where these providers work, how these centers' scored on the Quality Rating Scale and how many School Readiness children they serve. From this analysis, he would like to see if there are any apparent trends.

The committee discussed the possibility of opening up these courses beyond the ELC's network of providers.

Kathy D. informed the committee that courses are needs based, and are written and structured according to the needs of the ELC's contract network providers.

Kathy D. also provided the committee with a brief overview on the ELC's Co-op Program. She provided the committee with an example bag which contains educational materials and activities that the provider can utilize in their centre. Currently there are 148 network providers enrolled in the Co-op.

## **7. Discussion Items**

### **a. Current Enrollment**

Lauren Faison reported that the ELC is currently actively enrolling families. In November 2010 the ELC enrolled 289 new families through the School Readiness Program. Staff have contacted each person on all seven counties waitlists and the only families that remain on the waitlist are those that have been unable to be contacted.

### **b. Staffing Model**

Lauren F. provided the committee with an overview of the new staffing model that the ELC is working towards. This model will utilize more cross training and provide numerous staff with primary roles, as well as secondary roles that will enable the ELC be more efficient and effective with its staffing resources. Lauren F. also informed the committee that Friday's are being used for staff development and training, and several trainings have already taken place.

### **c. Child Screening**

The committee were informed that staff are now tracking additional information when children receive hearing, vision and developmental screening by the ELC's Early Intervention Team. This information includes, body mass index and nutrition which

will assist the ELC to provide more holistic services to the children and families in which it serves.

**d. Statewide Provider Contract**

Lauren F. provided the committee with an update on the status of the statewide contract to be disseminated to providers.

**e. Contract Compliance Policy**

Lauren F. spoke to the committee on the need for a contract compliance policy. Staff need direction from the Board on how to handle non-compliance in relation to the Provider Network Agreement. Lauren F. asked for the formation of a Sub-Committee to discuss this matter further. Ed F., Elsie B. and Jeanne M. volunteered to be on this Sub-Committee. This meeting has been set for January 10, 2011.

**8. Updates**

**a. Health and Safety Monitoring**

**b. CLASS/ERS Assessments**

Lauren F. provided the committee with a brief update in relation to these matters.

**9. Other Business**

There was no other business to be discussed.

Meeting adjourned at 11:01am.

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

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

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.*