



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

Wednesday, March 30, 2011

9:00am to 10:00am

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
John Grosskopf
Jeanne Martin
Traci Leavine
Catie McRae
Linda Nelson
Lesia Johnson

Staff Present:

Lauren Faison, Chief Executive Officer
Regina D'Souza, Program Director
Megan Gocs, Executive Assistant
Kathy Hayes, Director of Quality Assurance and Accountability

Committee Members Absent:

Sarah Glass
Sharon Gaskin
Jeanne Barker
Maria Pouncey

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 9:01am.

2. Approval of Agenda

The motion to approve the agenda for this meeting was made by Catie McRae. This motion was seconded by Linda Nelson. This motion was approved.

3. Approval of Minutes for March 4, 2011

The motion to approve the minutes for the Program Policy and Strategy Committee Meeting of March 4, 2011 was made by Linda N. This motion was seconded by Catie M. This motion was approved.

4. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

5. Action Items

a. Approval of Contract Enforcement Policy

Staff are currently in the process of reviewing all Coalition policies and procedures. Currently there is no policy that addresses providers that are out of compliance with their School Readiness Provider Network Contract, or the Voluntary Prekindergarten contract.

On March 4, 2011, the Program Policy and Strategy Committee were presented with a draft of the Contract Enforcement Policy for their review. Upon review, the committee had several concerns regarding the draft of the policy. Since this meeting, staff have met with Board Counsel and have revised the draft policy to reflect the committee's concerns and suggestions. The amended policy outlines the Coalition's policy regarding handling of provider contract non-compliance issues. The Program Policy and Strategy Committee were asked to review the new Contract Enforcement Policy and recommend it for Board approval.

The committee discussed the amended policy. Lauren Faison informed the committee that staff will be developing a spreadsheet of instances of contract non-compliance to track how issues on non-compliance are handled by staff. This will provide a historical record, as well as a reference going forward. Staff are also working on formalizing the process of how to handle instances of non-compliance with clear processes and procedures.

The motion to approve Contract Enforcement Policy was made by Ed F. This motion was seconded by Catie M. This motion was approved.

Jeanne Martin asked staff whether this policy will supersede the Health and Safety (Ratio Violation) Policy. Lauren F. asked the committee whether it was their wish to maintain the current Health and Safety (Ratio Violation) Policy, or whether they would like to rescind it.

The current Health and Safety (Ratio Violation) Policy is that "effective January 1, 2009, any ratio and/or capacity violations will result in disallowance of School Readiness payments for all children present at the time of the infraction". The committee discussed this policy, and whether this policy should be kept or rescinded. Lauren F. provided the committee with some background on why this policy was written and enacted, and the importance of maintaining ratios. Jeanne M. informed the committee that the Department of Children and Families has a progressive enforcement policy in relation ratio violations. Staff informed the committee that once the ELC started imposing financial penalties for ratio violations, more providers started taking ratio seriously. Some of the committee members felt the current policy as it stands is immeasurably harsh. Lauren F. informed the committee that the intention of the policy was to be harsh.

The committee discussed the need to have a policy that provided more flexibility in relation to ratio. Lesia Johnson asked Lauren F. what circumstances would warrant a provider being treated differently for ratio violation. Lauren F. discussed some potential circumstances with the committee.

The motion to rescind the Health and Safety (Ratio Violation) Policy was made by Ed F. This motion was seconded by Jeanne B. This motion was approved.

6. Updates

a. Policy Project Update

Lauren F. provided the committee with an update on where staff are at with the policy project. She informed them that this committee will be involved in reviewing the policies as they are ready for review. The committee were also informed that staff are in the process of outlining over 190 processes.

Some of the committee asked if Donna ONeal, who is assisting staff in development performance measurements for the ELC, could speak to the committee on the performance measurements and structures she is developing.

b. Further Analysis of Quality Rating Scores

At the last Program Policy and Strategy Committee Meeting, the committee requested a more detailed breakdown of the previous analysis provided that compared the Quality Rating Scores against the percentage of School Readiness children served.

7. Other Business

Lauren F. provided the committee with a brief legislative update. She encouraged the committee to educate their legislators on the importance of keeping the School Readiness and Voluntary Prekindergarten Programs together.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40am.

Minutes recorded by: _____
Megan Gocs, Executive Assistant

Full Committee Approval Date: _____

Committee Chair's Initials: _____

Board Secretary Initials: _____