



*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, December 8, 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:

Larry DiPietro, Chair
Dr. Elsie Burton
Traci Leavine
Catie McRae
Jeanne Martin
Carrie Rubenstein
Linda Nelson
Jeremy Cohen
Rodney Reams
Ed Feaver
Willy Gamalero
Bob Gabordi
Kim Kelling Engstrom
Monesia Brown
Chris L. Jensen, Jr.

Staff Present:

Chris Duggan, Chief Executive Officer
Lauren Faison, Chief Operating Officer
Sam Sweazy, Vice President of Program Services
Kara Smith, Director of Human Resources
Kathy Hayes, Vice President of Finance
Jeff Allen, Quality Assurance Specialist
Erin Harrell, Quality Assurance Specialist
Carrie Pafford, Director of Provider Services
Molly Lord, Community Partnership Director
Karen Moon, Director of Quality Assurance
Liz Murphy, Administrative Assistant
Briant Mertz, Volunteer Coordinator
Megan Gocs, Executive Assistant

Board Members Absent:

Maureen Daughton
Marlon Hunter
Kimberly Moore
Shelia Shelton
Dr. Barbara Sloan
Janice Sumner
Angel Trejo
Sarah Glass
Maria Pouncey
Lesia Johnson
Sharon Gaskin

Guests Present:

Steve Holmes, Department of Children and Families
Keszia Cox, Thomson Brock Luger and Company
Matt Hansard, Thomson Brock Luger and Company

1. Welcome and Roll Call

Larry DiPietro, Chair, welcomed board members, staff and guests. Roll call was taken and quorum was established at 11:38am.

2. Approval of Agenda

The motion to approve the agenda for this meeting was made by Chris L. Jensen, Jr. This motion was seconded by Willy Gamalero. This motion was approved.

3. Approval of Minutes for September 15, 2009

The motion to approve the minutes for the Board Meeting of September 15, 2009, was made by Chris J. This motion was seconded by Dr. Elsie Burton. This motion was approved.

4. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

5. Special Action Item

a. Acceptance of 2008 – 2009 Audit Report – Action Item #2009-21

In compliance with the School Readiness and Voluntary PreKindergarten Grant Agreement with the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI), the Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region (ELC) is required to provide AWI with an annual single audit in accordance with single audit requirements contained in Section 215.97, Florida Statutes, and the Federal Single Audit Act. During the week of October 26-30, 2009, Thomson Brock Luger and Company completed their 2008 – 2009 audit of the Coalition. The Audit Committee approved Thomson Brock Luger and Company's audit of the Coalition on November 18, 2009.

Matt Hansard went through the financial statements, the supplementary information and the management letter with the Board. Matt H. informed the Board that no deficiencies were found in the Coalition's internal controls during the audit. He also informed the Board that in his opinion, the Coalition complied with all requirements that are applicable to each of its major Federal Programs and major State projects for the year ending June 30, 2009. In the management letter, Thomson Brock Luger and Company made three recommendations in relation to the Coalition's internal controls. These included the Chief Executive Officer's disbursement authorization, disbursement policies and procedures, and debit card controls. The Coalition is already addressing each of these recommendations. In relation to the prior year's recommendations, the Coalition has addressed each of these issues accordingly. The motion to accept the 2008 – 2009 Audit Report was made by Chris J. This motion was seconded by Bob Gabordi. This motion was approved.

6. Consent Agenda – Action Item #2009-22

a. Approval of Match Policy

Management reports from the ELC's external audit for the financial year ending June 30, 2008, and the Office of Early Learning's fiscal monitoring conducted in February 2009, included recommendations that the Coalition develop written policies and procedures to document the Coalition's efforts to meet all match requirements. This Action Item was recommended for approval by the Board by the Finance Committee on December 2, 2009.

b. Approval of Earmarks and Restrictions Policy

Management reports from the ELC's external audit for the financial year ending June 30, 2008, and the Office of Early Learning's fiscal monitoring conducted in February 2009, included recommendations that the Coalition develop written policies and procedures to document the Coalition's efforts to meet all earmarks and restrictions imposed by our grant agreement. This Action Item was recommended for approval by the Board by the Finance Committee on December 2, 2009.

c. Approval of Sub Recipient Policy

Management reports from the ELC's external audit for the financial year ending June 30, 2008, and the Office of Early Learning's fiscal monitoring conducted in February 2009, included recommendations that the Coalition develop written policies and procedures to document the Coalition's efforts to meet all sub recipient monitoring requirements.

When the Coalition utilizes Federal funds to make sub-awards to sub recipients, the Coalition is subject to a requirement to monitor each sub recipient in order to provide reasonable assurance that sub recipients are complying, in all material respects, with laws, regulations, and award provisions applicable to the program. This Action Items was recommended for approval by the Board by the Finance Committee on December 2, 2009.

d. Approval of Employee Benefits Broker

In making the decision to move away from PMI as leased employees, the ELC began the process of securing a relationship with an employee benefits broker. On September 14, 2009, an RFP was posted on the ELC website soliciting responses from local benefits brokers to provide the ELC with a detailed account of the services and experience they offer. The deadline for submission was September 18, 2009, with in person presentations and interviews for the top three brokers on September 23, 2009.

Three submissions were received and each was invited for an interview with the Executive Team. The Executive Team then narrowed the selection to two brokers both offering excellent customer service and proven subject expertise. Of these two brokers, one broker's service offers an employee friendly website dedicated to allowing employees the benefit and convenience of viewing their personal array of benefits. After verifying references, the Executive Team recommended Allen, Mooney and Barnes Investment Advisors, LLC as the Coalition's employee benefits broker. This Action Item was recommended for approval by the Board by the Executive Committee on October 5, 2009.

e. Approval of Labor and Employment Law Counsel

In reviewing the needs of the Coalition, staff recently determined the need to acquire counsel in relation to matters of State and Federal labor and employment laws. On October 5, 2009, a Request for Qualifications was posted on the Coalition website soliciting responses from local attorneys to provide the Coalition with details of qualifications and services by October 12, 2009.

Submissions were received from The Krizner Group, Sniffen and Spellman, P.A. and Allen, Norton and Blue, P.A. Each firm was invited for an interview between October 19-21, 2009. Of these three firms, staff recommended Sniffen and Spellman, P.A. as the Coalition's labor and employment law counsel because of their proven expertise and excellent customer service. The Executive Committee was asked to approve the Representation Agreement for labor and employment law counsel with Sniffen and Spellman, P.A. This Action Item was recommended for approval by the Board by the Executive Committee on November 30, 2009.

f. Approval of Tenant Representative

The current lease for the Leon County offices expires on October 10, 2010. In an effort to assist with this significant relocation from two buildings to one, the Executive Team is recommending that the Coalition engage a tenant representative to assist with market

knowledge and analysis, space planning and design services, procurement preparation and implementation, site evaluation and analysis, and financial analysis and negotiation.

On September 29 and 30, 2009, the Executive Team met with two Commercial Real Estate Companies, Proctor and Long, LLC and Sperry Van Ness Commercial Real Estate Advisors. Of these two companies staff are recommending Proctor and Long, LLC to be the Coalition's tenant representative to assist with finding a new leased office space in Leon County.

Proctor and Long's presentation included vital elements that seem best suited to the needs of this organization. These elements included, an understanding of the budgetary concerns and needs of a non-profit; an extensive background dealing with State government facilities and procurement; architectural services incorporated into their contract with the Coalition; and a focus on acquiring a facility that enables the Coalition to clearly demonstrate its mission to the community and its customers.

Chris J. asked about the status of the Leon County office move. Chris Duggan informed members, staff and guests that Proctor and Long, the Coalition's Tenant Representative, is currently looking into various sites for the new office.

This Action Item was recommended for approval by the Board by the Executive Committee on October 5, 2009.

g. Approval of Amendment to the Corporate Resolution

Tallahassee State Bank requires that the Board pass a resolution identifying who has signature authority over the accounts the ELC holds with the Bank. Tallahassee State Bank also requires that the Board determine what powers are granted to each person given signature authority. These powers were determined by the Board at the June 16, 2009, Board Meeting.

Since June 16, 2009, the Board has undergone a change of leadership from Chris L. Jensen, Jr. to Larry DiPietro. As a result, the Tallahassee State Bank requires that we amend our Corporate Resolution to reflect this.

The Executive Committee is asked to approve the amendment to the Coalition's Corporate Resolution with Tallahassee State Bank to remove Chris L. Jensen, Jr.'s name and include Larry DiPietro's name as Chair with authorized signature authority. This Action Item was recommended for approval by the Board by the Executive Committee on November 30, 2009.

The motion to accept the complete Consent Agenda – Action Item #2009-22 was made by Chris J. This motion was seconded by Catie McRae. This motion was approved.

7. Coalition Reports

a. Chairman's Report

Larry D. provided his Chairman's report to the Board. Larry D. spoke to the Board about the possibility of using technology more in meetings. He suggested that the Board utilize laptops in meetings to view meeting materials instead of printing them.

Chris D. spoke briefly about the Board Source Conference she attended in November and how they utilized technology during the meeting. She also spoke about how she attended an information session about Board's utilizing technology to work more efficiently.

Larry D. presented the 2008 – 2009 Annual Report to the Board, and then went through it briefly with them. The Chair then informed the Board that he will be attending the Early Learning Advisory Council Meeting in Tampa on December 4, 2009. The Board was also told that the Board Governance Policies and Procedures are in the process of being drafted and will be sent out to the Board for review over the coming weeks.

b. Chief Executive Officer's Report

Chris D. presented her Chief Executive Officer's Report to the Board. She went through the accomplishment of the Coalition over the last quarter. Such achievements include, screening over eight hundred children since July 1, completing phase one of the Quality Improvement Systems, launching the Coalition's new website and increasing participation in the Provider Co-op Network by fifteen percent.

Chris D. let the Board know that she is also attending the Early Learning Advisory Council Meeting, as well as the Association of Early Learning Coalitions Meeting in Tampa on December 9 and 10, 2009.

The Board was also told that Coalition shirts will be available for purchase in January 2010, and staff would be contacting them with information in the coming weeks.

c. Treasurer's Report

Before the Treasurer presented his report, Catie M. expressed the concerns of the school systems that were expressed to her regarding the freeze of School Readiness dollars. There is a feeling among the school districts that there is a bias against the school districts. Both Chris D. and Larry D. recommended that the Program Policy and Strategy Committee look into this issue. It was suggested by a board member that this committee talk to the school districts directly to discuss the issue. Chris D. suggested that the Finance Committee might want to join the Program Policy and Strategy Committee when discussing this matter. The motion to accept the Treasurer's Report was made by Chris J. This motion was seconded by Elsie B. This motion was approved.

Willy G. presented the Treasurer's Report to the Board. He informed board members, staff and guests that the Finance Committee met on December 2, 2009, and reviewed the Coalition's financials and utilization for July 1, 2009 to September 30, 2009. Willy G. reported that, not including the child care utilization part of the budget which is currently projecting a deficit, the balance of the budget is currently under budget. Staff are working to reduce this projected childcare utilization deficit through the implementation of a utilization management plan that has been presented to the Finance Committee.

8. Action Items

a. Approval of Officers – Action Item #2009-23

On September 15, 2009, current Board Chair Chris L. Jensen, Jr., requested that the Board approve to continue with the current Officers through to the December 8, 2009 Board Meeting. This would give the Governor time to appoint a new Coalition Board Chair. The Board approved this request. On October 16, 2009, Larry DiPietro was appointed as Chair of the Board of the Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region.

The previous Officers agreed to serve for the balance of this fiscal year in order to provide continuity of Board leadership. The persons to be considered for Officer positions are, Rodney Reams as Vice Chair, Ed Feaver as Secretary and Willy Gamalero as Treasurer. The Board was asked to approve these Board Officers. The motion to approve the named Officers was made by Chris J. This motion was seconded by Linda Nelson. This motion was approved.

b. Approval of Committee Chairs – Action Item #2009-24

On September 15, 2009, current Board Chair Chris L. Jensen, Jr., requested that the Board approve to continue with the current Committee Chairs through to the December 8, 2009 Board Meeting. This would give the Governor time to appoint a new Coalition Board Chair. The Board approved this request. On October 16, 2009, Larry DiPietro was appointed as Chair of the Board of the Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region.

The previous Chairs agreed to serve for the balance of this fiscal year in order to provide continuity of Board leadership. The persons to be considered for Committee Chair positions are, Maureen Daughton as the Chair of the Advocacy and Resource Development Committee, Dr. Elsie Burton as the Chair of the Program Policy and Strategy Committee, Rodney Reams as the Chair of the Audit Committee Chair and Willy Gamalero as the Finance Committee Chair. The Board is asked to approve the named Committee Chairs. The motion to approve the named Committee Chairs was made by Chris J. This motion was seconded by Willy G. This motion was approved.

9. Review of the New Coalition Web Site

Chris D. showed the Board the new Coalition web site. She explained various sections of the website and indicated what additions will be added during phase two of the implementation of the website. Board members were encouraged to provide staff with feedback in relation to the website.

10. Hot Topic: Why is Early Learning Good for Business and Business is Good for Early Learning

Due to lack of time, the hot topic was not discussed. However, Larry D. requested that all board members review the document in their meeting packet so that the conversation could be continued at another time.

11. Committee Reports

a. Board Communication Strategic Plan Workgroup

Bob G. informed the Board, staff and guests that the Board Communication Strategic Plan Workgroup has met twice, on November 19, 2009 and on December 3, 2009. Bob G. invited more board members to join this committee, as this committee is looking to form small sub-committees to focus on particular target audiences. In particular the sub-committees will focus on, what the audience needs from us, what we need from them and how do we reach them. Bob G. will discuss with Chris D. about what sub-committees need to be formed and then Chris D. will communicate will board members about our sub-committee requirements.

Bob G., Chris D. and Larry D. then spoke the Board about the business breakfast the Coalition put on on December 1, 2009, called Why is Early Learning Good for Business and Business is Good For Early Learning.

b. Advocacy and Resource Development Committee

As the Advocacy and Resource Development Committee Chair was not at the meeting, Chris D. provided the committee report. Chris D. informed the Board that the Coalition intended on doing the Sweetheart Raffle again. She informed the Board that the Chair of this committee felt that in this economic climate \$50.00 for a ticket was too expensive. Several Board members agreed with this. Willy G., Elsie B., Ed Feaver and Linda N. believed that the ELC should sell tickets for the Sweetheart Raffle at \$25.00. A motion was made and unanimously approved by the Board.

c. Program Policy and Strategy Committee

The Program Policy and Strategy Committee had nothing to report.

d. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee had nothing to report.

e. Audit Committee

The Audit Committee had nothing to report.

Larry D. presented Chris J. with an award on behalf of the Board and staff for his service and leadership as the ELC Governor appointed Board Chair from 2005 to September 2009.

Ed F. made the comment that he would like an "Other Business" item on future Board agendas. He also suggested having a statement on next years Annual Report about what is not being met by the ELC.

Meeting adjourned at 1:07pm.

Minutes recorded by: _____
Megan Gocs, Executive Assistant

Full 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.