

Early Learning Coalition of Escambia County
Board Meeting Minutes
October 9, 2018 - 10:00 AM
Chair: Van Mansker

Members in Attendance

Van Mansker	Mary Ann Bickerstaff	Roger Thompson
Edna Williams	Cindy Kirk	Drew Hardgrave
Gerald Boone	Judy Dickinson	

Members Called In

Craig Jones	Wendi Ochs	Melody Meier
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Members Absent

Shawn Jennings	Christina Doss	Mona Jackson
Peggy Steward	Brett Rowell	Marty Tutchtone
Drew Hardgrave		

Staff

Bruce Watson	Becki Rutchland	Paula Rollins
Anne Cynkar	Vicki Pugh	Dawn Engel

I. Welcome and Introductions:

The Board meeting was called to order by Mr. Mansker.

II. Public Comments:

There were no public comments.

III. Chair Comments:

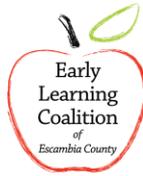
A. Approval of Consent Agenda: Meeting Agenda, Minutes of June 14, 2018, August 9, 2018 and the May and June 2018 Financial Statements.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Hardgrave and seconded by Ms. Bickerstaff, the Consent Agenda consisting of the Agenda, the Minutes of June 14, 2018 and August 9, 2018 and the May and June Financials were approved and accepted without objection.

IV. Executive Committee Report:

A. Executive Committee Action Items.

The Board Chair recommended to have a separate farewell reception after hours for our former Board Chair Mr. Kermit "Skip" Housh who has served extensively with the Coalition and the community for the past 12 years. Several Board members suggested to have community partners or Providers sites to host this farewell in early November and invite former Board members, the



Pensacola News Journal, and WEAR tv. All are encouraged to send any additional ideas or suggestions for Mr. Housh's farewell to Mr. Watson.

B. Board Member Terms

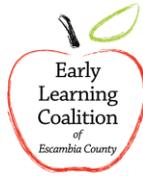
Recently, Ms. Ochs and Mr. Jones' Board of Director term expired, and the Coalition is required to fill the positions. Mr. Watson addressed each Board Member personally and asked each to consider serving a second term. Enthusiastically they both agreed to extend for a second term. A motion was made by Mr. Hardgrave and seconded by Mr. Boone to approve a second term for Ms. Ochs and Mr. Jones to serve as a Board of Director member for ELCEC for a second term. The motion was accepted and approved by the Board without objection.

Ms. Nelms expressed an interest to remain on the Board of Directors after her retirement from Career Source. Mr. Watson consulted with OEL on the eligibility of a Board Member remaining on the Board if they no longer lived or worked in the Coalition's county. With regret the response from OEL was that for members to remain eligible and to serve as a Board Member they must reside and work in that county or the servicing area. Mr. Jones presented the question of what the definition of work meant. Does work imply receiving a payment for a service or can work be a service as a volunteer in the community without pay? It was explained that the member must be "officially" working in the Coalition's servicing area. As stated by the Chair that this policy requirement of eligibility will set the precedence for any future applications to serve as a Board of Director member with the Coalition. A motion was made by Mr. Jones and seconded by Ms. Bickerstaff to remove Susan Nelms as a member of the Board of Directors. The Board accepted and approved this motion without objection.

Mr. Boone announced that this was his last meeting and that he will be retiring in November. The Board Chair and Mr. Watson presented Mr. Boone with a plaque showing the Board's appreciation for his time, service, and contributions to the ELCEC, the Board, and to the community. Congratulations and thank you Mr. Boone on a job well done! The Coalition wishes you the best in all your future endeavors.

C. Board Meeting Convening Time

It was brought to the attention of the new Board Chair that Board convening times may need to be changed to accommodate the Board members and to make a quorum. A discussion was held to survey various times. The times suggested were; 8:30 am, 10:00 am, and 3:30 pm. Ms. Pugh suggested to send out a survey monkey questionnaire to capture the opinions of all members before the next Board meeting. The questionnaire was sent the first week of October and the results indicated that there were eight votes for 8:30 am, nine votes for 10:00 am, and five votes for 3:30 pm. The Chair confirmed that the 10:00 am Board meetings would remain at the same time.



D. Board Vice-Chair

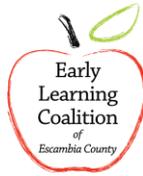
With Mr. Mansker transitioning to the position as ELCEC's new Board Chair, the Coalition's Vice-Chair position became vacant. Several candidates were considered for the position but because of time, work, and personnel commitments Mr. Thompson was the best candidate and most flexible to fill this position and remain as a member of the Executive Committee. Mr. Thompson accepted the position and a motion was made by Ms. Williams and seconded by Mr. Jones to approve Mr. Thompson's position as the new Vice-Chair. The Board accepted and approved Mr. Thompson's position as ELCEC's new Vice-Chair without objection. Congratulations Vice-Chair Thompson!

E. Executive Director's Evaluation

The Chair opened the discussion by relating his Board experiences with the Executive Officer in the past three years. The time, energy and dedication that Mr. Watson puts into the success of this Coalition is evident in the detailed information that he consistently provides his staff and Board members. This was most impressive when the Coalition received \$238,875 from the state with the hope of receiving even more next year. This was only one example to support the Executive Director's evaluation scores and a proposal of a 10% increase in salary, which is a 5% increase over the increase already approved for all employees. This 10% would justly represent a fair and equitable pay for the quality time, and dedication Mr. Watson has given to the ELCEC in the past year. Mr. Jones requested clarification that the increase would only be a 5% raise because the Board had already approved a 5% increase for all employees in June. Mr. Watson confirmed that this was the case and the change would be represented in the new salary of \$105,200. The Executive Committee brings to the Board a motion and seconded by Ms. Kirk to accept the Executive Director's evaluation and a 10% salary increase. The Board approved and accepted the motion without objection.

F. Staff Health Benefits

Throughout the state of Florida many of our similarly sized Coalitions are receiving 100% staff health care benefits. The Chair shared that ELCEC presently pays 85% of the coverage for their employee's Staff Health Benefits which does not include supplemental dental or vision coverage. The Chair proposed that 100% of Staff Health Benefits be paid by the Coalition, to include supplemental vision and dental coverage. Results of the Coalition's prior research on this additional coverage appeared to be a positive move for the Coalition. It is not only a great beneficial investment for the employees but, would allow the Coalition to remain competitive in the job hiring market. Financially this would only cost the Coalition \$38,000 for the health care insurance portion of the benefits and \$11,000 for vision and dental. All this totaling less than \$50,000 and keeping the Coalition below the 5% of Administrative costs by 2%. The Chair reiterated that this is a win-win for all participating and indicates that the Coalition is truly interested in the welfare of its employees and desires to continue building job loyalty and job security for quality personnel. The Executive Committee brought a motion before the Board and seconded by Ms. Kirk to accept and approve that the Coalition pay 100% of the Staff Health Benefits, to include supplemental vision and dental coverage. The motion was accepted and approved without objection.



An interesting question was raised by Ms. Ochs while discussing health benefits for staff. Are Employee Engagement Surveys being done by the staff? Mr. Watson stated that every other year the Coalition conducts a survey with the results being carefully reviewed by the Chair, Executive Director and Staff Directors. The next survey assessment is anticipated to be scheduled in early 2019.

G. Coalition Budget 2018/2019 - Grant Increase/Revision

Mr. Watson informed the Board that this budget is required because OEL increased School Readiness funding to 15.5M of which the Coalition received their portion of \$874,761. Surprisingly, this did not change VPK or WOA nor did this increase change our operating costs, already approved for the year. This increase in budget went directly to SR Direct slots. Consideration was made to increase Quality, but even with this additional funding the amount dedicated to Quality would remain at 6% which is well above the 4% minimum. The addition of \$51,000 for employee health benefits only negligibly affected the Admin percentage. The previous budget already approved a 5% COLA pay increase for staff, which went into effect October 1, 2018. Mr. Watson stated that this was the first time that the Coalition had a budget that exceeded \$21M and that it must be spent in the next nine months. The goal of receiving this the money from the Federal government is hoping that the legislature will see the results of how the \$60M was spent and next year authorize this same amount or more so that the Coalitions will be more stabilized and not have to drawdown. The Executive Committee brings the motion to the Board to approve the revised budget and seconded by Ms. Williams. The revised budget was accepted and approved without objection.

V. Executive Director's Report:

A. SR/VPK Fiscal Year Benchmark, Utilization/Enrollment/ Enrollment/Wait List Status and Contracting Summary Reports

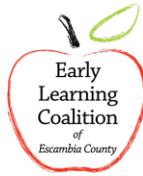
1. Benchmark Report:

The Coalition continues to face the challenges with the new EFS MOD system which begins the first benchmark tracker from last year's summary. The Coalition came very close to spending 100% of the money even without knowing the exact amount to be spent in June. It was a little under executed based off what was projected and the 13th invoice was not as much as it historically has been in the past. Also, typically, VPK gives the Coalition more money than it uses and takes the unused portion back at the end of the year. Without these differences the Coalition would have spent nearly the entire 100% allocated.

The biggest challenge now for the Coalition is to figure out:

- a. How many children are exactly enrolled.
- b. How much money the Providers have earned since June.
- c. How much money we owe the Providers since June.

All told the amounts are only an estimate because everything is based off a percentage of the number of days in the month. In July there were two additional days, so Providers received



110% of what they were paid in June and there were 3 additional days in August, so the Providers will receive 115% as they were paid in June. The Coalition realizes that over payments may occur and that there is ambiguity in the budget but until a system is in place for day to day accountability then payments will not be consistent. The Coalition's target spending for this time of the year is 16.7% but with the Coalition at 17.6%. This puts the Coalition slightly ahead of Provider payments based on the budget which includes the \$874,000 of the total money needed to be spent. For the budget year, 1/6 of the money has been budgeted in each category for the year. We are slightly behind on Indirect, Quality, but ahead on Admin which is affected by the health insurance bill due at the same time. VPK had little money spent because this program just started.

On a side note, Mr. Watson stated that there is a limited capacity of Providers for the infants and toddlers age group. Quality Providers are seriously in demand in all area counties. DCF has been very concerned and one suggestion was to reach out to the community for quality Providers wanting to care for this infant and toddler age group. This continues to be a huge challenge but sacrificing quantity over quality makes this challenge even bigger.

2. Enrollment/ Wait List Status Report:

As of October 1, the Coalition had 3,300 children enrolled in the School Readiness Program. The Coalition's target number for the money we need to spend is 3,450 children. With the new EFS MOD system the Coalition is finding that there are duplicated numbers which are impacting our overall numbers. There are 250 children on the Wait List.

There are 2,000 children enrolled in the 2018/2019 VPK Program. Currently there are 1,927 applications submitted and 98 approved.

Currently there are 90 School Readiness Providers and 79 VPK Providers.

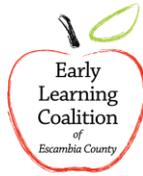
3. Contracting and Fraud Summary Report:

Currently, there are 90 SR Providers and 79 VPK Providers this year. No new SR Providers contracted with the Coalition and one Providers removed. In 2018/2019 the Coalition had 5 Total Contract Terminations, 5 of which were Provider Choice Terminations. No Fraud cases presently to report.

VI. Old Business:

A. EFS Modernization Transition Update

After five months, there is still no reliable EFS MOD system in place. In the last month the Coalition turned the old EFS Legacy system back on. The staff resorted to repopulating data since July 1, 2018, to present into the new EFS MOD system. Even though it was time consuming this information did aid in providing more accurate data to pay Providers. The Coalition's intent is to finally pay the Provider's 99.9% of what they are entitled to for the months of July-through September. Realistically, this percentage does not guarantee total accuracy but, until a more reliable system is available the Coalition will continue to work with



both the EFS Legacy and EFS MOD systems. Accolades from Mr. Watson to both the Coalition Eligibility Staff, and the Providers for their patience with their pay issues and this on-going challenging system.

VII. New Business:

A. Escambia County Grant Approval 2018/2019

The Chair opened the discussion by sharing his budget meeting experience with the County Commissioner's office while Mr. Watson was on travel. The purpose for attending this meeting was to defend our grant request for this coming year. Last year the Coalition received \$238, 875, and there was hope of receiving even more this year. The Chair emphasized that detailed information that Mr. Watson provided to support this grant request was impressive and without doubt would convince the Commissioners that the Coalition was justified in receiving another grant this year. The Chair used this as an example to support and praise the continued efforts of the Executive Director and staff throughout the year. The Chair also commented that it takes a lot of hard work behind the scenes to accomplish what this Coalition has successfully done. A caveat to all this was that the County may cut outside agencies by 50% next year and Mr. Watson and the Chair have initiated a plan early for the County Commissioners to vote on this if it occurs. The Coalition's intent is to be prepared to move out of the outside agency category of Local Agencies and move into the Local Option Sales Tax and Economic Development category which will shield and protect the Coalition's money even more if the 50% cut occurs. Interestingly, with the upcoming elections and a possible revision to the Homestead Act this cut of 50% may become a reality.

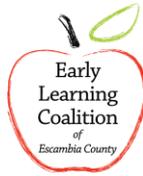
B. Gulf Power Foundation Grant

A month ago, the Gulf Power Foundation approached the Coalition to put together a regional proposal to the Foundation to improve the quality of early learning in the four Northwest Florida Coalitions. The grant is \$300,000 over a five-year period, \$60,000 per year, will be divided among the four Coalitions in Northwest Florida. The Coalition is working with the ELCs of Santa Rosa, Emerald Coast, and Northwest to develop a regional proposal for the Foundation to consider. One stipulation made by the Gulf Power Foundation is that the donations could not go for slots. Proposals on how to spend this money over the next two years would be to use it for Provider preparations, CLASS assessments. ELC Escambia agreed to be the Executive Agency for the Gulf Power Foundation. Our Coalition would receive \$16,000 with an additional \$3,000 to be the program administrator. The money should be made available by the first of the year so that classes can begin.

C. Board Member Comments

UWF Book Give Away, October 13, 2018 prior to the UWF homecoming game at Mariner Park, Wahoo Stadium. Set up 4:30 pm. Free tickets for the game if interested see Mr. Watson or Ms. Pugh

Mr. Jones announced that there is a Director's position open in the University Educational Center for Child Development. If interested application can be made on line.



Mr. Hardgrave announced that there will be a Breast Cancer fundraiser sponsored by “Real Men Wear Pink.” During their campaign there will be two fundraising events. October 22 and 26 2018. For more information go to “Real Men Wear Pink” website. Donations can also be given on line.

The Coalition will be closing October 9, 2108 at 2:00 pm in preparation for Hurricane Michael and will be closed all day October 10, 2018.

VIII. Upcoming Audits and Reviews

A. Financial Review on site visit October 22-26, 2018

Last year the Coalition was exempt from receiving a Financial Review because of their stellar results from the previous year. They are anticipating even better results this year even though documents and records must be pulled as far back as 2016.

IX ED/Chair Travel

A. ED: Gulf Power Economic Symposium, October 10-11, Destin

B. ED: AELC/OEL ED/ELAC Meetings, October 24-26 – ELC Miami

C. Chair: ELAC Meeting, October 26 – ELC Miami

X. Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Next Meeting: December 13, 2018 10:00 a.m., at the Early Learning Coalition Office, 3300 North Pace Boulevard, Suite 210, Pensacola, FL 32505

Minutes approved by:

Brett Rowell, Board Secretary

Date