

**Early Learning Coalition of Escambia County  
Board Meeting Minutes**

**(Note: These are meeting notes, vice minutes, as the meeting did not meet quorum.)**

**October 8, 2020 10:00 a.m.**

**Chair: Van Mansker**

**Members in Attendance**

Van Mansker  
Mona Jackson  
Richard Wright

Melody Meier  
Angela Strumeyer  
Cindy Kirk

Dr. Laura Edler  
Bryan Wyer  
Craig Jones

**Members Absent**

Wendi Ochs  
Drew Hardgrave  
Marcus McBride

Mary Ann Bickerstaff  
Edna Williams  
Shannon Robinson

Beate Bolton  
Judy Dickinson  
Steven Sanchez

**Staff**

Dawn Engel  
Jamie Phelps

Vicki Pugh  
Becki Rutchland

Paula Rollins

**Welcome and Introductions:**

Notification of this meeting of the Board of Directors was posted to the Coalition Public Calendar Board on September 30, 2020 and sent to the Pensacola News Journal for publication on September 24, 2020.

**I. Public Comments:**

There were no Public Comments.

**II. Chair Comments:**

**a. Approval of Consent Agenda: Meeting Agenda, Minutes of December 12, 2019, and Financial Statements for October and November 2019.**

Mr. Mansker announced that there were not enough Board members in attendance to meet quorum, therefore the meeting could not be called to order. Mr. Mansker asked Mr. Watson to provide an overview of the Executive Director's Report.

**III. Executive Committee Report:**

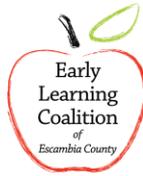
**a. RDC Chair**

No discussion as quorum was not met.

**b. Executive Director Annual Evaluation**

No discussion as quorum was note met.

**IV. Executive Director's Report:**



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

1. Benchmark Report:

First and second month expenditures for this fiscal year were about \$1.6 million dollars each. The Coalition is roughly 3% ahead of spending projections which equates to about \$500,000 dollars. The increase in spending was due to the Coalition paying all registration fees for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 year to all Providers. The Coalition has received an additional Notice of Award (NOA) in the amount of \$600,000 dollars which will be used to clear the Wait List. Mr. Watson noted that unless more childcare workers manifest so that Providers can increase capacity, it will remain challenging to rise above the ability to serve more than 3,600 children. Administrative costs are running about 3-3.5% and Quality is at about 7%. Mr. Watson noted that the percentage VPK administrative costs exceed 4% at this time of the year because children are not in school in July and early August.

2. Enrollment/Wait List Status Report:

Currently there are 3,465 children enrolled in the School Readiness program of which 1,277 are school-age children. Mr. Watson noted that, over the last several weeks, the decline in enrollments of roughly 200 children may be an anomaly in EFS/MOD as opposed to an actual decline in enrollments. There are 97 children enrolled in the SR Match Program and all 49 on the Wait List were pulled last week. There are 391 children on the wait list but 50 were pulled this week. There are 1,264 children enrolled in VPK which is about two thirds of historical numbers. Mr. Watson noted that this appears to be a statewide trend likely due to the pandemic.

3. Contracting and Fraud Summary Report:

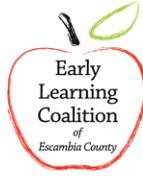
The Coalition has 79 School Readiness Providers. Eight Providers are out of commission due to damage sustained from Hurricane Sally. Two Providers were able to secure alternate space and were able to resume service. Mr. Watson thanked Ms. Strumeyer and her team for facilitating the Providers' ability to quickly resume services. Two homes sustained serious damage from fallen trees and flooding and are currently closed but have indicated that they intend to resume service as soon as possible. Currently there are 78 VPK Providers. Eight VPK Providers opted not to contract this year. There was one new case of parent fraud to report.

**V. Old Business:**

**a. Fire/Hurricane Recovery and Coalition Office Reopening**

Mr. Watson reported that the reception area in the Administrative suite has been changed in order to accommodate safety needs. Many staff will remain on telework after the pandemic ends as telework has proven to be as, if not more, effective as working from the office. The new furniture that was purchased to retrofit the Eligibility reception area has been repurposed and placed in the Sun Room to function as client reception stations.

**b. Escambia Children's Trust Update**



The County Commissioners approved the proposed referendum for the Escambia Children's Trust. The publicity campaign started in September. Mr. Watson asks that Board members encourage their acquaintances to vote in favor of the measure.

**c. Provider Rate Change Status**

The Provider Rate Increase was submitted to OEL and is pending approval however, OEL has not acted upon any requests for rate increases.

**VI. New Business:**

**a. OEL CARES Grants Phases: Phase III**

Mr. Watson noted that Phase III CARES Grants will provide a grant to those contracted Providers who were not eligible for the previous Phases.

**b. Annual Code of Ethics**

Annual Code of Ethics forms are due for all Board members. The forms were attached to the meeting invitation and may be faxed or email to Ms. Phelps at the Coalition. Mr. Watson asked that the forms be returned as soon as possible as they are subject to review in the upcoming audit.

**VII. Adjourn**

Lacking quorum, the meeting was not called to order therefore the meeting was not adjourned.

**Next Meeting:** December 10, 2020 10:00 a.m. via virtual means from the Early Learning Coalition Office, 3300 North Pace Boulevard, Suite 210, Pensacola, FL 32505

**Minutes approved by:**

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 Marcus McBride, Board Secretary

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 Date