



Early Learning Coalition of Escambia County

**RDC Committee Meeting Minutes**

July 11, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

**Committee Members in Attendance**

Roger Thompson	Cindy Kirk	Tarae Donaldson
Paul Fetsko	Tammy Hicks	Tammy Greer
ShaCondra Primm	Melissa Birdsall	MaryAnn Bickerstaff
Jessica Czuprynski		

**Staff in Attendance**

Bruce Watson	Dawn Engel	Nina Daniels
Melissa Jennings	Darrell Merritt	

**Providers and Partners in Attendance**

Roselyn Sukal	Deborah Markley	Pamela Barksdale
Misty Lambeth	Deirdre Patton	Shaunna Bailey
Theresa Hill	Juanita Lindsey	

**Public in Attendance**

None

Before the meeting was called to order, Mr. Watson made the announcement of the passing of Ms. Joyce Griffin. Ms. Griffin had been with the Coalition for 14 years. A moment of silence was held in her honor.

**I. Welcome, Call to Order, and Approval of Agenda**

Notification of this meeting was posted to the Coalition Public Calendar Board and sent to the Pensacola New Journal on June 30, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Mr. Roger Thompson, Committee Chair.

**II. Public Comments**

None

**III. Approval of Agenda and Minutes for May 16, 2023**

Upon a motion made by Ms. Bickerstaff and seconded by Mr. Fetsko, the Agenda and the Minutes of the May 16, 2023, meeting were approved without objection.

**IV. Community Partner Updates**

a. Achieve Escambia  
No representative was available to report.



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b. ARC Gateway

Ms. Bickerstaff stated that they are continuing with early intervention services for children from birth to 12 years old and providing pediatric therapies. ARC Gateway was also awarded the grant from the Escambia Children's Trust to bring Help Me Grow to our community. They are currently working on getting their training established.

c. CareerSource ESCAROSA

Ms. Maiterth stated that a new computer skills program is being offered. Matrix & Soft Skills offers online training and certifications for people who are interested in cyber security and coding.

d. DCF Regulation

No representative was available to report.

e. Early Steps

No representative was available to report.

f. Escambia Children's Trust

Ms. Greer stated that Arc Gateway is starting up the Help Me Grow Project. The Trust is hoping to have the final contract signed soon. An RFP is currently out for mental health services. The Children's Trust is in the midst of their strategic planning and for those who are interested in what the Trust will be doing for the next 3 years, be on the lookout for the newsletter that will be going out that will list all the dates and times for the town hall meetings.

g. Florida Association for Infant Mental Health (FAIMH)

Ms. Markley stated that the local chapter is still meeting every other month. The next meeting will be held in Ft. Walton Beach on August 14, 2023. FAIMH is always looking for events to participate in and would like to have an opportunity to participate in a Help Me Grow event.

h. Gulf Coast Kids House

No representative was available to report.

i. Head Start

No representative was available to report.

j. Pensacola State College

Ms. Kirk stated that she is working on adding the new course, Health, Safety & Nutrition, which will be offered on August 21, 2023 and will be a completely online course. PSC is also working on four courses this fall that are required for CDA credentials and they hope to have these courses offered online by next fall.

k. Ready Kids!



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No representative was available to report.

### l. School District Education Career Academy

No representative was available to report.

### m. School District VPK

Ms. Czuprynski stated that she is back from maternity leave. The school district's VPK is 81% full. They are still working on getting families registered and to get the classrooms filled.

## V. Program Reports

### a. Medical Support Services Report

Ms. Jennings stated that numbers are currently down due to it being summertime. The medical staff are using this time to perform safety classes. During the FY22-23, there were 1,449 vision screenings performed that resulted in 87 referrals and 1,490 hearing screenings performed that resulted in 134 referrals. Also, during this fiscal year, there were 79 consults for inclusion/behavior.

### b. CCR&R Update

Ms. Jennings stated that referrals have dropped off due to it being summertime. The numbers should pick back up in July and August. In the month of June, there were 3,000 books distributed. For the 2022-2023 fiscal year, there were a total of 17,700 books distributed.

### c. Program Support Summary

Ms. Engel stated that there were 1900 participants in trainings this past fiscal year. Re-organization is going on in the OPS department. There was one member who resigned and will be moving on to the school district. Program assessments and monitorings will start back up this month. There is a new inclusion specialist that started at the beginning of July.

### d. SR/VPK Status Report and Contract Activity Summary

There are 2,504 children enrolled in the School Readiness Program. Three weeks of children were pulled from the waitlist on 6/27/2023. There are 716 children on the Wait List. To date, there are 1,582 children approved for VPK for the 2023/2024 school year. There are 31 children approved for Summer VPK. More are expected to apply in the coming months, especially this summer.

There are 81 School Readiness providers and 73 VPK providers.

There are a couple of fraud cases currently pending.

## VI. Old Business



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### a. ARPA Grants

All payments for ARPA Round 2 Final Payments have been completed. The DEL recouped all unexpended direct provider payments and redistributed the funding to Coalitions for ARPA Round 2 Final “Final” payments. This funding will be distributed to the Providers who received the first final payment.

## **VII. New Business**

### a. Ideas to Improve Child Care Employment Levels Committee

At the last Board meeting, it was decided to create a sub-committee to explore the opportunities and things that can be done to improve the employment levels in our childcare community in Escambia County. The Board is soliciting input from our partners. If you would like to take part in this committee, it is not restricted to Board members and staff, there will tentatively be a stated meeting on Thursday, July 27, 2023 that will be held after the EXCOM meeting ends around 10:00 a.m. Further information will be provided after the details are discussed with the Board Chair.

### b. SR and VPK Contracts for 2023/2024

SR contracts are 100% signed and approved for the new year. Most VPK classes don't start until August, so those Contract signings are still in progress. There will be a Contracting Brief at the end of July for VPK providers who do not do SR. The new VPK rates have been released. The new BSA is \$2,941.00 and the new hourly rate is \$5.32.

### c. Program Assessments and Monitoring for 2023-2024

The new contract year has started and program assessments and monitorings will start immediately. No assessments will be done during December due to the holidays and the Coalition tries to have assessments completed by May.

**Adjourn: Meeting was adjourned at 10:57 a.m.**

Next Meeting: September 19, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. at the Early Learning Coalition Office, 1720 West Fairfield Dr. Suite 100/400, Pensacola, Florida 32501