



Early Learning Coalition of Escambia County

RDC Committee Meeting Minutes

November 14, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

Committee Members in Attendance

Roger Thompson	Cindy Kirk	Tarae Donaldson
Tammy Hicks	MaryAnn Bickerstaff	Jessica Czuprynski
Shannon Nickinson	Tammy Abrams	Deborah Tucker

Staff in Attendance

Bruce Watson	Dawn Engel	Nina Daniels
Melissa Jennings		

Providers and Partners in Attendance

Roselyn Sukal	Pamela Barksdale	Misty Lambeth
Shaunna Bailey	Claudia Pacheco	Alicia Matlock
Shirley Kelley	Demetrius's	Tonyia

Public in Attendance

None

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 November 2, 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. Czuprynski and seconded by Ms. Maiterth, the Agenda and the Minutes of the July 11, 2023 and September 19, 2023 meetings were approved without objection.

IV. Community Partner Updates

a. ARC/Gateway/Help Me Grow

Ms. Shirley Kelley was here to represent Help Me Grow (HMG). This was her first RDC meeting and she was observing to learn what was discussed at the meeting, so she knows what to expect and discuss at future meetings.

Ms. Bickerstaff joined the meeting as Ms. Kelly was speaking and stated that Ms. Claudia Pacheco will be the HMG Care Coordinator who will receive calls from families, and Ms. Alisha



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Matlock is the HMG Care Coordinator for early intervention services. They are still looking to hire a Communications/Marketing Specialist. The HMG staff has been doing a lot of training in the last few weeks. The HMG website is available at helpmegrowescambia.org.

b. CareerSource ESCAROSA

Ms. Maitherth shared that there will be a big job fair coming up in January at the Fairgrounds. She also discussed that there is a Hot Jobs list on their website careersourceescarosa.org that details current job openings in the area.

c. DCF Regulation

No representative was available to report.

d. Escambia Children's Trust

Ms. Abrams reported that the Trust is searching for a new Executive Director. They have received over 500 resumes and have narrowed it down to seven candidates. The interviews will start in December. Renewals for out of school time contracts are coming up soon.

e. Head Start

No representative was available to report.

f. Pensacola State College

No representative was available to report.

g. Ready Kids!

No representative was available to report.

h. School District VPK

Ms. Czuprynski reported that there were no new updates for the School District VPK.

V. Program Reports

a. Medical Support Services Report

Ms. Jennings stated during the months of July through October there were 508 vision screenings performed from which 20 referrals were made and 545 hearing screenings were performed from which 32 referrals were made.

b. CCR&R Update

Ms. Jennings stated that there has been an increase in interviews in the month of October. There were 5 successful outreach events in the month of October. 4,270 books have been distributed so far, this fiscal year.

c. Program Support Summary



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Ms. Engel stated that monitoring's and assessments are going well. There has been an increase in inclusion and behavioral cases. There are multiple children in classrooms experiencing behavioral issues. Due to the uptick in the number of cases, Inclusion/Behavioral appointments to conduct observations are running about a month out. The Memorandum with ReadyKids to provide Ready Rosie has been signed. There are currently 434 participants.

d. SR/VPK Status Report and Contract Activity Summary

There are 2,520 children enrolled in the School Readiness Program. Two weeks of children were pulled from the waitlist on 11/1/2023. There are 674 children on the Wait List. To date, there are 2,129 children approved for VPK, of which 1,686 are enrolled.

There are 81 School Readiness Providers and 73 VPK Providers.

VI. Old Business

a. Program Assessments and Monitoring for 2023/2024

As of the November 1, 2023, DEL assessment summary report, ELC Escambia leads the State and has completed 41% of required assessments for the year.

VII. New Business

a. ARPA Grants for 2023/2024

The Coalition has begun spending the ARPA Discretionary and ARPA Early Learning Discretionary grants which is just under \$5 million. Around \$2 million will be sent out to providers after Thanksgiving. All of the funds will be spent between November 2023 through May 2024.

b. Governor's Holiday Closure Announcement

The Governor of Florida has authorized State employees' additional days off for the holidays. The days will be the day before Thanksgiving, December 26 and 29 and January 2, 2024. The DEL has confirmed that Coalitions are authorized to be closed for business on these days as well. This opportunity does not apply to contracted providers.

Adjourn: Meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Next Meeting: January 16, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. at the Early Learning Coalition Office, 1720 West Fairfield Dr. Suite 100/400, Pensacola, Florida 32501