



Early Learning Coalition of Escambia County

RDC Committee Meeting Minutes

May 21, 2024, 10:00 a.m.

Committee Members in Attendance

Roger Thompson	Jessica Czuprynski	Paul Fetsko
Bambi Sealy	Lindsey Cannon	Melissa Sidoti
Doug Brown		

Staff in Attendance

Bruce Watson	Dawn Engel	Nina Daniels
Melissa Jennings		

Providers and Partners in Attendance

Shirley Kelley	Melinda Maiterth	Pamela Barksdale
Roselyn Sukal	E. Sherrell Thomas	Victoria Jordan
Misty Lambeth	Kim Corner	Deirdre Patton
Juanita Lindsey		

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 May 2, 2024. 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 January 16, 2024

Upon a motion made by Mr. Fetsko and seconded by Ms. Maiterth, the Agenda and the Minutes of March 19, 2024, were approved without objection.

IV. Community Partner Updates

a. ARC/Gateway/Help Me Grow

Ms. Kelley stated that Help Me Grow participated in many events in April. May has still been a busy month. Help Me Grow has been providing screenings in childcare centers and have been providing follow-up training events. Ms. Kelley stated that Help Me Grow was present at Reimagine Bellview, where free food and clothing was distributed and participated in Parent University that was held at Dixon School for Arts & Science. Help Me Grow has many more events coming up through the rest of May and throughout the month of June.



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b. CareerSource ESCAROSA

Ms. Maiterth stated that ESCAROSA will be attending the Operation Resource event that is open to the public. ESCAROSA will have a resource table to provide information flyers. The Coalition is welcome to provide materials to be given out. ESCAROSA is still busy providing various workshops.

c. DCF Regulation

Ms. Sealy stated that the Childcare Regulation office has three new staff members. All three should start within the next two to three weeks. Ms. Sealy stated that School Readiness inspections will be completed by June 30.

d. Escambia Children's Trust

Ms. Cannon stated that she is working on an RFP that focuses on healthy habits in schools. The program is called Healthy School Escambia. ECT has funding for ten schools. Six schools have been identified so far and ECT is still looking for four more.

e. Head Start

Mr. Doug Brown was introduced as the new Head Start Director. Mr. Brown stated that the new school year enrollment has started and that the teaching staff has stabilized for the moment. Head Start is gearing up for the busy summer months to prepare for the 2024-2025 school year.

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 VPK registration is still in progress for the 2024-2025 school year.

V. Program Reports

a. Medical Support Services Report

Ms. Jennings reported that as of April, there have been 1,372 vision screenings from which 77 referrals have been made and 1,456 hearing screenings from which 90 referrals have been made.

b. CCR&R Update

Ms. Jennings reported that the number of new interviews has remained steady. The Coalition has been busy with outreach events and participated in 11 events in the month of April. As of April 2024, there have been 15,765 books distributed this fiscal year.

c. Program Support Summary



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Ms. Engel stated that the number of training events are coming down due to courses coming to an end. The Coalition partnered with Rotary of Pensacola and was awarded \$12,500 to purchase books to aid children in the transition to Kindergarten. Ms. Engel stated that the first round of assessments is completed.

d. SR/VPK Status Report and Contract Activity Summary

There are 2,628 children enrolled in the School Readiness Program. The last pull from the wait list was on May 9, 2024. There are 528 children on the Wait List. To date, there are 1,309 children approved for the 2024-25 VPK program.

There are 84 School Readiness Providers and 71 VPK Providers.

VI. Old Business

a. ARPA Grants for 2023/2024

The final \$2 million ARPA funds will be spent in the next two to three weeks. The Coalition completed the Business Learning Institute for Early Learning training. At the end of the training, the providers were required to complete a business plan. Once the plan is completed the course is officially complete and the providers will receive their incentive payments.

b. Joyce Griffin Room Dedication

The dedication of training room to Joyce Griffin is on track. The final plaque proof should be ready to view later this afternoon. The dedication is tentatively scheduled at the beginning of the Board meeting on June 13.

VII. New Business

a. New SR Provider Rates for Fiscal Year 2024-25

A comparative summary of the new SR provider rates was provided for discussion. This is the highest single increase in rates in the Coalition's history.

b. SR Plus Program in Fiscal Year 2024-25

The State is implementing a new program to allow parents who are already in the SR program to remain past 85% SMI up to 100% SMI. The parent fees will be significantly higher, but it will help ease the transition as their income increases.

Adjourn: Meeting was adjourned at 11:12 a.m.

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