



**Early Learning Coalition of Escambia County
Board Meeting Minutes
December 15, 2025, 9:00 a.m.
Interim Chair: Tammy Hicks**

Members in Attendance

Roger Thompson	Bambi Sealy	Tammy Hicks
Shacondra Primm	Deborah Tucker	Cindy Kirk
Brian Wyer	Tarae Donaldson	Mary Ann Bickerstaff
Lindsey Cannon	Doug Brown	Reginald Dogan
Melissa Sidoti	Mona Jackson	Craig Jones
Paul Fetsko		

Members Absent

Edna Williams	Deanna Oleske
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Public in Attendance

None

Staff in Attendance

Bruce Watson	Dawn Engel	Tom Porter
Melissa Jennings	Renee Maxwell	

I. Welcome and Introduction

Notification of this meeting of the Board of Directors was sent to the Pensacola News Journal for publication on December 11, 2025, and posted to the Coalition Public Calendar Board. The meeting was called to order by the Interim Chair, Ms. Hicks.

II. Public Comments

a. None.

III. New Business

a. Discussion/Approval of Ms. Engel's Counterproposal

The Executive Committee met with Ms. Engel on December 8, 2025, to discuss the Board's offer to temporarily promote Ms. Engel to the position of Interim Executive Director. Ms. Engel offered a counterproposal for the Board to consider.

Ms. Engel stated that she would take the position, but with the following stipulations.

1. An 11.5% increase instead of the 10% that was proposed.
2. If the position is given to another candidate, she would retain the 11.5% pay increase permanently. This is because training the incoming Executive Director will not be a one and done event. It will require extensive interaction over many months.



3. If the position is offered permanently, an \$11,000.00 increase in annual salary in addition to the 11.5% offered for the Interim position.
4. Due to the lack of time remaining for there to be a proper turnover before Mr. Wastson's last day of work, Mr. Watson needs to be permitted to come off PTO to help in the transition. Mr. Watson's participation in the transition is necessary. Mr. Watson agreed that with the Board's approval he will make himself available as needed.

A motion was made by the EXCOM and seconded by Mr. Thompson to approve Ms. Engel's counterproposal. The motion was put to a roll call vote to the sixteen Board members in attendance. 11 members voted Yes, 4 members voted No, and 1 member abstained. The motion was approved.

b. Approval of Mr. Watson to conduct turnover after December 23, 2025

This order of business was approved with the approval of Ms. Engel's counterproposal.

c. Approval to add Ms. Hicks, Interim Board Chair, as an authorized signer on the company checking account.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Jones, adding the Interim Board Chair, Ms. Tamela Hicks, as an authorized signer to the company checking account was approved without objection.

d. Approval of adding an Interim Executive Director to the company checking account.

The Board discussed adding Interim Executive Director, Dawn Engel to the company checking account. Upon the motion made by Mr. Brown and seconded by Mr. Jones, adding Interim Executive Director, Ms. Engel, as an authorized signer to the company checking account was approved without objection.

e. Approval to add Board Treasurer to the company checking account.

Mr. Brown made the motion to add the EXCOM members to the company checking account. Before the motion could be seconded, two EXCOM members stated that they do not wish to be on the company checking account. The motion was withdrawn. The Board Treasurer, Ms. Jackson, stated that she does not have an issue with being added to the company checking account. Mr. Brown made the motion to just add the Board Treasurer, Ms. Jackson, to the company checking account. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wyer. The motion to add the Board Treasurer, Ms. Jackson, as an authorized signer to the company checking account was approved without objection.

f. Delegation Letter for IED

The Board asked Mr. Watson to draft a letter of delegation of authority for the Interim Executive Director for the Interim Board Chair to sign. Mr. Watson agreed to draft the letter.



IV. Additional Discussion

The Hiring Committee have 4 interviews scheduled for this week. If the Committee agrees on a candidate, a special Board meeting will be held in January.

V. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:38 a.m.

Next Meeting: Thursday, February 12, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. at the Early Learning Coalition offices at 1720 West Fairfield Dr., Suite 100/400, Pensacola, FL 32501