Early Learning Coalition of Escambia County

Executive/Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
September 24, 2026, 9:00 a.m.

Committee Members Present
Tammy Hicks (Interim Chair) Craig Jones

Committee Members Absent
Mona Jackson

Board Member In Attendance
Kaley Dawkins

Staff
Dawn Engel Nina Daniels Tom Porter
Melissa Jennings Al Henderson

Public
Gemma Torcivia (TG Law PLLC)

I. Welcome and Introductions

Notification of the Executive Finance Committee Meeting scheduled for September 24, 2026, was sent to the Pensacola News Journal, and posted to the Coalition Public Calendar Board on September 2, 2026. The meeting was called to order by Ms. Hicks.

II. Public Comments

None.

III. Consent Agenda

Upon a motion made by Mr. Jones and seconded by Ms. Hicks, the Consent Agenda, consisting of the Agenda, Minutes of July 23, 2026, and Financials for July and August 2026 were approved without objection.

IV. Coalition Status Reports

a. Financial Update
The Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Activity for July and August 2026 was presented to the committee for discussion.

b. Enrollment/Wait List Status Report
There are 2,590 children enrolled in the School Readiness Program of which 87 are SRMAT and 6 are SR Plus. 1,169 are school-age children. There are 37 children on the Wait List. There are 1,737 children approved for VPK for 2026/27 Program year of which 1,400 are enrolled.

c. Contracting and Fraud Summary Report
There are 85 SR providers and 63 VPK providers.

Committee Recommendations

a. Nominations Committee – Nomination Slate
There are two nominees to serve as Vice Chair, Ms. Ruthie Noel and Ms. Melissa Sidoti. The board will vote at the next board meeting for replacement or Vice Chair. A letter will be sent to the Commissioner of Education with the results of the vote.
Mr. Craig made the motion to approve the Slate. Ms. Hicks seconded the motion. The motion was approved without objection.

Ms. Torcivia advised Ms. Hicks to submit her resignation as Vice Chair, which relieves her of the Interim Board Chair role.

V. Executive Director Updates

a. Financial Health Based on Funding Requirements
The organization is hitting all its required targets and restrictions except for VPK Admin's 5% Max. The cause is timing and the start of VPK. Next year's funding will be based on the number of children enrolled from July through December. The more children enrolled the better chance for more funding.

b. COLA Raises
The cost-of-living raises were approved and will go into effect on October 1, 2026.

c. AELC – State Level Priority Discussion
A quick overview of State Level Priorities was presented.

d. REOB/DEOB Discussion
DEL is already asking for a preliminary Reob/Deob

e. Required Reporting – Annual Report, Rev/Exp Report, & Inventory Report 10/1
These reports are required by the state, and they do not require the committee's approval. These reports are due this month.

f. Annual Single Audit is Completed and Accepted
The Single Audit has been completed and accepted.

g. Strategic Plan – Mapping with DEL's Strategic Initiative
Strategic Planning is almost complete on the state level. Studer Group has agreed to come in an do the Board Training.

h. Ongoing Efforts
1. Panhandle Group (2028 Educator Conference, Small Bix Survey, collaborating on use of same source vendors, identifying projects we can apply for funding, health

insurance). Met with Panhandle Group on Tuesday. The Panhandle Group is planning a two-day Educator Conference in 2028.

2. Community Partnerships (CAPC, Opening Doors, Studer Institute)
   Still working on adding to our Community Partnerships. Mr. Henderson has been invited to Navy Federal to discuss military challenges. Ms. Salzman has invited Mr. Henderson to a sustainability group.

3. Director's Meeting – Strategic Efforts
   A listening tour was at the last Director's Meeting. This group travels throughout the state, meeting with Coalitions and small focus group of providers.

VI. Old Business

a. Revised By-Laws – Update
Gemma Torcivia has reviewed the revised By-Laws and has a preliminary draft to present to the board. Henderson added that HB 797 presents new laws the organization must consider when updating the bylaws. Legal counsel acknowledged and recommended that the board form an ad-hoc By-Laws committee to review the legal counsel's draft. Torcivia inquired gave guidance on the board serving in a governance role, while the Executive Director handles the day-to-day operations. Torcivia suggested committee work is where board members can participate if looking for a hands-on approach. The recommendation came as a follow-up to a change in the By-Laws preventing the Executive Director from firing Directors without Board Approval.

b. Board Member Update
The next board meeting is scheduled for October 13, 2026, immediately following the RDC Meeting. A ballot for the Vice Chair position will be presented at this meeting. Ms. Torcivia will be in attendance.

VII. New Business

a. ELC Escambia's Annual Report
Mr. Jones made a motion to approve the ELC Escambia's Annual Report. Ms. Hicks seconded the motion. The motion was approved without objection.

b. CAPC Board Appointment
Mr. Jones made the motion to appoint Mr. Henderson to the CAPC Board. Ms. Hicks seconded the motion. The motion was approved without objection.

VIII. Audits and Reviews - In Progress

a. 2024-2025 Financial Fiscal Monitoring Report #2
On-Site audit next Monday – Friday of next week.

IX. Adjourn: The Meeting was adjourned at 10:24 a.m.

Next Meeting: October 22 , 2026, at 9:00 a.m. at the Early Learning Coalition Office, 1720 West Fairfield Dr., Suite 100/400, Pensacola, Florida 32501