



EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

Program Committee (Virtual Meeting via Zoom)

Meeting Minutes

January 7, 2022

9:00 – 11:00 am

Committee Members Present: Chair Michele King (Board Member – Golisano Children’s Hospital); Angela Anderson (Guadalupe Center); Damaris Boone (RCMA); Danna Breeden (Collier County Health Department and ELC RN); Stacie Britton (FDLRS); Patricia Dominguez (Challenged Minds Learning Center); Dr. Carol Frink (Lee County School District); JoAnne Fuciu (Lee Memorial); Jodi Garrett (Child’s Path); Megan Greeley-Gibson (The Children’s Community Center); Joanne Moran (Lee County School District); Ana Neuhauser (RCMA); Penney Norton (Division of Early Learning); Jim Ragusa (Guadalupe Center); Stephanie Rode (St. Andrews Catholic School); Heather Singleton (Child’s Path); Jami Slack (Open Doors); Char-Nequa Smith (Florida Health Department); Kendra Stamp (Educare); Michelle Starr (Collier County Public Schools); Jesyca Virnig;

Staff Members Present: Leona Adkins (interim COO and CPO); Amanda DeVariste (Managing Director); Bronwyn Gogia (Director of Assessment and Screening); Cheryl Carpenter (Director of Early Childhood); Gayla Thompson (Director of Professional Development).

Committee Members Absent: Maria Bettini (LCPS); Stacie Britton (FDLRS); Rita Dellatore (Board Member – Kid City); Rodrigo Gamboa-Dominguez (Challenged Minds Learning Center); Yara Duchesne (RCMA); Jenn Faber (Children’s Council); Donna Hernandez (Fort Myers Technical College); Ashley Houk (First Presbyterian Church, Naples); Donna Killion (Discovery Day Academy IV); Tia Knapp (ABC Academy); Terri Konczak (Division of Early Learning); Elizabeth McBride (Collier County Public Schools); Marie Liebensohn (Lee Memorial); Rachel McIntyre (Open Doors Lehigh Acres and Estero); Marissa Mona (EduCare Academy); Joanne Pachiva (Lee County School District); Kelly Roy (Board Member – FSW); Donna VanTol (Collier County Health Department – ELC); Paul Welch (Sonrise Academy); Mandy Willis (Faith Academy).

Agenda Items	Facilitator/Presenter	Comments/Actions
Welcome	The meeting was called to order by Michele King at 9:03 am using the Zoom platform.	

<p>Approval of Meeting Minutes for November 5, 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft minutes were reviewed for the November 5 meeting. 	<p>Motion to accept minutes as presented made by Heather Singleton and seconded by Damaris Boone. Minutes will be posted on the Program Committee page at https://elcofswfl.org/program-committee/.</p>
<p>Danna Breeden – COVID 19 and other Health Concerns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children positive in a center must stay out for 10 days, from the time that symptoms start. • Adult teachers with COVID can return after 5 days if they no longer have symptoms. They cannot return until the fever is gone for 24 hours. • Three elements can be used to return: stay home until symptoms are gone; get tested; Doctor note that it is not COVID. • List of tests accepted by CDC was sent out in a blast • There will be a nurse town hall on January 13 (see link). 	<p>Topic: Nurse Town Hall Meeting Time: Jan 13, 2022, 01:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada) https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83608296400 Meeting ID: 836 0829 6400 Or use phone 929 436 2866</p>
<p>Leona Adkins - ELC Report for Susan Block</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice of Award - \$64 million was awarded to ELCSWFL in different areas of focus such as Outreach, Workforce Initiatives, Disaster Recovery etc. • To date, the ELC has spent \$16 million to support providers • Enrollment numbers: SR 5677, VPK 6649. • The Coalition cannot guarantee children to providers, as there is parental choice. • Discussed issues with finding and retaining staff, especially when jobs at Target or Walmart pay \$16.00 to start. • Discussion regarding recruiting teachers. 	<p>Correction – The Notice of Award for ELCSWFL is over \$62 million. The \$64 million was reported in error.</p>

<p>Bronwyn Gogia - Child Assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several providers have withdrawn from the Child Assessment differential program, or no longer qualify. • Providers are encouraged to administer all three periods of child assessment. The 2nd period of assessment is due this month. • Many of those providers who do not qualify for the assessment differential have chosen to stop administering the child assessments all together. 	
<p>Cheryl Carpenter – Assessments for CLASS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SR CLASS assessments continue. We are fortunate to be ahead of many Coalitions and will not have to be in catch up mode for SR assessments. • There are many classes available in both English and Spanish to help prepare both SR and VPK teachers for observation. 	<p>To register for classes, go to www.elcofswfl.org, scroll to the bottom of the homepage, and click on “Click here to register for training”.</p>
<p>Gayla Thompson – VPK teacher and Director requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors who are exempt from VPK endorsement due to earning their Director’s Credential before 2006, must now earn their VPK endorsement before the VPK Application can be certified for 22-23. • VPK Lead teachers are required to take 15 hours of Emergent Literacy training classes before the VPK Application can be certified and children added to classes. All lead VPK teachers must take these classes, including certified teachers in the public schools and those with degrees who work in private childcare. If a teacher is new, the classes must be completed before becoming a lead in the VPK classroom. Classes are not required for substitutes, however, are recommended as best practice so they may step into the lead position if necessary. Concerns were expressed that not enough time is allowed for new hires to take these classes to meet the needs of providers. Michelle Starr from Collier Public Schools expressed concern with turnover and how to get teachers trained timely. 	
<p>Open Discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty of recruiting staff. • Concern that the funds that the Coalition will be dispersing will not help as intended 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions put to group: VPK Estimating Conference is next week – Enrollments are down about 16K compared to 2019-20. • What are we hearing about the decrease from ELCS? Providers? Parents? -RCMA is seeing a decrease in children, maybe connected to parents wanting summer VPK and head start during the school year. Losing kids to the public school system mostly due to buses. - Collier schools down about 150, not as low as it was last year. Having to put some head start 3-year old's in VPK, numbers are still low. - Some can't offer VPK because they can't find teachers -Losing kids to head start because they offer more hours than a typical 3-hour VPK day. • What is the outlook for the remainder of Program Year 2021-22? • Some RCMA children may enroll in summer VPK <p>What is the outlook for Program Year 2022-23?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concerned with turnover and if new teachers will need all the VPK Emergent Literacy courses before they start - More hours would make the program more enticing to parents. 	
Adjournment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 am 	
Next Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • February 25, 2022 	

All meetings will be held via Zoom until further notice.