



## EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

Program Committee (Virtual Meeting via Zoom)

Meeting Minutes

February 25, 2022

9:00 – 11:00 am

**Committee Members Present:** **Presiding - Rebecca McKellar** (Board Member – Creative World); **Angela Anderson** (Guadalupe Center); **Damaris Boone** (RCMA); **Danna Breeden** (Collier County Health Department and ELC RN); **Stacie Britton** (FDLRS); **Rodrigo Gamboa-Dominguez** (Challenged Minds Learning Center); **Jodi Garrett** (Child’s Path); **Megan Greeley-Gibson** (The Children’s Community Center); **Donna Hernandez** (Fort Myers Technical College); **Donna Killion** (Discovery Day Academy IV ); **Terri Konczak** (Division of Early Learning); **Joanne Moran** (Lee County School District); **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); **Michelle Starr** (Collier County Public Schools); **Jesyca Virnig** (Learning Tree);

**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). **Cora Rice** (Program Director)

**Committee Members Absent:** **Maria Bettini** (LCPS); **Rita Dellatore** (Board Member – Kid City); **Patricia Dominguez** (Challenged Minds); **Yara Duchesne** (RCMA); **Jenn Faber** (Children’s Council); **Dr. Carol Frink** (Lee County School District); **JoAnne Fuciu** (Lee Memorial); **Ashley Houk** (First Presbyterian Church, Naples); **Michele King** (Committee Chair, ELC Board, Golisano Children’s Hospital); **Tia Knapp** (ABC Academy); **Marie Liebensohn** (Lee Memorial); **Elizabeth McBride** (Collier County Public Schools); **Rachel McIntyre** (Open Doors Lehigh Acres and Estero); **Marissa Mona** (EduCare Academy); **Ana Neuhauser** (RCMA); **Penney Norton** (Division of Early Learning); **Joanne Pachiva** (Lee County School District); **Kelly Roy** (Board Member – FSW); **Kendra Stamp** (Educare); **Donna VanTol** (Collier County Health Department – ELC); **Paul Welch** (Sonrise Academy); **Mandy Willis** (Faith Academy).

Agenda Items	Facilitator/Presenter	Comments/Actions
<b>Welcome</b>	The meeting was called to order by Leona Adkins at 9:02 am using the Zoom platform.	

<b>Introductions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All in attendance introduced themselves. New board member Rebecca McKellar gave her history in Early Childhood Education and her current position which involves training new teachers and creating trainings for teachers at Creative World. Creative World has centers throughout the United States. Rebecca also is a former Early Childhood Specialist for the Early Learning Coalition of SWFL. She is the moderator of this meeting today. We are excited to have her join the Program Committee.</li> </ul>	
<b>Susan Block – ELC Reported by Leona Adkins</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ms. Adkins reported that we are close to the end of the legislative session. HB 1199, a bill that would create a funding formula for School Readiness (SR) remains under consideration.</li> <li>We are awaiting the release of the latest statewide market rates to analyze SWFL rate in comparison to other communities.</li> </ul>	
<b>Approval of Meeting Minutes for January 7, 2022</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft minutes were reviewed for the January 7 meeting.</li> </ul>	<p>Motion to accept minutes as presented made by Angela Anderson and seconded by Heather Singleton. Minutes were unanimously approved. Minutes will be posted on the Program Committee page at <a href="https://elcofswfl.org/program-committee/">https://elcofswfl.org/program-committee/</a>.</p>
<b>Leona Adkins – Grants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ARPA grant will offer \$32 million in stabilization funds which will be accepted by ELC on Monday, February 28<sup>th</sup>.</li> <li>The application for ARPA funds is very involved and will be available in the portal partially pre-populated</li> <li>Training sessions will be available to facilitate the ease with which to fill out the application.</li> <li>The base amount is \$12,000, higher amounts are based on the number of children, CLASS scores and other variables.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief II (ESSER II) funds for VPK providers allow \$290 for technological assistance per classroom. Information will be sent out the third week of March.</li> <li>• Funding for a variety of grants will be received and we will let you know when and where applications are available.</li> </ul>	
<b>Gilda Duran – reported by Cora Rice: Enrollment and waitlist</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As of Friday February 25, there were no families on the School Readiness (SR) waiting list.</li> <li>• Enrollment of families: Lee 1893, Collier 767, Hendry 192, Glades 15. Children enrolled: Lee 3307, Collier 1370, Hendry 350, Glades 21.</li> <li>• Trying to recruit providers. Infant and Toddler slots are the most difficult to find. Encouraging providers to open classrooms.</li> </ul>	Please contact <a href="mailto:Brenda.Griffin@elcofswfl.org">Brenda.Griffin@elcofswfl.org</a> if you have any recommendations for new SR providers.
<b>Danna Breeden – COVID 19 and other Health Concerns reported by Gayla Thompson</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COVID numbers are steadily declining. It is still recommended that children, staff, parents, and visitors with COVID symptoms either get tested, go to the doctor, or stay home until symptoms resolve. It is still required that a positive COVID child or staff be reported to DCF and ELC</li> <li>• There is also new COVID-19 guidance from the Florida Department of Health which does not rely on wearing facial coverings in a community setting. This is contrary to the CDC guidance.</li> </ul>	Flier from FDOH will be attached to the email accompanying these minutes.
<b>Bronwyn Gogia - Child Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms. Gogia discussed the extension of the Mental Health grant.</li> <li>• ELC is working with the Health Planning Conference of SWFL, Jessica Stone for this phase of the grant.</li> <li>• 10 providers, 20 teachers, have been chosen for observation and coaching support in social emotional development.</li> <li>• There will be three trainings with staff of the providers in the pilot project. Hopefully, the work will continue with other providers, after with pilot.</li> <li>• Materials include some from the Discovery Source – the Pyramid Model Kit, and the Calming Kit for Toddlers through Preschool.</li> <li>• Also purchasing ASQ screening kits for all SR providers.</li> </ul>	

<b>Cheryl Carpenter – Assessments for CLASS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ELC is amid contracting with Teachstone to assist with the CLASS assessments. This will allow all the SR and VPK assessments to be completed timely for the purposes of contracting.</li> </ul>	
<b>Gayla Thompson – VPK teacher and Director requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Florida statutes and rules require that all VPK directors have a VPK Director Credential with VPK endorsement or hold a valid certificate in education leadership issues by the Florida Department of Education.</li> <li>VPK Lead teachers are required to take 15 hours of Emergent Literacy training classes in addition to Implementing the Florida Standards in Preschool Classrooms: 3 VPK Years Old to Kindergarten (online VFSP) before the VPK Application can be certified and children added to classes.</li> <li>Terri Konczak, VPK regional facilitator explained the process for dealing with the 3-part classes of emergent literacy trainings. The classes can be taken online on the DCF website or live virtual trainings. Back to DCF site for follow up session.</li> </ul>	<p>Directors may access more information pertaining to the Director Credential and course registration at:  <a href="https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/child-care/training.shtml">https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/child-care/training.shtml</a></p> <p>Fliers for both VPK Directors and VPK Leads will be included with the minutes when they are sent out.</p>
<b>Open Discussion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heather Singleton and Laura Fisher are interested in the possibility of using retired individuals to work as assistants in classrooms. They would be paid a stipend and would have to meet all DCF criteria to be in the rooms. Would there be a possibility to link with a foster grandparent group? If you are interested, please contact Heather. Ashley Houk is interested.</li> </ul>	<p>Contact Heather Singleton at <a href="mailto:heathers@childspath.org">heathers@childspath.org</a> if you are interested in this project.</p>
<b>Adjournment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 am</li> </ul>	
<b>Next Meeting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>April 15, 2022</li> </ul>	

*The next meeting will be available both face to face and by Zoom.*