



EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

Program Committee

Meeting Minutes

November 13, 2015

9:00 – 11:00 am

Committee Members Present: Chair – **Ashley Houk** – (First Presbyterian Church, Naples); **Angela Anderson** (Child Care of Southwest Florida); **Damaris Boone** (RCMA); **Renate Engels** (Guadalupe Center); **JoAnne Fuciu** (Lee Memorial); **Kim Gerbasio** on phone (LAMP); **Beth Lobdell** on phone (CCSWFL) **Stephanie Rode** (St. Andrews Catholic School); **Sherry Shupp** (RCMA); **Heather Singleton** (Gladiolus Learning and Child Development); **Anne Snyder** (FDLRS, Lee Schools); **Alexandra Vaughan** (CCCR); **Jesyca Virnig** (Learning Tree)

Staff Members Present: **Tom Bamrick** (Chief Operating Officer); **Kristi Biffar** (Supervisor of Mentors and Trainers); **Susan Block** (Chief Executive Officer); **Gayla Thompson** (Chief Quality Officer)

Committee Members Absent: **Ivette Aponte-Torres** (CCCR); **Jenn Faber** (Children’s Council); **Peggy Janitz** (RCMA); **Julia Kroeker** (Florida Southwestern State College); **Marie Liebensohn Morales** (Collier Public Schools); **Rachel McIntyre** (Open Doors Preschool); **Ana Neuhauser** (RCMA); **Andy Spalding** (Immokalee Child Care Center); **Kendra Stamp** (EduCare); **Maggie Stevens** (Lee County Schools); **Paul Walsh** (Sonrise Academy)

Agenda Items	Facilitator/Presenter	Comments/Actions
Welcome and Introductions	The meeting was called to order by Ashley Houk at 9:01 am and introductions were made.	
Approval of Meeting Minutes for September 11, 2015	Draft minutes were reviewed for September 11, 2015.	Motion to accept minutes made by Sherry Shupp, and seconded by Renate Engels. Approved unanimously. Minutes will be posted on the ELC website on the Program Committee page
Understanding the District Perspective on Kindergarten Readiness: VPK Provider Input Gayla Thompson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gayla Thompson reported that Hendry and Lee Counties each have a Kindergarten teacher training on how to get ready for Kindergarten. Currently, we are working on contracting with a trainer for Collier County and Sherry Shupp provided a contact to find a trainer for Glades County. The committee would like the schools to know that VPK is not kindergarten. While VPK needs to prepare children for school, it needs to be developmentally appropriate. There are only 540 hours throughout the school year in which to work with these children. Expectations of what children will learn in VPK are unrealistic. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee would like to know the top three things VPK children need to know for kindergarten, eg. write their name, count to 30, follow directions. • Parents complain to provider that the child didn't learn enough in VPK and is put in a low group for Kindergarten. • Self-help skills and cultural sensitivity are very important for later academic success. These are some of what VPK teaches well to all children. 	
<p>Legislative/ELC Update Susan Block</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Southwest Florida Community Foundation</u> – ELC is involved in a Lumina Foundation Future Makers initiative to benchmark a community's well-being. In the 5 county area (Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry and Lee) only 27% of graduates have a degree which provides a sustainable income. This is a cradle to career initiative which involves private/public sector /economic development. The question was raised, how will benchmarks be documented if FLKRS is not available again this year? • <u>Association of Early Learning Coalitions</u> - Representatives of the Early Learning Coalitions will meet with Florida school administrators in February to encourage the bridge between early learning and the school districts. • <u>Child Care Development Fund (CCDF)</u> –Federal law was changed in 2014, Florida is responding to the plan. Draft bill language from Rodney McKinnon, Executive Director of Office of Early Learning, will be put forward for legislative consideration. The Florida legislature is looking at meeting the minimum requirements of CCDF. • <u>ELC Board</u> – There is an upcoming strategic planning meeting scheduled that will focus on input from staff and committees including what is done well, what is not good and ideas for improvement. Input is requested before the meeting. 	
<p>Southwest Florida Stars Kristi Biffar</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratings were completed later this year than previously, as the Coalition was doing the CLASS observations – we have 4 Pre-K and 4 Toddler certified CLASS observers. • Maleeni Singh, ELC Quality Mentor, worked with the workgroup to update standards for STARS. ECERS/ITERS were eliminated, but may still use FCCERS where CLASS is not appropriate. Credentials in progress are now being credited toward the professional development requirements. • Last year 33 providers were rated, this year 36 have signed up so far. CLASS observations for this year will begin in January. • A recommendation was made to enroll providers into STARS at different times of year. This would roll observation times, which may 	

	<p>help some providers for whom fall is too busy to sign up for STARS.</p>	
<p>Market Rate Discussion Thomas Bamrick</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cost of living is used to choose counties with whom to compare rates paid for school readiness services. Our goal is to smooth out unevenness within our four counties, which may mean increasing some rates and decreasing others. • The market survey is done every 2 years by county and state. Providers need to list private pay rates, without any scholarships they offer, when filling out the Provider Update Forms to provide good information for the Market Rate Survey. • Ms. Block stated that Gold Seal certification is not the best evidence of quality. There may be a recommended change in the rate for Gold Seal, as ELC looks at how best to incentivize SWFL STARS. • The ELC Board will be making decisions about Market Rate and Gold Seal after the upcoming strategic planning meeting. • A recommendation was made by committee members to set up business training such as offered by Ted Copeland. 	
<p>Waitlist and VPK/SR numbers Tom Bamrick</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The waitlist between the Single Point of Entry (old system) and the Parent Portal (new system) is 1850, increased from 1700 at the last meeting. 2-3 documents must be approved to qualify for the waitlist now. This screening decreases the waitlist numbers overall. • School Readiness enrollment is ongoing for the must serve category and the economically disadvantaged. More enrollment documents are submitted and screened prior to the appointment with the client. 55 children were enrolled since late October, current SR enrollment is 3645. • Only Birth -5 being enrolled, no school age children. • Immokalee has no room for approved children to enroll, need more capacity • VPK enrollment 7201 as of today 	

<p>Projects – Gayla Thompson and Kristi Biffar</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Early Learning Provider Funding Project</u> – 6 providers participating in the project this year. Tier One providers work on CLASS – Introduction to CLASS and Making the Most of Classroom Interactions. Tier Two completed CLASS and is doing ELFL training with TA/Coaching or Communities of Practice. • <u>Early Learning Florida (ELFL)</u> – 50 spots for online training alone, or with coaching or Communities of Practice. 14 of these spots are for the Tier Two participants, 36 for others. Will offer spots to SWFL STARS participants. If training is completed and Mastery achieved, participants get paid \$125 and 1 CEU. There are 5 classes offered with 10 spots in each class. There will be two semesters at 8 weeks per semester. The classes are supported with teacher instruction. Cheryl Carpenter is the point person for this project. • <u>Early Head Start/Child Care Partnership</u> - Currently has about 50 children enrolled in the project. Ashley Houk announced that the ELC Board agreed to adjust the priorities of the level three funding to give priority to those infants and toddlers who qualify for the grant, up to the full enrollment of 72 children. This category is only applicable when there are openings in the project. • <u>FSU Pathway to Quality for Infants and Toddler Child Care</u> – Our staff will test part of the 10 Components of Quality Infant and Toddler Care tool in conjunction with the ELC of Sarasota. This will involve recruiting 14 -17 facilities who will allow staff to use this tool to see how well it describes the quality care components for infants and toddlers. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Kristi Biffar (Kristi.Biffar@elcofswfl.org). Participation in research projects counts toward the professional contribution section of the Director’s Credential renewal. 	
<p>Meetings discussion – other discussion/events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday December 1, 2015 from 5 – 8 pm is the CCCR Early Childhood Education Symposium with Edith Peisach, creator of the acclaimed “Baby Stars” program. Alexandra Vaughn is the contact for this event. Cost is \$50, with a limited number of \$25 scholarships available. 	<p>To register go to www.collierchildcare.org. You can reach Alexandra Vaughan at 305-970-8639.</p>
<p>Adjournment</p>	<p>The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 am.</p>	
<p>Next Meeting</p>	<p>Friday, January 8, 2015 9 – 11 am</p>	

All meetings will be held at 2675 Winkler Avenue, Fort Myers, FL 33901 unless otherwise announced.