



# EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA BOARD MINUTES

Wednesday, November 18, 2020  
9:00 a.m.

**Board Members Present:** *Marshall Bower, Interim Board Chair, Chair-Events Committee, President and CEO, The Foundation for Lee County Public Schools; Douglas Szabo, Esq., Board Treasurer, Henderson, Franklin, Starnes and Holt P.A*

**Board Members Present via ZOOM:** *Nate Halligan, Vice Chair, Asst. Vice President/Small Business Portfolio Manager, Busey Bank; Jeff Alluri, Principal, VP Consulting, Element Technologies, LLC; Rita Dellatore, Owner/Director, Kid City Early Learning Academy, LLC; Brooke Delmotte, Provider Liaison/Operations Manager, Early Steps, SWFL Health Planning Council; Michele King, Director Child Advocacy Program, Golisano Children’s Hospital of SW Florida; Jim Palmer, Child Care Regulations Supervisor, Department of Children and Families; Joe Paterno, Executive Director, Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board; Kimberly Ross, Owner, Ross Dynasty Care; Dr. Kelly Roy, Chair-Nomination & By-Laws Committee, Professor/Coordinator of Early Childhood Education, Florida Southwestern State College*

**Board Members Absent:** *Selina Jefferson, Board Secretary, Director, Mount Hermon Ministries/Dew of Hermon Early Learning Center; Damaris Boone, Chair-Program Committee, Early Education Outcome Analyst, Redlands Christian Migrant Association (RCMA); Yara Duchesne, Program Coordinator, Redlands Christian Migrant Association (RCMA); Jason Himschoot, Esq., Chair-Human Resources Committee, Maughan, Himschoot & Adams Law Group; Kim Jordan, Interim Superintendent of Schools, Glades County School District; Selena Lucas, Assistant Community Health Nursing Director, Designee-Florida Department of Health Collier County; ;Roger Mercado, Director, Lee County Human and Veteran Services, Designee-Lee Board of County Commissioners;*

**Staff Present:** *Susan Block, CEO; Lugeenya Blackstock, CFO; Gilda Duran, Director of Risk Management; Ginger McHale, Executive Coordinator*

**Staff Present via Zoom:** *Kim Usa, Chief Program Officer; Leona Adkins, Chief Quality Officer*

(\*) *Materials included in Board packet*

(\*\*) *Materials posted on SharePoint for Board Members’ access*

Agenda Items	Discussion	Action/Assignments
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<p><b>Welcome and Introductions</b>  <b>A. Board Approval of Updated Agenda, 11/18/2020</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Bower called the meeting to order at 9:03 am. A quorum was established.</li> <li>• Ms. Block presented an update to the agenda: item 5C, 2021 Health Insurance Benefit Contribution.</li> <li>• Ms. Block welcomed Dr. Beth McBride who will be rejoining the ELC Board January 1, 2021 as the Head Start Designee, Collier County Public Schools.</li> </ul>	<p>Motion made to accept the updated agenda made by Mr. Szabo and seconded by Mr. Paterno. Motion approved.</p>
<p><b>Public Comments</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>	
<p><b>1. Executive Committee Report*</b>  <b>A. Update</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No report currently.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>2. Consent Agenda (Vote required)*</b>  <b>Note: Any item on the Consent Agenda can be withdrawn by a Board Member for full Board consideration</b></p> <p><b>Approval of Meeting Minutes of the September 30, 2020 Board Meeting**</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The September 30, 2020 minutes presented for approval.</li> </ul>	<p>Motion to approve the 9/30/2020 minutes made by Mr. Paterno and seconded by Ms. Delmotte. Motion approved.</p>
<p><b>3. Finance Committee*</b>  <b>A. Discuss Utilization Forecast**</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Szabo reported the number of enrolled First Responders' children has decreased as expected since new referrals ended July 31, 2020. School Readiness (SR) services continue at this time.</li> <li>• Mr. Szabo stated with the help of the Office of Early Learning (OEL) staff, Wait List data from EFS Mod (The Portal) corrected which accounts for a 25% decrease.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>B. Review of Utilization Reports and Statements of Revenues and</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Szabo discussed the financial reports ending September 2020. Mr. Szabo addressed the summary</li> </ul>	<p>Motion from this standing committee presented for a vote. Motion approved.</p>

<b>Expenditures**</b>	<p>reports for School Readiness (SR) and Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) identifying the current year expenditures and administrative costs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The high VPK Administrative costs were noted and will be monitored carefully.</li> </ul>	
<b>C. Update of NOA**</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr. Szabo stated the Notice of Award (NOA) increased to over \$53M, additional funds are from the CARES funding along with Preschool Development Grants. CARES includes First Responder costs and provider grants.</li> </ul>	
<b>D. Update on Audit and Monitoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ms. Block reported the Coalition is preparing for Moss, Krusick annual audit which will be conducted virtually this year.</li> </ul>	
<b>E. Summary of Expenditures: Broad Authority</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr. Szabo stated the broad authority expires on Dec. 31, 2020 and does not need to be extended.</li> </ul>	
<b>F. Status: 2018-2019 Provider Payments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr. Szabo reported the underpayment providers' checks and first round of overpayment letters have been mailed out. Fifty-five providers responded: Six agreed with the amount due and forty-nine do not agree. Appointments will be scheduled with the forty-nine providers to review the financial records. Sixty follow-up letters have been mailed out. The funds collected are repaid to OEL.</li> </ul>	
<b>Committee Reports</b>		
<b>4. Events Committee</b>		
<b>A. Update</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No report currently.</li> </ul>	
<b>5. HR/Personnel Committee</b>		
<b>A. Approve Updated Job Description: CEO**</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ms. Block presented the updated CEO job description that reflects the re-organization of the Coalition. The operational duties have been reassigned to the COO.</li> </ul>	<p>Motion to approve the updated CEO job description made by Dr. Roy and seconded by Ms. Delmotte. Motion approved.</p>

<b>B. Revised ELC Organization Chart**</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ms. Block stated the new organization chart includes the promotions of Ms. Cotter to Chief Operations Officer, Mr. Reyes to Chief Information Officer and Ms. Blackstock to Chief Financial Officer.</li> </ul>	
<b>C. 2021 Health Insurance Benefit Contribution**</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ms. Block presented the proposed increase to our Florida Blue health insurance policy of 1% for 2021. This increase presents an increase to the staff contribution to their portion of health insurance.</li> <li>Ms. Block requests an increase of \$76.31 annual per employee to cover the increase.</li> </ul>	<p>Motion made to approve an increase of \$76.31 annually per employee made by Mr. Paterno and seconded by Dr. Roy. Motion approved.</p>
<b>6. Nominations &amp; Bylaws Committee</b> <b>A. Recognition of Outgoing Members: Yara Duchesne, Program Director RCMA and Selena Lucas, Assistant Community Health Nursing Director, Designee-Florida Department of health Collier County</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Roy recognized Mr. Duchesne and Ms. Lucas for their contributions as members of the Coalition's Board of Directors.</li> </ul>	
<b>B. Motion to Approve Kim Ross for Board Membership, January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2024</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Roy presented Ms. Ross for her second board term from January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2024.</li> </ul>	<p>Motion from this standing committee presented for a vote. Motion approved</p>
<b>C. Incoming Board members: Char-Nequa Smith, Lee County DOH and Beth McBride, Collier County Public Schools, Head Start Designee**</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Roy announced Ms. Smith and Dr. McBride will be joining the Board on January 1, 2021.</li> </ul>	
<b>D. Board Development: "Eligibility" and "Appeals Hearing Orientation"</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ms. Usa presented an overview of the Florida VPK eligibility and enrollment process.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms. Usa discussed in detail the SR program eligibility process. Most of the children enrolled come from the waitlist or they have an at-risk referral and receive services within 48 hours.</li> <li>• Ms. Duran presented in detail the Appeal Hearing process. There was a discussion about the use of Facebook in the investigation process.</li> </ul>	
<b>7. Program Committee A. Update</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms. Block reported on behalf of Ms. King. She stated the coalition has received two small preschool development grants for mental health support and curriculum for providers.</li> <li>• In 2021 VPK providers are invited to participate in a pilot VPK progress monitoring using Star Early Learning, the digital tool used to screen entering kindergartners, the Florida Kindergarten Screener (FLKRS). Providers will be given support items to complete the screenings.</li> </ul>	
<b>8. Appeals Committees A. Bloom Appeal, 10-8-2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Halligan reported the Appeal Committee agreed to overturn the decision to terminate childcare on the condition that the appellant provide additional documentation. Ms. Bloom provided the documentation by the due date and childcare has continued.</li> </ul>	
<b>B. Snowden Appeal, 10-8-2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Halligan reported the Appeal Committee agreed to overturn the decision to terminate childcare on the condition that the appellant provide additional documentation. Ms. Snowden provided the documentation by the due date and childcare has continued.</li> </ul>	
<b>9. Report of the CEO** A. Executive Director's Report**</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms. Block stated the Florida Legislative budget process will be challenging as funds are down by \$2B due to the Coronavirus impact. At this time, we do not know if the VPK budget will be affected.</li> </ul>	Ms. Block will share the OEL legislative budget request when available with the board members.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms. Block thanked Ms. Usa and Ms. Duran for the mini trainings they provided this morning.</li> <li>• All regular appointments with families are under way and field visits continue. We are watching the uptick in COVID-19 cases and if conditions pose a threat to the health and safety of our staff, we will make adjustments to our current practices.</li> <li>• Ms. Block welcomed Char-Nequa (Shay) Smith to the call. She will be joining the ELC Board on Jan. 1, 2021.</li> <li>• Mr. Halligan reported the Busey Bank book drive started in September. More information to come.</li> <li>• Mr. Bower encouraged board members to talk with legislators about the importance of early learning once the OEL budget is announced.</li> </ul>	
<b>10. Adjournment</b>	The board meeting adjourned by acclamation at 10:15am.	
<b>Next Meeting</b>	January 27, 2021, 9:00 am – 11:00 am, via Zoom	