



EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA
Kings Kidz Academy: Appeal Hearing Minutes
November 10, 2016
1:00 pm

Purpose: Review the Coalition’s decision to terminate School Readiness contract with Kings Kidz Academy, 330 W. Mariana Avenue, N. Fort Myers, FL 33903

Executive Committee Members Present:

Damaris Boone, *Early Education Outcome Analyst, Redlands Christian Migrant Association (RCMA) (Provider Representative)*
Dr. Denis Wright, *Charlotte Campus President and VP of Economic and Community Development, Florida Southwestern State College (College System Representative)*
Jennifer Lange, *Owner/Director, Little People’s School (Provider Representative)*

Appellant Present: **Leon Walsh**, *Kings Kidz Academy Attorney*; **Reverend Tim Richter**; **Sherry Pritcher**, *Director*; **Lois Strasbaugh**, *Church Member*

Coalition Staff Present: **Susan Block**, *CEO*; **Gayla Thompson**, *Chief Officer*; **Virginia McHale**, *Executive Administrative Assistant. to CEO*; **Charles Thomson**, *Coalition Attorney, Coleman, Yovanovich & Koester, P.A. (via the telephone)*

Agenda Items	Discussion	Action/Assignments
Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairperson, Dr. Denis Wright, led introductions beginning at 12:57 pm. 	
Review of Hearing Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Wright, chair, reviewed the appeal hearing procedure, referring to the agenda provided to all participants. Ms. Virginia McHale, Notary Public, swore all those testifying including: Gayla Thompson, Susan Block, Leon Walsh, Rev. Tim Richter, Sherry Pritcher, and Lois Strasbaugh 	

Presentation by Early Learning Coalition Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gayla Thompson, presented an overview of the decision to terminate the contract with Kings Kidz Academy. • Ms. Block clarified the rationale for termination was based on two DCF Class 1 Violations and the Coalition’s procedure in response, at that time. 	
Presentation of Kings Kidz Academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kings Kidz Academy presented their appeal. The attorney presented his argument that the violations were not valid. Staff testimony describes a different scenario where they responded appropriately. Rev Richter described a healthy and safe environment that is provided for children. Sherry Pritcher talked about all the steps taken following the incident and answered questions from the committee about the event, their response, and the families’ response. They did not feel that they could have or should have done anything differently as there was nothing that indicated a need to call 911.They disagree with the DCF Violations and are awaiting an appeal hearing with DCF in February 2017. Lois Strasbaugh spoke on behalf of the program as a church member and as someone who enrolled children in her care at the Academy. She spoke highly of the teachers and the care provided to children. 	
Conclusion of Appeal Hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Wright requested Kings Kidz to leave during deliberation. • The committee members deliberated and came to a determination. 	<p>The committee drafted minutes for the appeal hearing and approved them. The original draft was approved by all three members of the committee.</p>
Committee Decision	<p>The Committee overturned the Coalition decision to terminate School Readiness contract with Kings Kidz Academy. The Provider is allowed to enroll children effective November 11, 2016 with the following conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A written plan to correct the violations cited in the DCF reports is to be submitted. The Coalition staff will 	<p>Motion to accept the committee ruling by Damaris Boone, second by Jennifer Lange. Motion Approved.</p>

	<p>oversee implementation of the corrective action plan. Specifically, the Committee would like to see an appropriate plan to address illness and injury including parental notification, pick-up plans, and effective 911 policy.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Any future incident must be communicated to the Early Learning Coalition, according to Section X1 Notification, Part 68, of the Statewide School Readiness Provider Contract. 3. Kings Kidz Academy is on probation for a six-month period from 11/11/16 through 5/11/17. Any Class 1 Violation in the next six years will be grounds for termination of the School Readiness contract for the maximum five year period. <p>The Committee specifically stated these reasons in support of its decisions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The new Coalition procedure as of September 13, 2016 which would have permitted the option of a corrective action plan if violations had occurred after September 13, 2016. 	<p>Ms. Block will communicate with the Provider within 24 hours. Dr. Wright will present findings at the November 16th Board meeting.</p> <p>A letter will be sent to Kings Kidz Academy with the committee's determination by Ms. Block.</p>
<p>Preparation of Appeals Hearing Committee Minutes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee prepared a final draft of the minutes of the appeals hearing. 	<p>Motion to accept the appeal hearing minutes by Jennifer Lange, second by Damaris Boone. Motion Approved.</p> <p>The Committee charged Ms. Block with typing of the minutes, as written. Ms. Block will post the approved minutes to the Coalition's website.</p>
<p>Adjournment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Wright thanked the members for their participation and adjourned the meeting at 2:33 pm. 	