



# EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WORKSHOP MINUTES

Wednesday, July 29, 2020

2:00- 3:00 p.m.

**Purpose:** The Executive Committee is composed of officers and the chairpersons of Board committees. The Executive Committee is responsible for direction and oversight regarding the overall program and a financial management and operations. This Executive Committee Workshop is meeting to engage in ELC activities related to COVID-19 and the impact on our SWFL families and providers.

**Committee Member Present:** **Marshall Bower**, Interim Board Chair, Chair-Events Committee, *President/CEO, The Foundation for Lee County Public Schools*

**Committee Members via Zoom:** **Nate Halligan**, Vice-Chair, *Assistant Vice President/Small Business Portfolio Manager, Busey Bank*; **Douglas Szabo**, Board Treasurer, *Attorney, Henderson, Franklin, Starnes & Holt, P.A.*; **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)*; **Dr. Kelly Roy**, Chair-Nominations & Bylaws Committee, *Professor/Early Childhood Education Coordinator, Florida Southwestern State College*

**Committee Members Absent:** **Jason Himschoot**, Chair–HR Committee, *Attorney, Maughan, Himschoot & Adams Law Group*

**Staff Present:** **Susan Block**, CEO; **Kim Usa**, Chief Program Officer; **Ginger McHale**, Ex. Admin. Asst. to CEO

**Staff via Zoom:** **Nga Cotter**, CFO; **Leona Adkins**, Chief Quality Officer

(\* ) Materials included in Executive Committee Packet.

(\*\*) Materials posted on SharePoint for Committee Members.

Agenda Items	Discussion	Action/Assignments
<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting called to order at 2:03 p.m. by Mr. Bower. A quorum was established.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ms. Block presented a list of furniture scheduled for elimination from the ELC inventory.</li> </ul>	Motion made to approval the removal of the furniture listed made by Mr. Halligan and seconded by Ms. Boone. Motion approved.
<b>Public Comments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None.</li> </ul>	
<b>1. Executive Committee*</b> <b>A. Update on ELC Operations**</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ms. Block gave a brief history of the Coalition’s response to COVID-19 beginning with telework March 18, 2020. The staff returned to the office beginning of July implementing procedures developed in consultation with Danna Breeden, RN, Collier Department of Health. Procedures include office activities and how to respond to potential COVID-19 exposure.</li> </ul>	
<b>B. Grants and Activities Related to COVID-19</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ms. Cotter reported on new funding received the last few months of FY 19/20. The Mini-Grants for providers assisted 112 providers with funding to assist with costs due to COVID-19. In addition, 202 teacher received individual professional development grants.</li> <li>CARES Emergency Child Care Relief Grants applications are for both contracted (SR &amp; VPK) and non-contracted providers. We typically do not interact with non-contracted providers so, when requesting documents from the non-contracted providers for the grant, we discuss the opportunity to contract with the Coalition.</li> <li>Under the CARES Rising Kindergarten Summer Program, the school districts may be granted funds to create and implement transitional supports for children entering kindergarten in the fall of 2020.</li> </ul>	

	<p>This program will assist children who missed the last 20% of their VPK classes due to COVID-19.</p>	
<p><b>C. Services to Families during the Pandemic</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms. Usa reported on the First Responder and Essential Health Care Worker (ESS) program established by the state. To date we have received over 800 referrals from HR departments. Families are able to renew the childcare scholarship in three-month increments. The Office of Early Learning (OEL) is to give a 30 days' notice when this program will end.</li> <li>• The Coalition provided technical assistance to United Way for Lee Cares, a childcare scholarship response to COVID-19 funded by the Lee Board of County Commissioners. This short-term scholarship provides supports to those returning to the workforce following a COVID-19 related layoff or job loss.</li> <li>• Ms. Usa described health and safety preparations underway to accommodate client appointments in the office.</li> <li>• There was a discussion about provider capacity as children return to the centers and the increased in the number of ESS children being served. There is a concern that the ESS children will limit capacity for regular school readiness children. Staff will monitor this situation carefully.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>D. Provider Challenges</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms. Adkins reported the Early Childhood Specialists have the personal protective equipment to resume visiting one center a day. Short visits, fifteen minutes</li> </ul>	

	<p>or less, ensure we are monitoring providers while mindful of keeping staff safe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the peak of the pandemic, 333 providers closed due to COVID-19. Presently we have 30 providers closed due to various reasons. Some remain fearful of operating in the COVID-19 environment, some sites are in public schools or awaiting the school calendar announcement. For those unable to navigate the financial and environmental challenges, we anticipate that some may remain closed permanently. We have started a recruitment program for providers in high-need areas.</li> <li>• The provider weekly Town Hall meetings, held about once weekly since March are well-attended. Providers appreciate this opportunity. These will continue as a platform to provide information and training.</li> </ul>	<p>Dr. Roy requested a copy of the provider recruitment program.</p>
<p><b>E. General Discussion</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms. Block talked about what is contractually required grant activities where we experience challenges due to health and safety concerns. We are looking at conducting virtual trainings.</li> <li>• We await the FY20/21 grant award notification from OEL.</li> <li>• There was a discussion about the relationship of available childcare and getting the economy up and running. The relationship between childcare and the economy has become more broadly understood during the pandemic.</li> <li>• Mr. Bower thanked Mr. Szabo for his support with the FY18-19 and FY19-20 reconciliation addendums. Mr. Bower also thanked the Coalition</li> </ul>	

	staff for their service during this COVID-19 time.	
<b>Adjournment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The meeting adjourned by acclamation at 3:00 pm.</li> </ul>	
<b>Next Meeting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Wednesday, September 16, 2020</b></li> </ul>	