



EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

Program Committee

Meeting Minutes

April 8, 2016

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); **Kim Gerbasio** via phone (LAMP); **Beth Lobdell** (Childcare of Southwest Florida); **Karen Miller** (Childcare of Southwest Florida); **Stephanie Rode** (St. Andrews Catholic School); **Heather Singleton** (Gladiolus Learning and Child Development); **Jesyca Virnig** (Learning Tree); **Paul Welch** (Sonrise Academy); **Mandy Willis** (Faith Academy)

Staff Members Present: **Tom Bamrick** (Chief Operations Officer); **Kristi Biffar** (Supervisor of Mentors and Trainers); **Susan Block** (Chief Executive Officer); **Delia Buckley** (Family Resource Director); **Bronwyn Gogia** (Lead Quality Mentor); **Barbara Peck** (Family Resource Director); **Maleeni Singh** (Quality Mentor); **Gayla Thompson** (Chief Quality Officer)

Committee Members Absent: **Ivette Aponte-Torres** (CCCR); **Renate Engels** (Guadalupe Center); **Julia Kroeker** (Florida Southwestern State College); **Rachel McIntyre** (Open Doors Preschool); **Marie Liebenson Morales** (Lee Memorial); **Sherry Shupp** (RCMA); **Anne Snyder** (FDLRS, Lee Schools); **Kendra Stamp** (EduCare); **Michelle Starr** (Collier County Schools)

Agenda Items	Facilitator/Presenter	Comments/Actions
Welcome and Introductions	The meeting was called to order by Ashley Houk at 9:02 am and introductions were made.	
Approval of Meeting Minutes for March 10, 2016	Draft minutes were reviewed for March 10, 2016 meeting.	Motion to accept minutes made by Jesyca Virnig, and seconded by Heather Singleton. Approved unanimously. Minutes will be posted on the ELC website on the Program Committee page
Legislative/ELC Update Susan Block	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The legislative session is over and campaign season has begun. Legislative visits are encouraged during this pre-election period. • Susan Block explained the enrollment changes for School Readiness in the new Child Care Development Fund. Once in the program, most children are in to stay for 12 months. Coalitions have expressed concerns with waitlists and availability, although this rule supports continuity of care. • There will be a new grant agreement with the Office of Early Learning (OEL). Full implementation of changes will begin July 1. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about potential fraud were raised by Paul Welch. The Coalitions have some concerns in this area as well. • There will be a graduated phase out plan in place for those families that go over the 200% of Federal Poverty Level, to allow them to gradually increase their parent payment as they come off of subsidized care. • The priorities remain the same. The Coalition must serve population continues per statute. 	
<p>Letter to Rodney MacKinnon re: VPK - Ashley Houk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The draft of the letter to Rodney MacKinnon was distributed and read. • Suggestions were made to be added to the letter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Readiness Rate is used by parents to decide on providers for VPK. Unfair to have a rate for 13-14 still outstanding until spring of 2018 and effecting those providers. ○ Changes in Teaching Strategies Gold requirements and the Readiness Rates have created morale issues with staff. ○ The VPK Assessment is not a good reflection of a teacher's ability, as it does not take the starting point of the child into consideration. • The letter will be forwarded to the board for approval and signature once approved by the committee 	<p>Ashley Houk will revise the letter and Gayla Thompson will send it out to the committee for approval.</p>
<p>Southwest Florida STARS (QRIS) update and discussion – Ashley Houk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The STARS workgroup had discussed the addition of Toddler and Infant CLASS observations this year. • Concerns were expressed by some providers that the staff of centers were not ready for the Toddler assessment because there were no trainings offered. The suggestion was made that this year be a “pilot” year, and that the Toddler and Infant CLASS observations not count toward the STAR rating. • There are no trainings provided by Teachstone on Infant and Toddler CLASS other than observer trainings. The Coalition has had difficulty getting permission to use Teachstone materials for a training not sanctioned by Teachstone. • The Coalition needs to be sensitive to the needs of providers and hear them when they bring forth these concerns. There is an intention of partnership between the Coalition and providers regarding STARS, with the ability to discuss and have input. The Program Committee can provide this forum, as well as the workgroup on STARS. • Kim Gerbasio suggested that we wait to see how classrooms score before deciding the part Infant and Toddler CLASS will play in the calculation of STARS ratings. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The STARS workgroup will meet and discuss various alternatives for including the Toddler CLASS scores in STARS by determining appropriate thresholds for scores to count toward the STARS rating. 	
Toddler CLASS observer class information – Kristi Biffar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toddler CLASS observation training will be offered on May 10th and May 11th. This is a 2 day all day training. There are four spots left. Early Learning Florida classes will be offered in Spanish this summer from May 9 – July 3. The class will be Infant Toddler Social and Emotional Development. This is a totally online class, taught by a Spanish speaker with Spanish materials. The payment for mastery of the class is \$100. Performance Funding Project – an e-mail was sent this morning encouraging providers to apply. This project will be available in three different tiers this year. Apply by clicking on the link on the e-mail. A webinar on the Performance Funding Project is also available through the e-mail. 	<p>Call Kristi Biffar at 935-6177 for registration information</p> <p>Call Cheryl Carpenter by Wednesday, April 13 for registration information at 935-6167.</p>
SR and VPK numbers/Waitlist and VPK for 5 yr. olds – Tom Bamrick and Delia Buckley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VPK enrollment number is 7200. The Coalition began the year enrolling School Readiness children, however, not enrolling currently. Three years of historical data helps guide the decisions about increasing or decreasing enrollment at any given time. It has been observed that when the Coalition stops enrolling, parents self-reporting to referring agencies increase. The goal at this time is to keep approximately 4100 children enrolled at all times in the School Readiness program. The waitlist in July was 2000, it is now 900. The waitlist will increase now that the Coalition is not enrolling, except for at-risk children. For perspective, the waitlist in July of 2012 was over 5000. VPK is to be opened up to 5 yr. olds, beginning in July of 2016. These children must turn 6 no later than February 1 of the school year in which they enroll. 	
Family and Provider Portals – Delia Buckley and Gayla Thompson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The OEL Family Portal has received updates that require all parents to have a unique, personal e-mail address. The role of the Coalition staff to offer direct assistance to families has been reduced. If parents need help with uploading documents, they must go to a Coalition site 	

	<p>or work with their provider. Parents may no longer fax in documents and have staff upload them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soon the family portal will also host the full school readiness enrollment process. It already is the site for the waitlist. • The Provider Portal is under production at this time. The predicted date of availability is early fall. This site will allow providers to complete contracts and provider update information on line instead of the Coalition's SharePoint site. It will also allow uploading of attendance, eventually. The Coalition will continue to update the development of this new tool for communicating information between providers and Coalitions. 	
Other Discussion/Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 27th Patricia Hansen, RN will offer the Disaster Preparedness in Child Care Course from 6-8 pm at the United Way Building in Ft. Myers. This class is one that STARS participants may need. • Active shooter training was discussed. The Coalition will look at how this kind of training can be provided. Consensus was this would be for directors only so they can bring the training to their staff. 	Register at the Coalition website – www.elcofswfl.org and click on "Register Now".
Adjournment	The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 am.	
Next Meeting	Friday, May 13, 2016 9 – 11 am	

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