



Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida

Executive Director's Report for Coalition Board Meeting— 3/22/06

TAB 2: Office of Early Learning Updates

- **Board Chair and Executive Director Meeting:** Barbara and Sabra attended the 3rd Early Learning Advisory Board and Executive Director meeting on March 1st in Orlando with Lt. Gov. Toni Jennings. Updates on VPK and SR services were given and input was heard from all Coalition Chairpersons.
- **AWI Press Release on Family Satisfaction with VPK—** On March 2nd, the Agency for Workforce Innovation announced the results of the second part of a two-part customer survey showing that child care providers across the state are satisfied with Florida's new Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) program. The first part of the survey showed that parents of children enrolled in the VPK program are overwhelmingly satisfied with the implementation and benefits of the program. The program has enrolled over 92,000 children thus far since beginning in August 2005 and enrollment is currently underway for Spring and Summer 2006 sessions. (See Press Release on pp. 37-38; Statewide survey pp. 39-42)
- **Florida Dept. of Education—**Releases their report on VPK Accountability: Supports and Consequences. Information on Readiness Rates, Provider Probation, Improvement Plan and Timeline are discussed. (See DOE report on pp. 43-46).
- **ELIS—**The Early Learning Information System (ELIS) plan was presented to the EL Advisory Council Board Members on March 1st. This will be a complete overhaul of the present EFS system now being used by the State and Coalitions. (See Functional Modules, Conceptual Design and Timeline of Implementation on pp. 47-49)
- **Early Learning Plan—**A new Early Learning Coalition Plan will be mandated for all unmerged coalitions to be completed by May 1st and all merged coalitions by Sept. 1st. The new plan will address all School Readiness and Voluntary Prekindergarten services.
- **Coalition Performance Reviews—**All Coalitions will be monitored for a performance review according to a tentative schedule set by AWI. Our placement on the schedule is #16. The performance review will monitor and evaluate the performance of the ELC in administering the school readiness program, implementing the coalition's early learning plan, and administering the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program. At a minimum this will

include onsite monitoring of each coalition's finances, management, operations, and programs.

- **Legislative Update**—The legislative update was given at the March 1st ELC Advisory Board meeting. A summary of the legislative update is included in the board notebook on pp. 50-53 and a copy of the latest Bill Tracking Chart is on pp. 52A to 52E)

TAB 3: Coalition Updates

- **The ELC of SWFL Financial Statements Audit**—The Financial Statements for FY ending June 30, 2005 were audited by the firm of Rogers, Wood, Hill, Starman, & Gustason. There were no findings or questioned costs in the report. (See summary on p. 53)
- **ELC of SWF Staff Directory**—As directed by the board at the January Coalition meeting, a directory of all ELC of SWFL staff are listed on pp. 53A-53C)
- **Early Reading First Grant**—The Coalition, in partnership with United Way and Edison College, submitted a pre-application for the new 2006 round of the Early Reading First Grant from the US Dept. of Education. Those selected through this pre-application process will be invited to apply for the full application. (See ERF Abstract on pp. 54)
- **US DOE Professional Development Grant**—The Coalition of SWFL, in partnership with AWI, Office of Early Learning, and 4 other Coalitions, will submit a proposal for the US DOE PD Grant. Conceptually, we are interested in analyzing the impact of professional development delivery models. We will be utilizing the Beyond Centers and Circle Time training module for teachers in 3 and 4 year old classrooms, (delivered in 45 hours increments in Year 1 and Year 2), and delivering it to early childhood teachers in four formats: onsite college coursework, distance learning college coursework community-based training, and contextualized training (onsite training). (See WINS partnership agreement on pp. 54A and 54B.)
- **School Readiness Program Evaluator**—Shelley Robertson, from the Robertson Consulting Group, will give her report on her progress to obtain data, analyze and report on indicators as identified in the Coalition's early learning program at the January meeting. (See Shelley's summary evaluation report on pp. 55-59)
- **School Readiness Contract Monitoring**—Peter Escayg, our Director of Operations, assisted by ELC staff, conducted the Early Learning Contract Monitoring with Child Care of SW Florida on January 10-19. Peter will report a summary of the results of the monitoring at the March Coalition meeting. If any board members wish to see the full report, please contact Peter Escayg.

- **School Readiness Utilization Report**—Peter will report on the Coalition's Utilization Report (Burn Rate) and projections for the rest of the fiscal year. (See Utilization summary on p. 60).
- **School Readiness Monthly Reports**—(See School Readiness Component Summary Reports on pp. 61-68).
- **Lee County Library Festival 2006**—Congratulations to the Lee County Library for another successful Library Festival. Over 15,000 families attended the event. The Coalition was a sponsor again this year and hosted a VPK information booth and story time center. Child Care of SW Florida hosted the children's activity tent. (See flyer on p. 69-70)
- **LaBelle Children's Day 2006**—Congratulations to Judith Paskvan and the planning committee for the 2006 LaBelle Children's Day. The Coalition and CCSWFL participated in the event with activities for the children and providing information for the parents on VPK and United Way's 211 services. The Coalition also sponsored a vision and hearing screening event at the festival.
- **Play and Learn Center Fire**—Special thanks to Alice Parrish (DCF), Elaine Schaeffer (Edison College), and Melanie Holaway (Coalition Director of PD) for their quick response to the Coalition's request for assistance when the Play and Learn Center on Sanibel Island was completely destroyed by fire last Friday morning. A contribution fund was set up by the Coalition and many offers of resources have been dispatched from all 4 of our coalition provider communities! Thanks to these efforts, only 2 business days were lost before the center was re-opened with a provisional license at the Congregational Church of Sanibel! Contributions can be made to the Bank of the Islands of Sanibel. Contact Barbara Saunders for additional information. (See update email from DCF on pp. 70A-70C)
- **Dorothy Strickland Early Learning Symposium A Success**—On Feb. 4th, Dr. Dorothy Strickland, world renowned author, researcher and early literacy specialist was the guest speaker at the 2nd Early Learning Symposium, sponsored by the Early Learning Coalition of SW Florida, in partnership with Edison College. The event was held at Bishop Verot High School and it met with rave reviews. Over 350 teachers and parents attended the event.
- **Health and Safety Amendment to FL State Child Care Plan**—A new health and safety amendment was approved by the Child Care Bureau allowing coalitions to monitor all providers for compliance with basic health and safety regulations. The Coalition, under the direction of the Health Services Advisory Council, developed a team of community leaders responsible for monitoring health and safety regulations in the SWFL counties. (See Health and Safety Monitoring Chart on pp. 71-76). The committee will meet again to discuss monitoring duties so that all providers receiving SR dollars (including informal, registered and license-exempt providers) will be monitored for compliance with basic health and safety regulations.

- **Congratulations to Shirley Losch!**—for winning the NAEYC *Supporting Teachers, Strengthening Families National Leadership Program*. The program engages early childhood professionals in building the kinds of supportive relationships with families that help prevent child abuse and neglect and promote children's health social and emotional development. (See Congratulations letter from NAEYC with list of activities Shirley will participate in on p. 77).
- **May 2005 Market Rate Survey**—The Executive Board is asking for additional information on the possibility of increasing the School Readiness Provider rate based on the latest 2005 Market Rate Survey. Provider rates were last raised in January 2005. The Executive committee will review a fiscal impact report prior to making their recommendation at the May board meeting. (See Market Rate Survey and existing Maximum Reimbursement Rates on pp. 77A-77G).
- **VPK 2006!**—

Totals—We continue our efforts to advertise our VPK program, recruit new providers and enroll families. ***As of March 10th, 2006, we have 6,052 four-year olds enrolled in the VPK programs in our Southwest Florida communities with 207 approved VPK providers! This is 92% of our projected enrollment total for the 05-06 year and we are still enrolling Summer children!*** (See VPK Status Report on pp. 78-81)

Many thanks to Coalition and CCSWFL staff for their tremendous work in giving up their Saturdays to enroll children through the 15 VPK Roundup events held throughout SWFL!!! **Next VPK Roundup is Saturday at the Estero Public Library from 9 to Noon!!!**

School District Summer Totals—Lee County leads the way in the state for enrollment of VPK children in the summer program with 347 children enrolled! We attribute this to the partnership we had with the school district to enroll summer VPK children at the Kindergarten round up in the school choice office. Collier is also doing well with 74 children enrolled (Collier sent out 20,000 VPK flyers with all their school children; Hendry has 12 children enrolled; and Glades has 3. (See Coalition website for County-specific School District information in English, Spanish and Creole).

FYI—Statewide, there are 11,000 Summer VPK children enrolled. (45,000 were expected; School Districts projected enrolling 35,000 based on DOE projections). 18% of SR children are receiving VPK services.

Coalition staff will interview all School Districts to determine their preparations and needs for Summer VPK. (See VPK Summer Program Status Report for Hendry County on pp.82-83).

VPK Providers anticipate raise in reimbursement—For the 2006-2007 school year, the base student allocation per FTE for VPK in the Governor's Budget will go from \$2,500 per child to \$2,640 per child, based on the County's DCD (District Cost Differential). (See memorandum with DCD rates from Shan Goff on pp. 84-86). Coalitions are also hoping to receive an

increase in administrative dollars to include an additional 5% for non-direct services.

SWFL Coalition Pilots Multi-Enrollment Locations—Our coalition has been selected to pilot a new VPK enrollment system in multiple locations throughout SWFL. AWI will meet with coalition staff on April 5th to discuss the procedures that will be in place for this pilot.

CELEBRATION of 1st Year of VPK!—On May 11th, the ELC of SWFL Coalition will host an evening of celebration of the culmination of a successful 1st year of VPK! The event will take place at the Three Oaks Conference Center in Estero, from 6:30pm to 8:30pm and all existing and potential VPK providers are invited to attend.

DOE Selects New Kindergarten Screening Tool—On Feb. 21st a notice of intent to award contract was made to Harcourt for ECHOS (Early Childhood Observation System) and DIBELS (Diagnostic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills). The ECHOS is strictly an observational tool and will evaluate children's performance in all of the developmental domains. The DIBELS evaluates children's mastery of the letters of the alphabet and sounds of those letters.

VPK Standards—Board members will each receive a copy of the new VPK Standards for 4 year olds. The training in the standards is provided by Terri Konczak. All VPK providers have had the level 1 training and level 2 training is underway. (See VPK Standards training flyer on p. 87 and p. 88)

Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)—The Coalition ordered 700 of the Basics of Developmentally Appropriate Practice to be distributed to 447 SR Providers; 253 will be used for new recruitment of providers. (See DAP book cover on p. 89)

VPK Teacher Support Meetings; Orientation Meeting—

- See schedule on p. 90 for the Spring 2006 VPK teacher meetings on March 7th in Estero, April 11th, in Naples, and May 11th in Estero.
- See the schedule on p. 91 for the VPK Orientation Meeting for Directors and Child Care Center owners on May 10th in Labelle, May 15th in Ft. Myers, and May 23rd in Naples.

Public Awareness Campaign—AWI is offering financial support for VPK Public Outreach to Coalitions who submitted a request and detailed budget by March 5th. Our request for \$49,489 and included a wide variety of VPK outreach ideas including billboards, radio weather ads (English and Spanish); newspaper ads and informational brochures. We should know what dollars we will receive next week. Our PA Campaign will be in full swing beginning next month beginning with 2 weeks of radio weather VPK ads and Telemundo (Spanish TV) ads in all our counties. (See our VPK article and ad in the SWFL Parenting News on pp. 92-94) (Also see new ELC of SWFL VPK parent brochure and informational leaflet in side pocket of notebook.)

- **Early Learning Coalition of SWFL Website!**—If you haven't already checked out the new updates on our Coalition's website, please do! It is www.elcofswfl.org. We are adding new information every day. All meetings of the board and all committees, as well as special events are posted on the website and updated regularly. New sections include a picture gallery of Early Learning Services; a legislative contact page; and “Download Central” where you can access all of our Coalitions policies, Bylaws, Plans and Reports as well as AWI issued policies. (See new Home Page and other samples on pp. 95-98)

- **UPCOMING Professional Development EVENTS in SWF**

School-Age Services—Survive the Summer! May 6th and May 20th in Orlando and Miami. See flyer on p. 104.

CIRCLES of CARE Early Learning Conference—April 29th, 2006 at Ft. Myers High School, from 8am to 5pm. If you are interested in becoming a presenter, contact CCSWLF at (239) 278-0160.

ELLM Early Literacy and Learning Model—Statewide Literacy Coaching Seminar. March 27th from 8:30am to 11:30am, FIU, Jacksonville, FL. (See flyer on p. 106)

LEGACIES & LEGOS—Building High Quality Programs for Florida’s Children and Families; May 3-5, 2006; Hotel Royal Plaza, Lake Buena Vista. (See flyer on p. 107) For registration information on Legacies & Legos, consult the Coalition website, www.elcofswfl.org.

- **School Readiness Contracted Early Learning Services Reports—Summary July through February (pp. 61-68)**

Child Assessment Report (Creative Curriculum.Net Assessment Tool)
 Child Developmental Screening Report (Ages and Stages Screening Tool)
 Enrollment and Eligibility Report
 Vision & Hearing Screening Report; Health Consult and Training Report
 Inclusion Services Report
 Infant & Toddler Services Report
 Provider Recruitment & Support Report
 Resource and Referral Report

- **Committee Reports—**

Quality Enhancement/VPK Committee (p. 136-138) Elaine Schaeffer

Health Services Advisory Committee Joan Foss
 Feb. 3rd Minutes pp. 115-117
 March 3rd Minutes pp. 118-119

Executive Committee Barbara
 Jan. 23rd Minutes pp. 113-114
 March 20th Minutes pp. 119A-119B