



EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF
SOUTHWEST
FLORIDA

Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida Board Meeting

March 22, 2006

9:00 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. ~Krome Community Center, La Belle, Florida
Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present:

Joe Paterno, Phillip Keyes, Sabra Cecil, Joan Foss, Dan England, Lasheba Travis, Kate Sroka, Alice Parrish, Alan Dimmitt, Pat Gulley, Rhea Mike, Liz Karas, Barbara Mainster

Absent: Bob DiBenedetto, Myra Shapiro, Mary Lou Campbell, Lara Kunkler, Pat Cacho, Mary Lou Campbell, Elaine Schaeffer, Donna Williamson, Laura Stacell, Dr. Jean Richardson

ELC Staff Members Present:

Barbara Saunders, Exec. Director; Dee Goforth, Office Manager; Peter Escayg, Director of Operations; Jenny Corbett, Receptionist/Office Assistant, Melanie Holaway, Director of Professional Development Services; Shirley Losch, Director of Health Services; Jean Smith, Director of Voluntary Prekindergarten Services, Jenny Corbett, Receptionist/Office Assistant; Donna Thompson, Health Screener; Sandy Massa, Health Screener

Community Members Present:

Terri Konczak, DOE/VPK; Shelley Robertson, Robertson Consulting Group; Debbie Johnson, CCSWFL; Judith Paskvan, Hendry CHD Healthy Families; Arlene Bettencourt, CCSWFL; Barbara Peck, CCSWFL; Nancy Coker, CCSWFL; Neil Broderick, CCSWFL; Bill Robinson, CCSWFL Board; Bonnie Clukey, Collier County Public Schools; Maggie Stevens, Early Childhood Learning Center; Beth Drouin, Early Reading First; Sandra Palmer, CCSWFL; Dana Bennett, Gilda Duran, CCSWFL; Corina Duran, CCSWFL-Hendry/Glades; Peg Sullivan, FGCU; Janice Groves, HCEDC; Danna Breeden, CCHD; Ellen Murphy, CCHD

Meeting Objectives

1. To receive an update on LaBelle community needs
2. To review and approve the minutes of the January 23rd meeting
3. To review and approve the December and January Financial statements
4. To approve Policies on VPK Monitoring
5. To review options for raising the Provider Minimum Reimbursement Rate
6. To hear a presentation on *Florida Head Start: A Portrait of Our Head Start Children's Outcomes*
7. To hear a presentation on the Health Services Advisory Committee: *History, Function, Goals and Reports*
8. To hear a presentation on ELC of SWFL Progress Report Card
9. To go on an ELC of SWFL Website Tour
10. To review Office of Early Learning and VPK/SR Coalition updates (ED Report)
11. To review CCSWFL Contract Services Reports
12. To hear Committee Reports
13. To discuss "Good of the Order" items
14. To build the May 24th agenda and receive public input

Welcome and Agenda Review

Sabra Cecil called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. Introductions were made of Board members and the public.

A quorum was established. There were no changes to the agenda. Proposed Consent Agenda Items were approved.

AGENDA ITEM:

1. **Update on LaBelle Community Needs** – Judy Paskvan was the first presenter. She spoke about Children’s Week (4th Annual) and all the participating community organizations, such as United Way, Lee Memorial, Make a Wish, CCSWFL, ELC, and Project Hope. 209 parents and children attended. Children’s handprints were submitted to Tallahassee on the first week of Children’s Week and will be hung in the rotunda of the State capitol. Sabra asked Judy what the biggest barrier was. Judy said that transportation is the greatest challenge. Language is certainly another challenge. We are the only long-term child care facility in this area available now. In April, Dr. Will Leven will conduct a session on brain development. Lee - 661 births 89-Glades A photo session is planned called “Winds of Change” complete with pinwheels. The goal of this session is to address prevention of child abuse and neglect. Shirley L. said we will have a Hurricane Preparedness session. The goal of this session is to arm services to help communities prepare for the hurricane season.

Phillip Keyes introduced Janice Groves, Executive Director of Glades County Economic Council. One of her issues has been to attract new industry. Phillip Keyes said that one of the greatest challenges to face has been unemployment.

Arlene Bettencourt (CCSWFL) was the next presenter – Barbara S. said that Arlene was recently recognized as an integral part of the Hurricane Wilma recovery exercises. The recovery process began on Oct. 24th. 85 volunteers helped to deliver food and ice to remote areas where people had no transportation. She had volunteers from 211 and United Way, to name a few. Arlene is a part of the longtime recovery of this area. She is working with Project Hope and the Homeless Coalition. She is looking for donations of food. They are working on a grant for transitioning. Sabra asked if there was a food pantry. Arlene said that there really isn’t. But we can donate at the Little House in LaBelle.

2. **Consent Agenda Items 2-4**
 - Minutes – Jan. 23rd meeting
 - December and January Fiscal Reports
 - VPK Monitoring Policy

ACTION ITEM: All items on Consent Agenda were APPROVED

3. **Provider Rate Increase:** Tabled for the May Meeting
4. **Presentation on *Florida Head Start: A Portrait of Our Head Start Children’s Outcomes***

Liz Karas gave a snapshot of the Head Start program and introduced -Maggie Stevens.

Maggie S. talked about what happened in spite of the hurricane. She discussed the workings of Head Start – what it is all about and what they are doing in our various areas.

2004-2005 year, 70% of the teachers had CDAs. 55% had a college degree. Head Start children come into the program with an 18-month vocabulary level.

5. Presentation on the Health Services Advisory Committee: *History, Function, Goals and Reports*

Joan Foss and Pat Gulley talked about Health Services and the Health Services Committee. Committee started last September. The committee consists of 30 members. They meet once a month. There was a need for a nurse. CCSWFL and Lee County Health Dept. coordinated. ELC put together a Health and Safety Manual.

A sub-committee has been formed to make sure that goals are achieved. This committee is focusing on health and safety needs, including a long-range goal of dental hygiene awareness. One of their goals is to increase the amount of screenings for eye and ear testing in the four-county area.

They are encouraging all four counties to help them. Barbara did a survey of all the other coalitions. We are the leading coalition paving the way for good health and safety and may be the pilot model. Shirley L. demonstrated the screening equipment along with Debra (nurse)

Joe P. asked if follow-up sessions were conducted on these screenings. Follow-up is critical. Many parents do not follow up with a doctor after they are tested and screened. Shirley said that some doctors say that the child is too young to be tested and evaluated for hearing or eye screenings. She said that we need to supply current education to the medical society and parents. Healthy Kids Insurance is suggested if parents do not have any insurance. Barbara M. said that Ronald McDonald is doing good work in that field. Bill Robinson said that parental awareness should be considered. Barbara S. said that we have that “on our radar screen.” Pat G. said that there are areas that do not have fluoride in their water. So they drink bottled water which does not have fluoride – and, as a result, there is evidence of increased cavities showing up. Liz K. said that their schools are mandating good dental hygiene. Head Start requires it also.

6. ELC of SWFL Progress Report Card

Shelly Robertson was presenter. She gave us a review of an evaluation report card of the Coalition’s child care services. She said we will look at computer needs for the centers. She gave an overall assessment for this Spring (Quarterly Report Card). Alan D. asked why the State has information that our Coalition did not receive about Coalition services. Barbara S. said that we do have that info. Sabra suggested that we set up a phone bank. Sabra said that the State presented the information as a whole; it was not broken down by county.

7. To Get an ELC of SWFL Website Tour

Melanie Holaway gave us a tour online of the Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida website. Joe P. suggested that we add job opportunities links from the Workforce Development Board website.

8. Peter Escayg gave a utilization and contract services report.

Peter stated that we are on target with our utilization and spending plan. Peter reviewed the contracted services report and said that there was improvement from last month’s report

and continued discussions with CCSWFL are helping to improve efficiency of services and accuracy of reports.

9. To Review Office of Early Learning and VPK/SR Coalition Updates (ED Report)

Barbara gave her ED Report stating that this report serves as a summary of events and table of contents of the Coalition packet. (See ED REPORT)

10. To Hear Committee Reports

Melanie Holaway reported on the Quality Committee and said that the next Quality meeting will be on April 3rd at All Children's Specialty Center in Fort Myers.

Joan Foss said that the Health Services Committee will meet on April 7th at All Children's Specialty Center in Fort Myers.

11. To Discuss "Good of the Order" Items

12. To Build the May 24th Agenda and Receive Public Input

No addition to the agenda. Dan England said that DCF's goal is to take a closer look at child care and how to keep children out of trouble. They are concerned about Medicaid rates. He also expressed concern about illegal families and the stance of the legislature.

Liz K. said that the school system principals are very excited about VPK. The sign-up was very successful. It was a good idea to have our Coalition staff present at registration to sign up children for VPK.

School bullying was the next topic of conversation. Kate Sroka shared an account of a 7th grader in Cape Coral that committed suicide as a result of being bullied at school. This issue was directly presented to Governor Bush. The Governor said that something would be done about school bullying. Her point was that we CAN reach our legislators and they will listen if we pursue, persist, and approach them with these critical issues.

Barbara M. echoed Kate's concern about school bullying. We need to support these children that are harassed.

Alan D. said that we have 9 or 10 Board members that are absent for this meeting and that this needs to be addressed. It was suggested that those Board members that are absent from future Board meetings will be recorded as absent in the minutes. Barbara S. said we need to activate our nomination committee so that they can address the absentee issue. Sabra said we will get the nomination committee reactivated.

ACTION ITEM: Nomination committee will be activated to address the absenteeism among the Board members and nominate new members if necessary.

Adjourn— A motion was made to adjourn. It was seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Next Meeting: May 24 2006, 9 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. Career and Service Center of Lee County, 4150 Ford St. Extension, 275-3100