



**MINUTES of the BOARD MEETING**  
Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida  
*Coalition Offices, Fort Myers, Florida*  
**October 12, 2011 - 9:00 - 11:30 a.m.**

**Mission Statement**

*Our mission is to enhance the quality of children's lives by providing families, early childhood educators, caregivers and community partners in Collier, Glades, Hendry and Lee Counties, with opportunities to positively impact the future.*

**Board Members Present:**

**John Remington**, Board Chairperson  
*President*  
*A. Vernon Allen Builder, Inc*

**Joe Paterno**, Vice Chair  
*Executive Director*  
*Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board*

**Gerry Poppe**, Board Treasurer  
*Chief Financial Officer*  
*Waterman Broadcasting*

**Kathryn Canfield**, Chair – School Readiness/VPK Committee  
*Director*  
*Eagle's Nest Christian Academy*

**Michael D'Amico**  
*Director*  
*Collier County Head Start*

**Rick Donner**  
*CPA*  
*Donner & Company*

**Dan England**, Chair - Health and Developmental Services Committee  
*Director of Quality Management*  
*Lee Mental Health Center, Inc.*

**Colleen Gallagher**, Chair- Outreach Committee  
*President and CEO*  
*Community Coordinated Care for Children, Inc. (4C)*

**Joe Gammons**  
*President*  
*Office Furniture & Design Concepts*

**Jodi Jacoby**  
*Department of Children and Families*  
*Children's Network of Southwest Florida*  
*Child Care Licensing*

**Leslie Moguil**  
*Associate Executive Director*  
*Redlands Christian Migrant Association (RCMA)*

**Trina Puddefoot**

*Early Steps Program Coordinator  
Health Planning Council of SW Florida*

**Elaine Schaeffer**

*Professor of Early Childhood Education  
Edison State College*

**Peter Seif**

*President  
Synergy Networks*

**Jill Turner, Chair – Nomination/Bylaws & Policy Committee**

*CEO  
Children's Advocacy Center*

**Veronica Vega**

*Director  
Vega Family Child Care Home*

**Barry Williams, Chair – Quality Enhancement & Professional Development Committee**

*Director  
Collier County Parks & Recreation Department*

**Board Members Absent:**

**Donice Dawson, Board Secretary**

*Senior Vice President  
Synovus Bank*

**Joan Colfer**

*Director  
Collier County Health Department*

**Gordon Swaggerty Assistant Superintendent**

*Hendry County School District*

**ELC Staff Members Present:**

Kathleen Reynolds, CEO

Nga Cotter, CFO

Kristi Biffar, Quality Trainer

Peter Escayg, Director of Operations

Kim Gerbasio, Health and Safety Monitor

Melanie Holaway, Director of Provider Services

Danielle Long, Quality Trainer

Ginger McHale, Executive Administrative Assistant

Isabel Santiago, Early Intervention Coordinator

**4C Staff Members:**

Pat Frank, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer

Mary Ellen Saba, Director of Program Services

**Other Attendees:**

Danna Breeden, Collier County Health Department  
Elizabeth Garcia, Director, Discovery Day Academy at Bonita Springs  
Martha Kebhart, Director Edison State College Child Care Center, CCSWFL  
Beth Lobdell, Executive Director, CCSWFL  
Barbara Zirilli-Longergan, Area Coordinator, Children's Forum

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The meeting began at 9:03 a.m.

(\* ) *All related materials included in Board Meeting packet.*

**Agenda Item 1 – Welcome and Call to Order**

Mr. Remington welcomed everyone; quorum was established, and he called the meeting to order.

**Agenda Item 2 – Approval of the Minutes of the June 22, 2011 Board Meeting \***

Mr. Seif made a motion to approve the Minutes of the June 22, 2011 Board Meeting and Mr. Gammons seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

**Agenda Item 3 – Recognition of Former Board Members:**

Dr. Judith Hartner  
Ms. Elizabeth McDaniel-Garcia  
Ms. Alice Parrish

Ms. Reynolds thanked Ms. Elizabeth McDaniel-Garcia for her time on the Board and also for all she does for the children in Hendry County. In appreciation for her service as a Board Member Ms. McDaniel-Garcia was presented with an engraved clock.

Dr. Judith Hartner and Ms. Alice Parrish were unable to attend the October 12, 2011 Board Meeting. They will be contacted again to attend a future meeting.

**Agenda Item 4 – Pubic Comments / Announcements**

Ms. Reynolds announced that Ms. Barbara Mainster, Executive Director of RCMA, has resigned from the Board. Mr. Remington presented Ms. Leslie Moguil's application for Board membership.

Ms. Schaeffer made a motion to accept Ms. Moguil as a new Board Member and Mr. Seif seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Ms. Reynolds recognized Donice Dawson for her support of the Board and the \$1,000 contribution received from Synovus Bank.

Ms. Reynolds discussed the process of the recent state audit. Mr. Remington spent an hour talking with the auditors by telephone. He stated that they were impressed with the level of quality enhancement services available.

Ms. Reynolds discussed the recent Appeals Hearing. She indicated that the hearing process / agenda will be evaluated by the Policy / Nominations and Bylaw Committee. Things like length of time of the hearing, number of people attending, and timely receipt of pertinent paperwork will be assessed. Ms. Reynolds, Ms. Dawson, and Ms. Turner will work together on the protocol changes, and draft materials will be given to the Committee for final decisions.

### **Cheese Cake Sale**

Ms. Long discussed the cheese cake sale in conjunction with the Barnes & Noble Book Fair November 19, 2011 at the Fort Myers, Estero, and Naples locations. The Literacy Buddies Program will receive a percentage of the sales.

## **Agenda Item 5 – Consideration of Committee Reports and Related Action Item Requests**

### **A. Executive Committee**

- **Report on ELAC Meeting and Requested Support for Common Messages on Legislative Visits**

Mr. Remington asked Mr. Poppe to report on the ELAC Meeting. Mr. Poppe stated that ELAC's number one priority is funding for the School Readiness and VPK programs. Also, the Advisory Council reviewed and discussed their State and Federal Legislative priorities for 2011-12.

Mr. Remington thanked Mr. Poppe for attending in his place and stated that the Coalition has had a representative at each ELAC meeting for the last four years.

There was a discussion about Race to the Top application, which the Governor has agreed to submit.

Mr. Poppe noted that Ms. Reynolds is well respected by her colleagues at the ELAC meeting.

- **Review Letters Received in Response to Chair's Concerns Regarding Screening Results in Licensed-Exempt Facilities**

Mr. Remington reported that there are five centers remaining that are license exempt, and therefore, staff is unable to review screening results. Mr. Remington discussed the responses he received from the letters sent out regarding this lapse in background screening for child care workers.

Ms. Reynolds noted that the legislature has recently passed a law requiring providers to have car alarms that will alert them when a child is left in a car. This legislation will not impact license exempt providers.

- **Review Recommended Letter to Licensed-Exempt Facilities and Proposed Agreement Endorsed by Board Counsel (Vote Required)**

Mr. Remington reported that the Executive Committee had reviewed the letter and proposed agreement and recommends to the Board that they be sent to the five remaining license exempt School Readiness providers.

Ms. Gallagher made a motion to send the letter and proposed agreement as recommended, and Ms. Puddefoot seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

## **B. Review Finance Committee Reports**

- Report on June and August 2011 Summary Reports

Ms. Cotter presented the financial reports for periods ending June 30, 2011 and August 31, 2011. She also presented and discussed plans for meeting our targeted responsibilities. There was a discussion about the VPK numbers being down due to late start up in some venues.

Mr. Williams asked about the dates of the single audit. Ms. Cotter reported that the final report is due March, 2012. It will be presented to the Finance and Executive Committees and to the Board as soon as it is available.

- **Review of Allocation of New Award Funds (Vote Required)**

Ms. Cotter discussed the School Readiness services additional allocation award of approximately \$27,000 received in September.

Ms. Reynolds referred to the June 22, 2011 Board Meeting where it was discussed that should additional funds be received, they would be used to increase the Gold Seal percentage. However, based on the present budget numbers, Gold Seal is in a deficit.

There was a discussion about the number of children statewide and locally on Wait Lists. Some of these children are not being served due to the reduction in the budget.

It was the recommendation of the Executive Committee that the funds be placed in the Gold Seal line item, but that the Gold Seal percentage not be increased at this time. The recommendation is further that we look at expenditures in this line item in the spring and reassess whether Gold Seal rates should be increased, or if these funds be redirected elsewhere.

Mr. D'Amico made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Executive Committee and Mr. Seif seconded the motion. Unanimously approved

- **Review Draft Letter to Florida OEL Regarding: RCMA Monitoring (Vote Required)**

Ms. Reynolds presented the draft letter regarding the disagreement by the Coalition's CFO regarding this finding. The Coalition does not have the resources to conduct the level of monitoring that is being suggested. OEL staff has requested further discussion with them on the matter; Kathleen suggested approval of the letter with the understanding that if an agreeable understanding can be worked out with OEL staff, the letter will not be sent. Joe Paterno so motioned; Dan England seconded. Unanimously approved.

### **C. Nominations, Bylaws and Policy Committee (Votes Required)**

Ms. Jill Turner reviewed the recommendations of her Committee.

- Change Board Seat for Dan England. The motion to accept was made by Joe Paterno, with a second from Peter Seif. Carried unanimously.
- Extend Kathryn Canfield's Term to December 31, 2011. The motion to accept was made by Colleen Gallagher with a second from Dan England. Carried unanimously.

Ms. Turner explained the rationale for each of the following proposed policy changes, as shared with Board members in the materials provided for this meeting.

- Revised – 220.10 Board Policy SR/VPK Provider Compliance
- Revised – 520.1 VPK Provider Compliance Monitoring Policy
- Revised - 420.1 School Readiness Program Compliance Monitoring
- Revised 410.1 School Readiness Provider Reimbursement
- Revised – 510.1 VPK Provider Reimbursement

Peter Seif motioned to approve the recommended policy changes. Tina Puddefoot seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

### **D. Quality Enhancement and Professional Development Committee**

Ms. Schaeffer reported on the activities of this Committee. One item discussed regarded scholarships, which will now be available for VPK teachers as well as for SR teachers.

There have been recent changes in federal regulations regarding cribs. Supplying these newer cribs does represent significant costs for some of the Coalition's providers. Therefore, a portion of United Way funds will be used to purchase new cribs for providers in Lee, Hendry, and Glades who need them.

CLASS assessments and their voluntary implementation for providers with 4.5 or higher ERS scores were discussed. Training will be offered to providers prior to CLASS implementation.

### **E. SR/VPK Committee**

Ms. Canfield asked Ms. Holaway to present a synopsis of the SR / VPK data reviewed by the SR / VPK Committee. More specifics on SR and VPK enrollment, age distribution for child-care and expenditures by county will be shared later.

### **F. Health, Safety, and Developmental Services Committee**

Mr. England reported that the group is reviewing the goals and objectives of the Committee. They are also in the process of redoing the Coalition's First Aid Manual. Ms. Canfield stated that the work of this Committee has proven most helpful to providers.

### **G. Outreach Committee**

Ms. Gallagher discussed the upcoming Barnes & Noble book fair November 19th, the cheese cake sale, a Christmas event to benefit the Early Learning Coalition at the Omni Health Club,

and the Books-A-Million book fair on November 21<sup>st</sup>. All of these activities will support the Literacy Buddies Program. At present we have 1,300 buddies.

The Coalition has very good exposure on YouTube and on Facebook. This includes different videos as well as snapshots and comments. The latest videos regarding the use of Teaching Strategies have been well received.

It was noted that the ELC of SWFL will be one of seven coalitions to pilot a statewide professional development system.

## **Agenda Item 6 – Board Review and Discussion of Staff Reports**

- Review of 4C Monitoring Schedule and Monitoring Tool (Presentation)

Mr. Escayg used a PowerPoint slide show to present the monitoring process and to explain reports created on 4C and Redland Christian Migrant Association (RCMA). These reports need to comply with required oversight mandated by federal and state regulations. Ms. Reynolds stated that the monitoring reports track a selected child from the first contact through payment. The monitoring process also includes reviewing provider files, verifying the documents for eligibility, determining if proper credentialing is in place, and reviewing results of level two screening.

Ms. Moguil stated the monitoring is very thorough and that Mr. Escayg works well with her agency to insure efficiency of the monitoring visit and that the results assist the agency with continuous improvement. The monitoring process for RCMA's VPK covers some twenty-one counties.

- Enrollment Reports (Presentation)

Ms. Holaway presented the numbers for School Readiness and VPK. A copy of the report was sent to the Board Members previously. As of August 31, 2011, 5,301 children are on the wait list. She also presented the expenditures by county and Environment Rating Scale results.

Melanie noted that while it is early in the new fiscal year to draw strong conclusions, personal care routine scores appear to be lower than last year. Classes in this area will continue to be held, and there is high enrollment.

Kathleen expressed concern about the time lines between changes in the ERS instruments and requirements for providers to address same. Coalition staff will look into this and there is discussion at the state level by the Association of Early Learning Coalitions on the same matter.

Ms. Canfield asked Ms. Biffar to explain the hand washing and diaper changing processes that the providers need to follow. Kristi outlined the steps involved, and also explained that there are seven Area Provider meetings scheduled to discuss what is reasonable and/or not reasonable in meeting the requirements of the ERS. Provider input will be reviewed by ELC staff; changes may be made at the local level and recommended also for state-wide actions.

It was discussed that the health departments are no longer doing food inspections. Ms. Jacoby stated that DCF is doing food inspections as their schedules allow.

## **Agenda Item 7 – Report of the CEO**

- Report on OEL and AELC Meetings

Ms. Reynolds handed out the “Return on Investment and Case for Support” report from the Miami-Dade Coalition, in which economists argue that the success of higher education is influenced by early learning experiences.

She also recently attended the Education Summit held by the News Press in Fort Myers; regrettably, pre-k was not discussed as a potential component of improving student outcomes in Southwest Florida.

Ms. Reynolds also discussed the very real need for Board Members to contact state legislators regarding the need to fund SR and VPK. Materials related to this are included in the Board packet for this meeting. It could be a critical situation next year should the VPK program take another decrease in its budget.

- **Update on Match**

Ms. Reynolds discussed the match process and the required 6%.

Lee County is very supportive and the match amount is in the annual budget.

Collier County has doubled their match to \$50,000 with the remainder coming from the Naples Wine Festival. The Collier County Commissioners have agreed that Ms. Reynolds may work with the county manager so that the ELC match can be included in future budgets. Mr. Williams commended Ms. Reynolds on her presentation at the recent Collier County Commissioners’ meeting.

- **VPK Changes**

The pre and post assessments for VPK were also discussed. The Department of Education is requesting funds to cover pre and post assessments for VPK.

The State Board of Education is now requiring that 70% of VPK students “pass” both the ECHOS and the FAIR in order for a provider not to be labeled Low Performing. An analysis of last year’s data shows that 50% of the VPK providers would be labeled Low Performing given this change. This includes all but one of the Immokalee VPK providers, including public school programs. The number of low performing providers in the state will double due to this new scoring system. Ms. Reynolds does not believe that the members of the Board of Education truly understand the impact of this new ruling. As this issue evolves, it will be very important for all concerned to contact state legislators and to explain how “gain scores” – the amount of growth that students show as a result of experiencing VPK – are more viable approaches to determining impact as a result of tax payer investment.

## **Agenda Item 8- – Board Comments/New Business**

None.

## **Agenda Item 9 – Public Comments**

Ms. Lobdell suggested that the dates of the DOE meetings on the VPK rules be sent to the providers. She also requested that information be made available on Florida's Race to the Top application. Ms. Reynolds said that the application will be placed on the DOE website as will the dates of rules hearings.

Mr. Remington requested that an update on the Children's Movement be placed on the next Board agenda.

Ms. Kebhart handed out invitations to the Board Members to visit the Edison State College Child Care Center at their convenience.

## **Agenda Item 9 – Adjournment**

Mr. Donner made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Paterno seconded the motion. Unanimous approval. The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.