



## Minutes



Early Learning Coalition of Northwest Florida  
May 2017 Board Meeting Minutes

Coalition Funding and Service Delivery

The Coalition reimburses contracted small business providers (child care programs) in each of the seven counties served. The dollars listed below reflect the Coalition’s payment to child care/School Readiness providers for child care fees (direct/slots payments) minus the required parent portion.

Executive Committee	First Name	Last Name	Present	Present Via Phone	Excused Absence	Unexcused Absence
●	Tony	Bennett	X			
	Phil	Edwards		X		
	Kim	Gillis			X	
	Linda	Hood		X		
	Jackie	House		X		
	Joe	Jernigan		X		
	Doug	Kent			X	
	Pamela	Kidwell		X		
	Frank	Martin				X
	Jeannie	Martin	X			
●	Al	McCambry			X	
●	Jon	McFatter (P)			X	
●	Mary	McKenzie (VP)		X		
	Juliana	Melara	X			
	Johanna	Plumber		X		
	Neal	Reeves		X		
	Renae	Roundtree		X		
	Parnell	Smith		X		
●	Jerry	Sowell	X			
	Guy	Tunnell			X	
●	Darrin	Wall (S)	X			
●	Richard	Williams			X	
<b>Total</b>			<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>

**I. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS, GUESTS, AND STAFF**

The meeting was called to order by Board Vice Chair Mary McKenzie at 11:07 a.m.

**II. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA – *Jon McFatter***

Motion: **To approve the meeting agenda**

Motion By: Jerry Sowell

Motion Seconded By: Pamela Kidwell

Member/s Recusing from Vote:  YES  NO

**The motion carried.**

**III. ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA – *Jon McFatter***

**Explanation:**

Consent Agenda includes the following information listed under letters A – C. Board members may request that any item in the Consent Agenda be moved under the regular agenda for further discussion, prior to vote.

Motion: **To approve the consent agenda**

Motion By: Tony Bennett

Motion Seconded By: Joe Jernigan

Member/s Recusing from Vote:  YES  NO

**The motion carried.**

A. Approval of Minutes – *Jon McFatter*

**Explanation:** Please refer to the Board Meeting Minutes for the April 12, 2017, board meeting.

B. Financial Statements

**Explanation:** Please refer to Financial Statements through March 2017.

C. Credit Card Transaction Report

**Explanation:** Please refer to the Credit Card Transaction Report for April 2017.

**IV. COMMITTEE/FULL BOARD REPORTS – *Jon McFatter***

A. Finance Committee-*Jerry Sowell*

The Finance Committee did not meet in April.

B. Personnel & Policy Committee- *Mary McKenzie*

1. Related Party Contracts Below \$25,000

To follow Florida Statute, the Coalition Board must approve any contracts between Coalition employees, Coalition Governing Board members, and relatives of either group as s. 112.3143 F.S., defines and submit to Office of Early Learning (OEL) for approval. The Coalition must comply with requirements in

state statute and OEL instructions (s. 1002.84(20), F.S.) which require the following:

- A valid vote of approval requires two-thirds vote by the governing board.
- The Coalition will need to provide a detailed breakdown of how each member voted in to ensure that two-thirds of the members voted in favor of the related party contracts.
- The impacted individual(s) must complete the necessary conflict of interest disclosure forms, and these forms must be available for presentation to the governing board at the time of the board's vote.
- Any governing board member(s) benefitting from the contract(s) must disclose in advance the conflict of interest and must abstain from the vote process.
- Coalitions are prohibited from entering into contracts in excess of \$25,000 without prior approval from OEL.
- Coalitions are allowed to enter into contracts below \$25,000 without prior approval from OEL; however, such contracts are required to be reported to OEL within 30 days after approval by the coalition governing board is obtained

- a. Chipola Regional Workforce Development Board (CRWDB), Inc.,  
(d/b/a CareerSource Chipola) – Office Space Rental – Not To Exceed (NTE)  
\$15,000

Disclosures:

- Richard Williams, CRWDB Executive Director, is also a Coalition Board Member.
- Mary McKenzie, Coalition Board Vice Chair, is also a CRWDB Board Member.
- Darrin Wall, Coalition Board Secretary, is also a CRWDB Board Member.
- By having staff from both organizations sharing office space in one facility in Chipley, the customers of both organizations will be provided access to a wider array of services housed in one facility.

A vote was recommended, but was tabled until enough members were present for the vote and criteria above was met.

## 2. Personnel Policies

It is essential for the Coalition to continuously review and update personnel policies to ensure that Coalition staff can carry out the responsibilities of the organization in an effective and efficient manner. New technologies, service delivery changes, and organizational needs have resulted in revisions of current

policies and creation of new policies that need board approval. All policies are available for your review *(See Personnel Policies.)* and include the following:

- a. **Educational Assistance** (updated) – This changes the time an employee must be employed before educational assistance can be used. Also, it changes payment for educational assistance from reimbursement for educational courses to a payment assistance process.
- b. **Promotions** (new) - This ensures each employee has equal access to opportunities for growth and development.
- c. **Transfers** (new) - An employee may transfer, or may be transferred, when the employee meets the job qualifications and when the transfer will benefit both the employee and the Coalition.
- d. **Demotions** (new) - The Coalition may find it necessary or in the employee’s best interest to transition an employee through demotion. The Coalition provides a fair and equitable process in addressing demotions.
- e. **Alternative Work Locations** (new) – This ensures the effective and efficient completion of Coalition’s responsibilities while providing a framework for supporting families.

After some discussion with Landrum, the board decided to table this vote until further research could be conducted.

3. Sliding Fee Scale

Each year, the Coalition re-evaluates a parent’s required copay. The Child Care Development Block Grant of 2014, SEC. 658E(c)(5) requires that the Sliding Fee Scale addressing cost sharing with families is not a barrier to families receiving assistance. Due to federal changes in the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), OEL recommends that the Coalition determine the parent copay for the upcoming fiscal year at approximately 7 percent. The proposed sliding fee scale reflects this rate and increases the parent fee by \$0.20 (to \$1.35) per day for full time care and \$0.10 (to \$0.68) per day for part time. **(See Sliding Fee Scale 2017/2018.)**

Motion: **To approve the Sliding Fee Scale, as presented, for 2017/2018**

Motion By: Jerry Sowell

Motion Seconded By: Jeanne Martin

Member/s Recusing from Vote:  YES  NO

**The motion carried.**

4. Signature Authority

To ensure that functions of the Coalition can be completed in the absence of the Executive Director, two positions, Assistant Director and Operations and Outcomes Director would be designated signers for the Executive Director.

Currently Joe Seabrook, as Performance and Operations Officer, is a designated signer. The requested change would not only add an additional position for signature authority, but also reflect his change in title from Performance and Operations Officer to Operations and Outcomes Director.

**Motion: To approve the persons in the positions of Assistant Director and Operations and Outcomes Director as designated signers for the Executive Director**

Motion By: Joe Jernigan

Motion Seconded By: Renae Rountree

Member/s Recusing from Vote:  YES  NO

**The motion carried.**

C. Education & Program Committee- Al McCambry

1. Provider Support Service Numbers

Provider Support service numbers provide information regarding services completed for providers and children outside of regular child placement into School Readiness and Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Programs (direct slots).

a. Provider Contract Monitoring

The grant agreement between the OEL and the Coalition requires a percentage of contracted providers be monitored annually for contract compliance. The Coalition develops an annual monitoring schedule identifying School Readiness and VPK providers that will be monitored each month. Providers selected for monitoring represent all types of programs (center-based, school-based, faith-based, family child care home, licensed, registered, school-age only) from all counties in the Coalition service area. Staff completing the contract monitoring use OEL developed monitoring tools. Any non-compliances discovered must be corrected using a corrective action plan.

### Provider Contract Monitoring

1. School Readiness	YTD
Number of Contracted Providers	135
Completed Monitoring	51
High-Risk Providers (as defined by contract monitoring tool)	0
Providers with No Findings	9
2. VPK	
Number of Contracted Providers	85
Completed Monitoring	43

b. Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten AP1-AP3 Rates 2015/2016

OEL released the VPK Assessment Period (AP) 1 (AP1) – AP3 scores for the 2015/2016 Program Year on 27 April 2017. Our Coalition scored in the “Exceeding Expectations” range for all measures except Mathematics which was scored in the “Meeting Expectations” range. (See 2015-2016 VPK AP1-AP3 scores.)

To help support VPK and preschool teachers in their understanding of how to teach math concepts in a developmentally appropriate way, we are partnering with OEL and scheduling a series of four courses developed by the Florida Department of Education and the Office of Early Learning. To date, we have completed two courses in the series and trained over 25 VPK and preschool teachers. The series will end in May. The Coalition has also purchased math kits to be given to teachers who complete the courses.

D. Legislative Committee – Jon McFatter

As of 28 April 2017, with just over one week left until the scheduled end of the 2017 legislative session, Senate President Joe Negron and House Speaker Richard Corcoran announced on 26 April that both chambers had decided on a total budget amount of approximately \$83 billion (midpoint between the Senate's original proposed \$85 billion and the House's proposed \$81 billion) as well as on specific allocations - amounts in each budget category to be spent on budget conference negotiations.

As is common during legislative session, individual key issues are sometimes packaged into larger bills that form a 'train' that incorporates multiple bills that have been considered throughout the legislative process. In the Senate, SB 926 relating to Education by Sen. Anitere Flores (R-Miami), would modify provisions related to K-12 student assessments and the Minority Teacher Education Scholars Program, and add provisions related to early childhood development, intensive reading instruction, visitation of schools by individual school board members, Exceptional Student Education (ESE), school board attendance policies, and teacher bonuses. This includes the creation of the Committee on Early Childhood Development within the Department of Education that is substantively like HB 1229 by Rep. Erin Grall (R-Vero Beach) that would create the

Committee for Early Grade Success. The House has two bills that include provisions of the larger education packet.

Assistant Director (AD) Suzan Gage presented some additional information regarding steps forward in the legislative session. Both chambers submitted a budget late Monday (8 May) evening, and the budget is now on the desk of Governor Rick Scott waiting for signature. The budget included no increase for VPK and a \$25 million increase for School Readiness. Funding will be less from previous years for the Coalition.

Executive Director (ED) Lynne Eldridge shared that there is some discussion about consolidating Coalitions, going from 30 to 25. OEL are looking at a variety of criteria, including past monitoring results. ED Eldridge said OEL will likely consider the number of children served in a Coalition’s service area and other related factors. The purpose of consolidation is to save money to use for direct client services.

Additionally, the kindergarten readiness assessment was announced for the fall of 2017: STAR. This assessment is entirely computer-based, and there are some concerns regarding new kindergarteners being able to using a computer and mouse for assessments. ED Eldridge is concerned that assessment scores might not be as valid as if administered by other methods. She would like to reach out to legislators about this issue. Coalition Board Member Renae Rountree said a new \$3 million grant was passed that relates to library systems partnering with other organizations with a focus on innovative technology. ED Eldridge asked CBM Rountree to provide the Coalition with information regarding the grant.

E. Executive Director Overview – Lynne Eldridge

1. Waitlist Placement

The following numbers reflect the current situation with income-eligible children on the Coalition’s waitlist as of 27 April 2017:

Waitlist Children	Bay	Calhoun	Franklin	Gulf	Holmes	Jackson	Washington	TOTAL
INF	43	-	1	-	2	17	7	70
TOD	44	5	1	2	3	12	5	72
2YR	35	1	1	3	-	10	6	56
PR3	38	1	3	2	5	12	2	63
PR4	30	1	1	7	2	5	5	51
PR5	22	1	-	1	3	5	4	36
SCH	158	2	-	2	7	36	11	216
	370	11	7	17	22	97	40	564

ED Eldridge noted that the waitlist was not down much since last reported to the Coalition Board, and she pointed to the significant number of school-age children still on the waitlist. ED Eldridge said that a placement event was forthcoming in the next few weeks. The Coalition has found that placement events are the most



effective way to place eligible children in programs. There is enough funding to place 50 children before the end of the fiscal year. ED Eldridge predicted that the waitlist would likely remain the same or rise between now and the end of the fiscal year due to the increasing number of school-age children needing services.

Department of Children Families (DCF) Jeanne Martin asked why there seemed to be so many infants and toddlers waiting for services in Jackson County. ED Eldridge explained that a center closure and limited full-time spaces for infants and toddlers in Jackson County was the reason.

## 2. Internal Controls

The OEL developed the Internal Control Questionnaire (ICQ) as a self-assessment tool for Coalitions to evaluate whether a system of sound internal control exists within their organizations. Management staff continue the process of fine-tuning and creating written protocols to mitigate those areas of possible risk that were identified by the completion of the ICQ.

## 3. Fraud

The Coalition continues to work closely with Investigator Bradley, of the Department of Financial Services (DFS), Division of Public Assistance Fraud on suspected cases of fraud, as warranted.

The Coalition now has a direct number posted for staff, providers, and families to use to reach out to DFS representatives for reporting fraud anonymously and confidentially.

## V. DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES REPORT – *Jeanne Martin*

DCF Martin followed up with the Coalition Board regarding a topic she introduced at the last meeting. DCF had to close a family child care home. Instead of going to court, the provider decided to close their center. This was not a School Readiness contracted provider.

ED Eldridge asked DCF Martin to explain the main issues being faced by DCF right now. DCF Martin said the biggest issue they face in inspections is with School Readiness providers who are not DCF licensed. The required background screenings hold up the hiring process as we as the OEL required pre-service trainings. Non-licensed School Readiness providers (i.e., religious-except and public/private schools) are not used to the visits from DCF staff. For DCF-licensed School Readiness sites, DCF Martin said inspections are nearly at 100 percent completed.

DCF Martin and ED Eldridge both voiced concerns over school districts choosing to not contract with the Coalition for School Readiness services (mostly for Bay Base services). DCF Martin said that Bay District Schools is not the only district school system choosing to not renew contracts for School Readiness funding; there are at least six others throughout the state. DCF Martin said that her office would like to work with providers and the Coalition during this potentially challenging time. If providers are at-risk, DCF

would like to know as soon as possible to try to develop a plan of action. ED Eldridge agreed that the Coalition and DCF need to work together to make sure families and children are still served and providers are given the resources needed to meet state requirements.

ED Eldridge said that some providers have asked for renovation grants due to the nature of infrastructure findings (building/playground) during inspections. DCF Martin said those findings are more likely due to updates in OEL policy than with DCF.

**VI. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**VII. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for 14 June 2017, at 11:00 a.m.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:37 a.m.