

## **The Program Committee Minutes of a Meeting of the Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida.**

June 6th, 2025

### **Time and Place of Meeting**

A meeting of the Program Committee of Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida was held on June 6th, 2025, commencing at approximately 9:00am EDT at the offices of the Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida, Inc. located at 2675 Winkler Avenue, Suite 300, Ft. Myers FL 33901. Virtual option provided using Microsoft Teams.

### **Call to Order**

The following directors, constituting a quorum, were present in person or by teleconference: In person attendance:

- Michele King, Program Committee Chair on behalf of the Board of Directors

**Others present: Early Learning Coalition Staff:**

Dr. Melanie Stefanowicz, Chief Executive Officer

Gilda Duran, Chief Program Officer

Wynetta Upshaw, Chief Administrative Officer

Brenda Griffin, Director of Professional Development

Bronwyn Gogia, Director of Assessment and Screening

Cherly Carpenter, Director of Early Childhood Education

Monica Gaddy, Administrative Coordinator

**Presiding Officer; Secretary**

Michele King presided as Chair of the meeting; Monica Gaddy served as secretary of the meeting and kept the minutes. A quorum of the Program Committee

being present, Michele King called the meeting to order at approximately 9:00am EDT.

### **Welcome & Public Comment**

The Welcome & request for Public Comment was presented present by Committee Chair Michele King. No one from the public was in attendance and formal action was taken or required.

### **Agenda**

#### **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

Upon motion duly made by Jamie Slack and seconded by Joanne Moran, the committee unanimously approved the minutes of the Program Committee meeting dated April 25, 2025. All were in favor with no one being opposed. Motion carried.

The providers will be allowed to claim one additional day for reimbursement. The additional day has been allocated for Staff training. Staff training must be conducted with 75% of the staff in attendance. A record of participants and training materials must be maintained for auditing purposes.

## **Program Services Department**

*Gilda Duran Chief Program Officer of the Program* Services Department presented an overview and statical data for School Readiness, Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten and the current waitlist. We had a total of 1370 Child Care Resource and Referral request completed as of April 2025. Clients have been experiencing a few challenges with applying services due to the EFS Mod website updates. Clients are encouraged to visit the local office for assistance. The reports were presented open discussions followed. The number of VPK application received to date are 6,682. No formal action was taken or required.

## **Early Childhood Education Department**

Cheryl Carpenter, Director of Early Childhood shared class assessments matrix reflecting class scores for Fiscal year 2024-2025. SR total for classroom observations 424, VPK school observations 366 and VPK Summer Classrooms observations 11.

Connect with your class sessions will be conducted by the Early childhood specialist (ECS). These sessions have been designed to take place virtually during center naptimes. Classes will be available in English, Spanish and Creole. Topics will range from lesson planning to how to improve your CLASS scores. Classes

are teacher driven and are slated for 30 minutes. This information will be added to the monthly Town Hall meeting.

**Harry Chapen Food Bank** is looking for locations where they can set up parent education classes to discuss food and nutrition. If you would like to have them visit your center or know of any originations they might be of interested in having them, come out to educate the community on this topic. Please let Cheryl know by contacting her [Cheryl.Crpenter@elcofswfl.org](mailto:Cheryl.Crpenter@elcofswfl.org).

### **Contracts and Professional Development**

*Brenda Griffin the Director of Professional Development* reviewed provider contracts updates. The submitted contracts are currently being approved by CEO, 78 have been certified with only 41 pending. 108 Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) contracts currently certified with 30 pending. We have seven providers with 12 classroom room ready for the summer VPK program.

### **Class Composit Score changes:**

For the scores from 4.5-4.99(5%) you will no longer received a differential. New scale is from 5.0-5.99 will allow a seven (7%) differential. Top tier is 6.0-7.0 will provide a ten (10%) differential. Changes will go in effect will begin July 1, 2025.

**Added Professional Development Day:** If you have currently submitted your contract with only 12 days, you can do an amendment once the 2025-2026 amendments become available. As a provider you will be allowed to claim one additional day for reimbursement. The additional day has been allocated for Staff training and must have at least 75% of the staff in attendance. A record of participants and training materials must be maintained for auditing purposes.

**Lena Grow:** There is still time to register for Lena Grow. Email Mrs. Breanda @ Brenda.Griffin@elcofswfl.org to discuss availably.

### **Assessment and Screening**

***Bronwyn Gogia, Director of Assessment and Screening.*** The 2024-2025 Program year. Class Assessment differential is complete. Reviews have been completed for all participating providers and children have been approved. The new program year set to begin August 1, 2025.

### **VPK FAST Assessment**

Attention Educators the Division of Early Learning (DEL). Childcare Assessment Reflection (CAR) opportunities through a new was presented. A full discussion followed. No formal action was taken or required.

## **2025 - Legislative Updates**

Cheryl Carpenter Director of Early Childhood presented an overview of the 2025 - Legislative Updates. A full discussion followed. No formal action was taken or required.

The providers will be allowed to claim one additional day for reimbursement. The additional day has been allocated for Staff training. Staff training must be conducted with 75% of the staff in attendance. A record of participants and training materials must be maintained for auditing purposes.

## **New Business | Open Discussion**

Michele King opened the floor for any new business topics. No new business presented for discussion. No formal action was taken or required.

## **Meeting; Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:58 a.m. EDT. The next meeting was scheduled for September 5, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. EDT via teleconference.

Respectfully submitted,

