

Minutes of a Meeting of the Board of Directors of Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida.

February 6th, 2026

Time and Place of Meeting

A meeting of the Program Committee of the Board of Directors of the Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida was held on February 6, 2026, commencing at approximately 9:00 a.m. EDT at the offices of the Company located at 2675 Winkler Avenue, Suite 300, Fort Myers, Florida 33901, and virtually via Microsoft Teams.

Call to Order; Roll Call

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

- Bethany Quisenberry, Program Committee Chair
- Joanne Moran
- Stacie Britton
- Joanne Pachiva
- Rodrigo Gamboa



- Patricia Dominguez
- Stephanie Rode
- Amanda Thomas
- Angela Anderson
- Mandy Willis
- Damaris Boone
- Danielle Cwikla
- JoAnne Fuciu
- Jamie Schofield
- Chantal Porte
- Rebecca McKellar
- Molly Grant

Coalition Staff present:

- Melanie Stefanowicz, Chief Executive Officer
- Richard Cocchieri, Chief Financial Officer
- Beth McBride, Chief Programs Officer
- Cheryl Carpenter, Chief of Early Childhood Education
- Brenda Griffin, Director of Early Childhood Education
- Bronwyn Gogia, Director of Assessment and Screening
- Daana Breeden, RN

- Cora Rice, Director of Program Services
- Grant Thompson, Provider Contracts Specialist
- Jane Hess, Digital Media & Communications Specialist
- Sherry Shupp, Early Childhood Specialist II

Presiding Officer; Secretary

Bethany Quisenberry presided as Chair of the meeting. Melanie Stefanowicz served as Secretary of the meeting and kept the minutes. A quorum being present, Chair Quisenberry called the meeting to order at approximately 9:00 a.m. EDT.

Welcome & Public Comment

The section, Welcome & Public Comment, was presented. A full discussion followed. No formal action was taken or required.

Meeting Agenda Adoption

The section, Meeting Agenda Adoption, was presented. A full discussion followed. No formal action was taken or required.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The October 31, 2025 Program Committee Meeting Minutes were presented for review. Upon a motion duly made by Rodrigo Gamboa and seconded by Joann Moran, the minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

Program Services Department

Beth McBride, Chief Programs Officer, presented Program Services updates, including utilization data for School Readiness (SR) and Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) for the period July 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025. Highlights included enrollment trends, monthly utilization patterns, and waitlist activity.

Early Childhood Education Department

Cheryl Carpenter, Chief of Early Childhood Education, presented updates related to quality and performance, including CLASS observations. It was noted that the Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida is leading the state in completed CLASS observations as of January 20, 2026. Updates regarding upcoming CLASS tools and training timelines were also shared.

A full discussion followed. No formal action was taken or required.

Contracts and Professional Development

Brenda Griffin, Director of Early Childhood Education, provided updates on provider contracts and professional development activities. Topics included newly executed SR and VPK contracts, availability of provider profiles for the 2025–2027 period, ongoing LENA Grow recruitment, and professional development offerings available through the Coalition.

A full discussion followed. No formal action was taken or required.

Health and Safety Updates

Health and Safety updates were provided by Danna Breeden. A full discussion followed. No formal action was taken or required.

Assessment and Screenings

Bronwyn Gogia, Director of Assessment and Screening, presented updates including Teaching Strategies Child Assessments, VPK Progress Monitoring Period 2 completion rates, and ASQ Child Screening activity. Data related to screening outcomes and referrals for additional services were reviewed.

A full discussion followed. No formal action was taken or required.

Strategic Initiatives

Melanie provided updates on strategic initiatives, including School Readiness and VPK reimbursement requirements and compliance expectations under state rules. An overview of the Hurricane Ian Disaster Relief Grant was also provided, including grant purpose, timeline, eligible counties, and phased implementation approach. Quality improvement initiatives and Children's Week 2026 activities, including the Celebration of the Hands event, were also discussed.

A full discussion followed. No formal action was taken or required.

Legislative Updates

A legislative update was provided, including advocacy priorities and information relevant to the 2026 Legislative Session.

New Business

The section, New Business, was presented. A full discussion followed. No formal action was taken or required.

Next Meeting; Adjournment

Next Meeting Scheduled & Adjournment

The next Program Committee meeting was scheduled for April 10, 2026, at 9:00 a.m., with in-person and virtual attendance options available.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:30 a.m. EDT.

Respectfully submitted,