



EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

09.02.2026 | Human Resources Committee Meeting

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Human Resources Committee Meeting

 September 2nd, 2026 1:30pm EDT

The Human Resources/Personnel Committee is responsible for consideration of matters pertinent to assurance of legal and fiscal policies related to personnel of the Coalition.

Welcome & Public Comment

Adoption of the Agenda

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

Employee Resource Guide: Policy Updates

Annual Climate Survey: Management Follow-Through

2026–2027 Human Resources Committee Work Plan

New Business

Next Meeting

November 4, 2026, at 1:30 pm

Adjournment

Microsoft Teams Link

Welcome & Public Comment

The Human Resources/Personnel Committee is responsible for consideration of matters pertinent to assurance of legal and fiscal policies related to personnel of the Coalition.

Each public speaker shall be allowed a maximum of three minutes to speak. Prior to the meeting, each speaker shall [complete and sign the public comment form](#), which is maintained by the Administrative Coordinator, and state whether they intend to speak on a specific topic on the agenda or a topic that is not on the agenda. If the topic is not on the agenda, the Committee members will not comment on the issue but may direct the CEO to contact the speaker about the issue. The CEO may contact the speaker to review or resolve the issue, or to schedule the issue at a subsequent Committee meeting. General citizen participation shall not be permitted when the Committee is sitting as the legislative body pursuant to 6M-9.400 of Florida State Board Rule, to hear any appeals cases, charges, or recommendations to terminate a provider or client, or otherwise acting as a quasi-judicial body.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes



[06.102026] hr-committee-meeting-minutes-DRAFT.pdf



[06.102026] hr-committee-meeting-minutes-DRAFT.pdf

View PDF in Appendix or on Zeck.app [↗](#)

Vote: Approval of the June 10, 2026, HR Committee Meeting Minutes

We will need a member to motion to approve and a second to the motion. After the motion and the second, all committee members can indicate their vote using the Take Vote option below.

Employee Reference Guide: Redlines/Crosswalk of Changes

ACTION ITEM



[09.16.2026] Employee Reference Guide_redlined 08.18.2026.docx



[09.16.2026] Employee Reference Guide_clean copy.docx



ERG_Changes_Crosswalk_09.16.2026.pdf



ERG_Changes_Crosswalk_09.16.2026.pdf

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Vote: Motion to recommend that the Employee Reference Guide revisions, as presented in the redlined document and accompanying crosswalk, be advanced to the Executive Committee for further review and consideration.

Annual Climate Survey: Management Follow-Through

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEM

At its June 2026 meeting, the Human Resources Committee reviewed the results of the Annual Climate Survey. The survey reflected meaningful improvement in employee culture and engagement, particularly between 2025 and 2026, while identifying continued opportunities related to communication, role clarity, trust and fairness, compensation and benefits, mileage reimbursement, and cross-team collaboration.

Since that review, management has continued work in several areas:

- strengthening organization-wide communication capacity through the addition of the Chief Communications Officer;
- creating more consistent Executive Leadership Team and Leadership Team meeting structures;
- using the THRIVE/Synapse launch and staff-development activities to strengthen cross-team understanding and collaboration;

- clarifying organizational roles, reporting relationships, and operational responsibilities through ongoing restructuring and position review; and
- revising Employee Reference Guide provisions to improve clarity, consistency, accountability, and application of workplace expectations.

These actions represent continued progress rather than completion of the work. Compensation, benefits, mileage reimbursement, communication consistency, role clarity, and trust remain areas that require ongoing attention and, in some cases, longer-term planning.

Committee Discussion

Committee members are invited to provide input regarding:

- the workforce and culture indicators the Committee should monitor during 2026–2027;
- the appropriate frequency for management follow-up on climate-survey themes; and
- what information would be most useful to the Committee in assessing continued progress on employee climate and workforce stability.

No formal action is requested.

2026–2027 Human Resources Committee Work Plan

ACTION ITEM

The Human Resources Committee is responsible for considering matters related to the Coalition’s legal and fiscal policies concerning personnel. Establishing general priorities for the 2026–2027 year will help ensure that meeting agendas remain focused on appropriate

governance matters and that significant workforce issues receive timely Committee attention.



2026–2027 Human Resources Personnel Committee Work Plan_DRAFT.pdf



2026–2027 Human Resources Personnel Committee Work Plan_DRAFT.pdf

View PDF in Appendix or on [Zeck.app](#)



Vote: Motion to approve the 2026–2027 Human Resources Committee Work Plan as presented, subject to any amendments made by the Committee.

New Business

Committee members may identify emerging personnel or workforce matters for consideration. Matters requiring substantive discussion or formal action may be scheduled for a future duly noticed meeting.

Next Meeting & Adjournment

November 4, 2026, at 1:30 p.m.



FY 26-27 Mtg Calendar.docx

FISCAL YEAR 2027 (2026-2027)

Program, Events, Human Resources, and Nominations & Bylaws Committees Meeting Calendar

Program 9:00 – 11:00 am Hybrid Meetings	Events 8:00 a.m.-9:00 a.m. *In-person meetings	Human Resources 1:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m. Hybrid Meetings	Nominations & Bylaws 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Hybrid Meetings
August 28, 2026 Friday Agenda Deadline: August 20, 2026	September 2, 2026 Wednesday Agenda Deadline: August 20, 2026	September 2, 2026 Wednesday Agenda Deadline: August 20, 2026	September 2, 2026 Wednesday Agenda Deadline: August 20, 2026
October 30, 2026 Friday Agenda Deadline: October 21, 2026	November 4, 2026 Wednesday Agenda Deadline: October 21, 2026	November 4, 2026 Wednesday Agenda Deadline: October 21, 2026	November 4, 2026 Wednesday Agenda Deadline: October 21, 2026
January 29, 2027 Friday Agenda Deadline: January 20, 2027	February 3, 2027 Wednesday Agenda Deadline: January 20, 2027	February 3, 2027 Wednesday Agenda Deadline: January 20, 2027	February 3, 2027 Wednesday Agenda Deadline: January 20, 2027
April 2, 2027 Friday Agenda Deadline: March 23, 2027	April 7, 2027 Wednesday Agenda Deadline: March 23, 2027	April 7, 2027 Wednesday Agenda Deadline: March 23, 2027	April 7, 2027 Wednesday Agenda Deadline: March 23, 2027
May 28, 2027 Friday Agenda Deadline: May 18, 2027	June 2, 2027 Wednesday Agenda Deadline: May 18, 2027	June 2, 2027 Wednesday Agenda Deadline: May 18, 2027	June 2, 2027 Wednesday Agenda Deadline: May 18, 2027

Hybrid meetings will be hosted using the Microsoft TEAMS platform.

 **Vote: Meeting Adjournment**

Pre-Read | Annual Climate Survey

Survey History

The survey history reflects meaningful cultural progress, not a finished product. October 2022 provides a useful pre-transition baseline, with employee comments reflecting significant concerns about trust, communication, fairness, favoritism, compensation, and morale. More recent feedback continues to identify improvement areas, but the 2026 open-ended responses show a notably more constructive current-state climate, including stronger themes of mission connection, teamwork, respectful work environment, open communication, and positive momentum. The organization should describe the progress honestly: substantial improvement is evident, especially from 2025 to 2026, while compensation, benefits, mileage, communication consistency, and role clarity remain recurring work-in-progress themes.

Key Takeaway

Employee climate has improved over time, especially from 2025 to 2026. The data show a stronger current-state culture, while also confirming that continued attention to communication, fairness, compensation/benefits, and trust remains important.



04.17.2026_ELC Climate Survey.pdf



ELC_SWFL_Climate_Survey_2026_Q21_Q22_Q23.pdf



ELC_SWFL_Climate_Survey_Trend_Table.pdf



ELC_SWFL_Climate_Survey_Trend_Table.pdf

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

June 10th, 2026

Time and Place of Meeting

A meeting of the Human Resources Committee of the Board of Directors of Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida was held on June 10, 2026, commencing at approximately 1:30 p.m. EDT via Microsoft Teams.

Call to Order; Roll Call

The following committee members, constituting a quorum, were present:

- Trina Puddefoot
- Tanya Williams

The following committee member was absent:

- Jamie Merchant

Coalition Staff Present:

- Dr. Melanie Stefanowicz, Chief Executive Officer and Ex Officio Committee Member
- Dr. Beth McBride, Chief Program Officer
- Lauren Harris, Human Resources Generalist

Presiding Officer; Secretary

In the absence of a Human Resources Committee Chair, Trina Puddefoot presided over the meeting and Melanie Stefanowicz served as secretary, keep-

ing the minutes. A quorum of the Committee being present, Trina called the meeting to order at approximately 1:30 p.m. EDT.

Welcome and Public Comment

The section, Welcome and Public Comment, was presented. No members of the public requested to speak; therefore, no formal action was taken or required.

Adoption of the Agenda

The section, Adoption of the Agenda, was presented. A full discussion followed. Upon motion duly made by Trina and seconded by Tanya, the agenda was adopted as presented.

Approval of the April 15, 2026, Human Resources Committee Meeting Minutes

The April 15, 2026, Human Resources Committee meeting minutes were presented for approval. A full discussion followed. Upon motion duly made by Trina and seconded by Tanya, the April 15, 2026, Human Resources Committee meeting minutes were approved as presented.

Executive Committee Vacancy: Human Resources Committee Chairperson

The Executive Committee vacancy for the Human Resources Committee Chairperson was presented as an informational and discussion item. The Committee discussed the chairperson vacancy and Human Resources Committee membership for the 2026–2027 fiscal year. Recommendations will be referred to the Nominations and Bylaws Committee for consideration. No formal action was taken or required.

Employee Resource Guide: Policy Updates

The proposed Employee Resource Guide revisions were presented, including the medical-marijuana and drug-free-workplace provisions previously tabled for further review. The Committee also reviewed the redlined Employee Resource Guide and accompanying crosswalk of proposed revisions. The proposed updates addressed overtime approval and documentation, time-and-effort reporting for grant-funded work, the holiday schedule, workplace safety

and visitor expectations, smoking and vaping, corrective-action language, and other administrative and readability improvements.

A full discussion followed. Upon motion duly made by Trina and seconded by Tanya, the Committee approved recommending that the Employee Resource Guide revisions, as presented in the redlined document and accompanying crosswalk, be advanced to the Executive Committee for further review and consideration.

Annual Climate Survey

The results of the 2026 Annual Climate Survey and employee-response trend information were presented. The Committee discussed the organization's cultural progress and areas requiring continued attention. Survey results reflected improvement, particularly between 2025 and 2026, as well as continued opportunities related to communication, fairness, compensation and benefits, mileage, trust, and role clarity.

The item was presented for information and discussion. No formal action was taken or required.

CEO Evaluation

The 2025–2026 Chief Executive Officer Annual Performance Evaluation was presented. A full discussion followed. Upon motion duly made by Trina and seconded by Tanya, the Committee approved moving the 2025–2026 Chief Executive Officer Annual Performance Evaluation to the Executive Committee for review and consideration.

New Business

The section, New Business, was presented. No new business was introduced; therefore, no formal action was taken or required.

Adjournment

There being no further business, upon motion duly made by Trina and seconded by Tanya, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:15 p.m. EDT.

The next Human Resources Committee meeting was scheduled for September 2, 2026, at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Draft redline dated August 18, 2026 | Proposed Board action September 16, 2026

Purpose. This crosswalk summarizes the current changes reflected in the redlined Employee Reference Guide draft for HR Committee and Board review. It is intended as a governance summary and does not replace review of the full redlined document.

Crosswalk of Changes

ERG Section / Area	Summary of Change	Purpose / Rationale	Type of Change	Impact / Review Note
402 Work Week and Bi-weekly Pay Period	Section title revised from "Payday" to "Work Week and Bi-weekly Pay Period." The underlying workweek and direct-deposit language is unchanged.	Makes the heading more descriptive and distinguishes the section from the separate Pay Period policy in Section 403.	Administrative clarification	Low
501 Work Schedule	Replaces language describing a general Wednesday-through-Tuesday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. workweek with language establishing the Coalition's normal operating hours as 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Employees are assigned schedules within those hours unless otherwise approved or directed by their supervisor.	Separates the payroll workweek from daily operating hours and clarifies supervisor authority to assign or approve schedules based on operational needs.	Substantive operational clarification	Medium
502 Meal Periods	Clarifies that non-exempt employees must take at least a thirty-minute unpaid meal period during the workday. Adds that PLT may not replace or be combined with the required meal period and that employees must take the required meal period before using PLT to end the workday. Existing lunch-window and supervisor-consultation language is retained.	Establishes a consistent meal-period expectation, prevents use of paid leave to bypass the required meal period, and addresses attempts to combine lunch and PLT to shorten the workday.	Substantive timekeeping and scheduling revision.	Medium to High

ERG Section / Area	Summary of Change	Purpose / Rationale	Type of Change	Impact / Review Note
503 Work Breaks	Clarifies that two authorized fifteen-minute breaks may not be combined. Adds that employees who leave the premises during a break must clock out, the time away will be unpaid, and they must clock back in upon returning. Existing language prohibiting accumulation of breaks or use of breaks to extend lunch, offset lateness, or leave early is retained.	Clarifies paid-break boundaries, supports accurate timekeeping, and distinguishes an on-premises paid rest break from unpaid personal time away from the workplace.	Substantive timekeeping and workplace-operations clarification	Medium
Cellular Phone Reimbursement	Deletes the personal cell-phone reimbursement policy in full, including the eligibility criteria and the \$5.00 biweekly (\$130 annual) allowance.	Removes an obsolete reimbursement practice. The Coalition now provides Coalition-issued cell phones to employees whose positions require a mobile device.	Substantive policy deletion / administrative alignment	Low to Medium

2026–2027 Human Resources/Personnel Committee PROPOSED Work Plan

Purpose. The Committee supports responsible personnel governance by reviewing legal and fiscal policies related to Coalition personnel, monitoring material workforce and compliance risks, and administering the annual Chief Executive Officer performance-evaluation process.

Governance boundary. *The Committee does not address individual employee matters, direct staff, or administer routine HR operations. Chief Executive Officer compensation remains within the authority of the Executive Committee.*

Priority	Planned Activities	Anticipated Timing	Intended Outcome
Personnel Policy and Employee Reference Guide Review	Review proposed personnel-policy and Employee Reference Guide revisions when legal, regulatory, fiscal, or organizational changes require Board-level action. Monitor whether approved policies remain current and internally consistent.	Ongoing; as needed	Maintain clear, current, legally compliant personnel policies and advance recommendations through the Executive Committee to the Board when required.
Employee Climate and Organizational Culture	Review annual climate-survey results, management follow-through, and recurring themes at an aggregate level. Identify matters requiring policy attention or continued governance monitoring without directing day-to-day management responses.	September 2026 follow-through; annual survey review in Spring 2027	Support continued improvement in communication, trust, fairness, role clarity, engagement, and cross-team collaboration.
Workforce Stability and Organizational Capacity	Review concise, aggregate information regarding staffing levels, vacancies, recruitment, retention, turnover, and material organizational-capacity risks. Focus on significant trends rather than individual positions or personnel actions.	Initial review by November 2026; periodic thereafter as warranted	Ensure the Board is appropriately informed about material workforce risks affecting continuity, performance, or strategic execution.

Priority	Planned Activities	Anticipated Timing	Intended Outcome
Employee Compensation and Benefits Trends	Consider market, equity, affordability, and fiscal-sustainability issues affecting the Coalition's employee compensation and benefits framework. Review policy or budget implications when management identifies a material issue for governance consideration.	November 2026 or during the applicable budget/renewal cycle; as needed	Support a competitive and fiscally sustainable employee compensation and benefits framework. CEO compensation remains the responsibility of the Executive Committee.
Employment Law and HR Compliance	Receive updates regarding significant employment-law, regulatory, grant-compliance, or personnel-policy developments. Review recommended policy responses and material compliance risks.	Ongoing; formal review by early 2027	Reduce legal and compliance risk and ensure personnel policies remain aligned with applicable requirements.
HR Audit and Policy-Adherence Review	Review the results of any periodic HR audit, compliance assessment, or policy-adherence review presented for governance oversight. Monitor management's response to material findings without supervising corrective actions.	Early 2027 or upon completion of a review	Provide appropriate governance oversight of material HR findings and confirm that significant risks are addressed through management action.
Leadership Continuity and Succession Risk	Consider organizational continuity risks associated with critical leadership roles and review the adequacy of succession and emergency-continuity planning at a governance level. Coordinate with Nominations & Bylaws when Board leadership or governance succession is implicated.	Review by early 2027; as needed	Strengthen organizational resilience while preserving the CEO's authority over staffing and operational succession decisions.

Priority	Planned Activities	Anticipated Timing	Intended Outcome
Chief Executive Officer Performance Evaluation	Administer the annual CEO evaluation process consistent with the Governance Policy, including distribution, compilation, review, and reporting of evaluation results. Maintain separation between performance evaluation and compensation determination.	Initiate in Spring 2027; completed by June 2027	Complete a timely, evidence-based annual performance evaluation for presentation to the full Board. The Executive Committee determines CEO compensation.
Annual Committee Work Plan	Review progress on the current work plan and establish priorities for the following governance year. Adjust timing administratively when meeting schedules or external requirements change, while retaining Committee review of substantive priority changes.	June 2027	Maintain accountability for the Committee's responsibilities and continuity from year to year without creating unnecessary recurring reports.

Employee Climate Survey Trend Table

Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida | Draft for Board/Leadership Discussion

The table intentionally emphasizes trend direction rather than a single composite score because the historical survey files are not all available in the same raw data format. This approach allows the Coalition to compare consistent climate indicators over time while also preserving important context from written responses and non-substantive responses.

Climate indicator	Oct. 2022 baseline (pre-transition)	2024 (first full-year check)	2025 (transition pressure point)	2026 (current state)	Board-level interpretation
Senior leadership communication	Comments reflected communication concerns and disconnect between leadership and staff.	Improved; 76% favorable.	Mixed; 65% favorable; written feedback still requested clearer communication.	More constructive than 2025. 2026 written feedback still requests communication improvements, but comments more often frame communication as a continued improvement area rather than a broad climate failure.	Progress is visible; continue strengthening consistency, clarity, and follow-through.
Trust between leadership and employees	Repeated concerns about favoritism, trust, fairness, and leadership/staff disconnect.	Improved but fragile; 50% favorable and 33% neutral.	Still mixed; 46% favorable with harsh written comments.	Improving but still a watch item. 2026 comments include positive momentum, fairness, honesty/clarity, and positive change, while a smaller set still references micromanagement, favoritism, or respect from leadership.	Rebuilding phase, not yet complete. This remains a key long-term climate indicator.
Shared goal and team purpose	Mission connection was present, but comments described silos and uneven teamwork.	Strong; 81% favorable.	Dipped; 62% favorable during a difficult transition year.	Stronger in 2026. Many responses connect work to helping families, providers, teachers, children, and the Coalition's broader	Mission remains a durable strength; keep translating it into cross-department teamwork.

Climate indicator	Oct. 2022 baseline (pre-transition)	2024 (first full-year check)	2025 (transition pressure point)	2026 (current state)	Board-level interpretation
				mission.	
Supervisor support	Many comments appreciated immediate teams/supervisors despite broader climate concerns.	Very strong; 88% favorable.	Still strong; 81% favorable.	Sustained strength. 2026 feedback frequently references supportive coworkers, strong immediate teams, respectful work environments, and collaboration.	Immediate supervision appears to be a stabilizing factor; continue manager development.
Respectful workplace	Comments included concerns about respect, favoritism, gossip, accountability, and professionalism.	Improved; 67% favorable.	Improved further; 76% favorable, though concerns remained in comments.	Stronger than prior years, with several comments referencing a friendly, professional, respectful, or comfortable environment. Some concerns remain about favoritism, micromanagement, and interpersonal respect.	Respect and accountability should remain part of culture work, especially across departments.
Workplace culture satisfaction	Culture concerns were prominent: trust, communication, favoritism, and morale.	Improved; 62% favorable.	Slightly stronger; 65% favorable, but clear written concerns.	Meaningfully stronger in 2026. Open-ended responses include references to positive environment, strong culture, professionalism, positive momentum, and “huge positive change.”	Positive trend, with compensation, benefits, communication, and fairness still recurring themes.
Overall job satisfaction	Employees affirmed mission/community impact while identifying serious internal concerns.	Positive; 71% favorable.	Stable/slightly higher; 73% favorable.	Stronger in 2026. Responses include “I love my job,” “moving in a much better direction,” and appreciation for flexibility, mission, and team relationships, though benefits/compensation/mileage remain recurring	Job satisfaction appears to be improving, supported by mission connection and supervisor relationships.

Climate indicator	Oct. 2022 baseline (pre-transition)	2024 (first full-year check)	2025 (transition pressure point)	2026 (current state)	Board-level interpretation
				concerns.	
Open-ended tone and engagement signal	High concentration of negative themes: favoritism, distrust, compensation, accountability, and leadership disconnect.	Mixed but more constructive; mission, teamwork, pay/benefits, training, and communication.	Candid and sometimes harsh; some comments also acknowledged progress.	More constructive than 2025; fewer indications of crisis-level climate and stronger signs of stabilization.	Responses continue to surface concerns, but the tone has shifted. Staff appears more willing to provide direct, substantive feedback, and the 2026 comments are generally more constructive than 2025, with fewer indications of crisis-level climate and stronger signs of stabilization.

Background: The survey history reflects meaningful cultural progress, while also making clear that the work is not finished. October 2022 provides a useful pre-transition baseline, with comments reflecting significant concerns about trust, communication, fairness, favoritism, compensation, and morale. Those themes have not disappeared entirely; however, the 2026 open-ended responses reflect a more constructive current-state climate, with stronger themes of mission connection, teamwork, respectful workplace relationships, open communication, and positive momentum. The most notable improvement appears between 2025 and 2026, while compensation, benefits, mileage, communication consistency, and role clarity remain areas for continued attention.

Key Takeaway: Employee climate has improved over time, especially from 2025 to 2026. The data show a stronger current-state culture, while also confirming that continued attention to communication, fairness, compensation/benefits, and trust remains important.

2026 open-ended response signal.

The 2026 survey adds helpful context to the analysis. Of the 40 respondents, 33 provided substantive comments about what they like about working at the Coalition. The responses to the “dislike” and “suggestion” questions included more non-substantive responses, with 15 of 40 and 14 of 40, respectively. That pattern is worth noting. Employees are still willing to name concerns and identify areas for improvement, but the overall tone of the 2026 comments is more constructive than 2025 and includes stronger positive themes related to mission, teamwork, flexibility, and organizational progress.

Recurring 2026 positive themes include mission connection, supportive coworkers/immediate teams, friendly or respectful work environment, flexibility, and positive momentum. Recurring improvement themes include benefits/healthcare affordability, wages or mileage, communication consistency, remote/flexible work, role clarity, and professional development.