



Early Learning Coalition of Escambia County

Executive Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Note: Meeting conducted virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

October 1, 2020 8:30 a.m.

Members Present

Van Mansker

Mona Jackson

Members Absent

Marcus McBride

Staff

Bruce Watson

Jamie Phelps

Vicki Pugh

Becki Rutchland

Dawn Engel

Paula Rollins

I. Welcome and Introductions

Notification of rescheduling the Executive Finance Committee meeting scheduled for September 24, 2020 was sent to the Pensacola News Journal and posted to the Coalition Public Calendar Board on September 22, 2020. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Mansker. Mr. Watson noted that the Executive Committee only has three members at this time, therefore quorum is met with two members in attendance.

II. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

III. Consent Agenda

Upon a motion made by Ms. Jackson and seconded by Mr. Mansker, the Consent Agenda, consisting of the Agenda, the Minutes of the May 28, 2020 Executive Finance Committee Meeting, and the July Financial Statement was approved without objection.

IV. Status Reports

- a. SR/VPK Fiscal Year Benchmark Report, Enrollment/Wait List Status Report, and Contracting Summary Report

1. SR/VPK Fiscal Year Benchmark Report:

First month SR expenditures for this fiscal year were about \$1.6 million dollars and second month expenditures were also close to that range. The Coalition is roughly 3% ahead of spending projections which equates to about \$500,000 dollars. The increase in spending was due to the Coalition paying all registration fees for all last year to appropriate Providers. Administrative costs are running about 3.5% and Quality is at about 7%. CARES Phase III applications are still being submitted and CARES spending continues for children of First Responders. There is little VPK spending currently because most VPK programs are just starting classes.

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2. Enrollment/Wait List Status Report:

Currently, the Coalition has over 3,400 children enrolled in the School Readiness Program which is a decrease of about 200 children from last month. Fifty SRMT children were pulled from the wait list. The Coalition received notification that the County approved the grant request for 2020/2021 for \$238,875, which is the same as last year. The OEL will match SRMT spending up to \$177,000. There are about 400 BG8 ECON children on the wait list. Since the six-month revalidation requirement has resumed the number of children on the wait list may fluctuate. There are 443 First Responder children in care and as this number goes down children the Coalition will pull from the wait list.

3. Contracting and Fraud Summary Report:

There are 79 SR Providers at this time with about a half dozen that are temporarily out of commission due to damage from Hurricane Sally, several of which sustained major damage and may be closed for a month or more. There have been no terminations this fiscal year. Mr. Watson noted that although 1,600 children are approved for VPK, there are only 1,300 children enrolled at this time. He further noted that, statewide, VPK enrollments are running about two thirds less than last year, so the Coalition is line with the state trend. The Coalition had twelve VPK Providers decide not to contract this year, for a total of 64. There was one new case of parent fraud to report. Mr. Watson noted that the fraud case resulted in termination of services so the case may come before the Executive Finance Committee for review.

V. Committee Recommendations

None.

VI. Old Business

a. COVID Impact on Operations

1. Provider Payments/Parent Fee Waivers

The OEL has extended the waiver for Parent Fee payments to October 31, 2020. The OEL has decided to no longer pay for all enrollments when children are absent. Instead, the OEL has increased the number of payable absence days in a month from ten to sixteen. In addition, OEL has waived the documentation requirement for absences in excess of three. The Coalition is awaiting clarification from OEL regarding excessive VPK absences and the 80/20 rule.

2. First Responder and Health Care Worker Child Care

First Responder new enrollments ended at the end of July but Coalitions have not yet been advised as to how much longer the program will continue. Mr. Watson indicated that he has expressed concern to OEL regarding the need for sufficient notice from OEL regarding termination of the First Responder Program. He indicated that parents would need at least a month's notice in order to facilitate continuity of care. The Coalition is also awaiting

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clarification from OEL regarding parent fees for First Responders should the OEL discontinue parent fee waivers.

b. SRPA QIP/Grow With Me/LENA Update 2020-2021

Next week, the Coalition will begin conducting SRPAs for Programs that did not receive an SRPA last year. Mr. Watson noted that OEL will need to take into consideration that twelve-month QIPs implemented for low scoring Providers will run into the next contract cycle and could prevent signing 20/21 contracts. Mr. Watson further noted that, statewide, up to 25% of current Providers could be disqualified if they score less than a 4.0 on their SRPA.

c. Provider Rate Changes

The Coalition submitted a Provider Rate Change proposal to OEL for approval, however, OEL forgot about the proposal and then they denied approval taking issue with the proposed rate increases for infants and toddlers. Mr. Watson has agreed to rework some of the numbers and resubmit the proposal, but he strongly recommended standing by the Board approved rate increases that were submitted to the OEL. All committee members strongly supported standing by the proposed rate increases.

d. Escambia Children's Trust Update

There have been a number of significant donations made to the Escambia Children's Trust fund and the campaign is going well. For greater impact, billboards will be used in lieu of numerous yard signs. A new poll was conducted and indicates that support remains high at about 70%.

e. RDC Committee Chair (Provider Rep?)

The RDC Committee Chair position remains vacant at this time. Mr. Watson indicated that he has encouraged Board members Ms. Robinson and Ms. Strumeyer to assume the role but neither has committed to do so yet.

VII. New Business

a. CARES Phase III

The OEL CARES Phase III grants will allow the Coalition to pay contracted SR and VPK Providers who did not receive payment in the previous CARES Phases I and II. The payouts have decreased with each phase but are still a significant amount.

b. Curriculum Requirements and Scholarships

Ms. Engel reported that all School Readiness Providers acquired a curriculum from the OEL approved and are therefore eligible to continue contracting in the current fiscal year.

c. ICQ

For this fiscal year, nothing on the annual OEL Internal Control Questionnaire (ICQ) has changed except for updating the dates for certain items and updating the organizational chart to reflect current structure. Mr. Watson noted that review of the ICQ is conducted annually with



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the Executive Finance Committee. Upon a motion made by Mr. Mansker and seconded by Ms. Jackson, the ICQ was approved without objection.

d. ED Evaluation

Mr. Mansker indicated that Mr. Watson's annual performance evaluation was rated as Outstanding. Upon a motion made by Ms. Jackson and seconded by Mr. Mansker, a recommendation to forward Mr. Watson's annual performance evaluation to the Board for their approval was approved without objection.

Adjourn: Meeting was adjourned at 9:22 a.m.

Next Meeting: October 22, 2020 at 8:30 a.m. via virtual means from the Early Learning Coalition Office, 3300 North Pace Boulevard, Suite 210, Pensacola, Florida 32505

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