

**Provider Meeting Notes**  
**October 17, 2009**  
**Manatee United Methodist Church**

Ange Harber welcomed the attendees.

**Provider Advisory Group 6:30 pm – 7:00 pm then continuing 8:00 pm – 8:30 pm**

- Review of Board Meeting actions from 10/23/09
  - Report on contract negotiation with Children’s Services Advisory Board for Manatee County Government funding
    1. Denied pay for holidays
    2. Denied Gold Seal rate differential
    3. Denied infant rate for children with disabilities
    4. Approved “kinship care” eligibility for family members who have custody of other family members’ children who no longer receive stipends from the state and therefore are not eligible for school readiness funding – must be referred through Manatee Children’s Services
  - For next year’s funding, providers through the Provider Advisory Group might want to organize an "information sharing" to be presented to the County Commissioners.
  - Jennifer Radebach was removed from the Coalition Board.
  - Wanda Read-Burke attended as the new governor appointee to the Coalition Board.
  - Amendment to the School Readiness agreement was approved
    1. Removes clause disallowing pay for holidays for school-agers only enrolled for out of school days
    2. Changes 2 cross references
    3. Amends the At-Risk reporting requirements to reflect Safe Children’s Coalition procedures
- Responses to Questions/Issues from 9/17/09 meeting
  - Q/I. Is there a new form from Jobs, Etc.? It is a form that the parents have filled out, and it does not have a list of referrals. It was presented to A Child’s Galaxy.
  - R. The Coalition is not aware of a new form from Jobs, etc. Clients are given referrals to bring to the coalition to complete the in-take process to begin the authorization for payment of child care. If referrals are being taken directly to the providers, services may not be covered until the client comes to the Coalition for placement.
  - Q/I. Faxes are not arriving consistently.
  - R. Eligibility and Enrollment staff has been reminded to contact the providers by phone and also fax the information immediately. The staff now has the capability to fax from their desks so this should help to speed up the notification to providers.
  - Q/I. From what date is the ELC now enrolling off the wait list?
  - R. We have offered to all clients on the wait list through April 15, 2009.
  - Q/I. If a parent whose recertification date is 5 months away is not attending, and a provider notify ELC of the non-attendance and no contact, is that parent supposed to be terminated off the SR funding?
  - R. Yes
  - Q/I. One provider stated that she did notify ELC about a parent not attending, and the child’s name appeared on the attendance forms for the next two months.
  - R. The child may show up on the attendance roster for one or more months depending on the notification to the ELC. Rosters are printed the last week of the month prior to when they are to be completed.
  - Q/I. She claimed that the ELC staff told her the parent was eligible to receive funds until the recertification date.

- R. Children must consistently attend child care and any child who misses more than five consecutive days without documentation of absences could be terminated. Staff will be reminded about the attendance requirement for eligibility purposes.
  - Q/I. If a parent is terminated from the funding, how long does it take to allocate those termed funds to a new family?
  - R. Immediately, dollars are not obligated by parent so any unspent funds are eligible to redistribution- however parents may not be immediately called in off of the wait list.
  - Q/I. Training / information on writing grants was requested.
  - R. ELC will look into this.
  - Q/I. Can questions be asked about missing equipment, missing diversity or safety issues for example before ending the observation?
  - R. The assessors/monitors will ask the teachers open ended questions after their observation of the classroom. And, they will only ask about specific items if it will make a difference on the score. One assessor/monitor will ask questions of the director. If there are some safety issues, they will be addressed after questions are completed, prior to the a/m departing. If a major safety item presents itself, the assessment will stop. Teachers and directors will not interfere with words, nor will they try to introduce new equipment to the classroom after the children are present. Quality environments mean the environment is planned and prepared prior to the first child's arrival.
  - Q.I. Are CEU's actually required for renewals?
  - R. Yes, only CEU's are acceptable for credential renewals. Child care licensing in-service hours can be met with non-CEU hours.
  - Q.I. Can we set up tests shortly after the 40+5 training here?.
  - R. That is currently being worked on. At our next meeting, Venise Duchesne will have more details.
- There is a group in the Florida legislature advocating for requiring 4-year degreed teachers in VPK programs. This is an "inspirational" goal of the original legislation, and has been tried in years past including last year, and has not passed due to funding.
- Children's Academy of SW Florida staff Brenda Babeu and Darelyn Poole have been working with Venise Duchesne to bring the face-to-face introductory 40+5 training to Manatee County once more. Venise will address this with her "Training Update" presentation at the next meeting.
- The State of Florida has adopted "Core Competencies for Early Childhood" which may lay the groundwork for certification in the future.
- Dr. Stuckey has submitted the required paperwork to Tallahassee regarding the implementation of the Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education. If approved, this will lead to the first certification of teachers serving ages birth through four in the nation.
- The original Professional Grant Scholarship form had an incorrect fax number listed. All ELC-Manatee faxes are:
  - (941) 757-2915 (Administration)
  - (941) 757-2916 (Family Services – Resource/Referral, Enrollment/Eligibility – converted to email)
  - (941) 757-2917 (Child Health and Development, Provider Agreements - School Readiness and VPK, Provider Assessment and Monitoring – School Readiness and VPK, Education Department, Planning and Compliance)
  - (941) 757-2918 (Provider Payments – converted to email)
- Procedures to use when parents forget to sign their children in or out were discussed. The child must be signed in/out to meet licensing requirements, but the parent signature is needed for that child to be eligible for funding for that day. One provider shared her discussion with DCF Licensing. Providers asked that the ELC will address this issue in writing.
- Some providers are being investigated for fraud. Providers who have questions are advised to call Sharon Oakes at ELC if they have questions or concerns.

- A provider could dismiss a child with more than 5 consecutive absences lacking documentation. The policy/procedure for redeterminations is unclear. Often, the parents and providers receive late notification. This sometimes results in providers either not getting paid or receiving their reimbursement 30 days later. Ange will discuss this issue with Paul Sharff and Sharon Oakes soon.
- Providers asked that ELC help track the legislation in the upcoming session.

**Provider Meeting Training 7:00 pm – 8:00 pm**

Annette Larkin introduced The Honorable Bill Galvano, Representative to the State of Florida House of Representatives from District 68 (serving portions of Manatee and Hillsborough counties).

- Economic impact on services
  - Stimulus dollars will only be available for 2 years – use is complex as state must try to use these in programs which will not rely on duplicating these funds after the timeframe is up.
  - Cuts to the state budget last year were about \$6 billion – this year could be \$2-\$3 billion.
- Governor Crist has appointed a “Child Czar” – Jay Kallinger, and has developed a Children’s Cabinet.
- As Chair of the House Rules Committee, he is responsible for deciding which bills will be forwarded to which committees, and then when the committee-approved bills will be sent to the floor of the House for consideration.
- The article in the Sun Sentinel sparked many conversations across the state about who is working with the most vulnerable of citizens and the procedures that permit convicted felons to work with young children and the elderly. House Bill 201 has been proposed as a result:
  - Would require providers to use digital (Live Scan) method of fingerprint submission
  - Would require clearances for local, FDLE and FBI PRIOR to the person “being hired.”
  - Senator Williams is proposing that all providers/employees be screened, not just those working with the children
- Providers remarked that the Live Scan method is costly and waiting for even one week for a person’s screening results to be returned can mean the providers are out of ratio, therefore placing the children in the “unsafe environment” category. They also remarked that the only vendor locally has not operated in a reliable manner.
- Mr. Galvano reported that Governor Crist has organized a summit of his Cabinet personnel who deal with background screenings. They will share screening requirements and screening systems, then explore ways to equalize the requirements and streamline the systems.
- VPK Readiness Rate was discussed.
  - Providers expressed that a pre-test and post-test design was the fairest way to measure a child’s progress for the child, the VPK program and the kindergarten teacher.
  - No considerations are currently available for English language learners who have never been in a child care setting.
  - Current measurement has no baseline.
  - Screening tool is subjective and open to bias.
- Representative Galvano can be reached at [Bill.Galvano@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:Bill.Galvano@myfloridahouse.gov) His legislative assistant, Kathy Galea, can be reached at (941) 708-4968. His district secretary is Mark Pinto at the same number.
- Legislators must be in Tallahassee one week in November, two weeks in December, all of January and February. The actual session begins in March, then the legislators will be there through close of the session at the end of May.

**Next Meeting**

Thursday, November 19, 2009

12:00 noon – 2:00 pm

Manatee United Methodist Church

315 15<sup>th</sup> Street East

Bradenton, FL 34208

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