



Location: 1130 N Eglin Pkwy, Shalimar, FL 32579

Date: 8.28.2025

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Board Approved: 10.28.25

Program Committee Meeting Minutes

Program Committee Members Present:

Amanda Colwell, Okaloosa County Health Department Appointee
Emily Edge, Representative of an Agency Serving Children with Disabilities
Lindsay Roberts, Private Sector - Osprey Title (Zoom)
Kathy Curry, Representative of faith-based childcare providers

Program Committee Members Absent:

Kim Cox, Private Sector, Origin Bank
Julie Webb, Private Sector – Advanced Sacred Hope Academy (ASHA)
Amy Bowles, Okaloosa County Schools Appointee
Kristen Murdy, Representative of private for-profit childcare providers – Chair
Victoria Ebert, Private Sector - RC Hospitality
Jeff Brown, Private Sector, Bridging Analytics

Coalition Staff Present:

Dana Hodges, CEO
Angie Strumeyer, COO
Tawanda Brown, Education Manager
Deanna Hernandez, Executive Administrator

Public Present:

Ginny McCallum

- I. Call to Order – Amanda C. called the meeting to order at 10:05 am
- II. Consent Agenda

Kathy C. made the motion to accept the Consent Agenda as presented.
Motion is carried by unanimous vote.

III. New Business

a. SR Enrollments

Dana talks about changes in funding, stating that funding notifications are on pause and applicants are now placed on a waitlist. There are currently 130 families on the waitlist. The ELC is seeking recommendations on how to market these new changes. Discussions take place.

b. VPK Designation Changes

The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) assigns annual Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) provider designations by evaluating three key performance areas:

- *Program Quality*, measured by CLASS scores for classroom interactions.
- *Child Achievement*, children are assessed using the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) Star Early Literacy progress monitoring tool, which measures their early literacy and math skills to determine a kindergarten-readiness score.

- *Child Learning Gains*, which measures the overall progress and growth of children throughout the VPK program.

These metrics are used to calculate a performance score, which in turn establishes the provider's final designation.

To assist providers on probation (POPS) in improving their program, a new process has been implemented with three key requirements. These requirements are:

- Submitting a corrective action plan and keeping families informed of their status.
- Purchasing and implementing a curriculum approved by the Division of Early Learning (DEL).
- Submitting a staff development plan to improve the skills of their employees.

ELC requests recommendations for celebrating providers who have earned an "Excellent" rating on their VPK designations.

c. Educator Spotlight

Dana discusses adding in a Provider spotlight to highlight great teachers working in center who did not qualify for the Educator Spotlight using the current criteria. Discussions take place, recommendations are made.

d. Language Barriers

Angie updated the Committee on communication challenges stemming from the recent increase in multilingual families in our communities. ELC is seeking recommendations on alternative solutions, keeping in mind our budgetary restrictions. Discussions take place.

e. Hatch Table*

We have an IgniteTable by Hatch that needs a new home. The table allows children to actively build prosocial, communication, and cooperative skills while learning and collaborating with peers. We have a Provider that is not able to utilize the table and is willing to give it to another Provider. Providers were asked to submit a written request. These submissions were redacted and presented to the Committee for review. Deliberations take place until a recipient is chosen.

Amanda C. made a motion to award #5 to receive the Hatch table.
Motion is carried by unanimous vote.

f. Fall Workshop

Tawanda states that registration for the Fall Workshop will first open up to Providers who may need additional support and then it will open up to all Providers. There will only be 90 spots available, the workshop is scheduled to for Saturday October 4, 2025, from 8am – 12pm at NWFSC.

g. Storybook Village

Dana discussed the event and how it has grown in the past two years. She explains the intent and purpose of the event and announced that the event will take place on Saturday October 25, 2025, at United Fidelity Bank.



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IV. Public Comment

Amanda reminds the Committee members that tonight is the OCHIP International Overdose Awareness Day Community Event in Niceville which starts at 5:30pm.

V. Adjournment

Amanda C. adjourns the meeting at 11:45am.

Respectfully Submitted,
Deanna Hernandez
Executive Administrator