

Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Heartland, Inc.

ELCFH Executive Committee Meeting Monday, August 10, 2009 – 1:00 P.M.

Members Present: Ed Osborne, Alan Grimes (Conference Call), Sheila Nobles (Conference Call), Deb DeKeulenaere (Conference Call)

Staff: Anne Bouhebent, Anna Brookbank, Marjorie Bateman, Arvilla Brito, Olga Olvera, Diana Stanton

Guests: Raphael Gomez, Agency for Workforce Innovation/Office of Early Learning (Conference Call), Sally Hernandez, A Better Choice Children's Academy (Conference Call)

1. Call to Order (Ed Osborne)

Ed Osborne called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M.

2. FY 09-10 Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program Statewide Provider Agreement: Executive Director Recommendation for Provider Contract Termination

Anne stated a letter of non compliance was hand delivered to A Better Choice Children's Academy, LLC in Sebring on July 30, 2009. A copy of the letter is included in the Executive Committee packet on pages 2 and 3. The letter outlines the substantiated violations of sections 402.301-319, Florida Statutes committed by A Better Choice Children's Academy as documented and recently posted by the Florida Department of Children and Families. These violations occurred on April 7 and April 8, 2009. Anne stated A Better Choice Children's Academy was given 10 calendar days to respond to these violations. The violations were not posted at the time of the ELCFH Board Meeting on June 24, 2009 and are in addition to the violations presented at the Board Meeting.

Anne stated the ELCFH reviewed the role and intention of the School Readiness and VPK Provider, and legal counsel regarding the provisions in the VPK Statewide Provider Agreement. The rationale for recommending termination of the VPK contract is based on the provider's non adherence to the Florida Section 402 of Florida Statutes which stipulates health and safety standards for licensed providers.

Sally Hernandez, an employee of A Better Choice Children's Academy stated Ms. Linda Payne had responded to the letter and that the ELCFH should have received it by fax today. Anne Bouhebent stated no fax was received from A Better Choice Children's Academy at the ELCFH- Charlotte office. Ms. Hernandez stated that the letter explained the facility's intent to obtain new ownership and requested that the VPK Provider Agreement be allowed to remain in place while undergoing this transition. Anna Brookbank stated that VPK Provider Agreement is not transferable and welcomed communication from the provider once the transition is complete. Sheila Nobles also stated that it would be necessary to reapply for DCF licensure.

Deb DeKeulenaere made a motion to terminate the FY 09-10 VPK Provider Agreement with A Better Choice Children's Academy, LLC in Sebring. Sheila Nobles seconded. The motion carried.

3. Open Forum

Anna Brookbank requested guidance from the Committee on how to process VPK and School Readiness applications when a provider has violations of Florida Statute 402 which relates to health

and safety. A discussion ensued and it was determined that any violations of Florida Statute 402 in processing either School Readiness Contract or VPK Contract would result in the provider's application being denied.

Sheila Nobles made a motion to revise the ELCFH policy immediately to reflect any violations by a provider of Florida Statute 402 would result in the denial or termination of a VPK or School Readiness contract. Ed Osborne seconded. The motion carried.

4. Adjournment

Ed Osborne adjourned the meeting at 1:29 P.M.