ELCHC GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING-September 21, 2026

ACTION	ITEM III.C.
ISSUE:	Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Performance Evaluation Process and Merit Increase Consideration
FISCAL IMPACT:	$228,000 annual
FUNDING SOURCE:	School Readiness and Voluntary Prekindergarten
RECOMMENDED ACTION (1):	The Committee recommends that the full board approves a merit increase for Dr. Hicks, CEO, for the 2026 employment anniversary, effective November 14, 2026, with an annual salary of $228,000, the maximum allowed by state law.

NARRATIVE:
Dr. Fred Hicks, Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County CEO, would be eligible for a merit increase in recognition of his 2026 employment anniversary. In compliance with Rule 6M-9.120, Board members submitted the required Division of Early Learning (DEL) Annual Performance Evaluation form (DEL-SR 120) and submitted it to DEL by the due date, August 30, 2026. Dr. Hick's received an average evaluation score of 2.73 out of a possible 3.00. The Governance Committee recommends that the full board approve a merit increase for Dr. Hicks, for the 2026 employment anniversary, effective November 14, 2026, with an annual salary of $228,000 the maximum allowed by state law.

The Performance Evaluation for Merit Consideration Memorandum is attached.
(1 attachment)

Memorandum

To: Members of the Board of Directors

From: Dr. Frederick L. Hicks

RE: Performance Evaluation for Merit Consideration

Date: October 6, 2025

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Brief History

Under Rule 6M-9.120, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Executive Director Evaluation process is prescribed. The Early Learning Coalition Board Chair or other delegated member(s) shall annually complete the Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director Annual Performance Evaluation, Form DEL-SR 120, August 2025, for the ELC's CEO or executive director. The evaluation must be completed and submitted to DEL by August 30 of each year. This August the required evaluation was submitted on time to DEL.

Dr. Fred Hicks, CEO of the ELC of Hillsborough County, began employment at the ELCHC on November 14, 2022.

The 2026 DEL Form DEL-SR 120 average score of 2.73 out of a possible 3.00 would typically translate to the Board's consideration of a merit raise of 1.02% to an annual salary of $228,0000. This is the annual salary maximum capped by the State for a Level II CEO for 2026.

Performance Dimensions Section

Rate the five Performance Dimensions (pages 2-4) on known or observed behaviors of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) during this review period. Please base your ratings on observations or interactions and identify strengths and areas for improvement.

Use this rating scale to select a rating for each of the 5 Performance Objectives. Include narrative comments to explain/support your ratings and any aspects of the CEO's performance. This will help to provide better understanding and feedback.

Rating Scale Definitions for Performance Dimensions
The ratings are based on a scale of 1 to 3.

3 *Exceeds Expectations*: The CEO's level of performance on this performance dimension exceeded expectations. Performance exceeded expectations in essential areas of responsibility. Goals or projects were achieved to support this performance within this dimension.

2 *Meets Expectations*: The CEO's level of performance on this performance dimension met expectations. Performance met expectations to an acceptable extent on the essential areas of responsibility. Goals or projects were achieved to support this performance within this dimension.

1 *Unsatisfactory*: The CEO's level of performance fell significantly below the expectations for this performance dimension without any acceptable reason or justification. Performance failed to meet expectations on more than one essential area of responsibility, and less than acceptable progress was made toward achieving this dimension. Significant improvement is required.

N/O Not Observed: This rating option is available for use when there is not sufficient information to evaluate the level of performance.

Strategic Objectives Section

Overall Process

Board Member responses for the Performance Dimensions section will be tallied and averaged. This information will be used by the Executive Committee to provide the CEO with performance feedback and to make compensation decisions. The decision on CEO compensation will necessarily involve not only performance, but budgetary and salary cap considerations. However, in general, the general guidelines will be used in providing feedback and determining compensation will be as shown below.

Merit Consideration Ranges

Score: 2.7-3.0	Exceptional Merit Increase Range	3-5%
Score: 2.4-2.69	Commendable Merit Increase Range	2.5-3.5%
Score: 2.0-2.39	Meets Expectations Merit Increase Range	0-2.5%
Score: 1.0-1.99	Below Expectations Merit Increase Range	0% PIP*

*Performance Improvement Plan
Note: The applicable CEO salary cap for 2026 is $228,000

Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County (ELCHC)
Chief Executive Officer
Performance Appraisal Form
for Board Members

Date Filled Out	
Performance Review Period	
CEO's Name	Dr. Frederick Hicks
ELCHC BOD Member Name	

1. Leadership

Definition: The CEO's ability to inspire, motivate, and guide individuals and teams towards achieving organizational goals. This includes demonstrating integrity, fostering a positive culture, and effectively communicating the vision and mission of the ELC of Hillsborough County with stakeholders, childcare providers, elected officials, and other stakeholders.

- Question: How effectively does the CEO demonstrate leadership in guiding the organization towards its goals? (Select one)
  - 1: Unsatisfactory
  - 2: Meets Expectations
  - 3: Exceeds Expectations
  - Not Observed

Additional Comment:

2. Strategic Planning

Definition: The CEO's capability to develop, communicate, and implement long-term strategies that align with ELCHC's mission and vision. This involves setting clear objectives, anticipating future challenges, and adapting to changing environments.

- Question: How effectively does the CEO develop and implement strategic plans that drive the organization forward? (Select one)
  - 1: Unsatisfactory

- 2: Meets Expectations
- 3: Exceeds Expectations
- Not Observed

- Additional Comment:

3. Board of Director Relations

Definition: The CEO's ability to maintain productive and transparent relationships with the board of directors. This includes ensuring effective governance, facilitating informed decision-making, and keeping the board well-informed about organizational performance and strategic issues.

- Question: How effectively does the CEO engage with the board of directors to ensure effective governance and decision-making? (Select one)
  - 1: Unsatisfactory
  - 2: Meets Expectations
  - 3: Exceeds Expectations
  - Not Observed
- Additional Comment:

4. Financial Management

Definition: The CEO's proficiency in managing the organization's financial resources. This encompasses budgeting, financial planning, risk management, and ensuring the financial sustainability and growth of the ELC.

- Question: How effectively does the CEO manage the organization's financial resources to ensure sustainability and growth? (Select one)
  - 1: Unsatisfactory
  - 2: Meets Expectations
  - 3: Exceeds Expectations

- Not Observed

- Additional Comment:

5. Operational Efficiency

Definition: The CEO’s ability to optimize organizational processes and resources to achieve maximum efficiency and effectiveness. This includes streamlining operations, improving productivity, and ensuring that the ELC operates smoothly and efficiently.

- Question: How effectively does the CEO optimize organizational processes and resources to achieve maximum efficiency and effectiveness? (Select one)
  - 1: Unsatisfactory
  - 2: Meets Expectations
  - 3: Exceeds Expectations
  - Not Observed
- Additional Comment:
