



FIRST THINGS FIRST
The right system for bright futures

Arizona Early Childhood Development & Health Board

Central Maricopa Regional Partnership Council

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the First Things First Central Maricopa Regional Partnership Council was held on February 18, 2009 at Chandler YMCA, 1655 W. Frye Road, Chandler AZ 85224.

Jackie Garner, Council Chair, called the meeting to order at approximately 3:30 p.m.

Members Present

Andrea Colby, Angela Capone, Bonni Pomush, Glenn Waterkotte, Hope Dillon, Jackie Garner, Karen Emery, Kathy Halter, Maureen Duane, Trinity Donovan

Members Absent

Genoveva Acosta-Bueno

Guests

Wendy Sabatini, First Things First Manager for Maricopa Region
Terri Duhart, First Things First Coordinator for Southeast Maricopa Region
Jen Hewitt, YMCA
Joyce Chadwell, YMCA
Audrey Huntingger, YMCA
Three members from the public

Council Meeting Minutes

Member Pomush motioned to approve the minutes for the December 17, 2008 (with the correction to show Member Donovan as present) and the January 21, 2009 meetings. Seconded by Member Halter. Motion approved.

Call to the Public

None

YMCA Childcare Tour

Pat Berry thanked everyone for attending and gave an overview of the center and the enrichment curriculum they provide. Everyone participated in a tour of the facility led by Ms. Berry and Ms. Hewitt.

Chair/Vice Chair Meeting

Council Chair Garner, Vice-Chair Dillon, Regional Coordinators, and members of the First Things First Board attended the Chair meeting on February 5.

Council Chair Garner gave an overview of discussions that took place around the following topics:

- Proposed distributions regarding baseline adjustments to ensure that every Region is able to fund one strategy;
- Frontier communities adjustments to assist outlining areas where services are scarce;
- Need for a comprehensive Statewide Needs and Assessments Evaluation;

- Need for additional discretionary funding.

Council Chair Garner shared the following concerns at the Chair meeting:

- Safety of First Things First's funds and Central Maricopa's ability to carry out the proposed plans for their Region;
- First Things First's lack of advertisements to the public at large about the importance of their mission;
- The Logic Model does not fully address working with owners of centers;
- There are no codes on Arizona's books that address the critical issues to quality care pertaining to group size. If First Things First's issues are not addressed, the rules that are being set will remain so for the next ten years.

Legislative Updates

Vice Chair Dillon shared how to effectively advocate for the children and families:

- Notify all your contacts, the public and the Legislators ;
- Attach a story to the issues;
- Find something to rejuvenate your passion as you work to keep the funding alive;
- Don't stand idle and let the legislature take away the funding.

Vice Chair Dillon pointed out the meeting packet attachments, 3 – 6, containing fact sheets, strategies to educate the community, as well as a sample letter to Legislators.

Council Chair Garner shared information regarding a monthly dialogue that takes places in Tempe Arizona. This month's dialogue is on legislative issues and will be held February 23.

Member Halter reminded everyone that as they advocate for children and families to remember that there are provisions in the stimulus bill for childcare and that the funds should be used accordingly. Member Halter passed out information on Child Care Day 2009 and asked everyone to support this event by filling the legislative gallery and by registering to speak. Member Halter also shared that Department of Economic Security funding has been eliminated, the levels of childcare that were affected, and the ripple effect of unlicensed sub-standard childcare and thousands of jobs.

Coordinator Floth asked the Council to consider what they can do as a collective voice to be heard and that she would help facilitate whatever they choose to do as well as provide additional talking points for anyone that would like to personally speak with their Legislator. Representative Leah Landrum Taylor is on the Education Committee and was quoted as being very supportive of First Things First.

Vice-Chair Dillon and Members Duane and Halter will draft a letter, another strategy, or ideas for the Council to adopt. The information should be filtered through Coordinator Floth and will be presented at the March 18 Council Meeting.

There was further discussion on how to successfully get the word out, how First things First is moving forward and what is working.

Coordination Strategy Opportunity

Southeast Maricopa Regional Partnership Council Chair Coon sent her regrets for not being available to accompany Coordinator Duhart who shared Southeast Maricopa's Strategy for Family Support Network, how the strategy was developed and why, and walked everyone through the flow chart she provided. There was a discussion around this strategy and Member Capone motioned that the Central Maricopa Regional Partnership Council become part of the Family Support Network for the East Valley, seconded by Member Colby. Motion approved.

Retreat Planning

Members Emery and Pomush shared that the retreat will take place May 20, at Banner Desert Children's Hospital, 1400 S. Dobson, in Mesa. The Northeast Maricopa Regional Partnership Council Chair Fausel will facilitate. Members Emery and Pomush will contact Member Waterkotte to secure the facility and to lock down a morning schedule.

Coordinator Report

- Coordinator Floth gave an update on Statewide Strategies:
 - As of February 9, all the scheduled Parents Kits have been distributed.
 - 551 applicants have applied for Quality First! Coordinator Floth asked the Council to let her know if there are specific zip codes they would like to include.
 - Childcare health consultant, Cathy Ford, is working on an intergovernmental agreement between First Things First and Pima County Health Department to provide recruitment and training.
 - RFGA Compensation and Retention Initiative will be rolled out any day now.
 - The fee for T.E.A.C.H. increased to \$3,200 per applicant which will now only provide for 239 participants.
- Logic Model will be completed soon and Coordinator Floth may still contact the Council for input towards Scope of Work strategies.
- Family and Community Surveys and Partner Surveys have been completed at the statewide level and can be found on the First Things First website.
- The solicitation letter for volunteer reviewers will be available soon.
- The State Board will be touring Regional Councils to award them their allocated funds in the form of a Big Check. This is an opportunity for publicity and everyone is asked to attend if possible and to invite their legislators and the press. The date is tentatively set for February 26.
- Provided everyone with an email from First Things First's Board Chair, Nadine Basha, with additional talking points.
- Provided everyone with Decade of Data's latest compensation and credentials report regarding the state of childcare, wages, educational levels, etc. This information is also available on the First Things First website.
- First Things First was in the Chandler and Mesa newspapers and Member Pomush did a great job representing Central Maricopa in the Tempe issue of the newspaper.

Reports/Updates

- Member Halter's day care center was interviewed and was able to share the economic detriment to children and families.

Adjourn

There being no further business, Council Vice Chair Dillon adjourned the meeting at 5:27 P.M.

SUBMITTED BY:

Sharon Smith, Administrative Assistant III

Approved:

Jackie Garner, Regional Council Chair