



FIRST THINGS FIRST

The right system for bright futures

**Arizona Early Childhood Development & Health Board
Cochise Regional Partnership Council**

**Meeting Minutes
February 18, 2010**

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Introductions

The Regular Meeting of the First Things First Cochise Regional Partnership Council was held on Thursday, February 18, 2010 at 10:00 AM at the Sierra Vista Public Library Mona Bishop Room, 2600 East Tacoma Street, Sierra Vista, AZ 85635.

Council Members Present:

Vaira Harik, Mary Sue Houser, Dave Howe, Renae Humburg, Melodi Polach, Ginger Ryan, Jane Strain, Nancy-Jean Welker and Evelyn Whitmer

Council Members Absent:

Ana Bae-Limb and Del Cabarga

Others Present:

Melissa Avant, Cristal Martin, Michelle Quiroz, Pamela Crouch, Valley Owen, Joanne Basta, Judith Schmitt, Claire Brown, Sue Armstrong, Nicole Sanchez, Denisse Escarcega, Carolyn Owens, Lorna Sedillos, Priscilla Whitlock-Coates, Rebecca Drummond, Pam Patt and Bob Strain

Chair Strain welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at approximately 10:09 AM. Chair Strain led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes of the January 21, 2010 Meeting, January 21, 2010 Work Session Meeting and February 12, 2010 Work Session Meeting

A motion was made by Chair Strain to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2010 Meeting, January 21, 2010 Work Session Meeting and February 12, 2010 Work Session Meeting. Seeing no objections, the minutes will be posted as published.

Introduction of Needs and Assets Vendor

Angie Donelson PhD, President, Donelson Consulting LLC, provided introductions and a short description of qualifications for Joanne Basta PhD, Claire Brown EdD, and herself. Ms. Donelson also provided a handout to the Regional Council which listed the Donelson Consulting approach for developing the

Needs and Assets report along with contact information. The Regional Council discussed how community opinion will be incorporated and requested that the data for the Needs and Assets report be place based rather than zip code based as this would be a more accurate representation of Cochise County.

Discussion and Possible Approval on Food Box Strategy and Funding Mechanism

Melissa Avant, Regional Coordinator, provided a handout to the Regional Council that summarized the discussion concerning a food box strategy from the February 12, 2010 work session meeting. Ms. Avant also provided information on other regional councils who will continue the food box strategy.

Member Humburg moved that the Cochise Regional Partnership Council discuss the possible approval of a food box strategy. Member Polach seconded the motion. The Regional Council recognized that children birth through five are going hungry in Cochise County and discussed the need for a food strategy to address balanced meals and nutrition and the need for coordination to be written into any strategy formed. The Regional Council also questioned if a food box strategy would provide the systemic change that is the goal of First Things First. There are families that would benefit further from education or the delivery of prepared meals for the reason that many families do not have the knowledge to make an affordable, nutritious meal with any food provided to them.

Member Humburg moved that the Cochise Regional Partnership Council allocate zero funds into a new food box strategy and transfer \$68,552 from the carry forward category along with the concept of nutritional education to Strategy Five Health and Nutrition. Member Polach seconded the motion. Member Polach, Member Ryan and Member Whitmer each declared a conflict of interest and recued themselves.

Motion carried 5:0

Discussion and Possible Approval on Child Care Scholarship Stipend

Melissa Avant, Regional Coordinator, provided the Regional Council a handout that summarized the discussion concerning child care stipends from the February 12, 2010 work session meeting. Ms. Avant provided information on other regional councils who will utilize a child care scholarship stipend strategy. With an allocation of \$100,000, approximately 35 families would be served in Cochise County with the caveat that the children served would have to be enrolled in a Quality First center that is incurring an Arizona Department of Health Services licensing fee.

The Regional Council discussed the families on the Department of Economic Security waiting list and the strict guidelines the families have to fulfill in order to be put on the list. Families that cannot afford to enroll their children into child care either cannot go to work or have to place their children into uncertified homes while children placed in quality centers receive the maximum benefit of the First Things First strategies and healthy brain development. Support of this new strategy could stabilize families as well as the centers and workers of the child care industry. The Regional Council expressed the desire to receive more quantitative data than qualitative data in this strategy.

Member Welker moved that the Cochise Regional Partnership Council approve child care stipends as a new strategy to cover birth through three year olds and allocate \$100,000 from the carry forward category. Member Humburg seconded the motion.

Motion carried 8:0

Discussion and Possible Approval on Pre-K Expansion and Funding Mechanism

Melissa Avant, Regional Coordinator, provided the Regional Council a handout that summarized the discussion concerning Pre-K expansion from the February 12, 2010 work session meeting. Ms. Avant also provided information on other regional councils who will employ a Pre-K expansion strategy. Approximately 25-35 children would be served with an allocation of \$100,000.

Member Polach moved that the Cochise Regional Partnership Council discuss the possible approval of Pre-K expansion. Member Welker seconded the motion. The Regional Council discussed the need to receive outcomes, measurements and evaluative data from a Pre-K strategy. Existing programs must already be in place and the Regional Council would need to ensure that any strategy does not supplant the work of other existing agencies. The Regional Council also expressed the desire to utilize a funding mechanism that will address the needs of faith based schools along with public and charter schools.

Member Polach moved that the Cochise Regional Partnership Council approve Pre-K services as a new strategy and allocate \$100,000 from the carry forward category. Member Howe seconded the motion. Member Welker declared a conflict of interest and recused herself. Motion carried 7:0

Call to the Public

Carolyn Owens, Tucson Community Food Bank, spoke to the Regional Council of the work the Tucson Community Food Bank is doing in Cochise County.

1. Currently, the food bank is serving approximately 5000 families in Cochise County.
2. The food boxes provided by First Things First helps families "stretch their food dollars".
3. Families are required to take surveys and they state that the nutritional assistance helps their families.
4. In the past year, there has been a 40% increase in the request for food boxes.

Discussion of Strategy Eight/Coordination

Rebecca Drummond, MA, Program Director for Family Wellness, University of Arizona, College of Public Health, provided the Regional Council with an update for Strategy Eight Coordination and supplied handouts and resource updates from the National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center and the University of Connecticut Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Research and Training Center on Service Coordination. Ms. Drummond made suggestions for the Regional Council to consider.

1. Provide Leadership/Collaboration workshops or trainings for grantees. Ms. Drummond provided a handout from the Southwest Public Health Leadership Institute's Collaborative Leadership Training that could be tailored to the Regional Council's needs.
2. Compile or update a regional database of resources for families in Cochise County.

The Regional Council discussed the Request for Grant Application process and the need to make coordination a requirement in the process. The Regional Council discussed issues that could hamper collaboration such as feelings of ownership and competition. The Regional Council recognized there is a gap in coordination/collaboration and stressed the importance of coordination within the current strategies. The Regional Council questioned if coordination training is a First Things First mandate and if this falls under the original intent of the council. Are there steps to coordination and what stops collaboration and coordination from happening? The Regional Council discussed the expansion or formation of a resource guide and questioned if this would be redundant as there are guides available in Cochise County.

Data Report on Grantees

Melissa Avant, Regional Coordinator, provided information to the Regional Council from the Grants Financial and Program Data Summary Report. Ms. Avant presented the raw data along with the narrative reports from the grantees and reminded the Regional Council that until the data has been analyzed by the First Things First Evaluation Department the numbers are an estimate only. The Regional Council would prefer outcome based reports that reflect the raw data. To that end, there need to be comprehensive guidelines and clear expectations for the narrative reports.

Coordinator's Report

Melissa Avant, Regional Coordinator, provided the Regional Council a handout and highlighted events from the First Things First Board Wrap-Up.

1. Executive Director Elliot Hibbs has resigned. The new Executive Director is Rhian Evans Allvin.
2. All regional funding plans have been approved by the State Board.
3. The University of Arizona longitudinal study presented to the State Board and their study outcomes should be arriving shortly.
4. The State Board is looking into the RFGA process recommendations that were provided from focus groups.
5. First Things First has a Facebook page and Ms. Avant encouraged Members to become fans.

Review of Scope of Work for Strategy One/Home Visitation to Include Early Literacy

Member Howe moved to go into executive session pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.03 (A)(2) for purposes of agenda #10 at 3:15 PM. Member Polach seconded the motion. Member Harik, Member Polach and Member Whitmer declared conflict of interest and recued themselves.

Member Houser moved to close executive session. Member Welker seconded the motion. The Regional Council came back from executive session at 3:53 PM.

Review of Scope of Work for Strategy Nine/Oral Health

Member Harik moved to go into executive session pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.03 (A)(2) for purposes of agenda #11 at 4:00 PM. Member Polach seconded the motion. Member Harik and Member Ryan declared conflict of interest and recued themselves.

Member Polach moved to close executive session. Member Welker seconded the motion. The Regional Council came back from executive session at 4:26 PM.

Announcements

Next regular meeting: March 18, 2010 located at the Douglas Visitor's Center in Douglas, AZ.

Chair Strain and Vice Chair Howe attended the Chair/Vice Chair meeting on February 4, 2010. Chair Strain spoke of the varying philosophies throughout the regions on the subject of communications.

Chair Strain provided information concerning advocacy/legislative seminars hosted by First Things First.

Member Whitmer shared that Brain Builders training will begin in April.

Member Welker announced the South East Arizona Rural Chamber of Commerce has formed and will meet quarterly. Chair Strain proposed that First Things First present at a meeting.

Member Ryan announced that the Chiricahua Community Health Centers has hired an adult internist, a school psychologist and a dentist.

Chair Strain reminded the Regional Council of a 12:00 PM legislative conference call on Friday, February 19, 2010.

Melissa Avant, Regional Coordinator, will present at the Sierra Vista City Council Work Session, Monday, February 22, 2010 at 3:00 PM.

A TEACH Information Session was held on February 17, 2010 at 8:30 PM in the Cochise Regional Office in Sierra Vista, AZ. There were ten individuals in attendance to receive further information about TEACH.

Review of Scope of Work for Strategy Five/Health and Nutrition to Include Oral Health Education

Member Harik moved to go into executive session pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.03 (A)(2) for purposes of agenda #12 at 4:49 PM. Member Howe seconded the motion. Member Harik, Member Polach, Member Ryan and Member Whitmer declared conflict of interest and recued themselves.

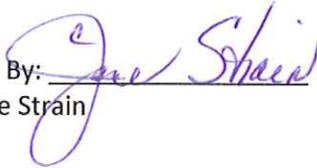
Member Humburg moved to close executive session. Member Welker seconded the motion. The Regional Council came back from executive session at 5:00 PM.

Adjournment

There being no further discussions, Chair Strain adjourned the meeting at 5:00 P.M.

Dated this 18 day of March, 2010.

Submitted By: Cristal Martin
Administrative Assistant

Approved By: 
Chair, Jane Strain