Call to Order and Introductions
The regular meeting of the First Things First – La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council was held January 27, 2010 at 9:30 a.m. at Beaver Dam High School Library, 3475 E. Rio Virgin Road, Beaver Dam, Arizona, 86432.

Chairman Frei called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. Council members, staff and guests introduced themselves.

Members present: Riley Frei and Betsy Lewis

Members Attending Telephonically: Jose Garcia, Terri Holloway, Lenore Knudtson, Vibette Saari, and Alisa Burroughs

Members Absent: Melissa Howell, Debra Weger, and Nancy Mongeau

Approval of Agenda
Member Lewis made a motion to approve the day’s agenda. Motion was seconded by Member Knudtson. Motion passed unanimously by members present.

Conflict of Interest
No Council Members declared a conflict of interest regarding items on the agenda.

Call to the Public
There were no calls to the public however, Phyllis Leavitt, Beaver Dam Elementary School principal stated she is pleased to see the progress made with enrichment of early childhood education. Ms Leavitt thanked First Things First and the La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council for the work they are doing for young children and education.

Consent Agenda
The Consent Agenda included the minutes of December 2nd, 2010. Member Holloway made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion seconded by Member Saari. Motion carried unanimously by members present.

Debbie Justice of The Learning Center for Families (TLC) introduced herself and stated they are happy to provide services to a community that is severely under-served. Ms. Justice stated that FTF funding has allowed TLC to expand services in Colorado City, Centennial Park, and Cane Beds. Ms. Justice stated an additional 36 families are able to participate in Home-Based Early Head Start. Ms. Justice provided the Regional Council with a brief overview of the program stating it focuses on the healthy development of children, their social welfare, building parent leaders, and self-sufficiency in the home. TLC spends ninety minutes a week in the home. Parents and children participate in play groups two times a month. Parents participate in Parent Committee meetings and some participate in the Parent Policy Council. As of today, TLC has served 48 families and three pregnant women. The biggest issue moving forward is adequate facilities for a child care center. Ms. Justice introduced Sandra Martinez whose family has benefited through TLC. Ms. Martinez thanked the Council for the assistance her family has received and stated that she’s found a new support system within the group. Ms. Justice introduced Jessica Sanchez, another parent who stated her daughter has also benefited through the program and is grateful for the opportunity. Ms. Sanchez stated she has learned things as a parent in the group she did not know before. Ms. Justice stated feedback has been exceptionally positive. Chair Frei asked Ms. Justice about partnerships being formed through the new medical facility. Ms. Justice stated they are currently working with a dental program and she would like to do developmental screenings as part of the well-baby checkups. Carol Lundgren of TLC stated the barrier they see most is lack of transportation. Ms. Justice agreed and stated the program does provide travel reimbursement however that does not help low income families who do not have transportation. Chair Frei thanked Ms. Justice and TLC for the work they are doing in the community.

Update on Home-Based Early Head Start in Northern Mohave County:
Tonya Ford, Mohave County Superior Court Infant Toddler Mental Health Team Coordinator, stated they are an infant/toddler mental health team and their target audience is anyone who works with children ages 0-5 in La Paz or Mohave Counties. Their goal is to provide training in infant and toddler mental health and the response in the region has been overwhelming. In 2010, the Court Team held 34 trainings with 871 attendees. The Court Team’s goal for 2011 is to put the information they learned over the past year...
in to practice. Ms. Ford stated they took a team to Miami Florida and shadowed the Safe Start Initiative, a Court Team that has been working effectively for 9 years. Ms. Ford gave a brief outline of the training they received in Miami and how it will help children in La Paz and Mohave Counties. Ms. Ford stated Ashley Rose Quarter will be speaking and signing books in Kingman, Saturday, February 5th. Ms. Quarter is the author of the book “Three Little Words”, describing her life in the foster care system. Ms. Ford stated the biggest obstacle the Court Team is facing is that personnel in many child welfare agencies are overwhelmed, have very high case loads, and there is a shortage of foster homes in the region. Chair Frei thanked Ms. Ford for the update.

Community Resources Guide and Outreach Update
Community Outreach Liaison Della Gray provided the Council and guests with an update on community outreach efforts in the region. Ms. Gray summarized the meetings she’s attended and will be attending. Ms. Gray provided the Council with a Resource Guide which has also been provided to grantees to facilitate collaboration. Ms. Gray stated she has been asking people at community events and meetings to complete a Champion form expressing their interest in taking action on behalf of First Things First. Ms. Gray also requested that grantee’s and stakeholders continue to send her success stories. Ms. Gray explained that she is developing a “Speaker’s Bureau Training” to provide participants tools to help spread the word about the importance of early childhood. Ms. Ford stated her and the assistant county manager set up a schedule where they will speak to service organizations and she will get information from Ms. Gray to assist in outreach efforts. Ms. Gray stated she will pick up the forms or send a self addressed stamped envelope and provide all the materials needed.

Legislative Update
Member Holloway stated she and Regional Manager Gary Arnold met with State Representative Doris Goodale in early December, 2010. Ms. Goodale was given an overview of FTF and Regionally-funded programs. Ms. Holloway stated she thinks the meeting was very positive and that Ms. Goodale is supportive of FTF. Ms. Beckett added that staff is working to establish relationships with legislative members to increase their understanding of the work that is happening as a result of FTF and protect our investment in early childhood. Ms. Goodale has expressed interest in learning more about the Court Team strategy and requested a tour of the Court Team facility. Ms. Ford stated she will contact Ms. Goodale and invite her to visit the Court Teams. Ms. Ford stated that although Ms. Goodale was not a supporter of FTF in the past, she is a supporter of children and by providing her with more information on what FTF is all about, we may be able to change her opinion.

Coordinator Report & Possible Discussion
Coordinator Beckett provided the Council with a financial and program data summary. Coordinator Beckett pointed out that grantees have expended 36% of funds and it appears we are on track to expend most of the allocated funds by the end of the fiscal year. Data is now being received from the new pre-kindergarten expansion sites. There were 92 children served through the new strategy in Quarter 1. Coordinator Beckett advised that she and Chair Frei presented the FY2012 Funding Plan to the State Board on January 25th and it was approved unanimously by the Board without questions. Two new agreements were presented as well; one for pre-kindergarten expansion in the Bullhead City Elementary School District and one for home visitation services with the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe. Both were approved by the board and will begin on February 1st. Coordinator Beckett provided the Council with the Council Member survey results from August 2010 and stated that feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and there continues to be concern over the RFGA process. However, she stated this is not a major concern for this Council as no new RFGA’s were released by the Council last year and there are no plans to release RFGAs for SFY 2012. Coordinator Beckett reviewed Meeting locations for 2011 advising that the time has changed from 9:00 to 9:30. Coordinator Beckett advised the Council that two applications have been received for the parent seat and the nominating committee is reviewing the applications. The Council was advised that the Grantee Coordination Meetings have been scheduled for 2011. Locations will be determined at a later date.

Next Meeting: The next meeting is at 9:30 am on Thursday, February 24th, 2011 at Arizona Western College located at 601 West 11th Street, Parker, Arizona, 85344.

Adjourn
Member Garcia made a motion to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Member Lewis. Motion carried unanimously by members present.

There being no further business, Chairman Frei adjourned the meeting at 10:39 a.m.

Minutes NOT approved

SUBMITTED BY:        APPROVED BY:

S. Jo Griffis, Administrative Assistant     Riley Frei, Chair