



**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 March 6, 2009 at Ben Furlong Education Building – 8700 S. Kyrene Rd., Tempe AZ 85284.

Jackie Garner, Council Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:50 p.m.

**Members Present**

Andrea Colby, Bonni Pomush, Genoveva Acosta-Bueno, Glenn Waterkotte, Hope Dillon, Jackie Garner, Kathy Halter, Trinity Donovan

**Members Absent**

Angela Capone  
Karen Emery  
Maureen Duane

**Guests**

Wendy Sabatini, First Things First Manager for Maricopa Region  
K. Vilay, First Things First Policy Specialist  
Six members from the public

**Approval of Minutes**

Member Colby motioned to approve the February 18, 2009 minutes as corrected, seconded by Member Acosta-Bueno. Motion approved.

**Call to the Public**

Suzanne Schunk, Southwest Human Development and Argul Ramadoss, Kids World shared information about their programs. Ms. Schunk stated that their program is shovel ready.

**First Things First Emergency Early Childhood Response Package**

Prior to discussion of the following programs, Council Chair Garner explained that stakeholders, directly or indirectly, must refrain from the discussion of programs that are applying for funding and that they must recuse themselves from voting. Coordinator Floth provided everyone with the conflict of interest statute.

**Presentation by Ms. Vilay**

- Read a statement explaining that the Board's decision to expedite funding through the Emergency Bid Waiver is in response to the current economic conditions and First Things First's commitment to strengthening the early childhood development and health for young children.
- An analysis of the current situation was performed to determine what the need is for children and families.

- Three areas are identified and solutions have been developed for children and families who are struggling as follows:
  1. Stabilize working families through scholarships and childcare for those families that are 166% – 200% below the poverty level and for families that are recently laid off or unemployed. This is different from the DES childcare subsidy where families must be 165% or below the poverty level to qualify for assistance.
  2. Prevention of abuse and neglect of children through family support strategies and home visitation programs.
  3. Food security/stability to prevent hunger to young children through food boxes.
- The only difference between the Bid Waiver and the RFGAs is that funds will be released sooner than the originally planned July 30, 2009 date and will be funded through June 30, 2009.
- The Arizona Board of Administration approved the Emergency Bid Waiver and Discretionary Funds. The timeline is from April 1, 2009 through June, 2010.
- Provided everyone with a chart of the Councils current strategies and allocated funds and explained the options to either move the funds through the expedited award process for Family Support and/or Access and Affordability or to expedite the current strategies. The Council will receive Scopes of Work and Standards of Practice for any options they choose.

Council Chair Garner explained to the Council how the discretionary funding (Topics 1-3) should be carried out and Coordinator Floth led the discussion on the options that Ms. Vilay shared explaining that if the Council choose to expedite the Emergency Bid Waiver they must also determine which Funding Plan Strategies to approve for discretionary funding and/or determine which Funding Plan Strategies to modify. The Council can also choose to maintain the Funding Plan as is.

Regarding Topic #1 (Board Emergency Response): Member Colby moved that the Central Maricopa Regional Partnership Council support and participate in the decision of the First Things First Board to use discretionary funding for child care scholarships for families with income levels of up to 200% of the federal poverty level, seconded by Member Dillon. Motion approved.

- Members Pomush and Halter recused themselves from the vote declaring they have a conflict of interest.

Member Colby then moved that the Central Maricopa Regional Partnership Council support and participate in the decision of the First Things First Board to use discretionary funding for emergency food boxes for eligible families with children birth through age five, seconded by Member Acosta-Bueno. Motion approved.

- Member Pomush recused herself from the vote declaring she has a conflict of interest.

The Council combined Topic #2 (Potential Changes to Regional Funding Plan) and Topic #3 (Use of Funding Plan Line Items for First Things First Board Emergency Response) as one vote. After further discussion of these two topics, six Council Members declared conflicts of interest:

Chair Garner  
Co-chair Dillon  
Member Acosta-Bueno

Member Donovan  
Member Pomush  
Member Waterkotte

As these six represented a majority of the Council, the Rule of Impossibility was invoked thereby allowing all Members to vote.

After discussion, Member Pomush moved that the Central Maricopa Regional Partnership Council expedite funding for the existing functions as identified in their Funding Plan in the amount of \$350,000 for Home Visitation and \$478,118 for financial incentives for infant and toddler care, seconded by Council Vice Chair Dillon. Motion approved.

**Report by Coordinator Floth**

- Discussed the RFGA reviewer recruitment letter. It was determined that Coordinator Floth would edit the letter to make it more parent friendly. Coordinator Floth will email the final version to the Council.
- Expressed that the Big Check award presentation was a success and well represented by community leaders. Thank you letters will be sent to everyone and the Council will send an official letter to the Tempe Police Chief and to the Senator. Thanked Council Members for their representation at the event. The event was covered in the Tempe and Chandler Republic newspapers.

**Retreat Update**

Due to the current obligations of the Council, the retreat has been tabled indefinitely.

**Regional Council Member Updates**

- Council Vice Chair Dillon provided everyone with information on President Obama’s release on investments in children.
- Member Colby provided everyone with information on block grants for accredited/licensed Early Childhood Programs; provided the numbers on where these school districts apply the funds; and stressed the detriment the families would face as a result of funding cuts to these programs.
- Member Acosta-Bueno gave an update on the huge funding cuts in CPS and DES and reported that DES is not giving families enough meeting notice which causes them to miss their appointments then dropped from the system and placed on a waiting list.

**Adjourn**

There being no further business, Council Vice Chair Dillon adjourned the meeting at 6:10 P.M.

SUBMITTED BY:

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Sharon Smith, Administrative Assistant III

Approved:

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Jackie Garner, Regional Council Chair