FIRST THINGS FIRST
The right system for bright futures

Arizona Early Childhood Development & Health
Pinal Regional Partnership Council

Meeting Minutes
March 11, 2009

Call to Order
The Pinal Regional Partnership Council Meeting was held on March 11, 2009 at Central Arizona College, I211, 8470 N. Overfield Road, Coolidge, AZ 85228.

Regional Council Chair Mezzio called the meeting to order at 2:15 PM.

Council Members in attendance:
Barbara Mezzio, Kai Gerkey, Melanie O'Neil, Charity Russell, Christina Jenkins, Mary Allen, Bryant Powel, and Arnoldo Hernandez

Council Members not in attendance:
Aaron Harris and Mary Kyle

First Things First Staff in attendance:
Jennifer Johnson, Aimee Kempton-Sarosi, Beverly Russell, and Carrie Loos

Public in attendance:
14 members of the public were present

Consent Agenda
The items on the Consent Agenda included the Meeting Minutes from the January 14, 2009 and February 27, 2009 Pinal Regional Partnership Council Meeting.

A motion was made by Member O'Neil to adopt the January 14, 2009 meeting minutes, seconded by Member Powell. Motion approved.

The February 27, 2009 Meeting Minutes could not be approved at the Council Meeting due to discussion regarding verbiage. The February 27, 2009 Meeting Minutes will be in the Consent Agenda for approval at the April 8, 2009 Council Meeting.

Update on First Things First Board Emergency Early Childhood Response Package
The State First Things First office received an Arizona Department of Administration (ADOA) Bid Waiver to expedite discretionary funds in regards to access and affordability and family support. The Pinal Regional Partnership Council will tentatively receive 515.18 scholarships for children equaling $1,051,610.06 dollars for a 3 to 4 month period. Eligible families will be 200% at/or below the federal poverty level and the centers need to be enrolled in *Quality First* and/or be accredited. The Council would like to consider cushioning more slots, after the time period has ended, but would like to wait

until more information (i.e. families affected by the cuts) is accumulated; only then will the Council possibly hold an Emergency Council Meeting to allocate more funds. The State funds will tentatively rollout on April 1, 2009.

February 18, 2009 – Priority waiting list will begin with all new clients (who are non-mandatory).
March 14, 2009 – Child care subsidy "drop" (below 165% - above 110% federal poverty level).
April 1, 2009 – Doubling and collapsing – doubling co-pay and collapsing for families with two or more children that receive a discount for siblings.
April 1, 2009 – Maximum reimbursement rate – 75% of the market rate survey 2000 + 5%, the 5% will be going away.

First Things First Food Boxes – The Statewide allocation is $500,000.00. The Council will receive an update on how many food boxes the Pinal region will receive.

Review to Pinal Regional Partnership Funding Plan in response to the Emergency Early Childhood Response Package
Regional Councils had the choice to change, enhance or simply expedite strategies within the following areas, without state board approval: access and affordability and family support. The Council voted at the February 27, 2009 Council Meeting to expedite the family support strategy #7 (home visitation) using a bid waiver process.

Regional Councils had the choice to add funding allocations to the goal areas above from the following areas: needs and assets ($50,000.00), evaluations ($200,000.00), and communications (35% of $17,500.00). The Council voted at the February 27, 2009 Council Meeting to move all funding from evaluations ($200,000.00) and moved 35% from communications ($17,500.00). The Council voted at the February 27, 2009 Council Meeting to move $217,500.00 to the State First Things First food box program.

Discussion and Possible Vote on the Pinal Regional Partnership Funding Plan in response to the Emergency Early Childhood Response Package
The Council skipped this agenda item until they receive more information on the families affected by the cuts.

Discussion and Possible Vote on Undistributed Pinal Regional Allocation
Ms. Kempton-Sarosi recommended adding additional funding to the expedited home visitation strategy #7 due to the expanded time frame from 12 months to 16 months.

A motion was made by Member Gerkey to increase the funding allocation for strategy #7 (home visitation) from $400,000.00 to $500,000.00 (an increase of $100,000.00), seconded by Member Allen. Motion approved. Conflict of Interest – Member O'Neil did not vote due to a conflict of interest. Additional work group meetings will take place to see if there are any further funding needs.

Regional Coordinator Report
The Council skipped this agenda item due to time constraints.

Call to the Public
Gerry Lugo, Early Intervention Program Director – Topic of Remarks: program overview, severe budget cuts to the program and the benefits of the program to infants, toddlers, and families.

Wendy Ketterer, Early Intervention Program Board Member – Topic of Remarks: program overview, severe budget cuts to the program and the benefits of the program to infants, toddlers, and families.

Monika Sheridan, Parent – Topic of Remarks: Early Intervention Program overview, severe budget cuts to the program and the benefits of the program to infants, toddlers, and families.

Pauline Haas-Vaughn, Child and Family Resources – Topic of Remarks: healthy families.

Jeanne Rodriguez, Enable Therapy Services – Topic of Remarks: therapies in Pinal County for children ages 0-5.

Diana Culver, Kids Klub – Topic of Remarks: impact of First Things First on child care crisis.

Bridget Hall, We Are One Day Care – Topic of Remarks: Department of Economic Service child care.

Nell Hall, We Are One Day Care – Topic of Remarks: Department of Economic Service issues of child care.

Next Meeting Date

The next Pinal Regional Partnership Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 8, 2009 at Central Arizona College.

Central Arizona College, M101
8470 N. Overfield Road
Coolidge, AZ 85228

Adjourn

A motion was made by Member Jenkins to adjourn the meeting at 3:54 PM, seconded by Member Gerkey. Motion approved.

Submitted By:

Aimee Kempton-Sarosi
Regional Coordinator
Pinal Regional Partnership Council

Approved By:

Barbara Mezzio
Chair, Pinal Regional Partnership Council