



## FIRST THINGS FIRST

*Ready for School. Set for Life.*

### Tohono O'odham Nation Regional Partnership Council

#### Meeting Minutes

##### Call to Order

A Regular Meeting of the First Things First Tohono O'odham Nation Regional Partnership Council took place on March 16, 2013, at the Tohono O'odham Head Start center in the San Xavier District in Tucson, Arizona. Vice Chair Mildred Manuel welcomed everyone and called the Meeting to order at approximately 8:35 a.m.

##### Members Present:

Chair Louis Johnson, Vice Chair Mildred Manuel, Ella Begay, Dionne Ramon, Kymberlii Tenario...

##### Members Present: (via phone)

Albert Adler, Janine Prewitt

Staff Present: Erin Lyons, Senior Director, Southeast Region; Travis Le Duc, Regional Director, Tohono O'odham Nation; Amanda Perino, Administrative Assistant.

##### Members Absent:

Joseph Mease, Ben Standifer

##### Welcome/Invocation

Member Ella Begay offered an invocation.

##### Approval of January 18, 2013 Tohono O'odham Nation Regional Partnership Council Meeting Minutes

Member Kymberlii Tenario moved that the Tohono O'odham Nation Regional Partnership Council approve the minutes of the January 18, 2013 Regional Council meeting as presented. Motion was seconded by member Ella Begay. Vice Chair Mildred Manuel asked if there was any discussion, no discussion held. Motion carried.

\*\* It was agreed between Vice Chair Manuel and Regional Director Travis Le Duc to move agenda item #6 – the discussion and possible action on the First Things First 2014 Needs and Assets Report, to agenda item #4. \*\*

##### Discussion and Possible Action on First Things First 2014 Needs and Assets Report - Vendor

Vice Chair Manuel opened discussion regarding the selection of the Vendor for the Tohono O'odham Nation's Regional Partnership Council's 2014 Needs and Assets Report. Regional Director Le Duc made a recommendation that the Tohono O'odham Nation Regional Partnership Council continue using the University of Arizona's Norton School, who had previously written the Needs and Assets Report for Tohono O'odham Nation Regional Partnership Council, as well as the Needs and Assets Reports for nine other First Things First Regional Councils. The 2012 Needs and Assets Report will soon be submitted to the State Board for final approval.

\*\* Chair Louis Johnson entered the meeting, in-person, at approximately 8:45 am. He had been attending telephonically before entering the meeting. \*\*

Director Victoria Hobbes, the Executive Director of the Tohono O’odham Nation Department of Education, addressed the Regional Council. She discussed the collection of the Needs and Assets data, and the desire to bring the collection of that data under the purview of the Tohono O’odham Nation. She explained that the Department of Education has both the staff and the ability to collect the data and asked that the Nation’s Department of Education be considered as a Vendor for providing the Needs and Assets data as soon as possible. Member Albert Adler asked Director Hobbes if they have the capacity to meet the state requirements, and that vetting would be required before the Tohono O’odham Nation was added to the Vendor list. Vice Chair Manuel confirmed that the vetting process would be necessary before they proceeded. Regional Director Le Duc reminded the Regional Council that if they decided to go with the Tohono O’odham Nation’s Department of Education as the Vendor, the vetting process required would push back the publishing of the Needs and Assets Report even further. Since the Vendor list was closing very soon, a decision would need to be made quickly. Member Tenario suggested they delay the decision to give the Department of Education more time to prepare to take on this responsibility in 2016.

Member Tenario moved to continue with the Norton School as the Vendor for the 2014 Needs and Assets collection. Motion was seconded by Member Begay. A roll call vote was held, and motion passed unanimously.

\*\* Member Ella Begay left the meeting at approximately 9:05 am – forcing the meeting to lose quorum. The meeting was suspended until Member Janine Prewitt telephonically entered the meeting at approximately 9:15 am – restoring quorum. \*\*

\*\* The Regional Director and Chair Johnson agreed to move item #8, Dr. Siqueiros’ presentation on the progress of the Baboquivari Unified School District, to item #5. \*\*

#### **Update on Progress at Baboquivari Unified School District**

Dr. Albert Siqueiros, Superintendent of the Baboquivari Unified School District, provided an in-depth presentation on the progress of his school district. He pointed to the significant headway that his school district has made in the past years, especially in terms of attendance, graduation numbers, test scores, and student college enrollment. Credited to these improvements are increased engagement between parents and schools, increased quality of professional development offerings, and the self-determination of the Tohono O’odham in making education a priority for their children. He also presented an overview of the “C-20 Philosophy” where the Tohono O’odham Nation’s children are being cared for from conception straight through to their entry into the workforce. Edna Morris carried the last portion of the presentation, carefully outlining how this philosophy can be applied to children who fall within the “cradle-to-three” age and pre-schools involved with B.U.S.D., and how they would align with the goals of First Things First. Dr. Siqueiros passed out a proposal asking FTF for funds to support salaries for two additional highly-qualified teachers, new classroom furniture, and to help remove some of the sixty children from the waiting list. Following the presentation and the proposal, Chair Johnson opened the issue to discussion.

Regional Director Le Duc suggested that the item be added to the agenda for the next meeting so that the fiscal aspects of the presentation can be discussed. Vice Chair Manuel asked if she could attend an observation of one of the B.U.S.D classrooms, Dr. Siqueiros said that they have an open door policy and that the Vice Chair was welcome at any time. The Regional Director suggested that they make the observation in conjunction with the next Regional Council meeting. Vice Chair Manuel agreed. The Regional Council concurred to add the discussion to the next Regional Council agenda.

#### **Call to the Public**

Kit McIlroy, the Program Coordinator for Community of Practice. He discussed the progress of the program, stating that they are finally just two months away from forming a genuine community of practice. Mr. McIlroy sees a real change happening in schools, where kids were being more and more prepared for success in academics. He credited efforts such as Vice Chair Manuel’s special needs programs and the Baboquivari Unified School District for contributing to that successful Community of Practice. He sees its expansion into the Indian Oasis School as just the beginning, expanding out into the wider community as well. Mr. McIlroy thanked the Regional Council for funding their efforts.

#### **Update on First Things First Parent Outreach and Awareness Regional Strategy.**

Vice Chair Manuel gave a brief introduction to the Parent Outreach and Awareness Strategy, which assists in providing opportunities and resources for kids, families, and mothers. She has been receiving consistent referrals and is actively working on coordinating services for those interested families. She introduced Monica Morgan and Denise Aldrich, advocates with the Family Support and Child Development program, who provided a presentation on their Home Visitation and outreach efforts. They have successfully

served 35 families with 47 total clients in different regions of the Tohono O’odham Nation, with many more referrals in progress. Ms. Morgan also outlined their efforts for providing curriculum appropriate for families in home-care situations. Ms. Morgan also provided a Staff training update. In all, the staff has participated in 12 different trainings, including Car Seat Safety Certifications, BrainBox training, Teaching Strategies, Wheelchair Van Safety, Understanding Traumatic Brain Injury, and AZ Strong Families. They have also become trained in providing vision and hearing screenings. The advocates have also attended 17 total community events and district meetings. Vice Chair Manuel pointed to the efficacy of their efforts, stating that she is receiving 2-3 new intakes per week, optimizing the services parents and children receive. Ms. Aldrich also pointed to the children’s personal enjoyment of the home visitation as being a benchmark of the strategy’s success. Vice Chair Manuel thanked the Home Visitors for going above and beyond their duties to advocate for and serve the children of the Tohono O’odham Nation. She also thanked the Regional Council for their support of the advocacy efforts.

Chair Johnson discussed the upcoming First Things First Early Childhood Summit in August and proposed that the advocates of the Regional Council be invited to attend. He requested that the proposal be added to the agenda for April so that it can be formally discussed.

#### **Update on Communications with the Tohono O’odham Nation and Regional Activities**

Aggie Hart, Parent Awareness and Community Outreach Coordinator for Tohono O’odham provided a brief update on her awareness and outreach activities throughout the Nation. She has been travelling extensively to various education centers and offices to work with members of the community. While there, she has taken the opportunity to speak with community parents, grandparents and elders – engaging them and making them aware of the work First Things First has done in the community.

Ms. Hart has also been actively distributing outreach materials, especially board books and onesies, as a way to make one-on-one connections with parents, as well providing materials to various Community centers. Regional Director Le Duc also pointed to the bag and book distribution during Love of Reading Week as another outreach effort.

Ms. Hart also discussed the upcoming Digital Storytelling Workshop she will be attending. She hopes to produce a digit short to play in community waiting rooms throughout the Nation.

#### **Regional Director Report**

Regional Director Le Duc referred to his Narrative Report – briefly highlighting the Community of Practice items, and how it is drawing in early childhood professionals, K-12 educators, and many others. He encouraged the Regional Council to attend the Community of Practice event on May 4<sup>th</sup>.

The Regional Director reviewed the State Fiscal Year 2014 Funding Plan. The plan was approved by the Board, implementation will begin on July 1, 2013 and includes the added School Readiness Indicators.

An update from the Chairs and Vice Chairs meeting was also provided. First Things First is moving forward with the Early Childhood Developmental Inventory for the State of Arizona and working with the Virginia Piper Trust.

The Regional Director outlined the upcoming timeline for Grants, Renewals and upcoming Regional Council meetings. The next Regional Council Meeting is scheduled for April 20, 2013 in Sells, AZ. The Regional Director would like to align the meeting date with the Play Date. May 18<sup>th</sup> is slated for Pisinemo, AZ. During this meeting, determinations will need to be made on grant renewals. A survey will be sent to the Regional Council to confirm quorum. The Regional Council has been invited to San Lucy, AZ for the July meeting, slated for the 20<sup>th</sup>.

The Regional Director also wants to convene a telephonic workgroup for making a recommendation on the Grant Renewals. The Regional Director asked for volunteers and Member Prewitt offered to participate. He also highlighted Member Prewitt’s invitation to the Smart Start conference in North Carolina.

Regional Director Le Duc requested that the Regional Council add an agenda item to next month’s meeting agenda to discuss what partnerships the Regional Council would like to consider for the 2014 Needs and Assets Report. This would be the opportunity to begin establishing links between First Things First and the Tohono O’odham Nation Department of Education.

**General Discussion**

Vice Chair Manuel mentioned that she is still planning the Child’s Play Date, which is scheduled for April 20<sup>th</sup> at the Primary school. The next planning session is scheduled for Friday, March 22, 2013, from 2-3:30pm at Management of Health building in Sells, AZ. It will be lead by Jasper Kinsley, Jr. the new Program Coordinator for the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder program.

There will also be a training session in the Hickiwan District beginning at 3pm, with trainings through July.

Regional Director Le Duc also took the time to congratulate the Regional Council on their five year anniversary.

**Call to the Public**

There were no calls to the public at this time.

Chair Johnson asked if there was a motion to adjourn the meeting. Vice Chair Manuel made a motion to adjourn. Member Tenario seconded the motion. Motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:30am.

Submitted By \_\_\_\_\_  
Amanda Perino, Administrative Assistant

Approved By \_\_\_\_\_  
Louis Johnson, Chair

Dated this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.