



FIRST THINGS FIRST

The right system for bright futures

Arizona Early Childhood Development & Health Board

Draft Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the First Things First – Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board was held on March 24, 2009 at the First Things First Board Office, 4000 N. Central Ave., Ste. 800, Phoenix, Arizona 85012.

Chair Mathis Basha called the meeting to order at approximately 9:10 a.m.

Members Present:

Nadine Mathis Basha, Vivian Saunders, Rhian Evans Allvin, Dr. Eugene Thompson, Hon. Cecil Patterson, Dr. Pamela Powell and Dr. Arturo Gonzalez

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Molly Bright, Mary Ellen Cunningham and Amy Corriveau

Absent:

Steve Lynn

Consent Agenda

The items on the Consent Agenda include the Minutes of the February 24, 2009 Board meeting. A motion was made by Member Patterson to adopt the Consent Agenda, seconded by Member Powell. Motion approved.

Board Member Reports/Updates

Member Patterson commented on recently attending the Central Maricopa Regional Partnership Council meeting and enjoyed meeting everyone in his home district. Member Patterson also stated the presentation to the Tempe Community Council was nicely presented.

Member Thompson wanted to congratulate Chair Mathis Basha and staff for their participation in the Regional Council check award presentations.

Chair Mathis Basha announced that First Things First had been selected by the Smart Start National Technical Assistance Center (NTAC) for the “Most Promising State for Young Children Award”.

Call to the Public

No call to the public at this time.

Communication

Mary Jo West, Assistant Director of Communications, presented to the Board an update on the Regional Partnership check award presentations and showed a DVD on First Things First messaging.

Legislative Update

Sandy Carpenter, Governmental Affairs Specialist, updated the Board on state and federal legislative issues.

Family and Community Survey

Dr. Amy Kemp, Assistant Director of Evaluation, presented the First Things First Family and Community Survey. Dr. Kemp stated that this survey gathers data related to the key measures of coordination, communication, and family support. The partner and family and community surveys were designed to measure progress towards goals as set out in the First Things First strategic plan roadmap. Dr. Kemp stated that the First Things First Family and Community Survey was conducted as a computer assisted telephone interview (CATI) throughout the state of Arizona between August and September, 2008. A random sample of 3690 parents (and un-paid related caregivers) of children five and under completed the 15 to 20 minute survey. The sample was drawn to represent the distribution of families with young children in the FTF Partnership Council Regions.

The First Things First Family and Community Survey is a baseline report on parents' perceptions of the resources currently available for young children and their families in Arizona and the current state of parents' knowledge about children's early development. Knowledge gained from this survey will provide insight into what early childhood issues are important to Arizona's parents, what are the areas in which families need additional support in receiving services for their child/children, and what are common types of information or misinformation related to the development of young children.

Statewide Initiatives Update

Sandy Foreman, Assistant Director for Policy and Research, gave the Board an update on Quality First, TEACH Arizona, Child Care Health Consultation, and Parent Kits.

T.E.A.C.H. ® ARIZONA

Ms. Foreman stated that the T.E.A.C.H. Advisory Committee met again in February, and First Things First met with the administrative home in March to coordinate the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program with the DES-funded Professional Career Pathways (PCPP) scholarship program. A logo and marketing materials are developed, and the T.E.A.C.H. administrative home has made contacts with all Arizona community colleges offering early childhood degree programs (with exception of the two Tribal colleges).

Quality First!

Ms. Foreman stated that March 2, 2009, was the close date for reviewing applications for the first group of 300 centers and homes. As of that date, 764 applications had been received. Only two Tribal regions lacked center applicants, and six regions had no homes apply. Recruitment continues in those regions. Initial eligibility checks have shown that 441 of the applications were exact or probable matches with the data in our database. The selection process will begin March 26, 2009, and will be completed by April 15, 2009, with the first 300 participants receiving notification and an orientation visit with a Quality First coach. Outreach activities to encourage additional applications are continuing, with 76 statewide efforts documented as of March 12, 2009. The AGILE team completed work for determining eligibility and prioritizing applicants using the selection criteria for the 300 statewide funded slots in Quality First. They also created secure access points to the FTF database by coaches, assessors, FTF staff and participants.

Child Care Health Consultation

Ms. Foreman stated that Pima County is ready to act on the intergovernmental agreement with First Things First to provide the recruitment, training and quality assurance for all child care health consultants. Initial planning meetings with Kathi Ford, RN, began March 12, 2009. Contracts with additional County Health Departments for hire of nurses and implementation of the consultation are under development. A child care health consultation tracking database, CareFacts, utilized by Pima County Health Department, has been purchased by First Things First and meetings are scheduled with our Business Services Division to complete the adaptation and technical installation with the Quality First database.

Parent Kits

The shipment of Parent Kits to birthing hospitals throughout the state continues according to schedule. The process of distributing the Kits to Tribal hospitals is being further defined.

Compensation and Retention RFGA

The RFGA to select a Compensation and Retention administrative home will release on March 16, 2009, with an award decision expected July 1, 2009.

Health Strategies Recommendations

Sandy Foreman, Assistant Director for Policy and Research, presented to the Board recommended strategies to address gaps in Arizona's health care system for children age five and younger. Ms. Foreman stated following a lengthy research process with guidance and consultation from the First Things First Health Advisory Committee, the Early Intervention Logistic Team, and other community stakeholders, five strategies to support statewide health infrastructure are presented to the First Things First State Board for consideration. The five health strategies include the following:

Strategy 1: Outreach and Enrollment Assistance for Public Health Insurance

No statewide funding or Board action is requested at this time.

Strategy 2: Increasing Access to Oral Health Screening and Care

State funds requested to support this strategy would be \$50,000 for FY10 for a consultant with expertise in oral health to provide: research, meeting facilitation, report-out, data collection and analysis, recommendations and a final report on improving oral health of children birth through age five. This strategy would be carried out in a 12 month contract.

Strategy 3: Physician Outreach and Education

First Things First will strengthen the system of health care for children birth through age five by providing statewide funding support to conduct physician outreach, technical assistance and coaching to medical practices throughout Arizona, including pediatric practices, family medicine, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC), Community Health Centers, Indian Health Services and Tribal Health facilities. State funds requested to support this strategy would be \$1,050,000 for FY10 through FY12.

Strategy 4: Workforce Support and Readiness

This workforce and readiness strategy proposes to partner with Arizona State University's speech language pathology program for the expansion of students' specified early intervention knowledge as part of a master's degree program as well as a post-degree certificate program. State funds requested to support this strategy would be \$1,185,000 for FY10 through FY13.

Strategy 5: Early Childhood Mental Health Therapists and Mental Health Consultation Preparation

This strategy will establish statewide infrastructure and educational scholarships to support the mental health consultation services prioritized and funded by FTF Regional Partnership Councils. Regional Partnership Councils have identified early childhood mental health consultation as an essential service to support the growth and development of children birth to age five. Statewide funding will support continuing education scholarships to licensed mental health clinicians and therapists to gain the requisite education, credentials, or endorsements to

provide mental health consultation to early childhood care and education programs serving young children. State funds requested to support this strategy would be \$1,290,000 for FY10 through FY12.

A motion was made by Member Gonzalez that the Board approve the Health Strategy recommendations as presented by staff. Seconded by Member Patterson. Motion approved.

Regional Strategies Requiring Further Development

Michelle Katona, Assistant Director of Regional Administration, introduced Joann Floth, Coordinator for the Central Maricopa Regional Partnership Council.

Central Maricopa

Joann Floth, Coordinator for the Central Maricopa Regional Partnership Council, presented to the Board an overview of the Central Maricopa Regional Funding Plan Strategy #11.

A motion was made by Member Thompson that the revised strategy #11 submitted by the Central Maricopa Regional Partnership Council be approved. Seconded by Member Patterson. Motion approved.

Regional Partnership Council Member Applicants

A motion as made by Member Thompson that the Board appoint the Regional Partnership Council members recommended by staff for the LaPaz/Mohave, Colorado River Indian Tribes, and Yuma Regional Partnership Councils. Seconded by Member Evans Allvin. Motion approved.

Regional Report

Ms. Katona reviewed with the Board the status of the Requests for Grant Applications and the inter-agency service agreements and contracts for programs starting on July 1, 2009. Ms. Katona also discussed the timeline for strategies being developed for programs that will not begin until after July 1, 2009.

On March 4, 2009, the Department of Administration, granted First Things First authorization to use a modified and expedited competitive bid process to meet critical, short term and essential child health and well-being needs. The modified process will allow First Things First to expedite the selection process by approximately two to three months and award grants totaling up to \$91.2 million for certain strategies. Potential areas for expedited funding through June 30, 2009 to support children and families with children five years and younger include:

Regional Allocation Funding (\$61.2M)

- Family support - child abuse and neglect prevention (through June 30, 2010) - \$27.7M
- Children's health and prevention, and early intervention strategies (through June 30, 2010) - \$18.4M
- Additional urgent strategies that meet essential child health and well-being needs (through June 30, 2010) - \$6.8M (funding that may be redirected from needs and assets report, evaluation, communications and carry forward)

Regional Discretionary Funding (\$30.1M)

- Child care scholarships for working families with children five years and younger - \$23.3M
- Emergency food assistance distributed by providers - \$ 500,000
- Strategies listed above or additional urgent strategies that meet essential child health and well-being needs (through June 30, 2010) - \$6.3M (funding for regions designated as frontier communities)

Emergency Response Report

Elliott Hibbs, Director of First Things First, reported to the Board that Arizona is facing unprecedented, tumultuous economic times. Families are facing tremendous financial and emotional stress, threatening the health, safety and

well-being of young children. Director Hibbs stated that on February 24, 2009, the First Things First Board approved an emergency response plan to respond to the dire challenges currently faced by families with young children. On March 4, the First Things First Board received approval from the Arizona Department of Administration (ADOA) for a bid waiver, granting authority to expedite the award of contracts quickly to implement a defined number of strategies through a non-competitive process. The expedited strategies respond immediately to the urgent needs of Arizona's young children and families. The current three strategies in the emergency response plan are 1) emergency child care scholarships; 2) immediate family support through home visitation and 3) emergency food assistance.

Executive Director Report

Elliott Hibbs, Director of First Things First gave an update to the Board on the agency's activities for March 2009.

Statewide Needs and Assets

Director Hibbs stated that collection of US census data to update the Child and Family Indicators sections of the Statewide Needs and Assets report is in its final stages. These sections will be updated by the end of March 2009. Work will begin on the Current Early Childhood Development and Health System sections in April 2009 so that formatting can begin on August 1, 2009 for a final report on October 10, 2009.

Financial Update

The Finance Division has created a manual process to monitor financial expenditure for statewide initiatives. By July 1, 2009, the PALS system & Accounting System should be functional including the appropriate interface of the manual process with a more sophisticated and automated system.

Current Budget Status

Director Hibbs stated that First Things First continues to expend under budget. February expenses were \$1,030,273 compared to a budget of \$1,265,768. Equipment and other operating expenditures in February were over budget due to Regional office start up costs related to the purchases of equipment, furniture, and supplies. The biggest savings continue to be in personal and professional (contracted) services. Year-to-date expenditures of \$9,440,850 were 17%, \$1,936,976 under budget. Total investments and cash on hand were \$331,977,141 as of the end of February which is a \$7,461,566 increase from January. Revenues from tax receipts for February bring the total tobacco tax revenues for the fiscal year to \$104.2 million.

Adjourn

There being no other business, Chair Mathis Basha adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:50 a.m.