



FIRST THINGS FIRST

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 April 27, 2010 at 8:30 a.m. The meeting was held at the First Thing First Office, 4000 N. Central, Suite 800, Phoenix, Arizona 85012.

Chair Lynn called the meeting to order at approximately 8:40 a.m.

Members Present:

Steve Lynn, Dr. Eugene Thompson, Nadine Mathis Basha, Dr. Pamela Powell, Dr. Arturo Gonzalez, Hon. Cecil Patterson and Gayle Burns

Members Absent:

Vivian Saunders

Ex-Officio Member Designee's Present:

Amy Corriveau, Brad Willis and Mary Ellen Cunningham

Chairman Lynn welcomed new Board member Gayle Burns. Member Burns is a lifelong child advocate owning and operating child care centers in Arizona for many years.

Call to the Public

Melody Johnson, Assistant Program Coordinator with T.E.A.C.H., congratulated First Things First, stating that six recipients who have achieved their Child Development Associate (CDA) certificate, did so through First Things First funded T.E.A.C.H. scholarships.

Mary Sue Watson, owner of three child care centers, expressed her gratitude for the emergency child care scholarships and would like to offer her support for First Things First. Ms. Watson's has a staff of nine teachers, with five participating in the T.E.A.C.H. program.

Bruce Liggett, Arizona Child Care Association, stated to the board his support for the access and affordability strategy and support for scholarships.

Ashley Anchondo, parent and recipient of a First Thing First emergency child care scholarship, thanked the Board for the child care scholarships and shared with the Board that if it wasn't for the assistance of First Things First, she would not have been able to go to nursing school, where she is an excelling student.

Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Member Thompson to approve the Consent Agenda with the exception of agenda item 2.I. Legislative Report, to be pulled off the Consent Agenda for discussion, seconded by Member Patterson. Motion carried.

Chairman Lynn stated for the record that Member Burns submitted a conflict of interest form regarding family member's participation in owning and operating a pre-school and would recuse herself if items regarding this subject were on the agenda for future discussions.

Jay Heiler, Public Affair Consultant to the Board, gave the Board an update on Legislative issues. Mr. Heiler reported that they are still having conversations with the House, Senate and Governor's office.

A motion was made by Member Patterson to approve Consent Agenda item 2.I. Legislative Report, seconded by Member Powell. Motion carried.

Board Member Report/Update

Member Patterson updated the Board on future outreach efforts with the First Things First Executive Director. Member Patterson concluded with a discussion regarding a presentation he gave to the Tempe Community Council.

Member Cunningham reported to the Board that April 24 – May 1 is National Immunization week.

Member Gonzalez stated to the Board that the Arizona Chapter of the Academy of Pediatrics sent an email to their members seeking physicians for seats on the Regional Partnership Councils. Currently 12 members are actively involved with the Regional Councils. They are also educating their membership on First Things First.

Member Mathis Basha reminded the Board that they and members of the Regional Partnership Councils can be politically active (with the exception of Ex-Officio members). Member Mathis Basha mentioned that they are gearing up for the No Campaign and encouraged everyone to reach out to their constituencies. Member Mathis Basha attended an event hosted by the United Way in Tucson and Southern Arizona on Professional Development, and a meeting hosted by the Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children.

Member Powell reminded the Board of two conferences up coming in Phoenix: the Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) on April 28-May 1, and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Professional Development Institute on June 6-9. Member Powell noted that the Mayor of Flagstaff proclaimed April 7-11 the Week of the Young Child. Member Powell would like to commit to addressing all of the Mayors in the state of Arizona to proclaim the Week of the Young Child next year.

Chairman Lynn stated that he and Executive Director Evans Allvin gave interviews this past month on Horizon in Phoenix and Arizona Illustrated in Tucson with positive feedback on the impending ballot initiative in November. Chairman Lynn mentioned that this month marks the second year of our Regional Partnership Councils being in place. The Regional Councils ensure that all of our children, across every community, have a voice and that they are given every opportunity to start school with a solid foundation. Chairman Lynn thanked our Regional Council members for their passion, dedication and commitment to children including those Regional Council members who have terms ending this June 30th and spoke on how grateful the Board is for their time and service to the young children and families of Arizona. Chairman Lynn thanked the Council members for their countless volunteer hours and let them know that they are making a difference in the lives of children.

System Building Work Session

Member Mathis Basha introduced the system building work session by reviewing the work that has been done to date by the Arizona Early Childhood Task Force. The Task Force is a broad-based group of community members, convened by First Things First to identify a model early childhood system for Arizona and to make recommendations for First Things First's role in that system. Rhian Evans Allvin reviewed with the Board the timeline that includes a Board and Council Member retreat August 23 and 24, 2010. Karen Woodhouse facilitated the work session during which the Board provided feedback on the timeline and process for joint decision making between the Board and Regional Councils on the roles and priorities of First Thing First in the early childhood system.

Communication Plan

Liz Barker Alvarez, Moses Anshell and Advocacy Communication Strategies (ACS) presented to the Board the First Things First Strategic Communications Plan for FY 2011 through 2013. It was stated that the goal of this plan is to help achieve the agency's mission by building awareness, knowledge and action across Arizona to ensure all children five years and younger have the tools they need to be successful in school and in life.

Access and Affordability to Quality

Karen Woodhouse presented to the Board a recommended approach and strategy for comprehensive quality, access and affordability of early childhood and education. This model requires systemic reform within the state, community and the early care and education field. The new paradigm shifts from an emphasis on simply providing child care to support working families to a system focused on the development and education of young children. In the long-term view, Quality First scholarships and other regional affordability strategies will provide additional funding to allow more children access to quality programs.

Conflict of Interest

A motion was made at approximately 12:20 p.m. by Member Mathis Basha to go into Executive Session pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A) (3) to obtain legal advice on conflict of interest clarification, seconded by Member Patterson. Motion carried.

A motion to return to regular session at approximately 1:25 p.m. was made by Member Mathis Basha, seconded by Member Powell. Motion carried.

RFGA Recommendations

A motion was made by Member Thompson that the Board approve the following Regional Council RFGA recommendations as recommended by staff:

Central Phoenix Inclusion of Children with Special Needs (Early Care and Education)
Central Phoenix Physician Training
Central Phoenix Care Coordination
Central Phoenix Health Insurance Outreach
North Phoenix Health Insurance Outreach
Southwest Maricopa Health Insurance Outreach
Southeast Maricopa Health Insurance Outreach
Southeast Maricopa Care Coordination
Central Maricopa Care Coordination
South Pima Health Insurance Outreach
North Pima Health Insurance Outreach
Pinal Community Based Training (Early Care and Education)
Pinal Sensory Screening
Pinal Oral Health
Pinal Health Insurance Outreach
Yuma Inclusion of Children with Special Needs (Early Care and Education)

Motion seconded by Member Mathis Basha. Motion Carried.

Financial Report

Josh Allen presented a financial update to the members of the Board on the fiscal impact of the proposed \$300 million loan to the state general fund.

First Things First leadership and staff have been working since early 2009 to secure a mechanism by which the organization would be able to provide a loan of its current available fund balance and support the state in its efforts to balance the general fund budget. The current proposal would provide for a transfer of \$300 million interest free. If adopted, the transfer would be made in January 2011 (FY11), and repayment would not begin until midway through FY 2013. Additionally, the overall repayment structure is weighted in such a way as to recognize the state's need and desire to allow for as much time as possible before repayment to First Things First. In addition, repayment of the funds to First Things First has been structured such that most of the repayment occurs in 2015 and after. In reviewing this proposal it should be noted that First Things First, by providing an interest free option, will be saving the state about \$13.2 million for every 1% they would have been charged by a private lender over the term of this agreement. In addition, it is estimated that First Things First will not generate \$13.9 million in interest income as a result of transferring \$300 million of its fund balance to the state and thus reducing its investments with the State Treasurer.

Executive Director Report

Rhian Evans Allvin welcomed new Board member Gayle Burns to the First Things First Board on behalf of herself and staff. Ms. Evan Allvin reported to the Board that she and Member Saunders co-presented on First Things First to the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona (ITCA) at the Talking Stick Resort and noted that the tribes are very supportive. Tribal leadership spoke passionately of the impact the funding has made to the children of their communities. Ms. Evans Allvin offered her congratulations to Chairman Lynn who will be receiving an award as a champion of children from the Southern Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children (AzAEYC) on May 1st.

General Discussion

No General Discussion

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for May 18, 2010 and will be held in Window Rock, Arizona.

Adjourn

There being no further discussion the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:55 p.m.