



FIRST THINGS FIRST

The right system for bright futures

Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council

Meeting Minutes, May 20, 2009

Call to Order/Welcome/Introductions

The regular meeting of the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council meeting was held on Tuesday, May 20, 2009 at the Diné for Our Children, 2nd Floor Conference Room, 48 West Highway 264 - Quality Inn Office Complex, Window Rock, Arizona 86515.

Paula Curley, Chairperson for the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council, called the meeting to order, at approximately 1:23p.m.

Members Present In Person: Paula Curley, Paula Seanez, Marie Allen, Dorothy Yazzie, Jenny Rodgers, Maggie Benally

Members Absent: Joe Martin, Spencer Willie, Herb Long, First Lady Vikki Shirley

Members Present by Phone: None

First Things First Staff Members Present: AdiShakti Khalsa (Northeast Regional Manager), Ellen Majure (Northeast Administrative Assistant),

Guests: Julie Fitzgerald, Isabelle Walker, Angela Cody

Consent Agenda

The Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council (hereafter referred to as the Council) reviewed the April 7, 2009 meeting minutes. **Member Seanez motioned to approve the minutes. Member Benally seconded the motion. Motion Passed.**

Emergency Food Box Discussion and Possible Approval

Ms. Khalsa updated the Council regarding the Food Box Distribution.

After a brief discussion about family eligibility for the food boxes, **Member Allen motioned to go into Executive Session. Member Seanez seconded the motion. Motion passed.** The Council then went into Executive Session.

Member Yazzie motioned to end the Executive Session. Member Seanez seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Member Rodgers motioned to authorize First Things First Staff to pursue agreements for emergency food distribution with the two applicants. Member Allen seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Child Care Scholarship Update

Ms. Khalsa updated the Council regarding Child Care Scholarships. There is over \$600,000 available, as directed by the State Board for Navajo Nation Emergency Child Care Scholarships. Presently, there is a contract with United Way of Northern Arizona and there is a United Way website where child care providers can apply for emergency child care scholarships. All applicants must also apply for Quality First. Thus far, no one has applied for the Navajo Nation. In a discussion with Member Shirley, she recommended that the Council look into the possibility of providing scholarships to families who are participating in the Navajo Nation higher education scholarship program, which is directed by Rose Graham. Many of the students are parents and they are attending college at NAU, ASU and U of A. These students already have access to scholarships because the emergency child care scholarships are set up in Flagstaff, Tempe and Tucson. A meeting was held with Rose Graham and her staff to see if this idea is worth pursuing. They work with 10,000 Navajo students and Ms. Graham agreed to try to get numbers on how many students have children that fall within the age range of birth to 5 and how many require child care.

The council then discussed the emergency scholarships program and how it might or might not work with Navajo Nation families and what the need is for the scholarships. The Council requested additional information on the need for child care scholarships, if First Things First can reallocate the money for the Council to use for other programs and/or to determine if United Way can reallocate the money in a way that makes sense for the Navajo Nation. Ms. Khalsa agreed to get information on these issues.

Regional Funding Plan Update

A. Strategy # 2 Discussion

The Council Discussed Strategy # 2. Chair Curley is going to send the New Mexico program information to Ms. Khalsa and Ms. Khalsa and Chair Curley will work together on revising Strategy # 2.

B. Strategy # 7 Discussion

The Council discussed the primary focus for Strategy # 7. After reviewing the strategy, Member Benally stated that the primary focus of the strategy needs to be on Navajo language acquisition. After much discussion, the Council agreed that Navajo language acquisition needs to be the focus of the strategy.

Member Curley reviewed the three areas for funding in the strategy: \$150,000 for children ages 0-3; \$150,000 for children ages 3-5; \$100,000 for the Clearing House. Ms. Majure suggested that a full-time position could be included in this strategy. Member Allen added that it might be appropriate to incorporate a home visiting model into this strategy. The Council discussed the possibility of having this strategy implemented as a government to government agreement. Ms. Khalsa agreed to look into the possibility of obtaining a government-to-government agreement instead of the going through the RFGA process.

A phone meeting will be scheduled between Member Seanez, Member Benally, and Member Willie and Ms. Khalsa to further discuss the early literacy strategy and the possibility of a government to government agreement with an organization that might be able to operate an early literacy program.

Update on RFGA's

Ms. Khalsa updated the Council regarding the RFGAs for Home Visiting and Support for Unregulated Care. Applications are due to the First Lady's Office on Friday, May 22, 2009. Review Committee volunteers are needed for these RFGAs and several Council Members volunteered.

Parent Kits Discussion and Possible Approval

Member Seanez expressed concern regarding knowing if the Parent Kits are utilized by families. Member Allen shared that she met with the head nurse at Fort Defiance Hospital who stated that their staff had parents view the Parent Kit DVDs prior to leaving the hospital.

Member Seanez **motioned that the Council endorse up to \$50,000 of the frontier adjustment funds for inclusion in the Parent Kits of books, CDs, and a resource page to make the kits more culturally relevant to the families of the Navajo Nation and to begin distribution of the Parent Kits as soon as possible. Member Rodgers seconded the motion. Motion passed.**

RPC Meeting Attendance Discussion

Chair Curley addressed the Council about her concern regarding some Council Members lack of consistent attendance and the difficulty in getting all of the Council Members together.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 4:50pm