



FIRST THINGS FIRST

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Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order/Welcome/Introduction of Guests

The regular meeting of the La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council was held on May 22, 2014, at 9:30 a.m. at the Mohave County Administration Building, Saguaro Room, 700 West Beale Street, Kingman, Arizona 86401.

Chair Mongeau called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m. Council members, staff and guests introduced themselves.

Members Present

Alisa Burroughs, Riley Frei, Jose Garcia, Terri Holloway, Betsy Lewis, Nancy Mongeau, Catie Sondrol, Debra Weger and Howard Weiske

Members Absent

Lenore Knudtson and Vijette Saari

Presentation

Senior Director Gary Arnold presented certificates of service to Members Weiske and Weger, and Vice Chair Frei.

Call to the Public

There were no responses to call to the public.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Regional Director Merritt Beckett directed staff to correct the reference to Chair Mongeau serving as a member of a program committee, not a finance committee as indicated on page two. Member Weiske made a motion to approve the April 24, 2014 meeting minutes as corrected. Member Holloway seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Presentation on the Mohave County Department of Public Health

Christy Bronston, BSN, RN, Nursing Services Manager for Mohave County Public Health Department, discussed their Maternal Child Health program. The program includes Women Infants & Children/Nutrition, Environmental Health, Bioterrorism/Emergency Response, Health Administration and Public Health Nursing. She provided history and an overview of each program, highlighting the services provided and target populations for each. All conduct screenings, then refer to providers as needed. In the past, both Mohave and La Paz counties received services, but reduced funding eliminated many of those in La Paz County. However, childhood immunizations are provided in the Arizona Strip area regardless of which state the child lives in. Ms. Bronston attributes increases in numbers served to improved awareness and collaboration due to coordination efforts of the Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visitation (MIECHV) program and the community coalition. There was discussion about the alleged link between vaccines and autism, and the effect of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) on free vaccines. Ms. Bronston noted the cost for one child's vaccines is approximately \$2,200, while the cost to investigate a single case of measles is \$440,000.

Deborah Conter, MS, Nutrition Manager discussed Women Infants & Children (WIC), which is a federally funded nutrition program. Currently they provide food, nutrition education and referrals to 3,500 participants whose eligibility is based on income. Staff uses motivational interviewing to determine which services are needed. Senior Director Arnold suggested connecting with our grantees who conduct home visits to promote the program. A Health in Arizona Policy Initiative (HAPI) grant enables them to work with special needs children, and recently led to the formation of the Special Needs Advocacy Coalition (SNAC). Director Beckett advised

the council that the Public Health Department is the first of a series of presenters we will see to discuss services in the region, with the intent of aiding strategic planning.

Summary and Discussion of May 2014 First Things First Leadership Forum Topics

Chair Mongeau and Senior Director Arnold attended the forum, and the main topic was the fiscal policy recommendations. There was extensive discussion at the forum, which is summarized in Handout 1. Many concerns arose, as did many suggestions. Some of the concerns were public perception of programs in the community; regional partnership councils' aversion to board guidance or mandates; special issues for tribal regions; the high cost of Quality First, which prevents funding in other areas; and the role of the state general fund. Chair Mongeau requested members review the handout and email suggestions to Director Beckett. Please keep in mind that the State Board's decision will have a big impact on our region. Chief Regional Officer Michelle Katona discussed the evolution of Quality First, and noted that recommendations would not go to the State Board until July. She provided the cost figures for the Quality First program statewide, explaining the scholarships are the biggest expense. All regional partnership councils are facing a 30% reduction in funding, but Senior Director Arnold noted that would allow stable funding for seven to fifteen years. The council discussed ideas for public/private partnerships, and requested staff guidance on possible ramifications. Chair Mongeau emphasized the importance of members sharing ideas with Director Beckett not later than June 16 so these can be compiled and taken back to the program committee for presentation to the State Board for consideration.

Update on Best for Babies Court Team Training in La Paz County

Member Weiske provided a summary of the Best for Babies training in Parker, and noted this training is now offered in all fifteen counties in Arizona. It covered the essentials of early development, and examined court system involvement. This training was attended by Superior Court judges, Child Protective Services representatives, and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs), among others. Member Weiske encouraged everyone to try to attend one of these trainings.

Member Weiske also attended the Dependency Attorney Training recently, along with several Superior Court and Tribal Court judges. The Tribal Court judges facilitated a discussion about the Indian Child Welfare Act, which addresses the effort to keep Native American foster children with their own tribes.

Possible Approval of SFY 2015 Implementation Plan for Community Outreach and Awareness

Community Outreach Coordinator Erin Taylor noted the addition of engagement to the plan she presented last month to align it with statewide benchmarks. The goal is to move people beyond awareness and get them to take action. Member Weiske made a motion to approve the SFY 2015 implementation plan. Member Sondrol seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Coordinator Taylor also shared that at the recent coordination meeting, there were three success stories from Arizona's Children Association Parents As Teachers program and one from Head Start. Future outreach reports will include success stories and engagement efforts to keep the council informed.

Coordinator Taylor also shared that Judge Weiss of the Mohave County Superior Court was chosen as one of three prominent individuals who will appear in a statewide First Things First media campaign.

The Kingman Regional Medical Center Kids' Fair is Saturday, May 31 from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. in Kingman. Coordinator Taylor and Member Holloway will be attending and the event will include free car seat checks and free car seats. This event typically draws upwards of 900 attendees.

Regional Director's Report

Director Beckett reviewed the SFY 2014 financial report, and noted there are no concerns.

Director Beckett provided an update on the 2014 Regional Needs and Assets Report, advising she has received the first draft, which will be presented for council review at the June meeting. The vendor – University of Arizona – will be on the phone to answer questions during that meeting, and will attend the July meeting in Parker. Director Beckett stated the information from key informant interviews will be very helpful for strategic planning and has not been available in the region previously. There was an 85% response rate to the child care census, which is exceptional.

Director Beckett reminded everyone to save the date, as the First Things First Early Childhood Summit is August 18-19 in Phoenix.

Director Beckett shared an update on scholarships and noted that we have received feedback from grantees regarding the difficulty families are experiencing when completing the scholarship applications. Ginger Sandweg, Senior Director for Early Learning has reviewed the process with the administrative home, Valley of the Sun United Way, and they are significantly revising the application to make it easier for families. Member Burroughs requested the application be provided in Spanish as well, and Senior Director Arnold will make that request.

Director Beckett reported that scholarship grant award letters for fiscal year 2015 went out last week, and amounts remained the same for all but two local providers. Topock and Bouse scholarships were reduced based on review of prior utilization because the schools were unable to use all the slots they were previously awarded. Those slots will be redistributed in SFY 2015 and both programs are aware the change is coming.

Director Beckett advised the current startup/expansion agreements in Quartzsite and Salome are scheduled to end on June 30; however, those sites have not been Quality First rated yet, which is necessary in order for them to be eligible to receive scholarships. The council will be presented with options to extend the contract at the next meeting, but may have to move funds among line items in the budget. Director Beckett will consult staff and bring a recommendation to the June council meeting.

Director Beckett reminded the council that the election of officers for fiscal year 2015 will also be at the June meeting.

Next Regular Meeting

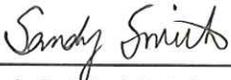
The next meeting of the La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council will be at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, June 26 at the Littlefield Unified School District located at 3490 East Rio Virgin Road, Beaver Dam, Arizona 86432.

Adjourn

Member Garcia made a motion to adjourn at 11:37 a.m. Member Holloway seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

SUBMITTED BY:

APPROVED BY:



Sandy Smith, Administrative Assistant



Nancy Mongeau, Chair