



FIRST THINGS FIRST

The right system for bright futures

Arizona Early Childhood Development & Health Board Cochise Regional Partnership Council

Meeting Minutes June 24, 2010

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Introductions

The Regular Meeting of the First Things First Cochise Regional Partnership Council was held on Thursday, June 24, 2010 at 1:00 PM at the Cochise College Benson Center 1025 S. Hwy. 90, Benson, AZ 85602.

Council Members Present:

Del Cabarga, Vaira Harik, Mary Sue Houser, Dave Howe, Melodi Polach, Ginger Ryan, Jane Strain, Nancy-Jean Welker and Evelyn Whitmer

Council Members Absent:

Ana Bae and Renae Humburg

Others Present:

Melissa Avant, Cristal Martin, Rhian Evans Allvin, Michelle Katona, Marla Chamberlain, Tony Bruno, Melissa Watts, Rebecca Drummond, Marilyn Godfrey, Lee Itule, Robin Falconer, Marcela Polo, Melody Johnson, Nancy Ledesma, Anthony Montana, Nicole Sanchez, Valley Tyminski, Mary Lamm, Janette Guerra, Faith Eidson, Michael Vetter and Pam Patt

Chair Strain welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at approximately 1:10 PM.

Member Cabarga led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Chair Strain to approve the minutes of the April 15, 2010 Regular Meeting, June 03, 2010 Special Meeting and Executive Session. Seeing no objections, the minutes will be posted as published.

Discussion and Presentation on Coordination

Rebecca Drummond, MA, Program Director for Family Wellness, University of Arizona, College of Public Health, provided the Regional Council a recommendation for Strategy Eight Coordination. Based on findings of the coordination study and discussions with the regional council members, Ms. Drummond recommended that the Cochise Regional Partnership Council develop a Cochise County early childhood network of stakeholders, the goal of which would be to utilize collaborative strategies both within the

First Things First grantee system and outside of the grant system. In the first year, initial steps should include networking and coordination. As the network becomes formalized, more collaborative efforts should take place. In future years partners may take on efforts to target “systems” or environmental/policy issues at the community level. This would include collaborative leadership and data collection. Ms. Drummond provided the following recommendations for implementation:

Year One (2010-2011): First Things First Cochise Regional Partnership Council will hire a Coordination Liaison staff member to focus on above mentioned Networking and Coordination activities. Efforts will focus on collecting and maintaining up to date early childhood services in Cochise County to increase families’ awareness and to enhance interagency awareness and partnerships. This liaison will also lead the First Things First and County-wide networking and coordination activities.

Year Two (2011-2012): Efforts will focus on sustainable impacts of the early childhood network in Cochise County, through Collaborative Leadership practices between stakeholders, including First Things First grantees, community members, and other agencies. This network will be used to identify gaps in services and systemic issues to be addressed at the local level. As priorities are assessed, action plans will be developed, and possible Memos of Understanding put in place. Partners will collaboratively guide local data collection activities.

Discussion and Possible Approval of SFY 2011 Coordination Strategy

Melissa Avant, Regional Coordinator, provided the Regional Council with a worksheet which outlined the budget justification for strategy eight. The Regional Council weighed the benefits of request for proposals and request for grant applications and the significance of finding individuals who are familiar with community development. The importance of building a system that is inclusive of the entire early childhood community was also discussed.

Member Polach moved that the Cochise Regional Partnership Council approve the Coordination Strategy in the amount of \$100,000 as recommended in the strategy worksheet to include personnel, resource guide development and facilitator as needed. Member Houser seconded the motion.
Motion carried 8:1

Communication Plan Discussion and Executive Director Update

Rhian Evans Allvin, Executive Director, First Things First, provided the Regional Council with an overview of the state-wide communications plan and outlined her responsibilities as Executive Director. Ms. Allvin spoke of the North Carolina Smart Start system and the elements, such as the utilization of regional councils, which were used as a model for the development of First Things First. Ms. Allvin discussed the development of a coordinated state-wide communications plan. The broad communications plan includes newsletters, bi-monthly policy briefs on varying topics, templates available for use to the regional staff, leave behinds along with radio spots and billboards. The billboards were chosen to highlight the connection between early childhood development and school success. Ms. Allvin concluded by speaking of the importance of grassroots movement and thanked the Regional Council on their investment in early childhood.

Discussion and Presentation on Therapists Recruitment and Retention for Cochise County

Melissa Avant, Regional Coordinator, provided the Regional Council a factsheet detailing the First Things First Early Childhood Therapist Incentives Program with the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS). The program is ready and the factsheet was sent throughout community networks. The

Regional Council questioned why stipends are the same across the state as the general belief is that, in order to recruit and retain qualified individuals, stipends for rural areas may need to be higher than those for metropolitan areas. Michelle Katona, Assistant Director, Regional Partnership Councils, explained the application process to the Regional Council. Applicants are awarded higher points for application to rural areas and are given priority processing. ADHS will research the benefits of the standardized stipend portion of the incentive program to see if a higher stipend will have a positive impact. Marketing will go throughout the Universities, school districts and newsletters. The Regional Council discussed local control and programmatic development.

Discussion and Possible Approval if First Things First Cochise Regional Partnership Council Resolution Opposing HCR2001

Chair Strain provided a handout and discussed a resolution to oppose HCR2001. Member Harik moved that the Cochise Regional Partnership Council support and approve opposition to HCR2001 via resolution. Member Ryan seconded the motion.

Motion carried 8:0

Presentation of SFY 2010 Programs

The Cochise Regional Partnership Council First Things First grantees gave a year-end presentation for state fiscal year 2010. The grantees were as follows: Bright Futures Collaboration (Arizona's Children Association, Child & Family Resources, Cochise County Health Department), Child Care Health Consultant, Child Care Scholarships, Community Food Bank of Tucson, Easter Seals Blake Foundation Project G.R.E.A.T. Steps, Healthy Childcare Program, Quality First, Southeast Arizona Food Bank, T.E.A.C.H. and Willcox Community Pantry.

Discussion and Possible Action on Date Change for Election of Regional Chair and Vice Chair

Member Ryan moved that the Cochise Regional Partnership Council move the election of the regional Chair and Vice Chair to the August 2010 meeting. Member Whitmer seconded the motion.

Motion carried 8:0

Presentation of Two Year Members

Chair Strain presented two new members to the Regional Council. The new members are Melissa Watts and Michael Vetter. Chair Strain and Melissa Avant recognized the service and dedication of the members whose two year terms have ended and presented them with a service pin and a thank you box. Those members are: Del Cabarga, Vaira Harik, Mary Sue Houser and Evelyn Whitmer.

Coordinator's Report

Melissa Avant, Regional Coordinator, provided the Regional Council with a coordinator's report. The Donelson Consulting will present their findings in the July 2010 meeting. Chair Lynn was reelected to the State Board. A regional council member orientation will be held in Tucson, AZ on July 28, 2010 and is open to new and existing council members. Surveys will be released in July and then on August 30 and 31 a priority setting system building task force will convene. Council members are welcomed to participate. Ms. Avant provided a grants financial summary report to the Regional Council and explained that it was for the third quarter.

Ms. Avant discussed the 10 additional Quality First! slots for a total of 30 participants in SFY2011. The Regional Council directed that preference be given to centers/homes in rural areas and unrepresented zip codes.

Discussion and Possible Approval of SFY 2011 Communications Strategy

Ms. Avant provided an update on the past and future presentations in Cochise County and discussed various tactics for communications. These tactics include:

- a) Objective One: ensure consistent messaging about FTF internally and externally to include distribution of FTF leave behinds and branded collateral materials
- b) Objective Two: Position FTF as a leader in efforts to fulfill Arizona's commitment to our youngest kids including media buys including TV, radio, newspaper, grocery carts, floor mats and cooler decals, billboards, theater ads
- c) Objective Three: Build and drive support from the general public, elected officials and additional target audiences for investment in programs and services for Arizona children five years old and younger including hiring a consultant for 5 months July through November to recruit and retain early childhood champions in the region.
- d) Objective Four: Inform Arizona caregivers of children five years and younger about early childhood program and services, in particular FTF statewide initiatives and regionally supported strategies including distribution of Born Learning collateral materials as part of local parent education and awareness strategies, inform the community through various outreach efforts including newsletters, submissions to partner newsletters, sponsor and/or participate in community events and conduct media and community outreach on grant awards and success of programs and services.

Member Houser moved that the Cochise Regional Partnership Council approve the Communication Strategy in the amount of \$60,000 to include a consultant, media buys, and leave behinds. Member Polach seconded the motion.

Motion carried 8:0

Discussion and Possible Approval of SFY 2011 Pre-K Strategy

Melissa Avant, Regional Coordinator informed the Regional Council that the RFGA for Pre-K Expansion and Capacity was released and no applications were received. Ms. Avant provided the following options for consideration:

- a) Re-release RFGA
- b) Government to government agreement with public school districts
- c) Contract with the statewide contract with Arizona Department of Administration with public school districts
- d) Add the \$100,000 to the Child Care Scholarships Strategy for the four and five year olds in a pre-school setting.

Member Harik moved that the Cochise Regional Partnership Council approve moving \$100,000 from the SFY 2011 Pre-K Strategy to the Child Care Scholarships strategy for children three to five years old not already in kindergarten. Member Houser seconded the motion.

Motion carried 8:0

Announcements

Next regular meeting: July 15, 2010 – Bisbee, AZ.

Member Polach informed the Regional Council that PRN is partnered with the Tucson Diaper Bank. Diapers are ordered monthly and there will be diaper drives throughout the county.

Call to the Public

There was no response to Call to the Public

Discussion and Possible Award of Health and Nutrition Grant(s) Health and Nutrition RFGA FTF-RC002-11-0292-00

Member Whitmer declared a conflict of interest and recued herself. Member Houser motioned to move into Executive Session pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.03 (A)(2), for purposes of agenda item #16. Member Polach seconded the motion. The time was approximately 6:23 PM.

Executive Session is recorded and the minutes are confidential.

Member Howe called a motion to close Executive Session. Member Houser seconded the motion. The Regional Council came back from Executive Session at approximately 6:36 PM.

Member Howe moved that the Cochise Regional Partnership Council accept the recommendations of the review team as provided in Executive Session for Health and Nutrition First Things First RFGA #FTF-RC002-11-0292-00. Member Polach seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4:2

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, Chair Strain adjourned the meeting at 6:39 P.M.

Dated this 19 day of August, 2010.

Submitted By: Cristal Martin
Administrative Assistant

Approved By: Jane Strain
Chair, Jane Strain