



FIRST THINGS FIRST

The right system for bright futures

Arizona Early Childhood Development & Health Board

La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order and Introductions

The regular meeting of the First Things First – La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council was held July 23, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. at the Bullhead City Elementary School District Board Room at 1004 Hancock Road, Bullhead City AZ.

Chairman Allsbrooks called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m. Guests were invited to introduce themselves.

Members present:

William Allsbrooks, Alisa Burroughs, Riley Frei, Lenore Knudtson, Betsy Lewis, Vijette Saari, Nancy Mongeau, Melissa Howell, Debra Weger

Members absent:

Jose Garcia

Call to the Public

Rich Miers updated the Council on the progress of the Interagency Council Healthy Families program and stated that additional funds for operating costs are needed.

Presentation and Discussion on FTF Emergency Child Care Scholarships

Dr. Kathy Turner, United Way of Northern Arizona, provided an overview of the statewide strategy to provide Emergency Childcare Scholarships. Twenty-three providers are currently offering the scholarships within the La Paz/Mohave region and 240 full-time and one part-time scholarship have been awarded to date. Applications for scholarships are no longer being accepted because funds are expected to spend out within the next two months.

Discuss on Re-designation of the Regions

Consultant Linda Cannon presented an overview of the process required by State statute to re-designate or re-affirm the regional boundaries every two years and requested comment and input from the Regional Council on the current regional boundaries.

Chairman Allsbrooks stated that the region is very large and outreach to rural areas is a particular challenge, especially in La Paz County; but he does not think changing the regional boundaries will resolve the issue. He'd like to see more funding to better communicate throughout the region.

Member Mongeau stated she would also like to see more communication and outreach with La Paz County and the smaller, more rural communities.

Vice-Chair Knudtson stated that perhaps a separate Council would better represent the interests of La Paz County and that partners in La Paz County may identify more or feel more ownership for a Council of their own.

Coordinator Beckett stated that while recruiting Council Members many partners from organizations in La Paz County indicated they do not have the capacity or resources for their staff to participate more fully in the partnership. One option available to the Council is to create a strategy specifically to reach the more rural, under-served communities.

Member Frei stated there is not sufficient population in rural areas and we shouldn't direct funds to communities just because they are rural.

Linda Cannon summarized the feedback from the Regional Council and acknowledged that the La Paz/Mohave region does present a challenge in terms of communicating and engaging the huge geographic area. Based on the input she received from the surveys and the discussion, her recommendation is that a boundary change is not necessary in the region; but that further consideration can be given to strategies to communicate with and engage very rural communities.

Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda included the minutes of the June 25th, 2009 Regular Council Meeting. Member Burroughs made a motion to approve the minutes on the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Member Frei. The motion carried with a unanimous vote by the members present.

Address Potential Conflicts of Interest Regarding Items on this Agenda

No Council Members declared a conflict of interest regarding any item on the agenda.

Presentation and Discussion of Proposed Board Policy on Regional Council Member Attendance (Attachment 2)

Coordinator Beckett explained that while the La Paz/Mohave Regional Council adopted an attendance policy last year, many Regional Councils are operating without attendance policies and are facing issues of having to cancel meetings due to lack of a quorum. The State Board would like to address this issue by implementing a single attendance policy for Council Members that will be consistently applied statewide. This policy would take the place of the existing La Paz/Mohave attendance policy. In preparation for the August Board meeting, the Coordinator asked the Regional Council to review a draft of the policy and provide feedback.

Chairman Allsbrooks stated that the policy is too lenient and that it should not matter if an absence is excused or not. Council Members who are absent are not able to contribute and the expectation should be that all Council Members attend regularly.

Coordinator Beckett stated she would share the feedback with staff drafting the policy.

Presentation, Discussion & Possible Approval of Infant/Toddler Mental Health Strategy

Coordinator Beckett presented the Infant/Toddler Mental Health strategy. The strategy has three pieces: first to strengthen court teams that serve vulnerable children, second to provide specialized training and technical assistance to child-serving organizations on child development and infant/toddler mental health; and third to provide tuition reimbursements and financial incentives to mental health service providers to increase their capacity to address the social and emotional needs of infants and toddlers.

Member Frei made a motion to approve the Infant/Toddler Mental Health Strategy for \$400,000. Motion was seconded by Member Saari. The motion carried with a unanimous vote by the members present.

Presentation and Discussion on FTF External Evaluation

Dr. Billie Enz and the First Things First external evaluation team presented an overview on the external evaluation including goals, design, methods and processes. The team is comprised of researchers from three Arizona universities - Northern Arizona University, University of Arizona and Arizona State University. Dr. Nancy Perry, also of the external evaluation team, described the school readiness study and the longitudinal study and explained how information gained from these studies will be used to demonstrate if First Things First is making a difference over time.

Coordinator Report

Coordinator Beckett provided a written update on the status of the Regional Funding Plan and Statewide Initiatives. Coordinator Beckett requested volunteers to serve on a funding plan workgroup. Member Mongeau and Member Burroughs volunteered to join the funding plan workgroup. Coordinator Beckett stated the State Board will approve regional allocations at the August Board meeting and she will bring a draft SFY2011 Funding Plan to the September Council Meeting for their review because the Council will need to approve the plan at the October Council Meeting. Coordinator Beckett stated that the new Infant/Toddler Mental Health Strategy, the recommendations for the two RFGA's, Early Care and Education and Professional Development, and the recommendation to fill the At-Large vacancy on the Council will all be presented to the State Board at the August 25th Board meeting. Coordinator Beckett also announced that the first Grantee Orientation meeting will be held in Kingman on August 10th.

Adjourn

Member Saari made a motion to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Member Howell. Motion to adjourn carried with a unanimous vote by the members present.

There being no further business, Chairman Allsbrooks adjourned the meeting at 11:35 a.m.

Minutes NOT approved

William Allsbrooks, Chair

Della Gray, Administrative Assistant II