



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Ready for School. Set for Life.

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 October 23, 2014, at 9:30 a.m. at the Centennial Community Center located at 69725 Centennial Park Road in Wenden, Arizona 85357.

Chair Mongeau called the meeting to order at 9:41 a.m. Council members, staff and guests introduced themselves.

Members Present

Riley Frei, Jose Garcia, Lenore Knudtson, Nancy Mongeau, Vijette Saari, Catie Sondrol and Howard Weiske
Terri Holloway and Debra Weger participated telephonically

Members Absent

Alisa Burroughs and Betsy Lewis

Declarations of Conflict of Interest

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

Possible Approval of Meeting Minutes

Member Sondrol made a motion to approve the September 25, 2014 regular meeting minutes. Member Garcia seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Review and Discuss Funding Plan Recommendations

Regional Director Merritt Beckett presented an overview of recommendations from the Funding Plan Workgroup, noting key data findings from the region's 2014 Regional Needs and Assets Report. The shortage of regulated childcare providers in the region is a key concern, and members discussed locations in the region where there are known wait lists. The number of child care programs rated at three or more stars in the Quality First Program has more than doubled in the last year (from five in 2013 to 11 in 2014), but access to affordable preschool programs, such as Head Start and school district preschool programs, is not sufficient to meet the need in the region. The various home visiting programs available to support families are a key asset in the region; but key informants report that overlap and duplication of home visiting programs is a concern. The state Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program is working with the Mohave County Department of Public Health on a home visiting collaborative that convenes local home visitation providers to address these issues. Director Beckett discussed the shortage of health care providers in the area, the need for more partnerships and the need for additional resources for children with special needs. Director Beckett mentioned an upcoming event sponsored by the Mohave County Special Needs Advocacy Coalition (SNAC) on October 30, as well as an upcoming Early Childhood System Collaboration meeting on November 4. Vice Chair Weiske made a motion to approve the funding plan recommendations as presented. Member Sondrol seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Director Beckett reviewed the SFY 2016-2018 regional funding plan draft, noting changes from the current SFY 2015 funding plan, and the significant reduction to Quality First scholarships. Following extensive discussion comparing and contrasting the two options presented, the council arrived at consensus to use the figures included in option A for the final draft of the funding plan. Director Beckett will request approval of the final draft at the December meeting.

First Read: Proposed Changes to Governance Policies

Director Beckett shared a template that was prepared by FTF legal counsel of proposed governance policies for regional councils to consider. She noted there are quite a few differences between our current policies and the template and requested the assistance of two council members to review the template, compare it with our current policies and work with staff to bring recommendations back to a future meeting. Vice Chair Weiske and Member Sondrol volunteered to help.

First Discussion: Inclusion of Prayer and/or Pledge of Allegiance at Future Meetings

Senior Regional Director Gary Arnold noted that this is a council decision that is not recommended or prohibited by the state board. Vice Chair Weiske stated the practice is evident at other public meetings and suggested it would make the meetings more formal and enhance dialogue with the faith community. Members noted advantages and disadvantages. Members Frei, Sondrol and Saari expressed support for the idea. Members Knudtson and Holloway expressed concerns. Pastor Garcia stated the action should only be taken if 100% of members are in favor of it. Discussion ensued, with members agreeing to separate the prayer and the pledge in to two separate agenda items for further consideration. Senior Director Arnold added that religious beliefs are personal, there is the risk of unintended consequences, there is a need to ensure any prayer or invocation would be inclusive of various beliefs and non-believers, and there is a need to express that participation is optional and would not affect any relationships with the council. Consensus was to continue the discussion at the next meeting.

Regional Director's Report

Director Beckett provided an update on the First Things First Tribal Consultation held on October 7, 2014 in Phoenix. The Fort Mojave Indian Tribe was represented by Vice Chairman Shan Lewis. Director Beckett will share the official report/summary at a future meeting.

Director Beckett reviewed the latest SFY 2015 financial report, noting figures were as anticipated at this time.

Director Beckett revisited the proposed meeting calendar for 2015. Several members have conflicts with the proposed dates, so after discussion the consensus was to move 2015 meetings to Wednesdays.

Community Outreach Coordinator Erin Taylor discussed the Tiny T-Birds preschool program, noting Bullhead City recently became a Read on Arizona community. At a recent Bullhead City meeting, access to quality childcare was a recurring theme, so she would like to collaborate with Read on Arizona for a Quality First site tour the third week of November. Coordinator Taylor will invite a variety of people, as well as various media representatives. Council members are encouraged to attend.

Director Beckett reiterated the Special Needs Advocacy Coalition (SNAC) will present their assessment findings at a meeting October 30 at 3pm, and the System Coordination Event with AzEIP is November 4 at 9 a.m. in Kingman, and added the 2015 Early Childhood Summit will be August 24-25, 2014.

Call to the Public

There were no responses to call to the public.

General Discussion/Announcements/Recommended Future Agenda Items

There were no announcements.

Next Regular Meeting

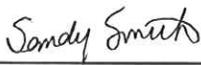
The next meeting of the La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council will be at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, December 4, 2014 at the Lake Havasu Unified School District located at 2200 Havasupai Boulevard, Lake Havasu City, Arizona 86403.

Adjourn

Member Frei made a motion to adjourn at 11:43 a.m. Member Garcia seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

SUBMITTED BY:

APPROVED BY:



Sandy Smith, Administrative Assistant


Nancy Mongeau, Chair