



FIRST THINGS FIRST

The right system for bright futures

**Arizona Early Childhood Development & Health Board
Cochise Regional Partnership Council**

**Special Meeting Minutes
December 15, 2009**

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Introductions

The Special Meeting of the First Things First Cochise Regional Partnership Council was held on Tuesday, December 15, 2009 at 10:30 AM at the Cochise College Benson Center 1025 State Route 90 Benson, AZ 85602.

Council Members Present:

Ana Bae-Limb, Del Cabarga (telephonically), Vaira Harik, Dave Howe, Renae Humburg, Ginger Ryan and Jane Strain

Council Members Absent:

Mary Sue Houser, Melodi Polach, Nancy-Jean Welker and Evelyn Whitmer

Others Present:

Melissa Avant, Cristal Martin, Sandy Carpenter (telephonically), Judith Schmidt and Priscilla Whitlock-Coates

Chair Strain welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at approximately 10:37 PM. Chair Strain led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Call to the Public

There was no response to Call to the Public

Legislative Proposals to Sweep First Things First Funds

Chair Strain opened the discussion after making a note for the record, stating Melissa Avant, Regional Coordinator, Cochise Regional Partnership Council and Cristal Martin, Administrative Assistant are not in any way involved in the discussion, but are present "simply to provide staff input and factual information."

Sandy Carpenter, Government Affairs Specialist, First Things First provided an update to the Regional Council with reference to a special legislative session to be held on Thursday December 17, 2009 to

address part of the state budget deficit. One of the items being considered is a deferment to the Voter Protection Act which would allow the Legislature to seize a portion of fund balances and new revenues from voter protected funds, including First Things First, each year for at least the next three years. For First Things First this would represent 50% of the fund balance and 50% of expected revenue to be taken over the next three years. Ms. Carpenter stressed to the Regional Council the importance of educating their Legislators to what this proposal would mean to the children, families and jobs in their constituencies.

The Regional Council discussed the various courses of action to take as well as their concern for the state of Arizona. On a local level, the Regional Council can outreach and communicate with the different groups in the Cochise region, such as city councils and rotary clubs, in order to partner with the community on this issue. Politically, it is also important to make phone calls, write emails and utilize each Council Member's individual network to inform the Legislators of the impact of overturning the Voter Protection Act. The Regional Council recognized that First Things First is not a stand-alone organization and the need to "link arms" with other agencies and groups in order to build a strong infrastructure.

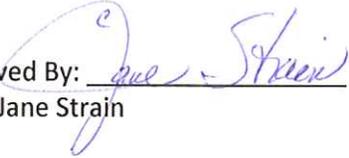
Adjournment

Next regular meeting: January 21, 2010 at 2:30 P.M. located at the Valley TeleCom Building in Willcox, Arizona.

There being no further discussions, Chair Strain adjourned the meeting at 11:21 A.M.

Dated this 21 day of January, 2010.

Submitted By: Cristal Martin
Administrative Assistant

Approved By: 
Chair, Jane Strain