



## 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 September 26, 2013, at 10:00 a.m. at the Centennial Community Center, 69725 Centennial Park Road, Wenden, Arizona 85357.

Chair Mongeau called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Council members, staff and guests introduced themselves. Chair Mongeau thanked the Wenden Elementary School personnel for the preschool tour this morning.

##### Members Present

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

##### Members Absent

None

##### **Call to the Public**

George Dean, Superintendent of the Salome Elementary School District #30 spoke briefly about the new program they are setting-up in Salome. He thanked First Things First and Regional Director Merritt Beckett. They received their provisional license from the Department of Health Services and are looking forward to working with us.

##### **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Member Weiske made a motion to approve the August 22, 2013 meeting minutes. Member Garcia seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

##### **2013 Early Childhood Summit Debrief: Highlights and Discussion**

Members agreed the conference was extremely informational and the keynote speakers were phenomenal, but there was almost too much going on at the same time with not enough time to cover everything. Members discussed the lack of adequate information regarding children with disabilities. Members noted a preference to hold the Summit either earlier or later in the year to accommodate those working in education, and Senior Director Gary Arnold stated he would take that back to the planners; however, planning for next year is underway with the venue already reserved for August of 2014. Director Arnold noted there were over 1,200 registrants, with 220 regional partnership council members in attendance – including six from the La Paz/Mohave region.

##### **Review and Discuss SFY 2013 Program Implementation**

Director Beckett reviewed the year-end financial report and explained anomalies. She further explained planned versus unplanned carry forward amounts, their effect on the anticipated SFY 2015 budget, and the reason these amounts have decreased each year. TEACH is financed at the state level as of July 1, 2013 (SFY 2014) and pre-kindergarten expansions, such as Salome and Quartzsite, are also being administered at the state level through the Arizona Department of Education and will be listed as one amount on future financial reports.

Director Beckett reviewed the year-end data report which illustrates that most of our grantees met their contracted service units. The anomalies on this report are due to a number of issues, including data that includes duplicated counts, a smaller number of children coming into foster care, a change in the Arizona Early Intervention Program provider and difficulties hiring qualified

(preferably bilingual) staff. Additionally, this report now 'flags' items such as staff turnover and client disenrollment when they exceed a predetermined percentage. Director Arnold further explained that percentages listed are based on the total number in that category, not the total number of clients.

### **Regional Director's Report**

Director Beckett reviewed the SFY 2014 financial report and noted it only reflects the first two months of this fiscal year.

Director Beckett reviewed the SFY 2015 Quality First model changes, and spoke about former First Things First Chief Executive Officer Rhian Evans Allvin's webinars that were offered to council members prior to her departure. Council members also received detailed copies of the proposed changes, and any comments submitted were incorporated before the State Board approved the changes in June. These changes take effect July 1, 2014, and the most significant for the La Paz/Mohave region is the merging of Quality First and Pre-Kindergarten scholarships. Director Beckett facilitated a discussion regarding specific details of the changes, and again the issue of transportation in rural communities arose. Directors Arnold and Beckett will convey these concerns to administrators at the central office. Director Beckett emphasized the importance of child care centers attaining at least 3 star ratings by the July 1, 2014 effective date, and Director Arnold added that centers can request re-assessment before April 2014 for SFY 2015. Additional discussion focused on the lack of quality care for infants in this region. Director Beckett noted that this council recently approved the addition of two new Quality First sites, the Colorado River Union High School District (CRUHSD) site and the Dolan Springs site, and the CRUHSD site does serve infants and toddlers. Director Beckett will follow-up on questions raised and provide additional information at a future meeting.

Director Beckett provided a brief update on the SFY 2015 funding plan development, noting that she will convene a work group and bring recommendations to the October meeting. The regional council will review recommendations in October and will need to approve a final draft at the December 5<sup>th</sup> regional council meeting.

Director Beckett also provided a brief update on the regional Needs and Assets Report, noting that our vendor began in July and has been submitting monthly status reports to her. She requested that any council members interested in reviewing the sampling plan and draft survey instruments could contact her. The vendor plans to attend the October 24 meeting, with Dr. Michelle Walsh presenting the preliminary documents and requesting council member feedback.

Director Beckett shared that some exciting systems building events have been occurring recently, including the second home visitation collaboration meeting where AzEIP and all of that strategy's grantees were represented. Together they are working to devise universal consent forms to match families with the agency that can provide the best suited services for their needs, and a third meeting is already scheduled. A representative of the Arizona Department of Health Services, which is the lead for the federal Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) grant, shared the news that two communities in our region are getting expanded services from that grant – Bullhead City and Quartzsite – and hopefully the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe will also see a benefit from that grant soon. Additionally, we hosted an oral health forum on August 8 with fifty-six attendees, providing books with oral health messages and distributing children's dental kits from the Delta Dental of Arizona Foundation. Director Beckett is also working on another Delta Dental grant in the hope of reestablishing a dental health coalition in our region.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, October 24, 2013 at the Lake Havasu Unified School District Board Room, 2200 Havasupai Boulevard, Lake Havasu City, Arizona 86403.

### **Adjourn**

Vice Chair Frei made a motion to adjourn at 11:23 a.m. Member Holloway seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**SUBMITTED BY:**

**APPROVED BY:**

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**Sandy Smith, Administrative Assistant**

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**Nancy Mongeau, Chair**