



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Ready for School. Set for Life.

Arizona Early Child Development and Health Board Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council MINUTES

Call to Order/Welcome

A Regular Meeting of the First Things First Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council was held on November 12, 2013 at 10:00 a.m. The meeting was located at the Navajo Nation Museum, Conference Room #1, Loop Road and Highway 264, Window Rock, Arizona, 86515.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Martin at approximately 10:11 a.m. followed by introduction of the Regional Council, staff, and guests.

Members Present: Martin Ashley, Amelia Black, Grace Boyne, Valonia Hardy, Harry Martin, Paula Seanez and Jeannette Yazzie; Byrde Nez and Rhonda Etsitty attended telephonically

Members Absent: Benjamin Barney

FTF Staff Present: Melissa Begay, Elyse Dempsey, Memarie Tsosie, and Virginia Turner

Call to the Public

There were no calls to public at this time.

Discussion and Possible Approval of October 8, 2013 Regular Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Member Etsitty that the Regional Council approve the October 8, 2013 Regular Meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Member Black. Motion carried.

Discussion and Possible Action on SFY14 Recruitment – Stipend/Loan Forgiveness Strategy

Regional Director Begay provided updates from current grantee, Arizona Department of Health Services, in regards to the Recruitment – Stipend/Loan Forgiveness Strategy. By recommendation of the Regional Council, First Things First initiated a performance improvement plan for the grantee in July 2013 to ensure recruitment of two therapists in SFY14 who would provide services to children ages birth to five within the region. Therapist eligibility requirements for the strategy include three definitions: 1) must graduate from an accredited therapy program within the past eighteen months; 2) must not have previously contracted to serve children birth to age five in eligible regions; and 3) must have recently moved or began providing services within the past 6 months to children birth to age five in the region. Arizona Department of Health Services recently identified three candidates – two speech language pathologists employed with Window Rock Unified School District (WRUSD), and one therapist employed with the Cedar Unified School District (CUSD) – who are committed to serving children ages three to five for twenty hours per week. As therapists of school districts, services will be limited to school district preschools. In addition, WRUSD specifically entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with Navajo Head Start that would pilot therapy services within Head Start centers located in Fort Defiance, Sawmill, and Saint Michaels, Arizona. Regional Director Begay asked that the Regional Council consider two candidates for hire to fulfill target service units for the strategy despite limited service area.

Members Black and Hardy recommended use of data identifying therapy needs for children birth to age five throughout the region to assist in determining where recruitment efforts should be concentrated.

Member Seanez indicated that recruitment of qualified therapist for the targeted age population of birth to five continues to be a challenge as therapists within the region are employed by school districts to serve students ages three to twenty-one.

Member Black expressed concern regarding the scarce number of Native speech therapists and advocated for the recruitment of therapists who are Native language speakers.

Regional Director indicated that monthly performance reports demonstrate that grantee recruitment efforts were concentrated within the Window Rock and Northern Arizona University areas, and that future recruitment can consider data to determine where to direct recruitment efforts within the region. Regional Director Begay also clarified that twenty hours of service per week for school district therapists would be a part of a regular forty-hour work week. Additionally, efforts to recruit therapist to work within the region would require a two year commitment of the Regional Council in supporting two therapists beginning in SFY2014.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Boyne that the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council approve the Recruitment – Stipend/Loan Forgiveness Strategy in which the grantee will contract two therapists identified in the Window Rock Unified School District, seconded by Member Seanez. Motion carried.

Review, Discussion, and Possible Action of the SFY15 Funding Plan

Chair Martin asked that Member Seanez to lead discussion and action for Agenda Item 5a and 5b as both he and Vice Chair Boyne had conflict of interest.

a. Quality First

Chair Martin declared conflict with the Quality First Strategy and recused himself from discussion and action. Chair Martin is the current superintendent of Kayenta Unified School District, a Quality First participant.

Vice Chair Boyne declared conflict with the Quality First Strategy and recused herself from discussion and action. Vice Chair Boyne is employed with the Navajo Nation Child Care Development Fund, a Quality First participant.

Member Etsitty declared conflict with the Quality First Strategy and recused herself from discussion and action. Member Etsitty is currently a Quality First Coach for the Association for Supportive Child Care, which is a current grantee of the strategy.

Regional Director Begay reminded the Regional Council that Quality First will enroll center based providers only per previous Regional Council action and updated the strategy allotment amount.

A motion was made by Member Black that the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council approve the Quality First Strategy package for 25 Center Based Providers, with an estimated funding allotment of \$490,960 as presented in today's SFY2015 Funding Plan document, seconded by Member Yazzie. Motion carried.

The Quality First package includes the following strategies for enrolled providers: Quality First Academy; Warmline Triage and the Warmlines for Child Care Health Consultation, Inclusion, Mental Health Consultation; and Quality First Coaching and Incentives.

The estimated amounts included in this motion will be updated and finalized according to the Quality First model and the Quality Ratings of the enrolled sites and brought back to the Regional Council at a future meeting.

b. Quality First Child Care Scholarships

Chair Martin declared conflict with the Quality First Child Care Scholarships Strategy and recused himself from discussion and action. Chair Martin is the current superintendent of Kayenta Unified School District, a recipient of Quality First Scholarships.

Vice Chair Boyne declared conflict with the Quality First Child Care Scholarships Strategy and recused herself from discussion and action. Vice Chair Boyne is employed with the Navajo Nation Child Care Development Fund, a recipient of Quality First Scholarships.

Regional Director clarified that Quality First centers receive scholarships according to the Quality First base model that accounts for the center's star rating, size, and history within in the region.

A motion was made by Member Hardy that the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council approve the Quality First Child Care Scholarships Strategy including an estimate of 204 scholarships for 24 Center Based Providers enrolled in Quality First; and an addition of 74 scholarships for children ages three to five attending preschool in zip codes 86033, 86031, 86510, and 87328, and 50 scholarships for children of Navajo college students temporarily living off the Navajo Nation. The total budget allotment for the Quality First Child Care Scholarship Strategy is estimated to be \$2,218,481 in SFY2015, seconded by Member Ashley. Motion carried.

The estimated amounts included in this motion will be updated and finalized according to the Quality First model and the Quality Ratings of the enrolled sites and brought back to the Regional Council at a future meeting.

c. Child Care Health Consultation
Chair Martin resume lead

A motion was made by Member Black that the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council approve the Child Care Health Consultation Strategy for 25 centers, and for the frontier adjustment for additional funding for mileage and travel for service delivery in our region. The total budget allotment for the Child Care Health Consultation Strategy is \$74,250 in SFY2015, seconded by Member Nez. Motion carried.

d. Expansion, Start-Up, and/or Capital Expense

Regional Director clarified that government grant agreements are continuing to be finalized with Holbrook Unified School District and the Arizona Department of Education to expand early learning programs with four additional preschool classrooms within the region.

A motion was made by Member Seanez that the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council allot \$500,000 for the Expansion, Start Up and/or Capital Expense Strategy with target service numbers of 4 Center Based Providers Served and 80 additional slots for participating children through a government to government agreement for SFY2015, seconded by Member Black. Motion carried.

e. Family, Friends, and Neighbors

Vice Chair Boyne declared conflict with the Family, Friends, and Neighbor Strategy and recused herself from discussion and action. Vice Chair Boyne is employed with the Navajo Nation Child Care Development Fund, a current grantee.

A motion was made by member Hardy that the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council allot \$200,000 for the Family, Friend, and Neighbors Strategy with target service numbers of 75 home based providers served through a government to government agreement for SFY2015, seconded by Member Seanez. Motion carried.

f. Food Security

Regional Director addressed previous concerns expressed by the Regional Council regarding an inconsistency in the number of target service units and proposed allotment for the strategy in SFY2015. In consultation with a current grantee, Regional Director Begay found that food had inaccurately been reported as number of pounds resulting in a higher number of target services units and a proposed strategy allotment. Instead, adjustments will be made to report target service units as number of boxes, which will in effect reduce number of target service units for SFY15 from 17,000 pounds of food to 9,000 boxes of food, and strategy allotment from \$340,000 to \$280,000.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Boyne that the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council approve the Food Security Strategy for an allotment of \$180,000 with target service numbers of 9,000 food boxes distributed through a Request for Grant Agreement for SFY2015, seconded by Member Black. Motion carried.

g. FTF Professional REWARD\$

A motion was made by Member Yazzie that the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council allot \$67,500 for the FTF Professional REWARD\$ Strategy with target service numbers of 50 incentives awards distributed in SFY2015, seconded by Vice Chair Boyne. Motion carried.

h. Home Visitation

Regional Director Begay clarified that the current grantee is contracted to provide screenings to children of families who are enrolled in home visitation services; however, the possibility of increasing the target service units for number of children screened can be considered after grantee has completed year one of the grant agreement. Additionally, a secondary target service unit – developmental screening conducted – has been added to the strategy, and a ten-percent increase has been recommended to allow for expansion of the program.

A motion was made by Member Black that the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council allot \$428,963 for the Home Visitation Strategy with target service numbers of 150 families served, 150 children screened, and 150 developmental screenings conducted in SFY2015, seconded by Member Yazzie. Motion carried.

i. Native Language Preservation

Regional Director Begay reported that the potential grantee will be in the initial planning year after the tribal grant agreement has been finalized.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Boyne that the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council approve the Native Language Preservation strategy for an allotment of \$150,000 with the understanding that target service numbers will not be set in year one for a government to government agreement for SFY2015, seconded by Member Ashley. Motion carried.

j. Nutrition/Obesity/Physical Activity

Regional Director Begay specified that a government to government agreement with current grantee will be pursued to prevent interruption in program services, in which the Regional Council may provide recommendations for the scope of work.

A motion was made by Member Hardy that the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council approve the Nutrition/Obesity/Physical Activity Strategy for an allotment of \$600,000 with target service numbers of 3,000 children served and 3,000 participating adults for SFY2015, seconded by Member Black. Motion carried.

k. Oral Health

Regional Director Begay specified that the proposed increase in allotment will fund the implementation of a tele-dentistry program in SFY2016.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Boyne that the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council allot \$460,000 for the Oral Health Strategy with target service numbers of 4,000 children receiving oral health screenings, 4,000 fluoride varnishes applied, and 500 participating professionals for SFY2015, seconded by Member Yazzie. Motion carried.

l. Parent Outreach and Awareness

A motion was made by Member Black that the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council approve the Parent Outreach and Awareness Strategy for an allotment of \$90,000, with target service numbers of 1,600 books distributed, 1,600 resources guides distributed, and 1 workshop held in SFY2015, seconded by Vice Chair Boyne. Motion carried, 7:0:1.

m. Recruitment – Stipend/Loan Forgiveness

Member Seanez inquired about the commitment required of the Regional Council for the Recruitment – Stipend and Loan Forgiveness Strategy after fulfilling commitment to recently approved therapists, and asked that the Regional Council be informed when able to defund the strategy.

Regional Director Begay clarified that as the grantee identified two therapist with Window Rock Unified School District, which was approved by the Regional Council, the Regional Council will begin a new two year commitment to the strategy through SFY2016.

A motion was made by Member Yazzie that the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council approve the Recruitment – Stipend and Loan Forgiveness Strategy for an allotment of \$66,420 with target service numbers of 2 therapists receiving loan forgiveness and 2 therapists receiving stipends for SFY2015, seconded by Member Ashley. Motion carried, 6:1:0.

n. Reach Out and Read

Member Seanez asked that evaluation be conducted to identify the impact of the strategy.

Member Yazzie specified that the evaluation include feedback from parents and/or caregivers regarding the usefulness of books.

Per Chair Martin's request for clarification regarding types of evaluations performed by current grantee, Vikki Shirley, Coordinator of Reach Out and Read Arizona, reported that internal evaluations are performed statewide and are not region specific.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Boyne that the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council approve the Reach Out and Read Strategy for an allotment of \$72,698, with target service numbers of 13,000 books distributed and 7 participating practices for SFY2015, seconded by Member Yazzie. Motion carried.

o. Scholarships non-TEACH

Member Black declared conflict with the Scholarship non-TEACH Strategy and recused herself from discussion and action. Member Black is employed with Diné College, a potential grantee of the strategy.

Regional Director Begay reported that in addition to support current grantees, Northland Pioneer College and Coconino Community College, funding will support a potential third grantee, Diné College, in providing scholarships to professionals receiving Associates of Arts in early childhood education through SFY2014 pending Regional Council approval. The Regional Council can review a full year of funding for the potential third grantee in SFY2015.

A motion was made by Member Seanez that the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council allot \$700,000 for the Scholarship non-TEACH Strategy with the target service numbers of 150 professionals receiving scholarships for SFY2015, seconded by Member Ashley. Motion carried.

p. Community Awareness

A motion was made by Member Seanez that the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council approve the Community Awareness Strategy for an allotment of \$30,000 for SFY2015, seconded by Vice Chair Boyne. Motion carried.

q. Community Outreach

A motion was made by Member Hardy that the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council approve the Community Outreach Strategy for an allotment of \$85,000 for SFY2015, seconded by Member Black. Motion carried.

r. Media

A motion was made by Member Black that the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council allot \$65,000 for the Media Strategy for SFY2015, seconded by Member Ashley. Motion carried.

s. Statewide Evaluation

A motion was made by Member Black that the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council approve the Statewide Evaluation Strategy for an allotment of \$225,900 for SFY2015, seconded by Member Ashley. Motion carried.

Review, Discussion, and Possible Action of the Scholarship non-TEACH Grant Agreement with Diné College

Member Black declared conflict with the Scholarship non-TEACH Strategy and recused herself from discussion and action. Member Black is employed with Diné College, a potential grantee of the strategy.

Regional Director Begay indicated that the grant agreement will be for the remainder of SFY2014 in which students enrolled in early childhood education degree programs in Spring Semester 2014 and Summer Session One 2014 will be provided scholarships.

A motion was made by Member Seanez that the Navajo Nation Regional Council to approve the grant recommendation for Diné College to be funded at \$32,780 to provide 20 scholarships in SFY2014, seconded by Member Ashley. Motion carried.

Discussion and Possible Approval of System Building Priority Themes

Regional Director Begay provided a PowerPoint presentation on three System Building themes previously identified: 1) creating a shared vision among early care providers, 2) enrolling children into early care programs, and 3) coordination of families and early care systems. Regional Director Begay summarized the common characteristics identified, Early Care and Coordination. Regional Director provided an example of a system approach.

Member Seanez supported the advancement of a shared vision among early care providers including First Things First; specifically in regards to directing funding based on needs across the region such as support for early care professionals to receive qualifying degrees and necessary trainings.

Member Black expressed interest in creating a resource of early care programs services offered throughout the region for community members.

A motion was made by Member Seanez that the Navajo Nation Regional Council approve a systems approach to coordinate and influence a shared vision among early care providers as our priority System Building Themes, seconded by Member Black. Motion carried.

Community Outreach Report

Community Outreach Coordinator Tsosie provided updates regarding potential changes to benchmarks for First Things First and quarterly goals and measures attained throughout the region. Specifically, the community outreach will focus on increasing awareness as well as recruitment, engagement, and renewal within the region. In addition, Community Outreach Coordinator Tsosie introduced a Google Maps component that acts as a visual tool of outreach provided across the region and across the state.

Regional Council Member Announcements

Member Black expressed gratitude for a presentation made to early childhood education classes by Community Outreach Coordinator Tsosie.

Member Etsitty announced that she has transitioned to a new position of Quality First Coach.

Next Meeting

The next Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council Regular Meeting will be held on December 10, 2013 at 10:00 a.m. at the Navajo Nation Museum, Conference Room #1, Loop Road and Highway 264, Window Rock, Arizona 86515.

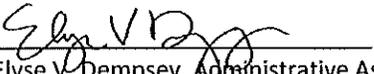
Adjournment

A motion was made by Member Seanez to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Member Black. Motion carried. Chair Martin adjourned the meeting at approximately 12:43 p.m.

Dated this 15th day of November, 2013

ARIZONA EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH BOARD

Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council


Elyse V. Dempsey, Administrative Assistant II


Grace M. Boyne, Vice Chair