

**Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board
Family Support and Literacy Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
April 18, 2013**

The Regular Meeting of the First Things First – Arizona Early Childhood Development & Health Board, Family Support and Literacy Advisory Committee was held on Thursday, April 18, 2013 at the First Things First Board Room, 4000 North Central Avenue, Suite 800, Phoenix, Arizona 85012.

Members Present: Ally Baehr, Irene Burnton, Pauline Vaughn designee for Danielle Gagnier, Sherie Gifford, Chris Linn, Patty Merk, Christine Niven, Beth Rosenberg, Dr. Noreen Sakiestewa, Irma Marquez, Terri Clark, Colleen Day Mach, Marilee Dal Pra
Members Participating by Phone: Suzanne Schunk, Christine Scarpati
Guests: Amanda Lisitto, Erin Raiden
FTF Staff: Dr. Aaliyah Samuel, Marla Dedrick, Stephanie Willis, Cynthia Chavarria

Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions:

Co-Chair Day Mach welcomed the Members and called the meeting to order at approximately 9:03 a.m. and introductions were made.

Consent Agenda:

Co-Chair Day Mach called for a review of the consent agenda items which included meeting minutes from February 17, 2012 and January 17, 2013. Motion was made to accept the minutes and Member Rosenberg seconded. Motion approved.

Statewide Literacy Update:

Member Clark gave an update on the model for the early literacy continuum as it relates to ARS15-701 and distributed a handout for review. The Statewide Literacy Team is creating a tool for providers to use and will be presenting their model at the National Center for Family Literacy Conference, Smart Start Conference and at the Early Success Alliance – State Policy Conference this year. The Team has also developed partnerships with the Summer Reading Collaborative and on November 1st we will have a Family Literacy Day. Dr. Samuel acknowledged the work Member Clark has done to bring Family Literacy to the forefront and to bring partners together. Infusing literacy using a system approach is really what the Statewide Literacy Team is trying to do and the timing of our work is really in alignment with what the Federal Government is doing.

Review of Family Support and Literacy Framework Recommendations:

Co-Chair Day Mach called for a review of the Family Support and Literacy Framework Recommendations. Dr. Samuel walked the group through the steps it took get to this document. The Framework was presented to the Advisory Committee for the first time in January. These were initial thoughts and ideas on how to move family support and literacy forward in the State. The inclusion of Literacy should not just be one solitary piece of the system but needs to be integrated in all we do. The First Things First (FTF) Family Support and Literacy Implementation Team helped plan out what direction to take our strategies in. Dr. Samuel is asking for the Advisory Committee to review the Framework and to be sure we captured all ideas which should be included. We are working with 13 FTF strategies, and the first suggestion was to align our standards of practice and clearly articulate the literacy component. We also discussed creating a second standard for early literacy so it's not just a caption/component of larger document and to be a more in-depth guide of what's expected in early literacy. Once the early learning tool from the Arizona Department of Education is finalized it will also be incorporated with what's happening across the state. First Things First wants to make sure we're in alignment with other systems already in place throughout the state and that will be intentional so that fidelity is there across the state. Dr. Samuel called for recommendations on whether the early literacy piece should be imbedded or if it should be its own piece? Member Burnton asked for further clarification and Dr. Samuel responded that each FTF standard of practice (SOP) has a component of early literacy imbedded but we've found it's not fully comprehensive on what it means to have an early literacy practice. First Things First is looking to revise the SOPs for clarity and to decide if we "amp up" what's in each individual SOP or if we develop an independent early literacy SOP and attach it to FTF toolkit. Member Clark shared that from past work with partners, there's not always a capacity to carry an individual SOP for early literacy but thinks it's great if we can provide the clarity on how to infuse the practice. Members feel that either option would be OK but they would prefer to see a separate SOP for more in-depth information. Co-Chair Day Mach further asked if we do decide on an individual SOP, would it note what early literacy means for each of the other

strategies? Dr. Samuel responded that the Family Support Implementation Team's consensus is that more detailed information would be worked into all the literacy strategies but didn't decide if should be established as its own SOP or to be more detailed as a component of all the SOPs. Co-Chair Day Mach questioned what the SOP for resource centers would look like, how would it be built up? Dr. Samuel replied that it would not be an optional SOP, it would be a mandatory component for each application. Members like both the ideas of infusing early literacy and the resource documents into each SOP as well as having separate SOPs. Dr. Samuel appreciates the ideas from the Advisory Committee and any changes could have to wait until fiscal year 15 or 16 to be made. Members like the idea of inclusion either way but not necessarily of waiting until the next cycle. We will possibly add discussion of a timeframe for including as an agenda item for the next meeting. Members believe that as the pieces come together and get clarified, many of the Family Resources Centers could use the time until next year's release to become more familiar with the early literacy plan. Members Gifford and Burnton have heard feedback that a lot of providers say they only serve the 0-3 population and they aren't getting the connections on early literacy they need and thus aren't providing early literacy. Dr. Samuel is willing to offer more information to providers so they have an understanding of what to do with early literacy. We may have to increase professional development on early literacy and Policy makers need to understand that literacy begins as early as ages 0-3.

Dr. Samuel shared Dr. Coffman's Framework and informed the Advisory Committee that it is being used throughout First Things First and she will send it out to the Advisory Committee Members by e-mail. The BUILD, Early Grade Success and Read On AZ entities are collaborating members throughout the state and they've been asked to increase communication with their partners regarding what's happening with this Advisory Committees' work. The BUILD Early Grade Success is in the process of creating a policy brief with specific recommendations on what their top priorities are. This includes mandating all-day kindergarten in Arizona and having mandated pre-school as an early education opportunity. The policy brief is still in draft form but when completed, will be shared with the Advisory Committee. Overall, not enough information on the work of this collaboration is being provided to providers and we need to broaden our role in outreach on the common core standards and the Read on AZ reading initiatives. More information needs to funnel down to early literacy groups. Member Clark is working on family toolkits, particularly for the Move On When Reading Initiative. She hopes we're not creating multiple toolkits but would like to create one that everyone can use and would like it to be a digital file that can also be distributed in multiple forms. Member Rosenberg asked that everyone consider including foster parents, grandparents and to all age groups when vetting this document to the community.

Dr. Samuel announced that an Early Grade Success Policy Brief was being drafted by BUILD. A copy will be sent to the Advisory Committee. Dr. Samuel also announced that at the Alliance for Early Success Conference in D.C., which she attended, family engagement was discussed as being the foundation for early literacy.

Stephanie Willis presented an update on the work of the Quality Assurance (QA) Team. They are in the early stages of Quality Assurance and developing three assessment tools. The Team is working on scheduling provider site visits with the first being scheduled for this week. Ms. Willis will share the findings from the site visit with First Things First staff in a report. The goal is to use the information to help Grantees learn from each other. The QA Team is analyzing findings from the Family Support Regional Studies as well and hopes to have this work completed this year. We will then need to determine how to use this data with other data sources to better understand the impact of the Family Support Strategies. The next several site visits will be held in the following areas; South Pima, Santa Cruz, North Pima, Central Pima and South Phoenix. These areas were selected because they were the only Regions who determined Family Support as one of their priority goal areas.

Members discussed that there are under-utilized Family Support & Literacy Strategies and that children with special needs is one strategy that's really lacking. Dr. Samuel stated that Regional Directors are looking at their Regions to see how we can better support Families with children with special needs. We need to ensure that those making funding decisions have the information they need. Member Merk stated there's been a shift in funding for example, with eligibility changes through the Arizona Department of Health Services that it looks as if we're supplanting funds.

Dr. Samuel announced that at this point Home Visitation in Arizona is aligned with other States and we have one of the highest dedicated funding pools for home visitation and that members from the PEW Foundation are interested in coming to Arizona to meet with key stakeholders so talk about our models. Member Linn asked if there is talk of increasing the number and/or frequency of home visitations being done? Member Burnton replied that it would depend on a few factors like the model being used, the family and program. This is one of the challenges with home visitation, they can be so unique. Marla Dedrick shared that the Standard of Practice states that home visitations are done once a month. Member Burnton felt that was not enough and Member Linn heard it's supposed to be once every two months. Dr. Samuel will research and clarify.

Members asked statistics showing that we're only serving 2% of families with home visitation is true? Member Burnton responded that although Arizona is blessed to have \$30 million invested in home visiting, we do not yet have the infrastructure to distribute the funding out en mass. Because participation in home visiting is voluntary we need to continue looking at and figuring out how to get

more funds out there to make home visiting efforts effective. Compared to MIECHV Arizona is doing better in numbers compared to California and as progress is made we're working with MIECHV on how to further push out. At our May meeting, we're going to look at how to work better with families.

Through our work we're creating strong linkages, initiating and engaging Child Protective Services (CPS) and Juvenile Court Systems. Dr. Samuel announced that there will be a meeting on the 23rd to work through policy on how to work with high risk families and how to support families that are on the "edge" so they don't enter system at all or when they exit they are plugged in with supports so they have a foundation/safety net of services so they don't go back to system again. The Family Support Implementation Team (FSIT) has also discussed working with this community and they have some anxiety and concern with capacity. First Things First is looking at our CPS policy so we're not duplicating services. Dr. Samuel will have update at the June Advisory Council meeting. Member Merk recommended Jonathon Gonzales be included on this team because the South Phoenix Regional Partnership Council (RPC) has made this a high priority strategy and where we landed in including this is in working it into the court teams strategy. We couldn't overcome some safety issues but we're in discussions with the courts and if they have a family resource center available, we'll provide information and resources on how to properly staff the centers. There is the possibility of having a resource center at the Durango Court (First Things First is not funding it at this point) and other partners have entered in the picture and we've been geared in different ways to maximize efforts. Dr. Samuel thanked Member Merk for the suggestion and added that we are looking at making this more broad based and not just in working with the RPCs. Child Protective Services is going through many changes and through a gathering of minds we're making sure we're all in alignment. We won't be working directly with the community receiving services, rather we're working with those on the sidelines.

Member Rosenberg recommended we take out the word "or" and make it read "and" under the line which reads "Initiate and engage Child Protective Services (CPS) and the juvenile court system." She also asked for clarification on what the reference to a CPS/FTF CPS policy means. Dr. Samuel clarified that First Things First has a CPS policy included in the home visiting strategy but not in the other strategies. We need overall clarity on what our policy is and that we align with the Child Protective Services policy.

Dr. Samuel announced that First Things First is working on system building training for all our strategies. We are working on integrating professional development across all strategies. Through our partnership with MIECHV, we're working on establishing a centralized web based database for statewide use. MIECHV has the funding to do this and they are looking to get this setup and made available ASAP.

In regards to the Parent Education Community Based Training (PE-CBT), we are categorizing the curricula and evidence based programs. We're compiling a list of all current curricula being used and how they align with the standards of practice (SOP). At this point, Grantees don't have a successful completion rate. Member Baehr noted that in the framework the level of training intensity must match the families' needs and maybe that's why not all training sessions are attended if the families' needs are met before the full training session. Member Merk offered that depending on where families are in their status as well as where they live, it could prevent families from attending all classes. The frequency of attending trainings may need to be stretched out so that families can come at any time. Maybe consider redefining the PE-CBT SOP. We're also working on additional outreach for enrollment of children and families in community care and family support for children with special needs. We're increasing awareness of the strategy and how families connect with health services. As we develop the infrastructure we'll discuss integration of the statewide database and aligning the SOPs for home visitation in the State so we provide consistent service delivery. Maybe we should require all home visiting programs to have full affiliation status with National Offices and to participate in professional development opportunities. Maybe we can utilize MIECHV funding for home visitor coordinators' professional development and work in continued partnership with the Arizona Department of Economic Security and the Arizona Department of Education. Members suggested we identify the Regional Partnership Councils that have carry-forward funds to determine how to help with family support and literacy programs. We should also include research and evaluation studies to determine the impact on all strategies.

Future Work and Next Steps:

Dr. Samuel will incorporate the Members' suggested changes on the framework and she'll move forward with the recommendations for the final document. The Family Support Implementation Team will vet once more and will return to the Advisory Committee for final approval prior to presenting to the First Things First Board at the June 2014 meeting. Member Clark motioned to approve moving forward with the final review by the Advisory Committee, seconded by Member Baehr. All voted yea, none opposed. Motion carried.

Adjournment

Co-Chair adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:03 a.m.