



FIRST THINGS FIRST
Ready for School. Set for Life.

**Policy and Program Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 4, 2012**

Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the First Things First – Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board Program Committee was held on Thursday, October 4, 2012 at the First Things First Board Room, 4000 North Central Avenue, Suite 800, Phoenix, Arizona 85012.

Members Present:	Dr. Pam Powell, Bill Berk, Amy Corriveau, Julianne Hartzell, Toni Harvier, Eva Lester (Designee for Alan Taylor), Laurie Smith, Kim Van Pelt, Brad Willis
Members Absent:	Gayle Burns, Dr. Randal Christensen, Colleen Day-Mach, Mary Ellen Cunningham, Naomi Karp, Kenton Laffoon, Dr. Eva Marie Shivers
FTF Staff:	Karen Woodhouse, Dr. Amy Kemp, Sandy Foreman, Ann Kaskel, Mona Qafisheh, Dr. Karen Peifer, Kristin Richardson, Rhian Evans Allvin, Chief Executive Officer

Chair Powell called the meeting to order at approximately 10:12 a.m.

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

Chair Powell called for a review and possible approval of the meeting minutes from July 19, 2012. Member Smith noted that her name was not on the list of attendees but she was present. Member Hartzell moved to approve the meeting minutes with this correction, Member Smith seconded. No discussion, all in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Update on Policy and Program Advisory Committees and Sub-Committees

No Advisory Sub-Committee Reports were shared at this meeting as the Sub-Committees have not met for a few months. The Committee reviewed the 2012-2013 meeting dates and agenda items listing.

Update on State Level Benchmarks and Process to Determine Regional Benchmarks for School Readiness Indicators

Chair Powell called on Karen Woodhouse to lead the presentation and discussion of approved state level benchmarks and review of the plan of action and timeline for Regional benchmark recommendations and approval.

Karen gave a brief recap of the progress made on the School Readiness Indicators and Benchmarks. The First Things First Board (Board) met on October 1st and 2nd, 2012 and was presented with the recommendations for each Indicator and Benchmark except for Indicators number one and five. These two Indicators will not have enough data available to move forward on until a future date. The Board approved eight of the recommendations as presented.

Indicator #1: There is no current data available to move this forward. A data source will be confirmed in the future through a partnership between First Things First, the Arizona Department of Education, the State Board of Education, the Governor’s Office and the Piper Trust Foundation. This partnership is looking to develop an instrument which will measure school readiness of all Arizona children entering kindergarten. The tool is not expected to be available until sometime in 2015 and is referred to as the kindergarten developmental inventory tool.

Indicators #2, #3 and #4 use Quality First data to establish the baselines. The Sub-Committee did recommend percentages they wanted to see above the baseline but this data is in its initial stages of being collected and will be available in July of 2013, when a substantial baseline can then be identified for these Indicators.

Indicator #5: Have not yet identified the best data source to use for this benchmark. Through a partnership between St. Luke’s Health Initiatives and First Things First, an opportunity assessment on the early intervention system is being conducted. The partners have selected Dr. Charlie Bruner out of the National Child and Family Policy Center based in Iowa to begin the assessment. Dr. Bruner has met with his core group of planners and will conduct an opportunity analysis on all facets and components of the

system we have in Arizona for intervening early for young children. This is not an assessment on the Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP) but about all of the partners which are engaged in early intervention including community based providers and state agencies. He'll be looking at Federal, State and local funding streams and looking at the way data is collected, where and how the data is stored, used and accessed. When the assessment is completed next summer, First Things First will reconvene the sub-committee to look at the data establishing a benchmark and to also revisit how the language of this indicator is stated to be sure its intent of how many kids are being identified and receiving early intervention prior to kindergarten is met. Member Van Pelt who is partner in this effort shared that the initial planning committee recently met and another group of people that would be key informants is being identified to establish an Advisory Committee. Letters have been sent to the heads of State agencies informing them of the project and encouraging them to communicate if they have any concerns or questions about the project and asking them help ensure Dr. Bruner gets appropriate feedback throughout the process. Member Van Pelt emphasized that the partnership is very intentional that everyone is engaged in this project and knows it is a look at the overall system for intervening early for young children, not just those enrolled in AZEIP.

Indicator #6: The sub-committee met and voted on the benchmark and changed the language to include the "number and **percentage** of children entering kindergarten exiting preschool special education to regular education". For this Indicator, a revised data pull by the Arizona Department of Education did show a significant difference from what was presented to the Program Committee in July. At that time the baseline and trend line were closer to the 14/15% level vs. where it is now up in the 20% level. The sub-committee identified a benchmark of 30% of children entering kindergarten exiting preschool special education to regular education. This may not seem like a significant increase for the eight years but the sub-committee considered the fact that data may fluctuate during these years. Member Corriveau shared that between 2008-2011 there was a change in the categories of special education and the category of developmental delay was added so children are able to carry their identification and services in a more fluid continuum through kindergarten and don't have to exit pre-school and be re-evaluated upon entering kindergarten. Member Willis identified that the first sub-bullet under Trend line data should be corrected from 2010-2011 to 2007/2008.

Indicators #7, #8 and #9: The First Things First Board approved these Indicators and Benchmarks as recommended.

Indicator #10: After the Program Committee meeting in July 2012, new data was received for this Indicator and now includes results from the Family and Community Survey. This is a weighted analysis of survey data that was first conducted in 2008 and again in the Spring of 2012 and will be repeated every two years for a total of four more reports by 2020. First Things First Research and Evaluation staff reviewed the survey data and determined the baseline figure of 63% of families being confident and competent about their ability to support their child's safety, health and well-being. With this information the sub-committee has determined that we want to see a 10% movement for an increase to 73% benchmark by 2020.

Special considerations were mentioned regarding timelines when working with Tribes and using tribal data. Member Hartzell shared concern of Regional Councils not being able to move forward because of lack of data from the Tribes. CEO Allvin agrees that it can be a sensitive area and First Things First will have to navigate Council by Council and if there's a sense that there will be a significant amount of work to get to a point where a Tribe is comfortable sharing data or may never feel comfortable sharing the data that there be some type of hybrid approach where we start forward on the benchmarks and approve them without the data and then integrate data as it's received. FTF will have to come up with some creative ways to not slow the whole process down and at the same time honor the time it takes to build the relationships to get the data from the Tribes. First Things First is working on hiring in an additional staff person or consultant resource that can provide more support in working with Tribes on data issues. Not just related to benchmarks but to building relationships and being a liaison for all research, evaluation studies and performance data.

Chair Powell reflected that in looking at desired progress by 2020, it is necessary to realize a new cohort of babies is birthed and a new cohort of parents is formed each year providing a new population that is included in the indicators and benchmarks every year. Member Berk agreed and stated that when Regional Partnership Councils meet they have the same conversations. Just because a plan like professional development is discussed and a plan created, doesn't mean Councils are done with professional development. He stated it is an issue for people who aren't involved in the day to day operations of the system who don't see the constant change happening.

Systems Approach Framework and Development of FY 2013 Work Plan

Karen Woodhouse provided information on significant work in Arizona has been funded in the last year through three foundations, the Piper Trust, Helios Foundation and the Steele Foundation, which has brought the National BUILD Initiative to Arizona. BUILD is about ten years old and has been working nationally in about eight to nine states working with a core group of leaders to identify

what pieces of the early childhood system need to move or change or develop, who they want to influence and what the impact is they want to see. BUILD has engaged with all the partners in the early childhood system. It is not duplicative of work done by First Things First or any state agency, and is collaborative and meant to move forward in ways other agencies or partners cannot. The Steering Committee consists of many people in the business community, because it's a group of people who have not traditionally been as engaged and also includes people who have been steadfast at the table and are represented. BUILD focuses on the entire early childhood spectrum of birth to age eight or grade three. BUILD has Committees on 1) Communication, 2) Health, 3) Reading, 4) Quality Early Learning and 5) the Professional Development Workgroup which just transitioned from First Things First to be under the BUILD umbrella and First Things First will continue to lead, convene and staff the Professional Development Workgroup.

Karen Woodhouse then introduced the draft First Things First Strategic Direction Systems Approach tool. This tool is intended to help shift conversations from indicators and benchmarks to move forward in a programmatic approach. The tool was developed from the direction of the Early Childhood Task Force, which identified nine priority roles for First Things First, which resulted in 10 School Readiness Indicators used to measure progress for these roles. This tool will serve as a frame on how we advance our strategic direction to change outcomes for kids. This framework is adapted from work by Julia Coffman and is being used by BUILD Arizona and First Things First.

Program Committee Members reviewed the document and shared that they felt it was a great start and is organized as a concise framework. The format, which is more of a roadmap, will act as a guiding tool and can be adapted by other committees and Regional Partnership Councils for planning work. The Program Committee suggested an additional column to identify obstacles/barriers.

Next Steps and FY13 Meeting Dates

Chair Powell announced the upcoming meetings of the Program Committee. Members were asked to hold these dates on their calendars:

- December 6, 2012, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Will focus on financial aspects of FTF, review the National Panel Evaluation Plan and discussion on Private/Public Partnerships.
- March 7, 2013, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Chair Powell adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.