



FIRST THINGS FIRST

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

Welcome and Roll Call of Regional Council

A Regular Meeting of the FTF Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council was held on January 13, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. The meeting was located at the Navajo Nation Museum, Conference Room #2, Loop Road and Highway 264, Window Rock, Arizona 86515.

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Boyne at approximately 10:01 a.m. followed by roll call of the Regional Council.

Members Present: Benjamin Barney, Victoria Begay, Grace Boyne, and Valonia Hardy attended in person; Amelia Black, Rhonda Etsitty, and Harry Martin attended telephonically

Members Absent: Paula Seanez and Dawn Yazzie

FTF Staff Present: Melissa Begay, Elyse Dempsey, Candida Hunter, Jeanne Martin, Ina Perez, Maria Soto, Christine Stein and Virginia Turner

Call to the Public

There were no calls to public at this time.

Discussion and Possible Approval of November 5, 2014 Special Meeting Minutes and of December 9, 2014 Regular Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Member Barney that the Regional Council approve the corrected November 5, 2014 Special Meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Member Begay. Motion carried.

Member Barney requested for correction of a typing error found on page two of the December 9, 2014 Regular Meeting minutes, paragraph 9.

A motion was made by Member Hardy that the Regional Council approve the December 9, 2014 Regular Meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Member Begay. Motion carried.

Presentation on Child Care Health Consultation

Regional Director Begay indicated that due to the weather, Ms. Deborah Huish would be addressing the Regional Council via telephone with intent to attend the February 2015 Regular Meeting of the Regional Council in person.

Deborah Huish, Child Care Health Consultant, reported that there are seven Quality First child care centers on Navajo Nation Arizona; of which two centers are within Tier One of the Quality First Tiered Service Model, three centers are in Tier Two, and two centers are in Tier Three. Child care centers are admitted into a tier based on the needs of centers, and health and safety assessments completed by Child Care Health Consultants. Ms. Huish noted that the intensity of assistance varies for each tier with Tier One being the least intensive, and further reported that trainings for staff and children are available based on need or request. Ms. Huish concluded with indication that coordination continues with all Quality First Center coaches and staff to set goals for each respective center.

Member Barney inquired about qualifications of Child Care Health Consultants to complete safety assessments within child care centers.

Ms. Huish stated that the child care health consultants are nurses who provide assessments for child care centers, and work with center directors and staff to address health and safety concerns. Ms. Huish completes assessments based on a health and safety checklist provided by the State of Arizona.

Vice Chair Boyne further noted that for Navajo Nation based child care centers receive regular inspection for safety issues by the Office of Environmental Health, child care center staff, and a construction inspectors for play areas.

Member Etsitty also commented that an assessment tool is used by Ms. Huish to evaluate early learning centers, which followed by discussion with program directors as needed to create individualized plans for program enhancement.

Member Hardy inquired about the areas served across Navajo Nation, and if a partnership exists with Navajo Head Start (NHS). Member Hardy expressed concern regarding multiple requests from NHS to provide a service similar to Quality First, and inquired of the possibility to expand services to NHS. Ms. Huish indicated that partnerships exist with early child care programs enrolled in Quality First. Regional Director Begay further reported that NHS is not currently participating in Quality First, but recent discussion could lead to a future participation of NHS.

Update and Discussion on the Native Language Preservation Strategy Assessment

Regional Director Begay reported to the Regional Council that a scope of work has been completed for the Native Language Preservation Assessment, where current Navajo language curriculum used by early learning programs will be identified and interviews of 20 stakeholders will be conducted. In addition, consistent with the FTF tribal data policy, Regional Director Begay noted that the scope of work has been presented to Ms. Beverly Becenti-Pigman, Chair of the Navajo Nation Human Research Review Board (NNHRRB), for review and consideration; and will be provided to the NNHRRB prior to finalizing the assessment. Regional Director Begay also asked the Regional Council to consider the scope of work to expand to include other components for assessment to assist with strategic direction planning.

Furthermore, Christine Stein, FTF Director of Research and Evaluation, indicated that the scope of work will ensure efforts to comprehend and evaluate the current curricula for Navajo language including origin of development, content and current use by early learning programs; followed by a comparison of all curricula. Ms. Stein stated that field methods and questions will be created for interviews of key stakeholders; and that the Regional Council can elect to include additional assessments in the scope of work such as classroom observations or a survey that provides more insight on the effectiveness of current curricula. Information collected will be synthesized and provided to the Regional Council for review and discussion. Ms. Stein reported that review and approval of the scope of work by the NNHRRB will extend the timeline to begin the Native Language Preservation Assessment as approvals from various tribal offices and programs must be submitted with an application and letter of intent by April 2015 with review by June 2015. If approved by the NNHRRB, a permit would be issued within 30 days and allow a request for proposals to seek a vendor to be released in August 2015, and implementation of the actual assessment by November 2015.

Member Barney expressed interest in reviewing a list of current curricula, and commented on the diminishing effectiveness of Navajo language programs. Member Barney also asked that FTF staff consider how the Navajo language has been historically preserved in the home and to examine the success of other tribes with language preservation.

Chair Martin joined the meeting via telephone at 10:40 a.m.

Chair Martin inquired about obtaining necessary permissions and approval for completion of the regional Needs and Assets Report through a similar course of action. Regional Director Begay responded that discussion regarding the Needs and Assets Report will be address in the next agenda item; and asked the Regional Council to review interview questions in Attachment 4a and provide feedback.

Update and Discussion on the 2014 and 2016 Needs and Assets Report

Regional Director Begay provided an update for the regional Needs and Assets Reports indicating that the 2014 report, which was granted an extension for completion by the FTF State Board until June 2015, recently received approval by the Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President for use of public tribal data. Regional Director Begay reported that Navajo Nation programs have since been contacted to obtain data, and continue to provide necessary data to complete the 2014 report by June 2015. Regarding the 2016 report, Regional Director Begay informed the Regional Council of recent discussion by FTF to address the challenges for tribal regional councils to obtain tribal approvals to complete Needs and Assets Reports. In response, FTF will be releasing short reports for the 2016 Needs and Assets reports for all FTF 28 regions to be completed by one vendor by December 2015; short reports will be an update of the 2014 report consisting of data, and will not be a full report as previously seen.

Ms. Stein further reported that the condensed 2016 Needs and Assets Reports will be followed by a full report for the 2018 Needs and Assets Report, which will be released earlier in 2017 to allow regional councils to use report for FY2019-2021 strategic planning.

Candida Hunter, Senior Director of Tribal Affairs, asked that the Regional Council begin initial discussion to identify data sources and data that would be helpful with the FY2019-2021 strategic planning.

Presentation and Review of the DRAFT SFY2016 Funding Plan to be presented to the State Board on January 20, 2015

Regional Director Begay presented highlights of the final draft of the SFY2016 Funding Plan to the Regional Council including the review and reprioritization of the regional needs by the Regional Council to advance the early childhood system; the funding of two new approaches to address system gaps - Mental Health Consultation strategy and the Professional Development for Early Care and Education Professionals strategy; and the changes in funding for Early Learning and Family Support respectively. Regional Director Begay noted that Mr. Martin will be presenting the SFY2016 to the FTF State Board on January 20, 2015. In addition, the Regional Council was reminded of discussion in August 2014 resulting in an unfunded approach to continue the advancement of the early childhood system through collaboration with early learning programs in the region. Regional Director Begay reported that FTF Navajo Nation convened the first Early Childhood Forum in August 2014 to begin initial discussions with regional stakeholders. The intent of the forum is to eventually form an Early Childhood Coalition that engages to enhance capacity to support young children and their families. The next forum will take place on February 18th.

Member Barney inquired about participation by regional higher education institutions with early learning programs. Regional Director Begay responded that higher education institutions can be included in future forum discussions.

Presentation and Review of Regional Governance Document – First Read

Regional Director Begay asked that the Regional Council review the three attachments – the original governance document, draft document, and final draft document, and suspend discussion until the February 2015 Regular Meeting to give the opportunity for more Regional Council members to attend and discuss in person.

Presentation and Review of Regional Contracts Requiring Renewal for SFY16-18

Regional Director Begay informed the Regional Council of regional contracts that will be requiring discussion and action in May 2015. New regional contract considerations would include two new strategies - Professional Development for Early Care and Educational Professionals, and Parenting Outreach and Awareness to be released through Requests for Grant Agreement (RFGA); two Government to Government Grant Agreements for Oral Health and Expansion: increased Slots and/or Capital Expense; two tribal Grant Agreements for Home Visitation, which has an increase allotment to fund the BIE Baby FACE program; and the Family, Friends and Neighbors strategy; of which all will be presented to the Regional Council in May 2015 for implementation beginning July 1, 2015 with the exception of the Family, Friends and Neighbors strategy contract. In addition, four renewal contracts for Nutrition/Obesity/Physical Activity, Food Security, Home Visitation, and Scholarship non-TEACH will be released in March, and presented to the Regional Council in May 2015 for continued funding and implementation by July 1, 2015. Last, statewide RFGAs include the College Scholarships for Early Childhood Professionals, which was released in December 2014 and will close on February 27th, 2015; and the Mental Health Consultation, which will be a new strategy for the region. Regional Director Begay asked that all Regional Council plan to attend the May 2015 to ensure quorum is maintained in the event of member conflicts.

Regional Director's Report

a. SFY 2015 Quarter One Data and Financial Reports

Regional Director Begay presented the SFY 2015 Quarter One data and financial reports to the Regional Council stating that all grantees are on track to meet target service units by June 2016. In addition, Regional Director Begay remarked that follow up will be made with the Home Visitation grantee, Chicanos Por La Causa, Inc. Parenting Arizona to ensure that reported data for number of families served and caseload of home visitors is accurate; that the Parent Kits distribution of Quarter Two reporting is anticipated to be lower in consideration of the discontinued participation of the Chinle Comprehensive Health Care facility; Reach Out and Read exceeded the number of participating practices through participation of satellite health care centers in the region. Regional Director Begay also provided an overview of the Navajo Nation detailed financial report with attention on expenditures under Food Security, Reach Out and Read, and Quality First Coaching and Incentives strategies, and noted that further explanation would be provided to the Regional Council by e-mail correspondence.

b. Community Outreach Coordinator Position

Regional Director Begay reported the Community Outreach Coordinator position was advertised in December 2014 and has since received 32 applications. Interviews will be scheduled for the end of January 2015 with intent to hire a coordinator by February.

c. **Early Childhood Workshop**

Regional Director Begay reported that a workshop committee convened in September 2014 to begin planning for the 2015 Parent and Caregiver Early Childhood Workshop – K'é: Growing Up Great. The workshop is schedule to take place on April 15, 2015 at Moenkopi Legacy Inn, Tuba City, Arizona; and will consist of a keynote speaker, Dr. Mark Sorensen, and three workshop sessions provided by Member Black, Paula Stefani and Sondra Soter, and Ursula Knoki-Wilson respectively. In addition, the regional office has contracted with a vendor, Prevent Child Abuse Arizona (PCAAz) from Prescott, who will be handling logistics including venue arrangement s, registration, on-site management, and lunch for the workshop.

Member Barney asked how lunch would be provided. Regional Director Begay explained that lunch would be provided by Moenkopi, and that PCAAz would be capable of purchasing lunch as an external contracted vendor.

Member Hardy asked if the April 2015 Regular Meeting of the Regional Council would still take place in Window Rock given the date of the workshop. Regional Director Begay confirmed the April 2015 Regular Meeting to be in Window Rock.

Future Agenda Items and Announcements

Vice Chair Boyne announced the next Regular Meeting is scheduled for February 10, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. in Window Rock, Arizona.

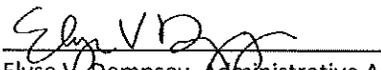
Adjournment

A motion was made by Member Hardy to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Member Begay. Motion carried. Vice Chair Boyne adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:35 a.m.

Dated this 22th day of January, 2015

ARIZONA EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH BOARD

Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council


Elyse V. Dempsey, Administrative Assistant II

Grace Boyne, Vice Chair