



**Pueblo Early
Childhood Council**

MEETING MINUTES OCTOBER 28, 2024 HYBRID VIA WEBEX

Mission Statement

Pueblo Early Childhood Council is a diverse, active network that collaborates and advocates to enrich and strengthen the lives of children, families, and the community.

Attendance:

Teresa Mathews-PECC/Children First
Sarah Martinez-CDPHE
Arlene Kennedy-SSCCC
Alexander Winters-PECC/Children First
Matt Guy-Common Thread Group
Lycynthia Ascensio-OJC/EHS
Josette Rusk-SSCCC
Maria Chavez-Contreras-Catholic Charities
Frankie Boone-DHS/CCCAP
Angie Shehorn-PECC/Children First
Cindy Keasling-D60
Joe Bellavia-PECC/Children First
Courtney Holt-Rogers-Baca/Prowers ECC
John Richardson-LCA
Gerald Gallegos-Health Solutions
Christina Hopewell-CDPHE
John Richardson-LCA

Gina Ferguson-CFC
Darla Hall-PECC/Children First
Katrina Appel-Colorado Blue Sky
Gina Wilburn-DHC/CCCAP
Dwanette Martinez-D70/Migrant ECE
Mari Palma-ECEMS
Paula Arellano-PECC/Children First
Hunter Johnson-PECC/Children First
Angela Velazquez-OJC/EHS
Annie Carlson-CDPHE
Rebecca Bellavia-PECC/Children First
Berlinda Perdo-OJC
Brenda Rodriguez-ESCCC
Dana Richardson-LCA
Alyssa Hopkins-OJC
Rita Samora-ECEMS
Vanessa Mateo-OJC

I. Introduction: Meeting called to order by Angie at 11:03 am.

II. Additions to the Agenda: N/A

III. Approval of Minutes: September 2024-approved.

**IV. Agency Highlight-Communities That Care
CDPHE-Sarah Martinez**

Sarah stated she and Annie will discuss what they are working on in Communities That Care (CTC) that focuses on preventing youth substance abuse. She stated one of their strategies aligns with the Early Childhood Council work. She reported CTC has a coalition upwards of forty-seven people representing several different agencies on youth substance use, schools and early childhood experts. Sarah stated they have sixteen youth advisors consisting of middle school, high school and college students they hired through the grant. Sarah detailed their work at CTC through a PowerPoint explaining engaging community stakeholders and the youth-friendly spaces and programs involving policy, education, and built environment. Angie will send out the PowerPoint for reference. A discussion ensued.

Contacts: Sarah Martinez, MS Sarah.martinez@pueblocounty.us
Annie Carlson, BS carlsona@pueblocounty.us

V. New Business:

A. SECC Update

Matt Guy-Children First

Matt@commonthread.org

Matt stated the will be sending out through the Council will be the third-year suspension survey. He emphasized the survey monkey has been shortened to collect data from the community. He mentioned there will be an incentive for licensed providers to fill out the survey. Matt stated they are collecting parents' stories with children in kindergarten and below. He reported they have met with one of the two districts in Pueblo County. Matt stated the third focus is parents' experiences with the medical community especially with children who have special needs. He mentioned the concern that the medical community is not willing to diagnose a child because they don't feel like they have anyone to refer to after diagnosis. He stated there is a possibility of broader conversations with parents about their experiences regarding programs telling parents to take their children home early. Matt mentioned they are working on continuing to work on a resource list for extracurricular and enrichment programs for children outside of the centers and homes. He encouraged everyone to share any activities they may know of with the council. Christina Hopewell asked that programs with families with children who have healthcare needs beyond our neurotypical children to refer them to the HCP program at the Health Department. She stated they can help with free care coordination with children ages birth to twenty-one years of age. She provided the link for the referral form. https://county.pueblo.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/PF_HCP_Referral-Form-Fillable-PDPHE%204.11.18_1.pdf She also mentioned there are pediatric specialty clinics that are open to Pueblo County and outlying communities in conjunction with the Children's Hospital. She stated there five specialties (cardiology, neurology, genetics, physical medicine, rehabilitation and orthopedics). Christina reported they served 459 families and 53 specialty clinics last year. She mentioned children already interfaced with Children's Hospital can reach out so they can swap to public clinics if transportation is a barrier.

B. Sub-Committees

Angie Shehorn-Children First

Angie stated the council would like to reinstate subcommittees after the first of the year. She is reaching out to co-chairs of those sub-committees that were co-chairs before COVID to let the council know if they are still interested in participating again or if the council needs to find new co-chairs. She stated there were the Family Engagement, Early Childhood Care and Learning, Health and Wellness, and sub-groups.

C. UPK Update

Angie Shehorn-Children First

Angie stated the following:

- Current programs filling out their profiles for the 2025 school year
- Once approved they will be good to go for the first round of matching-continuity of care (priority of placement-child currently attending program, employed family member) deadline November 8, 2024
- December 17, 2024, families can browse providers, preregistration for families requesting continuity of care
- Families matched and accepting the matches February 3-10, 2024

- February 10, 2024, first family to provider matching round begins
- Second matching starts in March
- Direct placement
- Earlier enrollment so providers and families are matched long before school year starts
- Families must register at district level also

D. ECLC

Angie Shehorn-Children First

Angie stated they held their meeting and discussed early childhood integrated data system or ESIS. She explained there are different data systems at the State and want to make it very cohesive with a one stop data location. The Commissioners are talking about the possibility of creating unique identifiers to assure data in system are unduplicated. She stated the name, date of birth, and address are the three pieces of data they will use to identify a child. Angie stated the Commissioners will investigate bids. She stated there are close to a dozen commissioners across the state as well as required individuals such as the Colorado Department of Early Childhood-CDEC, Colorado Department of Education-CDE and state level departments that serve children prenatal to age eight. Angie stated the State of Colorado and ECLC is working on an evaluation of the new department utilizing a vendor to perform this task. She stated the report will be out in November. She encouraged everyone to send her anything they want included in the evaluation plan. She stated the Home Visiting Investment Task Force co-chaired by Ida Rhodes, created a report. Angie mentioned they have meetings that are open to the public and she will send out the link. She stated the Colorado Department of Local Affairs is soliciting feedback regarding policies, procedures, and guidelines on the programs for the development of childcare facilities created by House Bill 2412,37 and will send out that link. Angie mentioned the Colorado Children's Campaign is hiring a Policy Analyst. Go to www.coloradokids.org . She reported the Colorado childcare contribution tax credit is an opportunity for individuals to donate money to childcare license programs or the Boys and Girls Club. She stated this is monitored through the government department of revenue.

E. CDEC

Angie Shehorn-Children First

Angie reported the Colorado Department of Early Childhood applied for the PDG grant-preschool development grant from the Federal Government. She stated they applied for 8 million dollars per year for the next five years and were denied. She mentioned the department is committed to resubmitting in 2025 for some funds and continuing the work of the PDG as best they can. She stated a piece of the work is the family voice, families getting together at the State level to help inform the work of the department. Angie state the State of Colorado has a peer mentorship program, and she will send out information.

VI. Evaluation

Eileen Dennis

Angie stated Eileen Dennis will be sending an evaluation (1-5 rating with feedback) email after every council meeting. Eileen will compile and share those reports. The information is received in aggregate.

VII. Community Reports –

PDPHE-Christina reported Fudge Gonzalez, registered nurse in the maternal child health program is retiring from the Health Department as of December 1, 2024. She was happy to announce there is a new MCHRN, Randy Mohar, starting next week.

East Side Child Care Center-Brenda stated the center will host a Trunk or Treat on October 30, 2024, in their parking lot.

Children First- Hunter mentioned Children First will be at Healthy Halloween October 29, 2024, from 9 am to 11:30 am at Praise Assembly. Angie mentioned after the new year Children First will continue to provide professional development opportunities. She stated there will be two trainings in November on the 16th from 9am to noon-Trauma Informed Care for infants and toddlers, and Narcan Training the 19th at 6pm in the St. Mary Conference room on the third floor at 1000 Minnequa Ave. Ryan mentioned Children First has a Facebook page. Angie mentioned the Governor's WIG goal is to have 30.9% of licensed programs in Colorado at Level 3, 4 or 5 (high quality). She stated that is equivalent to twenty-eight new programs over the next three years for Pueblo only. She stated Children First can be contacted for help.

Catholic Charities-Maria stated they partnered with United Way to provide a budget class (Parent Café) for families November 9, 2024, at Rocky Mountain SER, 330 Lake Avenue from 10 am to 11:30 am. She asked that families reach out to family services to sign up.

VII. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 12:05 pm.

VIII. Next Meeting — November 25, 2024. HYBRID-Virtually via Zoom

**In Person Meeting at TLC@ PCC, 1000 Minnequa Avenue, Pueblo, CO 81004
SMC Conference Room on the Third Floor**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/93498195039?pwd=eDJvamY0UkU3Wjdsb3Y5Zm8wMzFKQT09>

Meeting ID: 934 9819 5039 Passcode: 570894

Local Resources

Children First Childcare Connections – www.childrenfirstco.org

Pueblo County Childhood Resources <https://county.pueblo.org/public-health/pueblo-county-childhood-resources>

Statewide Resources

www.coloradoshines.com (Colorado Shines)

<https://www.coloradoshinespdis.com/s/login/> (Colorado Shines Professional Development Information System –PDIS)

<https://earlylearningco.org/> (Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines)

Respectfully submitted,
Paula Arellano