



**Pueblo Early
Childhood Council**

MEETING MINUTES JULY 22, 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
Brenda Rodriguez-ESCCC
Cindy Martinez-OJC
Alexander Winters-PECC/Children First
Darla Hall-PECC/Children First
Emilee Lopez-CPLC
Ryan Montoya-PECC/Children First
Rita Samora-ECEMS
Frankie Boone-DHS/CCCAP
Angie Shehorn-PECC/Children First
Gina Wilburn-DHS/CCCAP
Joe Bellavia-PECC/Children First
Cindy Keasling-D70
Angelina Velasquez-OJC
Darena Herschler-CDPHE/CTC

Rhonda Duskey-Kochis-CPLC
Darla Hall-PECC/Children First
Katrina Appel-Colorado Blue Sky
Marie Chavez-OJC
Dwanette Martinez-Migrant
Maria Chavez-Contreras-Catholic Charities
Erica Garcia-CCSOCO
Hunter Johnson-PECC/Children First
Alyssa Hopkins-OJC
Annette Alcon-CPLC
Rebecca Bellavia-PECC/Children First
Vanessa Mateo-OJC
Miley-OJC
Berlinda Perdo-OJC

I. Introduction: Meeting called to order by Angie at 11:00 am.

II. Additions to the Agenda: N/A

III. Approval of Minutes: May 2024-approved.

**IV. Agency Highlight-
Otero Jr, College Early Head Start-Cindy Martinez**

Cindy introduced herself as the Family Community Partnership Manager for Early Head Start out of Otero. She stated she is leaving the program and Berlinda is taking her place at the end of July. She explained Otero Junior College has held the Head Start (HS) Grant (not in Pueblo) since 1974 and the Early Head Start (EHS) Grant started in 1999 in multiple counties (Bent, Crowley, Otero, Pueblo, Prowers, Alamosa, Saguache and Rio Grande). She explained EHS is available to families who are pregnant or expecting children birth to 36 months and HS is for families with children ages 3-5 years old both totally free programs. She stated they

have connected to community partners that provide services for families such as free diapers. Cindy explained the services they offer.

- **Educational Services**-Screening, Referrals, Specialized Services
- **Family Services**-Goals, Assessments, Parenting Classes, Connections
- **Health Services**-Screenings, Lead Testing, Medical/Dental Education, Monitoring, Nutrition
- **Mental/Behavioral Health**-Screenings, Referrals, Consultations
- **Prenatal Services**-Fetal Development, Breastfeeding benefits, Education: Labor and Delivery-Nutrition, Dental, and All Family Services with Connection to Community Resources, Baby enrolled
- **Home Visiting**-Pregnant Woman and children 0-36 months
 - 90-minute home visit per week
 - 2 socializations, monthly
 - 1 Parent Education workshop, monthly
 - Program runs all 12months
- **Center Based Classroom**-Children 12 months and walking to 36 months
 - Classroom Services, M-Th 8:00 am- 3:30 pm
 - Transportation provided
 - Meals provided
 - Diapers provided
 - 4-1 ratio
 - Program runs all 12 months
 - 2 monthly home visits from Teacher and Family Advocate
 - 1 Parent Education workshop, monthly-meal and transportation provided

Cindy presented pictures of the program. She proceeded to answer questions.

V. New Business:

A. Resource Guides

Angie Shehorn-Children First

Angie stated the new updated guides are available and there is a QR code that will take you to a searchable guide.

B. SECC Update

Angie Shehorn-Children First

Angie stated Matt was unable to attend. She stated the Parent Coalition had a meeting with District 70 leadership on June 26, 2024. She stated at that meeting they discussed UPK and its rough start but their classrooms are almost full with enough teachers to cover existing and new students. She mentioned Children's First vital assistance. Angie stated parents prefer the morning sessions. Angie stated District 70 has a new suspension and expulsion policy and matrix providing consistency strategies and options for teachers and administrators. She emphasized there have not been any pre-k to second grade suspensions in the last six years in District 70 and they are working to eliminate the practice of sending children home early. She reported District 60 asked for more connections for professional development. Angie stated discussions about enrichment programs and pooling knowledge into the Coalition's existing program document. She stated the Coalition will not meet in July but resume August 1st.

C. UPK Updates

Angie Shehorn-Children First

Angie stated the following:

- In the middle of the last matching round for the upcoming school year 24-25

- Programs will be able to directly enroll families
- Children First will assist parents with placement if programs full
- 2% increase in the UPK payment for providers

D. Legislation Update

Angie Shehorn-Children First

Angie explained the following bills signed into law:

- HB24-1223: Improve Access to the Child Care Assistance Program
- HB24-1237: Programs for the Development of Child Care Facilities
- HB24-1311: Family Affordability Tax Credit

Angie provided information to the council:

- Initiative 108
- Initiative 50

E. Early Childhood Leadership Commission

Angie Shehorn-Children First

Angie stated she has been appointed by Governor Polis to the Early Childhood Leadership Commission. She stated she will attend the state meetings and represent early childhood in Southeast Colorado.

F. Colorado Shines Funding

Angie Shehorn-Children First

Angie stated Colorado Shines funding is available to licensed Colorado Programs in the portal. She mentioned the technical issues but Children First can help navigate the application. She stated East Side Child Care Center has successfully submitted their application for funding and several are pending. Angie explained the funding can help pay for coaching, materials, support substitutes, and attend the Rocky Mountain Childhood Conference. She mentioned programs will be responsible for ordering their own materials this year.

G. Council RFA

Angie Shehorn-Children First

Angie stated every five years the Early Childhood Councils must reapply to be the Early Childhood Council. She stated the five-year mark is coming up in 2025. She explained the process for reapplying. She mentioned Children First will reach out if programs MOU's are not updated.

H. LCO Reapplication

Angie Shehorn-Children First

Angie stated the local coordinating organization for Universal Preschool reapplication will happen in 2025. She stated she will be meeting with communities to ensure they support Children First reapplying to be the local coordinating organization for Pueblo, Baca, Bent Prowers, Otero, and Crowley.

I. [Strengthening Families Conference](#)

Angie Shehorn-Children First

Angie stated the Strengthening Families Conference is the first week of September and registration is \$75.00. She stated it is offered every two years and it is a great way to get professional development hours.

VI. Evaluation

Eileen Dennis

Angie stated Eileen Dennis from Triple Aim 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 –

East Side Child Care Center-Brenda Rodriguez stated she attended the Director’s workshop that covered staff retention, marketing businesses, benefits for staff and networking. She expressed it was a great workshop and wondered if the professional Development work group may be interested in offering.

Catholic Charities-Maria Chavez-Contreras reported the Parents as Teachers Program is adding a lactation empowerment program with certified lactation counselors on staff. She

Migrant-Dwanette Martinez they will collaborate with Chicanos Por La Causa Head Start (CPLC) for their three-day event in Walsenburg, Trinidad and Pueblo. She stated they will also attend the Boone Migrant family night next week.

OJC-Berlinda Perdo mentioned their second parent night on August 1, 2024. She invited community agencies to sign up for a table to provide resources at 5:30 pm.

CPLC-Emilie Lopez stated they are sponsoring a health fair open to the community at the Rawlings Library from 12-6 pm on July 25, 2024 with Intellitec offering free haircuts from 12-2pm. She mentioned they are enrolling and taking applications for the 2024-2025 school year. She stated their first day is September 3, 2024. Emilee stated there are job openings at CPLC and those can be found on their Facebook account-We are CPLC Colorado. Angie mentioned the jobs are also on the Health Department Resource Page

Children First-Hunter Johnson mentioned the World Breast Feeding Event hosted by WIC August 3, 2024 in front of JCPenney’s at the Pueblo Mall.

Colorado Blue Sky-Katrina Appel thanked everyone for the referrals as their case load is full. She asked if anyone needs information to reach to her.

VII. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 11:58 am.

VIII. Next Meeting — August 26, 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