



Pueblo Early
Childhood Council

MEETING MINUTES JULY 25, 2022 VIRTUALLY 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:

Angie Shehorn-PECC/Children First
Justin Gage-PDPHE
Molly Milusnic-PECC/Children First
Brenda Rodriguez-PECC/Children First
Karen Garcia-PDHS
Gina Lucas-Caring for Colorado Foundation
Rebecca Bellavia-PECC/Children First
Jenny Walters-PECC/Children First
Natalie Sparks-Kinderkirk
Valerie Maldonado-Children First

Veronica Ybarra-ELV
Kristie Dorwart-Health Solutions
Roni Rael-Ascension Preschool
Anna Neal-Safe Baby Court
Teresa Mathews-PECC/Children First
Josette Rusk-Southside Children Centers
Berlinda Pedro-CDI Head Start
Matt Guy-Common Thread Group
Amanda Rosales-Children First

I. Introductions: Meeting called to order by Angie at 11:07 am.

II. Additions to the Agenda: N/A

III. Approval of Minutes: May 2022-tabled to August

IV. Agency Highlight-SECC Suspension/Expulsion prevention

Matt Guy-Common Thread

Matt gave a brief update. He stated Pueblo received a Communities that Care Grant from the state of Colorado that started July 1, 2022. He emphasized the work is changing policies in Pueblo regarding early childhood, promoting social and emotional well being for children, families, caregivers and providers. Guy stated this year the work, under the SECC title, has transitioned to Children First. He explained the goal is to change the perception and policies regarding suspension and expulsion of young children in the community. Guy stated a team from the community will be created to go out and get the communities voice to create these policies. He stated they are on three different tracks. He said the first track is identifying individuals to help promulgate this team. He stated it is crossing over to the Pueblo County School Readiness Plan which has its own accountability council. Guy stated the majority of members will be parents and caregivers of young children. He said they may reach out to members of the council as well. Guy stated they want to look at the connections between families and early childhood, how families thrive, are they healthy and lastly how to move families forward through support. Angie added the council will serve as counsel for this work and will be a standing agenda for the PECC meetings.

V. New Business:

A. Pueblo Community Perspective

1. Resources for Families

a. What resources are missing?

After hours transportation/to & from
Parenting classes

Childcare
Translators
Housing/affordable housing
Advocacy

b. What resources are working?

Child Care Referrals
Food banks
Diaper banks
Children First Resource Guides
Grant Writing Guide
Catholic Charities Family Strengthening
PECC Meetings

c. What changes should be considered to accessing resources?

Cross agency referral system improved
Resources in schools
Unite Colorado
Pieces at Parkview
Getting the word out
Work w/United Way
Facebook
Advertising

B. Local Coordinating Organization for UPK

Angie Shehorn (Children First)- Angie stated Children First was awarded the local coordinating organization for Universal Preschool-Baca, Bent, Otero, Prowers, Crowley and Pueblo counties. She stated work will begin on a community plan for Baca and Prowers; Crowley, Bent and Otero; and Pueblo for Fall of 2023. Angie stated once community planning is established there will be advisory committees in each of those areas that will meet monthly to meet the needs of the community.

C. New Staff

Angie Shehorn (Children First) - Angie stated Children First has welcomed Amanda Rosales and Valerie Maldonado-teachers for the Mobile Child Care RV through Illuminate. They explained their background experience to the council.

D. [COMOM](#)

Angie Shehorn (Children First) – Angie informed participants the free dental clinic is coming back September 30 and October 1st. She stated they are looking for volunteers.

E. EC Scholarships-ECE [COSI](#) and [T.E.A.C.H](#) - Angie stated the COSI scholarships from ECCLA are for individuals laid off, experienced decreased earnings, job offers rescinded, or who could not enter the workforce due to adverse economic conditions. She stated they also have the family child care home facilities improvement grant. Angie stated the T.E.A.C.H scholarships will pay for credentials and certificates-AA, BA. She emphasized the specialist's opportunity is for coaches, professionals and nonprofit professionals, and substitutes.

F. Early Childhood Funding microsite [Growing Forward](#)

Angie Shehorn (Children First)-Angie informed the council this is from the State of Colorado, a one location for all to find out about childcare home bonus, all early childhood money going to childcare programs and childcare professionals. Angie reminded childcare home providers to submit their application for studies funding starting July 1st. She stated if anyone has questions or assistance please reach out to Children First.

G. Trainings

Molly Milusnic (Children First) – Molly stated she wants to bring trainings to Pueblo.

- i. Survey-trainings needed in community, and trainers
- ii. Pre-Licensing-Every other month, virtual, every other Tuesday, 5:30-8:30, 15-hour class, contact Paula at 719-549-3407 to register

Angie mentioned the EQIT training course-in person; open to parents, foster parents, teenagers; orientation August 8th.

VI. Sub Groups: (subgroups): on hiatus

VII. Community Reports

Catholic Charities-Ida Rhodes stated John Brenard is the new interim director. She said he has vast experience in education and the catholic community.

DHS- Karen Garcia stated the State of Colorado participants on food assistance has received the maximum food assistance. She stated Pueblo county has received 10 million dollars a month. Karen stated once the public health emergency is over the max allotment will drop to 4 million dollars a month. She mentioned TANF allotments have increased.

OJC-Berlinda stated migrant seasonal head start has openings.

YWCA-Angela stated they are opening a preschool, drop in center, as well as a four-story transitional housing unit.

VII. Evaluation Process

Eileen Dennis

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

VIII. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm.

IX. Next Meeting — August 22, 2022 HYBRID Virtually via Google Meets

<https://meet.google.com/nap-qgti-mxo>

Local Resources

Children First Child Care 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