



Early Childhood Education Task Force

February 17, 2016

Mesa Counts on College Access Center
635 East Broadway Road, Mesa, AZ (South entrance)
(Take stairs to 2nd floor meeting room)
Meeting Begins at 1 p.m.

Dr. David Luna, Chair	Rhonda Anderson, Member	Jake Brown, Member
Mike Hutchinson, Member	Paul Luna, Member	Dr. Anjum Majeed, Member
Cynthia Melde, Member	Linda McKeever, Member	Allison Mullady, Member
Nancy Salmon, Member	Dr. James Zaharis, Member	Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo, Member
Dr. Dawn Foley, Member		

1. Call to order
2. Review and take action on the Task Force meeting minutes of January 15, 2016
3. Hear opening remarks by Task Force Chair, Dr. David Luna
4. Hear a summary and discuss the Task Force's accomplishments to date
5. Hear a presentation and discuss how some other communities nationwide are addressing early childhood learning
6. Participate in a facilitated discussion to generate a list of possible actions to address Mesa's early childhood learning challenges and identify additional information/presentations needed.
7. Discuss next steps and meeting Schedule
8. Confirm next meeting: March 24, 2016, 1 p.m., Mesa Counts on College Access Center
7. Adjourn meeting (Motion and Second)

Task Force Members are highly encouraged to attend each meeting in person. By special request to the Chair, members might also attend by telephone conference call, if needed. City Council members may elect to attend the meeting for their own information, not for purposes of any legal action nor decision making by the Council. The City is committed to making its public meetings accessible to persons with disabilities. For special accommodations, please contact the City Manager's Office at 480-644-3333 at least two days before the meeting. Si necesita asistencia o traducción en español, favor de llamar al menos 48 horas antes de la reunión al 480-644-2767.

Agenda Item 2

MEETING MINUTES

CITY OF MESA
Early Childhood Education Task Force
Mesa Counts on College Access Center
635 E. Broadway Rd, Mesa, AZ 85201

Date: January 15, 2016 Time: 1:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT	MEMBERS ABSENT	STAFF PRESENT
Dr. David Luna, Chair	Jake Brown	Marrisa Ramírez-Ramos
Rhonda Anderson	Paul Luna	Natalie Lewis
Dr. Dawn Foley	Linda McKeever	Amy Trethaway
Mike Hutchinson	Dr. Allison Mullady	Niel Curley
Dr. Anjum Majeed		
Cynthia Melde		FACILITATOR:
Nancy Salmon		Karen Kurtz
Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo		
Dr. James Zaharis		

- 1. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME:** Task Force Chair and D5 Councilmember, Dr. David Luna, called the meeting of the Early Childhood Education Task Force to order at 1:11 P.M.
- 2. REVIEW AND TAKE ACTION ON THE TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 8, 2016:** Chair Luna called for a Motion to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2015 meeting.
MOTION: Mike Hutchinson made a Motion to approve the minutes as presented
SECOND: Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo
DECISION: Passed unanimously
- 3. HEAR OPENING REMARKS BY CHAIR, DR. DAVID LUNA:** Chair Luna emphasized the importance of the role of this Task Force and thanked all the members for their participation. He noted the Mayor's State of the City will take place February 4th at 7:30 A.M. at the Mesa Convention Center. All are invited to attend and Marrisa Ramírez-Ramos will send out the information to the Task Force members. He believes the Mayor will recognize the Task Force and the work we have accomplished to date. We will plan to convene another meeting in February, one in March and possibly two meetings in April. The goal for today's meeting is to review and evaluate the report and to make some recommendations to allow Staff to finalize the report. The Mayor may use this report as a launching point as he addresses the issue related to early childhood education in the City of Mesa.
- 4. HEAR AN OVERVIEW OF THE DRAFT TASK FORCE REPORT BY NATALIE N. LEWIS, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER:** Natalie Lewis acknowledged that the Task Force has done a tremendous amount of work in a short amount of time. She noted that the Task Force agendas, minutes and all of the data and materials have been sent to City Council as well. At this time the

Mayor and City Council are our key audience and this report will document the key findings of this Task Force to date. We are looking for your recommendations to finalize this report and it will go back to the Task Force before it is presented to City Council. This is not the end product and Council knows that additional work is needed for this Task Force. A handout containing comments from community members was provided to the Task Force.

5. PARTICIPATE IN A FACILITATED DISCUSSION TO REFLECT ON AND EVALUATE THE CONTENT OF THE REPORT RELATED TO THESE TOPICS:

Karen Kurtz facilitated the discussion on evaluating the report as a product and the message that it conveys about this issue. The Task Force members appreciated the brevity and focus of the report and how Staff captured the language and phrases generated in the meetings. The graphics are striking and emphasize key statistics. They felt this was a great springboard to help shape, define and clarify the Task Force's findings to present to Council.

a. Does the report adequately articulate the Task Force's key findings that define the challenge and opportunity related to early childhood care and learning in Mesa?

Convincing Points:

- Appreciate brevity
- Opportunity to do something good based on need
- Looking at various affordable options
- Statistics - National versus the Mesa Community
- Existing range of options – Leverage/optimize
- Quality matters in all early learning settings
- Professional development is critical
- Under-resourced families do not have access to resources

Clarify / Strengthen:

- "Kindergarten Readiness" remove the term "Assessment Tool"
 - Children need early learning experiences / opportunities that allow them to flourish
 - Define Readiness to include more than academic - social, emotional, fine and gross motor skills
 - Standards are in place for all levels
 - Developmental benchmarks
 - ADE Kindergarten Developmental Inventory – determine where child is now and know how to take child to next level
- Quality Matters
 - Change "Professional Development" wording to "Quality Teachers Matter" and include two messages:

- 1) Professional Development for Pre-K educators
 - 2) Parents/Caregivers are educators with a strong influence on a child's ability to learn
- Under-Resourced bullet point should be a statement not a question
 - Assessment map – identify gaps
 - Awareness
 - What resources are available
 - It is not the same Kindergarten, Kindergarten is the new first grade
 - Science of early brain development for 0-Kindergarten
 - How early child learning relates to long term success
 - Graphic on Benchmarks: How early childhood education leads to competent workforce development.
 - Change on Page 3, Paragraph 2: The Mesa community has an opportunity to ensure that every child has an optimal early **“learning”** experience... instead of **“education”**
 - Investment in early foundational years has impact for long term success. Return on investment - every dollar invested in early childhood equals \$16 returned to community
 - Stress the Urgency of the issue

Key Points:

- 1) Strengthen Families – First level of caregivers
- 2) Quality Matters regardless of setting
 - Professional development
 - Parent/Caregiver resources
- 3) Accessibility (geographic, financial):
 - Assessment map, connect those in need with existing resources, identify gaps
 - Under-Resourced Families bullet point as a statement instead of a question
- 4) Affordability – Not enough affordable options
 - Many families do not qualify for assistance, yet cannot afford Pre-K opportunities
- 5) Awareness – Many levels
- 6) Long Term Investment – early learning investment ties into economic development

- b. Does the report accurately convey the Task Force’s sense of urgency and importance around the need to ensure that Mesa’s children arrive at kindergarten ready and able to learn?**

Impression / Impact:

- Hope everyone sees themselves as part of the issue
- Hope for a collective “wow” with all audiences
- Entire community needs to be invested

Next Steps / Additional Information:

- Graphic - GIS layering on lower income populations, locations of resources, etc.
- Brainstorm ideas on possible options/solutions
- Look at other models / what other communities have done
 - San Antonio, San Diego, Denver, Seattle, Philadelphia, locally in AZ
- Connect with communities living in poverty
 - United Way - Project Thrive—possible guest speaker
- Multi-media approach / look at other avenues to share

Natalie Lewis advised the Task Force that this report will be viewed as preliminary tool to help the Mayor in his State of the City. Goal is that this report is owned by the Task Force. Feedback will be incorporated and a new draft shared by email prior to finalization.

6. DISCUSS SCHEDULING OF FUTURE TASK FORCE MEETINGS FEBRUARY – APRIL, 2016:

Marrisa Ramírez-Ramos has sent out a list of potential meeting dates to the Task Force.

7. ADJOURNMENT: Chair Luna adjourned the meeting at 2:25 P.M.

Submitted By:

Dr. David Luna, Chair

(Prepared by Dana Desing, TE: 14082507)