



Early Childhood Education Task Force Meeting

Friday, April 15, 2016

NOTE: New Location and a.m. start time

Mesa Police Fiesta District Station

1010 W. Grove Avenue, Mesa, AZ, Community Room

South of Southern and East of Alma School

Meeting Begins at **10 a.m.**

Dr. David Luna, Chair	Dr. Dawn Foley, 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

1. Call meeting to order
2. Review and take action on the Task Force meeting minutes of March 30, 2016
3. Hear opening remarks
4. Take action to accept resignation request from Task Force Member, Ms. Rhonda Anderson, Banner Health
5. Hear comments and insights from Task Force Members and City Staff who attended 4/11 tours of Jordan Center for Early Education and Mesa Community College's Early Education Center.
6. Participate a facilitated discussion to craft a shared, recommended "Mesa's Strategic Plan for Early Childhood Education." Some of the questions to be asked by the facilitator, include:
 - a) Do the broad goal statements accurately reflect the task force's recommendations?
 - b) Are the concrete action statements accurate, clear?
 - c) Should any of these concrete actions be combined, taken off the list, added to the list or moved?
 - d) Which concrete actions do you believe will be most/least impactful?
 - e) Is there a particular age group that the task force believes deserves Mesa's priority focus?
 - f) Does the task force wish to recommend phasing of some kind?
 - g) What are the different types of funding that should be explored by the community?
7. Discuss next steps.
 - a. Note: May 26, 2016, 7:30 a.m. Mayor and City Council Study Session, 57 E. 1st Street, Lower Council Chambers. This is the meeting where the Task Force's recommendations will be presented to the Council. As close to full attendance by the task force is appreciated.
8. Discuss and confirm whether a final committee work meeting is needed on Weds., April 20, 9 a.m., Fiesta District Police Substation
 - a. If full meeting is needed/scheduled for 4/20, confirm that a quorum (min. of 7 task force members) will be available and present.
9. Adjourn meeting (Motion and Second)

Task Force Members are highly encouraged to attend each meeting in person. By special request to the Chair or Vice 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: March 30, 2016 Time: 1:00 P.M.

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

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Task Force Vice Chair Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo called the meeting of the Early Childhood Education Task Force to order at 1:12 P.M.

2. **REVIEW AND TAKE ACTION ON THE TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 24, 2016:** Vice Chair Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo called for a Motion to approve the minutes of the March 24, 2016 meeting.

MOTION: Mike Hutchinson made a Motion to approve the minutes as presented
SECOND: Nancy Salmon
DECISION: Passed unanimously

3. **HEAR OPENING REMARKS BY TASK FORCE VICE CHAIR, DEANNA VILLANUEVA-SAUCEDO:** There was interest from Task Force members to take a tour of the Quality First facilities: Mesa Community College Children’s Center and the Jordan Center for Early Education. Everyone agreed to schedule for the week of April 11th, 2016. Cynthia Melde stated Mesa Community College would be happy to give a tour and she will forward the contact information to Staff to make the arrangements.

4. **HEAR GUEST SPEAKER PRESENTATIONS, DISCUSS AND PROVIDE FEEDBACK:**
 - a) **Mesa Public Library and the Mesa i.d.e.a. Museum:** info. related to existing programs and assets for early learners was provided to the Task Force in the agenda packet.

 - b) **B.Peterson, Development Executive for K-12 Education—How Technology can be used in early learning:**

Mr. Peterson has been a former educator for 20 years, primarily as a 5th grade teacher as well as middle school assistant principal and principal.

Personal devices are defined by what people can do with them and what they expect it to be. The American Academy of Pediatrics currently states that screen time includes 'device time.' and as adults, we need to help guide kid's time effectively.

Today's learners are unique and have certain expectations of what learning looks and feels like based on their experiences before coming into school.

Example Timeline of Technology:

1994 Debut of wifi
1998 Google, browsers
2001 iPod
2004 Facebook, social media
2006 Twitter
2007 smart phones, iPhone
2008 Apps, stores to purchase them
2010 iPad, personal devices
2015 Wearable personal devices

Today's students entering University (born in 1997) have never known the card catalog or Dewey decimal system, etc. They have immediate access to information. Today's high schoolers (born in 2001) are the portable, powerful population. They are social and want to connect and collaborate. They don't need to see you to be your friend. Middle schoolers (born in 2004) are unbelievably social with Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram. They rely on connection and collaboration with their friends and even look for feedback from those connections. Primary school kids (born in 2010) are now entering into the classrooms and have certain expectations about what learning looks like because they have never known a world without a touch screen interface. A quote from Alan Kay: "Technology is anything that wasn't around when you were born."

Literacy skills have been greatly increased with personal device reading programs across the country. In South Carolina, Kristi Meeuwse made her own resources deployed through the iPad for her kindergarten class, resulting in 100 percent of her students reading above grade level.

Putting technology into a child's hands helps to draw out that child's personal genius. Everything is possible. Kids enjoy the experience of learning, and become not only consumers of content, but creators of content. Today's technology can create and foster wonder in our kids throughout the education system; they show up excited to learn and to share what they know with the world.

Discussion:

It is important to create guidelines for using technology that balance with a child's physical well-being. Teachers can create multiple opportunities from station-type activities with time limits to taking the device out of the classroom to capture content. The definition of screen time is no longer clear and depends on how it is being used. Adults need to role model best practices in the use of technology.

- c) **Vice Chair Deanna Villanueva—San Antonio field trip overview, lessons learned:** Several Task Force members and City Staff visited San Antonio to learn about their early education model.

San Antonio 2020:

- Mayor's initiative utilizing sales tax (capped at .8% but other programs already use a portion) for Pre-K 4 SA with \$25M to \$33M annual revenue. This sales tax will sunset in 4 years.
- Texas already provides \$3,800 per child for half-day Pre-K
- 9 of the 17 school districts (equally 92% of student population in San Antonio) partner in program through an MOU with the City
- Community approval through community-based priority, collaboration with districts, workforce development, strong business/chamber support, goal of improving 3rd grade reading

Pre-K 4 SA Model:

- Four centers with consistent programming for full-day Pre-K serving 4 year olds
- State's half-day funding for each of the 2,000 students in PreK 4 SA split between the PreK 4 SA program (80%) and school districts (20%).
- Grant program to improve other existing programs (such as those in school districts) and serve more children
- Professional development for internal and external staff
- Emphasis on parent engagement
- Staffing—High ratio, starting salary \$65K, city employees, no union or pension
- New program: New policies and procedures
- Next Steps/Challenges: Tax sunsets in 4 years, political support, mixed outcomes/goals, data sharing difficulties, still many unserved

Lessons Learned from San Antonio City Leaders/Task Force:

- Community-based support important. SanAntonio 2020 initiative gave their Mayor tool to say “public has spoken—early childhood education is a priority.”
- Build collaborative relationships, data sharing between partners
- Strong business community support for work force development
- No Union—Teachers as city employees critical
- Ensure funding is sustainable—Sales tax requires ongoing political support
- Grant process is key to improving existing programs
- Same MOU boilerplate for all districts—Great education attorney
- Branding critical to ensure visibility and ongoing community support
- Phased approach was critical
- \$65K starting salary ensured outstanding talent; strong educator support
- Parent engagement critical
- Governance board—Ensure mix of male/female and education/business
- District data sharing critical to measure outcomes
- Specific messaging for school districts needed—Avoid competition
- Clear outcomes/goals need to be articulated

Mesa Early Childhood Education Task Force Observations:

- ❖ Preparation for Kindergarten—Issue of economics not ethnicity
- ❖ That said, cultural competency critical
- ❖ Be clear on purpose, how to evaluate outcomes, that outcomes are achievable
- ❖ Broad community-based support is key to community buy in about ‘need.’
- ❖ Mesa has many existing resources that have opportunity to be leveraged
- ❖ Great program in San Antonio, but Mesa may need to start first with leveraging existing resources and seeking a thoughtful phased approach to continue building resources.

Discussion:

Texas has state certification for K-6 teachers, but no special training for early childhood. The timeline for the San Antonio model, once approved, was 6 months to launch, which was too fast. There was not enough early, thoughtful collaboration with school districts as well as Head Start. Unfortunately, this translated into early city to district missteps, misunderstandings and barriers to constructive collaboration. New centers were built due to the geography covering 17 districts. It would have been better to have a pilot program in the school districts. The program was being paid for with tax, although not everyone had the ability to take advantage of the program. \$33m for serving 2,000 students high cost. There was no clear plan (or cooperation) to correlate information to be able to measure the benefit four years later. Within the four centers, there was an element of control over the quality of teachers, curriculum, etc., which would be difficult to replicate in 17 school districts.

5. TASK FORCE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE START OF A FACILITATED DISCUSSION REGARDING: Of all of the research, observations, presentations and your own experiences, what do you believe is the best path forward for Mesa?

Niel Curley provided a brief summary of the Task Force journey (key discussions and accomplishments) for each meeting, to date. Natalie Lewis explained that the final product of the task force may be two-fold: 1) an overview video is the Chair preference, but only if the City is able to find resources to create it; and at a minimum 2) a professionally formatted document stating the Task Force recommendations and to share electronically.

Task Force Recommended Concrete Actions:**QUALITY:**

- Expand Quality First enrolled centers in low income, under-resourced neighborhoods
- Identify goals timetable to increase the number of entities participating in Quality First
- Implement a grant program available to existing early ED providers to increase capacity and/or quality. This program would have an application rubric w/ measurable outcomes
- Subsidize some funding for teacher certification in early childhood with recipient agreement to teach in a Mesa program for 5+ years
- Partner with high quality sites and lab schools to develop educator training, teacher swaps, coaching/support groups (could be for 0-2 but harder to find)
- Offer professional development to all providers/teachers from Pre-K to 3rd grade to increase quality continuum
- Expand the Pre-K programs to full day in all Mesa Public Schools (MPS)

ACCESSIBILITY:

- Expand number of MPS sites in KinderU by X number per year
- Establish partnership with MPS to emphasize at-home/in-home care; activities using brain based learning, Parent University
- Fund additional spots at existing quality programs
 - Maybe sites agree to be training sites for other schools/providers
- City to provide funding (tax or grant) so that additional Pre-K offerings at existing high quality centers can be increased. Build on existing resources like MPS
- Create a funding mechanism to increase number of slots for working poor families by helping existing programs increase capacity of time, space, staff
- Double the number of Head Start locations in Mesa based on low income qualifying data
- Extend Head Start at MPS by offering services in summer

- Transportation is a huge barrier. Ensure accessibility of programming offered and increase programming (parent engagement & child care) in under-resourced neighborhoods
- Ensure 50% of low-income 3-4 year olds can access quality Pre-K — use a sliding scale up to 300% of federal poverty level

AFFORDABILITY:

- Affordability should not be criteria. Make Pre-K program an ongoing MPS offering
- Develop/provide programs without tuition by partnering with businesses for support
- Provide a way for families who don't qualify for existing subsidies to still gain access to Pre-K — sliding scale
- Reduce teaching costs – Add staff by partnering with teacher training programs and others training early childhood education related professionals
 - OT / SLP / Social Work / Nursing
- Scholarships/supplements for families who fall into the income “gap” – do not qualify for other programs but still can't afford top rated, quality sites
- Offer free bi-monthly Brain Box type training within underserved communities at community rooms, parks (dependent on weather), locally patronized businesses

STRENGTHEN FAMILIES:

- Create component of program for parent learning of skills and curriculum
- Text based strategies program – caregivers/parents receive “bite-sized” tips to support learning and development—can be tailored to either 0-2 or 3-5
- Community/Neighborhood parent groups facilitated by community organizations
 - Workshops – parenting, special needs topics
 - Book Clubs
 - Resource sharing
- Map the areas of Mesa with increased need (under-resourced families and limited existing capacity) and create resource centers where families can access information and materials (i.e. Brain Boxes) to enhance in-home care and/or access Pre-K programs for 3 and 4 year olds
- Review/change protocols in current MPS KinderU program to include state of the art strategies that include parental participation
- Provide opportunity for all caregivers of 0-5 to attend evidence-based parenting education classes regardless of income. This would help reduce social isolation.

COMMUNITY AWARENESS:

- Utilize current MPS media/outreach strategies to inform parents about Pre-K programs
- Partner with 150 local hospitals, faith based groups, pediatricians, schools to increase awareness of free/affordable Pre-K offerings
- Increase community awareness on the importance of quality Pre-K (0-5) through:
 - Community Service Announcements / Utility bills / Libraries / TV-Web-Radio
- Create an awareness campaign for Mesa (bilingual) to:
 - Promote the idea of families as the first classroom
 - Promote existing early education opportunities
- Provide grants for already existing programs to produce and distribute advertisements
- “Early Childhood Day” – host a 1 day conference for business leaders, community organization leaders, public officials to learn about early childhood education research, impact on society and existing programs, etc.
- Present program to each school PTO and staff meeting. Find opportunities for Public Service Announcements

- Have an aggressive Public Relations and Marketing Plan to consistently “tell the story” about the City and MPS plan to improve kindergarten readiness
- Create (or Partner) to establish a centralized hub for resources, information and referrals for families with children 0-5, locate in under-resourced communities
- Work with local community champions and organizations to increase public awareness about the importance of early childhood

OTHER STRATEGIES:

- Partner with districts to use Kindergarten Developmental Inventory to measure outcomes
- Establish a diverse governance structure to put emphasis on new Pre-K initiatives
- Influence the State of Arizona to fund Pre-K and full-day kindergarten
- Host an annual “Early Ed in Mesa” conference that allows providers and families to learn about opportunities, best practices, share info, etc.
- Organize community drives for resources of supplies, etc.
- Collaborate with external researchers to collect and analyze data to show results and keep programs funded – will also allow more opportunity for external funds
- Do a uniform survey of school students at different grades that could help determine what helps kids be prepared for school and what does not
- Establish an early childhood coalition that convenes around shared measures and common agenda to align and leverage resources
- Make the new Pre-K initiatives an integral part of other workforce development strategies pursued by the City/region

6. DISCUSS NEXT STEPS AND MEETING SCHEDULE:

At the next meeting, the Task Force will review a draft “strategic plan for early childhood learning in Mesa.” A subcommittee may be formed to finalize the plan.

The next meeting will be on April 15th, 2016, 10 A.M. If needed, an additional meeting may be scheduled for April 20th, 2016 from 9-11 A.M.

It was reported that one member have asked to resign due to family or work issues.

Staff will work on scheduling a tour of the Mesa Community College Children’s Center and the Jordan Center for Early Education during the week of April 11th, 2016.

May 26th, 2016, 7:30 A.M. is a tentative date for our recommendations to be presented to City Council in the Lower Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, Mesa.

7. CONFIRM NEXT MEETING DATE: April 15, 2016, 10:00 A.M.

8. ADJOURN MEETING:

MOTION: Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo made a Motion to adjourn the meeting

SECOND: Nancy Salmon

DECISION: Passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3:07 P.M.

Submitted By:

Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo, Vice Chair

Agenda Item 6

Mesa Early Childhood Education Task Force Draft Strategic Plan

Mission: Ensure Mesa children arrive at kindergarten ready and able to learn.

Vision: Every Mesa child has an optimal early learning experience no matter what setting he/she is in.

Guiding Principles:

1. No single organization or agency has the resources to address the issue of early learning opportunities alone. The entire Mesa community needs to collaborate to make sure every Mesa child has an optimal early learning experience.
2. Quality Matters – The quality of early learning providers and early learning environments matter, regardless of the setting, which can range from licensed early learning centers to in-home care with parents or caregivers.
3. Support parent choice of early learning settings for their young children.
4. Leverage existing resources and build on existing early learning assets to enable Mesa's children to flourish academically, physically, emotionally, and socially.
5. Investment in the early foundational years of children impact their long-term success in school and the economic health of the community.

QUALITY Goal: High quality early learning providers and early learning environments are available for all Mesa young children in any early learning setting.

Strategies:

- Expand the number of centers enrolled in Quality First located in low-income, under-resourced neighborhoods.
- Identify goals timetable to increase the number of entities participating in the Quality First initiative.
- Expand the Pre-K programs to full day in all Mesa Public Schools (MPS).
- Implement a grant program available to existing early learning providers to increase capacity and/or quality. This program would have an application rubric w/ measurable outcomes.
- Subsidize some funding for teacher certification in early childhood in exchange for recipients agreeing to teach in a Mesa early learning program for 5+ years.

Mesa Early Childhood Education Task Force Draft Strategic Plan

- Partner with high quality sites and lab schools to develop educator training, teacher swaps, and coaching/support groups (could be for 0-2 but harder to find).
- Offer professional development to all providers/teachers from Pre-K to 3rd grade to increase quality continuum

ACCESSIBILITY Goal: Quality early learning opportunities in a variety of settings are geographically located where families in need can reach them.

Strategies:

- Expand number of MPS sites in KinderU by X number per year.
- Establish partnership with MPS to emphasize at-home/in-home care; activities using brain based learning, Parent University.
- Fund additional spots at existing quality programs.
- Maybe sites agree to be training sites for other schools/providers.
- City to provide funding (tax or grant) so that additional Pre-K offerings at existing high quality centers can be increased. More children need access. Build on existing resources like MPS.
- Create a funding mechanism to increase number of slots for working poor families by helping existing programs increase capacity of time, space, staff.
- Double the number of Head Start locations in Mesa based on low-income qualifying data.
- Extend Head Start at MPS by offering services in summer.
- Locate centers for learning accessible for families without transportation
- Transportation is a huge barrier. Ensure accessibility of programming offered and increase programming (parent engagement & child care) in under-resourced neighborhoods.

AFFORDABILITY Goal: Mesa's capacity for affordable quality early learning opportunities matches the demand for these opportunities based on the community's demographics and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services affordability benchmark of 10% of family income for child care.

Strategies:

- Ensure 50% of low-income 3-4 year olds can access quality Pre-K — use a sliding scale up to 300% of federal poverty level
- Affordability should not be a criteria. Make a Pre-K (3-4 year old) program an ongoing MPS offering.
- Develop/provide programs without tuition by partnering with businesses for support.
- Provide a way for families who don't qualify for existing subsidies to still gain access to Pre-K — sliding scale

Mesa Early Childhood Education Task Force Draft Strategic Plan

- Reduce teaching costs – Add staff by partnering with teacher training programs and others training early childhood education related professionals (OT / SLP / Social Work / Nursing)
- Scholarships/supplements for families who fall into the income “gap” – do not qualify for other programs but still can’t afford top rated, quality sites
- Offer free bi-monthly Brain Box type training within underserved communities at community rooms, parks (dependent on weather), locally patronized businesses.

STRENGTHEN FAMILIES Goal: Parents/caregivers understand and receive support in carrying out their role as their children's first teacher.

Strategies:

- Create component of program for parent learning of skills and curriculum.
- Review/change protocols in current MPS KinderU program to include state of the art strategies that include parental participation.
- Provide opportunity for all caregivers of 0-5 year olds to attend evidence-based parenting education classes regardless of income. This would help reduce social isolation.
- Host an annual “Early Ed in Mesa” conference that allows providers and families to learn about opportunities, best practices, share info, etc.
- Text based strategies program – caregivers/parents receive “bite-sized” tips to support learning and development—can be tailored to either 0-2 or 3-5.
- Community/Neighborhood parent groups facilitated by community organizations - Workshops (parenting, special needs topics), Book Clubs (NAEYC), and resource sharing.
- Map the areas of Mesa with increased need (under-resourced families and limited existing capacity) and create resource centers where families can access information and materials (i.e. Brain Boxes) to enhance in-home care and/or access Pre-K programs for 3 and 4 year olds.
- Create (or Partner) to establish a centralized hub for resources, information and referrals for families with children 0-5, locate in under-resourced communities.
- Utilize current MPS media/outreach strategies to inform parents about Pre-K programs.

COMMUNITY AWARENESS Goal: All segments of the Mesa community are educated about the importance and benefits of quality learning experiences for young children.

Strategies:

- Partner with 150 local hospitals, faith based groups, pediatricians, schools to increase awareness of free/affordable Pre-K offerings.
- Increase community awareness on the importance of quality Pre-K (0-5) through Community Service Announcements / Utility bills / Libraries / TV-Web-Radio.

Mesa Early Childhood Education Task Force Draft Strategic Plan

- Create an awareness campaign for Mesa (bilingual) to promote the idea of families as the first classroom and promote existing early education opportunities.
- Have an aggressive Public Relations and Marketing Plan to consistently "tell the story" about the City and MPS plan to improve kindergarten readiness.
- Work with local community champions and organizations to increase public awareness about the importance of early childhood.

- Provide grants for already existing programs to produce and distribute advertisements.
- "Early Childhood Day" – host a 1 day conference for business leaders, community organization leaders, public officials to learn about early childhood education research, impact on society and existing programs, etc.
- Present program to each school PTO and staff meeting. Find opportunities for Public Service Announcements.

SUSTAINABILITY Goal: All sectors of the Mesa community work together to create long-term sustainable efforts to ensure Mesa children arrive at kindergarten ready and able to learn.

- Establish a separate and diverse governance structure to put emphasis on new Pre-K initiatives.
- Establish an early childhood coalition that convenes around shared measures and common agenda to align and leverage resources.
- Make the new Pre-K initiatives an integral part of other workforce development strategies pursued by the City/region.

- Partner with school districts to use Kindergarten Developmental Inventory to measure outcomes.
- Sustaining the programs – collaborate with external researchers to collect and analyze data to show results and keep programs funded – will also allow more opportunity for external funds.
- Do a uniform survey of school students at different grades that could help determine what helps kids be prepared for school and what does not.

- Influence the State of Arizona to fund Pre-K and full-day kindergarten.
- Organize community drives for resources of supplies, etc.