

**Foundations is the early childhood program of Joint Initiatives for Youth + Families, which includes Alliance for Kids, El Paso County’s Early Childhood Council.**

**AFK Vision:** *The Alliance for Kids is dedicated to making El Paso County the best place to raise a child.*

**AFK Mission:** *The Alliance for Kids will serve as a vehicle that brings together agencies and individuals to work collaboratively on a seamless system of care for young children and their families in El Paso County.*

**AFK COUNCIL MEETING**  
MEETING MINUTES

December 17, 2024 | 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM | [Google Drive](#)

Attendees: Liz Denson, Kandy McDaniel, Dwanette Martinez, Alma Wiley, Melissa Gibson-Steiner, Noreen Landis-Tyson, Toya Graham, Shelley Ettleman, Kelly Hurtado, Anthony Adams, Kathy Dobyms, Deanna Hunt, Donna Garcia, Sophia Horne

<b>Welcome</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kelly Hurtado Started with an icebreaker</li> </ul>
<b>Approval of November Minutes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Approved</li> </ul>
<b>UPK Updates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce shortages and retention issues remain a primary concern, with efforts underway to address them.</li> <li>• Providers are encouraged to make data-driven decisions about filling UPK seats and managing their business models.</li> <li>• Issues with CCAP (Child Care Assistance Program) sign-ups were addressed, and support mechanisms were discussed for providers facing challenges.</li> <li>• Noreen shared that El Paso County is actively working on a dual enrollment report from CDEC. This report aims to benefit families and help identify how CCAP funds are being allocated.</li> </ul>
<b>Council Committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goals and objectives for proposed committees were reviewed.</li> <li>• Members were invited to sign up for the Legislation &amp; Public Policy, and the Communications &amp; Membership Committee.</li> <li>• A task force on quality standards was proposed and more information will be provided after the new year.</li> <li>• Members were encouraged to reach out to Shay or Kelly if interested in the Workforce &amp; Mental Health Committee liaison roles.</li> </ul>
<b>Executive Committee Membership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members explored the idea of expanding the Executive Committee to enhance governance, improve communication, and streamline decision-making.</li> <li>• Act as a hub for directing legislative and policy initiatives.</li> <li>• Develop a reporting structure to track progress on strategic objectives.</li> <li>• A proposal on the committee's composition will be presented.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Council Meeting Times</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The council ultimately agreed to proceed with the scheduled <b>January 21st meeting at 1:30 PM</b>, with plans to potentially adjust future meeting times based on the survey results and the new outline of a potential executive committee</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Updates</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No updates to report</li> </ul>
<p><b>Wrap-up and Action Items</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A survey will be sent to members to determine a suitable time for council meetings beginning in February.</li> <li>Develop ideas for the structure and composition of the Executive Committee and present a proposal to the council for review and approval.</li> </ul>
<p><b>NEXT COUNCIL MEETING:</b>  January 21, 2025, 1:30-3:00  Location: Ascend Center, 1600 Union Blvd.</p>	