

**Fort Carson Regional Growth Plan
Education Partnership Group Meeting
October 8, 2009**

Meeting attendees:

- Andee Edelberg, Academy School District 20
- Jim Felice, Widefield School District 3
- Hal Garland, Lewis-Palmer School District 38
- Kate Hatten, Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments
- Kathlynn Jackson, Falcon School District 49
- Doug Jeavons, BBC Research & Consulting
- Dave Roudebush, Fountain-Fort Carson School District 8
- Josh Sidon, BBC Research & Consulting
- Shirley Swope, Peak Parent Center

Phase 2 Update

Doug Jeavons and Josh Sidon provided preliminary information on Soldier and family projections, including number of school age children (see attached). It was noted that, as deployment cycles change, the population estimates will also change. Therefore, the depiction of number of Soldiers present vs. deployed will change. Mr. Jeavons and Dr. Sidon explained the modeling process for the Growth Plan, indicating that numerous data sources are being used, including DEERS and Fort Carson data, as well as survey information. These sources are utilized to inform the model regarding the number of family members present in the region when the Soldier is here, as well as during deployments. District representatives noted, however, that the districts do not see large fluctuations in children during deployments, indicating that families with school age children may be more stable than spouses without children or with younger children. Mr. Jeavons also noted that the number of children present in the model has been “calibrated”, based on student counts of the most-affected districts as of the October 1, 2008 count day. This count day generally coincides with the beginning of the federal fiscal year.

It was noted that the increase in students from the beginning of FY 09 Q1 to FY 10 Q1 (this year’s count day) is significant. While the districts (particularly D-8) have seen increases, they have not seen this large (approximately 24%) an increase. There may be several factors affecting this discrepancy, including a potential lag in family arrivals (which would be problematic for districts receiving students after 1 October) or other reasons that may keep the military student population from increasing this much. The model, however, is still a work in progress, and BBC and PPACG will continue to look into these issues and update estimates based on updated troop and deployment information, as well as information from the latest count day. Dave Roudebush indicated that D-8 has seen a bigger influx of students earlier than expected, but this “rush” has tapered. BBC and PPACG will continue to revise estimates and update the model and projections as new information is obtained and deployments and other factors change.

Mr. Jeavons also presented information regarding the prevalence of special needs among Fort Carson children (see attached memo). The overall incidence of special needs children from Fort

Carson is about two percentage points higher than the overall El Paso County average. However, the incidence of special needs among Fort Carson children in D-8 is significantly higher. D-8's incidence of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder is also double the national rate. The survey data of incoming 4ID and 1st BCT (Fort Hood) Soldiers and families indicates a higher incidence of special needs and ASD, consistent with D-8's experiences. It was also noted that Fort Carson's Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) data tend to underestimate the numbers because there may be a lag in enrollment and not all families register. It is estimated that only about half of special needs children are actually registered.

Andee Edelberg indicated that approximately 50 Fort Carson families are living in Air Force Academy housing, and the district has experienced an increase in special needs children, with the largest increase in those with ASD. It was noted that serving special needs children is very costly for the districts. Many students require the assistance of paraprofessionals or day treatment programs, as well as transportation to out-of-district services. Available funding does not cover the costs. It was also suggested that families need more lead time for identifying and accessing services when they move and that the EFMP program should assist families in transferring IEPs and logistics of obtaining services in the region. However, as noted previously, not all families register with the EFMP program, exacerbating challenges.

State/Federal Issues

Kate Hatten indicated that PPACG is continuing to monitor potential opportunities for funding of growth-related needs, including PNA projects submitted by local districts and federal appropriations bills. However, as noted previously, funding has not been identified at this point. District representatives voiced their frustration over continued requests to provide data but without any funding results. Districts that have been proactive in meeting infrastructure needs, particularly those that have used capital reserves to meet Fort Carson growth needs, are especially frustrated in the inability to receive reimbursements for up-front costs. It was suggested that our legislative delegation, Chamber representatives, etc. may be able to help push for legislation/funding to assist local providers.

Upcoming Meetings/Events

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 12 at 3:30pm.

The CDMC will meet on Wednesday, 21 October at 3:00pm

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45pm.