

**Fort Carson Regional Growth Plan
Education Partnership Group Meeting
February 10, 2011**

Meeting attendees:

- Kate Hatten, Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments
- Kathlynn Jackson, Falcon School District 49
- Joanne Vergunst, Fountain-Fort Carson, School District 8
- LTC Erin Wilkinson, Fort Carson

Growth Plan Phase III Update

Kate Hatten provided a brief update regarding an ongoing survey of Soldiers and families that will be used, along with other data, to update the Fort Carson Demographic Model with more current information regarding demographics, family behaviors during deployments, housing preferences, etc. The survey responses are due by the end of February, but the survey time may be extended, depending on the number of responses received. Updated information will be distributed to the group once the survey analysis is complete.

Ms. Hatten also briefly mentioned PPACG's contract with Trilogly Integrated Resources to develop a Network of Care website for Service Members, Veterans & Their Families for the Pikes Peak region. This is a key recommendation from the Phase II Growth Plan – to develop a primary point of entry for social services for Soldiers and family members. PPACG is working with the Growth Plan's Medical, Behavioral Health & Social Services partnership group, Fort Carson's Warrior Family Community Partnership, Pikes Peak United Way 2-1-1, Army OneSource, and other stakeholders to develop the service directory component of the site. Information and resources available will include veterans information and crisis intervention; a searchable library of articles; links to key local, state, and national resources; social networking features; and a Personal Health Record feature, which allows individuals to store personal information, including health or military service documents, care coordination, emergency contacts and other information. The site is expected to launch in the spring. An example of the Network of Care site can be found at the following link:

<http://sandiego.networkofcare.org/Veterans/home/index.cfm>

School District Count Data

Joanne Vergunst provided information regarding military students in school districts throughout the region for the 2009-2010 school year (see attachment). This includes information regarding the number of military students per district; the number of special education students and military special education students; and (very rough, at this point) cost estimates for serving students with special needs. While certain districts, particularly Fountain-Fort Carson D-8, have very high numbers of military students, the data indicate significant numbers of military students in districts throughout the region. Information is still being collected for some districts, as well as for the 2010-2011 school year. Updated information will be distributed when available.

LTC Wilkinson expressed appreciation for the information, which will help in Fort Carson's planning efforts to provide school-based services off-post based on identified community needs/gaps. (Staffing numbers and locations and resource needs are still being determined.)

Other Business

It was noted that school district budgets continue to be affected significantly. Because of the end of ARRA funding (will no longer be available by the end of 2011) and state and district budget cuts, districts will face ongoing staffing challenges.

It was also noted that districts are currently experiencing poor attendance for military students. Attendance problems appear to be directly related to ongoing deployments, for a variety of reasons, including block leave when Soldiers return and overtaxed/stressed parents who keep older children out of school to help with younger children, and other factors. Some districts require education plans to be completed by parents in order for children to have excused absences during block leave.

Ongoing concerns about getting families to complete Impact Aid forms were also raised. Most districts undercount military students because forms are not completed for all students. Therefore, the districts receive less funding. Educating parents on the importance of completing forms remains a challenge. Impact Aid funding was also the subject of a recent news story by NewsFirst 5 (<http://www.newsfirst5.com/news/local-schools-losing-millions-in-promised-federal-funding/>).

The next partnership group meeting is scheduled for May 12th. Any updates prior to that date will be sent via e-mail.

Upcoming Meetings/Events

- **15 April 2011, 9am-4pm** Military Children & Youth Symposium (flyer attached)
- **20 April 2011, 3:00pm** Colorado Defense Mission Coalition (CDMC) meeting
- **5 May 2011, 3-6pm** Fort Carson Community Partnership Town Hall (details TBD)
- **12 May 2011, 3:30pm** Education Partnership Group meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45pm.