



El Cajon Collaborative
Newcomer Support Coordination Meeting Notes
December 3rd, 2009

I. Follow-up items from November Meeting

- **AYSO Soccer Leagues**
Lea has outreached to the local AYSO region president and has not yet heard back from him. There was discussion that this might be off-season, she will report back next meeting.
- **ESL classes update**
Cuyamaca representative Sheryl Ashley came with bad news regarding cut-backs to the non-credit ESL classes they have been able to provide in the past. We have not heard from Grossmont Adult school, Kara Vickrey (chair) will follow up. Ideas were discussed on what acceptable alternatives would be during these difficult financial times. One recommendation is to encourage folks who are English speakers to consider volunteering for Laubach Literacy Council, which provides a 12 hour training for new teachers and then utilizes them for small group ESL tutoring with a commitment of 6 months. There was also a revelation that job search experience can count for 6 weeks of English learning. Rowan from the Maximus Cal Works program will follow-up.
- **Refugee Summit on Education & Employment – Cuyamaca College**
More than 160 people attended the recent summit. No summary has been provided from the summit yet, Sheryl Ashley stated that there is a debrief meeting of the planning group on December 17th. They are planning on doing more cultural awareness of GCCCD staff and have a white paper available on a website.
- **Cultural Orientation for Newcomers**
The cultural orientation topics for Catholic Charities were provided. These topics are similar across all the resettlement agencies and include many issues which can not fully be dealt with in such a short period of time. It was suggested that additional community presentations be organized as an ongoing resource to newcomer families, particularly regarding legal and child welfare. Tim Slade of Catholic Charities is also looking for space to hold regular cultural orientation “CO” presentations. Additionally, a conversation about domestic violence and sexual abuse was indicated that there needs to be more education at an early stage about the laws in America. One suggestion was to find if maybe there are video resources which can provide testimonials of Middle Eastern families who have been affected by domestic violence.

II. Discuss Target Areas

- **Parent Education**
Tammy Ullsperger of the El Cajon Valley High School shared that there have been some significant challenges related to attendance of students because of newcomer families needs and cultural beliefs. It was recommended that people refer families to the school for education on alternatives to truancy. Also, it was recommended that cultural

***El Cajon Collaborative Vision:** An El Cajon community working collaboratively to ensure children, youth and families are safe, empowered and thriving*

***Mission:** The El Cajon Collaborative builds relationships, leverages resources and implements best practices to serve the children and families of the El Cajon Community.*

orientation could include a presentation by Tammy to help families understand what to do when the student needs to be absent.

- Job Development
Lea asked if anyone has East County Chamber of Commerce connections, which would be a next step for job development ideas. Also, she did contact the Welcome Back Center and hopefully they will be coming to a meeting soon.

III. Community Events/Announcements

H1N1 Training/Presentation for county staff, service providers and Voluntary Resettlement Agencies on Tuesday, December 15, 2009 from 10:30 – 12:30 at the San Diego Police Dept. Multi-Cultural Storefront (ground floor), 5348 University Ave, San Diego, CA 92105. Please RSVP by Monday, December 10th to Lisa Vang (916-654-2387) or chong.vang@dss.ca.gov.

Next Meeting: January 7, 2009

Workgroup Mission: *Our mission is to encourage respect and understanding of diverse cultures through community education and newcomer service support coordination.*