

PeopleFirst! Input and Contributions

Introduction

The *PeopleFirst!* plan for human capital development compiles the highest priority research-based strategies and recommendations from numerous local plans and assessments conducted from 2004 through 2007. These plans collectively gathered information and perceptions from thousands of local leaders and experts in education, government, business, grass-roots organizations as well as non-affiliated citizens. Following is an overview of local participants and other data sources used to assess local community needs and opportunities.

1. Shelby County Strategic Plan for Quality Early Care and Education 2005

This plan provide the research-based strategies found in *PeopleFirst!* **Goal B: Affordable, accessible high quality early care and education for all young children in Shelby County in care outside the home.** Leaders from following organizations were members of the plan's Steering Committee:

- LeBonheur Center for Children and Parents
- Lemoyne Owen College
- Memphis Association for Family ChildCare
- Memphis Association for the Education of Young Children
- Memphis City Government
- Memphis City Schools
- Memphis Quality Childcare Association
- Memphis Tomorrow
- NSA Mid-South Child Development Center
- Office of Mayor A C Wharton
- Office of U.S. Rep. H. Ford
- Quali-T Yes!
- Ready, Set, Grow!
- Shelby County ChildCare Resource & Referral
- Shelby County Head Start
- Shelby County Schools
- Southwest TN Community College
- Tennessee Family Child Care Alliance
- The Assisi Foundation
- The Community Institute for Early Childhood
- The Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis
- The Hyde Family Foundation
- The Plough Foundation
- TN Department of Human Services
- United Way of the Mid-South
- University of Memphis College of Education

These members, plus 90 other individuals, participated in five planning task forces. In addition to the organizations listed above, the following organizations were represented in these task forces include:

- Blooming Scholars Child Care
- Catholic Charities
- City of Memphis Center for Neighborhoods
- Tennessee Dept. of Education
- Empowered Family Child Care Support Group
- Family Services of the Mid-South
- Family to Family Home to Home Support Group
- First Tennessee Bank
- Heartbeat – CPR
- Heritage Enrichment Center
- Hooks Dimmick Childcare
- Jessie Mahan Childcare Center
- Kiddie Kollege Childcare
- LeBonheur Childrens Medical Center
- Lebonheur Early Intervention
- Memphis & Shelby County Division of Planning & Development
- Memphis Area Chamber of Commerce

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Finally, the following groups provided input and guidance via surveys, focus groups, and public meetings:

Parents

- Over 1,500 responses to parent surveys
 - Manual survey distributed at Community Institute's First Day Fair (608 parents throughout the community)
 - On-line survey on First Year's Institute website
- 6 parent focus groups with a total of 54 participants
 - 2 very low income groups
 - 4 mixed income groups at local companies

Child Care Providers

- 6 Provider Focus groups for a total of 45 childcare administrators and teachers
 - For/not-for-profit, faith-based/secular, center/home-based, all star levels from throughout the community
 - 125 Provider Survey's (15% of provider universe)

General Public

1. Town Hall Meeting with approximately 150 attendees — mix of childcare providers and parents
2. Input consistent with other research

2. School Funding and Governance Reform: Final Report of the Task Force for Quality Education 2006-2007

This report originated the strategies found under the *PeopleFirst!* **Goal C: High quality K-12 public education throughout Shelby County** and **Goal D: Affordable, accessible high quality “out of school time” programs for all youth in Shelby County.** The following individuals comprised the Task Force for Quality Education:

- Ron Belz, Belz Enterprises
- Beth Dixon, Memphis Rotary Club
- Bobbi Gillis, Memphis Regional Chamber
- Sharon Goldsworthy, Mayor of Germantown
- Russel Gwatney, Gwatney Chevrolet
- Lee Harris, Black Business Association
- Dr. Carol Johnson, Superintendent, Memphis City Schools
- Terry Jones, Mayor of Millington
- Linda Kerley, Mayor of Collierville
- Sara Lewis, Past Board Chair, Memphis City Schools

Ex Officio

- Willie W. Herenton, Mayor, City of Memphis
- A C Wharton, Mayor, Shelby County

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3. The Survey of Student Resources and Assets: Memphis City/Shelby County School System

This assessment was commissioned by the Memphis/Shelby County Youth Development Collaborative from the research-based Search Institute. In addition to recommendations found within the Task Force for Quality Education, this reports findings and recommendations also support and inform the strategy for *PeopleFirst!* **Goal D: Affordable, accessible high quality “out of school time” programs for all youth in Shelby County.**

This report was based on findings from 2,500 surveys randomly administered to 7th and 9th graders throughout MCS and SCS schools. Members of the Youth Development Collaborative Steering Committee that oversaw this initiative are as follows:

- Cheryl Beard, Co-Chair, Executive Director, Urban Youth Initiative
- Lee Morriss-Mueller, Co-Chair, Executive Director/CEO, Girl Scout Council of the Mid-South
- Sandra H. Burke, President, Girls Incorporated of Memphis
- Dr. Bill Byrne, President, Tennessee Mentorship
- Dr. Florence Calaway, Coordinator, Research and Evaluation MCS
- Debra A. Early, Education and Youth Development Director, Memphis Urban League
- Derek Henson, Program Manager, Teen Job Services, Metropolitan Inter-Faith Association
- Dr. John McCall, President, ArkWings Foundation
- Shauna Murphy, Program Director, Y-CAP Branch, YMCA of Memphis and the Mid-south
- Maura Black Sullivan, Coordinator, Planning and Student Services, SCS
- Lisa Moore Willis, Vice President for Programs, BRIDGES USA, Inc.

4. Labor Market Assessment: Sub-Region 1 (Shelby County, TN)

This assessment was commissioned by the Memphis Regional Economic Development Council from Younger Associates and Wadley-Donovan GrowthTech LLC. Its findings and recommendations were the primary guidance for strategies found in *PeopleFirst!* **Goal E: High quality post-secondary and workforce programs that effectively prepare people for, and match them with, local workforce opportunities.**

The findings presented in this study were developed by Younger Associates and Wadley-Donovan based on their national expertise and broad information-gathering from Shelby County citizens and businesses. Their information gathering ensured a comprehensive and diverse set of inputs, including:

- Approximately 75 interviews of representative employers, educators, trainers, and government officials throughout the region
- Six focus groups consisting of target-industry employers and a cross section of all employers, and of community representatives
- 207 surveys returned from employers across the regions with 20 or more employees in all business sectors
- 400 face-to-face surveys of residents in ages 18-70 of all socio-economic segments of the population

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In addition, the group obtained data from research sources including the Memphis Regional Chamber, Tennessee Department of Economic & Community Development, U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the U.S. Departments of Education and Commerce, as well as Environmental Systems Research Institute Business Information Solutions (SERIBIS), a leading vendor of demographic data.