



VALLEY OF THE SUN EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION Statement of Commitment as a High-Performing, Inclusive Organization

Valley of the Sun Early Childhood Association (VSECA) seeks to become a high-performing inclusive organization that exemplifies its mission and vision for young children and their families. We are enriched by the diversity within our community, placing inclusion as a core value in our work throughout Maricopa County and the state of Arizona.

Our commitment to being a high-performing, inclusive organization is honed by the understanding of the Guiding Principles set forth by the NAEYC Governing Board:

High Performing Inclusive Organizations recognize the uniqueness of individuals, groups, and organizations. Becoming a high performing inclusive organization is dependent upon simultaneous growth and development of individuals and groups and of the organization.

- 1. High Performing Inclusive Organizations define and understand diversity as broad, multidimensional, and inclusive of diverse viewpoints and perspectives, consistent with the overarching mission and vision of the organization.**
- 2. High Performing Inclusive Organizations understand the relationship of being inclusive to being high performing, and the importance of being high performing to the association's ability to achieve its mission and goals. The commitment to including a diversity of experiences and backgrounds requires special attention to achieving open and constructive debate prior to making decisions. All policies, programs and activities should reflect the association's mission and goals and articulate its philosophy and vision.**
- 3. High Performing Inclusive Organizations understand and acknowledge the role of individual, organizational and societal contexts to growth and development (e.g, personal life experiences influence uniqueness of individuals; organizational cultures reflects leaders' and members' understanding of pluralism and inclusion; and society reflects the power and systems that confer privilege or deny access and opportunity to individuals and groups.)**
- 4. High Performing Inclusive Organizations see value in being visionary, developmental and intentional in addressing change – particularly concerning social policy, demographic, and global changes impacting the organization's capacity to achieve its mission.**
- 5. High Performing Inclusive Organizations seek to leverage the inherent tensions between historical context, the power of the present, and intentional and inevitable change to remain dynamic, viable institutions. This requires a plan for managing change and identifying and supporting desired results of organizational transformation.**

6. Organizations seeking to be high performing and inclusive make a long-term commitment to plan, build understanding, develop policy, and take action to sustain organizational transformation.

Maricopa County is one of the largest metropolitan communities in the United States, encompassing over 9200 square miles. With a population exceeding 4 million, the Valley of the Sun is rich in culture, languages, and ethnicity. The 2010 U.S. Census¹ indicates that 57% of the population is White or Caucasian, 30% is Hispanic or Latino, 5% is Black or African American, 4% are Asian, 2% are Native American, and 2% are made up of other ethnic origins. Although the majority of Board members are White or Caucasian, we are a board that is highly reflective our diverse community.

In Maricopa County, the average median household income hovers around \$53,000, with roughly 17% of the population living in poverty. It is therefore imperative that we act with intent to build communications and services across our community by attracting to our Board state and local individuals and organizations engaged in providing for the common good, healthcare, developmental and educational services for children at risk.

We define and understand diversity as broad, multidimensional, and inclusive of diverse viewpoints and perspectives, yet remaining consistent with the overall mission and vision of our organization.

We recognize that personal life experiences influence the uniqueness of individuals; organizational cultures are reflective of members' understandings of pluralism and inclusion; and society reflects the power and systems that confer privilege or deny access and opportunity to individuals and groups.

We value our organization as visionary, developmental, and intentional in addressing change. We are transformational in practice, responding to social policy, demographic, and global changes that impact our organization's capacity to achieve its mission. This requires intentional strategies for managing change, for identifying and supporting desired outcomes.

We strive to make a long-term commitment to plan, to build understanding, to develop policy, and to take action in sustaining organizational transformation with dignity and grace.

Adopted by the VSAEYC Governing Board: June 2016

Revised by the VSECA Governing Board: January 2018

¹ U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). *U.S. census 2010 Maricopa County Arizona*. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/04013>