



**FIRST THINGS FIRST**  
*The right system for bright futures*

**First Things First Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council**  
**January 06, 2009**  
**Minutes of a Meeting**

**Call to Order/Welcome/Introductions:** The regular meeting of Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council was held on Tuesday, January 6, at 1:00 pm. at the Diné for Our Children, Conference Room, 48 West Highway 264 - Quality Inn Office Complex, Window Rock, Arizona, 86515. Chairwoman Dr. Paula Curley called the meeting to order at approximately 1: 40 pm.

**Members Present:** Dr. Paula Curley, Dorothy Yazzie, Jenny Rodgers, Herbert Long, Paula Seanez, Gerri Kee-Yazzie, First Lady Vikki Shirley, Spencer Willie, and Dr. Joe Martin (call in)

**Community / Public:** Julie Fitzgerald

**FTF Staff:** Dr. Florinda Jackson, AdiShakti Khalsa

**Approval of Minutes:** Regional Coordinator presented the minutes for the NNRPC November 12, 2008 meeting. Member Paula Seanez motioned to approve the Minutes. The motion was seconded by Member Dorothy Yazzie. Motion carried with a vote of 7 yes, 0 no, 1 abstention

**Discussion of Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Funding Plan:**

**Strategy 1: Increase number of children receiving quality early care and education through expansion of funding for Quality First! for facility improvements, coaching, and professional development.**

A new study of the Colorado's Qualistar Quality Rating and Improvement System by the RAND Corporation<sup>5</sup> suggests that the quality indicators which produce child outcomes measure not only the quality of the environment, but also the quality of interactions, in early care and education settings. Arizona is incorporating this research into its development of *QUALITY FIRST!* Arizona and the Navajo Nation will now have a system and working model of early childhood care and education quality standards, assessment and supports (financial and other) throughout the state, rather than multiple models, in order to ensure public confidence in its validity and to systematically evaluate outcomes for children.

Arizona's *Quality First!* includes the following components:

Administrative Infrastructure at FTF for coordination of the statewide system standards and rating, scale to define the various levels of quality, assessment of quality using standardized tools and reliable assessors, quality improvement plans that set goals related to standards and assessment results, coaching to reach goals in the quality improvement plan, child care health consultation to address health issues, T.E.A.C.H. scholarships to enhance professional

development of child care professionals, financial incentives and awards for materials, equipment, and other improvements, and evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the system in meeting its desired outcomes.

Goal: (1) FTF will improve access to quality early care and education programs and settings.

Key Measures:

- Total number of children enrolled in early care and education programs participating in the QIRS system
- Total number and percentage of early care and education programs participating in the QIRS system improving their environmental rating score

Target Population: FY10: 10 child care centers within the Navajo Nation Region

Proposed Service Numbers:

FY2010 July 1, 2009 -June 30, 2010 = 10 centers

SFY2011 July 1, 2010 –June 30, 2011 = 10 centers

SFY2012 July 1, 2011 -June 30, 2012 = 10 centers

Performance Measures SFY 2010-2012

- # of centers served through QUALITY FIRST! /FY10 10 centers, FY11- 10 centers, FY12 10 centers / actual service #\_\_\_\_
- # of children enrolled in early care and education programs with an increase of students each year over a 3 year period.
- # of identified improvements in regulatory and monitoring
- # quality early care and education programs increasing score/proposed service number

The Regional Council will monitor the participation and progress of all of the centers and homes enrolled in *Quality First!* The Council also plans to work on increasing community awareness and understanding of quality improvement for early care and education.

SFY2010 Expenditure Plan for Proposed Strategy

Population-based Allocation for proposed strategy \$ 500,000

Budget Justification:

Based on information on cost for QUALITY FIRST! provided by First Things First, with costs ranging from \$22,000 per home care provider to \$27,000 - \$34,000 per center depending on size, the Regional Council recommends using the average cost of \$32,125 per center for the purpose of budgeting. The Regional Council will target an additional 10 centers currently operating in the Navajo Nation Region beyond those that will be funded through the statewide initiative.

(a)	10 medium child care centers x \$32,125.00 =	\$ 321,250
(b)	Additional dollars for more specified improvement per center	+ \$ 178,750
	NNRPC FUNDED	\$ 500,000

- (a) 10 CENTERS FOR QUALITY AND ACCESS ON NAVAJO NATION - Medium Centers  
 Enrollment Bonus = \$500  
 TEACH Scholarship = \$3,200  
 Improvement Grant = \$10,000  
 TEACH Admin Home = \$625  
 Improvement Award = \$1,000  
 Fixed Cost = \$16,800

TOTAL \$32,125.00

- (b) ALL 19 CENTERS ELIGIBLE FOR QUALITY FIRST ON NAVAJO NATION WILL BE ABLE TO APPLY FOR ADDITIONAL NEEDS, IF A PARTICULAR CENTER WAS IN NEED OF CERTAIN AREA.

CAP OF \$10,000 PER CENTER (19 CENTERS / \$178,750 = \$ 9,407 PER CENTER)

- Enrollment Bonus
- Improvement Grant
- Improvement Award
- TEACH Scholarship
- TEACH Admin Home
- Additional dollars for more specified improvement per center

TOTAL \$ 178,750

**STRATEGY # 2: Increase numbers of children receiving quality early care and education through expanding capacity of existing centers.**

A barrier to providing increased care to infants and toddlers pertains to specific center improvement requirements in order to ensure accountability with valid outcomes for children. However, most early care providers do not have the available financial resources for quality supplements. The most effective delivery system for these services will be developed to address the following considerations:

1. Scholarships to enhance professional development of teachers
2. Materials and equipment/Curriculum Enhancement
3. Facility improvements/ renovations with a 50% secured match
4. Assessment to determine the effectiveness of the system in meeting its desired outcomes
5. Evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the system in meeting its desired outcomes
6. Coaching Enhancement

Lead Goal: Quality and Access

Goal: (1) FTF will improve access to quality early care and education programs and settings.

Key Measures:

- Total number of children enrolled and vacancies in regulated early care and education programs as a proportion of total population birth to age 5.
- Total number of identified improvements in regulatory and monitoring standards.

Proposed Service Numbers

SFY2010 July 1, 2009 -June 30, 2010 = 16-20 centers

SFY2011 July 1, 2010 –June 30, 2011 = 16-20 centers

SFY2012 July 1, 2011 -June 30, 2012 = 16-20 centers

Target Population: FY10: Infant/ Toddler/Preschools and child care centers within the Navajo Nation Region.

Performance Measures SFY 2010-2012

- # of new infant/toddler centers / preschools - #proposed service numbers
- # of children enrolled in early care and education programs with an increase of students each year over a 3 year period.
- #of identified improvements in regulatory and monitoring standards
- # quality early care and education programs increasing score/proposed service number

SFY2010 Expenditure Plan for Proposed Strategy:

Population-based Allocation for proposed strategy: \$425,000

1. Scholarships to enhance professional development of teachers capped at 3,200 per center
2. Materials and Equipment/Curriculum Enhancement capped at 1,000 per center
3. Facility improvements/ renovations with a 50% secured match capped at 10,000 per center
4. Assessment to determine the effectiveness of the system in meeting its desired outcomes capped at \$4,000 per center
5. Evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the system in meeting its desired outcomes capped at \$2,000 per center
6. Coaching Enhancement capped at \$6,000 per center

Grantees may apply for 4 out 6 indicators, to not exceed 26,200 per center. An Assessment and Evaluation system is required for every center.

**Strategy #3: Increase number of children receiving quality early care and education through funding of homes to be licensed (licensing options that are available; Indian Health Sanitation Permit, Navajo Nation Business Application, etc).**

The provider will be considered a self-employed person who meets the Navajo Nation business regulations for home based business, adhering to qualified home based child care regulations.

The most effective delivery system for these services will be developed to address the following considerations:

1. Start-up cost and Application Fees
2. Materials and equipment/Curriculum Enhancement
3. Scholarships to enhance professional development of providers
4. Facility improvements/ renovations with a 50% secured match
5. Assessment to determine the effectiveness of the system in meeting its desired outcomes
6. Evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the system in meeting its desired outcomes

Evidence supports that children who attend early care educational settings are ready for kindergarten. Head Start Preschools, Childcare centers and home based centers are regulated program which used best practices effectively.

Goal: (1) FTF will improve access to quality early care and education programs and settings.

Key Measures:

- Total number of children enrolled and vacancies in regulated early care and education programs as a proportion of total population birth to age 5.
- Total number of identified improvements in regulatory and monitoring standards.

Proposed Service Numbers

SFY2010 July 1, 2009 -June 30, 2010 = 22-25 homes

SFY2011 July 1, 2010 –June 30, 2011 = 22-25 homes

SFY2012 July 1, 2011 -June 30, 2012 = 22-25 homes

Target Population: Navajo Nation; 0-5 age children, home care providers and home based centers serving 0-5 age children.

Performance Measures SFY 2010-2012

- # of new family childcare homes providing care for infants and toddlers / proposed service number FY 22-25 homes, FY11- 22-25 homes centers, FY12 22-25 homes / actual service # \_\_\_\_
- # of children enrolled in early care and education programs with an increase of students each year over a 3 year period.
- #of identified improvements in regulatory and monitoring standards
- # quality early care and education programs increasing score/proposed service number

SFY2010 Expenditure Plan for Proposed Strategy (How much of the total allocation will go to this strategy)

Population-based Allocation for proposed strategy

\$ 275,000

Budget Justification: Describe how the allocation for the strategy was determined including characteristics unique to the region.

For new or existing home care to become regulated or licensed in areas of:

1. Start-up cost and application fees: BUSINESS LICENSE (NN Business Application fee @ \$150.00 one time, NN Sanitation permit fee of \$ 10.00 one time, NN Fingerprint Clearance fee @ 100.00 one time, CPR/First Aid Training fee @ \$50.00 annually and Arizona Licensing and Accreditation @ \$300.00 annually capped at \$600 per home provider).
2. Materials and equipment/Curriculum Enhancement capped at 1,000 per home: OPERATIONAL FOR A SAFE HOME (fire extinguisher/smoke alarm, fire plan/fire exit, poison/chemical control, food quality/toys quality, napping/snack equipment and telephone.
3. Scholarships to enhance professional development of home providers capped at \$1,600 per home.
4. Facility improvements/ renovations with a 50% secured match capped at \$3,500 per home.
5. Assessment to determine the effectiveness of the system in meeting its desired outcomes capped at \$4,000 per home.
6. Evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the system in meeting its desired outcomes capped at \$2,000 per home.

Grantees may apply for 4 out 6 indicators, to not exceed \$12,700 per home. An entity or agency to carry out financial/paperwork, at no additional dollars, will be forthcoming following a New Mexico model, provided by Dr. Curley.

**Strategy #4: Increase quality early care and education workforce by means of fostering education of those considering entering the field, those pursuing CDA, AA, BA, & MA degrees, and currently employed, through funding of scholarships, incentives, or professional development, as well as to increase quality early care and education workforce by funding MA level faculty and professionals stipends (transportation, per diem, etc.).**

This strategy is considered by the NNRPC to establish a Higher Education conduit at central site to serve high number of centers using distant education and on-line web CT video. To expand professional development opportunities for at least 45 Early Childhood Education Professionals to attain a Child Development Associate Certification (CDA), an Associate of Arts Degree (AA) emphasizing Early Childhood Education, or a Bachelor of Arts Degree (BA) in Early Childhood Education. The coursework will be grounded in the Dine Language and Culture. In the delivery of the courses, both distance learning and in person meetings with the students will be utilized. Ideally, a cohort model will be implemented, so that groups of students pursuing the same type of certification or degree are able to progress through the coursework together.

The most effective delivery system for these degree/certification programs will be developed to address the following considerations:

- Teachers of these courses must be highly qualified to teach the coursework and strong in the Dine Culture and Language (the faculty must be full faculty at PhD level; considerations will be made for Adjunct faculty and Practitioners, as determined by NNRPC.\*)
- The vast geography of the Navajo Nation, the remote locations of potential students and the issue of travel must be addressed; use of distance wide delivery will be give priority.
- Coursework must be scheduled at times that are accessible to early childhood teachers who work during the day and care for their families (presumably courses would need to be at night or on weekends)
- Academic supports, such as tutoring, coaching, and advisement must be provided
- Financial supports such as scholarships and money for books must be available for those who qualify
- Child care or any other supports to help ensure the students' success need to be considered
- Articulation agreements among the institutions of higher learning must be in place, so that all of the courses 'count' as the student progresses

Goal: (8) FTF will build a skilled and well prepared early childhood development workforce.

Goal: (9) FTF will increase retention of the early care and education workforce.

#### Key Measures:

- Total number and percentage of professionals who work with young children, outside of early care and education, who are pursuing a credential, certificate, degree in early childhood development or other appropriate specialty area.
- Total number and percentage of professionals working in early childhood care and education who are pursuing a credential, certificate, or degree
- Total number of children enrolled and vacancies in regulated early care and education programs as a proportion of the total population birth to age five.

Target Population: Adults pursuing a college degree, admitted to appropriate college or university.

#### Proposed Service Numbers

SFY2010 July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010; 45

SFY2011 July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011; 45

SFY2012 July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012; 45

#### Performance Measures SFY 2010-2012

- Increase in early childhood knowledge and practice through appropriate training after completion of course / strategic target.
- # of professionals pursuing degree in early childhood / Actual service #
- # of children enrolled in early care and education programs with an increase of students each year over a 3 year period.

SFY2010 Expenditure Plan for Proposed Strategy (How much of the total allocation will go to this strategy) population-based allocation for proposed strategy:  
\$500,000

Budget Justification: Developmental infrastructure to deliver:  
Scholarship: 45 students @ \$1000 each - 4 semesters = \$45,000 x 4 =  
\$180,000

Faculty /deliver: FTE Faculty (full time faculty at PhD level- see NNRPC considerations)  
\$314,000  
One class per semester @ \$60,000 - \$80,000 x 30% FTE x 4 semesters = \$314,000  
Faculty materials \$3,000 year x 2 = \$6,000

Total: \$  
500,000

**Strategy #5: Increase early care and education workforce for retention of degreed CDA, AA, BA & MA employment through funding of incentives or wage enhancement in early care and education.**

Firstly, a wage enhancement program would address two key issues affecting quality and access in early care and education settings: 1) retention of teachers and staff; and 2) qualifications of teachers and staff. The high turnover of early childhood staff directly impacts the quality of experience for children. Consistence of care in early education settings allows children to bond with their teachers and feel safe, thereby creating an environment conducive to learning. In order to improve retention of early childhood professionals, it will be important to enhance compensation. Wage enhancement programs incentivize teachers, staff and family child care home providers to increase their educational qualifications by taking college coursework in early childhood education.

Secondly, an awards incentive program will generate employee motivation and achieve results that will improve bottom lines and recognize participants' accomplishments. With appropriate support a customized incentive program should be incorporated that reflects tribal identity, culture and program emphasis. Participants need to have a clear understanding of the linkage between their effort and their incentive program.

The most effective delivery system for salary incentives, in form of an incentive bonus for certification or degree completion to address the following considerations:

- Throughout the creation of an incentive programs, a monitoring systems is needed to ensure the program runs seamlessly while providing insights every step of the way.

Program or organizations will ensure their staff members definitely are progressing and provide a bonus at the end with their completion of a certificate or degree.

- Degree: Incentive bonus will be \$500.00 for AA, BA or MA degreed Early Childhood and Special Education personnel. (100 total degrees available)
- Certificate: Incentive bonus for Early childhood, CDA, Special education for completion of certificate will be \$200.00 (250 total certificates available)

Lead Goal: (8) FTF will build a skilled and well prepared early childhood development workforce.

Goal: (9) FTF will increase retention of the early care and education workforce.

Key Measures:

Retention rates of early childhood development and health professionals

Target Population:

SFY2010 July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010; 100 AA, BA or MA degreed; 250 Early childhood, CDA, Special Education certificates

SFY2011 July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011; 100 AA, BA or MA degreed; 250 Early childhood, CDA, Special Education certificates

SFY2012 July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012; 100 AA, BA or MA degreed; 250 Early childhood, CDA, Special Education certificates

Performance Measures SFY 2010-2012

- # and % of early care and education teachers/assistant teachers retained for 3 years / Actual number and %
- % of early care workforce at entry level or advanced level retained for 2 years / proposed service #

SFY2010 Expenditure Plan for Proposed

Population-based Allocation for proposed strategy:

\$100,000

Budget Justification:

- Degree: \$50,000 = Incentive bonus will be \$500.00 for degreed Early Childhood and Special Education personnel. (100 total degrees available)
- Certificate: 50,000= Incentive bonus for Early childhood, CDA, Special education for completion of certificate will be \$200.00 (250 total certificates available)

**Strategy #6: Support Ke' (extended family/friends) by funding early care and education**

**through home visitations, resources, seminars, and hands-on training to improve knowledge and understanding of basic parenting /care giving skills.**

Home visiting services funded under this strategy will offer a comprehensive program to the families they serve, including a criteria of service in areas of Health and education; with emphasis of adult to child interactions within the cultural context (including early brain development, child development, curriculum, and behavior development).

The most effective delivery system for family visitation to address the following considerations:

- Social-emotional development and interactions for behavior and relationship building as it relates to reading and self concept.
- Focus on rural nature of population, need for regular home visiting to work with Navajo parents/relatives caring for the child.
- A plan articulating the transition from home to school and addressing the needs of "ready to learn" to be included.
- Public awareness and information efforts also need to go beyond informing parents and caregivers of information needed to raise an individual child or support a family in care giving.
- Health screening and resource support to be included.
- Home visitations programs and development include a 25 % secured match.
- An assessment/evaluation piece is required of the entity or organization providing the home visitation services.

Lead Goal: 11) FTF will coordinate and integrate with existing education and information systems to expand families' access to high quality, diverse and relevant information and resources to support their child's optimal development.

Goal: (12) FTF will increase the availability, quality and diversity of relevant resources that support language and literacy development for young children and their families.

Key Measures:

- Percentage of families with children birth through age five who report they are satisfied with the accessibility of information and resources on child development and health.
- Percentage of families with children birth through age five who report they are competent and confident about their ability to support their child's safety, health, and well-being.

Target Population:

SFY2010 July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010; TBD

SFY2011 July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2011; TBD

SFY2012 July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012; TBD

Performance Measures SFY 2010-2012:

- # of families receiving home visiting services/60 – proposed service #
- # and % of families that reported satisfaction with provided home visiting support/ Actual # & %
- # and % of families showing increases in parenting knowledge and skill after receiving home visiting support/ Actual # and %
- # and % of families reporting an increase in the # of days family reads/ Actual # and %

SFY2010 Expenditure Plan for Proposed Strategy

Population-based Allocation for proposed strategy  
\$400,000

Approximate: \$400,000 (TO BE DETERMINED USING A FORMULA BASE ALLOCATION)

**Strategy #7: Support families of children birth to 5 with literacy rich environments that promote dual -language in early care; education at preschools, centers and home based settings through funding including but not limited to: development of materials, dissemination of materials, clearinghouse, and community awareness to parents and families.**

Given this the Regional Partnership Council will work towards system building and sustainability and to expand the capacity of early language and literacy programs to provide supports and services to young children and their families. This strategy is conceptualized around the needs and concerns of the family, in contrast to serving individual family members in isolation. In order to do this effectively, the provider must:

- Recognize the oral and literacy history of the parents and first and secondary languages.
- Effective early literacy programs consider the socio-cultural context: that children's experiences with the world greatly influence their ability to comprehend what they read, Provide an opportunity for adults and children to reflect on literacy practices in their daily lives, and Understand the parent's literacy strengths and reinforce their knowledge and skills.
- Accommodations and adaptations should be made for children and adults with special needs or disabilities
- A storage and delivery system or clearinghouse infrastructure with necessary manpower operation and possibilities of on-line ordering, network, material storage, etc.
- Programs and development include a 25 % secured match
- An assessment/evaluation piece is required of the entity or organization providing services.

Lead Goal:

(11) FTF will coordinate and integrate with existing education and information systems to expand families' access to high quality, diverse and relevant information and resources to support their child's optimal development.

Goal: (12) FTF will increase the availability, quality and diversity of relevant resources that support language and literacy development for young children and their families.

Key Measures:

Percentage of families of children birth through age five who report they maintain language and literacy rich home environments (e.g. children hear language throughout the day, children have opportunities for listening and talking with family members, books and other literacy tools and materials are available and accessible to children).

Target Population: Newborn to five years child care early literacy development and dissemination for all children and families.

FY2010 July 1, 2009 -June 30, 2010; Pre-literacy: Birth -3 year; Pre-school: 3-5 year; Clearinghouse development and operation

SFY2011 July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011; Pre-literacy: Birth -3 year; Pre-school: 3-5 year; Clearinghouse development and operation

SFY2012 July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012; Pre-literacy: Birth -3 year; Pre-school: 3-5 year; Clearinghouse development and operation

Performance Measures SFY 2010-2012

- Number of programs offered per month to engage in literacy/language development  
Percent of Kindergarteners meeting benchmark at the beginning of the year for each school district in the region, according to DIBELS.
- Number of families receiving support to create literacy-rich environments

Budget Justification:

\$ 401,940

There is a significant variance in the types of education and support programs, and costs vary depending on the duration and scope of the service.

- Pre-literacy: Birth -3 year literacy activities = \$150,000
- Pre-school: 3-5 year literacy activities = \$150,000
- Clearinghouse development and operation = \$101,940

Chairwoman Paula Curley requested council members to refine strategies of funding plan, using the finance subcommittee to further define cost figures and administrative homes; to meet at a separate time and place following the informal open meeting law. A date was set for January 13, 2009 at 11:00 am. The finance subcommittee will report and recommend to the NNRPC on February 3, 2009.

**Coordinators Report:** There were no items to report at this time.