



FIRST THINGS FIRST

The right system for bright futures

Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council Finance Committee January 13, 2009 Minutes of a Meeting

Call to Order: The finance committee meeting held on Tuesday, January 13, 2009, at 11 a.m., at St. Michaels Association for Special Education Conference Room, 100 W. Mustang Rd., Window Rock, Arizona 86515. Paula Curley, chair of the council commenced at 11:08 am.

Members Present: Paula Seanez, Dr. Joe Martin (via phone), and Dr. Paula Curley

Members Absent: Dorothy Yazzie and Herb Long

Staff Present: Dr. Florinda Jackson, AdiShakti Khalsa, and Ellen Majure (via phone)

Guests present: Gloria Clark (NNHS), Grace Pooley (NNHS), Albert Damon Jr., (NNHS), and Jenny Rodgers (NNRPC)

Presentations of Cover Letter and Updated Funding Plan (summary of current version of plan with changes / recommendations for discussion) at committee meeting

Florinda asked committee to go through each strategy (1-7) using summarized cover letter and actual revised funding plan; each strategy will be thoroughly discussed and each finance committee member to give input /consensus, or further recommendations.

Strategy 1: Under this strategy, improvements in the quality of early care and education will occur through the enrollment of center based programs in Quality First! and it is recommended that the strategy name, key measures and performance measures be modified to reflect enrollment in Quality First!. Also, to recommend an outreach worker position as the liaison for Navajo Nation and Quality First. @ \$500,000

- a. Change the current key measures to these recommended 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.
(**Consensus from committee**)
- b. Modify the current performance measures to include the following:
 - # 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 standards (Navajo Nation Early Care Standards?)

(Consensus from committee)

- c. In addition, it is recommended that additional funding be provided to the 19 centers in the following two areas with a capped amount of \$5,750 per center. (19 centers/ \$108,750 = \$ 5,723 per center)
- Improvement awards to centers for additional improvement for centers (in addition to QF)
 - TEACH Scholarships for additional staff to utilize professional development activities (in addition to the 2 staff members designated by QF/TEACH).
 - The enrollment bonus and improvement award are covered through the Quality First! Program. The Navajo Nation Regional Council should provide a justification if they want to increase the enrollment bonus or improvement award. It is not necessary for the Regional Council to increase funding for the TEACH administrative home.

(Consensus from committee)

- d. Recommend an outreach worker to serve as a liaison between Early Care and Education programs throughout the Navajo Nation in order to maintain coordination among the local Navajo Nation government programs, State programs, and families of the Navajo Nation. Knowing that there are many variables and issues causing programs and centers to experience a decline in participation in Early Care and Education (such as culture, language, or inadequate facilities), especially in the remote areas of the Navajo Nation Region, an outreach worker may be very beneficial in working with the multiple programs, assisting with recruitment and providing information on the importance of quality early care and education. A designated outreach worker will ensure that recruiting in the centers and the areas of highest need are successful. I would like to propose budgeting \$70,000 to support a full time outreach worker. This outreach worker will need to have a good understanding of the assets and barriers within each of the communities, be able to establish strong relationships with the potential providers, and preferably have English/Navajo bilingual skills.
- A funding amount needs to be allocated at the cost of 1 FTE at 50,000, and materials @ 20,000= 70,000

(Consensus and Recommendation from committee; include benefits and research higher salary)

Strategy 2: Increase number of children receiving quality early care and education through expanding capacity of existing center @ \$425,000

Currently this strategy is written to provide quality improvement opportunities for center based early care and education programs that do not enroll in Quality First. Please note that the strategy name indicates that we want to **expand capacity of programs**.

Therefore we need to clarify as a Regional Council what we want to accomplish under this strategy—

- Is the **focus on expanding the number of children** with early care and education opportunities in center based programs?
 - Or is it about **improving the quality of early care and education**?
 - Or is it about **providing facility improvement grants**?
- a. There are concerns with the latter two if the Regional Council chooses those. With the way the strategy is currently written, there is concern that this strategy is another version of Quality First and therefore what is the rationale for developing a separate infrastructure to carry this work out? While it is recognized that all programs will not enroll in Quality First and there needs to be other strategies around improving quality, the Regional Council may want to consider looking at implementing a coaching and consultation model to achieve this as well as increasing opportunities for community based training. In regards to the facility improvements, we will need to provide the justification for why facility improvements are not linked to assessing the change in quality to the program and provide an explanation of how other federal funding streams are being used, even with a 25% match.
- b. Based on the issues raised above and the cultural and political history between the State of Arizona and the Navajo Nation, the FTF staff would like to recommend a meeting between FTF leadership and members of the Regional Council to talk through this strategy . FTF staff would like to schedule this as soon as possible and at a time that is convenient for Regional Council members. However if a meeting does not take place prior to the February Regional Council meeting when the Regional Council is planning to approve the funding plan, the Regional Council would be able to approve the other strategies and have those strategies presented to the State Board for approval at their February meeting. The Regional Council would be able to present strategy 2 at a later State Board meeting.

(Consensus and Recommendation from committee; to locate NNDOE and HS for further clarification and possible meeting, as well as council clarification of strategy 2)

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, NN Bus Application, etc) @ 275,00

- a. Are we planning to provide scholarships? If so that will be a concern as the home providers we are targeting are currently not regulated. Scholarships should go to individuals who are working in regulated programs. As a Regional Council we could provide community based training as the avenue to receive professional development.
- b. Also it is recommended that an incentive for facility improvements/renovations be offered after the home provider becomes regulated.

- c. In addition, a recommendation for the most effective delivery system for these services will be for an organization to serve as the administrative agent for this strategy and to carry out all aspects of the strategy with home care providers that includes the following:
- Start-up cost and Application Fees
 - Consultation for technical support
 - Support for safety improvements
 - Support for curriculum enhancement
 - Community based training
 - An incentive for facility improvements/renovations based on the expectation that the facility will acquire regulated status within 3 years (no cost this year)
- (Consensus and Recommendation from committee; to add to criteria listing for admin home, transition from home to school and training and support for health screening). Committee raised questions on purpose of 25% match, in-kind match of organization, need further discussion)***

No further discussion from finance committee due to end of quorum; each finance committee member will be individually reached to discuss remaining strategies and give input and recommendations. An updated funding plan will be then given to each finance committee member for final input prior to Feb. 3, 2009 NNRPC meeting.

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 . Also to increase quality early care and education workforce by funding MA level faculty and professionals stipends (transportation, per diem, etc.) @ 500,000

- a. The budget figures for this strategy need to be changed to one funding year only (2 semesters).
- b. Also do we want to consider including two cohorts and one additional faculty?
- c. Finally we need to clarify the definition of student, as a student may consist of a home care provider or center based employee or Arizona resident to pursue AA, BA, or MA degree meeting college or university requirements, as follows:
- d. Revised Developmental infrastructure to deliver for one year:
 - a. Scholarship: two cohorts of 45 students @ \$1,500 (tuition and text) each for 2 semesters = \$67,500 x 2 = \$135,000 x 2 cohorts = \$270,000
 - b. Faculty Team /deliver: FTE Faculty (Full time faculty at PhD level, three courses a semester /one year@ \$60,000-\$80,000 x 30% ERE = \$104,000 x 2 cohorts = \$208,000
 - c. Faculty materials \$4,000 year x 2 cohorts= \$8,000

Total: \$486,000

remaining balance \$14,000

Strategy 5: Increase early care and education workforce for retention of degreed CDA, AA, BA, and MA employment through funding of incentives or wage enhancement in early care and education: @ 100,000.00

- a. Wage Enhancement: We need to clarify if we want to provide a bonus after completion of a degree/certificate program, a wage enhancement, or both.
- The wage enhancement will require a place holder for upcoming year research and implementation @ average of \$2,000 a year per person. Depending on what FTF develops as a statewide strategy, this amount may be adjusted. Compensation packages will likely be established at different rates for different levels, i.e. less for someone completing an A.A. than someone completing a B.A. If FTF has not identified a compensation plan by FY10, funds would be carried forward to implement the plan regionally once FTF identifies what will be supported at the state level.
 - The salary incentive program will offer degree completion and certificate completion after 3-6 months of service
 - To conduct both salary incentive program and wage enhancement program will require to upgrade the salary incentive amounts to make a smoother transition towards 2,000 per wage enhancement per person.

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 @ 400,000.

- a. We need to clarify if **Strategy 6** is an **expansion of or new** early care and education through home visitations, resources, seminars, and hands-on training to improve knowledge and understanding of basic parenting /care giving skills.

Strategy 7(Early Literacy): 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 @ 400,000.

- a. We need to clarify if this is an **expansion of or new** 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.

Meeting Adjourned due to lost of quorum: 12:45 pm

The next regular NNRPC meeting is scheduled for February 3, 2009 at 1:00 PM.