



## FIRST THINGS FIRST

*Ready for School. Set for Life.*

### PUBLIC NOTICE OF MEETING OF THE ARIZONA EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH BOARD

Pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.02, notice is hereby given to the members of the First Things First Arizona Early Childhood Development & Health Board and to the general public that the Board will hold a ***Regular Meeting open to the public on January 20, 2014 beginning at 10:00 a.m., and January 21, 2014 beginning at 8:30 a.m. The meeting will be held at the First Things First offices located at 4000 N. Central Avenue, Board Room, Phoenix, Arizona 85012.*** Some members of the Board may attend telephonically.

*Pursuant to A.R.S. §§ 38-431.03(A)(1) & (A)(2), the Board may vote to go into Executive Session, which will not be open to the public, to discuss personnel items or records exempt from public inspection respectively, as indicated in the agenda. Pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(3), the Board may vote to go into Executive Session to obtain legal advice on any item on the agenda.*

*The Board may hear items on the agenda out of order. The Board may discuss, consider, or take action regarding any item on the agenda. The Board may elect to solicit public comment on any of the agenda items.*

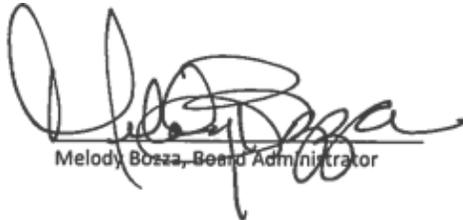
*The meeting agenda is as follows:*

- 1. Call to Order** **Janice Decker, Chair**
  
- 2. Conflicts of Interest** **Janice Decker, Chair**  
*Board Members will address potential conflicts of interest regarding items on this agenda.*
  
- 3. Call to the Public** **Janice Decker, Chair**  
*This is the time for the public to comment. Members of the Board may not discuss or take legal action regarding matters that are not specifically identified on the agenda. Therefore, pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.01(H), action taken as a result of public comment on matters not on the agenda will be limited to directing staff to study the matter, responding to any criticism, or scheduling the matter for further consideration and decision at a later date.*
  
- 4. Consent Agenda** **Janice Decker, Chair**  
*All items on the Consent Agenda will be considered for approval by a single motion with no discussion. Any individual item listed on the Consent Agenda will be removed from the Consent Agenda and discussed and voted on as a regular agenda item upon the request of any Board member.*
  - A. *Board Meeting Minutes: December 9, 2014* ***(Attachment #1)***
  - B. *Communications & Public Affairs Update* ***(Attachment #2)***
  - C. *Tribal Affairs Update* ***(Attachment #3)***
  - D. *Quality First Update* ***(Attachment #4)***
  - E. *Technical Changes to Strategies and Allotments* ***(Attachment #5)***
  - F. *Statewide and Signature Strategies Report* ***(Attachment #6)***
  - G. *Needs & Assets Report: Amended Extension Requests* ***(Attachment #7)***
  - H. *Meeting Location Change* ***(Attachment #8)***

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 5. Tribal Data Policy – Second Read ( <a href="#">Attachment #9</a> )<br>(Discussion and Possible Action)   | Candida Hunter,<br>Sr. Director, Tribal Affairs           |
| 6. Board Governance Policy Amendment – Second Read ( <a href="#">Attachment #10</a> )<br>(Discussion and Possible Action)   | Sam Leyvas, CEO   |
| 7. Briefing: Pre-K Development Grant and School Readiness Framework<br>(Presentation and Discussion) ( <a href="#">Attachment #11</a> )   | Amy Corriveau, Deputy<br>Associate Superintendent,<br>ADE |
| 8. Appointment of Regional Council Member Applicants<br>(Discussion and Possible Action, Possible Executive Session)<br><i>Pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(1), the Board may vote to go into Executive Session, which will not be open to the general public, to discuss this matter.</i> | Michelle Katona,<br>Chief Regional Officer                |
| 9. CEO Report/Update  | Sam Leyvas, CEO   |
| 10. Board Member Report/Update  | Board Members   |
| 11. FY16 Regional Funding Plan Presentations<br>(Presentation, Discussion and Possible Action) ( <a href="#">Attachment #12</a> )   | Michelle Katona, CRO<br>Regional Council Members          |
| 12. Future Agenda Item Requests   | Board Members   |
| 13. Next Meeting – April 13 - 14, Yuma, Arizona   | Janice Decker, Chair                                      |
| 14. Adjourn   |   |

Dated this 9th day of January, 2015

**ARIZONA EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH BOARD**



Melody Bozza, Board Administrator

*A person with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation such as a sign language interpreter by contacting Melody Bozza, Board Administrator, Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board, 4000 North Central Avenue, Suite 800, Phoenix, Arizona 85012, telephone (602) 771-5026. Requests should be made as early as possible to allow time to arrange the accommodation.*



## FIRST THINGS FIRST

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### ARIZONA EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH BOARD

#### MEETING MINUTES

*Draft*

##### Call to order

A Regular Meeting of the First Things First Arizona Early Childhood Development & Health Board was held on Tuesday, December 9, at 9:00 a.m. The meeting was held in the Boardroom of the First Things First offices located at 4000 N. Central Avenue, Suite 800 in Phoenix, Arizona 85012.

Chair Decker called the meeting to order at approximately 9:03 a.m. at which time Melody Bozza, Board Administrator conducted roll call and confirmed quorum.

##### Members Present:

Janice Decker  
Dr. Pamela Powell  
Nadine Mathis Basha  
Gayle Burns  
Steven W. Lynn  
Hon. Cecil Patterson (Joined the meeting telephonically at 9:26 a.m.)  
Vivian Saunders  
Ruth Solomon  
Brad Willis (DES)  
Mary Ellen Cunningham (ADHS)  
Amy Corriveau (ADE)

##### Members Absent:

None

##### Conflicts of Interest

There were none at this time.

##### Call to the Public

Chair Decker asked if there were any members of the public present that wished to address the Board and provided the parameters for doing so. There were no comments from the public at this time.

##### Consent Agenda

Chair Decker advised that all items on the Consent Agenda would be considered for approval by a single motion with no discussion unless an individual item listed on the Consent Agenda was removed from the Consent Agenda and discussed and voted on as a regular agenda item upon the request of any Board member.

- A. *Board Meeting Minutes: October 3, 2014 (Attachment 1)*
- B. *Regional Partnership Council New and Revised Strategies, Grants and Contract Agreement Amendments (Attachment 2)*
- C. *Communications & Public Affairs Update (Attachment 3)*
- D. *Tribal Affairs Update (Attachment 4)*
- E. *Quality First Update (Attachment 5)*
- F. *Regional Needs & Assets Report (Attachment 6)*
- G. *Technical Changes to Strategies and Allotments (Attachment 7)*
- H. *Budget Update (Attachment 8)*

After reading the items on the Consent Agenda, Chair Decker asked if members of the Board wished to remove any item for discussion. There being no request to do so, Member Mathis Basha moved to approve the consent agenda, with a second from Member Lynn. Motion carried.

**Office of Administrative Hearings Recommendation: R&R Happy Face Daycare**

Christopher Munns, Assistant Attorney General in the Solicitor General's Office, provided a brief presentation and summation of the possible options available to the Board in reviewing the Office of Administrative Hearing recommended decision. Ms. Renee Powell, owner/operator of R&R Happy Face Daycare, was provided the opportunity to address the Board and participated telephonically. Ms. Powell was given approximately five minutes to rebut any of the findings of Office of Administrative Hearing decision that she felt were inaccurate.

Casey Cullings, First Things First General Counsel, was provided equal time to address the Board regarding the position of FTF and the Office of Administrative Hearing decision. It was Mr. Cullings recommendation that the Board accept the Administrative Law Judge's recommended order.

The Board having reviewed the Administrative Law Judge's Proposed Findings of Fact, Member Powell moved to adopt the Findings of Fact, paragraphs 1 – 12, as recommended by the Administrative Law Judge. Motion was seconded by Member Patterson. Motion carried.

Member Powell moved to adopt the Conclusions of Law, paragraphs 1 – 3, as recommended by the Administrative Law Judge. Motion was seconded by Member Burns. Motion carried.

Member Saunders moved to affirm the recommendation of the Administrative Law Judge. Motion was seconded by Member Burns. Motion carried.

Chair Decker thanked Ms. Powell for her participation and advised that she would receive the decision of the Board in writing along with information regarding the right to appeal.

**Study Session: Cycle of Implementation; Board and Regional Council Responsibilities [\(Attachment 9\)](#)**

Michelle Katona, Chief Regional Officer, presented information regarding the processes and methods for which regional councils carry out their roles and responsibilities and how information is then presented to the Board for decision making. Quarterly data reports and template documents can be posted for Board members or committee chairs to review.

**External Audits [\(Attachment 10\)](#)**

Josh Allen, CFO/COO, explained that each year per statute, FTF is subject to an independent year-end financial audit. Based on FTF's relatively small size, the Auditor General's Office does not conduct FTF's actual audit but instead relies on an approved outside/private audit firm to conduct and submit FTF's audit. FTF's final audit is forwarded to the Auditor General's Office as well as the General Accounting Office (GAO) for inclusion in the State of Arizona CAFR (Comprehensive Annual Financial Report).

In addition to the annual year-end audit, FTF is also always subject to direct testing audit(s) by the Auditor General's Office as well as performance or general fiscal operations audits conducted by the GAO – an office within the Department of Administration.

Josh Allen provided a brief overview of the two audits conducted and their findings:

- **FY14 Fiscal Year End External Financial Audit (Henry & Horne, LLP)**  
There were no findings as part of the audit, with FTF receiving an unqualified opinion on its financial statements. The included financials show that FTF's position remains relatively constant with last year. Also attached is the management letter related to the audit. Within this letter, no recommendations on FTF's business practices were made by the external audit team this year.

- **General Accounting Office (GAO) Performance Audit**

In early November 2014, the State Comptroller (the director of GAO) contacted FTF's CFO/COO regarding the work that was completed 2½ years earlier. As a result of a report not having been completed in a timely manner by the GAO and FTF not having the opportunity to provide any clarifying documentation related to concerns identified, GAO determined no report would be issued. However, FTF and GAO agreed it was in the best interest of FTF that FTF be provided with any concerns which were identified to ensure the organization was able to benefit in any way possible from the effort that was completed previously by both parties/agencies.

The goal of FTF is to adhere to the internal policies and procedures, as well as follow state procurement rules, in order to provide transparency to our work.

**Meeting was adjourned at 10:40 for a short break. Chair Decker reconvened the meeting at 10:53 a.m.**

**Tribal Consultation Report (Attachment 11)**

Candida Hunter, Sr. Director of Tribal Affairs, presented the report. FTF convened a formal consultation session on Tuesday, October 7, 2014 for the purpose of continuing a dialogue on effective early childhood system building in tribal communities and enhancing public-private partnerships to provide support for those early childhood systems. The attached report summarized the comments and questions raised by Arizona's tribal leaders and their representatives/designees.

**Tribal Data Policy – First Read (Attachment 12)**

Candida Hunter, Sr. Director of Tribal Affairs, introduced the policy. In formal consultation with Arizona's tribes, it was recommended that First Things First develop a formal data policy that outlines the agency's approach to seeking tribal data agreements. The attached draft was developed based on feedback obtained through past tribal consultations, as well as First Things First's experience in obtaining tribal data agreements over the past six years. This draft was submitted for review and discussion as part of the First Read of this policy. Training for staff and coaches is in development that will address the cultural aspects of collecting sensitive data in tribal communities, as well as the publication and sharing or suppression of data.

**Board Governance Policy Amendment – First Read (Attachment 13)**

The Executive Committee presented this item as a First Read for the Board's review and discussion. Possible action would occur during Second Read at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.

The current membership of the Executive Committee includes Board officers and Board committee chairs, including:

- Board Chair
- Board Vice-Chair
- Program Committee Chair
- Finance Committee Chair

Chair Decker asked that staff craft the necessary revisions to include language to encompass any additional standing committees that would be formed at a later date by including the chair of those committees on the Executive Committee without formally changing the governance policy each time.

**ADOA Employee Engagement Survey Results (Attachment 14)**

Sam Leyvas, CEO, reviewed the overall results of this survey as well as those specific to FTF. In June/July 2014, the Arizona Department of Administration fielded an employee engagement survey of all non-university state government employees – including First Things First. The ADOA employee engagement survey is based in large part on the national Gallup Q12 survey. Over 16,000 employees across the state responded; representing a 68%

response rate, an increase of 28% from 2012. Data included with this item include 2014 statewide results, 2014 FTF results, and 2012 statewide and FTF results.

#### **Appointment of Regional Applicants**

Chair Decker asked if any Board member wished to call for an executive session to consider the applicants for Regional Council appointment. With there being no request to convene an executive session, Member Lynn made moved to approve the appointment of regional council member applicants as presented, with a second from Member Mathis Basha. Motion carried.

#### **CEO Performance Management & Compensation**

Chair Decker presented the recommendations of the Executive Committee. At its October 2014 meeting, the Board tasked the Executive Committee with reviewing the existing CEO performance management process for the purpose of making recommendations to the Board on an updated process and performance appraisal criteria. Subsequent to the October Board meeting, the Executive Committee discussed, considered, and drafted a set of recommendations for the Board's consideration – including a proposed timeline and updates to the current review process, performance criteria, and a set of draft SMAART goals for the remainder of FY2015. The Executive Committee presents these items for the Board's review, discussion and possible action.

Member Powell moved to approve the CEO's compensation, the CEO Performance Management Timeline and Process, and the CEO's FY15 performance measures as presented. Motion was seconded by Member Solomon. Motion carried.

#### **CEO Report/Update**

Sam Leyvas, CEO, shared that he had met with Dr. Flannigan of the newly formed Department of Child Safety (DCS) to discuss the priorities and history of FTF's work with DES as it relates to prevention within the child welfare system. It is the desire of FTF and DCS to continue to work together in this area and to meet on a regular basis in order to continue that relationship.

Sam Leyvas introduced Benjamin Altener, the new Sr. Director of Government Affairs, to the Board. The Legislative Update is contained in the board packet for the Board's review. With a new state administration taking office in January, staff is preparing for the conversations that lie ahead with the new leadership. In addition, there could be some changes in leadership within state agencies. The Regional Councils have expressed a desire to be more engaged in the conversations with legislators. FTF has released an RFP for a lobbyist who will work closely with Mr. Altener on strategic approaches to the Legislature.

At tomorrow's Early Learning Summit at White House there will be an announcement of the recipients of early childhood grants, of which several FTF grantees applied.

Strategic planning work at a regional level is continuing, and the Chairs and Vice Chairs from each council will present their funding plans at the January Board meeting.

Sam also attended an Expect More Arizona Founders breakfast, where the conversation continues what a world class education means.

The Data Agreement between ADE and FTF has been finalized and was a monumental effort between the system partners.

#### **Board Member Report/Update**

- **Regional Area Leadership Calls ([Attachment 15](#))**  
Board Chair Janice Decker hosted a series of conference calls with regional council chairs and vice chairs throughout October. Calls were scheduled by the six regional areas with Phoenix and Maricopa leadership joining together and one call was held with a group of the tribal regional partnership councils. Leadership

from 27 of the 28 regional councils participated on the conference calls. Chair Decker is looking forward to hearing the funding plan presentations at the January 2015 Board meeting.

Member Mathis Basha reported on the Policy and Program Committee restructuring. Three standing subcommittees have been disbanded and instead ad hoc committees will be convened as it was thought they would be more efficient and have the ability to focus on more specific areas:

Quality First Continuous Improvement ad hoc – This committee will meet initially in February of 2015 and subsequently every other month, to provide data and input to program committee.

Developmental Delays ad hoc – This committee will begin meeting in February of 2015 and will meet for six months. This committee will provide revised language and data sources for this indicator.

Member Saunders reminded everyone that the Tribal Nations State Legislative Day will be held at the State Capitol in January for interaction and sharing of information and encouraged everyone to attend.

Member Corriveau shared that the School Readiness Framework was presented to the State Board of Education, and she would be happy to present the information at a later Board meeting. She also reported that the Quality Kindergarten initiative is moving forward and includes professional development, and the Board of Education hopes to have a school readiness summit this coming summer, as well as an infant toddler summit and kindergarten summit.

Member Corriveau also reported that ADE will be receiving some technical assistance from North Carolina in the coming months to work on the implementation of the Kindergarten Developmental Inventory tool. In November, ADE accepted and replaced the AIMS test with the AZ Merit test. This next year will be a hold harmless year for those third graders that may have been retained. Incoming Superintendent Douglas has already begun working on her transition to ADE, and Sam Leyvas will be meeting with her once that occurs to discuss our collaboration and the work we do.

Member Powell shared that FTF was the recipient of an award at Dinner in the Stacks from the Phoenix Public Library.

Member Lynn reported that the FTF Board currently has one vacancy to be filled, with two terms ending very soon, even though those members will continue to serve until a replacement is appointed. FTF staff will continue to work with the Governor's office to get the vacancy filled and identify potential candidates for the expiring terms.

Member Burns met with the leadership of the Navajo Nation in Washington last week, and they expressed how thankful they were for the work that FTF is doing in the tribal regions.

### **Future Agenda Item Requests**

School Readiness Framework as presented to ADE

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the First Things First Early Childhood Development and Health Board will be held on January 20 – 21, 2014 in Phoenix, Arizona.

### **Adjourn**

There being no further business Chair Decker adjourned the meeting at approximately 12:35 p.m.

Dated this 9<sup>th</sup> day of December 2014

**ARIZONA EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH BOARD**



Melody Bozza, Board Administrator

*Telephone Procedures:*

The Board Room telephone was used for the member participating by telephone. Speakers physically present at the meeting spoke into microphones to ensure that member on the telephone could hear.



## FIRST THINGS FIRST

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**AGENDA ITEM:**

Communications and Public Affairs Update

**BACKGROUND:**

The attached report provides information and updates related to Communications and Public Affairs.

The report is segmented into several focus areas including:

- Community Outreach
- Communications
- Government Affairs
- Tribal Affairs (see report under separate cover)

**RECOMMENDATION:**

For informational purposes only.

## Community Outreach

The Community Outreach team continues its success at community engagement, including the recruitment of stakeholders in a tiered model and subsequent positive actions that these Friends, Supporters and Champions are taking on behalf of young children. At the fiscal year midpoint, some notable accomplishments include:

- The team recruited 4,238 new Friends of First Things First, **exceeding their benchmark by 47 percent** and bringing the total number of Friends to 16,464.
- There **was an increase of 323 new Supporters** engaged over the last six months, bringing the total number of Supporters at midyear to 1,443.
- More than 300 individuals reached the Champion level of engagement in the first half of the fiscal year, **exceeding the team's benchmark by 227 percent!** With the inclusion of about 70 new regional council members, this brings the total number of Champions to 755.

The impact behind these numbers comes from understanding that each of those Supporters or Champions took some action or series of actions on behalf of young children, such as attending a training on how best to share the message about the importance of early childhood; sharing FTF collateral with personal or professional networks; helping to host an FTF information table at a community event; or, attending a site tour of an FTF-funded program. Many of these stakeholder actions were facilitated or driven by the Community Outreach team. There were 233 total recorded actions by our Supporters and Champions over the first two quarters of FY15. **This exceeded the statewide benchmark by about 20%.**

Likewise, the number of referrals from Friends for FTF to share information with another group or organization totaled 318, **exceeding the set benchmark by about 65%.** These referrals helped grow the number of people throughout Arizona who connected with FTF and heard the message about the importance of early childhood.

The Community Outreach team continues to ensure that Friends, Supporters and Champions have the tools and support they need to act upon their support for Arizona's youngest children. A comprehensive review of the First Things First community engagement program can be found in Appendix F of the *First Things First Strategic Communications Plan*.

## Earned Media

Earned media continues to be an area of focus for First Things First, with **more than 80 stories** regarding early childhood, First Things First and our grantees appearing in media statewide since our last report. Some highlights of those efforts included:

- Thanks to a relationship that Coconino Community Outreach Coordinator Cynthia Pardo has developed with AmigosNAZ – a print and online magazine for and about northern Arizona's Latino community – the December print edition cover story was dedicated to early childhood (a story about trainings for Kith and Kin providers) and *three* articles on a variety of holiday season topics (including tips for families) were featured in the online edition.
- Community Outreach Coordinator Rachel Egoro leveraged a relationship with the faith representative on her regional council to appear on his Community Connections radio show on Faith Talk 1360AM. The show focuses on community organizations and their work in the

Phoenix area. Rachel's 15-minute segment focused on the importance of early childhood and holiday tips for caregivers. She hopes to make regular appearances on the show.

- Part-time outreach consultant Paulette LeBlanc leveraged her relationships with editors in her region to place nine articles on a variety of seasonal topics across the three major print publications for her small region in one month.

In addition to these successes, Chief Executive Officer Sam Leyvas submitted three columns to *The Arizona Republic* that likely ran in 5-8 Community sections each. The topics of those columns included tips for preventing holiday letdown in young children; information on goal-setting with young kids; and, suggestions on how to help children 5 and younger explore and develop hobbies.

### **Paid Advertising/Social Media**

The fall/winter flight of our paid advertising featuring messages that raise awareness of the importance of early childhood has ended in most regions of the state. The ads will return in late spring/summer. Our online stakeholder engagement continues to grow. Since our last board report, **FTF's Facebook followers have increased by about 5,000 individuals** – to about 71,000. Our **Twitter followers have also increased slightly to total more than 1,340**.

### **Government Affairs**

Ben Alteneider, our new Senior Director for Government Affairs, has been working to build his understanding of early childhood and FTF and to establish relationships with stakeholders. Since our last report, he has met with staff in the state House and Senate with jurisdiction over FTF's issues. He has also met with representatives of the Governor's Office for Strategic Planning and Budgeting (OSPB), the Arizona Department of Education, the Department of Child Safety, ReadOn Arizona, the Arizona Education Foundation, and Children's Action Alliance.

Future meetings have been scheduled with staff of the Joint Legislative Budget Committee, Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System, and representatives of partner organizations like the Arizona School Boards Association, the United Way and the Arizona Child Care Association. He also is working to meet with his counterpart at the Department of Health Services.

In addition to building these crucial relationships, the Senior Director for Government Affairs also attended the Zero to Three Conference in Florida in December to build his understanding of early childhood program and policy issues.

A database of known relationships between policymakers and current regional council members is being finalized. The database will be used to reach out to those regional council members to determine their interest in becoming more engaged in FTF's activities to inform policymakers about the importance of early childhood development and health and the work of FTF.

The Senior Director also continues to monitor Legislative and Congressional activities. Below are some highlights since the last Board meeting.

## Governor's Office

**Doug Ducey was inaugurated as Arizona's 23<sup>rd</sup> governor on Jan. 5.** In his inaugural address, Gov. Ducey reiterated his opposition to higher taxes as a potential solution to address the state's budget shortfall. While short on specifics, the address did note a policy interest in creating equal opportunity for all children when accessing public education and a commitment to expanding the economy. Gov. Ducey has made several appointments to his senior staff. In addition, his [transition team](#) and related subcommittees are finalizing priorities, potential policy changes and hiring considerations.

## State Legislature

- **The Legislature is set to convene on January 12, 2015.** Other important deadlines include:
  - Governor's State of the State Address – Jan. 12
  - Governor's Executive Budget unveiled by Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting (traditionally the first Friday after the start of session) – Jan. 16
  - Joint Legislative Budget Committee unveils Legislature's proposed budget (traditionally the second Friday after the start of session) – Jan 23
  - Deadline to introduce bills in the Senate – Feb. 2
  - Deadline to introduce bills in the House – Feb. 9
  - Last day to hear bills in Chamber of Origin – Feb. 20
  - Last day to hear bills in either Chamber – March 20
  - 100<sup>th</sup> day of Session – April 21
- The **State budget** continues to be the main focus of the next legislative session. The Joint Legislative Budget Committee (JLBC) now estimates the following deficits (does not take into consideration the \$490 million "Rainy Day Fund" and any policy changes that may impact future fiscal years (fy):
  - \$520 million deficit for FY15
  - \$1 billion deficit for FY16
  - \$928 million deficit for FY17
  - \$787 million deficit for FY18
- **Committees** in the House and Senate have been finalized. The Appropriations Committee in the Senate remains largely the same; newly elected Sen. John Kavanagh (a former House member) has been added to the committee, which will be chaired by Sen. Don Shooter. In the House, the Appropriations Committee will be chaired by Rep. Justin Olson. Also in the House, a new committee has been formed named Children and Family Affairs which will be chaired by Rep. John Allen. The new committee likely will focus on child welfare and the implementation of the new Department of Child Safety. A list of legislative committees can be found [azleg.gov](http://azleg.gov).

## Congress

- The 114<sup>th</sup> Congress convened on Jan. 6. Republicans now hold the majority in both the House and the Senate.
- On Jan. 20, President Obama is scheduled to deliver his State of the Union address outlining his priorities and budget for the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress.

- With passage of the “Cromnibus” in the waning days of the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress, most federal government agencies are funded through September 2015. Enacting a new budget will be a significant focus of the new Congress.

**Tribal Affairs**

See report under separate cover.

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### **AGENDA ITEM:**

Tribal Affairs Update

### **BACKGROUND:**

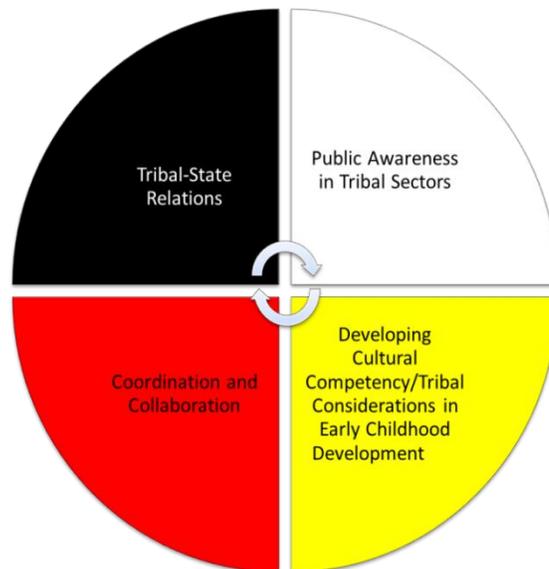
The attached table provides information on the activities related to Tribal Affairs for the month of December 2014. The first column lists three categories that indicate the overall content areas that summarize tribal affairs for this reporting period. These areas include:

- Tribal-State Relations
- Public Awareness in Tribal Sectors
- Coordination and Collaboration

The second column provides a summary of the activities and accomplishments.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

For informational purposes only.



**TRIBAL AFFAIRS STATUS REPORT**  
**December 2014**

Project Type	Description
<b>Tribal-State Relations</b>	<p>On December 8, the Senior Director of Tribal Affairs and Hualapai Tribe Regional Director attended the Hualapai Tribal Council meeting to present the region’s 2016-2018 funding plan, share information on the 2016 Regional Needs and Assets report process, and introduce the Senior Director of Tribal Affairs.</p> <p>On December 19, Tribal Affairs, Navajo Nation Regional Director and the Evaluation Project Director met with Chair Becenti-Pigman of the Navajo Nation IRB to seek guidance for the Navajo Native Language Preservation in Early Childhood Environments: Resources and Needs Assessment Scope of Work.</p>
<b>Public Awareness Efforts in Tribal Sectors</b>	<p>On December 13, the Senior Director of Tribal Affairs and the Community Outreach Coordinator of the Navajo Nation presented a session about the importance of early childhood and the work of First Things First at the Native American Scholarship Grant Association Conference. NAGSA is a non-profit association that was organized in 1991 to serve the unique needs of grant schools created by the Tribally Controlled Schools Act of 1988. NAGSA is comprised of schools from Arizona and New Mexico, including the Hopi Tribe, Navajo Nation, and White Mountain Apache Tribe. The mission of NAGSA is to: advocate for tribally controlled schools; act collaboratively on Native American school issues; advance Native American educational programs; empower local communities; and, ensure quality education for Native American students.</p>
<b>Coordination and Collaboration</b>	<p>Throughout December, Tribal Affairs and Research and Evaluation staff held teleconferences with Regional Directors to discuss information regarding the 2016 Regional Needs and Assets report and determine approval processes for each tribe.</p> <p>On December 9, Tribal Affairs staff attended the state Tribal Liaison Roundtable; the status of the 2014 Regional Needs and Assets report and the School Readiness Indicators were provided.</p> <p>On December 16, the Senior Director of Tribal Affairs attended the Arizona Coalition on Indian Health Care meeting. The ACOIHC continued discussion of amendments to the ACOIHC Statute and their desire to include FTF as a partner in the coalition.</p> <p>On December 30, Tribal Affairs staff met with Jody Sekerak, Stacion at the Phoenix Area Indian Health Services, to introduce themselves and request information specific to IHS data.</p>

**The following projects are currently in progress by Tribal Affairs:**

- Tribal Affairs and Community Outreach staff will attend the Indian Nations and Tribes Legislative Day on January 20. The purpose is to provide attendees – particularly legislators whose districts include tribal lands – with information about the importance of early childhood development and health and FTF’s work with Arizona’s Indian tribes and nations.
- The First Things First CEO, Senior Director of Tribal Affairs and regional staff will meet with Chairman Beauty and Vice-Chairwoman Rubio of the Yavapa-Apache Nation on February 3.
- The Senior Director of Tribal Affairs will continue to work with FTF Regional Directors to request meeting times with tribal leaders in the regions to introduce herself and provide pertinent information about FTF statewide and in the region.



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### AGENDA ITEM:

Quality First Update

### BACKGROUND:

The attached documents provide an updated report of Quality First enrollment data and estimated quality ratings on currently enrolled providers. Quality First Rating data shows that QF providers, on average, are making significant movement to higher quality levels. More than 49,000 children birth to 5 years are enrolled in Quality First programs and 45% of providers have achieved Quality levels (3-5 Stars).

The Quality First Participant Report shows 967 programs (910 Full Participation Actual Slots; and 57 Rating Only Actual Slots), which is different from the Quality First Preliminary Star Report, which indicates there are 932 programs with star ratings; this number differs because 35 programs are currently pending assessments and star ratings.

All Quality First Ratings are based on three measures: (1) ERS - Environmental Rating Scales (ECERS, ITERS, and FCCERS); (2) Classroom Assessment Scoring System – CLASS (Domains: Emotional Support, Instructional Support, and Classroom Organization); and, (3) QF Points Scale that measures Staff Qualifications, Administrative Practices, and Curriculum and Child Assessment. The table below includes providers whose ratings are now public, as well as providers who are in the process of completing one or more of the three assessments. Ratings for providers with an incomplete assessment process are considered as *preliminary Quality First Ratings*.

November 2014	December 2014	% Change
Providers: 965	Providers: 967	+0.2%
Children: 48,712	Children: 49,107	+0.8%
Waitlist: 323	Waitlist: 326	+0.9%
Ratings (911 Providers):	Ratings (932 Providers):	
1 Star: 12	1 Star: 15	+25.0%
2 Star: 507	2 Star: 501	-1.2%
3 Star: 259	3 Star: 276	+6.6%
4 Star: 107	4 Star: 109	+1.9%
5 Star: 26	5 Star: 31	+19.2%

### RECOMMENDATION:

Presented for information purposes only.

## Quality First Eligible Applicant and Enrolled Participant Data Report

Regional Partnership Council	Wait List	Full Participation Allocated (funded) Slots	Rating Only Allocated (funded) Slots	Full Participation Actual (filled) Slots**	Rating Only Actual (filled) Slots**	Infants*	Toddlers*	2 Yr Olds*	3Yr Olds*	4 Yr Olds*	5 Yr Olds*	Total Enrollment 0 - 5*
<b>Cochise</b>	1	39	0	36		64	108	172	283	382	91	1100
Center	1	24		23		57	96	150	264	369	85	1021
Home		15		13		7	12	22	19	13	6	79
<b>Coconino</b>	5	24	2	21	2	38	64	84	109	155	36	486
Center	5	19		18	2	37	61	80	103	154	36	471
Home		5		3		1	3	4	6	1		15
<b>Cocopah Tribe</b>		0			1				4	9	7	20
Center					1				4	9	7	20
Home												
<b>Colorado River Indian Tribes</b>		2	0	2		3	6	6	103	93	4	215
Center		2		2		3	6	6	103	93	4	215
Home		0										
<b>East Maricopa</b>	70	61	14	61	13	433	719	1001	1224	1446	386	5209
Center	67	56		56	13	432	707	988	1214	1439	384	5164
Home	3	5		5		1	12	13	10	7	2	45
<b>Gila</b>		9	6	7		6	20	17	70	112	15	240
Center		6		5		4	20	11	67	110	13	225
Home		3		2		2		6	3	2	2	15
<b>Gila River Indian Community</b>		2	0	3		10	10	20	42	37	6	125
Center		2		3		10	10	20	42	37	6	125
Home		0										
<b>Graham/Greenlee</b>		10	0	8		8	13	29	93	146	5	294
Center		7		5		6	9	27	88	143	4	277
Home		3		3		2	4	2	5	3	1	17
<b>Hualapai Tribe</b>		0	1									
Center		0										
Home		0										
<b>La Paz/Mohave</b>	11	21	0	20		14	62	88	242	371	107	884
Center	11	20		19		14	58	85	239	371	105	872
Home		1		1			4	3	3		2	12
<b>Navajo Nation</b>		25	0	17		5	9	8	123	255	42	442
Center		25		17		5	9	8	123	255	42	442
Home		0										
<b>Navajo/Apache</b>	6	4	0	4		1	21	29	34	35	8	128

## Quality First Eligible Applicant and Enrolled Participant Data Report

Center	4	3		3		19	27	33	32	7	118	
Home	2	1		1		1	2	2	1	3	10	
<b>Northwest Maricopa</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>906</b>	<b>1347</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>625</b>	<b>5877</b>
Center	29	60		60	18	375	613	898	1336	1988	623	5833
Home		7		7		7	9	8	11	7	2	44
<b>Pascua Yaqui Tribe</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>					<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>4</b>
Center		0										
Home		2		1					2	2		4
<b>Phoenix North</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>137</b>		<b>702</b>	<b>1132</b>	<b>1610</b>	<b>1871</b>	<b>2507</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>8689</b>
Center	12	127		127		693	1124	1594	1856	2492	860	8619
Home		14		10		9	8	16	15	15	7	70
<b>Phoenix South</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>125</b>		<b>340</b>	<b>568</b>	<b>904</b>	<b>1455</b>	<b>2748</b>	<b>601</b>	<b>6616</b>
Center	1	95		95		316	512	857	1413	2722	589	6409
Home	2	30		30		24	56	47	42	26	12	207
<b>Pima North</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>774</b>	<b>1066</b>	<b>1292</b>	<b>1543</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>5659</b>
Center	50	88		88	7	453	746	1037	1270	1521	499	5526
Home	13	25		25		23	28	29	22	22	9	133
<b>Pima South</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>79</b>		<b>97</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>698</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>2019</b>
Center	3	36		36		63	118	218	515	661	200	1775
Home	1	50		43		34	49	56	55	37	13	244
<b>Pinal</b>		<b>47</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>33</b>		<b>81</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>485</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>1405</b>
Center		36		29		78	139	169	357	481	152	1376
Home		11		4		3	6	7	6	4	3	29
<b>Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community</b>		<b>0</b>										
Center												
Home												
<b>San Carlos Apache</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>		<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>206</b>		<b>312</b>
Center		7		6		9	11	9	75	205		309
Home		1		1		2				1		3
<b>Santa Cruz</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>			<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>154</b>
Center	4	3		3				3	29	71	30	133
Home	10	4		4			3	2	9	5	2	21
<b>Southeast Maricopa</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>723</b>	<b>1026</b>	<b>1411</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>4308</b>
Center	70	47		47	9	303	519	697	991	1367	283	4160
Home	2	10		10		10	11	26	35	44	22	148
<b>Southwest Maricopa</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>24</b>		<b>103</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>1964</b>
Center	17	20		20		100	205	327	375	646	281	1934

## Quality First Eligible Applicant and Enrolled Participant Data Report

Home	5	4		4		3	7	5	7	4	4	30
<b>Tohono O'odham Nation</b>		9	0	6		4	16	12	103	95	9	239
Center		8		6		4	16	12	103	95	9	239
Home		1										
<b>White Mountain Apache Tribe</b>		6	0	5		13	23	15	18	224	39	332
Center		6		5		13	23	15	18	224	39	332
Home		0										
<b>Yavapai</b>	4	37	1	36		55	140	199	289	407	125	1215
Center	2	33		33		54	131	192	279	399	124	1179
Home	2	4		3		1	9	7	10	8	1	36
<b>Yuma</b>	10	34	7	34	7	52	95	136	249	473	166	1171
Center	2	14		14	7	35	73	115	222	459	161	1065
Home	8	20		20		17	22	21	27	14	5	106
<b>Statewide Total</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>960</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>3211</b>	<b>5470</b>	<b>7821</b>	<b>11407</b>	<b>16561</b>	<b>4637</b>	<b>49107</b>

\*Enrollment data is self reported by Child Care provider.

\*\*Includes Selected Pending Full Enrollment and Selected Pending Rating Only Enrollment

## Quality First Preliminary Star Level for Enrolled Providers by Regional Partnership Council

Regional Partnership Council	1 Star	2 Star	3 Star	4 Star	5 Star	Total
Cochise		24	6	6		36
Coconino		10	8	1		19
Cocopah Tribe						
Colorado River Indian Tribes						
East Maricopa		33	23	13	3	72
Gila		2	4		1	7
Gila River Indian Community						
Graham/Greenlee	1	5	1	1		8
Hualapai Tribe						
La Paz/Mohave		8	7	2	1	18
Navajo Nation		14	2	1		17
Navajo/Apache						
Northwest Maricopa	1	33	31	12	5	82
Pascua Yaqui Tribe						
Phoenix North	1	79	44	9	3	136
Phoenix South	9	66	26	13	6	120
Pima North		63	26	15	7	111
Pima South	1	41	25	7	2	76
Pinal		24	9			33
Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community						
San Carlos Apache		6		1		7
Santa Cruz		4	3			7
Southeast Maricopa		36	20	8	1	65
Southwest Maricopa		10	11	2		23
Tohono O'odham Nation		4	2			6
White Mountain Apache Tribe	1	3	1			5
Yavapai	1	20	9	5		35
Yuma		10	15	11	2	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>932</b>

Note: Regional partner councils' provider ratings are suppressed for confidentiality reasons, as the total providers enrolled within this regional area is less than 5. This report includes sites that have a star rating and are in the following statuses: Enrolled Participant, Rating Only Enrolled Participant, Selected For Rating Only, and Selected Pending Full Enrollment.

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## FIRST THINGS FIRST

*Ready for School. Set for Life.*

### **AGENDA ITEM:**

Technical Adjustment to FY15 Allotments/Awards

### **BACKGROUND:**

According to the Guidance adopted by the Board of First Things First in its September 2010 meeting, staff has completed technical adjustments to funding plans for clerical errors and nomenclature adjustments to allotments and contract amounts approved by the CFO/COO as follows:

#### **Clerical Error Adjustments -**

- The Pima South region increased two Parent Education Community-Based Training grant awards by \$26,048 when only one was to be increased. The Board approved the correct allotment of \$463,360 and by decreasing the clerical entry of one award by \$26,048 it will bring the strategy allotment to the correct board approved amount.

#### **Nomenclature Adjustments –**

- None to report at this time.

#### **Award/Allotment Adjustments –**

##### **Rollovers/No-Cost Extensions**

- None to report at this time.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The CEO recommends approval of technical adjustments to the FY15 allotments/awards as presented.

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## FIRST THINGS FIRST

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**AGENDA ITEM:**

Statewide and Signature Strategies Report

**BACKGROUND:**

The Statewide and Signature Strategies Report provides updated financial information on FY 2015 expenditures processed as of January 2, 2015, and program performance information through FY 2014 Quarter 1 (September 30, 2014) for strategies funded through statewide program funds, and other signature strategies and programs developed or substantially supported by First Things First.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The CEO recommends approval of this report.

## Signature Strategies FY2015 Q1

Strategy	Funding Source	FY 2015 Allotted Amount	FY 2015 Awarded Amount	FY 2015 Expended Amount	FY 2015 Contracted Service #	FY 2015 Actual Service #	Comments
Quality First Coaching & Incentives	FTF Regions	\$12,839,271	\$12,237,908	\$6,118,954	QF Centers: 744 QF Homes: 216 QF Rating Only: 72	QF Centers: 670 QF Homes: 172 QF Rating Only: 55	Quality First is a comprehensive quality improvement and rating initiative that provides support, funding and education to qualified centers and homes to improve the quality of early care and education for children younger than five years. The Quality First model includes assessment, coaching, T.E.A.C.H., Child Care Health Consultation and financial incentives for quality improvement and assigns a quality rating.
	Total	\$12,839,271	\$12,237,908	\$6,118,954	Regional: 1,032	Regional: 897	
Quality First Scholarships	FTF Regions	\$62,118,038	\$61,211,946	\$30,509,168	Scholarship slots for children 0-5 years: 7,940	Scholarship slots for children 0-5 years: 6,812.5	Quality First Scholarships help low-income families afford high quality early learning programs for their young children. Scholarships are made available to early care and education providers enrolled in Quality First to use for families with eligible children and may be used for full-time or half-day programming. These scholarships also support providers in maintaining a quality program. The grantee receives a deliverable-based payment for this strategy.
Scholarships TEACH	FTF State	\$1,994,960	\$1,894,298	\$612,068	Participating scholars: 641	Q1 data pending due to data clarification in process	T.E.A.C.H. ARIZONA is a comprehensive scholarship program that provides early care and education professionals with access to college coursework leading to a degree or certificate in early childhood education. T.E.A.C.H. provides financial support for books, tuition, travel stipends and time off from work to attend class and complete assignments, and a financial bonus upon completion of college coursework.
	FTF Regions	\$847,895	\$665,473	\$7,945	Participating scholars: 208		
	Total	\$2,842,855	\$2,559,771	\$620,013	Participating scholars: 849		
FTF Professional REWARD\$	FTF Regions	\$1,945,465	\$1,940,600	\$970,300	Incentive awards distributed: 1,437	Not reported until Quarter 2	REWARD\$ offers financial awards to early childhood teachers based on educational achievement, wages earned and hours worked per week and requires a commitment from participants to remain in their current employment, with the desired outcome of retaining good teachers to promote continuity of teachers and caregivers working with young children.
Parent Kits - statewide	FTF State	\$1,600,000	\$1,600,000	\$978,459	Kits distributed: 65,000	Kits distributed: 19,866	Arizona Parent Kits are provided statewide to all families with newborns as they leave the birthing hospital or center. The kits include an Arizona Parents Guide, six DVDs on early childhood development and health topics and a new book for parents to read with their baby.
Birth to Five Helpline	FTF State	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$39,325	Calls received: 2,500	Calls received: 514	The Birth to Five Helpline free service using a toll-free number (1-877-705-KIDS) with experts to answer any family's questions or address concerns on early childhood development for infants, toddlers and preschoolers. Questions can also be submitted online at <a href="http://www.swhd.org/get-help/birth-to-five-helpline">www.swhd.org/get-help/birth-to-five-helpline</a> .
Child Care Health Consultation	FTF Regions	\$2,889,672	\$2,731,502	\$665,304		Non-QF Tier 1: 13 Non-QF Tier 2: 0 Non-QF Tier 3: 21  QF Tier 1: 517 QF Tier 2: 72 QF Tier 3: 308	Child Care Health Consultants are nurses and child health experts who work with early care and education programs to provide teachers and staff with information and guidance to assure the health and safety of children in the program. This strategy provides onsite, email and phone consultation, staff training and referrals to community health resources. This strategy is delivered in a tier model: tier 1 is telephone technical assistance; tier 2 is on-site expert mode; and tier 3 is on-site comprehensive services.
	Total				Non-QF Centers: 31 Non-QF Homes: 48  QF Centers: 736 QF Homes: 213	Non-QF Centers: 14 Non-QF Homes: 20  QF Centers: 725 QF Homes: 172	
Mental Health Consultation	FTF Regions	\$4,610,350	\$4,572,965	\$1,516,737	Centers: 218 Homes: 42	Centers: 139 Homes: 9	Early childhood mental health consultation (MHC) is an evidence-based strategy proven to support the social and emotional development of all children in early care and education settings. MHC supports teachers and caregivers to respond to children with behavioral challenges in the classroom.

## Signature Strategies FY2015 Q1

Healthy Teeth AZ Website	FTF Regions	\$4,475,281	\$4,416,691	\$920,534	N/A. Project reports and deliverables are received per terms of the contract.	Healthy Teeth AZ is a web based portal with a referral database of dental providers willing to provide low cost or free oral health services for young children. This strategy also includes outreach to dental providers to engage their participation as a referral source, and promotion to families and other caregivers about local affordable oral health services.
Capacity Building	FTF State	\$300,000	\$299,952	\$134,918	N/A. Project reports and deliverables are received per terms of the contract.	The Capacity Building strategy uses the Assets Based Community Development (ABCD) model to focus on identification, deployment, and development of existing assets (knowledge, skills, capital resources, etc.) within each community and/or individual organization to access FTF grant awards and/or meet contractual requirements once an award is received.

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## FIRST THINGS FIRST

### **AGENDA ITEM**

Amended Extension Requests for 2014 Regional Needs and Assets Reports

### **BACKGROUND**

The purpose of the Regional Needs and Assets Reports is to identify assets, coordination opportunities, and unmet needs in early childhood development and health programs in each region. The needs and assets report is intended as the primary vehicle for the collection and analysis of all data available at the regional level, and informs the strategic planning of each regional partnership council.

The following Regional Partnership Councils have submitted amendments to prior approved extension requests for completion of their 2014 Regional Needs and Assets reports:

- Navajo Nation (request amended extension to June 9, 2015)
- San Carlos Apache Tribe (request amended extension to April 30, 2015)

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The CEO recommends approval of the requests for amendment to approved extensions for completion of the 2014 Regional Needs and Assets reports as presented.



## FIRST THINGS FIRST

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### Chair

Harry Martin

### Vice Chair

Grace Boyne

### Member

Benjamin Barney

Victoria Begay

Amelia Black

Rhonda Etsitty

Valonia Hardy

Paula Seanez

Dawn Yazzie

January 9, 2015

Janice Decker, Chair  
First Things First  
4000 North Central Avenue, Suite 800  
Phoenix, Arizona 85012

### **RE: Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council 2014 Needs and Assets Report**

Dear Chairwoman Decker:

The Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council respectfully requests an amendment to the time extension to submit our 2014 Needs and Assets report from January 20, 2015 to June 9, 2015.

The additional time will allow us to secure data from Navajo Nation agency programs, which will provide more regional specific data. Once the data is received the vendor will require time to review, analyze and synthesize the data for the 2014 report.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Harry Martin, Chair  
Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council



## FIRST THINGS FIRST

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### Chair

Vernon Poncho

### Vice Chair

Flora Talas

### Members

Michelle Antonio

Mary Bendle

Teri Gallenstein

Louis Lorenzo

Nolita April Noline

Delphine Rodriguez

Elliott Talgo, Sr.

Sabrina Tuttle

January 9, 2015

Janice Decker, Chairwoman  
First Things First Board  
4000 North Central Avenue, Suite 800  
Phoenix, Arizona 85012

Dear Chairwoman Decker,

I am writing to request a deadline extension for the submission of the San Carlos Apache Regional Needs and Assets Report to the First Things First Board.

The Regional Council needs additional time for the completion of the final report and to allow the San Carlos Apache Tribal Council time to review and approve the report for publication and dissemination. The Tribal approval process is as follows: First Things First submits the final draft report and Tribal Resolution and then goes before the Tribe's Education Committee and Attorney General. Upon approval from this Committee, First Things First will go before the full Tribal Council for approval of the final draft report and Tribal Resolution. Given the remaining steps, the Regional Council anticipates a board submission deadline no later than April 30, 2015.

The Regional Council remains very excited about the data collection, reporting and drafting process and its ultimate benefit to the children and families of the San Carlos Apache Region. We appreciate in advance your consideration of the unique circumstances surrounding the request for an additional extension and look forward to your response. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Vernon Poncho, Chair  
San Carlos Apache Regional Partnership Council

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## FIRST THINGS FIRST

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**AGENDA ITEM:**

Board Meeting Location Change

**BACKGROUND:**

The Board's September 2014 meeting in Yuma was cancelled due to a lack of meeting quorum. The CEO recommends rescheduling the Yuma meeting for April 13-14, 2015.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The CEO recommends approval of the meeting location change as presented.

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## FIRST THINGS FIRST

*Ready for School. Set for Life.*

**AGENDA ITEM:**

Tribal Data Policy

**BACKGROUND:**

In formal consultation with Arizona's tribes, it was recommended that First Things First develop a formal data policy that outlines the agency's approach to seeking tribal data agreements. The attached draft is based upon feedback obtained in past tribal consultations, as well as First Things First's experience in obtaining tribal data agreements over the past six years. The draft was compiled with input from FTF Tribal Affairs, Research & Evaluation and the Tribal Technical Advisory Group (TTAG). The Board had a first read of this policy at its December 2014 meeting; no changes were recommended.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The CEO recommends approval of the Tribal Data Policy as presented.

# First Things First

## DRAFT Tribal Data Policy

### Introduction and Background

Arizonans created First Things First via a citizens' ballot initiative to give more Arizona children the opportunity to start school healthy and ready to succeed. The very structure of First Things First reflects the organization's respect for and commitment to tribal sovereignty. Arizona's tribes can participate in First Things First in one of two ways: tribes may elect to have their tribal lands treated as a separate region by the statewide First Things First Board or tribes may elect to participate in the designated geographical region or regions in which their tribal lands are located. To date, a total of 19 of Arizona's 22 tribes participate in First Things First.

Those partnerships have led to the implementation of dozens of strategies that are expanding early education opportunities for children in tribal communities, supporting parents in their role as their child's first teachers and expanding the use of preventative health in areas statewide.

Comprehensive, accurate data is crucial to the success of Arizona's partnerships with tribes, and ultimately, to the creation of an effective early childhood system. Data is used to ensure informed decision-making and to measure the progress made in increasing school readiness for all children.

First Things First recognizes Arizona tribes as sovereign nations that have the right to regulate research and data collection on their tribal lands. To this end, First Things First is committed to obtaining all appropriate tribal approvals for data collection, analysis and reporting. This Tribal Data Policy was created to set forth the principles and basic process by which agreements will be sought with sovereign tribes for the collection and use of data related to children 5 and younger and their families who are members of tribes and living on tribal lands. This Policy was informed by insight shared by and feedback obtained through formal government-to-government consultation between First Things First and tribes (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013), as well as First Things First's experience in securing tribal data collection agreements as part of its process to develop regional needs and assets reports (2008, 2010, 2012, 2014) and statewide School Readiness Indicators (2014-2016).

**All data collected by First Things First are for the purpose of producing public materials, including data reports and other hard copy and online documents, that guide decision-making, measure the progress made in increasing school readiness for all children and increase public awareness of the needs of young children.**

### Definitions

This Data Policy outlines the principles that will govern First Things First's data collection partnerships with Arizona's tribes. For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

- **Data Collection Agreement:** A formal agreement with a tribe that outlines: the specific data to be collected; the use(s) for the collected data; the sources of the data to be collected, specific

measures in place to ensure data security and the confidentiality of individuals and the process that First Things First will use to ensure that the tribe has an opportunity to review the data prior to publication.

*NOTE: Whenever possible, information regarding data sources should include the organization providing the data, the data fields to be collected and whether data can/will be disaggregated by tribal members versus non-members.*

- **Primary data collection** refers to information obtained first-hand from individual tribal members by First Things First and/or its contractors (e.g., surveys and focus groups).
- **Secondary data collection** refers to information obtained by First Things First from another organization that currently has the authority to collect the data (e.g., tribal departments or organizations and federal, state or municipal agencies), as well as data collected by First Things First from tribes under prior agreements. This information may be received in individual or aggregate form, however, information is only *published* in aggregate form. In addition, once obtained, the data may be further analyzed or disaggregated by First Things First.
- **Tertiary data collection** refers to data already lawfully obtained from the tribe and which has previously been published (e.g., reports and policy briefs). All data obtained through tertiary collection will be used in its published format.
- **Publication** refers to the availability of materials based on data in a printed and/or electronic format (e.g. Need and Assets reports, fact sheets, etc.) to individuals, groups of individuals or the general public. This does not include those responsible for collecting, storing, analyzing or preparing the data-based materials for publication. First Things First regional council members may participate in the review of information/materials prior to publication.

## Content of Data Collection Agreements

Prior to pursuing any data collection agreement, First Things First will ascertain each tribe's process for requesting and accessing the desired data (e.g., Ethics Review Board, Institutional Review Board or tribal resolution). First Things First will respect and follow each tribe's specified approval process. First Things First will not assume that the approval process completed for one set of data is the same for a different set of data.

Data collection agreements will be kept by First Things First as long as First Things First continues to house data collected under the agreement. First Things First does not anticipate the non-accidental destruction of any data.

If First Things First plans to destroy/delete any data, First Things First will first reach out to tribes to ensure the safe and efficient transfer of any data to the tribe prior to completing the destruction.

Requests for data collection agreements will include:

- context for and background on the data being requested.

- information on how the data collected will benefit the tribe, Arizona’s early childhood system and First Things First.
- identification of the type of data to be collected (including target populations), the method of data collection, and the source(s) of that data (see NOTE on Page 4).
- descriptions of the final products the data is to be used/published in.
- the term of the agreement (for recurring projects, such as regional Needs and Assets reports and School Readiness Indicators, a timeframe covering at least three rounds of data collection is recommended).
- identification (if known) of any contractors that will be collecting data.
- a provision allowing the tribe to receive information on data collected and conclusions drawn in draft format – and to provide feedback, context, etc. to the data – prior to any data-based materials being published to ensure compliance with the completed agreement. The tribe has the discretion to identify the preferred format in which the draft information should be presented (e.g., in person presentation or written report). The completed data agreement must stipulate the date by which the tribe must complete its review. In situations where there are persistent questions or concerns regarding data elements, First Things First will enter in to a consultative process with the tribe with the goal of resolving issues to ensure that the information can be made suitable for public use.
- a stipulation that affirms the tribe’s right to request their data from First Things First, and a description of the process tribes will follow to request their data.

NOTE: Unpublished data will not be released to any person or entity without written consent from the appropriate tribal government (Tribal Council or duly authorized designee).

- explicit language that First Things First does not need to seek tribal approval to use data collected under valid agreements in future publications (i.e., publications not specifically listed in the agreement) UNLESS additional data analysis is completed or additional conclusions are drawn.

Addenda to data collection agreements should only be required if collection of additional data elements (not previously identified) is desired OR if First Things First is completing additional analysis on existing data for other publications/products. Tribes will be notified if any changes occur in the contractors or vendors collecting data on behalf of First Things First during the course of the agreement.

## Data Collection

Once a data collection agreement is in place, First Things First will provide each tribe with a principal point of contact for all communications and requests associated with data collection.

In cases of **Primary Data Collection**, First Things First will provide to the tribe the name of the organization/vendor completing the data collection and associated timeframes. First Things First will

work with tribes in a consultative process on any questions or concerns with the identified data collection organization/vendor.

Participants in primary data collection activities shall be advised that information they provide is confidential and that they may withdraw permission for First Things First to use information obtained from them at any time prior to the completion of data collection activities. Cultural responsiveness will be considered when data collection tools are created for targeted populations. In addition, cultural considerations around language of data collection tools either selected or created, as well as the utilization of a variety of data collection modalities to help ensure a diverse sample, will be considered.

In cases of **Secondary Data Collection**, for each organization/agency that houses desired data, First Things First will determine the source's process/protocol for data requests and will follow that process/protocol. In some cases, First Things First may need to request assistance from the tribe in securing the data if this is required by the source's process/protocol.

Information obtained through **Tertiary Data Collection** (previously published) will be used in its published format.

## Analysis of Data

First Things First Research and Evaluation staff works with staff from each of the data source partners/agencies to obtain the calculation/methodology behind the accessed data to ensure First Things First's analysis plan and interpretation of the data is accurate for the selected region, the state and the representative population. Additionally, this will safeguard the integrity of the data presented in its final format, as well as what is shared with tribal leaders, regional councils, the First Things First Board and stakeholders.

When First Things First is the data source, First Things First follows the same data integrity and quality assurance check to ensure accurate data is utilized for analyses. In addition, First Things First Tribal Affairs staff and Regional staff are consulted to ensure culturally sensitive approaches are taken to handle data elements and are done in accordance with the First Things First Tribal Consultation Policy (Addendum A). Data analysis is done by the First Things First Research and Evaluation staff and/or First Things First contractors/vendors (reviewed and approved by First Things First Research and Evaluation). Data will be stored securely in the First Things First data warehouse per the First Things First Data Security Guidelines (Addendum B), and this data is made available only for the purposes outlined in the data collection agreement. All data released will be in accordance with the First Things First Data Suppression Policy (Addendum C).

## Communication of Project Status

First Things First shall maintain regular communication with tribes regarding the status of data collection efforts in tribal communities. The First Things First Senior Director for Tribal Affairs serves as the organization's primary statewide liaison with tribal partners and is directly responsible for communicating with tribes on issues that are broadly related to facilitating or improving First Things First's work with Arizona's tribes and nations, including Tribal Consultation, bi-annual regional

designations and representing First Things First with major tribal organizations such as the Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona and the National Indian Education Association.

First Things First regional directors are the primary local liaison and work with tribal governments to implement First Things First early childhood initiatives in their area. The regional staff is directly responsible for communicating with tribes and nations about the status of First Things First's work with the specific tribe or nation, including data collection agreements and grantee performance. First Things First will seek guidance from tribes and nations regarding their preferred method of communication. Methods of communication may include letters, electronic correspondence, presentations and status reports to tribal leaders, as needed.

## **Protection of Privacy and Confidentiality Assurance**

It is the intent of First Things First to avoid any possibility of inadvertently reporting personally identifiable information. While First Things First uses only aggregate data in its reporting, there are some cases where specific populations may include only a few individuals. In such cases, the First Things First Research and Evaluation team will enforce the First Things First Data Suppression Policy (Addendum C).

In accordance with the First Things First Data Security Policies and Standards (Addendum B), First Things First staff and contractors must ensure that all personal or sensitive information in their possession is kept secure at all times against unauthorized or unlawful loss or disclosure.

First Things First staff and contractors are aware that at no time will any identifying information be stored on portable electronic devices (such as laptop computers, tablets, digital cameras, and portable hard drives including flash drives, USB memory sticks, iPods or similar storage devices). Any transfer of data, including identifying information, must be conducted using secure, encrypted formats, ensuring user IDs are stored/transported separately.

First Things First will cooperate with tribes to ensure suitable reporting and review opportunities are established prior to publishing or publicly disseminating information.

## **Review of Data by Tribes**

Tribes will receive information on data collected and conclusions drawn in draft format prior to the data being published or publicly disseminated to ensure compliance with the data collection agreement. Tribes have the discretion to identify a preferred format in which the draft information should be presented (e.g., in-person presentation or written report). The completed data agreement must stipulate the date by which the tribe must complete its review.

## **Publication of Data**

All data collected by First Things First is for use in aggregate form (not personally identifiable) at the regional, county or state level in a variety of public formats, including, but not limited to: reports and policy briefs, web pages and marketing materials. Although data collection agreements stipulate the

specific products in which data collected will be used, First Things First reserves the right to use data previously collected/published in future publications, so long as the new publication does not involve additional data collection and/or analysis.

In addition, as a public entity, the work of First Things First is subject to state public records law. All final work products — including any material published or publicly disseminated by First Things First — are subject to public records law and must be made available for inspection upon request by any member of the public.

## **Tribal Access to Data**

First Things First has the right to store all data collected and to utilize that data consistent with this Policy and individual data collection agreements. Tribes may officially request collected data from First Things First by submitting the First Things First Tribal Data Request Form (sample attached). The form allows tribes to easily request data for specific First Things First activities, according to tribal preference and the needs of their communities. First Things First will work with a tribe to provide the data in a mutually agreeable format (e.g., Word or Excel).

SAMPLE

**FIRST THINGS FIRST TRIBAL DATA REQUEST FORM\***

Depending on the nature and format of the data being requested, formal documentation from the tribe (such as a letter/resolution from the tribal government) may be required before First Things First can release data. Requests will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, and the requestor will be notified of any tribal documentation required prior to release.

**Data Requestor:**

Name of Person Requesting Data:

Tribal Affiliation:

Contact Address:

Contact Telephone/Email:

Purpose of the data request: \_\_\_\_\_

*Example: To use for a grant proposal, for tribal data updates, for strategic planning*

Preferred Data Format: \_\_\_\_\_

*Example: Excel file, data tables of key variables from the report*

Timeframe for Receiving Data (at least 15 days required once all documentation is received) \_\_\_\_\_

**Data Requested:\***

Data Collected as part of Needs & Asset Reports

- Name of data fields: Health; Family Support, Coordination; Early Learning
- Which agency data—DHS, IHS
- Current vs. historical data—Report Cycle

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*Example: Oral health data collected from IHS for 2012; WIC data from ITCA for 2014.*

Data Collected on School Readiness Indicators

- Name of the school readiness indicator(s)
- Year of data collection

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Other Data — please specify

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*Example: Quality First Rating and Enrollment data; First Things First Quality First Child Care Scholarships data for SFY 2014*

The requestor must specify data they are requesting. First Things First Tribal Affairs and/or Research and Evaluation staff may contact the requestor to clarify the request. Any changes to the request based on this contact will be documented in follow-up correspondence with the requestor.

**Data Recipient:**

The data requested above will be directly submitted to:

- Name of Designated Person:
- Title/Affiliation:
- Address:
- Phone/Email:

First Things First will not provide data while collection, quality assurance and analysis activities are taking place. Only final data that has been reviewed for accuracy and integrity will be shared with the designated person of contact in the agreed upon format.

**Please fill out the form and send it to:**

First Things First  
ATTN: Tribal Affairs  
4000 North Central Avenue, Suite 800  
Phoenix, AZ 85012

For questions regarding this form (or to submit the request electronically), please contact: [iperez@aztf.gov](mailto:iperez@aztf.gov)



## FIRST THINGS FIRST

*Ready for School. Set for Life.*

### **AGENDA ITEM:**

Proposed Board Governance Policy Revision

### **BACKGROUND:**

The composition and general responsibilities of the Board's Executive Committee are outlined in the Board's governance policies. The Executive Committee has several general areas of responsibility, including providing guidance on the organization's vision and strategy, Board meeting agendas, the periodic review of governance policies, and other duties as assigned by the Board.

The current membership of the Executive Committee includes Board officers and Board committee chairs, including:

- Board Chair
- Board Vice-Chair
- Program Committee Chair
- Finance Committee Chair

The duties and composition of the Executive Committee were included in the original adoption of the Board's governance policies in June 2008. Since then, the Board has added the Communications and Government Affairs Committee. However, the membership of the Executive Committee was never updated to reflect this change.

The proposed governance policy amendment would update the Executive Committee membership to include the chair(s) of all Board standing committees.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The Executive Committee presents this item for the Board's review and discussion.

**PROPOSED BOARD GOVERNANCE POLICY REVISION – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP  
FIRST READ**

1-115 Executive Committee Charter

Purpose

The duties of the Executive Committee (the “Committee”) shall be to assist the First Things First – Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board (the “Board”) in fulfilling its responsibilities with respect to providing guidance on the Board’s overall:

1. vision and strategy
2. meeting agendas
3. governance policy review

Membership

The Committee shall be composed of the:

1. Board Chair
2. Board Vice-Chair
- ~~3. Statewide and Regional Programs Committee Chair~~
- ~~4. Audit, Finance and Administration Committee Chair~~
- 3. APPOINTED CHAIR(S) OF ALL BOARD STANDING COMMITTEES**

Unless otherwise directed by the Chairperson, the Chair will preside over the Executive Committee and have the responsibility of reporting the committee’s proceedings to the full board.

All Board members will be notified of the Executive Committee meetings to allow them the opportunity to participate.

Meetings

The Committee shall:

1. meet as often as needed to fulfill responsibilities as charged
2. hold and conduct meetings in accordance with requirements of law

A majority of the Committee membership shall constitute a quorum. The Chair shall set the time, date and place of the meetings.

Originally Adopted June 25, 2008



## FIRST THINGS FIRST

*Ready for School. Set for Life.*

### **AGENDA ITEM:**

Arizona Preschool Development Grant and Arizona School Readiness Framework

### **BACKGROUND:**

On December 20, 2014, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) was awarded \$20 million in federal funds as part of the 2014 Preschool Development Grant program, which is administered jointly by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. ADE has the opportunity to receive \$80 million over the four-year grant cycle, depending on availability of federal funding.

The funds will be used to make preschool programs in a variety of settings more readily available to thousands of children in 15 high-needs communities across the state and will promote success in those programs by enhancing quality and building infrastructure statewide. Several First Things First funded initiatives and programs, such as Quality First, the Early Childhood Professional Development Network, Mental Health Consultation and, Child Care Health Consultation and Inclusion Coaching will be components of the quality supports and infrastructure provided to participating high need communities.

The Arizona School Readiness Framework (ASRF) was developed through efforts coordinated by the Arizona Department of Education in partnership with First Things First and the Head Start Collaboration Office, and with the input of many early childhood educators and stakeholders. The framework reflects the purpose of identifying readiness, and builds on the state's efforts to establish a system in which all children have access to quality experiences leading to school success. The ASRF will be an important guiding resource in the implementation of the Preschool Development Grant.

There are four specific goals of the ASRF:

1. To establish a common language around school readiness
2. To develop a clear outline of the readiness framework
3. Determine the roles of standards, effective instruction, and curriculum
4. Identify meaningful, well-aligned assessment of readiness to individualize instruction.

The framework combines four essential components to provide the supports needed to ensure children's school readiness and meet the goals identified above. The components are as follows: a common definition of school readiness, the use of effective instruction, standards, curriculum, and assessment, family engagement partnerships, and finally, quality transitions into kindergarten for all children.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Presented for information purposes only.

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## WHAT ARE PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANTS?

Preschool Development Grants support states to (1) build or enhance their infrastructure to provide high-quality preschool programs, and (2) expand high-quality preschool programs in high-need communities. These States will serve as models for expanding preschool to all 4-year-olds from low- and moderate-income families.

### Preschool Development Grantees plan to:

- Create or expand high-quality preschool programs in high-need communities;
- Implement state-level infrastructure and quality improvements;
- Collaborate with selected programs and ensure strong partnerships between school districts and other early learning providers;
- Align preschool programs within a birth-through-third-grade continuum of services; and
- Create sustainable programs by coordinating existing early learning funds.



There are two types of Preschool Development Grants:



Preschool Development Grants  
**Development Grants**

Development Grants are designed for states that currently serve less than 10 percent of four-year-olds and have not received a Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant.

States with Development Grants have ambitious and achievable plans to implement and sustain high-quality preschool programs that can reach and serve additional eligible children in one or more high-need communities.

Up to 35 percent of the Development Grant award may be used for state-level infrastructure and quality improvements.



Preschool Development Grants  
**Expansion Grants**

Expansion Grants are for states that currently serve 10 percent or more of four-year-olds or have received a Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant.

States with Expansion Grants have ambitious and achievable plans to implement and sustain high-quality preschool programs that can reach and serve additional eligible children in two or more high-need communities.

Up to 5 percent of the Expansion Grant award may be used for state-level infrastructure and quality improvements.

# 2014 GRANT AWARDS

## DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

AL	\$ 17,500,000
AZ	\$ 20,000,000
HI	\$ 2,074,059
MT	\$ 10,000,000
NV	\$ 6,405,860

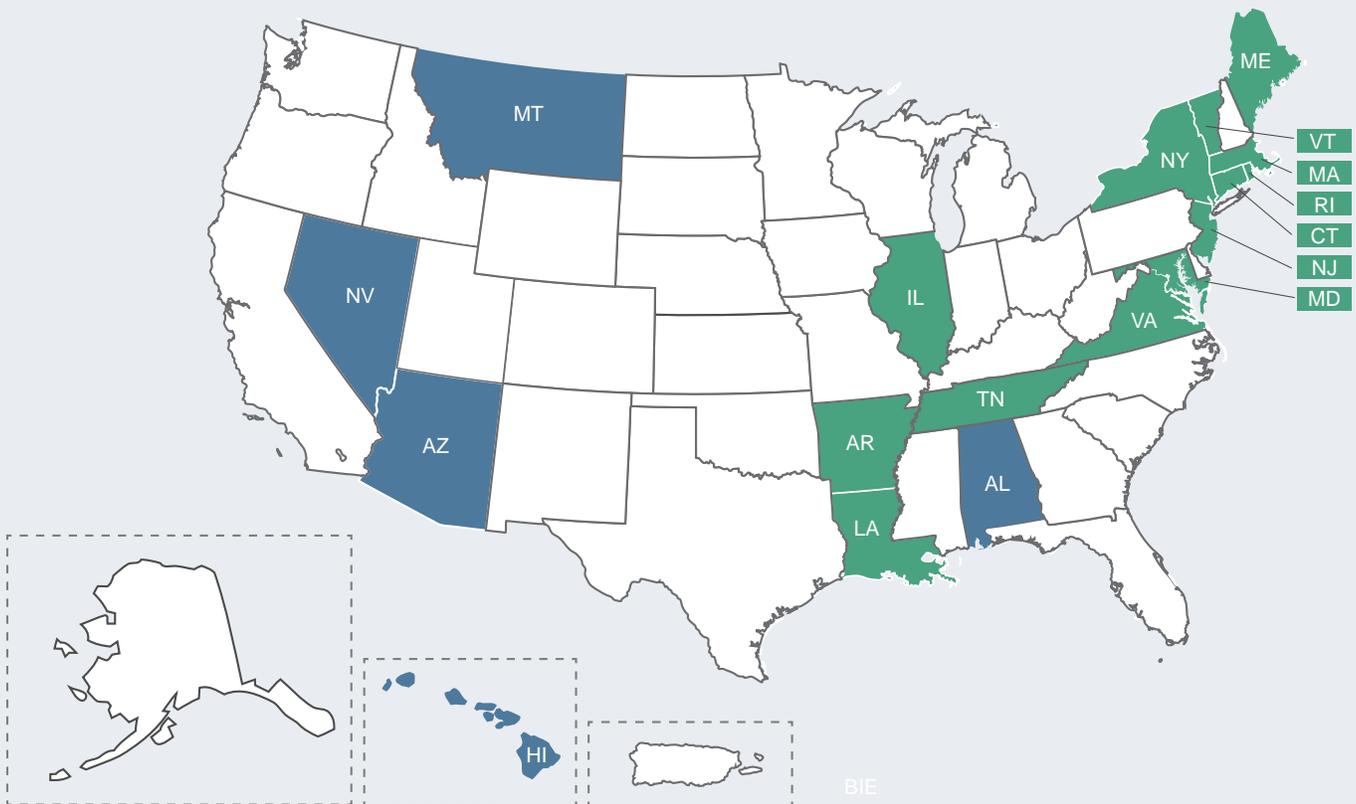
## EXPANSION GRANTS

AR	\$ 14,993,000	NJ	\$ 17,498,115
CT	\$ 12,499,000	NY	\$ 24,991,372
IL	\$ 20,000,000	RI	\$ 2,290,840
LA	\$ 2,437,982	TN	\$ 17,500,000
ME	\$ 3,497,319	VT	\$ 7,231,681
MD	\$ 15,000,000	VA	\$ 17,500,000
MA	\$ 15,000,000		

**TOTAL: \$226,419,228**

Over 18,000 additional children will be served in high-quality preschool programs in Year 1 of the program.

- States that received FY 2014 Preschool Development Grants – Development Grants
- States that received FY 2014 Preschool Development Grants – Expansion Grants



Preschool Development Grant Program is a discretionary grant program that is jointly administered by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

**Arizona-Preschool Development Grant**  
**Office of the Arizona Governor, Janice K. Brewer**

The Preschool Development Grant outlines Arizona’s ambitious but achievable plan to make high-quality preschool programs more available and accessible in 15 High Needs Communities (HNC) as well as to support preschool infrastructure-building and quality enhancements. Arizona proposes to use 65% of the funding to increase preschool access and quality for qualifying 4-year olds in targeted HNCs with a proposed project outcome of up to an additional 133 new classrooms and an increase of preschool slots by 3,478 by end of the grant cycle. Using a strengths-based, comprehensive Early Childhood Quality Improvement Process (ECQUIP) community collaboration will be established within each HNC to support sub-grantees with unique, specific issues: increasing access to high- quality and appropriate preschool programs, kindergarten transitions, literacy instruction and supports, English Language Learners, and providing Least Restrictive Environment placements for children with disabilities.

Arizona proposes maximizing early childhood education (ECE) infrastructure with 35% of the funding. Arizona will increase access to Arizona’s tiered quality rating improvement system (TQRIS), Quality First (QF), in the HNCs by devoting 9.8 million dollars over the next four years. QF is the rating system by which the sub-grantees will be measured as they move towards higher levels of quality, and is also part of the mechanism that will be used to identify and support specific activities and professional development needs. QF also provides additional comprehensive supports to the HNCs in the form of Mental Health Consultation, Child Care Health Consultation, and Inclusion Coaching. Arizona also proposes to advance the collaborative, statewide ECE Professional Development System and improve the qualifications and effectiveness of the early learning workforce by investing 12.7 million dollars in this strategy over the next four years. This grant will support robust professional development from ADE as well as financially ensures access to higher level college credits that supports movement toward credentialing. Some of these dollars are also committed to improving capacity within Institutes of Higher Education to offer robust programs for Arizona’s ECE and Early Childhood Special Education degrees. The last infrastructure building component is to establish data linkages between preschool and ADE. Arizona will invest 2.2 million dollars over the next four years in Information technology (IT) to align preschool data with ADE’s K-12 State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). This will enable reporting and analysis by the HNCs that can help identify achievement gaps, pinpoint initiatives that best promote positive outcomes, and provide data for longitudinal analysis.

Arizona has widespread support for the Preschool Development Grant application, and has

## ARIZONA-Preschool Development Grant Application

secured many letters attesting to this fact. The broad group of stakeholders includes state agencies such as Arizona's Department of Health Services, Department of Economic Services, and First Things First. Support also came from the statewide collaborative Read on Arizona, a partner in grade level reading initiatives. Arizona's State Advisory Council is the Early Childhood Development & Health Board which was also supportive of the effort. Arizona's philanthropic community is generous and supportive of ECE efforts. Both the Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust and the Helios Education Foundation tendered letters of support. The Arizona Head Start Association as well as local grantees also imparted letters of support. Child Advocacy allies, such as Children's Action Alliance and Expect More Arizona also submitted letters of support. In addition, the Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children also supplied a letter. Lastly, in each of the 15 HNCs, ECE partners came together to sign a single collective letter of support. Each of these submissions is as different as the communities they represent. Examples of these partners included local FTF Regional Council representatives, private child care, child care homes, faith based programs, school districts and Head Starts.

# Arizona's School Readiness Framework

Arizona Department of Education

First Things First

Head Start Collaboration Office



## Acknowledgements

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First Things First

Mary Reinwasser  
Heat Start Training &  
Technical Assistance

Lauren Preston  
Buckeye Elementary  
District

Kymerlii Ternario  
Tohono O'odham Tribal  
Head Start Program

Jacquelyn Power  
Blackwater Community  
School

Paul Ohm  
Sunnyside Unified District

Bruce Liggett  
AZ Child Care Association

Sr. Melita Penchalk  
Catholic Diocese of  
Phoenix

Garthanne de Ocampo  
Phoenix Elementary  
District

Eula Baumgarner  
Yuma Elementary District

Amber Larson  
City of Phoenix Policy  
Council

Juliana Olivarez  
Child Parent Centers

Seobaghn Arambula  
NACOG Head Start

Laurel Endfield  
Whiteriver Unified District

Barbara Wightman  
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Arizona State University

Vi Todd  
Glendale Elementary  
District

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District

Bridget Longoria  
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Karen Ortiz  
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Ruthjane Baldwin Willow  
Fowler Elementary District

Stephanie Hansen  
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Kyrene Elementary  
District

Shelley Pappas  
Scottsdale Unified District

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Department of Education

Laura Landis  
Head Start Training and  
Technical Assistance

Barb Milner  
Child Care

## Why Arizona Needs a School Readiness Framework

Similar to the varied and diverse terrain of Arizona, our children throughout the state represent a range of experiences, backgrounds, and abilities. There are a lot of misconceptions about what school readiness looks like (singing the alphabet song, counting to ten, writing their name). While these are important skills, they do not represent the comprehensive knowledge and skills that children must have in order to be fully prepared for the kindergarten curriculum and standards.

When the adults in a child's life provide high quality early learning experiences, children have stronger communication skills, creativity, initiative, and the confidence to approach new challenges. However, the adults may have varying levels of exposure to the Arizona Early Learning Standards which establish the general knowledge a child is expected to know prior to kindergarten entry. When adults have increased levels of awareness of the Arizona Early Learning Standards, they can facilitate activities to help children prepare for the rigor expected in kindergarten.

The early years are an exciting time in the development of children, and the transition into kindergarten is filled with both opportunity and challenge. Arizona recognizes that students today must attain the knowledge and skills needed to be college and career ready. As a result more focused attention must be shed on what happens in the birth to five years in order to create a strong foundation for all future learning. Collaborative efforts have led to the creation of a foundational continuum for Arizona's children, illustrated in a series of guiding documents that include the *Arizona's Infant and Toddler Developmental Guidelines*, the *Arizona Early Learning Standards* for children ages three to kindergarten entry and the *Program Guidelines for High Quality Early Education: Birth through Kindergarten*. Building upon these critical documents,

Arizona stakeholders, have come together to identify the Arizona School Readiness Framework that expresses a commitment to ensuring children are prepared as they enter the world of academic instruction and learning.

The Arizona School Readiness Framework (ASRF) encourages collaboration between services and the numerous parts of the early childhood system. The framework reflects the purpose of identifying readiness, and builds on the state's efforts to establish a system in which all children have access to quality experiences leading to school success. There are four specific goals of the ASRF:

1. To establish a common language around school readiness
2. To develop a clear outline of the readiness framework
3. Determine the roles of standards, effective instruction, and curriculum
4. Identify meaningful, well-aligned assessment of readiness to individualize instruction.

The framework combines four essential components to provide the supports needed to ensure children's school readiness and meet the goals identified above. The components are as follows: a common definition of school readiness, the use of effective instruction, standards, curriculum, and assessment, family engagement partnerships, and finally, quality transitions into kindergarten for all children.

Recognizing the significance of building a strong continuum in the early years is fundamental to the development of the ASRF. The framework outlined in this document provides the structure for the school readiness piece of the early childhood system that begins in infancy. The ASRF builds upon the growing body of research demonstrating the need for high quality early learning experiences and identifies the context for implementing Arizona's School Readiness Framework.

## **Establishing a Common Language to Lead to a Definition of School Readiness**

Bridging the gap between various early childhood systems and services requires that those in the field have a common understanding of what children need to be well prepared for school. The ASRF offers the adults who impact the lives of children a common definition for understanding the term, *school readiness*. Using a broadly understood working definition regarding what constitutes a child's readiness for school allows stakeholders from different parts of the early childhood system, whether a pediatric nurse, home visitor, librarian, parent or a preschool teacher, to work collaboratively and ensure all children arrive at school ready to meet the challenges of a rigorous academic curriculum in kindergarten.

In addition to providing a general understanding and vocabulary for discussing school readiness, The Framework provides practitioners with an outline of necessary concepts supported by the continuum of guidelines and early learning standards. Those who work directly with young children can access professional development and effective tools for implementing the readiness framework and be a resource for families and communities.

### **What is School Readiness in Arizona?**

The question of what it means for a child to be "ready for school" remains a topic of much national attention. Several recent attempts to identify and define school readiness have been made. In particular, the reauthorization of Head Start as the School Readiness Act of 2007 provided a more concrete definition of school readiness as, "the expectations of children's status and progress across domains for Language & Literacy Development, Cognition & General Knowledge, Approaches To Learning, Physical Well-Being & Motor Development, and Social & Emotional Development that will improve their readiness for kindergarten."<sup>1</sup> Secondly, the US Department of Education outlined the expectations of kindergarten readiness through the

Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Fund. In addition, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) identifies school readiness as involving more than just children. School readiness, in the broadest sense, is about children, families, early environments, schools, and communities. NAEYC recognizes that children are not innately “ready” or “not ready” for school. Their skills and development are strongly influenced by their families and through their interactions with other people and environments before coming to school (NAEYC, 2004). The commonality amongst the varying definitions establishes the expectation for a comprehensive approach to kindergarten readiness and emphasizes the role of the adults in a child’s life as the key to developing readiness for school. This reflects a movement toward a more holistic view of school readiness that encompasses each of the domains of development.

Building on the work of NAEYC and Head Start, Arizona defines school readiness as:

*Arizona’s young children will demonstrate school readiness through the Essential Domains of Language and Literacy development, Cognition and General Knowledge (including early mathematics and early scientific development), Approaches to Learning (curiosity, initiative, persistence, creativity, problem-solving and confidence), Physical Well-Being and Motor Development and Self-Regulation of Attention and Emotion (including Social and Emotional Development). Intentional development of skills and knowledge in these domains establishes a critical foundation for children to engage in and benefit from opportunities to learn.*

In seeking a common definition for school readiness, Arizona has adopted a comprehensive approach to describing what readiness looks like for young children entering kindergarten. The definition of school readiness used in ASRF emphasizes both the knowledge and attributes children need in order to attend to challenging curriculum presented in the kindergarten classroom.

The general knowledge component expected of a student ready to enter kindergarten relates directly to the *Arizona Early Learning Standards 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition*. Examples might include recognizing one’s written name, counting using one to one correspondence, or identifying some

letters of the alphabet from their name. The general knowledge goals specifically focus around language and literacy development, early mathematics and scientific thinking as outlined in the corresponding standards. (<http://www.azed.gov/early-childhood/files/2011/11/arizona-early-learning-standards-3rd-edition.pdf>).

The *Arizona Early Learning Standards* highlights the Approaches To Learning as a standard. This standard relates to children's abilities to think and problem-solve and includes more abstract constructs such as memory and attention. Being able to attend and process information are critical to a child's learning and achievement.<sup>ii</sup> Identifying how a child approaches a new learning situation is an important piece of their school readiness.

Self-regulation, found in the Social and Emotional Early Learning Standard, holds particular importance for a child's capacity for school success. Several studies have shown a strong, predictive correlation between self-regulation and academic success.<sup>iii</sup> Specifically, self-regulation sets the stage for managing one's own behavior, focusing on tasks, and undertaking challenges presented.<sup>iv</sup>

Current research suggests that self-regulation provides a significant link between a child's emotional and cognitive competencies.<sup>v</sup> Self-regulation may be seen as the ability to monitor one's own thinking and behaviors.<sup>vi</sup> Self-regulation encompasses the skills and attributes children need to appropriately respond to their environment<sup>vii</sup> by controlling and adjusting: their emotions, their behavior in social interactions, and their attention during cognitive experiences.<sup>viii</sup> In regard to school readiness, self-regulation supports children in their ability to:

- Inhibit impulsivity and follow school rules and social norms;
- Cope with challenges and engage in difficult cognitive tasks;
- Develop intentionality and plan for and communicate their needs;

- Demonstrate awareness of their environment and others around them to effectively interact with people and spaces within various settings; and
- Maintain attention and motivation for learning activities to occur.<sup>ix</sup>

Self-regulation crosses multiple domains of development and therefore plays a critical role in a child's academic achievement.<sup>x</sup> For example, a child who develops emotional competence in the ability to cope with making mistakes will more likely be able to persist at challenging tasks involving critical thinking and problem solving. Through new research, it is becoming increasingly clear that the ability to self-regulate is essential for ongoing achievement as students respond to the challenges beyond K-12 education.

### **Effective Instruction**

Successful teachers of young children promote growth in all developmental domains identified in the ASRF. Effective instructional strategies for all young learners change as children grow and develop. Young learners preparing for kindergarten must have access to varying learning activities that the adults in their lives intentionally plan. Children must have the opportunity to use play as an effective instructional strategy. In connection, adults need to strategically build children's skills that are representative of the *Arizona Early Learning Standards*. Providing support and scaffolding for the developmental domains of learning is the instruction that leads to school competence for young learners. In practice, effective instruction includes a combination of environmental design, provision of engaging materials, and nurturing and responsive interactions between adults and children. To best prepare young children for academic instruction in a K-12 setting, teachers and other adults must provide children with multiple experiences that are child-centered, experiential, and focused on problem-solving rather than rote learning. Early learning experiences should include a balance between child-directed

and adult-directed activities. Affording children various opportunities to become confident in their independent problem solving increases their capacity to self-regulate and thus expands their preparedness for school entry.

## **Standards**

As a precursor, the first guiding document outlining child outcomes begins with the *Arizona Infant and Toddler Developmental Guidelines* for children birth to the age of three. As children get closer to formalized school experience there is a shift towards more intentional instruction that will lead to school readiness. The *Arizona Early Learning Standards* have been developed to provide a framework for the planning of quality learning experiences for all children three to five years of age. The standards cover a broad range of skill development and provide a useful instructional foundation for children from diverse backgrounds and varying abilities. The standards are intended for use by all those who work with young children in any early care and education setting in urban, rural and tribal communities. They are a tool to be used by teachers and caregivers, and are applicable to parents and families as well. The standards documents are based on the premise that learning occurs on a continuum and that developmental domains are highly interrelated. Children succeed to their highest potential in nurturing environments that support their learning across domains and through the standards continuum.

The *Arizona Early Learning Standards* are divided into eight standards. Each standard is divided into strands, concepts and indicators. See the following chart for your convenience, which headlines the standards, strands, and concepts.

Standard	Strand	Concept
Social Emotional	1. Self	Self-awareness
		Recognizes and expresses feelings
		Self-regulation
	2. Relationships	Attachment
		Social interactions
Respect		
Approaches to Learning	1. Initiative and Curiosity	Initiative
		Curiosity
	2. Attentiveness and Persistence	Attentiveness
		Persistence
	3. Confidence	Confidence
4. Creativity	Creativity	
	5. Reasoning and Problem-Solving	Reasoning Problem-solving
Language and Literacy	1. Language	Receptive Language Understanding
		Expressive Language and Communication Skills
		Vocabulary
	2. Emergent Literacy	Concepts of Print
		Book Handling Skills
		Phonological Awareness
		Alphabet Knowledge
	3. Emergent Writing	Comprehension
		Early Writing, Writing Processes, and Writing Application
Mathematics	1. Counting and Cardinality	Counts Out Loud
		Knows Number Names and Symbols
		Counts to Tell Number of Objects
		Compares Numbers and Quantities
	2. Operations and Algebraic Thinking	Explores Addition and Subtraction
		Patterning
	3. Measurement and Data	Sorts and Classifies
		Data Analysis
		Measures
	4. Geometry	Spatial Reasoning
		Shapes
	Science	1. Inquiry and Application
Investigation		
Analysis and Conclusions		
Communication		
Social Studies	1. Family	Understands Family
	2. Community	Understands Community
		Rights, Responsibilities, and Roles within Community
		Geography
	3. Historical Thinking	Understands Time – Past, Present and Future
Physical Development, Health and Safety	1. Physical and Motor Development	Gross Motor Development
		Fine Motor Development
	2. Health	Personal Health and Hygiene Practices
	3. Safety	Safety and Injury Prevention
Fine Arts	1. Visual Arts	Creates and Understands Visual Arts
	2. Music and Creative Movement	Creates and Understands Music, Movement and Dance
	3. Drama	Creates Dramatic Activities

## **Curriculum**

The *Arizona Early Learning Standards* provide an essential first step for identifying an effective, high quality preschool curriculum. The curriculum should be researched-based, align with the *Arizona Early Learning Standards*, and support the goals of the local program. The National Association for the Education of Young Children defines curriculum as consisting of the knowledge, skills, abilities and understandings children are to acquire and the plans for the learning experiences through which those gains will occur.

Any chosen curriculum should be developmentally appropriate for all young learners. A quality curriculum should promote the use of effective instruction. It should address hands on activities, play, small and large group times, planning for robust learning centers, and outdoor learning time. The curriculum should also include a list of learning materials that the adult may use to intentionally scaffold the learning of children. The curriculum should be based on the interest and varying abilities of the children in the classroom. The curriculum should prompt the teacher to connect the learning to children's experiences and provide multiple opportunities for practice and demonstration of skills and knowledge.

## **Assessment**

Assessments are used to document and understand children's growth and learning to inform every day experiences. Effective assessment is conducted in an ongoing manner and used to guide instruction to best meet children's individual needs. As the assessment data is gathered in authentic and meaningful ways, information is used to intentionally plan instruction and build stronger relationships to support children's knowledge acquisition and self-regulation skills. Assessment generates information for and from parents, teachers, caregivers, and health professionals who all have a stake in preparing children for school entry. Through effective

assessment practices adults receive vital information about what children know and can do as well as what they are ready to learn. Having a clear picture of children's needs upon kindergarten entry allows teachers to appropriately plan curriculum throughout the year so that children can meet the rigor of the K-12 setting.

### **Family Engagement Partnerships**

Families play a critical role in supporting children's school readiness. They are the child's first teacher and expert on their child. Establishing a reciprocal relationship with families is critical to the development of healthy, successful learners. Open communication between early childhood professionals and families allows for the development of strong relationships and collaboration.

In a high quality early education program, frequent two-way communication is established and maintained, and families are presented with multiple opportunities to participate in activities and decisions that concern their children. Developing mutual respect, cooperation, and a shared responsibility for the child helps the family to see that they are a valued partner within the learning community. Effective family engagement requires an ongoing interaction that provides opportunities for information sharing, goal setting, and identification of needed supports and services. Offering families multiple opportunities to be involved with their child's education early on sets the stage for long-term, effective and collaborative family-school relationships throughout children's academic experiences.<sup>xi</sup>

### **Quality Transition into Kindergarten for all Children**

Too often discontinuities exist between the birth to five years and kindergarten experiences.<sup>xii</sup> As such, creating smooth transitions that better prepare children and their families for shifts in expectations and curriculum must be considered as part of a strong school readiness

framework. Effective kindergarten transitions are those that ensure collaborative, planned efforts among schools, teachers, families, and communities. Effective transitions utilize ongoing communication to form strong relationships over the full course of the year prior to kindergarten entry rather than considering transition as a single event activity. Additionally, transitions that best prepare children for entering school occur especially when there is a shared vision of readiness and the transition process.<sup>xiii</sup>

### **How Arizona Approaches School Readiness**

Arizona stakeholders must be strategic and intentional in ensuring improved school readiness for its youngest learners. Children's earliest experiences, especially those during a child's first three years, shape the brain and create the structures necessary for learning.<sup>xiv</sup> Therefore, recognizing the significance of a strong birth to five system is fundamental to the development of the Arizona School Readiness Framework. The ASRF provides common goals for the varying parts of the Arizona early childhood system and supports and builds upon the growing body of research demonstrating the relationship between high quality early education and later academic achievement. The successful implementation of Arizona's Readiness Framework is dependent upon building partnerships with families, improving kindergarten transitions, and building knowledge appropriately matched to the varying stakeholders (through a robust and high quality professional development track).

### **Conclusion**

The early years are an exciting time in a child's development, and the transition into kindergarten is filled with both opportunity and challenge. Arizona recognizes that students today must attain the knowledge and skills needed to be college and career ready.

Evidence of the importance of quality early care and education during a child’s first five years is clear. Making a commitment to ensure all of Arizona’s children enter school ready to learn requires acknowledging that school readiness begins in infancy. As infant-toddler developmental specialist, Ron Lally points out, “...the first building blocks of learning are laid down during the first two years of life through early social and emotional exchanges, and future learning is built on this foundation.”<sup>xv</sup> When the adults in a child’s life provide high quality early learning experiences, children have stronger communication skills, creativity, initiative, and the confidence to approach new challenges.

The ASRF encourages collaboration between families, services, and the various components of the early childhood system. As outlined, the framework reflects the purpose of identifying readiness, and builds on the state’s efforts to establish a system in which all children have access to quality experiences leading to school success. Building a coordinated, statewide effort to establish common understandings of school readiness will ensure Arizona’s children receive a solid foundation to successfully engage in the rigorous academic demands of K-12 education. Arizona’s School Readiness Framework both prepares children for academic success in kindergarten and also puts them on a path to lifelong success.

### **Designing the Kindergarten Developmental Inventory**

Lastly, Arizona’s School Readiness Framework provides the groundwork needed to design and develop Arizona’s Kindergarten Developmental Inventory (KDI). The purpose of the KDI is to provide a tool that allows parents, teachers and administrators to understand the extent of a child’s learning and development at the beginning of kindergarten to develop instruction that will lead to the child’s academic success. The tool that is developed or adopted will align with the *Arizona Early Learning Standards* and *Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards* for

kindergarten, cover all essential domains of school readiness (Physical & Motor Development, Social & Emotional Development, Approaches To Learning, Language Development, and Cognitive Development), and will be reliable and valid for its intended use. Knowing the attributes and expectations for children's entry to school through the use of the Arizona School Readiness Framework allows for the creation of an assessment mechanism that provides a valid measure of children's readiness at school entry. To date, predicting children's academic success through measurement of readiness indicators has been difficult.<sup>xvi</sup> But aligning readiness concepts with the assessment to reliably measure those concepts is a first step in designing a more effective achievement predictor.

## Notes

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<sup>i</sup> Kyle L. Snow, “Integrative Views of the Domains of Child Function: Unifying School Readiness,” School Readiness and the Transition to Kindergarten in the Era of Accountability, eds. R.D. Pianta, M.J. Cox., & K.L. Snow (Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes, 2007) 197-211.

<sup>ii</sup> Timothy Konold and Robert Pianta, “Empirically-Derived, Person-Oriented Patterns of School Readiness in Typically-Developing Children: Description and Prediction to First-Grade Achievement,” *Applied Developmental Science*, V9 N4, 2005: 174-187.

<sup>iii</sup> Judi Boyd, W. Steven Barnett, Elena Bodrova, Deborah J. Leong, and Deanna Gomby, Promoting Children’s Social and Emotional Development Through Preschool Education, (National Institute for Early Education Research, New Brunswick NJ: 2005).

<sup>iv</sup> Boyd et. al.

<sup>v</sup> Blair

<sup>vi</sup> Clancy Blair, “Self-Regulation and School Readiness,” ERIC Digest, 2003.

<sup>vii</sup> Ida Rose Florez, “Developing Young Children’s Self-Regulation through Everyday Experiences,” *Young Children*, July 2011: 46-51

<sup>viii</sup> Blair

<sup>ix</sup> Florez

<sup>x</sup> Florez

<sup>xi</sup> Robert C. Pianta & Marcia Kraft-Sayre, Successful Kindergarten Transition: Your Guide to Connecting Children, Families, & Schools, (Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes, 2003) p. 41.

<sup>xii</sup> Pianta & Kraft-Sayre, p.2

<sup>xiii</sup> Pianta & Kraft-Sayre, p.87

<sup>xiv</sup> J. Ronald Lally, “School Readiness Begins in Infancy,” *Kappan* v92 N3, 2010: 17-21.

<sup>xv</sup> Lally, p.18

<sup>xvi</sup> Maryland Committee for Children

NAEYC (Maxwell & Clifford 2004, 42)

