

### **Strategy 3: Professional Development Pathway System**

There is a significant need to increase the educational level of the early care and education workforce. Specifically, opportunities need to be made available and accessible to professionals who are employed in the field, typically at wages just above minimum wage, to increase their knowledge base within the early care and education field. Affordability of college-level course work is typically out of reach for many child care workers, especially when the time needed to complete classes is considered.

Statistics show there is a high rate of turnover in the early care and education field. Research shows that offering training opportunities for career advancement will help to recruit and retain staff. The professional development pathway will allow early care and education professionals to choose their own path—inspiring them to continually develop their professional abilities. As a result, individuals who take the initiative to increase their education and training may be rewarded with increased compensation and the satisfaction of knowing they are providing children and families with the best care possible<sup>iii</sup>.

Arizona's T.E.A.C.H. program will be the catalyst for enhancing existing programs and resources and bundling them into a more comprehensive system. The scholarships and infrastructure will provide a mechanism for identifying and building collaboration among principal stakeholders and programs, such as institutions of higher education, the Department of Economic Security—Professional Career Pathways Program, S\*CCEEDS (Statewide Child Care and Early Education Development System), etc. T.E.A.C.H. is a strategy benefitting children, families and programs by addressing workforce under-education, which negatively impacts the quality of early care and education.

- *Benefits to children:* higher quality, stable and more capable professionals; improved care and services; better developmental outcomes for children
- *Benefits to families:* early childhood professionals, who remain with their programs and continuously advance their skills and knowledge, are better able to build relationships with children and families and to foster their growth and development
- *Benefits to programs and staff:* support and financial assistance for ongoing professional development and educational pathways for staff leading to higher staff quality and better retention

The Navajo/Apache Regional Partnership Council recognizes that many avenues to high quality professional development need to be available to the early care and education workforce at many levels of education – from community-based education for those beginning the journey toward their CDA, to the need for accessible, relevant, high-quality, ongoing continuing education opportunities for those who have degrees, licenses, or credentials that they need to maintain through continuing education. The Navajo/Apache Regional Partnership Council proposes to offer two avenues for child care professionals:

#### **A . Offer additional T.E.A.C.H. scholarships to child care professionals outside of *Quality First!***

- The model calls for 10% contribution from the employer, 10% from the student/employee, and 80% from FTF.
- The employer needs to be willing to commit to the program. This model also calls for a bonus to be offered to the employee once the degree is completed. Although this expense is likely several years in the future, the employer needs to be willing to provide this bonus to the

employee upon completion.

- The Navajo/Apache Regional Partnership Council could determine the amount of the bonus, and include it in the amount awarded in the RFGA. A typical bonus amount is a one-time \$500.00 bonus upon completion of the degree/certificate.
- The T.E.A.C.H. model is branded, and cannot be altered or changed in any way<sup>iii</sup>.

**B. Offer community-based trainings that will be accepted towards course credit at Northland Pioneer College for non-T.E.A.C.H.-eligible early care and education workers and professionals**

The Navajo/Apache Regional Partnership Council recognizes that the T.E.A.C.H. model is contingent upon the child care center, or home, being eligible and willing to participate in the T.E.A.C.H. program, and that this may be a barrier to some members of the child care workforce. The Navajo/Apache Regional Partnership Council does not want to prevent any child care professional from benefitting from ongoing, effective, professional development. Therefore, the Navajo/Apache Regional Partnership Council will allocate funds to make this opportunity available for child care professionals, who are unable to participate in T.E.A.C.H. Additionally, the Navajo/Apache Regional Partnership Council recognizes that many child care professionals are unable to take time off work to attend classes; and therefore, the traditional educational model will not work for many people in this community.

The Navajo/Apache Regional Partnership Council has endeavored to create a system for a set of registered S\*CCEEDS trainings to be cumulatively accepted towards course credit with Northland Pioneer College. In order to take advantage of this opportunity, S\*CCEEDS registered students would need to be registered as students with Northland Pioneer College within a degree program in the Division of Early Childhood Development and would need to attend 15 Carnegie hours of training, which is eight, two-hour S\*CCEEDS trainings, to earn the equivalent of one college course credit. An advisory work group will be formed to create the framework for this program, to solidify the agreements with Northland Pioneer College to accept this method of instruction delivery, and to determine the administrative home to manage the accumulating S\*CCEEDS credits so that they transfer accurately. This set of S\*CCEEDS trainings would be applicable for professionals that need to maintain a certain number of continuing education hours as well. The Navajo/Apache Regional Partnership Council would like to create a set of “standardized” qualifications, education and training requirements and regulations for various program funding sources and workplace settings, which would include:

- An easier way for current practitioners and those entering the field to seek increased education and better pay and to find movement within our education and training system
- Solutions for agreement issues such as:
  - Clock hour training that “counts” toward college credit
  - Courses that transfer and “count” toward the next level
  - A coherent system of assessment of prior learning
  - A way for individual practitioners, programs, early care and education agencies and organizations to unite and share resources in innovative ways that will increase the availability and affordability of quality training and professional development opportunities”<sup>iv</sup>

The above model would utilize S\*CCEEDS-registered trainers and a specified set of S\*CCEEDS-approved training modules. In order for participants to obtain course work credit from Northland Pioneer College for attendance at S\*CCEEDS-registered trainings, the following will need to be established:

- An agreement between Northland Pioneer College (NPC) and S\*CCEEDS for NPC to accept proof of attendance at S\*CCEEDS-registered trainings for course credit
- Teachers and Directors wishing to obtain NPC credit will need to be registered with S\*CCEEDS and with NPC as a student.
- An Advisory Workgroup will need to be formed to create the processes for this agreement, as well as establish the Administrative Home for this program. The Administrative Home will need to track attendance, and assure S\*CCEEDS approval of instructors and training modules.
- These trainings will be available free of charge for all who attend and all will receive S\*CCEEDS credit; however, to be awarded NPC credit, the student will need to be enrolled at NPC as well.
- A specified set of S\*CCEEDS modules will need to be identified and possibly created, in order to be identified as eligible for course credit transfer to NPC. Additionally, NPC will need to approve the content of the modules as meeting the content/curriculum requirements for the specific class to which they will articulate.
- This model will require an agreement with Northland Pioneer College to accept attendance at these specific trainings for course credit toward a degree or credential program.

The work-product of the Advisory Workgroup will be the accomplishment of the following and will form the basis and content of the future strategy that will be proposed to the Board:

- Effectively link credential and degree programs and community-based training entities
- Identify core knowledge and skills within the training and education programs that are required by different types of employers
- Facilitate smooth transitions through the educational system for students to attain meaningful credentials, degrees, and employment
- Encourage the development of articulation agreements that support a continual pathway for transfer of education credits
- Enhance public recognition of early care and education practitioners as professionals
- Provide a consumer education tool for parents
- Encourage efforts toward increased compensation

**Lead Goal:** FTF will build a skilled and well-prepared, early childhood development workforce.

**Key Measures:**

1. Total number and percentage of professionals working in early childhood care and education who are pursuing a credential, certificate, or degree

**Target Population :**

Child Care professionals employed in licensed child care centers or homes, not already receiving a T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship through *Quality First!*

	SFY2010	SFY2011	SFY2012
<b>Proposed Service Numbers</b>	July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010	July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011	July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012
	10 TEACH	10 TEACH	10 T.E.A.C.H.

	<u>Scholarships</u>	<u>Scholarships</u>	<u>Scholarships</u>
	Advisory group formed, agreements reached	20 students in S*CCEEDS-NPC program	3-yr. total = 30 T.E.A.C.H. Scholarships <hr/> 20 students in S*CCEEDS-NPC program

**Performance Measures SFY 2010-2012**

- Number of professionals pursuing degree in early childhood/Actual service number

How is this strategy building on the service network that currently exists:

- Courses will be offered by Northland Pioneer College, which is the community college that serves the Northeastern portion of Arizona.

What are the opportunities for collaboration and alignment:

- This strategy will be implemented in collaboration and alignment with the First Things First State Board.
- There are several S\*CCEEDS trainers in the region and The Blake Foundation currently holds a contract to provide the S\*CCEEDS trainings throughout the region. Sharon Raban is a S\*CCEEDS Trainer, based in St Johns, who is available to offer additional trainings.

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

Population-based Allocation for proposed strategy

\$29,000 total allocation

**Budget Justification:**

T.E.A.C.H.

\$1,650.00 per student, per year (T.E.A.C.H. recommended cost)

\$1,050.00 Release time and travel stipend per semester

\$2,700.00 per T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship

Advisory Workgroup to create the S\*CCEEDS – NPC Program, the Navajo/Apache Regional Partnership Council will allocate \$2,000 for FY 2010.

<sup>i</sup> [http://spanish.ilgateways.com/forms/literature/career\\_lattice.pdf](http://spanish.ilgateways.com/forms/literature/career_lattice.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> Teaching and Teacher Education: An International Journal of Research and Studies, v24 n8 p2146-2156 Nov 2008

<sup>iii</sup> Information about the T.E.A.C.H. project is available on the web at [www.childcareservices.org/ps/teach.html](http://www.childcareservices.org/ps/teach.html). State contacts are available at [www.childcareservices.org/ps/statecontacts.html](http://www.childcareservices.org/ps/statecontacts.html)

---

<sup>iv</sup> [http://spanish.ilgateways.com/forms/literature/career\\_lattice.pdf](http://spanish.ilgateways.com/forms/literature/career_lattice.pdf)