



**FIRST THINGS FIRST**  
*Ready for School. Set for Life.*

- Agenda Item:** Follow-up Discussion on the ASU Learning Lab Site Visit
- Attachment:** Learning Lab Standards of Practice (Attachment 07)
- Background:** The Regional Council requested the opportunity to visit a local child care center learning lab to help inform Regional Council members on the operations of a learning lab. On February 18, 2014 at 9:30am the Regional Council had the opportunity to visit the ASU Child Development Laboratory (CDL). The CDL is a research, teaching and service program that enrolls children 2-5 years of age. <http://www.asu.edu/clas/ssfd/cdl/>
- Recommendations:** The Regional Director presents the Learning Lab Standards of Practice for Council review and discussion.

## **First Things First Learning Lab Standards of Practice**

### **Description of strategy including Standards of Practice**

The Learning Lab will provide high quality early care and education that will be available to the community in a full day, full-year child care program. The Learning Lab will also function as an early childhood dual-enrollment program that high school students can work in to earn both high school and community college credit toward early childhood courses. The Learning Lab will function as a regional location for professional development seminars and classes for early care and education staff in the region. As a Quality First eligible program, the Learning Lab will have access to the suite of strategies that are linked to quality through Quality First, including T.E.A.C.H. scholarships, Child Care Health Consultation through the Helpline, FTF Professional REWARD\$, and Quality First Child Care Scholarships.

The Learning Lab funded and implemented under this strategy will be a quality early education program that will be a venue to provide hands-on experiences to high school, college and university students enrolled in dual-enrollment or college level courses in early childhood, or related areas. The Learning Lab will provide a high quality early care and education program that will be open to the community on a full day, full-year basis, utilizing a tuition schedule and all available revenue streams and partnerships to be financially sustainable.

### **The Learning Lab will encompass the following components:**

- will be inclusive to all children,
- will practice continuity of care between teachers and children, with a goal of keeping teachers with the same group of children,
- will have low teacher-child ratios based on best-practice guidelines,
- will be of the highest quality and will work toward achieving a rating of 5 Stars,
- will be a Quality First participating site,
- will achieve national accreditation,
- will utilize the Creative Curriculum Gold Strategies,
- Will utilize the Arizona Early Learning Standards, Infant-Toddler Developmental Guidelines, and Program Guidelines for High Quality Early Education.
- will be available to high-school and college students, who are enrolled in early childhood classes, as a placement site to gain practical experience in working with young children, their parents, and Lab faculty in all facets of the early care and education program and early childhood development, and
- Will support faculty, lead and assistant teachers to meet or exceed the 2020 Benchmarks for professional development attainment outlined in the Quality First points scale.

### **First Things First School Readiness Indicators related to this strategy:**

FTF is seeking successful applicants to implement this strategy and work collectively with FTF to impact the school readiness indicators below:

- #/% children demonstrating school readiness at kindergarten entry in the development domains of social-emotional, language and literacy, cognitive, and motor and physical
- % of children with newly identified developmental delays during the kindergarten year

**First Things First Goal Area to be addressed:**

- Professional Development

**First Things First Service Units and Performance Measures to be addressed:**

Unit of Service:

- Number of participating adults

Performance Measures:

- Number of participating adults

**Target Population to serve:**

The Learning Lab will provide a pathway beginning with high school classes that articulate to College and will move students toward degree completion. Community college and university students will be part of the target population for placement in the Learning Lab to complete internships, student teaching placements, or program observations. The Learning Lab will necessarily be in one physical location; however, students attending any regional high school with an early childhood program are eligible for placement in the program. The Learning Lab will be open to all College students actively taking course work toward the completion of a degree or certificate. Additionally, The Learning Lab will be available as a placement site for university students who may be enrolled in higher education institutes located outside of the Region.

**Funding:**

This is a 12 month contract for the fiscal year with an option for renewal for two (2), additional twelve (12) month periods. Total funds available are \$300,000 for the first funding period. Renewal will be contingent upon satisfactory contract performance, evaluation and availability of funds. Funding amounts for renewals of the Learning Lab strategy will be \$240,000 in the following fiscal year and \$180,000 in the final fiscal year, which represents a 20% reduction per year in potential funding.