

**First Things First Early Childhood
Research and Evaluation National Advisory Panel**

Draft Meeting Minutes

April 30, 2012 – Day One

Call to Order

The meeting of the First Things First Early Childhood Research and Evaluation National Advisory Panel was held on April 30 and May 1, 2012. The first day of the meeting began at 11:00 a.m. on April 30. The meeting was held at the First Things First office, 4000 North Central Avenue, Suite 800, Phoenix, Arizona 85012.

Chairman John Love called the meeting to order at approximately 11:00 a.m.

Members Present

Dr. John Love, Dr. W. Steven Barnett, Dr. Clancy Blair, Dr. Noel Card, Dr. Claude Goldenberg, Dr. Dawn Mackety, Dr. Catherine Snow and Dr. Eugene Thompson

Members Present –Telephonic

Dr. Pamela Powell

Members Absent

Dr. Greg Duncan, Dr. Neal Halfon, and Dr. Eva Marie Shivers

Chairman Love called roll to officially open the meeting and then asked First Things First Early Childhood Research and Evaluation National Advisory Panel (Advisory Panel) members and First Things First staff to introduce themselves.

Discussion and Approval of March 12 and 13, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Chairman Love noted that the draft minutes from the March 12 and 13, 2012 meeting were available for review and approval. Dr. Dawn Mackety moved that the March 12 and 13, 2012 meeting minutes be approved, Dr. Catherine Snow seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Review/Reminder of Arizona's Open Meeting Law and Procedures

Chairman Love reminded all in attendance the Arizona Open Meeting Law requirements and procedures.

Review of Agenda and Meeting Materials

Chairman Love reviewed the itinerary for the day, including the agenda, and noted that the panel had a short timeline to provide their final recommendations to the First Things First Board of Directors. Chairman Love also noted that the panel would meet by telephonic meeting on May 24, 2012 and vote to approve the final recommendations to the First Things First Board. Chairman Love also reviewed the First Things First guiding research questions.

Discussion of Evaluation Approaches

Chairman Love referred the panel to the document summarizing the conditions necessary for the First Things First evaluation to take place. These conditions included:

- 1) Logic model
- 2) Criteria for selecting strategies for study
- 3) Criteria for sample selection
- 4) Definitions of key terms
 - a. Fidelity of implementation
 - b. Full implementation
 - c. Dosage
 - d. Service intensity
- 5) Integrated, longitudinal, statewide data system
- 6) Reliable and valid measures of key outcomes
- 7) Dissemination plan
- 8) Collaborative use of information from evaluations

Panel members had no additions to the necessary conditions.

CEO Rhian Allvin reiterated the complexity of the First Things First model, service delivery system, and governance. She noted that the direction of the panel's recommendations was not what was initially expected but is exciting. She further noted that efforts with the Department of Education to collaborate on data sharing were already underway. CEO Allvin recognized the challenge of gathering data necessary for evaluation and strategic planning purposes while simultaneously providing real-time services to constituents and staff, as well as monitoring service delivery and fidelity of program implementation. CEO Allvin responded to a panel member's question and underscored the importance of data analysis in this process.

One panel member questioned whether evaluation efforts would be outsourced or conducted in-house.

CEO Allvin responded that both methods would be used, depending on the nature of the evaluation questions and type of study required.

Panel discussion ensued regarding development of an integrated data system, the need for the panel to provide direction regarding the evaluation studies, and the potential for collaborative data collection and community partnerships with stakeholders including Native American communities.

Chairman Love noted the importance of understanding/defining what constitutes full implementation.

CEO Allvin stated that the challenge of immediate implementation of service delivery balanced with the need to examine program implementation fidelity and ensure that First Things First efforts are reaching the children and families in greatest need. CEO Allvin also noted that little is known about early care provided by families, friends, and neighbors; this type of care is unregulated but is commonly used in Arizona especially for infants and toddlers.

Chairman Love noted the importance of the logic model to determine what program elements need to be in place.

Dr. Amy Kemp stated that First Things First has in its possession all the data from the Consortium study, with the exception of the data collected on Tribal lands. Discussion ensued about the potential utility of the dataset.

Panel members commented on the Consortium database. Discussion included: whether unique child identifiers were present, the degree of parent service utilization data available, the number/percentage of parents that completed the entire battery of assessments, whether the database could be used as a baseline for future studies, whether it could be used to answer questions related to differences in service utilization across different groups, the utility of drawing sub-samples from the entire dataset, the use of the data for descriptive purposes, and the potential of weighting the data.

Chairman Love recessed the meeting at approximately 12:40 for lunch.

Chairman Love reconvened the meeting at approximately 1:35 pm.

Chairman Love provided a slide summarizing the potential evaluation approaches that First Things First could adopt that included the following:

- Case studies
- Implementation/process studies
- Descriptive outcome studies
- Quasi-experimental designs
- Regression discontinuity
- Propensity matching
- Planned-variation experimental studies

The panel discussed these options thoroughly. After discussion, the panel agreed to focus their evaluation recommendations on the strategies for which First Things First has allocated more than \$2 million in funding for fiscal year 2013. For those strategies, the panel began identifying specific evaluation questions and potential methodological approaches. The panel began their recommendations with strategies in the area of Quality, Access, and Affordability. The panel discussed the following questions and approaches:

Strategies in the Area of Access, Affordability, and Quality. Questions to Be Addressed and Possible Evaluation Approaches:

Overarching question: Are there relationships among Quality First ratings, improved early childhood programs, and children's kindergarten readiness? In the panel's discussion, the following questions and possible approaches were identified:

- 1) What is the fidelity of implementation of all components of Quality First interventions? (Child Care Health Consultation, Coaching/quality improvement plan, Incentives, offset of licensing fees, instructional and other supports, scholarships, T.E.A.C.H.) [potential methodological approach: implementation study]
 - a. What are the profiles of interventions received by providers?
 - b. What is the relationship between quality first interventions (Child Care Health Consultation, Coaching/quality improvement plan, Incentives, offset of licensing fees, instructional and other supports, scholarships, TEACH) and quality Star levels? [potential methodological approach: implementation study]
 - c. How different are the levels of quality by Star level (as measured by the Environmental Rating Scale, Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and Quality First point scale)? [potential methodological approach: implementation study]
- 2) Do Quality First cut scores measure meaningful differences between Star levels?
 - a. Do children receiving different Star levels of quality instruction have different child outcomes? [potential methodological approach: propensity matching or regression with fixed effects]
 - b. Do Quality First cut scores measure meaningful differences between Star levels?
 - c. Is change in quality over time different for providers participating in Quality First versus not participating? [potential methodological approach: propensity matching – possibly using waiting lists]
 - d. Are the below related to participation? Are they related to outcomes? [potential methodological approach: propensity matching, regression]
 - Star level (as determines interventions received)
 - Scholarship recipients
 - Different ages of children (infant/toddler, preschool)
 - Different types of providers (school based, private, for-profit, family child care)
 - Is participation and impact on school readiness related to different child-level demographics (i.e., low income, special needs, English Language Learners, ethnicity, home language, family mobility, Tribal communities)

Chairman Love recessed the meeting at approximately 5:30 p.m.

May 1, 2012 – Day Two

Chairman Love resumed the meeting at approximately 8:30 a.m.

Members Present

Dr. John Love, Dr. W. Steven Barnett, Dr. Clancy Blair, Dr. Noel Card, Dr. Claude Goldenberg, Dr. Dawn Mackety, Dr. Pamela Powell and Dr. Eugene Thompson

Members Absent

Dr. Greg Duncan, Dr. Neal Halfon, Dr. Eva Marie Shivers, and Dr. Catherine Snow

Discussion of Evaluation Approaches (continued)

Chairman Love resumed the meeting with continued discussion of evaluation approaches.

Following the process agreed upon the previous day, evaluation questions and approaches for the following strategies were discussed:

Strategies in the Area of Family Support. Questions to Be Addressed and Possible Evaluation Approaches:

Overarching questions:

What services and combinations of services are children receiving and how does service receipt relate to identified family and child needs? Are there First Things First strategies, programs, or models that are particularly effective? And how is their effectiveness related to costs? In the panel's discussion, the following questions and approaches were identified as discussed:

Home visitation: Questions to Be Addressed and Possible Evaluation Approaches:

- 1) Are home visitation programs being implemented with fidelity to the evidence-based models they were designed to follow? [potential methodological approach: implementation study]
 - a. Did the strategy(s) reach the intended families and hard to reach families?
- 2) What intensity of service is delivered in each model, and is it linked with family needs? [potential methodological approach: implementation study]
- 3) Is the degree of fidelity of implementation of home visiting models associated with children's school readiness outcomes? [potential methodological approach: propensity matching or regression with fixed effects]

Family resource centers: Questions to Be Addressed and Possible Evaluation Approaches:

Overall approach: intentionally select potential best approach or promising practice clusters of strategies in diverse communities for examination. Potentially transport strategies to a new location to examine exportability.

- 1) What is implemented in each family resource center? Is it in fulfillment of First Things First standards of practice? [potential methodological approach: implementation or case study and review of dash board/mapping of service utilization and community outcomes]
 - a. Did the strategy(s) reach the intended families and hard to reach families? Are families able to locate needed services? Are families receiving services aligned with their needs?
- 2) What models or consistent approaches are emerging? Identify potential promising practices.
- 3) What intensity of service is delivered and is it effectively linked with family need?

Community-Based Training: Questions to Be Addressed and Possible Evaluation Approaches:

- 1) Did the strategy(s) reach the intended families and hard to reach families? Are families able to locate needed services? Are families receiving services aligned with their needs?
- 2) What models or consistent approaches are emerging? Identify potential promising practices.
- 3) What intensity of service is delivered and is it effectively linked with family need?

Chairman Love recessed the meeting at approximately 12:10 for a lunch break.

Chairman Love reconvened the meeting at approximately 12:50 pm.

Strategies in the Area of Health. Questions to Be Addressed and Possible Evaluation Approaches: Overarching questions:

What services and combinations of services are children receiving and how does service receipt relate to identified family and child needs? Are there FTF strategies, programs, or models that are particularly effective? And how is their effectiveness related to costs? In the panel's discussion, the following questions and approaches were identified:

Care Coordination/ Medical Home: Questions to Be Addressed and Possible Evaluation Approaches:

- 1) What is implemented in the model? Is it in fulfillment of First Things First standards of practice?
 - a. Did the strategy(s) reach the intended families and hard to reach families? Are families able to locate needed services? Are families receiving services aligned with their needs?
- 2) What is the outcome for children and families of utilization of a medical home?
- 3) What system/policy changes have been related to First Things First and partner efforts around medical home/care coordination strategy? (especially in the context of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act)

Oral Health: Questions to Be Addressed and Possible Evaluation Approaches:

- 1) What is implemented? Is it in fulfillment of First Things First standards of practice?
 - a. Did the strategy(s) reach the intended children and hard to reach children? Are families able to locate needed services?
 - b. Beyond the standard of practice, what models or consistent approaches are emerging? Identify potential promising practices.
- 2) How are oral health strategies related to appropriate population outcomes such as dental caries?
- 3) Is service availability and utilization related to family distance from services? (intent to treat)
- 4) What system/policy changes have been related to First Things First and partner efforts around oral health strategy? (for example, tele-dentistry, practitioners who can apply fluoride varnish, Medicaid reimbursement)

Nutrition/ Obesity/ Physical Activity: Questions to Be Addressed and Possible Evaluation Approaches:

- 1) What models or consistent approaches are emerging in the national literature? Identify potential promising practices? (child care based, home visitation based, community based)
- 2) What system/policy changes have been related to First Things First and partner efforts around Nutrition/Obesity/Physical Activity?
- 3) How can First Things First refine and improve its standards of practice?

Mental Health Consultation: Questions to Be Addressed and Possible Evaluation Approaches:

- 1) What is implemented? Is there fidelity to a model? Is it in fulfillment of First Things First standards of practice? Are the following factors related to participation and/or impact?
 - a. Different ages of children (infant/toddler)
 - b. Different types of providers (school based, private, home based providers)
 - c. Child-level demographics (i.e., low income, special needs, English Language Learners, ethnicity)
- 2) Is there a correlation between effective implementation and improved quality (i.e., rising star level)?

The panel also addressed research issues relevant to First Things First's policy agenda that cut across programmatic strategies, including:

- 1) Language acquisition (English/dual language learners)
 - a. Are there specific approaches that are more effective in serving and achieving outcomes for English language learners? (e.g., parent-based or parent-focused? Child care provider-based? Community-based?)
- 2) Professional development and teacher quality
 - a. How is teacher quality related to classroom quality and child level outcomes?
 - b. What motivates teachers to pursue and complete higher education and remain in the field?
- 3) Tribal Communities
 - a. How is native language preservation related to strengthening families and overall language acquisition?

Discussion of Evaluation Recommendations

The panel members agreed that in addition to the recommended studies, collection of child level data on all early childhood indicators, collection of service data on all First Things First funded strategies, and establishment of a longitudinal data system with a data dashboard and mapping system would be recommendations to the First Things First Board in the final report.

Review Draft Outline for Panel's Report to the First Things First Board

Chairman Love referred the panel members to the proposed outline for the final report, located in their meeting materials. He noted that the meeting discussions would be reviewed and the panel's report to the board would reflect all the issues discussed at this meeting. When the drafts are circulated, particularly the first one, panel members will have the opportunity to weigh in on how the recommendations and their contexts grew out of the panel's discussions at this meeting.

Review Next Steps for Finalizing Panel's Report to the First Things First Board

Chairman Love reminded the panel of the timeline for editing and delivery of the report to the First Things First Board:

First draft circulated to panel May 8, 2012	Panel comments Due:	May 14, 2012
2nd draft circulated May 17, 2012	Panel comments Due:	May 21, 2012
3rd draft circulated May 23, 2012	Telephonic meeting:	May 24, 2012

Report finalized and sent to Board for June 12, 2012 meeting.

The next meeting of the First Things First Early Childhood Research and Evaluation National Advisory Panel will be held telephonically on May 24, 2012.

Adjourn

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m.