



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Ready for School. Set for Life.

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

Governor's Education Initiative – Arizona Ready

- On September 8th, Governor Brewer announced a new education initiative called *Arizona Ready*. The Governor's Office describes *Arizona Ready* as a 9-year initiative aimed at “expecting more from our children, our schools and ourselves” (see attached press release).
- According to the Governor's Office, *Arizona Ready* grew out of a two-year process to compete in the federal Race to the Top grant competition. Governor Brewer asked the P-20 Coordinating Council, the same group who helped craft the original proposal, to translate the application into a plan for the state's education system.
- Governor Brewer has designated *Arizona Ready* as the mechanism for helping translate this plan into policy. www.arizonaready.com is the initiative's website.
- There are some components of the plan that are already being implemented – like the new letter grade (A-F) system that will accompany the traditional school rating system (excelling, performing, etc.). Others proposals will likely require extensive policy conversations and/or considerations by the Legislature and other policy making bodies – including First Things First.
- We will continue to update as more information and conversations around the Governor's education policy agenda develops in the months ahead.

Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge

- The Governor's Office has convened several conversations around Arizona's potential application to the Early Learning Challenge and FTF has been participating in these conversations.
- A final decision as to whether or not Arizona is going to apply is still under active consideration by the Governor's Office; however, we have mutually agreed that the next step is for FTF to develop and write Sections A and B of the application.
- This will give the Governor's Office additional information as to whether or not they believe Arizona can ultimately be competitive. Simultaneously, this allows FTF to make progress on completing the application in the short amount of time between now and the October 19th deadline.

Child Care Subsidies

- FTF continues to engage in dialogue with the Governor's Office on possible solutions to the potential loss of federal matching dollars for child care subsidies in the state.

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