



FIRST THINGS FIRST

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QUALITY FIRST

White Mountain Apache Tribe
Regional Partnership Council





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WHAT IS QUALITY FIRST ?

Quality First (QF) is Arizona's quality improvement and rating system.

- Identify quality standards
- Assess early care and education programs
- Support programs in increasing quality standards





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STATEWIDE PARTICIPATION

867 early care and education providers

- 671 center-based
- 196 family child care

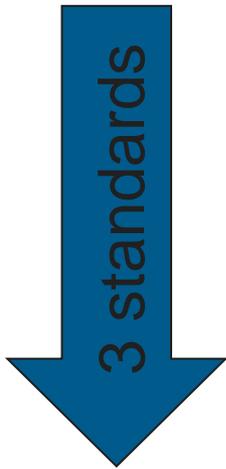
An estimated 26% of Licensed and Certified programs are enrolled statewide.





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Quality First Star Rating



- Environment
- Interactions
- Program Practices

	★ Rising Star	★★ Progressing Star	★★★ Quality	★★★★ Quality Plus	★★★★★ Highest Quality
	Demonstrates a commitment to examine practices and improve the quality of care beyond regulatory requirements.	Demonstrates a commitment to provide environments that are progressing in the ability to foster the health, safety and development of young children.	Demonstrates a level of quality that provides an environment that is healthy and safe with access to developmentally appropriate materials. Curriculum is aligned with state standards. Interactions between adults and children are enhanced. Staff qualifications exceed state regulatory requirements.	Demonstrates a level of quality that provides an environment of developmentally appropriate, culturally sensitive learning experiences. Curriculum is aligned with state standards. Relationships between adults and children are nurturing and promote language development and reasoning skills.	Demonstrates a level of quality that provides an environment of lower ratios/group size and higher staff qualifications that supports significant positive outcomes for young children in preparation for school. Curriculum is aligned with state standards and child assessment. Relationships between adults and children are nurturing and promote emotional, social, and academic development.
ERS Average Program Score	1.0 – 1.99	2.0 – 2.99	3.0 – 3.99 <i>No classroom score below 2.5</i>	4.0 – 4.99 <i>No classroom score below 3.0</i>	5.0 & above <i>No classroom score below 3.0</i>
CLASS	N/A	N/A	ES 4.5, CO 4.5, IS 2.0	ES 5.0, CO 5.0, IS 2.5	ES 6.0, CO 6.0, IS 3.0
Points Scale	N/A	N/A	6 point minimum SQ 2, AP 2, CA 2	10 point minimum SQ 2, AP 2, CA 2	12 point minimum SQ 4, AP 4, CA 4



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Quality First Star Ratings

Statewide

779 programs with star ratings

- 1 Star – 43 (6%)
- 2 Star – 607 (78%)
- 3 Star – 84 (11%)
- 4 Star – 35 (4%)
- 5 Star – 10 (1%)



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PROPOSED FY15 MODEL UPDATES

- Merging Quality First and Pre-Kindergarten
- First Things First Scholarships
 - Eligibility
 - Rates
 - Slots
- “Buy-in Option” for Quality First
- T.E.A.C.H.



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QUALITY FIRST AND PRE-K SCHOLARSHIPS

■ Current

- QF Pre-K is regional strategy funded in addition to QF base model
- Stand alone strategies
- Pre-K programs receive scholarships during rating process; QF programs must be rated before receiving scholarships
- Mentoring/Technical Assistance is required component of Pre-K scholarship strategy





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QUALITY FIRST AND PRE-K SCHOLARSHIPS

- FY15 Update
 - Common branding
 - All new programs rated prior to receiving scholarships
 - Pre-K Mentoring/Technical Assistance is funded at discretion of Council





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SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILITY

- Current
 - All enrolled Quality First providers and providers on the wait list are eligible to receive scholarships
 - All programs that apply for Pre-Kindergarten scholarships are eligible to receive them
- FY15 Update
 - July 1, 2013
 - NO WAITLIST SCHOLARSHIPS – PREK ELIGIBILITY 3-5
 - July 1, 2014
 - NO 1 STAR SCHOLARSHIPS – PREK ELIGIBILITY 3-5
 - July 1, 2015
 - ONLY 3-5 STAR PROGRAMS ELIGIBLE



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SCHOLARSHIP RATES

- Current
 - QF has 216 different rates based on:
 - 2010 DES Market Rate Survey (MRS)
 - DES Districts
 - Provider Type
 - Age Bands
 - Star Rating
 - Pre-K rate is different from QF rate
 - Rates don't exceed program's usual tuition cost for QF
 - Pre-K rate paid regardless of program tuition cost



SCHOLARSHIP RATES

- FY15 Update
 - Simplified rates (moving from 216 to 4 variations)
 - 2 age bands
 - Same statewide rates for all Pre-K and QF scholarships
 - Family and group homes at 67% center rate for children 0-36 months and 85% center rate for children 37-72 months (percentages align with trends in the MRS)
 - One rate at 3, 4 and 5 set at 90% of the 4 star cost of quality level
 - Rates paid regardless of what program charges





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PROPOSED ANNUAL RATES



		1 Star	2 Star	3-5 Stars
Centers	0-36 mo	\$ -	\$ 7,969	\$ 11,300
	37-72 mo	\$ -	\$ 6,000	\$ 7,300
Homes	0-36 mo	\$ -	\$ 5,625	\$ 7,600
	37-72 mo	\$ -	\$ 4,875	\$ 6,200



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SCHOLARSHIP SLOTS

- Current
 - FY 13 investment of \$54 million (\$39M for QF base; \$6M for QF additional; \$9M for Pre-K)
 - QF slots awarded across all providers based on size, program type and star rating – all star levels eligible
 - Pre-K slots awarded based on application request and intention for equal distribution among public and private programs
 - Pre-K scholarship slots have no caps; QF scholarship slots are capped



SCHOLARSHIP SLOTS

- FY15 Update
 - FY14 investment (\$40 million) as base for Quality First scholarships component
 - April 1st – date for rating “snapshot” to determine scholarship slots for upcoming FY
 - Slots for new programs determined on actual star rating
 - Council has discretion to fund slots above and beyond the QF base model
 - Caps for both QF and Pre-K scholarship slots
 - Scholarships are the financial incentives at 3, 4, and 5 stars (replaces and provides more funds than current quality bonus)
 - Table of estimated slots found in Board book





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QUALITY FIRST BUY-IN

- FY15 Update
 - Buy QF Rating Only participation (assessment package)
 - Buy additional assessment for QF Full Participation or Rating Only participants
 - Cost neutral to FTF and grantees
 - Can be funded by providers, business, philanthropy or other sponsors
- Rationale
 - Increase access to QF for providers
 - Increase access to high quality for families



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T.E.A.C.H.

- Current
 - Every QF site guaranteed teacher scholarships
 - Scholarships going unused for 90 days before redistribution to other scholars
- FY15 Update
 - QF prioritized, not guaranteed
- Rationale
 - Efficient and effective distribution of teacher scholarships