

Kindergarten Transition Community of Practice (Previously Pre-Kindergarten Mentoring)

In SFY 2014, Pre-Kindergarten Mentoring is provided by the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) as a component of the Pre-Kindergarten Scholarship Strategy in the La Paz/Mohave Region and multiple other regions across the state. ADE mentors provide a variety of training and technical assistance aligned with the Arizona Early Learning Standards and work closely with assigned programs to support best practices in early learning.

In SFY 2015, the Pre-K Mentoring Strategy will transition to a community of practice strategy to support the transition to kindergarten. The new strategy, Kindergarten Transition Community of Practice, is being developed by First Things First (FTF) and will not be a required component of the Quality First Scholarship Strategy in SFY 2015.

Why is the model changing?

- Mentoring was originally a component of the Pre-K Scholarship Strategy;
- In SFY 2015, Pre-K scholarships will be part of the Quality First Scholarships Strategy;
- Because all Quality First sites are assigned a coach, mentoring in the current form may be seen as duplicative of the coaching provided through Quality First.

What is changing?

- Strengthening public/private partnerships to support the transition to kindergarten from a variety of settings is important and is the basis for the DRAFT Standards of Practice (SOP) for the new Kindergarten Transition Community of Practice Strategy.
- The Pre-K scholarship Strategy initially supported the partnership between public schools and early care and education programs in the community by requiring that funding pass-through the public school to support community partner programs.
- As FTF developed the SOP internally, questions arose about the significant changes to the strategy and the need to vet this with school districts and early childhood education providers to ask them about what approach would work best for them.

What is the plan?

For SFY 2015, FTF determined that the Kindergarten Transition Community of Practice Strategy (previously Pre-Kindergarten Mentoring) would fund three main activities:

- Phase-out the current mentoring component, so it does not end abruptly;
- Conduct a pilot program of the draft SOP in one community for each region;
- Engage the public schools (including superintendents, Pre-K and kindergarten teachers, Quality First coaches and ADE mentors) to better understand the current status of kindergarten transition, what support is needed and what is the best approach to use.