

November 21, 2008

First Things First
Arizona Early Childhood Development & Health Board
4000 N. Central Ave.
Phoenix, AZ 85014

Paula Curley
Chair

Jenny Rodgers
Vice Chair

Geraldine Kee-Yazzie
Member

Herbert Long
Member

Joseph Martin
Member

Paula Seanez
Member

First Lady Vikki Shirley
Member

Spencer Willie
Member

Dorothy Yazzie
Member

Dear Members of the First Things First State Board:

On behalf of the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council, I am writing to request an extension until January 2009, for our Regional Council to present its Funding Plan to the State Board for approval.

The Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council has accomplished significant work in the past seven months. We have worked on and approved the Needs and Assets Report, prioritized the needs of children birth through 5 in the region, and have chosen the key measures we plan to impact across the Navajo Nation. In addition, we have identified the broad strategies which will address the needs and impact the key measures. Our work now is to further refine the strategies, decide upon the funding amounts and identify the target populations to be served.

Our prioritized strategies thus far are as follows:

Quality and Access

- Increase number of children receiving quality early care and education through funding for facility improvements.
- Increase number of children receiving quality early care and education through expanding capacity of existing centers.
- Increase number of children receiving quality early care and education through funding of homes to be licensed.

Professional Development

- Increase early care and education workforce by means of fostering education of those considering entering the field, those pursuing CDA, AA, BA, & MA degrees, and currently employed, through funding of scholarships, incentives, or professional development.

- Increase early care and education workforce through retention of degreed professionals (CDA, AA, BA & MA) by funding of incentives or wage enhancement in early care and education.
- Increase early care and education workforce by funding MA level faculty and professional stipends.

Family Support

- Support Ke' (extended family/friends) by funding early care and education through home visitations, resources, seminars, and hands-on training to improve knowledge and understanding of basic parenting/care giving skills.
- Support families of children birth to 5 with literacy-rich environments that promote dual-language in early care education at preschools, centers and home based settings through funding, including but not limited to: development of materials, dissemination of materials, clearinghouse, and community awareness to parents and families.

The Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council looks forward to completing and presenting a thorough funding plan to the State Board in January. Even more importantly, we look forward to the implementation of the strategies and making a real difference for the children and families of the Navajo Nation. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Paula Curley

Dr. Paula Curley
Chair, Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council