

Meeting Objectives:

1. Review Quality First's role within the early childhood landscape in Arizona.
2. Review Quality First's current fiscal policies and financial model.
3. Discuss the implications of Quality First's financial parameters
4. Define Scale for Quality First
5. Initial Work Group Convening

Time	Agenda item	Name/Organization	Preparation Documents (date provided)
1:00 pm	Welcome/Introductions; Recap of 3/31 Accomplishments; Adoption of 3/31 Meeting Minutes	First Things First Advocacy & Communication Solutions, LLC	Meeting Minutes/Summary (April 22) Description of how Quality First works with Special Populations (May 8) QFASC diagram (April 22)
1:10 pm	Presentations: System Perspectives, Overview of Quality First's Financing Model, Fiscal and Program Policies, Q&A	Karen Woodhouse and Lindsay Kaid, First Things First	Common Definitions (April 22) Overview of Quality First's Role in System (May 8) Line Item Budget (May 8) Sustainability/fiscal and program policy summary (April 22)
2:10 pm	BREAK		
2:20 pm	Discussion: Defining Scale for Quality First	Lori McClung and Heather Lenz, Advocacy & Communication Solutions, LLC	Finance Presentation (May 20) Systems Perspective Presentation (May 20)
3:25 pm	Reflection/Appreciation	Lori McClung and Heather Lenz, Advocacy & Communication Solutions, LLC	
3:35 pm	Work Group Breakout Discussions: Purpose, Role and Expectations; Objectives; Timeline; Additional Data Needs; Gathering Community Feedback	Work Groups: Quality Standards (Open Space) Planning, Monitoring & Accountability (Conference Room) Financial Support (Boardroom)	Work Group Expectations (March 31; May 20) Work Group Packets (May 20)
4:00 pm	Adjourn		

Future Meeting Schedule:

- July 9, 2015: 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm (Work Groups Only)
- September 29, 2015: 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
- Nov. 10, 2015: 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
- Jan. 26, 2015, 2016: 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

To: First Things First

From: Advocacy & Communication Solutions, LLC

Re: March 31st Quality First Advisory Subcommittee Meeting Summary

Date: April 17, 2015

First Things First (FTF) has convened the Quality First Advisory Subcommittee (QFASC) to reach consensus on recommendations that will be made to the Policy and Program Committee of FTF's board regarding continuous quality improvement of the Quality First program. The objectives of the QFASC are to:

1. Engage in a visioning process and agree on the strategic direction for and expected outcomes of the Quality First Initiative;
2. Utilize data to develop recommendations on how to continuously improve Quality First components, standards and implementation;
3. Examine overall costs of the Quality First model and program participation;
4. Provide input on how to increase integration and coordination of the Quality First initiative in the comprehensive early childhood system.
5. Make recommendations for strategy, model and/or policy changes to enhance participation in Quality First and contribute to the system goal of reaching statewide scale.

The second of the seven meetings was held on March 31, 2015, at First Things First offices. This memorandum summarizes the content, conclusions, and next steps of that meeting.

Content

This meeting was the second convening of the QFASC. Key elements of this meeting were:

- introduction of a process for QFASC members to provide feedback outside meetings;
- introduction of a process and timeline for collecting feedback from external stakeholders;
- a review of the structure of future meetings;
- a presentation and Q&A session on the current data and financing structure for Quality First;
- discussion on a long-term strategic direction for Quality First (the "North Star");
- discussion and finalization of a set of guiding principles to consider in this work;
- presentation of workgroup expectations and membership; and
- discussion on how scale should be defined relative to early learning and Quality First.

Conclusions

North Star:

Based on the results of the pre-survey conducted in March, during the meeting, the QFASC agreed to finalize the following strategic direction ("North Star") for this work: "Quality First is the designation of

quality, promoting school readiness by supporting early childhood educators in building the capacity to offer high-quality early learning experiences, educating parents and other stakeholders about what high-quality early learning is and how to access it, and providing an evidence-based and integrated foundation to Arizona's early childhood education system. "

Although QFASC members agreed this is a good strategic direction, there is a need to allow this direction to evolve during the next year as this work moves forward. This language has been shorted to a form that can be shared and understood publicly as: *Quality First is the designation of quality.*

Guiding Principles:

Based on the results of the pre-survey conducted in March, during the meeting, the QFASC agreed to finalize the following seven guiding principles to consider in this work:

1. Quality First will have a replicable and sustainable model for participants.
2. Quality First will demonstrate the ability to reach 'scale' through long-term trajectory of holistic quality improvement.
3. Quality First will prioritize closing the learning gap for underserved and high-risk children.
4. Quality First will ensure financial sustainability and continuity to support the whole QIRS system.
5. Quality First will have standards that support all children across diverse economic, cultural, and educational backgrounds.
6. Quality First will facilitate development of the system and participants to drive continuous quality improvement, guided by the impact on all children.
7. Quality First will increase and emphasize the accessibility and affordability of quality care.

Data and Financing Presentation:

During the meeting, FTF answered questions and discussed the aggregate data for the Quality First initiative that had been sent to the advisory committee previously.

After the data was discussed, QFASC members asked for additional data to reflect:

- The amount of time it takes for a provider to progress to a new star level without a scholarship;
- A geographical outline of where Quality First star-rated centers, by star level and type of participant (school, center, private, public, etc.), are located throughout the state;
- Detailed outline of Quality First star-rated centers located in tribal communities;
- An outline of the other organizations/agencies that are contributing to the expansion of access and quality in Arizona and how Quality First fits into that system (DES, etc.);
- An overview of the investment levels and progress among different types of participants (schools, providers, public, private, nonprofit, etc.);
- Further clarification on what specialized technical assistance and other professional development investments include (inclusion, mental health, provider type, in phone or in person, etc.);

- Overview of the hours spent on assessment for coaches (assessment, preparation, coaching, etc.) that outlines the cost calculation for conducting assessments.
- Total Quality First financing budget that outlines the total dollars within QF and detailed budget amount for each of the program’s areas;
- Data outlining scholarship utilization by center type and star level;
- A copy of the sustainability presentation that was given to the FTF board;
- Average length a coach has been assigned to a center and that center’s success in progression (to answer the question: Does the amount of time a coach works with a center directly relate to that center’s ability to progress?).

FTF will work between now and the next meeting (May, 20, 2015) to provide as much of this information as possible to QFASC members.

Workgroups:

Workgroup expectations, timeline, and membership were presented at the meeting. The following figure outlines the membership of each of the three workgroups established to support the work of QFASC:



To best support the work groups in making recommendations to the QFASC, FTF will brief each of the three workgroups during the May meeting to discuss expectations, collect additional data needs, and request information for gathering community feedback/input.

Scale:

At the first meeting, and in the feedback collected from QFASC members leading up to the March 31 meeting, QFASC members expressed the importance of defining scale for Quality First as an initial step in this process.

During the March 31 meeting, ACS facilitated a discussion in which QFASC members identified the inclusion of benchmarks related to the number of providers who are Quality First participants, and the number of children served by those participants as potential definitions of scale. The discussion at the March 31 meeting focused primarily on 'scale' within the broader context of access to high-quality early learning. This discussion will continue at the May 20 meeting to narrow the definition of scale as it relates specifically to Quality First's scope.

Top 5 Accomplishments from March 31, 2015 Meeting

1. QFASC members successfully defined a strategic direction for Quality First, on which they will base their recommendations moving forward.
2. QFASC members successfully defined a set of seven guiding principles, which will ensure they meet all recommendations.
3. QFASC members began to define the considerations of determining a 'scale' for Quality First, and although a group conclusion was not reached during the meeting, the conversation will continue at the next meeting.
4. Three work groups were established to address: 1) Quality Standards, 2) Planning, Monitoring, & Accountability, and 3) Financial Support. Chairs for these three work groups were identified, and expectations of each work group were defined.
5. FTF provided QFASC members with initial data requests to inform the work of this group; QFASC members were able to formulate additional data requests for FTF.

Next Steps

- FTF will:
 - gather additional data, including a line item budget, requested by QFASC members;
 - define common definitions for words used by FTF and QFASC members;
 - provide QFASC members with information related to FTF's fiscal and program policies;
 - provide QFASC members with additional context around scale of Quality First;
 - provide QFASC members with a description of where Quality First fits within the early childhood landscape in Arizona.
- QFASC members will:
 - review data and information provided by FTF;
 - convene again on May 20th to continue discussions around scale and financial support for Quality First and begin working within their work groups to define recommendations relative to the three work group areas and prepare to present those recommendations to QFASC members.

Other items noted:

- All future surveys will be formatted in a way which allows QFASC members to revisit their survey responses. Summaries of all future survey results will be provided to QFASC members in advance of the discussion.

Next QFASC Meeting: May 20, 2015 at 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at First Things First



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**ARIZONA EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH BOARD
QUALITY FIRST ADVISORY SUB-COMMITTEE
Draft Minutes**

Members Present:

Kameron Bachert – Chair, Villagio Early Childhood Learning Center, **Danielle Alexander**, Learning Care Group; **Anne Babinsky**, Yavapai Regional Partnership Council (RPC); **Melissa Busby**, Central Arizona College; **Rebecca Cirzan**, Association for Supportive Child Care; **Diane Fellows**, Child and Family Resources; **Jonathon Gonzales**, Arizona Head Start Association; **Cheryl McDaniel (for Andrew Brown)**, Kayenta Unified School District, **Melissa Madrid**, Gila River Childcare Indian Community; **Virginia Maya**, Association for Supportive Child Care; **Kelley Murphy**, Children’s Action Alliance; **Martha Munoz**, Northern Arizona University – College of Education, **Linda Pauley**, Risen Savior Early Learning Center; **Dr. Debbie Pischke**, Peoria School District, Maricopa RPC; **Erin Raden**, Arizona Childcare Association; **Jakob Raskob**, Department of Economic – Child Care Administration, **Katie Romero**, Southwest Human Development; **Christine Shrader**, Valley of the Sun United Way; **Tina Sykes**, Department of Education; **Alan Taylor**, Southwest Human Development **Brenda Thomas**, Porfirio H. Gonzales Preschool, and **Magdalena Verdugo**, Chicanos Por La Causa

Members Absent:

Paul Ohm, Sunnyside Unified School District – South Pim RPC, and **Marjorie Rasper**, Department of Health Services, Bureau of Childcare Licensing

First Things First Staff Present

Leslie Totten, Quality First Director, **Ginger Sandweg**, Senior Director Early Learning, and **Karen Woodhouse**, Chief Program Officer

Meeting Facilitators:

Lori McClung, Advocacy & Communications Solutions (ACS), **Heather Lenz**, ACS

Call to Order

A Regular Meeting of the First Things First - Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board, Quality First Advisory Sub-committee was held on Tuesday, March 31, 2015. **Chair Bachert** called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. The meeting was held at First Things First, 4000 North Central Avenue, Suite 800, Phoenix, Arizona 85012.

Welcome/Introductions

Chair Bachert welcomed the members and **Ms. McClung** requested members to introduce themselves and the organization they represent.

Approval of Minutes from the February 3, 2015 Meeting

Chair Bachert called for a vote to approve the minutes. Member Raskob noted edits which corrected the spelling of his name, the organization he represents and a misspelled word on page 2. Member Raskob moved to approve the minutes with the noted edits. Member Murphy seconded. Motion carried.

Ground Rules, Structure, and Expectations for Sub-committee

Ms. McClung discussed the ground rules and the decision making process for the meeting. **Ms. Totten** discussed the feedback process.

Quality First Advisory Sub-committee Survey Results

Ms. McClung discussed the results of the survey and shared the 7 guiding principles that were defined as a result of the survey. **Ms. McClung** shared with the members that a summary of the survey results would be shared with the

group.

Report on Current Quality First Data and Financing

Lindsay Kaid, First Things First Finance Manager, and **Dr. Roopa Iyer**, First Things First Senior Director, Research and Evaluation, answered questions about the report on Quality First Data and Financing.

Work Groups Assignments and Responsibilities

Ms. McClung discussed the workgroups including the workgroups that the members were assigned to and shared with the group the purpose and responsibilities.

Define Bringing Quality First to Scale

Ms. Lenz led the discussion and requested each member to share their idea defining scale for Quality First.

Next Meeting

May 20, 2015 at 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at First Things First

Adjourn

There being no further discussion, **Member Gonzalez** moved to adjourn the meeting. **Member Raden** seconded. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted on this 31st Day of March, 2015

Kim McCollum, Executive Assistant

Approved by:

Ginger Sandweg, Sr. Director, Early Learning

Committee Approval:

Kameron Bachert, Chair

Quality Standards for Programs & Practitioners
Nov 10, 2015

- **Elements to Consider:**
 - Indicators
 - Adaptability for cultural diversity
 - Inclusion of all students

- **Elements to Consider:**
 - Professional Development for existing workforce
 - Pipeline to build quality ECE workforce
 - Cultural sensitivity, consistency, and professional development of coaches
 - On-demand coaching to fit provider needs
 - Participant driven continuous quality improvement
 - System for quality maintenance of quality

Support for Continuous Quality Improvement
Sept. 29, 2015

Engagement, Outreach & Promotion
Jan 26, 2016

- **Elements to Consider:**
 - Parent/Family Engagement
 - Inclusion of FTF Grantees
 - Working with high-functioning programs
 - Family Childcare Providers

Quality First is the designation of quality.

Planning, Monitoring, & Accountability
Sept. 29, 2015

- **Elements to Consider:**
 - Benchmarks & Evaluation
 - Defined Trajectory of Long Term Progress
 - Streamline Assessments
 - Improve quality of all participants while working on scale
 - Cultural sensitivity, consistency, and professional development of assessors

Financial Support for Programs, Practitioners and Families
May 20, 2015 & Nov. 10, 2015

- **Elements to Consider:**
 - Sustainability
 - Defined interfacing with Subsidy
 - Support P.D. internally and externally

Quality First Advisory Sub-Committee

Project Overview: Goal, Guiding Principles, and Elements for Consideration

Understanding the “North Star”

The Quality First Advisory Subcommittee (QFASC) has defined a 10-year strategic direction of Quality First (the “North Star”), as: Quality First will be recognized as the designation of quality. For the Quality First model, the designation of quality falls within the scope of:

- 1) Identifying quality standards
- 2) Assessing programs according to standards
- 3) Supporting programs in increasing standards
- 4) Empowering families

7 Guiding Principles

Every recommendation made by the Quality First Advisory Subcommittee (QFASC) will consider the following guiding principles.

- 1) Quality First will have a replicable and sustainable model for participants.
- 2) Quality First will demonstrate the ability to reach ‘scale’ through long-term trajectory of holistic quality improvement.
- 3) Quality First will prioritize closing the learning gap for underserved and high-risk children.
- 4) Quality First will ensure financial sustainability and continuity to support the whole QIRS system.
- 5) Quality First will have standards that support all children across diverse economic, cultural, and educational backgrounds.
- 6) Quality First will facilitate development of the system and participants to drive continuous quality improvement, guided by the impact on all children.
- 7) Quality First will increase and emphasize the accessibility and affordability of quality care.

Common Definitions: For the purposes of this subcommittee, the following definitions are presented to establish a common language throughout this work:

- 1) *Providers:* teachers/family home caregivers/owners/directors of early childhood programs
- 2) *Programs:* early childhood centers or homes
- 3) *Participants:* those “programs” actively enrolled in Quality First
- 4) *Regulated Providers:* providers who are in good standing or licensed by DHS, certified by DES, and/or regulated by a tribal or military authority
- 5) *Access:* a regulated program’s ability to participate in a Quality First program
- 6) *Teacher:* a caregiver responsible for primary care of a group of children aged birth to five
- 7) *Administrator:* the individual responsible for oversight of an early childhood program
- 8) *Rating only:* Quality First participants with access to limited Coaching services (24 hours per year) and a requirement to achieve a quality rating level (3, 4, & 5 star).
- 9) *Rated:* to have a star rating designation in the Quality First system
- 10) *Quality Standards:* alignment with High Quality Standards for Early Childhood Programs as defined by the Arizona Department of Education
- 11) *Full Participation:* Quality First participants with access to the full package of services (Coaching, Assessment, Financial Incentives, CCHC, Professional Development)

Glossary of Terms:

- Access – a program’s ability to participate in a QF program
- Administrator – individual responsible for oversight of an early childhood program
- Full Participation: Quality First participants with access to the full package of services (Coaching, Assessment, Financial Incentives, CCHC, Professional Development)
- Providers – teachers/family home caregivers/owners/directors of early childhood programs
- Programs – early childhood centers or homes in general
- Participants – those “programs” actively enrolled in QF
- Quality Standard: Alignment with Program Guidelines for High Quality Early Education: birth through Kindergarten as defined by the Arizona Department of Education
- Regulated providers – licensed by DHS, certified by DES, regulated by a tribal or military authority – in good standing
- Rated: to have a star rating designation in the Quality First system
- Rating Only: Quality First participants with access to limited Coaching services (24 hours per year) and a requirement to achieve a quality rating level (3, 4, 5 star)
- Teacher – caregiver responsible for primary care of a group of children aged birth to five



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FY16 Budgeted Unit Costs for Quality First Initiative

The following QF unit costs are budgeted per participating program. FTF defines program size based on licensed/certified capacity for children 5 years and under (FTF definitions for program size are different from DHS license capacity, which includes children older than 5 years):

FTF Program Sizes:		DHS Program Sizes:	
Large Center:	150+		60+
Medium Center:	51 – 150		11-59
Small Center:	0 – 50		5-10
Home:	10 or fewer		5-10

ASSESSMENT – observation tools include Environment Rating Scales, CLASS assessment tool, and the Points Scale Assessment

QF Assessments are conducted annually for programs rated 1 – 2 Stars, and every other year for programs rated 3 – 5 Stars. If calculating an annual cost per participating QF program (whether the program is assessed that year or not), it is approximately \$4,700 per program.

Large Assessment Unit Cost (7 assessments @ \$1,310 and 1 @ \$655)	\$ 9,825.00
Medium Assessment Unit Cost (5 assessments @ \$1,310 and 1 @ \$655)	\$ 7,205.00
Small Assessment Unit Cost (4 assessments @ \$1,310 and 1 @ \$655)	\$ 5,895.00
Home Assessment Unit Cost (3 assessments @ \$1,310 and 1 @ \$655)	\$ 4,585.00

COACHING – regular onsite visits may include assessment review, quality improvement plan development, classroom observations and feedback, training and administrative support

1&2 Star Coaching Rate (min. 6 hrs. onsite/mo)	\$ 10,488.00
3-5 Star Coaching Rate (min. 4 hrs. onsite/mo)	\$ 4,968.00
Rating Only Coaching Rate for Pt. Scale Prep. (min. 0 hrs. onsite/mo)	\$ 1,104.00

DHS LICENSING – all DHS licensed providers receive 50% of licensing fees paid for a three year license

The program sizes listed below are per the DHS size definition for licensed programs (shown above)

DHS Designated Large Center Licensing Rate Paid by FTF	\$ 3,900.00
DHS Designated Medium Center Licensing Rate Paid by FTF	\$ 2,000.00
DHS Designated Small Center Licensing Rate Paid by FTF	\$ 500.00
DHS Licensed Home Licensing Rate Paid by FTF	\$ 500.00



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CCHC - Quality First participants can choose a level of support (Tier 1, 2, or 3) based on program need

CCHC Unit Cost for all programs	\$ 2,470.00
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QF ACADEMY - Ongoing professional development for all Technical Assistance providers (Coaches/Assessors/CCHC/Inclusion/Smart Support)

QF Academy Unit Cost for all programs	\$ 940.00
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SPECIALIZED TA – Includes services outside of Coaching related to special needs populations

Specialized Technical Assistance Unit Cost for all programs	\$ 550.00
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ANNUAL INCENTIVES

Cash incentives in the amounts indicated are provided for programs rated 3 – 5 Stars. Programs rated 1 – 2 Stars do not receive cash, but can purchase equipment, supplies or other items for quality improvement up to the incentive amount.

	1&2 Star Incentives	3 Star Incentives	4 Star Incentives	5 Star Incentives
Large Center	\$ 8,400.00	\$ 9,400.00	\$ 10,400.00	\$ 11,400.00
Medium Center	\$ 5,250.00	\$ 5,875.00	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 7,125.00
Small Center	\$ 3,675.00	\$ 4,125.00	\$ 4,575.00	\$ 5,025.00
Group Home	\$ 2,100.00	\$ 2,350.00	\$ 2,600.00	\$ 2,850.00
Family Home	\$ 1,050.00	\$ 1,175.00	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 1,425.00



FIRST THINGS FIRST

FTF FY16 Fiscal Policy Summary

The tobacco revenue set aside by voters for early childhood services is the only dedicated funding source First Things First has.

First Things First's tobacco revenues have decreased by more than 24 percent over the past 7 years – going from almost \$165 million in FY08 to less than \$125 million in FY14. That means we have \$40 million less per year to work with than when we started.

Future projections show continued decreases, to about \$122 million in FY15 and FY16. The responsible thing to do was to re-align our spending to our revenues.

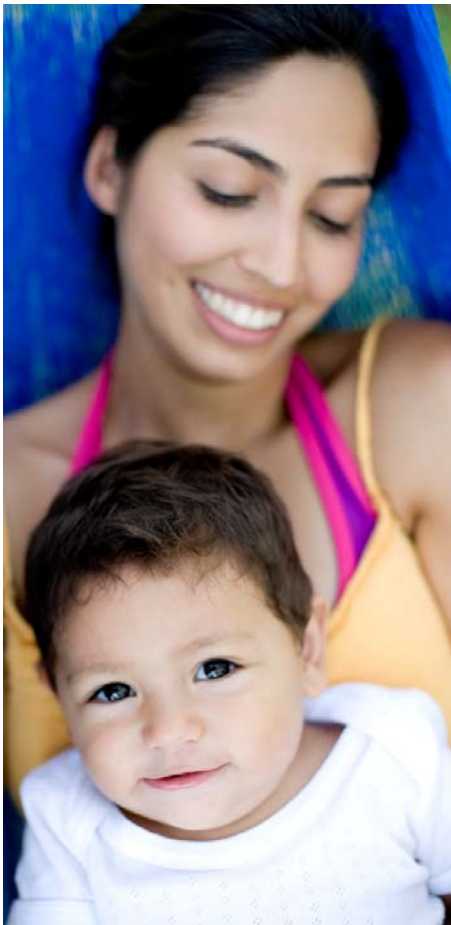
In June 2014, the Board reset the organization's annual baseline budget to \$126.6 million, a level that will allow FTF to maintain its program spending at a consistent level for an estimated 9-15 years.

In addition, the Board asked its Program Committee to consider whether program costs can be reduced and any guidance that can be provided to regions to assist in their annual decision-making. For FY16, based on the work of the Program Committee, the Board took action to “de-couple” Quality First participation and scholarships. FTF Regional Partnership Councils now determine how many scholarships they want to fund. The amount paid per scholarships, and the requirement that the scholarships only be used at Quality First participating providers that have achieved quality levels remain. In addition, Regional Councils were asked not to reduce the number of providers participating in Quality First. This was done to ensure that the infrastructure FTF has built in quality improvement would not be compromised.

For FY16, Regional Councils across the state went through an extensive strategic planning process to re-align their spending to the revised budget. They engaged local early childhood stakeholders – including families of young children, early childhood service providers, educators, business leaders, etc. – to prioritize the needs of their community and to determine where FTF's limited funding could be most impactful in meeting those needs.

Part of this process also identified ways in which new or expanded collaborations with local partners could allow these services to continue without FTF funds or with reduced funding.

The services funded through the new plans take effect July 1, 2015. In the meantime, FTF will work with our grantees and partners to minimize the impact of these necessary changes on children birth to 5 in our communities and their families.



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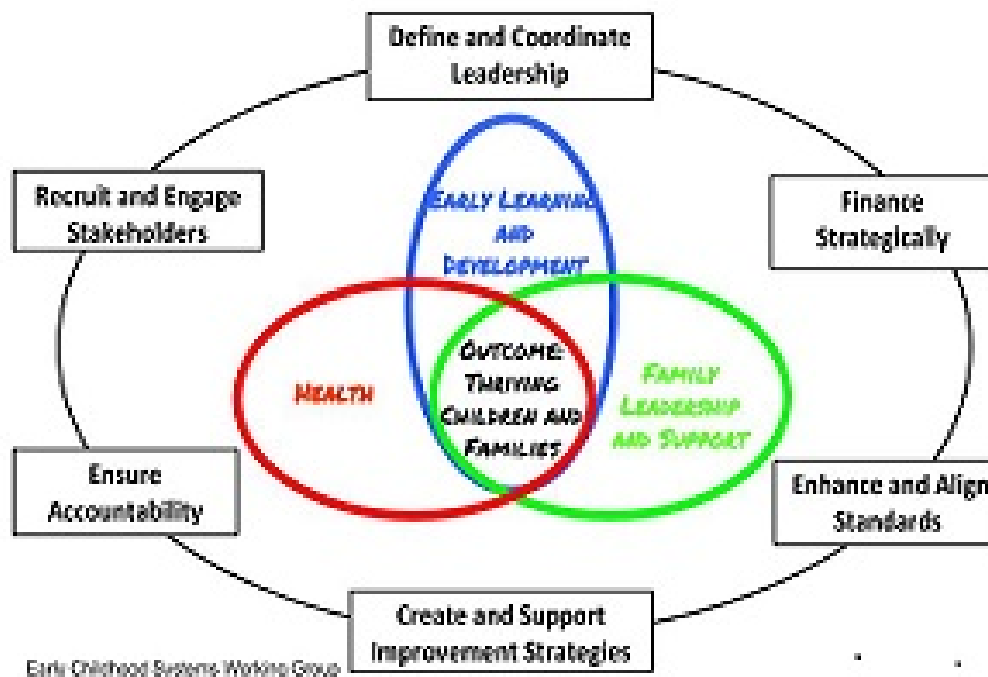
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Quality First and the Early Childhood System

May 2015

Comprehensive Early Childhood System

What Are the Functions of a Comprehensive Early Childhood System ?



EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE



**Early Childhood Key System Components
Birth to Age 8 Continuum**



Early Childhood System Functions: Integration Within and Among Components



**Emphasis on special needs populations should be integrated across all areas.*

Quality First



Arizona's quality improvement and rating system:

- Identify quality standards
- Assess programs according to these standards
- Support programs in increasing quality standards

Quality First Scale

of regulated programs
participating in Quality First

Quality First Scale

Quality First target “universe”:

2,653 regulated programs

Quality First expected participation in FY16:

1,006 regulated programs

38% in Quality First

Quality First Funding (by component and year)

	FY14 Final EXPENDED	FY15 AWARDED	FY15 YTD EXPENDED	FY15 YTD % EXPENDED	FY16 Pending AWARD
QF Coaching	\$ 8,456,123	\$ 8,696,908	\$ 8,109,524	93%	\$ 7,619,824
QF Specialized Technical Assistance	\$ 462,932	\$ 500,120	\$ 329,322	66%	\$ 520,300
Child Care Health Consultation	\$ 2,258,459	\$ 2,771,998	\$ 1,547,679	56%	\$ 2,498,181
QF Academy	\$ 616,164	\$ 971,960	\$ 519,880	53%	\$ 945,640
QF Assessment	\$ 3,746,315	\$ 5,039,245	\$ 3,468,435	69%	\$ 5,039,245
QF DHS Licensing Fee Assistance	\$ 619,600	\$ 809,750	\$ 510,900	63%	\$ 809,750
QF Incentives	\$ 3,959,991	\$ 3,541,000	\$ 1,956,047	55%	\$ 5,333,225
QF FTF Directed	\$ 412,947	\$ 617,600	\$ 346,626	56%	\$ 617,600
QF Scholarships	\$ 48,602,127	\$ 61,568,490	\$ 45,961,956	75%	\$ 36,989,898
Total Quality First Initiative	\$ 20,532,531	\$ 22,948,581	\$ 16,788,413	73%	\$ 23,383,765
Quality First Initiative + Scholarships	\$ 69,134,658	\$ 84,517,071	\$ 62,750,369	74%	\$ 60,373,663

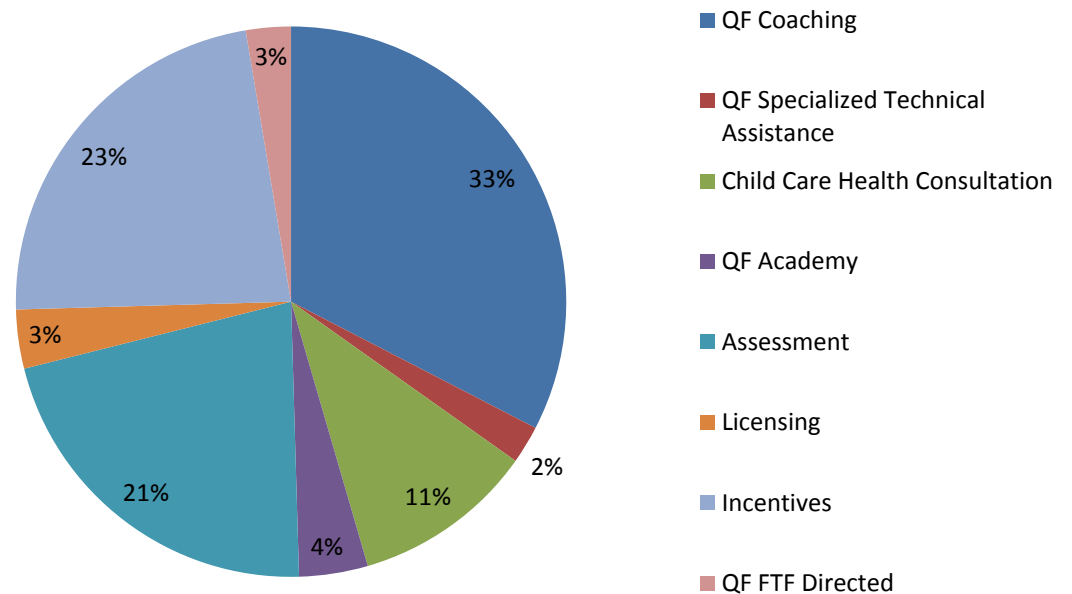
QF Funded Number of Providers	1,044	1,034	1,006
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Quality First Funding

FTF Quality First and Scholarships Investment in FY16:

\$60,373,663 (48% of FTF total available FY16 funding)

FY16 QF Initiative Investment by Strategy



Quality First Initiative
Investment in FY16:

\$23,383,765

Quality First

Annual FTF Quality First Initiative Investment:

\$23.4 million

This is the FTF approximate annual funding available to scale and sustain the Quality First Initiative moving forward

Quality First

The scope of work for the Quality First Advisory Subcommittee is to make recommendations on the Quality First Initiative related to standards, assessment and quality supports.

The scope of work does not include recommendations on Scholarships.



To: Quality First Advisory Subcommittee
From: Advocacy & Communication Solutions, LLC
Re: North Star, Guiding Principles, & Workgroup Survey Summary
Date: April 21, 2015

First Things First (FTF) commissioned Advocacy & Communication Solutions, LLC (ACS) to facilitate the discussions for the Quality First Advisory Subcommittee (QFASC) to provide input and recommendations to the First Things First Board's Policy and Program Committee regarding continuous improvement of the Quality First program. QFASC will meet between February, 2015 and January 2016.

In order to inform the discussion at the second QFASC meeting to take place on March 31, 2015, FTF and ACS distributed a survey to gather QFASC members' final feedback on the strategic direction ("North Star") for Quality First, and the principles and values that should guide the work of this group moving forward. The survey also gauged QFASC members' interests in participating in an additional work group to support the development of recommendations during the next year.

This memorandum provides a summary of the results of the survey.

SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESPONSES

Survey Respondents

Of the 24 total QFASC members, the following 20 (representing 80% of the total QFASC membership) responded to the survey.

Finalizing the North Star

Based on the feedback received during the February 3, 2015 meeting and through email, Quality First Advisory Subcommittee members identified the following strategic direction:

"Quality First is the designation of quality, promoting school readiness by supporting early childhood educators in building the capacity to offer high-quality early learning experiences, educating parents and other stakeholders about what high-quality early learning is and how to access it, and providing an evidence-based and integrated foundation to Arizona's early childhood education system. "

This strategic direction is intended to be the ultimate end-point, or "North Star," that the recommendations of the QFASC are geared toward.

In order to finalize the language above as the ultimate goal of this group, respondents were asked to rate the goal stated above according to one of the following statements:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
This should be the 10-year goal of Quality First.	70%	14
I am not sure if this is the most important 10-year goal, but if the group is I am okay with it.	25%	5
This absolutely should not be the 10-year goal of Quality First.	5%	1
Answered question		20

- Two-thirds of the QFASC members represented in the survey agree that the language above should definitely be the 10-year goal, or North Star, of Quality First.
- 25% of the members stated that they were not certain if this goal is the best 10-year goal, but if the majority of the group feels that it is the right goal than they are okay with it.
- One group member believes that the goal stated above should definitely not be the 10-year goal of Quality First.

Finalizing the Guiding Principles:

The survey presented QFASC members with 11 Guiding Principles, based on discussion during the February 3, 2015 meeting and feedback received through email from QFASC members. Members were asked to identify the 'Most Important' guiding principle, and then rank their top 5 choices in order of Most Important to Least Important.

Members were also given an option to mark 'This should not be a core principle of this group' or 'This is important, but there are more important factors to consider.' This section lists the guiding principles in order of most important to least important for the group to consider.

The top 3 guiding principles that QFASC members view as most important are:

1. Quality First will have a replicable and sustainable model for participants.
2. Quality First will demonstrate the ability to reach 'scale' through long-term trajectory of holistic quality improvement.
3. Quality First will prioritize closing the learning gap for underserved and high-risk children.

Following those identified as most important, QFASC also ranked the following four guiding principles as being significantly important to consider in the development of recommendations:

4. Quality First will ensure financial sustainability and continuity to support the whole QIRS system.
5. Quality First will have standards that support all children across diverse economic, cultural, and educational backgrounds.
6. Quality First will facilitate development of the system and participants to drive continuous quality improvement, guided by the impact on all children.
7. Quality First will increase and emphasize the accessibility and affordability of quality care.

Although QFASC members agreed on the most important guiding principles, members were divided on their opinions of the following two principles as either being not important or some level of importance to the group:

8. Quality First will prioritize raising community awareness among parents, providers, and policymakers. (50%/50%)
9. Quality First will embrace a participant-driven quality maintenance and improvement model.

QFASC members agreed that the following two guiding principles are not as important to consider in the development of the group's recommendations:

10. Quality First will prioritize family engagement and parental choice.
11. Quality First will ensure children are placed in the most appropriate early childhood program.

The results of the survey indicate that QFASC members should use the first seven guiding principles listed above as the principles to guide this work. Although not identified as most important, other principles (8-11) were rated with some importance and should be considered by QFASC members throughout this work.

Work Groups

Eighteen of the 20 survey respondents wanted to participate in a QFASC work group, and other respondents indicated that although they did not want to participate on a single work group they do want the opportunity to provide feedback.

The figure below outlines the QFASC members who are on each work group, and a '*' indicates the QFASC member who is chairing each work group.

Quality Standards:

Jonathon Gonzales*

Andrew Brown

Alan Taylor

Debbie Pischke

Christine Shrader

Paul Ohm

Planning, Monitoring & Accountability

Katie Romero*

Diane Fellows

Erin Raden

Virginia Maya

Tina Sykes

Kameron Bachert

Financial Support

Kelley Murphy*

Danielle Alexander

Melissa Busby

Rebecca Cirzan

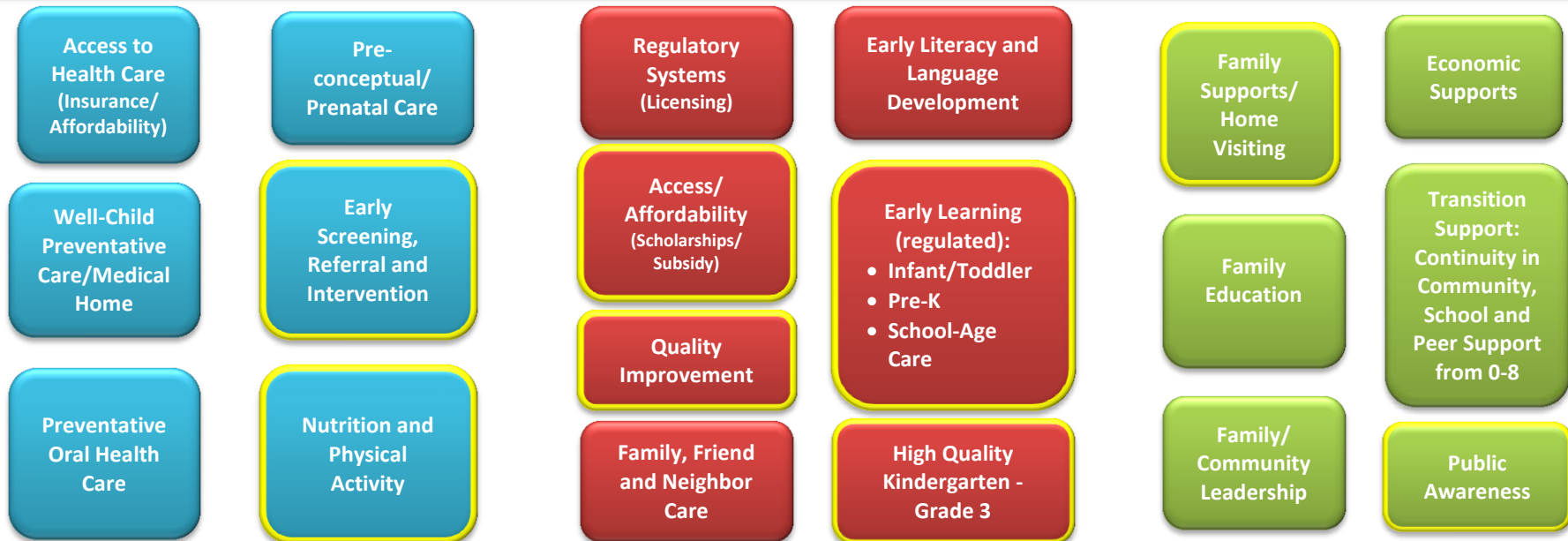
Linda Pauley

Jakob Raskob

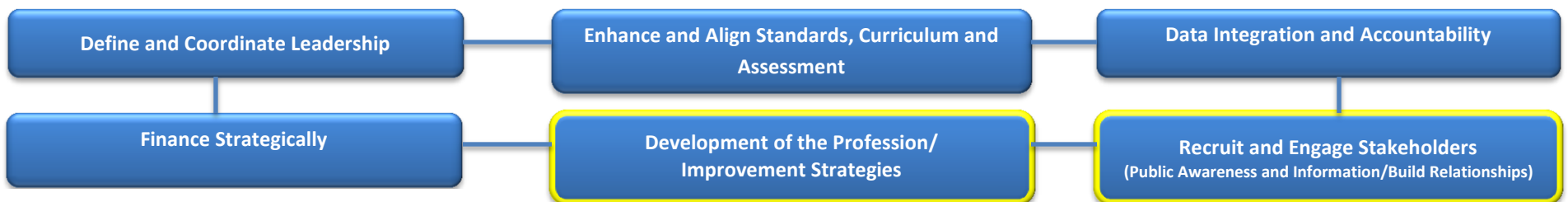
EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE



Early Childhood Key System Components Birth to Age 8 Continuum



Early Childhood System Functions: Integration Within and Among Components



**Emphasis on special needs populations should be integrated across all areas.*

Early Childhood System Functions Defined

Define and Coordinate Leadership

- Set guiding vision, mission, principles, outcomes and benchmarks for how systems work together.
- Articulate a shared understanding of roles and joint leadership to make greater progress toward goals.
- Work to develop intentional coordination among relevant governance structures and policies.
- Emphasize and provide opportunities to build relationships between stakeholders.

Enhance and Align Standards, Curriculum and Assessment

- Align standards, curriculum and assessment both within and across system sectors.
- Use standards, curriculum and assessment to integrate services and practices across system sectors as appropriate.
- Update standards and curriculum regularly to reflect current child and family needs and best practices.

Data Integration and Accountability

- Design data systems that track progress on outcomes and benchmarks.
- Regularly review and use data to guide continuous improvement and inform planning, policy, practice and operations.
- Connect data across the comprehensive early childhood system to answer critical policy questions.

Finance Strategically

- Develop fiscal policies that move system sectors toward delivery of services in a comprehensive manner.
- Provide financial incentives for ongoing quality and system improvement.
- Allow and incentivize braiding and blending of funding.
- Leverage federal, state, local and private dollars across systems.
- Secure sufficient and sustainable funding to support progress toward common goals.

Development of the Profession and Improvement Strategies

- Develop approaches that drive continuous improvement in both quality and service delivery.
- Connect improvement activities both within and across service sectors.
- Increase awareness and training to elevate “professionalization” of the field.

Recruit and Engage Stakeholders

- Emphasize and provide opportunities to build relationships between stakeholders.
- Use strategic communication to increase understanding of requirements and benefits of a comprehensive early childhood system.
- Build broad constituency to support strategic policy development and investment in a comprehensive early childhood system.
- Partner with families as leaders in building a comprehensive system.