



# FIRST THINGS FIRST

## Professional Development Systems Specialist

First Things First (AZ Early Childhood Development and Health Board), is a public agency that exists to increase the quality of, and access to, the early childhood development and health system that ensures a child entering school comes healthy and ready to succeed. Passed by voter initiative in 2006, First Things First operates through a tax on tobacco products. Governed by a state board and thirty-one Regional Partnership Councils, First Things First is a decentralized organization that engages diverse constituencies to accomplish its mission. Organizational values include a focus on accountability, transparency, coordination, collaboration and on the outcomes that will ensure young children start kindergarten ready for school and life.

### **Job Summary:**

The Professional Development Systems Specialist is a member of the Early Learning unit and functions as a content expert for policy development and implementation of the professional development system and program strategies for those that work with and on behalf of children birth to five.

This position is responsible for the:

- advancement of the First Things First Two Year Professional Development System Strategic Plan;
- oversight of the Arizona Early Childhood Career and Professional Development System, and;
- Policy development, management and oversight of professional development strategies funded by First Things First.

The position requires state level systems planning, committee/meeting facilitation and participation, presenting to a variety of internal and external partners, program oversight and management, and determination of effective policy and programs in early childhood education related to working with or on behalf of children birth to five. This position will directly assist regional partnership councils and other First Things First staff in early learning programmatic design, training and technical assistance, and content related information for grant proposals. This position conducts research on national trends and programs for Early Learning and has direct management responsibilities for designated statewide and multi-regional FTF strategies.

The Professional Development Systems Specialist also functions as a central agency consultant to regional partnership councils on early childhood development and health issues and assists regional staff with strategy development, training and technical assistance to regional councils,

program oversight, monitoring and evaluation to ensure that regional program objectives and outcomes are being achieved.

**Distinguishing Characteristics:**

The Professional Development Systems Specialist must have a strong knowledge of and experience with early care and education systems that support the workforce such as Workforce Registry and Tuition Supports, Quality Improvement and Rating, and trends in Early Learning workforce development. The position requires the ability to manage grants and partnership efforts in collaboration with multiple internal and external entities and stakeholders. The specialist must have research skills and the ability to analyze and apply that research to the development and implementation of best practice Early Learning programs.

**Typical Duties and Responsibilities:**

- Inform and advance the First Things First Two Year Professional Development Strategic Plan.
- Plan and facilitate the Professional Development Work Group and sub-committees.
- Facilitate the implementation of the Arizona Career and Professional Development Network.
- Facilitate policy development management and oversight of FTF statewide and/or multi-regional professional development strategies.
- Develop Scopes of Work and Standards of Practice that include best practice and evidence-based programming using current research and analysis of local, state and national resources and data.
- Assist regional directors and councils in the development of and planning for professional development strategy directions.
- Provide program support and technical assistance to assigned regional partnership councils, serve on assigned Regional Area Team (RAT), review annual regional funding plans and grant renewals, and provide historical information on partnership challenges and opportunities.
- Respond to requests from FTF staff and grantees for information and/or assistance promptly, professionally, courteously and helpfully.
- Convene and participate in Technical Review Teams and External Review Teams to review grant applications, contracts, governmental-to-governmental agreements, amendments, and renewals to ensure that the overall scope and intention of the services, including the standard of practice, is properly addressed and documented.
- Review and respond to quarterly narrative and data reports for assigned Early Learning Professional Development strategies, and provides assistance to other FTF staff in interpretation of those reports.
- Actively participates and contributes in internal meetings of the Early Learning Team, Early Learning Strategy Implementation Team, the Regional Area Team, Program Division Team, and all other meetings as requested.

**Qualifications:**

- Bachelors or Master's Degree in early childhood education, child development, education, social work, family studies, or a closely related field.
- Extensive experience in and understanding of early learning programs, early learning settings, early learning workforce, and professional development systems and strategies.
- Ability to work collegially and effectively within a team environment.
- Flexible and adaptable.
- Effective communicator, orally and in writing.
- Commitment to uphold high ethical standards.

Review of resumes will begin on July 27, 2015, and continue until the position is filled. For first consideration, please submit your cover letter, comprehensive resume and three professional references by the close of business on August 7, 2015 to:

[www.azstatejobs.gov](http://www.azstatejobs.gov)

In the AZ State Personnel System, the position is classified as a Grade 24 with a salary range of \$51,000.00 - \$70,000.00. The position is not covered under the State of Arizona Merit system rules. The State of Arizona offers an outstanding comprehensive benefits package.