I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

A strategic approach to public-private partnerships and seeking and leveraging various types of funds is essential to building a sustainable high-impact early childhood system. From the development and passage of the First Things First initiative in 2006, there was recognition that tobacco tax revenues alone are insufficient to realize the vision that all Arizona’s children are ready to succeed in school and in life. What is required to achieve this vision is the involvement and investment of public and private partners that collectively engage in building and investing in a quality early childhood system.

As First Things First develops in communities across Arizona and as a statewide organization, the timing is right to explore how First Things First can strategically leverage local, state, and national resources – public and private – to advance Arizona’s early childhood system. As business leaders, nonprofit executives, public sector representatives, educators, health and other practitioners grow increasingly aware of the benefits of investments in early childhood, First Things First is well-positioned to expand these systems-building efforts.

In October 2012, the FTF Board addressed the need for a more intentional approach by accepting the “Report on Public Private Partnerships”¹ that FTF’s Strategic Initiatives staff developed. The report outlined the rationale and readiness for moving forward with a plan to build public-private partnerships. Recommended actions in this report included:

A. Convene a Public-Private Partnership Committee (Committee) of the Board’s Executive Committee, with the Board delegating to the Board Chair the authority to seat a committee comprised of Board and regional council members, and private sector partners to provide input and take appropriate action on:
   1. A conceptual framework for establishing public-private partnerships;
   2. Target goals, strategies, and tactics;
   3. Standard(s) of practice for partnership development;
   4. Exploration and possible development of a First Things First endowment.

B. Develop Public-Private Partnership FY2014-2016 Plan (Plan) to include:
   1. Finalized conceptual framework;
   2. Mechanism to track inventory of ongoing efforts.
   3. Target goals and objectives (for example, number of grants written and secured, number of foundation relationships developed, number of regional projects advanced);
   4. Methods to evaluate effectiveness;

5. A description of the infrastructure needed, and plan to develop and implement needed infrastructure;
6. A description of the technical assistance needed to develop statewide and regional capacity to build public-private partnerships, and to secure and manage external funding;
7. Standard(s) of Practice

C. Develop a regular update report for the Board on the cross-sector early learning opportunities and activities with private sector philanthropies in Arizona.

D. Develop and disseminate interim guidance to regions to apply for and manage grants and partnerships.

The Board’s Executive Committee, under the leadership of the Board Chair, provided oversight of the development of the public-private partnerships plan. Two of FTF’s Strategic Priorities are assigned to the Board and relate to this topic: Building Public Awareness and Support and Early Childhood System Funding. (See Attachment 2, Conceptual Framework.) A subcommittee to provide consultation and plan development convened for the first time on January 4, 2013. The subcommittee included representatives from Arizona philanthropies, regional partnership council members, tribes and community members with expertise in partnership development (see attachment 1). The subcommittee was chaired by FTF Board member Nadine Mathis Basha.

As the subcommittee began its work, members first considered the rationale and need for First Things First to seek partnerships and investments in addition to tobacco-tax revenue. They considered federal, state and private revenue sources needed to achieve First Things First’s nine strategic priorities and six early childhood outcomes. A proposed conceptual framework was created that identified possible approaches that, when implemented, increase and enhance current investments from public and private sources, leverage current FTF funds, advance FTF strategic priorities. A basic concept prevailed – how to leverage additional partnerships and funds using resources currently generated by FTF. (Attachment 2 depicts this conceptual framework).

The subcommittee provided excellent ideas, feedback, and counsel to the Plan’s development and agreed on recommendations to advance to the Board. In total, Committee members reviewed and discussed the following six approaches and agreed that five of the six provided an appropriate and potentially effective framework. The subcommittee hopes this plan will strategically guide the expansion of new opportunities and resources for building Arizona’s early childhood system.

II. FROM CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK TO GOALS, RESULTS AND STRATEGIES

The Public Private Partnerships subcommittee recommends the following plan and priorities for expanding public-private partnerships and generating various types of support. This section includes target goals, desired results, and strategies.
Federal Grant Funds

Goal 1: Leverage FTF resources to secure federal grants to build and sustain the early childhood system.

A. Desired Result: This goal will be satisfactorily achieved when over five (5) years $100 million in Federal Grants is secured for the early childhood system.

Strategies:
1. Identify, consider, and prioritize opportunities that are available through list serves, partner organizations, websites such as grants.gov, and/or third party professional services/vendors to identify opportunities.
2. Create an internal response system that can react and respond quickly to grant opportunities.
3. Devise an internal mechanism by which FTF may apply for a grant exclusively, apply in collaboration with other organizations, decide not to apply, or forward the information to another entity in the ECE system.
4. Devise a clearinghouse-type mechanism by which FTF can determine if staff, regional council members, or partners have a relationship with a prospective grantor.

B. Desired Result: This goal will be satisfactorily achieved when five (5) sustainable partnerships with federal agencies are developed over five years.

Strategies:
1. Raise the profile of FTF with Federal agencies by attending federal program meetings, corresponding with grants managers and agency leadership, responding to calls for comment and feedback.
2. Partner with Arizona and other state’s universities, community colleges, and state agencies for research and program grants.
3. Seek national grant opportunities that are outside of traditional early childhood sources (unlikely places), such as the National Endowment of the Arts.
4. Build relationships with the Department of Defense in support of early childhood, especially for family support programs.

Resources Needed for Goal 1:
- Assessment of skills and resources needed within FTF to prepare and successfully receive federal grants.
- Clear, articulate case for support for FTF relative to federal grants.
- Models from universities and university foundations to inform operational approaches.
- Templates for the most common elements of grant applications.

National Foundation Funding

Goal 2: Develop partnerships with national foundations to build and sustain the early childhood system.

A. Desired Result: This goal will be satisfactorily met when 5 grants are secured over five (5) years from national foundations for Arizona’s early childhood system.
Strategies:
1. Prepare a case statement to garner interest, create awareness, agree internally on the approach, and explain the rationale of FTF’s mission and priorities. Clearly articulate how a foundation’s resources will make a difference in ways FTF is not currently engaged and the impact FTF could achieve.
2. Prioritize opportunities and seek those that will be most impactful to the School Readiness Indicators.
3. Have a plan and be prepared to explain how FTF will sustain the foundation’s financial investment.

B. Desired Result: This goal will be satisfactorily achieved when ten (10) sustainable partnerships with national foundations are developed over five (5) years.

Strategies:
1. Raise the profile of FTF with national philanthropies by attending national meetings and conferences and engaging in formal and informal networking and conversations.
2. Advance and market the FTF brand to a national audience through FTF’s research and policy briefs.
3. Utilize affinity networks (such as Grant Makers for Women and Children) of the Council on Foundations to make connections.
4. Present at national meetings and conferences to raise FTF’s profile across the United States.
5. Offer assets developed by FTF that are or could be useful and valuable to foundations.
6. Partner with Arizona and other state’s universities, community colleges, and state agencies for research and program grants.
7. Do prospect research to determine on which foundations to focus.

Resources Needed for Goal 2:
- Prospect researchers to identify current foundation priorities.
- Assessment of skill sets and resources needed within FTF to partner with or apply to grant-making foundations
- Contacts at Council of Foundations as a source of connections and potential partners.
- Protocols for who in the organization approaches national funders.
- Clear, articulate case for support for FTF relative to national philanthropies.

Tribes and Tribal Corporations
Goal 3: Strengthen relationships and foster long-term partnerships between tribes/tribal corporations and regional partnership councils to advance the early childhood system.

A. Desired Result: This goal will be satisfactorily achieved when we create and agree upon a written set of culturally appropriate best-practice models for public-private partnerships with tribes and FTF that leverage a variety of partners.

Strategies:
1. Include public-private partnerships as a focus area for a future tribal consultation.
2. Convene an ongoing tribal public-private partnership discussion comprised of tribal leaders, Indian organizations and other experts in the field to explore partnerships and expand early childhood initiatives in tribal communities.
3. Conduct research and explore other public-private partnership initiatives and plans that are tribal specific and/or include tribal initiatives to inform the public-private partnership tribal model discussion.
4. Help tribes leverage their relationship with FTF to enhance partnerships with other entities, such as with state government departments and statewide education partners.

B. Desired Result: This goal will be satisfactorily achieved by 2017 when 3 of the 22 federally recognized Tribes include early childhood strategies, program, and services in their tribal funding priorities.

Strategies:
1. Include public-private partnerships as a focus area for a future tribal consultation.
2. FTF will work with state partners to develop quarterly policy/knowledge/white papers targeted at tribal leaders on early childhood development and health topics.
3. Connect at least 3 Tribes/nations annually with technical assistance and capacity building efforts that will help expand early childhood systems into the tribal lands and nations.

C. Desired Result: This goal will be satisfactorily achieved when tribal-specific federal, private, and/or philanthropic funding is leveraged to expand and improve tribal/FTF’s success with tribal initiatives.

Strategies:
1. Seek out and monitor federal grant opportunities focused on tribal-specific early childhood initiatives.
2. Seek out funding opportunities that are outside of traditional early childhood sources (unlikely places), such as the Arizona Indian gaming operations, National Indian Education Association, and the National Indian Health Board.
3. Search out grant opportunities with foundations or other entities that may have an interest in exploring Indian education endeavors.

D. Desired Result: This goal will be satisfactorily achieved when (5) sustainable partnerships with tribal partners such as tribal-specific federal agencies, local, state-wide and national tribal organizations are developed over five (5) years.

Strategies:
1. Raise the profile of FTF with Tribes and Indian education partners by attending meetings and conferences and engaging in formal and informal networking and conversations.
2. Partner with tribal colleges for research and program grants.
3. Offer semi-annual early childhood briefing sessions to external partners such as the Indian Health Service and Tribal Education systems the via the Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona Early Childhoods Working Group.
Resources Needed for **Goal 3:**

- Representatives from tribal specific federal agencies, state tribal liaisons, tribal enterprises and private tribal philanthropy to assist with identification of resources and mechanisms to implement best practices in tribal public/private partnership models.
- Tribal internship and/or other staffing resource to regularly research tribal specific funding opportunities and public/private partnership ventures.
- Clear protocols for who in the organization may approach tribal funders.
- Tribal support organizations, such as the Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona and/or the First Nations Institute for technical assistance.

**Arizona Businesses, Individuals, and Private Sector Philanthropy**

**Goal 4:** Develop relationships with Arizona businesses, individuals, and private sector foundations to secure philanthropic investments and partnerships to enhance and sustain the early childhood system.

**A. Desired Result:** This goal will be satisfactorily achieved when 10 Arizona businesses, four (4) Arizona foundations, and 25 individuals bring $1 million to the early childhood system.

**Strategies:**
1. Build relationships with key prospects by inviting them to participate in FTF advisory committees, by participating in their events, and inviting their attendance at the FTF Summit.
2. Match FTF’s mission, vision, and indicators with the priorities of select foundations.
3. Prepare a case statement that explains FTF’s mission and priorities for private sector grants and partnership projects.
4. Use the “Needs and Assets” process to identify local funders and partner opportunities.
5. Position FTF as the Early Childhood Development and Health System expert.
6. Promote the School Readiness Indicators within a collective impact model that aligns with the partnership approach of various philanthropies.
7. Leverage the BUILD process to secure funds from businesses, private corporations, and business-related foundations to support early childhood system building.
8. Organize former and current council and board members to assist in building partnerships, relationships, and fund development.
9. Set up the appropriate mechanisms for seeking, booking, acknowledging and tracking unrestricted funds.
10. Set up the appropriate mechanisms for seeking, booking, acknowledging and tracking restricted gifts.

Resources Needed for **Goal 4:**

- Foundation annual reports and publications for information on their priorities
- Participation in Arizona Grantmakers Forum
- Gift and relationship management tracking system for contacts, solicitation approach, cultivation progress, etc. with individuals and private and corporate foundations.
Early Childhood Endowment

Goal 5: Establish an endowment for FTF to permanently ensure that all Arizona’s children succeed in school and in life.

A. Desired Result: This goal will be satisfactorily achieved when a fund is established at a 501(c)3 or community foundation.

Strategies:
1. Determine best structure for an endowment: separate 501(c)3 that supports FTF goals, FTF operated fund or some other model.
2. Review options for a home for the fund at existing partner organizations.

B. Desired Result: This goal will be satisfactorily achieved when internal capacity at FTF is established that engages strong volunteer and professional leadership (including professional advisors), to undertake planned giving in partnership with fund management.

Strategies:
1. Join philanthropy affinity groups that support education, children and youth, health.
2. Consider naming the endowment for a highly-respected and high profile supporter of early childhood health and education.
3. Establish a legal and financial advisors committee.

C. Desired Result: This goal will be satisfactorily achieved when a defined and adopted financial goal and the % increase expected in each of the subsequent five (5) years are set (includes current gifts and future commitments).

Strategies:
1. Create a plan for development of an endowment for FTF, including:
   a. An endowment strategy that will capitalize on the desire of individuals to give.
   b. An endowment campaign led by a high profile spokesperson or chair.
   c. A compelling message that identifies the priorities and gaps to be filled through an endowment and explains the justification for giving even though FTF’s business model requires carrying a significant fund balance.
2. Do an organizational assessment of FTF’s capacity to implement an endowment strategy.
3. Create a clear, compelling case of support for endowment giving to FTF.
4. Garner endowment support through external affairs strategies that “tell the story”.

Resources Needed for Goal 5:
- Representatives from private philanthropy and regional council members who represent philanthropy to assist with identification of resources and mechanisms to implement an endowment strategy.
- Private sector firms and organizations that specialize in endowment strategies.
• Feasibility study for an endowment/legacy giving campaign to support the FTF School Readiness Indicators.
• Foundation and philanthropy support organizations, such as the Council on Foundations for technical assistance.

Earned Income
Goal 6: The Committee does not consider an earned income goal to be a viable approach in the near term. However, an earned income approach may merit future consideration.

III. FTF INTERNAL STRUCTURES, CAPACITY AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PLAN

All of the First Things First strategic priorities require convening and collaborating with partners, providing leadership, and investing FTF resources and other resources in these processes. In order to successfully seek and win public and private grants and foster national, state and tribal partnerships – internal policies, protocols, and a commitment of staff resources are required. The Strategic Initiatives unit of the External Affairs Division will be responsible for leading, coordinating, and updating the plan.

Internal Tools, Structures and Capacity
There are certain elements an organization must have as it transitions into more focused partnerships and fund development approaches for long-term sustainability. The following internal supports are needed by FTF to achieve the goals and successful implementation of this Plan:

Regional Partnership Councils
• Regions have the guidance, resources, training, and systems they need to seek, apply for, and manage the external grants process.
• Regional council members have the capacity, interest and readiness to assist in building partnerships at the local, regional and tribal levels and acquiring funds from sources targeted in this plan.
• The description of duties for regional council members is modified to include community partnership building and fund development activities and support.
• The role of regional council members encompasses identification, cultivation and participation in engaging community leaders, potential and current partners, and other allies in implementing this partnership plan.
• Designated philanthropy members on regional councils work together across the state to identify viable strategies and roles they will play to implement the public-private partnership plan.

Internal Documents and Systems
• Availability of a regional tool kit structure populated with resources by March 2014.
• Design and implementation of an “External Grants Approval Log” to coordinate the state and regional grants application and approval process by March 2014.
• FTF has an electronic donor and partnership management (contact) system by December 2014.
• Written finance and accounting policies and protocols for accepting and reporting external grant funds and gifts are created by January 2014.
Written fund development policies, including existing state government gift acceptance and other policies are identified or created by January 2014.
Written policies and procedures exist that protect unrestricted gifts/funds by March 2014.
A Standard(s) of Practice document to clearly identify and define levels of partnership development involvement for FTF regional council members, regional and statewide leadership, and FTF Board members is approved by March 2014.

Personnel Capacity and Readiness
- The capacity and readiness of regional and statewide staff to successfully apply for public and private grant opportunities and develop public-private partnerships is evaluated and confirmed.
- A professional development plan to build the competency and capacity of FTF regional and statewide staff for identifying opportunities for public-private partnerships, developing relationships that result in partnerships, and sustaining the early childhood system with additional funds and resources is implemented.
- A staffing plan within the External Affairs Division to carry out the Public Private Partnerships Plan.
- Talented, experienced staff and volunteers are needed to follow-up, manage contacts, and establish and sustain relationships with individuals, businesses/corporations, and private philanthropies.

Critical Success Factors
At the final meeting of the sub-committee, the members were asked to step back from the detailed planning that occupied most of the committees’ attention and look at the public private partnership initiative as a whole. They were asked, “What is essential for FTF to do to be successful in this initiative?” The seasoned committee offered these nuggets of wisdom:

- Do not assume you have the internal mechanisms and capacity to do this big agenda – the human resources capacity as well as the emotional, financial, psychological, spiritual and physical readiness, fortitude and investment. Plan for them carefully.
- Public-private partnerships must be a fundamental element of who FTF is and instilled into the FTF culture. Make partnerships and building relationships a way of life at FTF, and as much a part of FTF as any other component.
- A viable, thoughtful communication plan – content, rollout and timing.
- Successful engagement of the regional partnership councils – how they are approached, trained and engaged over time will be important. (You can’t mandate culture.)
- Think about and plan for who might oppose this initiative.
- Tout and articulate FTF’s achievement of benchmarks and positive results for children and families. Explain what FTF has accomplished. This gives credibility.
- Think beyond the obvious. Look in unusual places for friends, funds and partners.
- Roll out this initiative across the State with the approach, “we are giving Arizonans the opportunity to help, to feel good, to invest in something very important.”
- Ensure various constituencies have input into and are included into this work.
- Arizona needs a positive story – let’s give it to them!
IV. STANDARD(S) OF PRACTICE

Standard(s) of Practice are developed for every First Things First strategy and provide the guiding principles to ensure universal understanding of strategies and to support consistency in implementation. A standard of practice for Public Private-Partnerships will be developed to guide all levels of FTF staff and volunteers with responsibilities for partnerships development.

V. EVALUATION PLAN

The evaluation of First Things First’s implementation of public-private partnerships will be the achievement of the desired results as identified by the public-private partnerships subcommittee. Ultimately, the number of relationships established, grants received, and partnerships established that support, strengthen and sustain the early childhood system are the measures of success.

A plan for evaluation of public-private partnerships also includes periodic assessments (through surveys and interviews) of Tribes and tribal corporations, individual donors, business and corporate funders, and national and state private philanthropies to stay connected and informed about important external partners.

VI. CONCLUSION

The National Governor’s Association produced a publication in 2008, Partnering with the Private and Philanthropic Sectors: A Governor’s Guide to Investing in Early Childhood.² That report concluded with what the leadership of FTF and partners in Arizona know about the need to leverage all resources to build a stronger early childhood system.

“Supporting the readiness of young children at risk for school failure is critical to the nation’s future. Although private resources are not intended to supplant public investment in the healthy development and school readiness of young children, they can be used to spur action and seed innovation across the state. Partnerships can support a cohesive early childhood system at the state and local levels, improve the quality and availability of programs and services, and cultivate a new cadre of champions to support early childhood initiatives... Public-private partnerships are not a silver bullet, but they are an important strategy for building a strong foundation of services and supports for young children to help ensure their healthy development and school readiness”.

This plan presents a pathway for systemic change through the articulated five goals, desired results and consideration what strategies and resources are needed. Not a silver bullet – rather the plan outlines a plan for success by acknowledging that it takes relationship building, assessment and infrastructure support. FTF’s plan embraces the need for collective action in Arizona to create long lasting and sustainable change through partnership.

Public Private Partnerships Committee

MEMBER ROSTER

Nadine Mathis Basha
Chair
First Things First Board Member

Sandi Perez
Vice President
Communications and Community Benefit
Delta Dental

Dale Enos
Regional Partnership Council
Gila River Indian Community

Jim Pitofsky
Chief Strategy Officer
Arizona Community Foundation

Rosanna Gabaldon
Arizona State Legislature
House of Representatives

Nancy Serenbetz
Development Officer
Northern Arizona University

Belen Gonzales
Program Officer
Nine Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust

Jane Strain
Cochise Regional Partnership Council

Yvonne Hunter
Attorney
Fenemore Craig Government Affairs

Chris Tompkins
Piper Fellows Program Coordinator
Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust

Louis Manuel Jr.
Tribal Council Chairman
AK-Chin Indian Community

Stuart Turgel
President
Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Phoenix
Northeast Maricopa-Regional Partnership Council
FACILITATOR
Leslie Anderson
Facilitator
Leslie Anderson Consulting, Inc.
10 Blackwood Road
Asheville, NC 28804
lesliea@ioa.com

EXECUTIVE DIVISION
Rhian Allvin
Chief Executive Officer
First Things First Board
4000 North Central Avenue, Suite 800
Phoenix, Arizona 85012
rallvin@azftf.gov

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
Aisha Muhammad
Executive Staff Assistant
Program Division
First Things First Board
4000 North Central Avenue, Suite 800
Phoenix, Arizona 85012
amuhammad@azftf.gov

Judy Walruff
Sr. Program Specialist
Programs Division
First Things First Board
4000 North Central Avenue, Suite 800
Phoenix, Arizona 85012
jwalruff@azftf.gov
Proposed Public Private Partnership Conceptual Framework

### Early Childhood System Outcomes

- All children have access to high quality, culturally responsive early care and education that promotes their optimal development.
- All children have access to high quality preventive and continuous health care, including physical, mental, oral, and nutritional health.
- All families have the information, services, and support they need to help their children achieve their fullest potential.
- All early childhood education and health professionals are well prepared, highly skilled, and compensated commensurate with their education and experience.
- The early childhood system is high quality, child and family centered, coordinated, integrated, and comprehensive.
- All Arizonans understand the importance of the early years and the impact of early childhood development, health, and education on Arizona’s economy and quality of life and, as a result, substantially support early childhood development, health, and education both politically and financially.

### First Things First Strategic Priorities

1. Early Care and Education System Development and Implementation—Convene partners and provide leadership in the development and implementation of a comprehensive early care and education system that is aligned both across the spectrum of settings and with the full continuum of the education system.
2. Quality Early Care and Education Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment - Convene partners, provide leadership, and provide funding for the development and implementation of quality standards for early childhood care and education programs and related curricula and assessments.
3. Quality, Access, and Affordability of Regulated Early Care and Education Settings - Convene partners, provide leadership, and provide funding for increased availability of and access to high quality, regulated, culturally responsive, and affordable early care and education programs.
4. Access to Quality Health Care Coverage and Services - Collaborate with partners to increase access to high quality health care services (including oral health and mental health) and affordable health care coverage for young children and their families.
5. Nutrition and Physical Activity-Collaborate with partners to support improved nutrition and increased age/developmentally appropriate physical activity levels among young children.
6. Supports and Services for Families—Convene partners, provide leadership, provide funding, and advocate for development, enhancement, and sustainability of a variety of high quality, culturally responsive, and affordable services, supports, and community resources for young children and their families.
7. Professional Development System - Convene partners, provide leadership, and provide funding for the development and enhancement of an early childhood professional development system that addresses availability, accessibility, affordability, quality, and articulation.
8. Building Public Awareness and Support - Convene partners, provide leadership, and provide funding for efforts to increase public awareness of and support for early childhood development, health, and early education among partners, public officials, policy makers, and the public.
9. Early Childhood System Funding – Secure, coordinate, and advocate for resources required to develop and sustain the early childhood system.

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