

Wednesday, August 1, 2012

2012 Tribal Consultation Report

Introduction

Pursuant to the First Things First (FTF) Tribal Consultation Policy and AZ Executive Order (EO) 2006-14, Consultation and Cooperation with Arizona Tribes, FTF convened a formal consultation session on Wednesday, August 1, 2012, for the purpose of better meeting the needs of Native American children and families, taking into consideration FTF evaluation and data activities, and other issues affecting the delivery of early childhood strategies in their geographic locations. First Things First is committed to meaningful consultation with Tribes through which elected officials and other authorized representatives of the tribal governments have the opportunity to provide meaningful and timely input to the development of policies or procedures that affect Indian tribes and incorporating such input into its decision making process related to all matters that significantly affect Arizona's Tribes and Native American children and families.

The following summary reflects comments and questions raised by Arizona's Tribal Leaders and representatives/designees.

Participants

Tribal leaders and Tribal representatives: LeRoy Ned Shingoitewa, Chairman, Hopi Tribe; Council Candida Hunter, Council Member, Hualapai Tribe; Yolanda Rogers, Council Member, Kaibab Paiute Tribe; Luis Gonzales, Council Member, Pascua Yaqui Tribe; Grace Boyne, Director of the Navajo Nation Child Care Development Fund representing the Navajo Nation, and Sandy Mays, Director of the Ak-Chin Childcare Program representing the Ak-Chin Indian Community. Written comments were submitted by the Cocopah Tribe.

First Thing First: Steven W. Lynn, Board Chair; Vivian Saunders, Board Member; Rhian Evans Allvin, Chief Executive Officer; Karen Woodhouse, Chief Program Officer; Dr. Amy Kemp, Senior Director of Evaluation; Beverly Russell, Senior Director, Tribal Affairs; Sam Leyvas, Vice President, External Affairs

In addition to First Things First representatives and tribal leaders and their representatives, representatives from the Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona were in attendance.

Remarks/Comments/Questions from Tribal Leadership and Representatives in response to questions posed by First Things First related to broad data and evaluation topics:

- Several of the participants mentioned concerns related to inaccurate counting of the number of children residing in tribal communities. Several comments were made related to tribal enrollment qualifications and how children can be missed in a tribal enrollment count if they do not meet the requirements set out by each tribe.
- Although all of the Tribal Leaders and designees spoke to the roles with respect to their specific communities, the discussion presented some common themes around the importance of putting all of the information together from the many evaluation and data activities that are currently occurring on tribal lands in a way that it can be used effectively by tribes. Several participants mentioned they have data but don't have the staff to analyze the information.
- A comment noted the importance of working with tribal communities to communicate the intent of First Things First beyond just a funding program but a process by which the young people are supported.
- Several participants stressed the importance of native language preservation as a learning strategy.
- A recommendation was made to have technical assistance available for tribes related to early childhood data management.
- A comment was made related to the importance of evaluating children as a whole and considering their well-being.

- A question about how data can be collected and properly analyzed related to language preservation because data on that type of strategy will most likely not be able to show results until years later.
- A comment was made about concerns related to data sharing within a tribal community due to confidentiality and a general concern about the misuse of data.
- A comment was made related to the number of databases that tribes may have to work with and these databases were set up with the intent of being managed by various people such as programming versus financial. There is no consistency. Additionally the many systems don't track cognitive behavior development and the type of activities that track a child's well-being.
- Several comments were made about the current data systems in the communities of the consultation participants collecting high level data without looking at more specific child level information that could help teachers understand how to better help children.
- A recommendation was made to First Things First to help train early childhood professionals about diversity and understanding.
- A recommendation was made to First Things First to continue to honor each tribal-specific approval process for data and evaluation activities, in addition to working with community members and programs to help with the collection of such data. However it was also noted that some tribal members may be more comfortable sharing information with someone that is not a member of their tribe.
- A recommendation was made related to the importance of choosing protocols for evaluation activities that take into account the geographical area and cultural contexts that may have an impact on individual results.
- A recommendation was made to ask families in tribal communities in an assessment about what their child has been exposed to, for example, has the family traveled?
- A comment was made about how technology plays a role in data and evaluation activities and how the lack of high capacity technology in some rural/tribal communities can hinder reporting and tracking. Specific challenges include broadband infrastructure and capacity.
- A recommendation was made to create a website to capture significant findings for tribal early childhood with respect to the appropriate approvals from tribes.

Comments from Tribal Organizations and Partners:

- ITCA made a comment that their epidemiology center may be able to help tribes with analyzing their data.
- A comment was made related to the possibility that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security could potentially be another data source related to early childhood.
- ITCA stressed the idea of data ownership for Tribes and need for continued approval by each sovereign nation for publication to the public.

Comments on the Statewide and Regional Needs and Assets Report

None

Comments on the National Advisory Panel

- A comment indicated that the recommendations were very good but all may not be relevant or possible in tribal communities.

Comments on State-wide and Regional Benchmarks for FTF School Readiness Indicator

None

Comments from Tribal Organizations and Partners:

- A question was posed about whether or not tribal leaders received the draft benchmark material in the consultation packet it was noted that tribal leaders need to see the information before they can make comment.
- A recommendation was made to ensure that the school readiness definition is approached with respect to cultural relevance and sensitivity.
- A comment noting that Indicator 2, 3, and 4 is all related to Quality First and it is important to note that at this point Quality First is a volunteer program and ITCA is concerned that FTF funding will be tied to tribe's decision to participate in Quality First.

- A comment was made about the importance of providing supports to tribes that are currently enrolled in Quality First to help meet the 3-5 rating level.
- Tribes must be included in how FTF defines developmental delays and how the assessment is made, and what types of tools are being used to make such decisions.
- A concern was raised about how well child visits are being documented because one of the monitors is reimbursement by insurance carriers and many tribal members may not have private insurance.
- A comment was made about the use of the Family and Community Survey as an indicator and the ability of tribes to provide feedback on the tool if they may not know what is specifically contained in the survey.

Comments on the First Things First Tribal Consultation Policy

- A comment was raised about the importance of sharing the work of each region with the tribal leadership.

Comments from Tribal Organizations and Partners:

- ITCA applauds the efforts of FTF related to tribal consultation.
- A comment was made to reiterate the importance of effective communication with tribal leadership, especially for those tribes that are working within a geographic FTF region.
- A recommendation was made to strengthen the language in the policy related to Objective 4: Ensure the Information and Data regarding tribal members are reviewed with the tribe prior to release or use.