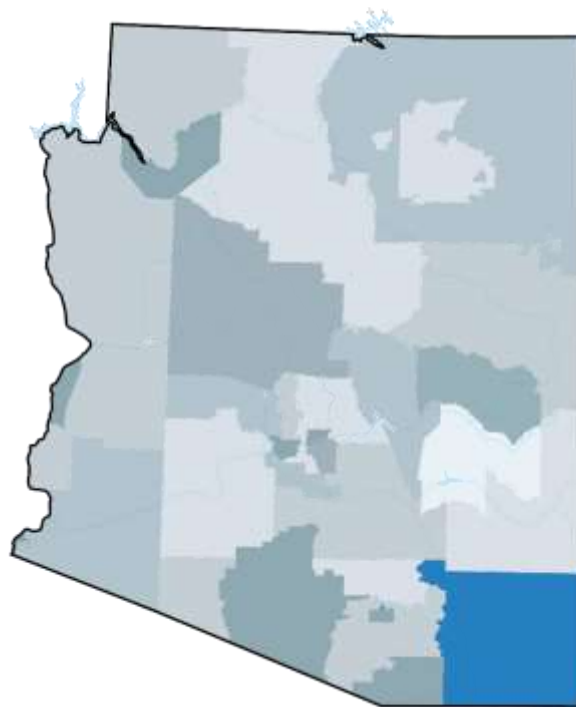


FIRST THINGS FIRST

Cochise Regional Partnership Council



State Fiscal Years 2024 – 2027 Strategic Plan

Presented to the First Things First Board
January 10-11, 2023



Mission

First Things First is an essential leader and partner in creating a family-centered, equitable, high-quality early childhood system that supports the development, well-being, health and education of all Arizona’s children, birth to age 5.

Vision

All Arizona’s children are ready to succeed in school and in life.

Regional Partnership Councils

First Things First’s statewide Board and its 28 regional partnership councils share the responsibility of ensuring that early childhood funds are invested in strategies aimed at improving educational and health outcomes for young children. Regional partnership councils identify the unique needs of their communities and decide how to best support young children and families in their areas. Regional councils, comprised of local volunteers, provide vision and leadership, governance and oversight. They identify, implement and fund strategies and build collaborations aimed at helping young children across Arizona succeed in school and life.

Cochise Regional Partnership Council

Darlene Melk, chair, health services provider

Danielle Brownrigg, vice chair, parent of a child age 5 years or younger

Elisa Castro, child care provider

Peter Huisking, business representative

Kalman Mannis, at-large representative

Anthony Reed, representative of a philanthropic organization

Terri Romo, public school administrator

Brandi Samaniego, at-large representative

Demetry Simonton, at-large representative

Diona Williams, early childhood educator

open, representative of the faith community

Melissa Avant, Regional Director



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Equity Vision Statement

Advancing equity is essential to First Things First’s mission and we aspire to embody our vision for diversity, equity and inclusion through all facets of our work.

To be effective partners and contribute to a world in which Arizona’s children birth to age 5 of all backgrounds have access to high-quality early childhood experiences, we must create and maintain an equitable workplace, work in partnership with the communities we serve and ensure that our funding practices align with our equity-centered values, particularly focusing on those who are most in need.

First Things First recognizes the pervasive inequities historically and currently faced by the Black, Indigenous and Latino communities and all people of color, and we strive for a world in which they will thrive. We also recognize that individuals and groups have been marginalized due to factors such as race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, mental and physical ability, national origin, income, language and religious affiliation and that people of color are particularly affected across these factors. We commit to increasing our understanding about these and all matters that create inequities and to bettering our actions internally and among the communities we serve.

This important work starts from within. As such, we strive to cultivate and maintain a workplace that:

- Reflects the diversity of our state within all levels of the organization (i.e., staff, leadership, regional partnership councils and state Board)
- Cultivates a community in which all members are welcome, seen, heard and valued
- Supports and expects each individual to engage in candid, introspective learning about equity and inclusion
- Engages an intentionally diverse, representative set of voices in key decision-making, centering on the voices of families and the community whenever possible
- Employs equitable workplace practices that yield high satisfaction, morale and career success consistently across all demographic groups
- Responds swiftly to address workplace inequities
- Ensures that our work as a funding organization – from planning to implementation to assessment – reflects our commitment to equity

Through our DEI strategic priorities and individual growth, we will be better able to meet the needs of Arizona’s youngest children, serve as a trusted ally for equity and fulfill our vision that all Arizona’s children are ready to succeed in school and in life.

Approved December 2021

Cochise Regional Partnership Council SFY24 – 27 Strategic Plan

Prioritized Strategy Areas	Strategy	Identified Need	Target Service Unit(s)* <i>*If applicable, identify targeted population and/or geographic areas</i>	Desired System Outcome
Quality First And Professional Development for ECE Professionals	Quality First Coaching and Incentives <i>(Statewide)</i>	1) More of Arizona’s early care and education (ECE) programs need to provide high-quality learning environments. 2) ECE programs, at administrative and classroom levels, require access to a system of equitable support to engage in quality improvement to achieve and sustain high-quality practices. 3) Families need reliable information about ECE program quality in order to make informed decisions when seeking child care.	No TSU	Access to high-quality, culturally responsive early care and education.
	Quality First Academy <i>(Statewide)</i>			Well-prepared, highly skilled and appropriately compensated professionals.
Access to Quality Care	Quality First Scholarships <i>(Statewide)</i>	The high cost of quality early care and education programs limits access for families due to affordability. High-quality child care positively impacts a child’s development and readiness for school.	No TSU	Access to high-quality, culturally responsive early care and education.
Educating Families and Caregivers	Parenting Education	1) Some parents need additional knowledge and capacity on how to best support school readiness within the home environment. 2) Some parents need additional knowledge around positive parenting strategies that promote positive behavior. 3) Some parents need additional knowledge around language and literacy development and how to best support language and literacy within the home environment.	No TSU	Information, services and support for families.
Navigating and Connecting Families to Resources	Family Support Coordination	Some families experience challenges accessing timely and effective services to address their immediate needs.	Number of families currently enrolled 12-25	Information, services and support for families.
Professional Development for ECE Professionals	Child Care Health Consultation <i>(Statewide)</i>	ECE providers do not have enough access to information and guidance on how to implement consistent high-quality health and safety policies and practices.	No TSU	Well-prepared, highly skilled and appropriately compensated professionals.

Professional Development for ECE Professionals	Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation <i>(Statewide)</i>	Early childhood professionals in child care centers/homes, home visitation, Family Support for Children with Developmental Concerns, and Family Friend and Neighbor programs need support in appropriately understanding, identifying and responding to the social emotional developmental needs and behavioral challenges of young children.	Number of center based early care and education programs served 3	Well-prepared, highly skilled and appropriately compensated professionals.
Building Awareness of the Importance of the Early Years	Educational Promotion and Brand Awareness <i>(FTF-Directed)</i>	1) Lack of awareness of the importance of early childhood health and development. 2) Lack of awareness of FTF as a trusted source of early childhood information and programs/services.	No TSU	Public understanding and support.
Building Awareness of the Importance of the Early Years	Media <i>(Statewide)</i>	1) Lack of awareness of the importance of early childhood health and development. 2) Lack of awareness of FTF as a trusted source of early childhood information and programs/services.	No TSU	Public understanding and support.

Please describe how the Regional Partnership Council’s SFY24-27 Strategic Plan promotes equity and support of under-resourced and underserved children and their families.

Cochise County covers about 6,200 square miles located in southeast Arizona next to the Mexican border and New Mexico and is diverse in geography, population and ethnicity. The Cochise landscape consists of scenic country and mountains, is largely rural, consists of small towns with populations of less than 10,000 people, and is known for agriculture, mining, and tourism. Cochise County offers a wealth of pro-growth and development opportunities thanks to low taxes, land availability, affordable commercial space, high-quality healthcare and education, and easy access to Interstate 10 and rail transportation. In Cochise, there are five major hubs, Douglas, Sierra Vista, Benson, Willcox, Bisbee, each hub of the county has a different culture and the regional council continues to adapt programs and services to help accommodate the differences and provide inclusivity of all people and offers a family-oriented society.

Through the strategic planning process and examining the data, the regional council intentionally focused on targeting families with young children that are impacted by single parent households, homelessness, housing instability, domestic and intimate partner violence, mental health and adolescent pregnancy to promote self-sufficiency and wellbeing. Due to this data, there is a commitment to advancing equity by elevating the voices and perspectives of parents, grandparents, providers, community members and others with lived expertise with young children birth to age 5 in the Cochise Region.

The consistent themes presented by this process includes the need for an integrated closed-loop referral system, mental health services, parenting education, community resources, services, and access to affordable high quality childcare. The regional council was intentional in funding strategies that could affect each of these communities through a plan that promotes equity, supports low-income working families and promotes children’s learning by improving the quality of early care and education and parenting programs that embed cultural responsibility to the under-resourced and underserved children and their families.

Regional Allocation and Proposed Funding Plan Summary SFY24 – 27
Cochise Regional Partnership Council

Allocations and Funding Sources	2024	2025	2026	2027
FY Allocation	\$2,135,493	\$2,135,493	\$2,297,923	\$2,297,923
Population Based Allocation	\$1,407,432	\$1,407,432	\$1,407,432	\$1,407,432
Discretionary Allocation	\$728,061	\$728,061	\$890,491	\$890,491
Carry Forward From Previous Year	\$763,632	\$582,069	\$308,871	\$198,103
Total Regional Council Funds Available	\$2,899,125	\$2,717,562	\$2,606,794	\$2,496,026

Strategies	Proposed Allotted	Proposed Allotted	Proposed Allotted	Proposed Allotted
Early Learning Systems Change		\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Inclusion of Children with Special Needs		\$119,000	\$119,000	\$119,000
Quality First Academy	\$16,500	\$16,500	\$16,500	\$16,500
Quality First Coaching & Incentives	\$571,080	\$571,080	\$571,080	\$571,080
Quality First Scholarships	\$1,232,585	\$752,639	\$752,639	\$752,639
First Things First College Scholarships		\$10,800	\$10,800	\$10,800
Child Care Health Consultation	\$112,200	\$128,700	\$128,700	\$128,700
Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation	\$36,720	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
Family Support Coordination	\$400,000	\$525,000	\$525,000	\$525,000
Parenting Education	\$119,000	\$119,000	\$119,000	\$119,000
Statewide Evaluation	\$95,423	\$95,423	\$95,423	\$95,423
Educational Promotion and Brand Awareness	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Media	\$14,634	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Total	\$2,618,142	\$2,618,142	\$2,618,142	\$2,618,142

Total Unallotted/Unawarded/Unexpended:*	\$280,983	\$99,420	(\$11,348)	(\$122,116)
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Fiscal Year	2020	2024	2025	2026	2027
% to Board Priorities		96.35 %	96.35 %	96.35 %	96.35 %
% to Quality First**	20.03%	26.72 %	27.35 %	27.35 %	27.35 %
Fiscal Year	4 Year Average				
% to Board Priorities	96.35%				
% to Quality First**	27.20%				

* Per FTF State Board direction, allotments reflect the budgeting of projected spending, therefore in some years’ total allotments may exceed total means of financing. However, actual expenditures against the allotments are expected to be fully supported by revenues, and each year the region is anticipated to end with a carry forward balance which is reflected in the subsequent year’s carry forward balance.

**Includes Quality First Academy, Quality First Coaching and Incentives, and Child Care Health Consultation.