

FIRST THINGS FIRST

San Carlos Apache 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.

Guiding Principal

The First Things First San Carlos Apache Regional Partnership Council believes the future of the Apache is deeply rooted in the past. By following our guiding principle, we will enhance our focus, productivity and innovation, by capturing all aspects of the basic Apache way of 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.

San Carlos Apache Regional Partnership Council

Christine Carlson, chair, public school administrator

Ronald Ritter, vice chair, member of the business community

Tristan Kitch, representative of a philanthropic organization

Randee Kitcheyan, at-large representative

Nolita April Noline, child care provider

Kelly Pahe-Reede, health services provider

Jaymie Swift-Hooke, parent of a child age 5 years or younger

Flora Talas, early childhood educator

Elliot Talgo, Sr., at large representative

open, representative of the faith community

open, at large representative

LaToya Beatty, 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

San Carlos Apache 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.
Educating Families and Caregivers	Community Based Language and Literacy	1) Lack of opportunities for parents and children to participate in hands-on, modeling, or targeted language and literacy parenting workshops. 2) Lack of awareness of the importance of early language and literacy.	Number of workshops conducted 156	Information, services and support for families.
Educating Families and Caregivers	Family, Friend and Neighbor Care	Family, Friend and Neighbor caregivers that provide child care in license-exempt home-based settings need support and education in order to improve the quality of caregiving, interactions and learning environments.	Number of Family, Friend and Neighbor care-givers served 20	Information, services and support for families.
Educating Families and Caregivers	Language, Literacy and Culture in Tribal Communities	1) Lack of children’s books or materials that are reflective of the Native Culture/Language in the children’s homes or community environments. 2) Lack of opportunities for children/caregivers/families to participate in community events (activities) to learn about language and literacy through the context of culture/traditions. 3) Lack of access to coaching for ECE professionals to integrate and implement Native culture and language materials in early care and education settings.	Number of materials distributed 600 Number of community events conducted 4 Number of professionals currently enrolled 45	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 12-18	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 9	Well-prepared, highly skilled and appropriately compensated professionals.
Professional Development for ECE Professionals	First Things First College Scholarships <i>(Statewide)</i>	1) Effective educational preparation provides those working in regulated early care and education programs the knowledge and skills to develop high-quality learning environments and support the healthy development of young children. 2) Teachers and directors working in regulated programs need financial support to achieve degrees in ECE.	No TSU	Well-prepared, highly skilled and appropriately compensated professionals.
Professional Development for ECE Professionals	Inclusion of Children with Special Needs	1) Children with disabilities and their families continue to face significant barriers to accessing inclusive high-quality early childhood programs, and too many preschool children with disabilities are only offered the option of receiving special education services in settings separate from their peers without disabilities. 2) Early care and education practitioners have challenges with the complexity of how to include children with special needs in classrooms and programs.	Number of center-based providers served 9	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.

Other Strategy Areas	Strategy	Identified Need	Target Service Unit	Desired System Outcome
Identifying and Addressing Developmental Concerns	Developmental and Sensory Screening	1) For many children, developmental delays and vision/hearing impairments are not detected early due to lack of screening. 2) Many children with possible developmental delays, or vision/hearing concerns are not being referred to treatment providers.	Number of children screened 275	Access to high-quality preventive and continuous health care.

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.

The San Carlos Apache Regional Partnership Council’s SFY24-27 strategic plan promotes equity and support of under-resourced and underserved children and their families by:

- Utilizing the 2022 regional needs and assets report that highlighted the need to:
 - Support families living in poverty. Poverty rates in the region among young children are triple those seen statewide and exceed rates seen across all Arizona reservations combined.
 - Support and offer additional outreach and services to identify the youngest children with special needs and to offer more early education teachers and staff the support needed for children with special needs.
- Approaching the development of this funding plan with the sense of *Shił Gozhóó*: the sense of happiness and contentment that comes from understanding the balance between oneself, one’s family, one’s community and the land. To this end, the regional council was intentional in strategies that would ensure the four elements - social, physical, mental and spiritual components - are connected and work together to achieve balance. Based on a cultural concept of interconnectedness, meaning that all things are related, the selected strategies are linked in recognition that the wellness of young children in the San Carlos Apache Region will require efforts that address the four elements from a relational world view and the Apache Way of Life.
- Learning from the community and having discussions with the San Carlos Apache Early Childhood Development and Health Collaborative and the San Carlos Apache Tribe’s Education Committee which brought trusted guidance and rational when choosing strategies.

Regional Allocation and Proposed Funding Plan Summary SFY24 – 27
San Carlos Apache Regional Partnership Council

Allocations and Funding Sources	2024	2025	2026	2027
FY Allocation	\$638,391	\$638,391	\$670,024	\$670,024
Population Based Allocation	\$430,841	\$430,841	\$430,841	\$430,841
Discretionary Allocation	\$207,550	\$207,550	\$239,183	\$239,183
Carry Forward From Previous Year	\$487,749	\$457,252	\$391,632	\$357,644
Total Regional Council Funds Available	\$1,126,140	\$1,095,643	\$1,061,656	\$1,027,668

Strategies	Proposed Allotted	Proposed Allotted	Proposed Allotted	Proposed Allotted
Inclusion of Children with Special Needs	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000
Quality First Academy	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Quality First Coaching & Incentives	\$158,660	\$158,660	\$158,660	\$158,660
First Things First College Scholarships	\$10,800	\$10,800	\$10,800	\$10,800
Child Care Health Consultation	\$34,000	\$34,000	\$34,000	\$34,000
Developmental and Sensory Screening	\$58,000	\$58,000	\$58,000	\$58,000
Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation	\$110,160	\$110,160	\$110,160	\$110,160
Community Based Language and Literacy	\$78,000	\$78,000	\$78,000	\$78,000
Family Support Coordination	\$58,000	\$58,000	\$58,000	\$58,000
Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
Language, Literacy and Culture in Tribal Communities	\$147,556	\$147,556	\$147,556	\$147,556
Statewide Evaluation	\$27,823	\$27,823	\$27,823	\$27,823
Educational Promotion and Brand Awareness	\$14,000	\$14,000	\$14,000	\$14,000
Media	\$11,250	\$11,250	\$11,250	\$11,250
Total	\$828,249	\$828,249	\$828,249	\$828,249
Total Unallotted/ Unawarded/Unexpended:	\$297,891	\$267,394	\$233,407	\$199,419

Fiscal Year	2020	2024	2025	2026	2027
% to Board Priorities		89.63%	89.63%	89.63%	89.63%
% to Quality First*	15.20%	23.86%	23.86%	23.86%	23.86%

Fiscal Year	4 Year Average
% to Board Priorities	89.63%
% to Quality First*	23.86%

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