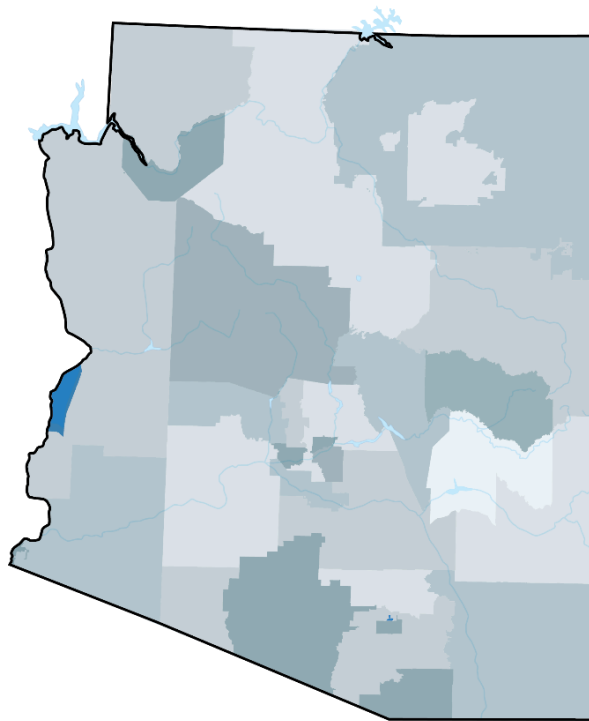


FIRST THINGS FIRST

Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council
Population birth through age 5: 787



State Fiscal Year 2026 Funding Plan

SFY 2024 – 2027 Strategic Plan Update

Presented to the First Things First Board
January 21, 2025



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.

Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council

Norma Ray, chair, early childhood educator

Daris Laffoon, vice chair, tribal public official/employee

Elvira Aspa, parent of a child age 5 years or younger

Delise Beavers, representative of a philanthropic organization

Gloria Flores-Lopez, member of the business community

Joanna Hermes, at-large representative

Shawni Laffoon, health services provider

Monica Rosnagle, child care provider

Brad Sale, public school administrator

Mariah Sharpe, at-large representative

Penny Swarthout, representative of the faith community

Tara Gene, regional director, First Things First

Kim Corbin, administrative specialist, First Things First

Regional Allocation and Proposed Funding Plan Summary SFY24 – SFY27
Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council

Allocations and Funding Sources	2024	2025	2026	2027
FY Allocation	\$260,144	\$260,144	\$159,009	\$277,072
Population Based Allocation	\$174,922	\$174,922	\$158,105	\$174,922
Discretionary Allocation	\$85,222	\$85,222	\$904	\$102,150
Carry Forward From Previous Year	\$98,080	\$210,237	\$193,338	\$75,302
Total Regional Council Funds Available	\$358,224	\$470,381	\$352,347	\$352,374
Strategies	Approved Allotment	Approved Allotment	Proposed Allotment	Projected Allotment
Early Learning Systems Change	\$46,508	\$91,079	\$91,079	\$91,079
Quality First Academy	\$1,000	\$920	\$1,000	\$1,000
Quality First Coaching & Incentives	\$19,330	\$18,202	\$19,330	\$19,330
Quality First Scholarships	\$104,000			
Child Care Health Consultation	\$6,800	\$8,008	\$6,800	\$6,800
Nutrition and Physical Activity	\$62,000	\$62,000	\$62,000	\$62,000
Book Distribution	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
Community Based Language and Literacy	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$65,000
Language, Literacy and Culture in Tribal Communities		\$59,429	\$59,429	\$59,429
Statewide Evaluation	\$11,506	\$11,506	\$11,506	\$11,506
Total	\$322,144	\$322,144	\$322,144	\$322,144
Total Unallotted/Unawarded/Unexpended:*	\$36,080	\$148,237	\$30,203	\$30,230

Fiscal Year	2020	2024	2025	2026	2027
% to Board Priorities		75.31 %	75.31 %	75.31 %	75.31 %
% to Quality First**	8.91%	8.42 %	8.42 %	8.42 %	8.42 %
Fiscal Year	4 Year Average				
% to Board Priorities	75.31%				
% to Quality First**	8.42%				

* 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, Quality First Assessment and Child Care Health Consultation.

Justification for not meeting 2020 Quality First %:

The Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Council has maintained their support for Quality First in the region, and this plan maintains participation for the same number of early care and education providers. The percentage is lower based on the lower costs projected to continue implementing the Quality First strategies in the region.

Justification for not meeting the 80% allotment to Board Priorities:

The regional council was provided with information, guidance and technical assistance regarding the First Things First Strategic Plan, State Fiscal Years 2024-2027. The regional council made some changes to their strategies. This did not change their percentage in meeting the board’s 80% recommendation. The regional council continues to support families and children with their unique challenges in the region and continue to align strategies to overcome these challenges. The strategies included the Board’s six priority areas and Foundational Guidance #1, #2 and #3 related to Quality First and Quality First Scholarships. The regional council understood the importance of aligning with the statewide strategic direction as they assessed data about local needs and identified priorities as well as strategies. Ultimately, the regional council was faced with significant capacity and infrastructure issues including a lack of existing child care programs i.e. a child care desert. As a result, the region did not meet the recommended funding level for the Board-identified priorities and supports funding

other local priorities. The regional council will continue to assess and look for future opportunities to continue to align with the Board’s priority areas and support Quality First.

The Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Council’s SFY24-27 Strategic Plan allocates over 75% of its funding to Board Priorities. Two strategies, Book Distribution and Nutrition and Physical Activity, were deemed critical by the regional council to support school readiness in the region but are outside of the Board Priorities, in addition to the Statewide Evaluation strategy. The CRIT Regional Council has increased their funding plan percentage allotted to Board priorities greatly from the current/previous strategic plan.

According to the 2024 Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Needs and Assets Report, the English Language Arts (ELA) assessment data from the Arizona Department of Education show that 67% of third graders are not meeting proficiency standards for English Language Arts, compared to 47% of third graders statewide. The CRIT Regional Council would like to focus on supporting children with early literacy opportunities. They will be funding Community Based Language and Literacy to give families opportunities to attend workshops and events that help educate and provide opportunities to engage their children in language and early literacy. As supplemental support, the Book Distribution Strategy will give children a library of books to support their literacy development at home. Based off the CRIT community engagement survey, many families don’t have age appropriate books to read to their children. In addition, the CRIT Regional Council wanted to provide opportunities for families to engage in less screen time for their child and to build opportunities for parent/child bonding.

Obesity is associated to health outcomes, such as higher risks of diabetes, cancer and heart disease. From the 2022 Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Needs and Assets report, 37% of Colorado River Indian Tribes children 2 years and older are obese or overweight, and the rate has increased overall from 29% in 2015. The rate is higher than the state average, and this caused concern for the regional council. The Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Council conducted a Caregiver survey within the region from November 2021 – February 2022. According to the Caregiver survey, when caregivers were asked what types of support they feel they most need to help with their child/children, nutrition and physical activity opportunities was one of the top services that caregivers indicated. With the experience and data available to them, there was a need to support families in developing a healthier lifestyle and support healthy child development. The regional council chose the Nutrition and Physical Activity Strategy as one of their top priorities to continue.

Exhibit 5.6. Types of services and support caregivers indicate they need

Service	Percent
Child Development	53%
Nutrition/Physical Activity	44%
Early literacy	44%
Behavior	40%
Health Services	22%
Guardianship	18%
Special Education	13%
Legal	13%
Other	0%

*Note: Survey respondents (n=45) could select multiple responses
Harder+Company Community Research. (2022). [FTF CRIT Region Caregiver Survey]. Unpublished data.*

COLORADO RIVER INDIAN TRIBES REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

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 FTF Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council developed its SFY24-27 strategic plan using a strategic planning committee made up of regional council members with guidance from a consultant specializing in tribal communities. The regional council members utilized data reports, community input through family events and two meetings with tribal council members to collectively identify the needs of children birth to age 5 and families. The strategic planning committee's goal was to better understand the needs of the community, the impact of the regional council's current strategies and the readiness of the community to engage with FTF-funded programs. The Colorado River Indian Tribes Reservation spans Arizona and California, with 84% of the reservation located in Arizona. The Colorado River Indian Tribes Region includes the Arizona part of the Colorado River Indian Tribes Reservation and the town of Parker, Arizona. Parker is the closest town with access to services for families and is partially on the Colorado River Indian Tribes Reservation, and this creates a blended community of tribal and non-tribal members. Many of the programs are open to everyone in both communities. The tribe consists of four distinct tribes: Mohave, Chemehuevi, Hopi and Navajo. With four different tribes, the regional council understands that not all of the tribal members have the same cultural practices and languages, which can create a challenge in preserving the culture and languages. The regional council always encourages programs to integrate any tribal teachings that will tie into their lessons to help preserve culture and language. In addition, the regional council's plan includes recommendations for programs to offer evening or weekend sessions to accommodate families' work schedules. The regional council expects strategy implementation to include activities provided in the housing hubs of the region to alleviate barriers, such as transportation, for families to access services. The regional council developed its strategic plan with intentionality around the flexible implementation of strategies to have the greatest impact on children and increased engagement with the community.

SFY26 FUNDING PLAN UPDATE / CHANGE TABLE

COLORADO RIVER INDIAN TRIBES REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

DESIRED OUTCOME: ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY, CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION.

Strategy Areas and Funded Strategies

Quality First

- Quality First Academy (prioritized)
- Quality First Coaching and Incentives (prioritized)

Access to Quality Care

- Early Learning Systems Change (prioritized)

Successes:

Quality First:

In SFY24, Quality First implemented a revision to the model resulting in service levels that are based on the needs of participating centers and homes, more targeted administration support and additional hours for Child Care Health Consultation.

There is one child care program participating in Quality First and has increased its rating, moving from 2-star to 4-star. A big success for the program and the region!

Early Learning Systems Change:

During the 4-year strategic planning process, the FTF Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Council wanted to support the child care system in the region by hiring a consultant to help evaluate the resources in the region and build collective collaboration to develop regional options to help address the child care issue. During SFY24, the regional council was informed of potential opportunities of child care in the region. For SFY25, The FTF Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Council decided to offer a Request for Grant Application (RFGA) to implement an Early Learning Systems Change Strategy for start-up/expansion of a new child care center. One application was received and awarded to help start up a child care center. This will provide additional child care slots in the region. The child care center is anticipating to open in Winter 2024/2025, depending on renovation.

DESIRED OUTCOME: INFORMATION, SERVICES AND SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

Strategy Areas and Funded Strategies

Educating Families and Caregivers

- Language, Literacy and Culture in Tribal Communities (prioritized)
- Community Based Language and Literacy (prioritized)

Language and Literacy

- Book Distribution (non-prioritized)

Successes:

Language, Literacy and Culture in Tribal Communities

With the success of the implementation of the Language, Literacy and Culture in Tribal Communities in SFY23, the FTF Colorado River Indian Tribes regional council wanted to continue funding to the strategy to develop another set of the language books. The language books will be created in all four languages of the tribe; Mohave, Chemehuevi, Navajo and Hopi. Presentation to the Colorado River Indian Tribes Tribal Council brought interest in discussing additional collaborations and disbursement of the books.

DESIRED OUTCOME: WELL-PREPARED, HIGHLY SKILLED AND APPROPRIATELY COMPENSATED PROFESSIONALS

Strategy Areas and Funded Strategies

Professional Development for ECE Professionals

- Child Care Health Consultation

DESIRED OUTCOME: ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY PREVENTATIVE AND CONTINUOUS HEALTH CARE.

Strategy Areas and Funded Strategies

Nutrition and Physical Activity

- Nutrition and Physical Activity (non-prioritized)

Successes:

Nutrition and Physical Activity

The Colorado River Indian Tribes Department of Health and Social Services Nutrition and Physical Activity program has been creative in outreaching and recruiting families by having lunch time sessions to show parents/caregivers on how to make nutritious meals and information for busy parents. They also provide take-home kits that provide a lesson and items to support the lesson for those participants that were not able to make a class and follow up with them via zoom or a phone call. In addition, the program is offering incentives to participate including supports and resources for their children to participate in athletics/sports programs.

The program has also included their work with food sovereignty and systems building activities to support families with food access and security. The Colorado River Indian Tribes experienced food access and security challenges during the pandemic, which brought together some state and community stakeholders to form the Colorado River Indian Tribes Food Security, Sovereignty and Sustainability committee. The committee wanted to get an understanding of where the community's perspective, knowledge, and understanding of food access and security within the CRIT community. To do this, they approached the Colorado River Indian Tribes Tribal Council for approval to conduct a food assessment survey with tribal members and to report the findings to the tribal council. After the survey was conducted, the committee collaborated with the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona to develop a report to present to the community and Colorado River Indian Tribes Tribal Council. The report will be finalized in early 2025. The report highlights demographics, frequency of food security and availability, causes of food insecurity and solutions among the Colorado River Indian Tribes members. The finds will help guide the committee's strategic planning.

DESIRED OUTCOME: COORDINATED, INTEGRATED, AND COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM

Strategy Areas and Funded Strategies

Evaluation

- Statewide Evaluation (non-prioritized)

Successes:

Statewide Evaluation:

2024 Regional Needs and Asset Reports were delivered in June 2024 and approved by the Board in August 2024.