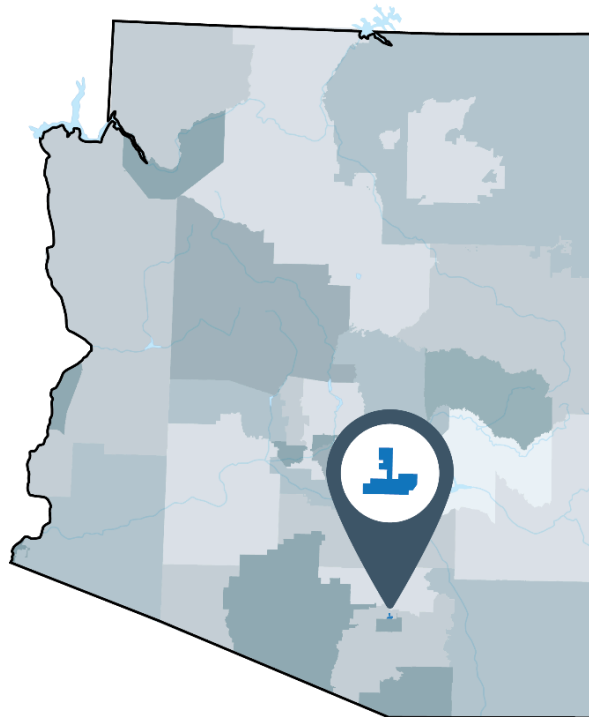




FIRST THINGS FIRST

Pascua Yaqui Tribe Regional Partnership Council
Population birth through age 5: 357



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.

Pascua Yaqui Tribe Regional Partnership Council

Cecilia Garcia, chair, health services provider

John Jensen, vice chair, representative of a philanthropic organization

Marilynn Correa Sando, early childhood educator

Marcus Diaz, at-large representative

Gloria Escalante, representative of the faith community

Rosie Gutierrez, child care provider

Shanna Ioane Tautolo, at-large representative

Amalia Reyes, at-large representative

Andrea Romero, parent of a child age 5 years or younger

Hector Youtsey, member of the business community

open, public school administrator

Tiburcia Yocupicio-Chambers, regional director, First Things First

Roxanne Ochoa, administrative specialist, First Things First

Regional Allocation and Proposed Funding Plan Summary SFY24 – SFY27
Pascua Yaqui Tribe Regional Partnership Council

Allocations and Funding Sources	2024	2025	2026	2027
FY Allocation	\$175,700	\$175,700	\$185,558	\$150,000
Population Based Allocation	\$82,533	\$82,533	\$74,599	\$82,533
Discretionary Allocation	\$93,167	\$93,167	\$110,959	\$67,467
Carry Forward From Previous Year	\$36,651	\$25,810	\$7,064	\$28,004
Total Regional Council Funds Available	\$212,351	\$201,510	\$192,622	\$178,004
Strategies	Approved Allotted	Approved Allotted	Proposed Allotted	Projected Allotted
Early Learning Systems Change	\$60,000			
Quality First Increase			\$40,000	\$40,000
Quality First Academy		\$269	\$269	\$269
Quality First Assessment		\$9,817		
Quality First Coaching & Incentives		\$7,929	\$7,929	\$7,929
Transition to Kindergarten	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000
First Things First College Scholarships	\$10,800	\$10,800	\$10,800	\$10,800
Child Care Health Consultation		\$1,985	\$1,985	\$1,985
Children's Health Systems Change	\$10,000	\$50,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Language, Literacy and Culture in Tribal Communities	\$90,000	\$90,000	\$90,000	\$90,000
Statewide Evaluation	\$6,229	\$6,229	\$6,229	\$6,229
Educational Promotion and Brand Awareness	\$8,500	\$18,933	\$8,933	\$8,933
Total	\$220,529	\$230,962	\$211,145	\$211,145
Total Unallotted/Unawarded/Unexpended:*	(\$8,178)	(\$29,452)	(\$18,523)	(\$33,141)

Fiscal Year	2020	2024	2025	2026	2027
% to Board Priorities		76.76 %	60.50 %	76.81 %	76.81 %
% to Quality First**	0.00%	0.00 %	8.65 %	23.77 %	23.77 %
Fiscal Year	4 Year Average				
% to Board Priorities	72.58%				
% to Quality First**	15.67%				

*Per FTF 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 the 80% allotment to Board Priorities: The Pascua Yaqui Tribe Region is a child care desert and lacks existing child care programs, which has led to significant care capacity issues. Although the region did not meet the recommended funding level for the board-identified priorities, the regional council will continue to fund the Quality First suite of strategies to support the Ili Uusim Mahtawa’apo (*Where Little Children are Taught*) Pascua Yaqui Head Start as well as fund an additional Quality First slot for the new Itom Ili Tosapo Am Remtituane (*Our Little Nest of Enlightenment*) Early Learning Center that will be open in SFY26.

PASCUA YAQUI TRIBE 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 Pascua Yaqui Tribe reservation and nearby surrounding communities are considered to be child care deserts. There is a significant need for child care, especially to support low-income, wage earning families who reside in the Pascua Pueblo Reservation (also known as New Pascua). In response, the FTF Pascua Yaqui Tribe Regional Council continues supporting the tribal government's work to enhance the tribal early childhood development and health system through continued conversations and partnerships with tribal leaders and staff. Currently, the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, in partnership with the regional council and other community partners, is working to create the first child care center on the reservation, including the development of a Pascua Yaqui Curriculum with emphasis in Yoeme language, history and culture. The center will serve approximately 116 children ranging in ages from birth to age 6, once it is constructed, with the intent to gradually expand to serve more children, including school aged children in subsequent years.

In addition, the Pascua Pueblo Reservation has a significant need for preschool services for low-income families with children who are eligible for enrollment at the Pascua Yaqui Head Start, but are not receiving services due to the lack of capacity of the program. The FTF Pascua Yaqui Tribe Regional Council continues to support a strong partnership with the Pascua Yaqui Head Start to provide kindergarten-transition programming to support more young children on the reservation to have equitable access to early learning experiences that will bolster kindergarten readiness.

SFY26 FUNDING PLAN UPDATE / CHANGE TABLE
PASCUA YAQUI TRIBE REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

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

Strategy Area and Funded Strategies

Quality First

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

Together, First Things First and the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) developed and facilitated information sessions and resources for Quality First participants to discuss the end of the federal funds and what SFY25 would look like for their participation, whether continuing or not.

The one regulated early care and education program in the region, originally funded through the federal pandemic relief funds, was able to maintain Quality First participation in SFY25 with funding support from the FTF Pascua Yaqui Tribe Regional Council.

The one currently participating program in the region has consistently maintained quality levels, which shows the success of implementation among both the grant partner and the participating early care and education program.

Changes:

Quality First:

The regional council recognizes the importance of maintaining Quality First supports to the Ili Uusim Mahtawa’apo (*Where Little Children are Taught*) Pascua Yaqui Head Start in SFY26 as well as funding an additional Quality First slot for the new Itom Ili Tosapo Am Remtituane (*Our Little Nest of Enlightenment*) Early Learning Center that will be open in SFY26.

Changes:	SFY25	SFY26
Quality First Increase		
Allotment:	\$0	\$40,000
Service Unit:	1 center-based provider	2 center-based providers

DESIRED OUTCOME: INFORMATION, SERVICES AND SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

Strategy Area and Funded Strategy

Educating Families and Caregivers

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

Successes:

During the second Pascua Yaqui Tribe Itom Lutu’uria Symposium held on July 5-6, 2024, the tribal social services division child care program staff presented the initial edition of the Itom Ili Tosapo Am Remtituane (*Our Little Nest of Enlightenment*) Early Childhood Learning Center Curricular Handbook, which comprises five units: Immediate Family, Self-Love, Love, Mesquite and Planting. According to tribal staff, “This handbook resulted from a 10-month organic and authentic collaborative effort involving elders/knowledge keepers, parents, community members and partners. Together, we developed Yaqui-centric curricula deeply rooted in our history, culture and language.”

The Language, Literacy and Culture in Tribal Communities Strategy is also implemented by the Dr. Fernando Escalante Library under the tribal education division. The grant agreement with this partner funds a position (library literacy specialist) who creates materials that are reflective of the tribal language and culture (including posters, informational flyers, etc.). These materials are shared during the community events designed and implemented by this staff position in partnership with tribal departments and programs. In SFY24, tribal library staff conducted 20 community events (five more than the contract service unit of 15) and provided 3,622 copies of native language and cultural materials (3,372 more than the contract service unit of 250).

Both tribal grant partners continue to work together on various community events and share with the community the tribal heritage materials that they are creating. These collaborations align with the tribal priorities and the regional council’s strategic vision of increasing opportunities to connect tribal families to their indigenous language, culture, history, community and lifeway through the creation and distribution of materials reflective of their tribal heritage at the community level and future school setting (new early learning center). The intent of this approach is to offer to the children and families both classroom and community learning opportunities about their Yaqui heritage.

Changes:

State Fiscal Year 2024 was the first year of implementation of the Language, Literacy and Culture in Tribal Communities Strategy. During SFY24 and early in SFY25, First Things First staff and the grantee engaged in conversations about the implementation data reported to First Things First, since the grantee exceeded the contract service units in year one implementation. Based on these conversations with the partner, a recommendation was presented to and approved by the regional council to increase the service unit for SFY26 that will align more with the target population of this strategy.

Changes:	SFY25	SFY26
Language, Literacy and Culture in Tribal Communities		
Service Unit:	450 materials distributed	650 materials distributed

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

Strategy Area and Funded Strategy

Professional Development for ECE Professionals

- First Things First College Scholarships (prioritized)

Challenges:

The grant partner had staff turnover and new staff transitioned into the position in SFY24. FTF regional staff continues to work in partnership with the new College Scholarships Strategy staff to outreach to tribal early care and education professionals to encourage applying for First Things First College Scholarships.

DESIRED OUTCOME: PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT

Strategy Area and Funded Strategy

Building Awareness of the Importance of the Early Years

- Educational Promotion and Brand Awareness (prioritized)

Successes:

FTF regional staff attend meetings of the Pascua Yaqui Awareness Campaign Committee led by tribal staff that include coordinated events and workshops that focus on various topics including early childhood development, language and literacy, child abuse prevention, mental health, breastfeeding and other topics. The regional council and regional staff provide books and educational reinforcement items to families and caregivers with young children during these community events in partnership with tribal staff from various tribal departments and programs.

The regional council continues funding sponsorships of community events on the reservation (i.e. community baby showers, Children’s Day and the Itom Lutu’uria Symposium). During these sponsored events, FTF is recognized via the logo on the flyers and invitations as well as verbal recognition of FTF sponsorships and the opportunity to share materials at the events. Furthermore, these and other community events have provided opportunities to FTF regional staff and regional council members to engage and strengthen relationships with tribal leaders and community stakeholders.

Changes:

The regional council decided to decrease the funding amount for the Educational Promotion and Brand Awareness Strategy in SFY26 to support the participation of the new tribal early learning center in Quality First. FTF regional staff will continue working with community partners to provide information and resources to families, caregivers and community members about the importance of early childhood development and health during community events and other outreach opportunities on the reservation.

Changes:	SFY25	SFY26
Educational Promotion and Brand Awareness		
Allotment:	\$18,933	\$8,933

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

Strategy Area and Funded Strategy

Health Resource Coordination

- Children’s Health Systems Change (non-prioritized)

Successes:

First Things First regional staff attends regular meetings of the Pascua Yaqui Tribe Yoemetuwame Committee led by tribal staff. The committee’s goal is to increase resilience and use of cultural practices to reduce diabetes, heart disease, stroke and cancer. This committee also implements various family and community activities that connect cultural teachings to health and wellness, such as breastfeeding initiatives, traditional food and providing fruits and vegetables through the Yoemem Harvest Program, etc.

Changes:

In SFY25, as part of the Children’s Health Systems Change grant agreement with the Pascua Yaqui Tribe Health Services Division, a study is being conducted to learn from families and caregivers of young children and expectant mothers about the types of local media they use and where they go to receive information, specific to accessing tribal health-based services (i.e. social media, marquees, banners, etc.). The regional council has intentionally planned to scale down the strategy starting in SFY26, marking the beginning of a new phase. This next phase will focus on developing an awareness campaign informed by the findings of the study. The regional council, tribal health services division and FTF staff continue working together on the implementation of this strategy that is unique to this tribal community.

Changes:	SFY25	SFY26
Children’s Health Systems Change		
Allotment:	\$50,000	\$10,000

DESIRED OUTCOME: COORDINATED, INTEGRATED, AND COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM

Strategy Areas and Funded Strategies

Bridge from ECE to Kindergarten

- Transition to Kindergarten (non-prioritized)

Evaluation

- Statewide Evaluation (non-prioritized)

Successes:

Transition to Kindergarten:

The Ili Uusim Mahtawa’apo Pascua Yaqui Head Start is the grantee implementing the Transition to Kindergarten Strategy and is also a Quality First participating center. In summer months, this grantee continues to provide classroom experiences to children without any preschool experiences or with limited preschool experiences in order to prepare them for the transition to kindergarten. In addition, the program prepares families to engage in their child’s education and support their child’s learning at home, provides bus transportation for the children and coordinates services with other family support programs available on the reservation such as the summer meal program. In SFY24, the Pascua Yaqui Head Start served 45 young children, 10 more than the contract service unit of 35.

Furthermore, the grantee continues to work in partnership with the Local Educational Agency, Tucson Unified School District (TUSD), to coordinate the implementation of the Transition to Kindergarten summer program with local elementary schools as well as to support parents/caregivers and their children through the enrollment process into TUSD schools for kindergarten.

Challenges:

Statewide Evaluation:

The approval of the 2024 Regional Needs and Assets Report required more time. The Pascua Yaqui Tribe held the tribal council election on June 3, 2024. Due to the transition of tribal council and department staff, the 2024 Regional Needs and Assets Report was approved by the tribal council on November 14, 2024 and the FTF State Board on December 10, 2024.