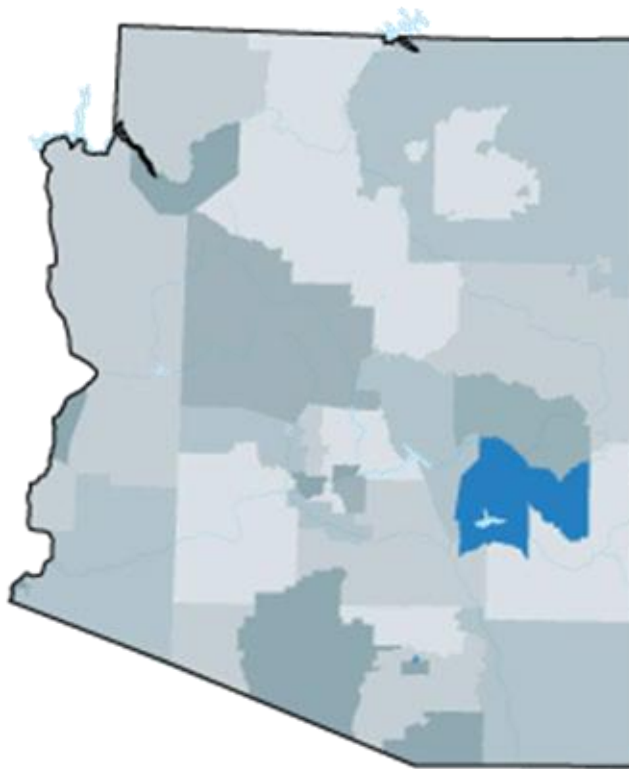




FIRST THINGS FIRST

San Carlos Apache Regional Partnership Council
Population birth through age 5: 1,472



State Fiscal Year 2026 Funding Plan

SFY 2024 – 2027 Strategic Plan Update

Presented to the First Things First Board
January 21, 2025

FIRST THINGS FIRST

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.

San Carlos Apache Regional Partnership Council

Christine Carlson, chair, public school administrator

Kelly Pahe-Reede, vice chair, health services provider

Christina Day, representative of a philanthropic organization

Randee Kitcheyan, at-large representative

Nolita April Noline, child care provider

Ronald Ritter, member of the business community

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

Victoria Marin, administrative specialist, First Things First

Regional Allocation and Proposed Funding Plan Summary SFY24 – SFY27
San Carlos Apache Regional Partnership Council

Allocations and Funding Sources	2024	2025	2026	2027
FY Allocation	\$638,391	\$638,391	\$391,898	\$670,024
Population Based Allocation	\$430,841	\$430,841	\$389,420	\$430,841
Discretionary Allocation	\$207,550	\$207,550	\$2,478	\$239,183
Carry Forward From Previous Year	\$472,225	\$779,974	\$714,354	\$402,241
Total Regional Council Funds Available	\$1,110,616	\$1,418,365	\$1,106,252	\$1,072,265
Strategies	Approved Allotted	Approved Allotted	Proposed Allotted	Projected Allotted
Inclusion of Children with Special Needs	\$75,000			
Quality First Academy	\$5,000	\$4,613	\$5,000	\$5,000
Quality First Assessment		\$50,639		
Quality First Coaching & Incentives	\$158,660	\$103,509	\$158,660	\$158,660
Transition to Kindergarten		\$11,000	\$11,000	\$11,000
First Things First College Scholarships	\$10,800	\$10,800	\$10,800	\$10,800
Child Care Health Consultation	\$34,000	\$38,899	\$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 Resource Centers		\$133,000	\$133,000	\$133,000
Family Support Coordination	\$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	\$839,249	\$839,249	\$839,249
Total Unallotted/Unawarded/Unexpended:	\$282,367	\$590,116	\$267,003	\$233,016

Fiscal Year	2020	2024	2025	2026	2027
% to Board Priorities		89.63 %	88.46 %	88.46 %	88.46 %
% to Quality First*	15.20%	23.86 %	23.55 %	23.55 %	23.55 %
Fiscal Year	4 Year Average				
% to Board Priorities	88.75%				
% to Quality First*	23.62%				

*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.

SAN CARLOS APACHE 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 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 rationale when choosing strategies.

SFY26 FUNDING PLAN UPDATE / CHANGE TABLE
SAN CARLOS APACHE 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)

Successes:

Quality First:

There are seven center-based providers and one home-based provider enrolled in Quality First in the region. Six of the 7 enrolled providers have achieved a 4- or 5-star rating and is something the region is very proud of.

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.

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)
- Family, Friend and Neighbor Care (prioritized)

Navigating and Connecting Families to Resources

- Family Resource Centers (prioritized)

Challenges:

Family, Friend and Neighbor Care:

First Things First is currently working on entering into an agreement for implementation of Family, Friend and Neighbor Care Strategy.

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

Strategy Areas and Funded Strategies

Professional Development for ECE Professionals

- Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (prioritized)
- First Things First College Scholarships (prioritized)
- Child Care Health Consultation (prioritized)

Successes:

Despite staffing challenges (cited below), the grant partner for the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Strategy uses their regional supervisor as the acting mental health consultant and engages in outreach and recruitment activities in the regional early childhood education community. The grantee’s regional supervisor has established a relationship with the only school district in the region and has completed a letter of commitment to start providing early childhood mental health consultation for them in a virtual/hybrid format. The grantee’s regional supervisor maintains close communication and collaborative relationships with the child care health consultant and the Quality First Coach serving the San Carlos Apache Region.

Challenges:

The Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Strategy continues to have challenges with recruiting and hiring a qualified mental health consultant locally. At the beginning of SFY25, a local consultant was hired, however, it did not work out and the grant partner is currently re-engaged in an active search to fill the position. The Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Strategy is being provided in hybrid/virtual mode as an interim remedy until a local mental health consultant is hired.

DESIRED OUTCOME: PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT.

Strategy Areas and Funded Strategies

Building Awareness of the Importance of the Early Years

- o Educational Promotion and Brand Awareness (prioritized)
- o Media (prioritized)

Successes:

Media:

In SFY24, targeted media efforts in the San Carlos Apache Region raised awareness about the importance of early childhood development, connecting families to resources and empowering communities to support children from birth to age 5. Building on this success, the SFY25 media campaign will expand these efforts with targeted online media ads and 90 radio spots on a local station.

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

Strategy Areas and Funded Strategies

Identifying and Addressing Developmental Concerns

- o Developmental and Sensory Screening (non-prioritized)

Challenges:

Developmental and Sensory Screening:

The developmental and sensory screening grant partner continues to struggle with meeting their services units as contracted. In quarter one of SFY25 the grant partner was able to screen six children of their 275 contracted service units. Parents in the region who have children not enrolled in Head Start or the school district preschool have been hard to connect with and there seems to be a lack of understanding about the importance of the screenings. The grant partner continues to work with the regional director to brainstorm ways to connect with community members and tribal departments.

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 Transition to Kindergarten Strategy was added as a new strategy with an amendment to the SFY25 San Carlos Apache Regional Funding Plan (Board approved December 2024). During a review of the four years' strategic plan, the regional council considered the possibility of meeting more needs of the young children in the region. The San Carlos Apache Region has 1,472 children under the age of 5 and of those children, 855 have all parents working. The San Carlos Apache Region has 350 child care slots with legally operated providers equating to a potential 76% care gap. Upon asking San Carlos Unified School District (the largest school system in the region), the regional council discovered that 45 students of the 76 enrolled kindergarteners attended Head Start or PreK programs, leaving 31 kindergarteners who did not attend Head Start or other PreK programs.

Statewide Evaluation:

The Statewide Evaluation Strategy successfully completed the 2024 Regional Needs and Asset Reports and were delivered in June 2024 and approved by the Board in August 2024.