



ARIZONA HEAD START COLLABORATION OFFICE GRANT APPLICATION

2015

Abstract

A comprehensive description of Arizona's Head Start Collaboration Office's plans to deliver quality collaboration services that are aligned to the Office of Head Start and Region IX priorities.

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Design and Approach to Collaboration Service Delivery

Introduction

The Arizona Department of Education is the agency designated in 2010 by the Governor of Arizona to serve as Arizona's Head Start Collaboration Office (HSCO). This application is for the 2016-2021 grant period and is a reflection of over one year of planning and working with our collaborating partners to ensure it accurately demonstrates the integral part Arizona's HSCO plays in Arizona's state system for governing early childhood education. Arizona's HSCO goals and objectives match Arizona's state plan for school-readiness. Arizona's school-readiness motto is, "Ready for School, Set for Life" and are outlined in the school-readiness indicators of Arizona's state early learning council, *First Things First* (See Appendix A). Knowing the complexities of Arizona's landscape—both geographically and politically—and its effect on the educational realm is essential to understanding the remarkable nature of the HSCO's collaborative partnerships.

Geographically, as noted in Arizona's 2015 HSCO Needs Assessment (See Appendix B), the State of Arizona was home to about 6.5 million people in a five-year estimate for 2013. Almost seven percent of the population was under the age of five (446,556). Arizona has 58 people per square mile; however, 75 percent of the population lives in urban areas, where the population density is 407 people per square mile. Twenty-two percent of Arizona residents live in rural areas, where the density is five people per square mile, and two percent live in areas that are considered to be frontier, in which there are only 3.6 people per square mile. This varied, wide expanse of land in a state where educational decisions are made on a local level (called, "local-control") present a challenge for state agencies, like the ADE and HSCO, to provide meaningful statewide guidance and recommendations. Thus, Arizona's HSCO relies on

its local partners to help share information and convene stakeholders to participate in HSCO activities.

Politically, Arizona has been quite busy in the last year. In November 2014, Doug Ducey was elected to be Arizona's 23rd governor. As with any new administration, items of priority have identified and one of the governor's top priorities, according to his website www.azgovernor.gov, is education. Of particular interest to Arizona's HSCO is the governor's focus on two items: charter schools and school funding. On the issue of school funding, the governor most recently signed a trio of bills that address school funding and works to settle a court case from 2013 that challenged the Arizona legislation for refusing to increase base level of education funding for inflation in both the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 budgets, despite a voter-approved Proposition (301) in 2000.

Also in November 2014, the people of Arizona elected a new Superintendent of Public Instruction, Diane Douglas, signaling a shift in focus for ADE. The new Superintendent challenged the state's K-12 standards and vowed to repeal them. The standards are currently being reviewed and are open to public comment. Additionally, since Ms. Douglas assumed office in January 2015, there has been some discord between the Superintendent and Arizona's State Board of Education. Currently, there are lawsuits pending, each brought forth by one side against the other.

Additionally, in 2015, Arizona's early childhood community has also seen much change. Some key players, vital to the establishment of a strong system for early childhood education in Arizona, have retired from their positions. Even Arizona Head Starts have seen a change in directors, some whom have been with Head Start in Arizona since its beginning. In fact, Arizona's HSCO experienced a significant change in leadership in 2015. The long time HSCO

director, who served in that capacity since the HSCO was with ADE, left state agency work to return to her Head Start roots on the local level. Yet, even with all of this change and flux in Arizona state leadership, there have been many glimmers of gold for Arizona.

In 2013 and 2014, Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education, visited Arizona. On both occasions, Secretary Duncan visited an early learning provider and addressed the early childhood community. Accompanying Secretary Duncan in 2013 was U.S. deputy assistant secretary of policy and early learning at the U.S. Department of Education, Libby Doggett, and Linda Smith, deputy assistant secretary and inter-departmental liaison for early childhood development for the Administration for Children and Families at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Ms. Doggett and Ms. Smith addressed early childhood teachers at a local community college and Ms. Smith specifically addressed the Head Start community and Early Head Start Child Care partnerships. Ms. Doggett was even taken to see early learning programs in both urban and rural areas so as to get a sense of the vastness of Arizona and the varied contexts in which children and their families are served.

Input for Arizona's HSCO 2015 Needs Assessment was garnered from various stakeholders and the process included the use of the Arizona Head Start Association (AHSA), its Executive Council, and its committee structure for varied levels of input. There were multiple opportunities for input and guidance during the planning process for over one year and included: AHSA Advisory Committee Member review of current Head Start environment including opportunities for further information gathering; an analysis of data gathered from multiple secondary and primary sources that would inform the HSCO in terms of status, needs, and opportunities related to the HSCO Overarching Goals. Secondary data, gathered and updated from existing data sources, included demographic information about Arizona, and

cumulative counts for the EHS/HS programs for 2010-2015. The HSCO also conducted a survey of Grantees to obtain specific information regarding collaboration.

The data collected through Arizona's HSCO 2015 Needs Assessment led to the creation of long range goals, short term objectives, and process goals. The result is a Strategic Plan that is a cross-section of lessons learned and accomplishments achieved from the activities undertaken in the Strategic Plan for the 2011-2015 grant period (for a statement on accomplishments See Appendix C), strategies to meet the needs of local Head Start and Early Head Start programs, and aspirations for strong growth in the future. Strategic Planning was based upon the information gathered in the Needs Assessment. Planning sessions were held on December 5, 2014, June 1, 2015 and October 23 2015. The strategic planning sessions included the HSCO Director, leadership from AHSA, Head Start Grantees and Delegate Agencies, and State Agency representatives in areas of focus for HSCO.

The data collected through the Needs Assessment led to the creation of long range goals. These long range goals are based on areas of interest and/or concern to the majority of stakeholders surveyed and are reflective of the bold achievements the HSCO proposes to complete over the next five years. After long range goals were determined, process goals were then delineated. Process goals are the incremental steps the HSCO is proposing to take to reach its bold targets.

The first step in determining Arizona's 2015 HSCO goals was taking time to reflect on the HSCO Strategic Plan for the 2011-2015 grant period. Rather than deviating from, the proposed activities in the 2016-2021 Strategic Plan build on ideas and efforts that were started in the previous Strategic Plan. While there has been a change in the Office of Head Start priorities for this new grant period, Arizona's plan is to continue focusing on supporting vulnerable

populations while working on even bolder goals that align with OHS priorities, Region IX priorities, and Arizona's early learning system.

Sub-Section A: Goals

In the process of developing its goals for the next five years, the Arizona HSCO developed long range and process goals aligned with the Office of Head Start (OHS) priorities, as well as Region IX priorities. The priorities for Region IX include: Teacher qualifications; the use of child care subsidies; the use of Teaching Strategies GOLD data to inform statewide conversations; and ways to develop systems for grantees to support one another in the areas of child health and safety and supervision.

According to *Child Care Aware of America and Arizona*, there are 304,017 children under age 6 who potentially need child care in Arizona (www.childcareaware.org). Of the children needing care, 46% are infants and toddlers; 25% are preschool age. Understanding this great need for child care for children from birth to preschool age, and being a pillar of Arizona's Early Childhood System, ADE has set goals for the HSCO to continue being a convener of collaborating partners to support Head Start and Early Head Start grantees, as well as to lend Head Start knowledge and expertise to Arizona's early childhood education community.

Arizona's goals are detailed below:

Long Range Goal 1: Head Start is involved in the development of state policies, plans, processes, and decisions impacting Head Start.

Short Term Objective A:

A. Beginning March 2016, Subcommittee and/or Policy Council members become advocates for Head Start through active participation on Boards, committees and workgroups such as:

- Strong Families Arizona Alliance and Inter-Agency Leadership Team
- Read On Arizona Statewide Taskforces and Community Teams
- First Things First Quality First subcommittee on Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement Systems
- Professional Development Workgroup

- BUILD Initiative
- Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership Initiatives

Process Goals:

1. Identify Boards, committees, and workgroups focused on issues impacting Head Start and Early Head Start and the Arizona ECE system.
2. Ensure that a Head Start and Early Head Start stakeholder is a member of each identified group.
3. As a member, the Head Start and Early Head Start stakeholder will assist in the development of policies, plans, processes and decisions that impact Head Start and Early Head Start and the Arizona early childhood system and keep Head Start and Early Head Start informed through updates at Arizona Head Start Association (AHSA) meetings.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: Arizona Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, AHSA, Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA), Arizona Department of Health Services (DHS), Arizona Department of Child Safety (DCS), Read on Arizona, First Things First (FTF), Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP).

Expected Outcomes:

1. Increase awareness of the role of Head Start and Early Head Start in the Arizona early childhood system (HSSCO evaluation plan).
2. Increase Head Start and Early Head Start representation in decisions impacting the Arizona early childhood system

Progress Monitoring: A survey of membership in the above mentioned groups will be conducted by the HSCO once a year for each of the five years of the grant period as part of the HSCO evaluation plan.

Short Term Objective B: Beginning March 2016, Subcommittee and/or Policy Council members become advocates for Head Start and Early Head Start through active participation in early childhood system-building efforts such as:

- The Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant.
- The development of early childhood teaching certificate requirements at Arizona institutions of higher education.
- The Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry.
- Kindergarten through 3rd grade formative assessment.
- State Systemic Improvement Plan for IDEA Parts B and C.
- Efforts on increasing engagement of male family members in early childhood development
- AZ Coalition for Military Families.
- Preschool Development Grant statewide community of practice and local communities of practice in participating communities.

Process Goals:

1. Identify Boards, committees, and workgroups focused on issues impacting Head Start and Early Head Start and the Arizona ECE system.
2. Ensure that a Head Start and Early Head Start stakeholder is a member of each identified group.
3. As a member, the Head Start and Early Head Start stakeholder will assist in the development of policies, plans, processes and decisions that impact Head Start and Early Head Start and the Arizona early childhood system and keep Head Start and Early Head Start informed through updates at Arizona Head Start Association (AHSA) meetings.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA), Arizona Institutions of Higher Education, Arizona Department of Education (ADE), Local Education Agencies, First Things First, Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP), AZ Coalition for Military Families.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Increase awareness of the role of Head Start and Early Head Start in the Arizona early childhood system
2. Increase Head Start and Early Head Start representation in decisions impacting the Arizona early childhood system

Progress-monitoring: To ensure Head Start participation in early childhood system building efforts, a survey of Head Start participation in the above mentioned initiatives will be conducted by the HSCO once a year for each of the five years of the grant period as part of the HSCO evaluation plan.

Short Term Objective C: Annually, strengthen Head Start and Early Head Start evaluation and information dissemination processes and expand partnerships related to early childhood messaging initiatives.

Process Goals:

1. Attend and participate in meetings of the State Early Learning Advisory Council (*First Things First* Board).
2. Publish the Annual Statewide Head Start Report and Fact Sheet.
3. Expand distribution of the Head Start Annual Report and disseminate information briefs about results.
4. Engage on ongoing evaluation and needs assessment of HSSCO efforts and disseminate results.
5. Work in collaboration with partners promoting media and branding campaigns supporting early childhood education and development.
6. Identify Head Start and Early Head Start families to promote advocacy and speak on behalf of Head Start and Early Head Start.
7. Collaborate on creation and dissemination of outreach materials with ASU PBS.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA), Arizona Department of Health Services, Arizona Institutions of Higher Education, Arizona Department of Education, Local Education Agencies, First Things First, Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP), ASU PBS.

Expected Outcomes: Increase community awareness of Head Start and Early Head Start and early childhood initiatives.

Progress Monitoring: An annual survey will be conducted of various stakeholders on the awareness of current initiatives of Head Start and Early Head Start as part of the HSCO evaluation plan.

Short Term Objective D: Starting in March 2016, Head Start and Early Head Start is actively involved in the on-going development and implementation of the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry.

Process Goals:

1. Ensure that a Head Start and Early Head Start stakeholder is a member of the working group(s) developing the Early Childhood Professional Registry.
2. Assist in the development and implementation of the Registry to ensure that it meets the needs of Head Start and Early Head Start professionals.
3. Disseminate information about the Registry to Head Start and Early Head Start professionals and encourage participation in the system.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: First Things First, Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA).

Expected Outcomes: Head Start and Early Head Start professionals participate in the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry.

Progress Monitoring: An annual review of the number of Head Start and Early Head Start participants in the Registry.

Short Term Objective E: Starting in March 2016, Head Start and Early Head Start is actively involved in the review of Arizona's TQRIS *Quality First* to ensure that it meets the quality improvement needs of Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

Process Goals:

1. Ensure a Head Start and Early Head Start stakeholder is a member of the working group(s) on the TQRIS.
2. Assist in the review of the TQRIS to ensure that it meets the needs of Head Start and Early Head Start professionals.
3. Disseminate information about participation in the TQRIS to Head Start and Early Head Start grantees and delegates and encourage participation in the system.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: First Things First, Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA).

Expected Outcomes:

Increase Head Start and Early Head Start participation in the Arizona TQRIS Quality First.

Progress Monitoring: Review *Quality First* data on the participation levels of Head Start and Early Head Start

Short Term Objective F: Starting in March 2016, Head Start and Early Head Start is actively involved in collaboration with Early Head Start Child Care Partnership Initiatives.

Process Goals:

1. Child Care Partnerships are aware of AHSA and attend AHSA meetings.
2. Collaborate with Child Care Partnerships and Department of Economic Security (DES) - Child Care Development Block Grant to ensure coordination and Head Start and Early Head Start representation in the development of standards for quality reimbursements.
3. Participate on DES workgroups writing the Child Care and Development Fund State Plan.
4. Convene a working group and/or pilot site(s) to better understand challenges and opportunities for community collaboration between Head Start and Early Head Start and Child Care partners.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: First Things First, Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA), Child Care Partners.

Expected Outcomes: Greater awareness and collaboration between Head Start and Early Head Start and Child Care partners

Progress Monitoring: A survey of awareness of EHS-CC partnerships will be conducted during the grant period as part of the HSCO evaluation plan.

Short Term Objective G: Starting in March 2016, Head Start and Early Head Start is actively involved in efforts to share data and increase data-based decision making.

Process Goals:

1. Through Head Start and Early Head Start representation on working groups and committees, understand relevant, ongoing data sharing work of initiatives such as the following:
 - *Quality First*
 - Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry
 - Read on Arizona MapLIT tool
 - Department of Economic Security—Child Care Administration

- *First Things First* data center
 - WIC
 - Arizona Department of Education
 - Arizona Academy of Pediatrics
 - Arizona Health Cost Care Containment System EPSDT providers
2. Develop and update, as needed, memorandums of understanding or data sharing agreements to include Head Start and Early Head Start data in identified data sharing initiatives.
 3. Coordinate collection, submission, and quality control of Head Start and Early Head Start data to identified data sharing initiatives.
 4. Develop strategic goals for statewide and grantee use of PIR and other data sources for program improvement.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: First Things First, Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA), First Things First, Department of Economic Security, Arizona Department of Education, Read on Arizona, WIC.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Greater awareness of Head Start and Early Head Start and Head Start and Early Head Start data
2. Increase usage of PIR and other Head Start and Early Head Start data to inform decision making and continuous quality improvement

Progress Monitoring: A survey of awareness and use of EHS-CC data will be conducted during the grant period as part of the HSCO evaluation plan.

Long Range Goal 2: Families in Head Start - who need full day services - have increased access to high quality, early care and education services.

Short Term Objective A: Annually, beginning in 2016, increase Head Start and Early Head Start programs applied for and/or participating in Quality First (TQRIS).

Process Goals:

1. Provide information on and promote the Quality First (TQRIS) system to Head Start and Early Head Start grantees and delegates.
2. Advocate to *First Things First* and *Quality First* for a menu of options for TQRIS that support the needs of Head Start and Early Head Start.
3. Provide information and support to Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees and delegates on *Quality First* scholarships, child care subsidies, and financial sustainability models for quality early care and education.
4. Provide information and support to Child Care partners and the early childhood community on *Quality First scholarships*, child care subsidies, and financial sustainability models for quality early care and education.
5. Convene financial leaders of Head Start and Early Head Start grantees and delegates to create professional development resources to support improved financial planning for improvement and sustainability of quality.
6. Work closely with the Arizona Department of Economic Security to utilize Child Care Development Block Grant to strengthen partnerships with Head Start and Early Head Start.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: First Things First, Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (AHSA), Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA), Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES).

Expected Outcomes:

1. Increase Head Start and Early Head Start application/participation in the Arizona TQRIS *Quality First*.
2. Increase the quality star rating of Head Start and Early Head Start providers enrolled in TQRIS.
3. Increase the number of Head Start and Early Head Start providers with sustainable financial plans to support the provision of ongoing quality early education.

Progress Monitoring: *Quality First* data will be used to monitor Head Start and Early Head Start participation and star ratings in the TQRIS in the HSCO Evaluation plan.

Short Term Objective B: Annually, beginning in 2016, increase Head Start and Early Head Start children served in full-day option through partnerships and/or braided funding.

Process Goals:

1. Provide information on and promote *Quality First* and scholarships to Head Start and Early Head Start grantees and delegates.
2. Provide information and support to Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees and delegates on *Quality First* scholarships, child care subsidies, and financial sustainability models for quality early care and education.

3. Convene financial and facilities planning leaders of Head Start and Early Head Start grantees and delegates to create professional development resources to support improved budgeting for improvement and sustainability of quality.
4. Work closely with the Arizona Department of Economic Security Child Care Development Block Grant to strengthen partnerships with Head Start and Early Head Start.
5. Convene Head Start and Early Head Start grantees and delegates to explore additional funding opportunities for full-day quality early education.
6. Support training of family support and eligibility staff to guide families in seeking full day education.
7. Convene Preschool Development Grant, Head Start and Early Head Start and Child Care partners to share resources and information on guidelines for quality early care environments and the financial planning needed to support them.
8. Plan a Summit on developing and financing quality early care and education environments.
9. Convene a working group to examine the feasibility of a collaborative referral system for early care and education.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: First Things First, Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA), Arizona Department of Economic Security.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Increase the number of full-day enrollment opportunities in Head Start and Early Head Start (PIR data).
2. Increase the number of children served in full day, high quality Head Start and Early Head Start programs (PIR data).
3. Increase the number of children with child care subsidies enrolled in Head Start and Early Head Start (PIR and DES data).
4. Increase the number of Head Start and Early Head Start providers with sustainable financial plans to support the provision of ongoing quality early education, including appropriate environments and facilities (HSSCO Evaluation plan).

Progress Monitoring: PIR data will be used to evaluate the number of full-day enrollment opportunities and the number of children served in full-day HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START programs; DES data will be used to evaluate the number of children with child care subsidies served in Head Start and Early Head Start programs; the HSCO Evaluation plan will be used to survey the number of Head Start and Early Head Start providers with financial sustainability plans.

Short Term Objective C: Starting 2016, collaboratively investigate the availability of quality early education for 3 year olds.

Process Goals:

1. Form a working group to explore data to better understand the availability of quality early education for 3 year olds.

2. The working group will provide findings and recommendations to AHSA.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA), Arizona Department of Health Services, Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES), Arizona Department of Education (ADE), First Things First.

Expected Outcome: Better understanding of the availability of quality early education for 3 year olds.

Progress Monitoring: The working group will create a report based on their findings.

Short Term Objective D: Annually, increase Head Start and Early Head Start staff obtaining degrees or acquiring higher degrees.

Process Goals:

1. Disseminate information about the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry to Head Start and Early Head Start professionals and encourage participation in the system.
2. Hold an annual meeting for Head Start and Early Head Start staff focused on participation in the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry.
3. Provide regular updates on the Registry at AHSA meetings.
4. Create a link with the Registry to interface with ADE Connect.
5. Partner to ensure that the Registry is coordinated with early childhood certification through ADE.
6. Disseminate information and support course credit for *Strong Families AZ* professional development offerings.
7. Support the development and utilization of non-traditional educational opportunities, such as cohorts and online training.
8. Form a working group to examine impediments to early childhood professionals pursuing degrees.
9. Disseminate information on the programs approved for certification on the ADE-ECE website.
10. Convene a working group to establish a definition of “related fields” for Arizona Head Start and Early Head Start grantees and delegates; utilize the First Things First career lattice to define the number of credits and type of coursework needed for employment at Head Start and Early Head Start.
11. Coordinate with Arizona Institutions of Higher Education to develop a recognized certificate for Arizona Head Start and Early Head Start and is recognized by the Office of Head Start.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA), Arizona Department of Health Services, Arizona Institutions of Higher Education, Arizona Department of Education, First Things First.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Increase the number of qualified Head Start and Early Head Start staff.
2. Increase the number of Head Start and Early Head Start staff with bachelor's degrees or higher.
3. Increase the number of Head Start and Early Head Start staff participating in FTF scholarships.
4. Increase the number of Head Start and Early Head Start staff participating in the Registry and statewide system of teacher quality.

Progress Monitoring: PIR data will be used to evaluate the number of qualified staff and the number of staff with a bachelor's (or higher) degree. *First Things First* data will be used to evaluate the number of HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START staff participating in the Registry and scholarships.

Short Term Objective E: By 2021, increase availability of quality infant/toddler professional development for Head Start and Early Head Start staff.

Process Goals:

1. Form a working group to identify the available infant/toddler development courses in Arizona.
2. Coordinate with partners to support the growth of the infant/toddler workforce.
3. Conduct a summit around infant/toddler education.
4. Utilize the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry to identify patterns in infant/toddler education and qualifications in the state.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA), Arizona Department of Health Services, Arizona Institutions of Higher Education, Arizona Department of Education, First Things First.

Expected Outcome: Increase the number of Head Start and Early Head Start professionals with infant/toddler preparation.

Progress Monitoring: PIR data and data gathered from the institutes of higher education.

Short Term Objective F: By 2021, increase the recruitment of childcare professionals into Head Start and Early Head Start.

Process Goals:

1. Identify key personnel for coordination and collaboration at institutes of higher education.
2. Coordinate to create a description of education and career pathways that aligns with the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry.
3. Market and promote early childhood education and careers to professionals entering the pipeline.

4. Coordinate with the Arizona Department of Education's Career and Technical Education Office to ensure standards are relevant to Head Start and Early Head Start professionals.
5. Form a working group to support partnerships with professional organizations that could link Head Start and Early Head Start programs with interns and create resources and materials to support programs in staff recruitment efforts.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA), Arizona Institutions of Higher Education, Arizona Department of Education.

Expected Outcome: Increase the number of Head Start and Early Head Start professionals.

Progress Monitoring: PIR data and data gathered from the institutes of higher education.

Long Range Goal 3: Increase the number of children in vulnerable populations served by Head Start. Vulnerable populations include children experiencing: homelessness, refugee status, foster care, and children from military families and with an IEP/IFSP.

Short Term Objective A: Annually, identify obstacles for vulnerable populations (including children living in poverty) to enroll in Head Start and Early Head Start and implement initiatives to increase enrollment.

Process Goals:

1. Create a working group to examine PIR and programmatic data to identify trends in low enrollment and expulsion for vulnerable populations.
2. Investigate impediments to enrollment of vulnerable populations both from the family and community perspective as well the Head Start and Early Head Start programmatic perspective.
3. Create and disseminate outreach materials/strategies that identify benefits of Head Start and Early Head Start and detail Head Start and Early Head Start eligibility.
4. Convene a partner group to identify common issues in serving vulnerable populations.
5. Hold a summit on family engagement.
6. Examine the role of male engagement in young children's success and recommend programmatic and coordination efforts to support it.
7. Coordinate with DES/CCA on the Child Care Development Block Grant on partnerships to identify needs, enroll, and serve vulnerable populations.
8. Convene forums for providers and agencies serving similar populations.
9. Strengthen partnerships between Head Start and Early Head Start and social service agencies to refer and recruit families currently in Head Start and Early Head Start to enroll in needed social services and vice versa.
10. Initiate a Head Start and Early Head Start communication campaign including: media, social media, ads, billboards, etc.

11. Create a working group to examine case study(ies) in child care partnerships between Head Start and Early Head Start, Early Childhood Special Education, and private child care to identify the current state of collaborations, needs, and assets.
12. Examine data on enrollment and coordinate with partners to support enrollment of military families.
13. Create a working group to examine the extent and circumstances in Head Start and Early Head Start waivers for families that are over income.
14. Identify available financial supports for outreach, referral, media and other efforts associated with outreach to vulnerable populations.
15. Convene a working group to examine the feasibility of a collaborative referral system for early care and education that coordinates with partners serving vulnerable populations.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA), Arizona Department of Economic Security, Arizona Department of Education, Child Care partners, First Things First, AZ Coalition for Military Families.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Increase the number of full-day enrollment opportunities in Head Start and Early Head Start.
2. Increase Head Start and Early Head Start enrollment numbers.
3. Increase the number of children enrolled in Head Start and Early Head Start from families experiencing homelessness, poverty, refugee status, kith & kin care, foster care, military, and IEP/IFSP.

Progress Monitoring: PIR data.

Short Term Objective B: Annually, identify obstacles for children in foster care enrolling and continuing in Head Start and Early Head Start and implement initiatives to increase enrollment and retention.

Process Goals:

1. Create a working group to examine the findings of the Maricopa pilot for serving children in foster care.
2. Integrate the lessons learned from the Maricopa pilot for other communities.
3. Convene a working group to establish a strategic plan to build relationships and increase referrals and warm handoffs between Head Start and Early Head Start and agencies working with children in foster care.
4. Convene a working group to establish a model of a continuum of care which enables children in foster care to move from one program to another without long waiting or lack of service periods.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start

Directors Association (AIHSDA), Arizona Department of Economic Security, Department of Child Safety, Arizona Department of Education, Child Care partners, First Things First.

Expected Outcome: Increase Head Start and Early Head Start enrollment numbers for children in foster care.

Progress Monitoring: PIR data.

Short Term Objective C: Annually, identify obstacles for children who are homeless enrolling and continuing in Head Start and Early Head Start and implement initiatives to increase enrollment and retention.

Process Goals:

1. Create a working group to examine impediments to enrollment and retention of homeless children.
2. Provide ASHA members with a continually updated list of local McKinney –Vento liaisons and provide support for those local partnerships.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA), Local Education Agencies, Arizona Department of Education.

Expected Outcome: Increase Head Start and Early Head Start enrollment numbers for homeless children.

Progress Monitoring: PIR data.

Long Range Goal 4: Building relationships to ensure continuity of services between birth to five programs and kindergarten to 3rd grade.

Short Term Objective A: Annually, engage School Leadership in the work of the birth-5 community to become champions for ECE.

Process Goals:

1. Convene a working group to do strategic planning to engage principals in schools that have grades kindergarten through 3rd.
2. Establish and support a community of practice for principals related to early childhood.
3. Educate District partners on Head Start and Early Head Start data.
4. Head Start and Early Head Start staff and leaders participate in ECQUIP meetings and know their LEA partners.
5. Principals participate in ECQUIP meetings and know their Head Start and Early Head Start partners.
6. Increased awareness of and decrease incidence of early entry of 4 year olds into Kindergarten.

7. Increased Head Start and Early Head Start and LEA collaboration in kindergarten transition policies and procedures, especially with the use of Teaching Strategies GOLD data.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA), Local Education Agencies, School Districts, Arizona Department of Education.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Increased participation in ECQUIP meetings.
2. Increased sharing of PIR and Teaching Strategies Gold data with District and other partners.
3. Increased awareness of the role of Head Start and Early Head Start in the Arizona early childhood system.

Progress Monitoring: Data gathered by ADE through ADE Connect; the HSCO Evaluation plan

Short Term Objective B: Annually, Broaden the participation of Early Head Start Childcare Partners in AHSA.

Process Goals:

1. Head Start and Early Head Start grantees invite Early Head Start Childcare Partners to AHSA meetings.
2. Educate Head Start and Early Head Start staff on the Head Start Collaboration Office and AHSA.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA), Local Education Agencies, School Districts, Arizona Department of Education, First Things First.

Expected Outcome: Increased AHSA membership.

Progress Monitoring: AHSA membership data

Short Term Objective C: By 2021, hold a Birth-5 Regional School Readiness Summit.

Process Goals:

1. Create a strategic planning group for a Regional School Readiness Summit.
2. Identify funding for a Regional School Readiness Summit.
3. Hold and evaluate a Regional School Readiness Summit.
4. As part of the Regional School Readiness Summit, inform stakeholders about the Kindergarten Developmental Inventory and how to assist families to understand its relevance for their child.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA), Regional Behavioral Health Authority, AHCCCS/EPSTD providers.

Expected Outcome: Increased awareness of current issues in School Readiness and best practice.

Progress Monitoring: A Regional School Readiness Summit evaluation will be done after the Summit is conducted.

Long Range Goal 5: Children in Head Start programs receive needed health care including: medical, dental and behavioral health prevention and treatment.

Short Term Objective A: Annually, increase the number and percent of children screened and receiving services for development, behavioral, or sensory concerns.

Process Goals:

1. Convene grantee working groups to examine PIR data to identify gaps in timely screenings by geography, subgroup of children/families, or other variables.
2. If gaps are found, identify necessary training, resources, or partnering actions needed to close the gap.
3. Work with community partners to identify barriers for parents to follow through with referrals.
4. Improve the process with community partners for those children that are referred to AzEIP to assure children are receiving services in a timely manner and that identification needed is timely.
5. Building on previous work, convene forums for AzEIP, Head Start and Early Head Start, and Local Education Agency partners to partner to improve service and outcomes of screening for development, behavioral, sensory concerns.
6. Convene a working group to review MOUs with Local Education Agencies and other partners for consistency and clarity of roles and responsibilities.
7. Based on the work of community forums and review of MOUs, improve or revise MOUs to ensure consistency and common understandings of roles and responsibilities.
8. Identify agencies in the community to provide behavioral services for those children that do not have AHCCCS or are underinsured.
9. Monitor data on completion of screenings on a quarterly basis for each program.
10. Stay aware of and coordinate with the common screening form identified by the Early Childhood Comprehensive System Grant.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start

Directors Association (AIHSDA), Regional Behavioral Health Authority, AHCCCS/EPSTD providers.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Increase the number of children screened within the required time.
2. Increase the number of children identified as needing a referral for behavioral health services receiving services within a timely manner.
3. Increase the number of children who receive the needed services that is identified in a timely manner.

Progress Monitoring: PIR data

Short Term Objective B: Annually, increase the number of children receiving a well-child exam within the first 90 days of entry of programs.

Process Goals:

1. Convene grantee working groups to examine PIR data to identify gaps in well-child visits by geography, subgroup of children/families or other variables.
2. If gaps are found, identify necessary training, resource or partnering actions needed to close the gap.
3. Strengthen relationships with community partners that provide medical services to Head Start and Early Head Start children for medical care.
4. Have AHSA Chair or Co-chair for Integrated Health Committee attend quarterly AHCCCS meetings with EPSTD coordinators.
5. Invite the various health insurance plan EPSTD coordinators to attend HSAC committee meetings.
6. Monitor data on completion of EPSTD well child's exam on a quarterly basis for each program.
7. Participate in the Interagency Coordinating Council for IDEA Part C.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA), AHCCCS/EPSTD providers, Arizona Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics.

Expected Outcome: Programs will report an increase in targeted EPSTD outcomes.

Progress Monitoring: PIR data.

Short Term Objective C: Annually, increase the number of children who receive a growth assessment within the required time.

Process Goals:

1. Convene grantee working groups to examine PIR data to identify gaps in timely growth assessments by geography, subgroup of children/families or other variables.

2. If gaps are found, identify necessary training, resource or partnering actions needed to close the gap.
3. Monitor data on completion of growth assessments on a quarterly basis for each program.
4. Health Managers from each program will identify those providers that are not completing growth assessments on EPSDT exams to AHCCCS insurance providers.
5. AHSA chair for committee will report to AHCCCS plans the concerns related to growth assessment.
6. AHSA will work with the Arizona Academy of Pediatrics to collect and share data for children enrolled in Head Start and Early Head Start programs related to growth assessments, BMI's and Nutrition Counseling.
7. AHSA will work with AHCCCS EPSDT health plans to collect and share data and promote communication with providers within the network.

Partners: Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA), AHCCCS/EPSDT coordinators, Arizona Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics.

Expected Outcome: Increase children who have a growth assessment at every well-child exam and will be referred to Primary Care Provider, WIC or to Head Start Registered Dietician or other community partner for education, as needed.

Progress Monitoring: PIR and partner program-specific data.

Short Term Objective D: Annually, increase the number of children who receive a dental exam in 90 days of enrollment.

Process Goals:

1. Convene grantee working groups to examine PIR data to identify gaps in preventative oral health care by geography, subgroup of children/families or other variables.
2. If gaps are found, identify necessary training, resource or partnering actions needed to close the gap.
3. Monitor data on completion of preventative oral health care on a quarterly basis for each program.
4. Convene a working group to identify the status of pediatric dentists and training for dentists to serve children.
5. An AHSA representative will attend the oral health coalitions in the state and have representation at other state activities related to oral health.
6. An AHSA representative will collect data and report to the AHCCCS EPSDT health plans on completed dental exams and dental treatment using PIR data.
7. Partner with *First Things First* to ensure understanding and coordination of Head Start and Early Head Start practice and fluoride varnish efforts.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start

Directors Association (AIHSDA), AHCCCS/EPSTD coordinators, Arizona Pediatric Dental Association, Community partners that provide oral health education and care to include Dignity Health, Maricopa County Oral Health, and various dental providers.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Increase children 3-5 years enrolled in Head Start who have a yearly dental exam.
2. Increase children 3-5 years enrolled in Head Start who receive oral health education.

Progress Monitoring: PIR data

Long Range Goal 6: Through effective and appropriate inclusionary practices, close the learning gap between typically developing children and children with special needs.

Short Term Objective A: Annually, improve the growth percentages (as demonstrated in Teaching Strategies GOLD) of children with special needs from the beginning of their Early Childhood Special Education services to completion.

Process Goals:

1. Assist in the update of the statewide inter-governmental agreement (IGA) between AzEIP and Early Head Start, then update Early Head Start local MOUs with AzEIP.
2. Increase awareness of changes in the statewide IGA with AzEIP and its implications for Early Head Start practice and collaboration.
3. Develop a statewide leadership team to support implementation of evidence-based strategies to support social/emotional development.
4. Hold a summit to engage families in special education/inclusion.
5. Work with partners to encourage families of children with special needs to enroll in Head Start and Early Head Start.
6. Convene grantee working groups to examine PIR data to identify gaps in serving children with special needs by geography, subgroup of children/families or other variables.
7. Create a working group to examine the extent and circumstances in Head Start and Early Head Start waivers for ten percent children with IEP/IFSP.
8. Coordinate with *First Things First* to monitor and support measurement and attainment of School Readiness Indicator number six.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA), AzEIP, Arizona Department of Education, LEAs and School Districts, Early Intervention Programs.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Increase the number and percentage of children with special needs served in Head Start and Early Head Start.

2. Decrease the gap between typically developing children and children with special needs as demonstrated on Teaching Strategies GOLD or other developmental assessment data.
3. Improve the growth percentages of children with special needs from the beginning of their Early Childhood Special Education services to completion to completion.

Progress Monitoring: PIR data; Data gathered through developmental assessment.

Short Term Objective B: Annually, increase the use of PIR and other Head Start and Early Head Start data sources to improve services and outcomes for children.

Process Goals:

1. Educate District partners on Head Start and Early Head Start data related to children with special needs.
2. Convene grantee working groups to examine PIR data (and compare to statewide data) to identify gaps in achievement for children with special needs by geography, subgroup of children/families or other variables.
3. Work with Read on Arizona MapLIT project to link Head Start and Early Head Start PIR data with other early literacy data.
4. Develop strategic goals for statewide and grantee use of PIR and other data sources for program improvement.
5. Keep AHSA aware of the State Systemic Improvement Plan Annual Report and progress in closing the gap between typically developing and children with special needs.

Partners identified to collaborate on this work: Arizona Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegates, Arizona Head Start Association (ASHA), Arizona Indian Head Start Directors Association (AIHSDA), AzEIP, Arizona Department of Education, LEAs and School Districts, Early Intervention Programs.

Expected Outcome: Increase usage of Teaching Strategies GOLD and other developmental assessment and PIR data to inform decision-making and continuous quality improvement in instructional practices and administrative decisions.

Progress Monitoring: HSCO Evaluation plan

Program Impacts

At the conclusion of the five-year grant period, it is anticipated that the HSCO will have contributed to building a stronger ECE system in Arizona and stronger high-quality early learning programs for all children, families, and communities of Arizona. A stronger system built on the principles of high-quality will benefit all, including those most affected by vulnerabilities.

The Arizona HSCO Director will continue to meet regularly with state agency representatives from each of the key early childhood programs housed within state agencies to ensure Head Start and Early Head Start is well-represented in state level decision- and commitment-making, and action-taking. As Arizona's ECE community continues to focus on systems building work, the HSCO will continue to actively look for ways to lend knowledge and expertise of the Head Start framework to efforts. A key opportunity to make lasting impact is in the support of the Early Head Start Child Care partnerships. The HSCO will look for intentional ways to share information with child care providers and administrators on professional development opportunities available, forums, meetings, and other events for the early childhood community.

Additionally, the work of Arizona's HSCO over the next five years should help improve the collection, analysis, and use of data in Head Start and Early Head Start programs to inform program decision-making that ultimately helps improve child outcomes. As Head Start and Early Head Start staff are encouraged and given opportunities supported by Arizona's HSCO to participate in Arizona's Early Childhood Workforce Registry there should be a noticeable sense of support to increase access to high quality workforce and career development for all staff. This includes participation in Arizona's Tiered Quality Rating Improvement System, *Quality First*.

Each of the long range goals, process goals, and short term objectives proposed in this plan contributes to the overarching goals of school-readiness and supporting parent, family, and community engagement. By contributing to the greater work of systems building and state-level participation in cross-agency coordination and collaboration, the HSCO joins with its partners in ensuring all of Arizona's children are ready for school at kindergarten entry. Additionally, the HSCO has the opportunity to convene partners to support Arizona's Head Start and Early Head Start teachers in their understanding of school-readiness and the effective

instructional strategies they need to support all children achieve academically. Simultaneously, LEAs and child care partners with Head Start will have opportunities to benefit from Head Start's information, resources, and expertise on providing comprehensive services and establishing strong family partnerships.

During this grant period Arizona's early childhood community will also be working on meeting the expectations of the Preschool Development Grant and the reauthorized Child Care Development Block Grant. Details of Arizona's Preschool Development Grant can be found on the ADE website at www.azed.gov/earlychildhood and specifics about the Child Care Development Block Grant can be found at www.acf.hhs.gov/programs. This signals a great opportunity for the HSCO to align its efforts with those of many partners to do the work of ensuring children are ready for school at kindergarten entry, while improving family and community engagement.

Sub-Section B: Collaboration Service Delivery

Partnering with State child care systems, emphasizing EHS-CC Partnerships.

In 2015, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services awarded a total of \$13.3 million to Arizona to support Early Head Start-Child Care partnerships. According to the website for the Office of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), these grants will allow new or existing Early Head Start programs to partner with local child care centers and family child care providers serving infants and toddlers from low-income families. In Arizona, approximately 1,850 children are currently being served by the seven EHS grantees with child care partnerships.

ACF will support states and communities as they expand high quality early learning opportunities to infants and toddlers through EHS-CC Partnerships. The HSCO and AHSA will be

looking for ways to bring this information to EHS-CC grantees and staff so as to improve the capacity for providing high quality infant and toddler care. Currently, there are no Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) in place between Early Head Start and Child Care partners in Arizona. Prior to the awards of the EHS-CC Partnership grants, there was a meeting between the Bureau Chief of Child Care Licensing at the Arizona Department of Health Services and Early Head Start grantees to discuss formulating MOUs. It is a goal of the HSCO to convene meetings with these partners and ADE to facilitate the process to establish MOUs that provide each partner with a clear scope of expectations for each side.

Additionally, Arizona's Child Care Development Fund State Plan, which can be found at www.azdes.gov, includes targeting quality funds for infants and toddlers in the following ways:

- Provider quality incentive payments,
- Recruiting small family child care homes,
- Child Care Resource and Referral System, including a Provider Registry for unregulated Child Care Provider training,
- Child Care for children residing in residential homeless/domestic violence shelters, and
- Support of Licensing and monitoring activities.

In its Annual Report, First Things First (FTF) reported on its partnership with DES last year. Due to state budget cuts, Arizona's ability to draw down about \$37 million per year in federal child care funds was jeopardized. For the past five years, FTF has partnered with the DES—through an MOU—to count \$34 million per year in FTF expenditures related to improving the quality of and access to preschool and child care as the state's match for the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). CCDF funds help ensure low-income working families have access to

safe, reliable child care. Since this MOU has been in place, DES has been able to draw down \$190 million in federal child care funds. This partnership has ensured tens of thousands of children have access to early learning opportunities because many children access preschool and kindergarten through their child care providers. In addition, this collaboration has enhanced child safety because children are not left to be cared for in unsafe environments and foster families do not face added financial burdens for young children in their care.

Work with State efforts to collect data regarding early childhood programs and child

Outcomes.

In Arizona, an extraordinary effort has been made to collect statewide data in early care and education. In February 2015, a universal ongoing progress monitoring tool—Teaching Strategies GOLD (TSG), was approved by Arizona’s State Board of Education. This marked the continued use of the tool by early childhood providers in Arizona, including Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Currently, there are 5 Head Start grantees with a combined 193 sites utilizing Teaching Strategies under the license of ADE and participating in this state data collection initiative. This year, there are 9,027 active portfolios for students and an astounding 16,558 archived portfolios!

Additionally, in October 2014, Arizona wrote an application for the Preschool Development Grant and was awarded the grant in January 2015. In the grant application, Arizona proposed to use designated funds to improve systems linkages between TSG and the State’s Longitudinal Data System, *AZDash*. The proposal is to link the preschool data captured in TSG with K-12 data in *AZDash*. It is important to ADE and the HSCO to have this data linked so communities have a better idea of what is truly happening with their youngest learners and what effect high quality early learning settings may be having on the academic trajectories of

these children. Details of the plan can be found in the Preschool Development Grant application at <http://www.azed.gov/early-childhood/preschool-development-grant/>. The HSCO will disseminate information about *AZDash* once the link to TSG has been completed, and will convene a meeting to introduce the system to the AHSA Executive Council.

Additionally, Arizona continues to move ahead in the work of K-3 formative assessment. Arizona remains part of the North Carolina Consortium on Kindergarten Entrance Assessment. Kindergarten teachers completed cognitive labs for the Kindergarten assessment tool last spring and this fall, a pilot group of 15 teachers is actually working with the tool and providing feedback to SRI, Arizona's research partner in this work.

Another state effort to collect data regarding early childhood programs and child outcomes is *MapLIT*, a mapping tool built by *Read On Arizona* to help improve community decision-making around early childhood literacy. In their 10-year strategic plan, found on their website at <http://readonarizona.org/about-us/>, *Read On Arizona* identified lack of information regarding critical literacy components as a barrier to effective solutions being formulated. In the 2014 Collaboration Survey, as reported on in the 2015 Needs Assessment, an astounding total of 50% of respondents found it *somewhat difficult, difficult, or extremely difficult* to obtain information and data for community assessment and planning. As a result, the HSCO Director collaborated with *Read On Arizona* to include Head Start locations included in the mapping system. This, as well as the inclusion of Head Start and Early Head Start TSG data in *AZDash*, will increase data sources for community planning and data-based decision-making.

Support for the expansion and access of high quality workforce and career development opportunities for staff.

According to the HSCO's Needs Assessment, 90% of the respondents in the Collaboration survey indicated they had challenges recruiting qualified staff. The dire need for Head Start and Early Head Start qualified staff is amplified by the teacher shortage in all of Arizona. According to one source, there were approximately 1,000 teacher vacancies before the current school year began (Cochran, 2015). Arizona's early childhood community has been working diligently on addressing not just the recruitment needs of its workforce, but also on the establishment of an early care and education professional development system.

The Arizona Early Childhood Career and Professional Development Network (Network) is an integrated early childhood professional development system for all Arizona early childhood professionals working with and on behalf of young children. It launched in October 2015. One component of the Network is the Professional Development website, www.azregistry.org, which provides the early childhood workforce access to a variety of professional development resources including competencies and standards, including those necessary for working with or on behalf of infants and toddlers; education pathways and opportunities; career pathways; employment opportunities; and the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry.

In tandem with the Network, the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry went live in October 2015. The Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry (Registry) is a web-based system that enables early childhood professionals and those interested in a career in early education to find and register for professional development opportunities and also to keep a record of their experience, education, professional development and credentials in a central location. It is also used to manage application and enrollment in First Things First College Scholarships for Early Childhood Professionals. Since joining the Registry is voluntary, Head Start and Early Head Start staff are encouraged to participate in this part of the Network. Head

Start and Early Head Start staff can participate by creating individual profiles to track their own professional development, and as instructors to provide professional development to their colleagues. Goals have been set for the HSCO and AHSA to convene joint meetings to provide information to Head Start and Early Head Start staff on the Network and Registry.

In the process of the establishing of the Network and Registry, the HSCO Director, as well as key personnel of ADE, participated in working groups to ensure both would be appropriate for Head Start and Early Head Start participation and beneficial to Head Start and Early Head Start staff development. One subgroup was focused on the area of credentials and articulation. Through the work of the subgroup, several holes in the credentialing and articulation work became evident to the HSCO Director. One area that is sorely lacking is Arizona's state credentials and degrees that relate to infants and toddlers. Currently the extent of credentialing in infants and toddlers is limited to one program. According to www.study.com, Rio Salado College, an Arizona community college, offers a certificate of completion in infant toddler development. The other state universities and community colleges may offer coursework that includes infants and toddlers, but it does not lead to a credential in infants and toddlers. Additionally, the HSCO Director discovered the lack of articulation agreements between most community colleges and universities. There are two community colleges with articulation agreements to one university, but there are no consistent, statewide agreements, and the Child Development Associate credential is accepted by the community colleges that awarded them.

Collaboration with QRIS.

On its website, www.qualityfirstaz.org, Arizona's tiered quality rating improvement system (TQRIS), *Quality First*, is defined as a signature program of FTF that, "partners with

regulated early childhood providers to make quality improvements that research proves help children birth to 5 thrive, such as education for teachers to expand their expertise in working with young children. It also supports parents with information about what to look for in quality early childhood programs that goes beyond health and safety to include a nurturing environment that supports their child's learning." *Quality First* partners with child care and preschool programs across Arizona to improve the quality of early learning they provide for kids birth to 5, including Head Start and Early Head Start settings.

Quality First has established a statewide standard of quality for early care and education programs and funds quality improvements that research proves help children thrive. This includes training for teachers to expand their skills in working with young children and coaching to help programs provide learning environments that nurture the emotional, social, language and cognitive development of every child.

For all participants, including Head Start and Early Head Start, participation in *Quality First* starts with an initial program assessment which will provide a clear picture of the program, both strengths and opportunities for growth. A highly-trained *Quality First* assessor will visit the program to observe classrooms and interview teachers. The assessor will then rate various aspects of the program, including the environment, curriculum, teacher-child interactions and more, using valid and reliable assessment tools. These scores are used to determine a site's initial *Quality First* Star Rating. The rating system is on a five-star scale, 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest.

According to information collected from FTF for the 2015 HSCO Needs Assessment, (Appendix B), there are 53 Head Start grantees—36 regional and 17 tribal—participating in *Quality First*. Of the Head Start grantees, 24 are 2-star sites; 7 are 3-star sites; 4 are 4-star sites;

and 1 5-star site. *Quality First* is a voluntary program and, unfortunately, space is limited. FTF does not have the capacity to enroll every provider in the state that wants to participate. There are currently 14 Head Start programs on the *Quality First* waiting list.

Work with state school systems to ensure continuity between Head Start and Kindergarten Entrance Assessment (KEA).

The Education Goal in Arizona works on linking the Birth to Five communities with the K-12 Education System. In particular, the Head Start State Collaboration Director works to educate the K-12 Education system about Head Start and other preschool programs that feed into their K-3 programs and help identify them as essential partners in preventing third grade retention. ADE has been working with Local Education Agencies to work with local Head Start Programs to update and maintain usable Memorandums of Understanding that outline the relationships between Head Start and the Local Education Agencies. In past years AzEIP, ADE, and Head Start have conducted regional forums to identify and streamline services specifically around early childhood special education and transition. This series of forums were conducted early in the five year grant cycle and then put on hold while AzEIP began to implement their new service methodology. These forums are typically facilitated by a Head Start Representative, as well as a representative from Arizona's Early Intervention Program (AzEIP) and the State 619 Coordinator. The Head Start Advisory group recommended that these partners again form a planning group to broaden the scope of the guidance to include in local MOUs.

A large part of ADE's work to encourage continuity of care between Head Start and preschools to the K-3 system has been significant work around kindergarten transitions. In 2015, ADE and the HSCO led a kindergarten transition summit that brought together LEAs and their Head Start partners to get information on effective practices around kindergarten

transition plans. In 2016, ADE and HSCO propose to reconvene a kindergarten transition summit to which past participants will be invited to attend. The purpose of this summit would be to dialogue about the challenges teams may have encountered while trying to formulate or better implement their kindergarten transition plans. Additionally, it will be an opportunity for peer-to-peer coaching around best practices and lessons learned.

In addition to the kindergarten transition summit, Arizona is moving forward with the work of identifying a kindergarten developmental inventory and the HSCO Director continues to participate in the work to ensure information regarding the development of the tool is shared with Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

Subsection C: Organizational and Management Structures, and Ongoing Oversight

Arizona will meet the Head Start Collaboration requirements established in Section 642B of the Head Start act by designating Nicol Russell as the State Director of Head Start Collaboration. Ms. Russell is the Deputy Associate Superintendent (DAS) of Early Childhood Education at the Arizona Department of Education and thus, in a position with sufficient authority and access to ensure that the collaboration within the state is effective and involves a range of state agencies and appropriate linkages to the Governor's office. An organizational chart is provided in Appendix D. One of the executive officers of the Arizona Head Start Association was part of the panel that reviewed the job description and criteria of the DAS for Early Childhood, and interviewed Ms. Russell when she applied for the position as the DAS for Early Childhood, and was directly involved in her selection (See Appendix E).

The internal process for the Head Start State Collaboration Office utilizes three groups for guidance, decision making, and support. First is the HSCO Advisory Group, which is a small group of advisors who give direct guidance and play key roles in ensuring Head Start is well

represented as part of the systems building efforts. This group meets on a regular and as-needed basis. A list of the Advisory Group is available in the 2015 Needs Assessment (See Appendix B). Secondly, a larger group of stakeholders meets on a bi-annual or annual basis. This group is made up of both the Advisory Group and a wider group of stakeholders and used for the purposes of vetting materials and ensuring that the work of the HSCO is aligned with other early childhood efforts. A list of the Stakeholders Group may be found in the 2015 Needs Assessment (See Appendix B). Lastly, the other key group of informants to the HSCO is the Executive Council for the AHSA, which includes the chairs of the AHSA standing committees. The HSCO Director meets with this group on a monthly basis. A list of the current Executive Council and Committee Chairs is available in the 2015 Needs Assessment (See Appendix B).

The HSCO continues to strive to build relationships with the Tribal Head Start Collaboration Director, local tribal E/Head Start and the tribal communities. The HSCO participates in the Intertribal Council Early Childhood Working Group that includes tribal Head Start and Early Head Start, Child Care, and other tribal stakeholders. The HSCO Director participates in and reports out to the Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona Early Childhood Work group, which meets quarterly to facilitate enhanced communication between tribal early childhood agencies (child care and Head Start) and state and federal agencies and local resources. Also, Tribal Head Start Programs are invited to regional opportunities for meetings and technical assistance.

To accomplish the ambitious, yet achievable goals of the HSCO, the HSCO Director plans to continue much of the work started in the previous grant period, with an emphasis on sustaining the accomplishments of systems building work. The HSCO Director will remain actively engaged in state level cross-agency work groups, leadership teams, professional

development opportunities, and governing boards, when appropriate. Additionally, the HSCO Director will utilize key staff to collaborate with the AHSA to coordinate HSCO activities for Head Start and Early Head Start personnel. The HSCO Director will also work closely with the Fiscal Specialist for ADE to ensure the HSCO budget is being adhered to and maintained with fidelity.

Budget Narrative

The Arizona Head Start State Collaboration budget is made up of two parts, the \$175,000 grant from the Office of Head Start and an additional \$43,750 in match funds.

Line Item Information

Personnel: \$68,274.00 of the federal share portion will be used to support a partial FTE for the Head Start Collaboration Director. \$51,334.00 will be used to for .8 FTE and an additional \$16,940.00 is budgeted for Fringe Benefits. The Fringe Benefits are calculated at 33% of the Head Start FTE salary allotment. The remaining .2 FTE of the Head Start Director Collaboration Director will come from other Federal Funds.

The personnel supporting the Head Start Collaboration Program are distributed between four positions: Deputy Associate Superintendent, Director of Early Childhood, Fiscal and Compliance Program Specialist, and Project Specialist. Personnel costs for each position are allocated based on the estimated time and effort each individual spends on the Head Start Collaboration Program and their other assigned ADE responsibilities. The calculation is as follows:

Position	Funding Source	FTE %	Amount Allocated
DAS	Head Start	30	\$24,000
DAS	IDEA 619 - Admin	25	\$20,000

DAS	IDEA 619- Set Aside	20	\$16,000
DAS	Preschool Development Grant	25	\$20,000

Position	Funding Source	FTE %	Amount Allocated
Education Program Director	Head Start	30	\$18,624
Education Program Director	IDEA 619 - Admin	10	\$6,208
Education Program Director	IDEA 619- Set Aside	20	\$12,416
Education Program Director	Preschool Development Grant	25	\$15,520
Education Program Director	FTF- Kindergarten Transitions	15	\$9,312

Position	Funding Source	FTE %	Amount Allocated
Fiscal and Compliance Program Specialist	Head Start	5	\$2,500
Fiscal and Compliance Program Specialist	IDEA 619 - Admin	25	\$12,500
Fiscal and Compliance Program Specialist	IDEA 619- Set Aside	43	\$21,500
Fiscal and Compliance Program Specialist	Preschool Development Grant	20	\$10,000
Fiscal and Compliance Program Specialist	FTF- Kindergarten Transitions	7	\$3,500

Position	Funding Source	FTE %	Amount Allocated
Program Project Specialist	Head Start	15	\$5,250
Program Project Specialist	IDEA 619 - Admin	25	\$8,750
Program Project Specialist	IDEA 619- Set Aside	56	\$19,600
Program Project Specialist	Preschool Development Grant	4	\$1,400

The fringe benefits have the same cost allocation as the salaries.

Contracted services

A total of \$82,000.00 has been budgeted for contracted services. These contracted funds will directly support the work of the office through the Arizona Head Start Association and Jeanette Shea & Associates. The majority of the budget (\$67,000) has been allotted to the Head Start Association. Through the utilization of the committee and executive governance structure collaborative work is conducted on behalf of the collaboration office. Examples of this work include:

- Creation of the AZ Head Start Annual report and 2017 Fact Sheet.
- Develop and provide informational newsletter distributed to collaborating partners about issues, opportunities, and systems building updates to further the building of an ECE profession and relationships between Head Start and other ECE entities.
- Conduct Parent Education Institute Expansion planning to address health issues, kindergarten transitions, financial literacy, and language development activities for an event to be conducted by February 2017.

- Participate in Regional Collaborative Meetings between Head Start, AzEIP, and Local Education Agencies.

\$15,000 dollars will be used to contract with Jeanette Shea & Associates to support the meeting and plan of both the Head Start Stakeholders Group and the advisory Group. Examples of this work include:

1. Provide an overview of Head Start programs from PIR data.
2. Provide a profile of Arizona and its communities from census and other existent data sources.
3. Support the development of indicators to guide the strategic planning process.
4. Revise a grantee survey of collaboration.
5. Compile items 1-4 into a needs assessment report.
6. Assist in preparing materials from the needs assessment process for review by key stakeholders.
7. Assist in preparing materials from the needs assessment process to support strategic planning.
8. Create a plan for engagement and service of boys and men and expulsion from early education programming

Other Operating Costs

These costs are established charged per FTE for the Arizona Department of Education. Risk Management is budgeted for \$276.00 based on last year's costs. An annual Internal Services Data is budgeted at 1385.00 x .8 FTE which is \$1,108.00. Yearly internal and external telecommunications is budgeted at \$600.00. Printing costs are estimated at \$250.00 per FTE with an annual estimated cost of \$200.00 per the .8 FTE. Office Supplies are estimated at \$500.

Rent is currently budgeted for \$398.00 monthly with an annual cost of approximately \$4,766.00 this line item includes an annual postage cost of \$50. Lastly \$2,807 will be used to conduct regional forums that are planned for June 2016 to bring together LEAs, Head Start, and AzEIP to support effective transitions.

Indirect Costs

The Arizona Department of Education has an indirect cost rate of 10.1% which is \$9,393 of the annual federal HSCO budget.

GAN AWARD	Admin	Contractual	Indirect Cost
\$175,000	\$93,000	\$82,000	\$93,000 X 10.1% = \$9,393

Travel

The HSCO plans to participate in the following national meetings and conferences:

Travel to Region IX

Airline Travel: \$392.00

Per Diem: \$64.00 per day (x3) = \$192.00

Hotel: \$250.00 per night (x3) = \$750.00

Incidental costs (taxi, tips, and fees): \$175.00

Total trip: \$1,509.00

Travel to the 2016 National Association of Elementary School Principals Conference

Airline Travel: \$550.00

Per Diem: \$59.00 (x4) per day = \$236.00

Hotel: \$200.00 per night (x3) = \$600

Registration: \$415.00

Incidental costs (taxi, tips, and fees): \$150.00

Total trip: \$1,951.00

Travel to the NAEYC PDI

Airline Travel: \$489.00

Per Diem: \$59.00 per day (x3) = \$177.00

Hotel: \$250.00 per night (x3) = \$750.00

Incidental costs (taxi, tips, and fees): \$150

Total trip: \$1,566

Match Share Portion

A \$43,750.00 match is required for Arizona's Head Start State Collaboration Office. Through an agreement with the Department of Economic Security, \$25,000 will be given to ADE to support the work of the HSCO. The additional match requirement will be obtained through \$18,750.00 in-kind donation from The Virginia Piper Foundation. \$15,000 of the DES direct-match will be used to support the work of the HSCO through the Head Start Association and \$10,000 will be used in contracted support for Jeanette Shea & Associates. A detailed description of services was previously outlined under contracted services.

The \$18,750.00 in-kind donation from the Virginia Piper Foundation is in the form of a State Literacy Director (See Appendix F).

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<http://readonarizona.org/about-us/>

www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ecd/early-learning/ehs-cc-partnerships/grant-awardees

www.acf.hhs.gov/programs

www.azdes.gov

www.azed.gov/early-childhood/preschool-development-grant/

www.azgovernor.gov

www.azregistry.org

www.childcareaware.org

www.qualityfirstaz.org

Arizona School Readiness Indicators

The following indicators are designed to guide and measure progress in building an effective early childhood system in Arizona. Taken collectively, they provide a comprehensive picture of how our state is preparing its youngest children for success in kindergarten and beyond.



CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Well-Child Visits

% of Arizona children receiving at least six well-child visits within the first 15 months of life

2010: 64% 2020 Goal: 80%

Healthy Weight

% of Arizona children age 2-4 with body mass index (BMI) in healthy weight range

2010: 65% 2020 Goal: 75%

Dental Health

% of Arizona children age 5 with untreated tooth decay

2007: 35% 2020 Goal: 32% or less



FAMILY SUPPORT & LITERACY

Confident Families

% of Arizona families report they are competent and confident about their ability to support their child's safety, health and well being

2012: 42% 2020 Goal: 52%



CHILD DEVELOPMENT & EARLY LEARNING

School Readiness

Benchmark related to developmental domains of social-emotional, language and literacy, cognitive, and motor and physical to be recommended in FY17 based on baseline data from Arizona kindergarten developmental inventory

Quality Early Education

% of Arizona children enrolled in an early care and education program with a Quality First rating of 3-5 stars

2013: 9% 2020 Goal: 29%

Quality Early Education – Special Needs

% of Arizona children with special needs/rights enrolled in an inclusive early care and education program with a Quality First rating of 3-5 stars

2013: 53% 2020 Goal: 73%

Affordability of Quality Early Education

Benchmark related to Arizona families that spend no more than 10% of the regional median family income on quality early care and education programs to be recommended in FY16

Developmental Delays Identified in Kindergarten

Benchmark related to early screening and intervention for children with developmental delays to be recommended in FY16

Transition from Preschool Special Education to Kindergarten

% of Arizona children exiting preschool special education enrolled in kindergarten regular education

2010: 22% 2020 Goal: 30%

Arizona Head Start State Collaboration Office

2015 Needs Assessment



**Nicol Russell, Director
Arizona Head Start State Collaboration Office
Arizona Department of Education**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) implemented a comprehensive approach to updating the HSSCO Needs Assessment and the Five-Year Strategic Plan by involving a broad range of stakeholders in the assessment as well as the strategic planning process. The process has been a collaborative effort and one that has been inclusive of many individuals and organizations representing Head Start and their partnering agencies. My appreciation for the efforts and many contributions of individuals and organizations is extended to:

- ★ The HSSCO Advisory Committee.
- ★ The Arizona Head Start Association Executive Director.
- ★ The Head Start Grantees and Delegate Agencies, Arizona State Agencies, and Community Partners that participated in surveys and the strategic planning process.

Sincerely,

Nicol Russell

Nicol Russell
Director
Arizona Head Start State Collaboration Office
Arizona Department of Education

OVERVIEW OF ARIZONA HEAD START PROGRAMS

The Head Start program in Arizona is administered through eight grantees with ten delegates serving Arizona's fifteen counties, one grantee serving the migrant and seasonal farm worker population Statewide, and thirteen grantees serving tribal communities.

During Head Start Program Year 2014-2015, 21,827 children participated in Early Head Start or Head Start Services throughout the State of Arizona. Of these children, 17,031 were served by the grantees serving the 15 Arizona counties, 840 children were served by the Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Program administered by Chicano's por la Causa, and 3,956 were served by Arizona Tribal Programs.¹

The Grantees serving the 15 Counties are:

- Northern Arizona Council of Governments (NACOG) serving Apache, Coconino, Navajo and Yavapai Counties
- Child Parent Centers, Inc. (CPC) serving Cochise, Graham, Greenlee, Pima, and Santa Cruz Counties
- Pinal Gila Community Child Services, Inc. (PGCCS) serving Pinal and Gila Counties
- Western Arizona Council of Governments (WACOG) serving La Paz, Mohave, and Yuma Counties
- City of Phoenix Education Division serving all of the City of Phoenix except portions served by Southwest Human Development and Crisis Nursery
- Maricopa County Head Start Zero – Five Program serving all of Maricopa County except portions served by the City of Phoenix, Southwest Human Development and Crisis Nursery
- Southwest Human Development (SWHD) Head Start serving five school districts in the central Phoenix and Paradise Valley areas
- Crisis Nursery serving the zip codes 85006 and 85008.



Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Services are provided by Chicanos por la Causa Early Childhood Development (CPLC) statewide with primary sites in Pinal, Yuma, and Maricopa Counties.

Tribal Head Start programs are offered by 13 of Arizona's Tribes. Note: Tribal Head Start Programs have not been included in this Needs Assessment.

- Cocopah Head Start (Somerton, AZ)
- Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT) Head Start (Parker, AZ)
- Gila River Indian Community (GRIC) Head Start (Sacaton, AZ)
- Havasupai Head Start (Supai, AZ)
- Hopi Head Start (Kykotsmovi, AZ)
- Hualapai Head Start (Peach Springs, AZ)
- Navajo Nation Head Start (Window Rock, AZ)
- Pascua Yaqui Head Start (Tucson, AZ)
- Quechan Head Start (Yuma, AZ)
- Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community (SRPMIC) Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC) (Scottsdale, AZ)
- San Carlos Apache Tribe (SCAT) Head Start Program (San Carlos, AZ)

¹ Head Start Program Information Report for 2015, Cumulative Enrollment; Arizona Head Start PIR report accessed November 4, 2015.

- Tohono O'odham Head Start (Sells, AZ)
- White Mountain Apache Tribe (WMAT) Head Start Program (Whiteriver, AZ)

Children and Pregnant Women Served

Of the 21,827 children served 3,188 received Early Head Start Services, 17,799 received Head Start services, and 840 received migrant and seasonal Head Start. Also, 171 pregnant women received services for a total of 21,998 persons served.

2015 Head Start Children Served and Pregnant Women Served

Head Start Grantee	Early Head Start	Pregnant Women	Head Start	Total
Grantees in the 15 Counties	2,867	152	14,164	17,183
Migrant and Seasonal Program – CPLC	326	0	514	840
Tribal Program Total	321	19	3,635	3,975
Total Children and Pregnant Women Served	3,514	171	18,313	21,988

Source: Head Start Program Information Report for 2015, Cumulative Enrollment; Arizona Head Start PIR report accessed November 4, 2015.

2015 Head Start Children Served By Age

Head Start Grantee	< 1 Yr	1 Yr	2 Yr	3 Yr	4 Yr	5 Yr +	Total
Tribal Head Start Programs	48	104	347	1,399	1,994	64	3,956
Migrant Seasonal Head Start	80	102	144	222	292	0	840
Grantees in the 15 Counties Total	735	1,005	1,157	4,941	9,150	43	17,031
Total Children/Percentage by Age	863 4%	1,211 6%	1,648 8%	6,562 30%	11,436 52%	107 0%	21,827

Source: Head Start Program Information Report for 2015, Cumulative Enrollment; Arizona Head Start PIR report accessed November 4, 2015.

Race and Ethnicity

Sixty-five percent of the children served are identified as White with children who are American Indian / Alaskan Native representing 21% the Head Start/Early Head Start population. Children who are identified as Black represent 5% of the population and children identified as Multi-Racial represent 4% of the population. The ethnicity of the majority of children served is identified as Hispanic or Latino Origin (60%).

Head Start Grantee	Am Indian Alaska Native	Asian	Black African Am	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	White	Multi Race	Other	Un-specified
Grantees in the 15 Counties Head Start and Early Head Start	794	203	1,156	408	13,468	861	154	139
Migrant Seasonal Head Start	0	1	0	0	833	6	0	0
Tribal Head Start Programs	3,844	1	1	5	31	39	54	0
Total:	4,638 21%	205 1%	1,157 5%	413 2%	14,332 65%	906 4%	208 1%	139 1%

Source: Head Start Program Information Report for 2015, Cumulative Enrollment; Arizona Head Start PIR report accessed November 4, 2015.

2013-2014 Children Served By Ethnicity

Head Start Grantee	Hispanic or Latino Origin	Non-Hispanic or Latino
Grantees in the 15 Counties	12,125	5,058
Tribal Head Start Programs	202	3,773
Migrant Seasonal Head Start	839	1
Total	13,166 60%	8,832 40%

Source: Head Start Program Information Report for 2015, Cumulative Enrollment; Arizona Head Start PIR report accessed November 4, 2015.

Type of Eligibility

The majority (80%) of children and pregnant women are income eligible. Children and families receiving Public Assistance, Foster Children and Children Experiencing Homelessness represent 12% of the EHS/HS population.

2013-2014 Children and Pregnant Women Served By Eligibility

Type	Balance of State	Tribal	MSHS	Total
Income Eligibility	14,606	2,208	777	17,591 (80%)
Receipt of Public Assistance	799	624	9	1,432 (6.5%)
Foster Children	281	162	2	445 (2%)
Homeless Children	499	266	4	769 (3.5%)
Over Income	897	715	48	1,660 (7.5%)
Income between 100% and 130% of Poverty	101	0	0	101 (.5%)

Source: Head Start Program Information Report for 2015, Cumulative Enrollment; Arizona Head Start PIR report accessed November 4, 2015.

ARIZONA PROFILE

Arizona Population

The State of Arizona was home to about 6.5 million people in a five-year estimate for 2013. Almost seven percent of the population was under the age of five (446,556) ²

Arizona has 58 people per square mile; however, 75 percent of the population lives in urban areas, where the population density is 407 people per square mile. Twenty-two percent of Arizona residents live in rural areas, where the density is five people per square mile, and two percent live in areas that are considered to be frontier, in which there are only 3.6 people per square mile. ³



From 2003 to 2013, the population of Arizona grew from 5.6 million to 6.5 million people. From 2003 to 2006, the growth rate was between a three and four percent increase per year. With the recession in 2008 – and Arizona particularly hard hit – population growth slowed and actually decreased about three percent from 2009 to 2010. Growth resumed from 2010 through 2013 at a rate of about one percent per year.⁴ US Census estimates of the Arizona population for 2014 show continued growth to 6.73 million.⁵

² 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates: Sex and Age. (n.d.). *US Census*. Retrieved October 13, 2015, from <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>.

³ Frontier Special Area (SArea)-STATISTICAL PROFILE – 2014. (February 26 2015). *Arizona Department of Health Services- Bureau of Health Systems Development*. Retrieved October 13, 2015, from <http://www.azdhs.gov/hsd/data/documents/reports/frontier.pdf>

⁴ Arizona Vital Statistics - Population Denominators. (November, 2014). *Arizona Department of Health Services*. Retrieved October 13, 2015, from <http://www.azdhs.gov/plan/menu/info/pop/index.php?pg=2010>

⁵ US Census. (n.d.) Arizona Quickfacts. Retrieved October 13, 2015 from <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/04000.html>.

Family Facts by County

	Total Population*	Households **	Households with Children under age six **	Children Under Age Five* (Percent of Population)	Median Income for families with children Under 18**** Couples/single mother	Percent of children 0-5 in Poverty (100% FPL)***
Arizona	6,479,703	2,380,990	384,441	447,100 (7%)	\$72,689/\$26,079	28%
COUNTY						
Apache County	71,978	22,771	4,729	5,902 (8%)	\$51,832/\$24,087	53%
Cochise County	131,038	50,865	7,272	8,386 (6%)	\$67,260/\$27,596	28%
Coconino County	134,795	46,711	7,474	8,762 (6.5%)	\$80,688/\$24,961	33%
Gila County	53,335	22,000	2,488	3,093 (6%)	\$58,646/\$21,516	39%
Graham County	37,168	11,120	2,448	3,085 (8%)	\$68,137/\$18,859	28%
Greenlee County	8,679	3,188	566	686 (8%)	\$62,443/\$27,105	16%
La Paz County	20,408	9,198	822	959 (5%)	\$40,652/\$25,930	36%
Maricopa County	3,889,161	1,411,583	238,955	280,020 (7%)	\$78,433/\$28,166	26.5%
Mohave County	201,680	82,539	8,981	10,487 (5%)	\$57,117/\$20,489	39%
Navajo County	107,326	35,658	7,011	8,371 (8%)	\$54,420/\$17,739	49%
Pima County	986,891	388,660	53,862	61,187 (6%)	\$71,033/\$23,574	30%
Pinal County	379,128	125,590	24,750	28,055 (7%)	\$65,680/\$24,699	22%
Santa Cruz County	47,122	15,437	3,231	3,628 (8%)	\$54,224/\$19,469	34%
Yavapai County	211,968	90,903	8,854	9,963 (5%)	\$62,790/\$24,414	26%
Yuma County	199,026	64,767	12,998	15,126 (8%)	\$52,635/\$21,384	28%

Source: *American Community Survey 2009-2013 5-Year Estimates.⁶ **U.S. Census 2010.⁷ ***American Community Survey 2009-2013 5-Year Estimates.⁸

Children Under 5

Based on the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey estimate for 2009-2013, there were 447,100 children under the age of five in Arizona. Children under five are seven percent of the overall Arizona population and Arizona counties range from five percent to eight percent of their population under the age of five. Based on 2010 Census data these children resided in 384,441 households, that was about 16% of the households in Arizona. Graham County has the highest percentage of households with children under six with 22% and La Paz County is lowest at 9%.

Poverty Rates

In 2009-2013 estimates, twenty-eight percent of all of Arizona's children under six are in poverty; this is two percent higher than 2007-2011 census estimates of twenty-six percent. This rate varies by county with seven counties (Apache, Coconino, Gila, Santa Cruz, La Paz, Mohave and Navajo) all having rates of over one-third (33%).

Median Income

In 2009-2013 estimates, Arizona's median income for families with children under 18 was \$72,689 for a two-income family. However, for a household headed by a single mother, that figure was \$26,079. Again, this figure varies widely across the state, with higher median incomes in Coconino, Maricopa, and Pima counties. The counties with the lowest median income for female-headed households were Santa Cruz, Graham, and Navajo counties.

Race and Ethnicity

The racial and ethnic makeup of the state of Arizona is different than the nation. In 2013, the proportion of the population that is Hispanic in Arizona was almost twice that of the nation (30.5 percent compared to 17 percent nationally). In addition to having a higher proportion of Hispanics, Arizona's population also differs from the nation in that there is a smaller proportion of African Americans (5 percent compared to 13 percent nationally) and a higher proportion of Native Americans (5 percent compared to 1 percent in the nation).⁹

Race and ethnicity are particularly diverse in Arizona for young children. As with the overall population in Arizona, there has been a decline in the rate of births since 2008. The number of births to Arizona residents peaked in 2007 at 102,687 births, and declined until 2012. In 2011, the number of births declined to 85,190, a 17 percent decrease from the high point in 2007.¹⁰ There was also a pattern during

⁶ 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates: Sex and Age. (n.d.). *US Census*. Retrieved October 14, 2015, from http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_13_5YR_S0101&prodType=table

⁷ 2010 U.S. Census. Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics. (n.d.) U.S. Census. Retrieved October 13, 2015, from http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=DEC_10_SF1_SF1DP1&prodType=table

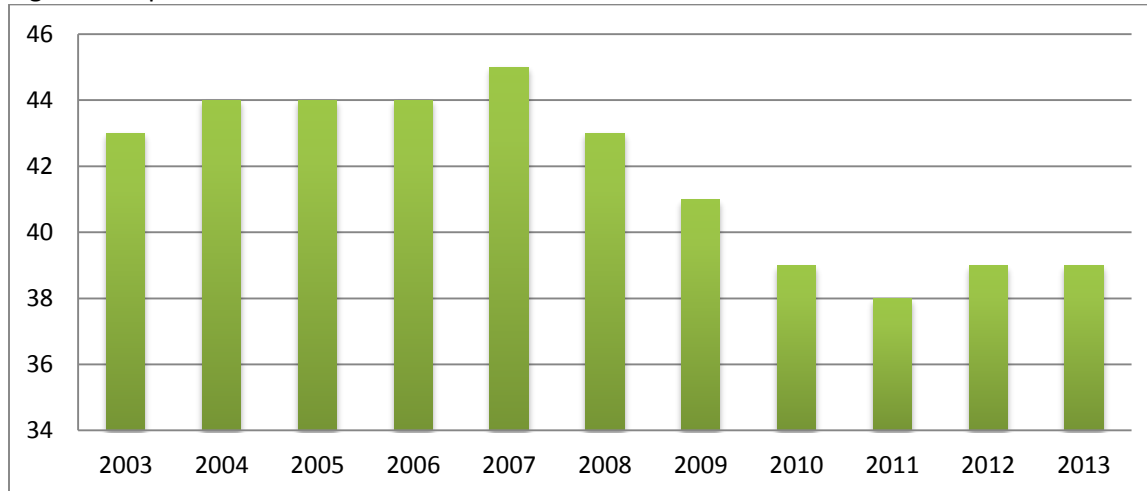
⁸ 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates: Median Family Income in the Past 12 Months by presence of own children under 18 years. (n.d.). *US Census*. Retrieved October 13, 2015, from http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_1YR_B19126&prodType=table

⁹ State and County Quickfacts. USA People Quickfacts. (n.d.). *US Census*. Retrieved October 22, 2015, from <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/00000.html>.

¹⁰ Arizona Vital Statistics - Birth Statistics. (2014, December). *Arizona Department of Health Services*. Retrieved October 22,

this same time period in the increase and then declining proportion of Hispanic births. In 2003, Hispanic births (n=39,101) exceeded the number of non-Hispanic, White births (n=38,842). Hispanic births continued to outnumber non-Hispanic, White births through 2007, then declined. This trend of lower rates of Hispanic births continues. In 2013 there were 33,075 Hispanic births compared to 38,220 births to non-Hispanic, Whites. The figure below shows the fluctuation in the proportion of Hispanic births from 2003 through 2013.¹¹

Figure 1 Hispanic Births as a Percent of All Births



Source: Arizona Vital Statistics

The population of immigrants without documentation of American citizenship has also shown a pattern of increase and subsequent decrease. This population is estimated to have grown from 330,000 in January 2000 to 560,000 in January 2008, a 70 percent increase. The undocumented population declined 63 percent from 560,000 in January 2008 to 350,000 in January 2012.¹²

In April 2010, Senate Bill 1070 was signed into law making it a crime to be in the state without proper documentation. The expressed intent of the law is “. . . to discourage and deter the unlawful entry and presence of aliens and economic activity by persons unlawfully present in the United States.” Effective July 2010, this legislation required police officers who are enforcing another law to determine, when practicable, the immigration status of the person lawfully detained and verify that status with the federal government. 13 Portions of Senate Bill 1070 have been found to be unconstitutional, however, the portion of the law requiring an officer to make a reasonable attempt to determine the immigration status of a person stopped, detained or arrested if there's reasonable suspicion that person is in the country illegally was upheld in 2012.¹⁴

2015, from <http://www.azdhs.gov/plan/menu/info/trend/index.php?pg=births>.

¹¹ Arizona Vital Statistics - Birth Statistics. (2014, December). *Arizona Department of Health Services*. Retrieved February 11, 2015, from <http://www.azdhs.gov/plan/menu/info/trend/index.php?pg=births>.

¹² Hofer, M., Rytina, N., & Baker, B.C. (2013, January). Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: March 2013. *U.S. Department of Homeland Security - Office of Immigration Statistics - Policy Directorate*. Retrieved February 13, 2015 from http://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/ois_ill_pe_2012_2.pdf

¹³ Chapter 113-Senate Bill 1070. (n.d.). *Arizona Department of State-Office of the Secretary of State*. Retrieved February 13, 2015, from <http://www.azleg.gov/alispdfs/council/sb1070-hb2162.pdf>

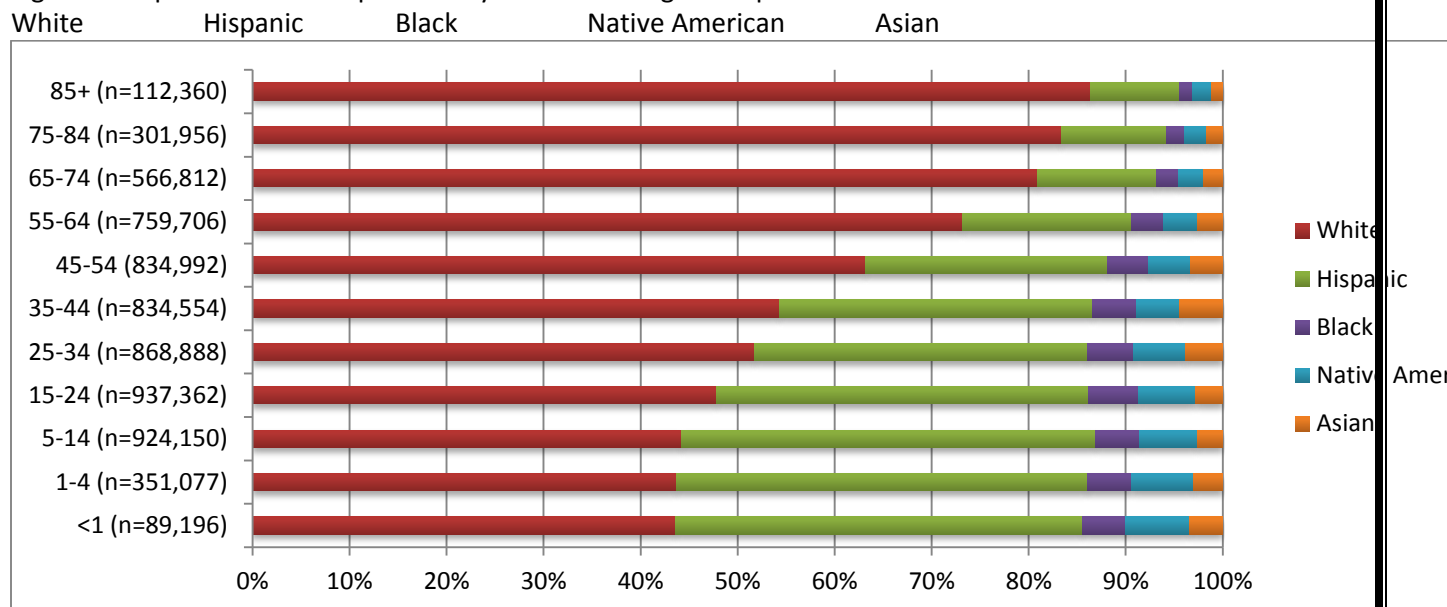
¹⁴ AZ Central. June 25, 2012. Retrieved October 22, 2015 from <http://www.azcentral.com/news/politics/20120603arizona-immigration-law-supreme-court-opinion.html>

The racial makeup of Arizona varies by age group. Among older age groups, the population is predominantly white, while the proportion of the population represented by Hispanics is highest among the younger groups. Over 40 percent of those younger than five are Hispanic compared to ten percent of people 75 and older (see Figure 2).¹⁵

¹⁵ Arizona Vital Statistics –Population denominators for 2013 – Table 10C-1. (2014, November). *Arizona*

Department of Health Services. Retrieved February 17, 2015, from <http://www.azdhs.gov/plan/menu/info/pop/index.php>

Figure 2 Proportion of the Population by Race within Age Group



Source: Arizona Vital Statistics

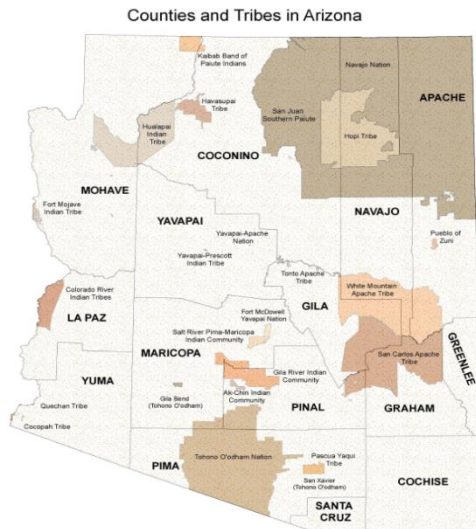
Twenty-one federally recognized American Indian tribes are located in Arizona, each representing a sovereign nation with its own language and culture. Tribal lands span the state and even beyond state borders, with the Navajo Reservation crossing into New Mexico and Utah, and the Tohono O'odham Reservation crossing international boundaries into Mexico.

Seventy-four percent of Apache County, 44 percent of Navajo County, and 28 percent of Coconino County residents are American Indians.¹⁶ Figure 3 is a map showing Arizona's counties and tribal lands.¹⁷

Figure 3 Arizona's Counties and Tribal Lands

¹⁶ Arizona Vital Statistics –Population denominators for 2013 – Table 10D-3. (2014, November). *Arizona Department of Health Services*. Retrieved February 16, 2015, from <http://www.azdhs.gov/plan/menu/info/pop/index.php>.

¹⁷ Inter Tribal Council of Arizona. Maps: Arizona State Counties. (n.d.). Retrieved March 6, 2015 from http://itcaonline.com/?page_id=16.



Source: Inter Tribal Council of Arizona

Poverty

Arizona has a higher percentage of residents living in poverty compared to the nation. In a five-year estimate for 2009-2013, 15 percent of the nation lived in poverty compared to 18 percent of those living in Arizona. This rate was 14 percent in Arizona in 2000.¹⁸ In Arizona in 2013, 26 percent of children under 18, 28 percent of children under six and 31 percent of those without a high school diploma lived below the poverty line.¹⁹

Poverty for children under six varies dramatically by county. The highest rates of poverty are in Apache and Navajo Counties with rates of 53 and 49 percent, respectively; seven counties (Apache, Coconino, Gila, Santa Cruz, La Paz, Mohave and Navajo) all have rates of over one-third (33%).²⁰

In addition to individuals, poverty can be calculated for families with children under the age of 18. In a five-year estimate for 2009-2013, 21 percent of families with children were below the poverty line in Arizona. This was three percentage points higher than the national average (18%).²¹

Rates of poverty for Arizona families with children vary widely by ethnic background. The National Center for Children in Poverty reports that in Arizona in 2013, fourteen percent of Asian children live in a poor family compared to 49 percent of Native American children.²²

¹⁸ Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics: 2000 Census 2000 Summary File 3. (n.d.). *US Census*. Retrieved on March 10, 2015 from <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

¹⁹ American Community Survey 5 year estimates 2008-2013. Percent of People Below the Poverty Line in the Last 12 months. County or Equivalent. (n.d.). *US Census*. Retrieved October 22, 2015 from <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

²⁰ 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates: Sex and Age. (n.d.). *US Census*. Retrieved October 14, 2015, from http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_13_5YR_S0101&prodType=table

²¹ US Census. Current Population Survey. (n.d.). *US Census* Retrieved October 22, 2015 from <http://www.census.gov/data.html>

²² National Center for Children in Poverty. Arizona Demographics of Poor Children. (n.d.). *National Center for Children in Poverty*. Retrieved October 22, 2015 from http://www.nccp.org/profiles/state_profile.php?state=AZ&id=7

For a family of four in 2015, the federal poverty level is \$24,250.²³ In Arizona, eight percent of the population live at less than 50 percent of the poverty level, or in extreme poverty. This proportion is larger for children under 18 (12percent).²⁴

Extreme poverty, or below 50% of the federal poverty line, shows similar trends as poverty overall, with some groups disproportionately affected. From 2009- 2013, the following percentages of Arizonans were in extreme poverty. For those under the age of 18, 12 percent are in extreme poverty. Of Native Americans, 20 percent are below 50 percent of the poverty line.²⁵

There is also wide variation in the proportion of households receiving assistance such as Supplemental Security Income, Cash Public Assistance, or SNAP (food stamps) in Arizona. The most recent American Community Survey data shows that 13 percent of households in Arizona receive SNAP assistance or food stamps. The lowest is in Greenlee County at 11 percent to a high of 26 percent in both Apache and Navajo Counties.²⁶

Household Food Insecurity is often a consequence of poverty. The USDA definition of food insecurity can be paraphrased as: a limited or uncertain availability of food. Low food security is food insecurity without hunger. Very low food security is food insecurity with hunger.²⁷ Food insecurity is similar but slightly higher in Arizona than in the United States as a whole and has increased in the past 10 years, notably between 2007 and 2008. In 2011- 2013, 16 percent of Arizona households had limited or uncertain food availability and six percent of those were hungry.²⁸

Foster Care

In Arizona in 2015, more children are living in foster care than at any time in the last fifteen years.²⁹ The Children's Action Alliance Reports that in March 2015, 17,623 children were in foster care.³⁰ In an independent review of the newly established Department of Child Safety, Chapin Hall reported that the increase in children in foster care is the result of the increase in abuse and neglect reports, especially since 2009; specifically, in a six year period, there was a 44 percent increase in reports. They note that

²³ 2015 Federal Poverty Guidelines. (n.d.). *US Department of Health and Human Services*. Retrieved March 9, 2015 from <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/15poverty.cfm>

²⁴ S1703: SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF PEOPLE AT SPECIFIED LEVELS OF POVERTY IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS 2009-2013. (n.d.). *US Census*. Retrieved on October 22, 2015 from <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

²⁵ S1703: SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF PEOPLE AT SPECIFIED LEVELS OF POVERTY IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS 2009-2013. (n.d.). *US Census*. Retrieved on October 22, 2015 from <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

²⁶ Selected Economic Characteristics by County 2009-2013. (n.d.). *US Census*. Retrieved October 22, 2013 from http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_13_5YR_DP03&prodType=table

²⁷ US Department of Agriculture. Definitions of Food Security. (n.d.). *US Department of Agriculture*. Retrieved March 10, 2015 from <http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/definitions-of-food-security.aspx>

²⁸ US Department of Agriculture. Food Security. (n.d.). *US Department of Agriculture*. Retrieved March 10, 2015 from <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-security-in-the-united-states.aspx>

²⁹ Arizona Department of Child Safety Independent Review. (June 26,2015). Chapin Hall Center for Children. Retrieved on October 22, 2015 from

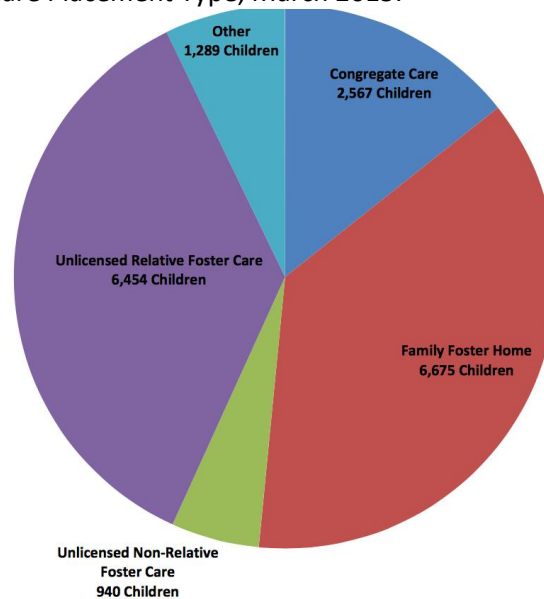
http://www.azauditor.gov/sites/default/files/AZ_Dept_of_Child_Safety_Independent_Review_0.pdf

³⁰ Department of Child Safety Data Dashboard. (2015). Children's Action Alliance. Retrieved on October 15, 2015 from http://azchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/DCS-Data-Dashboard_u_8_4_15.pdf.

this dramatic increase in abuse and neglect reports along with a weakening of other safety net supports (such as child care subsidies) during a time of economic recession, put substantial strain on public welfare agencies.³¹

The Chapin Hall report also noted that Arizona as compared to other states, places more children in foster care following a substantiated allegation of maltreatment. With this, pressure on the foster care system and out-of-home placements increased dramatically.³² Figure 4 shows the number of children in foster care by placement type in March, 2015.³³

Figure 4. Children in Foster Care Placement Type, March 2015.



Source: Arizona Department of Child Safety. CHILDS Data Extract
Updated 7/28/15

Source: Children's Action Alliance

³¹ Arizona Department of Child Safety Independent Review. (June 26,2015). Chapin Hall Center for Children. Retrieved on October 22, 2015 from

http://www.azauditor.gov/sites/default/files/AZ_Dept_of_Child_Safety_Independent_Review_0.pdf

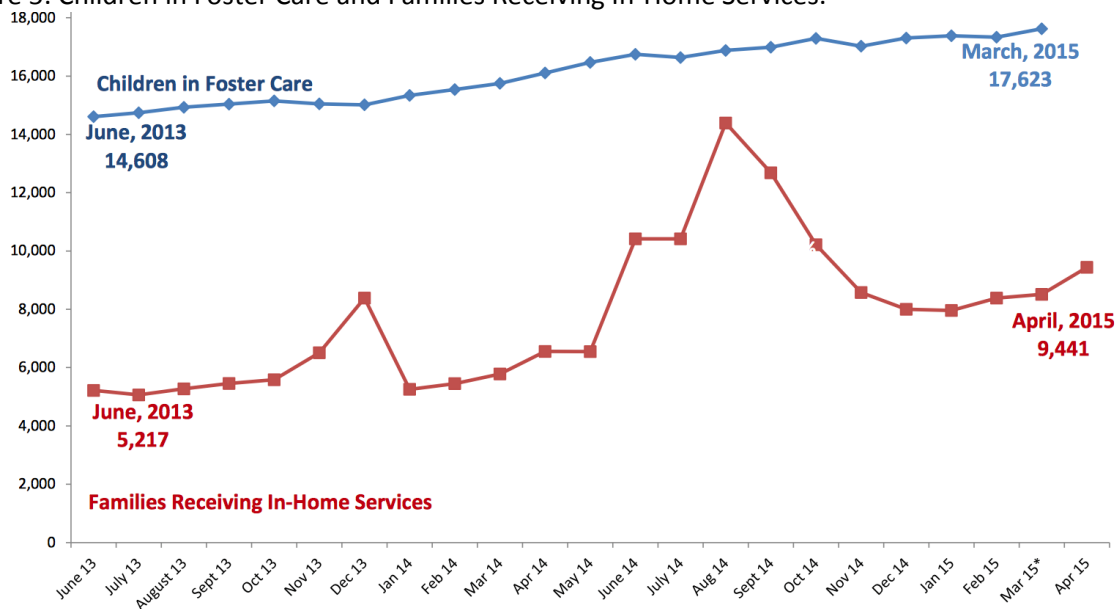
³² Arizona Department of Child Safety Independent Review. (June 26,2015). Chapin Hall Center for Children. Retrieved on October 22, 2015 from

http://www.azauditor.gov/sites/default/files/AZ_Dept_of_Child_Safety_Independent_Review_0.pdf

³³ Department of Child Safety Data Dashboard. (2015). Children's Action Alliance. Retrieved on October 15, 2015 from http://azchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/DCS-Data-Dashboard_u_8_4_15.pdf.

With these dramatic increases in abuse and neglect reports along with extensive use of out-of-home placement, the Chapin Hall report noted that median time in out-of-home care increased by almost fifty percent between 2009 and 2014. Figure 5 below shows the continuing increase in children in foster care and the unsteady upward trend in in-home services.³⁴

Figure 5. Children in Foster Care and Families Receiving In-Home Services.



Source: Department of Child Safety

Source: Children's Action Alliance

Children in foster care are likely to overlap with the eligibility ages for Head Start. In September 2014, 33.5 percent of children in foster care were one to five years old and children birth through eight were 58.2 percent.³⁵

Economy and Family Income

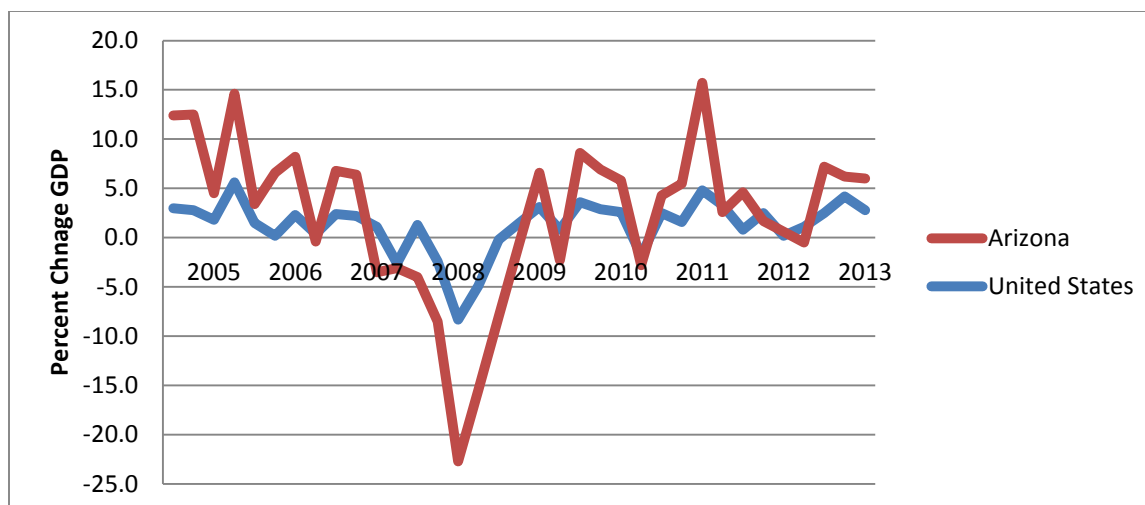
The economy of Arizona is growing after a hard hit during the recession. The Bureau of Economic Analysis calculates the gross domestic product (GDP) of states as well as the nation. GDP is the sum of what individuals, businesses and government spend on goods and services as well as investment and trade. Figure 6 shows the quarterly change in GDP from 2005 to 2013 for both the US and Arizona. Arizona contracted at a faster rate than the nation as a whole from 2005-2008, with a steep decline in 2008. Since that period, there has been positive GDP growth, but Arizona's rate of growth (1.4) has been lower than other neighbors in the southwest (4.3) and the nation as a whole (2.2).³⁶

Figure 6 Percent Change in GDP in the US and Arizona 2005-2013

³⁴ Department of Child Safety Data Dashboard. (2015). Children's Action Alliance. Retrieved on October 15, 2015 from http://azchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/DCS-Charts-and-Graphs-u_8_6_15.pdf

³⁵ Child Welfare Stats. (n.d.) Court Appointed Special Advocates CASA Arizona. Retrieved on October 5, 2015 from <http://www.azcourts.gov/casa/Child-Welfare/Child-Welfare-Stats>.

³⁶ Bureau of Economic Analysis. (n.d.). *U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)*. Retrieved October 22, 2015 from http://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/regional/gdp_state/gsp_newsrelease.htm



Source: US Bureau of Economic Analysis

Median household income in Arizona has historically tended to be lower than national averages. According to US Census, Arizona's median household income in 2013 was \$49,774 compared to the rest of the nation at \$53,046.³⁷ In 2013, the median household income varied widely by county. The highest median household income was in Maricopa County with \$53,596 and the lowest was in Apache County with \$31,476.³⁸

In 2009-2013 estimates, Arizona's median income for families with children under 18 was \$72,689 for a two-income family. However, for a household headed by a single mother, that figure was \$26,079. Again, this figure varies widely across the state, with higher median incomes in Coconino, Maricopa, and Pima counties. The counties with the lowest median income for female-headed households were Santa Cruz, Graham, and Navajo counties.³⁹

Arizona labor force and employment figures show patterns of steady growth through the 2000s, disruption around 2008, and current signs of recovery. Figures from the Bureau of Labor Statistics show the overall labor force peaking in December 2008 at 3,135,939 decreasing to 3,013,584 in January 2013, and rebounding to 3,141,139 in August 2015. The unemployment rate similarly peaked in January 2010 at a rate of 11.1 from a low of 3.7 in July 2007. In August 2015, the unemployment rate was 6.3 with 196,798 unemployed.⁴⁰

Unemployment varies across Arizona. While all parts of the state saw increased unemployment in 2010, the Phoenix Metropolitan Statistical Area showed the lowest rates while the Yuma Area suffered the

³⁷ Median Household Income. (n.d.) US Census. Retrieved October 22, 2015 from <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

³⁸ GCT1901. Median Income in the Last 12 Months 5 year estimates, 2009-2013. (n.d) US Census. Retrieved October 22, 2015 from http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_13_5YR_S1903&prodType=table

³⁹ 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates: Median Family Income in the Past 12 Months by presence of own children under 18 years. (n.d.). US Census. Retrieved October 13, 2015, from http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_1YR_B19126&prodType=table

⁴⁰ Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data: Local Area Unemployment Statistics. (n.d.) Retrieved November 2, 2015 from <http://data.bls.gov/timeseries/LASST040000000000003>

largest percentage of unemployment. The highest rate of unemployment in Yuma Metropolitan Statistical Area was 30.3 percent in August of 2010.⁴¹

HSSCO NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESS – STRATEGIC PLANNING 2016-2021

The approach to data gathering for the HSSCO Needs Assessment to inform strategic planning for 2016 - 2021 included multiple secondary and primary sources that would inform the HSSCO in terms of status, needs, and opportunities related to the HSSCO Overarching Goals. The Overarching Goals, and Areas of Focus defined below, are established by the Federal Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. The Overarching Goals describe the purpose of the HSSCOs and are:

- *Assist in building early childhood systems;*
- *Provide access to comprehensive services and support for all low-income children;*
- *Encourage widespread collaboration between Head Start and other appropriate programs, services, and initiatives;*
- *Augment Head Start's capacity to be a partner in state initiatives on behalf of children and their families;*
- *Facilitate the involvement of Head Start in state policies, plans, processes, and decisions affecting target populations and other low-income families.*

The Arizona Needs Assessment process was led by the Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) and included:

1. Advisory Committee Member (Attachment A) review of current environment including opportunities for further information gathering.
2. Secondary Data – gathered updated data from existing data sources, demographic information about the Arizona and cumulative counts for the EHS/HS programs for 2010-2015.
3. Survey of Grantees to obtain specific information regarding collaboration.
4. Analysis
 - HSSCO Executive Director and the HSSCO Advisory Committee reviewed results at each step in the process, identifying themes and potential priority areas for Strategic Planning discussion.
 - Advisory Committee Review of Results and discussion of priority areas for discussion in the Strategic Planning Process.
 - Consultant review:
 - Review of survey results in aggregate by area of focus as well as the specific results within each area of focus to determine level of working relationships and the difficulty in developing those relationships.
 - Comparison of Survey Results to identify themes, priority areas for development, and the nature of the action needed; i.e. form new relationships and/or strengthen existing relationships.
 - Review of barriers and opportunities identified by all data sources to determine common priorities, consistent barriers and potential opportunities to address the barriers.
5. Strategic Planning – based upon the information gathered in the assessment, strategic planning sessions were held on December 5, 2014, June 1, 2015 and October 23 2015. The strategic planning session included HSSCO AHSA leadership, Head Start Grantees and Delegate Agencies, and State

⁴¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data: Local Area Unemployment Statistics. (n.d.) *Bureau of Labor Statistics*. Retrieved November 2, 2015 from <http://www.bls.gov/data/#unemployment>

Agency representatives in areas of focus for HSSCO. A list of participants may be found in Attachment B the Agendas may be found in Attachments C through D.

DATA RESPONSES

Data to inform the HSSCO strategic planning process was gathered from the Advisory Committee, secondary data, and the Collaboration Survey.

HSSCO Collaboration Survey Results - By Area of Focus

The HSSCO Collaboration Survey for the 2014 Assessment was distributed to Arizona Non-Tribal Grantees. Thirty-nine responses were received including grantees and one delegate agency. The survey was broken into topic areas. Head Start and Early Head Start Directors distributed the appropriate survey to the staff member best able to answer questions related to: **health, family support and education**. Those with multiple areas of focus completed an **overall** survey. There were seven respondents to the **overall** survey, six for the **health** survey, 19 for the **family support** survey, and seven for the **education** survey.

The Collaboration Survey used in 2010 - 2012 was modified by the Advisory Committee to gather information specific to areas of interest/concern. Only those responding to the **overall** survey completed all questions. Respondents with a daily focus on **health, family support and education** answered the questions most related to those areas.

Following is a summary of the results from the Collaboration Survey.

Child Care

1. Access to full-year, full-day services remains a challenge for families. However, the majority (64%) of respondents report most families have access to full-year, full-day services. This is a change from surveys in the past. Respondents note that access to regulated and quality care is still a challenge.
2. No respondents in 2014 noted establishing relationships in the Child Care area as extremely difficult; this is dramatic decrease from 2012.

Child Care - Extent of Difficulty in Establishing Relationships Comparison					
	Not at all difficult % of responses	Somewhat difficult % of responses	Difficult % of responses	Extremely difficult % of responses	N/A % of responses
2011	46%	30%	12%	8%	4%
2012	39.3%	14.3%	7%	21%	18%
2014	20%	31%	22%	0%	27%

Children Experiencing Homelessness

1. Only a 'few' children and families or 'no children and families' have access to these services (percent reporting):
 - Homes Education Liaison (22%)
 - Local Housing agencies (shelters, affordable housing providers, etc. (22%))
2. All actions had at least one respondent who reported no effort to engage in the activity listed. The highest rates of N/A were in (number reporting):

- Engaging the local McKinney-Vento Liaison, in conducting staff cross training and planning activities (6)
 - Entering into an MOU with the appropriate local LEA to coordinate selection priorities for eligible children, including children experiencing homelessness In coordination with LEAs, developing and implementing family outreach and support efforts under McKinney-Vento and transition planning for children experiencing (8)
 - In coordination with LEAs, developing and implementing family outreach and support efforts under McKinney-Vento and transition planning for children experiencing homelessness (6)
 - Consulting with the Arizona Child Support Program (DES DCSE) to determine if child support has been collected for the family but is being held since the whereabouts of the homeless person/child is unknown (9)
3. A decreased percentage of respondents found that establishing relationships was 'extremely difficult' – from 19% in 2012 to 2% in 2014. However, there has been a steady decrease in the report of 'not at all difficult'.

Homelessness - Extent of Difficulty in Establishing Relationships Comparison					
	Not at all difficult % of responses	Somewhat difficult % of responses	Difficult % of responses	Extremely difficult % of responses	N/A % of responses
2011	41.18%	13.23%	5.89%	10.29%	29.41%
2012	34.6	25%	8%	19%	16%
2014	26%	29%	17%	2%	26%

Children with Disabilities

1. As compared with 2012 there are more reports of having NO working relationships with organizations serving children with disabilities and lower rates of collaboration.
2. Reports of 'not at all difficult' were lower in 2014 as compared to 2011 and 2012; rates of 'extremely difficult' were higher.

Children with Disabilities - Extent of Working Relationships Comparison				
	No Working Relationship- little/no contact % of responses	Cooperation- exchange info/referrals % of responses	Coordination- working together % of responses	Collaboration – share resources/ agreements % of responses
2011	17.95%	38.46%	15.38%	28.21%
2012	0%	14.3%	21.4%	64.3%
2014	13%	56%	19%	13%

Children with Disabilities - Extent of Difficulty in Establishing Relationships Comparison					
	Not at all difficult % of responses	Somewhat difficult % of responses	Difficult % of responses	Extremely difficult % of responses	N/A % of responses
2011	50.94%	37.73%	5.66%	1.89%	3.78%
2012	32%	40%	10%	4%	4%
2014	19%	51%	14%	8%	8%

Community Services

1. More than one-third of respondents reported that 'few' or 'no children and families' have access to the following services (percent reporting):
 - Substance abuse prevention/treatment services (38%)
 - Child abuse prevention/treatment services (38%)
 - Domestic violence prevention/treatment services (31%)
 - Private resources geared toward prevention/intervention (faith-based, business, foundations, shelters, etc (54%)
 - Legal Services (39%)

Family Literacy

1. Actions where there have been no efforts to engage in the activity listed by more than thirty percent of respondents (number reporting):
 - Obtaining information on the district Literacy Plan (for Move on When Reading) (4)
 - Establishing linkages/partnerships related to the district Literacy Plan (for Move on When Reading) (7)
 - Establishing linkages/partnerships with Read on Arizona community members (7)
 - Obtaining information and guidance on digital literacy (4)
2. Few or no children and families have access to the services: (3 or more responses)
 - English Language Learner Programs (5)
 - Children's books in the home (3)
 - Public/private sources that provide book donations or funding for books (3)
 - Financial Literacy Services (6)
3. Assessment of extent of difficulty with family literacy partnership was added to the assessment in 2014. The following items were ranked:
 - Obtaining information on the district Literacy Plan (for Move on When Reading)
 - Establishing linkages/partnerships related to the district Literacy Plan (for Move on When Reading)
 - Obtaining information on Read on Arizona efforts in the community
 - Establishing linkages/partnerships with Read on Arizona community members

- Obtaining Family Literacy Guides
- Obtaining information and guidance on digital literacy

Family Literacy- Extent of Difficulty in Establishing Relationships 2014					
	Not at all difficult % of responses	Somewhat difficult % of responses	Difficult % of responses	Extremely difficult % of responses	N/A % of responses
2014	23%	32%	8%	0%	36%

Health Care

1. Few children and families have access to the service (number of responses)
 - Local agencies providing mental health prevention and treatment (3)
 - Transportation to get to medical/dental appointments (3)
2. Actions that have been difficult in the past 12 months:
 - Getting full representation and active commitment on your Health Advisory Committee (1)
 - Exchanging information on resources with medical dental and other providers regarding health care (2)
3. As compared with 2012 a larger percentage of respondents report that relationships are 'not at all difficult' or somewhat difficult'.

Health Care - Extent of Difficulty in Establishing Relationships Comparison					
	Not at all difficult % of responses	Somewhat difficult % of responses	Difficult % of responses	Extremely difficult % of responses	N/A % of responses
2011	44.95%	37.61%	7.34%	6.42%	3.67%
2012	21.4%	28.6%	28.6%	14.3%	7.1%
2014	35%	50%	15%	0%	0%

Head Start Transition and Alignment with K-12

1. Fifty or more percent of respondents reported they have no or a little involvement with the LEA related to:
 - Establishing and implementing comprehensive transition policies and procedures with LEAs (5)
 - Linking LEA and Head Start services relating to language, numeracy and literacy (6)
2. Compared to 2012, reported rates of 'little involvement' with the LEA higher and rates of 'no involvement' are lower. Rates of 'some involvement' and 'significant involvement' are similar.

--

Extent of involvement with the local education agencies regarding transition from Head Start to Kindergarten Comparison				
	No involvement with LEA	A little involvement with LEA	Some involvement with LEA	Significant involvement with LEA
2012	23.2%	12.56%	32.1%	32.1%
2014	6%	25%	36%	33%

System Building and Partnerships with Local Education Agencies (LEAs)

1. Eighty percent of respondents reported MOUS with all or most of local LEAs.
2. There were NO actions where one-quarter or more of respondents reported difficulty or extreme difficulty.
3. Actions where there have been no efforts to engage in the activity listed by more than thirty percent of respondents:
 - Enrolling in Quality First
4. Fifty percent or more of respondents report no or little involvement with the LEA was reported in the following efforts (number of responses):
 - Educational activities, curricular objectives and instruction (5)
 - Information, dissemination and referrals for families to Head Start. (5)
 - Professional development for staff, including opportunities for joint staff education (6)
 - Provision and use of facilities, transportation, etc. (5)
 - Opportunities for collaborative planning and coordination (6)
5. Comparing extent of LEA involvement from 2012 to 2014, 'significant' and 'some' involvement have decreased and 'a little' involvement has increased.

Extent of involvement in partnerships with the local education agencies Comparison				
	No involvement with LEA	A little involvement with LEA	Some involvement with LEA	Significant involvement with LEA
2012	13%	16%	32.5%	39%
2014	12%	35%	27%	25%

- Assessment of extent of difficulty with system building partnerships was added to the assessment in 2014. The following items were ranked:
 - Obtaining information on the Early Childhood Quality Improvement Plan (ECQUIP plan)
 - Establishing linkages/partnerships related to the ECQUIP plan
 - Obtaining information on Quality First
 - Enrolling in Quality First
 - Establishing linkages/partnerships with Quality First
 - Obtaining information on other system-building efforts such as MIECHV and First Things First funded strategies

- Establishing linkages/partnerships on other system-building efforts such as MIECHV and First Things First funded strategies

Extent of Difficulty in Establishing Relationships 2014 – System Building and LEAs					
	Not at all difficult % of responses	Somewhat difficult % of responses	Difficult % of responses	Extremely difficult % of responses	N/A % of responses
2014	49%	26%	6%	1%	19%

Professional Development

1. 90% of respondents (all but one respondent) have challenges recruiting qualified staff.
2. Fifty percent of respondents indicated they partner with High School Career & Technical Education ECE Programs. Some are just beginning or don't have formal agreements. Some partnerships that have been formed include: providing volunteers in our classrooms and using their job fairs to recruit future staff.
3. Thirty or more percent of respondents indicated 'little' or 'no' involvement with:
 - Institutions of Higher Education (4 year) (3)
 - On-line course/programs (3)
 - Child Care Resource & Referral Network (4)
 - T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood @ (5)
 - Engaging with other organizations / efforts to enhance recruitment such as use of student teaching (4)

Child Welfare/Public Welfare

1. Over 20% of respondents report that few children and families have access to the service (number of responses)
 - Services and networks supporting foster and adoptive families (4)
 - Child Support Enforcement Services (4)
2. Actions that have been difficult or extremely difficult in the past 12 months for 25% or more of respondents:
 - Working with local child welfare offices / providers to increase recruitment of families receiving TANF or of children in foster care (5)
 - Facilitating shared training and technical assistance opportunities with child welfare providers (5)
 - Getting involved in state level planning and policy development (5)
3. Actions where there have been no efforts to engage in the activity listed by 20% or more of respondents

- Facilitating shared training and technical assistance opportunities with child welfare providers (6)
- Getting involved in state level planning and policy development (6)
- Exchanging information on roles and resources with other service providers regarding TANF, Foster Care or Child Support Enforcement

Extent of Difficulty in Establishing Relationships 2014 – Child Welfare					
	Not at all difficult % of responses	Somewhat difficult % of responses	Difficult % of responses	Extremely difficult % of responses	N/A % of responses
2014	16%	35%	22%	5%	23%

CONCLUSIONS

Priority Areas of Focus

Respondents to the Collaboration Survey identified the following priorities for the HSSCO:

1. Children and families Experiencing Homelessness
2. Coordination with LEAs and the Kindergarten Transition
3. Public Welfare / Child Welfare

And the following areas to build on current strengths:

1. Family Literacy – Move On When Reading Plans
2. Children with Disabilities – Coordination of services
3. Health – Coordination of services

Working Relationships

Among stakeholders, for the majority, it is either “not at all difficult” and or only “somewhat difficult” to establish working relationships in all areas examined. Also, in all areas examined over time - other than health - the percent of respondents stating that establishing working relationships are ‘not at all difficult’ has dropped over time.

Extent of Difficulty in Establishing Relationships 2011 Compared to 2012					
	Not at all difficult % of responses	Somewhat difficult % of responses	Difficult % of responses	Extremely difficult % of responses	N/A % of responses
Child Care					
2011	46%	30%	12%	8%	4%
2012	39.3%	14.3%	7%	21%	18%
2014	20%	31%	22%	0%	27%
Homeless					
2011	41.18%	13.23%	5.89%	10.29%	29.41%
2012	34.6	25%	8%	19%	16%
2014	26%	29%	17%	2%	26%
Children with Disabilities					
2011	50.94%	37.73%	5.66%	1.89%	3.78%
2012	32%	40%	10%	4%	4%
2014	19%	51%	14%	8%	8%
Health Care					
2011	44.95%	37.61%	7.34%	6.42%	3.67%
2012	21.4%	28.6%	28.6%	14.3%	7.1%
2014	35%	50%	15%	0%	0%
Family Literacy					
2014	23%	32%	8%	0%	36%
System Building and LEA Relationships					
2014	49%	26%	6%	1%	19%
Child Welfare					
2014	16%	35%	22%	5%	23%

Extent of Involvement with LEAs

One-quarter of respondents noted significant involvement with LEAs and one-third stated the same for LEAs specifically related to kindergarten transition. Similar rates identified 'some involvement', however, no or little involvement was reported by 47% and 31%, respectively.

Extent of involvement in partnerships with the local education agencies Comparison				
	No involvement with LEA	A little involvement with LEA	Some involvement with LEA	Significant involvement with LEA
2012	13%	16%	32.5%	39%
2014	12%	35%	27%	25%

Extent of involvement with the local education agencies regarding transition from Head Start to Kindergarten Comparison

	No involvement with LEA	A little involvement with LEA	Some involvement with LEA	Significant involvement with LEA
2012	23.2%	12.56%	32.1%	32.1%
2014	6%	25%	36%	33%

Overall Findings

- While the majority of respondents identified that it is either “not difficult” and or only “somewhat difficult” to establish working relationships, the percent noting relationships are ‘not at all difficult’ has dropped over time.
- Community resources and programming is limited for families and children.
- Transportation is a major barrier in many communities.
- Childcare access continues to be limited, especially of high quality early care and education.
- Timeliness of follow-up and placement of children with special needs continues to be of concern.
- There were many comments about the challenges of turnover and new staff in the child welfare system. Other items noted were the challenge families have with the ‘red tape’ and overall perception of the process as punitive.
- Respondents noted that coordination with LEAs varies by district. Coordination related to kindergarten transition, sharing of TSG results, and numeracy and literacy approaches were noted as most challenging.

Priorities for 2016-2021 Strategic Plan

In 2014 and 2015, the Arizona HSSCO developed a comprehensive Five Year Strategic Plan for 2016-2021. Arizona defined six process goals:

Process Goal 1: Head Start is involved in the development of state policies, plans, processes, and decisions impacting Head Start.

Process Goal 2: Families in Head Start - who need full day services – have increased access to high quality, early care and education services.

Process Goal 3: Increase the number of children in vulnerable populations served by Head Start. Vulnerable populations include children experiencing: homelessness, refugee status, foster care, and children from military families and with an IEP/IFSP.

Process Goal 4: Building relationships to ensure continuity of services between birth to five programs and kindergarten to 3rd grade.

Process Goal 5: Children in Head Start programs receive needed health care including: medical, dental, and behavioral health prevention and treatment.

Process Goal 6: Through inclusion, close the learning gap between typically developing children and children with special needs.

Attachment A – Advisory Committee Members

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Debbie Everett	Roosevelt School District	602 232-4912	everettd@rsd.k12.az.us
Geri Martinez	Alhambra School District		gmartinez@alhambra.k12.az.us
Irene Burnton	Arizona Department of Health Services	602-364-1453	Irene.burnton@azdhs.gov
Jackie Flores	Colorado River Indian Tribes	928 662-4311	Jackie.flores@crit-nsn.gov
Judy Walruff	First Things First	602 771-5010	jwalruff@azftf.gov
Karen Ortiz	Helios Foundation	602 381-2273	kOrtiz@helios.org
Karen Preston	Quechan Head Start	760 572-0263	kspyuma@aol.com
Leola Larzelere	White Mountain Apache Head Start	928 338-4938	LqI2@nau.edu
Maggie Malloy	Child Parent Centers, Inc.	520 523-2512	mmalloy@childparentcenters.org
Marsha Porter	Crisis Nursery	602 273-7363	mporter@crisisnurseryphx.org
Melanie O’Neill	Pinal Gila Community Child Services	480-557-9607	melanie.oneil@pgccs.org
Mindy Zapata	Southwest Human Development	602 266-5976	mzapata@swhd.org
Mollie Bright	ADES, AzEIP	602 532-9960	mbright@azdes.gov
Myra Francis	San Carlos Apache Tribe	928 475-2740	mod2654@yahoo.com
Natalie Alvarez	GPUL		nalvarez@gphxul.org
Pat Foster	Gila River Head Start	520 562- 3423	pat.foster@gric.nsn.us
Patty Kirkland	Deer Valley Unified School District	623-376-3969	Patti.Kirkland@dvusd.org
Rayma Duyongwa	Hopi Head Start	928 734-2230	rduyongwa@hopi.nsn.us
Ron Ransom	Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community	480 362-2200	ron.ransom@srpmic-ed.org
Shelda Twist	Cocopah Head Start	928 627-2811	cocohs@cocopah.com
Joyce Holgate	Hualapai Tribe Head Start	928 769-2522	joyceholgate@gmail.com
Ronald Duncan	Navajo Nation Head Start	928 871-6960	RonaldDuncan@nndode.org

Attachment B – Strategic Planning Participants

Amy Corriveau, HSSCO

Jonathan Gonzalez, Arizona Head Start Association

Brad Willis, DES/Child Care Administration

Mindy Zapata, Southwest Human Development

Meloney Baty, ADHS MIECHV

Marsha Porter, Crisis Nursery

Natalie Alvarez, Greater Phoenix Urban League

Brenda Mann, Head Start TTA

Rayma Duyongwa, Hopi Nation Head Start

Natalie Alvarez

Terri Clark, Read on Arizona

Kim Pollins, Booker T. Washington Child Development Head Start

Kimberly Tan, Maricopa County Head Start

Chrisanda DeBois, Maricopa County Head Start

Cindy Gaspar-Rust, FACES, Head Start (Early)

Laura Landis, Region 9 TTA

Brenda Mann, Region 9 TTA

Daniel Zapata, Chicanos Por La Causa-ECD

Michelle Thornton, PGCCS

Monica Brinkerhoff, Child Parent Centers

Dulce Hernandez, CC WSHS

Alecia Jackson, MCHS

Katrina Relph-Mueller, PGCCS

Karie Taylor, DES/AZEIP

Nicol Russell, ADE

Marcela Zepeda, CPLC-ECD

Josie Agon, BTW HS

Larry Campbell, CCCS WSHS

Liz Hernandez, CCCS WSHS

Patti Kirkland, COP

Marion Hill, COP

Amy Kemp, Dynamic Analysis, LLC

Attachment C - Strategic Planning Agenda



Az Head Start Collaboration
December 5, 2014
1-4 pm

1. Introductions and Welcome
2. Review of HSSCO Goals and Responsibilities
3. Required Considerations
 - a. ECE Systems Building
 - b. Health Care
 - c. Child Welfare/Public Welfare
 - d. Child Care
 - e. Children with Disabilities
 - f. Professional Development
 - g. Children and Families Experiencing Homelessness
 - h. Family Literacy
 - i. Building Relationships with K-3
 - j. Military Families
4. Arizona's Fiscal Commitment to Education and Early Learning – Kelley Murphy
5. Current Landscape – Dr. Amy Kemp
6. Readiness Goals
7. Current Goals Discussion and Revision
8. Today's Work
9. Next Steps

Attachment C - Strategic Planning Agenda



**AZ Head Start Collaboration
June 1, 2015
8:30am - 12pm**

1. Introductions and Welcome
2. Purpose of the Meeting
3. 2016-2021 Priorities, Process Goals and Objectives
4. Break
5. Working Groups
6. Wrap Up

Attachment C – Strategic Planning Agenda



Arizona Head Start

ASSOCIATION

Supporting Head Start quality today, impacting Arizona's tomorrow!

ASHA Executive Committee Agenda

Date: October 23, 2015

9:00am-11:30am

Meeting Location-

George B. Brooks, Sr. Community School

3146 East Wier St Phoenix AZ, 85040

Call in: 1-866-502-8312 & Pass Code: 965644

AGENDA ITEM	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE/ PRESENTER
9:00-9:15am • Call to Order & Adoption of Executive Team Agenda	Mindy Zapata/Alecia Jackson
9:15-11:25am • HSCCO Update, new work plan etc., strategic planning follow up	Nicol Russell/Amy Kemp
11:30am-Adjourn	

Appendix C

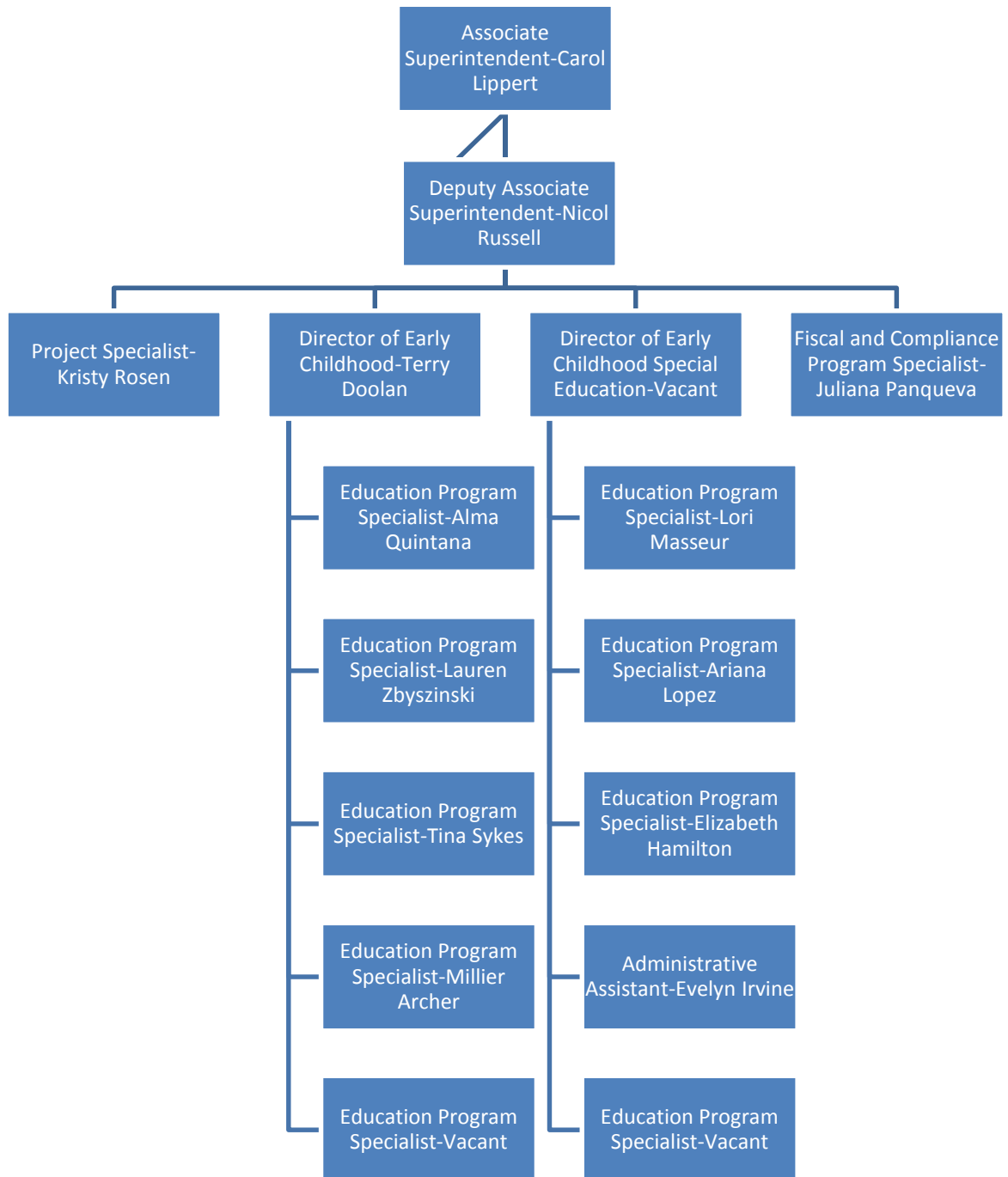
Summary of Accomplishments from 2011-2015

At the time Arizona's 2011-2015 Head Start Collaboration Office (HSCO) grant narrative was written, Arizona was embarking on an never-before seen level of collaboration, coordination, and alignment in its Early Childhood Education system. In the years since the initial Strategic Plan was written, the HSCO has made significant contributions of time, effort, knowledge, and expertise to the accomplishments of Arizona's Early Childhood Systems building efforts. Some of the major contributions include:

- Regional early childhood collaboration forums were conducted. These forums were a result of joint planning and coordination between the Arizona Department of Education, the HSCO, the Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP), the Arizona Head Start Association (AHSA). It provided information to programs on the roles and responsibilities of each of the participating partners—the local education agencies (LEAs), Head Start/Early Head Start, and AzEIP.
- Head Start stakeholders were involved in the development of a robust continuum of high-quality early learning documents: Arizona's Infant Toddler Developmental Guidelines, Arizona Early Learning Standards, and the Program Guidelines for High-Quality: Birth through Kindergarten.
- To ensure Head Start grantees are aware of the activities of the HSCO, the HSCO Director is regularly on the agenda of the quarterly meetings for the Arizona Head Start Association, sharing updates of ADE and other key information.

- To increase community awareness of Head Start, the HSCO Director serves as ADE's representative on the State Early Learning Advisory Council (First Things First) Board.
- An annual Mental Health Symposium was convened by the AHSA.
- Work to include Head Start/Early Head Start in the development of a comprehensive, coordinated Early Childhood Network and Registry.
- The Head Start State Collaboration Director has been a key partner in the Maternal, Infant, Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program and Inter-Agency Leadership Team.
- The Head Start State Collaboration Director participates in the BUILD Arizona Initiative. BUILD Arizona is a consortium of stakeholders working through a collective impact model to meet goals and ensure sustained, systematic changes. The HSCO remains an active member on multiple levels including the state level steering committee.

Appendix D



Appendix E

One of the executive officers of the Arizona Head Start Association was part of the panel that reviewed the job description and criteria of the DAS for Early Childhood, and interviewed Ms. Russell when she applied for the position as the DAS for Early Childhood, and was directly involved in her selection. Ms. Russell meets with the Executive and Policy councils of the AHSA regularly to garner their input on matters related to the ongoing direction of the HSCO. Additionally, stakeholder groups related to matters of the HSCO include representatives with AHSA membership.

Appendix F

VIRGINIA G. PIPER CHARITABLE TRUST

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

James D. Bruner

José A. Cárdenas

Paul N. Critchfield

Arthur W. DeCabooter, Ed.D.

Laura R. Grafman

Sharon C. Harper

Judy Jolley Mohraz, Ph.D.

Stephen J. Zabilski

November 16, 2015

Ms. Jan Len
Administration for Children and Families
San Francisco Regional Office
90 7th Street, 9th Floor
San Francisco, California 94103

PRESIDENT

Susan M. Pepin, M.D.

Dear Ms. Len:

The Arizona Head Start Collaboration Office is a critical partner in our collective efforts to improve services for Arizona's disadvantaged young children and their families. Early literacy remains a priority funding area for Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust. To date, our foundation has committed \$1.5 million (\$250,000 annually over six years) to support a director to lead the state's early literacy work. This position is part of a collaborative partnership between the Arizona Department of Education, Head Start State Collaboration Office, First Things First, Arizona Community Foundation, Helios Education Foundation and Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust, which focuses on alignment and coordination to achieve better early literacy outcomes for all of Arizona's children.

Since we embarked on this collaborative project three years ago, we've made significant progress in connecting existing public and private early literacy investments. We have also developed a number of tools to strengthen our literacy supports for Arizona's young learners and continue to identify ways to work together to address critical gaps.

In addition to the funding support for the state literacy director, our foundation also currently provides grant funding for a number of community-based early literacy programs including AARP's Experience Corp program and we have previously supported Read Out and Read, Raising A Reader, and Parents as Teachers. These

Jan Len
September 16, 2015
Page 2 of 2

programs ensure critical literacy supports and improved outcomes for high-risk children in the Phoenix metropolitan area.

We are grateful for our strong partnership with the Head Start State Collaboration Office and its director Nicol Russell, and we are pleased to provide in-kind support for the Arizona Head Start Collaboration Grant. If you have any questions regarding our funding commitments, please contact me at 480-556-7138.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Marilee Dal Pra".

Marilee Dal Pra
Vice President of Programs