

ACF Administration for Children and Families	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES	
	1. Log No. ACF-IM-HS-08-01	2. Issuance Date: 1/03/2008
	3. Originating Office: Office of Head Start	
	4. Key Words: Head Start Reauthorization	
	P.L. 110-134	

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM [See Attachment]

TO: Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees and Delegate Agencies

SUBJECT: Head Start Reauthorization

INFORMATION:

On December 12, 2007, President Bush signed into law the reauthorization of the Head Start program. This law (P.L. 110-134) authorizes Head Start through September 30, 2012 and contains significant revisions to the previous Head Start Act. Attached is a listing of some of the major requirements in this Act that have an impact on local Head Start programs. A copy of P.L. 110-134 can be found on Head Start’s Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc>. This law needs to be read together with P.L. 105-285, the Head Start Act of 1998, which has been amended by P.L. 110-134. The Office of Head Start will post a copy of the compilation of the Head Start Act, as amended, on the ECLKC in the near future.

All Head Start programs are strongly encouraged to carefully read this law (and the amended Act as soon as it is available). Programs are also encouraged to regularly review the Policy Clarification site on the ECLKC, as the Office of Head Start, through the issuance of several Policy Clarifications, will be highlighting some of the new requirements that grantees and delegate agencies will be required to meet. (A copy of these Policy Clarifications will also be forwarded to all Head Start programs.)

Please direct any questions on this Information Memorandum to your OHS Regional Office.

/ Patricia E. Brown /

Patricia E. Brown
Acting Director
Office of Head Start

ATTACHMENT:

(Please note that the following discussion contains only those changes to the Head Start Act that the Office of Head Start believes to be the most relevant to Head Start programs. This is not a complete list of all changes. The changes discussed below are grouped into several general categories.)

Definitions

Definitions have been added for the terms deficiency, limited English proficient, professional development and unresolved area of noncompliance, among others.

Grantee designation

Financial assistance is available to Head Start grantees for a period of five years.

There will be a review panel established by the Secretary to develop a process to determine which Head Start grantees will, at the end of their five year designation as a Head Start agency, be given another five year designation non-competitively and which will need to compete for such a designation.

Funding allocation formula

The formula regarding the allocation of funds has been significantly revised and is as follows:

The first requirement is that each grantee be given its on-going base funding level (unless the appropriation for a fiscal year is less than the previous fiscal year, in which case each grantee's funding level would be reduced proportionately). If the fiscal year appropriation is greater than that appropriated in the previous fiscal year, the increase will be used as follows:

- 2½-3% of the increase will be used for Head Start/EHS training and technical assistance (T/TA) activities. At least half of the T/TA funds must be awarded directly to grantees, at least one quarter must be used to establish a state-based T/TA system and the remaining funds shall be used at the Secretary's discretion.
- Grantees will get a cost-of-living increase, up to, but not to exceed, the previous fiscal year increase in the Consumer Price Index – Urban (CPIU).
- American Indian/Alaskan Native and Migrant/Seasonal Head Start programs will both receive up to \$10 million (or 5% of the funding increase, whichever is less) for purposes of expanding enrollment. (The only exception to this is if the fiscal year appropriation increase would not permit a COLA increase equal to at least half of the prior year increase in the CPIU, in which case no expansion funds would be made available.)

If there are still additional funds available after allocating any funding increase for the purposes discussed above:

- 40% of the remaining funds would be allocated for quality improvement purposes
- 45% of the remaining funds would be allocated for expansion, with Head Start and Early Head Start sharing equally in the allocation of expansion dollars
- 15% of the remaining funds would be used to fund the State Advisory Councils

(The allocation of both the quality funds and the expansion funds is discussed in more detail in Section 640 of the Head Start Act.)

Monitoring

The time period for correcting non-compliance findings is 120 days.

Monitoring reviews no longer have to be led by a **Federal** Team Leader.

Monitoring reviews will include "interrater reliability checks to ensure quality and consistency across and within regions".

(Other changes to the monitoring system that reflect new or revised statutory requirements will be developed over the next several months and will be incorporated into the FY 2009 monitoring protocol. Head Start agencies will be informed of those changes later this year.)

Head Start's target population

Homeless children are categorically eligible for Head Start and the Secretary is to promulgate regulations assuring such children are "prioritized for enrollment."

Subject to the specifics of the implementing regulations, grantees may propose to:

- Serve up to 35% of their enrollment from children whose families' incomes are between 100%-130% of the poverty line
- Convert current pre-school age slots to infant and toddler age slots

Each Head Start program must assure that 10% of its enrollment will be of children with disabilities. (A waiver of this requirement may be granted for a period of up to three years.)

Certain special pay and allowances paid to members of the Uniformed Services are not to be included in determining Head Start eligibility.

Grantee administration, management and governance

Each Head Start agency will, at least once every year, conduct a comprehensive self assessment of its effectiveness and progress in meeting program goals and objectives and in complying with the Head Start Program Performance Standards. Agencies will also be required to develop improvement plans to strengthen those areas that have been identified as needing improvement.

Head Start agencies shall develop procedures for on-going monitoring.

Head Start agencies will report their enrollment on a monthly basis and will, under certain conditions, be subject to funding reductions for failure to substantially maintain their funded enrollment.

Specific roles and responsibilities of the Governing Body and the Policy Council are delineated.

Each Head Start agency's governing board shall have at least one member who has a background and expertise in accounting or fiscal management; one who has a background in early childhood development and one who is a licensed attorney. (Elective boards may be given an exception to these requirements.)

Every Head Start grantee must submit annually to HHS a complete accounting of its administrative expenses.

Every Head Start grantee must submit to HHS a copy of its audit management letter and any audit findings that relate to its Head Start program.

Every Head Start agency shall publish and make available to the public, at least once a year, a report on the operations of its Head Start program, including information on funding, enrollment, health services, parent involvement and monitoring.

Head Start program must obtain parental consent for any "non-emergency intrusive physical examination".

Each Head Start agency must assure that any curricula used in its program is based on scientifically valid research and is age and developmentally appropriate.

HHS will describe the obligations of a Head Start grantee to its delegate agency(ies).

Staff qualifications and training

All EHS teachers shall, by September 30, 2010, have, at a minimum, a CDA credential.

Standards will be established by HHS for Head Start home visitors and family workers.

At least 50% of Head Start teachers, nation-wide, must, by September 30, 2013, have a BA or advanced degree in early childhood education or a related degree with experience teaching pre-school age children.

All Education Coordinators must, by September 30, 2013 have a BA or advanced degree in early childhood education or a related degree with experience teaching pre-school age children.

All Head Start teacher assistants must, by September 30, 2013, have at least a CDA credential or be enrolled in a program leading to an associate or baccalaureate degree or be enrolled in CDA credential program that will be completed within two years.

All Head Start agencies must submit an annual report to HHS on their progress in meeting the above degree and credentialing requirements

All Head Start teachers must, by October 1, 2011, have at least an AA degree in early childhood education or a related field with pre-school teaching experience or have a BA degree and been admitted into the Teach for America program.

(Waivers to the above staffing requirements may, in certain situations, be granted by HHS.)

All Head Start teachers must attend at least 15 hours of professional development each year.

Head Start teachers who receive financial assistance from Head Start to enroll in college courses must agree to work in Head Start for at least three years or repay a prorated amount of their financial assistance.

Each Head Start agency shall develop a professional development plan for all full-time employees.

Studies

HHS shall conduct a study of the status of limited English proficient children and their families participating in Head Start programs.

HHS shall conduct a study of the extent of unmet need for American Indian/Alaskan Native children and families and for Migrant and Seasonal farm-worker children and families.

HHS shall conduct a study of the preparedness of Head Start programs to appropriately respond to large scale natural emergencies.

Enrollment/program options

HHS will develop the following rules/policies:

- How grantees may request authority to operate a locally designed model that will better meet the needs of its community;
- How grantees may propose to convert current part-day, part-year slots to full-day, full-year slots;
- How grantees may propose to reduce their funded enrollment in any year in which the appropriation is not sufficient to allow grantees to maintain current levels of service.

Standards/Measures

HHS will review and, as appropriate, revise the Head Start Program Performance Standards.

HHS will, using the study of the National Academy of Sciences on Developmental Outcomes and Assessments for Young Children, provide guidance to Head Start agencies on the use of scientifically-based measures.

Collaboration/Coordination

Head Start agencies shall collaborate with local educational agencies and shall work to assure an orderly transition of Head Start children into kindergarten (or, if appropriate pre-K).

Head Start agencies shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with the appropriate agency that manages publicly funded pre-school programs in the grantee's service area, whenever there is such a pre-school program in the grantees community.

The role of State Collaboration Offices will be expanded.

Each governor will establish a State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care to assure collaboration and coordination among all the early childhood programs in the State.

Centers of Excellence

HHS shall, subject to the availability of funds, establish Centers of Excellence and designate up to 200 exemplary Head Start agencies as such centers.