

Video Message from Yvette Sanchez Fuentes

Hello - I'm Yvette Sanchez Fuentes, Director of the Office of Head Start. Last January, the Department of Health and Human Services released the Head Start Roadmap to Excellence - our initiative to raise the level of quality across all of our Head Start programs to ensure that our children and families receive the quality services they deserve.

Today - we at HHS are continuing our Head Start reform efforts by proposing new regulations and support structures which will bolster program effectiveness and program integrity.

Every day, local Head Start programs across the country are providing critically needed comprehensive services to our nations most vulnerable children and their families. To ensure that local staff are receiving the training and professional development they need - We are announcing the launch of 4 new national training and technical assistance centers dedicated to providing local

programs with the support and latest best practices and evidence based research to support the work they do daily.

These National Centers include the National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning, the National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness, the National Center on Program Management and Fiscal Operations and the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement.

More information on the National Centers and the redesign of the Head Start Training and Technical Assistance System is available on the ECLKC.

As you may know the 2007 Head Start Reauthorization Act called on the Department of Health and Human Services to establish designation renewal policies for Head Start grantees. In accordance with the 2007 Reauthorization, the Secretary established a council of experts that provided HHS with recommendations on how the agency should move forward.

Today, with the recommendations of the Secretary's Advisory Council - HHS is proposing new regulations which introduce competition into the Head Start grant process.

First, these regulations, over a three year period, will transition all head start grants into a 5 year grant cycle.

Second, to ensure all Head Start children and their families are receiving quality services -- under the proposed regulation, 25 percent of Head Start and Early Head Start programs, monitored each year, will be required to re compete for their next five years of funding.

In the regulation you will see that HHS has set list of seven specific performance conditions that would automatically force a grantee into recompetition. These seven specific performance conditions fall under the categories of quality, licensing and operation and fiscal and internal controls.

I encourage you to read the new proposed regulation and submit your comments and suggestions during the 90 public

comment period. HHS will be reviewing and responding to the comments and suggestions we receive.

This Administration fully believes that our children are our future. Everyone from the Secretary down to my office is fully committed to ensuring that the children and families we serve receive the highest quality Head Start experience.

With these new regulations and the launch of the redesigned Training and Technical Assistance system, we are continuing on the Roadmap to Excellence and promoting enhanced program quality and integrity.

Thank you for taking the time to view this webcast and thank you for the work that you do each and every day on behalf of the million children and families we serve.