

Head Start Act of 2007
Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007
(PL 110-134)

HEAD START COLLABORATION; STATE EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE
[42 U.S.C. 9837b]

Sec. 642B. (a)(1) From amounts made available under section 640(a)(2)(B)(vi), the Secretary shall award the collaboration grants described in paragraphs (2), (3), and (4).

(2)(A) The Secretary shall award, upon submission of a written request, a collaboration grant to each State and to each national administrative office serving Indian Head Start programs and migrant or seasonal Head Start programs to facilitate collaboration among Head Start agencies (including Early Head Start agencies) and entities that carry out activities designed to benefit low-income children from birth to school entry, and their families. The national administrative offices shall use the funds made available through the grants to carry out the authorities and responsibilities described in subparagraph (B) and paragraphs (3) and (4), as appropriate.

(B) Grants described in subparagraph (A) shall be used to—

(i) assist Head Start agencies to collaborate with entities involved in State and local planning processes to better meet the needs of low-income children from birth to school entry, and their families;

(ii) assist Head Start agencies to coordinate activities with the State agency responsible for administering the State program carried out under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.) and entities providing resource and referral services in the State, to make full-working-day and full calendar year services available to children;

(iii) promote alignment of curricula used in Head Start programs and continuity of services with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework and, as appropriate, State early learning standards;

(iv) promote better linkages between Head Start agencies and other child and family agencies, including agencies that

provide health, mental health, or family services, or other child or family supportive services, such as services provided under section 619 or part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.); and

(v) carry out the activities of the State Director of Head Start Collaboration authorized in paragraph (4).

(3) In order to improve coordination and delivery of early childhood education and development to children in the State, a State that receives a collaboration grant under paragraph (2) shall--

(A) appoint or designate an individual to serve as, or carry out the responsibilities of, the State Director of Head Start Collaboration;

(B) ensure that the State Director of Head Start Collaboration holds a position with sufficient authority and access to ensure that the collaboration described in paragraph (2) is effective and involves a range of State agencies; and

(C) involve the State Head Start Association in the selection of the Director and involve the Association in determinations relating to the ongoing direction of the collaboration office involved.

(4) The State Director of Head Start Collaboration shall—

(A) not later than 1 year after the State receives a collaboration grant under paragraph (2), conduct an assessment that--

(i) addresses the needs of Head Start agencies in the State with respect to collaboration, coordination and alignment of services, and alignment of curricula and assessments used in Head Start programs with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework and, as appropriate, State early learning standards;

(ii) shall be updated on an annual basis; and

(iii) shall be made available to the general public within the State;

(B) develop a strategic plan that is based on the assessment described in subparagraph (A) that will—

(i) enhance collaboration and coordination of Head Start services by Head Start agencies with other entities providing

early childhood education and development (such as child care or services offered by museums), health care, mental health care, welfare, child protective services, education and community service activities, family literacy services, reading readiness programs (including such programs offered by public and school libraries), services relating to children with disabilities, other early childhood education and development for limited English proficient children and homeless children, and services provided for children in foster care and children referred to Head Start programs by child welfare agencies, including agencies and State officials responsible for services described in this clause;

(ii) assist Head Start agencies to develop a plan for the provision of full working-day, full calendar year services for children enrolled in Head Start programs who need such services;

(iii) assist Head Start agencies to align curricula and assessments used in Head Start programs with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework and, as appropriate, State early learning standards; and

(iv) enable Head Start agencies to better access professional development opportunities for Head Start staff, such as by working with Head Start agencies to enable the agencies to meet the degree requirements described in section 648A(a)(2)(A), including providing distance learning opportunities for Head Start staff, where needed to make higher education more accessible to Head Start staff; and

(v) enable the Head Start agencies to better conduct outreach to eligible families;

(C) promote partnerships between Head Start agencies, State and local governments, and the private sector to help ensure that children from low-income families, who are in Head Start programs or are preschool age, are receiving comprehensive services to prepare the children for elementary school;

(D) consult with the chief State school officer, local educational agencies, and providers of early childhood education and development, at both the State and local levels;

(E) promote partnerships between Head Start agencies, schools, law enforcement, relevant community-based organizations, and substance

abuse and mental health treatment agencies to strengthen family and community environments and to reduce the impact on child development of substance abuse, child abuse, domestic violence, and other high-risk behaviors that compromise healthy development;

(F) promote partnerships between Head Start agencies and other organizations in order to enhance Head Start program quality, including partnerships to promote inclusion of more books in Head Start classrooms;

(G) identify other resources and organizations (both public and private) for the provision of in-kind services to Head Start agencies in the State; and

(H) serve on the State Advisory Council in order to assist the efforts of Head Start agencies to engage in effective coordination and collaboration.

(b)(1)(A) The Governor of the State shall--

(i) designate or establish a council to serve as the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care for children from birth to school entry (in this subchapter referred to as the State Advisory Council'); and

(ii) designate an individual to coordinate activities of the State Advisory Council, as described in subparagraph (D)(i).

(B) The Governor may designate an existing entity in the State to serve as the State Advisory Council, and shall appoint representatives to the State Advisory Council at the Governor's discretion. In designating an existing entity, the Governor shall take steps to ensure that its membership includes, to the extent possible, representatives consistent with subparagraph (C).

(C) Members of the State Advisory Council shall include, to the maximum extent possible--

(i) a representative of the State agency responsible for child care;

(ii) a representative of the State educational agency;

(iii) a representative of local educational agencies;

(iv) a representative of institutions of higher education in the State;

(v) a representative of local providers of early childhood education and development services;

(vi) a representative from Head Start agencies located in the State, including migrant and seasonal Head Start programs and Indian Head Start programs;

(vii) the State Director of Head Start Collaboration;

(viii) a representative of the State agency responsible for programs under section 619 or part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.);

(ix) a representative of the State agency responsible for health or mental health care; and

(x) representatives of other entities determined to be relevant by the Governor of the State.

(D)(i) The State Advisory Council shall, in addition to any responsibilities assigned to the Council by the Governor of the State--

(I) conduct a periodic statewide needs assessment concerning the quality and availability of early childhood education and development programs and services for children from birth to school entry, including an assessment of the availability of high-quality pre-kindergarten services for low-income children in the State;

(II) identify opportunities for, and barriers to, collaboration and coordination among Federally-funded and State-funded child development, child care, and early childhood education programs and services, including collaboration and coordination among State agencies responsible for administering such programs;

(III) develop recommendations for increasing the overall participation of children in existing Federal, State, and local child care and early childhood education programs, including outreach to underrepresented and special populations;

(IV) develop recommendations regarding the establishment of a unified data collection system for public early childhood education and development programs and services throughout the State;

(V) develop recommendations regarding statewide professional development and career advancement plans for early childhood educators in the State;

(VI) assess the capacity and effectiveness of 2- and 4-year public and private institutions of higher education in the State toward supporting the development of early childhood educators, including the extent to which such institutions have in place articulation agreements, professional development and career advancement plans, and practice or internships for students to spend time in a Head Start or pre kindergarten program; and

(VII) make recommendations for improvements in State early learning standards and undertake efforts to develop high-quality comprehensive early learning standards, as appropriate.

(ii) The State Advisory Council shall hold public hearings and provide an opportunity for public comment on the activities described in clause (i). The State Advisory Council shall submit a statewide strategic report addressing the activities described in clause (i) to the State Director of Head Start Collaboration and the Governor of the State.

(iii) After submission of a statewide strategic report under clause (ii), the State Advisory Council shall meet periodically to review any implementation of the recommendations in such report and any changes in State and local needs.

(2)(A) The Secretary shall use the portion reserved under section 640(a)(4)(A)(iii) to award, on a competitive basis, one-time startup grants of not less than \$500,000 to eligible States to enable such States to pay for the Federal share of developing and implementing a plan pursuant to the responsibilities included under paragraph (1)(D)(i). A State that receives funds under this paragraph shall use such funds to facilitate the development or enhancement of high-quality systems of early childhood education and care designed to improve school preparedness through one or more of the following activities--

(i) promoting school preparedness of children from birth through school entry, including activities to encourage families and caregivers to engage in highly interactive, developmentally and age-appropriate activities to improve children's early social, emotional, and cognitive development, support the transition of young children to school, and foster parental and family involvement in the early education of young children;

(ii) supporting professional development, recruitment, and retention initiatives for early childhood educators;

(iii) enhancing existing early childhood education and development programs and services (in existence on the date on which the grant

involved is awarded), including quality improvement activities authorized under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990; and

(iv) carrying out other activities consistent with the State's plan and application, pursuant to subparagraph (B).

(B) To be eligible to receive a grant under this paragraph, a State shall prepare and submit to the Secretary a plan and application, for a 3-year period, at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary shall require, including--

(i) the statewide strategic report described in paragraph (1)(D)(ii), including a description of the State Advisory Council's responsibilities under paragraph (1)(D)(i);

(ii) a description, for each fiscal year, of how the State will make effective use of funds available under this paragraph, with funds described in subparagraph (C), to create an early childhood education and care system, by developing or enhancing programs and activities consistent with the statewide strategic report described in paragraph (1)(D)(i);

(iii) a description of the State early learning standards and the State's goals for increasing the number of children entering kindergarten ready to learn;

(iv) information identifying the agency or joint interagency office, and individual, designated to carry out the activities under this paragraph, which may be the individual designated under paragraph (1)(A)(ii); and

(v) a description of how the State plans to sustain activities under this paragraph beyond the grant period.

(C) The Federal share of the cost of activities proposed to be conducted under subparagraph (A) shall be 30 percent, and the State shall provide the non-Federal share.

(D) Funds made available under this paragraph shall be used to supplement, and not supplant, other Federal, State, and local funds expended to carry out activities related to early childhood education and care in the State.

(E) Not later than 18 months after the date a State receives a grant under this paragraph, the State shall submit an interim report to the Secretary. A State

that receives a grant under this paragraph shall submit a final report to the Secretary at the end of the grant period. Each report shall include--

(i) a description of the activities and services carried out under the grant, including the outcomes of such activities and services in meeting the needs described in the periodic needs assessment and statewide strategic report;

(ii) information about how the State used such funds to meet the goals of this subsection through activities to develop or enhance high-quality systems of early childhood education and care, increase effectiveness of delivery systems and use of funds, and enhance existing programs and services;

(iii) information regarding the remaining needs described in the periodic statewide needs assessment and statewide strategic report that have not yet been addressed by the State; and

(iv) any other information that the Secretary may require.

(F) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to provide the State Advisory Council with authority to modify, supersede, or negate the requirements of this subchapter.