

REGION VI HEAD START ASSOCIATION BOARD

Quarterly Reporting Form



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Position: New Mexico HSCO Director

Organization: New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department

Reporting Period: August – October, 2024

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Correspondence:

- Regional Office
- Region VI Collaboration Directors
- NMHSA
- Local Colleges and Universities
- State Department Staff

Content Topics:

1. Collaborate with state systems to align early care and education services and supports for children and families prenatally to age five

- **Grants to support the conversion of Head Start slots to Early Head Start slots**

This is a PDG funded deliverable that is currently in development. The HSCO has reached out to the NMHSA to determine which grant recipients are in the conversion process, and has also analyzed feedback solicited from grant recipients to determine need and how to structure this grant. While facilities are a noted challenge, the federal funds cannot be used in this way beyond minor repairs. The grant recipients also identified a need for professional development so the Department will begin looking at ways to address this.

- **Blended PreK and Head Start enrollment**

The Department began encouraging the use of blended funding for PreK and Head Start to align services and support families. This was accomplished by integrating NM PreK into existing Head Start programs. This resulted in increases in over 50 Head Start classrooms.

2. Work with state efforts to collect and use data on early childhood programs to guide decision-making and improve child and family outcomes.

- **Needs Assessment**

The annual Head Start Needs Assessment will be completed by June 30 and submitted with the renewal narrative and budget. We have engaged in some preliminary conversations with UNM's Cradle to Career Policy Institute who have helped provide this Assessment in previous years.

- **Annual Outcomes Report**

The ECECD Annual Outcomes Report is mandated by state law. The data in this report captures the progress that ECECD continues to make to help build and support the state's early childhood system. The report is due in December, and Head Start and Early Head Start data was provided to the ECECD Data Assessment Bureau that included Funding amounts, the number of children and professionals, and the education levels of Head Start staff. Also included were the numbers of ECECD scholarships which were awarded to Head Start professionals, wage supplements, parity, and the total number of memberships, and professional development courses Head Start staff completed on Quorum, the state's online professional development platform.

- **Kid's Count Data report**

Head Start data was collected to help inform the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Kid's Count Data Report. This data in this report helps raise visibility for state and national needs surrounding children's well-being. The Head Start data provided for this report included the number of children age 3 and 4 who are enrolled in preschool through Head Start in New Mexico. This data is provided from the collaboration office to ECECD's Data Assessment and Research Bureau in addition to other early childhood system level data. The Data Assessment Bureau then passes that information on to New Mexico Voices for Children, a local advocacy organization focused on policy advocacy and research to improve the well-being of children and families in New Mexico.

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

- **Educator pay parity**

ECECD supports state experienced and credentialed PreK, Head Start, and Infant and Toddler educators with pay parity in alignment to their counterparts in public school. In the reporting period, \$86,261.24 in pay parity funds were awarded to 63 Head Start staff.

- **Scholarships**

ECECD's Scholarship Program makes it possible for early childhood professionals to afford the expense of taking coursework that leads to credentials and degrees. 100% of books and tuition is covered by the Scholarship after any financial aid, local or regional scholarships, have been applied. Other scholarships or financial aid eligibility do not impact eligibility for the ECECD scholarship. In this reporting period, over \$1,000,000 in scholarship funds were awarded with 223 scholarships being awarded to Head Start and Tribal Head Start staff.

- **Wage Supplements**

The Wage Supplement Program provides education-based supplemental wages to early childhood educators who earn less than \$18/per hour and work as teachers, teacher's assistants, or family childcare home professionals with children from birth to age five. The program is education-based and includes ten incremental levels; the more education one attains, the more supplement one can receive. During the reporting period, \$21,831.33 in Wage Supplement funds were paid to 29 individuals, and 9 of them were Head Start staff.

- **Bilingual Incentive**

A one-time payment of \$1,500 is available to all early childhood professionals who meet certain eligibility criteria and have received a certification for demonstrating they are bilingual. In the reporting period, \$69,810.44 in bilingual incentive funding was awarded to 46 individuals, and 7 of those are identified as Head Start staff.

- **Competencies Update**

New Mexico's Common Core Content & Competencies for Early Care Educators were last updated in 2011. The Competencies encompass a career lattice that supports the professional development for providers who work in

systems that serve children birth through third grade and their families. The levels of the Common Core Content and Competencies correspond to levels of certification and licensure available from the state of New Mexico. ECECD has partnered with The New Mexico Center of Excellence for Early Childhood Education Western New Mexico University to revise the Competencies to ensure that the content is relevant and responsive to current best practice around teaching and learning with an emphasis on cultural and language sustainability, birth-to-age eight development and learning, special education, and inclusion. This work is also designed to align the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)'s work to develop a common set of competencies via NAEYC's Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators. This 18-month project began over the summer, and has engaged New Mexico's Early Childhood Higher Education Task Force, and ECECD's Quality Initiatives Bureau which is overseen by the HSCO Director.

- **Early Learning Guidelines Revision**

New Mexico currently has a set of Early Learning Guidelines and in partnership with the University Colorado Denver's School of Education and Human Development, will update these to Early Learning **Standards** for children birth through age five. With the understanding that "Standards" are designed to describe what children should know and be able to do, this updated document will provide guidance about development and learning for young children. New Mexico stakeholders and end users of this important tool, including members of the New Mexico Head Start Association have been given an initial update of the process, and will remain involved in the feedback loops, as well as survey and engagement groups to ensure that the end result is reflective of the voices of New Mexico's educators.

4. Coordinate with school systems to ensure continuity and alignment across programs, as appropriate.

- **Innovative Preschool Special education Pilot**

ECECD has initiated an innovative preschool special education project funded by PDG and designed to address inclusion and to ensure that all children, including PreK students with disabilities, have access to high-quality early childhood education. This pilot project funding opportunity will provide Basic (half-day) state-funded PreK dollars to support inclusion in NM PreK classrooms in the Roswell Independent School District (RISD). This funding will help RISD provide the necessary resources and support to create inclusive classrooms that benefit all children, including those with disabilities and typically developing peers.

5. State and regional priorities as needed

- **Meetings, Conferences, and Events**

- **NMHSA Monthly Board Meetings**
 - January 18, 2024
 - February 29, 2024
 - April 25, 2024
 - June 27, 2024
 - August 29, 2024
- **Office of Head Start Collaboration Office Meeting**
 - February 26-28, 2024 Crystal City, VA
- **National Head Start Conference**
 - April 15 – 18, 2024
- **Strategic Planning Retreat**
 - May 13 – 14, 2024

New Mexico's Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) and the New Mexico Head Start Association convened leadership from Head Start and Early Head Start programs from across the state, both Regional and Tribal Head Start, for two days of discussion and planning, sharing perspectives, exchanging ideas, and providing input that will

shape the state's prenatal-to-five early childhood system. This retreat marked the first time that the State of New Mexico's early childhood system and Head Start grant recipients have met to strategize on how to strengthen collaboration. New Mexico's Lieutenant Governor, and Head Start Alum, Howie Morales gave opening remarks, and Director Khari Garvin also joined us virtually to deliver a motivating and encouraging keynote. The retreat's theme, *Leading the Nation, Building the Future TOGETHER!*, highlighted key partnerships at the local, state, regional, and national level. In attendance were more than 100 Head Start leaders, local early childhood system building coalitions, and the New Mexico Tribal Advisory Coalition.

- **NAEYC Professional Leadership Institute**
 - June 1 - 5, 2024

ECECD is using PDG funds to support 10 New Mexico Institutes of Higher Education that offer early childhood associate and bachelor degrees to obtain accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) for their teacher preparation programs. The PLI Conference hosted by NAEYC provided an opportunity for guidance, technical assistance, workshops, and networking for the IHEs to continue this work in order to meet their goals. This helps support the state's established articulation agreement for common course numbering and transfer of credits for early childhood programs.

- **Governor Lujan Grisham's Early Childhood Summit**
 - July 24, 2024

The State's Governor, Michelle Lujan Grisham, and nearly 200 individuals that included tribal governors to legislators to advocates and teachers gathered to discuss Early Childhood Education's future in New Mexico Wednesday. The Governor opened the morning by sharing her plan that includes better compensation for educators at all levels and better access to afterschool and summer programs. The Head Start Collaboration Office Director was invited, as well as the NMHSA leadership team for a day of strategic planning, collaboration, and learning. In her remarks, the Governor stressed the importance of Head Start as an integral part of the state's early childhood system of support, but noted that it needed to be in solidarity and collaboration with other existing systems. She said, "... the people in this room who will not rest until we are clear that we will not lose one more language or have that risk in one more place anywhere in our state because it was all fractured: a little first sovereign nation and Head Start, little over here in a small community. Those days in New Mexico are gone. I declare success."

- **Partner Roundtable**
 - July 27, 2024

As part of ECECD Cabinet Secretary, Elizabeth Groginsky's plan to establish a quarterly gathering of all early childhood partnerships, a Round Table was held that included universities, research partners, state department divisions and bureaus, Head Start, Tribal partners, and more. The purpose was for discussing ECECD strategic priorities, and to introduce partners to one another for a deeper level of engagement, awareness, and mutual support.

- **Tribal Head Start Meeting**
 - October 1, 2024

After the Head Start Planning Retreat, Tribal Head Start partners expressed an interest in meeting together on a regular basis having recognized the value in the collaboration opportunities among themselves. ECECD's Assistant Secretary of Native American Early Childhood Education and Care, Cotillion Sneddy helped organize the kickoff event, and from there, Tribal Head Start Staff will continue the meetings moving forward. The state's Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC) coordinator, joined to share about the Department's initiative, SEED which stands for

Social and Emotional Early Development. The Head Start Collaboration Office Director also oversees this role, so there are strong opportunities for cross-sector support.

- **Budget**

The FY25 HSCO Budget Narrative was written to support necessary travel for conferences and events, as well as direct supports including another annual retreat event in the Spring, a contractor for the annual needs assessment, a potential support person in coordinating the association agendas and bridging additional collaboration between the Department and NMHSA. The HSCO also agreed to use a portion of funds to sponsor the annual Region VI Conference which is being held in Albuquerque, New Mexico this year.

- **Advisory Councils and Subcommittees**

The HSCO Director in New Mexico is appointed to represent Head Start in two statewide advisory councils. One is the Early Care and Education Advisory Council, which New Mexico is required by federal law to have.

The Advisory Council has created 4 subcommittees, and the HSCO Director is a member of the Program Quality and Accountability Subcommittee. Some of the work this subcommittee helps inform includes the priorities of the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) Redesign, and the update to the state's Early Learning Standards.

The HSCO Director also sits as a subject matter expert for the Early Childhood Professional subcommittee. Some of this subcommittee's work includes the state's new Professional Development Information System (PDIS) which will house the state's professional development goals, plans, and certificates, as well as house the state's workforce registry. The subcommittee will also support the state's recruitment campaign, Developing Futures (www.nmfutures.org), Apprenticeships, and a study of the infant and toddler pay parity program, which is also the way Early Head Start educators can qualify for pay parity pending specific eligibility requirements.

The HSCO is also appointed to the federally mandated Interagency Coordinating Council that advises and assists the Department in addressing the needs of families of infants and toddlers with or at risk for developmental delays, or with developmental disabilities. In this council, the HSCO Director has determined to support and represent Head Start on a subcommittee around workforce.

Board Action Items: *Can someone please share the calendar invitation to any required board meetings so I can plan accordingly? Please also share any documents outlining expectations and required reporting to ensure I am submitting in a timely manner.*

Report Attachments (if any):

Signature(s): _____

Date: 10/20/2024