

## Head Start Collaboration Office Priorities 2015

Head Start Collaboration Offices (HSCO) exist “to facilitate collaboration among Head Start agencies...and entities that carry out activities designed to benefit low-income children from birth to school entry, and their families<sup>1</sup>. They provide a structure and a process for the Office of Head Start (OHS) to work and partner with state agencies and local entities to leverage their common interests around young children and their families to formulate, implement, and improve state and local policy and practices. To be effective, the HSCO director must hold a full-time position of sufficient authority and access to ensure collaboration is effective and involves a range of state agencies<sup>2</sup>.

### **OHS has prioritized the work of the HSCO to guide their work. The six priorities include:**

1. Partner with state child care systems emphasizing the Early Head Start – Child Care (EHS-CC) Partnership Initiatives
2. Work with state efforts to collect data regarding early childhood programs and child outcomes
3. Support the expansion and access of high quality, workforce, and career development opportunities for staff
4. Collaboration with State Quality Rating Improvement Systems (QRIS)
5. Work with state school systems to ensure continuity between Head Start and Kindergarten Entrance Assessment (KEA)
6. Any additional regional priorities

The methods by which the HSCO coordinate and lead efforts for diverse entities to work together include:

**Communication:** Convene stakeholder groups for information sharing, planning, and partnering and serve as conduit of information between regional offices, the state, and local early childhood systems.

**Access:** Facilitate Head Start agencies’ access to, and utilization of, appropriate entities so Head Start children and families can secure needed services and critical partnerships are formalized.

**Systems:** Support policy, planning, partnerships, and implementation of cross agency state systems for early childhood, including the State Advisory Council, that include and serve the Head Start community.

<sup>1</sup> Head Start Act Section 642(B)(a)(2)(A)

<sup>2</sup> Head Start Act Section 642(B)(a)(3)(B)