

Definition of Professional Development in Head Start Act, 2007

Sec. 637. [42 U.S.C. 9832] Definitions

(21) The term ‘professional development’ means high-quality activities that will improve the knowledge and skills of Head Start teachers and staff, as relevant to their roles and functions, in program administration and the provision of services and instruction, as appropriate, in a manner that improves service delivery to enrolled children and their families, including activities that—

(A) are part of a sustained effort to improve overall program quality and outcomes for enrolled children and their families;

(B) are developed or selected with extensive participation of administrators and teachers from Head Start programs;

(C) are developmentally appropriate for the children being served;

(D) include instruction in ways that Head Start teachers and staff may work more effectively with parents, as appropriate;

(E) are designed to give Head Start teachers and staff the knowledge and skills to provide instruction and appropriate support services to children of diverse backgrounds, as appropriate;

(F) may include a 1-day or short-term workshop or conference, if the workshop or conference is consistent with the goals in the professional development plan described in section 648A(f) and will be delivered by an institution of higher education or other entity, with expertise in delivering training in early childhood development, training in family support, and other assistance designed to improve the delivery of Head Start services; and

(G) in the case of teachers, assist teachers with—

(i) the acquisition of the content knowledge and teaching strategies needed to provide effective instruction and other school readiness services regarding early language and literacy, early mathematics, early science, cognitive skills, approaches to learning, creative arts, physical health and development, and social and emotional development linked to school readiness;

(ii) meeting the requirements in paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 648A(a), as appropriate;

(iii) improving classroom management skills, as appropriate;

(iv) advancing their understanding of effective instructional strategies that are—

(I) based on scientifically valid research; and

(II) aligned with—

(aa) the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework developed by the Secretary and, as appropriate, State early learning standards; and

(bb) curricula, ongoing assessments, and other instruction and services, designed to help meet the standards described in section 641A(a)(1);

(v) acquiring the knowledge and skills to provide instruction and appropriate language and support services to increase the English language skills of limited English proficient children, as appropriate; or

(vi) methods of teaching children with disabilities, as appropriate.

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