

**HEAD START
TRIBAL CONSULTATION**

**February 15, 2012
Petoskey, Michigan
Region V**

DETAILED FINAL REPORT

Presented by:
Yvette Sanchez Fuentes, Director
Office of Head Start

Introduction

Pursuant to the Department of Health and Human Services Tribal Consultation Policy and Section 640 (1)(4) of the Head Start Act, in 2012 the Office of Head Start (OHS) is convening six Tribal Consultation sessions for the purpose of better meeting the needs of American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) children and families, taking into consideration funding allocations, distribution formulas, and other issues affecting the delivery of Head Start services in their geographic locations.

OHS is committed to meaningful consultation with Tribes through which elected officials and other authorized representatives of the tribal governments have the opportunity to provide meaningful and timely input prior to the development of policies or regulations, the interpretation of existing regulations, or other policies or procedures that affect Indian Tribes. OHS is committed to seeking input from AI/AN governing bodies, leaders, and individuals designated by tribal leaders and incorporating such input into its decision-making process related to all matters that significantly affect Tribes and AI/AN children and families.

The 2012 schedule is as follows:

February 15, 2012	Petoskey, Michigan
March 22, 2012	Phoenix, Arizona
April 3, 2012	Billings, Montana
May 4, 2012	Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
October 15, 2012	Portland, Oregon
October 17, 2012	Anchorage, Alaska

By Notice in the Federal Register, dated February 1, 2012, OHS notified AI/AN leaders of a Tribal Consultation for Tribes in Region V on February 15, 2012, in Petoskey, Michigan, immediately prior to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services consultation on February 16, 2012. The following Report reflects comments and recommendations raised by AI/AN leaders and representatives; comments and responses from OHS; and areas identified as requiring additional follow-up as discussed at the Tribal Consultation. (Separate reports for each Tribal Consultation will be issued following each of the dates listed above.)

Participants

Office of Head Start: Ross Weaver, Director, Quality Assurance Division; Fran Majestic, Data & Information Technology Lead; Kay Willmoth, Regional Program Manager, Region V; WJ Strickland, Senior Program Specialist, Region XI. Additional OHS staff participated via conference call. (See Appendix for detailed listing.)

Tribal leaders and Tribal representatives: (See Appendix for detailed listing.)

Introductory Remarks

The Tribal Consultation session began with opening remarks from Director Yvette Sanchez Fuentes via video.

Discussion/Comments of AI/AN and OHS Participants

Ross Weaver, Director, Quality Assurance Division, extended Director Sanchez Fuentes' regrets for being unable to attend in person. He also affirmed the Director's goal that Tribal Consultations will improve communication and relationships with AI/AN grantees and support programs in providing improved services to Native children and families.

Mr. Weaver acknowledged the written testimony submitted in advance from: Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, Bad River Band of Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians, and Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. He invited the participants from those Tribes to present key messages from their written testimony. Representatives from other Tribes were also invited to speak.

A. Monitoring Reviews – AI/AN Participant Comments

- Reviewers often do not understand tribal communities. Some are insensitive. One team leader asked the Sault Ste. Marie Tribal Chairman to stop talking. Another observed a classroom and commented on how cute it was that staff spoke “gibberish” to the children when they were speaking Ojibwe. In those two incidents, none of the review team members seemed familiar with tribal programs. The Tribe's most recent review was led by an AI/AN Program Specialist, and it went very well.
- It is important that OHS understands tribal concerns because they are very similar. Reviewers are often not familiar with tribal issues and have little experience.

Monitoring Reviews – AI/AN Recommendations to OHS

- Allow the assigned Program Specialist or other Federal staff from the AI/AN Regional Office to lead review teams.
- Assign reviewers who are accustomed to working with Tribes so that they can explain to other review team members how Tribes work.
- Until reviewer training can be improved, consider inviting a Head Start Director from another AI/AN program to serve as onsite consultant during a review.
- Improve recruitment of potential reviewers for the AI/AN programs.

Monitoring Reviews – OHS Responses

- Inappropriate behavior is taken seriously. The examples are appalling and inexcusable. If inappropriate behavior occurs, programs should notify the Central Office immediately through their Program Specialist, as well as Ross Weaver and Adia Brown, so that the issue can be addressed while the team is still onsite.

- For years, OHS has had the policy that a review team should not be led by the assigned Program Specialist partly because of an appearance of conflict of interest. Because there are not enough AI/AN Program Specialists to lead all the reviews, Program Specialists from the other Regional Offices have also led reviews at AI/AN programs. OHS is trying to recruit more reviewers from AI/AN and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS). Programs are encouraged to submit names of potential reviewers.
- The Program Specialist and Review Team Leader have the opportunity to discuss issues prior to the review. It is an issue of cultural sensitivity as well as cultural competence. OHS will explore options for appropriate training and will consider providing an onsite consultant for each tribal review.

B. Funding Opportunities – AI/AN Participant Comments

- The Bad River Tribe would like long-term funding for expanded Head Start programming rather than the limited-time expansion offered through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The Tribe did not apply for ARRA funding because there was no long-term commitment.

Funding Opportunities – OHS Responses

- ARRA expansion will continue in FY2012; programs with Early Head Start (EHS) expansion will continue at the full 12-month amount that was originally awarded.
- There is an upcoming funding opportunity with the Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (MIECHV), administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration, in collaboration with the Administration for Children and Families. Tribes can propose to use EHS as a model for this program and can propose more than one model to fit their needs.

C. Quarterly Data Collection Sessions – AI/AN Recommendations to OHS

- Explain the purpose of the Quarterly Data Collection Sessions; provide information on what would be collected and how it would be used.

Quarterly Data Collection Sessions – OHS Responses

- OHS does not view these calls as data collection but as calls for the purposes of supporting grantees' School Readiness activities and identifying related Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) needs. These support calls are being made to all grantees. [Editor's Note: Director Sanchez Fuentes issued a letter on February 22, 2012, to explain the purpose. See Attachment 1.] These sessions are unrelated to the Designation Renewal System (DRS). OHS wants to see where Head Start stands with regard to School Readiness at the grantee, Regional Office, and National Centers level in order to see how OHS can provide programs with the support they need in the formulation of goals and aggregation of data. One challenge for programs is how to engage with local education agencies (LEAs) as they align their goals. OHS is exploring how it can facilitate this process.
- Risk Management Meetings (RMMs) have been scaled back because OHS decided that, in their current form as universal pre-application meetings, they

would be more useful on an as-needed basis as determined by Regional Offices and programs. At the local level, programs have systems that provide ongoing monitoring. If your systems are in place, you are mitigating risk. From the risk management perspective, OHS often looked at what was going wrong. The movement toward 360 Oversight maximizes communication with grantees that examine what is going right in terms of strength and addresses challenges as they occur.

- Program Specialists conduct more frequent, regular, and ongoing calls with Grantees. These ongoing calls replace the once-a-year pre-funding application call with more regular two-way communications that have the purpose of jointly identifying program strengths and innovations to build upon areas needing improvement and issues requiring clarification and guidance from OHS or the Regional Office.

D. Communication – AI/AN Participant Comments

- Timely, accurate communication from the Central Office is lacking. The Federal record keeping system often necessitates that Tribes duplicate efforts. The AI/AN newsletter is not adequate when Tribes need greater guidance from the Acting Regional Program Manager.
- A request from OHS to Tribal Leaders may not be forwarded to anyone else, not because the Tribal Leaders do not care, but because they receive so much information. This makes it difficult for AI/AN programs to respond to OHS in a timely manner.
- All correspondence sent from the Tribe to OHS are now cc'd to the Program Specialist to ensure that the original documents are not lost in the Central Office and that the Tribe is credited with submitting documents on time.

Communication – AI/AN Recommendations to OHS

- Streamline the communication between Program Specialists and Grants Specialists to reduce duplicate requests for information.
- Establish a permanent, single point of contact for issues in which all tribal programs are affected.

Communication – OHS Responses

- We also recognize that Tribal Leadership is the point of contact for all sovereign tribal governments and tribal consortia; therefore, it is our practice to address communications to Tribal Leadership. OHS follows the practice of cc'ing communications to AI/AN Program Directors as it relates to program and funding. Some communications require submissions with original signatures, and this can cause delays given all the other business that Tribal Leadership manage.
- OHS will look into standardizing communications to routinely include the Head Start Director.

E. Tribal Consultations – AI/AN Participant Comments

- The sessions have not been productive, consistent, or timely in notifying grantees. Not all announcements are in the Federal Register, and not all reports are out in 90 days.
- Sault Ste. Marie appreciates Director Sanchez Fuentes' efforts in providing written responses to issues expressed in 2010 and the actions that OHS has taken to eliminate problems with Non-Federal Share.

Tribal Consultations – AI/AN Recommendations to OHS

- Improve the consultation process so that issues affecting AI/AN are openly discussed and resolved in a timely manner.
- Develop an OHS Tribal Consultation policy.
- Provide 60–90 day notification for Tribal Consultations to allow Tribal Leaders to clear their busy schedules and also to allow participants to make affordable travel arrangements.

Tribal Consultations – OHS Responses

- OHS aligned the OHS consultation with the HHS consultation, which impacted the timeline for notification. Future consultation notifications will be more timely.
- OHS recognizes opportunities for improving the OHS Tribal Consultation planning and process and is working to do that. OHS appreciates that its efforts to report out the results of the 2010 Tribal Consultations proved to be valuable and that Report is being used as the template for subsequent OHS Tribal Consultation Reports.
- The 2011 report is in clearance and should be released soon. It is OHS' intention to issue each 2012 Tribal Consultation Report no later than 90 days after the conclusion of each consultation meeting in keeping with Sec. 640 (l)(4)(D) of the Head Start Act.
- Reports will be housed under “Monitoring and Reports” on the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC). (See <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/mr>)

F. Designation Renewal System (DRS) – OHS Comments

- Head Start Act requires Head Start agencies to be awarded five-year grants instead of grants for indefinite periods. (See Sec. 638 of the Head Start Act). The Act also required the Secretary to develop and implement a system of “designation renewal” to determine whether an individual Head Start/EHS agency is eligible to receive a five-year grant automatically or, instead, must compete for renewal of its designation as a Head Start/EHS agency through submission of an application for funding in response to a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA). However, the Head Start Act creates a unique process for AI/AN Head Start/EHS agencies in recognition of the unique role of AI/AN Head Start/EHS providers within their Native communities.
- New regulations at 45 CFR 1307 establish rules implementing the OHS Designation Renewal System. 45 CFR 1307.3 describes seven DRS conditions that make a Head Start/EHS agency ineligible for an automatic five-year grant:

1. One or more deficiencies on a single monitoring review from June 12, 2009.
 2. Average scores falling below established thresholds on any of the three CLASS pre-k domains OR score on any of the three CLASS pre-k domains is in the lowest 10 percent nationally. Related to the latter, the lowest 10% will not be identified until all the CLASS reviews are completed by end of May or early June.
 3. Lack of established School Readiness goals as demonstrated by the requirements at 45 CFR 1307.3 (b)(1).
 4. Revocation of license to operate by a State or local licensing agency from June 12, 2009, where the revocation has not been overturned or withdrawn prior to issuance of a relevant FOA.
 5. A final determination of suspension by OHS since June 12, 2009.
 6. Debarment by other Federal/State agency or disqualification from Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).
 7. Determination by the responsible HHS Official that the agency is at risk of failing to continue functioning as a going concern based on reviews of agency audits.
- If an agency meets one of the seven conditions described in 45 CFR 1307.3, it cannot receive an automatic five-year Head Start/EHS grant. Such a determination is not an adverse action to the program.
 - If you are interested in reading the rationale, basis, and purpose of the DRS final regulation, please refer to the Preamble of the Final Rule. The Regional Office is happy to direct AI/AN agencies to this resource.
 - CLASS review will remain the same. Scores from Head Start centers will be averaged into composite scores. If a program falls in the lowest 10% nationwide in any of the areas of emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support or if a program did not score the minimum scores (4, 3, and 2 respectively), it will be ineligible for an automatic five-year grant. The highest 90% of programs do not have to re-compete unless they also have minimum scores for each of the three areas. Research shows that programs that are not meeting those minimums are more likely doing harm than helping child development.
 - The lowest 10% will not be identified until all the CLASS reviews are done by end of May or early June. CLASS scores will now be sent independently of the monitoring report. Programs will receive CLASS scores within 30 days of review.
 - CLASS does not apply to EHS. Until there is a validated tool, EHS will be reviewed as it has been in monitoring reviews. The same is true for home-based and locally designed programs.

Designation Renewal System (DRS) – AI/AN Participant Comments

- DRS is not taking into account programs' experience and accountability, such as cases in which programs ask for help but never receive it.
- There is confusion about where Tribes fit into DRS.
- Some reasons for why programs have to re-compete do not seem serious enough to warrant re-competition.

Designation Renewal System (DRS) – AI/AN Recommendations to OHS

- Provide more direct communication from OHS on DRS.
- Appoint the assigned Program Specialist as the Health and Human Services (HHS) official who will determine whether a condition is still present after the improvement plan has been implemented. Include T/TA system in this process.
- Clarify procedures for designation renewal for AI/AN grantees.

Designation Renewal System (DRS) – OHS Responses

- [Editor’s Note: All AI/AN agencies determined not to be eligible for automatic five-year grants were notified by letter dated February 22, 2012.] As part of the statutory process for AI/AN agency DRS, all AI/AN agencies receiving notification letters are entitled to a period of consultation and a period within which to implement a quality improvement plan. As a result of this timeline, no AI/AN agency will be subject to having to possibly submit an application in response to a FOA in this calendar year.
- OHS and the Regional Office are committed to providing direct T/TA and support during development and implementation of the improvement plan.
- Section 1307 states that a non-tribal agency may not receive a grant to carry out an AI/AN Head Start program unless there is no AI/AN agency available. If they are selected, it will only be interim until a tribal agency becomes available. Due to long-established principles of sovereignty, no alternate agency or organization may provide Head Start/EHS services on tribal or Alaska Native land without express authority from AI/AN leadership.
- Programs should continue to do what they do because they believe it would provide the highest quality services. If there are issues that need correcting, fix them not because of an impending review but because they need to be fixed.
- There are a number of resources available from the ECLKC home page that may be useful as AI/AN agencies consider DRS. For example, there is a link on Designation Renewal at <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/hs/dr>. A Tribal Language Preservation Resource is under National Center for Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness (NCCLR) at <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic>. “Understanding and Using the CLASS for Program Improvement” is under National Center for Quality Teaching and Learning (NCQTL) at <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching>. Also ECLKC has a link to “School Readiness” at <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching> which leads to “What’s New in School Readiness.” The ECLKC help desk is available to answer questions. Notify OHS of problems accessing resources.

G. School Readiness – OHS Comments

- Each Head Start agency is required to:
 1. Establish School Readiness goals per the Head Start Act.
 2. Assess individual children’s progress in meeting the goals and individualize services to support each child’s progress.
 3. Aggregate and analyze data to help inform program improvement.

- In thinking about School Readiness, focus on how well children are doing – from the child’s perspective in terms of gains – and focus on parent engagement in terms of supporting families to continue children’s lifelong learning.
- Goals should be focused around the five domains in the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework:
 1. Approaches to learning
 2. Cognition and general knowledge
 3. Language and literacy
 4. Physical development and health
 5. Social and emotional development
- Goals should be observable and measurable. They should be broad statements. One example is “Children will recognize and regulate emotions, attention, and behavior.” Goals should focus on skills and knowledge that children should have when they are in Head Start and transition to public school.
- Once goals are established, programs are expected to:
 1. Make sure goals align with the Framework, state early learning standards as appropriate, and local education agency (LEA) expectations.
 2. Implement a plan for achieving the goals. These plans could focus on professional development for teaching staff; mentor coaching support; teacher qualifications, continuing education; or additional curriculum to supplement the main curriculum.
 3. Assess the child’s progress on an ongoing basis and make sure they are making progress toward those goals. Individual child assessments must be ongoing and must include one or more valid and reliable assessments of a child’s status and progress, including but not limited to direct assessment, structured observations, checklists, staff or parent report measures, and portfolio records or work samples. Use these assessments to individualize activities for the child.
 4. Aggregate and analyze data. Consider what patterns and trends you are experiencing around School Readiness – in groups of children, across groups of children enrolled in specific classrooms, centers, home-based or other options, groups or settings, or other groups of children such as dual language learners, or to provide summary information by specific domains of development. Use the data to inform program improvement and design.

School Readiness – AI/AN Participant Comments

- Goals have to be broad because the data change so often.
- It is critical to explain to parents why goals are important, the significance of where their child stands, and the direction in which the program would like the child to progress. Parent education may take years.
- Programs must educate parents about School Readiness goals in a way that meets all their levels of education and understanding.
- Programs need to partner with other agencies to develop a community wraparound approach. Indian children are often raised in extended family groups. We may be directing the wrong caregiver (mother vs. grandmother). Consider the housing and resources, food insecurities, and financial issues at home that could

cause toxic stress on the child, which could impact emotional development at a young age. How are children raised in the context of community? What are the cultural values of the community that drive the way children are raised? Goals are easy, but we need answers/tools to achieve these goals.

- Bad River is working jointly with the regional Head Start grantee to formulate one set of goals for School Readiness for the school district since the children will go to the same public school. In developing the goals with the LEA, the LEA was more concerned about social and emotional development than education. They felt that if children come to school with understanding of routines and rules, the school could teach them.

School Readiness – AI/AN Recommendations to OHS

- Clarify how much School Readiness progress is enough.
- Clarify how formal School Readiness plan must be.

School Readiness – OHS Responses

- The intent is for programs to have the information they need to know how children are progressing. If you and/or parents are not satisfied with children's progress, how do you use this information to make changes in your design, support teaching staff, develop materials and curriculum supports to help children move ahead? OHS is not requiring children be at some norm, just that they are achieving progress.
- School Readiness goals should be established in concert with the parents.
- School Readiness is not just plans, but making sure you have actual written goals.
- Programs may select one or more valid and reliable assessment tools that best meet their community's needs. The *Head Start Program Performance Standards* require that this be done in a specified time and that the tool be a validated reliable assessment tool.
- Programs can articulate the goals and progress in their annual report. The annual reports are not just for OHS to see how programs are doing. They are for the community to see how well you are doing and can serve as an entry point for communicating with your community.
- OHS is working with the National Center for Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness (NCCLR) to develop a hands-on tool specifically designed for AI/AN programs to support individual Tribes and Alaska Natives to connect their cultural, traditional skills, values, beliefs, and life ways to the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework. This tool is called *Making It Work!* and was originally commissioned by the Regional Office to support AI/AN grantees' understanding of the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework and its connection to school readiness.

H. Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) – AI/AN Participant Comments

- During FY 2004–09 when T/TA was provided by the Academy for Educational Development (AED), Oneida worked closely with the local specialist. After the transition to ICF in FY 2010, the new local specialist had little contact with the program. In FY 2011, Oneida had no contact with a T/TA specialist until August.

He was not well-versed in tribal programming. When he visited the program, he went directly to the Tribal Council and not to the Head Start Director, which was embarrassing for the program. Oneida's strength is based on its T/TA. To be successful, the program looks to OHS and its peers.

- AI/AN has been without T/TA for six months. There have been three contractors in 12 years. There is lack of continuity. The stronger the relationship with T/TA, the more beneficial the T/TA.
- Staff at Mille Lacs need recertification as CLASS observers. This is typically provided by the T/TA contractor. There is concern about re-competition without proper access to T/TA. CLASS is not culturally relevant. Staff/teachers feel teaching language is restricted in the CLASS model because constant interaction is required in CLASS. But in their culture, staff/teachers prefer to listen and observe. The program would like to hire staff who are from the community and have cultural knowledge. The CLASS model makes that difficult.
- In Indian country, it would be good if educators could be better trained about child development, including social and language development, so they could recognize when a child might have developmental delays requiring a referral and depending on the outcome, requiring an intervention, such as physical or occupational therapy. Tribes are already good at making sure children get dental/medical visits.

Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) – AI/AN Recommendations to OHS

- Include Tribes in the selection process for a T/TA contractor to ensure that the contractor is well-versed in how tribal communities and programs work and that the local providers are prepared to address needs.
- Introduce the new T/TA system to all programs via a Webcast. Introduce new T/TA providers to their assigned tribal programs via a Webcast.
- Use T/TA dollars for training tribal programs instead of training new T/TA contractors every four years.
- Design a T/TA system that is relevant for Tribes.
- Clarify the role of the National Centers.
- Provide additional training for staff to recognize developmental delays.

Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) – OHS Responses

- The T/TA available to AI/AN agencies and programs is based on a network of supports to grantees. This T/TA network is made up of:
 1. Head Start/EHS agency direct funding for T/TA in their grant awards.
 2. Head Start National Centers.
 3. T/TA Centers comprised of contracted Early Childhood Education (ECE) Specialists and Grantee Specialists.All of this is in addition to the direct and ongoing support provided by assigned Program Specialists.
- ECE Specialists will focus on School Readiness, classroom instruction, and child development services, while Grantee Specialists will focus on issues such as noncompliance and deficiencies identified in monitoring reports.

- OHS recognizes Tribes' concern about those providing T/TA support being aware and respectful of how Tribes operate and their heritage and culture.
- The T/TA network has six National Centers. Contact information can be found on ECLKC at <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system>. National Centers develop tools/resources to support grantees.
- Region XI and Region XII T/TA and Collaboration Office contract was recently awarded to FHI Development 360, LLC [See Attachment 2]. This contract is to provide T/TA services for Regions XI and XII and to support the Head Start State Collaboration Offices (HSSCO) for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start and American Indian/Alaska Native Head Start. ICFi has since filed a protest with the Government Accountability Office (GAO) regarding this award. A stop work order has been issued, and therefore at this time and until the matter is resolved, FHI360 will not be providing any T/TA and HSSCO services [See Attachment 3]. Public information regarding this protest is posted on GAO's Web site at <http://www.gao.gov/search?q=B-406062>.
- Please continue to submit T/TA requests directly to your Program Specialists. OHS will be providing services on a limited basis through the use of Federal staff and the T/TA National Centers.

I. Teacher Qualifications – AI/AN Participant Comments

- Sault Ste. Marie has been very proactive in getting opportunities for BAs and has found outside funding for tuition-free college courses for AAs. Three out of five teachers have earned AAs; the other two are currently enrolled in AA programs. Though the Head Start Act states 50% nationally need a BA, the Tribe is hearing that the 50% must be met at the program level. There are concerns that once teachers earn their degrees, they will leave for higher wages.
- Mille Lacs has two staff members with 10+ years of experience and MAs in education, but not ECE. The program was forced to pay for these individuals to earn their CDAs. The rule is not working for rural areas. In seven years, the program has been able to hire only one person who already had a CDA and one person with an ECE degree. The program has relationships with local colleges – tribal colleges, community colleges, and technical schools.
- Tribes would prefer to hire from the community and grow from within rather than casting a wide net for individuals with BAs.
- One Tribe has an agreement with community college. For an AA, the Tribe pays \$10/credit and \$30 registration fee. Tuition is waived for employees taking online classes. That waived tuition can then be used as in-kind. It is difficult at the BA level. One university will accept 100% of the AA credit from the community college for an online BA, but it is not an ECE-specific degree.

Teacher Qualifications – AI/AN Recommendations to OHS

- Clarify how the rule can be interpreted for AI/AN and how programs can determine what other education as acceptable.
- Provide funding for additional wages for staff who earn higher credentials.
- Allocate funding for staff compensation in the President's 2013 budget.
- Clarify the coursework equivalent for ECE degree.

Teacher Qualifications – OHS Responses

- The 50% requirement for a BA is a *national* requirement. It is meant to get as many people qualified as possible.
- Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) is not going to stem the tide of staff who want to leave for higher wages when they earn higher credentials.
- OHS understands that AI/AN programs face issues outside the norm. Having staff with higher degrees is not the only way to deliver high-quality services.
- For the sake of monitoring, consider whether all teaching staff have a professional development plan. If they do not have required qualifications, is it being addressed through an individual staff development plan? Where are they on that plan and how is it being supported? If programs feel that staff have met qualifications, articulate that to the review team. Noncompliance is not determined onsite during reviews.
- ECE is still a relatively new field. Now states are offering credentials. There are so many college programs that offer different coursework. It is nearly impossible for the Federal office to determine the equivalent of a major in ECE college by college. Grantees need to make these determinations. It is important for grantees to figure out why you chose to hire a person and what their path is for professional development. The goal is for teaching staff to know what they are doing and know how to be appropriate with strategies for very young children and their families.
- Every grantee has access to all Program Information Report (PIR) data. Last year, PIR showed that 2% of teachers in preschool center-based AI/AN Head Start have an advanced degree in ECE or higher; 24% have at least a BA in ECE; 38% have an AA, and 27% have CDAs. It is important that all staff are in some sort of training.
- With EHS, there is no waiver. Emphasis is on staff development. In 2013, preschool assistant teachers need at least a CDA or equivalent.

J. Expanded Early Head Start – OHS Comments

- Programs can speak to their Program Specialist about transferring funds from Head Start to EHS. The programs would have to decide whether to give up Head Start slots if services for pregnant women, infants, and toddlers are a greater need in their community as determined through community assessment and based on tribal values. There is a tradeoff if you have a waiting list for Head Start.

K. 2012 Budget – OHS Comments

- The budget includes \$409M increase for Head Start programs for FY2012 (October 1, 2011 through September 30, 2012). Out of that increase, the largest portion, \$340M, will be used to make permanent the ARRA expansion.
- Budget also includes funds for small COLA increase of 0.72%. This is meant to support rising costs in programs. Each staff member would get an increased salary rate. Programs could use the rest of money for other rising costs such as insurance, supplies, and utilities.

- The remainder of the budget increase includes \$14.5M for T/TA. One-half goes to grantees. This includes grantees that receive expansion funding for Head Start/EHS. Every program operating EHS will get slight adjustment in T/TA for EHS because the base funding is being raised.
- EHS expansion is now included in the current base. COLA will be calculated on the new figure.
- For 2013, there are cuts in the President's proposed budget for Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and CSBG (Community Service Block Grant). For Head Start, the President is proposing \$86M increase with partial COLA and a transition fund to target communities where new grantees are selected. The budget must go to Congress for negotiations.

APPENDIX

Tribal Consultation Participants

Federal Staff

First Name	Last Name	Position	Organization
Trevondia	Boykin	Program Specialist	Office of Head Start
Phyllis	Henderson	Program Analyst	Office of Head Start
Lula	Howard	Program Analyst	Office of Head Start
Tracie	Little	Program Analyst	Office of Head Start
Camille	Loya	Acting Regional Prog. Manager, RO XI	Office of Head Start
Fran	Majestic	Data & Information Technology Lead	Office of Head Start
Michele	Plutro	Education Specialist	Office of Head Start
WJ	Strickland	Senior Program Specialist	Office of Head Start
Cynthia	Walker	Program Specialist	Office of Head Start
Ross	Weaver	Director, Quality Assurance Division	Office of Head Start
Kay	Willmoth	Regional Program Manager, RO V	Office of Head Start
Donald	Wyatt	Program Specialist	Office of Head Start

Tribal Leaders and Representatives

First Name	Last Name	Position	Organization
Catherine	Abramson	Tribal Council Member	Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians
George	Antoine	Policy Council Member	Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians
Ann	Belleau	Head Start Director	Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan, Inc.
Angeline	Boulley	Education Division Director	Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians
Joan	Christnot	Head Start Director	Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin
Melinda	Danforth	Tribal Council Member	Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin
Joyce	McClellan	Head Start Director	Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians
Dennis	Olson, Jr.	Commissioner of Education	Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe
Anne	Suggitt	Head Start Director	Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians
Lisa	Summers	Legislative Assistant	Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin
Alec	Thundercloud	Executive Director of Health	Ho-Chunk Nation
Robert	Two Bears	Tribal Council Member	Ho-Chunk Nation
Luanne	Wiggins	Head Start Director	Bad River Band of Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians

ATTACHMENT 1: Issued February 22, 2012



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Office of Head Start
1250 Maryland Avenue, SW
8th Floor
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Grantee Director and Program Staff:

It is hard to believe that another program year is half over. By now, you have probably had one or two conference calls with your Program Specialist to discuss your goals for children's school readiness. At the beginning of this program year, I asked every Regional Office to make it a priority to begin an ongoing dialogue with each grantee to learn about your school readiness goals and to hear about the progress your children are making throughout the year.

My goal is to ensure that Regional staff maintain an ongoing dialogue with grantees to better understand how each program is supporting children's learning, and in this process, to identify existing strengths and gain an understanding of the data grantees gather to inform program improvements as well as enhance professional development and to provide ongoing direction of training and technical assistance. These conversations provide you and your staff an opportunity to tell your story about the progress your children are making. This process also provides OHS with valuable information for understanding differences or trends in school readiness efforts within states, across states and nationally. As a result of these conversations, we expect Regional staff to work closely with our TTA partners to assist programs in getting support as needed.

Head Start's authorizing purpose is to promote school readiness. The 2007 Head Start Act specified that programs are to establish goals for children's school readiness. The Designation Renewal regulation that became effective on December 9, 2011 provided additional requirements related to child assessment, individualization, data aggregation and analysis and responsive program improvement. The Office of Head Start anticipates that the regular system of individualized calls will support grantees' efforts to institute systems and practices that yield the best possible child progress. We also want to make sure that we are fully aware of the challenges you face, the innovations you implement and the successes you achieve.

If you have any questions, please contact your Program Specialist.

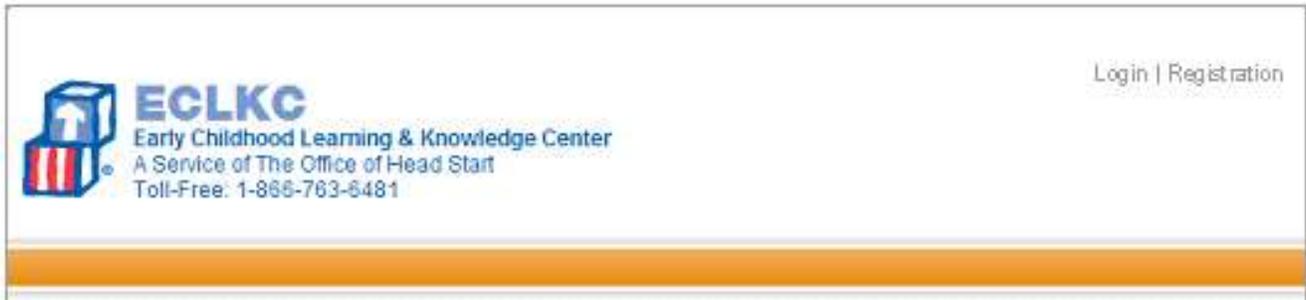
As always, I look to our Head Start programs to lead the nation in providing high quality early childhood education and also to our continued mutual efforts on behalf of children and families.

Sincerely,

/ Yvette Sanchez Fuentes /

Yvette Sanchez Fuentes, Director
Office of Head Start

ATTACHMENT 2: Issued February 22, 2012



Award of Regions XI and XII T/TA and Collaboration Center

The Office of Head Start announces the award of a contract to FHI Development 360, LLC to operate a Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) and Collaboration Center for Region XI, serving American Indian and Alaska Native children and families, and Region XII, serving Migrant and Seasonal children and families.

The Center will operate under the leadership of a Project Director. Within the Center, each Region will be staffed by a Collaboration Director, a T/TA Manager, Early Childhood Education (ECE) Specialists, and Grantee Specialists. The ECE specialists will support local programs in work related to school readiness, including positive child outcomes; parent, family and community engagement; career development needs of staff; and, collaboration with others at the national, tribal, state and local levels. Grantee Specialists will work with grantees with findings identified through the federal monitoring process and other areas of concern.

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Office of Head Start
1250 Maryland Avenue, SW
8th Floor
Washington, DC 20024

Hello,

The purpose of this email is to provide you with an update regarding the Region XI and Region XII T/TA and Collaboration Office contract recently awarded to FHI Development 360, LLC. This contract is to provide TTA services for Regions XI and XII and to support the Head Start State Collaboration Offices (HSSCO) for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start and American Indian/Alaska Native. ICFi has since filed a protest with the Government Accountability Office (GAO) regarding this award. A stop work order has been issued and therefore at this time and until the matter is resolved, FHI360 will not be providing any TTA and HSSCO services. Public information regarding this protest is posted on GAO's website at <http://www.gao.gov/search?q=B-406062>.

Please continue to submit your TTA requests directly to your program specialists. The OHS will be providing services on a limited basis through the use of federal staff and the TTA National Centers.

Please submit any questions that you may have via email directly to your respective Regional Program Manager:

Camille Loya, Acting RPM Region XI

Camille.Loya@acf.hhs.gov

Sandra Carton, RPM Region XII

Sandra.Carton@acf.hhs.gov

During this unique and unusual time, the OHS is here to support you and we will do our very best to ensure that your needs are met so that you can continue to provide quality Head Start services to your children and families.

Thank you for the work that you do every day.

Yvette Sanchez Fuentes
Director, Office of Head Start

Protest Q & A

The following frequently asked questions are from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) website and are intended for a general audience. Readers should be aware that many of the rules for filing and pursuing protests, as well as the substantive matters of bid protest law, are complex, and

these FAQs are not intended to address all possible issues and situations. Additional information is available at GAO's website: <http://www.gao.gov/legal/bids/bidfaqs.html#2>

Q: How do I get more information about a protest that has been filed?

You may [search our bid protest docket](#) by B-number, protester name, agency name, and solicitation number. The docket provides information concerning the filing date, decision deadline, the GAO attorney assigned to the protest, and the current status of the protest. When a decision is publicly available, a link to that decision is included in the docket search results.

Q: Can I get a copy of the actual protest, pleadings, or other documents provided by the protestor or the agency?

We don't release documents while a protest is pending. After a protest is decided, you may request access to information, including redacted protests. You can request this information [through our Freedom of Information Act process](#).

Q: What happens after a protest has been filed?

If the protest is not dismissed for procedural reasons, the agency must, within 30 days of the filing of a protest, provide a report addressing the protest arguments. The protester must file comments responding to the agency report within 10 days of receiving the report (failure to file comments will result in dismissal of the protest). After the comment period, GAO may request additional filings from the parties, conduct alternative dispute resolution, or hold a hearing. For more information, see our [Bid Protest Regulations](#) (4 C.F.R. § 21.3) and [Bid Protests at GAO: a Descriptive Guide](#), and this timeline of a bid protest.

Q: What is "corrective action"?

Corrective action is an agency's voluntary decision to address an issue in response to a protest. Corrective action can occur at any time during a protest. An agency's corrective action may involve a re-evaluation of proposals, a new award decision, an amendment to a solicitation, or other actions. We will typically dismiss a protest if an agency takes corrective action that resolves protest arguments or provides the relief sought by the protester.

Q: What are the possible outcomes for a GAO protest?

A protest is concluded when it is

- "withdrawn" by the protester,
- "dismissed" by GAO because the protest had a technical or procedural flaw (such as lack of timeliness or jurisdiction) or because the agency takes corrective action that addresses the protest,
- "denied" by GAO because we found no merit to the protest, or
- "sustained" by GAO because we agree with the protest arguments.

Q: What happens when GAO sustains a protest?

If we agree with a protester that the agency violated a procurement law or regulation in a prejudicial manner, we will issue a decision sustaining the protest and recommend that the agency address the violation through appropriate corrective action. The agency must then advise us whether it will comply with the recommendation.

Q: How long does GAO take to decide a protest?

We must decide a protest within 100 calendar days. We always seek to issue a decision as far in advance of the 100-day deadline as possible.

Q: Does GAO make its decisions publicly available?

It depends on what the decision was:

- We make public decisions that deny or sustain a protest and dismissals that address a significant issue.
- We do not make public routine dismissals of protests.

Q: When does GAO make its protest decisions publicly available?

It depends on whether the decision is subject to a protective order or not:

- If a decision is not subject to a protective order, it will usually be available on this Web site within 1-2 days.
- If a decision is subject to a protective order, the parties must agree to the release of a public version that redacts proprietary or source-selection-sensitive information. The preparation of a public version of a protected decision may take between a few days and a few weeks; however, occasionally, a decision may not be made public for months if other events, such as corrective action, would be affected by the release of the decision.

Q: What kinds of redactions does GAO make to a decision?

We seek to issue decisions that provide meaningful and transparent explanations for our rulings. Even if a protective order is issued for a protest, information in the public version of a protected decision will be redacted only where it is proprietary or is source-selection-sensitive. For example, evaluation point scores and adjectival ratings, unfavorable or adverse past performance information, and total cost or price generally will not be redacted from a decision.

Q: Where can I find a protest decision?

[You can browse our recent decisions.](#)

Or

[Search for new or older decisions.](#)

You can also find our decisions through outside commercial services such as Westlaw and Lexis.

Q: I know a protest has been decided, why I can't find the decision?

It depends on what the outcome was:

- If a protest is dismissed, we will not make the decision publicly available, unless it addresses a significant issue.
- If a protest is sustained or denied, you should find the decision on this Web site within 1-2 days after the decision date. If you don't find it, then we are preparing a redacted version which will be made public when available. (See When does GAO make its decisions publicly available?)