

HEAD START TRIBAL CONSULTATION

**March 22, 2012
Phoenix, Arizona
Region IX**

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 March 6, 2012, OHS notified AI/AN leaders of a Tribal Consultation for Tribes in Region IX on March 22, 2012, in Phoenix, Arizona, immediately following the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services consultation on March 21, 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: Amanda Bryans, Director, Education and Comprehensive Services Division, Office of Head Start (OHS); Camille Loya, Acting Regional Program Manager, Region XI, OHS; Jan Len, Regional Program Manager, Region IX, OHS. 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

Amanda Bryans, Director, Education and Comprehensive Services Division, extended Director Sanchez Fuentes' regrets for being unable to attend in person. She 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. In addition to participant comments at the Tribal Consultation, written testimony was submitted by the Gila River Indian Community.

A. Staff Training – AI/AN Participant Comments

- Head Start provided funds for training and the education of staff in the past.
- Tribes need trainers available. At one time there were partnerships with universities, although they were not nearby.
- Staff training is important.
- Some information provided in training is contradictory.

Staff Training – AI/AN Recommendations to OHS

- Provide additional funds to train staff.
- Provide opportunities to train new directors.

Staff Training – OHS Responses

- OHS has offered new Directors' training in the past. Last October, training was offered at the OHS 1st National Birth to Five Leadership Institute, held in Washington, DC. When training is offered, OHS discusses regulations and policies and where to find additional information. Grantees should contact Program Specialists for links to important training materials available online.
- The information for new staff keeps changing, and it is important to stay up-to-date. Updated materials are available online.
- OHS recently created a library of school readiness-related information for isolated Alaska grantees that had connectivity issues that prevented the regular or consistent access to the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC). There is interest within Region XI in creating resources that can act as roadmaps for information for certain staff, such as disabilities coordinators. It is possible to ship out CDs or links for certain groups. Efforts will be made to continue this and other education opportunities.
- Tribes can also avail themselves of state and regional association trainings, such as those in Arizona, California, North Dakota, and Colorado. There are National Center trainings at association trainings. Tribes can find information on association Web sites. New Director training will be offered at some of these meetings.

B. Language and Culture – AI/AN Participant Comments

- President Obama made a commitment to improving the preservation of Native languages. Head Start is important because it can offer education at the beginning of this process.
- Tribes are losing their languages; languages are not taught in the home. Language is identity and should not be lost. Elders are trying to mold young parents to become teachers of language at home.
- All Tribes are not the same. Arizona has 40+ Tribes with different cultures.
- Cultural dynamics have changed, and there is an influx of other groups. This presents cultural diversity and is a good dynamic. But it also causes loss of languages. Some teachers are working on this but it costs money to gain knowledge. Where can they get help to revitalize this?
- Public school hurts AI/AN children, since they are not respected as the first people in the United States.
- Children cannot get dual language from television. It must be contextual. Children need practical exposure. Some tribal programs have immersion. Teaching languages takes creative methods.

Language and Culture – AI/AN Recommendations to OHS

- Offer English as a Second Language (ESL) in Head Start programs just as public school systems offer ESL to support English language development for children who are Native language speakers.
- Assist Tribes with language revitalization.
- Develop multilingual frameworks that support revitalizing culture and language in schools.
- Provide funds for dual language learning.

Language and Culture – OHS Responses

- Director Sanchez Fuentes's comments in the video reflect that OHS supports revitalizing language and sustaining culture.
- OHS and Region XI know that language and culture are integral to school readiness and not separate from it. Using a Native language helps children value themselves and is good for their brains. It offers increased cognitive flexibility according to research.
- The Administration for Native Americans has supported language revitalization with funds.
- OHS and Region XI are seeking ways to provide support to language efforts.
- Language and culture are critical to promoting school readiness, and Head Start should celebrate diverse cultures across the nation. Acting Regional Program Manager Camille Loya requested recommendations on the topic of integrating Native language and culture into AI/AN Head Start and Early Head Start programs – what works and what does not work and what supports are needed.
- The National Center for Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness (NCCLR) was asked for information on incorporating language and culture in programs for school readiness. The National Center has been developing and piloting a tool in Alaska called *Making It Work!*

C. Facilities – AI/AN Participant Comments

- Buildings are aging. White Mountain Tribal Apache Council has 400 children and families who want to participate, but half are turned away. Funding is not supporting the number of children who want to enroll.
- Colorado River Tribe has a building site but needs funds for the building. The Tribe needs a facility in town. Asthmatic children would benefit from relocating to a new facility.
- Pascua Yaqui Tribe noted that there are many complexities including the capacity of buildings. The Tribe wants to expand in one location but lack resources.
- Spirit Lake Tribe has experienced flooding and mold in buildings, which creates respiratory problems for children. The Tribe needs a new facility. Consolidating in one area would help lower costs.

Facilities – OHS Responses

- There is less discretionary money for facilities than there once was. Child Care funds some facilities. Some programs blend Child Care and Head Start to benefit from the Child Care contribution.
- Amanda Bryans invited Arizona Head Start Association Director Bonnie Williams to provide information about the State's *First Things First* program which provides funds for facilities improvements. They work through regional partnership councils. The organization is looking for new people to apply for positions on councils and to participate in a strategic planning process. The councils then work with regional staff on funding plans that drive how dollars are spent. Funds are supporting health, early learning and education, and facilities improvement. Information is available at <http://www.Azftf.gov> or through the local regional director. Funds come from the state tobacco tax, which supports children, birth to five, and children living in poverty. Tribes participate by treating tribal lands as a region or by participating in a geographic area such as a county. There are State, Federal, and other resources available to support the facility needs of Head Start. Over time, grantees should move to realistic budgeting and planning for vehicle and facility maintenance and replacement.

D. Fiscal Issues– AI/AN Participant Comments

- It is a challenge is to meet the 10 percent Non-Federal Share (NFS) match.
- Resources such as health and other services are available but are not acknowledged and considered when determining the in-kind match.
- Tribes are required to provide information to Head Start, but there is little information on software and databases for Head Start documents.
- Since the indirect cost rate ends in September but grants runs to December, the Pascua Yaqui Tribe cannot recoup funds even at 50 percent for the last three months. The Tribe would like to correct this problem.
- When funds are allocated, there are sometimes two award documents. It is hard to receive a partial award and then wait for a second allocation.

Fiscal Issues – AI/AN Recommendations to OHS

- Cap the indirect cost rate at 50 percent.
- Partner with Tribes to develop ways to meet the NFS match or waiver.
- Provide fiscal training.
- Notify grantees of their full award amount at the beginning of the budget year.

Fiscal Issues – OHS Responses

- Waivers are available to address administrative costs and the indirect cost rate. Indirect costs are limited to 15 percent because 85 percent of costs should be for delivering services.
- There is no limit to how many times you can get an NFS waiver, though the waiver request must be submitted annually. Programs should work with their Program Specialist to identify possible sources for increasing the NFS.
- Section 1301.20 of the *Head Start Program Performance Standards* lists administrative cost authority. OHS can offer guidance and a framework for consideration.
- OHS has worked to share information on indirect cost rates – grantees can seek two-year rates; there is greater flexibility on provisional rates; and grants policy statements reference required information.
- OHS staff will check to see if there was an Information Memorandum (IM) and may reissue that IM. Information is sent to a list of tribal leaders and AI/AN Head Start Directors. Names can be added if Program Specialists are alerted.
- Unrecovered indirect costs can count toward the NFS match.
- Costs over 15 percent are not allowable as Federal costs.
- Indirect costs are a separate cost category within the overall budget, and are not added to the grant. There is a distinction between administrative costs and indirect costs. Indirect costs are part of the administrative cap.
- After Tribes review policy and guidance, if there are questions, they may discuss the issues with Program Specialists and the Acting Regional Program Manager.

E. Designation Renewal System (DRS) – OHS Comments

- DRS is on hold for Tribes since there is no training and technical assistance (T/TA) contract.
- The 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/Early 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.

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

- Tribes want to know more about the designation process.
- Tribes find re-competition confusing and asked who they are competing against.

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

- Share more information on DRS.
- Clarify procedures for DRS for AI/AN grantees.
- Clarify whether DRS will involve another consultant company coming in to operate tribal programs.

Designation Renewal System (DRS) – OHS Responses

- OHS recognizes that Tribes are sovereign nations.
- Re-competition is a different system than is used when a grantee relinquishes or terminates a grant, which is called replacement.
- Whether through re-competition or replacement, non-tribal agencies could only operate on tribal lands with the approval of the Tribe.

F. School Readiness – OHS Comments

- OHS supports intentional strategies to ensure every child makes progress and is prepared to enter kindergarten with the skills and abilities to succeed. School readiness does not mean strictly academic domains. Health, language, and physical development are all critical.
- OHS hopes the work that programs do to establish goals is helpful. They must decide what is expected and open the door to conversations with other officials. It is important to introduce ideas from early childhood to colleagues in K-12 and to bring parents to the conversation.
- OHS is not telling programs to replace curricula they have now. It is important to have curricula that are inclusive of children in Head Start, to be able to say why the curriculum is evidence-based, and to show that children make progress.
- There is new attention on ongoing assessment. Assessment is to help children improve and progress. Kindergarten entry assessments are about schools planning to meet the needs of the children who are coming.

School Readiness – AI/AN Participant Comments

- Costs for curriculum standards and assessment for one Tribe is \$30,000. There are no funds for that. Who will provide that, and how can the Tribe budget for it?
- Tribes are concerned about age-appropriate standards and training teachers about assessments.
- Head Start frameworks and policies may not consider tribal policies and laws.

School Readiness – AI/AN Recommendations to OHS

- Revise Head Start policies based on discussions with tribal leaders.
- Clarify whether there will be a mandate on how to work with Head Start children on the domains.

School Readiness – OHS Responses

- OHS is collecting comments. In conversations with K-3, there is a need to encourage them to align with early childhood principles to benefit K-12. Early childhood professionals have information to offer to help children progress.
- OHS wants a high bar for school readiness but is cautious about setting arbitrary benchmarks. OHS is looking at this from a research point of view and does not want a ceiling for children. OHS prefers to scaffold and to make room and space to individualize. The accountability for progress is on the program to make meaningful and responsive improvements.
- School Readiness goals should be established in concert with the parents.
- 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.

G. Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) – OHS Comments

- Region XI and Region XII T/TA and Collaboration Office contract was recently awarded to FHI Development 360, LLC [See Attachment 2]. This contract was 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. Before the new contract could be implemented ICFi 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].
- National Centers are available to AI/AN grantees in all domain areas to offer information and support. As always, AI/AN programs should look to their assigned Program Specialist to raise any need for training or technical assistance. During this period without a T/TA contract, if AI/AN grantees are identified meeting one or more of the conditions triggering the Designation Renewal System (DRS), any action based on that is on hold.
- The T/TA contract is part of a process that is not under the direct control of OHS or the Region.
- Technical assistance is available on requirements, review of procedures, or policies through Program Specialists on an ongoing basis.
- Regions are offering cluster and state-based trainings and the Regional Office is making that information available to grantees, but there are limitations on our ability to provide direct onsite T/TA for Region XI at this time. In Region XI, work is underway to identify the need for onsite T/TA and to find a way to offer assistance and to match needs with resources. There is concern about school readiness, goals, and data, and there are resources to bring to bear to address these

concerns. T/TA will be organized and offered using as many methods as possible to best address grantee needs.

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

- T/TA assistance has been lacking for the last six months. The Program Specialist has been helpful during this period. In the past, the T/TA provider was familiar with the reservation and training was helpful.
- T/TA should be offered by someone familiar with the culture. White Mountain Apache Tribe is isolated and needs support. People who do not go to the reservation do not know how the Tribe lives.
- T/TA is needed. Salt River Tribe has performed data assessment for years, but needs technical assistance putting together the report that OHS wants to go to parents.
- T/TA services are important including developing more strategic planning involving leaders and teachers in Head Start to reflect changes in communities.

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

- New T/TA providers must get to know the concerns and issues facing Tribes.
- Clarify how T/TA providers can help Tribes align Head Start and state guidelines.

H. Teacher Qualifications – AI/AN Participant Comments

- White Mountain Apache Tribe has difficulty helping teachers gain credentials and finding schools to work with teachers. The Tribe works with local community colleges on associate's degrees but finding colleges that offer bachelor's degrees is difficult. Arizona State University is helping to get the teachers certified. The Tribe is trying hard to get staff qualified, but the cost is high and available funds do not cover costs.
- Colorado River Indian Tribes have put their teaching staff on contract. The staff exhaust grants and scholarships such as Pell grants and then utilize program funds to offset costs. Staff commit three years of service as a result.
- Respected older teachers may lack credentials, but they enrich the children.
- Salt River Indian Community can pay for staff to become certified. Staff are credentialed for birth to five, but they are often not from the community. The Tribe is not sure how to encourage community members to become certified to teach.
- Three Affiliated Tribes wants parents to become teachers and to use the tribal college, but parents are not moving at a pace to meet the credentialing deadline and will look delinquent.

Teacher Qualifications – AI/AN Recommendations to OHS

- Provide funding for wages to be competitive with public schools.
- Provide funding to support credentialing.

Teacher Qualifications – OHS Responses

- Associate's degrees are required, and more than 80 percent of staff have achieved this. OHS is issuing waivers in this area. If teachers required to have this degree

have a CDA and are enrolled in a degree program, they can qualify for a waiver. OHS is being flexible.

- By September 30 2013, 50 percent of Head Start teachers nationwide are required to have bachelor's degrees. It is a *national* requirement. While it will not be assessed at the local level, it is important that Head Start teachers are as qualified as possible.
- Teachers in Head Start may be eligible for loan forgiveness if they work in Head Start programs. Exhausting opportunities for grants is a good policy.
- An increasing number of teachers are getting online degrees. Webcams offer the chance to reflect on practice. OHS has invested in online degrees for staff working with infants and toddlers since there is a nationwide shortage of these professionals.
- Head Start requires degrees in early childhood or a related field. State certifications are not required by OHS but do offer a pathway for demonstrating educational credentials.
- Staff do leave; part of what Head Start does is to offer experience. When people go to school and leave Head Start, hopefully Head Start is bringing along other people. There is a balance.
- It is important to figure out continuity and to invest in people. Head Start believes it is critical to have people from the community working in the program and hopes this means people develop professionally.

I. Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) – OHS Comments

- MIECHV is funded through the Health Resources and Services Administration at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It offers an opportunity to implement grants in states to implement home visiting models. Eleven states picked EHS as a model, and this expands EHS home-based slots.

J. 2012 Budget – OHS Comments

- OHS has no control over the award schedule of funds. At times, OHS may have to award a balance due to the issuance of a Continuing Resolution by Congress. In years when an annual budget has not been passed, OHS can award only the amount allocated at any time.
- 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 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) expansion.

2012 Budget – AI/AN Recommendations to OHS

- Funding opportunities should be open-ended and allow for local determination.

APPENDIX

Tribal Consultation Participants

Federal Staff

| First Name | Last Name | Position | Organization |
|------------|------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Patricia | Banks | Program Specialist | Office of Head Start |
| Trevondia | Boykin | Program Specialist | Office of Head Start |
| Linda | Brooker | Program Specialist | Office of Head Start (Contractor) |
| Amanda | Bryans | Division Director | Office of Head Start |
| Keyona | Hall | Program Specialist | Office of Head Start |
| Phyllis | Henderson | Program Analyst | Office of Head Start |
| Lula | Howard | Program Analyst | Office of Head Start |
| Walter | Jourdain | Program Analyst | Office of Head Start |
| Jan | Len | Regional Program Manager | Office of Head Start |
| Tracie | Little | Program Analyst | Office of Head Start |
| Camille | Loya | Acting Regional Prog. Manager, RO XI | Office of Head Start |
| Michele | Plutro | Education Specialist | Office of Head Start |
| Janet | Schultz | Health/Monitoring Specialist | Office of Head Start (Contractor) |
| WJ | Strickland | Senior Program Specialist | Office of Head Start |
| Donald | Wyatt | Program Specialist | Office of Head Start |

Tribal Leaders and Representatives

| First Name | Last Name | Position | Organization |
|------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Cynthia | Antone | Tribal Council Member | Gila River Indian Community |
| Kerrie | Armstrong | Administrative Assistant | Colorado River Indian Tribes Head Start |
| Kelly | Bradfield | Head Start Director | Three Affiliated Tribes |
| Rowena | Cooya | Family Services Supervisor | White Mountain Apache Tribe Head Start |
| Joe | Dukepoo | Vice President | Round Valley Indian Tribes |
| Jacqueline | Flores | Director | Colorado River Indian Tribes Head Start |
| Pat | Foster | Head Start Director | Gila River Indian Community |
| Luis | Gonzales | Tribal Council Member | Pascua Yaqui Tribe |
| Cline | Griggs | Tribal Council Member | White Mountain Apache Tribe |
| Jandi | Hernandez | Account Technician | White Mountain Apache Tribe Head Start |
| Duane | Jackson Sr. | Tribal Council Member | Spirit Lake Tribe |
| Ella | James | Head Start Manager | Three Affiliated Tribes |
| Clinton | Kessay | Tribal Council Member | White Mountain Apache Tribe |
| Nuemi | Largo | President, Policy Council | Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Early Childhood Ed. Center |
| Leola | Larzelere | Head Start Director | White Mountain Apache Tribe Head Start |
| Stephen | Lewis | Lt. Governor | Gila River Indian Community |
| Vivan | Lopez | Education Director | Pascua Yaqui Tribe |
| Mona | Lupe | Special Needs/Mental Health Advocate | White Mountain Apache Tribe Head Start |
| Louella | Nahsonhoya | Staff Assistant | Hopi Tribe |
| Anisa | Patch | Grants Specialist | Colorado River Indian Tribes |
| Arnold | Ramirez | Training Consultant | |

| First Name | Last Name | Position | Organization |
|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Ron | Ransom | Director | Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Early Childhood Ed. Center |
| Joel | Redfox | Tribal Council Member | Spirit Lake Tribe |
| Nila | Rinehart | Lead Site Manager | Community Development Institute (CDI) |
| William | Rosenberg | Program Manager | Pascua Yaqui Tribe |
| Beverly | Russell | Senior Director of Tribal Affairs | First Things First |
| Noreen | Sakiestewa | Head Start Director | Hopi Tribe |
| Monica | Sayad | Head Start Director | Round Valley Indian Tribes |
| LeRoy | Shingoitewa | Chairman | Hopi Tribe |
| Jean | Simms | Head Start Director | Ute Mountain Ute |
| Janice | St. Claire | Head Start Manager | Three Affiliated Tribes |
| Shanna | Tautolo | Grants and Contracts Officer | Pascua Yaqui Tribe |
| Michael | Thom | Vice Chairman | Karuk Tribe |
| Bonnie | Williams | Director | Arizona Head Start Association |



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



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.

Office of Head Start (OHS) | 1250 Maryland Avenue, SW | 8th Floor Portal Building | Washington D.C. 20024
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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?)