Appendices

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Sound planning using data-informed decisions is the bedrock of effective program operations and continuous program improvement. HSPPS Achieving program goals, 45 CFR § 1302.102, requires programs to establish program goals for the delivery of program services that are responsive to community needs, along with measurable objectives to assess progress towards goals. Collecting and analyzing program data is a critical part of this process. Ultimately, it allows programs to track progress to determine how well programs are fulfilling their commitments to provide quality services to children and families from all backgrounds.

Program data is also essential for demonstrating progress on goals, effectiveness of services, and whether programs are complying with HSPPS and grantee performance requirements. As stipulated in each grantee’s baseline Head Start grant application, strategic long-term goals, measurable objectives, and projected outcomes are the basis for the program design approach.

The common refrain, “data rich but information poor,” speaks to a truth for many organizations that collect program data but do not use it in a meaningful way. The authors of Managing Information Strategically make this critical distinction between data and information: 1

“In information is not just data collected. Rather it is data collected, organized, ordered, and imbued with meaning and context.”

In order for data to become useful to a decision-maker, it must be presented as information that he or she can relate to and act upon. This is exactly why well-presented data—meaning data that clearly aligns with a program’s goals and provides a meaningful road map toward progress—is a critical feature of the grant application.

Responding to the HSPPS, Head Start programs have moved beyond simple data collection and are now analyzing, comparing, and using data-informed discoveries to make sound decisions for their programs. Data collection is most effective and useful when:

1. What gets measured… gets managed [improved]. — Peter Drucker

2. Not everything that can be counted counts and not everything that counts can be counted. — Albert Einstein

3. Without data you are just another person with an opinion. — W. Edwards Deming

4. Data is not just adding things to your plate. Data is about making sure you have the right things on your plate. — Unknown
1) Programs collect and analyze data to answer critical questions
2) Data turnaround is fast
3) Information is presented on an ongoing basis so stakeholders can respond in real time to address emerging issues

By following these three guidelines, data analyses will not only be richer but programs will also be able to use what they learn from the data to answer critical questions, set strategic directions, devise systemic solutions, and continually improve services to children and families.

Data collection is so much more than meeting a reporting requirement. Indeed, good use of data can enhance a program’s mission. When staff are able to clearly visualize potential program results and their role in bringing about those results, they are more enthusiastic about analyzing data and tracking agency progress. Likewise, when data analyses and performance measures lead to successful results, staff also become more vigilant and intentional about data collection. As an added benefit, understanding how their work affects children, families, and their community not only increases staff’s passion and energy for the work, but it also leads to more cohesive and effective teamwork.

Peter Drucker, often credited as the father of management theory, described two functions of data:

1) To manage operations
2) To guide decisions

Head Start programs use data in both of these ways. Much of the data collected by Head Start programs relates to operations. Programs collect, aggregate, compare and monitor operational data (e.g., attendance or staff turnover) on an ongoing basis to ensure that service delivery is timely, efficient, and effective. Many Head Start programs use their information management systems to track and report data on operations.

Head Start programs are becoming increasingly adept at using data to track progress towards goals and using analytic skills to inform decision-making.

The Head Start planning cycle helps programs use data collection to support integrated, systematic planning. As programs implement their management systems, they should consider how to use data to both inform current work and, through the grant application, to develop and describe a program’s future work.

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2 Schwartz, T., & Porath, C. (2014, May 30). “Why You Hate Work,” The New York Times. https://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/01/opinion/sunday/why-you-hate-work.html. Article includes references to a study which found that employees were more likely to stay with their organizations when they derived meaning and significance from their work.

How can programs use the Foundations for Excellence: A Guide for Five-Year Planning and Continuous Improvement, 2nd Edition?

Foundations for Excellence, 2nd Edition highlights how sound planning practices support effective Head Start programs and shows programs what Head Start expects from strategic planning. Study each topic with an eye to how it can support your program throughout the planning process. Here are some ideas for making the most of this guide. Use them to spark discussion, establish a shared understanding of key concepts, and identify ideas that need further exploration.

- **Support the development of both the baseline and continuing Head Start grant applications.** As a companion to the Head Start Grant Application Instructions, Foundations for Excellence, 2nd Edition supports programs in writing successful grant applications. Topic 1 highlights the vocabulary you will need to use. Topic 4 models how to use it. Throughout this guide there are tips and strategies for implementing systems thinking and organizational change.

- **Evaluate and measure current program goals and objectives.** Topic 1, Nuts and Bolts of Strategic Planning, and Topic 3, Achieving Program Goals that Support Child and Family Outcomes, highlight key vocabulary and provide useful ideas for evaluating program goals, measurable objectives, and action plans. Focus especially on writing SMART objectives. Note in particular the “M” in SMART, which stands for “measurable.” The grant application instructions require programs to report on their progress in each continuation application, and you can only point to progress on something you’ve measured.

- **Set program goals, write objectives and outcomes, and develop action plans.** Topic 3 will help program staff recognize the relationship between goals and objectives. It describes how to keep goals alive and how program goals, including school readiness goals, intersect to ensure comprehensive, high-quality services. Topic 4, Pulling it All Together, provides samples of program goals and measurable objectives and further connects the goals and objectives to an action plan. Both topics model how programs can use the planning forms provided in the appendices.
Plan and conduct leadership training related to oversight roles of the governing body/Tribal Council and Policy Council. HSPPS 45 CFR §§ 1301 and 1302 outline the responsibilities of Head Start program leadership (e.g., governing body/Tribal Council, Policy Council and key management staff) in overseeing and participating in the program planning process. Topics 1 and 2 unpack these concepts and discuss the key responsibilities around the program planning cycle. This will support leadership as they develop, plan, and evaluate their programs during the five-year project period. Discuss this guide with your leadership team to arrive at a shared understanding of the information and how best to proceed.

Discuss community assessment results with your program’s management team. Topic 2, Five-Year Planning in Head Start, describes how to use strategic planning tools, such as the community assessment, to envision a desired future. Topic 4 in turn models how to integrate program goals, objectives, and expected outcomes to address real-world issues. Together, these topics can help you develop and use a responsive community assessment.

Evaluate your strategic planning process. Topic 2 supports programs as they consider ways to refresh their strategic planning process. In addition to describing key elements in the strategic planning process, it also highlights ways to rally stakeholder consensus as programs establish long-term goals.

In using this guide, consider both “effort” and “effect.” Identify the ways that you will measure progress towards achieving your program goals, objectives, and outcomes. In addition to collecting data that shows how much your program does and how frequently it does it (measures of effort), think about measures of changes in knowledge, attitudes, or behaviors (measures of effect). Measures of effect can help you understand the positive difference you are making for children and families.
Glossary of Program Planning Terms

Terms and Definitions

**Action Plan:** A defined set of steps that outline what a program will do to meet its goals and objectives; a description of the steps, services, and other actions needed to accomplish goal(s). An action plan often includes measures of progress to help a program know what difference it is making; it includes what will be done, who is responsible, and the timeline for completion.

**Action Steps:** Individual steps that outline what a program will do to accomplish its goals and objectives.

**Baseline Data:** An initial collection of information that can be used for comparative purposes. Baseline data can be used as a starting point to understand any changes that happen over time.

**Challenge:** Information describing obstacles to achieving program goals and objectives. When forecasting an anticipated barrier to achieving the goals and objectives “expected” challenge is used. Typically identified in the baseline application.

**Data:** Facts or information used to calculate, analyze, plan, or report something.

**Effect:** “Measures of effect” determines changes in knowledge, attitude, or behavior as a result of the activity. They track whether a program’s activities have made a difference.

**Effort:** “Measures of effort” count what and how much a program provides. They describe whether and to what extent activities were carried out as planned.

**Evidence:** Facts, information, documentation, or examples given to support an assertion.

**Goals:** Broad, aspirational statements that describe what the program seeks to accomplish. In Head Start, program goals may include the provision of educational, health, nutritional, and family and community engagement program services.
Appendix C

**Impact:** The influence or effect. This term is often used to signify the findings from an experimental or quasi-experimental research study. Impact refers to how the program, children, families, and/or community changed over the five-year project period as a result of what the program did.

**Objectives:** Activities to be completed to achieve a goal. They should be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely (SMART). They are achievable in the short term.

**Outcome:** Something that happened as a result of an activity or a process; the actual results achieved each year. When referencing a result that is hoped to happen in the future, the term “expected” outcome is used. Typically identified in the baseline application.

**Progress:** Forward movement toward the achievement of goals, objectives, and expected outcomes.

**School Readiness Goals:** The expectations of children’s status and progress across domains of language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge, approaches to learning, physical well-being and motor development, and social and emotional development that will improve their readiness for kindergarten.

**Strategic Long-Term Goals:** Look to the future and reflect what a program values and wants to accomplish. Strategic long-term goals are profound and require a significant amount of time to achieve.
Program Management and Quality Improvement

Management system, 45 CFR § 1302.101

(b) Coordinated approaches. At the beginning of each program year, and on an ongoing basis throughout the year, a program must design and implement program-wide coordinated approaches that ensure:

(1) The training and professional development system, as described in § 1302.92, effectively supports the delivery and continuous improvement of high-quality services;

(2) The full and effective participation of children who are dual language learners and their families;

(3) The full and effective participation of all children with disabilities, including but not limited to children eligible for services under IDEA, by providing services with appropriate facilities, program materials, curriculum, instruction, staffing, supervision, and partnerships, at a minimum, consistent with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act; and,

(4) The management of program data to effectively support the availability, usability, integrity, and security of data. A program must establish procedures on data management, and have them approved by the governing body and policy council, in areas such as quality of data and effective use and sharing of data, while protecting the privacy of child records in accordance with subpart C of part 1303 of this chapter and applicable federal, state, local, and tribal laws.

Achieving program goals, 45 CFR § 1302.102

(a) Establishing program goals. A program, in collaboration with the governing body and policy council, must establish goals and measurable objectives that include:

(1) Strategic long-term goals for ensuring programs are and remain responsive to community needs as identified in their community assessment as described in subpart A of this part;

(2) Goals for the provision of educational, health, nutritional, and family and community engagement program services as described in the program performance standards to further promote the school readiness of enrolled children;
(3) School readiness goals that are aligned with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five, state and tribal early learning standards, as appropriate, and requirements and expectations of schools Head Start children will attend, per the requirements of subpart B of part 1304 of this part; and,

(4) Effective health and safety practices to ensure children are safe at all times, per the requirements in §§ 1302.47, 1302.90(b) and (c), 1302.92(c)(1), and 1302.94 and 1303 subpart F, of this chapter.

(b) Monitoring program performance. (1) Ongoing compliance oversight and correction. In order to ensure effective ongoing oversight and correction, a program must establish and implement a system of ongoing oversight that ensures effective implementation of the program performance standards, including ensuring child safety, and other applicable federal regulations as described in this part, and must:

(i) Collect and use data to inform this process;

(ii) Correct quality and compliance issues immediately, or as quickly as possible;

(iii) Work with the governing body and the policy council to address issues during the ongoing oversight and correction process and during federal oversight; and,

(iv) Implement procedures that prevent recurrence of previous quality and compliance issues, including previously identified deficiencies, safety incidents, and audit findings.

(2) Ongoing assessment of program goals. A program must effectively oversee progress towards program goals on an ongoing basis and annually must:

(i) Conduct a self-assessment that uses program data including aggregated child assessment data, and professional development and parent and family engagement data as appropriate, to evaluate the program’s progress towards meeting goals established under paragraph (a) of this section, compliance with program performance standards throughout the program year, and the effectiveness of the professional development and family engagement systems in promoting school readiness;

(ii) Communicate and collaborate with the governing body and policy council, program staff, and parents of enrolled children when conducting the annual self-assessment; and,

(iii) Submit findings of the self-assessment, including information listed in paragraph (b)(2)(i) of this section to the responsible HHS official.

(c) Using data for continuous improvement. (1) A program must implement a process for using data to identify program strengths and needs, develop and implement plans that address program needs, and continually evaluate compliance with program performance standards and progress towards achieving program goals described in paragraph (a) of this section.

(2) This process must:

(i) Ensure data is aggregated, analyzed and compared in such a way to assist agencies in identifying risks and informing strategies for continuous improvement in all program service areas;

(ii) Ensure child-level assessment data is aggregated and analyzed at least three times a year, including for sub-groups, such as dual language learners and children with disabilities, as appropriate, except in programs operating fewer than 90 days, and used with other program data
described in paragraph (c)(2)(iv) of this section to direct continuous improvement related to
curriculum choice and implementation, teaching practices, professional development, program
design and other program decisions, including changing or targeting scope of services; and,

(iii) For programs operating fewer than 90 days, ensures child assessment data is aggregated
and analyzed at least twice during the program operating period, including for subgroups, such
as dual language learners and children with disabilities, as appropriate, and used with other
program data described in paragraph (c)(2)(iv) of this section to direct continuous improvement
related to curriculum choice and implementation, teaching practices, professional development,
program design and other program decisions, including changing or targeting scope of services;

(iv) Use information from ongoing monitoring and the annual self-assessment, and program data
on teaching practice, staffing and professional development, child-level assessments, family
needs assessments, and comprehensive services, to identify program needs, and develop and
implement plans for program improvement; and,

(v) Use program improvement plans as needed to either strengthen or adjust content and
strategies for professional development, change program scope and services, refine school
readiness and other program goals, and adapt strategies to better address the needs of
sub-groups

Education and Child Development Program Services

Purpose, 45 CFR § 1302.30

All programs must provide high-quality early education and child development services, including for children
with disabilities, that promote children’s cognitive, social, and emotional growth for later success in school. A
center-based or family child care program must embed responsive and effective teacher-child interactions. A
home-based program must promote secure parent-child relationships and help parents provide high-quality
early learning experiences. All programs must implement a research-based curriculum, and screening and
assessment procedures that support individualization and growth in the areas of development described in
the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five and support family engagement in
children’s learning and development. A program must deliver developmentally, culturally, and linguistically
appropriate learning experiences in language, literacy, mathematics, social and emotional functioning,
approaches to learning, science, physical skills, and creative arts. To deliver such high-quality early education
and child development services, a center-based or family child care program must implement, at a minimum,
the elements contained in §§ 1302.31 through 1302.34, and a home-based program must implement, at a
minimum, the elements in §§ 1302.33 and 1302.35.

Education and Child Development Program Services

Parent and family engagement in education and child development services, 45 CFR § 1302.34

(a) Purpose. Center-based and family child care programs must structure education and child development
services to recognize parents’ roles as children’s lifelong educators, and to encourage parents to engage in
their child’s education.
(b) Engaging parents and family members. A program must offer opportunities for parents and family members to be involved in the program’s education services and implement policies to ensure:

1. The program’s settings are open to parents during all program hours;
2. Teachers regularly communicate with parents to ensure they are well-informed about their child’s routines, activities, and behavior;
3. Teachers hold parent conferences, as needed, but no less than two times per program year, to enhance the knowledge and understanding of both staff and parents of the child’s education and developmental progress and activities in the program;
4. Parents have the opportunity to learn about and to provide feedback on selected curricula and instructional materials used in the program;
5. Parents and family members have opportunities to volunteer in the class and during group activities;
6. Teachers inform parents, about the purposes of and the results from screenings and assessments and discuss their child’s progress;
7. Teachers, except those described in paragraph (b)(8) of this section, conduct at least two home visits per program year for each family, including one before the program year begins, if feasible, to engage the parents in the child’s learning and development, except that such visits may take place at a program site or another safe location that affords privacy at the parent’s request, or if a visit to the home presents significant safety hazards for staff; and,
8. Teachers that serve migrant or seasonal families make every effort to conduct home visits to engage the family in the child’s learning and development.

Federal Administrative Procedures

Basis for determining whether a Head Start agency will be subject to an open competition, 45 CFR § 1304.11

(b) An agency has been determined by the responsible HHS official based on a review conducted under section 641A(c)(1)(A), (C), or (D) of the Act during the relevant time period covered by the responsible HHS official’s review under § 1304.15 not to have:

1. After December 9, 2011, established program goals for improving the school readiness of children participating in its program in accordance with the requirements of section 641A(g)(2) of the Act and demonstrated that such goals:
   i. Appropriately reflect the ages of children, birth to five, participating in the program;
   ii. Align with the Birth to Five Head Start Child Outcomes Framework, state early learning guidelines, and the requirements and expectations of the schools, to the extent that they apply to the ages of children, birth to five, participating in the program and at a minimum address the domains of language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge, approaches toward learning, physical well-being and motor development, and social and emotional development;
   iii. Were established in consultation with the parents of children participating in the program.
Family and Community Engagement Program Services

Family engagement, 45 CFR § 1302.50

(a) Purpose. A program must integrate parent and family engagement strategies into all systems and program services to support family well-being and promote children’s learning and development. Programs are encouraged to develop innovative two-generation approaches that address prevalent needs of families across their program that may leverage community partnerships or other funding sources.

(b) Family engagement approach. A program must:

(1) Recognize parents as their children’s primary teachers and nurturers and implement intentional strategies to engage parents in their children’s learning and development and support parent-child relationships, including specific strategies for father engagement;

(2) Develop relationships with parents and structure services to encourage trust and respectful, ongoing two-way communication between staff and parents to create welcoming program environments that incorporate the unique cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds of families in the program and community;

(3) Collaborate with families in a family partnership process that identifies needs, interests, strengths, goals, and services and resources that support family well-being, including family safety, health, and economic stability;

(4) Provide parents with opportunities to participate in the program as employees or volunteers;

(5) Conduct family engagement services in the family’s preferred language, or through an interpreter, to the extent possible, and ensure families have the opportunity to share personal information in an environment in which they feel safe; and,

(6) Implement procedures for teachers, home visitors, and family support staff to share information with each other, as appropriate and consistent with the requirements in part 1303 subpart C, of this chapter; FERPA; or IDEA, to ensure coordinated family engagement strategies with children and families in the classroom, home, and community.
Programs write their five-year plans and action plans in different ways. Topic 4 offers examples of what a program’s goals, objectives, expected outcomes, and plans could look like based on the data that the program collects through its community and self-assessments. The sample forms that follow may be helpful as you write your own plans. Writing measurable objectives and expected outcomes and considering the data to collect to understand your progress will serve you well in completing your baseline and continuation applications for the five-year project period.
## Action Plan

**Program Goal:**

**Objective No. ___:**

**Expected Outcome(s):**

**Expected Challenge(s):**

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# Action Plan

**Program Goal:**

**Objective No. ___:**

**Expected Outcome(s):**

**Expected Challenge(s):**

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Action Plan (Cont’d)
Appendix F

Resources

ECLKC website at https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/ offers a variety of resources to support and build on the learning in Foundations for Excellence: A Guide for Five-Year Planning and Continuous Improvement, 2nd Edition. Below are the resources referenced throughout these topics. Review the offerings on the ECLKC for additional resources to meet your individual needs.

- **Building Partnerships: Guide to Developing Relationships with Families**
  Explore the role that Positive Goal-Oriented Relationships play in effective PFCE. This guide offers definitions, tools, and guides for reflective practice and supervision.

- **The Family Partnership Process: Engaging and Goal-Setting with Families**
  Strong, healthy families give their children the best chance at success in school and in life. The Family Goal-Setting Guide explores how strong partnerships can positively influence the goals families set in the Family Partnership Process.

- **Five Steps to Community Assessment: A Workbook for Head Start and Early Head Start Programs Serving Hispanic and Other Emerging Populations**
  In this workbook, find a five-step community assessment process. Use it to help programs identify new or under-served populations in the service area, assess their needs, and identify available resources.

- **Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF)**
  The ELOF presents five areas of early learning, referred to as central domains. The Framework is designed to show the continuum of learning for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. It is grounded in comprehensive research around what young children should know and be able to do during their early years.

- **Head Start Management Systems Wheel**
  The Head Start Management Systems Wheel was developed to support Head Start programs in systems thinking. Learn more about the 12 program management, planning, and oversight systems. Find out how these systems are critical to high-quality service delivery.

- **Management Matters: Head Start Program Planning Cycle**
  View this narrated presentation to learn about the program planning cycle’s step-by-step process. Programs should consider this process as they plan and implement responsive services.

- **Parent, Family, Community, Engagement (PFCE) Interactive Framework**
  The PFCE Framework is designed to help Head Start programs achieve outcomes that lead to positive and enduring change for children and families. Use the interactive Framework to find research, resources, and regulations related to program foundations, program impact areas, family engagement outcomes, and child outcomes.
Endnotes and Sources

**Topic 1**
1. Throughout this document, the term “Head Start” refers to both Head Start and Early Head Start programs and services for children and families.

**Topic 2**
1. Throughout this document, the term “Head Start” refers to both Head Start and Early Head Start programs and services for children and families.
3. HSPPS 45 CFR §§ 1302.102(a)(3) and 1304.11(b)(1)(i)-(iii).

**Topic 3**
1. HSPPS 45 CFR §§ 1302.102(a)(3) and 1304.11(b)(1)(i)-(iii).
2. HSPPS 45 CFR § 1302.102(c)(2)(ii)–(iii).
3. HSPPS 45 CFR § 1302.16(a)(2)(iv).
4. HSPPS 45 CFR § 1302.52(b).

**Topic 4**
1. HSPPS 45 CFR § 1302.32(b).