

Hidalgo County Head Start Program

Policy Council Agenda

DATE: April 13, 2011

SUBJECT: Presentation/Discussion of On-Site Monitoring Review Findings

RATIONALE/NEED: The On-Site Monitoring Review (Federal Review) is attached for your review and discussion.

RECOMMENDATION: No action required.

COST: N/A

RELATED INFORMATION INCLUDES: On-Site Monitoring Review Findings and information regarding the waiver submitted.

INITIATED BY: Teresa Flores, Executive Director

REVIEWED BY: Teresa Flores, Executive Director

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S APPROVAL: 




DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

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

To: Board Chairperson
Mr. Ramon Garcia
Board Chairperson
Hidalgo County Head Start Program
1901 W State Hwy. 107
McAllen, TX 78504

From: Responsible HHS Official
Ms. Yvette Sanchez Fuentes
Director, Office of Head Start

 3/23/11
Date

Overview of Findings

From 1/30/2011 to 2/4/2011, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted an on-site monitoring review of the Hidalgo County Head Start program. We wish to thank the governing body, Policy Council, staff, and parents of your program for their cooperation and assistance during the review. This Head Start Review Report has been issued to Mr. Ramon Garcia, Board Chairperson, as legal notice to your agency of the results of the on-site program review.

Based on the information gathered during our review, your Head Start program was found to be out of compliance with one or more applicable Head Start Program Performance Standards, laws, regulations, and policy requirements. The report provides you with detailed information in each area where program performance did not meet applicable Head Start Program Performance Standards, laws, regulations, and policy requirements. Each area of noncompliance identified in this report should be corrected within 120 days following receipt of this report.

Since 2009 two new features were added as applicable to triennial and first year reports. First, if during the course of a review an area of noncompliance was identified and corrected on site, the report will include a narrative to describe the area of noncompliance and a narrative to describe the corrective action the grantee took to correct the finding.

Secondly, program strengths identified during the on site review will also be included in triennial and first year review reports.

If you are a grantee serving preschool age children in the center-based option, a sample of your preschool classrooms will be observed using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). This classroom observation instrument looks at the teacher/child interactions, as well

as interactions between children. If you operate a center-based program for preschool age children, the results of CLASS will be included in your monitoring report as a separate attachment. The Office of Head Start encourages grantees to consider the CLASS results in planning ongoing efforts to improve classroom quality.

The ACF Regional Office will contact you soon to address any questions you may have about this report.

Distribution of the Head Start Review Report

Copies of this report will be distributed to the following recipients:

Ms. Deborah Drake, Acting Regional Program Manager

Mr. Eric Rodriguez, Policy Council Chairperson

Ms. Teresa Flores, CEO/Executive Director/Head Start Director

Overview Information

Review Type: *Triennial*
Organization: *Hidalgo County Head Start Program*
Program Type: *Head Start*
Team Leader: *Mr. Frank Olguin*
Funded Enrollment HS: *3570*
Funded Enrollment EHS: *Not Applicable*

Area of Strength

The grantee had unique, high-quality, wide-ranging professional development practices to benefit teaching staff. Forty-eight percent of the current staff was parents of children currently or formerly enrolled in one of the grantee's Head Start programs. Over 90 percent of the grantee's teachers had degrees, and the rest were working toward them. In addition, substitute teachers were parents, with orientation and training provided to introduce them to work in the Early Childhood field.

The program had a strong commitment to professional development for its staff and had a Staff Development department with a Director and Coordinator. The main roles and responsibilities of the two individuals were to assess the professional level of staff employed by the program and develop a professional development plan for each staff member, providing each with the guidance, tools, and support needed to complete each identified goal.

One manager stated she became involved with the Head Start program when her daughter was enrolled, and she frequently volunteered. Head Start leadership identified her potential and offered her a position as an assistant teacher. Her professional development plan--written with her input and the support of her Center Manager and leadership of the program--led to her earning a master's degree in Early Childhood Education and a position in management. She said Head Start offered her financial assistance to complete each of her identified goals, and she also received 4 hours of paid study time weekly, encouragement, and follow-up from the Professional Development Coordinator and the leadership team.

Educational support was common practice for staff wishing to obtain degrees, and if a student was not eligible for financial aid through the college, the program provided assistance such as direct financial support and loans. The program also supported the ongoing professional development of staff by allowing early release for staff taking courses.

Area of Noncompliance Corrected On Site Determination

Applicable Standards	Program Type	Status
644(a)(2)(C-E)	HS	Corrected

Head Start Act

Sec. 644. [42 U.S.C. 9839]

(a)

(2) Each Head Start agency shall make available to the public a report published at least once in each fiscal year that discloses the following information from the most recently concluded fiscal year, except that reporting such information shall not reveal personally identifiable information about an individual child or parent:

(C) The total number of children and families served, the average monthly enrollment (as a percentage of funded enrollment), and the percentage of eligible children served.

(D) The results of the most recent review by the Secretary and the financial audit.

(E) The percentage of enrolled children that received medical and dental exams.

The grantee did not make available to the public a report published at least once each fiscal year disclosing information on the average monthly enrollment as a percentage of funded enrollment, results of the most recent Federal Review and financial audit, and percentage of enrolled children receiving dental examinations. A review of the Annual Report to the Public at 5:30 p.m. on February 3, 2011 found it lacked information about average monthly enrollment, results of the most recent Federal review and the financial audit, and the percentage of children receiving dental examinations. In an interview with the Executive Director, Assistant Director of Programs, and Assistant Director of Operations, the Assistant Director of Operations stated the one-page document was the program's Annual Report to the Public.

The grantee did not make available to the public an annual report including all required elements; therefore, it was not in compliance with the regulation. However, at 8:30 p.m. on February 4, 2011 a review of an updated Annual Report to the Public found it contained the previously missing elements. The updated Annual Report was also found posted on the grantee's public website. The grantee corrected the noncompliance during the review; therefore, it was in compliance with the regulation.

Findings corrected on site are provided for your information and may be helpful as you plan, assess your ongoing monitoring procedures or identify areas that may need improvement.

New Area of Noncompliance Determinations

At least one area of noncompliance was documented at Hidalgo County Head Start Program Head Start program.

Applicable Standards	Program Type	Status
640(d)(1)	HS	Noncompliance

Head Start Act

Sec. 640. Allotment of Funds; Limitations on Assistance

(d)

(1) The Secretary shall establish policies and procedures to assure that, for fiscal year 2009 and thereafter, not less than 10 percent of the total number of children actually enrolled by each Head Start agency and each delegate agency will be children with disabilities who are determined to be eligible for special education and related services, or early intervention services, as appropriate, as determined under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), by the State or local agency providing services under section 619 or part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.).

The grantee did not ensure no less than 10 percent of the total number of children actually enrolled was children with disabilities determined eligible for Special Education and related services or Early Intervention services, as appropriate, as determined under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) by the State or local agency providing services under section 619 of IDEA. In an interview, the Family Services Director, who oversaw the Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance component of the program, stated the program did not currently enroll 10 percent children eligible for services by the Local Education Agencies (LEAs). She stated the grantee currently enrolled 129 children referred and found eligible--3.5 percent of the total enrollment of 3,690, 198 referred and in the evaluation process, another 30 referred and found ineligible for services, and an additional 75 whose parents signed a Refusal of Services statement.

The Family Services Director further stated the program applied for and received waivers of the requirement for the prior 2 program years. A review of a letter of request and justification for a waiver sent to the Regional Office on August 31, 2009 and a review of an August 24, 2010 letter from the Regional Office found the Regional Office granted retroactive approval of waivers for the program years August 18, 2008 through May 27, 2009 and August 17, 2009 through May 28, 2010. The Executive Director stated the program did not have a waiver for the current program year but had an improvement plan in place stating it would achieve 10 percent enrollment of children with disabilities. She further confirmed the program did not currently meet the required 10 percent.

The grantee did not ensure it enrolled no less than 10 percent children with disabilities and did not have a waiver of the requirement for the current program year; therefore, it was not in compliance with the regulation.

Timeframe for Corrective Action

The area(s) of noncompliance cited in this report must be corrected within 120 days of the receipt of this report. Pursuant to Section 637(2)(C) of the Head Start Act, a grantee that fails to

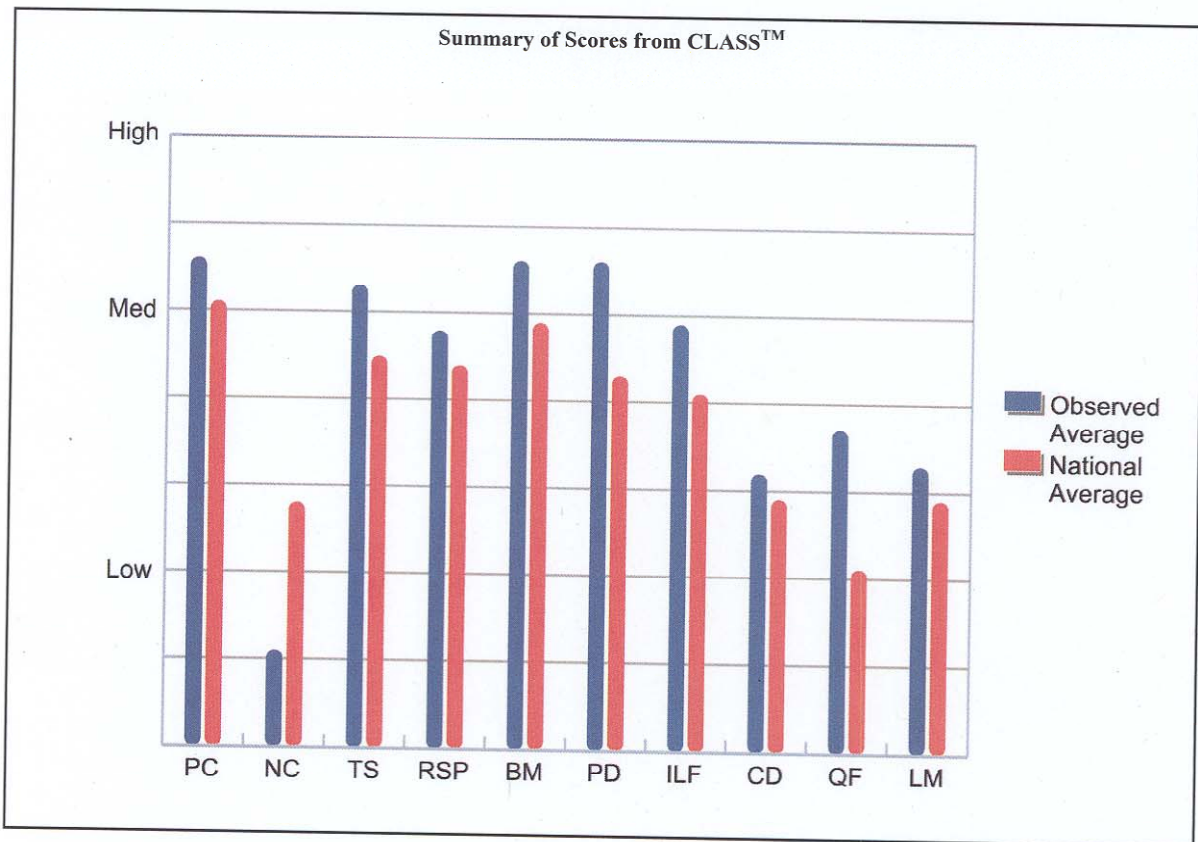
correct an area of noncompliance within the prescribed time period will be judged to have a deficiency that must be corrected within the time period required by the responsible HHS official.

— END OF REPORT —

Results from CLASS™ Observations conducted at Hidalgo County Head Start Program

The following information represents the results of the preschool classroom observations with the Classroom Assessment Scoring System™ (CLASS™) which were conducted concurrent with your triennial review. The team observed 64 classrooms. These results are for your information and you are welcome to use this report in your quality improvement efforts if you find it helpful. This information is only representative of those classrooms where the CLASS™ observations took place.

The CLASS™ tool looks at 10 dimensions of teacher-student interactions and states those observed interactions on a seven point scale. The table on this page provides you with the average scores across the preschool classrooms observed in your program and the national average from a large study of early childhood classrooms. The chart on the next page will show the aggregate scores from all of your evaluated preschool classrooms along each of the ten dimensions, with a summary of the comments for each of these areas.



Results from CLASS™ Observations conducted at Hidalgo County Head Start Program

Summary of Comments from Classroom Observations		
Dimension	Score	Summary
Positive Climate (PC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Relationships · Positive Affect · Positive Communication · Respect 	5.6	In classrooms, there were some examples, but not consistent ones, of: (a) positive relationships, positive communication, and respect between teachers and children; and (b) teachers and/or children displaying positive affect.
Negative Climate (NC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Negative Affect · Punitive Control · Sarcasm/Disrespect · Severe Negativity 	1.1	In classrooms, there were few examples of displays of strong negative affect by teachers and children. When incidents arose, they were well managed by both teachers and children; There were no examples of: (a) punitive control by the teachers; and (b) sarcasm/disrespect and severe negativity by teachers and children.
Teacher Sensitivity (TS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Awareness · Responsiveness · Addresses Problems · Student Comfort 	5.3	In classrooms, there were some examples, but not consistent ones, of: (a) teachers' awareness of children's needs and abilities, responsiveness to children, and ability to address problems as they arose; and (b) children's comfort.
Regard for Student Perspectives (RSP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Flexibility and Student Focus · Support for Autonomy and Leadership · Student Expression · Restriction of Movement 	4.8	In classrooms, there were some examples, but not consistent ones of: (a) teachers' flexibility and support of children's autonomy and leadership; and (b) children's focus and expression. At times, teachers did restrict children's movement.
Behavior Management (BM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Clear Behavior Expectations · Proactive · Redirection of Misbehavior · Student Behavior 	5.6	In classrooms, there were some examples, but not consistent ones, of: (a) teachers having clear behavior expectations, being proactive, having low reactivity, and providing redirection of misbehavior; and (b) children's compliance. Some misbehavior that disrupted the classroom environment was observed.
Productivity (PD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Maximizing Learning Time · Routines · Transitions · Preparation 	5.6	In classrooms, there were some examples, but not consistent ones, of: (a) teachers maximizing learning time, having clear routines, facilitating brief transitions that provided learning opportunities, and being prepared for activities; and (b) children being offered choices when finished and understanding routines.
Instructional Learning Formats (ILF)	4.9	In classrooms, there were some examples, but not consistent ones, of: (a) teachers effectively facilitating activities,

Classroom Assessment Scoring System™, Pianta et al. © 2008 Brookes Publishing Co.

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Results from CLASS™ Observations conducted at Hidalgo County Head Start Program

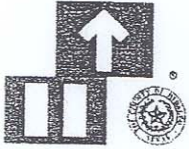
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Effective Facilitation · Variety of Modalities and Materials · Student Interest · Clarity of Learning Objectives 		providing a variety of modalities for learning, and conveying learning objectives to children; and (b) children showing interest in activities.
Concept Development (CD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Analysis and Reasoning · Creating · Integration · Connections to the Real World 	3.2	In classrooms, there were some examples, but not consistent ones, of teachers providing opportunities for children to analyze and reason, be creative, integrate new knowledge with previous knowledge, and make connections to the real world.
Quality of Feedback (QF) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Scaffolding · Feedback Loops · Prompting Thought Processes · Providing Information · Encouragement and Affirmation 	3.7	In classrooms, there were some examples, but not consistent ones, of: (a) teachers scaffolding children's learning, prompting their thought processes, providing information to further children's understanding, and encouraging/affirming children's interests and abilities; and (b) teachers and children participating in feedback loops.
Language Modeling (LM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Frequent Conversation · Open-Ended Questions · Repetition and Extension · Self- and Parallel Talk · Advanced Language 	3.3	In classrooms, there were some examples, but not consistent ones, of: (a) teachers asking open-ended questions and giving children time to respond, repeating and extending children's conversations using self and parallel talk, and promoting advanced language; (b) teachers and children participating in frequent conversations, including conversations between peers; and (c) children responding to teachers questions.

* - Low score suggests a developmentally appropriate learning climate that fosters students' well-being.

- High score suggests that this is an area that teachers could improve to create a more positive climate for students.

Initial Waiver Request for Children with Disabilities

February 3, 2011



Hidalgo County Head Start Program

P.O. Box 0117 Edinburg, Texas 78540-0117 (956) 383-0706

February 3, 2011

Debbie Drake
Acting Regional Program Manager
Office of Head Start, RO VI
1301 Young St. Room 934
Dallas, TX 75202

Dear Ms. Drake,

The Hidalgo County Head Start Program is not able to meet the mid-year requirement to identify the 10% children with disabilities through the local education agencies (public schools) and is hereby requesting a waiver. This will be our third and final waiver as we work with the local education agencies (LEA's) to comply with this requirement. We have analyzed our Improvement Plan activities and have revised them to facilitate the identification and services process. We will work more aggressively to secure the LEA's cooperation and assistance in this endeavor. In the attached pages we have documented our rationale for not being able to meet the requirement and we have included the revised Improvement Plan.

Please call me if additional information is required. Your assistance in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Teresa Flores
Executive Director

cc: Mr. Fred Huerta, Program Specialist



Hidalgo County Head Start Program

P.O. Box 0117 Edinburg, Texas 78540-0117 (956) 383-0706

Hidalgo County Head Start Program Justification for Requesting a Waiver Section 640 (d) of the 2007 Head Start Act

The identification process required by the Head Start Act for children with disabilities has presented our Program with a number of challenges which prevent our children from receiving services by the public school in a timely manner. Since the new requirement was approved two years ago, every attempt is being made to engage the public schools (local education agencies) to identify and serve the 10% requirement of children with disabilities. As we reached the mid-year we have determined that the current status requires that we submit one more and final waiver to the 10% requirement. We have been unable to reach the 10% during the time prescribe by the Head Start Act. We feel confident that we will meet that goal prior to the end of the Program year.

The attached report shows that 128 children have been identified and are being served by the LEA; 30 were assessed and did not meet the LEA criteria; 75 parents refused to have their children referred and 189 children have been referred to the LEAs for evaluation/assessment. We are committed and determined to work very aggressively with the LEA's for the next few months to insure that we are in full compliance with this mandate.

In spite of this reality, the Hidalgo County Head Start Program provides comprehensive services to all 3,690 children enrolled. There is no doubt that we meet every child's individual needs beginning on day one of our Program year. Children's folders and other reports and information present evidence of this. We are a Program committed to the individualization of instruction and our decisions are guided by this commitment every day.

The previous Head Start model [1308.19(d)] remains the first step in the identification and service process. It originates with beginning instruction where the

child is and finding the most appropriate method to serve the child's needs. It utilizes the services which parents may have secured for their children on their own initiative prior to enrollment in the Head Start Program and those that are identified through our own process. The process is very comprehensive and includes the parent, the teacher, the case worker (the center manager, the support service facilitator or the support service assistant), the staff in the Special Services Department, other department staff and external specialists in the area of need. This process for identification of children with special needs reflects decades of training and experience and demonstrates that the services from the private sector have provided very successful results for our children.

Currently our Program is providing special needs services to 591 children who meet our criteria for special services under the previous model. These services are provided by private entities (rehab) and are by design a one-on-one service in the identified area of need. Each child has an Individual Goals and Objective Plan (IGO) developed with the private rehab specialist, the parent, the Head Start case worker (support service assistant facilitator, support service facilitator, or the center manager), the teacher and the disability assistant if one is assigned. The child's progress is documented by the provider and made available every one to three months to the parent, the teacher and the Special Services Department. The teacher receives more frequent reports to insure coordination of services.

The implementation of the new process on the other hand has become the single most counterproductive change which interferes with meeting children's individual needs. Several aspects of the public school model versus our previous Program model reflect the differences between the two and our position regarding this requirement: 1.) The public school model for serving children with disabilities is an "exclusionary" rather than an "inclusionary" model to meet children's current needs. The criteria utilized to determine the need for services is so stringent, that there is a tendency to under serve and thus ignore needs beyond regular instruction and short term needs. Financially, many public schools are strapped and their expenses for serving children with disabilities are beyond their sources of funding.

2.) The school model evolved from the accepted practice in public schools that once a special need is defined, it remains a permanent need throughout a child's school years. This practice causes a child to be labeled disabled for life and is the rationale for many of our parents to refuse services from the public schools. 3.) Utilizing the public school model adds another layer of diagnosis which is repetitive and requires additional time (a minimum of 90 days) to complete. The model requires Response to Intervention (RTI) for at least 90 days prior to initiating the referral process. A child who is enrolled in the Head Start Program since the first day of classes and who is processed by the public school model will require at least six (6) months before any services are provided. 4.) Currently public schools are not accepting that our children are ready to be assessed when the Head Start staff submits the referral packet and all the RTI data. They are sending their own staff to conduct a brief observation and based on this observation they make a determination that the child may or may not be referred and assessed.

While the LEA's process continues, our 591 children receive services as prescribed through the rehabs. This ensures that there is no lapse in services for our children. While we have great partnerships with the public schools, our priorities are not their priorities; our needs are not necessarily their needs. As public schools funds become scarce, they cannot add more children to serve. Once identified, the public schools must serve our children.

Historically, our area has a shortage of credentialed public school staff to identify as well as to serve special needs children enrolled in the schools. This long existing need for staff augments our unfulfilled requests for services and thus the shortage of identified children.

As we assess our efforts over the last two years and review our Improvement Plan activities, we have made revisions and initiated other actions to insure that we meet the 10% requirement before the end of the year. Attached is a revised Improvement Plan for the actions to be taken during the remainder of the Program year.

HIDALGO COUNTY HEAD START PROGRAM
Improvement Plan For 2010-2011
Section 640 (d)(i) of the Head Start Act

Activities	Timelines	Person Responsible
Continue to participate in Parent Orientation meetings and monthly parent meetings and provide flyers/brochures on IDEA, ADA, and Section 504 to Head Start parents of eligible children with disabilities.	Spring 2011	Special Services Director Disability Coordinator Special Services Facilitator
<p>To address the high incidence of parents refusing services from the LEA's, we will continue to provide training to staff and parents on the referral evaluation/ services process.</p> <p>Parents whose children are receiving services with the LEA's will be engaged in conferences with parents whose children are not served to facilitate acceptance and participation.</p>	On Going	Special Services Director Disability Coordinator Special Services Facilitator
Continue to maintain written Community Partnership Agreements with 13 Special Education Departments of LEA's with emphasis on awareness and importance on the LEA's role in the identification and service process.	Annually	Community Partnership/Transition Director
Maintain frequent communication and Partnership Agreements or Interagency Agreements with ECI & Child Find to address the new mandate for enrollment of children with disabilities.	On Going	Special Services Director

HIDALGO COUNTY HEAD START PROGRAM
Improvement Plan For 2010-2011
Section 640 (d)(i) of the Head Start Act

Schedule one-on-one meetings with the LEA's superintendents and appropriate staff to review issues or concerns with the identification and service process as it relates to the specific LEA.	Spring 2011	Executive Director, Representative from the Grantee's Chairperson's Office, Special Services Director, Assistant Program Director
Continue to collaborate and coordinate with each LEA to facilitate and expedite the identification and enrollment of children with disabilities in the public schools.	On Going	Special Services Director
Schedule and participate in meetings with appropriate staff from all 13 LEA's to explore additional service delivery options for children with disabilities.	At least twice a year	Special Services Director
Comply with LEA requirements to implement "Recognition and Response (R&R)/Response to Intervention" (RTI) as a means to address children's needs prior to the decision to make a referral.	On Going	Special Services Director Case Worker (Support Service Staff, Center Manages)
Conduct timely comprehensive screening within three months of the child entering the program as recommended in Tier I of the R&R system.	August 2010- May 2011	Classroom Staff Support Service Staff Education Area Director Special Services Director
Refer children with suspected/identified disabilities to LEA's for evaluation, special education and related services immediately after compliance with R&R/RTI if referral is warranted.	Within 90 days of a child's enrollment	Support Service Staff Teacher Special Services Director

HIDALGO COUNTY HEAD START PROGRAM
Improvement Plan For 2010-2011
Section 640 (d)(i) of the Head Start Act

Request additional assistance and guidance from LEA's Special Education Staff on R&R/RTI to Head Start Staff as needed.	August 2010- May 2011	Special Service Director
Attend ARD meetings as requested by LEA's officials for children not requiring further services and for those children being recommended for the Pre-school Program for Children with Disabilities (PPCD) with LEA's.	August 2010- May 2011	Special Service Director Support Services Staff Teacher
Partner with LEA's to provide Special Education services on site (Head Start) and/or provide Head Start transportation to LEA for services.	August 2010- May 2011	Special Services Director
Schedule and coordinate training by LEA's staff for Head Start staff on the Referral Process.	August 2010- May 2011	Special Services Director
Encourage and facilitate dual enrollment (½ day with Head Start ½ day with LEA) for children to receive services from both entities.	August 2010- May 2011	Special Services Director Support Services Staff
Provide recruitment and enrollment materials for families of children with suspected/identified disabilities to participate in Child Find Fairs, clinics with LEA's.	August 2010- May 2011	Special Services Director
Send outreach letter to all (13) Special Education Departments of LEA's, to ECI's, Child Find and community organizations welcoming their referrals as a continued recruitment effort for children who meet the Head Start enrollment requirements.	On Going	Special Services Director

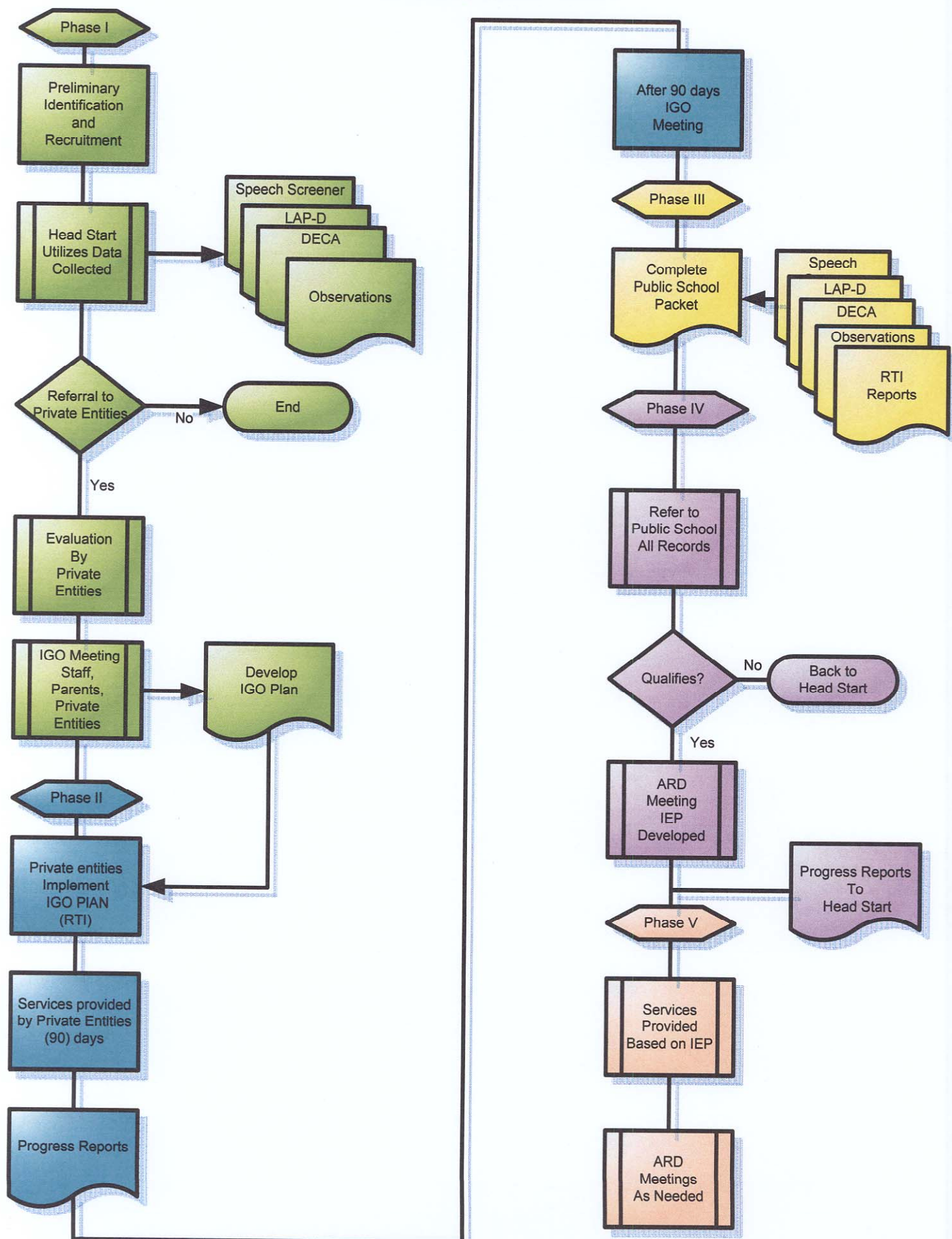
HIDALGO COUNTY HEAD START PROGRAM
Improvement Plan For 2010-2011
Section 640 (d)(i) of the Head Start Act

<p>Provide staff training for Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) programs regarding Head Start recruitment and enrollment requirements.</p> <p>Participate in ECI transition meeting and provide parents with information about enrollment of children with disabilities in Head Start.</p>	<p>August 2010- May 2011</p>	<p>Special Service Director Support Services Staff</p>
<p>Evaluate and update current procedures for recruitment of children from Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) as needed.</p>	<p>August 2010- May 2011</p>	<p>Special Service Director</p>
<p>Provide additional training to Head Start teachers to increase competency in observation skills for the purpose of the screening and referral process.</p>	<p>August 2010- May 2011</p>	<p>Special Services Director</p>
<p>The Special Services Director and the Disability Coordinator will continue to remain on the Child Find Advisory Committee and attend meetings as scheduled.</p>	<p>August 2010- May 2011</p>	<p>Special Services Director Disability Coordinator</p>
<p>Maintain written contracts with Medicaid eligible private rehab providers to serve children with disabilities in need of services.</p>	<p>August 2010- October 2010</p>	<p>Special Services Director</p>
<p>Schedule additional meetings with the Region One Education Service Center staff and LEA's special education directors to develop consistency for the referral process across the Region.</p>	<p>Spring 2011</p>	<p>Special Services Director, Disabilities Coordinator, Assistant Program Director</p>

**Additional Information Submitted for the Waiver
Request for Children with Disabilities**

February 16, 2011

Hidalgo County Head Start Addressing Special Needs



Addressing Special Needs Children

Outline of Activities

Phase I – Preliminary Identification/Recruitment

- A. Administration and use of data from the following evaluations:
 - 1. Speech Screener
 - 2. LAP-D
 - 3. DECA
 - 4. Observations by parents, teachers, other staff, review by Special Services Staff
- B. Referral to Private Entities for further evaluation
- C. Individual Goals and Objectives (IGO) meetings to review evaluations results from private entities and to develop IGO Plan.

Phase II – Response to Intervention (RTI): Provision of Services by Private Entities and Implementation of IGO Plan

- A. Services are scheduled and delivered by private rehabilitative specialists in all areas for at least 90 days.
- B. Progress is recorded and monitored for at least 90 days.
- C. IGO meetings are held as needed when changes to IGO Plan are required.

Phase III – Referral to Public School for Identification of 10% Requirement

- A. Public School Packet of Information for referral is completed and submitted.
- B. All RTI data is also submitted.
- C. Public school staff review Referral and other data

Phase IV – Public School Assessment/Evaluation

- A. Public school staff determines which children will be assessed/evaluated.
- B. Evaluation/Assessment conducted.
- C. Results reported to Head Start.

Phase V – Provision of Services by Public School

- A. ARD meeting is held and IEP is developed for children who meet public school criteria.
- B. Services are scheduled and delivered.
- C. Progress reports sent to Head Start.

Hidalgo County Head Start Program

Proposal for Increasing Enrollment of Children with Disabilities

2011-2012

Media/Communication

Activities	Timeline	Person Responsible
Schedule meetings/appointments with the media within the community served to develop and air PSA's via the radio/television to assist in the recruiting.	Spring 2011-Spring 2012	Special Services Director Public Relations Officer
Write PSA's to be printed in the local newspapers in the communities served.	Spring 2011-Spring 2012	Special Services Director Public Relations Officer
Distribute a Child Find Brochure solely on recruiting children with disabilities to include severe disabilities in the community.	Spring 2011-Spring 2012	Special Services Director Hidalgo County Head Start Program Staff
Include recruitment information for children with disabilities on the Hidalgo County Head Start Program web page. www.hchsp.org	On-Going	Special Services Director MIS Director

Presentations/Trainings/Assistance

Activities	Timeline	Person Responsible
Continue to participate in Parent Orientation meetings and monthly Parent Committee Meetings and train parents on the referral process and provide flyers/brochures on IDEA, ADA, and Section 504 to Head Start Parents of eligible children with disabilities.	Spring 2011	Special Services Director Disability Coordinator Special Services Facilitator
To address the high incidence of parents refusing services from the LEA's, Special Services Department staff will continue to provide training to staff and parents on the referral evaluation/services process.	On-Going	Special Services Director Disability Coordinator Special Services Facilitator
Request additional assistance and guidance from LEA's Special Education Staff on R&R/RTI to Head Start Staff as needed.	August 2010-May 2011	Special Services Director
Schedule and coordinate training by LEA's for Head Start staff on the Referral Process.	August 2010-May 2011	Special Services Director
The Parent Committees at each center will include a presentation on the identification of children with disabilities early in the year.	September 2011	Family Services Director Special Services Director

Hidalgo County Head Start Program

Proposal for Increasing Enrollment of Children with Disabilities

2011-2012

Collaboration/Agreements

Activities	Timeline	Person Responsible
Maintain frequent communication and Partnership Agreements or Interagency Agreements with LEA, ECI and Child Find to address the mandate for enrollment of children with disabilities.	On-Going	Special Services Director
Send outreach letters to all (13) Special Education Departments of LEA's, to ECI's, Child Find and private community entities welcoming their referrals as a continued recruitment effort for children who meet the Head Start enrollment requirements.	On-Going	Special Services Director
Schedule additional meetings with Region One Education Service Center staff and LEA's Special Education Directors to develop consistency for the referral process across the Region.	Spring 2011	Special Services Director Disabilities Coordinator Assistant Program Director

Reporting/Compliance/Monitoring

Activities	Timeline	Person Responsible
Center staff will be provided with an updated monthly report notifying them of the status on the 10% quota.	Monthly	Center Manager Support Service Staff Special Services Staff
Comply with LEA requirements to implement "Recognition and Response (R&R)/Response to Intervention" (RTI) as a means to address children's needs prior to the decision to make a referral. Maintain comprehensive records and submit to LEA with Referral Packet.	On-Going	Special Services Director Case Worker (Support Service Staff, Center Manages)
Refer children with suspected/identified disabilities to LEA's for evaluation, special education and related services immediately after compliance with R&R/RTI if referral is warranted.	Within 90 days of a child's enrollment	Support Service Staff Teacher Special Services Director
Family Services Department staff will assist Special Services Department staff to make special needs children a targeted priority for recruitment. Every center will plan to meet the 10% requirement earlier than mid-year thru targeted recruitment strategies.	Fall 2011	Family Services Director Special Needs Director
All data on special needs children will be automated to facilitate the processing of information and reports for targeted action on a timely manner.	On-Going	Special Services Staff
Desk audits of special needs children data will be monitored bi-weekly to address needed action at each center.	On-Going	Special Services Staff
A monthly report to the Policy Council of identified children with special needs will be included in the Enrollment Reports from Family Services.	Monthly	Special Services Staff Family Services Staff

Hidalgo County Head Start Program

Proposal for Increasing Enrollment of Children with Disabilities

2011-2012

Follow-ups/Conferences/Meetings

Activities	Timeline	Person Responsible
Schedule one-on-one meetings with the LEA's superintendents and appropriate staff to review issues or concerns with the identification and service process as it relates to the specific LEA.	Spring 2011	Executive Director, Representative from the Grantee Board (Commissioners' Court), Special Services Director, Assistant Program Director
Special Services Department Staff will conduct follow-up one-on-one conferences with parents who are refusing services from LEA.	On-Going	Special Services Department Staff
Parents whose children are receiving services with the LEA's will be engaged in conferences with parents whose children are not served to facilitate acceptance and participation.	On-Going	Special Services Department Staff

Committees

Activities	Timeline	Person Responsible
The Special Services Director and the Disability Coordinator will continue to remain on the Child Find Advisory Committee and attend meetings as scheduled.	August 2010-May 23011	Special Services Director Disability Coordinator

Training and Technical Assistance

Activities	Timeline	Person Responsible
Technical assistance will be secured from the ECE Specialist. A meeting to develop an action plan and a schedule for assistance from Specialist will be held.	May 2011	Special Services Director Head Start Executive Director Head Start Assistant Program Director
The Plan of Action for assistance will be implemented throughout the year.	On-Going	Special Services Director Assistant Program Director

Center Manager's Plan of Action to Serve Children with Special Needs
March 3, 2010

Proposed Strategies	Action to be Taken	Person Responsible	Timeline
1. Begin recruitment/applications of children in January or sooner than March.	Recruitment of children for Head Start services will be scheduled in January for new and currently enrolled children.	Family Services Director will schedule for 2011-2012	April 2011
2. Special Education representative from the I.S.D. be present at transition meetings.	Transition Director and Special Services Director will meet with ECI's to plan for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attendance of Head Start Transition meetings will be only if child meets the Head Start eligibility criteria ● Attendance of LEA personnel at meeting to secure approval for further evaluation. ● Completion of Head Start application. 	Transition Director, Special Services Director	Spring 2011
3. Meetings with Special Education Directors or representatives and Center Managers/Facilitators, Area Director/Special Services staff to communicate and plan for services.	Center Managers/Facilitators will schedule meeting with LEA Special Education Directors or representative to communicate and plan for specific children needing services.	Center Managers, Special Services Department Staff, Area Directors	Early Fall 2011

Proposed Strategies	Action to be Taken	Person Responsible	Timeline
4. Target therapy agencies (rehab) including those with partnership agreements – advertise with flyers.	Head Start recruiters will visit rehabs and provide/post information on the recruitment of children with special needs.	Head Start Recruiters – Center Managers, Support Service Facilitators and Assistants, other Center Staff	Prior to Recruitment Dates
5. Encourage parents to go to LEA to request services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Head Start Case Managers (Center Managers, Support Service Assistants, Support Services Facilitator) will encourage parent to secure services from LEA's. ● Case Manager will assist parents to write a letter requesting services specifically during referral process. 	Head Start Recruiters – Center Managers, Support Service Facilitators and Assistants, other Center Staff	During application process
6. During recruitment, parents of children under 3 years old with suspected disabilities should be encouraged to contact ECI's. Take initiative to call for the parents.	Case Manager will assist and guide parents to make contact with ECI.	Head Start Recruiters – Center Managers, Support Service Facilitators and Assistants, other Center Staff	During application process
7. Parents can recruit parents of children with special needs. Give parents the Head Start's staff business cards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A brief orientation on children with special needs will be provided to Head Start parents. ● Information on children with special needs will be given to parents. 	Head Start Recruiters – Center Managers, Support Service Facilitators and Assistants, other Center Staff	On-Going

Proposed Strategies	Action to be Taken	Person Responsible	Timeline
8. Explain to parents their rights regarding labeling. Parents have the last word.	An orientation on parents' rights and responsibilities will be provided regarding children with special needs.	Special Services staff will assist and coordinate or present	Early Fall 2011
9. Recruitment – ECI must provide more lead time prior to Transition Meeting to contact LEAs.	Transition Director and Special Services Director will meet with ECI's to express needs and plan accordingly.	Transition Director, Special Services Director	Spring 2011
10. Parents/Staff must address current information vision, hearing, campus, referral.	Hearing and vision screening findings must be addressed by parents and/or staff prior to referral for identification of other needs by LEAs. Case Managers must conduct follow ups until such needs are addressed.	Case Managers, Center Managers, Support Services Facilitators and Assistants	On Going
11. Parents help with school district referral process – letters, phone call, visits, email.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Parents roles and responsibilities will describe the specific steps for parents during and after the referral process. ●Special Services staff will prepare and publish a quick reference card with these steps. ●Case Workers will monitor and follow up with parents until child is enrolled with LEA. 	Special Services Staff Special Services Staff Case Workers	Spring 2011 Spring 2011 On Going
12. Take an individual approach with parents; get to know them personally.	Orientation for Case Managers on how to take an individual approval will be conducted.	Special Services Director	Spring 2011
13. Educate parents regarding Special Education; follow up. Define special education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Orientation for parents on Special Education will be presented during Parent Orientation. ●Packet of resources will be prepared and handed to parents. 	Special Services Director	Early Fall 2011

Proposed Strategies	Action to be Taken	Person Responsible	Timelines
14. Recommend that parents go to Special Education Departments before and during application process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Orientation for parents on Special Education will be presented during Parent Orientation. ●Packet of resources will be prepared and handed to parents. 	Special Services Director	Early Fall 2011
15. Complete referrals to LEAs within 45 days of enrollment. Make it a deadline.	Referrals to LEA's will be completed within 45 days of enrollment.	Case Managers, Center Managers, Support Services Facilitators and Support Services Assistants	Within 45 Days of Enrollment
16. Build a good relationship with the Special Education Departments – LEAs, Region One, ECI's and Easter Seals.	Schedule Orientation Meeting with LEA Special Education Directors/Representatives, Region One, ECI's and Easter Seals.	Area Directors, Center Managers, Special Services Staff	Early Fall 2011
17. Discuss with parents any siblings with possible special needs for referral during recruitment.	Prepare a quick reference card with do's and don'ts for Case Managers. Include information to assist in recruiting children with special needs.	Special Services Director	Spring 2011
18. Continue advocating partnerships with LEAs regarding special needs services.	Make contact with LEA's when all other efforts have failed.	Executive Director, Assistant Program Director	On Going