



# Hidalgo County Head Start Program Memorandum

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Date: March 21, 2014

To: Hidalgo County Head Start Policy Council  
Hidalgo County Commissioners' Court

From: Teresa Flores, Executive Head Start Director

Subject: 2014 Restored Funding

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A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Teresa Flores".

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014 on January 17, 2014 restored the 5.27% reduction in funding as a result of sequestration. The Act also provided for a 1.3 % Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) effective with the start of our FY 2014 budget period. The revised funding levels established for the Hidalgo County Head Start Program are as follows:

New Base Award	\$25,185,064
TTA (Training and Technical Assistance)	\$ 276,833
COLA ( Cost of Living Adjustment)	\$ 327,406
<b>Total Restored Appropriation Award</b>	<b>\$25,789,303</b>
2014 Approved Budget Post Sequestration	\$24,134,644
<b>Net Returned Funding</b>	<b>\$ 1,654,659</b>

The Hidalgo County Head Start Program was fiscally impacted in 2013 due to sequestration, and equally reduced the proposed budget for 2014. In analyzing the results of the Program's successful efforts in complying with the funding shortage, we can point to the resiliency of staff in sustaining the same level of professional services regardless of the reduction in funding. In spite of the funding cuts, the Program did not close any classrooms, decrease hours of operations or reduce enrollment. Three-thousand six-hundred and ninety (3,690) children remained served.

While not all budgeted vacancies were filled in 2013, all strategic positions remained on board and no actively employed staff was laid off or furloughed. Staff voluntarily took on additional responsibilities to sustain all services at the appropriate levels, and in many instances, strengthened those services. The Program is very fortunate for the dedication, commitment and support which has been exhibited by the staff during these trying and stressful times as operations were streamlined and responsibilities were realigned.

As the Program moves forward in 2014, the Hidalgo County Head Start Program proposes to capitalize on the results of the streamlining process and support staff as they continue to perform the realigned responsibilities, by preparing a COLA slightly higher than the current recommendation of 1.3%. In addition the Program will also fund all fringe benefits as originally budgeted without requiring staff to pay the additional medical premium increase adopted by the Grantee Board. The Hidalgo County Head Start Program will continue to benefit from the high level of efficiency achieved as a result of the new streamlined processes implemented during sequestration.

Of the original twenty one unfilled vacancies outlined in the 2013 Sequestration Plan, the Program proposes to fill the Human Resource Director position as this function is vital in implementing and administering the newly developed human resource automated system by the county and the application review process which has now been added to the department responsibilities. The duties of the remaining 20 vacancies are being performed by existing personnel or have been eliminated due to a more efficient and streamlined approach as follows: the Fiscal Officer's duties have been absorbed by the Chief Financial Officer, the MIS Secretary's duties were absorbed by the MIS Coordinator, duties for the Public Information Office have been reassigned to the remaining Education Coordinator with assistance from other directors, the second Education Coordinator duties' have been distributed among the four Education Area Directors and the remaining Education Coordinator. The vacant Center Manager position was filled by reassigning a Support Service Facilitator to the position and replacing the Facilitator with a Support Service Assistance position at a lower cost to the Program. The Staff Development Coordinator was replaced by a Secretary under the Staff Development Director. The three Disability Classroom Aides' duties are being shared by full-time Classroom Aides. The Craftsman's duties are shared by other maintenance personnel, the three Custodians positions were "Floaters" to be utilized as needed, the Program restructured the duties and other staff share those duties, and the two Bus Drivers' vacancies and the corresponding bus aides became obsolete as the Program found more effective ways to design bus routes. Three substitute positions were also removed from the budget as center staff found ways to engage parents and volunteers in substituting in our classrooms.

In addition for 2014 the five unfilled vacancies (one teacher, one assistant teacher and three custodians) were also eliminated from the budget as children slots were reassigned to centers with greater need within the allocated classrooms. The teacher position was for an extra instructor above our classroom needs. The Assistant Teacher position became non-essential once the teaching position was eliminated. The three Custodial positions were eliminated as a result of a more efficient manner of assigning Custodians to classrooms.

Training and Technical Assistance costs will still include the Program's internal specialists, Education Department Staff (Education Area Directors and the Coordinator) and the Staff Development Director, who provide direct training to staff, as was reflected in the 2013 Sequestration Plan. These personnel perform the roles of educational guides/coaches to the teaching staff. They organize and conduct both formal and informal mentoring activities; interact one-on-one with staff to help them reflect best practice in order to connect research and theory to their work. The target continues to be the individualization of instruction as children are instructed to achieve school readiness.

In summary the Hidalgo County Head Start Program proposes to utilize the restored funds in the following manner:

- To cover the increase in medical premiums for all personnel. This will relieve employees from having to pay the anticipated additional monthly insurance premium of \$64.
- To restore funds to the supplies and the "Other" category to fully account for rent, utilities, telephone, and mental health expenses and for insurance premiums for building and liability, which have increased for 2014.
- To provide a Cost of Living Adjustment of 3.5% to all personnel and realign compensation with educational attainment and function responsibilities for teaching and administrative positions. Currently employed teachers who have earned a Bachelor's degree but who do not meet the degree required in the job description, will be compensated with \$1,000 above the associates degree salary.

The Chief Financial Officer's position will be aligned with the Administrator for Human Resources' salary, based on comparable responsibilities and risk factors in the performance of those functions.

These adjustments will help retain trained and experienced personnel, limit staff turnovers, and maintain salary levels within range of the local prevailing rates. This COLA will assist in minimizing the downward pressure on salaries due to consistently low salary adjustments during the past five years.

- To fill the vacancy for Human Resource Director. This position is essential in assisting the Human Resource Administrator with the implementation of personnel system and the additional responsibilities assigned to the department by the County's Human Resource department as the new on line application system is implemented and as more direct involvement is required in the application review process.

Please refer to attached 2014 Budget comparison which outlines the recommended line item adjustments as a result of the restored funds.

## Hidalgo County Head Start Program

### 2014 Budget (Restored Funding)

Description	Approved 2014 Budget	Restored Funding	Variance	Comments/Notes
<b>Salaries/Fringes</b>				
Salaries	16,005,673.18	16,705,454.15	699,780.97	COLA Increase (3.5%)
Fringes/Pension Costs	5,756,239.75	6,509,455.79	753,216.04	COLA Benefits Increase
<b>Total Salaries/Fringes</b>	<b>21,761,912.93</b>	<b>23,214,909.94</b>	<b>1,452,997.01</b>	
<b>Out of Town Travel</b>	-		-	
<b>Equipment</b>	-		-	
<b>Supplies</b>				
Office	69,700.00	69,700.00	-	
Postage	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
Classroom	172,700.00	201,561.99	28,861.99	
Maintenance	154,483.00	154,483.00	-	
Janitorial	75,000.00	75,000.00	-	
Medical	8,006.84	8,006.84	-	
Playground	-	-	-	
Operational	53,450.00	53,450.00	-	
<b>Total Supplies</b>	<b>543,339.84</b>	<b>572,201.83</b>	<b>28,861.99</b>	
<b>Other</b>			-	
Center Space	167,911.00	177,911.00	10,000.00	
Telephone	214,200.00	261,200.00	47,000.00	
Utilities	433,844.51	518,644.51	84,800.00	
Local Travel	85,900.00	85,900.00	-	
Renovations	-		-	
Professional Services	92,500.00	92,500.00	-	
Dental Serv	15,000.00	15,000.00	-	
Disability Serv	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
Mental Health	20,000.00	33,000.00	13,000.00	
Medical Serv	6,000.00	6,000.00	-	
Printing- Admin	7,497.72	7,497.72	-	
Printing Center	32,705.00	32,705.00	-	
Insurance	197,000.00	215,000.00	18,000.00	
Vehicle Maintenance	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
Fuel	125,000.00	125,000.00	-	
Equip. Repair-Admin	1,500.00	1,500.00	-	
Equip. Repair-Center	47,500.00	47,500.00	-	
Equip. Rental	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
CDA/ T.T.A.	276,833.00	276,833.00	-	
<b>Total Other Expend.</b>	<b>1,829,391.23</b>	<b>2,002,191.23</b>	<b>172,800.00</b>	
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>24,134,644.00</b>	<b>25,789,303.00</b>	<b>1,654,659.00</b>	