


Hidalgo County Head Start Program
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Date: February 19, 2025
To: Policy Council
From: Irma Peña, Head Start Executive Director 
CC: Head Start Executive Team
Subj: Change in Scope Proposal – Early Head Start Program

The Hidalgo County Head Start Program (HCHSP) has been a Head Start model for children 3-5 years of age in Hidalgo County for over 40 years and provides high-quality services to children and families that are most in need. HCHSP provides comprehensive services and promotes progress in children's early learning and supports positive family outcomes in under-resourced communities.

The Office of Head Start recognizes that Head Start Programs nationally have encountered challenges for a variety of reasons to include a shift in community needs over time. The HCHSP's Community Assessment identified an increase in PreK enrollment in public schools and an extreme lack of services to infants and toddlers and pregnant women in Hidalgo County.

Section 640(g)(3) of the Head Start Act allows Head Start programs to convert Head Start slots to Early Head Start slots and is **highly encouraged by the Office of Head Start**.

Reference: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/im/acf-im-hs-22-09>

HCHSP will request a Change in Scope for PY 2025-26 and will implement an "Early Head Start" model starting August 1, 2025, with proposed direct services to children/pregnant women starting August 1, 2026.

Detailed information will be provided in the Change in Scope proposal that will be presented at the Policy Council meeting.