

**Memorandum of Understanding Between**  
**Hidalgo County Head Start Program**  
*And*  
*AVANCE, Inc./Colonia's Early Head Start Program and*  
*Early Head Start Child Care Partnership Program*  
**2021-2023**



The **Hidalgo County Head Start Program (HCHSP)** and **AVANCE, Inc.** agree to establish a working and cooperative relationship between the parties in order to plan services appropriate for each agency's or program's clients. It is the objective of the **Hidalgo County Head Start Program** to collaborate with partners in our communities, in order to provide the highest level of services to children and families; to foster the development of a continuum of family centered services, and to advocate for a community that shares responsibility for the healthy development of children and families of all cultures.

The terms and conditions set forth in the following document shall constitute the entire Agreement between the **HCHSP** and **AVANCE, Inc.**, may not be amended except by a written document signed by **HCHSP** and **AVANCE, Inc.**

**AVANCE, Inc. will:**

- Provide services for infants and toddlers and their families to encourage trust and emotional security, provide a variety of sensory and motor experiences, support physical, social and emotional development, encourage the development of self-awareness and autonomy, and support emerging communication skills.
- Provide service coordination services for all eligible children and maintain documentation of these activities. The Family Development worker is responsible for coordinating all services within the program and across agency lines, as well as being available to parents.
- Make decisions regarding what services will be provided, which includes type, frequency, intensity, location, name of services provider, and method of delivery made through a collaborative Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) process between parents and other team members. Services are jointly coordinated with other services providers involved in delivery of services to the child and family.
- To assist with transition into other appropriate programs and services when the child turns three. As early as ninety (90) days prior to the child's third birthday and with family approval, a face-to-face conference must be convened with the family, the Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) program staff and staff from the next future setting, to review the child's program options and transition plan. The child must be referred to Hidalgo County Head Start Program as described in the Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) and agreed upon by the parents. With parental consent assessment information may accompany the referral.
- Participate in and support efforts for a smooth transition when entering Head Start programs as well as for children who, at age three, will need to be considered for services for the preschool age. To avoid duplication of effort, the **AVANCE, Inc.** will coordinate, to the extent possible with families and the Head Start program to support the cooperation and the sharing of information among agencies and their community partners in accordance with the agency's confidentiality policies.

- Will establish and maintain transition procedures, will coordinate with the **Hidalgo County Head Start Program** to ensure the relevant children's record are transferred; will initiate meetings with **Hidalgo County Head Start Program** staff for the next placement to discuss transition progress and abilities of individual children. The process will take into account; the child's health status and developmental level, circumstances, and availability of Head Start.
- Transition planning by **AVANCE, Inc.** will be undertaken for each child and family at least six months prior to the child's third birthday. **AVANCE, Inc.** will allow the child, as appropriate, to remain in Early Head Start, following his or her third birthday, for additional months until he or she can transition into a Head Start, childcare, pre-school, or daycare setting.

**Hidalgo County Head Start Program will:**

- Provide a comprehensive pre-school program for economically disadvantage children, three to five years of age. The program gives priority to identify, recruit, and serve foster children, homeless children, and children with disabilities and their families. Services include health, mental health, nutrition, education, special services, social services, parent involvement, and transition services.
- Engage in an ongoing family partnership building and provide social service assistance when needed.
- Provide information and referrals to families regarding services of collaborating agency/program.
- Abide by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services final regulations pursuant to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).
- Maintain the children's, families', and programmatic records in a manner that will assure the protection of the rights and privacy of parents, families, and staff. All **HCHSP** records, data, or information related to individual children, families, and staff will be treated as confidential. Release of information will take place only with clients' prior written consent and approval.
- Follow Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines and HCHSP work safe plans due to Covid-19 pandemic.

**Collaboration Efforts between AVANCE, Inc. and HCHSP:**

- To refer clients as appropriate to each other. Services to the client will be based upon the needs of said client and the receiving agency's or program's ability to provide services. In the event that the receiving agency or program is unable to provide services to the client, it is agreed that alternate referrals will be provided as possible resources.
- To exchange reports describing services rendered between each other on a regular basis. The undersigned parties agree that they will try, when possible, to participate and collaborate in shared forums, networking meetings, and training sessions.

**Termination:**

Either party may terminate the Agreement, with or without cause, by giving ten (10) days written notice to the other.

**Term:**

The Term of this Memorandum of Understanding is for two years commencing **September 1, 2021** and ending **August 31, 2023**, unless earlier terminated as provided herein.

**Governing Law:**

This Memorandum of Understanding will be construed in accordance with the Laws of the State of Texas and is performable in Hidalgo County, Texas.

**Consideration:**

This Agreement is being made in consideration of the following: **AVANCE, Inc.** and **Hidalgo County Head Start Program** agree that there will be no financial exchange of monies or other compensation.

The below signed authorities agree to the statements in this document in order to develop a strong collaboration and an open communication system at all levels which will enable both **AVANCE, Inc.** and **HCHSP** to provide the children the best services available.

**AVANCE, Inc.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Maria I. Campos, Regional Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Hidalgo County Head Start Program**

*Richard Cortez*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Honorable Richard Cortez  
Hidalgo County Judge

*10-4-2021*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Teresa Flores*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teresa Flores, Executive Director  
Hidalgo County Head Start Program

*10-1-2021*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



*Arturo Guajardo*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Arturo Guajardo,  
Hidalgo County Clerk

**Approved As To Form:**

Ricardo González, P.C.  
DBA, Oxford & González

By: *Ricardo González*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ricardo González

AI- 82452  
Date Approved by Policy Council: 09-15-2021  
Date Approved by Commissioner's Court: 09-21-2021

APPROVED BY  
COMMISSIONERS COURT  
ON: *9-21-21 mm*