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Oct. 27, 2011

## **A Memorandum of Understanding Between Horseheads Central School and Schuyler Head Start**

### **I. Parties to the Agreement**

- A. Horseheads Central School District; and
- B. Schuyler Head Start Grantee

### **II. Purpose of Agreement**

- A. To improve availability and the quality of services for the geographic service area of the Schuyler Head Start and the Horseheads Central School District's children, age three through age five, and their families;
- B. To support children's optimal development and readiness for school entry and success;
- C. To address the unique strengths and needs of the local population, such as homeless, migrant, or non-English speaking families;
- D. To promote collaboration regarding shared use of transportation, facilities, and other resources, as appropriate;
- E. To promote further collaboration to reduce duplication and enhance efficiency of services;
- F. To define the roles and responsibilities of the named parties toward coordination and greater collaboration; enhance linkages and relationships; and exchange information on the provision of educational and non-educational services; and
- G. To coordinate a comprehensive system of activities, policies, and procedures among the named parties which guide and support their delivery of services to children and their families.

### **III. Program Descriptions**

- A. Schuyler Head Start Grantee.
- B. Head Start is a nation-wide Federal grant program funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is a comprehensive child development program for families with young children in the areas of education, social services, health, and family involvement. Head Start preschool programs are for children from 3 to 5 years of age and their families.

Head Start is mandated to assume a leadership role in the development of partnerships with community agencies and service providers. Each Head Start, Migrant and Seasonal, and American Indian/Alaska Native Head Start program must have a written agreement with the local school

systems (LSS) or local education agency (LEA) to coordinate and collaborate to best meet the needs of children and their families.

C. Horseheads Central School District.

#### **IV. Authority**

- A. Head Start's responsibility for coordination and collaboration with the School District responsible for managing publicly funded preschool programs in the service area of the Head Start grantee is mandated in the Head Start Act: Public Law 110-134 "Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007."
- B. The Horseheads Central School District; is authorized by Horseheads Central School District Board of Education.

#### **V. Guiding Principles**

- Create and maintain a meaningful partnership to promote school readiness so that children from low-income families in Head Start programs, or who are preschool-age, may receive comprehensive services to prepare them for elementary school and to address any potential "achievement gap."
- Plan and implement strategies based on practice and research that have proven to support children's school success.
- Respect the uniqueness of our community's needs and resources.
- Promote the involvement of members of the early care and education communities.
- Share commitment, cooperation, and collaboration for a coordinated service delivery system.

#### **VI. Joint Roles in System Review, Coordination, Collaboration, Alignment, and Implementation**

The Horseheads Central School District and the Schuyler Head Start Grantee will review and develop plans for the coordination, collaboration, alignment, and implementation of each of the following 10 activities, as mandated by the Act.

1) Educational activities, curricular objectives, and instruction including:

- I. Implementing a research-based early childhood curriculum that is aligned with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework developed by the Secretary and, as appropriate, Universal Prekindergarten Learning Standards the New York State K-12 State Learning Standards.

2. Establishing ongoing communications between the Schuyler Head Start grantee and the Horseheads Central School District for developing continuity of developmentally appropriate curricular objectives (which for the purpose of the Head Start program shall be aligned with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework and, as appropriate, with Universal Prekindergarten Learning Standards the New York State K-12 State Learning Standards) and for shared expectations for children's learning and development as the children transition to school.

2) Public information dissemination and access to programs for families contacting the Head Start program or any of the preschool programs including:

1. Generating support and leveraging the resources of the entire community in order to improve school readiness.
2. Establishing ongoing channels of communication between Head Start staff and their counterparts in the schools (including teachers, social workers, local educational agency liaisons designated under section 722(g)(1)(J)(ii) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii)), and health staff to facilitate coordination of programs.

3) Selection of eligible children to be served by programs including:

1. Developing and implementing systems to increase Head Start and Universal Prekindergarten program participation of underserved populations of eligible children.
2. Developing procedures for identifying children who are limited English proficient, and informing the parents of such children about the instructional services used to help children make progress towards acquiring the knowledge and skills and acquisition of the English language.
3. Collaborating with all public or private entities providing early childhood education and development services or programs in the community and addressing any barriers to such collaboration that the agencies encounter including:
  - (i) Programs implementing grant agreements under the Early Reading First and Even Start programs;
  - (ii) Other preschool programs operating under Title I;
  - (iii) Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education Programs serving children with disabilities; under section 619 and part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.)
  - (iv) Child care programs;
  - (v) The educational programs that the children in the Head Start program involved will enter at the age of compulsory school attendance; and
  - (vi) Local entities, such as a public or school library for—
    - (A) Conducting reading readiness programs;
    - (B) Developing innovative programs to excite children about the world of books, including providing fresh books in the Head Start classroom;
    - (C) Assisting in literacy training for Head Start teachers; and
    - (D) Supporting parents and other caregivers in literacy efforts.

4) Definition of service areas: Both the Horseheads Central School District and the Schuyler Head Start will provide services to all students located in the geographical area. Services include: academic, health, social, emotional and nutritional.

5) Staff training, including opportunities for joint staff training on topics such as academic content standards, instructional methods, curricula, and social and emotional development and transition-related training for school staff and Head Start staff.

6) Program technical assistance including linking services provided in the Head Start program with educational services, including services relating to language, literacy, and numeracy, provided by school district.

7) Provision of services to meet the needs of working parents, as applicable including: coordinating activities to make resources available for full working day and full calendar year available to children and coordinating activities and collaborating with programs under the Child Care and Development Block Grant.

8) Communication and parent outreach for smooth transitions to kindergarten including:

1. Developing and implementing a systematic procedure for transferring, with parental consent, Head Start program records for each participating child to the school in which such child will enroll.
2. Establishing comprehensive transition policies and procedures that support children transitioning to school, including by engaging the local educational agency in the establishment of such policies.
3. Conducting outreach to parents and elementary school (such as kindergarten) teachers to discuss the educational, developmental, and other needs of individual children.
4. Helping parents of limited English proficient children understand—
  - (A) The instructional and other services provided by the school in which such child will enroll after participation in Head Start; and
  - (B) As appropriate, the information provided to parents of limited English proficient children under section 3302 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7012)
5. Developing and implementing a family outreach and support program, in cooperation with entities carrying out parental involvement efforts under title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and family outreach and support efforts under subtitle B of title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, taking into consideration the language needs of parents of limited English proficient children.
6. Assisting families, administrators, and teachers in enhancing educational and developmental continuity and continuity of parental involvement in activities between Head Start services and elementary school classes.
7. Helping parents, including grandparents and kinship caregivers, to understand the importance of parental involvement in a child's academic success while teaching them strategies for maintaining parental involvement as their child moves from Head Start to elementary school.

8. Helping parents understand the instructional and other services provided by the school in which their child will enroll after participation in the Head Start program.

9) Provision and use of facilities, transportation, and other program elements including:

1. Collaborating on the shared use of transportation and facilities, in appropriate cases.
2. Collaborating to reduce the duplication and enhance the efficiency of services while increasing the program participation of underserved populations of eligible children.
3. Exchanging information on the provision of non-educational services to such children.

10) Other elements mutually agreed to by the parties.

## **VII. Confidentiality**

All acknowledge confidentiality requirements that each grantee and agency must follow regarding the sharing and release, with the consent of families, of personally identifiable information regarding children and families. Each grantee and agency will protect the rights of young children with respect to records and reports created, maintained, and used by the public agencies. It is the intent of this agreement to ensure that parents have rights of access and rights of privacy with respect to such reports and records, and that applicable State and Federal laws for exercise of these rights be strictly followed. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) will be followed. (See 34CFR 303.460.)

## **VIII. Dispute Resolution**

Parties will first attempt to resolve the dispute between or among themselves. All local agencies will ensure that a system is in place to resolve disputes and solve problems. The system should include:

- a. Timelines for regular meetings to review local agreements, plan collaborative activities, and resolve issues; and
- b. The identification of a liaison from Schuyler Head Start and the Horseheads Central School District.

## **IX. Review of Agreement**

The agreement will be jointly reviewed by all parties biennially and more frequently if laws and regulations are amended that will significantly impact this agreement, or when a party requests a formal change.

**X. Term of Agreement**

The agreement will become effective immediately after being signed and dated by all parties. By signing the agreement, the Schuyler Head Start and the Horseheads Central School District agree to the terms.

**XII. SIGNATURES**

**For the Horseheads Central School District**

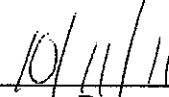
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Ralph Marino, Horseheads Central School Superintendent

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Date

**For Schuyler Head Start**



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Michele Gimbar, Executive Director

  
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Date