

HEAD START BOARD OF DIRECTORS' REPORT



August 2020

Federal Updates: On July 24, 2020, the U.S Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Head Start, released six funding opportunity announcements (FOAs). These include an FOA for Early Head Start Expansion. The competitively awarded funding will expand high-quality, comprehensive services to income-eligible infants and toddlers and their families through the expansion of Early Head Start services. The current closing date for applications is September 21, 2020.

The Office of Head Start is providing resources and guidance to help children, families, and program support staff during this difficult time. Dr. Deborah Bergeron, Office of Head Start Director, stated that “the Office of Head Start is trying to empower programs to make decisions and that programs will do the best they can do to use the provided information.” For more information, see the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) OHS COVID-19 Updated page at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/about-us/coronavirus/ohs-covid-19-updates>.

State Updates: Taundwa Jeffries, Director Head Start Collaboration Office, is tracking the level of services via Google Docs currently provided in EHS/HS programs across the state of Virginia. Also, through the shared google document, the Head Start Collaboration Office can gauge which programs have received their CARES Act Supplemental funding to date and all EHS/HS program reopening dates.

NRCA Updates: Head Start teaching staff returned to work on August 13 to find many changes at centers to keep them, families, and children safe during COVID-19. Along with NRCA Policies and Procedures for Re-opening, staff trained on the NRCA Head Start COVID-19 Policies and Procedures, and the COVID-19 Transportation Policies and Procedures. (Please see attached.)

Additionally, Head Start program changes include requiring staff to wear masks unless a health risk prevents them from doing so, and children will be encouraged to wear masks if developmentally appropriate. According to Licensing standards, only nine children in the classroom at one time with two staff. Children and staff will stay with the same group on the bus, playground, and in the classroom. Children will space further apart, and teachers will remove not easily cleaned items from the school, such as stuffed animals and dress-up clothes.

Head Start will apply for the Early Head Start Expansion grant.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sheryl Helm