Director of Early Childhood and Family Services Report
August 2026

Federal Updates:

OHS Policy and Regulations https://headstart.gov/policy/im/acf-ohs-im-26-01

1. Log Number: ACF-OHS-IM-26-01
2. Issuance Date: 08/06/2026
3. Originating Office: Office of Head Start
4. Key Words: Enrollment Requirements

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM
Subject: Enrollment Reductions
Information:
This Information Memorandum (IM) is intended to support timely and consistent decision-making while preserving the availability of Head Start Preschool (HSP) and Early Head Start (EHS) enrollment slots. The Head Start Act allows programs to propose a reduction of their funded enrollment to maintain quality services (Section 640(g)(3)).
.

Notice of Proposed Rulemaking - Reducing Federal Burden for Head Start Programs

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF), under the leadership of Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. at the Department of Health and Human Services, and Assistant Secretary Alex J. Adams, has two new announcements.

1. Publication of a proposed rule titled "*Reducing Federal Burden for Head Start Programs*;" and
2. Issuance of a new Information Memorandum (IM) on Enrollment Reductions for Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

This proposed rule will significantly reduce regulatory burden and unlock savings to serve more children and families. These proposed updates directly benefit the Head Start workforce, programs, and families. To ensure children truly thrive, the rule secures vital health, nutrition, and physical activity fundamentals. Moreover, it drives local innovation by granting maximum flexibility in critical workforce decisions.

The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) regarding the Performance Standards will be open for public comment in the Federal Register on Friday, August 7.

Additionally, the issued IM communicates a new review process for Enrollment Reduction requests, including how ACF will use these standards to evaluate, and approve or deny requests in a timely, consistent, and transparent manner. This new process will help streamline processes for providers and maximize Head Start reach to more families.

Featured Resources
Explore related resources to learn more.

- Preview of the NPRM on the Federal Register website, including the Preamble and the proposed changes
- Head Start NPRM press release on the ACF website
- Information Memorandum ACF-OHS-IM-26-01 Enrollment Reductions.

The Federal Register website will be open to receive comments beginning August 7 and remain open for 60 days.
To submit comments electronically, follow the "Submit a comment" instructions in the Federal Register. This approach is our preferred method for receiving comments.
All comments without change will be posted to www.regulations.gov, so please do not include any personal or sensitive information. We will use your comments to help shape our decisions for a final rule.

State Updates

- 2026 State of the State webinar features a celebration of accomplishments in 2025-2025 and a review of priorities ahead for early childhood in Virginia. The recording and slides have been posted on the VDOE website.

.

NRCA Program Updates:

Enrollment- Enrollment continues in each jurisdiction. We have enrolled approximately 220 children and have several applications in the verification and screening process.

Professional Development- On August 6 Head Start Pre-Service was held at the PGL site. This was an all-day professional development with staff receiving a presentation of our annual self-assessment and 5-year goal progress. We also had a guest speaker on the importance of sleep for preschoolers. Health and Safe Environments trainings were completed by the HS Administrative Team and Site Administrators lead us in wellness at work activities between breaks.

Personnel- Our hiring campaign is underway. Currently we have all positions filled and are accepting substitute applications. Administratively we welcome Beth Rodriguez, Family Services and ERSEA Specialist and Sarah Rodden, Early Education and Program Planning Specialist.

Regional T/TA – We have opened new goals with our Regional T/TA representatives. ERSEA practices and Child Education are the topics our T/TA is working on with administrative staff.

Self -Assessment-Our Annual Program Self-Assessment is complete. A full report is attached for your review.

Service Area Updates:

- Teaching staff are returning to work. They are setting up classrooms, and home visiting with families.
- Family Wellness Coaches continue to complete enrollment visits including scheduling dental appointments and visits to primary care physicians.
- Staff CPR and First Aid training is underway.
- At our Fairlawn Campus Project Grow and Learn we are preparing for children to transition to kindergarten and enrolling new children including 2 Head Start children who will be receiving before and after Head Start care.
- First Day of School:
  - August 10—Margaret Beeks,
  - August 12---Floyd Elementary, and McHarg Elementary and Macy McClaugherty
  - August 17—New River Community College Early Learning Center
  - August 24—Head Start classrooms except Blacksburg Center starts Aug. 27.

Annual Reports Due

- Our **Annual Report to the Public** will be submitted for review in September.
- Program Information Report **"PIR**" is due Aug. 31st.
- **Integrated Service Area Plans and Procedures** will be submitted in October. .

Respectfully Submitted,

Roni Fitch, Director of Early Childhood and Family Services

NRCA Head Start Monthly Enrollment Report - as of June 30, 2026

as of July 31, 2026

Enrollment and Attendance

Center	Funded Enrollment	Current Enrollment	# Vacant Slots within 30 days	Average Daily Attendance (April)	Over Income Enrolled for the Year
Blacksburg	17	17			
Christiansburg	34	34			
Floyd Elem	10	9			
Floyd	16	16			
HS ELC	17	17			
Macy	10	10			
Margaret Beeks	9	9			
McHarg	30	30			
Pearisburg	34	30			
Project G & L	17	16			
Pulaski	34	29			
Program Total	228				14

Waitlist

Criteria	Homeless	Foster	Public Assistance	Income Eligible		130%		Over Income		2/3	Total	Declined Services
Age	3 or 4	3 or 4	3 or 4	4	3	4	3	4	3			
Blacksburg												
Christiansburg												
ELC												
Floyd												
Giles												
Project G & L												
Pulaski												
Radford												
Program Total												0

Disabilities

Children enrolled with an IEP	
Children Referred to LEA (in the process)	
Children Awaiting Services	
Families in NRVCS Case Management Services	

Comments:

Waitlist is not yet available because we are placing students. Pearisburg has 4 applications identified, Both Fairlawn and Floyd are still searching for one application and Pulaski has 2 over income children that would like to come but we are holding for some applications of eligible children

Performance Standards

1302.12(d)(1)(ii)	*Establishes criteria that ensures eligible children are served first*
1302.13	*In order to reach those most in need of services, a program must develop and implement a recruitment process.*
1302.14(b)(1)	*A program must ensure at least 10% of its total funded enrollment is filled by children eligible for services under IDEA*
1302.15(a)	*A program must maintain its funded enrollment level and fill any vacancy as soon as possible. A program must fill any vacancy within 30 days.*
1302.16(b)	*If a program's monthly average daily attendance rate falls below 85 percent, the program must analyze the causes of absenteeism to identify any systematic issues that contribute to the program's absense rate.*