

## Annual and Midyear Report Form

State Name: ARKANSAS

Date: May 2, 2013

- Annual Report-Timeframe:** March 1, 2012 –Feb. 28, 2013  
**Due Date:** **May 31, 2013**
- Mid-Year Report-Timeframe:** March 1– August 30, 2013  
**Due Date:** **September 30, 2013**

### Collaboration Director

Jacqueline Dedman  
Arkansas Head Start  
State Collaboration Office  
1400 W. Markham, Suite 406  
Little Rock, AR 72201  
501-371-0740 (office)  
501-831-1153 (cell)  
501-370-9109 (fax)  
[jackied@arheadstart.org](mailto:jackied@arheadstart.org)

### Lead Agency Contact

Tonya Russell, Director  
Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education  
Arkansas Department of Human Services  
501-320-8953 (phone)  
501-683-6060 (fax)  
[tonya.russell@arkansas.gov](mailto:tonya.russell@arkansas.gov)

### ACF Regional Contact

Kimberly Chalk  
Region VI ACF  
DHHS  
1301 Young Street, Ste 937  
Dallas, TX 75202  
214-767-8847 (phone)  
214 767-2038 (fax)  
[kchalk@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:kchalk@acf.hhs.gov)

**Briefly describe your accomplishments in the following areas. Where possible, indicate the goals from your work plan and the desired and actual outcomes**

Facilitate collaboration among Early Head Start and Head Start grantees and entities that provide child and family services to low-income families. Describe your accomplishments and outcomes in the following areas, as applicable.

## **School Transition**

- To foster seamless and long-term success of Head Start children by promoting continuity of services between Head Start Child Development and Learning Framework and State early learning standards including pre-K entry assessment and interoperable data systems.

**OHS Priority Goal 2:** To enhance and maintain collaboration, coordination, and alignment of transition services and curriculum by Head Start programs with state-funded pre-Kindergarten programs and the public schools.

### **List Strategies:**

- 1. Identify ways to link Head Start and LEAs together in providing transportation assistance to families.*
- 2. Coordinate with (ADE) LEAs and State-Funded Pre-K in planning for successful transitions in order to meet the needs of pre-school and Kindergarten children.*
- 3. Establish an ongoing plan of action to address ways that pre-K and Kindergarten can come together on a regular basis to support school readiness efforts.*
- 4. To support the alignment of transitional services and program curriculum and resources from other agencies, which is integrated with the Child Development and Early Learning Frameworks for all Head Start programs, Common Core State Standards, and the state benchmarks.*

### **Describe the outcome/results:**

The SR state teams met in November, 2012 for the first time to network and participate in training on SR, data systems, and transition. There were 14 teams from local programs and school systems who met together to address school readiness issues on the local levels. The teams consisted of representatives from the public school, {K-teacher & Principal), Head Start, HIPPY, State-Funded Pre-K (ABC), pre-K teacher, Special Education, and ECE Coordinator}. The evaluations were very good and participants asked for more assistance in keeping these lines of communication open and to continue the work on the local level. The local teams provided the state team with a variety of items to work on in order to improve school readiness in Arkansas.

The state team is working with the National Center for Quality teaching and Learning (NCQTL). They provided us with a dynamic speaker for our first summit and will be working with us as we plan for the next summit, which is scheduled for October 9, 2013 in Hot Springs, AR. This summit will focus on transition and collaboration.

The HSSCO director continues to work with the state SR team and local school readiness teams across the state. The collaboration office has set up a communications forum for local teams to access in order to continue their work on the local level and to continue an open line of communication with state and local teams. The forum will be used to keep all; local early childhood programs and early childhood professionals up-to-date on state issues and initiatives. The open forum will begin on February 1, 2013. The beginning topics include: ARCECEAM, State Legislative Updates, AECC, Grade Level Reading Campaign

(GLRC), and suggestions for local SR teams. To access the forum, go to [www.arheadstart.org](http://www.arheadstart.org), go to the News Menu item and then click Forum. Instructions are provided for your convenience.

The state of AR is excited about this goal and will continue to move forward in maintaining collaboration, coordination, and alignment of transition services and all aspects of preparing children for the public schools.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Professional Development**

- to collaborate with institutions of higher education to promote professional development through education and credentialing programs from early childhood providers in states

**OHS Priority Goal 2: To enhance and support EHS/HS/MSHS program's ability to access quality professional development opportunities in order to maintain skilled and competent staff.**

### **List Strategies:**

1. *Share different ways that EHS/Head Start can access professional development quality training and resources.*
2. *To promote linkages with Child Care Resource and Referral Networks to promote Head Start programs*
3. *To promote local linkages between Head Start programs and the Traveling Arkansas' Professional Pathways (TAPP) for professional development.*
4. *To promote linkages between Higher Education for increased access to appropriate degree opportunities and to access online courses.*
5. *To link EHS/HS/MSHS programs to appropriate quality professional development trainings in the state that meets the needs of their program and program staff.*
6. *To facilitate the lead for connecting EHS/HS/MSHS programs to the National Centers for professional development: Quality Teaching & Learning, EHS National Resource Center, Program Management & Fiscal Operations, Health, and Parent, Family, & Community Engagement.*
7. *Collaborate with all state partners in accessing information on quality training among agencies/organizations and share with EHS/HS/MSHS programs. Including programs that serve children with disabilities services to dual-language learners, and to address cultural and linguistic responsiveness.*
8. *To collaborate with other state partners and facilitate ways to problem-solve and eliminate the difficulty for EHS/HS/MSHS programs to:*

### **Describe the outcome/results:**

The DHS/DCCECE has hired a professional development (PD) person for the state. Beverly Wright works closely with all state agencies in collaborating and updating ways to enhance the professional development system in the state. The HSSCO attended the NAEYC Professional Development Forum with the Arkansas team. The team worked on a PD system for the state of Arkansas.

The DCCECE and the HSSCO is also working closely together to update the TAPP Registry, Better Beginnings (QRIS) levels, and revisiting professional development state training contracts to ensure that all early childhood professionals have access to quality training opportunities in order to maintain skilled and competent staff.

The HSSCO director is also working closely with state partners in the following areas:

### **Birth through Pre-K Teaching Credential**

Arkansas has begun implementation phase of the Arkansas Birth through Pre-K Teaching Credential. The core competencies have been approved and it is now open for Higher Education institutes to apply for permission to offer the coursework that qualifies for the credential. Currently, Pulaski Technical College has been approved to offer the courses. The Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education will administer the credentialing process. The Higher Education Workgroup is currently looking at options that may allow current teachers with degrees to apply for the credential. A representative Pulaski Tech will provide an update to program directors in September.

For the first time in Arkansas, the HSSCO, the Department of Education and the Division of Early Childhood Education is working together to put in place an ongoing system of collaboration and communication for School Readiness/Transition between State-Funded Pre-K, Head Start, HIPPI, and the Public School system. Each area of the state is asked to put together teams to participate in a school readiness summit to address transition, data systems, and school readiness. We had a consultant from the National Center for Quality Teaching and Learning (NCQTL) and a representative from the Arkansas Research Center to present and share information to the teams on November 5, 2012. This was an outstanding session.

### **Birth-to-Kindergarten Integrated License**

The B-K Early Childhood Program Development Committee members completed a draft for the program of Study for an Integrated (Special Education) Early Childhood B-K Initial Licensure. The licensure includes 84 education hours and 35 hours in general studies for a total of 119 hours. All hours were documented and supported by NAEYC and CEC standards. The B-K License will be voted on and approved by the state board. The HSSCO has attended several meeting in working with the State Department of Education o revise the Licensure Task Force's recommendations to support the continuation and expansion of an early childhood teacher preparation and licensure in Arkansas. The task force recommendations included the following:

- To convert the levels of initial licensure from P-4, 4-8, 7-12 to K-6, 4-8, and 7-12. Pre-school (age 3 and up to Kindergarten) will become an added endorsement to a K-6 license, under a State Board of Education approved program of study.
- Teachers adding K-6 or 4-8as endorsements by testing will be expected to complete additional coursework in reading as identified by the State Board of Education.
- Initial licensure in special education shall be K-12 only, with an endorsement needed for Pre-K.
- The level of initial licensure for certain areas will convert from P-12 to K-12.
- Plus, much more...

Justification for these changes include a focus on the common core standards, Teacher Excellence and Support Systems being in place, prevalent K-6 structure in most Arkansas schools, and Institutions of Higher Education's preparation for teacher candidates operating under the 120 hour rule.

The State Board did approve for AR to move from a P-4 license to a new B-K Integrated license. The task force met again in November, 2012 to develop competencies modeled from the NAEYC and the CEC standards. It was also recommended that Home Visiting be included in this integrated study program. A final draft will be sent to all committee members.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Child Care and Early Childhood Systems**

- to coordinate activities with the State agency responsible for State CCDBG program and resource and referral, to make full-working-day and full calendar year services available to children. Include Head Start Program Performance Standards in State efforts to rate the quality of programs (Quality Rating and Improvement System, or QRIS) and support Head Start programs in participating in QRIS and partnering with child care and early childhood systems at the local level.

**OHS Priority Goal 1:** To enhance and maintain collaboration and coordination among EHS/HS/MSHS with child care in order to provide full-day, full-year comprehensive and quality services for children.

**OHS Priority Goal 4:** To enhance and support strong collaboration AND coordination among EHS/HS/MSHS, state-funded pre-K, and public schools in building early childhood systems and access to quality comprehensive services for all children.

### **List Strategies:**

1. *To support collaborative efforts between child care and Head Start to provide full-day/full-year service delivery models, shared trainings, and other partnerships and activities.*
2. *To promote local linkages between Head Start programs and the Child Care Resource and Referral Network.*
3. *To promote expansion of quality services for infant and toddler care.*
4. *Partner with Higher Education programs to access resources related to child care and cross trainings.*
5. *To facilitate the involvement of EHS/HS/MSHS programs in outreach and public awareness activities at the state and local levels.*
6. *Establish an ongoing, supportive, and collaborative relationship with child care.*
7. *Create or purchase a software tracking system for all early childhood programs that supports the State Longitudinal Data System.*
8. *To maintain collaborative and ongoing relationships with national, regional, state, and local community service organizations.*
9. *To provide information and update reports to the EHS/HS/MSHS programs bi-monthly regarding the focus and activities of the State Advisory Committee (SAC).*
10. *To unify early childhood data systems (program assessment data) across the State of Arkansas.*

11. *To encourage Head Start programs to participate in the Lead screening follow-up and data collection with the Arkansas Department of Health to ensure the safety of all Head start children.*
12. *To follow-up and continue to encourage and support Head Start programs in their participation in Better Beginnings, our newly implemented QRIS in Arkansas. Arkansas will be adding levels 4, 5, and maybe 6 to the Better Beginnings, QRIS process.*
13. *To support and enhance collaboration among EHS/HS/MSHS programs with other state and local partners in articulating and addressing all aspects of school readiness.*
14. *To compare and contrast the Child Development Early Learning Frameworks and the State's AECC Framework Benchmarks in order to address school readiness state planning.*

**Describe the outcome/results:**

**Arkansas Better Beginnings/QRIS**

The HSSCO director serves on the Arkansas Better Beginnings (BB) Quality Rating Improvement System committee. Programs in the state of Arkansas are currently going through the three-level process. Arkansas has approximately 891 quality approved centers that provide quality services to over 62,000 children. These numbers include the following breakdown of children served in Arkansas in quality approved programs:

- Infants & Toddlers – 10,339 children
- Preschool – 138,905 children
- School Age – 12,972 children
- Family Child Care – 590 children

In addition to these numbers, we have many programs that are in the process of completing levels one, two, and three. Head Start has approximately 88% of its programs that have completed all three levels. The BB QRIS committee is currently working on adding levels four, five, and maybe six. This committee meets every month and lately at the HSSCO.

**ASSET Mapping**

The UALR College of Business team is working on a mapping system to include all DHS/DCCECE, Head Start, Home Visiting sites and resources. The goal is to have a website that is efficient for the general public. They are looking for a name for the mapping project. The goals are to create an online mapping system, online resource guide and a place for to house the “Getting Ready for School” publications. It was noted that this is still a work in progress. Tonya Russell shared that DCCECE would have brochures from UALR, social media to let folks know about the new initiative. The use of the Better Beginnings web-site and word of mouth will be used to get the information out to the public. UALR will also be sharing at meetings and events that they are scheduled to attend.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Regional Office Priorities**

- To support other regional office priorities such as, but not limited to,
  - family and community partnerships;
  - health, mental health, and oral health;
  - disabilities; and
  - support to military families.
  - Other special OHS and ACF initiative requests for HSSCO support should be routed through the OHS Regional Offices

**Regional Office Priority Goal 5:** To support Regional Office priorities, projects, and initiatives by maintaining an open line of effective communication and ongoing Human Development relationships and activities.

**List Strategies:**

- *To participate in monthly conference calls.*
- *To complete accurate monthly, mid-year, and annual reports of state activities.*
- *To participate and support RO activities and initiatives when asked.*
- *To collaborate with the Regional Office in planning the Region VI Institute.*
- *To work with the Regional Office in completing the HSSCO's Strategic Plan.*
- *To work cooperatively and consistently with the RO in supporting EHS/HS programs, while maintaining connections with the TTA systems and the National Centers.*

**Describe the outcome/results:**

The AR HSSCO has worked closely with the Dallas Regional Office liaison on an ongoing basis. The activities for the past year (March 1, 2012 through February 28, 2013) include face-to-face productive meetings with the program specialists, TTA teams, and the regional manager to plan and address better ways to work together. The regional office was very supportive in planning for the five-state conference and worked with the collaboration director via conference calls, emails, and onsite conference work. The regional office maintains accurate updates and provides grantee reports and needed information to support the work of the collaboration director through monthly conference calls and participation at Region VI Association Board meetings.

**Briefly describe your additional accomplishments and outcomes in the following areas. Where possible, indicate the goals from your work plan and the desired and actual outcomes**

- Head Start's involvement in the development of state policies, plans, processes and decisions. Including
  - your activities with State Advisory Council (SAC) on Early Childhood Education and Care or other activities related to the SAC
  - your activities with the Head Start Association both State and Regional
  - other activities as appropriate

The **Arkansas Legislative session** started its work in the House and the Senate in January, 2013. The HSSCO director worked with AR advocates, Citizens First Congress, Invest Early Coalition, and the AR Home Visiting Network to put legislative packets together for home visiting and high quality early childhood programs in AR.

**Goal 12:** To enhance, support, and maintain collaboration, coordination, and alignment of services in education (school readiness) among EHS/HS/MSHS, State-funded Pre-Kindergarten programs and the public schools.

**AECC's Mission:**

*"As good stewards of the public trust, we will support and advise the Division by ensuring that all Arkansas children and their families have access to a safe, high-quality, developmentally*

*appropriate, nurturing, learning environment and by educating and assisting parent, child care providers, and communities to prepare our children for future success. “*  
(Adopted October, 1999)

**Strategies:**

1. To exhibit knowledge, understanding, and competence in maintaining compliance with the Head Start Performance Standards (HSPS) and the 2007 Head Start Act as information is shared and explained to state partners.
2. To develop and maintain a working and cooperative relationship with state agencies that is grounded with respect, sharing, and unity of purpose.
3. To facilitate the involvement of EHS/HS/MSHS programs in outreach and public awareness activities at the state and local levels.

**Outcomes/Results:**

The Arkansas Early Childhood Commission (AECC) convenes on a quarterly basis (January, April, and October). The commission is charged with supporting and advising the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education by ensuring that all Arkansas children and their families have access to a safe high-quality, developmentally appropriate, nurturing, learning environment and by educating and assisting parents, providers, and communities to prepare children for future success. The work continues for strengthening and expanding partnerships with other agencies and organizations for connected action, as the commission focus on a diverse set of topics and activities.

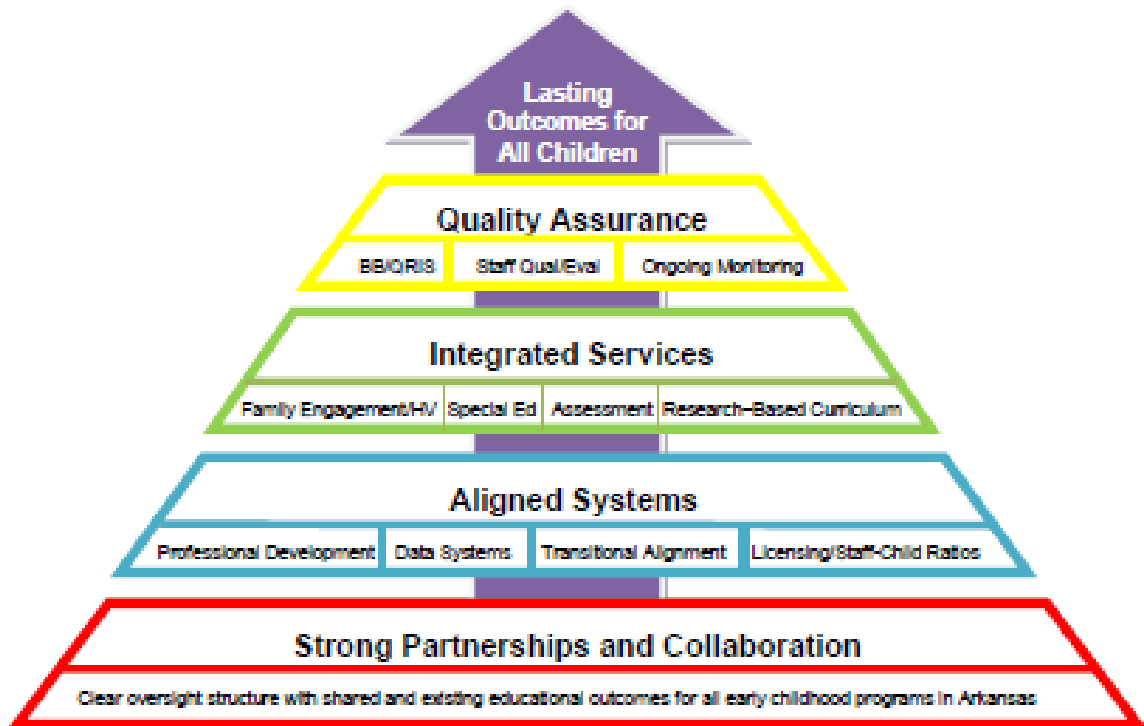
The HSSCO director was officially appointed by the Governor to serve on the Arkansas Early Childhood Commission. She was sworn in on July 19, 2012 with a term limit that extends to July 1, 2015. The HSSCO director has attended every commission meeting and has been approved to serve as chair beginning in July, 2012. The commission had a retreat in October, 2012 to review and update the commission’s goals and measurable. As chair, the HSSCO assigned three task forces to move forward with the needed work of the commission. The task forces assigned are in the areas of: School Readiness, AECC’s Policies and Procedures, and Goals and Measurables. The task forces will complete their assigned task and report back in January, 2013.

The HSSCO director presented a proposal to the AECC to look at way to implement a statewide assessment for all early childhood programs in the state. The commission approved the proposal and helped to select a task force to work on this initiative and to help create this system. The HSSCO director agreed to chair this task force since she wrote the proposal for creating this early childhood system. The system was later named ARCECEAM (more information below).

**Arkansas Comprehension Early Childhood Education/Assessment Model**

The ARCECEAM task force continues to meet monthly and will be making its final decisions on the statewide early childhood assessment in April of this year. The selected publishing company will be invited to present to the task force and followed up with a personal interview. Decisions will be made as to which assessment will be used in the state for early childhood education and progress monitoring. Two task members will provide an ARCECEAM update to the AECC in January, 2013. The model shown below was selected as the model to be used for this new early childhood system. It identifies 12 indicators integrated throughout four specific areas for the quality system.





After researching over 30 assessments, the task force narrowed the selection to the top five: Work Sampling, Brigance, Teaching Strategies, Preschool Language Scale, and Hawaii. These publishing companies will conduct a face-to-face presentation on their assessment products and cost in March.

**Arkansas Better Beginnings/QRIS**

The HSSCO serves on the Arkansas Better Beginnings/QRIS special committee. The committee is charged with updating levels 1-3 and developing levels four and five. The committee has decided to incorporate “CLASS” in levels four and five. The team is also considering adding licensing standards to levels one or two. All assessments for BB will be reviewed and updated.

Arkansas developed and approved reciprocity for Head Start programs using their most recent monitoring review to determine where they will start in the QRIS process.

\*\*\*\*\*

**AHSA’s Goal:** The HSSCO director will work with the AHSA to plan, coordinate regional, state, and local activities that will enhance learning opportunities for teachers, families, and for children as we prepare them for the public schools.

**Outcomes/Results:**

The following specific outcomes (in addition to other information listed in this report) were accomplished with the AHSA within the past year:

**Building Relationships...**

As a new HSSCO director, the director reached out to Head Start directors in order to build relationships and to learn more about their programs by setting up a “Director-to-Director Small Talk” with EHS/HS directors. The HSSCO director also made packets for new directors so they would know about the collaboration office and the AHSA.

- Director-to-Director Small Talk - The HSSCO director implemented a “*Director-to-Director Small Talk*” with EHS/Head Start directors in the state. The purpose of these small talks is to build relationships with all EHS/Head Start directors and to discuss their program needs in relation to state updates and activities. The small talk will be held every quarter (April, June, October, & December) for the 2012 program year. The small talks were started in April and will end in December. EHS/Head Start directors sign-up on the AHSA’s web-site and spend 30 minutes with the HSSCO director. Each quarter different topics are posted on the web-site to share with directors along with activity sheets.
- New Head Start/EHS Directors - The HSSCO director also provided support and outreach to new EHS/Head Start directors by visiting their sites to share information and to offer support for their new position. A welcome packet is given to each new director that provides information about the AHSA, the HSSCO, and a list of all EHS/Head Start programs in the state and their contact information. Currently we have four new EHS/Head Start directors in the state. All visits and information sharing was completed by the end of June, 2012.

### **AHSA’s Audit Report**

The financial records for the AHSA/HSSCO was audited by the Shoptaw, LaBahn, & Company, P.A. as of December 31, 2011 and 2010, and the related statements of activities and statements of cash flow for the years then ended. The report showed that the AHSA/HSSCO is in conformity with accounting principles accepted in the United States/. The company provided an audit report in accordance with Government Auditing standards, which highlights consideration of the AHSA’s internal controls over financial reporting and compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grants.

### **AHSA Class/Board Bi-Monthly Meeting**

The AHSA had its bi-monthly meeting (March, May, July, September, November, and January), whereby, EHS/Head Start grantees attended the Class and Board meeting. The HSSCO and the AHSA is working to involve more parents in these meetings. The HSSCO director donated a gift basket to the program that brought the most parents and friends. EOA of Washington County, where Brenda Zedlitz is the director, won the gift basket of EHS/Head Start supplies and activities for the month of November. We also have guest speakers to attend for the directors’ class meeting. We have invited different presenters to share information in various need areas that’s identified by the directors. Presenters such as Trude Puckett who presented on the Birth-to-Pre-K Credential and Mary Rollans, Arkansas Tech University from Russellville, AR, presented on college opportunities. Tonya Russell is invited to present at each meeting providing directors with state updates on early childhood issues and education.

### **Governor’s EHS Appointment to Commission**

In updated the membership for the Arkansas Early Childhood Commission, The HSSCO director sent out a survey to identify interest for representation on the commission. After receiving feedback from directors, the HSSCO director recommended Rhonda Ahrent for consideration as a commissioner. The Governor appointed Rhonda Ahrent as the EHS representative to the commission. Rhonda is the Director for the BRAD Head Start/EHS program in Pocahontas, Arkansas. The AHSA now has three members from the association who

have been appointed by the Governor to the commission (Head Start, Migrant Head Start, and EHS). EHS and Head Start is well represented!

**2012 Region VI Head Start Conference/Arkansas Head Start Institute**

The Arkansas Head Start Association and the State Collaboration Office will hosted the 2012 Region VI Head Start Annual Training Institute, which was held in Rogers, Arkansas on November 5-8, 2012 at the Embassy Suites, NMA Hotel and Convention Center. The theme for this event is “*Success Through Relationships.*” The Institute was a huge success with over 300 participants attending.

**Installation of Officers**

At the Region VI Institute, during the state meeting for Arkansas, the AHSA will install new and existing officers to the Board for 2013 – 2015. Ms. Sara Green will host the installation for these officers. The state will also work on its resolution during the state meeting.

**Arkansas Pre-Institute Sessions & Awards Recognition**

For the first time in Arkansas, state collaborative partners have pulled together a school readiness pre-institute that addresses school readiness, data systems and transitional alignment (priorities for OHS) for all early childhood programs in the state. (See Arkansas Collaborating for School Success above in the HSSCO’s report.) The teams participating will become the Arkansas Early Childhood Task Force for Early Childhood Education.

The AHSA will recognize graduates who graduated in 2011-2012 year and EHS/Head Start staff in Arkansas who have made outstanding contributions to EHS/Head Start children and families in the state. This will be held on Monday evening prior to the start of the Region VI Institute.

**AHSA’s Web-site**

The HSSCO has worked hard with her administrative manager to enhance the association’s web-site. As director for the HSSCO and working closely with the AHSA, it was very important for the web-site to be user friendly and easily assessable. Therefore, the HSSCO has included a communications update for folks who may be in a hurry and just want to listen. On the other hand, we also have a written update on the forum for folks who have time to view all the different areas, while also making it assessable to other partners in the state.

Some of the other enhanced changes on the web-site include: Video Messaging, Pictures, & Updates, Archival Data, Conference Videos, Arkansas Statewide Forum, Content Areas, Quarterly Updates, and focus on the Child with digital information and content.

\*\*\*\*\*

- Work with the required annual needs assessment regarding the needs of Head Start grantees with respect to coordination, collaboration, alignment of services and alignment of curricula and assessments

**Goal:**

To conduct a needs assessment with all EHS/Head Start programs in the state of Arkansas using the Needs Assessment and format that was designed and sent from the Office of Head Start.

**Strategies:**

The needs assessment was conducted and analyzed in 2012. The HSSCO had 100% participation from all EHS/Head Start programs. As a result of the analysis, the HSSCO’s strategic work plan was developed, which identifies long and short term needs of EHS/Head Start grantees. The strategic work plan is updated annually and approved by the AHSA’s board. The next full needs assessment will be conducted in 2016 prior to the ending of the five year work plan.

**Outcomes/Results:**

A SWOT Analysis was completed with Head Start directors and staff to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the EHS/Head Start grantees in the state. This information was used to complete the strategic plan for the work plan.

We now have an effective 5-year strategic work plan to guide the work of the HSSCO. The work plan is updated annually in order to identify if EHS/Head Start needs have been met and to select other initiatives and systems to create from the work plan.

\*\*\*\*\*

- A description of the work you have completed on developing or revising the five-year strategic plan

**Goal(s):**

**OHS Priority Goal 1:** To enhance and maintain collaboration and coordination among EHS/HS/MSHS with child care in order to provide full-day, full-year comprehensive and quality services for children.

**OHS Priority Goal 2:** To enhance and maintain collaboration, coordination, and alignment of transition services and curriculum by Head Start programs with state-funded pre-Kindergarten programs and the public schools.

**OHS Priority Goal 3:** To enhance and support EHS/HS/MSHS program’s ability to access quality professional development opportunities in order to maintain skilled and competent staff.

**OHS Priority Goal 4:** To enhance and support strong collaboration and coordination with EHS/HS/MSHS programs in building early childhood systems and access to comprehensive community services for children.

**Regional Office Priority Goal 5:** To support Regional Office priorities, projects, and initiatives by maintaining an open line of effective communication and ongoing Human Development relationships and activities.

**Goal 6:** To enhance and maintain collaboration and coordination among EHS/HS/MSHS and local providers for access to comprehensive health services.

**Goal 7:** To enhance and maintain collaboration and coordination with EHS/HS/MSHS programs in accessing and identifying needed services for children experiencing homelessness.

**Goal 8:** To enhance and maintain collaboration and coordination among EHS/HS/MSHS programs with welfare and child welfare service providers.

**Goal 9:** To enhance and maintain collaboration and coordination with EHS/HS/MSHS programs to support state and local efforts in the area of family literacy.

**Goal 10:** To enhance and maintain collaboration and coordination among EHS/HS/MSHS programs with providers of services for children with disabilities.

**Goal 11:** To enhance and maintain collaboration and coordination among EHS/HS/MSHS programs in building early childhood systems and access to comprehensive community services for children.

**Goal 12:** To enhance, support, and maintain collaboration, coordination, and alignment of services in education (school readiness) among EHS/HS/MSHS, State-funded Pre-Kindergarten programs and the public schools.

**Strategies:** Strategies for each goal is listed in the strategic plan, however, the HSSCO is working closely with the AHSA to ensure that these goals and strategies are being done in order to address the needs of Head Start grantees with respect to coordination, collaboration, and alignment of services. An update is listed in the table below to show the goals that have been completed, ongoing, and specific timelines for completion.

<b>Goal #s</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Priority Goals 1-4</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>Still Working On</b>	
<b>Priority Goals 5</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Still Working On</b>	/
<b>Goal 6</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>Still Working On</b>	
<b>Goal 7</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Complete</b>	/
<b>Goal 8-12</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>Still Working On</b>	

**Outcomes/Results:**

The HSSCO’s strategic plan is complete and is now an ACTION item. It is used as a management tool to direct the activities of the Arkansas HSSCO in its efforts to enhance collaboration in the state. The plan focuses on goals, objectives, and activities for improving collaboration among state and local community partners for the 2012-2017 program years. The plan also identifies the agencies that will be responsible for making sure these goals are accomplished, resources needed, cost, specific timelines, and an evaluation to ensure the goals and objectives were accomplished. Different state partners have agreed to work with EHS/Head Start in meeting goals and objectives (Share Example). The strategic plan has been approved by the AHSA board and is listed on the AHSA’s web-site.

The Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office updates the strategic plan quarterly to indentify the work that is being done and the completed goals. Even though some of the goals are completed, they are still ongoing. Ongoing means that a system (communication, coordination, alignments) is in place that is working for Head Start grantees, partners and/or other stakeholders, whereby, they are benefitting and receiving what they need in order to move forward in their programs. The AHSA’s Board reviews the plan annually for updates and changes (if any). The revised strategic plan is also posted on the Head Start Enterprise System and the ECLKC.

**Briefly describe your efforts to support the coordination of Head Start services to American Indian/Alaska Native and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs in your State.**

We do not provide services for American Indian/Alaska Native programs, but we do provide the same services, plus other needed services for migrant and seasonal programs. As you review the goals and strategies, you will see that migrant seasonal is included in all activities.

**Describe additional activities and successes in the past year.**

**Strengthening Families in Arkansas**

Through the Strengthening Families Initiative (SFI), more than 30 states are shifting policy, funding, and training to help programs working with children and families build protective factors with families. SFI is a research-based, cost-effective strategy to increase family stability, enhance child development, and reduce child abuse and neglect. It builds on five protective factors: Parental Resilience, Social Connections, Concrete support in times of need, knowledge of parenting and child development, and social and emotional competence of children.

Arkansas is using the strengthening families approach to provide oversight and direction, ensure strong linkages and collaboration by integrating SFI into the work of the state and county agencies, community organizations, and other state planning processes, and to increase the understanding and knowledge of the importance and value of investing in the five protective factors in early care and education.

**Arkansas Home Visiting Network**

The Arkansas Home Visiting Network (HVN) has hired a new director. Her name is Kathy Pillow Price. She will manage the MIECHV grant and work with the AR Home Visiting Network. The HSSCO director came up with the AR Home visiting network in an attempt for all home visiting programs in AR to work together and share resources.

The Arkansas Home Visiting Network (HVN) has put in place a legislative platform to educate and to plan ahead in identifying the importance of home visiting in Arkansas. The platform does not request for any funding, but just seeks to let legislators know what the program is about.

The network consists of the following home visiting programs:

- *Nurse Family Partnership*
- *HIPPY*
- *Parents As Teachers (PAT)*
- *Following Babies Back Home*
- *Healthy Families America*
- EHS/Head Start
- Save the Children

### **Grade Level Reading Campaign**

The HSSCO is working closely with the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families, and the DHS/DCCECE to promote the grade level reading campaign.

***“By 2020, all children will read on grade level by the end of the third grade.”***

The Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation held a summit to promote the Arkansas Campaign for Grade Level Reading on January 11 and 12<sup>th</sup>. The campaign’s focus was on the goal by 2020, ALL Arkansas children will read at grade level by the end of the third grade. The campaign shared four distinct objectives for Arkansas to focus on in order to reach this goal:

1. Improve School Readiness,
2. Reduce Chronic Absence,
3. Stop Summer Learning Loss, and
4. Strengthen Parent and Community Engagement.

Research in recent years shows that these four impact areas are contributors to our children’s success in achieving reading proficiency.

The summit included dynamic speakers from the national level and state legislators who shared the importance of this goal and what it would mean for Arkansas’ children. Everyone left with a vision to support this state goal focusing on the ultimate outcome of higher high school and college graduation rates, improved literacy rates, and an educated workforce ready to tackle the global economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. A plan was shared with strategies outlining what an individual, school, business, and the community could do in order to assist in reaching this state goal.

The HSSCO director has written a children’s book to intentionally identify strategies that families could do with their children to promote reading. The book has been shared with all Head Start directors. They were also encouraged to incorporate some of these reading ideas and projects from the book in their program. The book will be featured in a video to support the state outcome:

### **Oral Health Coalition**

The Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office and the Oral Health Coalition continue to work together to provide oral health standards and support to EHS/Head Start programs in Arkansas. The HSSCO director provided statistical data from the 2012 Oral Health Summit to the Oral Health Coalition to support their Medicaid platform for the legislation. The numbers had increased for dentists accepting Medicaid and providing services in the rural areas of the state to Head Start programs.

Arkansas did receive a grade D for dental sealants in four specific areas:

1. Having sealant programs in high-need schools,
2. Allowing hygienists to place sealants in school-based programs without requiring a dentist’s exam,
3. Collecting data regularly about the dental health of school-children and submitting it to the national oral health database, and
4. Meeting a national health objective on sealants – Healthy People 2010 – 50%

### **Dental Home Initiative**

The Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office and the Oral Health Coalition worked together to plan the Governor’s Oral Health Summit, which was held on June 15, 2012. The summit was very successful, whereas, we were able to increase the number of dental homes in underserved areas and the number of dentists who would accept Medicaid for EHS/Head Start programs. Other major areas of focus included awareness activities focused on increasing participation of dentists and educating staff and parents about the importance of oral health. The summit was made available through a proposal that was completed by the HSSCO director for the Dental Home Initiative (DHI). The final report has been submitted to the DHI. The HSSCO meets with the Oral Health Coalition monthly.

### **CASSP Coordinating Council**

The CASSP Coordinating Council meets each month to address issues in the state that is outlined in the strategic plan for wraparound services. The council is working on the following goals:

1. Increase children, youth, and families’ active participation in CASSP.
2. Advocate for public policy that improves the children’s behavioral health system.
3. Develop working partnerships between CASSP and AR System of Care (SOC) to further state-wide efforts in developing a more comprehensive systems of care for youths and families in need.
4. To increase public awareness of the services offered.

The HSSCO director attends monthly meetings to ensure that the services are provided for Head Start children and families. The HSSCO director will be presenting within the next quarter to share information on the Head Start programs and how services could be provided in the most effective way.

### **AR Safe Kids/Court Team**

The HSSCO director participates in the monthly meetings for the AR Pilot Court Team for Safe Babies. The team has established five sub-committees to address issues related to family court cases for infants And toddlers. The five sub-committees include Collaboration, Post Removal, Parent Partners, Visitation Houses, and FASD Leadership. Each sub-committee is working on a plan of action and will report to the full court team each month.

**How do your responses to the questions above impact your approved work plan for the current or coming year?**

The responses identifies the amount of work that has been done and the amount of progress that that has been made in the state, inclusive of EHS/Head Start programs in promoting effective communication, coordination, and collaboration with state and local partners.

As you review the HSSCO’s work plan, the responses also outlines the continued and ongoing work that needs to be done, not just with EHS/Head Start programs, but with all early childhood programs in the state. Things are going really well in AR considering recent changes, budget cuts (sequestration), the economy, and other situations that may have caused a freeze to the way we do plan things.

*HSSCO – J. Dedman*