



ARKANSAS HEAD START STATE COLLABORTION OFFICE

Hello EHS/HS Directors!

I hope you all had a great holiday weekend! After two weeks on the job, I thought I would update you on some of the state activities that I have been working on. Most of this information will be in the Mid-year report, but I wanted to share some things that you will have an opportunity to take part in as well. I know you are busy, therefore, I plan to send out quarterly updates on major changes and/or initiatives that may occur during that quarter. I am really excited about several things that are going on in the state that will improve and/or enhance systems and services for our EHS/Head Start programs.

I have updated the HSSCO fact sheet and will be sending that out to all programs.

*In the process of completing a small \$10,000 grant in collaboration with the Dental Health Initiative to provide dental homes for children in programs located in underserved areas and to recruit dentists who will accept medicaid. the grant is due this month. This will be very exciting!

*The AECCS Medical Homes Work group has also received a \$300,000 grant to address finding medical homes for children and youth in the state.

I will be serving on the 5-state member team for the Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC), whereby Arkansas will be applying for up to \$10 million to improve early learning and development programs in the state. I am sure you are familiar with the competitive state grant that was released by the Obama administration on August 23rd. If not, the full document is available at www.ed.gov.

I am working collaboratively with the early childhood specialists (TTA) to complete an implementation plan that focus on Curriculum and ongoing assessment, aligning state early learning standards, working with LEAs, parents, families, and communities, as well as, addressing program improvements and self-assessment in EHS/Head Start programs. The plan was sent to the Dallas Regional Office in July, however, a few more things were added and the revisions will be sent in this week.

I am serving on the Governor's Work-Life Task Force. The purpose of this initiative is to recognize Arkansas employers for establishing and providing resources that support employees in balancing the needs of both work and family. Your program will have an opportunity to participate in this great initiative within in the next month. I encourage all programs to participate because it will help you to identify some things in your program that you may want to enhance for your employees, such as wellness, other options for benefits, and career development. Deana and I will send out the information when available, but just wanted you to know about it in advance.

Deana and I will be sending out the updated 2011 Needs Assessment data that we are required to do according to the Head Start Act (Sec. 642B(a)(4)(A)(i)). The Needs Assessment will focus on collaboration, coordination, and alignment of curricula assessments used in Hed Start programs with the Head Start Outcomes Framework and, as appropriate, State Early Learning Standards. This information will be coming out this fall (October) and we look forward to your full participation. The results will be used to develop a strategic plan to outline how the HSSCO will assist and support EHS/Head Start [programs.in](#) meeting the requirements of the Head Start Act for coordination, collaboration, transition to elementary school and alignment with K-12 education.

The needs assessment is organized around the Federal priority areas for the HSSCO. These eleven priority areas include:

- Health Services;
- Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness;
- Welfare/Child Welfare;
- Child Care;
- Family Literacy;
- Services for Children with Disabilities;
- Community Services;
- Education (School Readiness);
- School Transitions and Alignment with K-12;
- Professional Development; and
- Early Childhood systems Development

The AHSA Class and Board meetings will be next week here in the HSSCO. I do hope that you will be able to attend! Deana will send out a reminder with more information.

Please let me know if you have questions, need additional information, and/or if I can assist in any other way. Have a short, but super week! Jackie

*Grant Support

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