



Arkansas Head
Start-State
Collaboration
Office

Self-Assessment
Report



March 1, 2006-
February 28, 2011

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office. This report covers the project period of March 1, 2006-February 28, 2011. Ann Patterson served as the Collaboration Director for the Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office during this period.

The Head Start-State Collaboration Offices were created by the Office of Head Start to give a visible presence for Head Start at the state level. The Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office was created in 1996. The report includes the following sections: Overview of the Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office, Overview of Special Projects, Evaluation Results, and a Closing Summary.

Overview of the Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office

This section will provide an overview of the purposes and priorities of the Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office. Collaboration grantees build and strengthen linkages among Head Start, child care, education and health care systems in order to build an effective child development and early childhood system. Head Start-State Collaboration grantees are encouraged to consult broadly with the early childhood community, and in particular with the State Head Start Association, as they carry out these projects.

The Head Start - State Collaboration Office funding in Arkansas flows to the Department of Human Services- Division of Child Care/Early Childhood Education and then to the Arkansas Head Start Association. The Arkansas Head Start Association in partnership with the Arkansas Department of Human Services-Division of Child Care/Early Childhood Education have oversight of the Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office.

Overview of Special Projects

This section will provide an overview of special projects that the Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office worked on for the project period of March 1, 2006-February 28, 2011. The following projects will be included in the report: Oral Health Summits, AR MOM, ECHO Project, Cavity Free Kids, Child Endangerment Forums, Early Childhood Forums, Arkansas SpecialQuest Initiative, Arkansas Better Beginnings, Birth through PreK Teaching Credential, Arkansas Better Chance for School Success, Arkansas Head Start Website, Arkansas State Advisory Councils, Head Start Data Integration Initiative, Early Childhood Mental Health Initiative, Welcome the Children, and Homeless Activities .

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Evaluation Results

This section will provide an overview of the evaluation results. The Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office conducted a survey to evaluate the effectiveness for the project period of March 1, 2006-February 28, 2011. The survey was designed to address the goals and objectives of the Head Start-State Collaboration Office and identify areas for future development. The survey was divided into three sections. The first section was used to determine the respondent's relationship with the Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office and if the Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office was meeting the main purposes of the office. The second section focused on how well the Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office was meeting the priorities outlined by the Office of Head Start. The final section evaluated how well the Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration did in achieving their goals and objectives. The survey was distributed by email to individuals or organizations identified by Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Staff as either local or state partners, Head Start Directors, or other community stakeholders. Of the 88 survey invitations, 67.0% (n = 59) were completed. Of the 59 completed surveys, some respondents did not complete all questions.

Closing Summary

The Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office has done very well at meeting or exceeding expectations established by the Head Start Act and the Office of Head Start. The Collaboration Office has also performed well in attaining the goals and objectives established during the project period of March 2006-February 2011. Identified strengths of the Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office, as well as areas for targeted focus, have been identified in this section of the self-assessment. Strengths include increased collaboration with state funded Pre-K , public schools, disability service providers for preschool population, and comprehensive health services. Targeted focus areas include outreach efforts for military families, relationships with disability service providers for birth through age three population, provision of full-day, full-year services, and collaboration with welfare, child welfare, homeless, and family literacy service providers. As it moves forward, The Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office continues to work on all priority areas as required by the funding agency, the Office of Head Start.

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Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office Overview

The Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office plays an important role in helping our state make progress in improving the lives of young children and families. The Collaboration Office assists with relevant state initiatives and brings the support and perspective of Head Start to the development of a comprehensive early childhood system in Arkansas.

These partnerships:

- Help build early childhood systems and access to comprehensive services for all low-income children;
- Encourage widespread collaboration between Head Start and other appropriate programs, services, initiatives, and augment Head Start's capacity to be a partner in state initiatives on behalf of children and families; and
- Facilitate the involvement of Head Start in the development of state policies, plans, processes, and decisions affecting the Head Start target population and other low-income families.

The following purposes of the Head Start State Collaboration Office are defined in Public Law 110-134 "Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007":

- Assist Head Start agencies to collaborate with entities involved in State and local planning processes to better meet the needs of low-income children from birth to school entry, and their families;
- Assist Head Start agencies to coordinate activities with the State agency responsible for administering the State program carried out under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.) and entities providing resource and referral services in the State, to make full-working-day and full calendar year services available to children;
- Promote alignment of curricula used in Head Start programs and continuity of services with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework and, as appropriate, State early learning standards;
- Promote better linkages between Head Start agencies and other child and family agencies, including agencies that provide health, mental health, or family services, or other child or family supportive services, such as services provided under section 619 or part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.); and
- Carry out the activities of the State Director of Head Start Collaboration authorized by law.

In Arkansas, the Collaboration Director focuses on enhancing collaboration and coordination within ten key activity areas: 1) Health Care, 2) Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness, 3) Welfare/Child Welfare, 4) Child Care, 5) Family Literacy

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Services, 6) Services for Children with Disabilities, 7) Community Services, 8) Education (Publicly Funded Pre-K and Public School), 9) Professional Development, and 10) Outreach and Public Awareness

The State Director of Head Start Collaboration shall fulfill the following roles as defined by Public Law 110-134 "Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007":

(A) conduct an assessment that--

- addresses the needs of Head Start agencies with respect to collaboration, coordination/alignment of services, and alignment of curricula/assessments used in Head Start programs with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework and State early learning standards;
- shall be updated on an annual basis; and
- shall be made available to the general public;

(B) develop a strategic plan that is based on the assessment that will—

- enhance collaboration/coordination of Head Start services by Head Start agencies with other entities providing early childhood education/development, health care, mental health care, welfare, child protective services, education/community service activities, family literacy services, reading readiness programs, services relating to children with disabilities, other early childhood education/development for limited English proficient children/homeless children, and services provided for children in foster care/children referred to Head Start programs by child welfare agencies;
- assist Head Start agencies to develop a plan for the provision of full working-day, full calendar year services for children enrolled in Head Start programs who need such services;
- assist Head Start agencies to align curricula/assessments used in Head Start programs with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework and, as appropriate, State early learning standards;
- enable Head Start agencies to better access professional development opportunities for Head Start staff, such as by working with Head Start agencies to enable the agencies to meet the degree requirements, including providing distance learning opportunities for Head Start staff, where needed to make higher education more accessible to Head Start staff; and
- enable the Head Start agencies to better conduct outreach to eligible families;

(C) promote partnerships between Head Start agencies, State and local governments, and the private sector to help ensure that children from low-income families, who are in Head Start programs or are preschool age, are receiving comprehensive services to prepare the children for elementary school;

(D) consult with the chief State school officer, local educational agencies, and providers of early childhood education and development, at both the State and local levels;

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(E) promote partnerships between Head Start agencies, schools, law enforcement, relevant community-based organizations, and substance abuse and mental health treatment agencies to strengthen family and community environments and to reduce the impact on child development of substance abuse, child abuse, domestic violence, and other high-risk behaviors that compromise healthy development;

(F) promote partnerships between Head Start agencies and other organizations in order to enhance Head Start program quality, including partnerships to promote inclusion of more books in Head Start classrooms;

(G) identify other resources and organizations (both public and private) for the provision of in-kind services to Head Start agencies in the State; and

(H) serve on the State Advisory Council in order to assist the efforts of Head Start agencies to engage in effective coordination and collaboration.

Priority areas in previous years have been health, education/transition, child care, welfare reform, professional development, family/early literacy and services to homeless children. During the 2006-2011 project period, the Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration project focused on the following:

- Professional development opportunities for teachers and caregivers.
- Promoting quality child classrooms through the enhancement of linkages with higher education.
- Representing the concerns of Head Start Centers to meet future workforce needs.
- Head Start involvement in literacy outreach.
- Inclusion of Head Start in supporting school readiness initiatives.
- Participation in public policy affecting low income families and children.
- Social and emotional well-being of young children and families.
- Collaborative relationships between Head Start programs and community partners.
- Improve access to oral, health, and mental health services for children.
- Promoting successful transition for Head Start children and families to public school and kindergarten.

Special Projects/Activities

For the project period of 2006-2011, the Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office focused on all priority areas. This section highlights some of the projects and activities that were accomplished during the project period.

Oral Health Summits

2006: Active participation in Arkansas Oral Health Coalition meetings; HSSCO director continued to serve as Chair of the Coalition in 2006. Annual Governor's Oral Health Summit held in July; HSSCO director emceed the event. Assisted with Oral Health Coalition outreach and education event during opening night of Arkansas Travelers Baseball in April.

2010/2011: Head Start participation in the Oral Health Public Policy Summit held in August, identified priorities for an oral health public policy agenda for Arkansas in the 2011 legislative session. The passage of three pieces of legislation made it clear that oral health was an important topic. Act 89 allows dental hygienists to perform hygiene procedures in public settings without the direct supervision of a dentist. This will allow more children to get preventive oral care since many Arkansans live miles from the nearest dentist. Act 90 authorizes trained physicians and nurses to apply fluoride varnish to children's teeth during regular check-ups, and through Act 197, approximately 87 percent of all Arkansans will now have access to fluoridated drinking water. This Act requires all community water systems serving more than 5,000 people to fluoridate the water system. HSSCO director continues partnership work with the Arkansas Oral Health Coalition, Delta Dental of Arkansas, and the Arkansas State Dental Association.

AR MOM

2007: The first Arkansas Mission of Mercy (ArMOM) held in Little Rock in May provided 1,542 patients, including children, in desperate need of dental services in excess of \$630,000 in donated dental care. Arkansas State Dental Association and Delta Dental of Arkansas sponsored the event. The Arkansas Oral Health Coalition and the Arkansas Homeless Coalition, both of which the HSSCO is active, volunteered in this effort.

2008: The HSSCO assisted with the second annual Mission of Mercy (ArMOM) held in Little Rock in May. ArMOM treated 1,569 patients in desperate need and provided in excess of \$643,859 in donated dental care. There were 1,711 fillings and 2,816 teeth extracted, supported by 790 volunteers that included 143 dentists, 58 dental hygienists, 237 dental assistants, 19 pharmacists, 32 nurses, and 301 lay support staff. Arkansas HSSCO assisted with sponsorship of the pediatric area at ArMOM.

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2009: The third annual Mission of Mercy (ArMOM) was held in northwest Arkansas in May, with the Arkansas HSSCO and local HS programs assisting with preparation and volunteering during the event. During two days, 1,970 patients received 1,480 fillings and had 3,015 teeth extractions, amounting to a total of \$822,075 of donated dental care. There were 974 volunteers, including 184 dentists, 85 dental hygienists, 228 dental assistants, 12 pharmacists, 40 nurses, and 425 support staff. Work has begun on the fourth annual Ar-MOM to be held in southeast Arkansas.

2010: The fourth annual Arkansas Mission of Mercy (ArMOM) was held in southeast Arkansas in May, with the Arkansas HSSCO assisting in the planning of the event.

2011: Work has begun on the 2011 ArMOM scheduled to be held in central Arkansas

ECHO Project

2006: Worked collaboratively with partners in expanding the ECHO (Early Childhood Hearing Outreach) project, through the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management, Utah State University, to Arkansas as a cooperative effort among Early Head Start, Migrant & Seasonal Head Start, Arkansas Children's Hospital, and the Arkansas Department of Health & Human Services EHDI Program. Six Arkansas Early Head Start programs, as well as the delegate agency for Migrant & Seasonal Head Start, were chosen through an RFP selection process to participate in this collaborative effort. The goal of this project, funded by ACF, Office of Head Start, is to initiate a concentrated state-based effort to enhance the capacities of Migrant Head Start and Early Head Start grantees to conduct objective hearing screenings for children birth to three years of age and to ensure that appropriate follow-up diagnostic and intervention services are provided for children who do not pass the screening. Activities began in October and will run through September 2007. HSSCO Director serves on State ECHO Team.

2007: HSSCO Director continued work with partners in ECHO (Early Childhood Hearing Outreach) project, through Arkansas Children's Hospital, in coordination with the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management, Utah State University. The State ECHO team trained Region 6 TA Network personnel in May. The HSSCO Director participated in panel presentation at IPP meeting held in Washington DC in July to discuss Arkansas activities and potential expansion throughout the state and region. Through the effort of the Arkansas TA Specialists and the HSSCO, all Early Head Start programs, as well as Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs, should be involved in the ECHO project within the next year.

2008: The HSSCO Director continued work with partners in ECHO (Early Childhood Hearing Outreach) project, through Arkansas Children's Hospital, in coordination with the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management, Utah State University. Invited participant to meeting in May held in Colorado, sponsored by N-CHAM, to discuss enhanced and continued Early Head Start involvement with ECHO; also present at the meeting were Region VI T/TA representatives.

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2009/2010: The HSSCO director continued work with partners in ECHO (Early Childhood Hearing Outreach) project, through Arkansas Children's Hospital, in coordination with NCHAM, the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management, Utah State University. HSSCO director is working with State ECHO team in preparing for additional training for new Early Head Start expansion and new Early Head Start grantees in Arkansas, with the goal of having 100% of our Early Head Start programs involved in ECHO.

2010/2011: The HSSCO continued work with partners in ECHO (Early Childhood Hearing Outreach) project, through Arkansas Children's Hospital, in coordination with NCHAM, the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management, Utah State University. HSSCO worked with State ECHO team in offering training for Early Head Start programs who had received Early Head Start expansion and a new Early Head Start grantee. All Arkansas Early Head Start programs have been trained in the ECHO model. Information is shared with local programs on the availability of pediatric audiologists throughout the state.

Cavity Free Kids

2008: HSSCO continued collaborative relationship with Delta Dental Plan of Arkansas in partnership activities with the Arkansas Head Start Association, HSSCO, and local Head Start, Early Head Start, and Migrant & Seasonal Head Start programs in Arkansas. With support from Delta Dental of Arkansas, Cavity Free Kids training and curricula were provided to participants from Arkansas programs, as well as TA Specialists in November. An Arkansas Better Chance state employee was a part of the training also and we are discussing ways in which Cavity Free Kids can extend beyond Head Start into the child care and state pre-k funded programs across the state, to enhance oral health education and practices to more young children.

Child Endangerment Forums

2006: Collaborative effort with Arkansas Commission on Child Abuse, Rape & Domestic Violence in cosponsoring a Forum on "Endangered Children in Arkansas" held in February. Over 130 participants from Head Start, child care, education, child welfare, law enforcement, juvenile justice, child advocates, mental health, substance abuse prevention, and others attended the one-day event. Evaluations were very positive and efforts will be made to continue similar events of interest with ACCARDV. The next forum, tentatively scheduled for spring 2007, will focus on domestic violence and drug related concerns for children and families, particularly in the area of methamphetamine use.

2007: HSSCO and Arkansas Commission on Child Abuse, Rape & Domestic Violence sponsored Endangered Children in Arkansas forums in Russellville in May and in Searcy in October in 2007. Topics included information on the Oklahoma Head Start

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Domestic Violence Initiative, new child abuse legislation and mandated reporting, and substance abuse issues, including effective and efficient identification and protection of children endangered by methamphetamines and other drugs.

2008: HSSCO worked in collaboration with Arkansas Commission on Child Abuse, Rape & Domestic Violence in co-sponsorship of Endangered Children in Arkansas Forums held in Monticello in March, Newport in April, and Springdale in October. Topics presented at the forums included indicators of child abuse, children's cognitive and social emotional development, trauma issues, drug-endangered children, children's mental health, mandated reporting, and working with children of incarcerated parents.

2009: HSSCO worked in collaboration with Arkansas Commission on Child Abuse, Rape & Domestic Violence in co-sponsorship of a two-day Endangered Children in Arkansas Forum held in Little Rock in March. Topics presented during the two-day event included children's cognitive and social emotional development, trauma issues, drug-endangered children, and children's mental health.

Early Childhood Forums

2007: Worked in partnership with Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education and Invest Early in Education in sponsoring Early Education Community Collaboration roundtable discussions across the state. The forums were held throughout June in Hope, Batesville, Harrison, and Fort Smith and provided an opportunity for Head Start, Community Action Agencies, ABC providers, and other early childhood programs to take an objective look at the current status of early education in the community and link all stakeholders who have an interest in the success of our youngest citizens. Common needs/expectations and issues were discussed in the forums, as well as related opportunities and potential solutions. Three areas were identified as a common thread in all locations: collaboration, enrollment, and a perceived uneven playing field. The summary report was shared and discussed with various organizations, stakeholders, and public officials, as well as being available from the Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office. Working on implementation of potential solutions identified through these community forums. In preparation for the Early Education Community Collaboration Roundtables, three Head Start directors were a part of a videotaping for an early education collaborative showcase of Arkansas programs involved in innovative partnerships at the local level. This video was a part of the Roundtable Forums held in June.

Arkansas SpecialQuest Initiative

2007: Arkansas was accepted as state team for Special Quest training held in August in North Carolina. HSSCO Director served as team coordinator; other members include the Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education, Partners of Inclusive Communities, Child Care Resource & Referral, and a parent of a young child with a disability.

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2010/2011: The HSSCO continued its work in collaboration with the Arkansas Head Start Association, with funding provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, through Arkansas Department of Human Services Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education and Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, in bringing the Special Quest Initiative to Arkansas early childhood educators, parents, and partners. The Arkansas Special Quest Initiative includes representatives of parents of young children with disabilities, early childhood programs, Part B and Part C, Head Start, mental health, and higher education. Six community teams and a state-level team have participated in training held in January, May, and August of 2010. The community teams are located in Northwest/Western Arkansas, Hope, Forrest City, Conway, Little Rock, and Jonesboro.

Arkansas Better Beginnings

2007: The Arkansas Head Start Association, in cooperation with the HSSCO, set a goal to increase the number of state quality approved child care programs, and consequently, comprise thirty percent of the quality centers in the state. Sixty-six percent of the Head Start centers in Arkansas are State Quality Approved or have NAEYC accreditation. Work continues in cooperation with the Arkansas Technical Assistance Specialists to support Head Start programs and centers who want to achieve state quality approval and several have developed plans to move in that direction.

2008: The HSSCO director is a member of the newly formed evaluation team for QRIS looking at tools to evaluate the Quality Rating Improvement System when it rolls-out in Arkansas. Participated in QRIS training for representatives who are working with identified early childhood sites prior to implementation of the quality rating system.

2010/2011: Implementation of Better Beginnings, the quality rating improvement system for child care & early childhood education went live on July 1, 2010. Planning continues on the "Roll Out Event" in October. Information on Better Beginnings can be found at: www.ARBetterBeginnings.com. A reciprocity agreement was developed and has been implemented for participation by Arkansas Head Start programs in the Better Beginnings QRIS program.

Birth through PreK Teaching Credential

2007: Working with Arkansas legislative representatives, Department of Education, Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education, Arkansas Head Start Association, and the early childhood community in proposing a "Birth to Five" licensure for Arkansas. This effort is in response to an Interim Study of the State Legislature.

2008: HSSCO director worked with Arkansas legislative representatives, Department of Education, Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education, and the early childhood community in proposing a "Birth to Five" licensure program for Arkansas. This effort is

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in response to an Interim Study of the Arkansas Legislature. Meetings held with Higher Education partners, with a White Paper developed which was shared with legislators and the general public about the importance of a Birth to Five licensing program for early childhood educators in Arkansas. Recommendations from the Interim Study Committee presented to the Legislative Education Committee in November, with proposed legislation to be filed in the 2009 Arkansas Legislative Session. The HSSCO, along with representatives from the Arkansas Head Start Association, participated in Early Childhood Education Higher Education workgroup meetings to discuss issues including birth to five licensure, professional development, articulation, and other areas of concern for early childhood professional development.

2010/2011: HSSCO and Arkansas Head Start Association were involved in the development of the Birth-Pre-K Teaching Credential. Rules and regulations for the Birth-Pre-K Credential were open for public comment until November 15; one comment was received. The Birth-Pre-K Teaching Credential was implemented in January 2011. One college has already submitted documentation to offer course work leading to the credential.

Arkansas Better Chance for School Success

2006: The Arkansas Better Chance for School Success (ABCSS) funding increased to \$60 million through state general revenue in 2005. The Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) continued to work with the Arkansas Head Start Association, Arkansas Advocates for Children & Families, Arkansas Kids Count Coalition, Arkansas Early Childhood Association, Invest Early Coalition and other early childhood advocates to support and enhance collaborative efforts. The increase in state funding provided for a total of 18,731 children being served in state-funded pre-k programs in 2006, along with 9,950 Head Start children also being served throughout the state.

2007: The Arkansas Better Chance for School Success (ABCSS) funding increased to \$100 million through state general revenue in the 2007 State Legislative Session. The Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) continued to work with the Arkansas Head Start Association, Arkansas Advocates for Children & Families, Arkansas Kids Count Coalition, Arkansas Early Childhood Association, Invest Early Coalition and other early childhood advocates to support and enhance collaborative efforts. The increase in state funding provided for more than 22,000 three-and-four-year-old children from families of up to 200% of Federal Poverty being served in state-funded pre-k programs in 2007, along with 9,950 Head Start children being served throughout the state.

Arkansas Head Start Website

2008/2009/2010/2011: The Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office and Arkansas Head Start Association launched a new website at www.arheadstart.org that

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showcases information about the Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office, Arkansas Head Start Association, and local Head Start programs. Since the site went live in August of 2008, there have been over 125,000 hits to the site. Information about the Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office has been accessed between 2,900 and 4,000 times. Information on local programs has been accessed between 5,700 and 17,000 times.

Arkansas State Advisory Council

2009/2010: In 2009, Governor Mike Beebe established the Arkansas Early Childhood Commission as the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care. Current State Advisory Council members representing different aspects of Head Start are active on the State Advisory Council and reports are routinely shared with the Arkansas Head Start Association and the Arkansas Head Start, Early Head Start, and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start directors.

2010/2011: The HSSCO director and the chair of the Arkansas Early Childhood Commission, our state early childhood advisory council, presented information to the Arkansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Partnership Council about the state advisory council, potential opportunities for collaborative efforts in development of a comprehensive early childhood system in Arkansas, and new funding from OHS to assist with the Arkansas Early Childhood Asset Map. The Arkansas Head Start Association and the State Collaboration Office hosted the July Arkansas Early Childhood Commission meeting, and the HSSCO director served as chair of the meeting in August, as the current chair was out-of-state. The state advisory council application, through ARRA funding, was approved in August. Arkansas is developing an Early Childhood Asset Map, which will provide interactive demographic information in a web-based system and accessible to the general public, as well as to early childhood providers. This unified data initiative proposes to reduce barriers and improve data flow to encourage and provide more opportunities for coordination among all early childhood education and child care programs.

Head Start Data Integration Initiative

2010/2011: The HSSCO director is working with the Arkansas Research Center, the Arkansas Department of Education, and the Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education in promoting Head Start involvement in the State's Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). An outcome specified in the current SLDS Implementation and Modernization Project is expansion of data sharing agreements to maximize the amount of data about the pre-k population in Arkansas. HSSCO director is working closely with Arkansas Head Start Association and Head Start directors in securing commitment for involvement in this initiative; eight Head Start grantees have shared data for inclusion in the SLDS; three other Head Start programs are in the process of participating. A Memorandum of Understanding and a Guidance document are being developed with input from Head Start directors and staff from the SLDS Initiative.

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Early Childhood Mental Health Initiative

2006: Continued leadership role in collaborative effort with Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education and Division of Behavioral Health Services with the Arkansas Early Childhood Mental Health Initiative. Funding continued in 2006 for three pilot projects with Community Mental Health Centers (CMHC) who are working with Arkansas Better Chance programs, Arkansas Head Start programs and other state quality approved early education programs to provide early childhood mental health consultation and education services for young children, families and caregivers.

2007: HSSCO continued leadership role in collaborative effort with Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education and Division of Behavioral Health Services in the Arkansas Early Childhood Mental Health Initiative and participated in routine conference calls and meetings with sponsoring organizations, pilot sites and evaluation team.

2008: The Head Start State Collaboration Office Director continued to support the Arkansas Early Childhood Mental Health Initiative to promote the importance of positive social emotional development of young children from low-income families to support school readiness. Initial early childhood partners were phased out as formal pilot sites linked with identified community mental health centers in an effort to increase and support early childhood mental health in newly identified early childhood education programs other than state-funded pre-k and Head Start. Ongoing research and evaluation continue within the Early Childhood Mental Health Initiative; an initial report was finalized and shared with stakeholders and other interested agencies and organizations, including the Arkansas Children's Behavioral Health Commission.

2009/2010: The Head Start Collaboration Office director continued to support the Arkansas Early Childhood Mental Health Initiative to promote the importance of positive social emotional development of young children from low-income families to support school readiness. Ongoing research and evaluation continue in the Early Childhood Mental Health Initiative, with results showing that children in classrooms where consultation was available had fewer behavior problems and more positive social skills were exhibited. Current participation includes child care centers serving children on vouchers.

2010/2011: The HSSCO director continues to support the Arkansas Early Childhood Mental Health Initiative to promote the importance of positive social emotional development of young children from low-income families to support school readiness. Ongoing research and evaluation continue in the Early Childhood Mental Health Initiative, with results showing that children in classrooms where consultation was available had fewer behavior problems and more positive social skills were exhibited. Additional emphasis will be focused on training within early childhood and mental health, with direct linkages with the Social Emotional workgroup of the Arkansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems initiative.

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Welcome the Children

2006: Serving on 'Welcome the Children' Advisory Committee; the project is funded by the Division of Child Care and administered by Partners for Inclusive Communities. Using research-based training materials, the primary goal is to provide training and technical assistance to help early childhood providers, including Head Start, and other educators understand cultural issues, learn strategies to support Latino children, and make appropriate referrals of children who exhibit possible developmental delays. First annual state conference, "Celebrating Cultural Harmony" was held in May 2006 and the HSSCO was a co-sponsor.

2007: Co-sponsorship of Welcome the Children "Celebrating Cultural Harmony" second annual training conference held in May. The focus of the training was to enhance understanding of cultural issues, teach strategies to support Latino children and make appropriate referrals of children who exhibit possible developmental delays. HSSCO director serves on Advisory Committee for Welcome the Children, a project funded by the Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education and administered by Partners for Inclusive Communities. Using research based training materials, the primary goal is to provide training and technical assistance to help early childhood providers, including Head Start, understand various cultural issues and enhance techniques for supporting Hispanic children and families.

2008: Co-sponsorship of Welcome the Children "Celebrating Cultural Harmony" third annual conference held in May. The conference enhanced the understanding of cultural issues and taught strategies to support Latino children and make appropriate referrals of children who exhibit possible developmental delays.

2009/2010: HSSCO continues its support of the Welcome the Children project, by serving on the advisory committee and the conference planning committee. The fourth annual conference was held in October. The conference goal is to enhance the understanding of cultural issues and to teach strategies to support Latino children and make appropriate referrals of children who exhibit possible developmental delays.

2010/2011: HSSCO director is active in Welcome the Children Project with Partners for Inclusive Communities in supporting efforts addressing issues for dual and second language learners.

Homeless Activities

2006: Active member of Arkansas Homeless Coalition and Homeless Policy Academy. Both policy academy groups (Chronically Homeless and Homeless Families with Children) voted to merge efforts in May; quarterly meetings began in July. State Homeless Conference held in September. Participated in various meetings to plan for "stand down" which was held at Philander Smith College in Little Rock in September. There were 115 women, 200 children, 177 non-veteran men and 174 veteran men for a total of 666 homeless. There were 268 registered volunteers,

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bringing the total of 934 people involved in the stand down. Homeless Outreach Dinner held in Little Rock in November. The dinner was a collaborative effort among faith-based organizations, churches, the Arkansas Democrat and Republican parties and service providers, including the Arkansas Homeless Coalition. Three hundred dinners were served to men, women and children. Various activities were available for children, along with distribution of backpacks, blankets and other items for those in attendance.

2007: The HSSCO Director served on conference planning committee for state homeless conference, "Children, The Forgotten Homeless" held in Little Rock in October. HSSCO assisted with a children's art and poetry contest on "What a Home Means to Me" with recognition of children's art and poetry displayed at a reception prior to the conference at a local art gallery. HSSCO Director serves on Arkansas Homeless Coalition and Arkansas Homeless Policy Academy. Volunteered at Thanksgiving Outreach Dinner held in November; assisted with children's activities and distribution of backpacks to children. Participation in Holiday Caravan in December; distributed gifts, clothing, blankets, and food to children, families and individuals who were homeless.

2008: The HSSCO serves on the Arkansas Homeless Coalition and Arkansas Homeless Policy Academy. Director served as co-chair for Children & Family activities at the Homeless Outreach Event held in September, where we distributed books, toys and backpacks to children and families. Other services available included counseling, medical services, dental services, spiritual assistance, clothing and meals. Director is member of the Legislative Committee for Arkansas Homeless Coalition. Director participated in panel presentation, "The Culture of Homelessness" at Welcome the Children conference held in May.

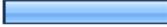
2009/2010: HSSCO director continues to be involved in the Arkansas Homeless Coalition. Presented workshop at Arkansas Department of Education Homeless Coordinators meeting in April, emphasizing ways in which Head Start and public education can work together in addressing needs of homeless children and families. Director continued work with Department of Education Homeless Coordinator in collaborative training and events between Head Start and public education; with two workshops held in October and November that included representatives from local Head Start programs, the GPSS Network, and Team Arkansas, the state-based TA Network. HSSCO was actively involved in the annual Homeless Outreach Event, held in October in North Little Rock and in coordination with City Fest of Central Arkansas. HSSCO director co-chaired the committee for children and family activities at the event. Director also participated in annual Homeless Conference.

2010/2011: HSSCO director was involved in the Arkansas Homeless Coalition. An outreach event was held in December 2010. HSSCO director served as co-chair of children's activities during the event. HSSCO director continues partnership efforts with Arkansas Department of Education emphasizing ways in which Head Start and public education can work together in addressing needs of homeless children, including collaborative training and events between Head Start and public education.

Evaluation Results

Relationships/Evaluation of Main Purposes

This section pertained to identifying the relationship with the Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office as well as evaluating if the Collaboration Office was achieving the main purposes. Respondents were asked to identify how they were associated with the Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office. Respondents were then asked to rate each main purpose on a likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.

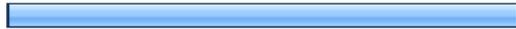
1. How are you associated with the Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Head Start, Early Head Start, or Migrant-Seasonal Head Start Program		42.4%	25
Community Partner		11.9%	7
State Agency Partner		28.8%	17
Other		16.9%	10

2. If other, please identify type (Education, Health, Higher Ed, etc.):

- Education (3 responses)
- Friend
- Higher Education - University Center on Disabilities for the State
- Professional development for staff members who teach.
- Higher Ed
- University and State Health Department
- Mental Health
- Training and technical assistance
- SpecialQuest Mentor
- Consultant

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3. In your opinion, does the Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office help build early childhood systems and access to comprehensive services for all low-income children?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree		88.1%	52
Agree		10.2%	6
Neither Agree or Disagree		1.7%	1
Disagree		0.0%	0
Strongly Disagree		0.0%	0

4. In your opinion, does the Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office encourage widespread collaboration between Head Start and other appropriate programs, services, initiatives, and augment Head Start's capacity to be a partner in state initiatives on behalf of children and families?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree		88.1%	52
Agree		10.2%	6
Neither Agree or Disagree		0.0%	0
Disagree		1.7%	1
Strongly Disagree		0.0%	0

5. In your opinion, does the Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office facilitate the involvement of Head Start in the development of state policies, plans, processes and decisions affecting the Head Start target population and other low-income families?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree		89.8%	53
Agree		8.5%	5
Neither Agree or Disagree		1.7%	1
Disagree		0.0%	0
Strongly Disagree		0.0%	0

Arkansas Head Start- State Collaboration Office Self -Assessment

Office of Head Start Priority Areas

This section pertained to evaluating how well the Arkansas Head Start Collaboration Office addressed priorities identified by the Office of Head Start.

The following definitions were used to rate the priorities:

- Collaboration-share resources and/or have formal, written agreements.
- Coordination-work together on projects or activities.
- Cooperation-exchange of information.
- No working relationship-little or no contact.
- Not applicable-This option is for state agencies and organizations not directly involved in this priority area.

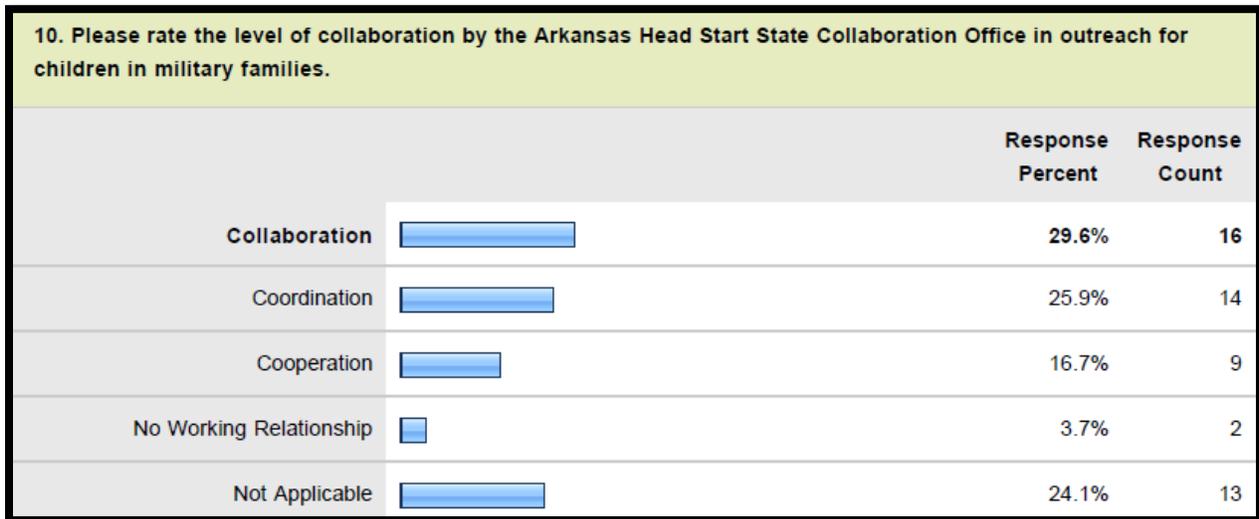
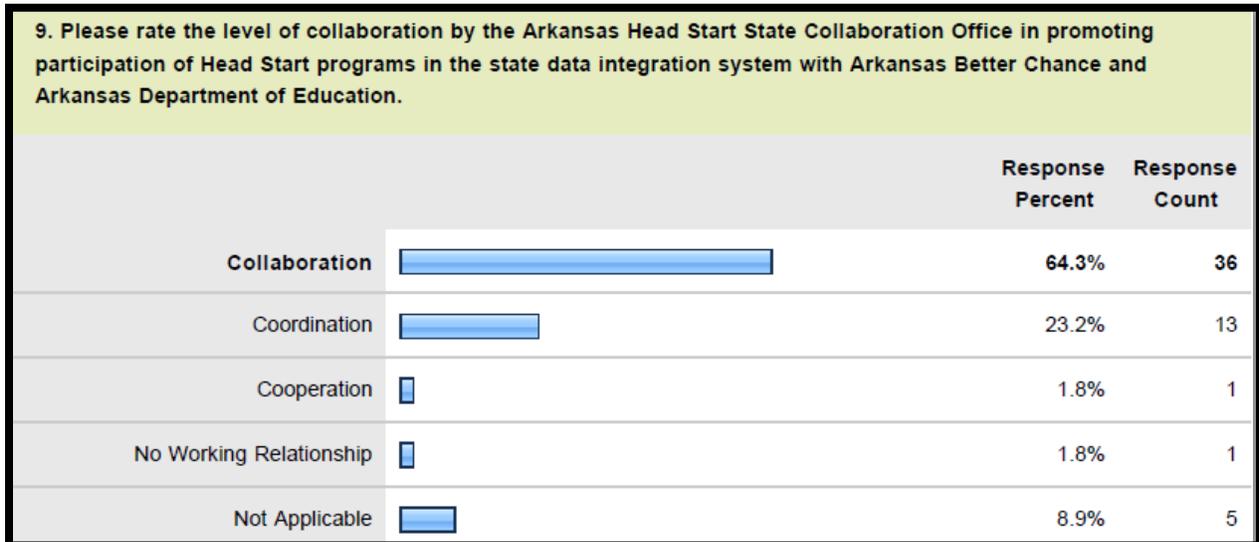
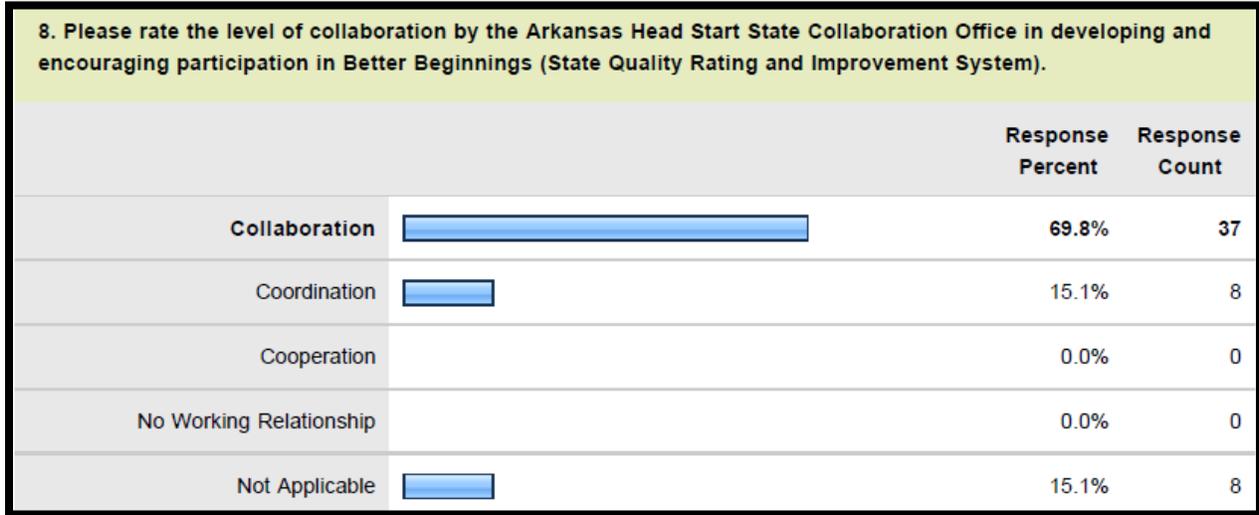
6. Please rate the level of collaboration by the Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office with Institutions of Higher Education.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Collaboration		50.0%	27
Coordination		31.5%	17
Cooperation		9.3%	5
No Working Relationship		0.0%	0
Not Applicable		9.3%	5

7. Please rate the level of collaboration by the Arkansas Head Start Collaboration Office in transition/continuity of services between Head Start and Local Education Agencies (LEAs).

		Response Percent	Response Count
Collaboration		53.6%	30
Coordination		17.9%	10
Cooperation		14.3%	8
No Working Relationship		0.0%	0
Not Applicable		14.3%	8

Arkansas Head Start- State Collaboration Office Self -Assessment



Arkansas Head Start- State Collaboration Office Self -Assessment

Goals and Objectives

This section pertained to goals and activities of the Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office. Respondents were asked to rate performance based on the following definitions:

- Excellent-Exceeds expectations for collaboration.
- Satisfactory-Meets expectations for collaboration.
- Improvement Needed-Does not meet expectations for collaboration.
- No opinion-This option is for state agencies/organizations not directly in the priority area identified.

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide feedback about any significant achievements or concerns related to each goal.

11. Please rate the Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office's performance in enhancing collaboration and coordination for access to comprehensive health services which includes social-emotional and oral health.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Excellent		76.4%	42
Satisfactory		10.9%	6
Improvement Needed		0.0%	0
No Opinion		12.7%	7

12. Please list any concerns or achievements related to collaboration and coordination of comprehensive health services:

- The Head Start Collaboration Office is actively involved with the AR Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (AECCS) Initiative and participates as a member of the Medical Homes and Social-Emotional Work Groups. Both Work Groups have completed and are currently involved in activities related to comprehensive health services. The Office has been instrumental in achieving success in several of AECCS' Projects. In addition, the Office has participated in the planning, development and implementation of several other major projects around health services including Coordinate School Health, the AR Coalition for Obesity Prevention/ Early Childhood Work Group, and ABCD III/AR LINKS.
- The Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office is very helpful when providing information concerning health services. They are always sending information regarding oral health and social-emotional conferences, trainings, etc.
- Head Start is really a leader in comprehensive health services.
- The AR Head Start State Collaboration Office has been very active in assuring local Head Start program's knowledge of fluoridation activities ongoing in their communities and advocacy for fluoridation of the local water supply.
- The AR HS Collaboration does an exemplary job in representing the HS community and in collaborating and coordinating across the systems. It should be noted that there are few efforts in the state of AR that address the health of young children that do not include the collab office director or a HS representative. It is an amazing amount of work from such a small office.
- Has worked cooperative to address the issues regarding lead and obtaining lead results from physicians; Provides details as it relates to Oral Health grant opportunities/ resources

Arkansas Head Start- State Collaboration Office Self -Assessment

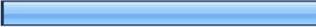
13. Please rate the Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office's performance in enhancing collaboration and coordination in accessing and identifying needed services for children experiencing homelessness.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Excellent		46.3%	25
Satisfactory		29.6%	16
Improvement Needed		0.0%	0
No Opinion		24.1%	13

14. Please list any concerns or achievements related to collaboration and coordination in accessing and identifying needed services for children experiencing homelessness.

- Ann Patterson has been involved with the Homeless Coalition and state conferences related to homelessness.
- There are no homeless shelters in some communities and therefore families are not easily identified, or knowledgeable about accessing services, therefore children and families do not receive necessary services.

15. Please rate the Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office's performance in enhancing collaboration and coordination with welfare and child welfare services providers.

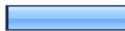
		Response Percent	Response Count
Excellent		54.5%	30
Satisfactory		23.6%	13
Improvement Needed		0.0%	0
No Opinion		21.8%	12

16. Please list any concerns or achievements related to collaboration and coordination with welfare and child welfare services.

- The Office works closely to improve quality in child care programs and help ensure that children participating in child welfare services access quality child care. This includes the Child Care Development-funded voucher program.
- Please see question 12. This office represents HS very well.

Arkansas Head Start- State Collaboration Office Self -Assessment

17. Please rate the Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office's performance in enhancing collaboration and coordination with Child Care to provide full-day, full-year comprehensive and quality services for children and families.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Excellent		66.7%	36
Satisfactory		20.4%	11
Improvement Needed		1.9%	1
No Opinion		11.1%	6

18. Please list any concerns or achievements related to collaboration and coordination with Child Care to provide full-day, full-year comprehensive and quality services for children and families.

- The Head Start Collaboration Office was actively involved in the development of the state's quality rating improvement system, called Better Beginnings. The Office actively promotes the System and its implementation.
- Reduced funding levels for Head Start and child care vouchers.
- The director served on many councils and committees to work toward high quality services for every child.
- Maintains an excellent relationship with the AR Division of Child Care and EC Education and keeps the Head Start Programs informed with the latest issues or state changes for services

19. Please rate the Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office's performance in enhancing collaboration and coordination with Child Care to support state and local efforts in the area of family literacy.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Excellent		60.0%	33
Satisfactory		20.0%	11
Improvement Needed		0.0%	0
No Opinion		20.0%	11

20. Please list any concerns or achievements related to collaboration and coordination with Child Care to support state and local efforts in the area of family literacy.

- The director is highly engaged in working with all groups across the state to promote high quality and family literacy.
- Provides information at the AR HS Association meetings.

Arkansas Head Start- State Collaboration Office Self -Assessment

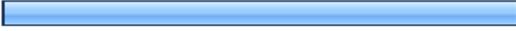
21. Please rate the Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office's performance in enhancing collaboration and coordination with providers of services for children with disabilities.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Excellent		83.3%	45
Satisfactory		5.6%	3
Improvement Needed		1.9%	1
No Opinion		9.3%	5

22. Please list any concerns or achievements related to collaboration and coordination with providers of services for children with disabilities.

- One concern is the lack of Part C Service Providers in rural areas.
- Ann Patterson has always been an advocate for children with disabilities and their families. This is evident in collaboration meetings she is involved with and in her interactions with others.
- I feel that Head Start has been a leader in working with children with disabilities.
- working together on Special Quest and other Inclusion activities has been great
- The Head Start State Collaboration Office provided the opportunity for the Title V Children with Special Needs program staff and Head Start programs to receive joint training during the rating period.
- There are many issues related to the delivery of services for children with disabilities. The HS Collab. Office speaks up as to these needs on a frequent basis. The issue is the need to invite HS to the table in seeking to improve these services.
- Several times they have coordinated training for EHS and First Connection staff to enhance awareness of program requirements and to facilitate better working relationships.
- Spearheads/ Assists in the development of state level interagency agreement regarding services to children with disabilities and their families

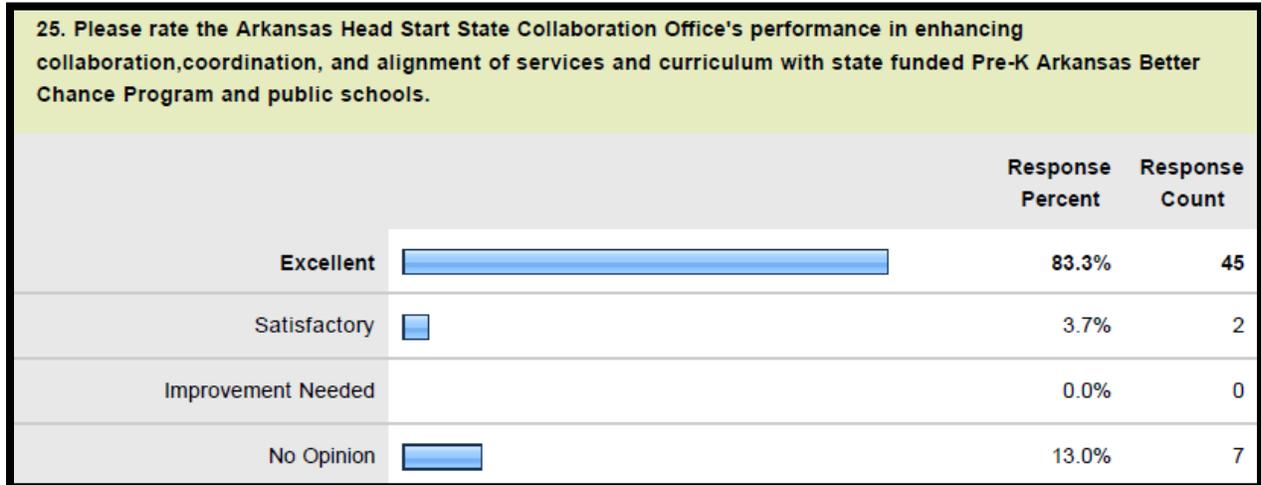
23. Please rate the Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office's performance in enhancing collaboration and coordination in building early childhood systems and access to comprehensive community services and supports for children and families.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Excellent		88.9%	48
Satisfactory		9.3%	5
Improvement Needed		0.0%	0
No Opinion		1.9%	1

24. Please list any concerns or achievements related to collaboration and coordination in building early childhood systems and access to comprehensive community services and supports for children and families.

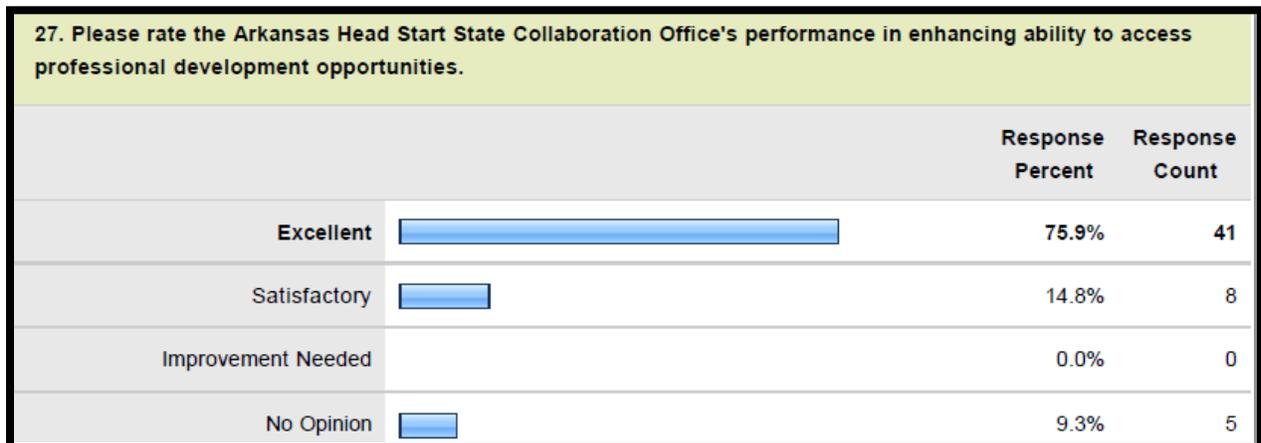
Arkansas Head Start- State Collaboration Office Self -Assessment

- See previous comments regarding strong support for and active participation in AR Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Initiative, which includes activities around access to comprehensive community services. Other areas of strong performance include Coordinated School Health and AR Coalition for Obesity Prevention.
- Ann Patterson is always present at state early childhood meetings and facilitates collaboration between Head Start and state initiatives.



26. Please list any concerns or achievements related to enhancing collaboration, coordination, and alignment of services and curriculum with state funded Pre-K (ABC/ABCSS) and public schools.

- Achievement: Ms. Tonya Russell, Director, Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, has been on the agenda for AHSA Meetings.
- Ms. Patterson and her team have really worked tirelessly to make this happen. They have been very successful in doing so..
- Concern: Head Start new framework adjustment with State framework Logic and Reasoning English as the 2nd language Social Studies
- They held state wide meetings with Head Start and Child Care facilities to encourage them to partner and collaborate, in an effort to serve all eligible children in the service area. They would come and meet with providers in their local area to encourage collaboration.
- Is active with the Division and provides up to date details on state legislation items as it relates to EC



Arkansas Head Start- State Collaboration Office Self -Assessment

28. Please list any concerns or achievements related to enhancing ability to access professional development opportunities.

- The Head Start Collaboration Office has been instrumental in expanding access to all child care providers to various Head Start trainings, including one on Asthma and I Am Moving, I Am Learning. This Office continually seeks opportunities to enhance/expand access to professional development.
- The AR Head Start State Collaboration Office is very helpful in providing access to professional development opportunities. They keep agencies informed of training opportunities that are available. They also facilitate the annual Arkansas Head Start Institute.
- Sponsoring training opportunities
- The quality of the training provided through the work of the office is very good. One need only look at this past year's state conference, review the communiqués distributed and review the agendas for the HS classes.
- We receive notices of available training that is forwarded to Head Start programs through the Collaboration office.

29. Please rate the Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office's performance in facilitating outreach and public awareness at the state and local level.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Excellent		77.4%	41
Satisfactory		20.8%	11
Improvement Needed		0.0%	0
No Opinion		1.9%	1

30. Please list any concerns or achievements related to in facilitating outreach and public awareness at the state and local level.

- This is work that all HS providers must be engaged in.
- They keep us very aware of on-going issues related to children and families.

Closing Summary

Based on the evaluation results from the Head Start community, as well as local and state partners, the Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office is meeting or exceeding expectations as defined by the Office of Head Start and the Head Start Act. In achieving goals and objectives outlined in the Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office Grant, the HSSCO met or exceeded expectations for collaboration, coordination, and alignment of services.

The following areas have been identified as strengths through the evaluation process:

- Continued strengthening and enhancing of relationship among the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, the Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office, and the Arkansas Head Start Association.
- Continued involvement in a wide-range of comprehensive health services has been an area where the Arkansas Head Start-State Collaboration Office has excelled including focus on oral health, mental health, lead screening issues, and the Arkansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Initiative.
- Increased collaboration and coordination with disability service providers for the preschool population.
- Increased collaboration and coordination with state funded PreK and public schools.
- Enhanced participation of Head Start in professional development opportunities throughout the state on a variety of topics.

The following have been identified as areas that will need increased efforts in collaboration, coordination, and alignment of services:

- Increasing outreach opportunities for children in military families.
- Enhancing partnerships with service providers of homeless children and families.
- Increasing focus on partnerships pertaining to welfare, child welfare, and family literacy.
- Working to enhance collaboration with disability service providers for the birth through age three population. One barrier is a lack of providers in rural areas.
- Continuing to encourage programs to look at innovative ways to provide full-day, full-year services for children and families. This has been a challenge due to the limited availability of resources.

In moving forward, the HSSCO will continue to focus on all priority areas as well as newly identified Office of Head Start priorities.