



Washington HSSCO Strategic Plan

June 2013

Period: 2013-2016 (this document is an update of the existing five-year strategic plan; three years remain)

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

- ❖ Snapshot—where we are now: Washington’s kindergarten entry assessment process--WaKIDS-- is in its first year as a requirement for state-funded full day kindergarten. WaKIDS includes three components: a whole child assessment administered by kindergarten teachers, family connection that include individual teacher-family conversation, and the early learning collaboration component which is still under development. WaKIDS is based upon Washington’s Early Learning and Development Guidelines (formerly Benchmarks). The Guidelines were published in March 2012. Head Start grantees were actively involved in the redesign process and the updated Guidelines are in alignment with the Head Start Child Development and Learning Framework. Washington is the process of developing processes for inclusion of early learning data in a state longitudinal data system known as the P-20 warehouse, which is currently under construction. A workgroup has been meeting to develop a Ready Schools Action Plan, which will help to guide Washington’s P-3 efforts moving forward.

Objective	Action	Year(s)			Sources of Evidence
		13/14	14/15	15/16	
Smooth transitions occur for children between Head Start and school entry.	Support the regional early learning coalitions to partner with ESDs to refine and implement the early learning collaboration component of WaKIDS.	X	X	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Contracts in place to allocate funds to Thrive for Community Momentum ✓ HSSCO participation in planning with Thrive regarding the work ✓ Reporting from coalitions on progress of WaKIDS
Early Learning Guidelines are implemented in ways that support various	Continue to serve on the cross-agency work team dedicated to implementation of the	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ HSSCO participation in work team dedicated to implementation.

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audiences (including parents, professionals, and diverse communities) and support integration of the Guidelines as a foundational element of Washington early learning systems efforts.	Guidelines.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cross agency work implementation. ✓ Contract(s) related implementation eff
Head Start data is included in Washington efforts to tell the story of early learning through data.	Serve as lead Head Start contact within DEL for build out of capacity for the Early Learning Management System (ELMS) to include Head Start sites into the system.	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Functionality for H to enter sites into E
	Serve on early learning data governance work group convened by DEL.	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ HSSCO participatio governance work g
	Facilitate development and implementation of data sharing agreements between DEL and HS grantees to transfer HS child level data into the state longitudinal data system known as the P-20 warehouse.	X	X	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Dialogue is conven grantees regarding data share agreem ✓ Data share agreem developed and put
Opportunities for partners across the Pre-K through 3 rd spectrum in Washington have opportunities for shared learning and relationship development.	Support implementation of the annual Starting Strong P-3 conference.	X	X	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Contract(s) in place funds to support St conference.

Professional Development: To collaborate with institutions of higher education to promote professional development through education and credentialing programs for early childhood providers in states.

- ❖ Snapshot—where we are now: Building upon the work of the Professional Development Consortium, Washington’s professional development system is developing rapidly. Core competencies for early learning professionals have been developed which are in alignment with Washington’s Early Learning and Development Guidelines (the Guidelines align with the Head Start Child Development and Learning Framework). Based upon the Core Competencies, there is a career lattice that includes Head Start staff. Higher education institutions are rolling out stackable certificates for early learning professionals that are based upon the Core Competencies and lead to degrees. There is a professional development registry called MERIT in place to support early learning professionals to find and track training and career development. MERIT does not currently include Head Start TTA system trainings or include functionality that would allow a grantee to manage multiple sites.

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Objective	Action	Year(s)			Sources of Evidence
		13/14	14/15	15/16	
Efforts to increase the qualifications of Head Start teachers do not compromise the capacity of AIAN programs to have tribal staff serving in classrooms.	Support the First People’s First Steps Alliance to explore alternative credentialing pathways for tribal early learning teachers.	X	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ HSSCO participation in meetings of the First People’s First Steps Alliance. ✓ Contract in place to support Alliance efforts to outline alternative pathway.
Washington’s professional development registry, MERIT, is inclusive of Head Start staff and serves as a tool for Head Start grantees to track the professional development of their staff.	Serve as lead Head Start contact within DEL for planning modification of MERIT for Head Start use and convene opportunities for direct Head Start user input.	X	X	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Specific opportunities are made available for Head Start users to give input to the development of the system. ✓ Modifications to MERIT are made for Head Start use. ✓ # of Head Start users in MERIT.
Head Start teachers are able to take advantage of available supports for expenses associated with degrees and credentials.	Provide up to date information regarding all Washington Head Start grantees to OSPI for inclusion on low-income schools list which is necessary for teaching staff to claim Perkins student loan forgiveness benefit.	X	X	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ All Head Start grantees are included on the annually updated list of low income schools.

Child Care and Early Childhood Systems: To coordinate activities with the State agency responsible for the 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 through a Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) and support Head Start programs in participating in QRIS and partnering with child care and early childhood systems at the local level.

- ❖ Snapshot—where we are now: Head Start grantees are actively involved in conversations taking place at the state level regarding the need for improvements to the child care subsidy program in order to better meet the needs of families who require full-day or full-year services.

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Washington’s Quality Rating Improvement System, called Early Achievers, launched on July 1’ 2012 as a part of Washington’s implementation of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant plan. There is a high degree of alignment between Early Achievers standards and Head Start performance standards but the logistics of Early Achievers participation have not yet been modified to reflect Head Start program operating structures and needs.

Objective	Action	Year(s)			Sources of Evidence
		13/14	14/15	15/16	
Head Start grantees participate in Early Achievers (Washington’s QRIS)	Work with HS/ECEAP Early Achievers pilot to test processes for HS/ECEAP participation in EA and use findings to develop customized HS/ECEAP pathway for future participation in Early Achievers.	X	X	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Number of Head Start grantees signed up for Early Achievers. ✓ Reciprocity Plan for Head Start/ECEAP pathway in Early Achievers
Early Achievers serves as vehicle for information sharing and relationship building between Head Start and child care.	<p>Work with HS/ECEAP Early Achievers pilot to develop process for operationalizing training/resource hub concept in Washington’s Race to the Top application.</p> <p>Support implementation of training/resource hubs statewide.</p>	X	X	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Framework for training/resource hubs is developed. ✓ Contracts with Head Start grantees to deliver training/resource hub services are in place.
Head Start service distribution information is taken into account in efforts to expand early learning opportunities equitably across the state.	Partner with ECEAP to conduct periodic updates to the saturation study which details breakdown of Head Start and ECEAP services available in WA down to the school district level.	X		X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Saturation study.

Regional Office Priorities: To support other regional office priorities such as 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.

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Objective	Action	Year(s)			Evidence
		13/14	14/15	15/16	
Head Start grantees have increased capacity to meet children's oral health needs.	Building upon the work of the Head Start Dental Home Initiative, continue to provide opportunities for Head Start staff to come together with ABCD regional coordinators to engage in peer and cross program learning and planning.	X	X	X	✓ Opportunities provided for HS and ABCD staff to come together.
There is increased access of Head Start services by children and families involved in the child welfare system.	Engage in dialogue with DSHS Children's Administration staff regarding reasons for low utilization of Head Start services by children and families involved in child welfare and strategies for improving utilization.	X	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Meetings take place with DSHS CA. ✓ Strategies implemented to increase utilization rates.
Strengths-based family support philosophies and strategies are embedded in Washington's early learning system.	Provide support to the Strengthening Families Washington Collaborative to engage in strategic planning and capacity building.	X			
Head Start grantees have partnerships with McKinney-Vento homeless liaisons that enable them to better serve families currently experiencing homelessness.	Convene periodic opportunities for relationship building and learning about each other's programs for Head Start, ECEAP and McKinney-Vento homeless liaisons.			X	✓ Opportunities take place for learning across programs (i.e. meetings, webinars...)
	<p>Provide up to date contact list of McKinney-Vento contacts to Head Start grantees.</p> <p>Provide up to date contact list of Head Start grantees to McKinney-Vento liaisons.</p>	X	X	X	✓ Cross program contact lists.
Strong	Convene opportunities	X	X	X	✓ Meetings with DEL

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partnership takes place between OHS Region X and DEL	for leadership from OHS Region X and DEL to come together to share information and engage in joint planning.				and Region X leadership take place.
Health is included as a key element of Washington's early learning system	Look for future opportunities to promote improved coordination/alignment between health and early learning in WA.	X	X	X	

Strategies that Cross Goal Areas: Many strategies employed by the HSSCO serve to promote the goals of the HSSCO broadly rather than correlating to a discrete goal area.

Objective	Action	Year(s)			Evidence
		13/14	14/15	15/16	
Two-way communication between the HSSCO and local Head Start grantees takes place so that grantees have Information about state level initiatives and opportunities for input and participation and the HSSCO has information about grantee needs and interests.	Distribute bimonthly HSSCO newsletter	X	X	X	✓ Newsletter is posted http://www.del.wa.gov/early-learning/early-learning-start/hssco.aspx .
	Leverage WSA meetings/conferences as opportunities to connect with Head Start grantees in order to both gather and distribute information.	X	X	X	✓ HSSCO participation in meetings/conferences
	Visit Head Start grantees to learn about the diverse ways HS services are being implemented across the state and provide opportunities for dialogue with local programs about their needs and interests related to state level activities/initiatives.	X	X	X	HSSCO visits to grantees (at least once per year).
	Conduct annual needs assessment of Head Start grantees.	X	X	X	✓ Needs assessment conducted to the public.
Communication between key players at the state level working with and on behalf of Head Start takes place to leverage opportunity and minimize duplication of effort.	Continue to convene HS/ECEAP Partnership for Quality to facilitate information sharing/partnership opportunities. (group includes: HSSCO, DEL ECEAP, WSA, T/TA, RX, HS Director)	X	X	X	✓ Partnership for Quality
Key partners in Washington have access to information about Head Start including	Update on a biennial basis the Head Start, Early Head Start and ECEAP State Profile and make it		X		✓ Updated version of

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details specific to Washington.	available to state level partners and to local grantees for use in their partnership building efforts.				
	Serve as a single point of contact for Head Start at the state level-respond to requests for information from partners and stakeholders, including state legislature.	X	X	X	
The HSSCO is aware of best practices relating to early learning systems building/integration efforts and is engaged in key conversations related to these topics in Washington.	Serve on the state team for the Build Initiative.	X	X	X	✓ HSSCO participation meetings/webinars
AIAN grantees are supported to be full partners in Washington’s early learning system development efforts.	Serve on the advisory committee for the AIAN HSSCO.	X			✓ HSSCO participation advisory committee
The HSSCO is knowledgeable about the national context of the work of HSSCOs.	Participate in meetings and calls convened by the national and regional offices.	X	X	X	✓ HSSCO attendance national/regional n
Head Start perspective is included in state level planning and decision making.	Serve on the Early Learning Advisory Council.	X	X	X	✓ HSSCO participation activities.
	Participate in internal DEL dialogue and planning efforts	X	X	X	
	Ensure Head Start representatives are included in opportunities for stakeholder input at the state level.	X	X	X	✓ Head Start particip committees, work p
Washington’s early learning system building efforts are intentional about meeting the needs of children and families of color.	Participate in the Advancing Racial Equity effort lead by Thrive by Five to develop and implement a racial equity theory of change.	X	X		✓ HSSCO participation and work team me ✓ Racial Equity Theor
Washington Head Start grantees are able to provide recruitment information to families who may be eligible for services.	Implement and maintain data sharing agreements between DEL and individual grantees to provide DSHS client information by zip code to grantees to be used for recruitment.	X	X	X	✓ Data-sharing agree

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