


City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 20, 2009

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF AN APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES FOR THE ALEXANDRIA HEAD START PROGRAM AND TRANSFER OF PROGRAM MONITORING TO THE ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ISSUE: Consideration of an application for grant funds for the Alexandria Head Start program from the Department of Health and Human Services for the federal budget period September 1, 2009, through August 31, 2010, and a transfer of program monitoring responsibilities from the City Department of Human Services (DHS) to the Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS). Application for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) dollars will be covered in a separate memo.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Authorize the submission of a grant application, due June 1, 2009, not to exceed \$1,828,166, including \$1,752,313 for Head Start program operations, \$22,232 for training and technical assistance and \$53,621 for a permanent 3.06% cost of living increase for Head Start staff;
- (2) Affirm that, due to City budget constraints, no City funds will be available to fund this program in FY 2010 or future years;
- (3) Authorize the transfer of program monitoring responsibilities from the City Department of Human Services (DHS) to the Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) (fiscal responsibilities will remain with DHS); and
- (4) Authorize the City Manager to execute all necessary documents.

BACKGROUND: Alexandria Head Start is a federally funded program serving 252 children, ages three to five, in the City of Alexandria. This grant application funds the existing Head Start program with \$1,828,166 in federal funds. The City is the grantee for the program and The Campagna Center (TCC) is the delegate agency. Funds for the program flow from the federal government to the City of Alexandria and then to TCC which is responsible for the day to day

operations of the program. TCC's governing board is responsible for the governance of the program, with annual reporting to City Council.

As the grantee, the City of Alexandria is responsible to the federal government for the oversight and monitoring of the delegate agency (TCC). This function has been assigned by the City Manager to DHS and includes financial and programmatic monitoring of the program. The delegate agency has a separate Memorandum of Understanding with the Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) which outlines a collaborative relationship with ACPS regarding facilities use, special education services, curriculum coordination and transitioning of children to kindergarten.

DISCUSSION: In April, the School Board approved the creation of an Early Childhood Specialist position. The person in this position will assume joint responsibility with DHS for "...providing leadership in the development, implementation and coordination of the City and school division's early childhood programs, pre-kindergarten through grade two." Most Head Start classrooms are located in school buildings and there is already a close relationship between the schools and Head Start. To further encourage that relationship and facilitate the transition process between the two programs, it is proposed that, beginning with the 2009/10 grant year, the monitoring and oversight of the Head Start delegate agency be shared between DHS and ACPS. DHS would oversee and monitor all financial responsibilities of the delegate agency and ACPS would oversee and monitor the programmatic responsibilities. Specifically, the responsibilities would be assigned as follows:

The Department of Human Services Operations Division will:

- Hold quarterly meetings between the Operations Division of DHS and TCC to review financial recordkeeping, reporting, and compliance with all Head Start regulations in the areas of Fiscal Management and Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance
- Receive and review A-133 (Annual Single Audit Report) and the Management Letter with comments and action plans as required.
- Conduct a random sample of financial transactions on a quarterly basis to trace source documentation and ensure compliance with laws and regulations using the Head Start Fiscal Checklist
- Ensure internal controls are in place and in compliance with applicable laws and regulations
- Review the SF-269 Financial report submitted by the Delegate Agency and agree to amounts reported to the City's records prior to submitting the report to the Federal government
- Submit required monthly attendance reports to the Federal Government
- Reimburse the Delegate Agency for authorized expenditures based on payment procedures outlined in the Delegate Agency agreement
- Review and approve grant budget as a component of the annual grant application

During the transition period, the Office for Early Childhood Development (OECD) will continue to monitor Head Start eligibility files. In the fall of the 2009-2010 school year, OECD staff will review a 10% sample of family records to test appropriate application of eligibility requirements.

The Alexandria City Public Schools will:

- Hold quarterly meetings between the Early Childhood Division of ACPS and TCC to review programmatic operations of the Head Start program.
- Provide oversight of curriculum, assessment, and child outcomes of the Head Start program.
- Provide oversight of the agreements outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (attached) between the Delegate Agency and ACPS, including:
 - Facilities use
 - Transition and alignment with kindergarten through grade 12 services
 - Special education and inclusion services
- Conduct semi-annual observations of Head Start classrooms and schedule meetings with Head Start managers to ensure compliance with Head Start regulations in the following areas:
 - Nutrition
 - Safe environments
 - Disability services
 - Mental health services
 - Family and community services
 - Transportation
 - Education and early childhood development services
- Child care center licensing requirements
- Virginia QRIS (Quality Rating Improvement System) standards
- NAEYC accreditation standards
- Participate in the program's required annual self-assessment process
- Participate in the development of the required community assessment document and yearly updates
- Review and approval of programmatic components of the annual grant application

FISCAL IMPACT: A total of \$1,828,166 in federal Head Start dollars is available for Alexandria Head Start for the program year beginning on October 1. The City provides a local cash match of \$196,541 and ACPS provides an in-kind match of \$760,751 in the form of donated space and services. Included in the total of \$1,828,166 is \$53,621 for a 3.06% permanent cost of living increase. ARRA funds are available through a separate application process and will be addressed in another docket memo.

ATTACHMENT: Memorandum of Understanding between Alexandria City Public Schools and The Campagna Center

STAFF:

Debra R. Collins, Assistant City Manager for Community and Human Services
Cathy David, Deputy Superintendent, Alexandria City Public Schools
Carol Farrell, Director, Office for Early Childhood Development, Human Services
Kendel Taylor, Financial Management Coordinator, Management & Budget

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
ALEXANDRIA HEAD START PROGRAM**

**PART 1
FACILITIES**

The Alexandria City Public School (ACPS) facilities are owned and operated by the City of Alexandria School Board primarily for the conduct of educational activities for the children of the city. The School Board is also committed to other uses of its facilities so long as these uses do not interfere with basic educational programs. In addition to recreational and other social activities conducted within its school buildings, ACPS currently provides space for eight federally funded Head Start sites operated by the City of Alexandria through the auspices of the Campagna Center. These sites are located at Jefferson-Houston Elementary School, George Washington Middle School John Adams Elementary School, T. C. Williams High School, Mount Vernon Community School, Cora Kelly Elementary School, Samuel Tucker Elementary and Patrick Henry Elementary School. The Head Start program will have exclusive use of the areas designated within those schools for their use, subject to the Guidelines presented below.

Guidelines

1. No fees will be charged by ACPS for use of facilities by the Head Start Program. On an annual basis, ACPS will provide to the Head Start program a delineation of "in-kind" expenses associated with the use of school facilities by Head Start. These expenses will include costs for fair market rental, utilities, maintenance, and custodial care. Costs will be calculated on a square foot basis, based on actual expenses for the preceding fiscal year.
2. Custodial and maintenance support of Head Start classrooms and offices will be provided by ACPS. The custodians assigned to the host schools will be responsible for providing these cleaning services consistent with the remainder of the school facility. Communications required to ensure the above is adequately provided must take place between the Head Start staff and the school staff. Requests for maintenance/repair support that is beyond the capability of the school staff will be submitted on an ACPS work order form to the building principal who will approve and forward to the ACPS Facilities Department for completion. A copy of the work order request, whether approved or disapproved, will be returned to the requestor. Upon completion of approved work orders, a copy of an appropriately annotated form will be returned to the requestor for file.

Memorandum of Understanding
Alexandria City Public Schools and Alexandria Head Start Program
July 17, 2008

3. Modifications to Head Start facilities that are driven by program changes or expansions will be accomplished only on a reimbursable or direct pay basis. Further, these modifications must be initiated through the building principal to the ACPS Facilities Department. Once initiated, communications concerning approved projects will take place directly between the ACPS Facilities Department and Head Start. Under no circumstances will Head Start cause or allow any modifications, repair or additions to School Board property by outside groups without the prior knowledge and approval of the ACPS Facilities Department. Educational Facilities personnel will coordinate renovations/modifications required for Head Start in compliance with local and state codes. Head Start personnel will contract directly with consultants to prepare plans and specifications for such renovations. Modifications/renovations that are accomplished due to program changes/expansions must be reimbursed in full at the completion of the work. If outside contractors are used, Head Start will reimburse in full directly to the contractors involved. If ACPS personnel are used, Head Start will reimburse for materials used in the job.
4. Improvements or repairs to the facility requested by Head Start which are not driven by program changes, are the responsibility and prerogative of ACPS. Requests will be judged based on the criteria developed for the work order management system. Building/facility safety, security and integrity will always receive the immediate attention they deserve. All other requirements will be judged on the basis of manpower, time, and budgetary means as well as the merit of the requirement.
5. Improvements or repairs to Head Start sites, which by their nature, could be significant and/or costly, must be discussed first with the building principal and if agreed upon, included in the school's annual Capital Improvement Project request. These improvements will then be negotiated as part of the school's CIP submission usually requested by the Facilities Department in the spring of each year. Approved CIP requests are prioritized in the ACPS six year CIP program which goes to the School Board in the fall of each year.

Memorandum of Understanding
Alexandria City Public Schools and Alexandria Head Start Program
July 17, 2008

6. Head Start personnel are asked to maintain open lines of communications with their host school staff on all matters of support. All requests for support should go through the school staff and not directly to the ACPS Facilities Department. When ACPS or contractor personnel are on site to respond to a request, they should not be asked to do anything that is not on their service ticket. If additional work is required, the school staff should be contacted who in turn should contact the ACPS Facilities Department for approval of the additional work.
7. Head Start understands that rising enrollments at a school may require that ACPS reclaim the space currently allocated to Head Start for educational purposes. ACPS will make every effort to accommodate Head Start programs, but must accommodate its core purpose first. Timely notice will be provided to Head Start when space must be reclaimed for educational purposes.
8. As Head Start's enrollments and requirements expand, ACPS will make an effort to identify space that is available for additional Head Start program space at one of the existing sites or at another school in the City of Alexandria. Timely notice will be provided to ACPS when additional space needs are required.

Memorandum of Understanding
Alexandria City Public Schools and Alexandria Head Start Program
July 17, 2008

PART II
TRANSITION AND ALIGNMENT WITH K-12 SERVICES

I. PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of Part II is to establish policies and procedures between Alexandria City Public Schools and Alexandria Head Start in the provision of continuous services to Head Start preschool children to ensure an effective process of transition to kindergarten services within Alexandria City Public Schools.

II. CONTINUITY OF SERVICES AND EFFECTIVE TRANSITION

A. Ongoing Channels of Communication between Head Start and ACPS staff

Alexandria City Public Schools and Alexandria Head Start will collaborate to ensure communication to facilitate coordination of programs and continuity of developmentally appropriate curricular objectives.

1. Head Start teachers/managers will meet with ACPS Kindergarten teachers at least twice a year to discuss the educational, developmental, and other needs of individual children.

2. Head Start managers will meet with ACPS site principals on a quarterly basis to review program operations and transition procedures. ACPS principals, special services and the ESL office will be invited to Head Start monthly parent meetings throughout the year to ensure connection between the Head Start classrooms and ACPS.

3. Head Start staff will attend PTA meetings at all sites and encourage HS parents to join them at these events.

4. Head Start will provide eligibility/enrollment information to the office staff at each site. ACPS will assist in distribution of this material and referrals of underserved populations of eligible children to Head Start.

5. Head Start staff will organize and participate in joint training, including transition-related training, for school staff and Head Start staff on an annual basis.

Memorandum of Understanding
Alexandria City Public Schools and Alexandria Head Start Program
July 17, 2008

6. Senior Head Start Managers will present and discuss Head Start curriculum with ACPS Senior Management, Elementary principals and staff from the ESL and Special Education office annually to ensure that: (1) curricula used in the Head Start program are aligned with the Head Start Child Outcomes framework and state early learning standards with regard to cognitive, social emotional, and physical competencies that children entering Kindergarten are expected to demonstrate; and (2) Services provided to Head Start parents are linked with educational services, including services relating to language, literacy, and numeracy, provided by ACPS.

B. Transition Policies and Procedures

Alexandria City Public Schools and Alexandria Head Start will collaborate to ensure that in the year prior to and during the year a child is transitioning to Kindergarten, parents are provided assistance to understand the instructional and other services provided by ACPS.

1. During the spring subsequent to a child's transition to Kindergarten, Head Start, in collaboration with ACPS Kindergarten teachers and the ESL office will hold a Spring Kindergarten Institute (inviting previous Head Start parents with kindergarteners and current Head Start parents with children transitioning to Kindergarten the following year) to discuss:

- a. Differences between Head Start and Kindergarten
- b. Lessons learned by new Kindergarten parents
- c. Assistance to parents of limited English proficient children to understand the instructional and other services provided by ACPS and as appropriate, the information regarding their child's education.
- d. The K-Prep program implemented by ACPS in the summer prior to Kindergarten entry and the importance of Head Start children's participation.

2. During the summer preceding a child's transition to Kindergarten, Head Start staff will contact families with children transitioning to Kindergarten as follows:

- a. July: encourage them to attend ACPS K-Prep classes
- b. August: provide families with resources and support to address their questions about the impending transition to kindergarten to ensure children are prepared for the transition.

Memorandum of Understanding
Alexandria City Public Schools and Alexandria Head Start Program
July 17, 2008

3. During the fall subsequent to a child's transition to Kindergarten and 1st quarter parent conferences, Head Start, in collaboration with ACPS Kindergarten teachers and the ESL office will hold a Fall Kindergarten Parent Meeting, for previous Head Start families, to discuss:

- a. Conference notes
- b. Questions and concerns
- c. Tips on how to help kindergarteners succeed
- d. Assistance to parents of limited English proficient children to understand the instructional and other services provided by ACPS and as appropriate, the information regarding their child's education.
- e. Information and encouragement of parent involvement activities within the school and how to access the Parent Liaison assigned to each school.

4. For the first six months after a child transitions to kindergarten, Head Start will continue to offer family support services to parents to address any concerns, needs and questions. Parents (including grandparents and kinship caregivers, as appropriate) are provided assistance to understand the importance of parental involvement in a child's academic success while teaching them strategies for maintaining parental involvement as their child moves from Head Start to Kindergarten.

C. Systematic Procedure for the Transfer of Records

Alexandria Head Start will develop and implement a systematic procedure for transferring, with parental consent, Head Start program records for each participating child to the school in which such child enrolls.

1. Provide records for each kindergarten-bound child to include:
 - a. Electronic portfolio assessment documentation on CD
 - b. Final Pre-K PALs scores
 - c. Final COR assessment report
2. ACPS will provide, with parental consent, the Kindergarten PALs scores of previous Head Start children to Head Start.

Memorandum of Understanding
Alexandria City Public Schools and Alexandria Head Start Program
July 17, 2008

PART III
SPECIAL EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES

I. PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of part III is to establish procedures between Alexandria City Public Schools and Alexandria Head Start in the provision of services to preschool children eligible for special education in compliance with Federal and Virginia State Regulations.

Part III will:

- A. Define which services will be provided by each agency
- B. Establish policies and procedures regarding referrals, evaluations, planning, and delivery of services

II. PROGRAM MANDATES

Responsibility of the School District

- A. Conduct a public awareness campaign about the existence of Special Education services for all eligible disabled students
- B. Screen all students referred to Child Find
- C. Provide complete diagnostic evaluations when appropriate
- D. Develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for all children who meet the eligibility criteria
- E. Provide services outlined in the Individualized Education Program
- F. Provide all services listed above at no cost to the family

Responsibility of Head Start Program

- A. Provide developmental, hearing, vision, speech/language, and dental screenings for all enrolled children within 45 calendar days
- B. Maintain 10% of children with disabilities
- C. Assure that children with disabilities receive all services to which they are entitled under the Head Start Performance Standards for Children with Disabilities

Memorandum of Understanding
Alexandria City Public Schools and Alexandria Head Start Program
July 17, 2008

III. SERVICE IMPLEMENTATION

A. Child Find/Screening

Alexandria City Public Schools will:

1. Provide information about Child Find and Special Education Services
2. Schedule and conduct developmental screenings
3. Explain procedures and programs to parents

Alexandria Head Start will:

1. Provide screenings for children within 45 calendar days after enrollment
2. Provide a summary of screening results to parents

B. Referral for Evaluation

Alexandria City Public Schools will:

1. Receive referrals from the Head Start Disabilities Manager
2. Explain the Special Education evaluation process to parents
3. Obtain written permission for formal evaluations from parents

Alexandria Head Start will:

1. Generate a list of referrals based on classroom staff and Speech/Language referrals as needed.
2. Contact parents and obtain written consent prior to making referrals
3. Forward the names to the Child Find Specialist
4. Provide Physical Exam and Audiological screenings to Child Find

C. Comprehensive Evaluation

Alexandria City Public Schools will:

1. Schedule assessments, determine eligibility, and schedule in a timely fashion
2. Complete the necessary testing
3. Invite parents and Head Start staff to eligibility meeting
4. Explain test results to parents and Head Start staff at the Special Education eligibility meeting within 65 school business days of written request for evaluation.

Alexandria Head Start will:

1. Assist parents in completing the Initial Development Questionnaire Form for Child Find
2. Arrange for Speech/Language and/or Psychological Evaluations as needed for children enrolled in Head Start
3. Assist Child Find with translators if needed for evaluations
4. Provide Child Find with the results of evaluations/observations conducted by Head Start in order to facilitate completion of the evaluation process with the consent of the parents

D. Individualized Education Program Development

Alexandria City Public Schools will:

1. Conduct complete developmental evaluations of children who are referred
2. Invite parents and Head Start staff to the eligibility meeting
3. Conduct the Special Education eligibility meeting to review the results of evaluations with parents and Head Start personnel
4. Invite parents and Head Start personnel to participate in the development of the Individualized Education Program, if the Head Start child is found eligible for services

Alexandria Head Start will:

1. Remind parents of eligibility meeting
2. Participate on the eligibility committee
3. Participate in the development of the Individualized Education Program for children enrolled in Head Start

E. Placement

Alexandria City Public Schools will:

1. Make every effort to maintain placement of children in Head Start when Head Start is the referring agent, as deemed appropriate by the Individualized Education Program
2. Utilize Head Start as a placement option, when appropriate, for preschool children identified as needing special education services through Child Find
3. Provide a special education preschool teacher for the Head Start program.

Alexandria Head Start will:

1. Make every effort to accommodate children with disabilities referred by Child Find

Memorandum of Understanding
Alexandria City Public Schools and Alexandria Head Start Program
July 17, 2008

2. Participate in integration activities as program allows

F. Specific Program Service Delivery

Alexandria City Public Schools will:

1. Provide the services specified in the Individualized Education Program to include one or more of the following: self-contained class in a public school or resource teaching at Head Start, teacher visits to the child's home, speech and related services as needed, such as Speech/Language Therapy; Occupation Therapy and/or Physical Therapy (as indicated)
2. Provide transportation to Head Start and/or transportation home for the special education program
3. Consult with Head Start staff and provide a copy of progress review when updating and monitoring the Individualized Education Program on quarterly schedule

Alexandria Head Start will:

1. Meet with Head Start consultants providing special services once a month
2. Provide documentation of the frequency and focus of special services to parents and Head Start staff
3. Provide opportunities for children to participate in individual and group sessions to develop skills
4. Provide all necessary information to the Alexandria City Public Schools with the consent of parents
5. Contact, via disabilities manager, the preschool special education coordinator one week after the specified service delivery date on the IEP to ensure that services have begun

G. Procedures for Hiring and Supervising Staff Providing Special Services

Alexandria City Public Schools and Alexandria Head Start will:

1. Hire and supervise staff according to their own program policies and procedures
2. Provide orientation for staff regarding each program's regulations, requirements, goals, service delivery, procedures and the interagency agreement as needed

Memorandum of Understanding
Alexandria City Public Schools and Alexandria Head Start Program
July 17, 2008

H. Procedures for Reviewing/Monitoring Child's Progress

Alexandria City Public Schools will:

1. Conduct regular reviews of child's progress as specified in the IEP
2. Meet with Disabilities Coordinator and Head Start teachers to review child's progress and determine appropriate intervention strategies quarterly
3. Hold monitoring sessions which may include, but are not limited to initial IEP meetings and annual reviews of the IEP
4. Observe children and consult with Head Start staff as needed.

Alexandria Head Start will:

1. Monitor IEPs developed jointly by Head Start and Alexandria City Public Schools
2. Participate in reviewing of IEPs developed by Alexandria City Public Schools for dual placements, and if service delivery is provided by Alexandria City Public Schools only but child is enrolled in Head Start
3. Meet with Alexandria City Public Schools representative monthly to review process and share concerns

IV. CONFIDENTIALITY

Alexandria City Public Schools and Alexandria Head Start shall follow the requirements outlined in the Family Education Right to Privacy Act (FERPA).

Alexandria City Public Schools and Alexandria Head Start shall use a parental release form that complies with regulations.

V. TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Alexandria Head Start will:

1. Notify Alexandria City Public School representative of pertinent training sessions provided by Head Start
2. Coordinate with Head Start to provide an in-service training related to Special Education.

VI. COUNTING AND REPORTING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Alexandria City Public Schools will:

Adhere to Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia

Memorandum of Understanding
Alexandria City Public Schools and Alexandria Head Start Program
July 17, 2008

Alexandria Head Start will:

Give a written count to Alexandria City Public Schools quarterly

VII. TRANSITION ACTIVITIES

A. Children with Alexandria City Public Schools IEPs

Alexandria City Public Schools will:

1. Review IEP's of all students who will be age eligible for kindergarten in the fall
2. Initiate procedures for exit from the preschool Special Education program, if appropriate
3. Conduct evaluations of the targeted children, if deemed appropriate by the IEP team
4. Convene IEP meeting with Head Start staff and parents to determine the need for continued services on the primary level
 - a) Revise the IEP, if indicated
 - b) Arrange for fall transportation when necessary
 - c) Inform parents about school registration procedures

Alexandria Head Start will:

1. Continue to interact with Special Education staff to meet the IEP goals and objectives of each child
2. Attend and participate in exit IEP meeting for children going to kindergarten
3. Invite an Alexandria City Public Schools representative to parent meeting to discuss transition with parents who have children with a disability
4. Meet with an Alexandria City Public Schools representative and to review Speech/Language IEPs developed by Head Start for children entering kindergarten
5. Forward pertinent information to public school with the consent of the parent

TERMINATION/REVIEW

This MOU will be reviewed and revised by Alexandria City Public Schools and Alexandria Head Start on an as needed basis or at least once annually. This Agreement may be terminated by either party upon thirty (30) days written notice. Questions regarding this MOU should be directed to:

Part 1: Facilities – Mark Krause

Part 2: Continuity of Services and Transition – Kris Clark

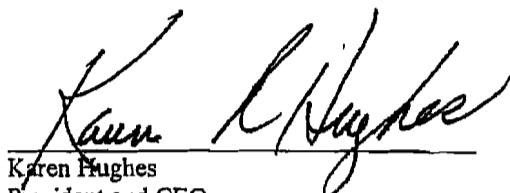
Part 3: Special Education – Michael Romanelli

SIGNATURES



Dr. Morton Sherman
Superintendent
ACPS

Date: 8/12/08



Karen Hughes
President and CEO
The Campagna Center

Date: 9/3/08

Memorandum of Understanding
Alexandria City Public Schools and Alexandria Head Start Program
July 17, 2008