



Family and Community Engagement Transition Services & Child Records Protections Operating Procedures Manual

*Aligned with the 2024 Head Start Program
Performance Standards*

(Standards 1302.50 -1302.53)

(Standards 1302.70 -1302.72)

(Standards 1302.20 -1302.24)

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INTRODUCTION (Standard 1302)

The focus of the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement program is on the child, the family, and the community as a group of interacting personalities. The role of the staff is to provide support to the child and family. Social Services/Parent Engagement staff also serves as a resource to the family by serving as a liaison between the Head Start Campus and Early Head Start Center, the family and the community. Out of this interaction; empowerment, enhancement of problem solving skills, and self-reliance is the desired outcome for each family system.

Head Start Family Empowerment Advocates/Campus Staff also perform the following roles:

1. Provide support and serve as a resource to families.
2. Act as a bridge between, the family and the community.
3. Provide training and education to families in using available resources and services, and in locating those that are unavailable or inaccessible.
4. Serve as a resource within the Head Start program for other *staff* members.
5. Maintain accurate records for the benefit of families and other staff members.
6. Act as an advocate of the children and families enrolled in the program, both within the Campus and in the community.
7. Involve parents in the process of making decisions about the nature and operation of the Head Start program.
8. Involve parents in the classroom as paid employees, volunteers or observers.
9. Assist parents in working with their children in cooperation with the staff.
10. Involve parents in planning activities for themselves in the Campus and in the Community.
11. Work with donors that make in-kind contributions to the Head Start program.
12. Work with Administration, campus teams, parents, and community volunteers in generating the program's 20% non-federal share annually.

This "Content Area Plans "will outline how these tasks will be accomplished by the Family Empowerment Advocates/Campus Staff in collaboration with other Head Start team members.

II. FAMILY EMPOWERMENT ADVOCATES/PARENT ENGAGEMENT DESK PROCEDURE

1. Family Empowerment Advocates meet monthly to outline and document activities for the following month.
2. Check with teachers daily and document absenteeism.
3. Document absences reasons and follow up with a call and/or home visit if necessary.
4. Schedule home visits with families at least two a year according to FS/PI time line and as needed to meet individual family circumstances and to complete Family Partnership

Agreements. (First is due to the FSA the middle of August) (Second is due by the last day of April). (See Education Manual – Home Visit for procedure in scheduling home visits)

5. Enter applications and enrollment data on Child Plus weekly or as needed to ensure information on system is current. (Speak with management staff to allow information to be checked and followed through.)
6. Update Child Plus waiting list monthly.
7. Assist Campus Director in compiling the Non-Federal Share report monthly (Inkind).
8. Update Child Plus weekly, and encourage Campus staff to document contacts with families weekly or as they occur.
9. Update emergency cards as changes occur or at least once a week.
10. Partner with families on a continuous basis, to ensure that their needs and/or concerns are being met.
11. Conduct case management meetings monthly in order to ensure all enrolled families are staffed by FS/PI time line deadline. (100%)
12. **Conduct parent meetings/parent engagement events.** Send out flyers at least **one** week in advance of meeting. Conduct, as needed, monthly volunteer orientations for new parent and/or community volunteers.
13. Make community contacts monthly via telephone, correspondence or scheduled office appointments to acquire in-kind and/or resource information for enrolled families.
14. Follow up and document within two weeks the results of referrals. The maximum time for follow up is 30 days.
15. Include Policy Council Meeting report in monthly parent meeting.
16. Recruit and enroll as needed to maintain Campus capacity. Conduct folder review after each enrollment. Fill all vacancies within 30 days. Process dropped folders within 30 days.
17. Maintain locked files daily. Collaborate with Campus staff to keep in order weekly.
18. Attend ARD meetings and team meetings as scheduled.
19. Plan and coordinate with Campus staff, parent-training activities monthly or as needed.
20. During the first part of the year, include transition information on parent meeting agenda.
21. Conduct election of parent officers and policy council members at the September parent meeting. All other parent training topics will be determined from the results of the Parent Survey.

Job Descriptions

See Human Resources Director Job Description

CAMPUS OPERATING PROCEDURES

Campuses open at 7:30 a.m. and close at 4:00 p.m. Children of working parents will be accepted in the campus as early as 7:30 a.m. and will be picked up by 3:00 p.m.

1. Any changes in a family's work or school status are to be reported to the Family Empowerment Advocate. Families failing to adhere to the appropriate time slots will receive a conference upon each occurrence. The Campus Director and Family Empowerment Advocate are to outline a written plan of action to bring them into compliance. A copy of the plan with staff and parent signatures will be given to the family and a copy will be kept in the child's folder. Family Empowerment Advocates will monitor the family's progress toward compliance and provide support and encouragement.
2. Head Start offers children two-thirds of the daily nutritional requirements through breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack. Breakfast is served from 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. Lunch may be served as early as 11:00 a.m. or from 11:30a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Afternoon snack is served at 2:30 pm.
3. No child is accepted in the campus after 8:30 a.m., unless approved by the Campus Director or other designated staff person.
4. It is the responsibility of each parent or person bringing a child to the campus, to escort the child to the campus to be checked in by campus staff. During check in, backpacks and carry ins are checked to ensure the safety of all children.
5. If a child is going to be absent, it is the responsibility of the parent to inform the Campus Director or campus staff as soon as possible. Each time a child is absent, the parent must write a note or bring a doctor/clinic excuse to the Campus Director upon the child's return to school.
6. If a child is absent three consecutive days, and the Campus Director has not been notified, the Family Empowerment Advocate will make contact in regards to absenteeism and prepare proper documentation. Every effort will be made to keep each child enrolled in the program.
7. A child will not be released to anyone who is not listed as a designated pickup person, without prior written parent/guardian authorization.
8. A child will not be released to anyone who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.
9. Head Start parents are asked to bring an extra pair of garments to be left in the campus in the event of an accident (i.e., spilled paint, wetting or food spilling).
10. Children are not allowed to wear open toed shoes or sandals for safety reasons. A child is allowed to wear modified footwear as deemed necessary by the parent. The parent must submit a written request /authorization to verify qualifying condition.

After three (3) days a doctor's statement is required for the child to continue to wear the modified footwear. (See Head Start Standard Sec. XVII. F).

11. Head Start will not be liable for theft or damage to children's clothing or jewelry.
12. Parents are to notify the Campus Director and Family Empowerment Advocates/Parent Involvement staff immediately if there is a change of address, telephone number, emergency number and/or name. It is the responsibility of parents to keep place of employment and any change of income current with the Site Manager and Social Services/Parent Involvement Specialist.
13. Two home visits are required for each enrolled child by his/her teacher. Support services staff may make additional home visits; the visits will be scheduled.
14. Parents are encouraged to contact the Campus Director with any questions and suggestions concerning campus operations. A Grievance Policy is posted in each campus, and parents should read and follow the policy.
15. Head Start provides enrollment opportunities to any eligible child regardless of race, creed, color, sex, disability or national origin.
16. The Campus Director or other designated staff will bring any special problem or occurrence that affects an enrolled child to the parents' attention.
17. Parents are responsible for keeping all appointments and maintaining current immunizations on the enrolled child.
18. Parents are encouraged to participate in classroom and other programs activities designed to promote or enhance the development of parent skills, self-confidence and child awareness on a weekly basis.
19. Parent meetings are held once a month at each campus. Parents are encouraged to attend these meetings.
20. Parents may take advantage of all training opportunities that will help them become more aware of their role as the child's first and most important teacher.
21. Parents may take advantage of every opportunity available to participate as volunteers and observers in the classroom.
22. Head Start staff will partner with parents to establish goals, responsibilities and time lines.
23. Head Start parent trainings are designed to help parents better understand the principles and philosophies of infant/toddler growth and development and preschool education. We urge all parents to take advantage of these trainings.

- 24.** Parents are provided with transition services when their children enter into the Head Start program. Families are also provided transition services when their children enter kindergarten programs.

PARENT COMMITTEES (Standard 1301.4)

PROCEDURE

1. A parent committee will be created at the first parent meeting of the year in September.
2. Parent/Guardian(s) will elect officers and Policy Council Representative and Alternate at the first meeting.
3. In order to hold an office, the person must be a parent or legally responsible adult of a child currently enrolled in the Head Start Program at that designated campus.
4. Assistant Head Start Director will train parent/guardian(s) on Roberts' Rules of Order and will conduct the election process following these rules. Assistant Head Start Director will also inform parent/guardian (s) of the roles of each office that is elected.
5. Parent Committee meetings will be held throughout the year on dates selected and voted on by the Parent Committee.
6. Parent/Guardian(s) will learn of new policies and have opportunities to participate in planning of activities on the campus.
7. Policy Council Representatives will be listed on the agenda each month to share information received at the prior month's Policy Council Meeting

Subpart E - Family and Community Engagement Program Services

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT (Standard 1302.50)

PROCEDURE

1. Family Empowerment Advocates will recognize parents as the child's primary teachers. Parents will be encouraged to be their child's primary teachers throughout the school year. Training will be made available to support the parent/guardian(s) in this area.
2. Communication with the parent/guardian(s) will begin during the application process and will continue to build through the orientation into the program.
3. Applications and orientations will be made available in the families preferred language, when available, and an interpreter from Head Start or the local LEA will be available to parents that need this service.
4. During the orientation process, parent/guardian(s) will complete the Family Partnership Agreement which includes the agencies needs assessment. Completing the Family Partnership Agreement at orientation allows Family Empowerment Advocates to have adequate time to work with families on their goals and provide resources to the family

for any needs that may be available.

5. Interpreters, when available, will be used at Parent Engagement Trainings and Parent Meetings so that all parents will feel welcome and comfortable during attendance.
6. Family Empowerment Advocates will encourage parent/guardian(s) to participate in volunteer opportunities on campus. Parent/Guardian(s) will be welcome in the campus and staff will ensure that parent/guardian(s) are aware of job opening in the program and areas volunteers are needed.
7. Family Empowerment Advocates, Campus Staff, Management Team will collaborate as much as possible to ensure that parents family engagement strategies are used in the classroom, home and the community.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT (Standard 1302.51)

PROCEDURE

1. Parent/Guardian(s) will participate in the Read Across America literacy program each school year.
2. Parent Engagement staff will provide training in areas of literacy at Parent Meetings.
3. Family Engagement Coordinator will attend the first parent meeting of each school year and stress the importance of attendance of the children. Family Empowerment Advocates will also discuss the importance of attendance at Parent Meetings and Home Visits.
4. Parenting education training will be done with Parent Powered Parenting Curriculum.

FAMILY PARTNERSHIP SERVICES (Standard 1302.52)

PROCEDURE

1. Family Partnership Agreements are completed at time of orientation giving Family Empowerment Advocates adequate time to work with the family to meet their needs.
2. The Family Partnership Agreement includes the needs assessment.
3. Trainings for the parent/guardian(s) will be based off the needs assessments and parent interest survey.
4. Family Partnership Agreements will be taken on the first home visit in August. Family Empowerment Advocates and parent/guardian(s) will jointly develop a plan on how to assist the family with achieving these goals and inform parent/guardian(s) of any resources that may be available to them.
5. Home Visits will be entered into Child Plus, along with each goal the family has, with a plan of action outlining the steps that both the parent/guardian and Family Empowerment Advocates.
6. A follow up home visit will be conducted in November.
7. A final home visit will be conducted in March and any goal adjustments will be made at this time.
8. Home Visits will be conducted in the parent/guardian(s) home when possible. However, if parent does not agree to a Home Visit or there is a significant safety hazard to Family

Empowerment Advocates, an alternate location can be used to conduct the home visit.

9. Parent/Guardian(s) will be given a parent handbook at the beginning of each year that contains a community resource directory.
10. Family Empowerment Advocates will discuss with the family regarding any services that they are currently receiving from other agencies so that there will not be a duplication of services.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (Standard 1302.53)

PROCEDURE

1. Parent/Guardian(s) are provided with a community resource directory at the beginning of each school year.
2. A formal and informal network of contacts have been developed with community organizations.
3. Agreements and MOU's have been established with various state and community agencies.
4. Community members serve on the Policy Council, Advisory Committees and as volunteers.
5. Referrals are made to WIC and Texas Department of Health and Human Services when needed.
6. Informal and formal agreements have developed with Health Providers and Nutritionist. See Health and Nutrition Plans
7. A Disabilities/Mental Specialist is available to parents. See Dis./MH Plan.
8. Staff receives training on child abuse/neglect and the reporting procedures.
9. Head Start cooperates with local reporting agencies for child abuse.
10. Children have the opportunity to visit the library thru field trips.
11. There are hands on activities with books and other manipulatives in the classroom.
12. Parents are invited to help with cultural activities in the classroom.
13. Representatives from state and local agencies are encouraged to participate on Policy Council and provide trainings for parents during parent meetings.
14. Agency will work with local school districts to share data and information at both Partnership meetings and through software if allowed.

Subpart G – Transition Services

Transition from Early Head Start (Standard 1302.70)

PROCEDURE

1. Beginning six months before a child's third birthday, Family Empowerment Advocates will have a transition meeting with the family to decide the best place

for the child to transition to.

2. Family Service staff will verify if the child will be able to transition into the Head Start Preschool program by re-verifying the family's income. If the child is eligible for Head Start Preschool the staff will ensure that the child transitions to Head Start Preschool the following school year. If the child is no longer eligible for Head Start Preschool, the Family Services staff will assist the parent in locating quality child care and will assist the parent with the transition into their new location.

Transition Services (Standard 1302.71)

PROCEDURE

1. Each child will receive a transition packet at the end of each school year that contains information to be used in the summer to continue the child's education.
2. Each child will receive a transition into Head Start Preschool bag at the first home visit or orientation if it is after the first day of school.
3. Family Empowerment Advocates will ensure that the final parent meeting contains information about that transition of their child to kindergarten.
4. Students on standalone campuses will complete a field trip to the receiving ISD in April/May of the school year.
5. Kindergarten teachers, when available, will be in attendance at Parent's Transition Meeting to provide information about kindergarten.
6. On-going communication between campus staff and ISD staff throughout the year regarding child's records.
7. Final Parent/Teacher Conference will discuss the child's readiness to transition into the kindergarten classroom.
8. CSNT will follow all privacy requirements as defined in subpart C of part 1303. (See Transition Plan for more information)

Transitions between programs (Standard 1302.72)

PROCEDURE

1. CSNT will assist parents that are moving out of the service area to ensure that a local Head Start Preschool program has all needed information. If a Head Start Preschool program is not available Family Empowerment Advocates will assist parent with finding another early education program.
2. CSNT will work with local pre-kindergarten and other early education centers that our students may transition to for the year prior to kindergarten.

Subpart C – Protections for the Privacy of Child Records

1303.20 Establishing procedures

PROCEDURE

1. The Agency will maintain confidentiality with all PII in child records.
2. Procedures will be updated at least annually or as needed.

Program Procedures – applicable confidentiality provisions. (Standard 1303.21

PROCEDURE

1. The Agency will follow FERPA.
2. The Agency will follow Individuals with Disabilities Education Act procedures for all children with a disability or concern.

Disclosures with, and without, parental consent. (Standard 1303.22)

PROCEDURE - Disclosure

1. All parents will be notified of the Agency's confidentiality procedures during orientation.
2. All staff will sign a confidentiality statement at the beginning of each school year.
3. Parents will sign a "Consent for Disclosure of Confidential Information" form when they request any PII.
4. The "Consent for Disclosure of Confidential Information" will contain the person requesting the information, the purpose of the request, the signature of both the parent and the staff.
5. Parents will be informed when records are transferred to a school district or program that their child will enroll or transfer to.

PROCEDURE – Disclosure with Parental Consent

1. Parent has the right to refuse transfer of the information if done so in writing.
2. If Parent does not refuse, all needed information will be transferred to the requesting school district or program.

PROCEDURE – Disclosure without Parental Consent

1. PII in a Child's file can be released without the parental consent in the following situations: Contractors/Providers, School Districts, Audits, Federal Review teams, Federal or State Entity conducting a study on Child and Family Outcomes, Emergency Situations, Judicial Orders, USDA/CACFP, or CPS cases.
2. If allowed, Parent/s will be notified, in advance, of any subpoenaed records.
3. Any information collected by an outside agency listed above must be destroyed when no longer needed for the purpose of disclosure.
4. Parents will be notified of agencies that may request information, without their prior

consent, in the parent handbook and during the parent orientation.

PROCEDURE – Written Agreements

1. MOU and Interagency agreements will contain information regarding the FERPA procedures.
2. MOU and Interagency agreements will reviewed annually and updated as needed.
3. The Agency will address violations on a case-by-case basis.

PROCEDURE – Annual Notification

1. Parents will receive notification of FERPA and confidentiality procedures in the parent handbook.
2. The handbook is available electronically or in a hard copy version.

PROCEDURE – Disclosing PII

1. Only information requested will be disclosed.

Parental rights. (Standard 1303.23)

PROCEDURE – Parent Rights orientation

1. At orientation, parents are informed that they are allowed to see their child's record.
2. If parent requests access to their child's record, the parent will sign "Consent for Disclosure of Confidential Information" form.
3. Parents will be given access to the requested information within 45 days after receipt of request.
4. Parents are allowed access to only their child's record.
5. No record will be destroyed with an outstanding request for review.

PROCEDURE – Amended Information

1. Parents are allowed to ask the program to amend information that may be incorrect or may violate the child's privacy.
2. The Agency will consider the parent's request and if a denied will inform the parents in writing within 30 days.

PROCEDURE – Hearings

1. Parents are allowed a hearing if they disagree with the decision to amend their child's record.
2. If a hearing is granted, a person that does not have direct interest in the outcome will conduct the hearing.
3. Parent will be allowed to present evidence that is relevant to the issue.

4. If information is found to be inaccurate, misleading, or violates the child's privacy act, the information will be amended or removed from the child's record.
5. If information is found to be accurate, parents must be allowed to make a statement placed in the child's file that states why they disagree with the program's decision.

PROCEDURE – Right to Copy of Record

1. The program will provide a parent with a free copy of any information that is disclosed to a third party with parental consent if requested.
2. Copy of information requested by a court order will not be released to the parent.

PROCEDURE – Right to Inspect Written Agreements

1. Parents will have the right to review any written agreements with third parties.

Maintaining records. (Standard 1303.24)

PROCEDURE

1. Child's records are kept within a locked filing cabinet in the Family Empowerment Advocate's office.
2. The key for the filing cabinet will be located within the Family Empowerment Advocate's office but will not be visible to a parent or staff member.
3. Family Empowerment Advocates will keep two years of records looked on the campus for review.
4. Older records will be stored in a locked facility until they are destroyed.
5. All staff that access a child record will sign in on the Confidentiality form located in the front of the child's record.
6. Any disclosure of information will be documented on the Confidentiality form.
7. The Agency uses Child Plus to maintain child's records. Child Plus has security settings to ensure that only allowed staff have access to the child's record and Child Plus is password protected requiring frequent password changes.
8. Parent Statements will be disclosed with disputed information.

**Community Services Head Start
Transition Plan-Head Start
Preschool**

Date Planned	Required Activity	Responsible Person	Parent Involvement	Date Completed
January	Staff attend transition IFSP/IEP Meetings	Education Coordinator / Family Empowerment Advocates	Yes	May
January	Teachers to begin transition activities in classroom.	Teachers	None	End of School
January	Begin implementing Nutritional Transition Component. Will include carrying trays during meal time.	Teachers / Nutrition Coordinator	None	End of School
January	Look at child's record to determine if meeting is needed with receiving program.	Family Empowerment Advocates / Coordinators	Yes	1st of May
February	Initiate contact with receiving programs.	Campus Directors / Family Empowerment Advocates	None	1st of May
March	Survey sent to determine School District.	Family Empowerment Advocates / Teachers	Yes	April
April	Initiate joint training for field trips to receiving program	Family Empowerment Advocates / Teachers	Yes	End of School

May	Parent/Teacher Conference for all children transitioning from Program. Complete Transition Summary and parents are to receive transition bags.	Teachers / Education Coordinator	Yes	End of May
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Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework School Readiness Goals 2024-2025

1. Goal: Parents will ensure that all children are healthy.

Objective: 85% of all students will complete health requirements.

Action Steps:

1. Compliance on initial physicals
2. Compliance on initial dentals
3. Compliance on six-month dentals
4. Compliance on annual physicals
5. Compliance on lead
6. Compliance on hemoglobin

2. Goal: Parents will increase family engagement skills.

Objective: 80% of Parents will participate in Family Engagement Activities.

Action Steps:

1. Parent Engagement Events
2. Participation in Read Across America
3. Parent Powered Parenting Curriculum Participation

3. Goal: Parents will be prepared for transition into kindergarten.

Objective: 80% of parents will complete activities that will ensure their child is ready to transition to ISD campus.

Action Steps:

1. Parent participation in Home Visits
2. Parent participation in Parent Teacher Conferences.
3. Completion of home activities.

4. Goal: Parent and Staff will participate in Mental Wellness activities.

Objective: 90% of parents and staff will participate in mental wellness activities.

Action Steps:

1. Participation in quarterly staff wellness activity.
2. Parents will participate in Parent Powered Parenting Curriculum
3. Participation in staff wellness training

(Head Start Performance Standard 45 CFR 1304.53(b))

1. CSNT Head Start will purchase personal cleansing wipes and pull-up (only) unless parents request the use of diapers. All requests for pull-ups and wipes must be directed to Family Empowerment Advocate. Family Empowerment Advocate will purchase pull-ups at the request of Campus Director as needed.
2. Documented medical advice from a Health Care Professional is required from parents who request a brand of pull-ups/diapers or wipes different from the brand chosen by CSNT. Request for pull-ups/diapers and wipes when documented medical advice is received must be directed to Family Engagement Coordinator.
3. Request for pull-ups and personal cleansing supplies must be submitted in timely manner to allow for requisition preparation.

Diaper/Pull-up Changing Policy:

1. CSNT Head Start staff will adhere to Child Care Licensing Standards 746.3501, 746.3501, 746.3503, and 746.3505 for Pull-up/Diaper changing, changing equipment and sanitization guidelines to prevent spreading of germs. See Health Policy Procedures, Sec. 7.
2. CSNT will provide a change of clothes for children when needed. Family Engagement Coordinator will assess at the beginning of the school year and again in January each campus's clothing needs.

MALE INVOLVEMENT

“It’s easier to build strong children than to repair broken men”

Fredrick Douglas

The focus of Male Involvement is to increase male and family involvement through leadership training, parenting classes, literacy involvement and other activities men enjoy.

GOALS

- Head Start will support and encourage men and families to be involved in parent campus meetings, Policy Council and other Head Start Programs.
- Head Start will help fathers face the challenges of family, work and community.
- Head Start will recognize different cultural heritage within the family.
- Head Start will emphasize the importance of a positive male role model within the home.
- To increase coordination of other community agencies that focus around male and family involvement.
- To increase the amount of time fathers are engaged with their children around literacy and other educational activities.

Information Websites: www.fatherhood.org

www.fatherhood.hhs.gov www.nhsa.org

www.fatherlove.com

www.fathers.com

Healthy Marriage Initiative

Goal: To assist couples in developing the skills and knowledge to form and maintain healthy marriages. To assist couples in gaining access to marriage education services on a voluntary basis.

1. Couples or individuals who contact Head Start Family Empowerment Advocates with concerns dealing with relationship and/or marriage will be referred to the appropriate agency.
2. Family Empowerment Advocates will make referral within 10 days of initial contact and will follow-up at least 30 days after referral is made.

Referral Agencies:

*Family Systems – Couples Counseling – Bowie County 5321
Summerhill Rd.
Texarkana, TX
903-791-1051
Accepts Medicaid and Private Insurance*

*Counseling Services of Pittsburg
200 W. Marshall, Ste. E
Pittsburg, TX
903-856-6001
Accepts Medicaid and Private Insurance. Reduced Rate based on family size and income.*

*Lighthouse Counseling Services
217 N,. Jefferson, Ste. 3
Mt. Pleasant, TX
903-575-1330
Accepts Medicaid and Private Insurance*

Family Empowerment Advocate Timelines

See Family Empowerment Advocate Timelines in Forms