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June 11, 2020

To: Public Schools Required to Use State-Approved Contracts for Head Start Programs
From: Cary A. Booker, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Early Childhood Education 
Subject: 2020-2021 Preschool Education Program Contracts

School districts that are required to use a preschool education program contract when contracting with a Department of Children and Families-licensed Head Start Program for the 2020-2021 school year must use either the standard state-approved Preschool Education Program Contract templates provided by the Department of Education (DOE).

Attached are the updated standard state-approved Preschool Education Program Contract template. The contract templates will also be posted to the [Head Start at www.state.nj.us/education/ece/hs](http://www.state.nj.us/education/ece/hs).

Districts must submit all contracts electronically, via Homeroom. The Division of Early Childhood Education will no longer accept paper copies of revised or fully executed contracts.

To upload contracts, visit [DOE's website for Homeroom](https://homeroom.state.nj.us/), <https://homeroom.state.nj.us/> and upload documents to the "Early Childhood" hyperlink listed in the "Homeroom Administration" column. Please remember that you will need your District ID, Username and Password to upload documents. Districts without an account for this application must contact their district's Homeroom Administrator to establish an account.

For Head Start contracts, please be aware that the section on Child Abuse Record Information Checks and Criminal History Background Checks the Child Care Providers and Head Start Grantees will provide an affidavit to the districts verifying that all procedures were followed. Individual copies of Child Abuse Record Information Checks and Criminal History Background Checks can no longer be provided. **According to the Child Care Center Licensing Law (N.J.S.A. 30:5B1-1 to 15, supplemented by P.L. 1992, c.95.) and the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (N.J.A.C. 3A:52). The CARI and CHRI background information is governed by confidentiality and dissemination statutes that prohibit this information from being shared with unauthorized persons.**

Please note the additions to the 2020-2021 Preschool Education Program Head Start Contract template:

Head Start-Specific Additions:

- Head Start Program Performance Standards requirements addressing chronic absenteeism are referenced.
- Coaching and classroom support on the chosen curriculum and ECERS-3 will be provided jointly by Master Teachers and Head Start Education Supervisors/Coordinators.
- Head Start Grantees and districts will coordinate professional development activities.
- The section on suspension and expulsion includes information from the Head Start Program Performance Standards and state policies, along with the use of the Pyramid Model for Supporting Social and Emotional Competencies to reduce challenging behaviors.
- Head Start Grantees will determine their calendar in accordance with the required student contact days required by the District.
- All slots partly funded by Head Start must be Head Start income eligible or are eligible for designated over-income.
- Head Start Grantees can make modification to the approved budget when appropriate, based on reasonable and customary cost and verifiable documentation.
- Head Start Grantees can submit documents of their teachers' professional experiences to the District when the mandated in-services/workshops are the same in nature.
- Districts may not withhold funding at any time during the contract period without meeting with Head Start Grantee. If the issue of payment is not resolved locally, an appeal may be made to the Commissioner pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:3A-1.3 Controversies and Disputes.
- Upon non-renewal the District shall recover monetary value of startup materials limited to playground equipment, non-consumable startup materials, and start-up classroom technology based on DOE approval. The amount recovered shall be determined by the current market value or depreciated value of said items (as per Federal Schedule) whichever is lower.

For school districts using standard state-approved Preschool Education Program Contract templates without modifications:

All fully executed contracts must be received by the department within 60 days of the school district's receipt of this memo.

For school districts requesting modifications to the standard state-approved Preschool Education Program Contract templates:

- Districts must seek and receive approval from the DOE prior to executing the contract.
- The DOE will not accept modifications that repeat language or citation contained in N.J.A.C. 6A:13A.
- Modifications to the standard state-approved preschool education program contract templates must be submitted to the Division of Early Childhood Education by June 15, 2020 for approval. Requests for modifications submitted after this date will not be considered.
- All contract modification requests will be reviewed and approved as they are received. The DOE must approve all modified state-approved preschool education program contracts prior to discussion and/or dissemination to Head Start Grantees or providers.

Modification requests must be submitted on the standard contract template. Additions must be indicated by underlining and **highlighting. Deletions must be indicated with a ~~strike through~~.**

Fully executed contracts must be received by the department within 60 days of the school district's receipt of contract modification approval.

If you have any questions, please contact Suzanne Burnette, Director, Head Start Collaboration Office or Erika Kelley, Education Program Development Specialist, Division of Early Childhood Education at (609) 376-9077.

CAB/TC/SB/EK
Attachments