

Calendar No. 200

109TH CONGRESS }
1st Session }

SENATE

{ REPORT
109-131

HEAD START IMPROVEMENTS FOR SCHOOL READINESS ACT

AUGUST 31, 2005.—Ordered to be printed

Filed, under authority of the order of the Senate of July 29, 2005

Mr. ENZI, from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and
Pensions, submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany S. 1107]

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, to which was referred the bill (S. 1107) to reauthorize the Head Start Act, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably and recommends that the bill (as amended) do pass.

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I. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF THE BILL

The Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act of 2005 reauthorizes and makes improvements in the Head Start program in order to ensure that children in the program make measurable progress toward developing the skills they need to enter school ready to learn. In order to accomplish this, the bill focuses on four areas: (1) improved academic, developmental, and educational outcomes for children, (2) improved teacher competencies and high quality opportunities for professional development, (3) better coordination and collaboration with other programs in the State (including child care, State preschool programs, and the local public

schools), and (4) greater accountability for the management of Head Start programs; and (5) enhanced support for infants and toddlers through the Early Head Start program.

The bill authorizes \$7.2 billion for fiscal year 2006, \$7.5 billion for fiscal year 2007, \$7.8 billion for fiscal year 2008, and such sums as may be necessary for subsequent years. Each year, 13 percent of Head Start funding is set-aside for the Secretary to allocate funds for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs, Indian Head Start programs, training and technical assistance for Head Start grantees, improvement in the PRISM reviews through increased inter-rater reliability training, and other purposes. For research and evaluation each year, \$20 million is reserved. The set-aside for Early Head Start is increased from 10 percent currently to 18 percent in fiscal year 2010.

II. BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Head Start was created in 1965 and today stands as one of the nation's most well regarded domestic programs. Head Start's mission to promote school readiness among the Nation's low-income children reflects a comprehensive approach to supporting children and families. Because school readiness depends upon the interdependent relationship between cognitive, intellectual, physical, social and emotional, and other areas of development, Head Start programs provide a broad array of services determined to be necessary, based on an assessment of the child and family's needs.

Children in Head Start enter the program with a number of factors that put them at risk of school failure, such as extreme poverty, family economic and housing instability, and limited family education attainment. The overwhelming majority of Head Start children are from families earning less than 100 percent of the Federal poverty level, \$18,850 for a family of four (2004 HHS Poverty Guidelines), and in most Head Start families, neither parent hold more than a high school degree or general equivalency degree (GED). Research shows that Head Start clearly makes a difference for children living in poverty, yet experience has shown that the program itself cannot eradicate the overwhelming effects of poverty on children and their families.

By its nature, Head Start requires community input in order to be responsive to community needs. Head Start programs have successfully reached out to community partners to help foster school readiness and transitions to school, provide health care, increase access to social services for families, and provide full-day, full-year services for children. Local programs may adapt their services to serve Indian tribes or migrant and seasonal farm worker communities, target homeless children or children of drug-addicted parents or help families transitioning off welfare. Built on the premise that effective intervention in the lives of children can be best accomplished through family and community involvement, Head Start attempts to involve communities and families in both the design and implementation of the program at the local level.

Today, Head Start provides educational and other comprehensive support services to close to 1 million low-income preschool children in order to help prepare for and increase the success of Head Start participants in school. Head Start program currently provides services to children from a diverse population of eligible families, in-

cluding migrant and Native American children, through nearly 19,000 centers and 829 home-based programs in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the United States territories. The committee encourages consideration of this diversity to meet the goals of Head Start programs.

Unlike other Federal social service programs that are funded through States the Department of Health and Human Services awards Head Start grants directly to local agencies, called grantees, which deliver program services. Grantees, estimated at 2,100, may contract with other organizations, called delegate agencies, to run all or part of their programs. Grantees had contracts with approximately 622 delegate agencies in fiscal year 2004. Grantees and delegate agencies include public and private school systems, community action agencies, faith-based organizations and other private nonprofit and for profit organizations, local governments, and Indian tribes.

Since the inception of the program, Head Start has continuously improved the quality of the services it provides. As the needs of children and families changed, so has Head Start. Head Start was first enacted into law in 1965 as a summer program with a budget of \$352 million. In 1995, an appropriation of \$3.3 billion allowed more than 2,000 locally run Head Start programs to serve more than 730,000 children and their families. By fiscal year 2004, Head Start was funded at more than double that of 1995, where it received \$6.8 billion in funding and supported programs in every State.

The committee also recognizes that the face of poverty has changed dramatically since Head Start was created 40 years ago. Single parent families headed by women accounted for about one-third of the poor in 1966; now they represent more than half of those living in poverty. Children have now replaced the elderly as the group most likely to be poor. One child in five in the United States lives in poverty. Disadvantaged children who are part of a racial or ethnic minority group face even harsher realities; 36 percent of all African American children, and 30 percent of all Hispanic children, come from families earning less than the Federal poverty threshold (U.S. Census, 2003).

Recognizing the harmful impacts of poverty on later educational attainment it is critical we prepare all children to enter school ready to learn in order to provide for their later success in school and to close the achievement gap. Studies document a wide gap between lower and higher income children before they enter kindergarten which, if unaddressed, often persists into later years in schooling and despite significant Federal investment, this gap persists. Research also shows that lower-income children are far less likely than their higher-income peers to participate in early childhood education programs before beginning elementary school. If we do not prepare all children to succeed and become lifelong learners, our global competitiveness in the 21st century economy will be jeopardized.

The research shows that, on average Head Start helps to narrow the achievement gap between our Nation's poorest children and their more affluent peers. The committee believes that the program can be strengthened to build upon that success and lead to increased outcomes for Head Start children. Long-term positive out-

comes and cost-savings improved school performance to also include more positive behavior, reduced special education placement, lower in-grade retention and dropout rates, and increased lifelong earning potential.

In 1993, Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala appointed an Advisory committee on Head Start Quality and Expansion to examine closely the Head Start program and to make recommendations for the future. The recommendations of the Advisory committee focused on three important areas: (1) the need to improve quality; (2) the need to expand services; and (3) the need to forge partnership with other community providers, including closer coordination with elementary schools, State, and locally sponsored programs, cooperating with the private sector and linking Head Start with other National initiatives. Reauthorizations of the Head Start Act in 1994 and 1998 enhanced teacher qualifications, increased attention to cognitive areas of development, created the Early Head Start program, and led to program standards and the Outcomes Framework that guide Head Start programs in their curriculum planning, instruction, and delivery of services, as well as in the ongoing assessment of the progress and accomplishments of children.

The Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act of 2005 builds on the original foundation of the Head Start program and on past reauthorizations, by increasing the focus on continued program quality and the achievement of important educational and other outcomes for children across the range of developmental domains critical to ensuring their school readiness.

III. LEGISLATIVE HISTORY AND COMMITTEE ACTION

On May 25, 2005, the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions met in executive session and favorably reported the bill with an amendment in the nature of a substitute unanimously.

Hearings and testimony—summary of witnesses

The Subcommittee on Education and Early Childhood Development held a hearing on April 5, 2005 at 9:30 a.m. entitled “Head Start: Ensuring Dollars Benefit the Children”. The hearing focused on the Government Accountability Office’s (GAO) recent report entitled “Head Start: Comprehensive Approach to Identifying and Addressing Risks Could Help Prevent Grantee Financial Management Weaknesses.” The GAO study was requested in late 2003 by Senator Enzi, Senator Alexander, Senator Gregg, Congressman Boehner, and Congressman Castle following reports of alleged financial impropriety by Head Start executives in more than a dozen United States cities. Between January 2003 and the first months of 2005, multiple accounts from numerous communities across the country alleged serious financial abuses and irregularities by local individuals and/or entities entrusted with the responsibility of managing Federal Head Start funds meant to serve poor and at-risk children. The incidents identified involved the use of tens of millions in Federal Head Start funds that were intended to serve more than 10,000 disadvantaged U.S. children. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) report on the program found a significant percent of local Head Start operators surveyed in 2000 had

some form of financial irregularity, a portion of which were serious deficiencies. Three years later GAO found that more than half of those operators still had recurring financial management problems, and recommended more timely follow up, and enhanced training and technical assistance to develop the capacity of agencies to address such problems. GAO urged the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to develop a better system to identify local centers with financial problems. The Department of Health and Human Services has the oversight responsibility for Head Start grantees. This is a challenge considering there are almost 1,700 grantees, with over 20,000 centers containing more than 48,000 classrooms. HHS's current system of accountability may not have the capacity for this oversight and the committee during this hearing examined ways to improve program monitoring by HHS and what other oversight and accountability alternatives exist.

The following witnesses testified:

Dr. Wade Horn, Assistant Secretary for the Head Start Bureau Administration for Children, Youth and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC, discussed strengthening the education component of Head Start and improving coordination and integration of State and local childhood services in support of President Bush's proposal. Additionally, he testified about the importance of monitoring to measure the quality of Head Start programs. He also described several efforts ACF has implemented to improve monitoring and accountability.

Dr. Marnie S. Shaul, Director of Educating and Protecting Children, United States Government Accountability Office (GAO), Washington, DC, testified in regard to GAO's recent report on Head Start risk management which the committee requested. She discussed the Administration on Children and Families (ACF) processes to assess financial risks, specifically in regard to how these processes can be improved to ensure accuracy and reliability. In addition, she discussed the effectiveness of approaches ACF uses to make sure Head Start grantees address any financial management weaknesses in a timely manner. GAO had many recommendations including suggesting the ACF take steps to compete grants if the grantee fails to meet programmatic or financial management requirements.

Mayor A.C. Wharton, Mayor of Shelby County, Memphis, TN, testified on Shelby County's ongoing efforts, as well as some of their planned efforts, to improve program oversight and stewardship. Several of GAO's findings mirrored weaknesses Shelby County had identified and were actively working to resolve in local Head Start programs.

Yvonne Gates, Clark County Commissioner, Las Vegas, NV, discussed the promise of the Head Start Program and its goals to erase inequities among citizens and to give all children a level playing field for their future academic success. Therefore, she recommended that the committee expand local oversight of the chosen grantees. She testified about the importance of local government and the need for them to be more actively engaged in the local review and evaluative process for the use of these Federal programs. Local government is closer to the people, and has the opportunity to provide technical assistance to local agency partners, and addi-

tionally may be able to provide other resources to expand the scope of services of these programs.

Jim Caccamo, Director, Metropolitan Council on Early Learning, Kansas City, MO, testified in regard to the financial and governance problem with the Kansas City Head Start grantee KCMC. The financial and governance problems at KCMC began to surface 4 years ago, in April 2001. The Controller/Chief Financial Officer was engaged in a kickback scheme and in February of 2002, pled guilty to bribery and money laundering. He was sentenced to 51 months in prison and ordered to pay over \$800,000. Mr. Caccamo suggested that the fiscal mismanagement, excessive salaries, and the employee kickback problems could have been avoided with tighter oversight on the part of the Executive Director and Board.

Olivia Golden, Senior Fellow at the Urban Institute, Washington, DC, testified primarily on effective strategies for building the strongest possible Federal oversight role to support high-quality, fiscally accountable, programmatically successful, and well-managed Head Start programs across the country. She described GAO's recommendations as practical and thought they would be useful and that thoughtful implementation of these recommendations would help Head Start programs attain the highest level of accountability. Additionally, Ms. Golden discussed the GAO report findings that contributed to this effort by identifying gaps in Federal oversight particularly in regard to Federal monitoring.

IV. EXPLANATION OF THE BILL AND COMMITTEE VIEWS

Enhancing the school readiness of Head Start children

School readiness has always been central to Head Start's mission, and should continue to be a primary goal of Head Start programs. The committee's intent in the Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act is to assist Head Start programs with further meeting the goal of promoting school readiness and closing the achievement gap among Head Start children.

According to the National Institute for Child Health and Development and other experts, school readiness consists of a broad set of competencies such as cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and language development, motivation and approaches to learning, as well as discipline-specific domains including the arts, literacy, mathematics, science, and social studies. Researchers at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center, the University of North Carolina have defined school readiness as the condition of children when they enter school, and the capacity of schools to educate the children enrolled. According to the research team, "the readiness puzzle can only be solved if the two pieces fit together" (Bailey, 1999).

The academic, cognitive, and social competencies that define school readiness begin developing long before children enter the elementary classroom. Knowledge about children's development and learning has increased greatly during the past two decades. Research in the neurobiological and behavioral sciences suggests the importance of a child's experience during the first years of life for healthy brain development; and demonstrating the importance of early intervention for at-risk infants and their parents, and the opportunity presented in early infancy for strengthening families.

From birth through age 5, children rapidly develop the capabilities on which subsequent development builds. According to child development expert T. Berry Brazelton, M.D., “A child’s experiences in the first months and years of life determine whether he or she will enter school eager to learn or not.”

The committee recognizes that the areas of a young child’s development are strongly correlated with later school success are foundational in nature. Standards for early learning should, as much as practicable, seek to address the cognitive, social, emotional, physical, language development, and motivation influencing a young child’s development. To accomplish this goal of ensuring that children participating in the Head Start program develop the cognitive, social, and emotional competencies necessary to succeed, the Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act significantly enhances Head Start’s emphasis on positive outcomes for school readiness in all domains, especially in cognitive development, while retaining the commitment to providing comprehensive social services.

Studies indicate that children enrolled in Head Start make progress while in the program. Based on data from the 2000 Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES), children enter Head Start with cognitive, social, and emotional skills well below the National norm of most children their same age. Key findings from FACES reveal that participation in Head Start narrows the gap between Head Start children and the general population of preschool-aged children in domains representing key components of school readiness. With only 9 months of participation in the program, FACES data demonstrate a reduction in the school readiness gap between disadvantaged children and their peers with meaningful gains in their vocabulary, letter recognition, and writing skills. Children also improved in other cognitive, social, and emotional skills, demonstrating a reduction in problem behaviors, aggressive behaviors, hyperactive behaviors, and withdrawn behaviors. Physically, children showed high rates of immunizations, health screenings, treatment for disabilities, and enrollment in health insurance plans. And as Head Start continues to evolve, outcomes for children participating in the program continue to improve. Data from FACES show that, as compared to 1997, Head Start children show greater gains in book knowledge, letter recognition, and print conventions. According to such data, children previously participating in Head Start programs meet National norms by the end of their kindergarten year.

Despite these gains, however, data show Head Start children still lag behind the National average in school readiness when they enter kindergarten. A 2003 publication by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), “Strengthening Head Start: What the Research Shows”, provides an analysis of outcomes for children and families served by the Head Start program. The HHS analysis concludes that both lower and higher achieving Head Start children have low scores on school readiness evaluations overall and show some limited progress after completion of the Head Start program. In other words, Head Start children enter and leave the program with below average skills and knowledge levels (HHS, 2003).

The first year preliminary findings for the Head Start Impact Study released in June of 2005 provide further evidence of the importance of Head Start for low-income children and families. The study found that 3-year-olds in Head Start got the most benefits from the program. Results found that within 6 to 8 months, both 3- and 4-year-olds, showed small to moderate improvements in pre-reading, pre-writing, vocabulary, and parental reports of children's literacy skills as compared to children not enrolled in Head Start programs. This report indicated that Head Start programs had small to moderate impact on the 5,000 preschoolers in the study. The committee is encouraged that within a year Head Start was able to cut in half the achievement gap that would have been expected if the children had not attended a Head Start program. Neither age group, showed a significant improvement in oral comprehension or early math skills, nor data also showed children leaving Head Start perform below National norms. The Impact Study follows children until they complete the first grade, and the committee is waiting for the final report in 2007 and hopes to see that the reduction in the achievement gap continues for the participants in the study.

Because data indicate that many Head Start children enter kindergarten without the knowledge proven to be an excellent predictor of school success, the committee seeks to ensure that all children participating in Head Start receive the maximum benefit of its programs and services. The challenges that so many Head Start children face later in their academic careers begin well before they enter school. As such, the committee recognizes the importance of Head Start's services in helping children make gains toward achieving academic parity with their peers that are not eligible for the program, and to enter school ready to learn.

Early literacy is one facet of children's learning and development that is critical to school readiness. The committee recognizes and applauds the work of Head Start programs to provide a more enriched literacy experience and instruction to children. Children who read well in the early grades are far more successful later in school, and scientific based research demonstrates the importance of a strong foundation for children before they are given formal reading instruction in kindergarten and first grade. Head Start's attention to the development of early language and literacy skills is key to helping children advance reading skills in the later grades.

Head Start programs should provide children from low-income families a high quality, oral language and literature rich environment and establish appropriate literacy goals for children that are tied to instructional strategies adapted to their individual level of learning and development. The committee encourages Head Start to continue its pivotal role in promoting early literacy, consistent with scientific based research, such as the Early Reading First initiative. In addition to caring for the emotional and social needs of children under their care, Head Start programs must also encourage and promote cognitive development activities along with professional development for teachers and staff based on scientific based research in reading.

Children who have limited preliteracy skills (i.e. weak phonological and weak phonemic awareness) are more likely to struggle

in attaining age-appropriate reading instruction that should be taken into account by Head Start teachers. For example, if children can correctly and consistently identify letters of the alphabet before they enter kindergarten and understand that letters represent sounds that make up words, it is more likely that they will learn to read words in school faster than children who do not possess this knowledge. Research consistently confirms that children's knowledge of the alphabet is a strong predictor of their later progress in learning to read words accurately, quickly and automatically. Professional development and instructional activities should be designed to strengthen phonological awareness and instruction to help children understand that words are made up of letters, which correspond to sounds.

The committee also recognizes the importance of other skills critical to the school readiness of young children. For example, promoting premathematics and prescience knowledge and skills are an important component of school readiness. These competencies may be promoted through early science and math experiences, including observing with senses, predicting, inferring, defining and controlling variables, working in teams, and communicating discoveries. Examples of science and math experiences may include planting different seeds, with various types of growing medium, light, and water; building towers with various block sizes; employing ramps and different balls; and watching ice melt in different environments.

The Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act updates the Head Start program quality standards and performance measures to reflect the areas of competence fundamental to children's school readiness. Head Start grantees are required to demonstrate the capacity to serve eligible children with scientifically based programs that promote school readiness and meet quality standards. Stronger quality standards under the bill will help facilitate children's development of the following: language skills; prereading knowledge, including an interest in and appreciation of books, reading and writing either alone or with others; premathematics knowledge, such as recognition of numbers and counting; cognitive abilities related to academic achievement; and, social development important for environments constructive for child development, early learning and school success. The committee bill continues to require limited English proficient (LEP) children to further develop their language skills through Head Start, such as making progress toward the acquisition of the English language, while also focusing on the other requirements for children in the program.

The statutory improvements of the committee bill are expected to promote the acquisition of skills and competencies Head Start children need to enter school ready to learn. The committee also requires that the results based performance measures be reviewed and updated as needed, no less than every 4 years, based on advances in the science of early childhood development.

Head Start alignment with K-12 education

An alignment of goals and expectations extending from the early years into later schooling can support better transitions from infant toddler care through preschool programs to kindergarten and into the primary grades, as teachers work within a consistent frame-

work across educational settings. Comprehensive standards, curricula, teaching practices and assessments must be age, developmentally, and linguistically appropriate for young children. These standards, curricula, teaching practices, and assessments must be supported by comprehensive services for children and by the professional development for staff to support each child's positive development and educational growth. Care must be taken to ensure that curricula and other practices used in Head Start programs serve as a foundation for later learning in school. Studies show that many children, including and especially children from low-income families, enter school without the necessary skills and abilities to succeed. States report that between 20 percent to nearly half of all children entering school are not prepared to succeed in school. Evidence further suggests that children who start behind tend to stay behind. For these reasons, the committee recognizes the importance of building on Head Start's mission of school readiness to ensure that the program provides the foundation children will need to reach high standards later in school. The committee also urges greater coordination between preschool programs, including Head Start, and local educational agencies to appropriately align expectations and curricula and facilitate a smooth transition from Head Start into school.

Because many children in Head Start enter the program with less exposure to print and to a wide-ranging vocabulary, Head Start's attention to all domains of child development and learning is necessary to ensure positive gains in cognitive development, including early literacy. Early development of language and literacy skills provide children with the foundation needed to later become proficient readers at their grade level. The No Child Left Behind Act authorizes significant funds for reading programs such as Early Reading First and Reading First, which establish clear and specific expectations for what can and should happen for all students by insisting that they have the necessary language, cognitive, and early reading and literacy skills for continued success in school. The committee intends to strengthen the ability of Head Start, local schools, and other preschool programs to provide a positive continuum of early literacy experiences and instruction.

The Language Enrichment Activities Program (LEAP), developed by the Margaret H. Cone Head Start Center in Dallas, Texas has demonstrated that intensive professional development with a strong early literacy curriculum and a relationship with a community's local elementary school can advance and strengthen the cognitive and communications skills of low-income children. Children attending the Cone Head Start Center have demonstrated that, while in the program, they can perform at levels comparable to children from a higher socioeconomic level when given a quality preschool experience that includes a strong curriculum aligned with the K-12 system, intensive teachers training, and onsite monitoring and support of teacher instruction and interaction with children.

Like other complex skills, reading and writing are outcomes that result from the continual interaction of development and learning, and therefore a range of individual variation is to be expected in the rate and pace at which children gain literacy skills. The committee recognizes that effective curricula and training programs

are available that promote the development of language and early literacy knowledge and skills among Head Start children, and encourages Head Start to make use of such curricula, materials, and instructional practices. The committee intends, to the extent possible, that scientifically-based curricula and training programs be utilized.

The committee recognizes Head Start's mission is to prepare the Nation's most disadvantaged children to enter and later succeed in school. Therefore, the Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act requires that Head Start curricula and assessments be aligned with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework and, as appropriate, State early learning standards. In referencing the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework and Indicators (2000), the committee further recognizes that Head Start has pre-established, researched-based, and appropriate standards and outcomes for the program developed by independent experts and practitioners to help guide teachers and staff with curricula and assessments in all domains of child development. Research reports of the National Research Council such as *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*, *Eager to Learn: Educating Our Preschoolers*, and *From Neurons to Neighborhoods* state that standards and outcomes for young children must address a wide range of domains: cognitive, social, emotional, physical, language development, approaches to learning, as well as content areas of arts, literacy, mathematics, science, and social studies. The committee intends that Head Start's curricula, assessments, and services continue to be aligned to address all such domains, consistent with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework.

The committee also makes changes in the Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act to ensure appropriate and greater alignment of Head Start services to early learning standards for preschool age children in respective States in which Head Start programs operate. The committee recognizes the benefits of alignment to State early learning standards and acknowledges that many States have developed early learning standards for preschool age children. However, some State standards do not cover the full range of child development and learning.

In providing for the appropriate alignment under the Act, it is the committee's view that any alignment of standards to Head Start should recognize the continuity between early learning standards and standards for elementary and secondary grades. Curricula and assessments for preschool age children should be consistent with developmental and age appropriate standards, and address all areas of children's development and learning.

The committee bill updates the Head Start educational standards regarding the skills children need to later succeed in school and intends such standards be consistent with the latest scientifically based research.

The committee bill helps to ensure a seamless system of education for children of all ages by requiring States to consult with their Chief State School Officer, local educational agencies, and local Head Start agencies when developing early childhood standards and general plans for the coordinated delivery of early care and education services at both the State and local level.

Increased need for coordination and collaboration

Head Start has a long history of coordinating with other programs to provide comprehensive child development and support services to young children and families with incomes at far below the poverty level receive the health, nutrition, and educational supports that they need to be successful and prepared to enter school ready to learn. The committee anticipates overtime that Head Start and Early Head Start programs will increase coordination with schools, child care, and other preschool programs to help meet the needs to working families and to create more cross-sector communication.

In recent years, States have begun to expand their own early childhood development initiatives. The National Institute for Early Education Research reported in 2004 using data from fiscal year 2003, that 17 States used their own funds to supplement Head Start. States sponsoring preschool programs have expanded greatly over the past 30 years. In 1970, only seven States funded preschool programs. According to the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) 40 States and the District of Columbia had some form of State-sponsored prekindergarten program in the 2002–03 school year. These 40 States provided early education to approximately 738,000 of the Nation’s 7.8 million 3- and 4-year-olds in pre-kindergarten programs, and spent over \$2.54 billion to finance these programs.

With so many different early childhood programs providing services to the same target population, some States have sought to improve coordination and collaboration among the programs in order to create a cohesive system that is more responsive to the needs of working parents, and supports opportunities for children to participate in high quality programs that involve communities in the planning and implementation of service delivery. The committee is concerned that a fragmented service delivery system and uncoordinated programs can hinder program improvement and prevent needy children and families from obtaining the full array of available services for which they qualify and could benefit.

The committee has also addressed the importance of collaboration by further expanding the current role of the Head Start Collaborator in each State to not only collaborate and coordinate service delivery but also to promote alignment of Head Start services with State early learning standards, the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework, and State regulations for school readiness goals. Each Head Start State Collaboration Office will conduct a needs assessment of Head Start agencies in the State with respect to collaboration and coordination of services for children, align services with State early learning standards, the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework, and State regulations for school readiness goals, provide for greater opportunities for professional development for Head Start staff, and promote partnerships between Head Start and other organizations. With these changes, the committee also intends to reduce the duplication of services, prevent under enrollment, and allow gaps in services for Head Start children and families to be more easily addressed.

The committee feels strongly that the Director of State Collaboration should be a position of significant authority, appointed by the Governor and preferably located within the Office of the Gov-

ernor. This centralized authority will allow for a more comprehensive coordination of services statewide, which will assist in providing “wrap around” child care services, health care, and employment services that are critical to the working poor.

In an effort to engage all community stakeholders, the committee bill specifies that a variety of new entities participate in State collaboration activities. Some of these entities include: State and local educational agencies, State Departments of Health and Human Services, representatives of the State Head Start association, representatives from the State network for child care resource and referral agencies, and community and faith based organizations. The addition of these entities will allow all States to develop a more seamless system for the provision of services to needy children and families, as well as leveraging the experience, expertise, and resources of a variety of organizations and individuals.

The committee encourages the Secretary, in awarding collaboration grants to the States, to award funds for designation of a Migrant and Seasonal Farm worker Collaboration Project Director position and an Indian Head Start Collaboration Project Director. Such positions should be assigned the same responsibilities assigned to the State Directors of Head Start Collaboration. While it is important that the State Directors of Head Start Collaboration engage with the migrant and Indian populations in their respective States, these special Project Directors will ensure that the specific issues faced by children and families served by Migrant and Seasonal Head Start, and Indian Head Start programs are addressed. These positions will also serve as a conduit for knowledge and understanding of these special populations served by the Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

In the context of greater collaboration, the committee also recognizes the important role of partnerships between Head Start programs and school and public libraries in increasing the preliteracy skills of Head Start participants. Many librarians have worked extensively in the area of improving family literacy and achieved success in integrating research based literacy practices into their work with families with prekindergarten children. Some Head Start programs across the country have long had library partnerships, through which librarians provide literacy training to Head Start staff; utilize a lending library, mobile library van, or other efforts to provide books to children; foster greater parental involvement through reading programs; and offer outreach and programs for limited English proficiency populations. The committee is encouraged by these practices and urges their continuation and expansion.

State Head Start Collaboration offices currently receive about \$8 million in funding each year. Given the new, expanded role Head Start Collaboration offices will play under the bill, the committee urges the Secretary to increase the investment in collaboration offices, if it can be done without reducing the level of services to Head Start children.

State advisory councils

The committee recognizes the importance of bolstering coordination and collaboration among Head Start and other early childhood

education programs through the establishment of a State Advisory Council.

In many States, as well as at the local level, there has been movement to enhance coordination among the variety of early childhood education programs through formal and comprehensive State coordination arrangements. In some States, significant coordination already exists among Head Start, Early Start, child care and State prekindergarten programs and public schools. In some cases, such coordination efforts have taken the form of Councils or Governor's Cabinets.

In keeping with a desire for greater collaboration among Head Start, early learning programs, and other related programs serving young children in the State, the committee has attempted to formalize coordination efforts in all States in a highly inclusive way across the sectors and settings of early childhood programs. In such efforts, the committee intends to bring together a diverse and wide array of agencies, organizations, and early childhood professionals, including, but not limited to, Head Start, family and center-based child care, and State prekindergarten programs. For States with similar preexisting councils or entities, additional members may need to be included in order to meet the inclusive list of representatives for the council.

The State Advisory Councils in the committee bill are intended to be consultative and encourage greater State level coordination of efforts and understanding of shared goals for young children, programs and the professionals who provide the critical early education for children from birth until school entry. In particular, the council is charged with conducting a periodic Statewide assessment of early care and education programs for children from birth to school entry; identifying barriers to, and opportunities for, collaboration and coordination between entities carrying out Federal and State child development, child care, and early childhood education programs; developing a professional development system with a career ladder plan for early care and education in the State; making recommendations for a Statewide, unified data collection system; and reviewing and approving a strategic plan to better serve children in Head Start programs. The committee requires each State Advisory Council to provide opportunities for genuine public input in both its needs assessment and its recommendations, as well as meet with sufficient regularity to review and revise the needs assessments and recommendations.

The committee recognizes the use of Nationally established data fields for collecting data on the child care supply. Utilizing the data collected would strengthen the coordination of early childhood education and maximize the existing capacity of early childhood education in the United States. Efforts to develop a unified State data collection system for early care and education should incorporate child care data systems, such as those of child care resource and referral agencies.

The committee intends to work further to strengthen the coordination and collaboration of early care and education programs for all needy children and families.

Training and technical assistance

The committee bill changes the training and technical assistance set-aside from “at least two percent” in current law to “two percent” and directs that half of those funds be sent directly to local grantees so that programs have a reliable source of funding for training and technical assistance activities. The remaining 50 percent spent by the Secretary provides the Secretary adequate flexibility to conduct appropriate Federal training and technical assistance to help individual programs meet the Head Start quality standards.

The committee bill allows training and technical assistance funds to support a regional or State system of early childhood education training and technical assistance. The committee encourages the Secretary to include in its regional system, assistance for the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program and the American Indian/Alaska Native programs. The committee encourages the Secretary to provide the training and technical assistance for these two programs through National awards by contractors with knowledge of, and experience in, working with the populations served by these programs.

The committee bill also restricts the use of training and technical assistance funds for travel expenditures associated with attending conferences when similar training and technical assistance is available locally. It is the committee’s view that occasional travel to conferences and events may be necessary but only as such conferences relate to the overall effectiveness and quality of Head Start programs and outcomes. Excessive travel to Head Start conferences and events, especially those outside the continental United States, is generally not the most appropriate or effective use of Federal training and technical assistance funds. Whenever possible, Head Start programs should utilize local or regionally based training opportunities and should limit travel to occasions when an identified training need cannot be met through local or regional resources. The committee urges the Secretary to ensure that expenditures are consistent with the needs identified in a grantee’s annual plan for training and technical assistance.

The committee believes that better information is needed on how funds for training and technical assistance are spent by both Head Start agencies and the Department. The committee urges the Department to require better data reporting on the use of training and technical assistance dollars so that Congress has access to more complete information when assessing the amount of funds needed for this purpose. Better data reporting also will help the Department and Congress identify the most effective uses of these funds so that Head Start instructors and administrators are gaining the knowledge needed to improve program management and the delivery of services to children and their families.

Quality improvement

The Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act provides greater support for improving program quality by significantly increasing the percentage of new dollars that must be spent on quality improvement.

Quality Head Start programs contribute significantly to children’s development. There is growing recognition that participation

in high quality early childhood education and care programs are important indicators of success in school and in life. This is due in part to the fact that these programs impact children precisely at the point when children's development is rapid, dramatic, and multidimensional. Research has demonstrated that the experiences of young children greatly affect all aspects of their development, including cognitive development. The level of commitment to quality improvement demonstrated in the committee bill is critical if Head Start is to succeed in improving the school readiness of participating children.

Therefore, the committee continues to place a significant emphasis on program quality and requires 30 percent of new funds for fiscal year 2006, and 40 percent for each of fiscal years 2007 through 2010 to be set aside for quality improvement. These funds are an effort to ensure that Head Start programs are of the highest possible quality, and to ensure that funds are available to assist Head Start programs to reach new goals for teacher quality. The committee recognizes that financial resources are needed to reach these new goals for teacher quality. The bill begins to address this need by ensuring that of the funds reserved (beyond those funds necessary to adjust programs for inflation) not less than half of all quality funds must be used to increase teacher salaries and assist programs in recruiting and retaining quality staff. Funds also may be spent on other functions that have been determined to improve program performance, such as providing ongoing professional development based on the latest early childhood research on curriculum and teaching methods, or improving outreach to families and external partners.

Head Start programs are operating in a highly competitive job market due to the Nation's economic strength. Head Start employs over 198,000 dedicated staff members (including 51,000 teachers) to provide the comprehensive array of educational and social services, which comprise the Head Start program. While program quality depends on the availability of quality materials, equipment, and community partners to provide comprehensive services, the quality of Head Start programs is primarily dependent upon staff quality. Therefore, staff development continues to be a high priority of this committee.

Programs must be able to attract and retain qualified staff despite competition for skilled workers from a wide range of industries beyond child development and educational service areas and to develop and retain the qualified work force needed to ensure Head Start program quality. Improved academic achievement in the Head Start program cannot be accomplished without well qualified Head Start teachers who are trained in scientifically-based literacy techniques and understand the importance of a language rich, interactive environment for children.

The committee recognizes that a well designed Head Start classroom with an effective prereading program delivered by a competent teacher is vital for later reading proficiencies and school readiness. Head Start teachers must be equipped with an understanding of how oral language, prereading and early literacy develops in children and how parental and classroom instruction and involvement can optimize that development. Children need exposure to concepts about print, open-ended conversations that grow their

vocabularies and oral language skills, an understanding of the relationships between letters and sounds, ability in phonemic awareness and early writing as well as prereading development. Teachers need professional development throughout their careers to strengthen their knowledge and skills for promoting children's language, prereading and early writing, as well as other cognitive areas.

Head Start research and evaluation

There is an ongoing need for high quality research about the effectiveness of Head Start. During the 1998 reauthorization, Congress took a giant step forward by commissioning a National study on the impact of Head Start services to provide valuable data comparing the outcomes of children in Head Start programs with similar children who do not participate in the program. In June, 2005, Department of Health and Human Services published the first year preliminary findings of the Head Start Impact Study. The committee looks forward to the final report of the Head Start Impact Study in 2007, which will be useful for the committee in helping reform the program so that all grantees can have a positive impact on children in the program.

In 1997, Head Start launched the Family and Child Experiences Survey (known as FACES) to provide valuable information on child outcomes and program performance quality over time. FACES is a study of a National random sample of Head Start programs, but is not designed to compare Head Start participants to other children in other preschool programs serving a similar population or other situations if not enrolled in a Head Start program. Plans are currently underway by the Department of Health and Human Services for the third round of data under the FACES study. In addition to current research, with input from the Head Start community, research needs should be continually assessed so that Congress can identify ways in which Head Start programs can be strengthened to best meet the needs of the children it serves.

The committee supports a one-time directive to the National Academy of Sciences to establish an independent panel of experts to review the current body of early childhood research. Because academic outcomes and assessments for young children are emerging areas of knowledge and practice, the act also includes a review of Head Start's outcomes by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), to facilitate greater information and recommendations on their further development, appropriateness, and application. Once NAS completes its report and recommendations, the Department of Health and Human Services will use the results of such study to develop, inform and revise Head Start's outcomes. As such, any guidance or mandates for new outcomes will be grounded in independent research and informed by experts and practitioners in the child development and early care and education fields.

This review is needed to provide recommendations on age and developmentally appropriate academic standards and measurable benchmarks for achievement, the types of services (including classroom instruction) necessary to ensure school readiness, and appropriate methods to assess child progress in preparing for school. This study also is needed to ensure a well informed approach to developing school readiness standards and will assist States in the

process of developing and/or implementing such standards. The committee hopes that recommendations of this panel will be used by the Secretary to inform and guide the development and implementation of the recommended educational standards for Head Start program participants.

The committee notes with some concern there is insufficient research focusing on American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start programs, thus limiting the availability of scientifically based research on these programs. The committee strongly recommends that the Secretary undertake a study or set of studies designed to focus on this population, with a focus on issues such as curriculum development, availability and need for services, appropriate research methodologies and measures for these populations, and best practices for teaching and educating American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start program participants. Furthermore, the committee underscores the importance of providing tribes and tribal organizations (such as the National Indian Head Start Directors Association) the opportunity to contribute to and collaborate on this research, with tribes retaining as much local control over this process as is practicable.

Family literacy

Efforts to improve family literacy also are an important component of the Head Start program. Family literacy activities, including financial literacy services, are critical to ensure the cohesive delivery of services to families and to enhance parental involvement in their child's education, which is significantly challenged if parents themselves cannot read. In keeping with the goal of improving school readiness and valuing the role of parents in their children's education, the committee bill renews its support for training and technical assistance in the area of family literacy services.

Since the 1998 reauthorization of Head Start, grantees have received exemplary services and nearly 50,000 children's books have been placed in Head Start classrooms. In addition, nearly 2,000 Head Start parent-mentors have received training to better prepare them to support their child's language and literacy development and to encourage other parents to do the same. The committee commends the work of the Head Start Bureau and the National Center for Family Literacy in its conduct of the Head Start Family Literacy Project. Not only have program grantees found the project's training and technical assistance useful, but evaluations have proven the merit of this important work. The committee encourages the Secretary to ensure the continuity of these important services so that Head Start children will be better prepared for school and Head Start parents will be better able to fulfill their role as their child's first and best teacher.

Father involvement

The committee hopes that Head Start agencies will take appropriate steps to encourage fathers and other adult role models (as appropriate) to participate in the academic, social, and emotional development of children enrolled in Head Start programs. The committee has included language requiring Head Start programs to extend outreach to fathers, in appropriate cases, and feels that the involvement of both parents is crucial to the education of young

children, and to the success of the Head Start program. The committee feels strongly that parent involvement provides a more stable learning environment and increased long-term emotional, social and health benefits.

Underserved and at-risk populations

While all children served by the Head Start program are economically in need there are some subgroups of the eligible Head Start population that are particularly at risk, and often underserved. According to a study conducted by the Department of Health and Human Services in 2001, less than 19 percent of the eligible children of migrant and seasonal workers receive Head Start services. Similarly, the Indian Head Start program serves only 16 percent of eligible children. The committee bill attempts to increase the participation of these children by increasing the percentage set aside for Indian Head Start and for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start to 4 and 5 percent respectively.

In an effort to address the unique challenges faced by American Indian and Alaska Native children, the committee bill includes representatives of Tribal Head Start programs serving large numbers of American Native and Alaska Native children as participants in State level collaboration and coordination of services and requires annual consultation with the Secretary. The committee believes that increased input from tribal programs that serve large numbers of American Indian and Alaska Native children will allow for a better understanding of their unique needs.

Homeless children face substantial barriers when it comes to gaining and maintaining access to Head Start services. The Department of Education's fiscal year 2000 Report to Congress on the Education of Homeless Children and Youth identified limited program capacity and availability, transportation, and immunizations and residency requirements as representing significant barriers within the Head Start program for homeless children to access Head Start services. The committee bill attempts to address this issue by increasing efforts to conduct outreach to homeless families, and leveraging the experience of the homeless liaisons in public schools that are required under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Improvement Act. This coordination assists in identifying barriers to serving homeless children and facilitates a smooth transition when homeless children move from Head Start to elementary schools. The bill also addresses the issue of required paperwork, which is one of the biggest barriers to enrolling homeless children in Head Start. Homeless families often have difficulty producing the necessary documents, such as birth certificates and immunization records. The Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act models provisions in the No Child Left Behind Act that allow eligible homeless students to enroll in Head Start while those documents are being obtained (consistent with State and local law). This will allow needy children to begin accessing critical Head Start services at the earliest possible opportunity.

Through the comprehensive services provided to young children and their families, Head Start and Early Head Start programs can play an important role in preventing the abuse and neglect of children and in protecting children and ameliorating the affects of maltreatment they may have already suffered. Ensuring that children

are ready to learn means ensuring that children are safe at home and receive the kind of nurturing and care that all children deserve.

Research shows that abused and neglected children are more likely to have poor prospects for success in school; sexually abused and neglected children are at a higher risk for academic failure; that maltreatment appears to be an additional factor over and above poverty that affects the academic achievement of children; and a higher frequency of academic difficulties and school behavior problems is reported among abused children.

The committee recognizes that abused and neglected children and children at risk of maltreatment are in need of preventive services and may benefit from Head Start and Early Head Start services. The committee bill builds upon provisions already existing in the Head Start statute that provide for (1) home based services to Head Start children and their families, (2) staff training in working with children who experience violence, (3) training to parents in parenting skills and basic child development, and (4) collaboration with other agencies and organizations involved in child and family services.

Homeless children in Head Start programs

Over 40 percent of children living in homeless shelters are under the age of 5, and are at an age where early childhood education can have a significant positive impact on their development and future academic achievement. Homeless children experience more developmental delays, health problems, and other challenges, which make enrollment and access to Head Start programs important for success in school.

Many barriers have limited homeless children's access to and participation in Head Start, including high mobility, lack of required documentation, lack of transportation, and lack of coordination. In order to overcome these barriers the committee urges Head Start grantees to increase their outreach, recruitment, and enrollment of families in homeless situations; to provide appropriate services to meet their needs; and to collaborate with relevant community agencies.

To eliminate these barriers to homeless families' participation in Head Start, the Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act includes many provisions specifically designed to increase the participation of homeless families in Head Start programs. It is the committee's intent that when the Secretary issues regulations to implement these provisions of the act that consideration is given to procedures that will eliminate and address the identified barriers to homeless families' participation in Head Start programs. The committee recognizes the Head Start Bureau's historical encouragement of local Head Start grantees to target homeless families whenever possible to address the challenges such families experience. Research has demonstrated the importance of early childhood education for homeless children, offering the stability and supports needed for a child to cope with his or her situation.

In general, when a grantee works on its community needs assessment, it should ensure that it accounts for homeless families. The mean income of homeless families is 46 percent of the poverty line; homeless families are often so poor and so mobile that they are not

accounted for in standard census measures. For this reason, extra efforts should be made to include homeless families in calculations of the concentration of low-income families in a geographic area. The Secretary may require that grantees in their community needs assessment take into account the percentage of homeless pre-school age children in the service area. Grantees should be particularly cognizant of all underserved populations in their community such as homeless children, children in foster care, and children with disabilities. The Secretary should ask grantees to report on efforts to remove barriers, facilitate enrollment, and prioritize children who are most in need of Head Start services in their community. Family transportation needs of underserved populations should be addressed in Head Start planning efforts.

The goal of reducing underenrollment should not discourage grantees from serving underserved populations, including homeless children. Therefore, regulations should clarify that provisions designed to reduce under-enrollment are not meant to prohibit or discourage Head Start grantees from serving homeless children. If a homeless child moves out of the program's service area, to the extent feasible and at the request of the parent, such child can continue to participate in such program until the end of the year.

Documentation for homeless children continues to be a barrier. The committee recognizes the difficulty in securing documents (e.g. proof of age, proof of residency, birth certificates, and immunization and other medical records) for homeless children and should be able to demonstrate that they are in the process of obtaining such documents from a relevant agency. Homeless families, when appropriate, should be allowed to produce alternative proofs of residency and evidence of such documents. To facilitate effective transitions, grantees should request records from previous service providers and transfer the records of former program participants in a timely manner. The committee encourages States and localities to review laws, policies, or regulations that act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless children in Head Start programs, in particular in respect to relevant documentation and records. It is the committee's intent that when the Secretary develops regulations, the Secretary considers such State or local reviews, especially with respect to documentation policies.

It is important to the committee that better and more consistent data relating to homeless children and families is obtained. Therefore, the committee urges the Secretary to include a specific analysis of the status of homeless children and children in foster care in the report on the status of children participating in Head Start programs.

Limited English proficient children and families

Approximately 28 percent of the children served by Head Start speak a language other than English at home and come to Head Start centers with limited English skills. These children speak over 140 languages. After English, the most common languages spoken by Head Start children are Spanish, Chinese, Hmong, and Vietnamese. Given demographic projections for the immigrant community, the number of children who will come to the Head Start program speaking a language other than English will only increase in the foreseeable future.

During this reauthorization of Head Start, the committee prioritized improving the delivery of services for limited English proficient children and their families. The bill establishes a requirement that grantees set policies to identify and serve limited English proficient children through linguistically appropriate approaches so that such children have a meaningful opportunity to participate in Head Start programs. The committee urges the Secretary and the Head Start Bureau to continue and enhance activities to ensure that limited English proficient children are served by high quality Head Start programs, including activities to assist Head Start grantees to adopt teaching strategies that provide language rich learning environments, literacy development, and materials appropriate for limited English proficient children.

The committee recognizes the development of Native language immersion and cultural programs as an important strategy for meeting the needs of children served by Indian Head Start programs, guided by the discretion of the individual Tribal grantees.

Children with disabilities in Head Start

Head Start grantees are required to enroll and provide comprehensive educational, medical, and social services to children with disabilities and their families. Since 1972, Congress has required that no less than 10 percent of the children a grantee serves are children with disabilities. Currently, children with disabilities comprise 13 percent of the total Head Start population.

Today, over 134,000 children with disabilities participate in Head Start and Early Head Start programs, including children with speech and language impairments, autism, orthopedic impairments, mental retardation, developmental delays, and learning disabilities. Within Head Start programs, children with disabilities receive individualized services in an inclusive, integrated environment that prepares them to enter their neighborhood school. The population of children with disabilities served in Head Start has increased by 26,000 children since 1997.

The committee recognizes the important role that Head Start plays in seeking out, identifying and serving low-income children with disabilities. Therefore, it encourages grantees to maintain current strategies delineated in Federal performance standards for comprehensively addressing the needs of children with disabilities. Grantees must: continue outreach to identify and enroll children with disabilities; provide comprehensive educational, medical, and social services to children with disabilities; coordinate programs and systems (such as IDEA and Medicaid/EPSTDT programs) to ensure that a wide range of needs are met; and provide funding for training and technical assistance specifically related to those who care for children with disabilities.

Assessments of young children

Recent research on child development and learning has shown integrating a child's cognitive development with his or her social, emotional, and physical development promotes greater school readiness. Consistent with that research, Head Start programs are currently guided in their curriculum and program practice by the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework, which provides guidance toward an integrated approach of child development and learning,

with a variety of indicators within each area of child development (i.e., social, emotional, physical, cognitive, etc.). The Framework also is helpful to programs in their efforts to analyze and use data on child outcomes in program self-assessment and continuous improvement.

Recent reports conducted by the National Academy of Sciences, such as *Neurons to Neighborhoods* and *Eager to Learn: Educating Our Preschoolers*, have demonstrated the need to consider carefully the variation in each child of his or her development and background in developing standards for Head Start programs, expected outcomes for Head Start children, and effective and appropriate pedagogy and assessment. The committee believes that educational assessments are an essential component of program evaluation and improving student achievement. Through valid and reliable assessments, much can be learned about program strengths and weaknesses, what a child has or has not learned, and which instructional techniques work best with different children.

Currently, Head Start programs use locally designed assessments to monitor child development and growth, and to improve instruction and services to maximize children's learning. The committee bill acknowledges the importance of assessments in Head Start and has included a requirement that agencies establish effective procedures and provide for the regular assessment of Head Start children, such as observational assessments, direct formal assessments, or parent and provider interviews, taking into consideration the age of the child. Because academic outcomes and assessments for young children are emerging areas of knowledge and practice, the committee recognizes the ongoing need to consult and rely on recommendations from independent experts in the development and application of such outcomes and assessments. The committee expects that Head Start agencies will have a process to assess each of the elements important to a child's school readiness and later performance in school, including cognitive abilities, motor and sensory development. The Head Start agency may choose the assessment so long as it is valid and reliable and meets recognized technical standards.

The committee has included requirements in the act that the National Academy of Sciences review and make recommendations on appropriate academic requirements, benchmarks, and assessments for children in Head Start. The committee encourages the Secretary to take the panel's recommendations, as well as those of other experts in the field, into consideration when reviewing, developing, and revising outcomes and assessments in Head Start.

Teacher quality and staff qualifications

The committee believes that well educated and skilled teachers are a key to early childhood program quality and better outcomes for children. Research consistently demonstrates a link between the achievement of children and the knowledge, skills, and competency of classroom teachers. Teachers in Head Start programs must be adequately trained and educated, particularly in effectively providing prereading, language, and premathematics instruction as well as social, emotional, and physical development.

While Nationally, the Head Start program has met the requirement that 50 percent of its teachers have at least an Associates de-

gree, the committee believes that improvements can be made. Nationally among existing State prekindergarten programs, about 75 percent of classroom teachers have either a bachelor's degree (BA) with specialized training in early childhood or a master's degree (MA) (Gilliam, 2005). In order to promote the highest quality instruction and learning environment as possible, the committee has taken a number of steps to strengthen the educational requirements for Head Start teachers.

Over the next 5 years (by September 30, 2010), all Head Start teachers in center-based programs must have at least an Associate's Degree (AA) relating to early childhood development or an AA in a related educational area with coursework related to early childhood development; and, demonstrated teaching competencies as determined by the Head Start director.

Over the next 3 years (by September 30, 2008), all Head Start curriculum specialists and education coordinators in center-based programs must have a Bachelor's Degree (BA) relating to early childhood development or a BA or advanced degree and coursework equivalent to a minor relating to early childhood development.

Over the next 3 years (by September 30, 2008), all Head Start assistant teachers in center-based programs must have a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or be enrolled in a CDA program to be completed within 2 years.

Over the next 6 years (by September 30, 2011), at least 50 percent of all Head Start teachers in each center-based program must have a BA relating to early childhood education or a BA with specialized training for prekindergarten and demonstrated teacher competencies.

Head Start agencies in States with more rigorous standards for teaching prekindergarten must meet those standards.

Head Start agencies must demonstrate continued progress each year in hiring more highly educated teaching staff for Head Start classrooms.

The committee strongly believes that continuing professional development is also an important element to improving the Head Start teaching workforce. Each Head Start teacher shall have at least 15 clock hours of professional development per year. Such professional development shall be high quality, sustained, intensive, and classroom focused in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction.

The committee believes that encouraging current Head Start staff to return to school is an important goal. If Head Start funds are used to provide financial assistance to pursue a degree in higher education, the Head Start employee must remain employed with Head Start for at least 3 years after receiving the degree or repays the total or prorated amount.

The committee understands that there are State and Federal student financial aid programs available to Head Start personnel to pursue higher education degrees. It is the committee's intent that, to the extent possible, these sources of financial aid should be accessed to assist Head Start personnel to meet the teacher quality and staff qualification requirements under this act.

The committee's primary objective is to improve outcomes for children in Head Start programs by strengthening the quality of the programs serving these children. According to the National In-

stitute for Early Education Research, “teachers who have earned a BA are better equipped to provide high quality preschool education than are teachers with a 2-year degree (AA), Child Development Associate (CDA) certificate, or High School diploma (even when these teachers have had training in child development).”

Research clearly indicates that vocabulary is a critical building block to later literacy. Research also shows that the size and complexity of young children’s vocabularies are directly related to the size and complexity of the vocabularies of the adults with whom children interact—both parents and teachers. Well educated teachers who themselves have strong literacy skills, rich vocabularies and employ complex speech patterns, provide stronger early literacy experiences to children than do teachers with lower levels of education. The National Adult Literacy Survey found that literacy and verbal skill levels are clearly linked to formal educational attainment levels and individuals who have earned a Bachelor’s degree have a broader vocabulary than individuals who have an Associates degree.

The committee understands that the requirement for the number of individuals with Bachelor’s degrees set out in the legislation may be challenging for certain grantees, States, and regions. The challenges in securing and maintaining teaching staff with advanced degrees is particularly acute for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs, Indian Head Start programs and programs that require bilingual teaching staff, and rural grantees. The committee acknowledges that many of the challenges faced by these programs are systemic by virtue of how and where they operate and urges the Secretary to assist grantees in meeting these challenges.

Upon request by the Head Start grantee, the Secretary may grant a waiver of the Head Start teacher requirements. The committee has given the Secretary broad waiver authority for grantees, including rural and seasonal programs that can demonstrate continued aggressive statewide and National efforts have been unsuccessful at recruiting staff to satisfy the degree requirements as provided in the committee bill. This authority provides for a renewable 1 year waiver to such grantees that are unable to meet the degree requirements.

The committee also notes the challenge facing Indian Head Start programs which are often located in remote and isolated areas without access to post-secondary institutions. It is the committee’s hope, however, that these challenges can be addressed by additional access to distance education. The committee bill includes a proposal to provide additional funding to Tribal Colleges and Universities. The committee intends for this funding to help the staff of Indian Head Start programs attend Tribal Colleges and Universities where such institutions exist, in order to meet the teacher requirements of this legislation in a way that respects the traditional values of Native American tribes.

Finally, the committee views the teacher requirements as an important goal for all Head Start center-based programs. However, in implementing the requirements of this section, the Secretary shall not impose penalties or sanctions on individual Head Start programs or staff in the Head Start monitoring process, as a result of failing to meet the levels of teachers holding such credentials prescribed under this section.

Early Head Start

Neurological research demonstrates that during the first 3 years of life the brain undergoes its most dramatic development, and children acquire the ability to think, speak, learn, and reason. According to many brain researchers, the development between the prenatal period and the first years of life is more extensive than previously thought and susceptible to long lasting early environmental influences (Moughty, 2003). The groundbreaking report *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children* cites, “Babies raised by caring, attentive adults in safe, predictable environments are better learners than those raised with less attention in less secure settings.” (Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1994).

The critical development which occurs during the first 3 years of a child’s life is well documented: all infants and toddlers need positive learning experiences to foster their intellectual, social, and emotional development and to lay the foundation for later school success. Infants and toddlers living in high-risk environments need additional supports to promote their healthy growth and development. Disparities in children’s cognitive and social abilities become evident well before they enter Head Start or Prekindergarten programs at age 4.

The Early Head Start program minimizes these disparities and ensures that children enter school ready to learn. The National Evaluation of Early Head Start—a rigorous, large scale, random-assignment evaluation—concluded that the Early Head Start program is making a positive difference in areas associated with children’s success in school, family self-sufficiency, and parental support of child development.

In light of these findings, the committee has added amendments to expand the Early Head Start program which currently serves three percent of eligible children, increasing the current 10 percent set aside of total Head Start appropriations to 18 percent by 2010. The committee provides for such increase, so long as these increases will not reduce services for preschool age children in the Head Start programs.

Services for parents to support their role as parents are a critical component of the Early Head Start program. According to the National Academy of Sciences, there is considerable evidence to support the notion that programs that combine child focused educational activities with explicit attention to parent-child interaction patterns and relationship building have the greatest impact for at-risk children. The National Evaluation of Early Head Start concluded that Early Head Start parents were more involved and provided more support for their child’s language development and learning than control group parents. This clearly shows that the two generation focus is critical to the achievement and success of Early Head Start.

The committee expects that Early Head Start programs will continue to offer required services to parents to support their role as parents and will continue to be responsible for the provision of services to parents that meet the Head Start Performance Standards. These services may continue to be provided either directly by the Early Head Start programs or through formal partnerships with community agencies. Early Head Start programs will continue to encourage parent participation in these services.

Because so many infants and toddlers are in the care of relatives, friends, or neighbors, the committee intends that Early Head Start programs provide home-based services to family child care homes and kith and kin caregivers caring for infants and toddlers who also participate in Early Head Start services. These home-based services will enhance the ability of kith and kin caregivers to provide continuity in supporting children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development. The committee intends that Early Head Start should be able to implement successful models for kith and kin care emerging from the Department of Health and Human Service's Enhanced Home Visiting Project. The committee also feels that while training and services may be provided directly to other caregivers when parents are unable to attend, services under this section should also continue to be provided to children's immediate families.

Given the recent changes in the overall Head Start training and technical assistance system, the committee encourages the Secretary to ensure that Early Head Start programs and staff continue to receive opportunities for specialized infant and toddler training and technical assistance.

Further, it is critical that training for Early Head Start programs focus on the unique social and emotional development of infants and toddlers. Attending to the social and emotional development of very young children is important to their overall functioning, their ability to form and maintain relationships, their ability to learn, and their future success in school and life.

Designation and competition of Head Start agencies

It is the committee's intent with this bill to improve the accountability, quality, and outcomes of Head Start programs for children and their families. This goal is accomplished in two ways: by ensuring that the funding for those grantees with significant or recurring deficiencies is suspended or terminated; and by assisting grantees in improving their performance through training and technical assistance.

All grantees, even those with priority designation, are required to submit an application for funding every 5 years. For initial designation as a Head Start grantee, an entity must demonstrate the power, authority, and capability to administer a Head Start program, and shall establish program goals for improving the school readiness of Head Start children. Current grantees that are eligible to apply are those that have met or are making progress toward meeting program goals, the Head Start performance standards, and the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework. However, only those high performing grantees that are currently receiving funding, have met or exceeded program and financial requirements, have no unresolved deficiencies and have not had findings of deficiencies during their last triennial review, and can demonstrate active collaboration with other State or local providers of services to children, are eligible to receive priority designation. The committee believes expanding the universe of organizations eligible to compete and operate Head Start programs may result in improved program performance and stronger Head Start programs overall. The committee recognizes that all grantees, even high performing grantees,

and ultimately the children will benefit from ongoing continuous improvement of the program.

The committee understands the significance of a priority designation for grantees in the open competition process. Therefore, language in the bill clearly defines what constitutes a deficiency and an area of unresolved noncompliance. A deficiency is defined as a systemic or substantial failure of an agency in an area of performance that the Secretary determines involves: a threat to the health, safety, or civil rights of children or staff; a denial to parents to exercise their full roles and responsibilities related to program operations; a failure to comply with standards related to early childhood development and health services, family and community partnerships, or program design and management; the misuse of funds under this subchapter; loss of legal status or financial viability, loss of permits, debarment from receiving Federal grants or contracts, or the improper use of Federal funds; or the failure to meet any other Federal or State requirement that the agency has shown an unwillingness or inability to correct, after notice from the Secretary.

An agency can also be deemed deficient by: a systemic failure of the board of directors if it fails to fully exercise its legal and fiduciary responsibilities; a substantial failure of an agency to meet the administrative requirements of section 644(b); the failure of an agency to demonstrate that it has attempted to meet the coordination and collaboration requirements with entities described in section 640(a)(5)(D)(iii)(I); or, having an area of unresolved noncompliance. By using the term systemic or substantial in nature, a deficiency is reserved for serious failure to conform to Head Start performance standards.

The committee was very concerned with some of the findings of the GAO's February 28, 2005 report entitled *Head Start: Comprehensive Approach to Identifying and Addressing Risks Could Help Prevent Grantee Financial Management Weaknesses*. This report determined that 53 percent of grantees identified with noncompliance were again cited for noncompliance in their next reviews.

The committee recognizes that a noncompliance is not the same level of severity as a deficiency. However, it was unsatisfactory to the committee that programs failed to correct a noncompliance in a timely manner. The committee defined the term unresolved area of noncompliance as a failure of a program to correct a noncompliance within 120 days or within additional time as authorized by the Secretary. A program failing to resolve an area of noncompliance within 120 days will be deemed deficient.

The committee recognizes that some non-compliances are procedural in nature, and as such cannot be "undone." In these cases, the committee expects that resolution of the noncompliance will involve the implementation of policies and procedures that will ensure future compliance with the Head Start statute and regulations.

All grantees with a current deficiency or a deficiency identified in the last triennial review will be subject to an open competition without priority designation. Any eligible grantee that has had a deficiency is encouraged to compete for designation. If a Head Start agency resolves deficiencies and areas of non-compliance within the

timeframe of the quality improvement plan, such agencies shall receive special consideration in such open competition. The committee also expects that the current practice of self-certification regarding the resolution of findings of noncompliance will be continued.

The committee anticipates high performing grantees will be awarded a subsequent grant for 5 years and remain Head Start grantees because consistency is very important for the Head Start program especially for the children served by these grants. The committee also recognizes that many Head Start grantees are doing a very good job administering their grants. In the case of Indian Head Start programs, the committee intends that any grant awarded for these purposes will go to an Indian Head Start grantee. In the event that an eligible Indian Head Start grantee is not available, children shall continue to receive services until an Indian Head Start grantee becomes available and designated.

Head Start performance standards, educational standards and measures

As a National laboratory for early childhood development, the Head Start program has always been concerned with the quality of its programs and its effects on children and families. Since 1975, the Head Start program has focused on the quality of services provided and has assessed quality through process indicators, such as the number of teachers with early childhood education degrees or child development credentials. These indicators have been measured primarily through compliance with the Head Start Performance Standards using the ON-Site Program Review Instrument (OSPRI) once every 3 years. Process indicators will continue to be important to the Head Start program because of the belief that the quality and quantity of services provided are inextricably linked to the effects of the program.

Head Start's performance standards are also critical to maintaining the highest quality of services in Head Start centers. Such standards include mandatory regulations for Head Start grantees and prescribe the characteristics of a quality Head Start program. Beyond defining the process for providing services to children in the program, the Head Start Program Performance Standards guarantee comprehensive services such as immunizations, health services, nutrition, education, and the involvement of parent programs. The committee recognizes that the gains in development and school readiness outcomes made by Head Start children are closely associated with Head Start's performance standards.

In 1995, Head Start joined efforts throughout the Federal Government to develop performance measures to promote accountability through the assessment of program quality and outcomes. These performance measures are helping the Head Start program change its focus from process to outcomes and toward results oriented evaluation in accordance with the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (P.L. 103-620), the recommendations of the 1993 Advisory Committee on Head Start Quality and Expansion and the mandate of Section 641A(b) of the 1994 Reauthorization of the Head Start Act.

The performance measures developed in response to enhanced educational focus are providing methods and procedures for assess-

ing, annually and over long periods, the quality and effectiveness of programs operated by Head Start agencies.

However, while the performance standards establish a minimally acceptable level of services, they do not directly measure program quality or effectiveness. Head Start's performance measures, on the other hand, which provide a measure of program quality and effectiveness, have not generally been applied to local grantees until the 1998 reauthorization; rather, they have provided a snapshot of Head Start program quality.

The national reporting system and assessment

In 1998, the committee included and Congress passed a provision requiring results-based national performance measures to be applied locally and specifically to all programs, as part of the monitoring and triennial compliance reviews and directed the Secretary to develop additional performance measures to assess the educational achievement of children in the Head Start program. In addition to the assessments, currently administered in the Head Start program, to measure child outcomes, the Department of Health and Human Services has developed the National Reporting System to fulfill the results based performance measurement requirement under this act.

The NRS is a standardized test given at the beginning and end of each program year to assess on a limited set of language, literacy, and math indicators all 4 and 5 years old in the Head Start program. At this time, the National Reporting System does not assess the other six domains of child development.

Children are assessed regularly in every Head Start program around the country. Researchers agree that multiple assessments of young children are needed to determine young children's learning and development.

Currently, Head Start children participate in multiple assessments that are locally designed and implemented to improve instruction, services, and overall program quality. In some cases, while data from these assessments may be useful to inform the instructional needs of individual children at the local level, they cannot be used to evaluate and compare rates of progress and the readiness of children in Head Start programs nationwide. The National Reporting System is not designed to replace any of the current assessments used by local programs.

The bill directs an independent panel of experts to make recommendations to the Secretary regarding assessment and outcomes for Head Start programs, including the following:

1. The development of additional performance measures (including social-emotional development) to assess the achievement of children in the Head Start program, and provide information on how the results will be used to improve the quality and accountability of the Head Start program, as well as targeted training and technical assistance; and
2. the process by which validity and reliability will be incorporated.

The committee encourages the Secretary to examine the impact of such assessments on Head Start practices and instruction, and how such assessments and data analysis will be conducted, including training for teachers. The committee does not intend that the

results of National assessments be used as the sole measure to evaluate Head Start programs.

It is the committee's view that a stronger accountability system is needed to ensure that Head Start children are prepared for school. The committee intends to give further consideration to the administration, implementation, and use of the National Reporting System.

Transition

Successful transition from preschool into K-12 is one of Head Start's primary objectives. The committee has long recognized that transition activities are a partnership in which the Head Start and local education agencies must cooperate; therefore compatible transition requirements are outlined both in the Head Start statute and in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Previously, the committee provided a set aside to fund 31 demonstration projects designed to identify and replicate best practices for extending a Head Start-like model of comprehensive services into kindergarten and the first three grades of elementary school, thereby facilitating the transition of Head Start children into their local school systems. Based on the success of this initiative, two information memos sharing project results were disseminated to all Head Start grantees. In addition, three training guides have been developed and numerous training opportunities made available to assist grantees in incorporating best practices identified by this effort.

These demonstration projects were discontinued in fiscal year 1996 consistent with the terms of their original awards. The committee feels strongly about the continuation of the transition activities, which have been demonstrated to be effective and should now be an integral part of every Head Start program.

The committee commends the administration's efforts to foster an environment in which transition activities are integrated into program operations in a manner similar to each of the other vital services provided to families. It is the committee's intent that those efforts continue and that grantees be provided continued training and technical assistance to make that goal a reality.

Accountability

The committee recognizes that, according to the latest monitoring report issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 85 percent of current Head Start grantees are providing quality services. However, there are some grantees that are not fulfilling their obligation to ensure that our Nation's neediest children enter school with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed. Over the past 10 years the Department has terminated approximately 170 Head Start grantees.

The committee believes the current Head Start monitoring system is not adequate to ensure that programs are consistently delivering the level of high quality services necessary for children to advance in all areas of development. Evidence that program quality varies greatly is a concern of Congress and of high performing grantees that are negatively impacted by the poor quality of lower performing grantees. It is the committee's view that the scheduled triennial review process, coupled with an automatic renewal of

grants on an annual basis, does not provide adequate assurances to the Congress and the public about Head Start program operations. Therefore, the committee bill requires that grantees develop annual program goals and demonstrate that they have met, or are making progress toward meeting these goals as a condition of receiving priority in designation of their Head Start grant. All grantees are required to reapply every 5 years consistent with the terms for financial assistance under the Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act.

Governing body

The committee believes that there needs to be an entity with fiscal and legal liability that can be held accountable for program operations and oversight. The committee recognizes that, under current Head Start regulations, the Governing Body has fiscal and legal liability for Head Start programs. The committee believes that by establishing the roles and responsibilities of the Governing Body or Board in the Head Start statute, grantees structure will be strengthened and clarified. Policy Councils do not currently have fiscal and legal liability and the committee agrees that they are not the appropriate entity for such responsibilities. The Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act takes a number of steps to ensure that Head Start agency has a Governing Body or Board that is actively engaged and can provide more effective oversight, which the committee believes is an important role given their fiscal and legal responsibility and liability for the program.

The bill makes additional requirements regarding the composition of the Board. The Board must reflect the community being served, including at least one person with experience in fiscal management, and at least one person with experience in early childhood development. If feasible, the Board should include at least one individual with knowledge of the Head Start program and its performance standards. In the event that individuals with experience in fiscal management and early childhood development are not serving on the Board, the Board is encouraged to obtain help in these areas from consultants. The committee also intends for public agencies operating Head Start programs be permitted to make use of existing employees who have such expertise.

The committee believes that the Board is responsible for developing internal controls to safeguard Federal funds and to comply with all applicable laws and regulations. The Board's role is to establish policies and procedures to detect or prevent program non-compliance, and develop procedures to facilitate meaningful consultation and collaboration.

By strengthening the role of the Board in Head Start programs, the committee by no means is abolishing the Policy Councils and intends for Policy Councils to continue in their role and capacity of support for quality Head Start programs. Parents have long played a central role in the operations of Head Start programs. The committee is clear in its intent by requiring the Board to consult with the Policy Council in the areas set forth in the act, as well as for the Policy Council to have its own appropriate roles and responsibilities. The committee expects the Board to consult with the Policy Council, and has prescribed impasse procedures for when

the Board and the Policy Council disagree, in order to resolve such disputes.

The committee also encourages parents and others in the community in which Head Start operates to actively serve on the Board.

To facilitate oversight and Head Start agency accountability, the Board shall receive regular and accurate information from the Head Start agency about program planning, policies and operations, including PIR and audit reports.

The committee intends that training and technical assistance to be provided to the members of the Board and Policy Councils, if appropriate, to ensure that they understand their oversight responsibilities and can effectively oversee the programs.

Oversight and Monitoring

At least once every 3 years each Head Start and Early Head Start agency receives a comprehensive onsite review by the Department of Health and Human Services. These monitoring reviews play a vital role in assuring that Head Start agencies are providing high quality services.

The committee believes that oversight by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services is an important factor in ensuring that Head Start grantees meet the guidelines established for their program. Appropriate oversight ensures that program effectiveness can be assessed and measured, that only qualified programs continue to receive Federal funding, and that inefficient or abusive use of Federal funds is halted.

The PRISM monitoring of Head Start grantees undertaken by the Department is critical to realizing the goals of adequate oversight of the program. Head Start's current monitoring system is the gold standard in the field of early care and education. As such, amendments are added to the Act to ensure that such monitoring is conducted in all Head Start centers, to provide for greater accountability and oversight.

The committee believes that the PRISM reviews need to be conducted, to the greatest extent possible, in a consistent and reliable manner. It is the committee's intent that the conduct of such reviews of Head Start grantees provide for greater consistency across all variables such as time, reviewers and geographical location. No Head Start program should be recompeteted without all the same advantages of a program in good standing simply because inconsistencies in the review process led to them being given a more severe evaluation than other similar programs. As such, amendments to the act ensure that a portion of the technical and training assistance dollars are allocated to provide training and improve the inter-rater reliability of the PRISM reviews.

The committee recognizes that the monitoring process has new consequences associated with it because grantees can lose their priority designation in the recompetition process if they are found to be deficient. In order to ensure the integrity of the monitoring process by ACF, the committee has added provisions regarding interrater reliability.

The committee also defines interrater reliability to mean the extent to which two different raters or observers consistently obtain the same result when using the same assessment.

The committee bill allows the Department to contract out for activities associated with the monitoring of Head Start grantees. In order to ensure the integrity of the monitoring process, the committee believes the Department should be allowed to contract out monitoring responsibilities to impartial third parties who have a demonstrated expertise in early childhood development and Head Start program operations, including knowledge and expertise about the Head Start performance standards. The committee intends for the change to maintain the integrity of the monitoring process and prevent undue influence by personal relationships between grantees and the regional offices.

Currently, ACF regional office employees serve the dual role of leading monitoring reviews and overseeing the provision of training and technical assistance. We share the goal of the Department in preserving the integrity of these two discrete processes. However, the committee believes that, because of their years of training and their expertise with the Head Start program, its regulations and policies, employees of the Department should (to the extent determined appropriate by the Secretary) continue to be included on teams sent out to monitor and evaluate Head Start programs.

Under-enrollment

Under current law, Head Start grantees are expected to fully meet their funded enrollment and to maintain a waiting list. This is required in order to ensure program integrity and access to program services by eligible low-income children. The committee is concerned about reports indicating that some Head Start grantees have experienced problems achieving and maintaining their full funded enrollment and are operating with significant under-enrollment while others experience shortfalls in their capacity to provide or maintain services to eligible children. Given the importance of this issue and its implications for Head Start, the committee believes a statutory approach to dealing with under-enrolled grantees is warranted.

While the full extent to which Head Start programs are under-enrolled is unknown, the committee believes, given very limited Federal resources, that under-enrollment at any level is an unacceptable and potentially serious problem, and one that needs an immediate solution.

The committee bill provides for reduction of Head Start grants and redistribution of funds in cases of under-enrollment. The committee bill has been carefully drafted to provide for shared accountability in addressing issues of enrollment of Head Start children. The bill requires each Head Start program to report on a monthly basis to the Secretary a figure which reflects the program's actual enrollment, including a description of an enrollment shortfall if such actual enrollment is less than the funded enrollment prescribed by the grant held by the Head Start agency.

The bill also requires the Secretary (on a semi-annual basis) to determine which Head Start agencies are under-enrolled, and directs the agency (in collaboration with the Secretary) to provide for a plan and timetable in which to address issues of under-enrollment in agencies operating with less than 95 percent of enrollment.

In reviewing enrollment data, the committee bill directs the Secretary to take into consideration: the quality and extent of out-

reach, recruitment, and community needs assessments, changing demographics, mobility of populations, and the identification of new underserved low-income populations; facilities related issues that may impact enrollment; the ability to provide full-day programs, where needed, through Head Start funds or through collaboration with other funds or programs; the availability and use by families of other preschool and child care options (including parental care) in the local area; and agency management procedures that may impact efficient enrollment. Agencies identified by the Secretary shall be provided timely and on-going technical assistance to reduce under-enrollment, but are considered to be out of compliance immediately.

Upon receipt of technical assistance, the Head Start agency will implement its plan to address under-enrollment. If after 9 months, a Head Start agency is still operating with an actual enrollment that is less than 95 percent of the agency's funded enrollment, the Secretary may designate such agency as chronically under-enrolled and recapture, withhold, or reduce the base grant by a percentage equal to the percentage difference between funded and actual enrollment for the most recent year in which the agency is determined to be under-enrolled.

If the Secretary, after implementation of the plan, finds that the causes of under-enrollment are beyond the agency's control; the shortfall can reasonably be expected to be temporary; or the number of slots allotted to the agency is small enough that under-enrollment does not constitute a significant shortfall, the Secretary may waive or reduce the percentage reductions in the base grant.

The Secretary shall use the recovered funds to distribute to other Head Start agencies within the State that demonstrate they will use such funds to increase enrollment in their Head Start programs. If there is no agency within a State that meets this requirement, the Secretary shall redirect such amounts to other Head Start agencies.

Financial audits

In addition to conducting on-site inspections, regional ACF staff also monitors grantees' compliance with regulations by annually reviewing their financial audit reports. Auditors may select and review samples of financial transactions to determine whether a grantee has followed established procedures and program regulations. If a grantee administers more than one Federal grant, as is often the case with large nonprofit agencies, school districts, and municipalities, relatively small grants may not be reviewed in much detail.

In addition to a lack of detail, financial audit reports may not provide timely information for monitoring current grantee operations. Grantees have 9 months to submit financial audit reports for any given year. It may take several additional months before officials in the HHS Office of Inspector General review the audit report, summarize the findings, and submit the findings to the appropriate regional officials. Grantees that are classified as "high risk" do not face termination of their funding unless they are also classified as deficient, which usually involves an on-site inspection. As a result, ACF may wait up to 3 years until the next regularly scheduled triennial inspection before it classifies a high-risk grant-

ee as deficient and requires it to develop a quality improvement plan and face possible termination from the program.

The committee is very concerned about this process and encourages the Secretary to adopt additional measures that would permit an annual review of grantee financial status.

Combat pay ineligibility

The committee feels strongly that as our soldiers are overseas fighting to defend our freedom, it is our responsibility to look out for their children and families. When soldiers receive combat pay because they are working in dangerous situations this extra income should not adversely affect their family's eligibility for programs such as Head Start. During the 108th Congress, the Subcommittee on Children and Families held a series of joint hearings with the Armed Services Subcommittee on Personnel on issues affecting military families. The committee included language to address the problem of soldiers not being able to access certain benefits, such as Head Start, due to income ineligibility when such parents receive combat pay. This language is intended to ensure that families in the military receiving combat pay and who would otherwise be eligible for Head Start would not be deemed ineligible because of that income supplement.

Grantee responsibility to seriously deficient delegate agencies

This legislation includes language that would strengthen the ability of Head Start grantees to defund delegate agencies that have serious deficiencies. Head Start grantees, in addition to the oversight already conducted by the Secretary, are asked to clearly define procedures for defunding a seriously deficient program as well as that program's appeals process. It is the intent of the committee that such procedures be fair to all parties but not unduly cumbersome or time-consuming.

Grantees are expected to define their procedures for evaluating delegate agencies to minimize the circumstances that would necessitate defunding and ensure that all of its delegate agencies are held accountable for performance and successfully address any deficiencies in a timely manner.

Any delegate agency found seriously deficient must be notified of the possibility of termination. During the notice period, monthly monitoring visits and technical assistance may be provided by the Head Start grantee. The grantee could also elect to release funds on a reimbursement basis instead of in advance, particularly in the event of questionable fiscal practices by the delegate agency. After a reasonable notice period, if deficiencies are not corrected, termination will take effect. The grantee is then responsible for ensuring continuity of Head Start services for the children and families affected.

Accessibility to books

To further expand the availability of books in Head Start classrooms, the committee bill recommends that State Head Start Collaboration offices promote partnerships between Head Start agencies and other organizations to enhance the Head Start curriculum, including partnerships to promote more books in Head Start classrooms.

Because of the importance of creating a literacy rich environment for children in the Head Start program, the committee further encourages the Secretary to recommend a sufficient number of children's books for each Head Start classroom.

The committee also recognizes the importance of enhancing linkages between Head Start programs and libraries. As such, the bill encourages Head Start programs to collaborate with local libraries, where available, that are interested in that collaboration, to develop innovative programs to excite children about the world of books. Such programs may involve taking children to the library for story hour; promoting use of library cards for families so that children can bring books home; developing a lending library or using a mobile library van; entering into a financial agreement with the library to provide the Head Start classroom book collection; to supplement the collection with books on various themes of the week or, to provide fresh books in the classroom on a regular basis; and carrying out other activities through partnerships, to promote literacy and excitement about the world of print.

Centers of excellence

The committee bill includes the Centers of Excellence in Early Childhood, which was originally proposed by Senator Alexander on July 28, 2003.

The committee supports the underlying goal of giving grants to Head Start programs that are exemplary and leveraging excellent programs to model best practices so that other programs can achieve excellence. The legislation authorizes the Governors to nominate and the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) to create a nationwide network of 200 Centers of Excellence in Early Childhood built around exemplary Head Start programs.

All Head Start centers need to excel in school readiness, accountability, and coordination of services; improving the performance of all centers in these areas is the focus of this legislation. States have primary responsibility for setting standards for and funding public education. A child who arrives at school too far behind the starting line may never catch up. In addition, the State is in the best position to help coordinate the variety of public and private programs that have been created since Head Start was established. In order to increase coordination between Head Start and the public school system and other State-run social service programs, such as Medicaid and the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program, centers that have the potential to drive effective collaboration within their State would be nominated by their Governor.

The Secretary of HHS would select 146 Centers of Excellence from among nominations submitted by the Governors. The Secretary would name an additional 54 centers, with a goal of having at least one Center of Excellence in each State, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico. It is also the committee's intent that one or more Indian Head Start, and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs will be recognized as Centers of Excellence. The bill permits exemplary Indian Head Start programs and migrant and seasonal Head Start programs to be nominated by their respective regional office (region 11 and region 12) instead of the Governor.

In addition, it is the committee's intent that Governors are encouraged to look to Head Start centers offering Early Head Start programs. The significance of years 0–3 in child development is now widely understood, and it is important for Centers of Excellence to be able to encourage best practices in serving the very young.

When making bonus grants the Secretary shall give a priority to programs that demonstrate that they are of exceptional quality and would serve as exemplary models for programs in their geographic region. The Secretary may also consider the population served by the applicant especially if they are serving an underserved population. Programs that have a record of doing an exceptional job of serving underserved populations should be given this priority as well.

Head Start programs identified as Centers of Excellence would receive a Federal bonus grant of at least \$200,000 and up to \$500,000 in each of 5 years (in addition to its base funding). It is the committee's intent that bonus grant funding for the Centers would vary depending on the number of children served at a Center of Excellence. It is the hope of the committee that as we continue to work through the legislative process and when new money is available some of this money will be designated for the Centers of Excellence.

The Centers of Excellence bonus grants will be used for centers to:

1. work in their community to model the best of what Head Start can do for at-risk children and families, including getting those children ready for school and ready for academic success;
2. coordinate all early childhood services in their community;
3. offer training and support to all professionals working with at-risk children;
4. track these families and ensure seamless continuity of services from birth to age 8, with an emphasis on working in partnership with public schools to ensure that Head Start children succeed in school;
5. become models of excellence by all performance measures and be willing to be held accountable for good outcomes for our most disadvantaged children; and
6. have the flexibility to serve additional Head Start or Early Head Start children or provide more full-day services to better meet the needs of working parents.

The committee intends that a Center for Excellence that uses its bonus grant for activities related to infants and toddlers must demonstrate existing expertise in providing services to this age group. The developmental needs of infants and toddlers are unique and require teachers that have knowledge of infant and toddler development.

The committee has included Early Head Start, Migrant and Seasonal Head Start, and Indian Head Start programs as participants in the Centers of Excellence Program. The committee feels that all Head Start programs could benefit greatly by the exemplary practices modeled in Early Head Start programs for infants and toddlers, as well as practices tailored to the needs of children in Indian, Migrant, and Seasonal Head Start programs.

Funding

The committee bill authorize the Head Start program at \$7.215 billion for fiscal year 2006, \$7.515 billion for fiscal year 2007, \$7.815 billion for fiscal year 2008, and such sums for fiscal years 2009 and 2010. By increasing the authorization level in the Head Start program by \$300 million in each of the next three fiscal years, the committee is affirming its desire to improve and enhance program quality while also reasonably expanding the program to reach additional eligible children and families living in poverty.

Participation in Head Start programs

The committee recognizes that due in large part to the success of welfare reform, some low-income families earning a little above the Federal poverty level whose children would benefit from Head Start services are not able to participate in the program because they are not income eligible. The committee felt it was important to retain the 100 percent Federal poverty level in determining the formula allocation to States under the Head Start Program. However, the committee has raised the eligibility level from 100 percent to 130 percent of the Federal poverty level consistent with eligibility for the free school lunch, school breakfast and special milk programs. The committee intends for such policy to help families that strive to move off welfare to continue to access the Head Start program and to provide additional opportunities for participation of working poor families in Head Start programs. The 130 percent is intended to permit programs to serve children up to 130 percent of the Federal poverty level just as programs are currently allowed to serve 10 percent of over income children. The 130 percent would not count toward the 10 percent of over income children served by programs. The committee does not intend that the 130 percent be taken into account when determining eligible children for the purpose of the formula or allotment of funds.

Migrant and seasonal Head Start programs and Indian Head Start programs

The committee has included several provisions to improve access to Head Start services by children of migrant and seasonal farm workers, as well as by Indian children.

According to a study conducted by the Department of Health and Human Services in 2001, the Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs have consistently received less than four percent of the Head Start annual appropriation, enabling them to serve only 19 percent of eligible migrant and seasonal children, compared to 50 percent of the eligible population served by the regular Head Start program. Indian Head Start programs serve over 23,000 children each year; however that number represents only 16 percent of eligible children. The committee recognizes the need to expand services to additional eligible children.

The committee has taken steps to address this issue by directing the Secretary to allocate five percent of the funds reserved under section 640a(2) to Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs. The committee has also directed the Secretary to allocate four percent of the reserved funds to Indian Head Start programs. The committee intends that all new money available from the Secretary's 13 percent set aside under increases in annual appropriations for

Head Start reserved by the Secretary under section 640a(2) be directed to such programs in a proportionate manner until the five percent allocations are achieved. The committee ensures that the programs do not reduce the number of children served in existing Head Start programs. The committee further intends that funding increases allow current programs to expand the number of children served, as well as establish new programs in areas that lack services to these populations of children.

Priority funding and regular Head Start expansion grants

The committee bill provides any remaining funds after maintaining required reservations in section 640 and adjusting current Head Start programs for inflation shall be used for quality improvement funds. In fiscal year 2006, 30 percent of such funds shall be used for quality improvement activities and 40 percent shall be used for each fiscal year 2007 through 2010 for these purposes. The committee intends the remaining percentages be used for program expansion grants.

In allocating the expansion funds, the committee made it a priority to eliminate apparent discrepancies in the allocation of Head Start dollars among the States. The committee is responding to the inclusion of a 1978 hold harmless provision that has created a disparity in how money was allocated between the States despite the increase in appropriations. Up to this point Head Start funds were not allocated through a formula. At the time the formula was instituted currently funded grantees were provided a hold harmless to ensure that they did not see a reduction in their funding.

The result of the hold harmless is that 22 States receive funds above their share of child poverty population. For example, States such as Nevada are serving only 30 percent of their eligible population and other States such as Maine serve 89 percent of their eligible population. The committee has taken steps to address this problem and ensure that States ability to serve their eligible population has not been compromised.

In order to begin to address this inequity, the committee has included the requirement that 65 percent of any new money (expansion of the current program) for Head Start would be allocated on a priority basis to those States that are under funded (based on the percentage of eligible children being served in that State.) The committee intends for the Secretary in implementing this provision shall assign a priority to the 28 States adversely affected by the 1978 hold harmless provision and shall distribute such funds in accordance with the current formula allocation in the Head Start Act. The remaining 35 percent of expansion funds shall be allocated among all States based upon the current formula. Although the committee acknowledges this is not a full resolution to the funding discrepancies between the States it begins to remedy this situation.

V. COST ESTIMATE

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, June 7, 2005.

Hon. MIKE ENZI,
*Chairman, Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for S. 1107, the Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Kathleen FitzGerald.

Sincerely,

ELIZABETH M. ROBINSON,
(For Douglas Holtz-Eakin, Director).

Enclosure.

S. 1107—Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act

Summary: S. 1107 would reauthorize the Head Start program through 2010. The program was authorized through 2003 by Coats Human Services Reauthorization Act of 1998 (Public Law 105–285) and has since been extended through annual appropriation acts.

CBO estimates that the bill would authorize additional appropriations of \$7.3 billion in 2006 and about \$39.1 billion over the 2006–2010 period, assuming that annual levels are adjusted for inflation when specific annual appropriation levels are not provided. (Without such inflation adjustments, the authorizations would total about \$38.7 billion over the 2006–2010 period.) CBO estimates that appropriation of the authorized levels would result in additional outlays of \$35.2 billion over the 2006–2010 period, assuming annual adjustments for inflation (and about \$34.9 billion without adjustments for inflation). Enacting S. 1107 would not affect direct spending or receipts.

S. 1107 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined by the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA). Any costs to state, local, or tribal governments would result from complying with conditions for receiving federal assistance.

Estimated cost to the Federal Government: The estimated budgetary impact of S. 1107 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 500 (education, training, employment, and social services).

	By fiscal year, in millions of dollars—					
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2020
SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION						
Head Start Spending Under Current Law:						
Budget Authority ¹	6,843	1,400	0	0	0	0
Estimated Outlays	6,810	3,735	765	96	14	0
Proposed Changes:						
Head Start:						
Estimated Authorization Level	0	7,215	7,515	7,815	7,958	8,102
Estimated Outlays	0	4,113	7,170	7,605	7,885	8,033
Bonus Grants to Centers for Excellence in Early Childhood:						
Authorization Level	0	90	90	90	90	90
Estimated Outlays	0	5	51	87	89	90

	By fiscal year, in millions of dollars—					
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Administrative Costs for Centers for Excellence in Early Childhood:						
Authorization Level	0	3	3	3	3	3
Estimated Outlays	0	*	1	2	2	3
Research Activities for Centers for Excellence in Early Childhood:						
Authorization Level	0	2	2	2	2	2
Estimated Outlays	0	*	1	2	2	2
Tribal Colleges and Universities Head Start Partnerships:						
Estimated Authorization Level	0	10	10	10	11	11
Estimated Outlays	0	1	7	9	10	10
Total Proposed Changes:						
Estimated Authorization Level	0	7,320	7,620	7,920	8,063	8,207
Estimated Outlays	0	4,118	7,230	7,706	7,988	8,138
Total Spending Under S. 1107:						
Estimated Authorization Level	6,843	8,720	7,620	7,920	8,063	8,207
Estimated Outlays	6,810	7,853	7,995	7,802	8,002	8,138

¹ The 2005 level is the amount appropriated for the Head Start program including an advance of \$1.389 billion for the 2004–2005 academic year. The 2006 level is the amount appropriated in an advance appropriation for the 2005–2006 academic year.

Notes: Components may not sum to totals because of rounding. * = less than \$500,000.

Basis of estimate: S. 1107 would reauthorize the Head Start program through 2010. The program is currently authorized through September 30, 2005, by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005 (Public Law 108–447). For this estimate, CBO assumes that the bill will be enacted near the start of fiscal year 2006, that the estimated amounts shown in the table will be appropriated for each year, and that outlays will follow historical spending patterns.

CBO estimates that S. 1107 would authorize total funding of \$39.1 billion over the 2006–2010 period assuming that “such sums” amounts provided after 2006 reflect adjustments for inflation. If the authorized amounts are appropriated, outlays would increase by \$4.1 billion in 2006 and by \$35.2 billion over the 5-year period.

The above table presents CBO’s estimates for the different components of the bill. For the overall Head Start program, the bill would specify authorized amounts for fiscal years 2006 through 2008 and would authorize the appropriation of such sums as may be necessary in 2009 and 2010. CBO’s estimate of authorized levels in 2009 and 2010 is the authorized amount for 2008 adjusted for inflation. The amounts authorized for bonus grants, administration, and research for the Centers of Excellence in Early Childhood are specified in each year. For the Tribal Colleges and Universities Head Start Partnerships program, the bill specifies a 2006 level, and CBO’s estimate of the authorizations from 2007 through 2010 is that amount inflated.

Head Start

S. 1107 would revise and reauthorize the Head Start program through 2010. The Head Start program provides comprehensive child development services to low-income children. Services include education, health, nutrition, and social services with the overall goal of increasing the school readiness of young children in low-income families.

The bill would authorize the appropriation of \$7.215 billion in 2006 (in addition to the \$1.4 billion already appropriated for that year), \$7.515 billion in 2007, \$7.815 billion in 2008, and such sums as may be necessary in 2009 and 2010. CBO estimates that the total authorizations for the 2006–2010 period would be about \$38.6

billion, assuming adjustments for inflation, with resulting outlays of \$34.8 billion over those 5 years.

Funding for this program currently is provided on a program-year basis through appropriations in two separate fiscal years: a current fiscal year appropriation and an advance appropriation available October 1 of the next fiscal year. Although the program has been funded by two separate appropriations since 2001, funding does not need to be authorized separately because all of the funds for a program year could be provided in one appropriation.

Centers for Excellence in Early Childhood

The bill would permanently authorize appropriations of about \$95 million a year for a new Centers for Excellence in Early Childhood grant program. The Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) could designate 200 exemplary Head Start agencies as such Centers of Excellence. These centers would receive bonus grants to carry out various activities including enrolling additional children and providing training to teachers. The Secretary also would be authorized to make a grant to an independent organization to conduct research on the ability of centers to improve school readiness of the children receiving Head Start services and to measure the success of the centers. The bill would authorize \$90 million a year for bonus grants, \$2.5 million annually for HHS administrative costs, and \$2 million a year for research. CBO estimates that providing these amounts would result in outlays of \$338 million over the next 5 years.

Tribal colleges and universities Head Start partnerships

S. 1107 would create a new Tribal Colleges and Universities Head Start Partnership program and authorize the appropriation of \$10 million in 2006 and such sums as may be necessary from 2007 through 2010. The bill would authorize the Secretary of HHS to award 5-year grants to tribal colleges and universities to create education programs on tribal culture and language, to increase the number of Indian Head Start staff members and parents with advanced degrees in early childhood education and related fields, and for other purposes. CBO estimates that providing the necessary amounts would result in outlays of \$37 million over the 2006–2010 period.

Intergovernmental and private-sector impact: S. 1107 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined by UMRA. The bill would authorize over \$7 billion annually for fiscal years 2006 through 2010 to support Head Start and Early Head Start program activities, including new standards for the education and professional development of teachers serving program participants. Any costs incurred by State, local, or tribal governments would result from complying with conditions for receiving Federal assistance.

Previous CBO estimate: On June 2, 2005, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for H.R. 2123, the School Readiness Act of 2005, as ordered reported by the House Committee on Education and the Workforce on May 18, 2005. That bill would authorize the overall Head Start program from 2006 through 2011 (as opposed to 2006 through 2010) and would authorize slightly less funding in those

years than S. 1107. The Senate bill will authorize two new grant programs that are not included in the House bill.

Estimate prepared by: Federal Costs: Kathleen FitzGerald; Impact on State, Local, and Tribal Governments: Lisa Ramirez-Branum; Impact on the Private Sector: Meena Fernandes.

Estimate approved by: Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

VI. APPLICATION OF LAW TO THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Section 102(b)(3) of Public Law 104–1, the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA) requires a description of the application of this bill to the legislative branch. This bill does not amend any act that applies to the legislative branch.

VII. REGULATORY IMPACT STATEMENT

The committee has determined that there will be minimal increases in the regulatory burden imposed by this bill.

VIII. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1. Short title

This act may be cited as the “Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act.”

Section 2. Statement of purpose

This section modifies section 636 by adding the goal of educational instruction in prereading, premathematics and language skills in the promotion of school readiness and development.

Section 3. Definitions

This section amends Section 637 by adding community-based organizations to the definition of potential delegate agencies (2). Section 637(17) is amended to remove the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau from the definition of “State.” Section 637(18) defines “homeless child” as one who lacks a regular or adequate nighttime residence or whose residence is a temporary shelter as defined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Section 637(19) defines “limited English proficient” with respect to a child as someone enrolled or preparing to enroll in Head Start, someone who was not born in the United States or whose native language is not English, or someone whose difficulty in speaking or understanding English may be sufficient to deny such child the opportunity to participate fully in society or the ability to successfully achieve in a classroom in which the language of instruction is English.

Section 637(20) defines “deficiency” as a systemic or substantial failure of an agency in an area of performance that the Secretary determines involves: a threat to the health, safety, or civil rights of children or staff; a denial to parents to exercise their full roles and responsibilities related to program operations; a failure to comply with standards related to early childhood development and health services, family and community partnerships, or program design and management; the misuse of funds under this subchapter; loss of legal status or financial viability, loss of permits,

debarment from receiving Federal grants or contracts, or the improper use of Federal funds; or the failure to meet any other Federal or State requirement that the agency has shown an unwillingness or inability to correct, after notice from the Secretary. A systemic failure of the board of directors if it fails to fully exercise its legal and fiduciary responsibilities. A substantial failure of an agency to meet the administrative requirements of section 644(b). A failure of an agency to demonstrate that it has attempted to meet the coordination and collaboration requirements and entities described in section 640(a)(5)(D)(iii)(I). An agency having an area of unresolved noncompliance.

Section 637 (21) defines “unresolved area of noncompliance” means failure to correct a noncompliance item within 120 days or within such additional time (if any) authorized by the Secretary, after receiving from the Secretary notice of such noncompliance item, pursuant to section 641A(d).

Section 637 (22) defines “inter-rater reliability” means the extent to which two different raters or observers consistently obtain the same result when using the same assessment

Section 4. Financial assistance for Head Start programs

This section amends section 638 to reauthorize financial assistance to Head Start agencies for 5 years.

Section 5. Authorization of appropriations

This section amends section 639 to reauthorize the Head Start Act at \$7.215 billion for fiscal year 2006, \$7.515 billion for fiscal year 2007, \$7.815 billion for fiscal year 2008, and such sums as may be necessary for fiscal years 2009 and 2010.

From the amount appropriated, the Secretary can make available up to \$20 million for fiscal year 2006 to carry out research, demonstration, and evaluation activities including longitudinal studies under Section 649, and such sums for fiscal years 2007–10, of which no more than \$7 million used for impact studies under Section 649(g) for fiscal years 2006–10.

Section 6. Allotment of funds

This section amends section 640 by requiring the Secretary to reserve a sum each fiscal year for Indian Head Start and migrant and seasonal Head Start programs that is the total of not less than 4 percent of the amount appropriated for Indian programs under section 639 for that fiscal year and not less than 5 percent of that appropriated amount for migrant and seasonal programs, except that if reserving such percentages would reduce the number of children served by Head Start programs relative to the number of children served upon the date of enactment of this act. After ensuring that each grant recipient for Indian and migrant and seasonal Head Start programs have received 4 percent and 5 percent respectively, the Secretary shall distribute 65 percent of the remaining funds to priority grant recipients in the States serving the smallest percentages of eligible children and distributing the remaining 35 percent on a competitive basis.

This section outlines rules in the provision and administration of technical and training assistance in great detail including limiting assistance as described in section 648 in an amount for each fiscal

year equal to 2 percent of the amount appropriated under section 639 of which: 50 percent shall be made available to agencies to comply with the standards in section 641A(a)(1) and 50 percent shall be made available to the Secretary to support a regional or State system of early childhood education training and technical assistance and to assist local programs including Indian and migrant and seasonal programs or which not less than \$3 million shall be made available to carry out the activities described in section 648(d)(4). In order to provide assistance, this section requires the Secretary to reserve 30 percent of such excess amount for fiscal year 2006, and 40 percent of such excess amount for each fiscal year 2007–10.

This section requires that funds for quality improvement may be used to ensure such programs have adequate numbers of qualified staff and that such staff is furnished adequate training; developing and financing the salary scales and benefits standards under sections 644(a) and 653 to ensure that salary scales and benefits standards under section 644(a) and section 653, in order to ensure that salary levels and benefits are adequate to attract and retain qualified staff for such programs. Quality improvement funds may be used for salary increases to assist with implementation of quality programs and improve staff qualifications; ensure that staff can promote the language skills and literacy growth of children and can provide children with a variety of skills that have been identified, through scientifically based early reading research, as predictive of later reading achievement, as well as additional skills identified in section 641A(a)(1)(B)(ii); and encourage staff to continually improve their skills and expertise by informing the staff of the availability of Federal and State incentive and loan forgiveness programs for professional development.

Quality improvement from reserved funds may also take the form of a collaboration grant from the Secretary to each State to facilitate collaboration between Head Start agencies and entities that carry out other activities designed to benefit low-income families and children from birth to school entry. Such grants shall be used to promote alignment of Head Start services with State early learning standards, the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework, and State regulations for school readiness; encourage 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; promote better linkages between Head Start agencies and other child and family agencies that provide health, mental health or family services, or other child or family supportive services; and carry out activities of the State Director of Head Start Collaboration. To improve coordination and delivery of early education services to children in the State, a State that receives such a grant is required to appoint a State Director of Head Start Collaboration; ensure that the Director holds a position with sufficient authority and access to ensure that the collaboration is effective and involves a range of State agencies; and involve the State Head Start Association in the selection of the Director and involve the Association in determinations relating to the ongoing direction of the collaboration office. Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this act, the Director must conduct an assessment that addresses the needs of Head

Start agencies in the State with respect to collaborating, coordinating services, and implementing State early learning and school readiness goals and standards to better serve children enrolled in Head Start programs. Such assessment will be updated annually and shall be made available to the public.

This section also mandates an assessment of the availability of high quality prekindergarten services for low-income children in the State and requires the Director to develop a strategic plan based on the assessment that will: (1) enhance collaboration and coordination of Head Start services with other entities providing early childhood programs and services, health care, mental health care, welfare, child protective services, education and community service activities; family literacy services, reading readiness programs, services related to disabled children and other programs and services for LEP and homeless children; (2) assist Head Start agencies to develop a plan for the provision of a full working day, full calendar year services for children enrolled in Head Start programs who need such care; (3) assist Head Start agencies to align services with State early learning and school readiness goals and standards and to facilitate collaborative efforts to develop local school readiness standards; (4) enable agencies in the State to better coordinate professional development opportunities for Head Start staff such as assisting 2- and 4-year public and private institutions of higher education to develop articulation agreements; awarding grants to such institutions to develop model early childhood education programs; working with local Head Start agencies to meet the degree requirements in section 648A(a)(2)(A); enabling State Head Start agencies to better coordinate outreach to eligible families; (5) promote partnership between Head Start agencies, State governments, and the private sector to help ensure that low-income pre-school children are receiving comprehensive services to prepare them to enter school ready to learn; and (6) promote partnerships between Head Start agencies, schools, law enforcement, 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 and other high risk behaviors that compromise healthy development.

This section requires the Governor of a State to establish a council to serve as the State advisory council on collaboration on early care and education activities for children from birth to school entry. The State Advisory Council shall include: the State Director of Head Start Collaboration; a representative of the appropriate regional office of the Administration for Children and Families; a representative of the State educational agency and local educational agencies; a representative of institutions of higher education; a representative of the State agency responsible for mental health care; a representative of the State agency responsible for teacher professional standards; certification and licensing; a representative of the State agency responsible for child care; early childhood education professionals; kindergarten teachers and teachers in grades 1 through 3; health care professionals; child development specialists; a representative of the State agency responsible for assisting children with developmental disabilities; a representative of the State agency responsible for programs under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; a representative of the State inter-

agency coordinating councils established under Section 641 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; a representative of the State Head Start Association where appropriate; a representative of the State network of child care resource and referral agencies; a representative of community-based organizations; a representative of State and local providers of early education and child care; a representative of migrant and seasonal Head Start programs and Indian Head Start programs; parents; religious and business leaders; the head of the State library administrative agency; representatives of State and local organizations and other entities providing professional development to early care and education providers; and a representative of other entities determined to be relevant by the chief executive officer of the State.

The State Advisory Council is responsible for conducting a periodic Statewide needs assessment concerning early care and education programs; identifying barriers to and opportunities for collaboration and coordination between entities carrying out Federal and State child development, child care, and early childhood education programs; developing recommendations regarding means of establishing a unified data collection system for early care and education programs throughout the State; developing a statewide professional development and career ladder plan for early care and education in the State. The Council shall hold public hearings on the needs assessment and recommendations described in this subsection and the Council shall submit a statewide strategic report concerning the needs assessment and recommendations to the State Director of Head Start Collaboration and the chief executive officer of the State. After submitting the report, the Council shall meet periodically to review any implementation of the recommendations and any changes in State and local needs.

The Secretary is required to use from amounts reserved and allotted for programs described in section 645A(a) of this subchapter 11 percent for fiscal year 2006, 13 percent for fiscal year 2007, 15 percent for fiscal year 2008, 17 percent for fiscal year 2009, and 18 percent for fiscal year 2010, of the amount appropriated pursuant to section 639(a).

This section requires the Secretary to establish procedures to enable Head Start agencies to develop locally designed or specialized service delivery models to address local community needs including models that leverage existing capacity and procedures to provide for the conversion of part-day programs to full-day programs or part-day slots to full-day slots.

This section requires the Secretary to issue regulations to ensure the appropriate supervision and background checks of individuals with whom Head Start agencies contract to transport Head Start children.

This section requires the Secretary to conduct an annual consultation in each affected Head Start region, with tribal governments operating Head Start and Early Head Start programs and such consultations will be for the purpose of better meeting the needs of American Indian and Alaska Native children and families, taking into consideration funding allocations, distribution formulas, and other issues affecting Head Start services within tribal communities. Notice of the consultation will be published in the Federal Register prior to the consultations and a detailed report of such

consultation shall be prepared and made available to all tribal governments receiving funds under this subchapter.

This section requires the Secretary to issue regulations and remove barriers to the enrollment and participation of eligible homeless children in Head Start.

This subchapter does not require a State to establish a program of early education for children in the State, nor does it require any child to participate in a program of early education in order to attend preschool, or to participate in any initial screening prior to participation in such program.

This section requires all funded curricula under this subchapter to be scientifically-based, age appropriate and available for parents to examine.

Section 7. Designation of Head Start agencies

This section amends section 641 by giving the Secretary discretionary authority to designate any local public or private non-profit or for-profit within a community, including community-based organizations, as a Head Start agency. To be designated as Head Start agencies they must establish program goals for improving school readiness of children, including goals for meeting the performance and educational standards as described in section 641A and shall establish results-based school readiness goals that are aligned with requirements and expectations of local public schools. To continue to receive grants, agencies must demonstrate progress toward meeting such goals.

In designation and redesignation the Secretary shall, in consultation with each State's chief executive officer, give priority to high performing, eligible agencies that: are already receiving funds under Head Start, meet or exceed program and financial management requirements or standards described in section 641(a)(1), has no unresolved deficiencies and has not had findings of deficiencies during the last triennial review under section 641A(c), and can demonstrate, through agreements such as memoranda of understanding, active collaboration with the State or local community in the provision of services for children (such as the provision of extended day services, education, professional development and training for staff, and other types of cooperative endeavors).

The Secretary shall designate a Head Start agency from among qualified applicants in such community after conducting an open competition.

This section includes a rule of construction that State notwithstanding any other provisions of law, under no condition may a non-Indian Head Start agency receive a grant to carry out an Indian Head Start program.

The Secretary shall conduct an open competition and shall consider the effectiveness of each such applicant to provide Head Start services based on the plan of such applicant: (1) to consider past performance of applicants in providing comparable services to Head Start services; (2) to provide health, nutritional, education, and social to prepare children to succeed in school; (3) to use scientifically based programs that promote school readiness; (4) the plan of such applicant to meet standards outlined in section 641A(a)(1); (5) the plan of such applicant to coordinate the proposed Head Start program with other local preschool programs, State prekindergarten

programs, child care programs, local educational agencies, and reading readiness; (6) to coordinate with public and private entities who are willing to commit resources to assist the Head Start program meet its program needs; (7) to collaborate with a local library to excite children about the world of books; (8) to involve parents in the education of their children at home and at the center and to give them the opportunity to participate in the development and performance of the program at the local level; to offer parents either directly or through referral family literacy services, parenting skills training, counseling (such as substance abuse and mental health counseling); to offer parents the option to offer training in basic child development, assistance in developing communication skills, opportunities for parents to share experiences with other parents, any other activity designed to help parents become full partners in the education of their children; to provide each participating family a family needs assessment that includes consultation with such parents about the benefits of involvement in their child's education; to extend outreach to fathers to strengthen the role of fathers in families and in the education of their young children, and in Head Start programs, by working directly with fathers and father figures; (9) the plan of such applicant to meet the needs of: LEP children and their families including procedures to identify such children, plans to provide trained personnel and plans to assist children in making progress toward the acquisition of the English language; (10) to meet the needs of children with disabilities; (11) who chooses to assist younger siblings of children who will participate in the Head Start program to obtain health services from other sources; (12) and the plan of such applicant to collaborate with other entities carrying out early childhood education and child care programs in the community; (13) to meet the needs of homeless children and children in foster care; and (14) the plan of such applicant to recruit and retain qualified staff.

Section 8. Quality standards; monitoring of Head Start agencies and programs

This section amends section 641A by requiring additional educational performance standards and minimum levels of accomplishment based on recommendations of the National Academy of Sciences panel (described in section 649(h)) and other experts in the field of early childhood education relating to: (1) language skills related to listening, understanding, speaking, and communicating including: understanding and use of a diverse vocabulary (including knowing the names of colors) and knowledge of how to use oral language to communicate for various purposes; narrative abilities used, for example, to comprehend, tell and respond to a story, or to comprehend instructions; ability to detect and produce sounds of the language the child speaks or is learning; and clarity of pronunciation and speaking in syntactically and grammatically correct sentences; (2) prereading knowledge and skills, including: alphabet knowledge, knowing the letter names and associating letters with their shapes and sounds in the language the child speaks or is learning; phonological awareness and processes that support reading, for example, rhyming, recognizing speech sounds and separate syllables in spoken words, and putting speech sounds together to make words; knowledge, interest in, and appreciation of books,

reading and writing, and knowledge that books have parts such as front, back and title page; early writing, including the ability to write one's own name and other words and phrases; and print awareness and concepts, including recognizing different forms of print and understanding the association between spoken and written words; (3) premathematics knowledge and skills, including number recognition; use of early number concepts and operations, including counting, simple adding and subtracting, and knowledge of quantitative relationships such as part versus whole and comparison of numbers of objects; use of early space and location concepts including recognizing shapes, classification, striation, and understanding directionality; and early pattern skills and measurement, including recognizing and extending simple patterns and measuring length, weight and time; (4) scientific abilities including, building awareness about scientific skills and methods, such as gathering, describing, and recording information, making observations, explanations and predictions, and expanding scientific knowledge of the environment, time, temperature, and cause and effect relationships; (5) general cognitive abilities relate to academic achievement and child development including, reasoning, planning, and problem-solving skills; ability to engage, sustain attention, and persist on challenging tasks; intellectual curiosity, initiative, and task engagement; and motivation to achieve and master concepts and skills; (6) social and emotional development related to early learning and school success including developing: the ability to develop social relationships, demonstrate cooperative behaviors, and relate to teachers and peers in positive and respectful ways; an understanding of the consequences of actions, following rules, and appropriately expressing feelings; a sense of self, such as self-awareness, independence, and confidence; the ability to control negative behaviors with teachers and peers that include impulsiveness, aggression, and noncompliance; and knowledge of civic society and surrounding communities; (7) physical development including developing fine motor skills such as strength, manual dexterity, and hand-eye coordination; and gross motor skills, such as balance and coordinated movements; and (8) in the case of LEP children, progress toward acquisition of the English language while making meaningful progress in attaining the knowledge, skills, abilities, and development described in the aforementioned areas.

This section requires that facilities used by Head Start agencies for regularly scheduled center-based and combination program option classroom activities be in compliance with State and local requirements concerning licensing for such facilities and that such facility shall be accessible by State and local authorities for purposes of monitoring and ensuring compliance.

Additionally, this section requires the Secretary in developing standards, to consider the unique challenges faced by individual programs, including seasonal, short term or those that serve rural populations, when developing standards regulations. The Secretary is also required to consult with Indian tribes, American Indian and Alaska Native experts in early childhood development, linguists, and the National Indian Head Start Directors Association in program standards review and promulgation, and educational performance measures for language acquisition and school readiness.

This section amends section 641A by adding a new section, "Evaluation and Corrective Actions for Delegation Agencies; section (641A(a)(4))." This section requires the Secretary to establish procedures for evaluating delegate agencies as well as procedures for defunding delegate agencies and procedures for appealing such defunding decisions. Each Head Start agency shall evaluate its delegate agencies using procedures established in this act and shall inform the delegate agencies of the deficiencies to be corrected. To ensure corrective actions, the Head Start agency may: initiate procedures to terminate the designation of the agency unless the agency corrects the deficiency; conduct monthly monitoring visits to such delegate agency until all deficiencies are corrected or the Head Start agency decides to defund such delegate agency; and release funds to such delegate agency only as reimbursements until all deficiencies are corrected or the Head Start agency decides to defund such delegate agency.

This section requires performance measures to be appropriate for the population served and be reviewed not less than every 4 years based on advances in early childhood development science.

This section requires results-based outcome measures to be designed for the purpose of promoting the competencies of Head Start children with an emphasis on measuring those competencies that have a strong scientifically-based predictability of a child's school readiness and later performance in school. This section permits Head Start agencies to establish and implement additional local results-based educational performance measures and goals.

This section mandates unannounced site inspections for health and safety of Head Start Centers and sets rules for prompt follow-up reviews to agencies and programs that fail to meet one or more of the performance measures developed by the Secretary, and in the case of programs cited with substantial deficiencies a review is required within 6 months of the initial citation. Reviews may incorporate without or with limited prior notice as is necessary to ensure the participation of parents and key staff members. Reviews will be conducted by teams that include individuals who are knowledgeable about Head Start and other early childhood programs and, to the maximum extent practicable, the diverse needs of eligible children and LEP children and their families. Review will include assessment of program effectiveness measured in accordance with the results-based measures developed by the Secretary. Reviews will seek information from communities and States about innovative or effective collaborative efforts, barriers to collaboration, and collaboration efforts of Head Start agencies. Review teams will also review and assess whether a program is in conformity with the income eligibility requirements and regulations of section 645. Reviews will assess whether programs are adequately addressing the population and community needs (including LEP, migrant and seasonal farmworker children). Reviews will also assess outcomes and performance as they relate to State-, local-, and agency-determined school readiness goals.

This section also requires that in order for a Head Start agency to retain designation and continue to receive funds if it has failed to meet quality standards or results-based performance measures it must develop in a timely manner a quality improvement plan subject to the Secretary's approval or (in some cases) the spon-

soring agency. The Secretary or sponsoring agency must respond to the proposed improvement plan within 30 days of receiving it from an agency, either approving it, or giving reasons for not approving it. This section requires within 120 days of the fiscal year's end the Secretary to publish a summary on the outcome findings which must be made widely available to the public as well as to the parents of Head Start children.

This section establishes rules allowing for the reduction of grants and redistribution of funds in cases of under-enrollment. Each Head Start agency is required to report actual enrollment to the Secretary monthly and if that number is below the funded enrollment stated in the base grant, the agency must explain the enrollment shortfall. The Secretary must determine which agencies are under-enrolled based on at least 4 months of data. In cases of less than 95 percent enrollment, the Secretary will develop in collaboration with the agency, a plan and timetable for correcting under-enrollment considering quality, extent of outreach, community needs assessment, changing demographics, identification of new underserved low-income populations, any facilities-related issues affecting enrollment, ability to provide full-day programs where needed through Head Start funds or through collaboration with other funding sources where available, the availability and use by families of other preschool and child care options, and agency management procedures that may impact enrollment.

This section requires that the Secretary provide timely and ongoing technical assistance to an agency for the purpose of implementing the plan but if, 1 year after the plan is implemented and under-enrollment persists the Secretary shall continue to provide technical assistance where determined appropriate. After 9 months of being under-enrolled the Secretary may designate such agency as chronically under-enrolled and may recapture, withhold or reduce the base grant by a percentage equal to the percentage difference between funded and actual enrollment. But if the enrollment shortfall is beyond the agency's control, is expected to be temporary or the number of slots allotted to the agency is small enough that under-enrollment does not constitute a significant shortfall, the Secretary may waive or reduce percentage reductions.

In terms of redistribution of funds, the Secretary may use amounts recovered through reductions in a fiscal year to redirect funds to other Head Start agencies within the State to increase enrollment in their programs. In the case that there is no agency in the State that qualifies for the additional grant money, the Secretary may redirect funds to Head Start agencies in other States that do meet the requirements. Recaptured funds from under-enrolled agencies serving Indian or migrant children shall be awarded to other agencies serving those same special populations.

The Secretary will adjust as necessary the funded enrollment indicated in the grant award of a Head Start agency receiving redistributed amounts.

Section 9. Centers of excellence in early childhood

Subject to the availability of funds, this new section 641B requires the Secretary to establish a program in which he designates up to 200 exemplary Head Start agencies (including Early Head Start agencies, Indian Head Start agencies, and migrant and sea-

sonal Head Start agencies) as Centers of Excellence in Early Childhood, with at least one designee per State and the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico as well as not less than one Indian Head Start program and not less than one migrant and seasonal Head Start program, for a 5-year term. During the period of that designation and subject to the availability of appropriations, the agency shall be eligible to receive a bonus grant. State Governors shall nominate centers and applications must contain such information as the Secretary may require, and in case of Indian, migrant and seasonal Head Start programs, program branches shall nominate centers for this distinction.

Applications shall include: (1) evidence that the Head Start program has significantly improved the school readiness and academic outcomes of Head Start children; (2) evidence that the program meets or exceeds Head Start standards and performance measures in section 641A (a) and (b) as evidenced by successful completion of programmatic and monitoring reviews and has no substantial deficiencies; (3) evidence that the program is making progress toward attaining the goals in section 648A; (4) evidence demonstrating the existence of a collaborative partnership between the agency and the State or a State agency; (5) a nomination letter from the Governor demonstrating the agency's ability to carry out the coordination, transition and training services of the program to be carried out under the bonus grant, including coordination of activities with State and local agencies that provide early childhood services to children and families in the community; and (6) information demonstrating the existence of a local council for excellence in early childhood education which shall include representatives of all institutions, agencies, and groups involved in the work of the center for eligible children and other at risk children and their families.

The Secretary shall base the amount of the bonus grant on the number of children served at the center of excellence and subject to the availability of funding, make such a bonus grant in an amount not less than \$200,000 a year which may be used to: (1) provide services to additional eligible children; (2) better meet the needs of working families in the community served by the center by serving more children in Early Head Start or full-working-day, full calendar year Head Start programs; (3) model and disseminate best practices for achieving early academic success including achieving school readiness and developing rereading and premathematics skills for at-risk children and achieving the English acquisition for limited English proficient children, and to provide seamless service delivery for eligible children and their families; (4) coordinate early childhood and social services available in the community served by the center for at-risk children from birth through age 8, including pregnant mothers, and their families; (5) provide training for Head Start teachers and staff and develop agency leaders; (6) provide effective transitions between Head Start programs and elementary school and to provide training and technical assistance to help the providers increase their ability to work with low-income, at-risk children and their families; and (7) carry out other activities determined by the center to improve the overall quality of the Head Start program.

The Secretary may revoke an agency's designation if it is determined that the agency is not demonstrating adequate performance.

The center will work with its delegate agencies, other Head Start agencies and other providers of early childhood services in the community to encourage the agencies and providers to carry out model programs.

This section requires the Secretary to make a grant to an independent organization to conduct research on the ability of the centers of excellence to improve the school readiness of Head Start children and to positively impact school results in the earliest grades and shall also conduct research to measure the success of the centers at encouraging delegate agencies and additional Head Start agencies to meet measurable improvements in the area of school readiness. The report is required no later than 4 years after the date of enactment of the Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act of 2005 and is to be submitted to the Secretary and Congress.

Under this section, \$9 million is appropriated for fiscal year 2006 and each subsequent year to make bonus grants to centers of excellence including \$2.5 million to pay for the Secretary's administrative costs in carrying out this section and \$2 million for the research activities described under this subsection.

Section 10. Powers and functions of Head Start agencies

This section amends section 642 to require that in order to be designated as a Head Start agency, an agency must have authority under its charter or applicable law to receive and administer funds and contributions from private or local public sources which may be used in support of a Head Start program, and funds under any Federal or State assistance program pursuant to which a public or private nonprofit or for profit agency, could act as grantee, contractor, or sponsor of projects appropriate for inclusion in a Head Start program. Such agency must also be empowered to transfer funds and delegate powers of its governing board and its overall program responsibilities. These powers must include the power to make transfers and delegations covering component projects in all cases where this will contribute to efficiency and effectiveness or further program objectives.

This section also requires that in order to be designated a Head Start agency, an agency must: (1) establish a program with all standards set forth in section 641A(a)(1); (2) demonstrate the capacity to serve eligible children with scientifically based curricula and other services that promote school readiness; (3) establish effective procedures and provide for the regulator assessment of Head Start children including observational and direct formal assessment where appropriate; (4) seek the involvement of parents, community members, and local businesses in the design and implementation of the program; (5) provide for the regular participation of parents and community members in the implementation of such programs; (6) provide technical and other support needed to enable such parents and area residents to secure available assistance from public and private sources; (7) establish effective procedures to facilitate the involvement of parents of Head Start children in activities designed to help such parents become full partners in the education of their children; (8) conduct outreach to schools in which

Head Start children will enroll, local educational agencies, the local business community, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, museums and libraries to generate support and leverage the resources of the entire local community in order to improve school readiness; (9) offer services or referrals to parents of Head Start children family literacy services and parenting skills training, drug and alcohol counseling, including information on the effect of drug exposure on infants and fetal alcohol syndrome; and (10) at the option of such agency offer to such parents training in basic child development and cognition, assistance in developing literacy and communication skills, opportunities to share experiences with other parents, regular in home visitation, and any other activity designed to help parents become full partners in the education of their children; (11) provide participating families a family needs assessment that includes consultation with such parents (including foster parents and grandparents, where applicable) about the benefits of parent involvement; (12) consider providing services to assist younger siblings of Head Start children to obtain health services from other sources; (13) perform community outreach to encourage volunteers for the Head Start program; (14) inform custodial parents in single parents families that participate in programs and activities about the availability of child support services for purposes of establishing paternity and acquiring child support, and refer eligible parents to the child support offices of State and local governments; (15) provide parents of limited English proficient children outreach and information in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language that the parents can understand; and (16) at the option of an agency, partner with an institution of higher education and a nonprofit organization to provide college students with the opportunity to serve as mentors or reading coaches to Head Start participants.

Each Head Start agency shall take steps to ensure to the maximum extent possible that children maintain the developmental and educational gains achieved in Head Start programs and build upon such gains in further schooling.

In communities where both public prekindergarten programs and Head Start programs operate, the Head Start agency shall collaborate and coordinate activities with the local educational agency or other prekindergarten program and providers of prekindergarten, including outreach to identify eligible children. With parental permission, Head Start staff will also work with elementary schools to discuss teaching strategies and options and ensure a smooth elementary school transition for such children. The head of each Head Start agency shall coordinate activities and collaborate with the State agency responsible for administering the State program carried out under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 and other programs carrying out early childhood education and development programs. Head Start agencies will also collaborate with local educational agencies on shared use of transportation and facilities, and to reduce duplication of services while increasing participation of underserved populations of eligible children and exchanging information on the provision of non-educational services to such children.

To promote continued parental involvement when children transition to school, this section requires Head Start agencies to pro-

vide training to parents: to inform them about their rights and responsibilities regarding their children's education; to enable them to understand and work with schools in order to communicate with teachers and other school personnel; and to support the schoolwork of the children and to participate to appropriate decisions relating to the education of their children.

This section mandates that each Head Start agency shall consult with child development experts and classroom teachers to develop teacher hiring and evaluation assessments which shall measure: whether the teacher possesses an appropriate literacy level to implement Head Start curricula and whether the teacher has mastered other functions outlined in section 648A(a)(1) of this bill.

Head Start agencies are expected to enroll 100 percent of its funded enrollment and maintain an active waiting list at all times with ongoing outreach to communities to identify underserved populations.

Section 11. Head Start transition and alignment with K-12 education

This section renames Section 642A "The Head Start Transition and Alignment with K-12 Education." This section is amended to require each agency to coordinate with local educational agencies and schools in which Head Start children will enroll to: (1) develop and implement a systematic procedure for transferring, with parental consent, Head Start program records for each participating child to the school which such child will enroll; (2) establish ongoing channels of communication between Head Start staff and school counterparts to facilitate program coordination; (3) develop continuity of developmentally appropriate curricula and practice between the Head Start agency and local educational agency to ensure an effective transition and appropriate shared expectations for learning and development as the children make the transition to school; (4) conduct parent-teacher meetings; (5) organize and participate in joint training, including transition-related training of school and Head Start staff; (6) develop and implement family outreach and support programs, taking LEP families into consideration; (7) assist families, administrators and teachers in enhancing educational and developmental continuity and continuity of parental involvement in activities between Head Start services and elementary school classes; (8) link the services provided in the Head Start program with the education services, including services related to language, numeracy, and literacy provided by local educational agencies; (9) help parents understand the importance of parental involvement in a child's academic success while teaching the parents strategies for maintaining parental involvement as their child moves from the Head Start program to elementary school; (10) develop and implement a system to increase participation of underserved eligible children in program; and (11) coordinate activities and collaborate to ensure that curricula used in the Head Start program is aligned with State early learning standards regarding cognitive, social, emotional, and physical competencies that children entering kindergarten are expected to demonstrate.

Section 12. Submission of plans to governors

This section amends section 643 to require approval from a State Governor of a proposed Head Start plan for a contract, agreement, grant, or other assistance before an agency may carry out a Head Start program in the State. Governor approval is not required, however, for Indian Head Start and migrant and seasonal Head Start programs. The timeline for a State Governor approval or disapproval has been shortened from 45 days to 30 days of such submission.

Section 13. Participation in Head Start programs

This section amends section 645(a)(1)(A) by allowing Head Start programs to serve children whose families are below 130 percent of the poverty line.

This section also deems a homeless child eligible for Head Start services.

This section requires that military housing upgrades and special pay relating to duty subject to hostile fire or combat not be considered income for the purposes of determining Head Start program eligibility of the children of uniformed services members section 645(a)(3)(B).

Section 14. Early Head Start programs

This section renames Section 645A “Early Head Start Programs.” Section 645A is amended by requiring Head Start agencies to provide additional services to parents to support their role as parents including parenting skills and basic child development training. Such training includes home-based services and family support services. This section also requires that Early Head Start agencies develop a systematic transitioning process for children and parents from Early Head Start into Head Start or other local early childhood education programs, as well as establish communication channels between Early Head Start and Head Start staffs to coordinate programs.

This section amends section 645A to include agencies responsible for administering Section 106 of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act as a group with which Early Head Start agencies shall ensure formal linkages.

This section expands the definition of “Eligible Services Providers” to include tribal governments and entities operating migrant and seasonal Head Start programs, as well as community-based organizations that meet program participation standards.

This section also allows the Secretary to use funds for training and technical assistance to provide professional development and personnel enhancement activities on effective methods of conducting parent education, home visiting, and promoting quality early childhood development, on methods of recruiting and retaining qualified staff and on methods to increase program participation for underserved populations of eligible children.

This section mandates that not later than September 30, 2010, all teachers providing direct services to Early Head Start children and families have a minimum of a child development associate credential or an associate degree and have been trained in early childhood development or equivalent coursework.

This section requires the Secretary to establish standards for training, qualification, and the conduct of home visits for home visitor staff in Early Head Start programs to further enhance the quality of services provided to families of participating children. Such standards established by the Secretary shall include: structured child-focused home visiting that promotes parents' ability to support the child's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development; effective strengths-based parent education, including methods to encourage parents as their child's first teachers; early childhood development with respect to children from birth through age 3; methods to help parents promote emergent literacy in their children from birth to age 3; health, vision, hearing and developmental screenings; strategies for helping families coping with crisis; and the relationship of health and well-being of pregnant women to prenatal and early child development.

Section 15. Appeals, notice, and hearing and records and audits

This section amends section 646(a) by terminating or reducing financial assistance and an application for refunding may be denied after the recipient has been afforded reasonable notice and opportunity for a full and fair hearing. Additionally, this section amends the timelines for a full and fair hearing to include a right to file a notice of appeal of a decision to termination within 30 days of notice of the decision from the Secretary; and access to a full and fair hearing of the appeal, not later than 120 days from receipt by the Secretary of the notice of appeal.

This section prohibits a Head Start agency from expending financial assistance awarded for the purpose of paying legal fees pursuant to an appeal, except that such fees shall be reimbursed by the Secretary if the agency prevails in their appeal.

This section allows the Secretary to suspend funds to a grantee in the case of a grantee having multiple and recurring deficiencies for a period of 6 months and has not made substantial and significant progress toward meeting the goals of the grantee's quality improvement plan or eliminating all deficiencies.

The section amends section 647(a) by requiring each Head Start agency receiving financial assistance to maintain and submit a complete accounting of their administrative expenses including salaries and compensation annually to the Secretary.

Section 16. Technical assistance and training

This section amends section 648 by requiring the secretary to make available funds set aside in section 640(a)(2)(C)(ii) to support a regional or State system of early childhood education training and technical assistance that improves the capacity of Head Start programs within a region or State to deliver services in accordance with the Head Start standards described in section 641A(a)(1). The Secretary shall: ensure that agencies with demonstrated expertise in providing high quality training and technical assistance to improve the delivery of Head Start services, including the State Head Start Association, State agencies, migrant and seasonal Head Start programs, and other entities currently providing training and technical assistance in early education are included in the planning and coordination of the system; and encourage States to supplement the funds authorized in section 640(a)(2)(C)(ii) with Federal,

State, or local funds other than Head Start funds, to expand training and technical assistance activities beyond Head Start agencies to include other providers of early childhood services within a region or State.

In allocating resources for technical assistance and training under this section, the Secretary shall also assist Head Start agencies and programs in increasing the program participation of eligible homeless children. In addition to including the assessment of the needs of homeless children and their families when conducting and participating in communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment.

This section recognizes Head Start personnel from community and faith-based organizations as eligible to receive grants for training in the use of the performing and visual arts to include community and faith-based organizations.

This section requires the Secretary to provide, either directly or through grants or other arrangements, funds to provide services to children determined to be abused or neglected, training for personnel providing services to children referred by entities providing child welfare services or receiving child welfare services. The Secretary shall also provide training and technical assistance funding for Head Start personnel that addresses the unique needs of migrant and seasonal farmworking families, LEP families, and homeless families.

This section requires that funds used under this section shall be used to provide high quality, sustained and intensive training and technical assistance in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction. Such funds shall be used to carry out activities related to one or more of the following: education and early childhood development; child health, nutrition, and safety; family and community partnerships; other areas that impact the quality or overall effectiveness of Head Start programs.

This section does not permit training and technical assistance funds to be used for long distance travel expenses for training activities available locally or regionally or for activities that are substantially similar to locally or regionally available training activities. Such funds shall be used for needs identified annually by a grant applicant or delegate agency in its program improvement plan.

Funds may be used to support local efforts to enhance early language and preliteracy development of children in Head Start programs and to provide children with high quality oral language skills and environments that are rich in literature in which to acquire language and preliteracy skills. Each agency, in coordination with the appropriate State office and the relevant State Head Start collaboration office shall ensure that all of the agency's teachers receive ongoing training in language and emergent literacy. Such training shall include methods to promote phonological and phonemic awareness and vocabulary development in age-appropriate and culturally and linguistically appropriate manner. Literacy training shall be culturally and linguistically appropriate and support children's development in their home language. Literacy training shall also include training in how to work with parents to enhance positive language and early literacy development at home. Literacy training shall also include specific methods to best address

the needs of children who have speech and language delays or have other disabilities.

Section 17. Staff qualifications and development

This section amends section 648A by requiring all center-based Head Start teachers to have at least an associate degree or equivalent coursework in early childhood or related educational area and teachers must also demonstrate teaching competencies including at a minimum, an appropriate level of literacy, a demonstrated capacity to be highly engaged with children and the ability to effectively implement and early childhood curriculum as determined by the program director by September 30, 2010.

This section also requires all center-based Head Start curriculum specialists and education coordinators to have the capacity to offer assistance to other teachers in the implementation and adaptation of curricula to the group and individual needs of a class and to have a baccalaureate or advanced degree and coursework equivalent relating to early childhood by September 30, 2008.

By September 30, 2008, all center-based Head Start teaching assistants must: have at least a child development associate credential; be enrolled in a program leading to an associate or baccalaureate degree; or be enrolled in a child development associate credential program to be completed within 2 years.

This section requires alignment, by September 30, 2011, with State prekindergarten teacher requirements where teacher requirements for State prekindergarten programs are established. If a State's teacher requirements for prekindergarten program is less than those required by the Head Start program. In addition, in States that do not have an established State prekindergarten program or in States that do not have established teacher requirements for their State prekindergarten programs, 50 percent of all Head Start teachers in each center-based program must have a baccalaureate degree relating to early childhood and demonstrated teaching competencies.

This section also requires each Head Start teacher to attend an average of not less than 15 clock hours of professional development per year. Each Head Start agency and program is required to create a professional development plan for all staff who provide direct services to children in consultation with all employees, including a plan for classroom teachers and curriculum specialists to meet the degree requirements.

The Secretary is to require Head Start agencies to demonstrate continued progress and to submit an annual report indicating the number and percentage of center-based classroom instructors with child development associate credential or associate, baccalaureate or graduate degrees. The Secretary is required to compile and submit such program reports to the House Committee on Education and the Workforce and the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. A Head Start agency may demonstrate progress by partnering with institutions of higher education or other programs that recruit, train, place, and support college students to deliver an innovative early learning program to preschool children.

Head Start staff who receive financial assistance to pursue a degree are required to teach or work in a Head Start program for at

least 3 years after the degree is obtained or repay the total or prorated amount of the financial assistance received based on the length of service completed after receiving the degree.

The Secretary may waive post-secondary degree requirements for an agency (1) that can demonstrate aggressive recruitment efforts that have been unsuccessful with people who meet the requirements, (2) or if there is limited access to degree programs due to remote location of the program involved, or (3) if current Head Start staff is enrolled in a program that grants the required degree and will be completed in a year. An agency that receives such a waiver shall ensure that Head Start teachers for the agency who have not met the post-secondary degree requirements but are otherwise highly qualified and competent shall be directly and appropriately supervised by a teacher who has met or exceeded the degree requirements. The Secretary may not grant a waiver that exceeds 1 year, however the grant is renewable.

Section 18. Tribal colleges and universities Head Start partnership

This section amends the act by authorizing the Secretary to award at least 5-year grants to Tribal college and universities to promote school readiness in Indian children by implementing tribal culture and language programs and increasing the number of degrees in early childhood education and related fields among Indian Head Start agency staff, parents of Head Start children, and members of the tribal community involved in Indian Head Start. Such programs shall develop and implement technology-mediated formats, and grants may be used for technology literacy programs for those served by or associated with Indian Head Start. The Secretary will ensure that the American Indian Programs Branch of the Head Start Bureau of the Department of Health and Human Services is sufficiently staffed to administer the programs in this section and to provide appropriate technical assistance to the Tribal Colleges and universities receiving grants. To receive grants, Tribal Colleges and universities must submit applications to the Secretary for consideration, including a certification that a partnership has been established with at least one Indian Head Start agency for the purpose of conducting these activities. This section authorizes \$10 million to carry out this section for fiscal year 2006 and such sums for fiscal years 2007–10.

Section 19. Research, demonstration, and evaluation

This section amends section 649 so that the Secretary will also consider abused or neglected children when developing, testing, and disseminating new ideas for addressing the needs of low-income children.

This section requires the Secretary to contract with the Board on Children, Youth, and Families of the National Research Council, the Board on Testing and Assessments and the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies to establish an independent panel of experts to review and synthesize research and theories in the social, behavioral, and biological sciences regarding early childhood, and make recommendations regarding: (1) age and developmentally appropriate Head Start academic requirements and outcomes including the standards described in section 641A(a)(1)(B)(ii); (2) differences in the type, length, mix, and intensity of services nec-

essary to ensure school readiness for children from challenging backgrounds; (3) appropriate assessments of children including formal and systematic observations in a child's natural environment; assessments of children's development through parent and provider interviews; assessments of appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities, LEP, and from different cultural backgrounds; (4) identification of existing or recommendations for the development of, scientifically-based, valid and reliable assessments that are capable of measuring child outcomes in the areas important to school readiness, including language skills, prereading ability, premathematics ability, cognitive ability, scientific ability, social and emotional development, and physical development; and (5) appropriate use and application of valid and reliable assessments for such Head Start programs.

The panel will consist of multiple experts in child development and child education, professional development, assessments of young children (including children with disabilities and limited English proficient children), including screening, diagnostic, and classroom based instructional assessments, and this panel shall be selected and appointed by the National Academy of Sciences, after consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

The panel will be established no later than 90 days after the enactment of this Act and not later than 1 year after the panel is established shall it complete and submit such recommendations to the Secretary. Amendments made to section 641A(a)(1)(B)(ii) shall not be implemented by the Secretary until the panel submits the report.

The Secretary shall, in appropriate cases, use the panel's results and recommendations to develop and revise educational standards and the performance measures, and assessments utilized in the Head Start programs.

The Secretary shall also conduct a study on the status of LEP children and their families in Head Start programs and no later than September 30, 2009 shall the Secretary prepare and submit a report containing the results of the study to Congress including information on: the demographics of LEP children from birth through age 5, including the number of such children receiving Head Start services and the geographic distribution of such children; the nature of Head Start services provided to LEP children and their families including types, duration, intensity, costs of family services and language assistance; procedures in Head Start programs for the assessment of language needs and the transition of LEP children to kindergarten including the extent to which Head Start programs meet the requirements of section 642A for LEP children; the extent to which Head Start programs make use of funds under section 640(a)(3) to improve the quality of Head Start services provided to LEP children and their families; and the qualifications and training provided to Head Start teachers serving LEP children and families; the rate of progress made by LEP children and their families in Head Start programs including: (1) their rate of progress toward meeting educational standards described in section 641A(a)(1)(B)(ii) while enrolled in Head Start, measured between 1990 and 2004; (2) the correlation between such progress and the type of instruction and educational program provided to LEP children; and (3) the correlation between such progress and

the health and family services provided by Head Start programs to LEP children and their families.

Section 20. Reports

Section 650(a) is amended so that the Secretary will also consider homelessness, children in foster care in reports concerning the status of children. This section also updates the name of the Senate committee charged with oversight of this legislation to "Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions."

Section 21. Comparability of wages

Section 653 is amended as to mandate that no individual is to be compensated with Federal funds in excess of the salary of the Secretary. If this is violated, the Secretary shall withhold from the base grant of the Head Start agency involved for the next fiscal year, an amount equal to the aggregate amount by which the salary that resulted in the violation exceeded the salary of the Secretary.

Section 22. Limitation with respect to certain unlawful activities

This section amends section 655 to forbid participation in civil disturbance, rioting, or unlawful demonstration by individuals assigned by or employed in Head Start agencies.

Section 23. Political activities

This section amends section 656(b) to forbid the participation of any Head Start employee during the hours in which such individual is working on behalf of such program in any political activity associated with an election, or contending faction or group, in an election for public or party office, or any activity to provide voters or prospective voters with transportation to the polls, or any voter registration activity. The Secretary may issue rules and regulations to enforce this section.

Section 24. Parental consent requirement for health services

This section amends the act to require written parental consent before administering or referring any health care services or procedures including non-emergency intrusive physical examination of a child in connection with participation in a program. Such services that require written parental permission include examinations: not immediately necessary to protect the health or safety of a child, those that require incision or those which involve exposure of private body parts. This section does not prohibit agencies from using established methods for handling cases of child abuse and neglect that comply with Federal, State or tribal law.

IX. CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

In compliance with rule XXVI paragraph 12 of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following provides a print of the statute or the part or section thereof to be amended or replaced (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in italic, existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman).

HEAD START ACT

* * * * *

SEC. 636. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE.

It is the purpose of this subchapter to promote school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of low-income children through *educational instruction in prereading skills, premathematics skills, and language and through* the provision, to low-income children and their families, of health, educational, nutritional, social, and other services that are determined, based on family needs assessments, to be necessary.

DEFINITIONS

SEC. 637. For purposes of this subchapter:

(1) The term “child with a disability” means—

(A) * * *

(B) * * *

(2) The term “delegate agency” means a public, private non-profit (*including a community-based organization*), or for-profit organization or agency to which a grantee has delegated all or part of the responsibility of the grantee for operating a Head Start program.

(3) * * *

(A) * * *

* * * * *

(C) Parent literacy, *including financial literacy*, training that leads to economic self-sufficiency.

* * * * *

(17) The term “State” means a State, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, Guam, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands of the United States, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, but for fiscal years ending before October 1, 2001 (and fiscal year 2002, if the legislation described in section 640(a)(2)(B)(iii) has not been enacted before September 30, 2001), also means the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. **■ Mariana Islands.**

(18) *The term “homeless child” means a child described in section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a(2)).*

(19) *The term “limited English proficient”, used with respect to a child, means—*

(A) *who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in a Head Start program, Early Head Start program, or other early care and education program;*

(B)(i) *who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English;*

(ii)(I) *who is a Native American, Alaska Native, or a native resident of a United State territory; and*

(II) *who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the child’s level of English language proficiency; or*

- (iii) *who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and*
- (C) *whose difficulty in speaking or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny such child—*
 - (i) *the ability to successfully achieve in a classroom in which the language of instruction is English; or*
 - (ii) *the opportunity to participate fully in society.*
- (20) *The term “deficiency” means—*
 - (A) *a systemic or substantial failure of an agency in an area of performance that the Secretary determines involves—*
 - (i) *a threat to the health, safety, or civil rights of children or staff;*
 - (ii) *a denial to parents of the exercise of their full roles and responsibilities related to program operations;*
 - (iii) *a failure to comply with standards related to early childhood development and health services, family and community partnerships, or program design and management;*
 - (iv) *the misuse of funds under this subchapter;*
 - (v) *loss of legal status or financial viability, loss of permits, debarment from receiving Federal grants or contracts, or the improper use of Federal funds; or*
 - (vi) *failure to meet any other Federal or State requirement that the agency has shown an unwillingness or inability to correct, after notice from the Secretary, within the period specified;*
 - (B) *system failure of the board of directors of an agency to fully exercise its legal and fiduciary responsibilities;*
 - (C) *substantial failure of an agency to meet the administrative requirements of section 644(b);*
 - (D) *failure of an agency to demonstrate that the agency attempted to meet the coordination and collaboration requirements with entities described in section 640(a)(5)(D)(iii)(I); or*
 - (E) *having an unresolved area of noncompliance.*
- (21) *The term “unresolved area of noncompliance” means failure to correct a noncompliance item within 120 days, or within such additional time (if any) authorized by the Secretary, after receiving from the Secretary notice of such noncompliance item, pursuant to section 641A(d).*
- (22) *The term “interrater reliability” means the extent to which 2 different raters or observers consistently obtain the same result when using the same assessment tool.*

* * * * *

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR HEAD START PROGRAMS

SEC. 638. The Secretary may, upon application by an agency which is eligible for designation as a Head Start agency pursuant to section 641, provide financial assistance to such agency for a period of 5 years for the planning, conduct, administration, and eval-

uation of a Head Start program focused primarily upon the children from low-income families who have not reached the age of compulsory school attendance which (1) will provide such comprehensive health, education, parental involvement, nutritional, social, and other services as will enable the children to attain their full potential and attain school readiness; and (2) will provide for direct participation of the parents of such children in the development, conduct, and overall program direction at the local level.

* * * * *

[AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS

[Sec. 639. (a) There are authorized to be appropriated for carrying out the provisions of this subchapter such sums as may be necessary for fiscal years 1999 through 2003.

[(b) From the amount appropriated under subsection (a), the Secretary shall make available—

[(1) for each of fiscal years 1999 through 2003 to carry out activities authorized under section 642A, not more than \$35,000,000 but not less than the amount that was made available for such activities for fiscal year 1998;

[(2) not more than \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 1999 through 2003 to carry out impact studies under section 649(g); and

[(3) not more than \$12,000,000 for fiscal year 1999, and such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2000 through 2003, to carry out other research, demonstration, and evaluation activities, including longitudinal studies, under section 649.]

SEC. 639. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated for carrying out the provisions of this subchapter \$7,215,000,000 for fiscal year 2006, \$7,515,000,000 for fiscal year 2007, \$7,815,000,000 for fiscal year 2008, and such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2009 and 2010.

(b) SPECIFIC PROGRAMS.—From the amount appropriated under subsection (a), the Secretary shall make available to carry out research, demonstration, and evaluation activities, including longitudinal studies under section 649, not more than \$20,000,000 for fiscal year 2006, and such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2007 through 2010, of which not more than \$7,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2006 through 2010 shall be available to carry out impact studies under section 649(g).

* * * * *

ALLOTMENT OF FUNDS, LIMITATIONS ON ASSISTANCE

SEC. 640 (a)(1) * * *

(2) The Secretary shall reserve 13 percent of the amount appropriated for each fiscal year for use in accordance with the following order of priorities—

[(A) Indian Head Start programs, services for children with disabilities, and migrant and seasonal Head Start programs, except that there shall be made available for each fiscal year for use by Indian Head Start programs and by migrant and

seasonal Head Start programs, on a nationwide basis, not less than the amount that was obligated for use by Indian Head Start programs and by migrant and seasonal Head Start programs for fiscal year 1998;】

(A) Indian Head Start programs, services for children with disabilities, and migrant and seasonal Head Start programs, except that the Secretary shall reserve for each fiscal year for use by Indian Head Start and migrant and seasonal Head Start programs (referred to in this paragraph as covered programs), on a nationwide basis, a sum that is the total of 4 percent of the amount appropriated under section 639 for that fiscal year (for Indian Head Start programs), and 5 percent of that appropriated amount (for migrant and seasonal Head Start programs), except that—

(i) if reserving the specified percentages for Indian Head Start programs and migrant and seasonal Head Start programs would reduce the number of children served by Head Start programs, relative to the number of children served on the date of enactment of the Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act, taking into consideration an appropriate adjustment for inflation, the Secretary shall reserve percentages that approach, as closely as practicable, the specified percentages and that do not cause such a reduction; and

(ii) notwithstanding any other provision of this subparagraph, the Secretary shall reserve for each fiscal year for use by Indian Head Start programs and by migrant and seasonal Head Start programs, on a nationwide basis, not less than the amount that was obligated for use by Indian Head Start programs and by migrant and seasonal Head Start programs for the previous fiscal year;

(B)* * *

* * * * *

【(C) training and technical assistance activities which are sufficient to meet the needs associated with program expansion and to foster program and management improvement activities as described in section 648 of this subchapter, in an amount for each fiscal year which is not less than 2 percent of the amount appropriated for such fiscal year, of which not less than \$3,000,000 of the amount appropriated for such fiscal year shall be made available to carry out activities described in section 648(c)(4);】

(C) training and technical assistance activities that are sufficient to meet the needs associated with program expansion and to foster program and management improvement activities as described in section 648, in an amount for each fiscal year that is equal to 2 percent of the amount appropriated under section 639 for such fiscal year, of which—

(i) 50 percent shall be made available to Head Start agencies to use directly, or by establishing local or regional agreements with community experts, colleges and universities, or private consultants, for any of the following training and technical assistance activities, including—

(I) activities that ensure that Head Start programs meet or exceed the program performance standards described in section 641A(a)(1);

(II) activities that ensure that Head Start programs have adequate numbers of trained, qualified staff who have skills in working with children and families, including children and families who are limited English proficient and children with disabilities;

(III) activities to pay expenses, including direct training for expert consultants working with any staff, to improve the management and implementation of Head Start services and systems;

(IV) activities that help ensure that Head Start programs have qualified staff who can promote language skills and literacy growth of children and who can provide children with a variety of skills that have been identified as predictive of later reading achievement, school success, and other educational skills described in section 641A;

(V) activities to improve staff qualifications and to assist with the implementation of career development programs and to encourage the staff to continually improve their skills and expertise, including developing partnerships with programs that recruit, train, place, and support college students in Head Start centers to deliver an innovative early learning program to pre-school children;

(VI) activities that help local programs ensure that the arrangement, condition, and implementation of the learning environments in Head Start programs are conducive to providing effective program services to children and families;

(VII) activities to provide training necessary to improve the qualifications of Head Start staff and to support staff training, child counseling, health services, and other services necessary to address the needs of children enrolled in Head Start programs, including children from families in crises, children who experience chronic violence or homelessness, and children who experience substance abuse in their families, and children under 3 years of age, where applicable;

(VIII) activities to provide classes or in-service-type programs to improve or enhance parenting skills, job skills, adult and family literacy, including financial literacy, or training to become a classroom aide or bus driver in a Head Start program;

(IX) additional activities deemed appropriate to the improvements of Head Start agencies' programs, as determined by the agencies' technical assistance and training plans; or

(X) any other activities regarding the use of funds as determined by the Secretary;

(ii) 50 percent shall be made available to the Secretary to support a regional or State system of early childhood education training and technical assistance, and to assist

local programs (including Indian Head Start programs and migrant and seasonal Head Start programs) in meeting the standards described in section 641A(a)(1) and

(iii) not less than \$3,000,000 of the amount in clause (ii) appropriated for such fiscal year shall be made available to carry out activities described in section 648(d)(4);

(D) discretionary payments made by the Secretary (including payments for all costs (other than compensation of Federal employees) of reviews of Head Start agencies and programs under section 641A(c), and of activities carried out under paragraph (1), (2), or (3) of section 641A(d) related to correcting deficiencies and conducting proceedings to terminate the designation of Head Start ~~agencies;~~ *agencies*); and

(E) * * *

No funds reserved under this paragraph or paragraph (3) may be combined with funds appropriated under any other Act if the purpose of combining funds is to make a single discretionary grant or a single discretionary payment, unless such funds appropriated under this subchapter are separately identified in such grant or payment and are used for the purposes of this subchapter. No Freely Associated State may receive financial assistance under this subchapter after fiscal year 2002. *In no case shall the Secretary use funds reserved under this paragraph to expand or create additional slots for services in non-Indian and non-migrant and seasonal Head Start programs until the 4 and 5 percent amounts specified in subparagraph (A) are reached. The Secretary shall assure that any additional funding appropriated in any of fiscal years 2006 through 2010 that is available to the Secretary under the authority of this paragraph shall be used to increase the funding levels of migrant and seasonal Head Start programs and Indian Head Start programs until such point as migrant and seasonal Head Start programs are receiving not less than 5 percent of the total funds appropriated under section 639 and Indian Head Start programs are receiving not less than 4 percent of the total funds appropriated under section 639. After ensuring that the 4 and 5 percent amounts described in subparagraph (A) and the 2 percent amount described in subparagraph (C) have been reached and after allotting the funds reserved under paragraph (3)(A) as specified in paragraph (3)(D), the Secretary may distribute any remaining funds available to the Secretary under this paragraph to covered programs, and if the Secretary decides to distribute such remaining funds available under this paragraph to covered programs, the Secretary shall distribute the funds by distributing 65 percent of the remainder by giving priority to grant recipients in the States serving the smallest percentages (as determined by the Secretary) of children less than 5 years of age from families whose income is below the poverty line, and distributing 35 percent of the remainder on a competitive basis. The Secretary shall require each Head Start agency to report at the end of each budget year on how funds provided to carry out subparagraph (C)(i) were used.*

(3)(A)(i) * * *

(I) **60 percent of such excess amount for fiscal year 1999, 50 percent of such excess amount for fiscal year 2000, 47.5 percent of such excess amount for fiscal year 2001, 35 percent of such excess amount for fiscal year 2002, and** **25 percent of**

such excess amount for fiscal year 2003, 30 percent of such excess amount for fiscal year 2006, and 40 percent of such excess amount for each of fiscal years 2007 through 2010; and

* * * * *

(B) * * *

(i) Ensuring that Head Start programs meet or exceed **performance standards pursuant to section 641A(a)(1)(A).** *standards and measures pursuant to section 641A.*

[(ii) Ensuring that such programs have adequate numbers of qualified staff, and that such staff are furnished adequate training, including developing skills in working with children with non-English language background and children with disabilities, when appropriate.]

(ii) Ensuring that such programs have adequate numbers of qualified staff, and that such staff is furnished adequate training, including training to promote the development of language skills, premathematics skills, and prereading in young children and in working with limited English proficient children, children in foster care, children referred by child welfare services, and children with disabilities, when appropriate.

[(iii) Ensuring that salary levels and benefits are adequate to attract and retain qualified staff for such programs.]

(iii) Developing and financing the salary scales and benefits standards under section 644(a) and section 653, in order to ensure that salary levels and benefits are adequate to attract and retain qualified staff for such programs.

[(iv) Using salary increases to improve staff qualifications, and to assist with the implementation of career development programs, for the staff of Head Start programs, and to encourage the staff to continually improve their skills, and expertise by informing the staff of the availability of Federal and State incentive and loan forgiveness programs for professional development.]

(iv) Using salary increases to—

(I) assist with the implementation of quality programs and improve staff qualifications;

(II) ensure the staff can promote the language skills and literacy growth of children and can provide children with a variety of skills that have been identified, through scientifically based early reading research, as predictive of later reading achievement, as well as additional skills identified in section 641A(a)(1)(B)(ii); and

(III) encourage the staff to continually improve their skills and expertise by informing the staff of the availability of Federal and State incentive and loan forgiveness programs for professional development.

(v) Improving community-wide strategic planning and needs assessments for such programs and collaboration efforts for such programs, *including collaborations to increase program participation by underserved populations of eligible children*

(vi) * * *

[(vii) Ensuring that such programs have qualified staff that can promote language skills and literacy growth of children and that can provide children with a variety of skills that have

been identified, through scientifically based reading research, as predictive of later reading achievement.】

(vii) *Providing assistance to complete postsecondary coursework including scholarships or other financial incentives, such as differential and merit pay, to enable Head Start teachers to improve competencies and the resulting child outcomes.*

【(viii) Making such other improvements in the quality of such programs as the Secretary may designate.】

(viii) *Promoting the regular attendance and stability of all Head Start children with particular attention to highly mobile children, including children from migrant and seasonal farmworking families (where appropriate), homeless children, and children in foster care.*

(ix) *Making such other improvements in the quality of such programs as the Secretary may designate.*

(C) Quality improvement funds shall be used to carry out any or all of the following activities:

(i)(I) Not less than one-half of the amount reserved under this paragraph, to improve the compensation (including benefits) of classroom teachers and other staff of Head Start agencies and thereby enhance recruitment and retention of qualified staff, including recruitment and retention pursuant to achieving the requirements set forth in section 648A(a). The expenditure of funds under this clause shall be subject to section 653. 【Preferences in awarding salary increases, in excess of cost-of-living allowances, with such funds shall be granted to classroom teachers and staff who obtain additional training or education related to their responsibilities as employees of a Head Start program.】 *Salary increases, in excess of cost-of-living allowances, provided with such funds shall be subject to the specific standards governing salaries and salary increases established pursuant to section 644(a).*

* * * * *

(ii) To train classroom teachers and other staff to meet the 【education performance】 *additional educational* standards described in section 641A(a)(1)(B), through activities—

(I) to promote children's language, *prereading*, and literacy growth, through techniques identified through scientifically based reading research;

【(II) to promote the acquisition of the English language for non-English background children and families;】

(II) *to help limited English proficient children attain the knowledge, skills, and development specified in section 641A(a)(1)(B)(ii) and to promote the acquisition of the English language by such children and families;*

(III) * * *

【(IV) to provide training necessary to improve the qualifications of the staff of the Head Start agencies and to support staff training, child counseling, and other services necessary to address the problems of children participating in Head Start programs, including children from dysfunctional families, children who experience chronic violence in their communities, and children who experience substance abuse in their families.】

(IV) to provide education and training necessary to improve the qualifications of Head Start staff, particularly assistance to enable more instructors to be fully competent and to meet the degree requirements under section 648A(a)(2)(A), and to support staff training, child counseling, and other services necessary to address the challenges of children participating in Head Start programs, including children from immigrant, refugee, and asylee families, children from families in crisis, homeless children, children in foster care, children referred to Head Start programs by child welfare agencies, and children who are exposed to chronic violence or substance abuse.

(iii) To employ additional Head Start staff, including staff necessary to reduce the child-staff ratio, *educational staff who have the qualifications described in section 648A(a)*, and staff necessary to coordinate a Head Start program with other services available to children participating in such program and to their families.

(iv) * * *

(v) To supplement amounts provided under paragraph (2)(C) to provide training necessary to improve the qualifications of the staff of the Head Start agencies, and to support staff training, child counseling, and other services necessary to address the problems of children participating in Head Start **programs, including children from dysfunctional families, children who experience chronic violence in their communities, and children who experience substance abuse in their families.** *programs.*

(vi) To conduct outreach to homeless families in an effort to increase the program participation of eligible homeless children.

(vii) To conduct outreach to migrant and seasonal farmworking families and families with limited English proficient children.

(viii) To partner with institutions of higher education and nonprofit organizations, including community-based organizations, that recruit, train, place, and support college students to serve as mentors and reading coaches to preschool children in Head Start programs.

(ix) To upgrade the qualifications and skills of educational personnel to meet the professional standards described in section 648AA(a)(1), including certification and licensure as bilingual education teachers and for other educational personnel who serve limited English proficient students.

[(vi)](x) Such other activities as the Secretary may designate.

* * * * *

(4) ***

(A) each State receives an amount which is equal to the amount the State received for fiscal year **[1998] 2005**; and

[(B)] any amount available after all allotments are made under subparagraph (A) for such fiscal year shall be distributed proportionately on the basis of the number of children less than 5 years of age from families whose income is below the poverty line.**]**

(B) any amount available after all allotments are made under subparagraph (A) for such fiscal year shall be distributed as follows:

(i) Each State shall receive an amount sufficient to serve the same number of children in Head Start programs in each State as were served on the date of enactment of the Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act, taking into consideration an appropriate adjustment for inflation.

(ii) After ensuring that each State has received the amount described in clause (i) and after allotting the funds reserved under paragraph (3)(A) as specified in paragraph (3)(D), the Secretary shall distribute the remaining balance, by—

(I) distributing 65 percent of the balance by giving priority to States serving the smallest percentages (as determined by the Secretary) of children less than 5 years of age from families whose income is below the poverty line; and

(II) distributing 35 percent of the balance on a competitive basis.

(5)(A) From amounts reserved and allotted pursuant to paragraph (4), the Secretary shall reserve such sums as may be necessary to award the collaboration grants described in subparagraphs (B) and (D).

[(B) From the reserved sums, the Secretary may award a collaboration grant to each State to facilitate collaboration regarding activities carried out in the State under this subchapter, and other activities carried out in, and by, the State that are designed to benefit low-income children and families and to encourage Head Start agencies to collaborate with entities involved in State and local planning processes (including the State lead agency administering the financial assistance received under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.) and the entities providing resource and referral services in the State) in order to better meet the needs of low-income children and families.

[(C) A State that receives a grant under subparagraph (B) shall—

[(i) appoint an individual to serve as a State liaison between—

[(I) the appropriate regional office of the Administration for Children and Families and agencies and individuals carrying out Head Start programs in the State; and

[(II) agencies (including local educational agencies) and entities carrying out programs serving low-income children and families;

[(ii) involve the State Head Start Association in the selection of the individual, and involve the association in determinations relating to the ongoing direction of the collaboration;

[(iii) ensure that the individual holds a position with sufficient authority and access to ensure that the collaboration described in subparagraph (B) is effective and involves a range of State agencies;

[(iv) ensure that the collaboration described in subparagraph (B) involves coordination of Head Start services with health care, welfare, child care, education, and community service ac-

tivities, family literacy services, activities relating to children with disabilities (including coordination of services with those State officials who are responsible for administering part C and section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1431–1444, 1419)), and services for homeless children;

[(v) include representatives of the State Head Start Association and local Head Start agencies in unified planning regarding early care and education services at both the State and local levels, including collaborative efforts to plan for the provision of full-working-day, full calendar year early care and education services for children; and

[(vi) encourage local Head Start agencies to appoint a State level representative to represent Head Start agencies within the State in conducting collaborative efforts described in subparagraphs (B) and (D), and in clause (v).

[(D) Following the award of collaboration grants describe in subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall provide, from the reserved sums, supplemental funding for collaboration grants—

[(i) to States that (in consultation with their State Head Start Associations) develop statewide, regional, or local unified plans for early childhood education and child care that include the participation of Head Start agencies; and

[(ii) to States that engage in other innovative collaborative initiatives, including plans for collaborative training and professional development initiatives for child care, early childhood education and Head Start service managers, providers, and staff.]]

(B)(i) From the reserved sums, the Secretary shall award a collaboration grant to each State to facilitate collaboration between Head Start agencies and entities (including the State) that carry out other activities designed to benefit low-income families and children from birth to school entry.

(ii) Grants described in clause (i) shall be used to—

(I) encourage Head Start agencies to collaborate with entities involved in State and local planning processes to better meet the needs of low-income families and children from birth to school entry;

(II) encourage 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 resources and referral services in the State to make full-working-day and full calendar year services available to children;

(III) promote alignment of Head Start services with State early learning and school readiness goals and standards, including the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework;

(IV) 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; and

(V) carry out the activities of the State Director of Head Start Collaboration authorized in subparagraph (D).

(C) *In order to improve coordination and delivery of early education services to children in the State, a State that receives a grant under subparagraph (B) shall—*

(i) appoint an individual to serve as the State Director of Head Start Collaboration;

(ii) ensure that the State Director of Head Start Collaboration holds a position with sufficient authority and access to ensure that the collaboration described in subparagraph (B) is effective and involves a range of State agencies; and

(iii) involve the State Head Start Association in the selection of the Director and involve the Association in determinations relating to the ongoing direction of the collaboration office.

(D) *The State Director of Head Start Collaboration, after consultation with the State Advisory Council described in subparagraph (E), shall—*

(i) not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act, conduct an assessment that—

(I) addresses the needs of Head Start agencies in the State with respect to collaborating, coordinating services, and implementing State early learning and school readiness goals and standards to better serve children enrolled in Head Start programs in the State;

(II) shall be updated on an annual basis; and

(III) shall be made available to the general public within the State;

(ii) assess the availability of high quality pre-kindergarten services for low-income children in the State;

(iii) develop a strategic plan that is based on the assessment described in clause (i) that will—

(I) enhance collaboration and coordination of Head Start services with other entities providing early childhood programs and services (such as child care and services offered by museums), health care, mental health care, welfare, child protective services, education and community service activities, family literacy services, reading readiness programs (including such programs offered by public and school libraries), services relating to children with disabilities, other early childhood programs and services for limited English proficient children and homeless children, and services provided for children in foster care and children referred to Head Start programs by child welfare agencies, including agencies and State officials responsible for such services;

(II) 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 care;

(III) assist Head Start agencies to align services with State early learning and school readiness goals and standards and to facilitate collaborative efforts to develop local school readiness standards; and

(IV) enable agencies in the State to better coordinate professional development opportunities for Head Start staff, such as by—

(aa) assisting 2- and 4-year public and private institutions of higher education to develop articulation agreements;

(bb) awarding grants to institutions of higher education to develop model early childhood education programs, including practica or internships for students to spend time in a Head Start or prekindergarten program;

(cc) working with local Head Start agencies to meet the degree requirements described in section 648A(a)(2)(A), including providing distance learning opportunities for Head Start staff, where needed to make higher education more accessible to Head Start staff; and

(dd) enabling the State Head Start agencies to better coordinate outreach to eligible families;

(iv) promote partnerships between Head Start agencies, State governments, and the private sector to help ensure that preschool children from low-income families are receiving comprehensive services to prepare the children to enter school ready to learn;

(v) consult with the chief State school officer, local educational agencies, and providers of early childhood education and care to conduct unified planning regarding early care and education services at both the State and local levels, including undertaking collaborative efforts to develop and make improvements in school readiness standards;

(vi) promote partnerships (such as the partnerships involved with the Free to Grow initiative) between Head Start agencies, schools, law enforcement, 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;

(vii) promote partnerships between Head Start agencies and other organizations in order to enhance the Head Start curriculum, including partnerships to promote inclusion of more books in Head Start classrooms and partnerships to promote coordination of activities with the Ready-to-Learn Television program carried out under subpart 3 of part D of title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6775 et seq.); and

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

(E)(i) The Governor of the State shall designate or establish a council to serve as the State advisory council on collaboration on early care and education activities for children from birth to school entry (in this subchapter referred to as the State Advisory Council).

(ii) The Governor may designate an existing entity to serve as the State Advisory Council, if the entity includes representatives described in subclauses (I) through (XXIV) of clause (iii).

(iii) Members of the State Advisory Council shall include, to the maximum extent possible—

(I) the State Director of Head Start Collaboration;

- (II) a representative of the appropriate regional office of the Administration for Children and Families;
 - (III) a representative of the State educational agency and local educational agencies;
 - (IV) a representative of institutions of higher education;
 - (V) a representative (or representatives) of the State agency (or agencies) responsible for health or mental health care;
 - (VI) a representative of the State agency responsible for teacher professional standards, certification, and licensing, including prekindergarten teacher professional standards, certification standards, certification, and licensing, where applicable;
 - (VII) a representative of the State agency responsible for child care;
 - (VIII) early childhood education professionals, including professionals with expertise in second language acquisition and instructional strategies in teaching limited English proficient children;
 - (IX) kindergarten teachers and teachers in grades 1 through 3;
 - (X) health care professionals;
 - (XI) child development specialists, including specialists in prenatal, infant, and toddler development;
 - (XII) a representative of the State agency responsible for assisting children with developmental disabilities;
 - (XIII) a representative of the State agency responsible for programs under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.);
 - (XIV) a representative of the State interagency coordinating council established under section 641 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1441);
 - (XV) a representative of the State Head Start Association (where appropriate), and other representatives of Head Start programs in the State;
 - (XVI) a representative of the State network of child care resource and referral agencies;
 - (XVII) a representative of community-based organizations;
 - (XVIII) a representative of the State and local providers of early childhood education and child care;
 - (XIX) a representative of migrant and seasonal Head Start programs and Indian Head Start programs (where appropriate);
 - (XX) parents;
 - (XXI) religious and business leaders;
 - (XXII) the head of the State library administrative agency;
 - (XXIII) representatives of State and local organizations and other entities providing professional development to early care and education providers; and
 - (XXIV) a representative of other entities determined to be relevant by the chief executive officer of the State.
- (iv)(I) The State Advisory Council shall be responsible for, in addition to responsibilities assigned to the council by the chief executive officer of the State—
- (aa) conducting a periodic statewide needs assessment concerning early care and education programs for children from birth to school entry;

(bb) identifying barriers to, and opportunities for, collaboration and coordination between entities carrying out Federal and State child development, child care, and early childhood education programs;

(cc) developing recommendations regarding means of establishing a unified data collection system for early care and education programs throughout the State;

(dd) developing a statewide professional development and career ladder plan for early care and education in the State; and

(ee) reviewing and approving the strategic plan, regarding collaborating and coordinating services to better serve children enrolled in Head Start programs, developed by the State Director of Head Start Collaboration under subparagraph (D)(iii).

(II) The State Advisory Council shall hold public hearings and provide an opportunity for public comment on the needs assessment and recommendations described in subclause (I). The State Advisory Council shall submit a statewide strategic report containing the needs assessment and recommendations described in subclause (I) to the State Director of Head Start Collaboration and the chief executive officer of the State.

(III) After submission of a statewide strategic report under subclause (II), the State Advisory Council shall meet periodically to review any implementation of the recommendations in such report and any changes in State and local needs.

[(E)](F)(i) The Secretary shall—

(I) * * *

* * * * *

[(F)](G) As used in this paragraph, the term “low-income”, used with respect to children or families, shall not be considered to refer only to children or families that meet the low-income criteria prescribed pursuant to section 645(a)(1)(A).

(6)(A) From amounts reserved and allotted pursuant to paragraphs (2) and (4), the Secretary shall use, the grants for programs described in section 645A(a), a portion of the combined total of such amounts equal to [7.5 percent for fiscal year 1999, 8 percent for fiscal year 2000, 9 percent for fiscal year 2001, 10 percent for fiscal year 2002, and 10 percent for fiscal year 2003, of the amount appropriated pursuant to section 639(a), except as provided in subparagraph (B).] 11 percent for fiscal year 2006, 13 percent for fiscal year 2007, 15 percent for fiscal year 2008, 17 percent for fiscal year 2009, and 18 percent for fiscal year 2010, of the amount appropriated pursuant to section 639(a).

[(B)(i) If the Secretary does not submit an interim report on the preliminary findings of the Early Head Start impact study currently being conducted by the Secretary (as of the date of enactment of the Head Start Amendments of 1998) to the appropriate committees by June 1, 2001, the amount of the reserved portion for fiscal year 2002 that exceeds the reserved portion for fiscal year 2001, if any, shall be used for quality improvement activities described in section 640(a)(3) and shall not be used to serve an increased number of eligible children under section 645A.

[(ii) If the Secretary does not submit a final report on the Early Head Start impact study to the appropriate committees by June 1, 2002, or if the Secretary finds in the report that there are substan-

tial deficiencies in the program carried out under section 645A, the amount of the reserved portion for fiscal year 2003 that exceeds the reserved portion for fiscal year 2002, if any, shall be used for quality improvement activities described in section 640(a)(3) and shall not be used to serve an increased number of eligible children under section 645A.

[(iii) In this subparagraph:

[(I) The term “appropriate committees” means the Committee on Education and the Workforce and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Labor and Human Resources and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

[(II) The term “reserved portion”, used with respect to a fiscal year, means the amount required to be used in accordance with subparagraph (A) for that fiscal year.]

[(C)](B)(i) For any fiscal year for which the Secretary determines that the amount appropriated under section 639(a) is not sufficient to permit the Secretary to reserve the portion described in subparagraph (A) without reducing the number of children served by Head Start programs or adversely affecting the quality of Head Start services, relative to the number of children served and the quality of the services during the preceding fiscal year, the Secretary may reduce the percentage of funds required to be reserved for the portion described in subparagraph (A) for the fiscal year for which the determination is made, but not below the percentage [required to be] so reserved for the preceding fiscal year.

* * * * *

(f) The Secretary shall establish procedures to enable Head Start agencies to develop locally designed or specialized service delivery models to address local community [needs.] *needs, including—*

(1) *models that leverage the capacity and capabilities of the delivery system of early childhood education and child care; and*

(2) *procedures to provide for the conversion of part-day programs to full-day programs or part-day slots to full-day slots.*

(g)(1) * * *

(2) For the purpose of expanding Head Start programs, in allocating funds to an applicant within a State, from amounts allotted to a State pursuant to subsection (a)(4), the Secretary shall take into consideration—

(A) * * *

* * * * *

[(C) the extent to which the applicant has undertaken community-wide strategic planning and needs assessments involving other community organizations and public agencies serving children and families (including organizations serving families in whose homes English is not the language customarily spoken), and organizations and public entities serving children with disabilities;]

(C) *the extent to which the applicant has undertaken communitywide strategic planning and needs assessments involving other community organizations and Federal, State, and local public agencies serving children and families (including organizations and agencies providing family support services and pro-*

tective services to children and families and organizations serving families in whose homes English is not the language customarily spoken), and individuals, organizations, and public entities serving children with disabilities, children in foster care, and homeless children including the local educational agency liaison designated under section 722(g)(1)(J)(ii) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii));

(D) the extent to which the family and community needs assessment of the applicant reflects a need to provide full-working-day or full calendar year services and the extent to which, and manner in which, the applicant demonstrates the ability to collaborate and participate with **[other local]** *the State and local* community providers of child care or preschool services to provide full-working-day full calendar year services;

(E) the numbers of eligible children in each community who *would like to participate but* are not participating in a Head Start program or any other early childhood program;

(F) * * *

(G) the extent to which the applicant proposes to foster partnerships with other service providers in a manner that will *leverage the existing delivery systems of such services and* enhance the resource capacity of the applicant; and

(H) the extent to which the applicant, in providing services, plans to coordinate with the local educational agency serving the community involved, *including the local educational agency liaison designated under section 722(g)(1)(J)(ii) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii))*, and with schools in which children participating in a Head Start program operated by such agency will enroll following such program, regarding such services and the education services provided by such local educational agency.

* * * * *

(i) The Secretary shall issue regulations establishing requirements for the safety features, and the safe operation, of vehicles used by Head Start agencies to transport children participating in Head Start programs *and requirements to ensure the appropriate supervision and background checks of individuals with whom the agencies contract to transport those children.*

* * * * *

(1)(1) * * *

* * * * *

[(3) In carrying out this subchapter, the Secretary shall continue the administrative arrangement responsible for meeting the needs of children of migrant and seasonal farmworkers and Indian children and shall ensure that appropriate funding is provided to meet such needs.]

(3) *In carrying out this subchapter, the Secretary shall continue the administrative arrangement at the national or regional level for meeting the needs of Indian children and children of migrant and seasonal farmworkers and shall ensure—*

(A) *that appropriate funding is provided to meet such needs, including training and technical assistance provided by staff*

with knowledge of and experience in working with such populations; and

(B) the appointment of a national migrant and seasonal Head Start program collaboration director and a national Indian Head Start collaboration director.

(4)(A) For the purposes of paragraph (3), the Secretary shall conduct an annual consultation in each affected Head Start region, with tribal governments operating Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

(B) The consultations shall be for the purpose of better meeting the needs of American Indian and Alaska Native children and families pertinent to subsections (a), (b), and (c) of section 641, taking into consideration funding allocations, distribution formulas, and other issues affecting the delivery of Head Start services within tribal communities.

(C) The Secretary shall publish a notification of the consultations in the Federal Register prior to conducting the consultations.

(D) A detailed report of each consultation shall be prepared and made available, on a timely basis, to all tribal governments receiving funds under this subchapter.

(m) ENROLLMENT OF HOMELESS CHILDREN.—The Secretary shall issue regulations to remove barriers to the enrollment and participation of homeless children in Head Start programs. Such regulations shall require Head Start agencies to—

(1) implement policies and procedures to ensure that homeless children are identified and receive appropriate priority for enrollment;

(2) allow homeless children to apply to, enroll in, and attend Head Start programs while required documents, such as proof of residency, proof of immunization, and other medical records, birth certificates, and other documents, are obtained within a reasonable timeframe; and

(3) coordinate individual Head Start programs with efforts to implement subtitle B of title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.).

(n) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed to require a State to establish a program of early education for children in the State, to require any child to participate in a program of early education in order to attend preschool, or to participate in any initial screening prior to participation in such program, except as provided under section 612(a)(3) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(3)) and consistent with section 614(a)(1)(C) of such Act (20 U.S.C. 1414(a)(1)(C)).

(o) MATERIALS.—All curricula funded under this subchapter shall be scientifically based, and developmentally and linguistically based (to the extent practicable), and age appropriate. Parents shall have the opportunity to examine any such curricula or instructional materials funded under this subchapter.

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[DESIGNATION OF HEAD START AGENCIES]

[Sec. 641. (a) The Secretary is authorized to designate as a Head Start agency any local public or private nonprofit or for-profit agen-

cy, within a community, which (1) has the power and authority to carry out the purposes of this subchapter and perform the functions set forth in section 642 within a community; and (2) is determined by the Secretary (in consultation with the chief executive officer of the State involved, if such State expends non-Federal funds to carry out Head Start programs) to be capable of planning, conducting, administering, and evaluating, either directly or by other arrangements, a Head Start program.

[(b) For purposes of this subchapter, a community may be a city, county, or multicounty or multicounty unit within a State, an Indian reservation (including Indians in any off-reservation area designated by an appropriate tribal government in consultation with the Secretary), or a neighborhood or other area (irrespective of boundaries or political subdivisions) which provides a suitable organizational base and possesses the commonality of interest needed to operate a Head Start program.

[(c)(1) In the administration of the provisions of this section (subject to paragraph (2)), the Secretary shall, in consultation with the chief executive officer of the State involved if such State expends non-Federal funds to carry out Head Start programs, give priority in the designation of Head Start agencies to any local public or private nonprofit or for-profit agency which is receiving funds under any Head Start program on the date of the enactment of this Act unless the Secretary determines that the agency involved fails to meet program and financial management requirements, performance standards described in section 641A(a)(1), results-based performance measures developed by the Secretary under section 641A(b), or other requirements established by the Secretary.

[(2) If there is no agency of the type referred to in paragraph (1) because of any change in the assistance furnished to programs for economically disadvantaged persons, the Secretary shall, in consultation with the chief executive officer of the State if such State expends non-Federal funds to carry out Head Start programs, give priority in the designation of Head Start agencies to any successor agency that is operating a Head Start program in substantially the same manner as the predecessor agency that did receive funds in the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which the determination is made.

[(3) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subsection, the Secretary shall not give such priority to any agency with respect to which financial assistance has been terminated, or an application for refunding has been denied, under this subchapter by the Secretary after affording such agency reasonable notice and opportunity for a full and fair hearing in accordance with section 646(a)(3).

[(d) If no entity in a community is entitled to the priority specified in subsection (c), then the Secretary may designate a Head Start agency from among qualified applicants in such community. In selecting from among qualified applicants for designation as a Head Start agency, the Secretary shall give priority to any qualified agency that functioned as a Head Start delegate agency in the community and carried out a Head Start program that the Secretary determines met or exceeded such performance standards and such results-based performance measures. In selecting from among qualified applicants for designation as a Head Start agency,

the Secretary shall consider the effectiveness of each such applicant to provide Head Start services, based on—

[(1) any past performance of such applicant in providing services comparable to Head Start services, including how effectively such applicant provided such comparable services;

[(2) the plan of such applicant to provide comprehensive health, nutritional, educational, social, and other services needed to aid participating children in attaining their full potential;

[(3) the plan of such applicant to coordinate the Head Start program it proposes to carry out, with other preschool programs, including Even Start programs under part B of chapter 1 of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 2741 et seq.) and programs under part C and section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1431–1444, 1419), and with the educational programs such children will enter at the age of compulsory school attendance;

[(4) the plan of such applicant—

[(A) to seek the involvement of parents of participating children in activities (at home and in the center involved where practicable) designed to help such parents become full partners in the education of their children;

[(B) to afford such parents the opportunity to participate in the development, conduct, and overall performance of the program at the local level;

[(C) to offer (directly or through referral to local entities, such as entities carrying out Even Start programs under part B of chapter 1 of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 2741 et seq.), public and school libraries, and family support programs) to such parents—

[(i) family literacy services; and

[(ii) parenting skills training;

[(D) to offer to parents of participating children substance abuse counseling (either directly or through referral to local entities), including information on drug-exposed infants and fetal alcohol syndrome;

[(E) at the option of such applicant, to offer (directly or through referral to local entities) to such parents—

[(i) training in basic child development;

[(ii) assistance in developing communication skills;

[(iii) opportunities for parents to share experiences with other parents; or

[(iv) any other activity designed to help such parents become full partners in the education of their children; and

[(F) to provide, with respect to each participating family, a family needs assessment that includes consultation with such parents about the benefits of parent involvement and about the activities described in subparagraphs (C) (D), and (E) in which such parents may choose to become involved (taking into consideration their specific family needs, work schedules, and other responsibilities);

[(5) the ability of such applicant to carry out the plans described in paragraphs (2), (3), and (4);

[(6) other factors related to the requirements of this subchapter;

[(7) the plan of such applicant to meet the needs of non-English background children and their families, including needs related to the acquisition of the English language;

[(8) the plan of such applicant to meet the needs of children with disabilities;

[(9) the plan of such applicant who chooses to assist younger siblings of children who will participate in the proposed Head Start program to obtain health services from other sources; and

[(10) the plan of such applicant to collaborate with other entities carrying out early childhood education and child care programs in the community.

[(e) If no agency in the community receives priority designation under subsection (c), and there is no qualified applicant in the community, the Secretary shall designate a qualified agency to carry out the Head Start program in the community on an interim basis until a qualified applicant from the community is so designated.

[(f) The Secretary shall require that the practice of significantly involving parents and area residents affected by the program in selection of Head Start agencies be continued.

[(g) If the Secretary determines that a nonprofit agency and a for-profit agency have submitted applications for designation of equivalent quality under subsection (d), the Secretary may give priority to the nonprofit agency. In selecting from among qualified applicants for designation as a Head Start agency under subsection (d), the Secretary shall give priority to applicants that have demonstrated capacity in providing comprehensive early childhood services to children and their families.]

SEC. 641. DESIGNATION OF HEAD START AGENCIES.

(a) DESIGNATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized to designate as a Head Start agency any local public or private nonprofit or for-profit agency, within a community, including a community-based organization that—

(A) has power and authority to carry out the purpose of this subchapter and perform the functions set forth in section 642 within a community; and

(B) is determined to be capable of planning, conducting, administering, and evaluating, either directly or by other arrangements, a Head Start program.

(2) REQUIRED GOALS FOR DESIGNATION.—In order to be designated as a Head Start agency, an entity described in paragraph (1) shall establish program goals for improving the school readiness of children participating in a program under this subchapter, including goals for meeting the performance standards and additional educational standards described in section 641A and shall establish results-based school readiness goals that are aligned with Head Start Child Outcomes Framework, State early learning standards (if applicable), and requirements and expectations for local public schools.

(3) ELIGIBILITY FOR SUBSEQUENT GRANTS.—In order to receive a grant under this subchapter subsequent to the initial grant provided following the date of enactment of the Head Start Im-

provements for School Readiness Act, an entity described in paragraph (1) shall demonstrate that the entity has met or is making progress toward meeting the goals described in paragraph (2).

(4) GOVERNING BODY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—

(i) ENSURING HIGH QUALITY PROGRAMS.—In order to be designated as a Head Start agency, an entity described in paragraph (1) shall have a governing body—

(I) with legal and fiscal responsibility for administering and overseeing programs under this subchapter; and

(II) that fully participates in the development, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the programs to ensure the operation of programs of high quality.

(ii) ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS.—The governing body shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with Federal laws and regulations, including the performance standards described in section 641A, as well as applicable State, Tribal, and local laws and regulations, including laws defining the nature and operations of the governing body.

(B) COMPOSITION OF GOVERNING BODY.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The governing body shall be composed as follows:

(I) Not less than 1 member of the governing body shall have a background in fiscal management.

(II) Not less than 1 member of the governing body shall have a background in early childhood development.

(III) Membership that reflects the community to be served.

(ii) CONSULTANTS.—In the case that persons described in clause (i) are not available to serve as members of the governing body, the governing body shall make use of consultants in the areas described in clause (i) to work directly with the governing body.

(iii) CONFLICT OF INTEREST.—Members of the governing body shall—

(I) not have a conflict of interest with the Head Start agency or delegate agencies; and

(II) not receive compensation for service to the Head Start agency.

(C) RESPONSIBILITIES.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The governing body shall be responsible, in consultation with the policy council or the policy committee of the Head Start agency, for—

(I) the selection of delegate agencies and such agencies' service areas;

(II) establishing criteria for defining recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities;

(III) all funding applications and amendments to funding applications for programs under this subchapter;

(IV) *the annual self-assessment of the Head Start agency or delegate agency's progress in carrying out the programmatic and fiscal intent of such agency's grant application, including planning or other actions that may result from the review of the annual audit, self-assessment, and findings from the Federal monitoring review;*

(V) *providing guidance for the composition of the policy council or the policy committee of the Head Start agency;*

(VI) *developing procedures for how members of the policy council or the policy committee of the Head Start agency are selected, including procedures for how parents of children currently participating in a Head Start or Early Head Start program are selected to serve on the policy council or the policy committee of the Head Start agency;*

(VII) *audits, accounting, and reporting;*

(VIII) *personnel policies and procedures including decisions with regard to salary scales (and changes made to the scale), salaries of the Executive Director, Head Start Director, the Director of Human Resources, and the Chief Fiscal Officer, and decisions to hire and terminate program staff; and*

(IX) *the community assessment, including any updates to such assessment.*

(ii) **CONDUCT OF RESPONSIBILITIES.**—*The governing body shall—*

(I) *develop an internal control structure to facilitate these responsibilities in order to—*

(aa) *safeguard Federal funds;*

(bb) *comply with laws and regulations that have an impact on financial statements;*

(cc) *detect or prevent non-compliance with this subchapter; and*

(dd) *receive audit reports and direct and monitor staff implementation of corrective actions; and*

(II) *develop procedures to facilitate meaningful consultation and collaboration and solicit input from the policy council or the policy committee of the Head Start agency regarding matters of recruitment, enrollment, funding applications, and programmatic design, including processes to resolve internal disputes.*

(D) **RECEIPT OF INFORMATION.**—*To facilitate oversight and Head Start agency accountability, the governing body shall receive regular and accurate information about program planning, policies, and Head Start agency operations, including—*

(i) *monthly financial statements (including detailed credit card account expenditures for any employee with a Head Start agency credit card or who seeks reimbursement for charged expenses):*

- (ii) *monthly program information summaries;*
- (iii) *program enrollment reports, including attendance reports for children whose care is partially subsidized by another public agency;*
- (iv) *monthly report of meals and snacks through programs of the Department of Agriculture;*
- (v) *the annual financial audit;*
- (vi) *the annual self-assessment, including any findings related to the annual self-assessment;*
- (vii) *the community assessment of the Head Start agency's service area and any applicable updates; and*
- (viii) *the program information reports.*

(E) *TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.*—Appropriate training and technical assistance shall be provided to the members of the governing body to ensure that the members understand the information the members receive and can effectively oversee and participate in the programs of the Head Start agency.

(b) *COMMUNITIES.*—For purposes of this subchapter, a community may be a city, county, or multicounty or multi-county unit within a State, an Indian reservation (including Indians in an off-reservation area designated by an appropriate tribal government in consultation with the Secretary), or a neighborhood or other area (irrespective of boundaries or political subdivisions) that provides a suitable organizational base and possesses the commonality of interest needed to operate a Head Start program.

(c) *PRIORITY IN DESIGNATION.*—In administering the provisions of this section, the Secretary shall, in consultation with the chief executive officer of the State involved, give priority in the designation (including redesignation) of Head Start agencies to any Head Start agency or delegate agency that is high performing, as determined by meeting each of the following criterion.

- (1) *Is receiving assistance under this subchapter.*
- (2) *Meets or exceeds program and financial management requirements or standards described in section 641A(a)(1).*
- (3) *Has no unresolved deficiencies and has not had findings of deficiencies during the last triennial review under Section 641A(c).*
- (4) *Can demonstrate, through agreements such as memoranda of understanding, active collaboration with the State or local community in the provision of services for children (such as the provision of extended day services, education, professional development and training for staff, and other types of cooperative endeavors).*

(d) *DESIGNATION WHEN ENTITY HAS PRIORITY.*—If no entity in a community is entitled to the priority specified in subsection (c), the Secretary shall, after conducting an open competition, designate a Head Start agency from among qualified applicants in such community.

(e) *RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.*—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, under no condition may a non-Indian Head Start agency receive a grant to carry out an Indian Head Start program.

(f) *EFFECTIVENESS.*—In selecting from among qualified applicants for designation as Head Start agency, the Secretary shall consider

the effectiveness of each such applicant to provide Head Start services, based on—

(1) any past performance of such applicant in providing services comparable to Head Start services, including how effectively such applicant provided such comparable services;

(2) the plan of such applicant to provide comprehensive health, educational, nutritional, social, and other services needed to aid participating children in attaining their full potential, and to prepare children to succeed in school;

(3) the capacity of such applicant to serve eligible children with programs that use scientifically based research that promote school readiness of children participating in the program;

(4) the plan of such applicant to meet standards set forth in section 641A(a)(1), with particular attention to the standards set forth in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of such section;

(5) the plan of such applicant to coordinate the Head Start program the applicant proposes to carry out with other preschool programs, including—

(A) the Early Reading First and Even Start programs under subparts 2 and 3 part B of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6371 et seq., 6381 et seq.);

(B) programs under section 619 and part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.);

(C) State prekindergarten programs;

(D) child care programs;

(E) the educational programs that the children in the Head Start program involved will enter at the age of compulsory school attendance; and

(F) reading readiness programs such as those conducted by public and school libraries;

(6) the plan of such applicant to coordinate the Head Start program that the applicant proposes to carry out with public and private entities who are willing to commit resources to assist the Head Start program in meeting its program needs;

(7) the plan of such applicant to collaborate with a local library, where available, that is interested in that collaboration, to—

(A) develop innovative programs to excite children about the world of books, such as programs that involve—

(i) taking children to the library for a story hour;

(ii) promoting the use of library cards;

(iii) developing a lending library or using a mobile library van; and

(iv) providing fresh books in the Head Start classroom on a regular basis;

(B) assist in literacy training for Head Start teachers; and

(C) support parents and other caregivers in literacy efforts;

(8) the plan of such applicant—

(A) to seek the involvement of parents of participating children in activities (at home and in the center involved

where practicable) designed to help such parents become full partners in the education of their children;

(B) to afford such parents the opportunity to participate in the development and overall conduct of the program at the local level, including through providing transportation costs;

(C) to offer (directly or through referral to local entities, such as entities carrying out Even Start programs under subpart 3 of part B of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6381 et seq.), public and school libraries, and entities carrying out family support programs) to such parents—

(i) family literacy services; and

(ii) parenting skills training;

(D) to offer to parents of participating children substance abuse counseling (either directly or through referral to local entities), including information on the effect of drug exposure on infants and fetal alcohol syndrome;

(E) at the option of such applicant, to offer (directly or through referral to local entities) to such parents—

(i) training in basic child development (including cognitive development);

(ii) assistance in developing literacy and communication skills;

(iii) opportunities to share experiences with other parents (including parent mentor relationships);

(iv) regular in-home visitation; or

(v) any other activity designed to help such parents become full partners in the education of their children;

(F) to provide, with respect to each participating family, a family needs assessment that includes consultation with such parents about the benefits of parent involvement and about the activities described in subparagraphs (C), (D), and (E) in which such parents may choose to become involved (taking into consideration their specific family needs, work schedules, and other responsibilities); and

(G) to extend outreach to fathers, in appropriate cases, in order to strengthen the role of fathers in families, in the education of their young children, and in the Head Start program, by working directly with fathers and father figures through activities such as—

(i) in appropriate cases, including fathers in home visits and providing opportunities for direct father-child interactions; and

(ii) targeting increased male participation in the conduct of the program;

(9) the ability of such applicant to carry out the plans described in paragraphs (2), (4), and (5);

(10) other factors related to the requirements of this subchapter;

(11) the plan of such applicant to meet the needs of limited English proficient children and their families, including procedures to identify such children, plans to provide trained personnel, and plans to provide services to assist the children in

making progress toward the acquisition of the English language;

(12) the plan of such applicant to meet the needs of children with disabilities;

(13) the plan of such applicant who chooses to assist younger siblings of children who will participate in the Head Start program, to obtain health services from other sources;

(14) the plan of such applicant to collaborate with other entities carrying out early childhood education and child care programs in the community;

(15) the plan of such applicant to meet the needs of homeless children and children in foster care, including the transportation needs of such children; and

(16) the plan of such applicant to recruit and retain qualified staff.

(g) *INTERIM BASIS.*—If there is not a qualified applicant in a community for designation as a Head Start agency, the Secretary shall designate a qualified agency to carry out the Head Start program in the community on an interim basis until a qualified applicant from the community is so designated.

(h) *INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS AND AREA RESIDENTS.*—The Secretary shall continue the practice of involving parents and area residents who are affected by programs under this subchapter in the selection of qualified applicants for designation as Head Start agencies.

(i) *PRIORITY.*—In selecting from among qualified applicants for designation as a Head Start agency, the Secretary shall give priority to applicants that have demonstrated capacity in providing effective, comprehensive, and well-coordinated early childhood services to children and their families.

* * * * *

SEC. 641A. QUALITY STANDARDS; MONITORING OF HEAD START AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS.

(a) **QUALITY STANDARDS.**—

(1) **ESTABLISHMENT OF STANDARDS.**— * * *

(A) performance standards with respect to services required to be provided, including health, parental involvement, nutritional, social, transition activities described in section **[642(d)] 642(c)**, and other services;

(B)(i) **[education performance standards]** *educational performance standards* to ensure the school readiness of children participating in a Head Start program, on completion of the Head Start program and prior to entering school; and

[(ii) additional education performance standards to ensure that the children participating in the program, at a minimum—

[(I) develop phonemic, print, and numeracy awareness;

[(II) understand and use language to communicate for various purposes;

[(III) understand and use increasingly complex and varied vocabulary;

[(IV) develop and demonstrate an appreciation of books; and

【(V) in the case of non-English background children, progress toward acquisition of the English language.】

(ii) *additional educational standards based on the recommendations of the National Academy of Sciences panel described in section 649(h) and other experts in the field, to ensure that the curriculum involved addresses, and that the children participating in the program show appropriate progress toward developing and applying, the recommended educational outcomes, after the panel considers the appropriateness of additional educational standards relating to*

(I) *language skills related to listening, understanding, speaking, and communicating, including—*

(aa) *understanding and use of a diverse vocabulary (including knowing the names of colors) and knowledge of how to use oral language to communicate for various purposes;*

(bb) *narrative abilities used, for example, to comprehend, tell, and respond to a story, or to comprehend instructions;*

(cc) *ability to detect and produce sounds of the language the child speaks or is learning; and*

(dd) *clarity of pronunciation and speaking in syntactically and grammatically correct sentences;*

(II) *prereading knowledge and skills, including—*

(aa) *alphabet knowledge including knowing the letter names and associating letters with their shapes and sounds in the language the child speaks or is learning;*

(bb) *phonological awareness and processes that support reading, for example, rhyming, recognizing speech sounds and separate syllables in spoken words, and putting speech sounds together to make words;*

(cc) *knowledge, interest in, and appreciation of books, reading, and writing (either alone or with others), and knowledge that books have parts such as the front, back, and title page;*

(cc) *early writing, including the ability to write one's own name and other words and phrases; and*

(ee) *print awareness and concepts, including recognizing different forms of print and understanding the association between spoken and written words;*

(III) *premathematics knowledge and skills, including—*

(aa) *number recognition;*

(bb) *use of early number concepts and operations, including counting, simple adding and subtracting, and knowledge of quantitative relationships, such as part versus whole and comparison of numbers of objects;*

(cc) *use of early space and location concepts, including recognizing shapes, classification, striation, and understanding directionality; and*

(dd) early pattern skills and measurement, including recognizing and extending simple patterns and measuring length, weight, and time;

“(IV) scientific abilities, including—

(aa) building awareness about scientific skills and methods, such as gathering, describing, and recording information, making observations, and making explanations and predictions; and

(bb) expanding scientific knowledge of the environment, time, temperature, and cause-and-effect relationships;

(V) general cognitive abilities related to academic achievement and child development, including—

(aa) reasoning, planning, and problem-solving skills;

(bb) ability to engage, sustain attention, and persist on challenging tasks;

(cc) intellectual curiosity, initiative, and task engagement; and

(dd) motivation to achieve and master concepts and skills;

(VI) social and emotional development related to early learning and school success, including developing—

(aa) the ability to develop social relationships, demonstrate cooperative behaviors, and relate to teachers and peers in positive and respectful ways;

(bb) an understanding of the consequences of actions, following rules, and appropriately expressing feelings;

(cc) a sense of self, such as self-awareness, independence, and confidence;

(dd) the ability to control negative behaviors with teachers and peers that include impulsiveness, aggression, and noncompliance; and

(ee) knowledge of civic society and surrounding communities;

(VII) physical development, including developing—

(aa) fine motor skills, such as strength, manual dexterity, and hand-eye coordination; and

(bb) gross motor skills, such as balance and coordinated movements; and

(VIII) in the case of limited English proficient children, progress toward acquisition of the English language while making meaningful progress in attaining the knowledge, skills, abilities, and development described in subclauses (I) through (VII);

(C) * * *

(D) standards relating to the condition and location of facilities for such agencies, programs, and **projects; and** projects, including regulations that require that the facilities used by Head Start agencies (including Early Head Start agencies) and delegate agencies for regularly scheduled center-based and combination program option classroom activities—

(i) shall be in compliance with State and local requirements concerning licensing for such facilities; and
 (ii) shall be accessible by State and local authorities for purposes of monitoring and ensuring compliance; and

* * * * *
 (2) CONSIDERATIONS IN DEVELOPING STANDARDS.— * * *

(A) * * *

(B) take into consideration—

(i) past experience with use of the standards in effect under this subchapter on [the date of enactment of this section] *the date of enactment of the Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act*;

(ii) changes over the period since [the date of enactment of this Act] *the date of enactment of the Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act* in the circumstances and problems typically facing children and families served by Head Start agencies;

(iii) developments concerning best practices with respect to early childhood education and development, children with disabilities, *homeless children, children in foster care*, family services, program administration, and financial management;

* * * * *

(vi) changes in the population of children who are eligible to participate in Head Start programs, including the language background and family structure of such children (*including children in foster care and the number of homeless children*)[; and];

(vii) the need for, and state-of-the-art developments relating to, local policies and activities designed to ensure that children participating in Head Start programs make a successful transition to [public schools] *the schools that the children will be attending*; and

(viii) *the unique challenges faced by individual programs, including those programs that are seasonal or short term and those programs that serve rural populations*;

(C)(i) review and revise as necessary the performance standards in effect under this subsection; and

(ii) ensure that any such revisions in the performance standards will not result in the elimination of or any reduction in the scope or types of health, education, parental involvement, nutritional, social, or other services required to be provided under such standards as in effect on [the date of enactment of the Coats Human Services Reauthorization Act of 1998.] *the date of enactment of the Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act*; and

(D) *consult with Indian tribes, American Indian and Alaska Native experts in early childhood development, linguists, and the National Indian Head Start Directors Association on the review and promulgation of program standards and measures (including standards and measures for language acquisition and school readiness).*

(3) STANDARDS RELATING TO OBLIGATIONS TO DELEGATE AGENCIES.— * * *

(4) EVALUATIONS AND CORRECTIVE ACTIONS FOR DELEGATE AGENCIES.—

(A) PROCEDURES.—

(i) *IN GENERAL.*—Subject to clause (ii), the Head Start agency shall establish procedures relating to its delegate agencies, including—

(I) procedures for evaluating delegate agencies;

(II) procedures for defunding delegate agencies; and

(III) procedures for appending a defunding decision relating to a delegate agency.

(ii) *TERMINATION.*—The Head Start agency may not terminate a delegate agency's contract or reduce a delegate agency's service area without showing cause or demonstrating the cost-effectiveness of such a decision.

(B) EVALUATIONS.—Each Head Start agency—

(i) shall evaluate its delegate agencies using the procedures established pursuant to this section, including subparagraph (A); and

(ii) shall inform the delegate agencies of the deficiencies identified through the evaluation that shall be corrected.

(C) *REMEDIES TO ENSURE CORRECTIVE ACTIONS.*—In the event that the Head Start agencies identifies a deficiency for a delegate agency through the evaluation, the Head Start agency may—

(i) initiate procedures to terminate the designation of the agency unless the agency corrects the deficiency;

(ii) conduct monthly monitoring visits to such delegate agency until all deficiencies are corrected or the Head Start agency decides to defund such delegate agency; and

(iii) release funds to such delegate agency only as reimbursements until all deficiencies are corrected or the Head Start agency decides to defund such delegate agency.

(D) *RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.*—Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to impact or obviate the responsibilities of the Secretary with respect to Head Start agencies or delegate agencies receiving funding under this subchapter.

(b) RESULTS-BASED PERFORMANCE MEASURES.—

(1) *IN GENERAL.*— * * *

[(2) *CHARACTERISTICS OF MEASURES.*—] (2) *CHARACTERISTICS AND USE OF MEASURES.*—The performance measures developed under this subsection shall—

(A) * * *

(B) be adaptable for use in self-assessment, peer review, and program evaluation of individual Head Start agencies and programs[, not later than July 1, 1999; and];

(C) be developed for other program purposes as determined by the Secretary[.];

[The performance measures shall include the performance standards described in subsection (a)(1)(B)(ii).]

(D) measure characteristics that are strongly predictive (as determined on a scientific basis) of a child's school readiness and later performance in school;

(E) be appropriate for the population served; and

(F) be reviewed not less than every 4 years, based on advances in the science of early childhood development.

The performance measures shall include the performance standards and additional educational standards described in subparagraph (A) and (B) of subsection (a)(1).

(3) **USE OF MEASURES.**—The Secretary shall use the performance measures developed pursuant to this subsection—

(A) to identify strengths and weaknesses in the operation of Head Start programs nationally, regionally, and locally[; and];

(B) to identify problem areas that may require additional training and technical assistance resources[.]; and

(C) to enable Head Start agencies to individualize programs of instruction to better meet the needs of the child involved.

[(4) **EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES.**—Such results-based performance measures shall include educational performance measures that ensure that children participating in Head Start programs—

[(A) know that letters of the alphabet are a special category of visual graphics that can be individually named;

[(B) recognize a word as a unit of print;

[(C) identify at least 10 letters of the alphabet; and

[(D) associate sounds with written words.]

(4) **RESULTS-BASED OUTCOME MEASURES.**—*Results-based outcome measures shall be designed for the purpose of promoting the knowledge, skills, abilities, and development, described in subsection (a)(1)(B)(ii), of children participating in Head Start programs that are strongly predictive (as determined on a scientific basis) of a child's school readiness and later performance in school.*

[(5) **ADDITIONAL LOCAL RESULTS-BASED PERFORMANCE MEASURES.**—In addition to other applicable results-based performance measures, Head Start agencies may establish local results-based educational performance measures.]

(5) **ADDITIONAL LOCAL RESULTS-BASED EDUCATIONAL MEASURES AND GOALS.**—*Head Start agencies may establish and implement additional local results-based educational measures and goals.*

(c) **MONITORING OF LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In order to determine whether Head Start agencies meet standards established under this subchapter and results-based performance measures developed by the Secretary under subsection (b) with respect to program, administrative, financial management, and other requirements, the Secretary shall conduct the following reviews of designated Head Start agencies, and of the Head Start programs and Head Start centers operated by such agencies:

(A) A full review of each [such agency] Head Start center at least once during each 3-year period.

* * * * *

[(C) Followup reviews including prompt return visits to agencies and programs that fail to meet the standards.]

(C) *Unannounced site inspections of Head Start centers for health and safety reasons, as appropriate.*

(D) *Notwithstanding subparagraph (C), followup reviews, including—*

(i) prompt return visits to agencies, programs, and centers that fail to meet 1 or more of the performance measures developed by the Secretary under subsection (b);

(ii) a review of programs with citations that include findings of deficiencies not later than 6 months after the date of such citation; and

(iii) followup reviews that incorporate a monitoring visit without prior notice of the visit to the agency involved or with such limited prior notice as is necessary to ensure the participation of parents and key staff members.

[(D)] (E) Other reviews as appropriate.

[(2) CONDUCT OF REVIEWS.—The Secretary shall ensure that reviews described in subparagraphs (A) through (C) of paragraph (1)—

[(A) are performed, to the maximum extent practicable, by employees of the Department of Health and Human Services who are knowledgeable about Head Start program;

[(B) are supervised by such an employee at the site of such Head Start agency;

[(C) are conducted by review teams that shall include individuals who are knowledgeable about Head Start programs and, to the maximum extent practicable, the diverse (including linguistic and cultural) needs of eligible children (including children with disabilities) and their families;

[(D) include as part of the reviews of the programs, a review and assessment of program effectiveness, as measured in accordance with the results-based performance measures developed by the Secretary pursuant to subsection (b) and with the performance standards established pursuant to subparagraphs (A) and (B) of subsection (a)(1); and

[(E) seek information from the communities and the States involved about the performance of the programs and the efforts of the Head Start agencies to collaborate with other entities carrying out early childhood education and child care programs in the community.]

(2) CONDUCT OF REVIEWS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—*The Secretary shall ensure that reviews described in paragraph (1)—*

(i) are performed, to the maximum extent practicable, by employees of the Department of Health and Human Services who are knowledgeable about Head Start programs;

(ii) are conducted by review teams that shall include individuals who are knowledgeable about Head Start and other early childhood education programs and, to

the maximum extent practicable, the diverse (including linguistic and cultural) needs of eligible children (including children with disabilities, homeless children, and children in foster care) and limited English proficient children and their families, and personnel management, financial accountability, and systems development and monitoring;

(iii) include as part of the reviews of the programs, a review and assessment of program effectiveness, as measured in accordance with the results-based performance measures developed by the Secretary pursuant to subsection (b) and with the standards established pursuant to subparagraphs (A) and (B) of subsection (a)(1);

(iv) seek information from the communities and States where Head Start programs exist about innovative or effective collaborative efforts, barriers to collaboration, and the efforts of the Head Start agencies to collaborate with the entities carrying out early childhood education and child care programs in the community;

(v) include as part of the reviews of the programs, a review and assessment of whether the programs are in conformity with the income eligibility requirements under section 645 and regulations promulgated under such section;

(vi) include as part of the reviews of the programs, a review and assessment of whether programs have adequately addressed the population and community needs (including needs of populations of limited English proficient children and children of migrant and seasonal farmworking families); and

(vii) include as part of the reviews of the programs, data from the results of periodic child assessments, and a review and assessment of child outcomes and performance as they relate to State, local, and agency-determined school readiness goals.

(B) TRAINING; QUALITY AND CONSISTENCY.—*The Secretary, from funds available under section 640(a)(2)(C)(ii), shall provide periodic training for supervisors and members of review teams in such topics as program management and financial audit performance. The Secretary shall ensure the quality and consistency across and within regions of PRISM reviews and non-compliance and deficiency determinations by conducting periodic interrater reliability checks.*

(d) CORRECTIVE ACTION; TERMINATION.—

(1) DETERMINATION.—*If the Secretary determines, on the basis of a review pursuant to subsection (c), that a Head Start agency designated pursuant to section 641 fails to meet the standards described in subsection (a) or results-based performance measures developed by the Secretary under subsection (b), or fails to address the community needs and strategic plan identified in section 640(g)(2)(C), the Secretary shall—*

(A) inform the agency of the deficiencies that shall be corrected *and identify the technical assistance to be provided consistent with paragraph (3)*;

* * * * *

(e) **SUMMARIES OF MONITORING OUTCOMES.**—Not later than 120 days after the end of each fiscal year, the Secretary shall publish a summary report on the findings of reviews conducted under subsection (c) and on the outcomes of quality improvement plans implemented under subsection (d), during such fiscal year. [Such report shall be widely disseminated and available for public review in both written and electronic formats.] *The information contained in such report shall be made available to all parents with children receiving assistance under this subchapter in an understandable and uniform format, and to the extent practicable, provided in a language that the parents can understand. Such information shall be made widely available through public means such as distribution through public agencies, and, at a minimum, by posting such information on the Internet immediately upon publication.*

(f) **SELF-ASSESSMENTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not less frequently than once each program year, with the consultation and participation of policy groups and, as appropriate, other community members, each agency receiving funds under this subchapter shall conduct a comprehensive self-assessment of the effectiveness and progress in meeting programs goals and objectives and in implementing and complying with Head Start program performance standards.

(2) **REPORT AND IMPROVEMENT PLANS.**—

(A) **REPORT.**—An agency conducting a self-assessment shall report the findings of the self-assessment to the relevant policy council, policy committee, governing body, and regional office of the Administration for Children and Families of the Department of Health and Human Services. Each self-assessment shall identify areas of strength and weakness.

(B) **IMPROVEMENT PLAN.**—The agency shall develop an improvement plan approved by the governing body of the agency to strengthen any areas identified in the self-assessment as weaknesses or in need of improvement.

(3) **ONGOING MONITORING.**—Each Head Start agency, Early Head Start agency, and delegate agency shall establish and implement procedures for the ongoing monitoring of their Head Start and Early Head Start programs, to ensure that the operations of the programs work toward meeting program goals and objectives and Head Start performance standards.

(4) **TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.**—Funds may be made available, through section 648(d)(13), for training and technical assistance to assist agencies in conducting self-assessments.

(g) **REDUCTION OF GRANTS AND REDISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS IN CASES OF UNDER-ENROLLMENT.**—

(1) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this subsection:

(A) **ACTUAL ENROLLMENT.**—The term “actual enrollment” means, with respect to the program of a Head Start agency, the actual number of children enrolled in such program

and reported by the agency (as required in paragraph (2)) in a given month.

(B) **BASE GRANT.**—The term “base grant” means, with respect to a Head Start agency for a fiscal year, that portion of the grant derived—

(i) from amounts reserved for use in accordance with section 640(a)(2)(A), for a Head Start agency administering an Indian Head Start program or migrant and seasonal Head Start program;

(ii) from amounts reserved for payments under section 640(a)(2)(B); or

(iii) from amounts available under section 640(a)(2)(D) or allotted among States under section 640(a)(4).

(C) **FUNDED ENROLLMENT.**—The term “funded enrollment” means, with respect to the program of a Head Start agency in a fiscal year, the number of children that the agency is funded to serve through a grant for the program during such fiscal year, as indicated in the grant agreement.

(2) **ENROLLMENT REPORTING REQUIREMENT FOR CURRENT FISCAL YEAR.**—Each entity carrying out a Head Start program shall report on a monthly basis to the Secretary and the relevant Head Start agency—

(A) the actual enrollment in such program; and

(B) if such actual enrollment is less than the funded enrollment, any apparent reason for such enrollment shortfall.

(3) **SECRETARIAL REVIEW AND PLAN.**—The Secretary shall—

(A) on a semiannual basis, determine which Head Start agencies are operating with an actual enrollment that is less than the funded enrollment based on not less than 4 consecutive months of data;

(B) for each such Head Start agency operating a program with an actual enrollment that is less than 95 percent of its funded enrollment, as determined under subparagraph (A), develop, in collaboration with such agency, a plan and timetable for reducing or eliminating under-enrollment taking into consideration—

(i) the quality and extent of the out-reach, recruitment, and community needs assessment conducted by such agency;

(ii) changing demographics, mobility of populations, and the identification of new underserved low-income populations;

(iii) facilities-related issues that may impact enrollment;

(iv) the ability to provide full-day programs, where needed, through Head Start funds or through collaboration with entities carrying out other preschool or child care programs, or programs with other funding sources (where available);

(v) the availability and use by families of other preschool and child care options (including parental care) in the local catchment area; and

(vi) agency management procedures that may impact enrollment; and

(C) provide timely and ongoing technical assistance to each agency described in subparagraph (B) for the purpose of implementing the plan described in such subparagraph.

(4) IMPLEMENTATION.—Upon receipt of the technical assistance described in paragraph (3)(C), a Head Start agency shall immediately implement the plan described in paragraph (3)(B).

(5) SECRETARIAL ACTION FOR CONTINUED UNDER-ENROLLMENT.—If, 1 year after the date of implementation of the plan described in paragraph (3)(B), the Head Start agency continues to operate a program at less than full enrollment, the Secretary shall, where determined appropriate, continue to provide technical assistance to such agency.

(6) SECRETARIAL REVIEW AND ADJUSTMENT FOR CHRONIC UNDER-ENROLLMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—If, after receiving technical assistance and developing and implementing a plan to the extent described in paragraphs (3), (4), and (5) for 9 months, a Head Start agency is still operating a program with an actual enrollment that is less than 95 percent of its funded enrollment, the Secretary may—

(i) designate such agency as chronically under-enrolled; and

(ii) recapture, withhold, or reduce the base grant for the program by a percentage equal to the percentage difference between funded enrollment and actual enrollment for the program for the most recent year in which the agency is determined to be under-enrolled under paragraph (2)(B).

(B) WAIVER OR LIMITATION OF REDUCTIONS.—If the Secretary, after the implementation of the plan described in paragraph (3)(B), finds that—

(i) the causes of the enrollment shortfall, or a portion of the shortfall, are beyond the agency's control (such as serving significant numbers of migrant or seasonal farmworker children, homeless children, children in foster care, or other highly mobile children);

(ii) the shortfall can reasonably be expected to be temporary; or

(iii) the number of slots allotted to the agency is small enough that under-enrollment does not constitute a significant shortfall, the Secretary may, as appropriate, waive or reduce the percentage recapturing, withholding, or reduction otherwise required by subparagraph (A).

(C) PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENT; EFFECTIVE DATE.—The actions taken by the Secretary under this paragraph with respect to a Head Start agency shall take effect 1 day after the date on which—

(i) the time allowed for appeal under section 646(a) expires without an appeal by the agency; or

(ii) the action is upheld in an administrative hearing under section 646.

(7) REDISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—

(A) *IN GENERAL.*—The Secretary shall use amounts recovered from a Head Start agency through recapturing, withholding, or reduction under paragraph (6) in a fiscal year—

(i) in the case of a Head Start agency administering an Indian Head Start program or a migrant and seasonal Head Start program, whose base grant is derived from amounts specified in paragraph (1)(C)(i), to redirect funds to 1 or more agencies that—

(I) are administering Head Start programs serving the same special population; and

(II) demonstrate that the agencies will use such redirected funds to increase enrollment in their Head Start programs in such fiscal year; or

(ii) in the case of a Head Start agency in a State, whose base grant is derived from amounts specified in clause (ii) or (iii) of paragraph (1)(C), to redirect funds to 1 or more agencies that—

(I) are administering Head Start programs in the same State; and

(II) make the demonstration described in clause (i)(II).

(B) *SPECIAL RULE.*—If there is no agency located in a State that meets the requirements of subclauses (I) and (II) of subparagraph (A)(ii), the Secretary shall use amounts described in subparagraph (A) to redirect funds to Head Start agencies located in other States that make the demonstration described in subparagraph (A)(i)(II).

(C) *ADJUSTMENT TO FUNDED ENROLLMENT.*—The Secretary shall adjust as necessary the requirements relating to funding enrollment indicated in the grant agreement of a Head Start agency receiving redistributed amounts under this paragraph.

(h) *CONTRACT WITH NONPROFIT INTERMEDIARY ORGANIZATION.*—From funds reserved under clause (i) or (ii) of section 640(a)(2)(C) or from whatever other resources the Secretary determines appropriate, in carrying out the provisions of this section, the Secretary or a Head Start agency may contract with a nonprofit intermediary organization that—

(1) provides evaluations and technical assistance to improve overall performance management; and

(2) has an exclusive focus of improving the performance management and the use of technology in assessing performance and meeting Head Start regulations and can provide on-site, hands-on guidance with the implementation of the recommendations.

* * * * *

SEC. 641B. CENTERS FOR EXCELLENCE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD.

(a) *DEFINITION.*—In this section, the term “center of excellence” means a Center for Excellence in Early Childhood designated under subsection (b).

(b) *DESIGNATION AND BONUS GRANTS.*—The Secretary shall, subject to the availability of funds under this subchapter, including

under subsection (f), establish a program under which the Secretary shall—

(1) designate not more than 200 exemplary Head Start agencies (including Early Head Start agencies, Indian Head Start agencies, and migrant and seasonal Head Start agencies) as Centers of Excellence in Early Childhood; and

(2) make bonus grants to the centers of excellence to carry out the activities described in subsection (d).

(c) APPLICATION AND DESIGNATION.—

(1) APPLICATION.—

(A) NOMINATION AND SUBMISSION.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive a designation as a center of excellence under subsection (b), except as provided in clause (ii), a Head Start agency in a State shall be nominated by the Governor of the State and shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

(ii) INDIAN AND MIGRANT AND SEASONAL HEAD START PROGRAMS.—In the case of an Indian Head Start agency or a migrant or seasonal Head Start agency, to be eligible to receive designation as a center of excellence under subsection (b), such an agency shall be nominated by the head of the appropriate regional office of the Department and Health and Human Services and shall submit an application to the Secretary in accordance with clause (i).

(B) CONTENTS.—At a minimum, the application shall include—

(i) evidence that the Head Start program carried out by the agency has significantly improved the school readiness of, and enhanced academic outcomes for, children who have participated in the program;

(ii) evidence that the program meets or exceeds standards and performance measures described in subsections (a) and (b) of section 641A, as evidenced by successful completion of programmatic and monitoring receives, and has no findings of deficiencies with respect to the standards and measures;

(iii) evidence that the program is making progress toward meeting the requirements described in section 648A

(iv) evidence demonstrating the existence of a collaborative partnership among the Head Start agency, the State (or a State agency), and other early care and education providers in the local community involved;

(v) a nomination letter from the Governor, or appropriate regional office, demonstrating the agency's ability to carry out the coordination, transition, and training services of the program to be carried out under the bonus grant involved, including coordination of activities with State and local agencies that provide only childhood services to children and families in the community served by the agency.

(vi) information demonstrating the existence of a local council for excellence in early childhood, which shall include representatives of all the institutions, agencies, and groups involved in the work of the center for, and the local provisions of services to, eligible children and other at-risk-children, and their families; and
 (vii) a description of how the Center, in order to expand accessibility and continuity of quality early care and education, will coordinate the early care and education activities assisted under this section with—

(I) program carried out under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.);

(II) other programs carried out under this subchapter, including the Early Head Start programs carried out under section 645A;

(III)(aa) Early Reading First and Even Start programs carried out under subparts 2 and 3 of part B of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6371 et seq., 6381 et seq.);

(bb) other preschool programs carried out under title I of that Act (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.); and

(cc) the Ready-to-Learn Television program carried out under subpart 3 of part D of title II of that Act (20 U.S.C. 6775 et seq.);

(IV) programs carried out under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.);

(V) State prekindergarten programs; and

(VI) other early care and education programs.

(2) *SELECTION.*—In selecting agencies to designate as centers of excellence under subsection (b), the Secretary shall designate not less than 1 from each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, an Indian Head Start program, a migrant and seasonal Head Start program, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

(3) *PRIORITY.*—In making bonus grant determinations under this section, the Secretary shall give priority to programs that, through their applications, demonstrate that they are of exceptional quality and would serve as exemplary models for programs in the same geographic region. The Secretary may also consider the population served by the applicant, such as programs that serve large proportions of limited English proficient students or other underserved populations, and may make bonus grants to programs that do an exceptional job meeting the needs of such children.

(4) *TERM OF DESIGNATION.*—

(A) *IN GENERAL.*—Subject to subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall designate a Head Start agency as a center of excellence for a 5-year term. During the period of that designation, subject to the availability of appropriations, the agency shall be eligible to receive a bonus grant under subsection (b).

(B) *REVOCATION.*—The Secretary may revoke an agency's designation under subsection (b) if the Secretary determines that the agency is not demonstrating adequate performance or has had findings of deficiencies described in paragraph (1)(B)(ii).

(5) *AMOUNT OF BONUS GRANT.*—The Secretary shall base the amount of funding provided through a bonus grant made under subsection (b) to a center of excellence on the number of children eligible for Head Start services in the community involved. The Secretary shall, subject to the availability of funding, make such a bonus grant in an amount of not less than \$200,000 per year.

(d) *USE OF FUNDS.*—

(1) *ACTIVITIES.*—A center of excellence that receives a bonus grant under subsection (b) may use the funds made available through the bonus grant—

(A) to provide Head Start services to additional eligible children;

(B) to better meet the needs of working families in the community served by the center by serving more children in existing Early Head Start programs (existing as of the date the center is designated under this section) or in full-working-day, full calendar year Head Start programs;

(C) to model and disseminate best practices for achieving early academic success, including achieving school readiness and developing prereading and premathematics skills for at-risk children and achieving the acquisition of the English language for limited English proficient children, and to provide seamless service delivery for eligible children and their families;

(D) to further coordinate early childhood and social services available in the community served by the center for at-risk children (birth through age 8), their families, and pregnant women;

(E) to provide training and cross training for Head Start teachers and staff, child care providers, public and private preschool and elementary school teachers, and other providers of early childhood services, and training and cross training to develop agency leaders;

(F) to provide effective transitions between Head Start programs and elementary school, to facilitate ongoing communication between Head Start and elementary school teachers concerning children receiving Head Start services, and to provide training and technical assistance to providers who are public elementary school teachers and other staff of local educational agencies, child care providers, family service providers, and other providers of early childhood services, to help the providers described in this subparagraph increase their ability to work with low-income, at-risk children and their families;

(G) to develop or maintain partnerships with institutions of higher education and nonprofit organizations, including community-based organizations, that recruit, train, place, and support college students to serve as mentors and read-

ing coaches to preschool children in Head Start programs; and

(H) to carry out other activities determined by the center to improve the overall quality of the Head Start program carried out by the agency and the program carried out under bonus grant involved.

(2) INVOLVEMENT OF OTHER HEAD START AGENCIES AND PROVIDERS.—A center that receives a bonus grant under subsection (b), in carrying out activities under this subsection, shall work with the center's delegate agencies, several additional Head Start agencies, and other providers of early childhood services in the community involved, to encourage the agencies and providers described in this sentence to carry out model programs.

(e) RESEARCH AND REPORTS.—

(1) RESEARCH.—The Secretary shall, subject to the availability of funds to carry out this subsection, make a grant to an independent organization to conduct research on the ability of the centers of excellence to improve the school readiness of children receiving Head Start services, and to positively impact school results in the earliest grades. The organization shall also conduct research to measure the success of the centers of excellence at encouraging the center's delegate agencies, additional Head Start agencies, and other providers of early childhood services in the communities involved to meet measurable improvement goals, particularly in the area of school readiness.

(2) REPORT.—Not later than 48 months after the date of enactment of the Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act, the organization shall prepare and submit to the Secretary and Congress a report containing the results of the research described in paragraph (1).

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2006 and each subsequent fiscal year—

(1) \$90,000,000 to make bonus grants to centers of excellence under subsection (b) to carry out activities described in subsection (d);

(2) \$2,500,000 to pay for the administrative costs of the Secretary in carrying out this section, including the cost of a conference of centers for excellence; and

(3) \$2,000,000 for research activities described in subsection (e).

* * * * *

[POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF HEAD START AGENCIES

[SEC. 642 (a) In order to be designated as a Head Start agency under this subchapter, an agency must have authority under its charter or applicable law to receive and administer funds under this subchapter, funds and contributions from private or local public sources which may be used in support of a Head Start program, and funds under any Federal or State assistance program pursuant to which a public or private nonprofit or for-profit agency (as the case may be) organized in accordance with this subchapter, could act as grantee, contractor, or sponsor of projects appropriate for inclusion in a Head Start program. Such an agency must also be em-

powered to transfer funds so received, and to delegate powers to other agencies, subject to the powers of its governing board and its overall program responsibilities. The power to transfer funds and delegate powers must include the power to make transfers and delegations covering component projects in all cases where this will contribute to efficiency and effectiveness or otherwise further program objectives.

[(b) In order to be so designated, a Head Start agency shall also—

[(1) establish effective procedures by which parents and area residents concerned will be enabled to directly participate in decisions that influence the character of programs affecting their interests;

[(2) provide for their regular participation in the implementation of such programs;

[(3) provide technical and other support needed to enable parents and area residents to secure on their own behalf available assistance from public and private sources;

[(4) seek the involvement of parents of participating children in activities designed to help such parents become full partners in the education of their children, and to afford such parents the opportunity to participate in the development, conduct, and overall performance of the program at the local level;

[(5) offer (directly or through referral to local entities, such as entities carrying out Even Start programs under part B of chapter 1 of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 2741 et seq.)), to parents of participating children, family literacy services and parenting skills training;

[(6) offer to parents of participating children substance abuse counseling (either directly or through referral to local entities), including information on drug-exposed infants and fetal alcohol syndrome;

[(7) at the option of such agency, offer (directly or through referral to local entities), to such parents—

[(A) training in basic child development;

[(B) assistance in developing communication skills;

[(C) opportunities to share experiences with other parents;

[(D) regular in-home visitation; or

[(E) any other activity designed to help such parents become full partners in the education of their children;

[(8) provide, with respect to each participating family, a family needs assessment that includes consultation with such parents about the benefits of parent involvement and about the activities described in paragraphs (4) through (7) in which such parents may choose to be involved (taking into consideration their specific family needs, work schedules, and other responsibilities);

[(9) consider providing services to assist younger siblings of children participating in its Head Start program to obtain health services from other sources;

[(10) perform community outreach to encourage individuals previously unaffiliated with Head Start programs to participate in its Head Start programs as volunteers; and

[(11)(A) inform custodial parents in single-parent families that participate in programs, activities, or services carried out or provided under this subchapter about the availability of child support services for purposes of establishing paternity and acquiring child support; and

(B) refer eligible parents to the child support offices of State and local governments.

[(c) The head of each Head Start agency shall coordinate and collaborate 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 other early childhood education and development programs, including Even Start programs under part B of chapter 1 of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 2741 et seq.) and programs under part C and section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1431–1444, 1419), serving the children and families served by the Head Start agency to carry out the provisions of this subchapter.

[(d)(1) Each Head Start agency shall take steps to ensure, to the maximum extent possible, that children maintain the developmental and educational gains achieved in Head Start programs and build upon such gains in further schooling.

[(2) A Head Start agency may take steps to coordinate with the local educational agency serving the community involved and with schools in which children participating in a Head Start program operated by such agency will enroll following such program, including—

[(A) collaborating on the shared use of transportation and facilities; and

[(B) exchanging information on the provision of noneducational services to such children.

[(3) In order to promote the continued involvement of the parents of children that participate in Head Start programs in the education of their children upon transition to school, the Head Start agency shall—

[(A) provide training to the parents—

[(i) to inform the parents about their rights and responsibilities concerning the education of their children; and

[(ii) to enable the parents to understand and work with schools in order to communicate with teachers and other school personnel, to support the school work of their children, and to participate as appropriate in decisions relating to the education of their children; and

[(B) take other actions, as appropriate and feasible, to support the active involvement of the parents with schools, school personnel, and school-related organizations.

[(4) The Secretary, in cooperation with the Secretary of Education, shall—

[(A) evaluate the effectiveness of the projects and activities funded under section 642A;

[(B) disseminate to Head Start agencies information (including information from the evaluation required by subparagraph (A)) on effective policies and activities relating to the transition of children from Head Start programs to public schools; and

[(C) provide technical assistance to such agencies to promote and assist such agencies to adopt and implement such effective policies and activities.

[(e) Head Start agencies shall adopt, in consultation with experts in child development and with classroom teachers, an assessment to be used when hiring or evaluating any classroom teacher in a center-based Head Start program. Such assessment shall measure whether such teacher has mastered the functions described in section 648A(a)(1).]

SEC. 642. POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF HEAD START AGENCIES.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—In order to be designated as a Head Start agency under this subchapter, an agency shall have authority under its charter or applicable law to receive and administer funds provided under this subchapter, funds and contributions from private or local public sources that may be used in support of a Head Start program, and funds provided under any Federal or State assistance program pursuant to which a public or private nonprofit or for-profit agency (as the case may be) organized in accordance with this subchapter, could act as a grantee, contractor, or sponsor of projects appropriate for inclusion in a Head Start program. Such an agency shall also be empowered to transfer funds so received, and to delegate powers to transfer funds so received, and to delegate powers to other agencies, subject to the powers of its governing board and its overall program responsibilities. The power to transfer funds and delegate powers shall include the power to make transfers and delegations covering component projects in all cases in which that power will contribute to efficiency and effectiveness or otherwise further program objectives.

(b) *ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS.*—In order to be designated as a Head Start agency under this subchapter, a Head Start agency shall also—

(1) *establish a program with all standards set forth in section 641A(a)(1), with particular attention to the standards set forth in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of such section;*

(2) *demonstrate the capacity to serve eligible children with scientifically based curricula and other interventions and support services that help promote the school readiness of children participating in the program;*

(3) *establish effective procedures and provide for the regular assessment of Head Start children, including observational and direct formal assessment, where appropriate;*

(4) *seek the involvement of parents, area residents, and local business in the design and implementation of the program;*

(5) *provide for the regular participation of parents and area residents in the implementation of the program;*

(6) *provide technical and other support needed to enable such parents and area residents to secure, on their own behalf, available assistance from public and private sources;*

(7) *establish effective procedures to facilitate the involvement of parents of participating children in activities designed to help such parents become full partners in the education of their children, and to afford such parents the opportunity to participate in the development and overall conduct of the program at the local level;*

(8) *conduct outreach to schools in which Head Start children will enroll, local educational agencies, the local business community, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, museums, and libraries to generate support and leverage the resources of the entire local community in order to improve school readiness;*

(9) *offer (directly or through referral to local entities, such as entities carrying out Even Start programs under subpart 3 of part B of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6381 et seq.)), to parents of participating children, family literacy services, and parenting skills training;*

(10) *offer to parents of participating children substance abuse and other counseling (either directly or through referral to local entities), if needed, including information on the effect of drug exposure on infants and fetal alcohol syndrome;*

(11) *at the option of such agency, offer (directly or through referral to local entities), to such parents—*

(A) *training in basic child development (including cognitive development);*

(B) *assistance in developing literacy and communication skills;*

(C) *opportunities to share experiences with other parents (including parent mentor relationships);*

(D) *regular in-home visitation; or*

(E) *any other activity designed to help such parents become full partners in the education of their children;*

(12) *provide, with respect to each participating family, a family needs assessment that includes consultation with such parents (including foster parents and grandparents, where applicable) about the benefits of parent involvement and about the activities described in this subsection in which such parents may choose to be involved (taking into consideration their specific family needs, work schedules, and other responsibilities);*

(13) *consider providing services to assist younger siblings of children participating in its Head Start program, to obtain health services from other sources;*

(14) *perform community outreach to encourage individuals previously unaffiliated with Head Start programs to participate in its Head Start program as volunteers;*

(15)(A) *inform custodial parents in single-parent families that participate in programs, activities, or services carried out or provided under this subchapter about the availability of child support services for purposes of establishing paternity and acquiring child support; and*

(B) *refer eligible parents to the child support offices of State and local governments;*

(16) *provide parents of limited English proficient children outreach and information in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language that the parents can understand; and*

(17) *at the option of such agency, partner with an institution of higher education and a nonprofit organization to provide college students with the opportunity to serve as mentors or reading coaches to Head Start participants.*

(C) *TRANSITION ACTIVITIES TO FACILITATE CONTINUED PROGRESS.*—

(1) *IN GENERAL.*—Each Head Start agency shall collaborate with the entities listed in this subsection, to the maximum extent possible, to ensure the successful transition of Head Start children to school, so that such children are able to build upon the developmental and educational gains achieved in Head Start programs in further schooling.

(2) *COORDINATION.*—

(A) *LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.*—In communities where both public prekindergarten programs and Head Start programs operate, a Head Start agency shall collaborate and coordinate activities with the local educational agency or other public agency responsible for the operation of the prekindergarten program and providers of prekindergarten, including outreach activities to identify eligible children.

(B) *ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.*—Head Start staff shall, with the permission of the parents of children enrolled in Head Start programs, regularly communicate with the elementary schools such children will be attending to—

- (i) share information about such children;
- (ii) get advice and support from the teachers in such elementary schools regarding teaching strategies and options; and
- (iii) ensure a smooth transition to elementary school for such children.

(C) *OTHER PROGRAMS.*—The head of each Head Start agency shall coordinate activities and collaborate 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.), other entities carrying out early childhood education and development programs, and the agencies responsible for administering section 106 of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (42 U.S.C. 5106a), parts B and E of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 620 et seq. and 670 et seq.), programs under subtitle B of title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.), Even Start programs under subpart 3 of part B of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6381 et seq.), and programs under section 619 and part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.), serving the children and families served by the Head Start agency.

(3) *COLLABORATION.*—A Head Start agency shall take steps to coordinate activities with the local educational agency serving the community involved and with schools in which children participating in a Head Start program operated by such agency will enroll following such program, including—

(A) collaborating on the shared use of transportation and facilities;

(B) collaborating to reduce the duplication of services while increasing the program participation of underserved populations of eligible children; and

- (C) *exchanging information on the provision of noneducational services to such children.*
- (4) *PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT.—In order to promote the continued involvement of the parents of children that participate in Head Start programs in the education of their children upon transition to school, the Head Start agency shall—*
- (A) *provide training to the parents—*
- (i) *to inform the parents about their rights and responsibilities concerning the education of their children; and*
- (ii) *to enable the parents—*
- (I) *to understand and work with schools in order to communicate with teachers and other school personnel;*
- (II) *to support the schoolwork of their children; and*
- (III) *to participate as appropriate in decisions relating to the education of their children; and*
- (B) *take other actions, as appropriate and feasible, to support the active involvement of the parents with schools, school personnel, and school-related organizations.*
- (d) *ASSESSMENT.—Each Head Start agency shall adopt, in consultation with experts in child development and with classroom teachers, an assessment to be used when hiring or evaluating any classroom teacher in a center-based Head Start program. Such assessment shall measure whether such teacher has mastered the functions described in section 648A(a)(1) and attained a level of literacy appropriate to implement Head Start curricula.*
- (e) *FUNDED ENROLLMENT; WAITING LIST.—Each Head Start agency shall enroll 100 percent of its funded enrollment and maintain an active waiting list at all times with ongoing outreach to the community and activities to identify underserved populations.*
- (f) *TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING PLAN.—In order to receive funds under this subchapter, a Head Start agency shall develop an annual technical assistance and training plan. Such plan shall be based on the agency's self-assessment, the community needs assessment, and the needs of parents to be served by such agency.*

* * * * *

[SEC. 642A. HEAD START TRANSITION.

[Each Head Start agency shall take steps to coordinate with the local educational agency serving the community involved and with schools in which children participating in a Head Start program operated by such agency will enroll following such program, including—

- [**(1) developing and implementing a systematic procedure for transferring, with parental consent, Head Start program records for each participating child to the school in which such child will enroll;
- [**(2) establishing channels of communication between Head Start staff and their counterparts in the schools (including teachers, social workers, and health staff) to facilitate coordination of programs;
- [**(3) conducting meetings involving parents, kindergarten or elementary school teachers, and Head Start program teachers

to discuss the educational, developmental, and other needs of individual children;

[(4) organizing and participating in joint transition-related training of school staff and Head Start staff;

[(5) developing and implementing a family outreach and support program in cooperation with entities carrying out parental involvement efforts under title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.);

[(6) assisting families, administrators, and teachers in enhancing educational and developmental continuity between Head Start services and elementary school classes; and

[(7) linking the services provided in such Head Start program with the education services provided by such local educational agency.]

SEC. 642A. HEAD START TRANSITION AND ALIGNMENT WITH K-12 EDUCATION.

Each Head Start agency shall take steps to coordinate activities with the local educational agency serving the community involved and with schools in which children participating in a Head Start program operated by such agency will enroll following such program, including—

(1) developing and implementing a systematic procedure for transferring, with parental consent, Head Start program records for each participating child to the school in which such child will enroll;

(2) establishing ongoing channels of communication between Head Start staff and their counterparts in the schools (including teachers, social workers, health staff, and local educational agency liaisons designated under section 722(g)(1)(J)(ii) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii))) to facilitate coordination of programs;

(3) developing continuity of developmentally appropriate curricula and practice between the Head Start agency and local educational agency to ensure an effective transition and appropriate shared expectations for children's learning and development as the children make the transition to school;

(4) conducting meetings involving parents, kindergarten or elementary school teachers, and Head Start teachers to discuss the educational, developmental, and other needs of individual children;

(5) organizing and participating in joint training, including transition-related training of school staff and Head Start staff;

(6) developing and implementing a family outreach and support program, in cooperation with entities carrying out parental involvement efforts under title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.), and family outreach and support efforts under subtitle B of title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.), taking into consideration the language needs of limited English proficient parents;

(7) assisting families, administrators, and teachers in enhancing educational and developmental continuity and continuity of parental involvement in activities between Head Start services and elementary school classes;

(8) *linking the services provided in such Head Start program with the education services, including services relating to language, literacy, and numeracy, provided by such local educational agency;*

(9) *helping parents understand the importance of parental involvement in a child's academic success while teaching the parents strategies for maintaining parental involvement as their child moves from the Head Start program to elementary school;*

(10) *developing and implementing a system to increase program participation of underserved populations of eligible children, including children with disabilities, homeless children, children in foster care, and limited English proficient children; and*

(11) *coordinating activities and collaborating to ensure that curricula used in the Head Start program is aligned with State early learning standards with regard to cognitive, social, emotional, and physical competencies that children entering kindergarten are expected to demonstrate.*

* * * * *

SUBMISSION OF PLANS TO GOVERNORS

SEC. 643. In carrying out the provisions of this subchapter, no contract, agreement, grant, or other assistance shall be made for the purpose of carrying out a Head Start program within a State unless a plan setting forth such proposed contract, agreement, grant, or other assistance has been submitted to the chief executive officer of the State, and such plan has not been disapproved by such officer within [45] 30 days of such submission, or, if disapproved (for reasons other than failure of the program to comply with State health, safety, and child care laws, including regulations applicable to comparable child care programs in the State), has been reconsidered by the Secretary and found by the Secretary to be fully consistent with the provisions and in furtherance of the purposes of this subchapter, as evidenced by a written statement of the Secretary's findings that is transmitted to such officer. Funds to cover the costs of the proposed contract, agreement, grant, or other assistance shall be obligated from the appropriation which is current at the time the plan is submitted to such officer. This section shall not, however, apply to contracts, agreements, grant, loans, or other assistance *to Indian and migrant and seasonal Head Start programs in existence on the date of enactment of the Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act, or to any institution of higher education in existence on the date of the enactment of this Act.*

* * * * *

PARTICIPATION IN HEAD START PROGRAMS

SEC. 645. (a)(1) The Secretary shall be regulation prescribe eligibility for the participation of persons in Head Start programs assisted under this subchapter. Except as provided in paragraph (2), such criteria may provide—

(A) that children from low-income families shall be eligible for participation in programs assisted under this subchapter if their families' incomes are below 130 percent of the poverty

line, or if their families are eligible or, in the absence of child care, would potentially be eligible for public assistance; and

(B) pursuant to such regulations as the Secretary shall prescribe, that—

(i) programs assisted under this subchapter may include, to a reasonable extent, participation of children in the area served who would benefit from such programs but whose families do not meet the low-income criteria prescribed pursuant to subparagraph (A); and

(ii) a child who has been determined to meet the low-income criteria and who is participating in a Head Start program in a program year shall be considered to continue to meet the low-income criteria through the end of the succeeding program year.

In determining for purposes of this paragraph, whether a child who has applied for enrollment in a Head Start program meets the low-income criteria, an entity may consider evidence of family income during the 12 months preceding the month in which the application is submitted, or during the calendar year preceding the calendar year in which the application is submitted, whichever more accurately reflects the needs of the family at the time of application. *A homeless child shall be deemed eligible for Head Start services.*

(2) Whenever a Head Start program is operated in a community with a population of 1,000 or less individuals and— * * *

* * * * *

(3)(A) *In this paragraph:*

(i) *The term “dependent” has the meaning given the term in paragraphs (2)(A) and (4)(A)(i) of section 401(a) of title 37, United States Code.*

(ii) *The terms “member” and “uniformed services” have the meanings given the terms in paragraphs (23) and (3), respectively, of section 101 of title 37, United States Code.*

(B) *The following amounts of pay and allowance of a member of the uniformed services shall not be considered to be income for purposes of determining the eligibility of a dependent of such member for programs funded under this subchapter:*

(i) *The amount of any special pay payable under section 310 of title 37, United States Code, relating to duty subject to hostile fire or imminent danger.*

(ii) *The amount of basic allowance payable under section 403 of such title, including any such amount that is provided on behalf of the member for housing that is acquired or constructed under the alternative authority for the acquisition and improvement of military housing under subchapter IV of chapter 169 of title 10, United States Code, or any other related provision of law.*

(4) *After demonstrating a need through a community needs assessment, a Head Start agency may apply to the Secretary to convert part-day sessions, particularly consecutive part-day sessions, into full-day sessions.*

* * * * *

[SEC. 645A. EARLY HEAD START PROGRAMS FOR FAMILIES WITH INFANTS AND TODDLERS.]

SEC. 645A. EARLY HEAD START PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.— * * *

* * * * *

(b) SCOPE AND DESIGN OF PROGRAMS.—In carrying out a program described in subsection (a), an entity receiving assistance under this section shall—

(1) * * *

(2) * * *

(3) * * *

(4) **[**provide services to parents to support their role as parents**]** *provide additional services to parents to support their role as parents (including parenting skills training and training in basic child development) and to help the families move toward self-sufficiency (including educational and employment services as appropriate);*

(5) *where appropriate and in conjunction with services provided under this section to the children's immediate families (or as approved by the Secretary), provide home-based services to family child care homes and kin caregivers caring for infants and toddlers who also participate in Early Head Start programs, to provide continuity in supporting the children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development;*

[5](6) coordinate services with services (*including home-based services*) provided by programs in the State and programs in the community (including programs for infants and toddlers with disabilities *and homeless infants and toddlers*) to ensure a comprehensive array of services such as health and mental health services, *and family support services*);

[6](7) ensure formal linkages with local Head Start programs in order to provide for continuity of services for children and families;

(8) *develop and implement a systematic procedure for transitioning children and parents from an Early Head Start program into a Head Start program or another local early childhood education program;*

(9) *establish channels of communication between staff of Early Head Start programs and staff of Head Start programs or other local early childhood education programs, to facilitate the coordination of programs;*

[7](10) in the case of a Head Start agency that operates a program and that also provides Head Start services through the age of mandatory school attendance, ensure that children and families participating in the program receive such services through such age;

[8](11) ensure formal linkages with the agencies and entities described in section 644(b) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1444(b)) **[and providers]** *providers* of early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq., and the agencies responsible for administering section 106 of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (42 U.S.C. 5106a) and parts B and E of

title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 620 et seq. and 670 et seq.); and

【9】(12) meet such other requirements concerning design and operation of the program described in subsection (a) as the Secretary may establish.

* * * * *

(d) ELIGIBLE SERVICE PROVIDERS.— * * *

* * * * *

(1) entities operating Head Start programs under this subchapter, *including tribal governments and entities operating migrant and seasonal Head Start programs*; and

(2) other public entities, and nonprofit or for-profit private entities, *including community-based organizations*, capable of providing child and family services that meet the standards for participation in programs under this subchapter and meet such other appropriate requirements relating to the activities under this section as the Secretary may establish.

* * * * *

(g) MONITORING, TRAINING, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, AND EVALUATION.— * * *

* * * * *

(2) TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACCOUNT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.— * * *

(B) ACTIVITIES.—Funds in the account may be used by the Secretary for purposes including—

(i) * * *

(ii) * * *

(iii) * * *

【(iv) providing professional development and personnel enhancement activities, including the provision of funds to recipients of grants under subsection (a) for the recruitment and retention of qualified staff with an appropriate level of education and experience.】

(iv) providing professional development and personnel enhancement activities, including the provision of funds to recipients of grants under subsection (a), relating to—

(I) effective methods of conducting parent education, home visiting, and promoting quality early childhood development;

(II) recruiting and retaining qualified staff; and

(III) increasing program participating for underserved populations of eligible children.

(h) STAFF QUALIFICATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT.—

(1) CENTER-BASED STAFF.—*The Secretary shall ensure that, not later than September 30, 2010, all teachers providing direct services to Early Head Start children and families in Early Head Start centers have a minimum of a child development associate credential or an associate degree, and have been trained (or have equivalent course work) in early childhood development.*

(2) HOME VISITOR STAFF.—

(A) *STANDARDS.*—In order to further enhance the quality of home visiting services provided to families of children participating in home-based, center-based, or combination program options under this subchapter, the Secretary shall establish standards for training, qualifications, and the conduct of home visits for home visitor staff in Early Head Start programs.

(B) *CONTENTS.*—The standards for training, qualifications, and the conduct of home visits shall include content related to—

(i) structured child-focused home visiting that promotes parents' ability to support the child's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development;

(ii) effective strengths-based parent education, including methods to encourage parents as their child's first teachers;

(iii) early childhood development with respect to children from birth through age 3;

(iv) methods to help parents promote emergent literacy in their children from birth through age 3, including use of research-based strategies to support the development of literacy and language skills for children who are limited English proficient;

(v) health, vision, hearing, and development screenings;

(vi) strategies for helping families coping with crisis; and

(vii) the relationship of health and well-being of pregnant women to prenatal and early child development.

* * * * *

APPEALS, NOTICE, AND HEARING

SEC. 646. (a) The Secretary shall prescribe procedures to assure that—

(1) * * *

(2) * * *

[(3) financial assistance under this subchapter shall not be terminated or reduce, an application for refunding shall not be denied, and a suspension of financial assistance shall not be continued for longer than 30 days, unless the recipient has been afforded reasonable notice and opportunity for a full and fair hearing; and

[(4) the Secretary shall develop and publish procedures (including mediation procedures) to be used in order to—

[(A) resolve in a timely manner conflicts potentially leading to adverse action between—

[(i) recipients of financial assistance under this subchapter; and

[(B) avoid the need for an administrative hearing on an adverse action].

(3) financial assistance under this subchapter may be terminated or reduced, and an application for refunding may be de-

nied, after the recipient has been afforded reasonable notice and opportunity for a full and fair hearing, including—

- (A) a right to file a notice of appeal of a decision within 30 days of notice of the decision from the Secretary; and
- (B) access to a full and fair hearing of the appeal, not later than 120 days from receipt by the Secretary of the notice of appeal;
- (4) the Secretary shall develop and publish procedures (including mediation procedures) to be used in order to—
 - (A) resolve in a timely manner conflicts potentially leading to an adverse action between—
 - (i) recipients of financial assistance under this subchapter; and
 - (ii) delegate agencies or Head Start Parent Policy Councils;
 - (B) avoid the need for an administrative hearing on an adverse action; and
 - (C) prohibit a Head Start agency from expending financial assistance awarded under this subchapter for the purpose of paying legal fee pursuant to an appeal under paragraph (3), except that such fees shall be reimbursed by the Secretary if the agency prevails in such decision; and
- (5) the Secretary may suspend funds to a grantee under this subchapter—
 - (A) except as provided in subparagraph (B), for not more than 30 days; or
 - (B) in the case of a grantee under this subchapter that has multiple and recurring deficiencies for a period of 6 months and has not made substantial and significant progress toward meeting the goals of the grantee's quality improvement plan or eliminating all deficiencies identified by the Secretary, during the hearing of an appeal described in paragraph (3), for any amount of time, including permanently.

* * * * *

RECORDS AND AUDITS

SEC. 647. (a) **[Each recipient of]** *Each Head Start agency, Head Start center, or Early Head Start center receiving financial assistance under this subchapter shall keep such records as the Secretary shall prescribe, including records which fully disclose the amount and disposition by such recipient of the proceeds of such financial assistance, the total cost of the project or undertaking in connection with which such financial assistance is given or used, the amount of that portion of the cost of the project or undertaking supplied by other sources, and such other records as will facilitate an effective audit.*

(b) The Secretary and the Comptroller General of the United States, or any of their duly authorized representatives, shall have access for the purpose of audit and examination to any books, documents, papers, and records of the recipients that are pertinent to the financial assistance received under this subchapter.

(c) *Each Head Start agency, Head Start center, or Early Head Start center receiving financial assistance under this subchapter*

shall maintain, and annually submit to the Secretary, a complete accounting of its administrative expenses, including expenses for salaries and compensation funded under this subchapter and provide such additional documentation as the Secretary may require.

* * * * *

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING

SEC. 648. (a) The Secretary shall provide, directly or through grants or other arrangements (1) technical assistance to communities in developing, conducting, and administering programs under this subchapter; and (2) training for specialized or other personnel needed in connection with Head Start programs, in accordance with the process, and the provisions for allocating resources, set forth in subsections [(b), and (c)] *(b), (c), and (d)*.

(b) The Secretary shall make available funds set aside in section 640(a)(2)(C)(ii) to support a regional or State system of early childhood education training and technical assistance that improves the capacity of Head Start programs to deliver services in accordance with the standards described in section 641A(a)(1), with particular attention to the standards described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of such section. The Secretary shall—

(1) ensure that agencies with demonstrated expertise in providing high-quality training and technical assistance to improve the delivery of Head Start services, including the State Head Start Associations, State agencies, migrant and seasonal Head Start programs, and other entities providing training and technical assistance in early education, for the region or State are included in the planning and coordination of the system; and

(2) encourage States to supplement the funds authorized in section 640(a)(2)(C)(ii) with Federal, State, or local funds other than Head Start funds, to expand training and technical assistance activities beyond Head Start agencies to include other providers of other early childhood services within a region or State.

[(b)](c) The process for determining the technical assistance and training activities to be carried out under this section shall—

(1) * * *

* * * * *

[(c)](d) In allocating resources for technical assistance and training under this section, the Secretary shall—

(1) give priority consideration to—

(A) activities to correct program and management deficiencies identified through reviews carried out pursuant to section 641A(c) (including the provision of assistance to local programs in the development of quality improvement plans under section 641A(d)(2)); and

(B) assisting Head Start agencies in—

(i) ensuring the school readiness of children; and

(ii) meeting the [educational performance measures] *measures* described in section 641A(b)(4);

(2) supplement amounts provided under section 640(a)(3)(C)(ii) in order to address the training and career development needs of classroom staff (including instruction for providing services to children with disabilities *and for activities*

described in section 1221(b)(3) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6371(b)(3))) and non-classroom staff, including home visitors and other staff working directly with families, including training relating to increasing parent involvement and services designed to increase family literacy and improve parenting skills;

(3) * * *

(4) * * *

(5) assist Head Start agencies and programs in conducting and participating in communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment, *including assessing the needs of homeless children and their families;*

(6) * * *

(7) * * *

(8) * * *

(9) * * *

(10) assist Head Start agencies in developing innovative program models, including mobile and home-based programs[; and];

(11) provide support for Head Start agencies (including policy councils and policy committees, as defined in regulation) that meet the standards described in section 641A(a) but that have, as documented by the Secretary through reviews conducted pursuant to section 641A(c), significant programmatic, quality, and fiscal issues to address[.];

(12) *assist Head Start agencies and programs in increasing the program participation of homeless children;*

(13) *provide training and technical assistance to members of governing bodies to ensure that the members can fulfill the functions described in section 641(a)(4);*

(14) *provide training and technical assistance to Head Start agencies to assist such agencies in conducting self-assessments; and*

(15) *assist Head Start agencies and Head Start programs in improving outreach to, and quality of services available to, limited English proficient children and their families, including such services to help such families learn English, particularly in communities that have experienced a large percentage increase in the population of limited English proficient individuals, as measured by the Bureau of the Census.*

[(d)](e) The Secretary may provide, either directly or through grants to public or private nonprofit entities, *including community-based organizations*, training for Head Start personnel in the use of the performing and visual arts and interactive programs using electronic media to enhance the learning experience of Head Start children. Special consideration shall be given to entities that have demonstrated effectiveness in educational programming for preschool children that includes components for parental involvement, care provider training, and developmentally appropriate related activities.

[(e)](f) The Secretary shall provide, either directly or through grants or other arrangements, funds from programs authorized under this subchapter to support an organization to administer a centralized child development and national assessment program leading to recognized credentials for personnel working in early

childhood development and child care programs, training for personnel providing services to non-English language background children (including services to promote the acquisition of the English language), *or providing services to children determined to be abused or neglected, training for personnel providing services to children referred by entities providing child welfare services or receiving child welfare services*, training for personnel in helping children cope with community violence, and resource access projects for personnel working with disabled children.

(g) *The Secretary shall provide, either directly or through grants or other arrangements, funds for training of Head Start personnel in addressing the unique needs of migrant and seasonal farmworking families, families with limited English proficiency, and homeless families.*

(h) *Funds used under this section shall be used to provide high quality, sustained, and intensive, training and technical assistance in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction. Funds shall be used to carry out activities related to 1 or more of the following:*

- (1) *Education and early childhood development.*
- (2) *Child health, nutrition, and safety.*
- (3) *Family and community partnerships.*
- (4) *Other areas that impact the quality or overall effectiveness of Head Start programs.*

(i) *Funds used under this section for training shall be used for needs identified annually by a grant applicant or delegate agency in its program improvement plan, except that funds shall not be used for long-distance travel expenses for training activities—*

- (1) *available locally or regionally; or*
- (2) *substantially similar to locally or regionally available training activities.*

(j)(1) *To support local efforts to enhance early language and preliteracy development of children in Head Start programs, and to provide the children with high-quality oral language skills, and environments that are rich in literature, in which to acquire language and preliteracy skills, each Head Start agency, in coordination with the appropriate State office and the relevant State Head Start collaboration office, shall ensure that all of the agency's Head Start teachers received ongoing training in language and emergent literacy (referred to in this subsection as "literacy training"), including appropriate curricula and assessments to improve instruction and learning. Such training shall include training in methods to promote phonological and phonemic awareness and vocabulary development in an age-appropriate and culturally and linguistically appropriate manner.*

(2) *The literacy training shall be provided at the local level in order—*

(A) *to be provided, to the extent feasible, in the context of the Head Start programs of the State involved and the children the program serves; and*

(B) *to be tailored to the early childhood literacy background and experience of the teachers involved.*

(3) *The literacy training shall be culturally and linguistically appropriate and support children's development in their home language.*

(4) *The literacy training shall include training in how to work with parents to enhance positive language and early literacy development at home.*

(5) *The literacy training shall include specific methods to best address the needs of children who are English language learners or are limited English proficient.*

(6) *The literacy training shall include specific methods to best address the needs of children who have speech and language delays, including problems with articulation, or have other disabilities.*

* * * * *

SEC. 648A. STAFF QUALIFICATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT.

(a) CLASSROOM TEACHERS.—

(1) PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS.— * * *

* * * * *

[(2)] DEGREE REQUIREMENTS.—

[(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall ensure that not later than September 30, 2003, at least 50 percent of all Head Start teachers nationwide in center-based programs have—

[(i) an associate, baccalaureate, or advanced degree in early childhood education; or

[(ii) an associate, baccalaureate, or advanced degree in a field related to early childhood education, with experience in teaching preschool children.

[(B) PROGRESS.—The Secretary shall require Head Start agencies to demonstrate continuing progress each year to reach the result described in subparagraph (A).**]**

(2) DEGREE REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—*The Secretary shall ensure that—*

(i) not later than September 30, 2010, all Head Start teachers in center-based programs have at least—

(I)(aa) an associate degree (or equivalent coursework) relating to early childhood; or

(bb) an associate degree in a related educational area and, to the extent practicable, coursework relating to early childhood; and

(II) demonstrated teaching competencies, as determined by the program director involved (including, at a minimum, an appropriate level of literacy, a demonstrated capacity to be highly engaged with children, and a demonstrated ability to effectively implement an early childhood curriculum); and

(ii) not later than September 30, 2008, all Head Start curriculum specialists and education coordinators in center-based programs have—

(I) the capacity to offer assistance to other teachers in the implementation and adaptation of curricula to the group and individual needs of a class; and

(II)(aa) a baccalaureate or advanced degree relating to early childhood; or

(bb) a baccalaureate or advanced degree and coursework equivalent to a major relating to early childhood;

(iii) not later than September 30, 2008, all Head Start teaching assistants in center-based programs have—

(I) at least a child development associate credential;

(II) enrolled in a program leading to an associate or baccalaureate degree; or

(III) enrolled in a child development associate credential program to be completed within 2 years; and

(iv) not later than September 30, 2011—

(I) in States that have established teacher requirements for State prekindergarten programs, all Head Start teachers in center-based programs—

(aa) if such requirements are not less than those requirements described in subclause (II), meet such teacher requirements for State prekindergarten programs; and

(bb) if such requirements are less than those requirements described in subclause (II), meet the requirements described in subclause (II); and

(II) in States that do not have an established State prekindergarten program or in States that do not have established teacher requirements for their State prekindergarten programs, 50 percent of all Head Start teachers in each center-based program have a baccalaureate degree relating to early childhood (or a related educational area or a baccalaureate degree that meets State specialized training requirements for prekindergarten teachers, such as State licensure, endorsement, or certification for prekindergarten or other early childhood area), and demonstrated teaching competencies, as determined by the program director involved (including, at a minimum, an appropriate level of literacy, a demonstrated capacity to be highly engaged with children, and a demonstrated ability to effectively implement an early childhood curriculum).

(B) **TEACHER IN-SERVICE REQUIREMENT.**—Each Head Start teacher shall attend an average of not less than 15 clock hours of professional development per year. Such professional development shall be high quality, sustained, intensive, and classroom-focused in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction and the teacher's performance in the classroom, and regularly evaluated for effectiveness.

(C) **PROGRESS.**—

(i) **REPORT.**—The Secretary shall—

(I) require Head Start agencies to—

(aa) demonstrate continuing progress each year to reach the result described in subparagraph (A);

(bb) submit to the Secretary a report indicating the number and percentage of classroom instructors in center-based programs with child development associate credentials or associate, baccalaureate, or graduate degrees; and

(II) compile and submit a summary of all program reports described in subclause (I)(bb) to the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate.

(ii) *DEMONSTRATE PROGRESS.*—A Head Start agency may demonstrate progress by partnering with institutions of higher education or other programs that recruit, train, place, and support college students to deliver an innovative early learning program to preschool children.

(D) *SERVICE REQUIREMENTS.*—The Secretary shall establish requirements to ensure that, in order to enable Head Start agencies to comply with the requirements of subparagraph (A), individuals who receive financial assistance under this subchapter to pursue a degree described in subparagraph (A) shall—

(i) teach or work in a Head Start program for a minimum of 3 years after receiving the degree; or

(ii) repay the total or a prorated amount of the financial assistance received based on the length of service completed after receiving the degree.

[(3) *ALTERNATIVE CREDENTIALING REQUIREMENTS.*—The Secretary shall ensure that, for center-based programs, each Head Start classroom that does not have a teacher that meets the requirements of clause (i) or (ii) of paragraph (2)(A) is assigned one teacher who has—

[(A) a child development associate credential that is appropriate to the age of the children being served in center-based programs;

[(B) a State-awarded certificate for preschool teachers that meets or exceeds the requirements for a child development associate credential; or

[(C) a degree in a field related to early childhood education with experience in teaching preschool children and a State-awarded certificate to teach in a preschool program.]

[(4) *WAIVER.*—

[(A) *IN GENERAL.*—On request, the Secretary shall grant a 180-day waiver of the requirements of paragraph (3), for a Head Start agency that can demonstrate that the agency has unsuccessfully attempted to recruit an individual who has a credential, certificate, or degree described in paragraph (3), with respect to an individual who—

[(i) is enrolled in a program that grants any such credential, certificate, or degree; and

[(ii) will receive such credential, certificate, or degree under the terms of such program not later than 180 days after beginning employment as a teacher with such agency.

[(B) LIMITATION.—The Secretary may not grant more than one such waiver with respect to such individual.]

(3) WAIVER.—

(A) *IN GENERAL.*—*On request, the Secretary may grant a waiver of the postsecondary degree requirements of paragraph (2) for 1 or more Head Start agencies, either individually, statewide, or throughout a region, that can demonstrate—*

(i) that continuing aggressive statewide and national efforts have been unsuccessful at recruiting an individual to serve as a Head Start teacher or curriculum specialist or education coordinator who meets the requirements of paragraph (2)(A);

(ii) limited access to degree programs (including quality distance learning programs), due to the remote location of the program involved; or

(iii) that Head Start staff members are, as of the day the waiver is granted, enrolled in a program that—

(I) grants the required degree; and

(II) will be completed within 1 year.

(B) *LIMITATION.*—*An agency that receives a waiver under subparagraph (A) shall ensure that Head Start teachers for the agency, as of the day the waiver is granted, who have not met the postsecondary degree requirements of paragraph (2) but are otherwise highly qualified and competent shall be directly and appropriately supervised by a teacher who has met or exceeded the requirements of this subchapter.*

(C) *DURATION.*—*The Secretary may not grant a waiver under subparagraph (A) for a period that exceeds 1 year.*

(b) MENTOR TEACHERS.—

* * * * *

(c) **FAMILY SERVICE WORKERS.**—In order to improve the quality and effectiveness of staff providing in-home and other services (including needs assessment, development of service plans, family advocacy, and coordination of service delivery) to families of children participating in Head Start programs, the Secretary, in coordination with concerned public and private agencies and organizations examining the issues of standards and training for family service workers, shall—

(1) review and, as necessary, revise or develop new qualification standards for Head Start staff providing such services;

(2) promote the development of model curricula (on subjects including parenting training and family literacy) designed to ensure the attainment of appropriate competencies by individuals working or planning to work in the field of early childhood and family services; [and]

(3) promote the establishment or a credential that indicates attainment of the competencies and that is accepted nationwide~~].~~; and

(4) *promote the use of appropriate strategies to meet the needs of special populations (including limited English proficient populations).*

(d) HEAD START FELLOWSHIPS.—

(1) AUTHORITY.— * * *

* * * * *

(3) ASSIGNMENTS OF FELLOWS.—

(A) PLACEMENT SITES.— * * *

* * * * *

(C) NO PLACEMENT IN LOBBYING ORGANIZATION.—Head Start Fellowship positions may not be located in any agency, *including a center*, whose primary purpose, or one of whose major purposes, is to influence Federal, State, or local legislation.

* * * * *

(e) MODEL STAFFING PLANS.— * * *

* * * * *

(f) *PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS.—Every Head Start agency and center shall create, in consultation with employees of the agency or center (including family service workers), a professional development plan for employees who provide direct services to children, including a plan for classroom teachers, curriculum specialists, and education coordinators to meet the requirements set forth in subsection (a).*

* * * * *

SEC. 648B. TRIBAL COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY HEAD START PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM.

(a) *PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to promote social competencies and school readiness in Indian children.*

(b) *TRIBAL COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY HEAD START PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM.—*

(1) *GRANTS—The Secretary is authorized to award grants, for periods of not less than 5 years, to Tribal Colleges and Universities to—*

(A) *implement education programs that include education concerning tribal culture and language and increase the number of associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degrees in early childhood education and related fields that are earned by Indian Head Start agency staff members, parents of children served by an agency, and members of the tribal community involved.*

(B) *develop and implement the programs under subparagraph (A) in technology-mediated formats, including providing the programs through such means as distance learning and use of advanced technology, as appropriate; and*

(C) *provide technology literacy programs for Indian Head Start agency staff members and children and families of children served by such an agency.*

(2) *STAFFING.*—The Secretary shall ensure that the American Indian Programs Branch of the Head Start Bureau of the Department of Health and Human Services shall have staffing sufficient to administer the programs under this section and to provide appropriate technical assistance to Tribal Colleges and Universities receiving grants under this section.

(c) *APPLICATION.*—Each Tribal College or University desiring a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary, at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require, including a certification that the Tribal College or University has established a partnership with 1 or more Indian Head Start agencies for the purpose of conducting the activities described in subsection (b).

(d) *AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.*—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section, \$10,000,000 for fiscal year 2006 and such sums may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2007 through 2010.

(e) *DEFINITIONS.*—In this section:

(1) *INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.*—The term “institution of higher education” has the meaning given such term in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a)).

(2) *TRIBAL COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY.*—The term “Tribal College or University”—

(A) has the meaning given such term in section 316 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1059c); and

(B) means an institution determined to be accredited or a candidate for accreditation by a national recognized accrediting agency or association.

* * * * *

SEC. 649. RESEARCH, DEMONSTRATIONS, AND EVALUATION.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—

(1) *REQUIREMENT; GENERAL PURPOSES.*—The Secretary shall carry out a continuing program of research, demonstration, and evaluation activities, in order to—

(A) foster continuous improvement in the quality of the Head Start programs under this subchapter and in their effectiveness in enabling participating children and their families to succeed in school and otherwise; and

(B) use the Head Start programs to develop, test, and disseminate new ideas and approaches for addressing the needs of low-income preschool children (including children with disabilities, *children determined to be abused or neglected, homeless children, and children in foster care*) and their families and communities (including demonstrations of innovative noncenter-based program models such as home-based and mobile programs, and otherwise to further the purposes of this subchapter.

(b) *CONDUCT OF RESEARCH, DEMONSTRATION, AND EVALUATION ACTIVITIES.*— * * *

* * * * *

(c) *CONSULTATION AND COLLABORATION.*— * * *

* * * * *

(d) **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES.**—The research, demonstration, and evaluation activities under this chapter shall indicate components designed to—

(1) * * *

* * * * *

(8) promote exploration of areas in which knowledge is insufficient, and that will otherwise contribute to fulfilling the purposes of this subchapter; *and*

[(9) study the experiences of small, medium, and large States with Head Start programs in order to permit comparisons of children participating in the programs with eligible children who did not participate in the programs, which study—

[(A) may include the use of a data set that existed prior to the initiation of the study; and

[(B) shall compare the educational achievement, social adaptation, and health status of the participating children and the eligible nonparticipating children; and]

[10] (9) provide for—

(A) * * *

(B) * * *

(C) * * *

(D) * * *

(E) * * *

[The Secretary shall ensure that an appropriate entity carries out a study described in paragraph (9), and prepares and submits to the appropriate committees of Congress a report containing the results of the study, not later than September 30, 2002.]

(e) **LONGITUDINAL STUDIES.**— * * *

* * * * *

(f) **OWNERSHIP OF RESULTS.**— * * *

* * * * *

(g) **NATIONAL HEAD START IMPACT RESEARCH.**—

(1) **EXPERT PANEL.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall appoint an independent panel consisting of experts in program evaluation and research, education, and early childhood programs—

[(i) To review, and make recommendations on, the design and plan for the research (whether conducted as a single assessment or as a series of assessments) described in paragraph (2), within 1 year after the date of enactment of the Coats Human Services Reauthorization Act of 1998;]

[(ii)] (i) to maintain and advise the Secretary regarding the progress of the research; and

[(iii)] (ii) to comment, if the panel so desires, on the interim and final research reports submitted under paragraph (7).

* * * * *

(7) **REPORTS.**—

(A) **SUBMISSION OF INTERIM REPORTS.**— * * *

(B) **SUBMISSION OF FINAL REPORT.**— * * *

(C) **TRANSMITTAL OF REPORTS TO CONGRESS.**—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall transmit, to the committees described in clause (ii), the first interim report by September 30, 1999, the second interim report by September 30, 2001, and the final report by September 30, [2003] 2007.

(ii) COMMITTEES.—The Committees referred to in clause (i) are the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on [Labor and Human Resources] *Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions* of the Senate.

* * * * *

[(h) QUALITY IMPROVEMENT STUDY.—

[(1) STUDY.—The Secretary shall conduct a study regarding the use and effects of use of the quality improvement funds made available under section 640(a)(3) since fiscal year 1991.

[(2) REPORT.—The Secretary shall prepare and submit to Congress not later than September 2000 a report containing the results of the study, including information on—

[(A) the types of activities funded with the quality improvement funds;

[(B) the extent to which the use of the quality improvement funds has accomplished the goals of section 640(a)(3)(B);

[(C) the effect of use of the quality improvement funds on teacher training, salaries, benefits, recruitment, and retention; and

[(D) the effect of use of the quality improvement funds on the development of children receiving services under this subchapter.]

(h) NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.— *The Secretary shall enter into a contract with the Board on Children, Youth, and Families of the National Research Council, the Board on Testing and Assessments, and the Institute of Medicine, of the National Academy of Sciences to establish an independent panel of experts to review and synthesize research and theories in the social, behavioral, and biological sciences regarding early childhood, and make recommendations with regard to each of the following:*

(A) *Age- and developmentally appropriate Head Start academic requirements and outcomes, including the standards described in section 641A(a)(1)(B)(ii).*

(B) *Differences in the type, length, mix, and intensity of services that are necessary to ensure that children from challenging family or social backgrounds (including low-income children, children with disabilities, and limited English proficient children) enter kindergarten ready to succeed.*

(C) *Appropriate assessments of young children for the purposes of improving instruction, services, and program quality, including—*

(i) formal and systematic observational assessments in a child's natural environment;

(ii) assessments of children's development through parent and provider interviews;

(iii) appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities and limited English proficient children;

(iv) appropriate assessments for children with disabilities, limited English proficient children, and children from different cultural backgrounds; and

(v) other assessments used in Head Start programs.

(D) Identification of existing, or recommendations for the development of, scientifically based, valid and reliable assessments that are capable of measuring child outcomes in the domains important to school readiness, including language skills, prereading ability, premathematics ability, cognitive ability, scientific ability, social and emotional development, and physical development.

(E) Appropriate use and application of valid and reliable assessments for Head Start programs identified in accordance with subparagraph (D).

(2) COMPOSITION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The panel described in paragraph (1) shall consist of multiple experts in each of the following areas:

(i) Child development (including cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development) and child education (including approaches to learning).

(ii) Professional development, including preparation of individuals who teach young children.

(iii) Assessment of young children (including children with disabilities and limited English proficient children), including screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based instructional assessment.

(B) REPRESENTATIVES.—The panel described in paragraph (1) shall be selected and appointed by the National Academy of Sciences, after consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(3) TIMING.—

(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of the Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act, the Board on Children, Youth, and Families of the National Research Council, the Board on Testing and Assessments, and the Institute of Medicine, of the National Academy of Sciences shall establish the panel described in paragraph (1), including selecting and appointing the members of the panel. Representatives described in paragraph (2) shall be selected and appointed after consultation with the Secretary.

(B) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 1 year after the panel described in paragraph (1) is established, the panel shall complete, and submit to the Secretary a report containing, the recommendations described in paragraph (1). The Secretary shall not implement the amendments made to section 641A(a)(1)(B)(ii) by the Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act until the panel submits the report.

(4) APPLICATION OF PANEL REPORT.—The Secretary shall use the results of the review and recommendations described in paragraph (1) to (where appropriate) develop, inform, and revise—

- (A) the educational standards, and the performance measures, described in section 641A; and
 - (B) the assessments utilized in the Head Start programs.
- (i) *SERVICES TO LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.*—

(1) *STUDY.*—The Secretary shall conduct a study on the status of limited English proficient children and their families in Head Start or Early Head Start programs.

(2) *REPORT.*—The Secretary shall prepare and submit to Congress, not later than September 2009, a report containing the results of the study, including information on—

(A) the demographics of limited English proficient children from birth through age 5, including the number of such children receiving Head Start or Early Head Start services and the geographic distribution of children described in this subparagraph;

(B) the nature of Head Start or Early Head Start services provided to limited English proficient children and their families, including the types, content, duration, intensity, and costs of family services, language assistance, and educational services;

(C) procedures in Head Start programs for the assessment of language needs and the transition of limited English proficient children to kindergarten, including the extent to which Head Start programs meet the requirements of section 642A for limited English proficient children;

(D) the qualifications and training provided to Head Start and Early Head Start teachers serving limited English proficient children and their families;

(E) the rate of progress made by limited English proficient children and their families in Head Start programs and Early Head Start programs, including—

(i) the rate of progress of the limited English proficient children toward meeting the additional educational standards described in section 641(a)(1)(B)(ii) while enrolled in Head Start programs, measured between 1990 and 2004;

(ii) the correlation between such progress and the type of instruction and educational program provided to the limited English proficient children; and

(iii) the correlation between such progress and health and family services provided by Head Start programs to limited English proficient children and their families; and

(F) the extent to which Head Start programs make use of funds under section 640(a)(3) to improve the quality of Head Start services provided to limited English proficient children and their families.

* * * * *

SEC. 650 REPORTS.

(a) *STATUS OF CHILDREN.*—At least once during every 2-year period, the Secretary shall prepare and submit, to the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on [Labor and Human Resources] *Health, Edu-*

cation, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate, a report concerning the status of children (including disabled and non-English language background children) in Head Start programs, including the number of children and the services being provided to such children. Such report shall include—

(1) a statement for the then most recently concluded fiscal year specifying—

(A) * * *

* * * * *

(8) information concerning children participating in programs that receive Head Start funding, including information on family income, racial and ethnic background, *homelessness, children in foster care*, disability, and receipt of benefits under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act;

* * * * *

(14) * * *

Promptly after submitting such report to the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on **[Labor and Human Resources]** *Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions* of the Senate, the Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register a notice indicating that such report is available to the public and specifying how such report may be obtained.

(b) FACILITIES.—At least once during every 5-year period, the Secretary shall prepare and submit, to the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on **[Labor and Human Resources]** *Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions* of the Senate, a report concerning the condition, location, and ownership of facilities used, or available to be used, by Indian Head Start agencies (including Native Alaskan Head Start agencies) and Native Hawaiian Head Start agencies.

* * * * *

COMPARABILITY OF WAGES

SEC. 653. **[The Secretary shall take]** (a) *The Secretary shall take such action as may be necessary to assure that persons employed in carrying out programs financed under this subchapter shall not receive compensation at a rate which is (1) in excess of the average rate of compensation paid in the area where the program is carried out to a substantial number of the persons providing substantially comparable services, or in excess of the average rate of compensation paid to a substantial number of the persons providing substantially comparable services in the area of the person's immediately preceding employment, whichever is higher; **[or (2)]** (2) in excess of the salary of the Secretary, in the case of an individual compensated with funds awarded under this subchapter or the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.); or (3) less than the minimum wage rate prescribed in section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938. The Secretary shall encourage Head Start agencies to provide compensation according to salary scales that are based on training and experience.*

(b) *If in any fiscal year the restriction described in subsection (a)(2) is violated, the Secretary shall withhold from the base grant of the Head Start agency involved (as defined in section 641A(g)(1))*

for the next fiscal year, an amount equal to the aggregate amount by which the salary that resulted in the violation exceeded the salary of the Secretary.

* * * * *

LIMITATION WITH RESPECT TO CERTAIN UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES

SEC. 655. No individual employed or assigned by or in any Head Start agency or other agency assisted under this subchapter shall, pursuant to or during the performance of services rendered in connection with any program or activity conducted or assisted under this subchapter by such Head Start agency or such other agency, plan, initiate, participate in, or otherwise aid or assist in the conduct of any unlawful demonstration, rioting, or civil disturbance.

* * * * *

[POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

[SEC. 656. (a) For purposes of]

SEC. 656. POLITICAL ACTIVITIES.

(a) *STATE OR LOCAL AGENCY.*—For purposes of chapter 15 of title 5, United States Code, any agency which assumes responsibility for planning, developing, and coordinating Head Start programs and receives assistance under this subchapter shall be deemed to be a State or local agency. For purposes of clauses (1) and (2) of section 150(2)(a) of such title, any agency receiving assistance under this subchapter shall be deemed to be a State or local agency.

[(b) Programs assisted under this subchapter shall not be carried on in a manner involving the use of program funds, the provision of services, or the employment or assignment of personnel in a manner supporting or resulting in the identification of such programs with (1) any partisan or nonpartisan political activity or any other political activity associated with a candidate, or contending faction or group, in an election for public or party office; (2) any activity to provide voters or prospective voters with transportation to the polls or similar assistance in connection with any such election; or (3) any voter registration activity. The Secretary, after consultation with the Office of Personnel Management, shall issue rules and regulations to provide for the enforcement of this section, which shall include provisions for summary suspension of assistance or other action necessary to permit enforcement on an emergency basis.]

(b) *RESTRICTIONS.*—

(1) *IN GENERAL.*—A program assisted under this subchapter, and any individual employed by, or assigned to, a program assessed under this subchapter (during the hours in which such individual is working on behalf of such program), shall not engage in—

(A) any partisan or nonpartisan political activity or any other political activity associated with a candidate, or contending faction or group, in an election for public or party office;

(B) any activity to provide voters or prospective voters with transportation to the polls or similar assistance in connection with any such election; or

(C) *any voter registration activity.*

(2) **RULES AND REGULATIONS.**—*The Secretary, after consultation with the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, may issue rules and regulations to provide for the enforcement of this section, which may include provisions for summary suspension of assistance or other action necessary to permit enforcement on an emergency basis.*

* * * * *

ADVANCE FUNDING

SEC. 657. For the purpose of affording adequate notice of funding available under this subchapter, appropriations for carrying out this subchapter are authorized to be included in an appropriation Act for the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which they are available for obligation.

* * * * *

SEC. 657A. PARENTAL CONSENT REQUIREMENT FOR NON-EMERGENCY INTRUSIVE PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS.

(a) **DEFINITION.**—*The term “nonemergency intrusive physical examination” means, with respect to a child, a physical examination that—*

- (1) is not immediately necessary to protect the health or safety of the child or the health or safety of another individual; and*
- (2) requires incision or is otherwise invasive, or involves exposure of private body parts.*

(b) **REQUIREMENT.**—*A Head Start agency shall obtain written parental consent before administration of, or referral for, any health care service provided or arranged to be provided, including any nonemergency intrusive physical examination of a child in connection with participation in a program under this subchapter.*

(c) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—*Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit agencies from using established methods, for handling cases of suspected or known child abuse and neglect, that are in compliance with applicable Federal, State, or tribal law.*

* * * * *