

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
ECTOR COUNTY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
AND GO. Inc.-PROJECT HEAD START**

Parties to the Agreement

This Agreement is between Ector County Independent School District and GO, Inc.-Project Head Start. GO, Inc.-Project Head Start and Ector County ISD agree to develop collaboration and cooperation with one another to maximize benefits of services to children with disabilities and their families through utilization of consultation and ongoing process of new ways to share resources, eliminate duplication and barriers. This Agreement documents the plans for shared working procedure. This Agreement will be automatically renewed annually except with thirty (30) days advance written notice of termination by either party in accordance with this agreement.

Purpose of Agreement

- A. The intent of this Agreement is to define the framework and provide guidance for effective collaboration of services to benefit young children with disabilities and their families. It is the commitment of these agencies to work together to assure coordination and continuum of services to children with disabilities from the ages of three to five years. All services will be provided in compliance with Federal mandates.
- B. To improve availability and the quality of services for Ector County children age three through age five, and their families.
- C. To promote further collaboration of services in a shared plan to efficiently identify, evaluate, and assist children and families with disabilities.
- D. To define the roles and responsibilities of the named parties toward coordination and greater collaboration.
- E. To ensure that all services are provided in accordance with the Federal mandates.

RECRUITMENT AND IDENTIFICATION

Objective: Identify potential children with disabilities to assure early intervention.

Go, Inc.-Project Head Start Responsibilities:

- Recruit, enroll and serve eligible children ages 3-5 years.
- Provide 10% enrollment opportunities for children with disabilities.
- Provide the community and community agencies with information (flyers, brochures) describing the program.
- Actively recruit via public displays and presentations at community functions and seek referrals from the community and its agencies serving families and children with disabilities.

Ector County ISD Responsibilities

- Identify potential children with disabilities ages 3 to 5 in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- Provide information to parents of children with disabilities regarding specific services for their children and family.
- Provide referrals to GO Project Head Start for children with suspected or verified disabilities.

SCREENING AND REFERRAL

Objective: Provide all children with comprehensive screenings in all areas of functioning to determine if further assessment is warranted.

GO, Inc.-Project Head Start Responsibilities:

- Coordinate screening of all Head Start children according to Performance Standards and Program Policy and Procedures.
- Provide screening of all enrolled children addressing visual/motor; body awareness; hearing and dental, by use of Health, Brigance Screening, and the Speech and Language Screening.
- Share with parent/guardian the screening information and screening results.
- Based on the Head Start Speech and Language Screening instrument, Head Start will consult with ISD SLP to provide classroom strategies to be implemented by the teacher for 4-6 weeks until re-screening takes place.
- Notify the parents of any screenings that suggest a need for further re-screening.
- Make referrals to Ector County ISD in a timely manner.

Ector County ISD Responsibilities:

- Review all screening information when receiving referrals from Head Start.
- Follow up on failed screenings by consulting with Head Start teacher and/or begin the referral process and follow up on students receiving intensive classroom interventions (4-6 weeks) to determine the need for re-screening.

- Notify Disabilities Specialist in a timely manner of any screenings that suggest a need for further evaluation.

EVALUATION

Objective: Determine eligibility for services utilizing available resources.

GO, Inc.-Project Head Start Responsibilities:

- Obtain parental consent and explain parental rights through a parent conference scheduled by Disabilities Specialist.
- Ensure that follow-through of referral packet is completed and submitted to the Ector County ISD Special Education Department.
- Participate in the evaluation process by providing supporting information from home visit, teacher information and teacher observation reports.

Ector County ISD Responsibilities:

- Notify Head Start staff on the status and outcome of the evaluation and results of testing and assessments provided by Ector County ISD within 90 days
- Ensure that the evaluation personnel prepare a written report of the results of the evaluation and verifies that the child's disability meets all the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. (IDEA).

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN

Objective: Determine the most appropriate Individual Education Program (IEP).

GO, Inc. Project Head Start Responsibilities:

- Participate in the IEP process for children enrolled in the Head Start Program.
- Implement IEP goals and objectives into the Head Start Lesson Plan.
- Disabilities Specialist will communicate with parents and appropriate Head Start staff regarding ARD meeting dates and participation.

Ector County ISD Responsibilities:

- Facilitate the development and review of IEP.
- Notify Disabilities Specialist of ARD meeting for each enrolled child with verified disabilities.
- Provide a copy of the IEP and evaluation report to Head Start staff.
- ARD committee will meet at least once a year to review the child's IEP.

SERVICES

Objective: Provide appropriate services in the least restrictive environment.

GO, Inc.-Project Head Start Responsibilities:

- Assure that teaching staff have appropriate training.
- Access and share resources of other community agencies for children with disabilities as determined in the IEP.

Ector County ISD Responsibilities:

- Provide special education and related services based on the IEP in the least restrictive environment.
- Provide services as outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

TRANSITION

Objective: Ensure a system exists between Head Start and Ector County ISD to transfer information about children who will transition from Head Start to Ector County ISD.

Go, Inc.-Project Head Start Responsibilities:

- Arrange meeting between Head Start staff and Ector County ISD staff.
- The Disabilities Specialist will notify school of child's planned enrollment prior to date of enrollment so that services will continue as soon as possible.
- Transfer transition packets with any pertinent records that would facilitate the transition.
- Transport children to Kindergarten for a visit.

Ector County ISD Responsibilities:

- Continue to collaborate with the Head Start staff for a smoother transition into public school
- Provide transition information to parents and Head Start staff at the annual meeting prior to enrollment in the kindergarten program.

TRAINING AND RESOURCE

Objective: Ensure maximum benefits for services to children and families are reached through utilization of existing resources and training.

GO, Inc.-Project Head Start Responsibilities:

- Invite Ector County ISD staff to participate in agency in-service training when applicable.
- Share resources and equipment as need arises as documented in the IEP.
- Invite Ector County ISD for visits to Head Start Program Sites.

Ector County ISD Responsibilities:

- Invite Head Start staff to participate in agency in-service training when applicable.
- Share resources and equipment as need arises as documented in the IEP.
- Invite Head Start staff to visit future kindergarten sites.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All acknowledge confidentiality requirements that each agency must follow regarding the sharing and release of information, with the consent of families, of personally identifiable information regarding children and families. Each agency will protect the rights of young children with respect to records and reports created, maintained, and used by the public agencies. It is the intent of this Agreement to ensure that parents have rights of access and rights of privacy with respect to such reports and records, and that applicable State and Federal laws for exercise of these rights be strictly followed. Both agencies will adhere to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and will ensure that agency policies and procedures are followed to safeguard the confidentiality of parents and children. In addition, both agencies will obtain written consent from parents before releasing any information.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

GO, Inc.-Project Head Start

Executive Head Start Director: Mrs. Betty J. Carter
206 W. 5th
Odessa, Texas 79760
(432)337-1352

Contact Person: Ms. Melba Dominguez
Disabilities Specialist
(432)337-1352 Ext 217

Ector County ISD
Executive Director
Special Education :

Mrs. Elaine Smith
P.O. Box 3912
Odessa, Texas 79760
(432)456-8719

Contact Persons:

Rakia Musa
RDSPD Coordinator
Jennifer Douglas, SLP/CCC
Catharine Wiley,
Educational Diagnostician
(432)456-8719

TERMS OF AGREEMENT

The Agreement will become effective immediately after being signed and dated by all parties. By signing the Agreement each agency agrees to the terms.

Ector County ISD Date
SUPERINTENDENT

GO, Inc. Project Head Start Date
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ECISD-SPECIAL EDUCATION Date
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

GO, Inc. Project Head Start Date
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR