

A Memorandum of Understand Between School District #363 Northome School Readiness Programs And KOOTASCA Head Start

I. Parties to the Agreement

- A. School District #363 Northome School Readiness
- B. KOOTASCA Head Start

II. Purpose of Agreement

- A. To ensure that all children in our communities receive the early childhood services needed wherever possible by maximizing community resources.
- B. To demonstrate our commitment to enter a more formalized, comprehensive agreement that addresses the issues outlined in the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007.

III. Program Descriptions

- A. KOOTASCA Head Start serves Itasca & Koochiching Counties. Head Start is a nation-wide Federal grant program funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is a comprehensive child development program for families with young children in the areas of education, social services, health, and family involvement. Head Start preschool programs are for children from 3 to 5 years of age and their families.

Head Start is mandated to assume a leadership role in the development of partnerships with community agencies and service providers. Each Head Start program must have a written agreement with the local education agency (LEA) that operates a pre-k program in their district.

- B. School Readiness is a public-school program open to Minnesota children age 3 years to kindergarten enrollment. Children are identified to participate in the program in a variety of ways including through Early Childhood Screening. School districts offer early childhood education programs and services unique to the needs of children and the resources in their communities. The goal of School Readiness is to prepare children for kindergarten with the skills and behaviors necessary to be successful in future learning.

IV. Responsibilities of Each Program

A. Both Agencies

The Head Start and School Readiness programs agree to work together on an ongoing basis to develop a collaborative relationship and a written Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will allow for ongoing communication, coordination, and collaboration in the following ten activities, as mandated by the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007:

Educational activities, curricular objectives, and instruction.

1. Implement research based early childhood curriculum that is aligned with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework and State Early Learning Standards.
2. KOOTASCA Head Start will provide a teacher qualified staff person and School Readiness will provide a qualified assistant to be part of the teaching team within the blended classroom.
3. The teaching team share duties and responsibilities within the blended classroom to provide high quality pre-school education to all children enrolled.
4. The teaching team is provided with time and resources to do joint planning for the classroom.
5. Classroom staff will maintain a continuous assessment process to improve instruction and record child progress.

Public information dissemination and access to programs for families contacting the Head Start program or any of the preschool programs.

6. Staff from KOOTASCA Head Start and School Readiness work collaboratively to provide information about the program as well as services for families in a unified voice.
7. The KOOTASCA Head Start Education Manager and Director maintain open communication with the school Principal and Superintendent to deal with on-going issues and needs as they relate to the partnership.
8. Collaborative partners advocate for and leverage resources of the local communities to improve school readiness.

Selection priorities for eligible children to be served by programs.

9. The KOOTASCA Head Start application is used for all families interested in early childhood programming within the Northome school district.
10. Staff from KOOTASCA Head Start rank applications based on income and risk factors. After the applications are ranked Head Start eligible children are slotted in the Head Start slots and the names and contact information from the remaining children is given to the Northome Principle so that those children can be enrolled through the School Readiness program.

B. Service Areas.

1. Included in this agreement are the towns of Northome and surrounding communities within the school district's service area.

C. Staff training, including opportunities for joint staff training on topics such as academic content standards, instructional methods, curricula, and social and emotional development.

1. The programs continue to provide independent training for staff depending on the needs identified by each individual program and opportunities within the school district and Head Start program.
2. Within this agreement Head Start will invite the assistant in the classroom to all Head Start sponsored trainings that are appropriate. It will be the responsibility of the school readiness program to pay for wages and mileage if the assistant chooses to not carpool with the classroom teacher.

D. Program technical assistance.

1. KOOTASCA Head Start will provide staff time and resources to provide site supervisors as required by the project.
2. KOOTASCA Head Start will provide staff time in the area of family support and case management.

E. Provisions of additional services to meet the needs of working parents, as applicable.

1. Both programs will agree to work together in linking families to needed services when appropriate.

F. Communications and parent outreach for smooth transitions to kindergarten as required in the Act.

1. The partners will work collaboratively to develop and implement a systematic procedure for transferring, with parental consent, Head Start and program records for each participating child to the school. In which such child will enroll.
2. Work together as part of a team to establish comprehensive transition policies and procedures that support children transitioning to school.

G. Provision and use of facilities, transportation, and other program elements.

1. All families enrolled in blended classrooms have the opportunity to work on their own behalf with the local school district to arrange transportation regardless of funding stream.

V. Guiding Principles

The following principles will guide the development of this memorandum of agreement:

- A. We will create and maintain a meaningful partnership that will facilitate improvement in the availability and quality of services for children ages 3-5 and their families in our common service area.
- B. We will work toward a comprehensive system of activities, policies and procedures among the named parties which guide and support delivery of services to children and their families.
- C. We will develop successful linkages within the context of the Head Start Act (2007) and Minnesota legislation policies and procedures.
- D. We will plan and implement strategies based on practice and research that have proven to support children's school success.
- E. We will respect the unique needs and resources of each program.

VI. Duration of Agreement

This agreement will be in effect from July 2023 until June 2025. ISD 363 will monitor their own staff vaccine and exemption status and will be made available upon request.

VII. Signatures

Each program, by the signature below of its authorized representative, hereby acknowledges that he/she has read this agreement, understands it, and agrees to be bound by its terms.

This agreement is executed on behalf of KOOTASCA Head Start and School District #363 School Readiness programs.

Date: 5-22-23

Maura Rosato
Head Start Program

Executive Director
Title

School District 363

Title