

Cooperative Agreement  
Between  
St. Croix Tribal Head Start  
And  
School District of Unity  
2013-2016

Philosophy

Interagency cooperation provides a foundation for developing a comprehensive and coordinated array of community services to ensure that all children and their families receive appropriate early intervention in a timely manner.

Purpose

The overall purpose of this agreement is to facilitate cooperative efforts between the School District of Unity and the St. Croix Tribal Head Start in providing appropriate services in the least restrictive environment to preschool children, ages 3-5 who have disabilities and special educational needs. It provides a policy framework for cooperative efforts and seeks to clarify issues relating to those efforts. It recognizes the need for cooperative planning between the school district and the Head Start in order to provide the service options for preschool children with special needs. Nothing in the agreement precludes the inclusion of other appropriate community service providers in the development of collaborative services.

Screening

Head Start will recruit, enroll, and serve eligible children ages 3-5. No less than 10% of the total number of enrollment opportunities will be available for children with disabilities who are eligible to participate. For Head Start children enrolled, a health and developmental screening will be conducted by Head Start within 45 days of entry into the program. The LEA (Local Educational Agency) will maintain a screening program to locate all children who are residents who may be in need of special education (PI11.03)(1)(a) and screen any child ages 3-5 upon request.

Referral for Evaluation

Head Start's Disabilities Manager will discuss with the staff the referral process of the LEA, which will result in appropriate referrals. All Head Start children, ages 3-5, with suspected disabilities will be referred to the LEA for evaluation to determine if a disability exists and if there is a need for special education services. The LEA will process all referrals in accordance with the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) guidelines.

Comprehensive evaluation

Head Start will maintain an active communication link with Special Education staff as the IEP (Individual Education Plan) process is completed, assist with family communication, and participate in the IEP-Team process. In particular, Head Start will share results of screenings, observations, and intervention plans as needed. The LEA

will provide a formal evaluation of a child who has been referred following the requirements of IDEA guidelines.

IEP Development

Head Start will collaborate with the LEA and implement strategies to support IEP goals for children and complete the Family Goals and attach to the IEP. The LEA will collaborate with the parents in the development of an appropriate IEP based on diagnostic information.

Placement

The LEA will place preschool children with disabilities in the most appropriate placement for that child and will work with Head Start in referring families of preschool children for whom Head Start may be the most appropriate placement.

Specific Program Delivery

This is meant to include transportation, therapies, and special education. Head Start will provide transportation, as needed, collaborate with special education staff to carry out our strategies for children and maintain regular communication with special education staff to monitor the child's progress. The LEA will provide specialized planning and programming for Head Start children on effective strategies to be carried out in the Head Start program to help the child meet the IEP goal.

Transition

Both agencies will share relevant information about each child's transitioning with parental permission and plan transitioning activities as needed.

Review of IEP

There is to be an annual review of the IEP to monitor the effectiveness and to ensure the needs and goals of the child are being met. IEP reviews may be done more than one time per year at the request of the parent, Head Start, or Special Education staff. Charting progress is not being noted it may be necessary to rewrite the IEP to be more effective in meeting the needs and goals of the child.

LEA and Head Start will review, update, and/or modify this agreement annually.

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Head Start Representative

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Date

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Unity School Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date