

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
ECTOR COUNTY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
AND GOPB, Inc. HEAD START SCHOOL READINESS ACADEMY**

Parties to the Agreement

This Agreement is between Ector County Independent School District and GOPB, Inc. Head Start School Readiness Academy. GOPB, Inc. Head Start School Readiness Academy 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 in effect from September 2015 and reviewed on May 2016.

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.

GOPB, Inc. Head Start School Readiness Academy 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 GOPB 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.

GOPB, Inc. Head Start School Readiness Academy 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, Brigrance 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 EC 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 to comply with Child find.

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 Manager in a timely manner of any screenings that suggest a need for further evaluation.

EVALUATION

GOPB, Inc Head Start School Readiness Academy Responsibilities:

- Once the referral is accepted and under the direction of EC ISD staff the Disabilities Manager will schedule a parent conference to obtain parental consent and explain parental rights.
- 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 45 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).

GOPB, Inc. Head Start School Readiness 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 Manager will communicate with parents and appropriate Head Start staff regarding ARD meeting dates and participation.
- All IEP's are kept confidential and locked.

Ector County ISD Responsibilities:

- Facilitate the development and review of IEP.
- Notify Disabilities Manager 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.
- Provide services according to date on IEP.

SERVICES

Objective: Provide appropriate services in the least restrictive environment.

GOPB, Inc. Head Start School Readiness 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 GOPB, Inc. Head Start School Readiness Academy and Ector County ISD to transfer information about children who will transition from Head Start to Ector County ISD.

GOPB, Inc. Head Start School Readiness Academy Responsibilities:

- Arrange meeting between Head Start staff and Ector County ISD staff.
- The Disabilities Manager will notify the public 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:

- Collaborate with the Head Start staff for a transition into public school.
- Provide transition information to parents and Head Start staff at the annual ARD 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.

GOPB, Inc. Head Start School Readiness Academy 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 Ector County ISD 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

GOPB, Inc. Head Start School

Readiness Academy

CEO/Executive Head Start Director: Mrs. Betty J. Carter

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Ector County ISD

Executive Director

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