

# Status of Head Start Pre-Kindergarten Partnerships in Vermont and Nationally



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State Collaboration Office  
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 **VERMONT**  
DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
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## Executive Summary

Nationwide, Head Start programs, including the seven programs in Vermont, promote the school readiness of three- and four-year-olds and five-year-olds not age-eligible for kindergarten from primarily low-income families by providing comprehensive education, child development, health, nutrition, and family support services to Head Start-enrolled children and their families. The federal government, not the States, oversees the operations of Head Start programs and provides the majority of funding directly to them. Head Start grantees are required to provide a 20 percent non-federal share match to the federal Head Start grant funds awarded to them, and they may use private, local, municipal, and/or State funding sources to meet the 20 percent match.

Forty-one States and the District of Columbia administer and fund state-funded pre-k programs. These programs vary greatly in their early learning standards, teacher and staff requirements, duration of pre-k education services, provision of comprehensive services, and the rigor of their monitoring systems. Generally state-funded pre-k programs are less regulated and monitored by States than Head Start programs are by the federal government. Two States (Florida and West Virginia) and the District of Columbia provide and fund universal pre-k education access to all eligible young children.<sup>1</sup> Thirty-nine States, including Vermont, have state-funded pre-k programs that are not offered to all eligible young children either because participation by eligible pre-k providers, such as Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), is voluntary and not all choose to offer state-funded pre-k; state-funding is insufficient to serve all eligible young children; and/or state-funded pre-k participation is targeted to young children from low-income families, young children with risk factors, and/or children with special needs.

In the 41 of 42 (98 percent) States with state-funded pre-k programs, Head Start programs participate in a mixed pre-k delivery system. Louisiana is the exception because the State does not allow Head Start programs to access state-funded pre-k dollars and braid these dollars with federal Head Start dollars to deliver state-funded pre-k to young children.

States allow Head Start programs to braid their federal Head Start dollars with state-funded pre-k dollars in two major ways, and in several States Head Start programs use both options. The two major ways are:

- In 59 percent of States with state-funded pre-k, Head Start programs apply directly to the State to access pre-k funding.
- In 68 percent of States with state-funded pre-k, including Vermont, Head Start programs contract with LEAs to braid their federal Head Start and state-funded pre-k dollars to provide state-funded pre-k.

In both of these ways, Head Start programs spend their braided federal Head Start

<sup>1</sup> The District of Columbia is defined as a State throughout this report unless there is a specific reason for identifying the District of Columbia by name.

dollars and state-funded pre-k dollars on one or more of the following items: enhance services for Head Start enrolled children; improve program quality for Head Start enrolled children; extend the Head Start program day or the state-funded pre-k program day for Head Start enrolled children; purchase additional Head Start slots/groups to provide Head Start to additional children; provide state-funded pre-k to state-funded pre-k eligible children in Head Start facilities; provide state-funded pre-k to state-funded pre-k eligible children and Head Start-eligible children in the same classroom; pay for teachers who are state-funded pre-k qualified; AND/OR defray the costs of professional development, the costs of equipment, and/or child assessments.

Among the States with state-funded pre-k programs, the pre-k amounts paid to Head Start programs either by the States directly, through a contract with a LEA, or by other intermediaries varies widely. Depending upon the State, one or more pre-k rates may be determined at either the State-, county-, or LEA-level by law, regulation, and/or through a negotiated agreement.

While Head Start programs in 11 States access state-funded pre-k dollars to purchase Head Start slots, a different set of 11 States appropriate State dollars to purchase Head Start slots and/or to supplement the federal dollars received by Head Start programs to be used for specific purposes. Oregon is an example of the latter 11 States, and its state-funded pre-k program, called the Oregon Head Start Prekindergarten Program, provides state-funded Head Start services and programming to all children participating in its state-funded pre-k program. The latter 11 States, in addition to purchasing Head Start slots, permit Head Start programs to use these appropriated state-funded Head Start dollars for many purposes: extending the Head Start program day and year, enhancing Head Start services, improving Head Start program quality, paying Head Start staff salaries, and/or funding innovative Head Start program models.

In Vermont, six of the seven Head Start programs have Head Start-Pre-K Partnerships with 23 LEAs at 28 sites providing quality pre-k education to 493 Head Start-enrolled children and 190 children from the community who are not enrolled in Head Start. Ninety-two percent of Head Start-enrolled children are counted in the Average Daily Membership. In these partnerships, Head Start programs provide 49.5 full-time teachers, and LEAs supply 18 full-time teachers and two part-time teachers. LEAs pay about \$275,000 more to Head Start programs than Head Start programs pay to LEAs. LEA payments to Head Start programs predominately help to raise Head Start teacher salaries, and two Head Start programs make rental payments to LEAs. There are 94 Head Start enrolled children with an IEP. Partnering LEAs provide on-site special education services at 25 of 28 (89 percent) sites.

This report contains two major conclusions. The first major conclusion is the large extent to which States provide funding to Head Start programs through state-funded pre-k funding streams and/or make appropriations to supply state-funded Head Start. The second major conclusion is that both Head Start programs and LEAs and preschool-aged children and their Vermont families benefit from Head Start-LEA Pre-K Partnerships.



## Introduction

This report is intended to provide a context for policymakers, practitioners, and the public at-large interested in understanding partnerships between Head Start grantees and state-funded pre-k programs. It describes:

- The Federal Head Start Program;
- State-/District of Columbia-Funded Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Programs;<sup>2</sup>
- Relationships between Head Start and State-Funded Pre-K Programs in 42 States;
- Variation among State-Funded Pre-K Amounts Paid to Head Start Programs among the States;
- State-Funded Head Start; and
- Head Start-Local Educational Agency (LEA) Pre-K Partnerships in Vermont, including the current extent to which funds and resources are shared between Head Start programs and LEAs in Head Start-LEA Pre-K Partnerships.

## Head Start Program

The Head Start Program's goal is to promote the school readiness of three- and four-year-olds and five-year-olds not age-eligible for kindergarten from primarily low-income families by supporting these young children's growth in language, literacy, mathematics, science, social and emotional functioning, creative arts, physical skills, and approaches to learning.<sup>3</sup> To achieve this goal, Head Start provides a comprehensive range of education, child development, health, nutrition, and family support services to Head Start enrolled children and their families.

The federal government oversees Head Start services and operations and provides funding directly to Head Start grantees in their local catchment areas (see Figure 1). The Head Start Act provides that local public organizations, private non-profit agencies, and for-profit entities are eligible to receive federal grant funds and be a Head Start grantee.

In Vermont, seven community-based organizations receive federal grants from the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to operate seven Head Start programs (see Figure 1):

- Four of the seven Head Start grantee organizations are in community action agencies: Champlain Valley Head Start, Central Vermont Community Action

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<sup>2</sup> The District of Columbia is defined as a State throughout this report unless there is a specific reason for identifying the District of Columbia by name.

<sup>3</sup> The Early Head Start program serves pregnant women and infants and toddlers under age of 3. Discussion about the Early Head Start program is not included in this report because the program serves children under age 3. Like Head Start, Early Head Start is federally administered to local grantees, has similar enrollment eligibility requirements, and provides comprehensive child development and family support services to infants and toddlers, pregnant women, and their families.

Council (CVCAC) Head Start, Northeast Kingdom Community Action (NEKCA) Head Start, and Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) Head Start.

- Two of the seven Head Start grantee organizations are in mental health agencies: Rutland County Head Start and Bennington County Head Start.
- One of the seven Head Start grantees is Brattleboro School District: Early Education Services Head Start.

The seven Head Start grantees in Vermont collectively received \$9,896,106 in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2014 funding to pay for 1,026 slots to enroll Head Start-eligible children from low-income families.<sup>4</sup> In Vermont it is estimated that 60 percent of Head Start-eligible three and four year old children are not enrolled in Head Start programs because of insufficient federal funds.<sup>5</sup>

Head Start programs primarily serve young children from low-income families, but there are some exceptions and some entitlements.

Without regard to their family's income, foster children or children who are homeless are categorically eligible to enroll in Head Start. Children from families with income less than 100 percent of the federal poverty level and children from families receiving public assistance such as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (Reach Up) or Supplemental Security Income are eligible to enroll in Head Start. According to the Head Start Act, a Head Start program is allowed to have up to 35 percent of its child enrollment consisting of children from families with incomes between 100 percent and

**Figure 1: Map of Catchment Areas for Head Start Grantees in Vermont**



<sup>4</sup> Louise Eldridge with the Region I OHS Office supplied this data to the VHSSCO Director on December 11, 2013. In January 2014, federal lawmakers enacted the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014. Both the amount of federal funding and number of federally-funded slots that all Head Start grantees in Vermont will receive as a consequence of this act are unknown because each Head Start grantee must prepare and submit their grant budgets to the Office of Head Start and because of the staggered nature of the Office of Head Start's grant review and approval process. The Office of Head Start will determine and make both sets of data available this summer.

<sup>5</sup> The "60 percent" of three and four year olds who are not enrolled in Head Start estimate was calculated using the equation of  $(1 - (1,026/2,579))$  multiplied by 100. In this equation 1,026 equals the number of federally funded Head Start slots, and 2,579 equals the estimated number of three and four year olds from families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty level. The 2,579 figure is from the 2009 Family Health Insurance Survey Data Compendium, and the VHSSCO obtained this figure in 2011 through a special request to the Vermont Department of Banking, Insurance, Securities and Health Care Administration (BISHCA), now called the Vermont Department of Financial Regulation.

130 percent of the federal poverty levels if the program sets priorities and is meeting the needs of children who are homeless, children with family incomes below 100 percent of the federal poverty level, or children whose families are eligible for public assistance. Up to 10 percent of a program's enrollment can consist of children from families of any income.

Many children enrolled in Head Start from families with income above the income eligibility limits are identified as having disabilities. At least 10 percent of each Head Start grantee's total actual child enrollment must consist of children with disabilities who are determined to be eligible for special education and related services, as determined by the State or local agency under Section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. During the 2012-2013 program year 22 percent of the children enrolled in Head Start programs in Vermont had an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and received special education and related services.<sup>6</sup>

A Head Start program receives a five-year federal grant for 80 percent of its funding from the Administration for Children and Families and must raise a 20 percent match of their total program's funding from non-federal contributions. The federal government allows Head Start programs to use private, local, municipal, and State funding sources as part of their 20 percent non-federal match. If a Head Start program's non-federal match is more than 20 percent, the size of that program's federal grant is unaffected.

Head Start programs are required to braid their federal dollars with their non-federal contributions. Braiding means that two or more funding sources are coordinated by an early childhood education provider to support the total cost of services to individual children, but the provider must allocate its revenues and track its expenditures by categorical funding source. Braiding requires that a Head Start program use cost allocation methods to ensure it does not duplicate the funding of its service costs and that it charges each of its funding sources its fair share of administrative and program costs.<sup>7</sup> Head Start programs must allocate revenues and track expenditures according to each funding source. The Office of Head Start requires that Head Start programs use cost allocation methods to assure that the funding of service costs is not duplicated and that each funding source, such as federal Head Start dollars and state-funded pre-k dollars, is charged its fair share of program and administrative costs.

The federal Office of Head Start, not the States, rigorously monitors Head Start programs to ensure that they are providing services and programming in compliance

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<sup>6</sup> Office of Head Start. (2013, December 21). 2012-2013 Head Start Program Information Report (PIR). Disability Services Report—State Level.

<sup>7</sup> Wallen, M. and Hubbard, A. (2013, November). *Blending and Braiding Early Childhood Program Funding Streams Toolkit, Enhancing Financing for High-Quality Early Learning Programs*. Chicago, IL: The Ounce, pp. 5 and 7; Spark Policy Institute. (2013, October). *Early Childhood Guide to Blending and Braiding in New York*. New York State Early Childhood Advisory Council Finance Work Group, pp. 9 and 10.



with the terms of the federal Head Start grant, the Head Start Act, and the Head Start Program Performance Standards and Other Regulations. Head Start programs undergo on-site monitoring reviews every three years. If the Office of Head Start determines that a Head Start program is poorly performing, that program's federal Head Start grant is re-competed. The organization holding the federal grant then must compete against other eligible organizations in its service area, and the best applicant will be awarded the grant for the next five years.

## **State/District of Columbia - Funded Pre-K Programs**

Forty-two States, including the District of Columbia, administer and fund state-funded pre-k programs.<sup>8</sup> Nine States do not fund a pre-k program. These are: Arizona, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming.<sup>9</sup> State-funded pre-k programs served more than 1.3 million children consisting of mostly four-year-olds.<sup>10</sup> These programs vary greatly in their early learning standards, teacher and staff requirements, duration of pre-k education services, provision of comprehensive services, and the rigor of their monitoring systems. Because the eligibility requirements of these programs differ from those of Head Start, these programs generally serve a much larger proportion of young children from families with higher incomes and more advantaged socio-economic backgrounds than those served by Head Start programs. State-funded pre-k programs generally are less regulated and monitored compared to Head Start programs.

Many States do not require state-funded pre-k providers to braid funding streams using the cost allocation methods that are required of all Head Start programs; instead, these States permit eligible pre-k providers, such as Head Start programs, to blend state-funded pre-k dollars with their federal Head Start dollars to serve young children and their families. Blending occurs when early childhood providers bundle funds from two or more separate funding sources to produce a one full-workday, full-year program budget which pays for a unified set of program services to a group of young children.<sup>11</sup> Blending can provide more fiscal management flexibility to pre-k providers regarding

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<sup>8</sup> Source: VHSSCO collected data by surveying, conducting phone interviews, and corresponding via email with Head Start-State Collaboration Directors, Head Start State Association Executive Directors, and other State officials between July 2013 and February 2014.

<sup>9</sup> Please note that a State of Arizona Department of Education official in January 2014 and an October 2013 New America Foundation report indicated that Arizona's tobacco-funded First Things First program is not a State-Funded pre-k program, but a November 2013 Ounce of Prevention report and a 2012 National Institute for Early Education Research report indicate that the First Things First program is one.

<sup>10</sup> Barnett, W. S., Carolan, M. E., Fitzgerald, J., Squires, J. H. (2012). *The State of Preschool 2012: State Pre-school Yearbook*. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.

<sup>11</sup> Wallen, M. and Hubbard, A. (2013, November). *Blending and Braiding Early Childhood Program Funding Streams Toolkit, Enhancing Financing for High-Quality Early Learning Programs*. Chicago, IL: The Ounce, pp. 5 and 7.

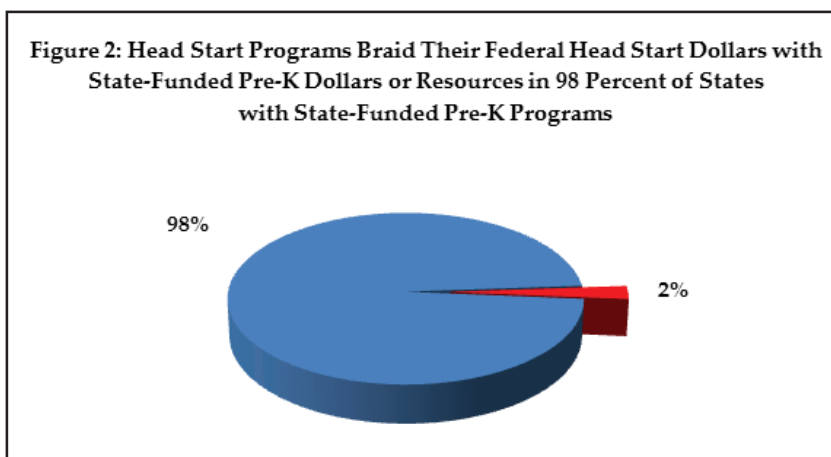
their use of funding streams than braiding does. While many States permit Head Start programs to blend these funding streams, the Head Start programs are still required by the federal Office of Head Start to use cost allocation methods.

State-funded pre-k programs supply either universal or limited access to pre-k eligible young children. A small minority of States (Florida and West Virginia) and the District of Columbia provide universal pre-k education access to all eligible young children. The vast majority of States (39 of 42 States or 93 percent), including Vermont have state-funded pre-k programs that do not offer pre-k to all eligible young children either because:

- Participation by eligible pre-k providers, such as LEAs, is voluntary and not all choose to offer state-funded pre-k, such in Vermont;
- State-funding is insufficient to serve all eligible children, such as in Georgia, Illinois, and Oklahoma; and/or
- State-funded pre-k participation is targeted to young children from low-income families, young children with risk factors, and/or young children with special needs.

### Relationship between Head Start and State-Funded Pre-Kindergarten Programs in 42 States

In 41 of 42 (98 percent) States, Head Start programs braid their federal Head Start dollars with state-funded pre-k dollars or resources (see Figure 2). The exception is the State of Louisiana which does not allow Head Start programs to access state-funded pre-k dollars.<sup>12</sup>



In these 41 States, Head Start programs braid their federal Head Start dollars with state-funded pre-k dollars in three ways. Thirty-eight of 41 (93 percent) States allow Head Start programs to braid their federal Head Start dollars with state-funded pre-k dollars in two major ways, and Head Start programs use both of these major options in 13 of 38 (34 percent) States. The two major ways are:

1. In 24 of 41 (59 percent) States, Head Start programs apply directly to the State, and upon a successful application, the State provides pre-k funding to Head Start programs (see Figure 3).

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<sup>12</sup> The Head Start and State-/District of Columbia-Funded pre-k data from the 50 States and the District of Columbia is current as of January 2014.

**Figure 3: The Three Ways and the Corresponding States by Which Head Start Programs Braid Their Federal Head Start Dollars with State-Funded Pre-K Dollars**

Apply to States (n=24)	Make Partnerships with LEAs (n=28)	Apply to Intermediaries (n=3)
Alabama	Alaska	Connecticut
Arkansas	California	Florida
California	Colorado	North Carolina
Colorado	Delaware	
Delaware	Illinois (in the City of Chicago)	
District of Columbia	Iowa	
Georgia	Kentucky	
Illinois (outside of the City of Chicago)	Maine	
Indiana	Maryland	
Iowa	Michigan	
Kansas	Minnesota	
Maryland	Mississippi	
Massachusetts	Missouri	
Minnesota	Nebraska	
Mississippi	New Jersey	
Missouri	New York	
Nevada	North Carolina (if LEA is an intermediary)	
New Mexico	Ohio	
Ohio	Oklahoma	
Oregon	Rhode Island	
Pennsylvania	South Carolina	
Rhode Island	Tennessee	
South Carolina	Texas	
Washington	Vermont	
	Virginia	
	Washington	
	West Virginia	
	Wisconsin	

2. In 28 of 41 (68 percent) States, including Vermont, LEAs, such as independent school districts/school districts/school systems receive pre-k dollars from the State to provide state-funded pre-k (see Figure 3).<sup>13</sup> Through their contracts/collaborative partnership agreements with LEAs, Head Start programs in these 28 States braid their federal Head Start dollars with the LEAs' pre-k dollars. In these agreements, sometimes federal Head Start and state-funded pre-k dollars are not exchanged between Head Start programs and the LEAs. Instead, the Head Start program and the LEA exchange services funded with federal Head Start and state pre-k dollars, respectively. This is what happens in Oklahoma and Tennessee.

In these two major ways, Head Start programs braid their federal Head Start dollars with the state-funded pre-k dollars for one or more of the following purposes:

- Enhance services for Head Start enrolled children;
  - Improve program quality for Head Start enrolled children;
  - Extend the Head Start program day or the state-funded pre-k program day for Head Start enrolled children;
  - Purchase additional Head Start slots to provide Head Start to additional children;
  - Provide state-funded pre-k to state-funded pre-k eligible children in Head Start facilities;
  - Provide state-funded pre-k to state-funded pre-k eligible children and Head Start-eligible children in the same classroom;
  - Pay for teachers who are state-funded pre-k qualified; and/or
  - Defray the costs of professional development, the costs of equipment, and/or child assessments.
3. In contrast to the two ways described above, Head Start programs in the States of Connecticut, Florida, and North Carolina access state-funded pre-k dollars through a third way via intermediaries (see Figure 3):
    - Head Start programs in Connecticut apply to local School Readiness Councils to access state pre-k funds to extend the federally-funded Head Start program day for Head Start enrolled children and provide state-funded pre-k to state-funded eligible pre-k children in Head Start facilities.
    - In Florida, Head Start programs apply to 30 Early Learning Coalitions for state-funded pre-k dollars because these coalitions receive pre-k dollars directly from

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<sup>13</sup> With one exception, the 28 States figure was calculated by excluding the States in which Head Start programs are only eligible to access or braid their federal Head Start dollars with state-funded pre-k dollars because a LEA is the Head Start grantee and administers the Head Start program. The exception is the State of Illinois because the City of Chicago runs the Chicago Public Schools and is the Head Start grantee. The State of Illinois was also counted in the 24 States figure because Head Start programs outside of the City of Chicago access state-funded pre-k dollars by applying to the State of Illinois.

the State. Head Start programs use the pre-k dollars to extend the Head Start program day or the state-funded pre-k program day for Head Start enrolled children and/or provide state-funded pre-k to state-funded pre-k eligible children in Head Start facilities.

- Head Start programs in North Carolina apply to local contractors designated by the State to manage the state-funded pre-k program on the county-level (about 50 percent of the contractors are school districts). Head Start programs use state pre-k funds to enhance the quality of services provided to existing Head Start children; improve the program quality for Head Start enrolled children; extend the federally-funded Head Start program day for Head Start enrolled children; provide state-funded pre-k to state-funded pre-k eligible children in Head Start facilities; and/or pay for teachers who are state-funded pre-k qualified.

Regardless of the way Head Start programs access and braid state-/District of Columbia-funded pre-k dollars/resources with federal Head Start dollars/resources, Head Start programs in 11 of 51 (22 percent) States access and braid state-funded pre-k with federal Head Start dollars to purchase Head Start slots/groups. These are: Alaska, Colorado, Delaware, Indiana, Kansas, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, Oklahoma, and Oregon.<sup>14</sup>

### **Variation of State-Funded Pre-K Amounts Paid to Head Start Programs among the States**

The methodologies for determining state-funded pre-k amounts paid to Head Start programs vary by State and within States. Several examples of methodologies are:

- Ohio has one statewide pre-k rate per child that is paid to Head Start programs.
- Georgia sets its pre-k rates by geographic zones.
- Florida determines its rates by county according to a formula-based Voluntary Pre-K Program payment rate schedule.
- In States such as Iowa, Maine, Vermont, and West Virginia, pre-k rates vary by school districts and Head Start programs negotiate and enter into Head Start-pre-k partnership agreements with the school districts. The amount of pre-k dollars received by Head Start programs through these agreements varies.
- In Illinois, Head Start programs receive a statewide rate outside the City of Chicago, but the Chicago Public Schools which is also the Head Start grantee determines the pre-k rates paid to Head Start programs within Chicago.

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<sup>14</sup> In Minnesota, the Early Learning Scholarship funds are used to serve additional children in Head Start. However, the scholarship amount is insufficient to cover the Head Start cost per child amount and does not fund program expenses such as professional development or administration, beyond individual child costs. In Nebraska, the state pre-k dollars fund Head Start group sizes, not slots. Because of the wide differences in the population densities of communities in Nebraska, funding is by group size. For example, a community in a very rural area may only have 14 eligible pre-k children but the program to serve these young children would not be financially viable if it received state pre-k funds based on a set amount per slot. Instead, the state funds the pre-k program based upon the group size.



- In New Jersey, Head Start programs contract with school districts and through these contacts Head Start programs receive pre-k dollars based upon a formula. This supplemental state pre-k funding ranging between \$4,000 and \$7,000 per child is added onto the federal Head Start cost-per-child that Head Start programs receive to help Head Start programs meet the State's pre-k standards and requirements.
- In Texas, the amount of pre-k funds received by Head Start programs varies and the amount received by a Head Start program depends on the half-day attendance rate and the terms of the Head Start-Independent School District (ISD) agreement.
- In Wisconsin, Head Start programs must contract with school districts to receive state pre-k dollars and the amount received by Head Start programs depends on the Head Start-school district contract and the amount received by the school district through Wisconsin's General Equalization Aid Formula.

When Head Start programs receive and braid state pre-k dollars with their federal Head Start dollars, their federal cost-per-child remains unchanged regardless of the pre-k rate per child or the amount pre-k dollars that a Head Start program receives.

## **State-Funded Head Start**

While Head Start programs in 11 States braid state-funded pre-k dollars with federal Head Start dollars to purchase Head Start slots, a different set of 11 of 51 (22 percent) States currently appropriate state dollars to purchase Head Start slots and/or to supplement the federal dollars received by Head Start programs to be used for specific purposes. These States are Alaska, Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin. Ten of these 11 (91 percent) States purchase Head Start slots for both three- and four-year-olds, and Delaware limits purchasing of additional Head Start slots to four-year-olds.<sup>15</sup>

Of these States, Oregon has made the largest investment in state-funded Head Start. In fact, its state-funded pre-k program is called the Oregon Head Start Prekindergarten Program. Oregon appropriates sufficient State funds to ensure that all children enrolled in the Oregon Head Start Prekindergarten Program receive comprehensive Head Start services and programming.

States with state-funded Head Start are not required to pay for monitoring of state-funded Head Start slots or to provide training and technical assistance to support the provision of state-funded Head Start services. Just like Head Start programs in States without state-funded Head Start slots, Head Start programs supplying federally funded and state-funded Head Start slots to young children and their families receive training and technical assistance through the federal Head Start training and technical assistance system and are monitored through the federal Head Start monitoring system.

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<sup>15</sup> The VHSSCO surveyed HSSCO Directors from December 15, 2013 through January 16, 2014.

In addition to purchasing Head Start slots, the 11 States with state-funded Head Start permit Head Start programs to use appropriated state-funded Head Start dollars for a variety of purposes. Head Start programs use state funds to extend the Head Start program day and year, enhance Head Start services, improve Head Start program quality, pay Head Start staff salaries, and fund innovative Head Start program models.

## **Head Start-Local Educational Agency (LEA) Pre-K Partnership Inventory Findings in Vermont as of December 2013**

When school districts begin or expand state-funded pre-k education in Vermont, they currently must use existing qualified private providers or potentially qualified providers as long as these providers are interested to provide pre-k education and have the capacity to effectively and efficiently meet the school district's needs.<sup>16</sup> Head Start programs have participated with school districts in the provision of state-funded pre-k education by forming Head Start-LEA Pre-K partnerships with school districts.

To learn the current status of Head Start-LEA Pre-K Partnerships in Vermont, the VHSSCO collected data during November and December 2013 through a Head Start-Public Pre-K Partnership survey of the seven Head Start programs who reported on pre-k partnerships with LEAs during the 2013-2014 school year. The 2013-2014 Head Start-LEA Public Pre-K Partnership survey collected data pertaining to partnership demographics; space, staff, and financial resources exchanged between Head Start programs and LEAs; classroom composition, mental health services not covered under an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), and child development assessment services. Most of the responses to the inventory questions could be quantified so that the VHSSCO was able to aggregate the data for the six of seven Head Start programs that have partnerships with LEAs. A few of the responses to the inventory questions were non-numeric, and the themes and patterns represented by those responses are described later in this report. For a complete list of the data fields and the questions, see Appendix A.

Six of the seven Head Start grantees reported collaborating with LEAs and having Head Start-LEA Pre-K partnership agreements to provide pre-kindergarten programs. These partnerships supply school readiness programming and services for the children enrolled, support the use of Teaching Strategies Gold child assessments, provide individualized supports to children and their families experiencing homelessness based on the family's self-assessed needs, transition preschool-aged children from Head Start to kindergarten, implement curriculum, and engage in planning for joint training. Table 1 in Appendix B displays the aggregate findings from the 2013-2014 Head Start-LEA Pre-K Partnership Inventory.

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<sup>16</sup> Vermont Agency of Education and State Board of Education. (2011, January 16). *Vermont Department of Education – State Board of Education Manual of Rules and Practices*. 2600 Prekindergarten Education. pp. 3-4.

The 2013-2014 Head Start-LEA Pre-K Partnership Inventory findings address:

- Number, locations, and hours of operation of the Head Start-LEA Pre-K Partnerships;
- Enrollment of young children;
- Human resources contributions by Head Start programs and LEAs;
- Exchange of financial resources; and
- Other Head Start-LEA Partnership Inventory findings.

#### Twenty-Eight Head Start-LEA Pre-K Partnership Sites

Six Head Start grantees directly partner with 23 LEAs at 28 individual Head Start-LEA Pre-K Partnerships sites with the bulk of the sites situated in the northern counties of Vermont (see Figure 4). Each site may consist of multiple classrooms. Hours of operation vary for these partnerships, but the most common hours of operation are part-day, part-week, school year (e.g. three or four days a week for 3.5 or four hours a day).

#### Enrollment

There are 493 Head Start-enrolled young children and 190 young children who are not enrolled in Head Start participating in pre-k at 28 Head Start-LEA Pre-K partnership sites.<sup>17</sup> Of the 493 Head Start children, 318 are four and five year olds and 175 are 3 year olds. Ninety-two percent of Head Start children are counted in the Average Daily Membership (ADM) in these partnership sites.<sup>18</sup> In 20 of the 28 Head Start-LEA Pre-K Partnership sites, 190 non-Head Start enrolled children are enrolled at these sites. At these 20 sites, 26 classrooms consist of both Head Start and non-Head Start enrolled children. There are 15 classrooms consisting of only Head Start enrolled children.

#### Human Resources Contributions by Head Start Programs and LEAs

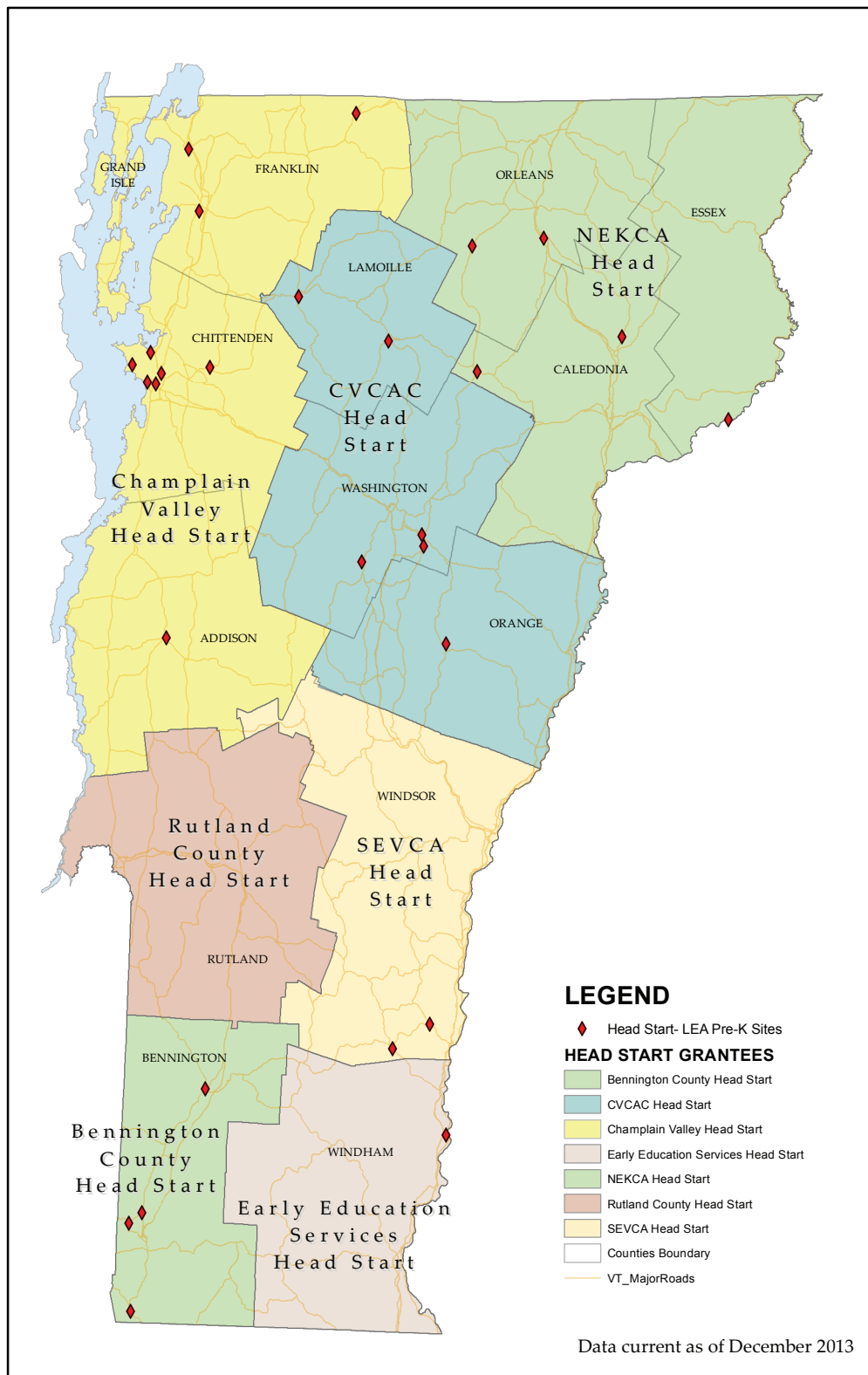
Head Start programs and LEAs contribute teachers, teaching assistants, and other staff

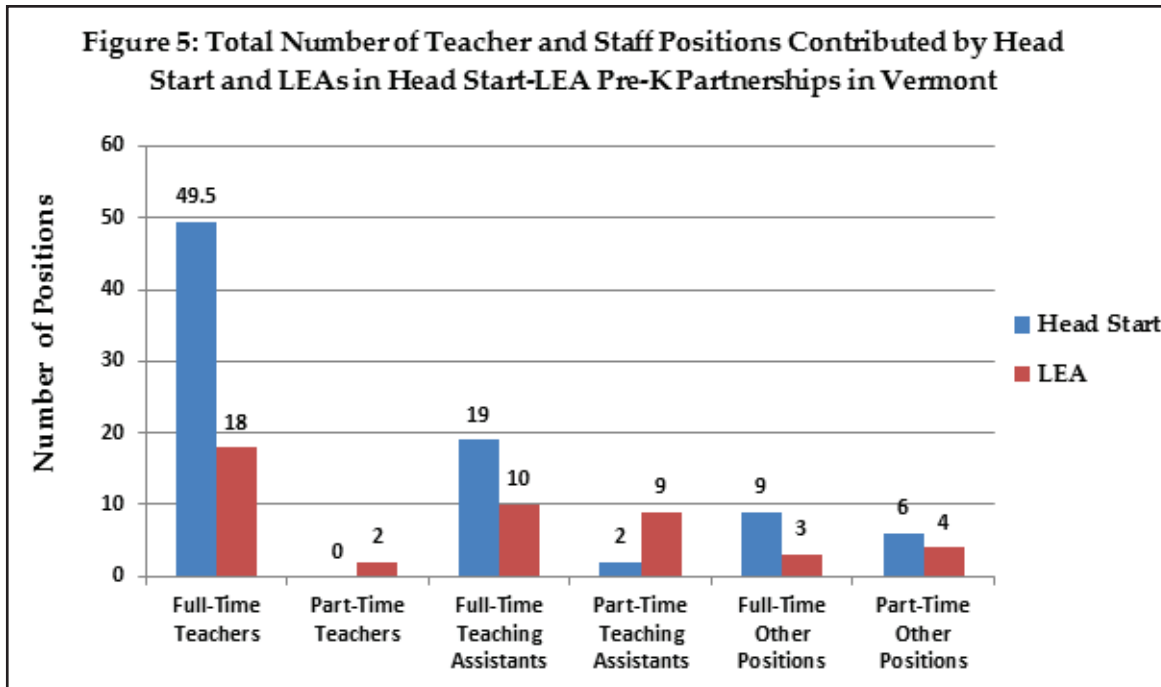
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<sup>17</sup> The VHSSCO Head Start-Pre-K Partnership Inventory did not pose a question asking specifically whether Head Start non-enrolled Head Start children receive Head Start's programming and comprehensive services. Anecdotally, Head Start program directors and staff have reported to the VHSSCO that non-enrolled Head Start who are taught in the same classroom with Head Start-enrolled children receive the same instruction and child assessments as Head Start-enrolled children. Generally, Head Start directors and staff report that Head Start provide many of the comprehensive Head Start services to non-enrolled Head Start children such as nutrition, tooth tutor education, parent education, and referrals of families to social and health services in the community.

<sup>18</sup> Average Daily Membership (ADM) is a count of resident and state-placed students receiving an elementary or secondary education at public expense. ADM data are listed by town according to a student's residence. Resident students are counted during the period between the 11th and the 30th day of the current school year, while state-placed students are counted for the school year prior to the current census period. Data are used in calculating equalized pupils which are used to determine the homestead tax rates. See <http://education.vermont.gov/data/average-daily-membership/>.

**Figure 4: 28 Head Start-LEA Pre-K Partnership Sites in Vermont**





members in the Head Start-LEA Pre-K partnerships. Head Start programs provide 49.5 full-time teachers, while the LEAs supply 18 full-time and two part-time teachers (see Figure 5). Of the 49.5 Head Start teachers,

- Thirty Head Start teachers had a baccalaureate degree in Early Childhood Education.
- Three Head Start teachers had with a baccalaureate degree in Elementary Education and an early education endorsement for licensure.
- Ten Head Start teachers had master degrees, and one Head Start teacher had a baccalaureate degree in sociology.
- The inventory questions did not ask if these Head Start and LEA teachers either had an early education endorsement or were licensed.

Head Start programs employ a total of 21 teaching assistants (19 full-time, two part-time), and the LEAs employ 19 teaching assistants (10 full-time, nine part-time). Head Start programs provide 15 other staff members (nine full-time, six part-time), and LEAs contribute seven other staff members/paraeducators (three full-time, four part-time) (see Figure 5).

#### Exchange of Financial Resources

Two Head Start grantees make rental payments to LEAs at three sites totaling \$27,502 annually. Five LEAs pay three Head Start grantees a total of \$185,450 to provide pre-k education at various per child rates:

- Two LEAs pay Bennington County Head Start \$110,000 at a per child rate of \$2,200 for 50 young children.



- A LEA pays Champlain Valley Head Start (CVHS) \$44,200 at a per child rate of \$2,600 for 17 young children, and another LEA pays CVHS \$22,000 at a per child rate of \$2,200 for 10 young children.
- A LEA pays Northeast Kingdom Community Action Head Start \$11,250 at a per child rate of \$750 for 15 young children.

LEAs pay three Head Start grantees a total of \$120,266 in lump sum payments predominantly help to raise Head Start teacher salaries, so that they are closer to the early education teacher salaries paid by school districts. Three Head Start directors reported that Head Start teacher salaries are not equal to LEA teacher salaries.

#### Other Head Start-LEA Pre-K Partnership Inventory Findings

The other findings are:

- There are 94 Head Start enrolled children with an IEP, and the partnering LEAs provide on-site special education services to them at 25 of the 28 sites.
- Generally mental health services not covered under an IEP are provided by Head Start programs either by Head Start staff or mental health consultants who are paid by Head Start programs through contracts with a third party.
- Generally the child development assessment services are conducted in collaboration between the LEA and Head Start program.

### **Conclusions**

This report yields two major conclusions. The first major conclusion is the great extent to which States provide funding to Head Start programs through state-funded pre-k funding streams and/or make appropriations to supply state-funded Head Start. This conclusion may be found to be counter-intuitive to the public because the federal government, not the States, rigorously oversees the operations of Head Start programs and provides the majority of funding directly to them. Ninety-eight percent of States with state-funded pre-k programs, including Vermont, provide significant funding to Head Start programs by allowing them to braid their federal Head Start dollars with the state-funded pre-k dollars for one or more of the following purposes: enhance services for Head Start enrolled children; improve program quality for Head Start enrolled children; extend the Head Start program day or the state-funded pre-k program day for Head Start enrolled children; purchase additional Head Start slots to provide Head Start to additional children; provide state-funded pre-k to state-funded pre-k eligible children in Head Start facilities; provide state-funded pre-k to state-funded pre-k eligible children and Head Start-eligible children in the same classroom; pay for teachers who are state-funded pre-k qualified; AND/OR defray the costs of professional development, the costs of equipment, and/or child assessments.

Eleven States currently appropriate state dollars to purchase Head Start slots and/or to supplement the federal dollars received by Head Start programs to be used for specific purposes. These purposes consist of extending the Head Start program day and year, enhancing Head Start services, improving Head Start program quality, paying Head

Start staff salaries, and/or funding innovative Head Start program models. Head Start programs supplying federally funded and state-funded Head Start slots to young children and their families receive training and technical assistance from and are monitored by the federal Office of Head Start.

Based largely on interpreting data from the VHSSCO Head Start-LEA Pre-K Partnership Inventory survey, the second major conclusion is that both Head Start programs and LEAs and preschool-aged children and their Vermont families benefit from Head Start-LEA Pre-K Partnerships. At 28 Head Start-LEA Pre-K Partnership sites, pre-k partnerships between six Head Start grantees and 23 LEAs enable the six Head Start grantees to serve 493 Head Start-enrolled and 190 non-Head Start-enrolled preschool-age children and their families. Ninety-two percent of Head Start-enrolled children are counted in the ADM. At 20 sites, 26 classrooms consist of Head Start-enrolled and 190 non-Head Start-enrolled children. These blended classrooms benefit both sets of enrolled children.

Both Head Start programs and LEAs benefit from the human and financial resources exchanged in these partnerships. Head Start programs provide 49.5 full-time teachers, and LEAs supply 18 full-time teachers and two part-time teachers. LEAs pay about \$275,000 more to Head Start programs than Head Start programs pay to LEAs. LEA payments to Head Start programs predominately help to raise Head Start teacher salaries to the teacher salaries paid by LEAs. Two Head Start programs make rental payments to LEAs to use classrooms in their facilities.

## Appendix A – Data Fields 2013-2014 Head Start-LEA Pre-K Partnerships for Preschool Inventory Survey

Directions - Respond to each question below for each site where your Head Start program has a Head Start-LEA Pre-K partnership with the LEA and any pre-k site where your Head Start program partners with a center that has a relationship with the LEA for publicly funded pre-k. If you have any questions or need assistance completing this inventory, please call Sheri.

### 1. PARTNERSHIP Demographics

- 1.a. List the site name where you have a Head Start-Pre-K Partnership to provide publicly funded pre-kindergarten.
  - 1.b. List the SU or SD associated with this site. For example Edmunds Elementary is in the Burlington School District. It may be more than one.
  - 1.c. Is this Head Start-Pre-K partnership directly with the LEA? Yes or No
2. SPACE Resources - Is this site in a Head Start-owned (owned outright or mortgage) building or in a LEA-owned building (owned outright or mortgage)? Yes, No, and No response
- 3.a. Is Head Start paying rent? Yes, No, or Not Applicable (N/A)?
  - 3.b. If yes, how much is it?
  - 4.a. Is LEA paying rent? Yes, No, or N/A?
  - 4.b. If yes, how much is it?
  5. Describe the hours of operation per week for each of the classrooms at this Head Start-Pre-K partnership program site in terms of part or full day, part or full year.
  - 6.a. List the total number of Head Start children enrolled at this Head Start-Pre-K Partnership location.
  - 6.b. How many of these Head Start children are four- and five-olds?
  - 6.c. How many of these Head Start children are three-year-olds?
  - 7.a. List the total number of non-Head Start children enrolled at this Head Start-Pre-K Partnership location.
  - 7.b. How many of these non-Head Start children are four- and five-olds?
  - 7.c. How many of these non-Head Start children are three-year-olds?

### CLASSROOM Composition

8. How many classrooms at this Head Start-Pre-K partnership site have Head Start and non-Head Start children in the classrooms?
9. How many classrooms at this Head Start-Pre-K partnership site have only Head Start children in the classrooms?

10. List the number of Head Start children counted in the LEA's Average Daily Membership (ADM).

11. STAFF Resources

11.a. List the total number of Head Start staff, their position (e.g. lead teacher, co-teacher, and teacher aide), and their employment status (full or part-time) at this Head Start-Pre-K site

11.b. Please list the highest degree for each individual Head Start staff at the site

12.a. List the total number of LEA staff, their position (e.g. lead teacher, co-teacher, and teacher aide), and their employment status (full or part-time) at this Head Start-Pre-K site

12.b. Please list the highest degree for each individual LEA staff at the site. Do not include EEE Special Educator here. It will be counted later.

FINANCIAL Resources: LEA Payments to Head Start

13. If applicable, list the total dollars that Head Start receives from the school for the Head Start-Pre-K Partnership. Please include the cost per child at the site or the flat pre-k rate received (e.g., 2,000 X 15 children = \$30,000 or a flat rate of \$5,000)

14.a. Do your Head Start program receive a pre-k lump sum from the LEA at this site? Yes or No

14.b. If yes, please check all that apply. Please check all that apply.

- The lump sum brings salaries in line with salaries of pre-k teachers in schools.
- The lump sum enrolls additional children.
- OTHER (Please Specify):

FINANCIAL Resources: Head Start Payments to LEA

15. List the dollar amount that Head Start pays the LEA for the Head Start-Pre-K partnership.

16. List the types of things Head Start payments cover in your program's Head Start-Pre-K partnerships. Please use rows 40, 41, and 42 if you need space.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

17.a. How many Head Start children at this site have an IEP for special education services?

17.b. How many of the Head Start children with an IEP are four- and five-year-olds?

17.c. How many of the Head Start children with an IEP are three-year-olds?

18. Which of the following services are provided by the LEA?

- LEA provides therapy on-site in the classroom

- LEA provides therapy off-site
- OTHER (Please Specify):

#### MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES NOT Covered under an IEP

19. List if the LEA is paying for or providing mental health services not covered under an IEP at this site. This can also include the LEA contracting with a third party.
20. List if Head Start is paying for or providing mental health services not covered under an IEP at this site. This can also include Head Start contracting with a third party.

#### Child Development Assessment Services

- 21.a. Describe who does the Teaching Strategies (TS) Gold assessments (e.g., collaboration, Head Start only, LEA only).
- 21.b. Does Head Start pay for the TS Gold?
- 21.c. Who inputs the TS Gold data?
22. SPECIAL NOTES-Add any other information about this partnership that you think sets it apart from other Head Start-Pre-K partnerships



## Appendix B – Table 1

### Acronyms

ADM – Average Daily Membership  
 BCHS- Bennington County Head Start  
 CVCAC – Central Vermont Community Action Council  
 CVHS- Champlain Valley Head Start  
 EES – Early Education Services  
 HS – Head Start  
 IEP – Individualized Education Plan

NA- Note applicable  
 NEKCA – Northeast Kingdom Community Action  
 RCHS – Rutland County Head Start – No partnerships at this time.  
 SEVCA – Southeast Vermont Community Action  
 TSG- Teaching Strategies Gold

<b>Table 1: Findings 2013-2014 Head Start/LEA Preschool Partnership Inventory</b>								
<b>Question<sup>19</sup> #</b>	<b>HS and LEA Partnership (Data Fields)</b>	<b>BCHS</b>	<b>CVHS</b>	<b>CVCAC<sup>20</sup></b>	<b>EES</b>	<b>NEKCA</b>	<b>SEVCA</b>	<b>Subtotals</b>
1 a	# of sites - A site may consist of multiple classrooms for each LEA partner (e.g. individual school)	4	10	6	1	5	2	28
1 c	# of LEAs partnering directly with each HS grantee - A LEA may consist of multiple schools.	2	9	5	1	4	2	23
<b>Space Resources</b>								
2	# of HS owned buildings	3	0	1	1	1	1	7
3 a	# of sites HS rents from LEA	0	1	0	0	2 (2 other sites are rented to non-LEA landlords)	0 (part of in-kind)	3

<sup>19</sup> Some survey question results are not included in this table because: 1) responses were descriptive vs. quantitative and/or 2) there were not enough responses to discern a pattern.

<sup>20</sup> CVCAC Head Start program's Chelsea site is counted among its Head Start-LEA Pre-K Partnership sites although there is a narrowly written agreement between CVCAC Head Start and the LEA/Orange Windsor SU. At the Chelsea site, the Orange Windsor SU places some of its Early Education Initiative and/or Early Essential Education children in CVCAC Head Start's classroom. In some cases, Orange Windsor SU has paid tuition and in some cases it has provided staffing. CVCAC Head Start does not have a formal written agreement with Orange Windsor SU aside from CVCAC Head Start's purchase of school lunches for Chelsea classroom children. Nevertheless, CVCAC Head Start describes as exemplary Orange Windsor SU's commitment to collaboration with CVCAC Head Start.

<b>Table 1: Findings 2013-2014 Head Start/LEA Preschool Partnership Inventory</b>								
<b>Question<sup>19</sup> #</b>	<b>HS and LEA Partnership (Data Fields)</b>	<b>BCHS</b>	<b>CVHS</b>	<b>CVCAC<sup>20</sup></b>	<b>EES</b>	<b>NEKCA</b>	<b>SEVCA</b>	<b>Subtotals</b>
3 b	\$ Annual cumulative amount of rent paid by each HS grantee	NA	\$9,382 to LEA	0	NA	\$18,120 rent to LEA  \$38,779 rent to non-LEA landlord  \$23,021 HS mortgage	Value of in-kind \$10,000	\$27,502 rent to LEA  \$38,779 rent to non-LEA landlord  \$23,021 HS mortgage
<b>Classroom Composition</b>								
6 a-c	# of HS children (4 and 5 year olds, 3 year olds) enrolled at each site	108 (68,40)	134 (70,64)	85 (50,35)	32 (27,5)	75 (63,12)	59 (40,19) note full enrollment = 74	493 (318,175)
7 a <sup>21</sup>	# of non-HS enrolled children at site	17	60	28 <sup>22</sup>	0	79	6 but can have up to 11	190
8	# of classrooms with HS and non-HS enrolled children	2	11	7 <sup>23</sup>	0	5	2	27
9	# of classrooms with only HS enrolled children	6	2	1	2	1	3	15

<sup>21</sup> All HS programs could not provide ages (question 7 b-c) for non-HS children in the partnerships.

<sup>22</sup> Note for CVCAC Head Start that the 28 non-HS enrolled children includes only the non-HS enrolled children in shared classrooms at the Barre City elementary school site that comply with the HS Program Performance Standards.

<sup>23</sup> Note for CVCAC Head Start that the seven classrooms with HS and non-HS enrolled children at the Barre City elementary school site only includes classrooms complying with the HS Program Performance Standards and meeting the HS length of session requirements.

<b>Table 1: Findings 2013-2014 Head Start/LEA Preschool Partnership Inventory</b>								
<b>Question<sup>19</sup> #</b>	<b>HS and LEA Partnership (Data Fields)</b>	<b>BCHS</b>	<b>CVHS</b>	<b>CVCAC<sup>20</sup></b>	<b>EES</b>	<b>NEKCA</b>	<b>SEVCA</b>	<b>Subtotals</b>
10	# of HS enrolled children counted in the school's ADM	86	117	86	32	75	59 enrolled at time of report of a possible 74	455
Staff Resources for Head Start								
11 a	Total # of HS teachers (full-time, part-time)	6 (6,0)	13(13,0)	10.5 (10.5,0)	6 (6,0)	9 (9,0)	5 (5, 0)	49.5
	Total # of HS assistant teachers (full-time, part-time)	11 (11,0)	0	1 (0,1)	0	3 (2,1)	6 (6,0)	21 (19,2)
	# of other HS staff (e.g. early care advocate, janitor, center manager, food service worker) (full-time, part-time) <sup>24</sup>	1 (0,1)	1(0,1)	0	0	13 (9,4)	0	15 (9,6)
Staff Resources for LEA								
12 a	Total # of LEA teachers (full-time, part-time)	2 (2,0)	3 (3,0)	9 (9,0)	0	6 (4,2)	0	20 (18,2)
	Total # of LEA assistant teachers (full-time, part-time)	2 (2,0)	6 (3,3)	11(5,6)	0	0	0	19 (10,9)
	Total # of LEA para-educators (full-time, part-time)	3 (3,0)	0	0	0	4 (0,4)	0	7(3,4)
Financial Resources: LEA Payments to Head Start Grantees								
13	LEA payments to HS grantees includes per child rate	\$110,000 50 chil- dren X \$2,200	\$64,200 17 children X \$2,600 10 children X \$2,000	0		\$11,250 15 children X \$750		\$185,450
	LEA lump sum payments to HS	0	0	0	\$4,000	\$23,336	\$92,930	\$120,266

<sup>24</sup> HS programs may not have provided the number of every staff member at each site.

<b>Table 1: Findings 2013-2014 Head Start/LEA Preschool Partnership Inventory</b>								
<b>Question<sup>19</sup> #</b>	<b>HS and LEA Partnership (Data Fields)</b>	<b>BCHS</b>	<b>CVHS</b>	<b>CVCAC<sup>20</sup></b>	<b>EES</b>	<b>NEKCA</b>	<b>SEVCA</b>	<b>Subtotals</b>
<b>Special Education Services</b>								
17 a-c	Total # of HS children on IEP (4 and 5 year olds, 3 year olds)	17 (9,8)	26 (15,11)	19 (ages not fully reported)	7 (ages not reported)	13 (13,0)	12 (7,5)	94
18	# of sites in which a LEA provides Special Education Services on-site	3	8	6	1	5	2 (also the LEA provides on-site services outside of classroom)	25
<b>Child Development Assessment Services</b>								
21 a	# of sites in which assessments in (both HS and LEA collaborate, HS only, LEA only)	(3 HS only, 1 LEA only)	(3 both, 7 HS only)	(5 both, 1 HS only)	1 HS only	All teachers	2 HS only	8 Both HS and LEA, 15 HS only, 1 LEA only
21 b	# of sites in which HS pays for Teaching Strategies Gold	3	6	6	1	5	0	21
21 c	# of sites in which (either only the HS inputs the TSG data, the LEA and HS input data, or only the LEA inputs the data)	(2 HS only, 1 HS and LEA, 1 LEA only)	(7 HS only, 3 HS and LEA)	(5 HS only, 1 HS and LEA) <sup>25</sup>	1 HS only	(2 HS only, 3 HS and LEA)	2 HS only	19 HS only, 8 HS and LEA, and 1 LEA only

<sup>25</sup> CVCAC Head Start inputs TSG data on home-based children. Some of these children are also served in LEAs who make observations and input their data independent of HS.