

# NATIONAL HEAD START ASSOCIATION QUALITY INITIATIVE

Head Start Performance Excellence and Quality Recognition Program



## Quality Initiative Guidelines and Application Content

*Recognizing and supporting innovative and outstanding  
Head Start/Early Head Start grantees across the nation.*



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## INTRODUCTION

### The NHTA Quality Initiative: Head Start Performance Excellence and Quality Recognition Program

Driven by NHTA's mission to coalesce, inspire and support the Head Start field as a leader in early childhood development and education, the NHTA Quality Initiative (QI) is the premier program recognizing and supporting excellence and outstanding performance of Head Start/Early Head Start grantees across the nation through the designations of a **Program of Achievement** and **Program of Excellence**. However, NHTA QI is more than a one-time award. It is a designation earned only by Head Start/Early Head Start programs that consistently demonstrate excellence in program management and service performance, and that continually support the achievement of robust outcomes for its customers: children birth to five years old, pregnant women, families, and the communities where they live.

#### What the NHTA QI Designation Means

The NHTA QI means proven and inspiring leadership; effective and efficient management; transparent and sound fiscal operations; informed, responsible, and responsive program governance; genuine partnering with and involvement of parents in all aspects of the program; highly experienced and educated staff; state-of-the-art programming; and quality services that reflect and respond to the aspirations and needs of children and families. NHTA QI grantees continuously strive to improve the performance of their programs; actively aim to build on and exceed prior goals and achievements; recognize, reward, and celebrate excellence in their staff; and "listen to" and support children, families, and communities with programming and services tailored specifically to them.

#### How the NHTA QI Benefits Your Program

Benefits include NHTA recognition and marketing services, spotlighted features on the NHTA website and conference programs, use of NHTA QI logo, resources and discounted NHTA services and products.

## PATHWAY TO EXCELLENCE

There are two NHTA QI designations: **Program of Achievement** and **Program of Excellence**. New programs may apply to be a Program of Achievement at a Provisional or Sustaining level or a Program of Excellence. Current participating programs may apply as a Program of Achievement at the Sustaining level or as a Program of Excellence.



## ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to apply for the NHSA Quality Initiative a Head Start/Early Head Start program must meet the following requirements:

- ✓ **Program is a current member of the National Head Start Association:** All applicants must be program members of NHSA and be current in their payment of NHSA membership dues for the year in which the application is submitted.
- ✓ Program is in **full compliance** with the Head Start Program Performance Standards and Other Regulations including CLASS™ scores that meet the requirements of 45 CFR 1307.3 (c)(1)(i-iii).
- ✓ Program is a **not currently subject to competition** per 45 CFR 1307.3 (a-g).

## OPEN ENROLLMENT APPLICATION PERIOD

Application for the NHSA Quality Initiative are accepted on an ongoing year-round basis.

## HOW TO APPLY

### Letter of Intent

Applicants should submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) indicating their purpose to apply. The LOI should state the following:

- Name of the applying program.
- Designation applying for: Program of Achievement - Provisional level, Program of Achievement - Sustaining level, or Program of Excellence.
- Program’s Head Start funding amount.
- Name and address where the invoice should be e-mailed or mailed.

The LOI should be on the agency’s letterhead and can be e-mailed to Carleen Wallington Kinlock, NHSA Professional Development Project Manager at [cwallingtonkinlock@nhsa.org](mailto:cwallingtonkinlock@nhsa.org).

After the Letter of Intent is received, NHSA will create and submit an invoice to the program.

### Application Fees

The application fee is due within 30 days of the invoice date. Once we’ve received the application fee, you will gain access to the online application submission tool. Please note that application fees (see below) are non-refundable.

Head Start Funding	Program of Achievement – Provisional	Program of Achievement – Sustaining	Program of Excellence
< \$1 Million	\$1,735	\$3,780	\$5,935
\$1 - \$3 Million	\$1,735	\$3,780	\$5,935
\$3 - \$10 Million	\$1,735	\$3,780	\$5,935
\$10 - \$25 Million	\$1,875	\$4,085	\$7,975
\$25 - \$40 Million	\$2,010	\$4,385	\$10,000
\$40 - \$60 Million	\$2,010	\$4,385	\$10,000
> \$60 Million	\$2,010	\$4,385	\$10,000

## Application Deadline

Programs will have four (4) months to complete the Quality Initiative application. The deadline date will be set by NHTSA and e-mailed to the identified Quality Initiative contact person(s).

## Submitting the Application

Responses to the application components will be submitted using an online tool. Upon receipt of the application fee, access to the tool will be sent to the QI contact person(s).

## OVERVIEW OF APPLICATION ELEMENTS

*The application elements are described below. Application responses will be submitted using an online tool.*


### Program Profile

Using the Program Profile form, all applications must include information on the Head Start/Early Head Start program. The Program Profile form can be found in Appendix I on page 9. It can also be downloaded from the Quality Initiative web pages on [www.nhtsa.org](http://www.nhtsa.org).

Also included in the Program Profile are the following three components:

- 1. Evidence of Full Compliance with the Head Start Program Performance Standards and Other Regulations**  
- The applicant must submit the report from the most recent Office of Head Start Monitoring Review, including CLASS™ observation rating.
- 2. Evidence of Financial Integrity & Program Accountability** - The applicant must submit three consecutive years of Independent Audit Reports and the most program's most recent Annual Report referred to by the Head Start Act.
- 3. Program Description Overview** - Provide a brief written narrative description below of the families and community served by your program. Information presented should include family and community strengths and challenges. Please elaborate on how your program is meeting these needs/challenges in the Innovation Indicators 39 & 40.

### Demonstration of Innovation

Quality Indicators 39 & 40 focus on program innovation. The applicant must submit written narrative responses as to how they are uniquely meeting the needs of children and families in their program and the needs of their community. Program of Achievement-Provisional level applications will provide responses only to these Indicators. The following symbol is used to highlight this: 

### Demonstration of Comprehensive Quality

The 41 NHTSA Quality Indicators reflect well-established performance excellence criteria and are a cross-section of different industries, yet are also specific to the systems and services in Head Start. These Indicators were designed to extract evidence of the ways that your program goes beyond the Head Start Program Performance Standards.

Applicants should provide written narrative responses that thoroughly address how the program's systems and practices meet or exceed the NHTSA Quality Indicators.

Below is a chart of the 41 Quality Indicator sections, subsections, and categories. The Quality Indicator questions, including the scoring criteria, can be located in Appendix II on page 12.

Applications for Program of Achievement — Sustaining level and Program of Excellence must include responses to Quality Indicator questions 1-41.

Indicator Section	Indicator Subsections	Indicator Categories
Organizational Development	Administrative Systems	1. Mission Statement
		2. Leadership Styles
		3. Strategic Planning
		4. Assessment and Monitoring
		5. Continuous Improvement
		6. Administrative Procedures
		7. Organizational Coordination
	Personnel Systems	8. Service Delivery System
		9. Work Health and Safety
		10. Staff Recruitment and Selection
		11. Employee Performance Appraisal
		12. Recognition, Retention, and Dismissal
		13. Employee Benefits
		14. Professional Development
		15. Compensation
	Fiscal Competence	16. Staff Turnover
		17. Fiscal Systems
		18. Fiscal Reporting
	Engagement	Parent Involvement
20. Parents as Teachers		
21. Parent Empowerment		
Public Relations and Advocacy		22. Parent Involvement
		23. Advocacy Information
		24. Advocacy Involvement
		25. Service Needs of Low-Income Children and Families
Program Enrichment and Innovation	Garnering and Using Resources	26. Public Relations and Marketing
		27. Diverse Targeted Marketing
		28. Other Funding and Resources
	Early Childhood Education	29. Quality Recognition
		30. Management Information Systems
		31. Inclusive Services
	Family Partnerships	32. Screening and Assessment
		33. Curriculum Implementation
	Community Partnerships	34. Partnership Building and Activities
		35. Family Services Staffing
	Health Services	36. Collaborative Agreements
		37. Follow-Up Services
		38. Health Systems, Policies, and Programs
Innovative Initiatives	39. Special Initiatives to Meet Child and Family Needs	
	40. Special Initiatives to Meet Community Needs	
	41. Head Start Impacts	

## Scoring Criteria

Each NHSA Quality Indicator provides scoring criteria that offers clarity of key information that a response should include. The scoring criteria are the minimum measures that reviewers will use to determine the quality of indicator responses.

## Questions to Consider

A list of Questions to Consider are provided for each Indicator is offered as additional **guidance** to help applicants to develop their response. Written narrative responses are not required for the Questions to Consider.

Some Questions to Consider relate specifically to Head Start, while other questions are adapted or verbatim from the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program Criteria\* and are applicable to Head Start and/or all businesses.

\* **Questions to Consider** are adapted from the *2011-2012 Criteria for Performance Excellence* (Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, MD; [www.nist.gov/baldrige](http://www.nist.gov/baldrige)).

## 6. Evidence

**Required Evidence:** This evidence must be included (uploaded) as part of the written narrative response and will be considered when scored.

**Suggested Evidence:** The applicant may choose to include (upload) these sources of information along with the written narrative response.

## 7. On-site Review (Program of Excellence applicants only)

Program of Excellence applicants will receive an on-site review including, but not limited to, an integrated stakeholder interview, classroom quality strategies, innovative initiatives, and program option visits.

## REVIEW PROCESS

A panel of professionals with extensive knowledge of and experience in Head Start will review the application elements and score the NHSA Quality Indicators to determine if the program has met the NHSA Quality Initiative criteria.

The scores for the Quality Indicators range from 0 - 20 points. Most of the Indicators have a maximum scoring value of 10 while others have a maximum score of 20.

**Program of Achievement applicants** – After the review and scoring process have been completed, the Head Start/ Early Head Start director and the identified Quality Initiative contact person(s) will be contacted with the outcome of the review.

**Program of Excellence applicants** – The On-Site Review follows the application review. Review decisions will be shared after that time.

## ANNUAL REPORT

All QI designated programs must submit an annual statement of program eligibility status and noted improvements. Annual report is due 30 days prior to the anniversary of of QI determination.

## DESIGNATION TERMS

Quality Tier	Program of Achievement		Program of Excellence
	Provisional	Sustaining	
Designation Term	12 months	5 years	5 years
Letter of Intent to Apply Due	3 months prior to designation end date	9 months prior to designation end date	9 months prior to designation end date
Renewal Application Due	N/A	6 months prior to designation end date	6 months prior to designation end date

## RENEWAL AND REVOCATION

### Applying to Renew Designation

*Program of Achievement - Provisional level:* There is no renewal for the Program of Achievement - Provisional level. A Letter of Intent to apply for the Program of Achievement - Sustaining level is due not later than three months prior to the designation end date.

*Program of Achievement - Sustaining level:* A Letter of Intent to apply for the Quality Initiative is due not later than nine months before the designation end date. The renewal application is due not later than six months prior to the designation end date.

*Program of Excellence:* A Letter of Intent to apply for the Quality Initiative is due not later than nine months before the designation end date. The renewal application is due not later than six months prior to the designation end date.

*Note: Letter of Intent and application renewal notices will be sent to the designated program by NHSA; however, it is the primary responsibility of the designated program to submit a Letter of Intent to apply and the renewal application in accordance with these timeframes.*

### Designation Revocation

In order to preserve the high standards of the NHSA Quality Initiative, Programs of Achievement (Provisional and Sustaining) and Programs of Excellence are expected to remain in full compliance with the Head Start Program Performance Standards and other regulations throughout the entire designation term. NHSA QI designated programs are responsible for notifying NHSA immediately of any occurrence (e.g., non-compliance, deficiency, audit finding, or legal action) that may negatively impact the status of their designation. NHSA reserves the right to temporarily or permanently remove designations from any program that no longer meets the full requirements of the NHSA Quality Initiative.

*PLEASE NOTE: In the event that the designation as a Program of Achievement (Provisional or Sustaining level) or a Program of Excellence is temporarily or permanently revoked, no amount of the application fee will be refunded.*



# NATIONAL HEAD START ASSOCIATION QUALITY INITIATIVE

Head Start Performance Excellence and Quality Recognition Program



## Application Elements and Requirements

Below and on the following pages is an outline the application elements and 41 Quality Indicator questions. Application responses will be submitted using an online tool. Programs will have four (4) months to complete the Quality Initiative application. The deadline date will be set by NHSA.

### PROGRAM PROFILE

	Program of Achievement		Program of Excellence
	Provisional	Sustaining	
<input type="checkbox"/> Applying for QI Designation →	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### NHSA QUALITY INITIATIVE CONTACT PERSON(S)

Identify one or two individuals who are knowledgeable about your Head Start/Early Head Start program and the NHSA QI application, and who can respond to inquiries and coordinate the scheduling of the on-site visit, if applicable.

Contact's Name _____	Contact's Name _____
Professional Title _____	Professional Title _____
Phone _____	Phone _____
E-mail _____	E-mail _____

### PROGRAM INFORMATION

Please enter general profile information for your program.

Official Program Name \_\_\_\_\_

Program's Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

Program's Mailing Address (if different from above) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

NHSA Membership # \_\_\_\_\_ (NOTE: Applicant program must be a member of the National Head Start Association)

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

HS Director's Name \_\_\_\_\_ EHS Director's Name \_\_\_\_\_

HS Director's Phone \_\_\_\_\_ EHS Director's Name \_\_\_\_\_

HS Director's E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ EHS Director's E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**PROGRAM INFORMATION cont.**

**Agency Type**

Grantee  Delegate

- Community Action     For-Profit     Non-Profit     School District  
 Tribal     Migrant/Seasonal     Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT**

**FUNDING** (Please provide the following funding information.)

Source of Funding (List sources other than ACF starting on the second line)	Total Funding From Source
Head Start/Early Head Start (ACF)	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____

Total number of children funded by Head Start/Early Head Start (ACF): \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of children funded by other sources: \_\_\_\_\_

**ENROLLMENT** (Please provide the following information for children and families enrolled in your program.)

1. Months of the year when children and families are enrolled (Multiple entries can be provided for Migrant/Seasonal programs):

From _____		From _____
To _____		To _____

2. Total number of enrollment:

Number of children enrolled in Head Start..... \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of children enrolled in Early Head Start..... \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of pregnant women enrolled in Early Head Start... \_\_\_\_\_

3. Number of children enrolled (by program design):

Center-Based..... \_\_\_\_\_  
Home-Based..... \_\_\_\_\_  
Combination..... \_\_\_\_\_  
Family Child Care..... \_\_\_\_\_

**PROGRAM QUALITY AND ACCREDITATION STATUS INFORMATION**

Please provide program quality and accreditation information for your program.

1. Does your program participate in a state QRIS?     Yes     No     Not Applicable

If YES, what is your program's current rating? \_\_\_\_\_ What is the highest possible quality rating? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Has your program (or if participating in a state QRIS, your state) conducted the following assessments?

ECERS-R     ITERS-R     FDCRS     CLASS™

3. Are any of your sites accredited by a national, regional, and/or state accreditation program?

(e.g., NAC, NAEYC, SACS CASI)     Yes             No

If YES, please list the programs of accreditation: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## EVIDENCE OF FULL COMPLIANCE

Provide the following information to demonstrate compliance with the Head Start Program Performance Standards and other regulations:

1. Date of your program's most recent Administration for Children and Families (ACF) on-site monitoring review (MM/DD/YYYY): \_\_\_\_\_

2. Was the program in full compliance as indicated in the review report?             Yes             No

If NO, was the program in full compliance after completing corrective actions?     Yes             No

3. Date program received letter of full compliance (MM/DD/YYYY): \_\_\_\_\_

4. Using the online tool, a copy of your program's most recent ACF on-site monitoring review report must be submitted as evidence that your program is in compliance with all applicable Head Start Program Performance Standards and other regulations, policies, etc.

If corrective actions were required, your program must also submit: a.) all corrective action plans, b.) all correspondence to and from the ACF related to corrective actions, and c.) The Overview of Findings from ACF stating that the previously identified findings were corrected and no further corrective actions are required.

5. Using the online tool, CLASS™ scores from the CLASS™ review that occurred as a part of the ACF on-site review must also be submitted.

## EVIDENCE OF FINANCIAL INTEGRITY AND PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY

To demonstrate integrity in the financial management system and program accountability, the following information is required and must be submitted:

### Independent Audit Reports

1. Using the online tool, submit the Head Start/Early Head Start program's *most recent* independent audit report and the two immediately prior. Therefore, three consecutive years of audit reports should be submitted.

2. Year of your program's most recent independent audit report: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Years of the two immediately prior year reports: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

4. Was the program found in good financial standing on all three audits:     Yes             No

5. If you answered No above, what were the findings and in what year were the findings identified?

Financial Audit Findings	Year
_____	_____

**Financial Audit Findings** cont.

**Year**


6. Describe what corrective actions took place to rectify the findings:

**Annual Report**

Using the online tool, submit the Head Start/Early Head Start program’s most recent Annual Report referred to and compliant with the requirements of the Head Start Act of 2007 [Sec. 644(a)(2)(A-H)].

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION OVERVIEW**

Using the online tool, you will be asked to provide a brief written narrative description of the families and community served by your program. Information presented should include family and community strengths and challenges. Please elaborate on how your program is meeting these needs/challenges in Innovation Indicators 39 & 40.



**Got Questions?**

We’ve got answers!

If you need clarification while completing your application for the NHSA Quality Initiative, we encourage you to contact us.

Call (703) 299-7513 or e-mail [cwallingtonkinlock@nhsa.org](mailto:cwallingtonkinlock@nhsa.org)

# NATIONAL HEAD START ASSOCIATION QUALITY INITIATIVE

A Head Start Performance Excellence and Quality Recognition Program



## DEMONSTRATION OF INNOVATION

INNOVATION

**Program of Achievement – Provisional level** applicants are required to submit responses only to NHSA Quality Indicators 39 & 40 to demonstrate the innovative approaches to meeting the needs of their children, families and communities.

**Program of Achievement – Sustaining level** and **Program of Excellence** applicants will respond to these Indicators as part of the broader demonstration of comprehensive quality.

The written narrative responses to Quality Indicators 39 & 40 will be entered using an online submission tool.

## DEMONSTRATION OF COMPREHENSIVE QUALITY

### 41 Quality Indicators

The 41 NHSA QI Indicators reflect well-established performance excellence criteria and are a cross section of different industries, yet specific to the systems and services in Head Start. The NHSA Quality Indicators were designed to extract evidence of the ways that your program goes beyond the Head Start Program Performance Standards. Program of Achievement – Sustaining level and Program of Excellence applicants must provide responses to all NHSA Quality Indicators, must include required evidence, and have the option to include suggested evidence as indicated.

The written narrative responses to the Quality Indicators will be entered using an online submission tool.

#### QI 1. How does the mission guide the program’s operations?

##### Suggested Evidence

Vision Statement, Mission Statement, Core Values

<b>Mission Statement</b>	<b>10</b>
Administrative Systems	70
Organizational Development	200

##### Scoring Criteria

- The response provides an in-depth description of how the mission guides the program including:
  - The mission statement is understood and can be articulated by staff, parents, and the governing body.
  - Training for staff, parents, and the governing body includes information on and discussion of the program’s mission.
  - Program goals and objectives align with the mission.
  - The program’s design and services delivery approach reflect the mission.

##### Questions to Consider

How do senior leaders set your organization’s vision, mission, and values?

How do senior leaders deploy your organization’s vision, mission, and values through your leadership system to the workforce, to parents, to the governing body, community partners and other stakeholders, as appropriate?

How do senior leaders’ actions reflect a commitment to the organization’s values?

## QI 2. How do senior managers lead, communicate with, and engage the entire workforce?

### Scoring Criteria

1. The response includes a summary of the leadership and management styles of the program director and key managers.
2. The response details how these leadership and management styles contribute to delivering high-quality services.

Leadership Styles	I	10
Administrative Systems		70
Organizational Development		200

### Questions to Consider

How do senior leaders achieve the following?

- Encourage frank, two-way communication throughout the organization.
- Communicate key decisions.
- Take an active role in reward and recognition programs to reinforce high-performance and student learning.

How do senior leaders achieve the following?

- Create an environment for organizational performance improvement, the accomplishment of your mission and strategic objectives, innovation, performance leadership, and organizational agility.
- Create a workforce culture that delivers a consistently positive experience for students and stakeholders and fosters their engagement.

## QI 3. How does your program conduct its strategic planning?

### Suggested Evidence

Strategic Plan

### Scoring Criteria

1. The responses includes a detailed description of the strategic planning process.
2. The response describes how the strategic plan guides Head Start program operations and contributes to the mission of the agency.
3. The response includes how the program's strategic planning addresses the key elements listed below?
  - Your organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
  - Long-term organizational sustainability, including needed core competencies.
4. The response includes the program's process for collecting and analyzing relevant data to inform strategic planning.

Strategic Planning	I	10
Administrative Systems		70
Organizational Development		200

### Questions to Consider

Have you implemented procedures to analyze the merits of the various options for providing services (e.g., transportation, facilities, and equipment), including lease vs. lease-purchase, vs. purchase, and/or direct vs. contracted services?

What are the key process steps, and who are the key participants?

How does your process identify potential blind spots?

How do you determine your core competencies, strategic challenges, and strategic advantages?

What are your short- and longer-term planning time horizons and how these time horizons set?

How does your strategic planning process address these time horizons?

How do you ensure that strategic planning addresses these additional key elements listed below?

- Early indications of major shifts in early care and education programs and services, child, family, and community demographics, markets, family, community partners and stakeholder preferences, competition, technology, the economy, and the regulatory environment, your ability to execute the strategic plan.

**QI 4. What process and outcome evaluation tools and methods are used as part of your assessment and monitoring system?**

Assessment and Monitoring	10
Administrative Systems	70
Organizational Development	200

**Suggested Evidence**

Performance Reports Provided to Board/Policy Council

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response describes how the program selects, collects, aligns, and integrates data and information for tracking daily operations and overall organizational performance, including progress relative to strategic objectives and action plans.
2. The response includes information on how the program involves parents, staff, board members, and persons knowledgeable about evaluation strategies in designing and implementing this system.
3. The response notes how customer satisfaction measures are integrated into this system.

*Questions to Consider*

What are your key organizational performance measures, including key short-term and longer-term budgetary and financial measures? How frequently do you track these measures?

**QI 5. How do assessment and monitoring system data inform the design and implementation of program improvements and adjustments?**

Continuous Improvement	10
Administrative Systems	70
Organizational Development	200

**Suggested Evidence**

Sample Program Improvement; Corrective Action Plan

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response describes how the program uses these data and information to support organizational decision making and innovation?
2. The response includes information on how assessment and monitoring system data inform:
  - a) program options
  - b) program services priorities
  - c) service delivery models and approaches
  - d) staffing patterns
  - e) program improvement and corrective action planning.

*Questions to Consider*

How do you use organizational performance review findings to develop priorities for continuous improvement and opportunities for innovation?

How are these priorities and opportunities deployed to faculty, staff, other work groups, and functional-level operations throughout your organization?

When appropriate, how are the priorities and opportunities deployed to your feeder and/or receiving programs, schools, partners, and collaborators to ensure organizational alignment?

How do you assess workforce engagement?

What formal and informal assessment methods and measures do you use to determine workforce engagement and workforce satisfaction?

How do these methods and measures differ across workforce groups and segments?

How do you use other indicators, such as workforce retention, absenteeism, grievances, safety, and productivity, to assess and improve workforce engagement?

**QI 6. How is the administrative procedures manual made available to and explained to all staff?**

**Suggested Evidence**

Procedures Manual Table of Contents

Administrative Procedures	10
Administrative Systems	70
Organizational Development	200

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response details who is involved in and/or responsible for manual updating and how they are involved.
2. The response notes how often and when are manual updates made.
3. The response summarizes major program policies and procedures areas contained in the manual.

*Questions to Consider*

How do you deploy plans, policies, and procedures throughout the organization to your staff to achieve your key strategic objectives?

How do you ensure that these policies and procedures align with and support the effective delivery of high quality services and the achievement of key outcomes?

**QI 7. For Multipurpose Agencies Only: How is the Head Start program fully integrated into the overall operation of your agency?**

**Required Evidence**

Multipurpose Agency Organizational Chart

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response explains to what extent there is a shared mission and organizational culture.
2. The response examines communication systems across programs all of the agency's programs.
3. The response describes any and all coordinated program planning and evaluation across the agency.
4. The response provides an overview of how other programs managed by the agency relate to and support the Head Start.

Organizational Coordination	10
Administrative Systems	70
Organizational Development	200

*Questions to Consider*

How do you foster an organizational culture that is characterized by open communication, high-performance work, and an engaged workforce?

How do you ensure that your organizational culture benefits from the diverse ideas, cultures, and thinking of your workforce?

**QI 8. How do you ensure that the service delivery system is integrated, effective, efficient, and child and family focused?**

**Required Evidence**

Organizational Chart

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response explains how the leadership and management structure supports integrated service delivery.
2. The response describes how the program design and management systems support effective service delivery.
3. The response summarizes how service tracking, monitoring, and reporting systems are used to ensure the delivery of integrated services.

System Delivery System	10
Personnel Systems	90
Organizational Development	200

*Questions to Consider*

How do senior leaders and managers achieve the following?

- Create an environment for organizational performance improvement, the accomplishment of your mission and strategic objectives, innovation, performance leadership, and organizational agility.
- Create a workforce culture that delivers a consistently positive experience for children, families and communities?

**QI 9. How do you plan for, implement, and ensure a safe, healthy, and productive working, environment?**

**Suggested Evidence**

Emergency and/or Disaster Plan

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response provides an overall description of the "organizational climate."
2. The response notes any and all wellness initiatives that have been planned and/or implemented.
3. The response describes how the program plans for and implements reasonable facilities and program accommodations for staff members with diagnosed disabilities.

Workforce Health and Safety	10
Personnel Systems	90
Organizational Development	200

*Questions to Consider*

How do you address workplace environmental factors, including accessibility, to ensure and improve workforce health, safety, and security?

What are your performance measures and improvement goals for each of these workforce needs?

What are any significant differences in these factors and performance measures or targets for different workplace environments?

How do you ensure work system and workplace preparedness for disasters or emergencies?

How does your disaster and emergency preparedness system consider prevention, management, continuity of operations, and recovery?

Are the Head Start centers accessible and do they conform with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1976?

Do the facilities and set-up create welcome and inviting indoor and outdoor environments, and encourage full participation of adults and children with disabilities?



**QI 10. Describe your personnel recruitment and selection system.**

**Suggested Evidence**

Sample Management/Frontline Staff Job Descriptions

Staff Recruitment and Selection   10	
Personnel Systems	90
Organizational Development	200

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response describes how the program identifies candidates with necessary knowledge, skills, abilities, and personal characteristics to perform the job for which they are applying.
2. The program explains if the system has the flexibility to employ persons qualified by education, by experience, or by a combination of both.
3. The response notes strategies to ensure that the diversity of the staff reflects the diversity of the families served.
4. The program describes if/how it recruits parents of currently and/or previously enrolled children to apply for jobs.
5. The response briefly describes new employee orientations including their timeliness and thoroughness.

**Questions to Consider**

How do you assess your workforce capability and capacity needs, including skills, competencies, and staffing levels?

How do you ensure that staff are appropriately certified or licensed?

How do you recruit, hire, place, and retain new members of your workforce?

How do you ensure that your workforce represents the diverse ideas, cultures, and thinking of your hiring and student and stakeholder community?

Does the program specifically target recruiting of individuals with diagnosed disabilities?

Does the personnel recruitment system value diversity? Does it ensure that the diversity of staff will, in a reasonable time frame, reflect the diversity of the families served?

**QI 11. How does your employee performance appraisal system promote staff and Program achievement, development, and improvement?**

**Suggested Evidence**

Blank Performance Evaluation/Improvement Form

Employee Performance Appraisal   10	
Personnel Systems	90
Organizational Development	200

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response explains how the system is aligned with updated job descriptions; core competencies; and key job roles, responsibilities and performance expectations.
2. The response notes if the system assesses descriptive qualities such as: responsibility, integrity, compassion, maturity, and the application of knowledge to perform roles and responsibilities as set forth in job descriptions.
3. The response describes the frequency and the mode for both formal and informal feedback between employees and supervisors.

**Questions to Consider**

How do you assess workforce engagement?

What formal and informal assessment methods and measures do you use to determine workforce engagement and workforce satisfaction?

How do these methods and measures differ across workforce groups and segments?

How do you use other indicators, such as workforce retention, absenteeism, grievances, safety, and productivity, to assess and improve workforce engagement?

How do you evaluate the performance of your senior leaders, including the head of your organization?

How do you evaluate the performance of members of your governance board, as appropriate?

How do senior leaders and your governance board use these performance reviews to advance their development and improve both their personal leadership effectiveness and that of your board and leadership system, as appropriate?

**QI 12. How does your personnel system support the recognition and retention of outstanding employees and the dismissal of marginal employees?**

Recognition, Retention, and Dismissal   10	
Personnel Systems	90
Organizational Development	200

**Suggested Evidence**

Recognition Event Agendas; Special Incentives

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response describes how the program provides specific compensation, rewards, recognition, and incentives to outstanding employees.
2. The response notes if the program provides general recognition and incentives to all employees (*Note: not benefits*).
3. The response explains how senior leaders take an active role in reward and recognition programs to reinforce high performance.

*Questions to Consider*

How does your workforce performance management system achieve the following?

- Support high-performance work and workforce engagement.
- Reinforce staff, stakeholder and organizational focus and achievement of your action plans

How do you organize and manage your workforce to achieve the following?

- Accomplish the work of your organization.
- Capitalize on the organization's core competencies.
- Reinforce a child and family focus.
- Exceed performance expectations.

How do you manage effective career progression for your entire workforce?

**QI 13. What fringe benefits and retirement plans are provided for and/or offered to Head Start employees?**

Employee Benefits   10	
Personnel Systems	90
Organizational Development	200

**Required Evidence**

Summary of Benefits Provided to Staff

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response summarizes whether the program's fringe benefit package provides employees access to health insurance, disability insurance, and a retirement plan.
2. The response provides details of the percentage(s) of fringe benefit costs that the employer contributes.
3. The response describes the retirement plan(s) available and the percentage and/or amount that the employer contributes to the plan(s).

*Questions to Consider*

How do you support your workforce via policies, services, and benefits?

How are these tailored to the needs of a diverse workforce and different workforce groups and segments?

For multipurpose agencies, are benefits provided to Head Start staff comparable to the benefits provided to employees in other agency programs?

How do benefits provided to Head Start management compare with those benefits provided to frontline employees?

**QI 14. What professional development opportunities and activities are available to Head Start employees?**

**Suggested Evidence**

Individual/Agency Professional Development Plan(s)

Professional Development   10	
Personnel Systems	90
Organizational Development	200

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response describes individual and team professional growth opportunities.
2. The response notes whether professional development is available to all employees at all levels of the program.
3. The response details the connection between individual and program training needs assessments and professional development plans and activities.
4. The response explains how the program evaluates the impact of professional development activities, including program quality improvements and outcomes.

**QI 14. What professional development opportunities and activities are available to Head Start employees? cont.**

*Questions to Consider*

How does your learning and development system address the following factors for your workforce members and leaders?

- Your organization’s core competencies, strategic challenges, and accomplishment of its action plans, both short-term and long-term.
- Organizational performance improvement and innovation.
- Ethics and ethical business practices.
- Student and stakeholder focus.
- Their learning and development needs, including those that are self-identified and those identified by supervisors, managers, and senior leaders.
- The transfer of knowledge from departing or retiring workforce members.
- The reinforcement of new knowledge and skills on the job.

How do you evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of your learning and development system?

How do you manage effective career progression for your entire workforce?

How do you accomplish effective succession planning for management and leadership positions?

**QI 15. Is the employee compensation and job classification system equitable and/or competitive?**

**Suggested Evidence**

Wage and Comparability Study

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response details that the compensation system is internally equitable (including across programs in multipurpose agencies).
2. The response notes that employee compensation is based on an up-to-date Wage and Comparability Study.
3. The response summarizes agency efforts to ensure that the program’s compensation plan is comparable to and/or competitive with compensation provided for the same or similar job classifications at other programs in the community (or region).

Compensation		10
Personnel Systems		90
Organizational Development		200

*Questions to Consider*

What are your current levels and trends in key measures or indicators of your workforce climate, including workforce compensation and benefits?

How do you use performance evaluations in determining executive and/or staff compensation?

How does your workforce performance management system achieve the following?

- Support high-performance work and workforce engagement.
- Consider workforce compensation, reward, recognition, and incentive practices.

What are your current levels and trends in key measures or indicators of workforce satisfaction?

How do you recruit, hire, place, and retain new members of your workforce?

**QI 16. How does the agency monitor, analyze, and respond to staff turnover?**

**Suggested Evidence**

Staff Satisfaction Survey; Exit Interview Protocol

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response describes the program’s plan for tracking and analyzing the reasons for staff departures.
2. The response notes procedures for recommending changes in policy, job descriptions, compensation packages, and other factors to reduce staff turnover.
3. The response cites the use of staff satisfaction surveys/assessments including exit interviews.

Staff Turnover		10
Personnel Systems		90
Organizational Development		200

*Questions to Consider*

How does your workforce performance management system achieve the following?

- Support high-performance work and workforce engagement.
- Consider workforce compensation, reward, recognition, and incentive practices.

What are your current levels and trends in key measures or indicators of workforce satisfaction?

How do you use other indicators, such as workforce retention, absenteeism, grievances, safety, and productivity, to assess and improve workforce engagement?

**QI 17. How do your fiscal systems and operations effectively support the delivery of high quality Head Start services?**

<b>Fiscal Systems</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20</b>
Fiscal Competence		40
Organizational Development		200

**Required Evidence**

Most Recent Independent Audit Report

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response describes how the system provides for: timely budget development; cost allocation; fiscal tracking, monitoring, and reporting; budget modifications; and fiscal forecasting.

*Questions to Consider*

How do you ensure that financial and other resources are available to support the accomplishment of your action plans, while meeting current obligations?

How do you allocate these resources to support the accomplishment of the plans?

How do you manage the financial and other risks associated with the plans to ensure the financial viability of your organization?

What are your current levels and trends in key measures or indicators of budgetary and financial performance, including aggregate measures of cost containment, financial viability, or budgetary performance, as appropriate?

How does the system ensure the timely replacement of equipment, including buses, copiers, computer systems and other items with a single-item value of \$5,000 or more?

**QI 18. What fiscal information is provided to the Board of Directors, Policy Council, and staff?**

**Suggested Evidence**

Monthly, Quarterly, Annual Reports

<b>Fiscal Reporting</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>
Fiscal Competence		40
Organizational Development		200

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response details the types and frequency of fiscal reports that the program provides.
2. The response describes how, to whom, and when/where fiscal information is provided.
3. The response notes how the program ensures that this information is provided in an understandable and timely manner.

*Questions to Consider*

What are your key current findings and trends in key measures or indicators of governance and fiscal accountability, internal and external, as appropriate?

**QI 19. How does the program’s fiscal system ensure that there is adequate flexibility to respond to identified goals and needs while maintaining sound, consistent and effective internal controls?**

<b>Fiscal Controls and Flexibility</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>
Fiscal Competence		40
Organizational Development		200

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response describes how the program’s fiscal system supports the delivery of services to achieve the primary needs and goals.
2. The response notes the safeguards in place to manage and reduce fiscal risks.
3. The response identifies the roles of program leadership, management, and the governing body in fiscal oversight and program stewardship.

*Questions to Consider*

How do you design and innovate your work processes to meet all your key goals and needs?

How do you incorporate the potential need for agility into these processes?

How do you incorporate productivity, cost control, and other efficiency and effectiveness factors into these processes?

**QI 20. How do your activities, strategies and policies reflect and support the philosophy that parents are the first and most important teachers and nurturers of their child (children)?**

**Suggested Evidence**

Parent Training Information; Parent Involvement Plan

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response effectively articulates a philosophy of parents as first teachers and nurturers.
2. The response summarizes activities, strategies, and policies that have been developed and implemented to support this philosophy.
3. The response describes how all staff responsible for encouraging parent involvement in all phases of the program.
4. The response notes how staff form partnerships with parents to reinforce lessons and learning *from home* at school and lessons and learning *from school* at home.
5. The response notes how the program accommodates family members with disabilities in all services and activities.

Parents as Teachers   20	
Parent Involvement	50
Engagement	100

*Questions to Consider*

How does the program ensure that there are multiple and diverse activities for the involvement of men who are significant in the lives of the Head Start children?

How do you enable parents to seek information and support?

How do you enable parents to obtain educational programs and services from you and provide feedback on Head Start services?

How does the program ensure that opportunities are available for family members to be exposed to culturally diverse activities?

What are your key means of supporting parents in their roles as first and most important teachers, including your key communication mechanisms?

How do you determine the key support requirements for your parents?

How do you ensure that these support requirements are deployed to all staff and community partners (when necessary and appropriate) involved in supporting parents in their role as first teachers and nurturers?

What are your current levels and trends (i.e., results) of key measures or indicators of parent engagement, including relationship building?

How do these results compare in each stage of parent relationships with you, as appropriate?

**QI 21. How do you empower parents to participate in community and school activities?**

**Suggested Evidence**

Parent Training Information

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response describes how the program promotes and supports parents to be active members and leaders both during and after their Head Start experience.
2. The response provides examples of how parents have been empowered by the program.
3. The response notes activities that the program has developed and implemented to empower parents as their children transition out of Head Start.
4. The response details how it follows up with and measures levels of parent participation in community and school.

Parent Empowerment   20	
Parent Involvement	50
Engagement	100

*Questions to Consider*

Do parents have opportunities to learn about and participate in state, regional, and/or national human service organizations, associations and or boards?

How does the program support and encourage parents to pursue these opportunities?

What are your current levels and trends (i.e. results) of key measures or indicators of parent participation?

Do these measures compare levels of parent empowerment and participation: 1) prior to child's enrollment in Head Start; 2) during the child's enrollment in Head Start; and 3) after the child has transitioned from Head Start?

**QI 22. What is your system for encouraging the training, hiring, and development of Head Start parents and other family members?**

Parent Development   10	
Parent Involvement	50
Engagement	100

**Suggested Evidence**

Personnel Policies and Procedures

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response explains how the program determines the training and employment development needs of parents.
2. The response details how the program specifically targets and encourages those who lack literacy skills, English language proficiency, formal training and credentials.

*Questions to Consider*

- How do you ensure that this system is equitable across the diverse parents and families served?
- How do you assess your workforce capability and capacity needs, including skills, competencies, and staffing levels?
- How do you recruit, hire, place, and retain new members of your workforce?
- How do you ensure that your workforce represents the diverse ideas, cultures, and thinking of your community and the children and parents served?
- How do you prepare your workforce for changing capability and capacity needs?

**QI 23. How do you ensure that key stakeholders receive up-to-date information on legislation and regulatory changes that could impact the Head Start program and families served?**

Advocacy Information   10	
Public Relations and Advocacy	50
Engagement	100

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response describes the program's procedures and mechanisms for ensuring that staff, parents, and board members are kept updated on proposed local, state, and federal legislation, as well as, policy and regulatory changes.
2. The response notes how the program encourages key stakeholders to give feedback on the updated information provided to them.

*Questions to Consider*

- How does the program ensure that it has the most up-to-date information to share with its stakeholders?
- What subscriptions (online and print) and groups (including professional memberships and online groups) does the program maintain to ensure that the information provided to its stakeholders is current, relevant, and accurate?

**QI 24. How do you, your staff, parents, and board members advocate for Head Start and other programs and organizations serving young children and families?**

Advocacy Involvement   10	
Public Relations and Advocacy	50
Engagement	100

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response describes how the program encourages staff, parents, and board members to serve on local, state, regional and/or national agency boards, committees, and other planning and coordinating groups.
2. The response notes how the program promotes the involvement of staff, parents, and board members to be active members of and to participate in their respective state and regional Head Start associations and the National Head Start Association.
3. The response indicates whether program staff and board members are members of local, state, and national professional and service organizations.

*Questions to Consider*

- How do you support staff, parents, and board members who want to serve on board, committees, and planning and coordinating groups are able to do so?
- Do you provide benefits or incentives for staff, parents, and board members to join professional membership organizations and associations?
- Do you provide benefits for staff to subscribe to professional publications (online and print)?
- Does your program provide training to staff, parents, and board members to encourage and empower them to be involved?

**QI 25. Do you have a system to engage, educate, and partner with the public about the quality of life issues and service needs of low-income children and families?**

**Suggested Evidence**

Public Information Documents and Media

**Service Needs of Low-Income Children and Families | 10**

Public Relations and Advocacy	50
Engagement	100

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response describes specific efforts that the program has developed and implemented to make the public aware of the issues impacting the quality of life of low-income children and families.
2. The response details any partnerships and collaborative efforts that are part of the program's system to engage and educate the public on these issues.
3. The response notes the key staff and program stakeholders who are involved in these efforts.
4. The response explains how it serves as a resource to other Head Start, early childhood, and human service agencies.

*Questions to Consider*

What strategies are used by the program to assist other human service agencies to be culturally responsive to Head Start families?  
 As a result of community partnerships, have your program's and/or your community partners' philosophy, policies, procedures, and/or services changed significantly?  
 How do you consider societal well-being and benefit as part of your strategy and daily operations?  
 How do you contribute to the well-being of your environmental, social, and economic systems?  
 How does your organization actively support and strengthen your key communities?  
 What are your key communities?  
 How do you identify these communities and determine areas for organizational involvement, including areas related to your core competencies?  
 How do your senior leaders, in concert with your workforce, contribute to improving these communities?

**QI 26. How does the program plan for and manage public relations?**

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response describes the program's: 1) use of media (e.g. online, print, broadcast); 2) strategies for responding to news stories; 3) plan for establishing and maintaining communication with public officials; 4) exercising of damage control; and 5) strategies for promoting accomplishments and activities.
2. The response notes how the program measures and determines the effectiveness of its public relations efforts.

*Questions to Consider*

How are the results of program performance assessments shared with the public?  
 How do you market, build, and manage relationships with the community including current and prospective families to achieve the following?

- Recruit and enroll children.
- Retain children and families, meet the needs of children and families requirements.
- Build market share.
- Increase community engagement with your program.

**Public Relations and Marketing | 10**

Public Relations and Advocacy	50
Engagement	100



**QI 27. How does the program use a variety of materials to target and market to different community and client groups?**

**Suggested Evidence**

Sample Marketing Materials

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response describes how the program develops and disseminates a variety of materials that are targeted and sensitive to the diversity of the community and groups served.
2. The response details the community-specific cultural, linguistic, socio-economic, educational, and resource factors that the program reflects in its marketing and public relations materials and efforts.

<b>Diverse Targeted Marketing</b>	<b>10</b>
Public Relations ad Advocacy	50
Engagement	100

*Questions to Consider*

How do you listen to your key community stakeholders and client groups to obtain actionable information?  
 How do your listening methods vary for different stakeholder groups and/or market segments?  
 How do you use social media and Web-based technologies to listen to stakeholders, as appropriate?

**QI 28. How has the program obtained fiscal and other resources, in excess of the Head Start grant and required non-federal share?**

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response provides examples of the types of funds, resources, and/or services that have been obtained by the program.
2. The response explains how these additional funds and resources are used to address the special and unique needs of local Head Start children and families.
3. The response notes how the program builds on its public relations, marketing, partnership building, and communication.

<b>Other Funding and Resources</b>	<b>10</b>
Garnering and Using Resources	30
Program Enrichment and Innovation	180

*Questions to Consider*

How do you ensure that financial and other resources are available to support the accomplishment of your action plans, while meeting current obligations?  
 How do you allocate these resources to support the accomplishment of the plans?  
 How do you manage the financial and other risks associated with the plans to ensure the financial viability of your organization?

**QI 29. Has the quality of your organization, services provided, and/or outcomes achieved been recognized by an external, non-federal source?**

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response indicates how the quality of your program is recognized by state government, local government, community organizations, professional associations, and/or performance excellence programs.
2. The response describes the specific elements of program quality (services, outcomes, staff qualifications etc.) that have been recognized.
3. The response provides examples of how the program is recognized for the high quality services and outcomes that it achieves for the general community (in addition to enrolled children and families).

<b>Quality Recognition</b>	<b>10</b>
Garnering and Using Resources	30
Program Enrichment and Innovation	180

*Questions to Consider*

Has your program applied for AND received accreditation by a local, state, regional, or national organization?  
 Has your program received a high QRIS rating from your state and/or local licensing agency?  
 What are your results for key measures or indicators of your organization's fulfillment of its societal responsibilities and your organization's support of its key communities?  
 What are your current levels and trends in key measures or indicators of child outcomes and process performance that are important to and directly serve your children and families?  
 How do these results compare with the performance of your competitors and other organizations offering similar services?  
 What are your results for key measures or indicators of achieving and surpassing legal, regulatory, and accreditation requirements?



**QI 30. Does the program have an automated management information system (MIS) and how does it use the system?**

Management Information Systems   10	
Garnering and Using Resources	30
Program Enrichment and Innovation	180

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response describes how the program uses the MIS: 1) to generate usable program reports; 2) to optimize management decision-making capability; and 3) as a resource to enhance program services.
2. The response notes how the system ensures confidentiality?
3. The response explains how the program maintains and provides adequate technical support and user training.

*Questions to Consider*

How do you select and ensure the effective use of key comparative data and information to support operational and strategic decision making and innovation?

How do you manage your organizational data, information, and knowledge to ensure the following properties?

- Accuracy
- Integrity and reliability
- Timeliness
- Security and confidentiality

How do you ensure that hardware and software are reliable, secure, and user friendly?

How do you manage organizational knowledge to accomplish the following?

- The collection and transfer of workforce knowledge.
- The transfer of relevant knowledge from and to staff, parents, and partners (while ensuring confidentiality).
- The rapid identification, sharing, and implementation of best practices.
- The assembly and transfer of relevant knowledge for use in your innovation and strategic planning process.

**QI 31. How does the program ensure and assess the delivery of high quality services to children with disabilities and their families?**

Inclusive Services   20	
Early Childhood Education	40
Program Enrichment and Innovation	180

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response provides a description of how the program assesses the quality of inclusive services.
2. The response briefly summarizes the process that the program uses to conduct the above assessment and the results.
3. The response notes whether and how the program has made aggressive and successful efforts to recruit and appropriately serve children with severe disabilities (if NOT included in the assessment results).

*Questions to Consider*

Who conducts the assessment?

Which staff members are involved in the assessment?

How are parents/families involved in the assessment?

How do you manage organizational knowledge to accomplish the following?

**QI 32. How is the information obtained from your child assessment system used to ensure high quality, comprehensive early childhood services to all children?**

Screening and Assessment		10
Early Childhood Education		40
Program Enrichment and Innovation		180

**Suggested Evidence**

Child Assessment Reports: Classroom/Program Levels

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response provides a brief overview of the valid and reliable types of screenings and developmental assessments used/conducted by the program.
2. The response describes how screenings, diagnoses, and assessment results are linked to and used for planning and implementation of the program’s curriculum.
3. The response explains how the program employs multiple data sources to inform its decisions and lesson planning for: individual children; for groups of children; and for the entire program.

*Questions to Consider*

How are the screening and assessment tools selected?

What trainings are provided to staff to ensure that screenings and assessments are conducted effectively and accurately?

How are parents involved in and/or notified about your screening and assessment processes?

**QI 33. What curriculum has been selected by the program and how is the curriculum implemented?**

Curriculum Implementation		10
Early Childhood Education		40
Program Enrichment and Innovation		180

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response includes a brief profile of the curriculum implemented by the program including the: 1) philosophy of the curriculum; 2) the key curriculum goals; 3) research basis for the curriculum; and 4) process used to select the curriculum.
2. The response describes how the curriculum is implemented by the program including:
  - Ensuring that staff have knowledge of and understanding of how the curriculum is implemented.
  - Ensuring that classroom volunteers have a basic understanding of the curriculum and the approach(es) used in implementing it.
  - Ensuring that parents have been provided an overview of the curriculum philosophy, goals, and approaches.
3. All staff and regular volunteers know and understand how to implement the program’s curriculum, can articulate the curriculum’s philosophy and goals, and can articulate how the curriculum choice is supported by current research.

*Questions to Consider*

How are staff trained on the curriculum and implementation of the curriculum?

How is the implementation of the curriculum linked to child assessments?

How and from whom do parents receive information regarding the curriculum and how it is being implemented for their child?

**QI 34. How does the program's system for building and sustaining family partnerships achieve positive outcomes?**

**Suggested Evidence**

Partnership Tracking Data; PIR

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response summarizes how the program initially establishes family partnerships.
2. The response describes how the program links individualized family goal setting with: services delivered directly by the program to the family and/or services that the program refers families to.
3. The response details the responsiveness and effectiveness of the program's: tracking of services; follow-up services; monitoring and reporting of families' progress in meeting their goals.
4. The response notes whether parents are surveyed regarding the quality of family partnership activities and services.
5. The response explains how individual agreements inform program-wide parent support and education initiatives.

Partnership Building and Activities		20
Family Partnerships		30
Program Enrichment and Innovation		180

*Questions to Consider*

How is the staff development and training plan used to ensure that family service staff can assist parents in developing individualized family partnerships, can access and link families with community resources, and can promote economic and personal self-sufficiency?

What multiple strategies does the program utilize to help families and their children identify and cope with both the daily and extraordinary violence that permeates communities?

How does the program ensure that staff recognize that family units are diverse and that family support and education systems must be correspondingly varied?

How do you determine family satisfaction and engagement?

How do you determine family dissatisfaction?

How do your measurements capture actionable information for use in exceeding family expectations and securing family engagement?

How do you identify and innovate educational programs and services to meet the requirements and exceed the expectations of your families?

Do your parent support and education initiatives employ sequenced opportunities for training and parent development activities?

**QI 35. How does the program ensure that family services staffing and caseloads provide for responsive, timely, and thorough services to meet the needs of families?**

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response summarizes how the program plans (planned) to systematically reduce the caseloads of family service personnel to a ratio of 1 staff to 35 families.
2. The response details how the program delivers responsive, timely, and thorough family services whenever caseload ratios are higher than 1:35.

*Questions to Consider*

How do you assess your workforce capability and capacity needs, including skills, competencies, and staffing levels?

Do the caseloads assigned by the program to family services personnel consider the following:

- Time spent working directly with or on behalf of a family?
- Additional duties required in the position?
- Travel, outreach activities, unplanned interruptions of normal work schedules, supervision, coordination?
- Work with community groups, attendance at staff meetings, staff development at trainings and conferences?
- Administrative functions, telephone contacts, case recording and data entry, reading of records and related reports, attending staffings?
- The program's organizational approach to engaging with families and delivering family services?

Family Services Staffing		10
Family Partnerships		30
Program Enrichment and Innovation		180

**QI 36. What is the program’s process for developing and executing formal collaborative agreements with other service providers?**

**Suggested Evidence**

Sample Collaborative Agreement

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response summarizes the various types of and reasons for developing formal collaborative agreements.
2. The response describes how the program delineates the responsibilities of all partners to these agreements.
3. The response provides examples of the intended and resulting outcomes of these agreements.
4. The response notes how time lines and benchmarks for service delivery are set and included in these agreements.
5. The response details how the program tracks the status of, reports on, and, as necessary, updates these agreements.

*Questions to Consider*

When appropriate, how are the program’s priorities and opportunities deployed to your collaborators to ensure organizational alignment?

How do you manage organizational knowledge to accomplish the following?

- The collection and transfer of workforce knowledge to your collaborators.
- The transfer of relevant knowledge from and to collaborators.
- The rapid identification, sharing, and implementation of best practices.
- The assembly and transfer of relevant knowledge from your collaborators for use in your innovation and strategic planning processes

How do you manage your collaborative agreements?

How do you ensure that your collaborators are qualified and positioned to enhance your performance in the achievement of outcomes for children and families?

How do you evaluate collaborate performance?

How do you deal with poorly performing collaborators?

Collaborative Agreements	10
Community Partnerships	20
Program Enrichment and Innovation	180

**QI 37. What are the program’s strategies for following up on the progress of and providing continuing support for former Head Start children and families?**

**Suggested Evidence**

Tracking Data for Former Children and Families

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response summarizes the range of follow-up services that the program provides for former Head Start children and families.
2. The response describes specific transitional activities, supports, referral services, and child and family outcomes tracking that the program provides for former children and families.
3. The response notes formal and informal collaborative efforts that the program engages in to ensure that necessary services and supports continue to be provided to children and parents once they’ve exited the program.

*Questions to Consider*

How do you sustain relationships with children and families to achieve the following?

- Continue to meet their requirements, and exceed their expectations in each stage of their relationship with you.
- Increase their engagement with you.

How do you ensure compliance with any and all confidentiality requirements when sharing and/or collecting information of former children and families?

What are your results for key measures or indicators of your organization’s fulfillment of its societal responsibilities and your organization’s support of its key communities?

Follow-Up Services	10
Community Partnerships	20
Program Enrichment and Innovation	180

**QI 38. How does the program stay current with and keep parents apprised of local, state, and federal Health: services delivery systems; insurance policies; and community programs?**

Health Systems, Policies and Programs   20	
Health Services	20
Program Enrichment and Innovation	180

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response indicates how the program’s health services for children and families is aligned with and utilizes the most current local, state, and federal systems, policies, and community resources and programs.
2. The response describes how the program modifies its own health initiatives to conform to and optimize utilization when there are changes to these systems, policies, and/or programs.
3. The response notes how the program keeps parents apprised of current health initiatives and as necessary to any and all changes to existing health systems, policies, and programs.

*Questions to Consider*

How does the program assess and address community health and nutrition problems or challenges impacting upon the lives of the children and families in the program?

What effort has the program made to lead and/or seek community-based solutions to these problems?

How does your learning and development system address the following factors for your workforce members and leaders?

- The reinforcement of new knowledge and skills on the job.

How do you enable parents to seek information and support?

How do you enable parents to obtain health programs and services from you and/or community resources?

What are your key communication mechanisms?

Do these mechanisms vary for the diverse families you serve?

**QI 39. What special initiatives, projects, service delivery strategies, and activities has the program developed to respond to the unique needs of children and families served?**



Special Initiatives to Meet Child and Family Needs   20	
Innovative Initiatives	60
Program Enrichment and Innovation	180

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response outlines how the program identifies the unique needs of its children and families and how it strategically plans in order to respond to and address these needs.
2. The response describes specific examples of special initiatives, projects, strategies, and activities that the program has developed and implemented in response to these needs.
3. The response notes any challenges that the program has faced in implementing these initiatives, strategies, and activities.

*Questions to Consider*

How do you “listen” to your families and community to obtain actionable information about their needs?

How do you use media including information obtained online, social media, and web-based technologies (including surveys, feedback forms, and community assessments) to learn about the unique needs of your children, families, and community?

How do you design and innovate your overall work systems?

How do you capitalize on your core competencies?

How do you decide which processes and services within your overall work systems will be internal to your organization (your key work processes and services) and which will use external resources to address the unique needs of your children, families, and community?

**QI 40. What special initiatives, projects, service delivery strategies, and activities has the program developed to respond to the unique needs of the community served?**

**INNOVATION**

Special Initiatives to Meet Community Needs   20	
Innovative Initiatives	60
Program Enrichment and Innovation	180

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response outlines how the program identifies the unique needs of the community served and how it strategically plans in order to respond to and address these needs.
2. The response describes specific examples of special initiatives, projects, strategies, and activities that the program has developed and implemented in response to these needs.
3. The response notes any challenges that the program has faced in implementing these initiatives, strategies, and activities.

*Questions to Consider*

How do you “listen” to community members to obtain actionable information about their needs?

How do you use media including information obtained online, social media, and web-based technologies (including surveys, feedback forms, and internal and external community assessments) to learn about the unique needs of your community?

How do you design and innovate your overall work systems?

How do you capitalize on your core competencies and the core competencies and resources in your community?

How do you decide which processes and services within your overall work systems will be internal to your organization (your key work processes and services) and which will use external resources to address the unique needs of your community?

How do you consider societal well-being and benefit as part of your strategy and daily operations?

How do you contribute to the well-being of your communities’ environmental, social, and economic systems?

What are your results for key measures or indicators of your organization’s fulfillment of its societal responsibilities and your organization’s support of its key communities?

**QI 41. How do you capture and utilize information about the short- and long-term impact(s) of Head Start services on the lives of the children, families, and communities served?**

Head Start Impacts   20	
Innovative Initiatives	60
Program Enrichment and Innovation	180

**Scoring Criteria**

1. The response summarizes the assessment, measurements, data collection, tracking, analysis, and reporting strategies that the program has developed to capture and utilize information about the impact(s) of Head Start services on the lives of children, families and communities.
2. The response details the program’s collaborative efforts and strategies to capture and utilize this information.
3. The response notes how the program analyzes and uses these impacts to inform and drive program improvements.
4. The response describes any parent and community surveys; service satisfaction and feedback forms; and public agency status reports (e.g. health department reports on child health, school district reports on readiness and achievement).

*Questions to Consider*

What are your key performance measures or indicators for tracking the achievement and effectiveness of your services?

For these key performance measures or indicators, what are your performance projections for both your short- and your longer-term strategic planning?

How does it compare with key benchmarks, goals, and past performance, as appropriate?

If there are current or projected gaps in performance and/or impacts, how will you/ do you address them?

What are your current levels and trends in key measures or indicators of child outcomes?

What are your current levels and trends in key measures or indicators of family and community satisfaction and dissatisfaction?

What are your results for key measures or indicators of your organization’s fulfillment of its societal responsibilities and your organization’s support of its key communities?

# NATIONAL HEAD START ASSOCIATION QUALITY INITIATIVE



## List of Required and Suggested Evidence

### Required QI Evidence

- Indicator 7: Multipurpose Agency Organizational Chart
- Indicator 8: Organizational Chart
- Indicator 13: Summary of Benefits Provided to Staff
- Indicator 17: Most Recent Independent Audit Report

### Suggested QI Evidence

- Indicator 1: Vision Statement; Mission Statement; Core Values
- Indicator 3: Strategic Plan
- Indicator 4: Performance Reports Provided to Board/PC
- Indicator 5: Sample Program Improvement; Corrective Action Plans
- Indicator 6: Procedures Manual Table of Contents
- Indicator 9: Emergency and/or Disaster Plan
- Indicator 10: Sample Management / Frontline Staff Job Descriptions
- Indicator 11: Blank Performance Evaluation/Improvement Form
- Indicator 12: Recognition Event Agendas; Special Incentives
- Indicator 14: Individual/Agency Professional Development Plan(s)
- Indicator 15: Wage and Comparability Study
- Indicator 16: Staff Satisfaction Survey; Exit Interview Protocol
- Indicator 18: Monthly, Quarterly, Annual Reports
- Indicator 20: Parent Training Information; Parent Involvement Plan
- Indicator 21: Parent Training Information
- Indicator 22: Personnel Policies and Procedures
- Indicator 25: Public Information Documents and Media
- Indicator 27: Sample Marketing Materials
- Indicator 32: Child Assessment Reports: Classroom/Program Level
- Indicator 34: Partnership Tracking Data; PIR
- Indicator 36: Sample Collaborative Agreement
- Indicator 37: Tracking Data for Former Children and Families



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