

TRANSITION SERVICE AREA

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2 TRANSITION SERVICE AREA PLANS

Plans are written by the LCHS Transition Specialist and the Education Team. The plans are developed to meet the performance standards and to provide a smooth transition into our eleven (12) local school districts. They include new initiatives in the area of transition and school readiness, parent and child activities, resources for parents, staff involvement, goals and objectives of the Transition Advisory Committee and Community Outreach.

2 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN TRANSITION

LCHS provides parents with the opportunity to take an active role in their child's transition into Head Start, Pre-K Counts and the elementary school setting. Program activities include:

- * Enrollment Day: All parents are asked to participate in enrollment day at the center their child will be attending during the upcoming school year. Parents visit the classroom and meet all of the center staff. Teachers and/or family workers meet with parents to inform them about curriculum, daily schedule, transportation, and parent involvement opportunities.
- * Participation in Transition Advisory Committee (TAC): At the first parent committee meeting in the fall, parents are invited to participate in TAC. They receive a brief overview of the schedule of meetings, topics discussed, and goals of the committee. Parents are given a sign up form and offered babysitting, if needed, in order to attend meetings.
- * School District Presentation: Each of our center parent committee groups receives a presentation from their receiving school district principal or guidance counselor. Topics reviewed include how to register for Kindergarten, curriculum, school readiness, an introduction to PA Kindergarten Learning Standards, daily programming, district's dress code, special activities, transportation, and parent involvement opportunities in the elementary school setting.
- * Resources: Past Parents are invited to return and share their transition experience with current parents at the spring Parent Committee meeting. Parents are given written resources throughout the school year to help them with the many transitions their children and family go through as they move from Head Start to the elementary school setting. Resources include, but are not limited to: books, booklets, pamphlets, school district links on Luzerne County Head Start's website, OCDEL Transition Tool Kit Resources, Learning is Everywhere Calendars, and articles about a parent's rights and responsibilities in their child's education, how children learn, school readiness, why to get involved in their child's education, the benefits of joining the PTA/PTO, and what to expect during the transition into the elementary school setting.
- * Transition Visit: Parent volunteers are invited to join the children as they tour the school and meet the staff. Parents will be provided with information about the school district's dress code. If possible, parents are encouraged to dress their children in similar clothing as the dress code, when they visit kindergarten.

3 CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

Children's activities support the transition into Head Start/Pre-K Counts and the elementary school setting. Parents, classroom staff, and family workers all take an active role in implementing the activities developed by the transition specialist and center staff.

- * Enrollment Day: All Head Start children participate in enrollment day at the center they will be attending in the upcoming year. They have the opportunity to meet the classroom staff and to visit with other children that will be in their class.
- * Classroom Visits: Wherever Luzerne County Head Start has a center located within a school district building, periodic visits to the kindergarten classroom, library, music room, etc. are arranged. Kindergarten teachers are also invited to visit Head Start classrooms for playtime or for special events.
- * Transition Visit: All Head Start children transitioning into Kindergarten at the end of the school year are taken to visit an elementary school. Head Start teachers plan the trip at the school where the majority of their children will be attending. If possible, children will wear clothing similar to the dress code. Parent volunteers are invited to join the children as they tour the school and meet the staff. Following the visit, Head Start children receive an *I'm Going to Kindergarten* booklet with activities they can do at home with their parents.
- * Classroom Activities: Head Start teachers receive a resource list of activities that are implemented in the classroom to reinforce what was learned during the visit to Kindergarten. Children will receive a writing bag with individualized activities from their Head Start Teacher in the spring. Past parents and children are invited by Head Start Teacher or Family Worker to return and share their transition experience with current parents and children. Classroom staff continuously supports and encourages children's questions, ideas, and interests/concerns about leaving Head Start to go to a new school.

3 TRANSITION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The LCHS Transition Advisory Committee holds three meetings a year at Head Start's Central Office. Meetings are scheduled at 9:00 A.M., the second Thursday in October, January, and March.

- * **Committee Members**: Members include Head Start parents, service area specialists, school district administrators, guidance counselors, kindergarten teachers, and child care, community, and agency representatives.
- * **Parent Participation in the Transition Advisory Committee**: At the start of each school year, parents are encouraged to become members of the Advisory Committee. Information about the committee is reviewed at Parent Committee and invitations to join are distributed to parents.
- * **Collaborative Agreement**: A written agreement is in place between Head Start and each of the 12 school districts who receive Head Start children each fall. The agreement is

designed to meet the performance standards related to Family Partnerships/Transition services to children and families. Each district designates a person to be contacted by center staff as needed to ensure proposed projects and activities are implemented and carried out to best serve children and families transitioning to districts. The agreement is reviewed annually.

- * **Meeting Agreement Objectives:** Members meet to decide how to best meet the objectives listed in the Collaborative Agreement as well as current issues in early care and education. Topics of discussion include Head Start's initiatives, changes at the PA Department of Education for children entering kindergarten, school readiness, PA Early Learning Standards, curriculum alignment, parent involvement in the public school system, advocating for young children and connecting parents and children to their new school placements.
- * **Committee Goals:** The committee works to ensure that all objectives in the Collaborative Agreement are met, that materials and resources for parents and children are developed through collaboration, that all current legislative changes for Head Start and the school districts are in place and that new challenges to curriculum alignment are met, and there is ongoing joint training and partnering.

4 THE TEACHER'S ROLE (Head Start and Pre-K Counts)

LCHS teachers and classroom staff are responsible for carrying out the following activities in order to meet the performance standards for transition services:

- * Participate in the transition of children from Early Head Start to a Head Start or Pre-K Counts classroom.
- * Participate in orientation and enrollment day.
- * Participate in parent-teacher conferences.
- * Assist parents as to how to have a successful parent-teacher conference.
- * New and transferring teachers will observe in a Kindergarten classroom when possible.
- * Invite Kindergarten teachers in your district to visit your classroom.
- * Send a letter in the fall to a kindergarten class in your district requesting to be pen pals and maintain communication throughout the school year.
- * Attend and participate in joint training with Kindergarten teachers when professional development calendars align.
- * Plan and attend the transition to Kindergarten field trip for students and parents. Inform parents of the school district's dress code and encourage them to dress students in similar clothing if

possible.

- * Review and distribute transition materials and resources to both parents and children (ongoing).
- * Help parents to set appropriate goals for their child/children in Head Start and the elementary school setting.
- * Conduct a spring home visit or parent-teacher conference to review growth, strengths and goals of child with parents. Inquire if families are interested in volunteering time next school year to share their transition experience at Parent Committee.
- * Assist parents in developing a transition plan for their child.
- * Prepare children's records to be transferred, with parent permission, to the school district.
- * When possible, conduct a meeting to review records with the receiving Kindergarten teacher.
- * Ensure that receiving school signs receipt of records and give signed form to Director of Early Childhood Education.
- * Provide Director of Early Childhood Education with a list of the children transitioning to each elementary school in their district.

5 THE FAMILY WORKER'S ROLE

LCHS family workers are responsible to carry out the following activities in order to meet the performance standards for transition services:

- * Participate in fall orientation and enrollment day.
- * Assist parents in understanding the goals of the Transition Advisory Committee and encourage parents to become members of the committee and to attend meetings.
- * Set up and participate in Parent Committee presentation given by school district principal, Kindergarten teacher or other district staff. The presentation will provide parents with the information they need about moving to the elementary school setting.
- * Provide parents with written information about Kindergarten registration and where needed, accompany parents to registration.
- * Contact school principals and set up a registration table in order to conduct in-takes at Kindergarten registration. The table will be set up at the receiving Kindergarten building.
- * Invite a PTA/PTO officer to attend Parent Committee in order to provide parents with information about their school district PTA/PTO membership and the benefits of joining.

- * Help parents throughout the year with the transition issues through discussions and by providing written resources to enhance parents' knowledge about their concerns and issues.
- * Attend, whenever possible, orientation to support parents and children in their transition from Head Start into the elementary school setting.

6 COMMUNITY OUTREACH

In order to develop partnerships with receiving school districts and community service agencies that Head Start is actively involved with, the LCHS Transition Specialist and executive director will meet with the district superintendents, agency directors and the Transition Advisory Committee members to discuss, review, and update the following:

- * **The Transition Advisory Committee.** The Committee, whose members include Head Start parents, service area specialists, school district administrators, guidance counselors, kindergarten teachers, and child care, community, and agency representatives will meet three times per year to discuss current early care and education plans, statewide Department of Education change and updates, and how to best transition children and families into the public school system.
- * **The Collaborative Transition Agreement.** The agreement was developed by the Advisory Committee, is reviewed annually, and is updated as new initiatives are introduced. The agreement defines objectives for meeting the performance standards and procedures for meeting them.
- * **Community Awareness Activities.** LCHS center staff and Specialists are actively involved in opportunities for educating the community about Head Start. Specialists are involved with the United Way and LCHS is represented at community events. Staff assists with site visits to Head Start by the community's Leadership Wilkes-Barre Class and high school/college sponsored projects that help children transition into the elementary school setting.
- * **Local School Districts.** Each district provides a contact person who can meet with center managers and other center staff as needed, to ensure that proposed projects and activities are implemented and carried out to best serve children and families who will transition into their district each year. The contact person is also responsible to assist with planning for joint training opportunities. These will include but not be limited to: classroom observations, meetings, training sessions and workshops necessary to align curriculum, and promote a smooth transition for children from Head Start to kindergarten.
- * **Head Start's Family and Community Partnership Specialists.** Head Start's Director of Education— works with the Recruitment Specialist to plan and implement an annual recruitment outreach project with the school districts. Materials are reviewed with members of the Transition Advisory Committee and distributed at the January Committee Meeting. Members are given information to give to the elementary school principal to be sent home with each kindergarten and first grade student.