

**QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT
COVER SHEET**

1. Grant Number: 06CD0013/01
2. Grantee Name and Address: Arkansas Department of Human Services
Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education
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4. Project Title: Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office
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 First Quarter X
 Second Quarter
 Third Quarter
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12. Name of Federal Project Officer: Victoria Marchand
Name of Regional Office Contact: Carlton Reid
13. Date Reviewed by Federal Project Officer:
14. Comments, (if any):

QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT
March 1, 2006 – May 31, 2006
ARKANSAS HEAD START STATE COLLABORATION OFFICE

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1. Major activities and accomplishments during this period:

Education/Literacy.

- Governor's Summit for Extra Learning Opportunities held March 9th. The Summit was sponsored by the Arkansas Out of School Network (AOSN) with support from the National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices and Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. The purpose of the Summit was to identify new stakeholders and partners, collect information on existing out of school time programs, and develop a plan for quality out of school care. Arkansas HSSCO director facilitated small group discussions during the Summit. AOSN meeting held April 19th to discuss outcomes of Summit and determine plans for the future.
- Participation in Arkansas Department of Education follow-up training on "Catastrophic Counseling Techniques" on March 1st in Little Rock.
- Participated in School Threat Assessment seminar on April 4th, sponsored by the U.S. Secret Service, Department of Homeland Security and held in Little Rock.
- Continued meetings with Department of Education, Special Education, Part B on collaborative efforts and updates on March 22nd and April 3rd.
- Arkansas was the only state in the nation to meet all ten quality benchmarks for state funded pre-k programs by the NIEER (National Institute for Early Education Research), for the second year in a row, as released in the *State of Preschool, 2005 State Preschool Yearbook*. The *Yearbook* compares state quality standards against a research-based checklist of benchmarks. The median number of benchmarks met by state pre-kindergarten programs was six.
- Participated as invited guest in roundtable event and press conference on March 23rd in releasing of report by Southern Education Foundation (SEF) on "Miles to Go: Pre-Kindergarten in Arkansas" at Fair Part Early Childhood Education Center, Little Rock School District. Guests included state legislators, Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families, Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education, Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, Arkansas Chamber of Commerce and other dignitaries.

- Attended Early Childhood Subcommittee of the Arkansas Legislative Committee on Education on March 23rd. Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education gave report on recent releases of two reports on quality early childhood education in Arkansas by NIEER and SEF.

Health

- Continued leadership role in collaborative effort with Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education and Division of Behavioral Health Services on Arkansas Early Childhood Mental Health Initiative. Participation in technical assistance conference calls and meetings held with pilot projects and mental health/child care/Head Start partners.
- Participation in monthly Arkansas Oral Health Coalition meetings. Serving on subcommittee to prepare for upcoming Governor's Oral Health Summit to be held on July 15th. Assisted with Oral Health Coalition outreach and education event at opening night of Arkansas Travelers Baseball on April 21st.
- Participating in national workgroup with five other Head Start State Collaboration Offices and state dental director network to develop on-going communications process and mechanism to share information, initiatives and resources that will unite Head Start and state dental offices in an effort to increase services for children age five and under.
- Participation in monthly CASSP Coordinating Council meetings. Serving on Public Policy & Legislative Work Group for Children's Mental Health.
- Continuing active participation in Social Emotional Health Committee, Arkansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Initiative.
- Met with representatives from Arkansas Dental Hygiene Association on March 10th to discuss ways in which members could become more involved with local Head Start programs in Arkansas.
- Met on March 1st with out-of-state consultant working with Arkansas officials to make recommendations for a system of care for children and adolescents with serious emotional disorders and their families.

Disabilities

- Serving on "Welcome the Children" Advisory Committee and Conference Planning Committee. Numerous meetings held in preparation for "Celebrating Cultural Harmony" conference which was held May 11th-13th. Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office was a co-sponsor of this first annual conference.

- Serving on Arkansas Coalition for Education of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing; participated in meeting on May 3rd. Also met with director of Beginnings Project from North Carolina on May 2nd who was in the state to provide technical assistance to Arkansas for similar program development to assist families of children who are deaf or hard of hearing and professionals who serve them.
- Working collaboratively with partners in expanding the ECHO (Early Childhood Hearing Outreach) project to Arkansas as an effort among Early Head Start, Migrant & Seasonal Head Start, Arkansas Children's Hospital, and the Arkansas EHDI Coordinator, Arkansas Department of Health & Human Services, Division of Health. Meeting held on May 23rd for Early Head Start and Migrant & Seasonal Head Start programs interested in participating in the ECHO project. A program interest record and action planning worksheet will be developed by each program wanting to participate in the project. A limited amount of resources are available for equipment and training, so a limited number of programs may be selected to participate in the process. Selection will occur in the summer, with activities to begin by Fall 2006.

Child Care/ Welfare Reform

- Hosted meeting on April 20th with Early Childhood Partnership Workgroup to discuss recommendations and prepare action plan for improving local coordination of Arkansas Better Chance for School Success (the state-funded pre-k program) and Head Start programs. Arkansas Advocates for Children & Families participated as a new member.
- Numerous meetings held with Arkansas Advocates for Children & Families and Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education in preparing for one-day conference to address issues of access to quality early childhood education services for immigrant families. The meeting, held in Conway on April 26th, brought a broad-based group of people together to explore opportunities for enhanced collaboration in eliminating barriers among the immigrant community in our state.
- Working with Quality Standards Committee for Arkansas Out of School Network (AOSN); meeting held on May 19th. Also serving as member on Public Education and Awareness Committee for AOSN; met May 22nd.
- Attended Arkansas Early Childhood Commission meeting on April 18th.
- Ongoing work with early childhood partners in statewide celebration of Arkansas Children's Week on April 2nd-9th.
- Served as Mistress of Ceremonies at opening session for Arkansas HIPPY (Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters) Conference and 20th Anniversary Celebration on March 7th-8th in Little Rock.

Homeless

- Head Start representation on Arkansas Interagency Council for the Homeless.
- Participation in monthly Chronically Homeless Policy Academy Council meetings.
- Serving on State Policy Academy Team for Homeless Families with Children. Meetings held monthly.
- Policy Academies of both target groups voted in May to merge and work together in addressing homeless issues in Arkansas.

National/Community Services

- Participant in financial management training provided by WIPFLi and Howard Gesbeck, Jr. on the Review of OMB Circulars Plus Head Start Issues. This was a collaborative effort that the MOU workgroup planned for through supplemental grant funding, but was not held until April 11th-13th. Other participants included representatives from Community Action, Head Start, state agencies and TA specialists.
- MOU Workgroup conference calls held to discuss continued collaborative efforts among Head Start, Community Action, Community Services, and Child Care. Conference calls will be held quarterly beginning in April.
- Participation in Arkansas Crisis Response Team training on April 7th.
- Governor's Family Friendly Awards luncheon held on April 10th. Served on host committee and assisted with registration and other details.
- Met with representative from Arkansas Children's Hospital (ACH) to explore options of outreach and education resources from ACH to Head Start and Early Head Start programs throughout the state. ACH representative met with Head Start directors and staff in May and has now made available "on-line" information for Arkansas programs.
- Representative from Arkansas School Boards Association met with Arkansas Head Start directors on May 17th to discuss Head Start's potential participation by sponsoring local activities for the Arkansas Study Circles Project "Building Bridges for Early Learning Birth to School." This process promotes schools and communities working together so every child will start school eager to learn and ready to succeed through public dialogue and problem solving. Several Head Start programs in Arkansas are interested in participating in the process and will be working with the Study Circles Project.

- Participation in Arkansas Health Insurance Roundtable meetings on May 8th -9th. The Governor announced at a March 7th press conference that Arkansas received approval of a federal waiver that will provide health coverage to thousands of Arkansans working in small businesses. One of the purposes of the May meeting was to further discuss components of the plan, which was originally developed by the Roundtable. The program will provide a health coverage option for businesses with less than 500 employees who have not provided group health insurance as a benefit for the 12 months prior to enrollment.
- Continuing work with “Arkansas Coalition for Economic Security” in addressing priority initiatives as they relate to serving low income children and families in Arkansas.

2. Problems: None

3. Significant Findings and Events: Routine communication with liaison from Booz-Allen-Hamilton, contractor for Region VI ACF Head Start, to Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office. Ongoing discussion of current state initiatives in early care & education, oral and mental health, and ideas for involvement in various activities, including state quality approval certification process for increasing the number of Head Start programs in Arkansas with state quality approval. Serving as Region VI representative in working with Head Start Bureau in planning for national collaboration directors meeting to be held in June, at the same hotel and prior to the Head Start Research Conference, which would allow HSSCO directors to participate in the Research Conference without additional travel. Working with Arkansas Head Start Association conference and program planning committees to plan for upcoming Arkansas Head Start Institute to be held in Hot Springs in July. Participation in collaborators meeting with UAMS Head Start/Early Head Start and Federal Review Team in March. Attended meeting in March with Child Development, Inc. staff in discussing human resource issues and concerns as it relates to increased costs of retaining teachers and staff. Attended PIR training held in Little Rock on April 25th. Participated in E-Rate conference call with Head Start Bureau and other HSSCO directors on May 23rd. Final evaluation reports received from independent evaluator of Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Project for the previous year, as well as a compilation of the past four years of activities. Preparation of supplemental grant funding final report to Regional Office and Head Start Bureau in April. Moved office location to Union Station, 1400 West Markham, Suite 406, Little Rock, AR 72201 on April 5th. Preparation and submission of 2005 Annual State Profile to Head Start Bureau, Pal-Tech, and Regional Office in May.

4. Dissemination Activities: Survey distributed by independent evaluator to partners and collaborating agencies and organizations regarding effectiveness of Head Start collaboration office and activities over the past year. Evaluation report for past year and previous four years disseminated to Head Start community and collaborative partners throughout the state. Continued dissemination of “Oral Health & Head Start in Arkansas” CD-Rom to state and local collaborative partners.

5. Activities planned for next reporting period: Ongoing work with Arkansas Head Start Association in preparation for Annual Institute to be held in July 2006. A recognition luncheon will be held in conjunction with the Institute in honor of Head Start teachers and staff who have completed degrees during the past year. Continuing work with partners in expansion of ECHO (Early Continuous Hearing Outreach) to Arkansas Early Head Start and Migrant & Seasonal Head Start programs.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann Patterson