

Kids on Campus – State Specific Project Framework

Phase One Summary

The Association of Community Colleges (ACCT) and the National Head Start Association (NHSA) completed a six-month planning grant to gauge field interest from stakeholders and build materials for a systemic expansion of co-locating Head Start classrooms on community college campuses.

The first stage of this project has confirmed both the need for and feasibility of co-location as a solution for on-campus childcare needs with secondary benefits of exposing Head Start parents to higher education and providing an on-campus location for early-childhood academic programs to conduct their practicums. While this approach has been around since the 1960s, participants in the first stage of work highlighted that there is no “roadmap” to follow for establishing them, making it a difficult process, despite the vast potential benefits. There are, however, just over 100 operational Head Start Centers on community college campuses. The goal of this project is replicate and scale those partnerships, which mostly came to be through homegrown solutions.

The resulting lessons have shaped the creation of an initial practitioner guide which covers a range of processes from helping the partners understand each other’s structures, what a partnership might look like, where and how to start conversations, who to talk to, the negotiation process, to marketing and launching this new venture. In addition to some of the framing and basics of partnerships, there are examples and guides for MOUs and contracts, considerations for space retrofitting, and a screening tool to help determine the readiness of the partnership.

Project Proposal Summary:

The Association of Community Colleges (ACCT) and the National Head Start Association (NHSA) launched a national project to demonstrate the viability of a replicable, systemic expansion of the co-location model for Head Start programs on community college campuses. In conjunction with this project, we would plan to include state-level projects to provide an increased level of support in these geographies. For the state-level projects, we can develop a plan with the goal of establishing an appropriate number of partnerships per year for two years. A partnership is one where an MOU is signed by the college and Head Start program, so it is likely that more than the goal number of partnerships will need to be explored. The State coordinator, a new position hired to lead the state level project, will work closely with the national team staff to follow the tiered process developed for those sites not in a target state. This process includes initial pairings (tier 1), those progressing toward partnership (tier 2) and partnerships that have passed the MOU state (tier 3). As pairings meet benchmarks of partnership (tier 3), each college/organization will receive a stipend to support student parent and center parent involvement. The inclusion of lived experience is critical to program sustainability and success.

We expect each pairing and eventual partnership to move on their own timelines, with start to completion date ranges varying greatly due to factors such as existing partner infrastructure, construction timelines, institutional planning schedules, and other variables. These pairings will be engaged through a series of activities that include: a pairing screening tool to determine organizational readiness; technical assistance sessions; regular facilitated conversations with appropriate stakeholders; partnership documentation and workplan review; utilization of external experts and convenings as needed; and a variety of dissemination activities.

The resources created during Phase One will be living documents with updates occurring based on feedback. Additional resources will be developed, including data collection and student and parent involvement. By making a concerted effort to hone the resources and technical assistance, scalability becomes more efficient as challenges to the partnership process are addressed.

Two project directors, one at ACCT and NHSA each, will lead the national project. Depending on the project structure, the state coordinators will report to the ACCT project director as ACCT is the fiduciary lead for the project or another structure that makes sense. In addition to the national project directors,

both NHTSA and ACCT also will utilize existing staff, with ACCT utilizing a larger portion as the lead agency on the project.

When looking to hire for this project, the state director will need to have a specific skill set. Relationship building and facilitation skills are essential as a critical piece of the project is partnership development. The coordinator should also be highly organized, a strong communicator, and have the ability to be flexible with frequently changing program dynamics. Experience with project management and either community colleges or Head Starts is needed.

The state coordinator will vet all colleges and Head Starts looking to join the project and make the initial pairings, following the structure set by the national co-directors and using the materials from Phase One of the project. The state coordinator will utilize the state focus to visit existing partnerships and conduct small convenings so that those exploring building a partnership can learn from the ones that have already developed.

At the end of the national project, ACCT and NHTSA will demonstrate the systemic viability of the Head Start-Community College co-location model with 50-75 operational partnerships and a publicly available, advanced user guide that has been honed to support the creation of additional partnerships after the grant concludes. In the state-specific projects, the goal will be to reach the desired number of partnerships at the end of two years as well as a state specific project brief and toolkit that is disseminated to the field. The state coordinator will work in conjunction with the national evaluator, who will be hired as a consultant, to produce these items.

The number of children and families served will vary across established partnerships. One goal of the project will be new childcare slots at community colleges. These slots will be filled by a combination of community college students' children, Head Start parents who may or may not decide to enroll in college, or other eligible community members. The required data collection will include aggregate tracking of these categories.

Goals and Outcomes –

Using data, we will test the underlying assumptions about the burdens and benefits of these partnerships which is critical to establishing whether and how the partnerships will be sustained and scaled.

1. Understand magnitude of appetite for and use of partnerships. Encompasses inquiries and applications, geography of partnerships, disaggregated by institutional characteristics, parent and student populations.
2. Estimate financial burden associated with partnerships. Provide clarity around the value of college facilities provided, the fraction of the required 20% philanthropic match met, costs incurred by the colleges and Head Starts. Also any perceived burdens among prospective non-implementing partners.
3. Estimate Head Start labor benefits of partnerships. Gain insight on the impact to the recruitment and staffing activities and pools, including composition of the labor pools and hires.
4. Estimate postsecondary educational benefits of partnerships. Learn trends in enrollment, persistence, and graduation among student-parents using centers, disaggregated by whether they were enrolled in the college prior to the new partnership. Disaggregated trends by demographic characteristics, number of children, and children's ages.
5. Determine if the state specific focus increases likelihood of co-location success.

	Year 1	Year 2	Total
Travel			
Coordinator Site Visits - Learn about Existing Sites	\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000
Coordinator Site Visits - Potential New Sites	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$10,000
Travel for local conference	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$6,000
Contracted Services			
State Coordinator Subgrant Salary	\$88,000	\$91,000	\$179,000
State Coordinator Subgrant Benefits	\$27,280	\$28,210	\$55,490
State Coordinator Subgrant Partnership Stipend*	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$24,000
Stipends Student Voice (3000)**	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$120,000
Materials & Printing			
Printing - events and brief	\$1,000	\$3,000	\$4,000
Supplies			
Laptop, printer, etc	\$2,000	\$0	\$2,000
Meeting Expenses			
Catering and A/V at Convenings	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$6,000
Professional Services			
Evaluator - Outcomes Brief and Disseminable Tools***	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$40,000
Dues/Subscriptions/Outside Events			
Conference Reg Fees	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$4,000
Software subscriptions (Zoom, Calendly)	\$500	\$500	\$1,000
Subtotal	\$226,780	\$227,710	\$454,490
Indirect	\$22,678	\$22,771	\$45,449
Grand Total	\$249,458	\$250,481	\$499,939

*State coordinator will be employed by college or state association as a subgrant

**20 Partnerships per year at \$3000 for each partner – this is based on the TX proposal. Will be different depending on goal number of partnerships.

***Could list in kind from national project to get this to \$50k