**Memorandum of Understanding for Collaboration – Head Start and Preschool Expansion Program (SAMPLE)**

This Memorandum of Understanding is entered into by and between:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Preschool Expansion Subgrantee) and

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Local Head Start Grantee) for the purposes of ensuring collaboration between Head Start and Preschool Expansion Programs. This collaboration will ensure that families with multiple risk factors in our community have access to the services that they need to ensure the healthy development of their children, prepare their children for school success and thrive and achieve ambitious family goals.

In support of this purpose, the above named entities agree to the following:

1. **Program Descriptions**
   1. **Head Start** is a comprehensive child development program, funded by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services that serves at-risk families with young children. Services include education, health, mental health and family and community partnerships. The Head Start program service area includes \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(description of area) and the grantee listed above serves \_\_\_(number) children within this area.
   2. The **Preschool Expansion Program** is a full-day preschool education program supported by federal funds from the State of Illinois’ Preschool Development Grant award to serve four-year-old children and their families with multiple risk factors. The program provides comprehensive services, including health, mental health and family support, as a mandated requirement for those funds. The district/organization primarily serves children in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(description of area) and the program serves \_\_\_(number) children.
   3. The service area defined by this MOU is the Head Start Grantee’s service area listed in part a.
2. **Goals**

The goals of this agreement will be:

* 1. To ensure coordination and collaboration between the Head Start Grantee and Preschool Expansion Program listed above, including specific roles and responsibilities to ensure a coordinated service system.
  2. To improve availability and quality of services for four-year-old children and their families, ensuring that all eligible children in the service area have access to quality education and comprehensive services.
  3. To ensure that the parties listed above will plan and coordinate recruitment and access to services and implement strategies to enroll the hardest to reach children in this community.
  4. To support the optimal development of children, including their school readiness and success, and the advancement and success of families.
  5. To establish seamless delivery of services that build on the strengths and support the needs of the local population.
  6. To reduce duplication, eliminate competition and enhance efficiency of services.
  7. To collaborate in service delivery to the greatest extent possible, including in transportation, facilities and other resources as appropriate and to ensure information exchange regarding educational and non-educational services for the benefit of children and families.

1. **Authority**
   1. Head Start’s responsibility for coordination and collaboration with the appropriate local entity responsible for managing publicly funded preschool programs in the service area of the Head Start grantee is mandated in the Head Start Act: Public Law 110-134 "Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007."
   2. The Preschool Expansion Program adheres to the statutory requirements of Preschool for All. The Preschool for All Children program is part of the Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) established by Section 1C-2 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/1C-2) or Sections 1C-2 and 2-3.89 of the School Code. The ECBG's purpose is to provide early, continuous, intensive, and comprehensive evidence-based child development and family support services to help families prepare their young children for later school success. Preschool for All’s general responsibility for coordination with other programs in the same service area is covered under several sections of Title 23, Part 235 of the Illinois Administrative Code [Subtitle A, Subchapter f; 235.20(c)(7), 235.50(a)(2)(B), and 235.70(b)(2)]. Specific rule about collaborating with Head Start is in Sections 235.120(b)(3)(B) and 235.140(a).
2. **Joint Roles and Responsibilities**

The Parties agree to review and develop a plan of activities for the coordination, collaboration, alignment, and implementation of each of the following ten areas mandated by the Head Start Act of 2007:

* 1. Educational activities, curricular objectives, and instruction
     1. Research based curriculum coordination aligned with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework and the Illinois Early Learning Standards.
     2. Ongoing communication between the Parties for continuity of curricular objectives and shared expectations for children’s learning and development as the children transition to school.
  2. Public information dissemination and access to programs for families contacting the Head Start program or any of the preschool programs
     1. Community/public information dissemination and resource development to support and improve school readiness.
     2. Ongoing communication channels between Head Start and their counterparts in the schools, including teachers, social workers, McKinney-Vento coordinators and health staff that facilitate program coordination.
  3. Selection priorities for eligible children to be served by programs
     1. Child selection, enrollment, and notification practices that ensure all eligible children will be served by the appropriate program and **there will be no competition for children.**
        1. Both parties will meet annually to review eligibility requirements and selection criteria to establish a system for determining the best placement based on characteristics and need for enrolling families.
        2. This process will be coordinated, transparent and seamless for children and families served. A written document will be mutually developed outlining how this process will work.
     2. Program participation of underserved populations of eligible children.
     3. Identifying limited English proficient children and informing their parents of instructional services to help children acquire English proficiency.
     4. Coordination and collaboration with other programs, as applicable, such as Title I Preschool, Early Intervention, Early Childhood Special Education, Preschool for All, Prevention Initiative, libraries, etc.
     5. Identify children with special needs and inform parent of appropriate services to support their child's school readiness.
  4. Definition of service area
     1. Child recruitment and referral practices that ensure all children will be served by the appropriate program in the service area and **there will be no competition for children.**
     2. Collaboration to reduce duplication and enhance service efficiency in the service area.
     3. Coordinated service delivery and strategies to overcome collaboration barriers.
  5. Staff training, including intentionally identifying and pursuing opportunities for joint staff training and professional development on appropriate topics, including:
     1. Academic content standards, instructional methods and curricula,
     2. Transitions and social and emotional development
        1. Recruitment, enrollment and selection criteria
     3. Comprehensive services and recruitment, selection criteria; parent and community engagement
  6. Joint program technical assistance and/or shared technical assistance resources, where feasible.
  7. Provision of services to meet the needs of working parents, as applicable: coordinating activities to make full day and year resources available to children who need it and collaborating with child care entities in the service area.
  8. Communication and parent outreach for smooth transitions to kindergarten
     1. Joint support of children’s transition to elementary school, including appropriate records transfers, outreach to parents, and specific activities to address limited English proficient children and their families.
     2. Joint parent education about their roles in the public schools related to their children’s learning and development.
  9. Provision and use of facilities, transportation, and other program elements
     1. Sharing facilities, as feasible and appropriate.
     2. Sharing transportation, as feasible and appropriate.
     3. Joint parent activities, education and involvement, as feasible and appropriate.
     4. Exchange of information on children’s service provision, as feasible and appropriate.
  10. Other elements mutually agreed to by the Parties. **(specify)**
      1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
      2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
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1. **Confidentiality**

All Parties acknowledge confidentiality requirements that each must follow regarding informed parental consent and the sharing and release of personally identifiable information regarding children and families. Each Party to this MOU will protect the rights of young children with respect to records and reports created, maintained, and used by the public agencies. It is the intent of this agreement to ensure that parents have rights of access and rights of privacy with respect to such reports and records and that applicable State and Federal laws for exercise of these rights be strictly followed. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) will be followed. (*See 34CFR 303.460*.)

1. **Communication and Resolution of Differences**

The Parties will create an ongoing system of communication to regularly review this MOU and implementation of this collaboration. Each party will identify a liaison who will be responsible for ensuring consistent and ongoing communication and implementation:

*Head Start Grantee Liaison: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Preschool Expansion Program Liaison:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

Both Parties will additionally develop a process to proactively prevent and resolve disputes or differences and to solve problems, working first to resolve disputes between them. The process will include timelines for regular meetings to review the MOU, plan collaborative activities, update each other on the plan achievement, and resolve issues.

1. **Review and Amendments**

The Parties will jointly review the MOU annually and more frequently when: laws or regulations are amended that significantly impact the MOU or when a Party requests a formal change. Any proposed amendment or modification to the MOU shall be submitted to the other Party at least thirty days prior to formal discussion or negotiation. All Parties must concur on any amendments.

The MOU will become effective immediately after being signed and dated by all Parties. By signing the MOU, the Parties agree to the terms. The signed MOU will be binding on all successors of the Parties to the MOU.

1. **Signatures**

The Parties believe that Head Start and the Preschool Expansion Program can create and maintain a meaningful partnership to promote school readiness so that low income families are served in a coordinated, high quality system. The Parties agree to plan and implement strategies based on practice and research that have proven to support children’s school success. The Parties agree to coordinate recruitment and enrollment so that each child and family is served in the best setting and programs cooperate to maximize community resources.

**For the Head Start Grantee:**

Head Start Director

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Signature Date

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Print Name Title

Head Start Grantee Executive Director / Authorized Representative

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Print Name Title

**For the Preschool Expansion Program:**

Early Childhood Program Director

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Print Name Title

Superintendent of Schools / Agency Executive Director

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