

## Great Start Readiness Program Frequently Asked Questions

### Community Partners

1. We have some community-education preschools that would like to participate – are they considered part of the 30%?
  - a. *Community Education preschools fall under the purview of the local education agency (LEA) and as such are considered to be LEA subrecipients. If an open-to-the-public preschool is operated by an LEA, this is also considered an LEA subrecipient. When you have questions, double-check the Department of Human Services childcare license to confirm what entity is the licensee....an LEA or a community agency. LEA programs are not counted as community-based providers.*
2. Will we be required to redistribute slots to meet the requirement to have 30% of slots filled by community agencies even if we have met the need and quality standards with LEA or Intermediate School District (ISD) operated programs?
  - a. *Prior legislation encouraged community partners and current legislation requires community partners. Some ISDs are experiencing difficulty because the new requirement for 30% of slots distributed to community partners came after collaboration and approval of the FY14 GSRP slot-distribution process. LEAs that have met the variety of quality and administrative benchmarks required of the grant should be able to expect consistency of slots allocated. That is, the ISD may 'hold harmless' existing, strong GSRP partners and should look to community partners and competition between all partners when distributing increased slots. The ISD should work with the Great Start Collaborative to strengthen community based programs that are interested to become GSRP subrecipients. See June 2013 Guidance on Community-Based Partners.*
3. What category do faith-based organizations (FBOs) fall under?
  - a. *FBOs are considered community partners and as such are counted within the minimal 30% of community partners for GSRP. FBOs can make strong GSRP partners as they are often well-connected to community agencies that support families. Teaching teams of faith-based subrecipients do not lead prayers and must keep religious instruction from being a part of a GSRP classroom; however children may pray on their own. In space used for dual purposes, there is no need to remove or cover faith-based displays. Faith-based subrecipients must meet state child care licensing rules. These subrecipients cannot restrict GSRP enrollment or staff hiring due to faith-based considerations.*

*Similar guidance would apply to all subrecipients; teaching teams do not lead prayers and keep religious instruction from being a part of a GSRP classroom; however children may pray on their own.*

4. Is a Public School Academy (PSA) a community or an LEA partner?
  - a. LEA.

## **Enrollment**

1. Can children from other ISDs be enrolled?
  - a. *No. While changes in GSRP structure have provided for more flexibility in recruitment and enrollment within each ISD, an ISD may not recruit and enroll from a neighboring ISD. Depending on ISD procedures, subrecipients may recruit and enroll across LEA boundaries and former Competitive GSRP catchment areas from within ISD boundaries. However, a program may be a subrecipient of multiple ISDs to support families who reside within the boundaries of a variety of ISDs. In this instance, the funding source for each enrolled child must be clear and accuracy in MSDS reporting is important.*
2. Can over-income children be enrolled before all under-income children?
  - a. *No. According to PA 60 of 2013, children must be enrolled based on poverty level, with children from families with lower income levels enrolled first. Please refer to June 2013 guidance on FY14 GSRP Child Eligibility and the FY14 Participant Eligibility and Prioritization Flowchart. It is reasonable to expect that for subrecipients having strong recruitment efforts and where all low income families are enrolled, if there are unfilled slots and a waiting list, slots could be filled with over-income families. In this way, due diligence is met regarding recruitment to serve children and families with the lowest poverty levels. Each ISD should develop policies around the enrollment of over-income children including the timing as well as the sliding fee scale.*

## **Fiscal**

1. Is the cost of the Early Childhood Specialist (ECS) included in the 10% cap?
  - a. *The ECS position is reported in function code 226, which is outside of the GSRP administrative codes. Refer to the budget section of the Implementation Manual.*
2. Please clarify how to determine if expenses are shared appropriately in the GSRP/Head Start Blend.
  - a. *Head Start partners can be a good resource to determine cost allocation plans: <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/operations/fiscal/costs/cost-allocation/Cost%20Allocation.htm> A simple way to consider this for GSRP would be to first determine the appropriate percentage of teacher salary paid by GSRP and Head Start, and then apply that percentage split consistently to all program costs.*

3. Do FY13 Competitive subcontractors have to spend all of their funds by Sept. 30, 2013 or can they do a carryover budget if they will be 13/14 subrecipients?
  - a. *If FY13 competitive programs will serve GSRP students as an FY14 subrecipient, carryover of FY13 funds is allowed.*

## **Teaching Credentials**

1. If GSRP/Head Start Blend classrooms are considered community partners, is it always true that teaching staff need to meet the community partner standard for lead teachers?
  - a. *Not always. When the ISD is also the Head Start Grantee and directly implementing the program, or when an LEA subrecipient is a Head Start grantee or delegate, the classrooms are counted as community partners toward the 30% requirement but need to meet the LEA requirement for lead teachers. In other words, teaching staff must meet the LEA credentialing requirements if the license holder is the ISD or LEA.*

*Where administration/operation of GSRP is moving from a community agency to the LEA or ISD, the ISD may choose to grandfather previously-approved GSRP lead teachers with bachelor degrees in child development, as long as the lead teacher remains employed as a GSRP lead teacher for that program. If the lead teacher changes employment to a different ISD or subrecipient, the lead teacher will have to meet the appropriate qualifications, above. Additionally, replacement staff for that position must meet credentialing qualifications, above.*

## **Weeks In Session**

1. This summer, an LEA opted to discontinue as a sub-recipient and is turning their program over to the ISD. We promptly applied for the child care license; the classroom does not qualify for a transfer. Will this program qualify for a minimum of 20 weeks in session, or will 30 weeks of programming be required? Our goal is 30, but with the constraints of the school year pending, licensing is my concern.
  - a. *A license is issued to a specific person or organization at a specific location, is non-transferable and remains the property of the DHS. Therefore, an application to establish a child care center must be for a specific location. The 20 week accommodation is for new GSRP classrooms; relocated GSRP classrooms must minimally have 30 weeks of programming. Licensing arrangements are one of the reasons for the 20 week accommodation. Because the classroom has a new licensee (ISD), this is considered a new classroom and fewer than 30 weeks of programming is approvable. It is commendable that you have a goal of 30 weeks; this better supports enrolled children to be prepared for a successful kindergarten experience.*

2. Can my new GSRP/Head Start Blend classroom meet for 20 program weeks this year?

a. *No. Those programs implementing the blend must meet the highest standard between the two programs.*

*Head Start Performance Standard 1306.32: The annual number of required days of planned class operations (days when children are scheduled to attend) is determined by the number of days per week each program operates. Programs that operate for four days per week must provide at least 128 days per year of planned class operations. Programs that operate for five days per week must provide at least 160 days per year of planned class operations.*