

APPENDIX Q

SPRING 2017 PROGRAM INFORMATION PACKAGE

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APPENDIX Q-1

OFFICE OF HEAD START MEMORANDUM

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ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

330 C Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20201 | www.acf.hhs.gov

TO: [DIRECTOR NAME]
FROM: BLANCA ENRIQUEZ, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF HEAD START
DATE: [Date]
RE: PROGRAM DIRECTOR NOTIFICATION

I am writing to let you know your Head Start program has been selected to participate in an important study, the Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey 2014-2018, known as FACES. [IF PROGRAM PARTICIPATED IN 2014-2015: Thank you for taking part in FACES during program year 2014-2015. We appreciate your programs' participation in FACES at that time. In spring 2017, we are continuing FACES data collection in [ENTER PROGRAM NAME]. As you may recall,] FACES is designed to gather information about the characteristics, experiences, and outcomes of children and families served by Head Start and to observe the relationships among family and program characteristics, classroom quality, and school readiness. The programs, children, and families chosen for previous rounds of FACES have, by participating, provided a tremendous service to all children and families of Head Start. Since 1997, the information collected has taught us a great deal about Head Start classrooms, staff, families, and children. It is very important to the Office of Head Start and the Administration for Children and Families to continue to gather information about the children and families who attend Head Start and about the programs that serve them.

The new round of FACES was launched in 2014 with a nationally representative sample of approximately 180 different Head Start programs. The selection of your program to be one of the study sites for this important effort with implications for the continuation and improvement of Head Start was random. Programs that participated in the first five rounds of FACES—in 1997, 2000, 2003, 2006, and 2009—found the experience to be a positive one, without undue intrusion on program operations. FACES is again being conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, with assistance from Juarez and Associates and Educational Testing Service.

During a one-week visit in spring of 2017, selected classrooms will be observed by a visiting team of professional Mathematica data collectors. Out of your entire program, only about four classrooms will be included in the study. Gifts will be given to each participating classroom. Program and center directors and teachers will be surveyed.

All information collected during the course of FACES will be kept private to the extent permitted by law and will not be shared with anyone outside the research team, including your program staff or parents. Programs and Head Start staff will never be identified by name in any reports of the study's findings.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: The referenced collection of information is voluntary. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB control number for this collection is 0970-0151 and it expires XXXXXXXX. If you have comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: Mathematica Policy Research, 1100 1st Street, NE, 12th Floor, Washington, DC 20002, Attention: Lizabeth Malone.

LETTER TO: [DIRECTOR NAME]

FROM:

DATE:

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Mathematica will send an email soon to provide more details about the assistance that will be needed from you and your staff. A member of Mathematica's research staff will call you soon after that email arrives to explain the study in more detail and answer any questions you have.

On behalf of the Office of Head Start, I would like to thank you in advance for agreeing to participate in this extremely important study of our programs. If you have any concerns regarding your program's participation in the study, please contact the study project officer, Maria Woolverton (202-205-4039), at the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services.

APPENDIX Q-2

MATHEMATICA PROJECT DIRECTOR MEMORANDUM

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MEMORANDUM

TO: <<Head Start Program Director>>
FROM: Lizabeth Malone, Project Director
SUBJECT: Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey
(FACES) 2014–2018

DATE: 2016
FACES-

[IF NEWLY SELECTED PROGRAM: You recently received notification in an email from the Director of the Office of Head Start that your program has been selected to participate in an important study—the Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey 2014-2018, known as FACES.] [IF PROGRAM PARTICIPATED IN 2014 -2015: As you may recall, your program was selected to participate in an important study—the Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey 2014-2018, known as FACES, during the 2014-2015 program year. At your time of selection, we reviewed the study plans for that year and the future in spring 2017. We appreciate your program’s participation in FACES at that time and look forward to working with you again. This coming spring, we are continuing FACES data collection in [ENTER PROGRAM NAME]. As a reminder,] Mathematica Policy Research is conducting FACES under contract with the Administration for Children and Families (ACF). ACF launched the first FACES study in 1997 to obtain information about the children and families served by Head Start. Through FACES, Mathematica has collected data from five nationally representative cohorts in 1997, 2000, 2003, 2006, and 2009, and has disseminated the information, through a series of reports, to ACF, OHS, Congress, and the early childhood research community. The information gathered and analyzed through FACES describes the characteristics, experiences, and outcomes of children and families served by Head Start. FACES has also been designed to observe the relationships among family and program characteristics, classroom quality, and school readiness.

Mathematica will *not* judge or report on the performance of individual programs, staff, or children. We are a policy research firm with extensive experience conducting Head Start and other early childhood research. The information that is provided by participants from your program will be combined with information from all other FACES participants and summarized in descriptive reports.

Your program was selected to participate in FACES through a random process. Participation is not mandatory, but it is very important for all of the programs in the sample to take part in the research in order to ensure the accuracy of the data. As will be described below, we will randomly select for study approximately two classrooms from each of two centers in your program. All participating classrooms will receive a token of appreciation for participating.

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LETTER TO: <<Head Start Program Director>>

FROM:

DATE:

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A FACES liaison will call you in the next two weeks to discuss your program's participation in this research and to answer any questions. To give you a better sense of what your participation will entail, we describe in this letter activities we would like to complete during our visit to your program, and the process we will follow to work with you to schedule and prepare for the visit.

In the box below, we provide an overview of the activities that will take place during the site visit as well as an estimate of how much time we will need to complete each one. We have also enclosed a FACES fact sheet with additional information about the study.

Spring 2017 Site-Visit Activities

Classroom observations. Site visitors will conduct observations in selected classrooms to measure classroom practices and instructional content. Each observation will take about three hours.

Individual staff surveys. Program directors, center directors, and teachers of the selected classrooms will be asked to complete surveys via the web or paper. We will ask these individuals about their employment and educational background, program goals and philosophy, and curriculum and classroom activities.

All information will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. All information collected during the course of FACES will be kept private to the extent permitted by law and will not be shared with anyone outside the research team, including your program staff or parents. Programs and Head Start staff will never be identified by name in any reports of the study's findings.

Next Steps In Planning The Visit

The FACES liaison responsible for working with your program will contact you soon to answer any questions you have about the study and to begin planning the visit to your program. During that conversation, he or she will discuss the process for selecting centers to participate in the study. The liaison will also ask you to identify someone from your program to serve as the on-site coordinator (OSC). That person will work with Mathematica's FACES liaison to help organize the data collection.

Choosing an OSC. The OSC will help us put together the information we need to select our sample and schedule visits to Head Start centers. If the randomly selected centers are not close to each other, we may have to ask you to identify two coordinators. We suggest that you identify a back-up OSC, regardless of the size of your program, to ensure there are at least two staff to fill the role. The OSC will receive an honorarium of \$250 for helping us. If there are two coordinators, each will receive \$125. If you wish, this token of appreciation can be made directly to the program.

LETTER TO: <<Head Start Program Director>>
FROM:
DATE:
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Selecting centers and classrooms. As a first step in selecting centers and classrooms, we will ask you during our call to confirm the following information:

- The program option(s) you offer (full day, part day, center, and home-based)
- The names and zip codes of your centers
- Your best estimate of the number of classrooms in each of the centers in your program

The next step in the process involves randomly selecting centers based on the information you provided. Two centers per program will be selected. Once a center is randomly selected, we will, with your permission, inform the center director of the selection and describe participation in the study.

After the centers have been selected, approximately two classrooms per center will be randomly selected. This process will be facilitated by a field enrollment specialist (FES) who will visit each center at the beginning of the data collection week. The FES visit will last one half day. We will ask the OSC to give the FES a list of its classrooms and the number of children in each. If a center has two or fewer classrooms, we will include all of them.

Scheduling the visit. We hope to conduct all of our observations at your program within a one-week time frame. As a first step in scheduling, we would like to discuss your program's operating schedule and how our visit can fit into it. We will make every effort to conduct the visit at a time convenient for your program.

We are looking forward to visiting your program. Your participation will be important for helping the OHS assess how well the system is fostering children's school readiness. If you have questions about the site visit before we call you, please contact [FACES LIAISON] at Mathematica [xxx-xxx-xxxx, EMAIL ADDRESS].

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APPENDIX Q-3
FACES FACT SHEET

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Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES) 2014–2018

FACT SHEET

Since its founding more than four decades ago, Head Start has served as the nation’s premier federally funded early childhood intervention. Focusing on children—often from families engendering multiple risks—before they begin formal schooling, Head Start has served as a natural national laboratory for a wide range of basic, prevention and early intervention research.¹ The Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES), first launched in 1997 as a periodic, longitudinal study of program performance, remains Head Start’s flagship research initiative. FACES is designed to be a reliable source of data for describing the experiences of Head Start children and their families. FACES 2014 – 2018 includes data collected during fall 2014 and spring 2015, as well as spring 2017. This national study is sponsored by the Administration for Children and Families.

The Research Team

The study is being conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, a respected, independent policy research organization whose studies of education initiatives and other programs have been used to inform national policymakers for more than 40 years. Researchers from Juarez and Associates and Educational Testing Service are assisting Mathematica in this round of FACES.

Our study design will ensure high quality and timely FACES data, and the new elements being added will enhance its potential to provide a valuable profile of the Head Start program and its participants. We are committed to translating research findings into formats that policymakers and programs can use.

Selecting Programs

The study includes 180 Head Start programs from around the country. The programs are selected from all eligible Head Start programs listed on the Head Start Program Information Report database for program year 2014–2015. All programs will participate in classroom and staff level data collection.

¹J. M. Love, L. B. Tarullo, H. Raikes, and R. Chazan-Cohen, “Head Start: What Do We Know About Its Effectiveness? What Do We Need to Know?” in *Handbook of Early Childhood Development*, ed. K. McCartney and D. Phillips, Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006.

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Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES) 2014–2018

Collecting Information

A team of Mathematica staff will visit the programs and collect the data for this study in spring 2017. These staff will observe each of the study classrooms and Head Start staff will be surveyed in all 180 programs.

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Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES) 2014–2018

FACT SHEET (continued)

On-Site Assistance

We will establish a cooperative partnership with an on-site coordinator (OSC) from each Head Start program. We will ask the OSC to help schedule site visits. Mathematica staff will work with the OSC to create a document that details the logistics of our site visits.

Privacy

Mathematica is committed to respecting and protecting the privacy of respondents and the data entrusted to us. Having conducted many studies involving disadvantaged populations, including the two most recent rounds of FACES, Mathematica has vast experience implementing stringent security procedures. Study results will be reported only in group form. In this way, the privacy of study participants will be carefully guarded. At the beginning of the study, we will tell participants about the study and our privacy policies. Mathematica senior project staff will be responsible for making sure field staff understand the necessity of maintaining strict privacy of the information they collect. All staff involved with the study will sign privacy pledges.

To Find Out More

Contact: Dr. Lizabeth Malone, the project director, at Mathematica Policy Research, (202) 264-3488, LMalone@Mathematica-Mpr.com. More information about FACES can be found by accessing the Administration for Children and Families FACES website at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/hs/faces>.

APPENDIX Q-4

LETTER TO ON-SITE COORDINATOR

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MATHEMATICA Policy Research

1100 1st Street, NE, 12th Floor
Washington, DC 20002-4221
Telephone (202) 484-9220
Fax (202) 863-1763
www.mathematica-mpr.com

FACES-

DATE

Dear [OSC]:

Thank you for agreeing to help us conduct the Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey 2014-2018, known as FACES. The Administration for Children and Families of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has contracted with Mathematica Policy Research, an independent policy research organization, to conduct the survey. FACES will provide details about the characteristics, experiences, and outcomes of children and families served by Head Start. It will also provide observations about the relationships among family and program characteristics, classroom quality, and school readiness.

Your program director has chosen you to help put together the information we need to select our sample of classrooms and schedule visits to Head Start centers. In spring 2017, directors and teachers will be asked to complete a brief survey on the web or on paper, and research staff will conduct classroom observations. The observations each take about three hours.

The assistance you provide will help us to effectively schedule data collection activities in your program. Your role is integral to the success of the study and will require that you spend some time outside of your regular duties helping us. In recognition of this effort, we have budgeted \$250 per program.

This letter and the attached FACES fact sheet provide details on the study activities. The following are the core activities for which we will need your help and an approximate schedule for each:

Sample Selection Activities

Center selection. Two centers in your program will be randomly selected to participate in FACES. If a program has only two centers, both will be included in the study.

Classroom selection. Two classrooms will be randomly selected in each center. If a center has only one or two classrooms, we will include all classrooms. A Mathematica field enrollment specialist (FES) will visit your program at the start of the data collection period. The FES visit will last one half day.

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LETTER TO: [OSC]

FROM:

DATE:

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Data Collection Activities

1. **Surveys for the program director, center directors, and classroom teachers.** The program director, center directors, and teachers of each selected classroom will each be asked to complete a short survey. These surveys will collect background information as well as information on professional experience, program practices, and classroom activities.
2. **Conduct classroom observations.** Mathematica staff will conduct observations in selected classrooms to collect information on classroom practices and instructional content. We will work with you to schedule them. Each observation will take approximately three hours. The center staff and teachers should make no special preparations for them. Each classroom will receive a gift for participating.

I will call you in the next few days to discuss the study and answer any questions you have. You may also contact me at [xxx-xxx-xxxx or EMAIL]. We very much appreciate your support and cooperation with this important study, and welcome any input you would like to provide. More information about FACES can be found by accessing the Administration for Children and Families FACES website at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/hs/faces>.

Sincerely,

[FACES liaison]

APPENDIX Q-5

LETTER TO CENTER DIRECTOR

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MATHEMATICA Policy Research

1100 1st Street, NE, 12th Floor
Washington, DC 20002-4221
Telephone (202) 484-9220
Fax (202) 863-1763
www.mathematica-mpr.com

FACES-

DATE

Dear [Center Director]:

Thank you for agreeing to help us conduct the Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey 2014–2018, known as FACES. The Administration for Children and Families of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services contracted with Mathematica Policy Research an independent policy research organization, to conduct the survey, which will focus on children’s development, family involvement, and program quality to identify strategies for improving the effectiveness of Head Start.

To accomplish these goals, we will be working with an on-site coordinator (OSC) enlisted by the program director. The OSC selected by your program director is [FILL OSC NAME]. The OSC will help coordinate activities between your center and our staff and will facilitate the work of the Mathematica team assigned to collect the data for the study.

This letter and the attached FACES fact sheet provide details on the study activities. The following are the core activities for which we will need your help and an approximate schedule for each:

Classroom Selection

Two classrooms will be randomly selected in each center. If your center has only one or two classrooms, we will include all classrooms. A Mathematica field enrollment specialist (FES) will visit your center at the start of the spring 2017 data collection period. The FES visit will last one half day.

Data Collection Activities

1. **Staff surveys.** The program director, center directors, and teachers of each selected classroom will each be asked to complete a short survey. These surveys will collect background information as well as information on professional experience, program practices, and classroom activities.
2. **Conduct classroom observations.** Mathematica staff will conduct observations in selected classrooms to collect information on classroom practices and instructional content. We will work with you to schedule them. Each observation will take approximately four hours. The center staff and teachers should make no special preparations for them. Each classroom will receive a gift for participating.

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LETTER TO: [Center Director]

FROM:

DATE:

PAGE: 2

You may contact me at [xxx-xxx-xxxx or EMAIL] if you have questions about the study or your center's participation. We very much appreciate your support and cooperation with this important study, and welcome any input you would like to provide. More information about FACES can be found by accessing the Administration of Children and Families FACES website at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/hs/faces>.

Sincerely,

[FACES study liaison]