

Integration of Head Start and State Early Care and Education Systems

**OMB Information Collection Request
0970 - 0356**

Supporting Statement

Part A

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Administration for Children and Families
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A1. Necessity for the Data Collection

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) seeks approval to conduct surveys with state and territory administrators involved in administering Head Start or other early care and education (ECE) programs. The goal of this project is to gather information about the ways in which Head Start is integrated into state ECE systems to inform OPRE's future research agenda. Information collected will be used for internal purposes only. Permission to collect information for this limited purpose is requested under ACF's generic clearance for Formative Data Collection for ACF Research (OMB Number 0970-0356). These activities fulfill the following goals of the formative generic: (1) inform the development of ACF research, and (2) maintain a research agenda that is rigorous and relevant.

Study Background

State and federal ECE systems provide a variety of direct services, including child care in centers and family child care homes; state-funded pre-kindergarten (in schools and community settings); early intervention and early childhood special education; as well as Head Start, Early Head Start, Migrant Head Start, and Tribal Head Start. This project focuses on one of these direct services, Head Start/Early Head Start, and its integration into state and territory ECE systems. States and territories have increasingly worked to strengthen their ECE systems to more efficiently and effectively serve young children. There have even been several federal efforts to support integrated state ECE systems, including provisions in the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act (2007; codified into law 42 U.S.C. § 9837b(b)) and the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grants, but more work needs to be done to coordinate ECE systems' multifaceted funding streams, services, standards, and regulations. Unlike the K-12 education system, which has a single state or territory agency that provides oversight and leadership, the ECE system includes multiple state and federal agencies that oversee funding and activities. These agencies, including state Departments of Education and state Departments of Health and Human Services, administer various federal and state funds to provide a range of ECE services and supports to children and families.

This study is part of a larger project to examine the extent to which Head Start and state ECE systems are integrated with one another by conducting surveys of state-level leaders. Previous efforts to examine system integration have focused on one or more aspects of the connections but have not taken a comprehensive look across multiple aspects of the ECE system. The first task of the project was to examine and summarize in one report the publicly available data on this topic. The report from the first project task summarizes information about the governance structures, financing, integrated data systems, quality improvement efforts, and professional development of the ECE workforce. The current proposed survey builds on the findings from the first project task, taking care not to duplicate any information that is already known from existing reports..

ACF has contracted with Child Trends to complete this project.

Legal or Administrative Requirements that Necessitate the Collection

There are no legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. ACF is undertaking the collection at the discretion of the agency.

A2. Purpose of Survey and Data Collection Procedures

Overview of Purpose and Approach

The purpose of this project is to inform the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) staff about the role of Head Start (HS) in other aspects of the state early care and education (ECE) system. This information will inform OPRE's future planning and ACF's future research agenda around building and supporting more integrated and aligned early care and education systems. Specifically, several current and possible future OPRE projects will focus on how components of the early care and education system, including Head Start, interact with one another to meet the diverse needs of children and families. A descriptive picture of the ways in which different aspects of the early care and education system coordinate with Head Start will help OPRE leverage information on the variability across states and across ECE systems components (e.g., licensing, Quality Rating and Improvement System, Child Care subsidies, state pre-kindergarten). to propose appropriate research questions as well as sampling and measurement approaches in current and future projects. For example, integration and coordination across ECE programs has been identified as an important, yet not well understood, component of ECE program performance (e.g., <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-671T>). The Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES) is an ongoing, multi-cohort, nationally representative descriptive study of Head Start and a key source of information for ACF about Head Start's performance. OPRE needs to better understand Head Start's integration with state systems, and the degree to which it varies across states. The proposed information collection could inform the development of appropriate sampling methods and measures of this construct for future FACES cohorts. Additionally, the new Preschool Development Birth to Five grants (PDG B-5) were a major investment by ACF in 2018 under which states will develop plans for strengthening ECE systems coordination and integration. OPRE is interested in understanding Head Start's role in state systems through this proposed information collection, the information from which we could use to determine whether our other research efforts, like FACES, might be leveraged to study the implementation of the PDG B-5 plans in the future.

To gather information for the current study, we will conduct surveys of state administrators to learn more about Head Start integration within their state's ECE systems. Analysis of these surveys will help us learn more about the various ways that Head Start is coordinated with other aspects of the ECE system, as well as any differences in the ways that leaders in state ECE systems understand or perceive ECE and Head Start within states/territories. Data collection is expected to take place over three months, following OMB approval. Data analysis will take place immediately following data collection.

Research Questions

1. There are two overarching research questions for this project. To what extent are HS programs connected to other aspects of the ECE system across the states/territories? What factors, within and beyond Head Start, support these connections or are barriers to these connections?
2. How does the relationship between Head Start and ECE systems vary across states and within states across state ECE system components (e.g., licensing, Quality Rating and Improvement System, Child Care subsidies, state pre-kindergarten)?

Study Design

The survey will gather information about perceptions of statewide integration and collaboration between Head Start and state-level ECE systems, barriers to collaboration and integration, and specific questions addressing how respondents' different offices interact with Head Start or state-level systems (see Appendix A HS-ECE Landscape Survey). We propose to survey in a subset of 29 states that represent the various geographical regions within Head Start.

Child Trends will identify individuals in five potential respondent types from each sampled state/territory: Head Start collaboration directors, pre-K director, child care subsidy director, child care licensing director, Quality Rating and Improvement (QRIS) director. These five respondent types represent the primary ECE programs that interact with Head Start. Moreover, each respondent provides a unique perspective given their role overseeing different programs within a state. No one respondent can provide information on all five programs. Specifically, Head Start collaboration directors are important to include because they are the only individual at the state level designated to support Head Start's collaboration with other entities in the ECE system. The state pre-K director is important to include because Head Start and pre-k serve children of the same age; they may have to navigate serving children in the same community. Children receiving Head Start funds may also receive child care subsidy funds. Thus, it is important to survey the state's child care subsidy director to learn more about how subsidy policies apply to Head Start programs. Licensing and QRIS are important to include because of recent changes to the Head Start Program Performance Standards. The new standards note that Head Start programs should meet some child care licensing requirements, even though not all states require Head Start to be licensed. The new standards also encourage Head Start programs to participate in state QRIS under certain circumstances. To adequately understand Head Start's interaction with state ECE systems, we need to collect data from these five respondent types, which represent the main entities which might interact with Head Start.

Many of the questions to understand policies will be asked only of one respondent type. However, we will ask all respondents the same questions related to perceptions of collaboration as well as a few demographic questions. The survey will include both close-ended questions to ensure consistent information across respondents and open-ended questions to gather more detailed responses. Multiple respondents/perspectives are needed for this information collection in order to inform how best to measure these constructs in future research studies like FACES and/or potential studies of the implementation of the PDG B-5 grants. As discussed above, the data from this task will inform OPRE's larger research agenda around ECE systems integration. An internal report will summarize the findings for OPRE.

The total sample of respondents is approximately 145 individuals. Our goal would be to achieve a 90 percent total response rate (131 responses), which is similar to surveys of similar types of respondents.^{1 2} While we do not anticipate receiving responses from all invited to take the survey, the 90 percent response rate will allow us to have adequate sample sizes to draw conclusions across states. We also anticipate receiving responses from multiple individuals within a state, which allows us to compare perceptions from various perspectives within Head Start and the state ECE system. A limitation to the proposed design is that it depends on the high response rate within a state to draw comparisons regarding perceptions. To ensure a high response rate, Child Trends will host the survey on a secure online survey platform, which enables us to closely monitor response rates and send email reminders.

Descriptive statistics (frequency, mean, and standard deviations as needed) will be used to analyze the survey data. Responses will be summarized overall and by respondent types across states. Where appropriate, we will use t-tests or ANOVAs to compare differences between respondent types. We will code open-ended questions to identify and summarize themes.

¹The Build Initiative & Child Trends. (2017). A Catalog and Comparison of Quality Initiatives [Data System]. Retrieved from <http://qualitycompendium.org/> on November 8, 2018.

² Resnick, G., Broadstone, M., Rosenberg, H., & Kim, S. (2015). *A national snapshot of state-level collaboration for early care and education*. Waltham, MA: Education Development Center.

Universe of Data Collection Efforts

The data collection activity consists of the Head Start and Early Care and Education Landscape Survey (see Appendix A HS-ECE Landscape Survey).

Supplementary documents include an outreach email (see Appendix B_HS-ECE Landscape Survey_Recruitment Email), follow up email for nonresponse (see Appendix C_HS-ECE Landscape Survey_Follow up Survey Email), and final email reminder (see Appendix D_HS-ECE Landscape Survey_Potential Refusal Response).

A3. Improved Information Technology to Reduce Burden

To reduce burden, our data collection processes will be conducted electronically. We will communicate with potential survey respondents via email, and respondents will be able to complete the survey online.

A4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

This research does not duplicate work that is accessible by ACF. In an early phase of the project, we conducted an extensive review of existing literature, including recent reports and reviews of existing data across states/territories. Through this review, we summarized the current information on Head Start involvement and integration within states. We used this review to inform the development of our survey questions in an effort to avoid asking questions which could already be answered by the available literature. In addition, we convened a group of experts in the field who provided input into the survey protocol. With their input, we determined which questions would provide valuable, new insight into Head Start integration with state ECE systems.

We are also reducing burden by asking different questions to different respondents. For example, technical questions about state policies will only be asked of the type of respondent most directly connected to the policy in their role (i.e. child care licensing policy questions will only be asked of licensing administrators). Questions that ask for the respondents' perceptions about system integration will be asked across respondent types. These questions will be asked across multiple respondents to allow us to compare perceptions from various perspectives within Head Start and state ECE systems.

A5. Involvement of Small Organizations

No small organizations are affected by this data collection.

A6. Consequences of Less Frequent Data Collection

This is a one-time data collection.

A7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances for the proposed data collection efforts.

A8. Federal Register Notice and Consultation

Federal Register Notice and Comments

Formative Generic

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR Part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), ACF published a

notice in the Federal Register announcing the agency’s intention to request an OMB review of the overarching generic clearance for formative information collection. This notice was published on October 11, 2017, Volume 82, Number 195, page 47212, and provided a sixty-day period for public comment. During the notice and comment period, no substantive comments were received.

Consultation with Experts Outside of the Study

The project team consulted experts from various sectors (e.g., state government, federal government, philanthropy) with knowledge of Head Start and state ECE systems. In total, five experts were invited to provide input on the study. Participants had expertise in national-level ECE systems topics, state-level ECE systems, coordination across state agencies, child care licensing and subsidy, and Head Start. Experts provided feedback on survey questions and response options via a web-based meeting and email.

A9. Incentives for Respondents

No incentives for respondents are proposed for this information collection.

A10. Privacy of Respondents

Information collected will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. Respondents will be informed of all planned uses of data, that their participation is voluntary, and that their information will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. This project falls outside of IRB because the project does not constitute research (i.e., the information gathered will not develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge).

As specified in the contract, the Contractor shall protect respondent privacy to the extent permitted by law and will comply with all Federal and Departmental regulations for private information. The Contractor has developed a Data Safety and Monitoring Plan that assesses all protections of respondents’ personally identifiable information. The Contractor shall ensure that all of its employees, subcontractors (at all tiers), and employees of each subcontractor, who perform work under this contract/subcontract, are trained on data privacy issues and comply with the above requirements.

As specified in the evaluator’s contract, the Contractor shall use Federal Information Processing Standard compliant encryption (Security Requirements for Cryptographic Module, as amended) to protect all instances of sensitive information during storage and transmission. The Contractor shall securely generate and manage encryption keys to prevent unauthorized decryption of information, in accordance with the Federal Processing Standard. The Contractor shall: ensure that this standard is incorporated into the Contractor’s property management/control system; establish a procedure to account for all laptop computers, desktop computers, and other mobile devices and portable media that store or process sensitive information. Any data stored electronically will be secured in accordance with applicable Federal and Departmental regulations. In addition, the Contractor must submit a plan for minimizing to the extent possible the inclusion of sensitive information on paper records and for the protection of any paper records, field notes, or other documents that contain sensitive or personally identifiable information that ensures secure storage and limits on access.

Information will not be maintained in a paper or electronic system from which data are actually or directly retrieved by an individuals’ personal identifier.

A11. Sensitive Questions

There are no sensitive questions in this data collection.

A12. Estimation of Information Collection Burden

Total Burden Requested Under this Information Collection

| Instrument | Total Number of Respondents | Annual Number of Respondents | Number of Responses Per Respondent | Average Burden Hours Per Response | Annual Burden Hours | Average Hourly Wage | Total Annual Cost |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Appendix A HS-ECE Landscape Survey | 131 | 44 ³ | 1 | .25 | 11 | \$30.82 | \$339.02 |
| Estimated Annual Burden Total | | | | | 11 | | |

Total Annual Cost

To calculate total annual cost, we assume that the typical respondent will be a state-level early childhood systems administrator. Based on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics on the mean salary for social and community service administrators, we used an average hourly wage of \$30.82.⁴ There will be no other direct costs to respondents beyond the time they spend participating in the survey.

A13. Cost Burden to Respondents or Record Keepers

There are no additional costs to respondents.

A14. Estimate of Cost to the Federal Government

The total cost for the landscape survey project under this current request will be \$152,968. These costs include planning the study, conducting the survey, analyzing the data, and writing a final report.

A15. Change in Burden

This is for an individual information collection under the umbrella formative generic clearance for ACF research (0970-0356).

A16. Plan and Time Schedule for Information Collection, Tabulation and Publication

The project will follow the timeline below. Recruitment will begin once the project receives OMB approval; reminder emails will be sent as needed through the study period. Quantitative data will be analyzed in Stata to produce descriptive information about the research questions.

| Project Timeline | |
|------------------------|---|
| Surveys Conducted | Three months following OMB approval |
| Analyze Data | One month following completion of data collection |
| Final Landscape Report | Five months following data analysis |

³ Annualized over the three year period of the umbrella Formative Generic (0970-0356)

⁴ United States Department of Labor. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2018, March 30). *Occupational Employment and Wages — May 2017*. [News release.] USDL-18-0486.

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A17. Reasons Not to Display OMB Expiration Date

All instruments will display the expiration date for OMB approval.

A18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

No exceptions are necessary for this information collection.