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Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

From: Beth Caron
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Administration for Children and Families (ACF)

Date: December 14, 2023

Subject: Change Request – Head Start Collaboration Office Annual Report (OMB #0970-0490)

This memo requests approval of changes to the approved information collection, Head Start Collaboration Office Annual Report, which is an instrument approved under the Generic Performance Progress Report (OMB #0970-0490).

Background

This information collection is an annual reporting requirement for all Head Start Collaboration Office grant recipients to gather uniform program performance from all 54 Head Start Collaboration Office (HSCO) grantees of which 52 are discretionary (50 states, DC, and PR) and 2 are cooperative agreements (one for American Indian and Alaska Native programs and one for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs).

HSCOs are awarded funds under Section 642B of the 2007 Head Start Act. HSCOs facilitate partnerships between Head Start agencies and other state entities that provide services to benefit low-income children and their families. The report ascertains progress and performance results from the prior year for reporting and accountability purposes. The information collection collects demographic information and topical information on activities in seven areas of collaboration that are required of HSCO grants. Sections are as follows:

A. Demographic Information
B. Information on HSCO Staff
C. Vision, Mission, and Goals
D. State Advisory Council
E. Major Partnerships and Collaborations
F. Involvement in Key Topic Areas
G. Memoranda of Understanding (MOU)/Interagency Agreements (IA)
H. Capacity and Need for Support in Key Topic Areas
I. Narrative Outcomes in Key Topic Areas

Using a human-centered approach, OHS gathered feedback[1] from Head Start Collaboration

[1] All approaches to gather feedback as part of this approach were conducted with fewer than 9 participants, through unstructured discussions (i.e., non-standardized oral communication), or through observations therefore not being subject to PRA.

Office grant recipients through group discussions, and user-testing involving observation to identify areas where burden on respondents can be reduced and where minor adjustments are needed to improve the clarity of the instructions and improve quality of the data collected. Additionally OHS has identified Qualtrics as an appropriate platform to improve the user experience for respondents. The updated information collection has been user tested by HSCO grant recipients and there were strong indications during pretesting that the overall reporting has likely been reduced through the changes and use of the Qualtrics platform. However, we continue to estimate four hours of burden for the information collection since it is unclear the extent to which burden has changed. Instead, we will instead monitor time to complete the survey leveraging analytical tools in Qualtrics combined with follow-up discussions with the HSCO grant recipients to update the burden estimate in future renewals of this information collection.

Overview of Requested Changes

Based on the data submitted by Head Start Collaboration Offices grant recipients and on the analysis of recent submissions, OHS proposes the following updates to the information collection:

- Hosting platform for the information collection has transitioned from SmartSheets to Qualtrics to improve survey flow and efficiency, increase analysis capacity, and provide a more user-friendly interface to reduce respondent fatigue.
- Instructions have been updated to provide essential information for respondents as they complete the report.
- Questions throughout the survey have been collapsed into matrices using likert scales and skip logic has been added to capture additional detail where HSCOs are most involved.
- Questions revised from yes/no responses to likert scales intend to improve the usefulness of the data collected.
- For the topical information throughout the data collection, the question logics have been structured to ask first if the condition is met so that only those respondents with a yes answer need complete the remaining topical questions that follow.
- Final questions in each section that ask for additional information if applicable; Instructions were rewritten for clarity.
- Contact information in the instrument was updated to reflect staffing change.
- Minor language changes were made throughout the document to align with current language use.
- Questions deemed unnecessary were redacted.

Time Sensitivities

Grant recipients are required to submit annual reports in the beginning of each year so approval of these changes by the end of January 2024 will allow for grant recipients to respond promptly.