

Community Assessment in the Head Start Act ([42 U.S.C. 9801 et seq.](#))

<p>Sec. 640(g)(1)</p> <p>For the purpose of expanding Head Start programs, the Secretary shall take into consideration—</p>	<p>(C) the extent to which the applicant has undertaken a communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment involving other entities, including community organizations, and Federal, State, and local public agencies (including the local educational agency liaison designated under section 722(g)(1)(J)(ii) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii))), that provide services to children and families, such as—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) family support services; (ii) child abuse prevention services; (iii) protective services; (iv) foster care; (v) services for families in whose homes English is not the language customarily spoken; (vi) services for children with disabilities; and (vii) services for homeless children <p>(D) the extent to which the family needs assessment and communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment of the applicant reflect a need to provide full-working-day or full-calendar-year services and the extent to which, and manner in which, the applicant demonstrates the ability to collaborate and participate with the State and local community providers of child care or preschool services to provide full-working-day full calendar year services.</p>
<p>Sec. 641A(c)(2)</p> <p>The Secretary shall ensure that reviews described in subparagraphs (A) through (C) of paragraph (1)—</p>	<p>(D) include as part of the reviews, an assessment of the extent to which the programs address the communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment described in section 640(g)(1)(C).</p>

<p>Sec. 641A(h)(3)</p> <p>The Secretary shall—</p>	<p>(B) for each such Head Start agency operating a program with an actual enrollment that is less than its funded enrollment, as determined under subparagraph (A), develop, in collaboration with such agency, a plan and timetable for reducing or eliminating under-enrollment taking into consideration—</p> <p>(i) the quality and extent of the outreach, recruitment, and communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment conducted by such agency.</p>
<p>Sec. 642(d)(2)</p> <p>Each Head Start agency shall ensure the sharing of accurate and regular information for use by the governing body and the policy council, about program planning, policies, and Head Start agency operations, including—</p>	<p>(G) the communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment of the Head Start agency, including any applicable updates.</p>
<p>Sec. 642(h)</p>	<p>Technical Assistance and Training Plan—</p> <p>In order to receive funds under this subchapter, a Head Start agency shall develop an annual technical assistance and training plan. Such plan shall be based on the agency's self-assessment, the communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment, the needs of parents and children to be served by such agency, and the results of the reviews conducted under section 641A(c).</p>
<p>Sec. 645(a)(4)</p>	<p>After demonstrating a need through a communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment, a Head Start agency may apply to the Secretary to convert part-day sessions, particularly consecutive part-day sessions, into full-working-day sessions.</p>

<p>Sec. 645(a)(5)</p>	<p>(A) Upon written request and pursuant to the requirements of this paragraph, a Head Start agency may use funds that were awarded under this subchapter to serve children age 3 to compulsory school age, in order to serve infants and toddlers if the agency submits an application to the Secretary containing, as specified in rules issued by the Secretary, all of the following information:</p> <p>(ii) A community-wide strategic planning and needs assessment demonstrating how the use of such funds would best meet the needs of the community.</p>
<p>Sec. 648(a)(3)</p> <p>In providing training and technical assistance and for allocating resources for such assistance under this section, the Secretary shall—</p>	<p>(B) to the maximum extent practicable—</p> <p>(iii) assist Head Start agencies and programs in conducting and participating in communitywide strategic planning and needs assessments, including the needs of homeless children and their families, and in conducting self-assessments.</p>

References in the Head Start Act Requiring the Use of Community Assessment Data:

In addition to the community-wide strategic planning regulations, there are [Head Start Act](#) requirements that can only be met by taking into consideration the data collected and analyzed during the community assessment process. The following paraphrased references identify how community assessment data must be used to meet the requirements of the Head Start Act:

When making funding determinations, there must be consideration for the lack of resources available in the community that may prevent the Head Start agency from providing all or a portion of the non-federal contribution; whether the Head Start agency is located in a community adversely affected by a major disaster; and the impact on the community that would result if the Head Start agency ceased to carry out such program. [\(Sec. 640\(a\)\(7\)\(b\)\(1\), \(4\), and \(5\)\)](#)

In selecting an applicant to be designated as a Head Start agency, there must be consideration for the plan of the applicant to coordinate and collaborate with other public or private entities providing early childhood education and development programs and services for young children in the community involved. [\(Sec. 641\(d\)\(2\)\(H\)\)](#)

For each grantee operating with an enrollment under its funded enrollment, a plan must be developed taking into consideration changing demographics, the ability to provide full working-day programs where needed, and the availability and use of other early childhood education and development options. ([Sec. 641A\(h\)\(3\)\(B\)\(ii\), \(iv\), and \(v\)](#))

The Policy Council shall approve and submit to the governing body decisions about activities to ensure that the Head Start agency is responsive to community and parent needs. ([Sec. 642\(c\)\(2\)\(D\)\(1\)](#))

A Head Start agency must collaborate and coordinate with public and private entities, to the maximum extent practicable. ([Sec. 642\(e\)](#))

Training and technical assistance shall be available to assist programs in developing and implementing full working-day and full calendar-year programs where community need is clearly identified. ([Sec. 648\(a\)\(3\)\(B\)\(iv\)](#))

