

BOARD AGENDA ITEM

May 10, 2022

SUBJECT:

Head Start / Early Head Start Waiver Requests for Students with Disabilities for 2020-2021 and 2021-2022

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The school district was approved for a five-year Head Start/Early Head Start grant in May of 2020, and the 5-year project period began on July 1, 2020, and extends through June 30, 2025. Governing bodies have a legal and fiscal responsibility to administer and oversee the agency's Head Start and Early Head Start programs. The governing body is responsible for activities specified in section 642(c)(1)(E) of the Head Start Act. Based on community needs, the grant program may need to be modified, and board approval will be sought for these changes.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATION

The Office of Head Start (OHS) under the revisions to the Head Start Act (2007) requires that all Head Start and Early Head Start programs fill 10% of the funded enrollment slots with children with diagnosed disabilities regardless of the severity of such disability. Head Start Performance Standards (HSPS) 1302.14 (b), states "a program must ensure at least 10 percent of its total funded enrollment is filled by children eligible for services under IDEA, unless the responsible HHS official grants a waiver." ACPSD submitted a disabilities waiver for the 2020-2021 program year. During OHS's review of the submission, it was noted that there was a discrepancy in the number of children with IEPs and ISFPs as identified in the Child Plus software tracking system and supported by child records versus the number reported in the Program Information Report (PIR) submission (18 IEPs & 5 ISFPs). This has been corrected. OHS has requested the resubmission of the correction. Agencies that operate both Head Start (HS) and Early Head Start (EHS) are expected to enroll at least 10% of children with disabilities in both HS and EHS. However, the requirement of a minimum of 10% enrollment of children with disabilities is applicable program-wide. Based on the program's funded enrollment, recipient agencies may submit a waiver request if they are unable to meet the requirement. It is recommended that ACPSD submit **a Disabilities waiver request for the 2021-2022 program year**: currently, 5.2% of children enrolled in HS/EHS are children with diagnosed disabilities (17 HS & 3 EHS). A total of **4 HS children** are in the process of having IEPs developed. Two (2) children have been referred to Baby Net (EHS) for further evaluation, and **5 children** have been referred to Child Find (HS) for further evaluation.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the submission of the Amended 2020-2021 Disabilities Waiver Request and the 2021-2022 Disabilities Waiver Request

PREPARED BY:

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