STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

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GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

May 16, 2013

MEMORANDUM

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents and Early Childhood Contacts, Public School Academy Directors, and Head Start Grantees

FROM: Susan Broman, Deputy Superintendent SB

SUBJECT: Family Choice and Preschool

Recruitment and enrollment for the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) and Head Start (HS) is currently underway and questions about the role of family choice in preschool enrollment require clarification.

The Office of Great Start encourages families to choose the most appropriate preschool placements to meet their needs as families, and to ensure the greatest opportunities for their children. In making these choices, every family must be fully informed of all benefits that they are eligible to receive and the advantages associated with these programs.

The GSRP Participant Eligibility and Prioritization Guidelines and Implementation Manual (links below) require referral of families eligible for HS services and ensure that families are fully informed of the benefits of the additional comprehensive service provision provided in addition to a part-day or school-day preschool classroom program. Conversely, we ask that local HS grantees, in compliance with the Head Start Act of 2007, enter into Memoranda of Understanding with their Local Education Agency responsible for state funded preschool that will ensure collaborative recruitment and selection of eligible children to be served by each program.

In order to create an effective coordinated system of preschool services, both GSRP and HS must fully inform families of their options and follow state and federal guidelines for appropriate enrollment of eligible children to ensure every preschool-eligible child has an opportunity to participate. Failure to provide clarity to families

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and work collaboratively does not help ensure long-term outcomes for individual children or for the state of Michigan. Coordination and collaboration across GSRP, HS, and private child care are critical to fully utilize our investments and to ensure that children are not missing out on the services they deserve.

Resources:

GSRP Implementation Manual section on Recruitment and Enrollment:
http://michigan.gov/documents/mde/Recruitment_and_Enrollment_408829_7.pdf

GSRP Participant Eligibility and Prioritizations Guidelines and Implementation:
http://michigan.gov/documents/mde/Eligibility_Flow_Chart_297910_71_408476_7.pdf

Head Start Act – Section 642B:
http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/Head%20Start%20Act#642B

Head Start – § 1305.5 Recruitment of Children:
http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/Head%20Start%20Requirements/1305/1305.5%20Recruitment%20of%20children..htm

cc: Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators
Michigan Education Alliance
Michigan Head Start Association