



HEAD START-COLLEGE PARTNERSHIPS AS A STRATEGY FOR PROMOTING FAMILY ECONOMIC SUCCESS: A Study of Benefits, Challenges, and Promising Programs



Center on
**Equity in
Higher Education**

About this Report

Improving family economic security in the United States requires new strategies to support parents while they develop skills and attain postsecondary education to prepare them for well-paid jobs. Parents need stable, affordable, convenient, and high-quality child care to attend and complete college, but child care costs are unaffordable for many parenting students, and child care centers are declining on college campuses. Head Start, the largest early care and education program in the country, provides eligible families with parental supports that could be utilized to promote college attainment. This report features findings from an Institute for Women's Policy Research study of Head Start partnerships with colleges and universities, based on expert and program leader interviews, program scans, and site visits. The report discusses the challenges and benefits experienced by partners and the families they serve and assesses the potential for increasing the number of Head Start-college partnerships to help low-income families achieve long-term economic security.

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Head Start-College Partnerships as a Strategy for
Promoting Family Economic Success:

A Study of Benefits, Challenges,
and Promising Programs

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Introduction and Summary

Improving family economic security in the United States requires new strategies to support parents while they develop skills and attain education to prepare them for well-paid jobs. Postsecondary education brings a range of benefits to graduates and their families, including enhanced economic stability and mobility, improved health and well-being, and better educational outcomes among their children (Attewell and Lavin 2007; Carnevale, Rose, and Cheah 2011; Gault, Milli, and Reichlin Cruse 2018; Hout 2012; Magnuson 2007; Sabol et al. 2019; Sommer et al. 2019; Zhan and Pandey 2004).

Connecting parents living in poverty with the opportunity to earn higher credentials can help them achieve economic security, and their chances of success substantially improve when they have access to services that help them balance caregiving, financial, and work responsibilities while in school.

The federal Head Start program pairs high-quality early childhood education for children with support for parents. The Head Start Program Performance Standards include a directive for programs to help parents set and make progress toward self-sufficiency goals, including goals related to education and career pathways, in an effort to improve families' economic security (45 CFR § 1302.50). The directive includes guidance on the use of partnerships with community-based organizations, which can include postsecondary institutions, to support families and parents' goal achievement (45 CFR § 1302.53).

Research suggests that access to affordable, high-quality child care can increase parents' ability to complete educational programs, and that without it, their chances of persistence and completion are much lower (Hess et al. 2014; Johnson and Rochkind 2009; Reichlin Cruse et al. 2018). Additional evidence demonstrates how supports like coaching and referrals to services—integral components of the Head Start program—can promote college persistence among students with low incomes (Evans et al. 2017; Scrivener et al. 2015). Greater collaboration between Head Start and college campuses stands out as a potential strategy to increase the postsecondary success of parents who need enhanced support.¹ A substantial share of parents and their children could benefit from more partnerships between Head Start and colleges: nearly half (46 percent) of college students who are parents of children under 6 meet the income-eligibility requirements for Head Start, as do more than half of single student parents with children under 6 (65 percent; IWPR 2019a).

¹ For previous analyses exploring the potential for Head Start and community colleges to partner to increase parents' educational attainment in conjunction with early childhood services, see Sommer et al. 2016 and Sommer et al. 2018.

Some Head Start programs and colleges already collaborate, through training and research partnerships, cross-referrals, and colocation. Head Start programs often share information with parents about opportunities to enter job training or higher education and may also help them enroll or apply for financial aid. Some child care centers on college campuses offer Head Start services to families, though not all of these centers serve parents from the college's student body.

More intentional collaboration between Head Start and institutions of higher education has the potential to bring myriad benefits. College students with children who are eligible for Head Start could benefit from access to high-quality early education for their children that also allows them to pursue postsecondary credentials. Serving families with a parent enrolled in college would help Head Start support families' ability to establish lasting economic security. Providing Head Start services would also allow on-campus child care centers—which are declining across the United States—to benefit from the additional financial resources and technical assistance that come with Head Start participation (Gault, Reichlin Cruse, and Schumacher 2019). Colleges would benefit through higher persistence and graduation rates among parents, an improved ability to recruit prospective students with children, and strengthened capacity to train the early childhood workforce.

This report highlights findings from a study by the Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) to understand the prevalence and nature of existing Head Start partnerships, explore the feasibility of expanding these partnerships to serve more eligible student parents and their children, and analyze the benefits and challenges associated with such arrangements. To address these questions, IWPR conducted a national scan of Head Start-college partnerships, 41 expert and program leader interviews, and 6 site visits to programs (lists of interviews and site visits can be found in the appendices).² The report discusses the conditions and resources needed to establish Head Start-college partnerships, characteristics that help make them succeed, the challenges they face, and their benefits to families, Head Start programs, and higher education institutions. It concludes with recommendations for colleges, communities, and policymakers interested in promoting family success through Head Start-college partnerships.

IWPR's research identified 82 partnerships between Head Start and higher education institutions in the United States. Of these, 62 serve student parents, with 24 prioritizing student parents for enrollment. Nine programs explicitly do not serve students from the partner institution (IWPR was unable to confirm either way for 11 programs; see Appendix

² In this report, "Head Start" refers to any type of Head Start grant program, and "Head Start-college partnership" refers to any kind of collaboration between college campuses and Head Start, Early Head Start, and Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships (EHS-CCP) grants.

E for a list of Head Start-college partnerships serving student parents).

IWPR's research finds that there are at least 82 partnerships between Head Start and higher education institutions. Of these, 62 serve student parents, with 24 prioritizing student parents for services.

Partnerships serving students with children fit into four broad categories: 1) on-campus Head Start services with additional child care present, 2) stand-alone on-campus Head Start services, 3) off-campus Head Start programs that serve student parents attending a partner college/university, and 4) off-campus Head Start programs that have an educational or workforce pathway for parents operated in collaboration with a college.

When the right circumstances and champions are in place, Head Start-college partnerships can provide high-quality early childhood education for children of low-income students pursuing postsecondary credentials, along with other supports that student parents often need to graduate. IWPR's research also finds that these partnerships can provide workforce training opportunities, serve as additional sources of support for campus-based child care, and strengthen college and community engagement.

Some of the challenges experienced by partnerships mirror those experienced by Head Start and child care programs more broadly, such as funding and bureaucratic struggles, and difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified teachers at existing pay rates, while other challenges are unique to Head Start college partnerships. Unique challenges include coordinating standards, curricula, and administrative practices across Head Start and child care programs on campuses where both exist, and establishing college students as a high-need, priority population in Head Start applications. Some communities assume that college students, by nature of their postsecondary attainment goals, would not count as a high-need population, so could not be prioritized in a Head Start grant application. Data on economic status and access to basic needs among community college students, however, show that a large share of student

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Data on economic status and access to basic needs among community college students, however, show that a large share of student parents, and especially single mothers, need Head Start supports as much as other parents with low incomes.

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While adequacy and availability of funding, complex bureaucracies, and regulatory and reporting requirements pose challenges, IWPR's interviews and site visits suggest a number of strategies and conditions that can make Head Start-college partnerships work well. Strong partner relationships with effective communication channels, committed leadership among both Head Start administrators and college leaders, and a strong community-based early childhood infrastructure can help support sustainable partnerships that bring numerous benefits to families and communities. In addition, such partnerships can help both colleges and Head Start programs attain important system goals, including helping families served by Head Start attain long-term economic self-sufficiency and helping colleges improve retention and graduation rates among students with children.

Education and Training Promotes Economic Mobility and Positive Child Outcomes among Families with Low Incomes

The benefits of postsecondary education are well-documented. Holding a higher degree is linked to lower poverty rates, higher earnings and employment rates, and greater access to work-related benefits that promote family well-being and economic security, such as pensions, health insurance, and paid leave (Baum, Ma, and Payea 2013; Carnevale, Smith, and Strohl 2013; Hout 2012; Reichlin Cruse, Milli, and Gault 2018). Being a college graduate is also associated with better health outcomes and greater community and civic engagement (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2016; Cutler and Lleras-Muney 2006; Dee 2004).

Access to quality postsecondary opportunities for parents is also important for children's outcomes and chances for long-term success. Maternal postsecondary education, for example, is associated with school readiness and on-time graduation for their children (Baum, Ma, and Payea 2013; Magnuson 2007). Attewell and Lavin (2007) find that the positive effects of a mother's college attendance on children's educational outcomes are large enough to mitigate the negative effects of growing up in a low-income household.

Evaluations of Community Action of Tulsa (CAP Tulsa), in Tulsa, Oklahoma, found that parents' participation in *CareerAdvance*, a two-generation and sectoral training program for parents of children served by CAP Tulsa's Head Start center, resulted in important benefits for children. One study of 273 CAP Tulsa Head Start children and their parents found that children whose parents participated in the *CareerAdvance* program, and were considered "more college ready" than other parents participating in the program, saw

positive outcomes in language receptivity and inhibitory control compared with children whose parents had similar levels of college readiness in a matched comparison group receiving only Head Start services (Sabol et al. 2019).³ In another study of 293 CAP Tulsa families, after one semester, children whose parents participated in *CareerAdvance*, had a higher rate of Head Start attendance and were much less likely to be chronically absent than children in the matched comparison group (Sommer et al. 2019).

Research shows that single mothers—who are more likely to live in poverty and less likely to hold a higher degree than other women—are one-third less likely to live in poverty with every additional level of education earned beyond high school (Reichlin Cruse, Milli, and Gault 2018). Head Start parents, who also live with high levels of economic insecurity and more than two-thirds of whom do not have credentials beyond high school, stand to benefit disproportionately from a clear and supportive pathway to earning postsecondary credentials (IWPR 2019b).

College Students with Children Need Child Care to Succeed

As of the 2015-16 academic year, 3.8 million college students were parents of dependent children (Reichlin Cruse et al. 2019). Most of these student parents, who make up 22 percent of U.S. undergraduates, are raising young children who are child care or preschool-aged: over half of all student parents have children aged 0-5 (53 percent).

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Student parents face significant time demands related to caregiving and other responsibilities that complicate their ability to enroll and persist in college. Single mothers in college, for example, spend an estimated nine hours per day on caregiving and housework, on top of coursework and paid employment (Reichlin Cruse et al. 2018). More than one quarter of community college students responding to the 2018 Community College Survey of Student Engagement report that caregiving responsibilities may lead them to withdraw from school (CCSSE 2018).

³ In this study, college readiness was defined as “high or low on an index of parent educational attainment, age, income, and number of adults in the household” (Sabol et al. 2019).

Having access to stable, affordable, convenient, and high-quality child care, however, can help student parents remain enrolled. An IWPR survey of 550 women community college students in Mississippi found that nearly one quarter interrupted their college careers due to insufficient child care, and of respondents with dependent children, two in five (42 percent) said that having more stable or affordable care would help them stay in school (Hess et al. 2104). While few, if any, rigorous evaluations have studied the effect of access to child care on student parents' college outcomes, available evidence suggests that access to affordable, convenient, or campus-based child care is a key factor in student parents' ability to persist and graduate (Reichlin Cruse et al. 2018).

Despite the potential role of affordable, campus-based child care to improve student parents' persistence and completion rates, the share of colleges that provide child care is shrinking. As of 2017, just 42 percent of community colleges had a child care center on campus, down from 53 percent in 2004. Campus-based care also declined at public bachelor's degree-granting institutions with just 48 percent reporting a center in 2017, compared with 55 percent 10 years earlier (Gault, Reichlin Cruse, and Schumacher 2019).

Campus child care closures exacerbate an already-difficult situation for families that need child care—low availability across the country means many parents may have few or no quality options for care, and even when care is available, its cost can put it out of reach (Malik et al. 2018). In 2018, the median cost of child care for children ages 0-4 years in the United States was \$9,800, an amount that can vastly exceed student parents' ability to pay, given that they are disproportionately likely to be living with very low incomes (Child Care Aware of America 2018; IWPR 2019a). Head Start-college partnerships that provide free high-quality early childhood education opportunities for the children of eligible student parents would fill an important gap in access to affordable care options for college students.

Head Start's **Potential to Support Parents'** Education and Training

About the Head Start Program

Head Start is a federally-funded program that promotes school readiness for children in families who live in or near poverty by providing comprehensive child development and family support services. By providing free, high-quality, reliable early childhood education to eligible families who would be unable to afford it otherwise, Head Start can enable parents to attend college or job training. Head Start can take the form of center-based care, family child care, or home-based care (45 CFR § 1302.20). Head Start serves

children ages three to five and Early Head Start provides care for infants and toddlers ages zero to three and pregnant women (45 CFR § 1302.12). Population-specific Head Start grants—including Migrant and Seasonal Head Start and American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start—are intended to expand access to high-quality early learning opportunities to underserved populations.

To be eligible for Head Start, families must live at or below the federal poverty line, or in limited cases, between 100-130 percent of poverty. If a child has a disability or is in the foster system, or the family is homeless or receives public assistance, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), they qualify for Head Start services regardless of income (45 CFR § 1302.12). Unlike other public assistance programs, Head Start does not have work requirements for parents to receive services.

Head Start programs may also specify target populations (such as parents with low incomes in education or training) for priority enrollment, based on local needs as determined by a community assessment (45 CFR § 1302.14). Head Start providers are required to perform a community assessment at least once over their five-year grant period to identify community strengths, needs, and resources (45 CFR § 1302.11). The assessment collects information on the number, demographic characteristics, and the education, health, nutrition, and social service needs of eligible children and their families; eligible parents' typical work, school, and training schedules; and child care and other resources and services that are available in the community to help meet families' needs. Findings from these community assessments inform program planning, funding, and evaluation, and are intended to help programs respond to trends in their service areas and meet the changing needs of eligible families (Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start 2018). The community assessment can inform selection criteria, staffing patterns, center locations, hours of services, and the delivery of services to children and families.

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In 2007, the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act (42 U.S.C. 9801 et seq.) established the Career Advancement Partnership Program (121 STAT. 1429), which designated funding for five year demonstration grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges, and Hispanic Serving Institutions. The grants could be used to, among other things, provide assistance for stipends and costs related to tuition, fees, and books for enrolling Head Start staff, parents of children served by the Head Start agency, and community members pursuing early childhood education degree and

certification requirements. After the initial five year period, the program was discontinued.

In recent years, the Office of Head Start launched funding for Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships (EHS-CCP) to strengthen early childhood services for infants and toddlers and their families who receive services provided through the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF).⁴ Programs funded through EHS-CCP grants aim to improve child progress toward school-readiness, create a highly-trained early childhood workforce, increase the supply of high-quality learning environments, and align national, state, and local child care requirements (Early Childhood Development 2017).

In fiscal year 2019, Head Start received \$10 billion in federal funding—\$200 million more than in the previous fiscal year (Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center 2018). The program as a whole served 1.05 million children ages birth to five, pregnant mothers, and their families, over two-thirds of whom identify as Latina/o or Black (Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center 2019a). Despite being the largest federally-funded early childhood program, Head Start served just 31 percent of eligible three and four year-olds, and just seven percent of eligible infants and toddlers, in 2017 (National Head Start Association 2016a).

Head Start Supports **Parents'** Education and Training

Head Start program characteristics, including family supports, continuity of care, and a lack of work requirements, make it a strong potential support for parents in education and training. Several studies provide evidence that Head Start promotes educational attainment (Sabol and Chase-Lansdale 2015).

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Head Start Family Support and Referral Services

Head Start was one of the first national programs to provide comprehensive services for both the needs of families and children together (Cooke 1965). For over 50 years, Head Start has provided comprehensive programming to children and families with the intention of improving children's likelihood of success and promoting family health and

⁴ CCDF is a block grant provided to states, territories, and tribal governments to provide subsidized child care to qualifying families and improve the quality of child care and child care providers (Office of Child Care 2018).

well-being. With the philosophy that children will thrive in households that are economically secure, healthy, and safe, Head Start offers a range of supports to parents, such as parenting skills training and supports and a combination of basic adult education and, at times, workforce development services, alongside education for children (National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement 2013). Head Start's parental support offerings include a range of services that could promote postsecondary success among parents who are already enrolled or who want to enroll in postsecondary education.

Head Start's individualized, culturally-responsive, and goal-oriented family engagement approach seeks to empower parents to set and achieve goals that they choose for themselves and their children (Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center 2019b). Such support can be targeted to help parents develop career skills. Studies conducted outside of Head Start settings find that case management services that provide intensive, one-on-one support to address students' holistic needs are associated with improved college persistence and completion (Evans et al. 2017; Scrivener et al. 2015).

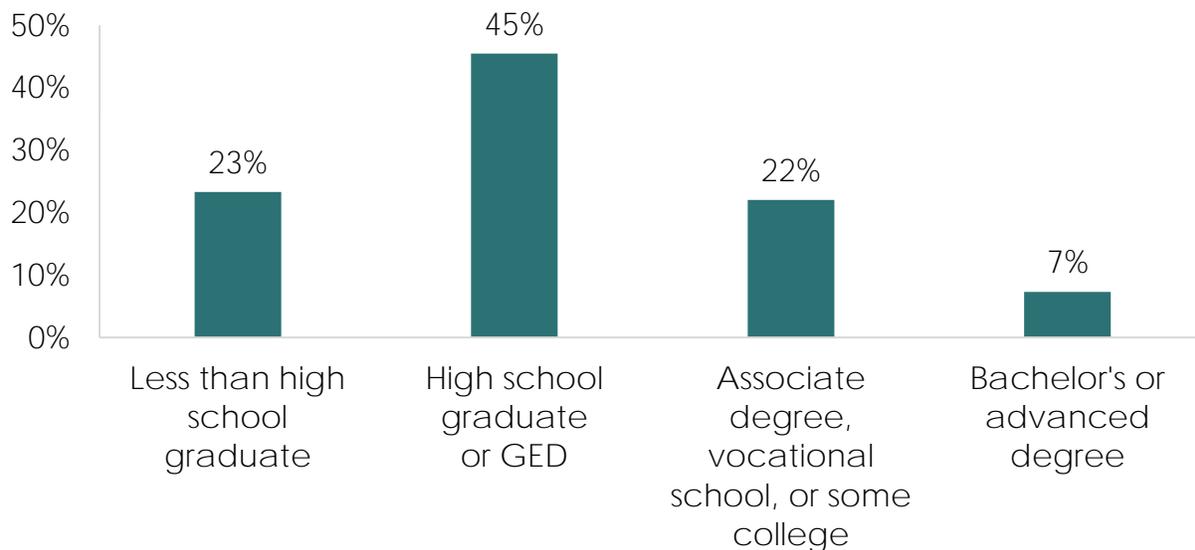
Case management that involves intensive, one-on-one support to address **individual students' needs** has been linked with improved persistence and completion outcomes for student participants (Evans et al. 2017; Scrivener et al. 2015).

Head Start services also include links to other supports and public benefits that can promote family stability and well-being (Office of Head Start 2019). In 2017-18, for example, the program helped families obtain health insurance through Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Plan (CHIP); helped connect pregnant women with prenatal care; and helped homeless families find secure housing. In addition, 16 percent of families served by Head Start that year received services related to job training and education, such as General Education Development (GED) programs and assistance in selecting a college (Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center 2019a).

Parents Utilizing Head Start Need More Access to Career Education and Training

Postsecondary education and training is increasingly important to securing living-wage employment, making parents' access to quality education and training programs central to Head Start's mission to promote sustained family economic security (Carnevale, Smith, and Strohl 2013). Nearly half (45 percent) of Head Start parents in 2017-18 had a high school diploma or the equivalent and 23 percent had less than a high school education (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Educational Attainment of Head Start Children's Parents/Guardians, 2017-18



Source: IWPR analysis of data from the 2017-18 Program Information Report (PIR), Office of Head Start.

Many families participating in Head Start report enrollment or interest in postsecondary education opportunities. In 2018, 15 percent of all Head Start parents reported enrollment in job training or postsecondary education (including a GED), associate, baccalaureate, or advanced degree program) and 3 percent had completed an associate, baccalaureate, or advanced degree during the program year (IWPR 2019b). Another 17 percent of Head Start parents expressed an interest in advancing their education through college, GED programs, or English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. Seven percent of Head Start parents already have an advanced or bachelor's degree and 22 percent have an associate degree, vocational certificate, or some college. Sixty-eight percent, or more than two-thirds, of Head Start parents have a high school diploma, GED, or less (45 percent are a high school graduates or have their GED and 23 percent have not graduated from high school; IWPR 2019b).

Evidence that Head Start Supports Educational Attainment and Career Development

Research suggests that pairing education and career training opportunities for parents with Head Start for children can lead to positive parental outcomes. Findings from the Head Start Impact Study, for example, suggest that Head Start parents attain significantly more postsecondary credentials than parents with similar characteristics who do not receive Head Start services. For the Head Start Impact Study, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services conducted a randomized control trial in 2002-03 to examine educational outcomes for over 4,000 Head Start parents with some college, but no degree,

compared with a matched-comparison group of parents who did not participate in Head Start (Sabol and Chase-Lansdale 2015).

The study found that Head Start participation was strongly associated with parents' educational attainment for those with some college experience: parents of three-year-olds in Head Start who had some college, but no degree were 23 percent more likely than the control group to attain a postsecondary credential (technical certificate or bachelor's degree) by the time their child finished kindergarten. By the end of their child's first grade year, they were 17 percent more likely to earn a credential than the control group (Sabol and Chase-Lansdale 2015).⁵

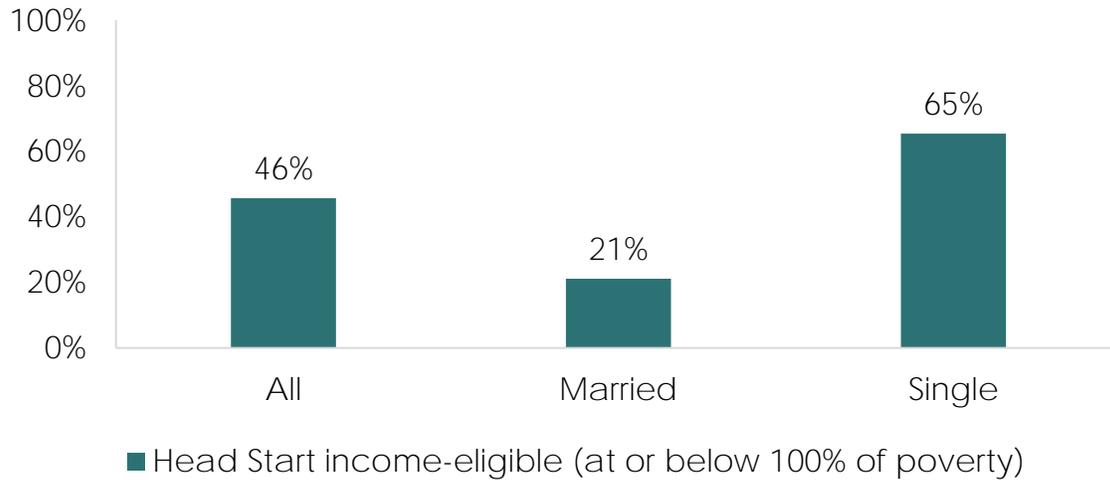
A Large Share of Parents in College Would Qualify for Head Start

A significant share of undergraduate student parents is likely to be eligible for Head Start participation. Among college students who are parents of children under 6, more than two in five (46 percent) meet income-eligibility requirements for Head Start (below 100 percent of the poverty line), as do nearly two thirds of single student parents (65 percent; Figure 2).

More than two in five college students with children under age 6 (46 percent) meet income eligibility cutoff for Head Start (below 100 percent of the poverty line), as do nearly two thirds of single student parents (65 percent).

⁵ The increase in educational attainment for Head Start parents over the control group in the Head Start Impact Study did not hold true for parents in the four-year-old cohort. The authors suggest that this may be because the parents of three-year-olds had an additional year to benefit from the support services offered to Head Start families and to make progress towards educational attainment. Families that enrolled their children in Head Start a year earlier may have also had stronger informational and social resources that encouraged them to enter school. No effects were found for parents with less than high school or with a high school diploma or equivalent (Sabol and Chase-Lansdale 2015).

Figure 2. Share of Student Parents with a Child under Age 6 who are Income-Eligible for Head Start, 2015-16



Source: IWPR analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2015-16 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:16).

Student parents are also likely to have trouble meeting basic needs. After receiving all financial aid and family assistance, student parents still have a median of \$4,300 in unmet financial need, and single mothers have an unmet need of roughly \$5,500—double the amount of unmet need among women students without children (IWPR 2019a). Food and housing insecurity—including homelessness—are also prevalent for students with children. According to a 2019 survey, 53 percent of student parents report food insecurity and 66 percent report housing insecurity, with another 16 percent reporting homelessness—a factor that automatically makes them eligible for Head Start (Goldrick-Rab et al. 2019).

Fifty three percent of student parents report food insecurity and 66 percent report housing insecurity, with another 16 percent reporting homelessness—a factor that automatically makes them eligible for Head Start (Goldrick-Rab et al. 2019).

The IWPR Study of Head Start-College Partnerships: Purpose and Methods

With awareness of several Head Start programs located on college campuses, and in light of evidence showing potential synergies between colleges and Head Start programs discussed above, IWPR conducted a study to gain a better understanding of the prevalence, characteristics, benefits, and challenges of Head Start-college partnerships, as well as the feasibility of increasing their prevalence. Methods included analysis of Head Start Program Information Report (PIR) data, a program scan (relying heavily on the Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center, or ECKLC, website), 41 expert and program leader interviews (using a snowball approach), a brief phone survey with 48 programs, and site visits to 6 campus programs that offer Head Start services to students with children. Site visits involved in-person interviews with a range of stakeholders, including college presidents and vice presidents, administrators, deans, and faculty, as well as a number of student parents who utilize their college's campus-based Head Start services (see Appendix A for a full description of the study methodology).

The Prevalence and Characteristics of Head Start-College Partnerships

IWPR's study began by seeking a better understanding of partnerships in operation around the country, to map where they are located, learn how they are typically structured, and identify program characteristics that may shed light on their benefits or challenges for partners and families. To capture the landscape of existing Head Start-college partnerships, IWPR conducted a scan of Head Start grantees and programs to identify those that involve a relationship with a college or university.

Of the 1,700 total agencies and organizations providing Head Start services, IWPR identified 82 instances where there is a relationship between a Head Start-related grantee and a college or university, or a college or university is the grantee itself (Office of Head Start 2019). Since no specific list of Head Start services offered on or in conjunction with an institution of higher education exists, this is the first known effort to compile such a list. IWPR acknowledges the strong possibility that its scan missed a number of existing partnerships that were not obvious on the basis of the grantee institution or name.

Of the 82 programs identified, IWPR found 62 that serve student parents from the college/university partner and 9 that explicitly do not serve college students (see

Appendix E for a list of identified Head Start-college partnerships serving student parents).⁶ Of the 62 programs serving student parents, 24 report prioritizing them for services over non-student families, 31 report serving students but not prioritizing them for services, and 7 provide education or job training programs in affiliation with a college to Head Start parents (Table 1).⁷ Programs vary in where they are located in relationship to the college/university partner campus, with the majority being located on-campus.

Table 1. Head Start-College Partnerships Serving Student Parents by Type and Location

	On-Campus	Off-Campus	Total
Programs supporting student parents through Head Start	44	11	55
Programs that prioritize student parents	23	1	24
Programs that do not prioritize student parents	21	10	31
Education and training opportunities for Head Start parents in collaboration with a higher education partner*	N/A	N/A	7
Total Programs Serving Student Parents			62

*Some of the education and training programs offered to Head Start parents in collaboration with a college partner may take place on-campus, depending on the program and type of course.

Source: IWPR Head Start-college partnerships scan.

Of the 62 programs serving student parents, 42 are affiliated with community college campuses (1 program has a partnership with 2 community colleges and 3 community colleges have 2 partnership programs – one that serves parents from the college and one that is a training/education program run by the Head Start center for Head Start parents in collaboration with the college) and 17 with bachelor’s degree-granting institutions (Table 2).

⁶ IWPR was unable to confirm whether 11 of the programs identified in the scan serve student parents after multiple attempts to contact via email and phone.

⁷ Partnership programs are defined as distinct program opportunities for parents that involve a direct link to a college or university; in some cases, two partnership programs may involve the same college partner. For example, if a Head Start center serves students from the college partner and also has an early childhood credential program provided to Head Start parents in collaboration with that same college’s early childhood education department; this is considered 2 separate partnerships. This situation is present at 3 community colleges, for a total of 6 distinct partnerships counted in the total 62 partnership programs identified.

Table 2. Head Start-College Partnerships Programs by Type of Higher Education Partner Institution

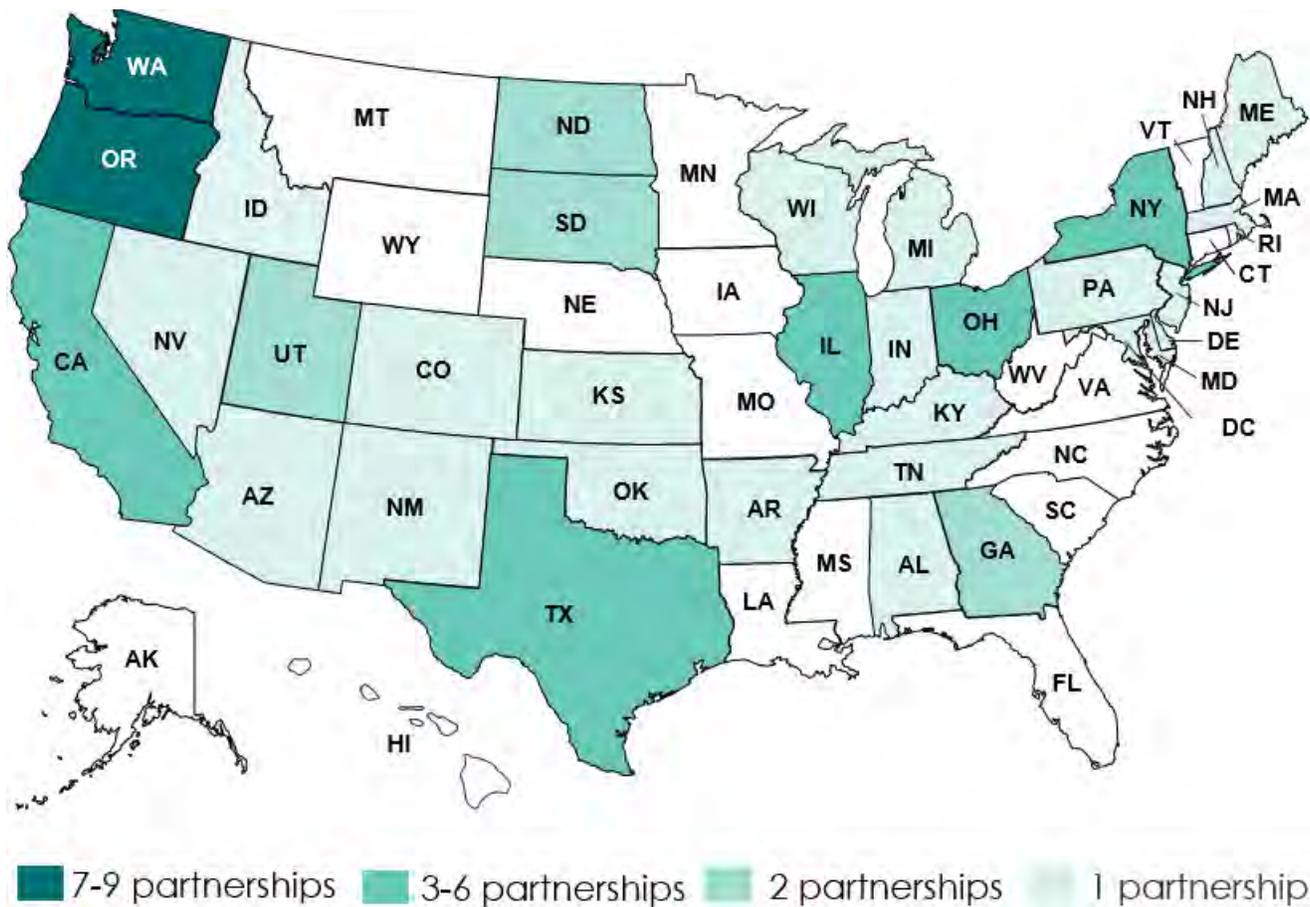
	Community College Partners	BA Degree-Institution Partners	Graduate School Partners	Total
Programs that serve student parents*	42	17	0	62
Programs that do not serve student parents	0	8	1	9
No information	2	9	0	11
Total Partnership Programs Identified ¹	44	34	1	82

*Total does not add up because one program has partnerships with two community colleges and another three community colleges have two partnerships with which they are affiliated: City Colleges of Chicago (IL), Lane Community College (OR), Portland Community College (OR), and Skagit Valley College (WA; see Appendix E for partnership program list).

Source: IWPR Head Start-college partnerships scan.

Programs are located across the country in 32 states, with highest concentrations in Washington (9), Oregon (7), and California (5; Figure 3).

Figure 3. Map of Head Start-College Partnership Programs that Serve Student Parents in the United States, as of October 2019



Source: IWPR Head Start-college partnerships scan.

Head Start-college partnerships serving student parents vary in terms of which entity is the Head Start grantee, where the partnership is located and the types of stakeholders involved, whether they target students for services, and how parents access the partnership (whether parents access college through participation in Head Start, or whether they are college students first and access Head Start through their institution).⁸ Partnerships can offer any type of Head Start service, with Head Start, Early Head Start, and EHS-CCP services being the most common (on their own or multiple types offered simultaneously).

IWPR found that of the 62 partnerships serving students with children, programs can be sorted into four categories (Table 3):

⁸ Partnerships that do not serve student parents range from strictly community-serving Head Start centers to research partnerships; those are not described in detail in this briefing paper.

Table 3. Types of Head Start-College Partnerships Serving Student Parents

	Total
On-Campus Head Start Services	
1) Campus child care center present*	32
Provides Head Start services together with other child care	25
Provides Head Start services separately	7
2) Stand-alone Head Start programs without campus child care	13
Total On-Campus Programs¹	44
Off-Campus Head Start Services	
3) Off-campus Head Start services for student parents at a partner college/university	11
4) Off-campus Head Start programs that have an educational or training pathway for parents operated in collaboration with a college	7
Total Off-Campus Programs	18
Total Programs Serving Student Parents¹	62

*Total does not add up because one program provides Head Start services both separately from its campus child care center and has one integrated classroom that has both regular child care and Head Start slots (Cuesta College, CA).

Source: IWPR Head Start-college partnerships scan.

1) On-campus Head Start services with campus child care present

Thirty two partnership programs have on-campus child care centers, with Head Start services provided either in conjunction with additional child care services under the same operational umbrella, or completely separately.

A) On-campus Head Start and child care provided together

The 25 programs providing Head Start services together with campus child care do so in two main ways:

- through integrated classrooms, with all children receiving care that meets Head Start standards and all parents having access to family engagement services, or
- through separate classrooms, where children receiving Head Start funding are in a classroom separate from children supported by other funding sources (but are still managed by the same on-campus child care center).

B) On-campus Head Start and child care provided separately

Seven partnerships involve an on-campus Head Start center or classrooms that operate distinctly from other child care services provided on campus. In this situation, none of the classes or staff overlap; they operate as completely (or nearly) separate entities. If the two programs interact, it is in limited circumstances, such as for professional development opportunities or access to specific resources (e.g. access to the Child and Adult Care Food Program or renting classroom space).

In some cases, families may access services in both programs, though this depends on class hours, funding sources, and other program elements aligning smoothly. For example, a family may receive part-day Head Start services and then transition their child to the child care center for the rest of the day to accommodate a full day of class, studies, or work.

2) Stand-alone on-campus Head Start services

Thirteen partnership programs identified in IWPR's scan are stand-alone Head Start centers that are located on their partner institution's campus with no additional campus child care provided. In these cases there is not a child care center on campus other than Head Start.

3) Off-campus Head Start services for student parents at a partner college/university

Eleven partnerships involve an off-campus Head Start center that provides services to eligible student families from the local college or university partner.

4) Off-campus Head Start programs that have an educational or training pathway for parents operated in collaboration with a college

Seven partnerships involve a pathway for the parents of Head Start children to educational or workforce training programs. These partnerships often focus on training Head Start parents for jobs in the early childhood education field, though others provide a range of options for study (programs may focus on a certain set of educational programs or allow parents to pursue any program offered by the college). They usually involve some type of memorandum of understanding or formal relationship between the Head Start center and the local college or university, and training may take place either at the Head Start site or at the partner institution.

Head Start-College Partnership Examples

IWPR compiled a range of examples of partnerships between Head Start and college campuses through interviews and six site visits. A selection of examples is provided below. These examples include a review of two of the few locations where IWPR identified concentrations of partnerships – Washington State and the City Colleges of Chicago – as well as individual sites in other areas that present models for serving students with children who are eligible for Head Start.

Head Start-College Partnerships in Washington State

Washington State has the largest number of Head Start-college partnerships that IWPR identified in a single state (10), 9 of which serve student parents.⁹ IWPR staff visited five colleges with partnerships serving student parents to learn more about how they work, why they were established, the perceived benefits to partners and parents, and program challenges.¹⁰ All nine partnerships that serve student parents involve community colleges, and one is an early childhood education credential program offered through a Head Start center in collaboration with a partner community college (whose students can also receive Head Start services at the center).¹¹

For all the Washington State partnerships serving student parents, Head Start services are offered at a center on or near campus alongside services funded through other means, including the state child care assistance program (Working Connections Child Care), the state pre-kindergarten program (Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program, or ECEAP), and private pay.¹² Many of the Head Start-college partnerships in Washington have been in operation for decades and most were formed because the colleges recognized that their students needed on-site care in order to enter and complete college.

⁹ West Coast states have higher concentrations of partnerships than the rest of the country. In addition to Washington, California has seven colleges with Head Start partnerships, five of which serve college students with children, one that explicitly does not serve student parents, and one for which information on the population served could not be obtained. Oregon has eight community colleges offering Head Start services, seven of which serve students and one for which information on the population served could not be obtained.

¹⁰ IWPR staff visited Tacoma Community College (Tacoma, WA), Olympic College (Bremerton, WA), Skagit Valley College (Mt. Vernon, WA), Spokane Community College (Spokane, WA), and Spokane Falls Community College (Spokane, WA).

¹¹ For the partnership at Bates Technical College, IWPR staff were unable to schedule an interview with program leaders to learn more about services offered, but the phone scan confirmed that they do serve student parents.

¹² Skagit Valley Head Start provides services at a center close to the campus; slots are funded through Head Start and the state pre-kindergarten program.

The partnership at Tacoma Community College is the most recently-established partnership program; the Center began providing EHS-CCP-funded services in 2016 through the main Head Start grantee, the Puget Sound Educational Service District 121.

Four of the Washington State partnerships prioritize student parents when allocating Head Start services, with prioritization mandated by the college as part of the partnership agreement.¹³ The programs that prioritize services for student parents all offer full-day services, funded by Head Start in addition to braiding additional funding sources together, including, in some cases, private pay, for hours of care not covered by Head Start.

One long-standing example of a Head Start-college partnership is Washington State Community College District #17 in Spokane (known as Community Colleges of Spokane). Community Colleges of Spokane is the Head Start, Early Head Start, and Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) grantee for 6 counties in Eastern Washington, serving nearly 1,850 children.¹⁴ The community college district manages 12 centers internally, 2 of which are located on community college campuses. Spokane Community College's (SCC) Bigfoot Child Care Center and Spokane Falls Community College's (SFCC) Early Learning Center are both nationally accredited by the National Accreditation Commission (NAC) and dedicated to serving student parents. Together, the centers provide child care (infant to pre-kindergarten) to over 200 children. Both centers operate for about 10 hours per day, 5 days a week, year round.¹⁵

“We see day in and day out that many parents can't access college or their educational goals without child care that is affordable and accessible for them. So it meets a critical need.”
- Patty Allen District Director, Spokane Head Start

Each campus has had a child care center since the 1970s. Both centers began prioritizing students for care in the early 1990s due to the recognition by the administration that a large share of their students had low incomes and were parents who needed child care to enter and complete college. Many of the students they serve are first-generation college

¹³ The colleges that prioritized student parents included Tacoma Community College, Olympic College, Spokane Community College, and Spokane Falls Community College.

¹⁴ The Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) program is Washington State's pre-kindergarten program for families with low-incomes with children ages 3-4 years.

¹⁵ Information for the profile of the Head Start-college partnership with Washington State Community College District #17 provided by an interview with Patty Allen, District Director for Spokane Head Start, February 27, 2019 and additional interviews conducted on IWPR's site visit to the Community Colleges of Spokane.

students. The district braids Head Start and Early Head Start funding with state child care subsidies, Child Care Access Means Parents in School Program (CCAMPIS), private pay, and student activity funds. This layered funding helps them meet student demand for full-day care that is offered year-round. Both of their campus centers offer discounted summer child care to Pell-eligible students.

The Spokane Falls Community College (SFCC) center serves as a lab school for the college's early childhood education department. The SFCC center began serving infants and toddlers around 1990. In 1995, the infant and toddler slots were converted to Early Head Start slots after the Community Colleges of Spokane (CCS) received one of the first Early Head Start grants in the nation. The infant and toddler rooms were initially established to meet student need and provide an opportunity for early childhood students to train in this profession. The infant room helps new mothers return to school, allowing them time and space to be with their babies, attend class, and study. It also provides nursing mothers with the space to continue nursing when they return to school.

The infant room helps new mothers return to school, allowing them time and space to be with their babies, attend class, and study. It also provides nursing mothers with the space to continue nursing when they return to school.

The Director of Spokane Head Start emphasized the importance of institutionalized relationship-building to create sustainable and effective partnerships within the colleges and throughout the community. The Community Colleges of Spokane (CCS) streamline communication between the district director of Spokane Head Start and college leadership by having the district director report directly to the CCS chancellor and attend monthly Board of Trustee meetings to present on the state of the Head Start centers. In addition, one of the five CCS governor-appointed Trustees attends the parent Policy Council meetings and regularly attends the fall and spring staff meetings. This communication helps the college administrators and the CCS cabinet understand student parents' needs and how the centers and colleges can support them on their way to full self-sufficiency.

Head Start at City Colleges of Chicago

Chicago, IL

City Colleges of Chicago Community College District in Chicago, Illinois (or City Colleges) is one of the largest community college systems in nation. Across its seven colleges and five satellite sites across the Chicago region, it operates five Child

Development Laboratory Schools that serve children of students, staff, and community members (City Colleges of Chicago 2019).¹⁶ The centers serve children ages 2-5, and each of the 5 lab schools offer 20 Head Start slots through the main Head Start grantee for the city, the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services (DFCC). DFCC sub-grants Head Start funds to City Colleges, in addition to other early learning funding, such as Preschool for All (serving children age four) and the Preventive Initiative (for children birth to three, available at Harry S. Truman College and Kennedy-King College; Office of Finance 2018).

The five lab schools are aligned with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework and the Illinois Early Learning Standards, and all are licensed by the State of Illinois and accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC; City Colleges of Chicago 2019). During the 2018 fiscal year, City Colleges received \$1.16 million in Head Start funding to support 100 Head Start slots across all five lab schools (Office of Finance 2018).

As with all Head Start providers, a priority system is used to allocate services to eligible families. The DFCC in Chicago regulates this process for early learning providers that receive Head Start and other early learning funding (Chicago Department of Family & Support Services 2017). Families are awarded points based on specific criteria, such as whether the child is a returning student, if the parent was a teen at the time of their child's birth, if the family recently immigrated to or is a refugee in the United States, among other factors. Providers have the flexibility to base additional priority on needs identified by community assessments conducted every five years (Chicago Department of Family & Support Services 2017). City Colleges' lab schools prioritize parents who are City Colleges students when their total points are equal to that of another parent who is a City Colleges staff or community member.¹⁷

City Colleges' lab schools also provide opportunities for onsite training for early childhood education students. City College early childhood students conduct over 6,000 student observation hours at the lab schools every year (Office of Finance 2018). Early childhood students also have the opportunity to fulfill their practicum requirements at the onsite lab schools, where they work with and learn from teachers who are trained in Head Start standard-care and regulations. Students from other departments such as

¹⁶ The five Child Development Laboratory Schools are located at Harry S Truman College, Kennedy-King College, Malcolm X College, Olive-Harvey College, and Richard J. Daley College.

¹⁷ Interview with Maria Sanchez, District Director of City Colleges of Chicago Child Development Studies, on March 19, 2019.

nursing or students in health and safety courses also utilize the lab school for observation.¹⁸

City Colleges also partners with Chicago Commons, a community-based Head Start grantee, to pilot the Parent Pathways to Early Childhood Careers Program. The impetus for this program, which provides Chicago Common Head Start parents a pathway for earning credentials in early childhood education, initially evolved from a Chicago Common's Head Start Family Assessment that identified 79 parents who were interested in pursuing early childhood education, 55 of whom met the minimum educational and language proficiency requirements to enroll in courses at City Colleges.¹⁹

Sixteen parents enrolled in the program for the spring of 2018 (Zinsser et al. 2019). Program participants are enrolled in Health, Safety, and Nutrition and Introduction to Early Childhood Education, which are both three-credit courses provided at the Chicago Commons Head Start center where their children receive care. These courses provide the minimum credentials for employment at an Illinois licensed child care program and a foundation for additional educational pathways. The second cohort will begin in the fall of 2019 and will consist of 20 slots for Chicago Commons Head Start parents and community partners from the Southside of Chicago.

Student parents' participation in the credential program is completely free. The program also arranges to pay off any outstanding student debt to City Colleges and participants are provided unrestricted child care stipends to cover care needed while they are in class (at the center or with a family member); transportation assistance to help them get to class; digital literacy training; and free dinner before classes for parents and their children. Parents also receive individualized support from Chicago Commons' family engagement staff to empower them to overcome barriers such as unstable housing, child care, and access to technology.

Funding for this program originated from the Illinois Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development and the Illinois Gateways Scholarship program. Supportive services and program costs such as books, transportation, meals, and child care are

¹⁸ Interviews with Maria Sanchez, District Director of City Colleges of Chicago Child Development Studies; Dexter Smith, Director, Child Development Laboratory School, Truman College on March 19, 2019, and Jessica Ruiz, Angela Cotromanes, and Carrie Nepstad, Truman College Early Childhood Development Faculty, on March 20, 2019.

¹⁹ Information about the Parent Pathways program provided by an interview with Rodrigo Paredez, Director of Family Engagement, and Tricia Cruz, Recruitment Coordinator and Community and Family Engagement Liaison, Chicago Commons, and Kate Connor, Vice President Academic and Student Affairs, Harry S. Truman College, March 19, 2019.

covered by community collaboration grant from University of Illinois at Chicago, in-kind donations from Truman College, and Chicago Commons (Zinsser et al. 2019).

Atlanta Technical College Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Atlanta, GA

The Atlanta Technical College Early Learning Center provides Early Head Start services to student parents at Atlanta Technical College (Atlanta Tech). Atlanta Tech's child care center has partnered with the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) since 2015 and is one of several child care centers in Georgia benefiting from an Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) grant.²⁰ The EHS-CCP initiative enables child care programs to offer Early Head Start services that provide high quality child care to low-income families. Atlanta Tech combines multiple funding streams to provide integrated classrooms where all children receive care meeting the high quality standards of Head Start. All parents have access to family engagement services and community resource referrals.

The Atlanta Tech Early Learning Center has 87 child care slots available to students, faculty, staff, or community parents and 24 EHS-CCP slots. The center serves children ages seven months through five years. Family advocates help parents navigate their complex schedules and heavy time demands so that children and families receive the services they need. Parent meetings and events are often held multiple times to allow parents who have class or work during one meeting to attend at another time. The center also recognizes that student parents often must take time off from school for a semester or more. The center supports these families by allowing them to keep their child enrolled at the campus center even if the parent is not enrolled at Atlanta Tech. This ensures that the child has continuous care and keeps the family connected to the college, which can help motivate parents to return to school.

The Atlanta Tech Early Learning Center, housed in the same building as the early childhood education department, serves as a lab school for early childhood students. Being conveniently located on-campus allows early childhood students to observe best practices in a classroom in real time and to complete practicums at a high-quality center. DECAL chose Atlanta Tech as a child care partner because of the opportunity to work with the early childhood department to train students in a setting following high quality early learning standards.

²⁰ Information in this profile provided by Carol Hartman, former Director of Policy and System Reform at the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, and Bridgett Walker, Early Head Start Partnership Manager for the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning.

Santa Ana College Early Childhood Education Center

Santa Ana, CA

Santa Ana College's (SAC) Early Childhood Education Center provides Early Head Start services to the children of students, faculty/staff, and community members in Santa Ana, California. A grantee of Rancho Santiago Community College District, the Early Head Start grantee for the city of Santa Ana in the Orange County area, since 2009, SAC's Early Childhood Education Center provides approximately 60 center-based Early Head Start slots to eligible parents, roughly 40-50 percent of whom are SAC students.²¹ Student parents are recruited for the center through outreach to California's Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) program, CalWorks (California's cash assistance program), and student groups, and through community outreach activities. In addition to Early Head Start, the center is funded through a number of other sources, such as state preschool funding, a CCAMPIS grant, the Child & Adult Care Food Program, and private pay. This blended funding model helps the center cover costs associated with having unionized staff, who are employees of the community college district. The district provides facilities, human resources, payroll, infrastructure, and custodial support to the SAC center.

The Early Childhood Education center offers full- and part-day care options for children ages six months through five years. The SAC center's classrooms are integrated, with all children receiving services following Early Head Start standards, regardless of how their services are funded, and all parents have access to family engagement services. Family advocates refer parents to community-based services, help them set strategic goals, and help them access resources on and off campus, including college counseling and transportation. Advocates also meet with student parents to monitor progress toward educational and individual goals.

The SAC Early Childhood Education center serves as a lab school for early childhood students. The early childhood department is located in the same building as the center, allowing students to easily observe or conduct their practicums on site. Support staff and beginning teachers are also often students at the college.

Rancho Santiago Community College District also operates the Valley High School Child Development Center, located on the Valley High School campus. Established in 2016, the program serves high school students who are parents. The Valley center works to create a pipeline from high school to college for the teen parents it serves, by helping them transition to SAC and helping their children be enrolled in the SAC Early Childhood

²¹ Information in this profile provided by My Le Pham, Director of Quality Assurance for Child Development Services for the Rancho Santiago Community College District.

Center. So far, the program has served nine teen parents, who have all gone on to enroll at SAC. They also benefit from the Santa Ana Unified School District College Promise program, which offers high school graduates a year of free tuition for full-time enrollment at Santa Ana Community College, as well as a laptop.²²

Benefits and Challenges of Head Start-College Partnerships

IWPR's research suggests that partnerships between Head Start programs and college campuses can provide a range of benefits to Head Start and other early childhood programs, higher education institutions, and families – they also face challenges that can complicate new program development and program sustainability. These challenges, in some cases, mirror the common challenges of running child care and Head Start programs anywhere, whereas some of the challenges are specific to providing Head Start to a college population. Analysis of the benefits and challenges of partnerships came primarily from phone and in-person interviews.

Benefits of Head Start-College Partnerships

Head Start-college partnerships can provide comprehensive support to eligible parents who choose to pursue postsecondary education, setting them up for success in college and increasing their chances of achieving family economic security in the long run.

Benefits to Families

- **Access to affordable, convenient child care that promotes parents' college engagement.**

On-campus Head Start services can increase low-income parents' ability to enroll and stay in college. For many parents interviewed for this study, securing Head Start services for their child was the key factor that allowed them to enroll in college, and parents and program leaders both emphasized how important Head Start services are in helping student parents stay enrolled.

“It's everything to me, it's my kid's future, it's our financial stability, it's our emotional stability, it's our mental health, it's the world to us. This is how I'm going to give my kids, as a single parent, as a single mother, everything that they need and everything that they deserve.”

- Student Parent at Olympic College, Bremerton, WA

²² For more information on the Santa Ana Unified School District College Promise, see <https://www.sausd.us/domain/40>.

Access to free, high-quality Head Start services on campus can also act as a powerful incentive for student parents to enroll and remain engaged in college, especially when considering tough decisions about taking a break from school. In some cases, parents can keep their children enrolled in the campus center while taking a break from classes. For these parents, returning to campus regularly to bring their child to school can keep them connected with their college goals, making it more likely that they will decide to return. Relationships between students and center staff and teachers also serve as an accountability measure that encourages parents to re-enroll. In other cases, programs will not allow parents who are not formally associated with the college to use their center, meaning that securing a Head Start slot can motivate student parents to stay enrolled when they might otherwise take time off from school.

➤ **Access to quality care in close proximity to campus.**

Student parents interviewed for this study place high value on the quality of the education and environment provided by campus-based Head Start programs. Especially for student parents whose children have special needs or who have experienced trauma, the quality of care, the safety of the center environment, and the personalized support provided through Head Start are invaluable. One grandparent interviewed for this study decided to re-enroll in an associate degree program, in part so that her grandchildren would be able to receive high-quality, trauma-informed care and education from the campus Head Start-college partnership program.

One grandparent interviewed for this study decided to re-enroll in an associate degree program, in part so that her grandchildren would be able to receive high-quality, trauma-informed care and education from the campus Head Start-college partnership program.

Student parents also appreciate having their children nearby when they are on campus. Having access to a high-quality, trustworthy, and affordable center on campus often helps parents deal with time and logistical challenges and alleviates anxiety that parents may feel when they are away from young children for extended periods. Parents and program leaders discussed the value a parent's ability to visit their child during the day, eat breakfast or lunch with them, pick them up when they fall ill, or simply check in on how they are doing. The proximity of a campus-based center gives student parents peace of mind and the time to focus on achieving their own educational goals.

➤ **Access to wraparound supports that help student parents persist.**

Growing evidence suggests that intensive coaching (sometimes called case management) that connects students with supportive services and other resources is linked to improved college completion (Evans et al. 2017). Head Start family support staff fill the role of a coach or case manager for parents who are enrolled in college. Being located on a college campus means that staff often have in-depth knowledge of campus services, and relationships with college staff that can support student parents. Campus-based Head Start family support advocates are well-equipped to assist and connect students with both on- and off-campus resources, and to help them with an array of challenges like registering for classes, applying for public benefits, or securing safe, affordable housing.

“Having everything ... right here on campus has been really impactful in being able to get things done... There are so many different people and resources on campus that I can walk to. I don't have to drive and pick up my daughter somewhere else, she's here **and I know she's fine if I go and come back.”**

- Student Parent at Tacoma Community College

In interviews, advocates described walking students to the financial aid, counselors, or registrar's offices to make person-to-person “handoffs” with staff who can directly assist their needs, sitting down with student parents to help them make important phone calls, or simply sharing the name, location, and phone number of the office or service they needed and checking-in to ensure that students had accessed the service they needed.

➤ **Building family-friendly campus environments.**

Having a child care and Head Start on campus increases awareness that many students have families of their own, and creates an understanding among faculty, staff, and other students on campus that families are part of their college community. Student parents feel more welcome on campuses when the college is aware of their unique needs and is invested in helping them succeed.

“A barrier that I had was when I was homeless... [The family support staff] made sure that we had dinner. They actually packed us a big box for the whole winter break. Just to have ...snacks to have in the car and just eat with us and stuff like that. So, they were really **there for us.”**

- Student Parent at Tacoma Community College

For many Head Start families, enrolling in school can trigger anxiety based on negative previous educational experiences. Having an on-campus center that serves student parents, particularly when it provides one-on-one support through Head Start’s family engagement services, can make them feel that their campus is intentionally working to accommodate their needs, alleviating anxiety associated with the prospect of enrolling in college. They are also exposed to other student parents who have similar life experiences, giving them access to peer support and networking opportunities in a space where they feel comfortable and safe.

➤ **Introducing young children to college life.**

The children of student parents also benefit. Being present on a college campus from a young age helps children feel comfortable in higher education settings and can make it seem natural to them that they will enroll in college in the future. One college president interviewed described the experience of observing two young children looking at flyers for educational programs and remarking to each other how they were going to attend the college one day to pursue engineering.

“With a campus-based Head Start center, we are planting seeds in the minds of parents that they belong on a college campus. For the kids, we are making a college campus a familiar **part of their lives at an early age.**”

- Dr. Thomas A. Keegan, President, Skagit Valley College

➤ **Increased availability of infant care.**

Finding affordable infant care is especially challenging for college students with children. Head Start-college partnerships that involve Early Head Start or EHS-CCP grants can create opportunities to increase the supply of infant and toddler care for parents enrolled in college. These age-specific grant opportunities can support infant and toddler care when campus child care programs might otherwise not be able to afford to do so due to high staff-to-child ratio requirements and other regulations that make it expensive to provide care for a small number of children.

A handful of campus child care programs interviewed for this study were able to open new infant rooms by partnering with an EHS-CCP grantee or receiving an Early Head Start grant themselves. Two others were sought out for partnership by an EHS-CCP grantee because of their existing infant rooms.

Benefits to Head Start and Early Childhood Programs

➤ **Direct link to the college helps facilitate family goal attainment.**

Nearly 20 percent of Head Start families in 2017-18 expressed interest in pursuing GED, college, or job training programs (IWPR 2019b). It can be hard for Head Start family support staff to facilitate clear and simple pathways to college without existing relationships and knowledge of the college environment. The Office of Head Start has held a series of webinars since 2016 to provide Head Start staff with guidance on how to support family economic security; this series has included specific webinars on the benefits of connecting with local colleges and apprenticeship programs and how programs can build partnerships with them.²³

Head Start-college partnerships can provide a convenient, systematic process for Head Start programs to support parents' educational goals, with built-in relationships that facilitate access to college-based supports. Partnerships can also allow Head Start programs to connect with eligible parents who have already entered the college space, providing them access to eligible families who have taken a first step toward long-term economic self-sufficiency, and are likely to benefit from wraparound supports for postsecondary education. On-campus supports can dramatically increase educational attainment among families who are eligible for Head Start.

Head Start-college partnerships can provide a convenient, systematic process for Head Start programs to support **parents' educational goals, with built-in** relationships that facilitate access to college-based supports.

➤ **Opportunities to strengthen Head Start and the early education workforce.**

Partnerships between colleges and Head Start programs can help meet Head Start and other early education programs' training and credentialing needs. Head Start programs must meet credentialing requirements for early childhood providers established by the 2007 Head Start Reauthorization Act and can work with colleges to help their staff access certificate and degree programs. As of 2013, all Head Start lead teachers must have either an associate degree or a state certificate and half of all Head Start teachers must hold a bachelor's degree in early childhood education (45 CFR §1302.91(2)(ii)). Colleges are key partners for helping Head Start programs meet these credentialing requirements. As of

²³ Slides and webinar recording available at: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/family-support-well-being/article/building-foundations-economic-mobility-bfem-webinar-series>.

spring 2017, 143 Head Start centers were working with local colleges to train staff (Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation 2019).

Head Start-college partnerships on college campuses often work collaboratively with early childhood education departments. Partnership programs may coordinate with their early childhood education department to provide professional development opportunities for staff. Campus-based Head Start partnerships may also provide early childhood students with opportunities for classroom observation and experiential learning. Students who observe and fulfill practicum requirements at the campus center get to know staff, teachers, and families, contribute an extra set of hands in the classroom, and serve as ready recruits to fill vacant jobs. Many program directors interviewed by IWPR reported hiring students who had trained at their centers while enrolled.

Other college departments—like nursing and psychology—also use on-campus Head Start programs for training, which can bring reciprocal benefits to the Head Start programs. Students can assist with service delivery, through activities such as health assessments and screenings, literacy activities, social work support for families, and parent education.

Off-campus Head Start programs often collaborate with college’s early childhood departments to create an educational pathway to early childhood credentials. In those cases, college faculty from the early childhood education department can teach credit-bearing courses for Head Start parents, and the department staff work with the college to make sure rules and regulations are followed to allow parents to receive credit for their participation.

➤ **Access to resources through integration of administrative and other services with the college system.**

On-campus Head Start-college partnerships are often integrated into the college system—e.g. center staff are employees of the college and the center is housed in one of the main college departments, such as student services. While this can create some complexity, which is discussed in more detail below, it can also benefit programs by alleviating the need to manage various aspects of the program, such as payroll, custodial services, utility and maintenance services, security, or human resources. This can lead to significant cost savings, particularly when it includes free or highly subsidized rent, and reduces the administrative burden of program management for center directors and staff.

Integration into the college campus can also provide access to institution-specific funding sources, such as student fees, student government funds, capital investments that can go

toward center improvements like renovating the center’s playground, and work study funds that can allow programs to employ students to assist with program operations.

➤ **Opportunity to increase program enrollment.**

Head Start-college partnerships can also help Head Start overcome enrollment challenges. During the 2016-17 school year, enrollment in Head Start was at a record low, likely due in part to growing access to universal pre-kindergarten programs (Bassok 2012; Child Trends Data Bank 2015). Programs with take-up challenges might increase enrollment by targeting the student parents who qualify for Head Start.

Benefits to Colleges and Universities

➤ **Meet enrollment and completion goals.**

In light of declining college enrollment and ambitious postsecondary attainment goals set by nearly every state in the country, increasing enrollment and completion rates are paramount for institutions (National Student Clearinghouse 2019). With the knowledge that these goals cannot be met without bringing adult students, many of whom have children, into the college space, partnerships between college campuses and Head Start programs provide a unique opportunity to provide highly affordable child care opportunities to parents with low incomes who may have never considered pursuing a postsecondary credential, and who would need child care to enroll. These parents would be more likely to persist and complete with access to Head Start care, given what is known about the role of accessible campus-based child care and other wraparound supports provided by Head Start in student parents’ educational outcomes (as discussed above).

“We’re student-focused and student-centered. Our goal is to increase the number of students who have the opportunity to complete and graduate... [the on-campus Head Start partnership is] a service that is needed to help with completion.”

- Elaine Williams Bryant, Dean of Student Services, Olympic College

➤ **On-site training opportunities for students.**

Campus-based Head Start programs, either combined with other child care services or on their own, provide valuable sites for training students in a range of departments, in addition to early childhood students. Head Start-college partnerships located on college campuses allow early childhood education students to observe high-quality early childhood settings and complete practicums onsite at their college rather than traveling to offsite locations. This provides exposure to Head Start quality standards and

requirements at the outset of their careers, increasing their likelihood of seeking out employment at Head Start programs once entering the workforce. It also offers students the opportunity to work with a more economically diverse group of students than those who would attend a center that is only open to faculty and staff.

“I encourage students to complete their practicum in a Head Start classroom. I want them to train in a setting that will allow them to grow.”

- Alexis Meyers, Early Childhood Education Department Chair,
Skagit Valley College

Many program leaders reported that students from the college often took jobs at their on-campus centers, helping the programs recruit workers and helping students get jobs. Students from other departments, such as nursing, dentistry, social work, and others may train at on-campus centers as well, providing an opportunity to learn firsthand how to work with young children—an experience that is not easily replicable without an on-campus child care center.

➤ **Helps institutions fulfill their missions to students and to the community.**

Head Start-college partnerships allow the college to take a holistic approach to promoting the economic success of its students, who will go on to build economic security for their families and contribute to their communities. College leaders interviewed for this study are committed to their Head Start-college partnerships, viewing them as a vital service for meeting the needs of low-income student parents and first-generation college students. College leaders also view their partnerships as an important contribution to the broader community by training and strengthening the local early childhood workforce.

Challenges Faced by Head Start-College Partnerships

➤ **Coordinating Head Start and college systems.**

Head Start is a complex program to administer, with complicated reporting and regulatory requirements that demand knowledge and staff capacity. Combining such a complex system with the administrative requirements of higher education systems can be challenging. College program leaders and campus staff and administrators described a number of obstacles, including covering unionized staff salaries and benefits with inadequate Head Start reimbursement rates; mismatches between the college’s academic schedule and the Head Start program calendar; and providing continuity of care for children whose parents’ access to Head Start is tied to continuous college enrollment.

➤ **Meeting disparate regulatory and reporting requirements.**

In addition to complying with rules and regulations associated with operating on a college campus, Head Start-college partnership programs—and most child care centers more generally—must often also meet the requirements and rules of multiple funding sources. Head Start funding covers the equivalent of a maximum of six hours a day, so to meet the care demands of student parents, who often need full-day care, programs must utilize a range of other funding sources that come with their own regulations and requirements (45 CFR § 1302.21(c)(2)). These sources can include Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funding, state pre-kindergarten funding, and the CCAMPIS grant, among others. In addition, programs often seek out accreditation and work to achieve high Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) ratings, which have their own set of reporting and quality requirements. Partnership directors must navigate a series rules and reporting requirements that may overlap but are largely unaligned.

“There are so many requirements for Head Start that are not required for normal child care and these make it more expensive. It is tough to make it all work and do it well with existing funding.”

- Campus Child Care Center Director

➤ **Maintaining awareness and buy-in.**

Campus-wide awareness and buy-in is essential to maximizing the benefits of the partnership for the Head Start program (e.g. coordination with the early childhood education department), for student parents (e.g. ensuring that campus services are referring student parents to the center), and for the college (e.g. improving students’ persistence and providing opportunities for onsite training). It requires center staff to engage in ongoing awareness campaigns to ensure that campus administrators, staff, and faculty members know about the program and understand the role it plays for student success.

“I think one of the largest difficulties that we have is the disconnect between what it is that we do, beyond just being a child care center, and that we serve as an educational function for the college itself.

- Cynthia Savini, Program Director, Sophia Bremer Child Development Center, Olympic College

In many college settings, administrator turnover creates a particular challenge, as differing levels of commitment to the campus child care center leads to uncertainty

among program leaders. Programs reported raising awareness by meeting regularly with college admissions and counseling staff and early childhood education faculty to check in on the center's needs, the students' needs, and the campus' needs.

➤ **Funding constraints.**

Obtaining funding is an overarching challenge for existing and potential new Head Start-college partnerships. Expert interviewees stressed the difficulty associated with receiving a Head Start grant as a first-time applicant, given that there is little funding beyond what is needed for existing grantees. Applying for Head Start partnership grants also requires an existing relationship between Head Start and partner organizations. A college applicant would require capacity and knowledge related to the Head Start system, and pre-planning to allow college or campus child care programs to respond quickly to funding opportunity announcements, which often give a short window for response.

For existing partnerships, Head Start funding is often not sufficient to cover the full cost of running a center. Though this challenge faces most programs receiving Head Start funding, not just those that partner with colleges, it can create tension with the school administration, who may not be familiar with how early childhood funding operates and the common challenges that face all child care providers. In addition, colleges are often dealing with significant financial resource constraints related to declining state funding in higher education (which is a particular problem for community colleges), making decisions about where to invest limited dollars more difficult. For administrators who may not understand the fundamental role of campus child care in promoting student persistence and completion, the costs of maintaining a child care center can seem burdensome and extraneous to the college's core academic mission.

For administrators who may not understand the fundamental role of campus child care in promoting student persistence and completion, the costs of maintaining a child care center can seem burdensome and **extraneous to the college's core academic mission.**

To provide adequate hours of care to meet students' needs, which can mean full-day, year-round care, colleges must often supplement Head Start funding with other sources. While Head Start has begun to encourage extended programming through "duration grants," in general, grantees are only required to provide at least 3.5 hours of care per day, meaning many Head Start programs only offer part-day classes (45 CFR § 1302.21; National Head Start Association 2016). Head Start's strong focus on kindergarten readiness, might, in some cases, obscure the reality that family support for parents often requires more hours to achieve economic self-sufficiency goals.

➤ **Concerns about demonstrating that parents in college are a high-need population**

Some experts interviewed for this study questioned whether communities would be able to effectively demonstrate that parents in college are a high-need population for the purposes of their Head Start applications, and some voiced concern that campus-based Head Start programs might divert funds from the lowest-income families in a community. Other experts, however, recognized that supporting parents in college would be an important strategy for supporting career pathways among Head Start parents.

Many of the Head Start-college partnerships featured in this report have, in fact, established a need for priority enrollment for student parents. Head Start grant applicants and grantees can provide priority enrollment to specific target populations by demonstrating a particular community need (45 CFR § 1302.14).

A sense that college students with children would not constitute a high-need population may reflect a historic lack of information and awareness about the large share of college students, and particularly community college students, who are working adults and parents, as well as a lack of awareness of the high rates of material hardship that college students experience, and the connections that do exist between colleges and Head Start programs.

As discussed earlier in this report, a significant share of college students are parents of young children—22 percent of U.S. undergraduates—and 46 percent of student parents with children under age 6 are income-eligible for Head Start (Figure 2; IWPR 2019a). Recent research on hardship among college students also finds that parents in community college are especially likely to have difficulty meeting basic needs related to food and housing (Goldrick-Rab et al. 2019).

Bachelor's degree-granting institutions may be especially unaware of the presence of low-income parents on their campuses. IWPR's research found that 4 of the 34 Head Start-college partnerships involving four-year colleges or universities serving students prioritize them for slots, compared with 20 of the 44 partnerships with community colleges. Eight of the partnerships with four-year schools explicitly do not serve students, compared with none of the community college-based partnerships.

While many student parents are likely to be income-eligible for Head Start, however, they could be experiencing less overall need than other Head Start families, though the question has not been tested by research. Some might argue that college attendance, in itself, signifies a higher degree of advantage than what is likely to be experienced by the Head Start population overall. One could argue, however, that if the Head Start program

is to make significant progress toward its goals of promoting long-term economic well-being among its participants, that supporting those in workforce development programs, including college, is an important strategy. Head Start programs that prioritize college students might be best situated in communities that already have a strong Head Start infrastructure serving clients throughout the community, to ensure that parents and children with a variety of life circumstances, including those who are interested in college, have the opportunity for support.

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Keys to Making Head Start-College Partnerships Work

- **Relationship building and continuous communication is essential to creating sustainable, well-functioning partnerships.**

All interviewees stressed the role of relationship building as essential to the success of Head Start-college partnerships. Program leaders and college administrators and staff emphasized that relationship building should start at the earliest stages of partnership development and continue over time as the partnership develops and matures. This involves ensuring buy-in and commitment from partners to spending the time and effort to develop and maintain a successful partnership; establishing open lines of communication between Head Start and college leadership; regular communication among Head Start staff and college faculty, staff, and administration; providing transparency about potential challenges from both sides of the partnership; and devoting time to ensuring that partners have a clear and reasonable understanding of their roles, constraints, and expectations.

“Partnerships work when both entities give and take; when there is a symbiotic relationship where partners are supporting one another and are **super collaborative.”**

- Kristen Sheridan, Director of Early Learning,
Olympic Educational Service District

Programs take a variety of approaches to maintaining relationships and communication. The Community Colleges of Spokane, for example, formalized relationships between the

Head Start program director and college leadership by having the Head Start director report directly to the chancellor. They also placed a college trustee on the Head Start Policy Council and had the Head Start program director attend Board of Trustee meetings. Other programs rely on less formal relationships, but still make sure to keep communication lines open between the Head Start program and key college leaders who are integral to sustaining the program, such as the Dean of Student Services and the Dean of Finance. In cases where relationships are tenuous, or where Head Start leaders are not systematically integrated into college decision-making, partnerships experience heightened uncertainty.

Several programs emphasized the importance of key relationships, such as with college administrators who handle risk management, grants and development, human resources, and payroll; between Head Start family support staff and staff from the recruitment, financial aid, academic counseling, registrar, and other student support offices; and with the early childhood education faculty and dean, and among other faculty whose students may need training to work with children. These relationships promote mutual awareness of available resources and can smooth interactions for students and for staff as they navigate the two systems.

➤ **Buy-in from college leaders and the campus community maximizes benefits to partners and families.**

Some college leaders recognize how Head Start’s mission strengthens the college’s ability to meet student need and serve the surrounding community. Acknowledging mission alignment is crucial to helping programs navigate challenges related to budget shortages, risk and liability management, and quality regulations.

“...It needs to be [looked at as] more of an investment in what [is needed] for students and [the] community.”

- Dexter Smith, Child Development Center Director,
Truman College at City Colleges of Chicago

Some programs promote buy-in from the broader campus community through visible engagement with activities on campus in collaboration with faculty members and students. For example, one program described hosting an on-campus family soccer night on the college’s turf field with Head Start families and student soccer players. At the event, families are able to learn more about campus resources and enrollment. Programs also promote buy-in by conducting campus education campaigns on the service that Head Start provides to student parents, and by working with student government to get

them involved with the program.

➤ **Supporting students “where they are” promotes college and family success.**

IWPR’s interviews and site visits suggest that Head Start’s family engagement services are effective in supporting parents while they pursue postsecondary education. Family engagement staff are well-equipped to provide the kind of personalized, intensive support to student parents with a range of needs and goals. When these staff have access to campus support services and knowledge of the college’s systems, they are better able to help parents meet their educational goals. These staff are often able tailor support to address individual students’ needs and help them overcome obstacles that might otherwise derail their progress.

The support provided by family engagement staff can also be invaluable for Head Start parents who are not yet enrolled in college but who have education or career goals that require higher credentials. For Head Start-college partnerships that provide pipelines to credentials by offering credit-bearing courses at the Head Start site, family engagement staff help parents enter (or re-enter) college by providing guidance and one-on-one support throughout the process. As parents become familiar and comfortable with the idea of college by taking classes at a familiar, off-site Head Start facility, transferring to the campus to continue their education becomes a more realistic possibility.

➤ **Provide continuity of care for children whose parents’ access to Head Start is tied to continuous college enrollment.**

Head Start-college partnerships must ensure that families receive continuous care for young children, even in the face of irregular enrollment patterns. Student parents often need to take breaks from school to deal with life circumstances; their access to campus child care should not be threatened in these cases. Continuity of care is linked to a range of benefits for children, such as stronger attachments that can facilitate healthy child development, as well as benefits for families and caregivers (for a review of literature, see McMullen 2018). Affordable, high quality campus child care services, like those offered by Head Start, are strong incentives for student parents to remain enrolled or to re-enroll after taking a break from school; they should be seen as mechanisms for promoting retention, in addition to the role they play in promoting children’s development and success. Rules that require credit enrollment to remain eligible for services should build in the flexibility for student parents to moderate their enrollment as needed to maximize benefits for children and act as a continued source of support for parents.

➤ Braiding and blending funding

Braiding and blending funding from a range of federal, state, and institutional sources can help support Head Start-college partnerships and the student parents they serve. Most programs interviewed for this study report braiding and blending at least one or two funding streams, in addition to Head Start. Most commonly, Head Start funding is combined with CCDF child care subsidies, though many also utilize state pre-kindergarten funding, state QRIS funds, private pay, and CCAMPIS funding. Some on-campus centers receive financial support from the college itself, through capital investments, student fees, student government funds, or scholarship funds (usually funded through a college foundation or endowment).

Braiding and blending funding can also allow centers to offer more hours of care to support student parents than may be provided by Head Start. While the process of braiding and blending can lend complexity to program maintenance, it provides a diverse foundation of funding that can enhance program sustainability.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Partnerships between Head Start and higher education institutions represent an opportunity to integrate essential education and family supports for parents and their children, increasing the chances for both to succeed. In the right context and with the right partners, Head Start-college partnerships can strengthen colleges' ability to serve students who have caregiving responsibilities and improve their academic outcomes; expand opportunities to train highly-skilled and in-demand early childhood educators; create new connections between colleges and their communities; and promote parents' ability to persist and complete education and strengthen their chances of establishing family economic security.

Maximizing the potential of these partnerships to benefit families, colleges, and Head Start programs requires strategic leadership, policy, and investment:

- 1) Policymakers should increase funding for existing and new Head Start grantees, in addition to greater funding for the child care system through the Child Care Development Fund and other early childhood funding streams.
- 2) Policymakers should support campus child care through increased availability of federal and state funds, such as state pre-kindergarten funding, dedicated state funding for infant care, and the federal CCAMPIS grant program.

- 3) Policymakers should designate funding for communities with high need for affordable, high-quality care among student parents to provide Head Start services on college campuses, without taking funding away from the existing need for Head Start funding among current and prospective grantees. Alternatively, new Head Start funding could be devoted to ensuring more Head Start services are offered at colleges with high demonstrated need among eligible student parents.
- 4) The Office of Head Start or nonprofit partners could build capacity for exploring and establishing new partnerships by providing technical assistance to communities interested in offering campus-based Head Start services, informed by the experiences of existing partnerships. Technical assistance is needed around how communities can establish the need for Head Start among local college students, including understanding the economic circumstances of the college population in their community and describing how Head Start will promote pathways out of poverty and to family economic security; and around potential partnership models. With additional funding, a process could also be established for staff at existing partnerships to mentor communities and colleges working to set up new partnerships.
- 5) Colleges interested in bringing Head Start services onto their campus, or connecting students with child care needs with local Head Start programs, should contact Head Start Regional Directors or local grantees to initiate those conversations. Likewise, Head Start grantees interested in serving the student parent population in their community should reach out to existing campus child care center directors, if available, or to student services staff and administrators.
- 6) Colleges and Head Start partnership programs should recognize that student parents often do not move through college pathways in a linear fashion and establish policies that enable students who are receiving Head Start services on campus to take enrollment breaks without jeopardizing their child care.

Appendix A. Methodology

This report is informed by a literature review, a program scan, expert and program leader interviews, and site visits to Head Start-college partnership programs all conducted from 2018 to 2019. IWPR identified partnerships through a number of sources, including the National Head Start Association, the Head Start Program Information Report (PIR), the Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center (ECLKC) website, and through expert interviews. IWPR defined Head Start-college partnerships broadly as formal or informal relationships between colleges and any type of Head Start program.

IWPR identified 82 partnerships between Head Start and higher education institutions. IWPR staff reviewed program websites to ascertain basic characteristics of the partnerships, such as whether the programs serve students from the college, whether they are located on a college campus, and whether they partner with a campus child care center. IWPR had brief telephone conversations and/or emailed programs for which it was unable to confirm all necessary details through its desk review. IWPR had brief telephone conversations with 48 programs (and was unable to reach 8 after repeated tries). From this research, IWPR found that 62 of the total 82 partnerships identified serve student parents, 24 of which prioritize student parents for services (see Appendix E for a list of Head Start-college partnerships serving student parents that IWPR identified).

Based on the program scan, IWPR invited 36 of the 62 Head Start-college partnership programs whose programs serve student parents for phone interviews, 12 of which did not respond and 24 of which expressed interest in scheduling a call. Programs contacted for an interview were chosen loosely based on whether IWPR had a referral or connection; whether they were at a four- or two-year institution, with an emphasis on community colleges (where the largest share of student parents are enrolled); their geographic location, with an interest in geographic variety as well as understanding more about concentrations of partnerships, such as in Washington State; and whether they received specific types of Head Start funding, such as EHS-CCP Head Start grants.

IWPR successfully scheduled and conducted 22 program leader interviews (two of the scheduled calls did not show and were never interviewed; see Appendix C for a list of program leader interviews). IWPR asked program leaders about the characteristics of their programs, factors they thought were necessary for establishing their Head Start-college partnerships, the challenges they face, and the benefits they perceive from the partnership.

IWPR researchers also conducted 19 phone interviews with Head Start and early childhood experts (see Appendix B for a list of experts interviewed for this study).

Interviewers asked experts about their perspectives on the feasibility of Head Start-college partnerships to help serve the child care needs of student parents and support their college persistence; whether they knew of partnerships that had not already been identified; and which federal or state policies might pave the way for expanding these partnerships in the future.

From the information gathered from the expert and program leader interviews, IWPR scheduled program site visits (see Appendix D for a list of site visits). IWPR's site visits were intended to give researchers a deeper understanding of how these partnerships are established and maintained and the benefits and challenges perceived by partners and parents. They also sought to identify promising program models or practices that could be lifted up as examples of what can work.

Sites were considered for visits based on a combination of factors, such as the presence of a mission or stated intention to serve students with children; program characteristics, such as how long they have been in operation and/or offered Head Start, typical number of student parents served, and how Head Start services are provided (e.g. whether they provided an integrated program model, where Head Start standards are applied in every classroom regardless of how children's services were funded); location on or near a campus; and geographic proximity to other Head Start-college partnership sites, for the sake of efficiency.

After reaching out to 11 potential programs, IWPR scheduled visits with 6. The sites that were ultimately chosen were selected because they were all located on or near college campuses and nearly all had integrated classrooms, meaning all children and parents received at least some Head Start services, in addition to travel convenience. IWPR focused visits in two areas that were identified as having concentrations of partnerships (Washington State and City Colleges of Chicago) to allow visits to a larger number of programs per trip, and to explore how concentrations of programs came to be and the extent to which they were a part of coordinated systems.²⁴

During the site visits, IWPR conducted interviews with 62 individuals, including Head Start and child care center directors, teachers, and family engagement staff; 11 student parents served by the partnership programs; college administrators, such as deans of early childhood education, vice presidents of student services, as well as four college presidents; early childhood faculty, and other campus staff. IWPR explored themes such as: characteristics of the program and its relationship with the college; challenges related to funding, systems integration, and meeting students' care needs; benefits related to

²⁴ IWPR also attempted to visit one program that informed IWPR on the day of the visit that it lacked administrative permissions to participate in a research study.

supporting student parents, collaboration with the early childhood department, and strengthening the early childhood workforce; and the factors that can lead to strong partnerships.

Appendix B. List of Expert Interviews

Rae Anderson

Former Director
National Center on Early Head Start
Child Care Partnerships, Zero to Three
Washington, DC

Kiersten Beigel

*Family and Community Partnership
Specialist*
Office of Head Start, Administration for
Children and Families, U.S. Department
of Health and Human Services
Washington, DC

Jacqueline Chu

*Managing Director for Finance &
Administration*
Center for Supportive Schools
New York City Department of Education
New York, NY

Patty Cole

Senior Director of Federal Policy
Zero to Three
Washington, DC

Yvette Sanchez Fuentes

Deputy Chief of Public Policy
Child Care Aware of America
Arlington, VA

Cathy Garland

*Washington State Head Start
Collaboration Administrator*
Olympia, WA

Scott Groginsky

*Former Senior Advisor for Policy and
Effective Practice*
National Head Start Association
Denver, CO

Mary Harrill

*Senior Director, Higher Education
Accreditation and Program Support*
National Association for the Education of
Young Children
Washington, DC

Lauren Hogan

*Senior Director of Public Policy and
Advocacy*
National Association for the Education of
Young Children
Washington, DC

Victoria Jones

Senior Manager of Data and Research
National Head Start Association
Alexandria, VA

Sandy Junker

*Retired Head Start/Early Head Start
Director*
Lower Columbia College
Longview, WA

Joan Lombardi, Ph.D

Senior Advisor
Buffett Early Childhood Foundation and
Bernard van Leer Foundation
Washington, DC

Anna Lovejoy
Senior Associate
Center for the Study of Social Policy
Washington, DC

Anne Mitchell
President
Early Childhood Policy Research
Albany, NY

Eri Noguchi, Ph.D
Chief Program Officer
Association to Benefit Children
New York, NY

Shannon Rudisill
Executive Director
Early Childhood Funders' Collaborative
Falls Church, VA

Joel Ryan
Executive Director
Washington State Association of Head
Start & Early Childhood Education and
Assistance Program
Seattle, WA

Louisa Tarullo, Ed.D
Director of Early Childhood Research
Mathematic Policy Research
Washington, DC

Yasmina Vinci
Executive Director
National Head Start Association
Alexandria, VA

Appendix C. List of Program Leader Interviews

Patty Allen

District Director
Spokane Head Start
Spokane, WA

Suzanne Boursaw

Former Head Start Director
Lower Columbia College
Longview, WA

Janae Bradford

Assistant Director, Family Advancement
Community Action Program (CAP) Tulsa
Tulsa, OK

Laura Cameron

Education Specialist
The Garrison Center for Early Childhood
Education, Montachusett Opportunity
Council (MOC)
Gardner, MA

Carla Clark

Executive Director
Shasta Head Start
Redding, CA

Ann Coldwater

Faculty Instructor & CCAMPIS Project
Director
San Antonio College
San Antonio, TX

Steven Dow

Executive Director
Community Action Program (CAP) Tulsa
Tulsa, OK

Sue Elder

Former Executive Director
Clackamas County Children's
Commission
Milwaukie, OR

Arlise Ford

Director of Social Services
Early Head Start and Head Start
Program, Education Alliance
New York, NY

Carol Hartman

Director of Policy and System Reform
(Retired)
Georgia Department of Early Care and
Learning
Atlanta, GA

Renee Hernandez Greenfield

Early Childhood Campus Children's
Center Director
Tacoma Community College
Tacoma, WA

Shauna Lower

Director, UKids Head Start and Early
Head Start
University of Utah
Salt Lake City, UT

Mary Ellen Lykins

Director, Early Learning Grant Programs
Skagit Valley College
Mt. Vernon, WA

Carol Morrison

Executive Director
Governors State University Family
Development Center
University Park, IL

Sue Norton

*Management Coordinator, Child and
Family Education*
Lane Community College
Eugene, OR

My Le Pham

Director, Early Head Start
Rancho Santiago Community College
District
Santa Ana, CA

Mary Margaret Reynolds

Special Projects Manager
Head Start of Lane County
Eugene, OR

Pilar Rivella

Executive Director, Early Head Start
Early Head Start San Antonio
San Antonio, TX

Tim Rochholz

Human Resource Director
Head Start of Lane County
Eugene, OR

Cynthia Savini

*Director, Sophia Bermer Child
Development Center*
Olympic College
Bremerton, WA

LaToya Threatt

Executive Director
St. Clair County Head Start
Pell City, AL

Emily Verok

Family Services Coordinator
The Garrison Center for Early Childhood
Education, Montachusett Opportunity
Council (MOC)
Gardner, MA

Sherry Waugh

*Program Director, Child and Family
Research Center*
University of Nevada, Reno
Reno, NV

Jane Weichel, Ph.D

*Director for Community Programs and
Engagement*
Schoenbaum Family Center, Ohio State
University
Columbus, OH

Appendix D. List of Site Visits

Bigfoot Child Care Center at Spokane Community College

Spokane, Washington

Child Development Laboratory Schools at Harry S. Truman College, City Colleges of Chicago

Chicago, Illinois

Early Learning Center at Spokane Falls Community College

Spokane, Washington

Early Learning Center at Tacoma Community College

Tacoma, Washington

Skagit Islands Head Start, Skagit Valley Community College

Mount Vernon, Washington

Sophia Bremer Child Development Center at Olympic College

Bremerton, Washington

Appendix E. Head Start-College Partnerships Serving Student Parents

Program	Institutional Site or Affiliate	Grant Type	On- or Off-Campus	Institution Type	City	State
St. Clair County Head Start	Jefferson State Community College	HS	Head Start parent training	Two-year	Pell City	AL
Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership	University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff	EHS-CCP	Off-campus services	Four-year	Pine Bluff	AR
Southwest Human Development Early Head Start and Head Start	Phoenix College	HS, EHS, EHS-CCP	Campus-based services	Two-year	Phoenix	AZ
Glendale Community College Laboratory School	Glendale Community College	EHS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Glendale	CA
Shasta County Head Start Child Development	Shasta College	HS, EHS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Redding	CA
Cuesta College Children's Center	Cuesta College	EHS	Campus-based services	Two-year	San Luis Obispo	CA
Santa Ana College Early Childhood Education Center	Santa Ana College	HS, EHS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Santa Ana	CA
Discovery Child Development Center	College of the Siskiyous	HS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Weed	CA
Columbian Early Childhood Center	Otero Junior College Child Development Services	HS, EHS	Off-campus services	Two-year	La Junta	CO
University of Delaware Early Learning Center	University of Delaware	EHS	Off-campus services	Four-year	Newark	DE
Atlanta Technical College Early Education Center	Atlanta Technical College	EHS-CCP	Campus-based services	Two-year	Atlanta	GA
Fort Valley State University Head Start	Fort Valley State University	HS, EHS, EHS-CCP	Campus-based services	Four-year	Fort Valley	GA
North Idaho College Head Start	North Idaho College	HS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Coeur D Alene	ID

Program	Institutional Site or Affiliate	Grant Type	On- or Off-Campus	Institution Type	City	State
Child Development Laboratory Schools	City Colleges of Chicago (multiple campuses)	HS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Chicago	IL
Parent Pathways to Early Childhood Careers Program with Chicago Commons Head Start	City Colleges of Chicago	HS	Head Start parent training	Two-year	Chicago	IL
Governors State University Head Start	Governors State University	EHS	Campus-based services	Four-year	University Park	IL
Children's Learning Center	University of Southern Illinois	HS	Campus-based services	Four-year	Evansville	IN
Hiersteiner Child Development Center	Johnson County Community College	EHS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Overland Park	KS
Western Kentucky University Child Care Centers	Western Kentucky University	HS, EHS	Campus-based services	Four-year	Bowling Green	KY
The Garrison Center for Early Childhood Education	Mount Wachusett Community College	HS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Fitchburg	MA
Garrett County Maryland Community Action Committee, Inc.	Garrett College and Allegany College of Maryland	HS, EHS	Off-campus services	Two-year	Garrett County	MD
Eastern Maine Community College Child Care Center	Eastern Maine Community College	HS, EHS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Bangor	ME
Radcliff Center	Schoolcraft College	EHS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Livonia	MI
Cankdeska Cikana Community College Head Start	Cankdeska Cikana Community College	AIAN HS	Off-campus services	Two-year	Fort Totten	ND
Mayville State University Child Development Programs	Mayville State University	HS, EHS, EHS-CCP	Campus-based services	Four-year	Mayville	ND
Head Start at Manchester Community College	Manchester Community College	HS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Manchester	NH

Program	Institutional Site or Affiliate	Grant Type	On- or Off-Campus	Institution Type	City	State
Atlantic Cape Community College Head Start/Early Learning Center	Atlantic Cape Community College	HS, EHS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Mays Landing	NJ
Companeros/Head Start, La Clinica de la Familia Early Head Start, and Dona Ana County Head Start NMSU Classroom	New Mexico State University	HS, EHS	Campus-based services	Four-year	Las Cruces	NM
University of Nevada, Reno Head Start	University of Nevada	EHS	Campus-based services	Four-year	Reno	NV
Educational Alliance Head Start	City University of New York (CUNY)	HS, EHS	Off-campus services	Two-year	New York	NY
Robert L. Hutchinson Child Care Center	State University of New York (SUNY) Adirondack	HS, EHS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Queensbury	NY
Onandaga Community College Daycare	Onandaga Community College	HS, EHS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Syracuse	NY
Arlitt Center Head Start	University of Cincinnati	HS	Campus-based services	Four-year	Cincinnati	OH
Schoenbaum Family Center Early Head Start Partnership	The Ohio State University	EHS, EHS-CCP	Off-campus services	Four-year	Columbus	OH
Child Development Center	North Central State College	EHS-CCP	Campus-based services	Two-year	Mansfield	OH
Community Action Project of Tulsa County (CAP Tulsa)	Tulsa Community College	HS, EHS, EHS-CCP	Head Start parent training	Two-year	Tulsa	OK
Periwinkle Child Development Center	Linn-Benton Community College	HS, EHS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Albany	OR
Head Start of Lane County	Lane Community College	HS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Eugene	OR
SEEKERS Program, Head Start of Lane County	Lane Community College	HS, EHS	Head Start parent training	Two-year	Eugene	OR

Program	Institutional Site or Affiliate	Grant Type	On- or Off-Campus	Institution Type	City	State
Mt. Hood Community College Head Start	Mt. Hood Community College	HS, EHS, EHS-CCP	Campus-based services	Two-year	Gresham	OR
Family Resource Center	Clackamas Community College	HS, EHS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Oregon City	OR
Albina Head Start	Portland Community College Cascade Campus	HS, EHS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Portland	OR
Center Training Assistant Program	Portland Community College	HS, EHS	Head Start parent training	Two-year	Portland	OR
Shippensburg Head Start Program	Shippensburg University	HS	Campus-based services	Four-year	Shippensburg	PA
Wounspe Oaye Tokahe Early Head Start/Head Start Program	Oglala Lakota College	AIAN HS, EHS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Kyle	SD
The University of South Dakota Head start	The University of South Dakota	HS, EHS	Off-campus services	Four-year	Vermillion	SD
Early Childhood Education Center	Southwest Tennessee Community College-Union Avenue Campus	EHS-CCP	Campus-based services	Two-year	Memphis	TN
Texas Tech University Center for Early Head Start	Texas Tech University	EHS-CCP	Off-campus services	Four-year	Lubbock	TX
Center for New Communities Family Learning Center	San Antonio College	EHS	Campus-based services	Two-year	San Antonio	TX
Child Development Complex	Mt. San Antonio College	EHS	Campus-based services	Two-year	San Antonio	TX
Southern Utah University Head Start	Southern Utah University	HS	Off-campus services	Four-year	Cedar City	UT
U of U - West Village Child Care Center	University of Utah	HS, EHS	Campus-based services	Four-year	Salt Lake	UT
Sophia Bremer Child Development Center	Olympic College	HS, EHS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Bremerton	WA

Program	Institutional Site or Affiliate	Grant Type	On- or Off-Campus	Institution Type	City	State
Head Start & Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program	Lower Columbia College	HS, EHS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Longview	WA
Edmonds Community College Head Start/Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) and Early Head Start	Edmonds Community College	HS, EHS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Lynnwood	WA
Early Childhood Education Short Certificate Cohort	Skagit Valley College	HS, EHS	Head Start parent training	Two-year	Mount Vernon	WA
Skagit Islands Head Start & Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP)	Skagit Valley College	HS, EHS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Mount Vernon	WA
Bigfoot Child Care Center	Spokane Community College	HS, EHS, EHS-CCP	Campus-based services	Two-year	Spokane	WA
Early Learning Center	Spokane Falls Community College	HS, EHS, EHS-CCP	Campus-based services	Two-year	Spokane	WA
Early Learning Center	Bates Technical College	EHS-CCP	Campus-based services	Two-year	Tacoma	WA
Early Learning Center	Tacoma Community College	EHS	Campus-based services	Two-year	Tacoma	WA
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Head Start	University of Wisconsin	HS	Off-campus services	Four-year	Oshkosh	WI
Total Partnerships						62

Note: Partnership programs are defined as distinct opportunities for parents that involve a direct link to a college or university; in some cases, two partnership programs may involve the same college partner. For example, if a Head Start center serves students with children from the college partner and also has an early childhood credential program provided to Head Start parents in collaboration with that same college's early childhood education department, this situation is counted as two distinct partnership programs. This situation is present at four community colleges, City Colleges of Chicago (IL), Lane Community College (OR), Portland Community College (OR), and Skagit Valley College (WA), for a total of 6 partnerships counted in the total 62 programs identified.

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