

2014 VERMONT HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

09/13/2015

Vermont Head Start State
Collaboration Office (VHSSCO)



Submitted to:
U.S. Department of Health & Human
Services
Administration for Children and
Families
Office of Head Start

Prepared by:
Sheri Lynn, M.Ed., MCHES, Consultant
www.planchange.net

Submitted by:
Ben Allen, Ph.D., Director
VHSSCO
Vermont Department for Children and
Families
Child Development Division
www.dcf.vermont.gov/cdd



 **VERMONT**
DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
CHILD DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	
Executive Summary	5
Acknowledgements	9
Overview of Vermont Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO)	10
Head Start and Early Head Start in Vermont	12
Introduction	12
Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees	13
Oversight, Funding, and Enrollment	14
Program Options	14
Needs Assessment Process	17
Introduction	17
Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results (SOAR)	
Framework	17
Timing and Topical Content of Needs Assessment Survey	21
Methodology to Determine Collaboration Strengths and Opportunities	24
Determining the Relative Amounts of Collaboration Strengths and Collaboration Opportunities for Each Office of Head Start	
Priority for HSSCOs	25
Needs Assessment Findings	26
Organization and Content of Survey Findings	26
Child Care	26
Strengths	26
Opportunities	28
School Transitions: Prekindergarten Partnership Development	29
Strengths	29
Opportunities	32
School Transitions: Partnerships with Local Educational	

Agencies (LEAs)	32
Strengths	32
Opportunities	35
Services for Children from Birth to Age 3 with Disabilities under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	36
Strengths	37
Opportunities	38
Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness	38
Strengths	39
Opportunities	40
Professional Development	41
Strengths	41
Opportunities	45
Comments	45
Early Childhood System	46
Strengths	46
Opportunities	48
Services for Preschool-Aged Children with Disabilities under Part C of IDEA	49
Strengths	49
Opportunities	51
Services for Military Families	51
Strengths	51
Opportunities	53
Conclusions	55
Strengths and Opportunities	55
VHSSCO's Fourth Year Work Plan	56
Dissemination of Report to Strengthen Collaboration	56

Figures in the Narrative

Figure 1: Geographic Service Areas for Vermont’s Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees	13
Figure 2: Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results (SOAR) Framework	18
Figure 3: Comparison of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) and SOAR	19
Figure 4: Alignment of SWOT and SOAR – Focus on Positive and Participation	20
Figure 5: Crosswalk of Survey Content by Program Year, OHS Priorities for HSSCOs, and VHSSCO Five-Year Strategic Plan Goals	22
Figure 6: Extent of Involvement between Head Start Grantees and Child Care Organizations/Service Providers	27
Figure 7: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees to Engage in Child Care Activities	28
Figure 8: Extent of Involvement between Head Start Grantees and LEAs to Provide Prekindergarten	30
Figure 9: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees to Engage with LEAs in Coordinating MOU Activities	31
Figure 10: Extent of Involvement between Head Start Grantees and LEAs regarding the Transitions of Children from Head Start to Kindergarten	33
Figure 11: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees to Engage in School Transitions Activities	34
Figure 12: School Transition Activities Most Often Put into Practice by Head Start Grantees to Support Successful Transitions for Head Start Children Entering Kindergarten	35
Figure 13: Extent of Involvement between Head Start Grantees and Organizations Serving Preschool-Aged Children with Disabilities under Part B of IDEA	37
Figure 14: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees Coordinating Services for Preschool-Aged Children with Disabilities under Part B of IDEA	38

Figure 15: Extent of Involvement of Head Start Grantees with Organizations/Service Providers Supporting Children Experiencing Homelessness	39
Figure 16: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees to Engage in Activities for Children Experiencing Homelessness	40
Figure 17: Extent of Involvement of Head Start Grantees with Professional Development Organizations/Service Providers	43
Figure 18: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees to Engage in Professional Development Activities	45
Figure 19: Extent of Involvement between Head Start Grantees with Early Childhood System Organizations/Service Providers	47
Figure 20: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees to Engage in Early Childhood System Activities	48
Figure 21: Extent of Involvement between Head Start Grantees and Organizations/Service Providers Serving Children from Birth to Age 3 with Disabilities	50
Figure 22: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees to Engage in Activities for Children from Birth to Age 3 with Disabilities	51
Figure 23: Extent of Involvement between Head Start Grantees and Organizations Serving Military Families	52
Figure 24: Degree of Difficulty of Head Start Grantees to Engage in Activities for Military Families	53

Appendices

Appendix A

List of Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees	57
--	----

Appendix B

References	59
------------	----

2014 Vermont Head Start and Early Head Start Needs Assessment Report

Vermont Head Start State Collaboration Office

Executive Summary

Under the Head Start Act, the Vermont Head Start State Collaboration Office (VHSSCO) is required to conduct and update annually a needs assessment of Head Start grantees in the State of Vermont in the areas of coordination, collaboration, and alignment of services, curricula, assessments, and standards used in Head Start grantees, such as aligning the *Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework* with the *Vermont Early Learning Standards* (VELS). The VHSSCO used the findings to inform the implementation of its Five-Year (2012-2017) Strategic Plan, including the Fourth-Year Work Plan. The VHSSCO submitted its fourth-year work plan on July 1, 2015, and the federal Region I – Office of Head Start (OHS) approved it on August 26, 2014.

The VHSSCO applied the Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations & Results (SOAR) framework to inform the 2013-2014 needs assessment process and web-survey questions. The SOAR framework is a strengths-based approach and reframes gaps or low levels of collaboration as opportunities for Head Start grantees to yield results through improving collaboration with their partners.

This needs assessment report for 2013-2014 program year used web-survey data collected from Head Start grantees during April 14 – June 23, 2014. The survey addressed seven of 11 OHS Priorities for Head Start State Collaboration Offices (HSSCOs). They are:

- 1) Child Care
- 2) School Transitions:
 - Head Start – Prekindergarten Partnership Development and
 - Partnerships with Local Educational Agencies
- 3) Services for Children with Disabilities
- 4) Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness
- 5) Professional Development
- 6) Early Childhood System
- 7) Services for Military Families

After analyzing the survey data, the VHSSCO found two overall patterns:

- 1) Collaboration Strengths in four of seven HSSCO Priorities:

- Child Care;
 - School Transitions -- Head Start – Prekindergarten Partnership Development and Partnerships with Local Educational Agencies;
 - Services for Children with Disabilities; and
 - Early Childhood System.
- 2) Collaboration Opportunities in three of seven HSSCO Priorities:
- Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness;
 - Professional Development; and
 - Services for Military Families.

Detailed charts with narratives related to each of the seven HSSCO Priorities form the body of this report and a brief summary of strengths and opportunities in each Priority is noted below:

- **Child Care:** Overall, Head Start directors viewed this Priority as strength because there were 85 percent more strengths than opportunities. Strengths included high Head Start involvement with the Child Development Division which administers the Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP), child care licensing regulations, and the STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS); and committees of the Building Bright Futures (BBF) State Advisory Council, Inc. or BBF Regional Councils that address child care issues and high Head Start engagement in activities, such as assisting families to access full-day, full-year services; and coordinating child care subsidy certificates based on service need (e.g. employment, training/education, Reach Up, special health needs of parent); and getting involved with state-level planning and policy development for Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Block Grant. One opportunity was for Head Start grantees to improve their level of involvement with higher education programs and services related to child care.
- **School Transitions:** This Priority was a strength.
 - **Head Start – Prekindergarten Partnership Development:** During 2013-2014 program year, 100 percent of Head Start directors reported that they had a partnership agreement with a Local Educational Agency (LEA) responsible for managing a publicly funded pre-k program. The survey data revealed that there were 67 percent more strengths than opportunities associated with partnerships or MOUs between Head Start grantees and LEAs to provide prekindergarten.
 - **Head Start Partnerships with LEAs:** There were 88 percent more strengths than opportunities to improve partnerships between Head Start grantees and LEAs concerning the transitions of children from Head Start to kindergarten in elementary schools. Strengths included high Head Start involvement with LEAs regarding the transitioning of children from Head Start to kindergarten and

putting into practice various activities to support successful transitions for Head Start children entering kindergarten. An opportunity for Head Start grantees and elementary schools was increasing their engagement on organizing and participating in joint training, including transition-related training for school staff and Head Start staff.

- **Services for Children with Disabilities:** This Priority was identified as strength. All Head Start directors reported strengths in meeting their core service delivery responsibilities to support preschool-aged children with disabilities in Head Start in accordance with Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Regarding Head Start providing services for children from birth to age 3 with disabilities under Part C of IDEA, there were 33 percent more strengths than opportunities. Strengths were the low levels of difficulties for Head Start to engage in activities for children from birth to age 3 with disabilities. Opportunities included low Head Start involvement with Children’s Integrated Services (CIS) and university/community college programs.
- **Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness:** While Head Start programs have strong collaborative relationships with human service and affordable housing organizations, they had much weaker relationships with the Local McKinney-Vento homelessness liaison at the Vermont Agency of Education and with school district Title I directors. Keeping in mind this context, analysis of the survey findings revealed that there were 83 percent less strengths than opportunities to improve collaboration regarding services for children experiencing homelessness. The opportunities included the low levels of involvement between Head Start grantees and local McKinney-Vento homelessness liaisons and school district Title I directors and high degrees of difficulty for most Head Start grantees to engage with LEAs in the implementation of transition planning and family outreach and support efforts under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. On the other hand, the strengths were high Head Start engagement in the collection of sufficient data on the needs of homeless children to inform school transitions procedures.
- **Professional Development:** There were 36 percent less strengths than opportunities for improving collaboration. Opportunities concerned low Head Start involvement with institutions of higher education, the Head Start-funded national centers, state-level CIS, regional Reach Up offices, and LEA-offered school transitions and school readiness trainings. Strengths included high Head Start involvement with the Head Start state-based Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) System and low levels of difficulty transferring credits between public institutions of learning and obtaining staff release time to attend professional development activities.

- **Early Childhood System:** This Priority had 76 percent more strengths than opportunities. Strengths included low difficulties for Head Start grantees to engage in early childhood systems activities such as exchanging information and providing input to the BBF State Advisory Council and BBF Regional Councils; participating in STARS; engage in State efforts to unify early childhood data systems, and participating with various CIS teams and high levels of Head Start involvement with BBF Regional Councils, STARS, statewide efforts to unify early childhood data systems, and CIS referral and intake and administrative teams. Opportunities for improvement included Head Start involvement with the BBF State Advisory Council and the CIS Consultation Team.
- **Services for Military Families:** There were 45 percent less strengths than opportunities to overcome challenges. Strengths consisted of high Head Start involvement with Community Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies and low degrees of difficulty for Head Start grantees to support the referral process for military families and children and exchanging information on roles and resources with other providers/organizations regarding services for children of military families. Opportunities for improvement included low Head Start involvement with the Vermont National Guard Family Assistance Center and high levels of difficulty for Head Start grantees to assist families to access child care services on weekends and evenings.

The VHSSCO will share the results of this report publicly and with stakeholders. Through this process, the collaboration, coordination, and alignment of services, curricula, standards, and/or assessments between Head Start grantees and their partners will be strengthened for the benefit of young children and their families in Vermont.

Acknowledgements

The 2014 Vermont Head Start and Early Head Start Needs Assessment Report involved a number of individuals. The Vermont Head Start State Collaboration Office thanks the Vermont Head Start Association members for its commitment to the annual needs assessment project and for posting the report online. The VHSSCO thanks Sheri Lynn of Lynn Management Consulting for developing the 2013-2014 Head Start Needs Assessment web survey and for collecting, categorizing, and summarizing the survey responses.

We also thank the Head Start program directors and their staff for completing the web survey, the primary data collection tool. A complete list of these programs is included in Appendix A. We also appreciate the support provided by the Child Development Division, Department for Children and Families, Agency of Human Services, State of Vermont.



Overview of Vermont Head Start State Collaboration Office

The Vermont Head Start State Collaboration Office (VHSSCO) is part of a network of state, territorial, and national offices. Each of the 50 States, District of Columbia and Puerto Rico has a Head Start-State Collaboration Office. The National Collaboration Offices are the Head Start State and National Collaboration Offices (HSSNCO), the American Indian/Alaskan Native Head Start Collaboration Office (AIANHSCO) and the Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Collaboration Office (MSHSCO). Each of the State and national offices receive a federal Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) grant from the Office of Head Start (OHS), Administration for Children in Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. For a five-year project period: September 30, 2012-September 29, 2017, OHS committed to the State of Vermont to award an annual HSSCO grant “to facilitate collaboration among Head Start agencies, including Early Head Start agencies, and entities that carry out activities designed to benefit low income children from birth to school entry, and their families,”¹

The VHSSCO facilitates collaboration among Head Start agencies and State and local partners by

- Assisting in building early childhood systems;
- Providing access to comprehensive services and support for all low-income children;
- Encouraging widespread collaboration between Head Start and other appropriate programs, services, and initiatives;
- Augmenting Head Start's capacity to be a partner in state initiatives on behalf of children and their families; and
- Facilitating the involvement of Head Start in state policies, plans, processes, and decisions that affect target populations and other low-income families. (Office of Head Start, 2014a, <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/states/collaboration/about.html>)

The VHSSCO works with the OHS in Washington, DC and the Regional OHS in Boston, Massachusetts.

During the 2013-2014 program year, the VHSSCO's work was guided by OHS' 2011 *Head Start State and National Collaboration Offices Framework*. The framework called upon the VHSSCO to

¹ Head Start Act Section 642B(a)(2)(A)

address four goal areas in its five-year strategic plan: 1) School Transitions, 2) Professional Development, 3) Child Care and Early Childhood Systems, and 4) Regional Office Priorities.

Under the Head Start Act, the Head Start State Collaboration Offices (HSSCOs) are required to update annually, a statewide needs assessment. This 2014 assessment report covering the 2013-2014 program year identifies the strengths and opportunities for Head Start grantees to collaborate, coordinate and align services and programming of State and local entities and to align curricula and assessments used by Head Start grantees with the *Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework* and the *Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS)*.² The needs assessment results informed the development of the Fourth-Year (2015-2016) Work Plan of the VHSSCO Five-Year (2012-2017) Strategic Plan.

² Head Start Act, Section 642B(a)(3)(C)(i).

Head Start and Early Head Start in Vermont

Introduction

The Head Start Program promotes the school readiness of children from low-income families, from three-year olds up to five-year-olds not age-eligible for kindergarten. School readiness supports growth in five domains:

- Language and literacy,
- Cognitive (e.g., math, science, etc.)
- Social and emotional functioning,
- Physical skills, and
- Approaches to learning.

To achieve this goal, Head Start provides a comprehensive range of education, child development, health, nutrition, and family support services to Head Start enrolled children and their families.

The Early Head Start Program provides early, continuous, intensive, and comprehensive child development and family support services to low-income infants and toddlers and their families, and pregnant women and their families. The Early Head Start Program goals are:

- Providing safe and developmentally enriching caregiving which promotes the physical, cognitive, social and emotional development of infants and toddlers, and prepares them for future growth and development;
- Supporting parents, both mothers and fathers, in their role as primary caregivers and teachers of their children, and families in meeting personal goals and achieving self-sufficiency across a wide variety of domains;
- Mobilizing communities to provide the resources and environment necessary to ensure a comprehensive, integrated array of services and support for families;
- Ensuring the provision of high quality responsive services to family through the development of trained and caring staff (Office of Head Start, 2014b, <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/ehsnrc/Early%20Head%20Start/about.html>).

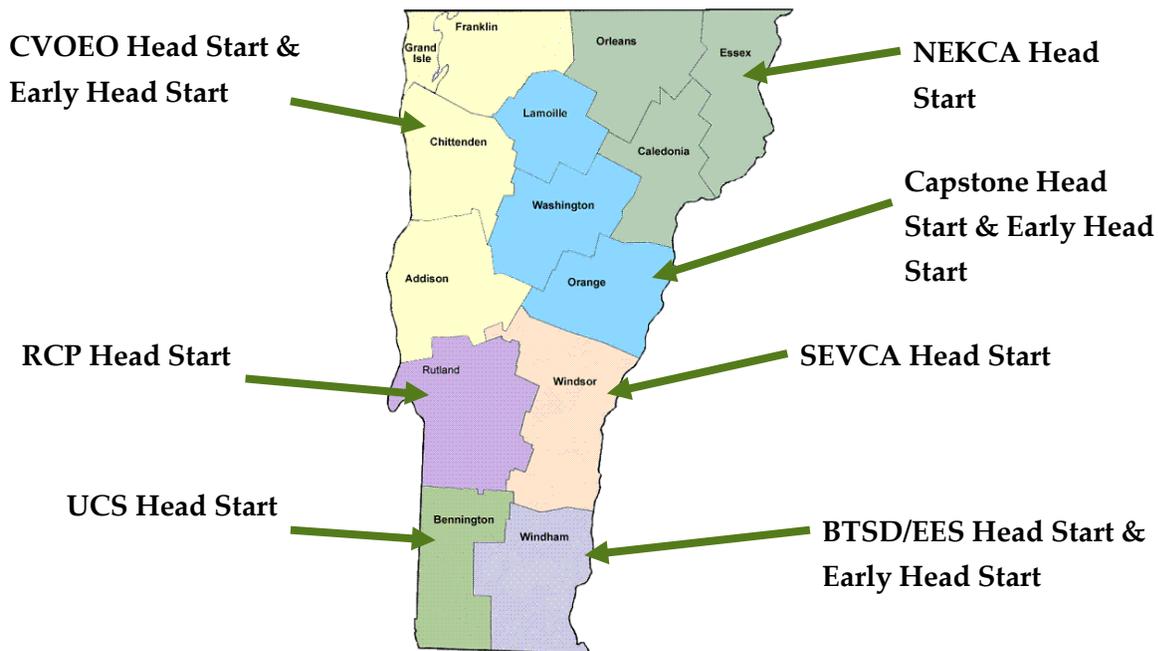
Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees

Head Start and Early Head Start grantees in Vermont are community-based organizations. Seven community-based organizations receive federal grants from OHS to operate seven Head Start programs. Four of the organizations also receive federal grants from OHS to operate the four Early Head Start programs in Vermont (see Figure 1). The types of organizations administering the programs are:

- Community Action Agencies: Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO), Capstone Community Action, and Northeast Kingdom Community Action (NEKCA) provide Head Start and Early Head Start services. Southeast Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) provides Head Start services.
- Mental Health Agencies: Rutland Community Programs, Inc. (RCP) and United Counseling Service (UCS) provide Head Start services.
- School District: Brattleboro Town School District/Early Education Services (BTSD/EES) provides Head Start and Early Head Start services.

Appendix A contains a list of the Head Start/Early Head Start directors and the counties served by Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

Figure 1: Geographic Service Areas for Vermont's Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees



Oversight, Funding, and Enrollment

OHS, located in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, oversees the operations of and provides the bulk of funding directly to Head Start programs. Under the Head Start Act, local public organizations, private non-profit agencies, and for-profit entities are eligible to receive federal grant funds and be a Head Start or Early Head Start grantee/provider.

Nevertheless, Head Start and Early Head Start programs in many States receive significant State funding from different sources to supplement their federal Head Start and Early Head Start grant funds. These State funding sources include: appropriations to fund state-funded Head Start and Early Head Start; state-funded pre-kindergarten dollars; and child care subsidy dollars (Allen, 2014, http://vermontheadstart.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/FINAL-Status_of_Head_Start-Pre-Kindergarten_Partnerships_in_Vermont_and_Nationally.pdf).

A local Head Start or Early Head Start program receives a five-year federal grant for 80 percent of its funding from OHS and must raise a 20 percent match of their total program's funding from non-federal contributions. The federal government allows Head Start/Early Head Start programs to use private, local, municipal, and State funding sources as part of their 20 percent match.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014 restored to Head Start and Early Head Start programs the federal funds that were cut by sequestration and provided a 1.3 percent cost-of-living increase for teachers and staff (Office of Head Start, 2014c, http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/pi/2014/resour_pri_001_021014.html). The Federal Fiscal Year 2014 base grant amounts of Head Start and Early Head Start programs in Vermont was \$15.2 million. The total ACF-funded enrollment of the seven Head Start programs and the four Early Head Start programs was 1,093 slots and 365 slots, respectively.³

Program Options

Based upon their respective community needs assessments and available annual funding, Head Start and Early Head Start grantees choose which program options to provide to meet the individual needs of young children and their families. The program options vary among the Head Start and Early Head Start grantees because individual grantees consider their community needs assessment data and choose program options which are best tailored to meet the needs of young children and families in their service areas (see Figure 1 and Appendix A).

³ The federal OHS Region I Office supplied the VHSSCO with the funding and slot figures on July 10, 2014.

One or more of seven Head Start grantees in Vermont during the 2013-2014 program year, offered the following program options:

- Center-based full day (at least six half hours daily) for five days per week;
- Center-based full-working-day (at least 10 hours daily) for five days per week;
- Center-based full-working-day (at least 10 hours daily) for five days per week for the full-year;
- Center-based part day (three and a half to six hours daily) for five days per week;
- Center-based full day (at least six hours daily) for four days per week;
- Center-based part day (three and a half to six hours daily) for four days per week;
- Home-based with one visit per week in a family's home for at least 32 home visits annually and with a minimum of 16 group socialization activities annually;
- Combination of services provided to children and their families in both a center setting and through intensive work with the child's parents and family in their home;
- Family child care option; and/or
- Family child care full-working-day (at least 10 hours daily), full-year.

In contrast with the standard OHS definition of full-year services to be at least 48 weeks annually, OHS lacks a standard definition of "full-year" Head Start services. The number of weeks that Head Start services are provided varies by grantee according to conditions of their grant award.

During the same year, one or more of four Early Head Start grantees in Vermont offered the following program options for at least 48 weeks annually:

- Center-based full day (at least six half hours daily) for five days per week;
- Center-based full-working-day for (at least 10 hours daily) five days per week;
- Center-based full-working-day (at least 10 hours daily) for five days per week for the full-year; and/or
- Home-based with one visit per week in a family's home for at least 32 home visits annually and with a minimum of 16 group socialization activities annually.

After the application, eligibility and enrollment processes are completed, families choose to enroll their children in available Head Start/Early Head Start program options.



Needs Assessment Process

Introduction

The 2013-2014 needs assessment process consisted of using Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations & Results (SOAR) framework, the drafting a web survey of Head Start grantees in consultation with the Head Start program directors, fielding the survey, and determining a methodology to analyze and describe the survey findings. This section of the report describes the SOAR framework; survey questionnaire's timing and topical content; types of survey questions; and methodology selected to analyze and patterns of collaboration from the survey findings.

Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results (SOAR) Framework

The Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations & Results (SOAR) framework is a strengths-based approach used by the VHSSCO to inform the 2013-2014 needs assessment process and web-survey questions. The survey findings informed the development of the fourth-year VHSSCO annual work plan. Figure 2 illustrates the SOAR framework process (Stavros and Hinrichs, 2014, <http://www.soar-strategy.com/>).

FIGURE 2: STRENGTHS, OPPORTUNITIES, ASPIRATIONS AND RESULTS (SOAR) FRAMEWORK



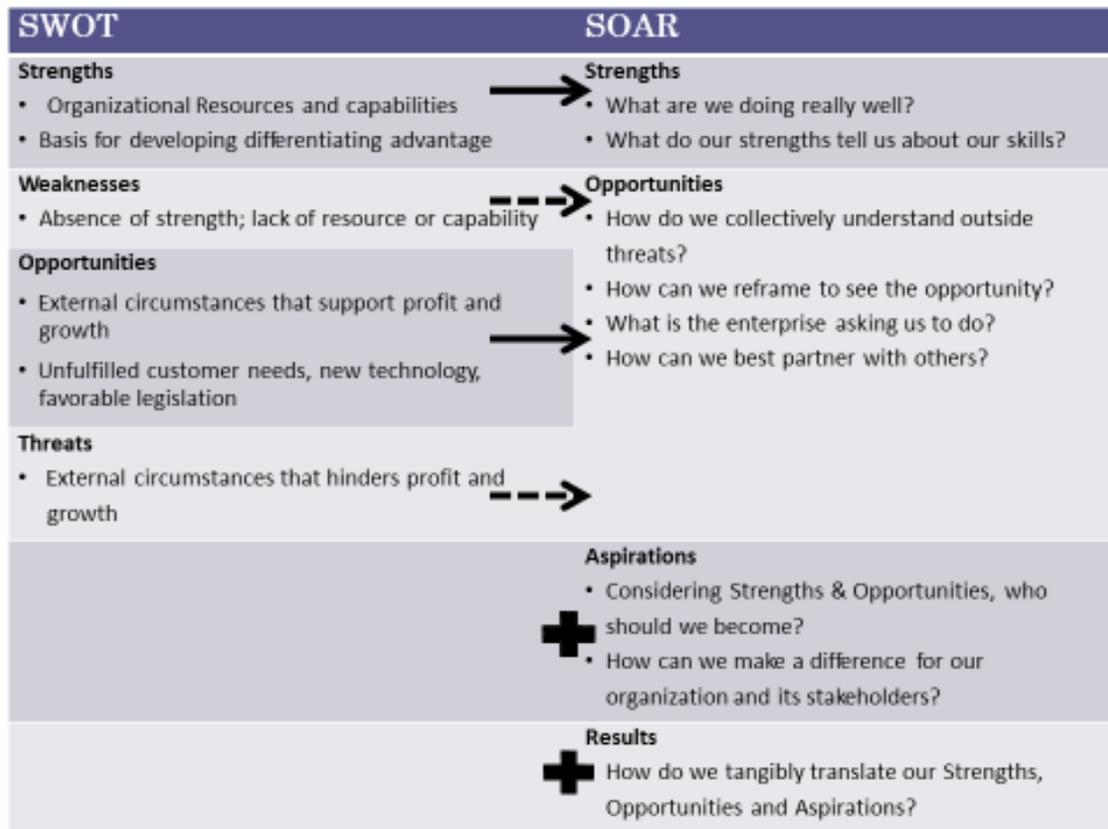
In contrast to the SOAR framework used in this report, the VHSSCO used the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analytical approach in 2011 to develop its VHSSCO Five-Year Strategic Plan. Comparing SOAR with SWOT, Silbert and Silbert (2007) contend, "Appreciative Inquiry and SOAR approaches to strategy development lend tremendous potential for success where traditional approaches, such as SWOT, fall short." (Page 4, <http://www.atlantic.edu/about/board/documents/SOARfromSWOT.pdf>). Figures 3 and 4 below compare the conceptual elements of SWOT and SOAR and depict the alignment of SWOT and SOAR, respectively (Capela and Brooks-Saunders, 2014, <http://coanet.org/conference/program/workshops.html>).

Figure 3: Comparison of SWOT and SOAR

SWOT vs. SOAR

SWOT Analysis	SOAR Approach
Analysis Oriented	Action Oriented
Weakness and Threat focus	Strengths & Opportunities focus
Competition focus- <i>Just be better</i>	Possibility focus- <i>Be the best!</i>
Incremental improvement	Innovation breakthroughs
Top down	Engagement at all levels
Focus on analysis → Planning	Focus on Planning → Implementation
Energy depleting- <i>There are so many weakness and threats!</i>	Energy creating- <i>We are good and can become great!</i>
Attention to Gaps	Attention to Results

Figure 4: Alignment of SWOT and SOAR – Focus on Positive and Participation



The VHSSCO chose SOAR instead of SWOT for this needs assessment because SOAR consists of a more strength-based and positive approach than SWOT (see Figure 3) while still being aligned with the SWOT analytical approach (see Figure 4) used in 2011 to develop the VHSSCO Five-Year Strategic Plan. The SOAR approach builds on SWOT’s collaborative strengths and reframes gaps or low levels of collaboration as opportunities for Head Start grantees to yield results through collaboration with their partners.

Timing and Topical Content of the Needs Assessment Survey

Using SurveyMonkey® software, the VHSSCO emailed a 2013-2014 needs assessment web survey to Head Start grantees to learn about their *Extent of Involvement* with State and local organizations and their *Degree of Difficulty* engaging in a variety of activities in 7 of the 11 OHS Priorities for HSSCOs (see Figure 5). For the 2013-2014 survey, the VHSSCO asked agencies that administered both Early Head Start and Head Start programs to complete one survey, in contrast to the 2012-2013 needs assessment survey in which four of seven agencies were asked to complete two different surveys: one for Head Start and one for Early Head Start.

The VHSSCO launched the online survey on April 16, 2014, a month later than in prior years. All seven grantees completed the survey by June 27, 2014. The month delay accommodated the four Head Start grantees needing additional time to prepare their federal Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership grant applications. This report contains the web survey findings.

Consistent with 2011 *OHS Head Start State and National Collaboration Offices Framework* (Office of Head Start, the 2013-2014 survey addressed the four VHSSCO Five-Year (2012-2017) Strategic Plan Goals: School Transitions; Professional Development; Child Care and Early Childhood Systems; and Regional Office Priorities. Figure 5 shows that the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 needs assessment surveys addressed seven of 11 OHS Priorities for HSSCOs, and the 2011-2012 needs assessment survey covered all 11 Priorities. Figure 5 also depicts how the four Five-Year VHSSCO Strategic Plan Goal Areas (in parentheses) align with each Priority

Figure 5: Crosswalk of Survey Content by Program Year, OHS Priorities for HSSCOs, and VHSSCO Five-Year Strategic Plan Goals

Survey Content (Relevant VHSSCO goal(s) are in parentheses, and checkmark indicates inclusion in survey.)	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
OHS National Priorities for HSSCOs			
1. School Transitions – School Readiness, Pre-k Partnerships, Alignment (VHSSCO School Transitions Goal)	✓	✓	✓
2. Professional Development (VHSSCO Professional Development Goal)	✓	✓	✓
3. Early Childhood System (VHSSCO Child Care and Early Childhood Systems Goal)	✓	✓	✓
OHS Regional Office Priorities			
4. Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness (Two VHSSCO Goals: Regional Office Priorities and School Transitions)	✓	✓	✓
5. Services for Children with Disabilities (Two VHSSCO Goals: Regional Office Priorities and School Transitions)	✓	✓	✓
6. Health Services (VHSSCO Regional Office Priorities Goal)	✓		
7. Child Welfare (VHSSCO Regional Office Priorities Goal)	✓		
8. Family Literacy Services (VHSSCO Regional Office Priorities Goal)	✓		
9. Child Care Subsidy and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) (Two VHSSCO Goals: Child Care and Early Childhood Systems and Regional Office Priorities) ⁴	✓	✓	✓
10. Community Services (VHSSCO Regional Office Priorities Goal)	✓		
11. Services for Military Families (Two VHSSCO Goals: Regional Office Priorities and Child Care and Early Childhood Systems)	✓	✓	✓

The web survey addressed the four goals of the VHSSCO Five-Year Strategic Plan and consisted of close-ended and open-ended questions addressing:

- Child Care

⁴ Child Care has been included in all three years of the survey whereas questions about TANF occurred solely in the 2011-2012 survey.

- School Transitions:
 - Head Start – Prekindergarten Partnership Development and
 - Partnerships with Local Educational Agencies
- Services for Children with Disabilities
- Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness
- Professional Development
- Early Childhood System
- Services for Military Families

Most closed-ended questions contained one of two scales to gauge the extent of collaboration between Head Start grantees and their partners. The two scales were:

- Five-point *Extent of Involvement* scale used for the first time (Frey, Lohmeier, Lee and Tollefson, 2006, http://signetwork.org/content_page_assets/content_page_68/MeasuringCollaborationAmongGrantPartnersArticle.pdf) and
- Four-point *Degree of Difficulty* scale used in prior VHSSCO needs assessment surveys.

Instead of the four-point *Extent of Involvement* scale used in prior Head Start needs assessment surveys, the VHSSCO used the new five-point *Extent of Involvement* scale in the 2013-2014 survey because the new scale provides consistency and a greater sensitivity in measurement than the four-point scale. The Head Start program directors agreed to this scale's use at the March 2014 Vermont Head Start Association meeting.

Head Start directors were asked to rate their programs' *Extent of Involvement* with each partner as either:

- Networking - Aware of organization, loosely defined roles, little communication, all decisions are made independently,
- Cooperation- Provide information to each other, somewhat defined roles, formal communication, all decisions are made independently,
- Coordination - Share information and resources, defined roles, frequent communication, some shared decision making,
- Coalition – Share ideas, share resources, frequent and prioritized communication, all members have a vote in decision making, or
- Collaboration – Members belong to one system; frequent communication is characterized by mutual trust, and consensus is reached on all decisions.

Head Start directors were asked to rate their programs' *Degree of Difficulty* in engaging in a variety of activities with partners as either

- Extremely Difficult,
- Difficult,
- Somewhat Difficult, or
- Not at All Difficult.

Head Start directors were asked open-ended questions to provide them with an opportunity to make comments and suggestions for improving collaborations and partnerships in the topical areas covered by the survey.

Methodology to Determine Collaboration Strengths and Collaboration Opportunities

For the seven OHS Priorities for the HSSCOs addressed in the report, the narrative was drafted and the survey responses were tallied and presented in the figures to highlight two patterns of collaboration:

- Collaboration Strengths: Patterns emerge when Head Start program directors have reported a high *Extent of Involvement* with service providers/organizations and/or a relatively low *Degree of Difficulty* in engaging in activities with partners.
 - High *Extent of Involvement* means at least four ($\leq 57\%$) of seven respondents selected were Coordination, Coalition and/or Collaboration.
 - Low *Degree of Difficulty* means four or more of possible seven responses selected were Somewhat Difficult and/or Not At All Difficult Four or
- Collaboration Opportunities: Patterns in which Head Start program directors have reported a relatively low *Extent of Involvement* with service providers/organizations and/or a relatively high *Degree of Difficulty* in engaging in activities with partners.
 - Low *Extent of Involvement* means four or more ($\leq 57\%$) of the seven responses selected Networking, Cooperation, and/or Not Applicable.
 - High *Degree of Difficulty* means four or more of the possible seven responses selected were Difficult, Extremely Difficult, and/or Not Applicable.

In boxes of the Figures, Collaboration Strengths were highlighted in light green, and the Collaboration Opportunities were highlighted in yellow.

Determining the Relative Amounts of Collaboration Strengths and Collaboration Opportunities for Each OHS Priority for HSSCOs

For each HSSCO Priority covered by this report, the VHSSCO tabulated the numbers of Collaboration Strengths and Collaboration Needs from the *Extent of Involvement* and *Degree of Difficulty* questions and calculated corresponding percentages of Collaboration Opportunities and Collaboration Strengths. This process enabled the VHSSCO to determine the relative amounts of Collaboration Strengths and Collaboration Opportunities for each HSSCO Priority. Using the data collected for the Child Care and Professional Development Priorities as examples here, the VHSSCO calculated that there were 12 Collaborations Strengths and one Collaboration Opportunity for the Child Care Priority (see Figures 6 and 7) with corresponding percentages of 92 percent and 8 percent, respectively. By subtracting 92.3 percent from 7.7 percent, VHSSCO determined that the Child Care Priority has 84.6 percent (85 percent when rounded up to the next full percentage points) more Collaboration Strengths than Collaboration Opportunities. Applying this process to the Professional Development Priority, the VHSSCO calculated that the Professional Development Priority has 36 percent fewer Collaboration Strengths than Collaboration Opportunities.

Needs Assessment Survey Findings

Organization and Content of Findings

The 2013-2014 findings of the Head Start grantees are organized by the following OHS Priorities for HSSCOs:

- 1) Child Care
- 2) School Transitions:
 - Head Start – Prekindergarten Partnership Development and
 - Partnerships with Local Educational Agencies
- 3) Services for Children with Disabilities
- 4) Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness
- 5) Professional Development
- 6) Early Childhood System
- 7) Services for Military Families

Child Care

Having strong partnerships with child care organizations is a priority for Head Start programs. Head Start programs provide full-day, full-year services to many young children by layering their federal part-day Head Start funding with the child care subsidy reimbursements payments from the Child Development Division (CDD)'s Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP). CCFAP-eligible families pay for child care by subsidizing the cost of child care. Parents of CCFAP-eligible children enrolled in Head Start programs pay low child care co-payments because these programs are four or five star programs in Vermont's Step Ahead Recognition System. In addition, Head Start programs partners with center-based child care, family child care home, and child care home providers. Overall, Head Start directors viewed the Child Care Priority as a Collaboration Strength because there were 85 percent more strengths than opportunities.

Strengths

The seven Head Start directors ranked as high their programs' *Extent of Involvement* with the following child care organizations (see the green highlighted boxes in Figure 6):

- State agency for child care (CDD),
- Child Care Resource and Referral
- Local child care programs to support access to full day, full-year services, and the
- State or regional policy/planning committee that addresses child care issues.

The Head Start directors indicated that their programs' had a low *Degree of Difficulty* engaging with their partners in all child care-related activities listed (see the green highlighted boxes in Figure 7).

Figure 6: Extent of Involvement between Head Start Grantees and Child Care Organizations/Service Providers

Answer Options	Network	Cooperation	Coordination	Coalition	Collaboration
A. State Agency for Child Care: Child Development Division (e.g., Financial Assistance/Child Care Subsidy, Child Care Licensing, Quality Recognition and Improvement System like STARS)	0	0	5	1	1
B. Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (e.g., Community Child Care Support Agencies)	0	3	3	1	0
C. Local child care programs to support access to full-day, full-year services	3	0	2	0	2
D. State or regional policy/planning committees that address child care issues (e.g., BBF State Advisory Council or BBF Regional Councils)	0	0	1	4	2
E. Higher education programs/services/resources related to child care (e.g., lab schools, student interns, cross-training)	2	2	2	0	1

Figure 7: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees to Engage in Child Care Activities

Answer Options	Extremely Difficult	Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Not at All Difficult
A. Establishing linkages/partnerships with child care providers	0	1	4	2
B. Assisting families to access full-day, full-year services	0	1	3	3
C. Capacity to blend or braid, HS or EHS and child care funds to provide full-day, full-year services	0	1	4	2
D. Aligning policies and practices with other service providers	0	1	5	1
E. Sharing data/information on children that are jointly served (assessments, outcomes, etc.)	0	0	5	2
F. Exchanging information on roles and resources with other providers/organizations regarding child care and community needs assessment	0	0	2	5
G. (New) Coordinating child care subsidy certificates based on service need (e.g. employment, seeking employment, training/education, Reach Up, self-employment, special health needs of parent)	0	2	2	3
F. (New) Getting involved with state level planning and policy development for Child Care Development Block Grant (e.g. CCFAP, licensing child care, specialized child care, child care referral, training, professional development incentives, program incentives, etc.)	0	0	2	5

Opportunities

Because four of seven Head Start grantees rated as low their *Extent of Involvement* with higher education programs related to child care-related activities (see Figure 6), an opportunity exists for the VHSSCO and Head Start grantees to improve their involvement with this partner. In addition, the Head Start directors made several suggestions during the 2013-2014 program year for strengthening their program’s access to child care services and resources:

- Improve Head Start access to the Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP) information system;
- Change the re-verification process to once per year;

- Raise State funding to broaden the definition of a qualified need. The difficulty with the full-day certificates pertains to parents who do not have a qualified need but the children need our care in our centers. The programs in Bennington work well together, but it is important to have state funding meet the needs of families; and
- Increase the level of child care financial assistance for families.

School Transitions: Partnerships to Provide Prekindergarten

The Head Start programs view as a priority strong prekindergarten education partnerships with school districts. During the 2013-2014 program year, Head Start grantees had Head Start-Prekindergarten Partnerships with 23 LEAs at 28 sites providing quality pre-k education to 493 children enrolled in Head Start and 190 children from the community who were not enrolled in Head Start.

The Head Start Act requires each Head Start grantee to have one or more Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) with the appropriate local entities, such as a school, school district, Supervisory District, or Supervisory Union, responsible for managing publicly funded preschool programs in the Head Start service area. The terms of the MOU must provide for a review of each of 10 activities and plans to coordinate these activities, as appropriate, as described in 642(e)(5)(A)(i-ii)(I-X) of the Head Start Act. Figure 9 lists the 10 activities plus an 11th activity about agreeing to shared school readiness goals and strategies based on the Vermont Head Start Association School Readiness Agreement. The survey data revealed that there were 67 percent more strengths than opportunities associated with partnerships or MOUs between Head Start grantees and LEAs to provide prekindergarten (see Figures 8 and 9).

Strengths

Generally, Head Start directors view their partnerships with Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) to provide prekindergarten education as a strength. The Figure 8 shows a high *Extent of Involvement* between Head Start grantees and their LEA partners. For the MOU coordinating activities 1- 3, 5-8, 10-11 (see Figure 9), most Head Start directors rated their programs as having a low *Degree of Difficulty* engaging with their partners.

Grantees made the following comments:

- An increased awareness on the part of LEA's of the importance of Early Childhood Education serves to improve our ability to partner and collaborate with them. There is gradual and steady progress;

- LEAs in Chittenden County are more open to discussions regarding Head Start public school collaboration;
- Shared training opportunities, shared values and resilient coordination; and
- An increased awareness on the part of LEA's of the importance of Early Childhood Education serves to improve our ability to partner and collaborate with them. There is gradual and steady progress.

Figure 8: Extent of Involvement between Head Start Grantees and LEAs to Provide Prekindergarten

Answer Choices	Response Percent	Response Count
Network (awareness)	0.0%	0
Cooperation (somewhat defined roles, formal communication)	14.3%	1
Coordination (shared resources, frequent communication, some shared decision making)	42.9%	3
Coalition (shared ideas, frequent/prioritized communication, all members vote on decisions)	14.3%	1
Collaboration (belong to one system, mutual trust in communication, consensus on decisions)	28.6%	2
We do not have a MOU for publicly funded pre-k under Act 62.	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)	0.0%	0

Figure 9: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees to Engage with LEAs in Coordinating MOU Activities

Answer Choices	Extremely Difficult	Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Not at All Difficult	Not Applicable
1. Educational activities, curricular objectives and instruction	1	1	4	1	0
2. Public Information dissemination and access to programs for families contacting Head Start or another preschool program	2	1	1	3	0
3. Selection priorities for eligible children to be served by programs	1	0	3	2	1
4. Service areas	2	2	1	2	0
5. Staff training, including opportunities for joint staff training on topics such as academic content standards, instructional methods, curricula, and social and emotional development	2	1	3	1	0
6. Joint/shared program technical assistance (e.g., on mutual needs, or to develop partnership agreements)	1	0	3	1	2
7. Provision of services to meet needs of working parents, as applicable	2	1	3	1	0
8. Communications and parent outreach for smooth transitions to kindergarten	2	0	3	2	0
9. Provision and use of facilities, transportation, etc.	2	1	3	0	1
10. Other elements mutually agreed to by the parties to the MOU	1	0	2	2	2
11. (NEW) Agreeing to shared school readiness goals and strategies based on the Vermont Head Start Association School Readiness Agreement (e.g. physical development and health, approaches to learning, cognitive development, activity, social-emotional development, and literacy/language development)	1	0	3	2	1
Other (please specify)					

Opportunities

Four of seven Head Start directors rated as high their programs' *Degree of Difficulty* coordinating in MOUs their service areas with those of LEAs. Head Start directors offered comments on this activity:

- Available space in schools is limited; and
- Need more frequently scheduled communication opportunities.

School Transitions: Partnerships with Local Educational Agencies

Strong collaborations between Head Start grantees and public schools are essential to make seamless transitions for children and their families as the children graduate from Head Start and enter kindergarten. Transitions are individualized and ultimately each child will continue to develop and gain ground at their own pace. Their families are included in the process and supported as well. All parents and their children get their needs met and access community resources, services and programs. The survey findings indicated that there were 88 percent more strengths than opportunities regarding partnerships between Head Start grantees and LEAs regarding the transitions of children from Head Start to kindergarten.

Strengths

Six of seven Head Start directors rated as high their programs' *Extent of Involvement* with LEAs regarding the transitions of children from Head Start to kindergarten (see Figure 10). Head Start directors were asked to rate the *Degree of Difficulty* of their programs to engage with LEAs on 16 school transitions activities. A majority of Head Start directors rated their *Degree of Difficulty* as low for 15 of 16 activities (see Figure 11).

Head Start directors were asked to list school transition activities are most often put into practice by their respective programs and elementary school partners to support successful transitions. Four or more of seven Head Start grantees indicated that they put into practice most often 11 of activities (activities 1, 4 -13) to support successful transitions for Head Start children entering kindergarten (see Figure 12).

The Head Start directors described several strengths in their prekindergarten education partnerships with LEAs:

- Timely phone conversations between HS and schools (kindergarten teachers & LEAs),
- Timely screenings, eligibility & IEP planning meetings,
- Kindergarten transition portfolios to schools,
- Willingness to provide supports necessary for smooth and inclusive transitions,
- Integrated services in place for transitions, and

- Champlain Valley Head Start has a strong commitment to support and prepare families as they transition out of Head Start and into public schools.

In addition, one Head Start director suggested that the VHSSCO advocate and work to improve school to school transition practices.

Figure 10: Extent of Involvement between Head Start Grantees and LEAs regarding the Transitions of Children from Head Start to Kindergarten

Answer Choices	Response Percent	Response Count
Network (awareness)	0.0%	0
Cooperation (somewhat defined roles, formal communication)	14.3%	1
Coordination (shared resources, frequent communication, some shared decision making)	57.1%	4
Coalition (shared ideas, frequent/prioritized communication, all members vote on decisions)	0.0%	0
Collaboration (belong to one system, mutual trust in communication, consensus on decisions)	28.6%	2

Figure 11: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees to Engage in School Transitions Activities

Answer Options	Extremely Difficult	Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Not at All Difficult
A. Coordinating with LEAs to implement systematic procedures for transferring Head Start program records to school	0	1	1	5
B. Ongoing communication with LEAs to facilitate coordination of programs (including teachers, social workers, McKinney-Vento liaisons, etc.)	0	1	5	1
C. Establishing and implementing comprehensive transition policies and procedures with LEAs	0	2	3	2
D. Linking LEA and Head Start services relating to language, numeracy and literacy	1	1	2	3
E. Aligning Head Start curricula and assessments with the <i>Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework</i>	0	0	1	6
F. Aligning Head Start curricula with the <i>Vermont Early Learning Standards</i>	0	0	0	7
G. Partnering with LEAs and parents to assist individual children/families to transition to school, including review of portfolio/records	0	1	4	2
H. Coordinating transportation with LEAs	1	2	1	3
I. Coordinating shared use of facilities with LEAs	0	2	2	3
J. Coordinating with LEAs regarding other support services for children and families	1	0	5	1
K. Conducting joint outreach to parents and LEA to discuss needs of children entering kindergarten	0	0	4	3
L. Establishing policies and procedures that support children's transition to school that includes engagement with LEA	0	1	2	4
M. Helping parents of limited English proficient children understand instructional and other information and services provided by the receiving school.	0	1	2	4
N. Exchanging information with LEAs on roles, resources and regulations	0	1	4	2
O. Aligning curricula and assessment practices with LEAs	0	2	2	3
P. Organizing and participating in joint training, including transition-related training for school staff and Head Start staff	1	3	3	0

Figure 12: School Transition Activities Most Often Put into Practice by Head Start Grantees to Support Successful Transitions for Head Start Children Entering Kindergarten

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1. Kindergarten teacher visiting preschool	85.7%	6
2. Kindergarten teacher participating in home visit	0.0%	0
3. Kindergarten camps	42.9%	3
4. Community event bringing kindergarten and preschool teachers together	71.4%	5
5. Pre-k children visiting their kindergarten classroom	100.0%	7
6. Pre-k teachers (Head Start and other providers) visiting a kindergarten classroom	71.4%	5
7. Holding an elementary school-wide activity with pre-k children	71.4%	5
8. Having a spring orientation about kindergarten for parents of preschool children	71.4%	5
9. Having an individual meeting between a teacher and a parent of the preschool child	57.1%	4
10. Sharing written records	100.0%	7
11. Families meet with a kindergarten teacher	85.7%	6
12. Families meet the principal	57.1%	4
13. Families take a tour of the school	57.1%	4
14. Families talk to parents of child's new classmates	42.9%	3
15. Families attend a workshop for parents	42.9%	3
16. Community partner hosts event for entering kindergarteners	28.6%	2
17. None of these	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)		2

Opportunities

An opportunity exists for Head Start grantees to improve their engagement with public schools on organizing and participating in joint training, including transition-related training for school staff and Head Start staff because four of seven directors rated as high their programs' *Degree of Difficulty* on this activity (see Figure 11).

Meanwhile, a minority of Head Start grantees reported that they and/or their community partners implemented a variety of school transition activities to support the successful transitions of Head Start graduates entering kindergarten (see Figure 12):

- Kindergarten teacher participating in home visit;
- Hold kindergarten camps;
- Families talk to parents of their child's new classmates;
- Families attend a workshop for parents;

- Community partner hosts event for entering kindergarteners;
- Host transition "teas" for incoming kindergarten students/families (one of two other comments); and
- BBF Regional Council provides kindergarten transition bags for all children entering kindergarten (one of two other comments).

These school transitions activities represent an opportunities for all Head Start grantees and their respective community partners to implement together.

Head Start grantees offered the following strategies to address concerns and challenges about school transitions:

- More time for cross visits between kindergarten and preschool teachers, more collaborative trainings/events for kindergarten and preschool teachers, more time, more opportunities, increased understanding between k and preschool teachers about developmental and academic stages/challenges of "the two worlds;"
- Kindergarten teachers to attend Head Start parent event and Head Start field trips to elementary schools;
- School leadership to support kindergarten teachers to attend kindergarten transition activities;
- We have hosted statewide and regional transition trainings on an annual basis;
- More consistency with the quality of school to school connections; and
- Schedule education and training about transitions for kindergarten.

Services for Preschool-Aged Children with Disabilities under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

During the 2013-2014 program year, 21 percent (254 of 1,208) of three-, four-, and five-year-olds not yet enrolled in kindergarten served by Head Start programs were children with disabilities (Office of Head Start, 2015a). Within 45 days of a child's enrollment in Head Start and in collaboration with the child's parent, Head Start grantees must conduct a developmental screening of the child to identify concerns regarding a child's development. If the Head Start program identifies a possible developmental concern for the child, the child is referred to a LEA that administers the Part B, Section 619 Special Education services, also known as Essential Early Education (EEE) services. It is the LEA's responsibility to evaluate a child who may have a developmental delay or medical conditions that may result in a delay. The local school district's Evaluation Planning Team (EPT) determines whether a preschool-age child is eligible to receive Part B, Section 619 special education services, and the EPT bases its decision on the evaluation

results and Vermont’s Special Education Rules criteria for children ages 3 up to 6. If a Head Start child is determined to be eligible for special education services, then a team, which should include a Head Start representative creates and develops an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) (Joint 2012 memo from the Department of Education, CDD, Vermont Head Start Association, Vermont Head Start State Collaboration Office, and CIS regarding federal Head Start requirements concerning children with disabilities. The survey findings indicated that there were 100 percent more strengths than opportunities regarding services for preschool-aged children with disabilities under Part B of IDEA.

Strengths

Six of seven Head Start directors rated their programs’ *Extent of Involvement* with the Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) as high *Extent of Involvement* and all Head Start directors assessed their programs’ *Extent of Involvement* with LEAs as high (see Figure 13). Five or more of Head Start directors ranked as low their programs’ *Degree of Difficulty* in collaborating on all school transition activities for this segment of the Head Start population (see Figure 14).

Figure 13: Extent of Involvement between Head Start Grantees and Organizations Serving Preschool-Aged Children with Disabilities under Part B of IDEA

Answer Options	Network	Cooperation	Coordination	Coalition	Collaboration
A. State Lead Agency for Part B/619 (Vermont AOE)	0	1	5	0	1
B. Local Part B/619 providers (preschool special education providers)	0	0	6	0	1

Figure 14: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees Coordinating Services for Preschool-Aged Children with Disabilities under Part B of IDEA

Answer Options	Extremely Difficult	Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Not at All Difficult	Not applicable
A. Obtaining timely Part B/619 (preschool special education) evaluations of children	0	2	2	3	0
B. Having HS staff attend IEP (Individualized Education Plan) meetings	0	0	0	7	0
C. Coordination services with Part B/619 providers: Early Essential Education	0	0	2	5	0
D. Sharing data/information on jointly served children (assessments, outcomes, etc.)	0	0	3	4	0
E. Exchanging information on roles and resources with other providers/organizations regarding services for children with disabilities and their families.	0	1	3	3	0

Opportunities

Although five of seven Head Start directors rated as low their programs' *Degree of Difficulty* in getting Part B, Section 619 evaluations from LEAs (see Figure 14), Head Start directors consistently indicate that this activity needs improvement.

Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness

Head Start and Early Head Start programs served many children and families experiencing homelessness. During the 2013-2014 program year, 16 percent (265 of 1,679) of the children served by Head Start and Early Head Start programs experienced homelessness. Meanwhile, Head Start and Early Head Start programs served 244 families experiencing homelessness and 44 percent of the families acquired housing (Office of Head Start, 2015a). While Head Start and Early Head Start programs have strong collaborative relationships with human service and affordable housing organizations, programs had much weaker relationships with the Local McKinney-Vento homelessness liaison at AOE and with school district Title I directors. Bearing this caveat in mind, the survey findings revealed that there were 83 percent fewer strengths than opportunities to address collaborative needs regarding services for children experiencing homelessness.

Strength

Six of seven Head Start directors rated as low their programs' *Degree of Difficulty* in obtaining sufficient data about the needs of children who are homeless (see Figure 16).

Figure 15: Extent of Involvement of Head Start Grantees with Organizations/Service Providers Supporting Children Experiencing Homelessness

Answer Options	Network	Cooperation	Coordination	Coalition	Collaboration	Not Applicable
A. Local McKinney-Vento homelessness liaison (e.g., public school, community services)	5	1	1	0	0	0
B. School district Title I Director (if applicable, and if Title I funds are being used to support early care and education programs for children experiencing homelessness). You may check not applicable.	4	2	0	1	0	0

Figure 16: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees to Engage in Activities for Children Experiencing Homelessness

Answer Options	Extremely Difficult	Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Not at All Difficult
A. Implementing school transitions policies and procedures to ensure that children experiencing homelessness needs are prioritized	2	2	0	3
B. Obtaining sufficient data on the needs of homeless children to inform the school transition procedures	1	0	2	4
C. Engaging the Local Educational Agency (LEA), including the local McKinney-Vento Liaison, in conducting staff cross training and planning activities	1	3	1	2
D. In coordination with LEA, developing and implementing family outreach and support efforts under McKinney-Vento and transition planning for children experiencing homelessness	1	3	2	1

Opportunities

The findings in Figures 15 and 16 indicate that there are opportunities to improve collaboration with the local McKinney-Vento homelessness liaisons and with school district Title I directors. Six of seven Head Start directors rated as low their programs’ *Extent of Involvement* with the local McKinney-Vento homelessness liaisons and Title I directors in school districts.

Four of seven Head Start directors rated as high their *Degree of Difficulty* engaging in the following activities for children experiencing homelessness:

- Implementing school transitions policies and procedures to ensure that children experiencing homelessness needs are prioritized;
- Engaging the Local Educational Agency (LEA), including the local McKinney-Vento Liaison, in conducting staff cross training and planning activities; and
- In coordination with LEA, developing and implementing family outreach and support efforts under McKinney-Vento and transition planning for children experiencing homelessness

After the VHSSCO Director received these findings, the VHSSCO director reached out to and met with Mary Mulloy, the Title I director and Beth Meyer, the McKinney-Vento homelessness liaison at AOE. Mulloy oversees the work of local Title I directors and Meyer coordinates the work of the local McKinney-Vento homelessness liaisons. Subsequently, both Mulloy and

Meyer met with the Head Start program directors at their monthly meeting, and the VHSSCO director connected Meyer to the Agency of Human Services (AHS)'s committee working to end family homelessness by 2020 in Vermont.

Professional Development

Professional Development is important to ensure that teachers and staff employed by Head Start programs and their partners have the needed degrees, credentials, and training to deliver high-quality services. Head Start and Early Head Start grantees have access to national, regional and state professional development systems. There were 36 percent less strengths than opportunities for the Professional Development Priority.

Strengths

Head Start program directors rated as high their *Extent of Involvement* with the state-based Head Start T/TA Network and other T/TA (regional, State) networks (see Figure 17). Meanwhile, Head Start programs directors rated as low their programs' *Degree of Difficulty* engaging in all professional development activities (see Figure 18).



Figure 17: Extent of Involvement of Head Start Grantees with Professional Development Organizations/Service Providers

Answer Options	Network	Cooperation	Coordination	Coalition	Collaboration
A. Institutions of Higher Education (4-year)	2	4	1	0	0
B. Institutions of Higher Education (less than 4-year) (e.g., community colleges)	1	6	0	0	0
C. On-line courses/programs	2	5	0	0	0
D. Child Care Resource and Referral Network	1	3	3	0	0
E. Head Start State-Based Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) Network	1	0	1	2	3
F. Other T/TA networks (regional, state)	3	0	2	2	0
G. Service providers/organizations offering relevant training/TA cross-training opportunities	3	2	1	1	0
H. a. National Center on Cultural & Linguistic Responsiveness	6	1	0	0	0
H. b. National Center on Parent, Family & Community Engagement	4	1	1	1	0
H. c. National Center on Quality Teaching & Learning	4	1	1	1	0
H. d. Early Head Start National Resource Center	4	1	2	0	0
H. e. National Center on Program Management & Fiscal Operations	4	2	0	1	0
H. f. National Center on Health	5	1	0	1	0
I. (NEW) Local Education Agencies school transitions and school readiness training	3	3	1	0	0
J. (NEW) Local Children's Integrated Services (CIS)	0	4	2	0	1
K. (NEW) State-level CIS	2	3	1	0	1
L. (NEW) Regional Reach-Up	1	3	2	0	1
M. (NEW) AOE	1	4	1	1	0
N. (NEW) Northern Lights	3	1	2	0	1

Answer Options	Network	Cooperation	Coordination	Coalition	Collaboration
Career Development Center which holds training and workshops and provides information about career pathways, workshops, trainings, and other professional development resources					
O. (NEW) CDD which administers the Bright Futures Information System (e.g. training calendar) and funds professional development grant resources and individual professional recognition bonuses	1	3	2	0	1
P. (NEW) Professional Preparation and Development Committee	5	0	0	2	0

Figure 18: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees to Engage in Professional Development Activities

Answer Options	Extremely Difficult	Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Not at All Difficult
A. Transferring credits between public institutions of learning	0	1	2	4
B. Accessing early childhood education degree programs in the community	1	1	3	2
C. Accessing Training & Technical Assistance opportunities in the community (including cross-training)	1	1	1	4
D. Accessing scholarships and other financial support for professional development programs/activities	0	1	3	3
E. Staff release time to attend professional development activities	1	0	4	2
F. Accessing on-line professional development opportunities (e.g., availability of equipment, internet connection, etc.)	0	1	1	5
G. Exchanging information on roles and resources with other providers/organizations regarding professional development	0	0	4	3

Opportunities

Opportunities exist to improve the *Extent of Involvement* of Head Start programs with 19 of 21 professional development organizations (see organizations A-D and G-P in Figure 17).

Comments

Head Start program directors offered the following comments about professional development:

- We need more local Early Childhood Education courses in actual college classroom settings on weekends and/or online; and
- Bennington has a Quality Task Force that coordinates and jointly funds educational opportunities and also members serve on the Northern Lights Professional Preparation and Development committee. We have limited higher ed opportunities for our staff besides the Community College of Vermont and this makes it difficult to hire qualified Bachelor level teachers or support staff to get their BA in Early Childhood Education.

Early Childhood System

The Head Start programs participate in varying degrees with State, regional and local organizations and service providers on early childhood systems activities in Vermont. The VHSSCO works to integrate Head Start programs into the State's early childhood system. Overall, survey findings indicated that there were 76 percent more strengths than opportunities in the early childhood system.

Strengths

At least four of seven Head Start directors rated as high their programs' *Extent of Involvement* with six of eight Early Childhood System organizations/service providers (see Figure 19). At least five of seven Head Start directors rated as low their programs' *Degree of Difficulty* with all nine activities (see Figure 20).

Head Start directors provided these comments about strengths regarding Head Start's involvement in the Early Childhood System:

- Continued efforts to connect with key players from the state toward universal goals, including statewide standards and expectations, and working to professionalize the field on an ongoing basis are great. Can we develop a statewide system for improving pay scales?
- I think the role of the Vermont Head Start Association and the state representatives have been strengthened on the state level. We now need to implement some of the systems at a local level.

Figure 19: Extent of Involvement between Head Start Grantees with Early Childhood System Organizations/Service Providers

Answer Options	Network	Cooperation	Coordination	Coalition	Collaboration	Do Not know
A. BBF State Advisory Council	1	4	1	0	1	0
B. BBF Regional Council(s)	0	0	0	2	5	0
C. State Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) -- STARS	0	2	3	0	2	0
D. State efforts to unify early childhood data systems (e.g., child/family/ program assessment data)	1	2	2	1	1	0
E. CIS - Referral and Intake Team	0	2	2	1	2	0
F. CIS - Individual Child/Family Team for children dually enrolled in Head Start or Early Head Start	0	0	4	1	1	1
G. CIS - Consultation Team	0	3	1	1	1	1
H. CIS - Administrative Team	1	1	0	1	3	1

Figure 20: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees to Engage in Early Childhood System Activities

Answer Options	Extremely Difficult	Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Not at All Difficult	Do Not know
A. Exchanging information from and providing input to the BBF State Advisory Council	0	1	3	3	0
B. Exchanging information from and providing input to BBF Regional Council(s)	0	0	1	6	0
C. Participating in STARS, the state QRIS	0	1	1	5	0
D. Participating in state efforts to unify early childhood data systems (e.g., Early Childhood Data Reporting System)	0	1	3	2	1
E. Communicating with the CIS Intake Coordinator when a child is identified as enrolled in Head Start or Early Head Start	0	0	0	6	1
F. Referring a child and family to CIS	0	0	0	7	0
G. Receiving a referral from CIS for a child and family	1	0	1	4	1
H. Attending an individual child/family CIS team meeting to coordinate services	1	0	2	4	0
I. Participating in the CIS Administrative Team	0	1	2	3	1
J. Other (please specify)					

Opportunities

Opportunities exist to improve the *Extent of Involvement* of Head Start programs with two of eight Early Childhood Systems’ organizations (see organizations A and G in Figure 19):

- BBF State Advisory Council
- CIS-Consultation Team

One Head Start director commented about improving its program’s collaboration with CIS:

- Working with CIS-Early Intervention providers is not difficult; however, we have noticed that it takes a very long time to get a copy of the One Plan following the meeting at which it is developed. For example, for 3 children, the meetings took place at the end of March and early April, and as of 5/27/14 we are still waiting for the written plan. The reason given is that the plan needs a physician's signature and then goes through a

medical records auditing process. Knowing the goals and services to be provided is an important part of good collaboration between EHS/HS and CIS-EI.

Services for Children from Birth to Age Three with Disabilities under Part C of IDEA

During the 2013-2014 program year, 18 percent (88 of 477) of infants and toddlers enrolled served by Early Head Start programs were children with disabilities (Office of Head Start, 2015a). Children with developmental delays receive early intervention services that Head Start/Early Head Start provides or arranges through referrals to its State and community partners. In Vermont, CIS determines whether a child from birth up to age three is eligible for Part C Early Intervention (EI) services under IDEA. Early Head Start may refer an infant or toddler to the regional CIS program or the child may already be receiving EI services upon entering Early Head Start program. There are 12 CIS regional programs, which conduct an evaluation to determine a child's eligibility for Part C EI services. After eligibility is determined by a team, which includes Head Start staff and the family, an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)/One Plan for the child and their family is developed and implemented. It is the responsibility of the CIS/EI program in the region to notify the school whether there is a child receiving EI services and is potentially eligible for Part B, Section 619 special education services under IDEA before the child turns three (Child Development, Division, Department for Children and Families, Department of Education, Vermont Head Start Association, Children's Integrated Services, and Vermont Head Start State Collaboration Office, 2012).

Part C, Early Intervention is one of the five services coordinated through regional CIS programs. Children eligible for Part C services are under 3-years old. Although there are four Early Head Start programs that serve this age group, all Head Start grantees may collaborate with a Part C/EI provider during a child's transition into Head Start. Head Start directors indicated that there were 33 percent more strengths than opportunities regarding services for children from birth to age 3 with disabilities.

Strengths

At least four of seven Head Start directors rated as low their programs' *Extent of Involvement* with local CIS/EI providers and non-Head Start councils, committees, or work groups (see Figure 21). At least four of seven Head Start directors rated as low their programs' *Degree of Difficulty* engaging in all six activities for infants and toddlers with disabilities (see Figure 22).

Figure 21: Extent of Involvement between Head Start Grantees and Organizations/Service Providers Serving Children from Birth to Age 3 with Disabilities

Answer Options	Network	Cooperation	Coordination	Coalition	Collaboration
A. State Lead Agency for Part C: CIS/Early Intervention (EI)	1	5	0	0	1
B. Local Part C providers: CIS/EI	0	1	3	1	2
C. Other federally funded programs for families of children with disabilities (e.g., Parent Training & Information Center, Family Voices, Dept. of Health-Maternal Child Health, Protection & Advocacy agency, Special Medical Services, etc.)	3	3	0	0	1
D. Other state-funded programs for children with disabilities and their families (e.g., developmental services agencies)	3	2	1	0	1
E. University/community college programs/services related to children with disabilities (e.g., University Centers of Excellence on Disability/others, Center on Disabilities and Community Inclusion at UVM)	3	2	1	0	1
F. Non-Head Start councils, committees or work groups that address policy/program issues regarding children with disabilities (e.g., State/Local Inter-agency Coordinating Council, preschool special education work/advisory group)	1	2	1	2	1

Figure 22: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees to Engage in Activities for Children from Birth to Age 3 with Disabilities

Answer Options	Extremely Difficult	Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Not at All Difficult
A. Obtaining timely Part C: CIS/EI evaluations of children	1	1	2	3
B. Having HS staff attend IFSP (Individual Family Service Plan) now known as CIS individual child/family One Plan meetings	0	2	2	3
C. Coordination services with Part C: CIS/EI	0	3	1	3
D. Sharing data/information on jointly served children (assessments, outcomes, etc.)	0	2	2	3
E. Exchanging information on roles and resources with other providers/organizations regarding services for children with disabilities and their families	0	1	3	3
F. (New) Aligning policies and practices with schools or supervisory districts/unions	1	2	2	2

Opportunities

Opportunities exist to improve the *Extent of Involvement* of Head Start programs with four of six organizations serving infants and toddlers with disabilities (see organizations A and C-E in Figure 21).

Services for Military Families

Vermont’s military families have different situations than other States. There are no military base installations in Vermont. The Vermont National Guard, a citizen soldier arm of the military trains and deploys guard members. These circumstances affected the needs assessment survey findings, and the ability of Head Start programs to provide child services to military families. For example in Figure 24, Not Applicable was a frequent response from the Head Start grantees because three or more of seven Head Start directors rated as Not Applicable their *Degree of Difficulty* to engage with their partners in seven of seven activities regarding services for children and their family members who are in the military. Based on their survey responses, Head Start directors indicated that there were 45 percent less strengths than opportunities regarding services for military families.

Strengths

Despite the different situation of military families in Vermont in comparison to many other States, this area had a few strengths. Four of seven Head Start directors rated as high their programs’ *Extent of Involvement* with community child care resource and referral agencies

providing services to military families (see Figure 23). Meanwhile, four of seven Head Start directors rated as low their programs' *Degree of Difficulty* engaging in two activities for military families (see Figure 24):

- C. Supporting the referral process for military families and their children; and
- E. Exchanging information on roles and resources with other providers/organizations regarding services for children of military families

Figure 23: Extent of Involvement between Head Start Grantees and Organizations Serving Military Families

Answer Options	Network	Cooperation	Coordination	Coalition	Collaboration	Not Applicable
A. Vermont National Guard Family Assistance Center	4	3	0	0	0	0
B. Local Child Care Providers	3	0	2	1	0	1
C. Military, Family, Community Network	5	1	1	0	0	0
D. Community Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies	3	0	1	0	3	0
Other (please specify)						

Figure 24: Degree of Difficulty of Head Start Grantees to Engage in Activities for Military Families

Answer Options	Extremely Difficult	Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Not at All Difficult	Not Applicable
A. Establishing partnerships with key providers supporting military families and their unique needs	0	0	1	2	4
B. Coordinating services with providers for military families and their children	0	0	2	1	4
C. Supporting the referral process for military families and their children	0	0	0	4	3
D. Sharing data/information with organizations that are jointly serving children and their family members who are in the military (e.g. child development assessment data, family support services accessed, etc.)	0	0	1	1	5
E. Exchanging information on roles and resources with other providers/organizations regarding services for children of military families	0	0	0	4	3
F. Assisting families to access child care services on weekends and evenings	2	1	1	0	3
G. Facilitating shared training and technical assistance opportunities in the community to support military families	0	1	1	2	3

Opportunities

Despite past VHSSCO efforts, future Collaboration Opportunities is limited in this area. Since 2012, the VHSSCO director has collaborated closely with Dianne Carter, the Regional Military Child Care Liaison – Missouri, New York, Vermont and she has met with the Head Start directors on multiple occasions to discuss involving them more closely with organizations A and B in Figure 23 and lowering the Degree of Difficulty for Head Start programs to engage in activities A-B, D, and F-G in Figure 24. In addition, Head Start programs do not provide child care services on the evenings and weekends, and that makes it difficult for many of these programs to assist military families with accessing child care services at those times. Because of these reasons, the changing early childhood system landscape, and OHS (2015b) announcing in

January 2015 six new Priorities for HSSCOs, this area was not included in the Fourth Year Work plan.

Conclusion

Strengths and Opportunities

Analysis of the 2013-2014 need assessment survey findings revealed collaboration strengths and opportunities for Head Start grantees and their federal, state, community, and partners in seven of 11 HSSCO Priorities:

- 1) Child Care
- 2) School Transitions:
 - Head Start – Prekindergarten Partnership Development and
 - Partnerships with LEAs
- 3) Services for Children with Disabilities
 - Preschool-Aged Children under Part B of IDEA
 - Children from Birth to Age 3 under Part C of IDEA
- 4) Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness
- 5) Professional Development
- 6) Early Childhood System
- 7) Services for Military Families

From analyzing the web survey data, four of seven HSSCO Priorities covered in this report were identified to have higher proportions of strengths than opportunities:

- Child Care: 85 percent higher
- School Transitions
 - Head Start – Prekindergarten Partnership Development: 67 percent higher
 - Partnerships with LEAs: 88 percent higher;
- Early Childhood System: 76 percent higher; and
- Services for Children with Disabilities:
 - Preschool-Aged Children under Part B of IDEA: 100 percent higher
 - Children from Birth to Age 3 under Part C of IDEA: 33 percent higher

Three of seven HSSCO Priorities had lower proportions of strengths than opportunities:

- Services for Military Families: 45 percent lower;
- Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness: 83 percent lower; and
- Professional Development: 36 percent lower.

VHSSCO's Fourth Year Work Plan

The VHSSCO used the strengths and opportunities identified from the analysis of the 2013-2014 needs assessment survey findings to draft its Fourth Year (September 30, 2015 – September 29, 2016) Work Plan of the VHSSCO (2012-2017) Five-Year Strategic Plan. In drafting its work plan, the VHSSCO also considered external factors including:

- Six updated OHS priorities for HSSCOs announced in January 2015;
- Four-year award of the federal \$33 million Preschool Development Expansion Grant (PDEG) in which all seven Head Start grantees can be PDEG subgrantees to AOE;
- Governor's Early Childhood Action Plan;
- Implementation of Act 166 making available universal pre-kindergarten education to all three-, four-, and non-kindergarten ready five-year-olds in Vermont and the joint AOE-AHS publication of *Implementation Guidance on Act 166 of 2014, Part 2* allowing Head Start grantees that are approved prequalified prekindergarten education programs under Act 166 to receive the statewide annual tuition rate of \$3,000 from school districts to provide Vermont approved prekindergarten education; and
- Input from the Vermont Head Start Association.

Dissemination of Report to Strengthen Collaboration

The VHSSCO will share the results of this report publicly particularly with stakeholders, including Vermont Head Start Association; CDD, DCF, AHS; AOE; and the BBF State Advisory Council, Inc. Through this process, the collaboration, coordination, and alignment of services, curricula, standards, and/or assessments between Head Start grantees and their partners will be strengthened for the benefit of young children and their families in Vermont.

Appendix A

Head Start and Early Head Start Programs

Paul Behrman, Director

Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO) Head Start and Early Head Start
431 Pine St.

Burlington, VT 05401

802/651-4180

Counties Served: Addison, Chittenden, Franklin, Grand Isle

Lori Canfield, Director

Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) Head Start

107 Park Street

Springfield, VT 05156

802/885-6669

County Served: Windsor

Joanne Mattsson, Director

Rutland Community Programs, Inc. (Rutland County Head Start)

Box 222

Rutland, VT 05702

802/775-8225

County Served: Rutland

Debra Gass, Director

Brattleboro Town School District-Early Education Services (BTSD-EES) Head Start and Early
Head Start

130 Birge St.

Brattleboro, VT 05301

802/254-3742 ext. 110

County Served: Windham

Linda Michniewicz, Director

Northeast Kingdom Community Action, Inc. (NEKCA) Head Start and Early Head Start

191 High St.

Barton, VT 05822

802/525-3362

Counties Served: Essex, Orleans, Caledonia

Marianne Miller, Director
Capstone Community Action Head Start and Early Head Start
20 Gable Place
Barre, VT 05641
802/479-1053, 800/639-1053
Counties Served: Lamoille, Orange, Washington

Betsy Rathbun-Gunn, Director
United Counseling Service (Bennington County Head Start)
P.O. Box 588
Bennington, VT 05201
802/442-3686
Counties Served: Bennington

Appendix B

References

- Allen, B. (2014, April). *Status of Head Start Pre-Kindergarten Partnerships in Vermont and Nationally*. Report of the Vermont Head Start State Collaboration Office, Child Development Division, Vermont Department for Children and Families. Retrieved September 2015.
http://vermontheadstart.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/FINAL-Status_of_Head_Start-Pre-Kindergarten_Partnerships_in_Vermont_and_Nationally.pdf.
- Capela, S. and Brooks-Saunders, A. (2014). *A Different Approach to Strategic Planning: SOAR-Building Strengths-Based Strategy*. PowerPoint presentation at the 2012 National Council on Accreditation Conference, New York, NY.
<http://coanet.org/conference/program/workshops.html>.
- Child Development, Division, Department for Children and Families, Department of Education, Vermont Head Start Association, Children's Integrated Services, and Vermont Head Start State Collaboration Office. (2012). *Joint 2012 memo regarding the Clarification of Federal Head Start and Early Head Start Requirements Regarding Documentation for Young Children with Disabilities*.
- Frey, B., Lohmeier, J., Lee, S., & Tollefson, N. (2006). Measuring collaboration among grant partners. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 27(3) 383-392. Retrieved August 2014.
http://signetwork.org/content_page_assets/content_page_68/MeasuringCollaborationAmongGrantPartnersArticle.pdf.
- Head Start Act Section 642B(a)(2)(A). Retrieved February 2014.
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/Head%20Start%20Act>.
- Head Start Act, Section 642B(a)(3)(C)(i). Retrieved August 2014.
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/Head%20Start%20Act>.
- Head Start Act Section 642(e)(5)(A)(i-ii)(I-X). Retrieved September 2014.
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/Head%20Start%20Act>.
- Office of Head Start. (2011). *Head Start State and National Head Start Collaboration Offices Framework*.
- Office of Head Start. (2014a). *About Head Start Collaboration Office*. Retrieved February 2014.
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/states/collaboration/about.html>.

- Office of Head Start. (2014b). About Early Head Start. Retrieved September 2014.
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/ehsnrc/Early%20Head%20Start/about.html>.
- Office of Head Start. (2014c). Program Instruction: FY 2014 Head Start Funding Increase, (ACF-PI-HS-14-01). Issued February 10, 2014. Retrieved August 2014.
http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/pi/2014/resour_pri_001_021014.html.
- Office of Head Start. (2015a). *2013 – 2014 Head Start Program Information Report*.
- Office of Head Start. (2015b). Head Start State and National Head Start Collaboration Offices Framework. Retrieved September 2015.
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/states/collaboration/docs/head-start-collaboration-office-priorities-2015.pdf>
- Silbert, J. and Silbert, T. (2007). SOARing from SWOT: Four Lessons Every Strategic Plan Must Know. Innovation Partners International. For publication in the August 2007 issue of the *AI Practitioner: International Journal of AI Best Practice*. Retrieved August 2014.
<http://www.atlantic.edu/about/board/documents/SOARfromSWOT.pdf>.
- Stavros, J. and Hinrichs, G. (2014) *SOAR-Strategy*. Retrieved August 2014.
<http://www.soar-strategy.com/>.