

 Policy #:ERSEA-1	Effective Date:	Page #: 1 of 2
Ref #: 1302.11(b)	Policy Council Approval Date:	

COMPONENT: ELIGIBILITY, RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, AND ENROLLMENT

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE: To conduct a community needs assessment every three years to collect data about community strengths, needs, and resources. This data will be used to make decisions about long and short term goals, selection criteria, the type of services provided for children and families, and to determine collaboration possibilities with other agencies. Data will be updated each year as needed.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE:

Every five years Head Start will conduct a Community Needs Assessment in accordance with Performance Standard 1302.11(b)(1) that will include:

- Demographic make-up of Head Start eligible families, including number, geographic location, and racial/ethnic composition.
- Other child development and child care programs serving Head Start eligible children.
- Estimated number of children with disabilities four years and under including types of disabilities and relevant services and resources provided to these children by community agencies.
- Data about education, health, nutrition and social service needs of Head Start eligible families.
- Resources in the community that could address these needs.

The annual grant planning and budget process will include a review and update of the strengths, needs and resources of the four (4) county service areas.

Information gathered includes surveys to staff, community service providers and parents. In addition, information from local, state and federal sources including but not limited to the Department of Health and Human Services, Kids Count, County Fact Books and newspapers will be utilized.

Analysis of the assessment information will be used to set criteria that define the types of children and families who will be given priority for recruitment and selection and developing long and short term goals in the strategic and grant planning process, including locations of sites, program options, staffing patterns and identifying areas of need.

The Policy Council and the Board of Directors must approve or disapprove the Community Assessment procedures, as well as the Assessment itself. The procedure should be reviewed and approved in June of every third year of operation.

Management staff works in coordination with the Head Start Director to determine areas of focus, timeframes, deadlines, participants and assignments.

Timeframes for the Community Assessment data collection is generally July-October, concluding with a findings meeting in November and the final report is prepared and submitted to the Policy Council in November and Board of Directors in December for approval.