

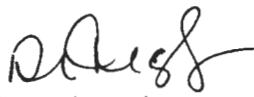


Interoffice Memorandum

April 3, 2023

AGENDA ITEM

TO: Mayor Jerry L. Demings
-AND-
County Commissioners

THRU: Dr. Tracy Salem, Deputy Director 
Community and Family Services Department

FROM: Sonya L. Hill, Manager
Head Start Division
Contact: Sandra Moore, (407) 836-8913
Sonya Hill, (407) 836-7409

SUBJECT: **Consent Agenda Item – April 11, 2023**
Application for Federal Assistance related to Cost-of-Living
Adjustment (5.6%) FY 2022-2023

The Head Start Division requests Board approval of the Application for Federal Assistance related to Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) between the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start and Orange County. The COLA adjustment (5.6%) grant funds, in the estimated amount of \$814,664, will be used to support cost-of-living increase for all employees, add four new positions including; Center Manager, Family Service Worker, Data Coordinator, and an Administrative Specialist, provide a 5.0% pay increase to 22 positions, and temporary employment contracts.

ACTION REQUESTED: **Approval of Orange County Head Start Application for Federal Assistance related to Cost-of-Living Adjustment (5.6%) FY 2022-2023 in the estimated amount of \$814,664. Four new positions will be added; Center Manager, Family Service Worker, Data Coordinator, and an Administrative Specialist, provide a 5.0% pay increase to 22 positions, and temporary employment contracts. An in-kind waiver is requested.**

SH/smm:ms

Attachments

BCC Mtg. Date: April 11, 2023

ORANGE COUNTY HEAD START APPLICATION

FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

Related to

COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT (5.60%) FY 2022-2023

Table of Contents

1. COLA Narrative.....2

2. Non-Federal Match.....3

ORANGE COUNTY HEAD START PROGRAM
**APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE RELATED TO
COST – OF – LIVING ADJUSTMENT (5.60%) FY 2023**

Budget Narrative

October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023

The Orange County Head Start Program is requesting \$814,664 in federal funding to provide Head Start Services to 1,536 children throughout Orange County, FL. The Orange County Head Start Program will use the permanent 5.60% COLA to support the cost-of-living increase for all employees, add four positions to the organizational chart to include Center Manager, Family Service Worker, Quality Assurance Data Coordinator, and an Administrative Specialist. The Data Coordinator position will be a new focus within the Quality Assurance unit. COLA funds will also provide a 5.0% pay increase to 22 positions and support the continuing cost of temporary employment contracts.

Orange County Cost of Living Increase

In February 2022, the Orange County Board of County Commissioners approved a 4% increase in salaries, a 1.75% increase in retirement and a \$1,100.00 per person increase for health insurance for all Orange County Government employees. All Orange County Head Start staff was included to receive these increases in insurance cost. The increase will come at a total estimated cost of \$469,920 for the 297 employees. Orange County Head Start will use \$469,920 from the COLA increase to cover the salary, retirement, and insurance increase. The COLA will be applied retroactively to the beginning of the 2023 program year and support the cost-of-living increase for all staff. The Orange County Head Start Division, along with The Orange County

Head Start Policy Council has determined that this will be the best allocation of the permanent COLA dollars. Because of the increased salary and fringe benefit costs, the requested award will help Orange County Head Start to permanently improve alignment of benefits with other providers of like services.

The COLA award of \$469,920 in federal funds will assist with salary and benefits in the following amounts:

COLA AWARD

Amount Allocated	Description
\$376,815	Salaries
\$93,102	Fringe

New Positions

Family Service Worker & Center Supervisor

Orange County Head Start (OCHS) is requesting to add a Family Service Worker (FSW) and Center Supervisor to the organizational manning table. Both positions will be permanent. The FSW and Center Supervisor positions will provide support for the opening of a new Head Start site. The FSW position will provide case management services at the new Head Start site, and the Center Supervisor will oversee the staff, children, and day to day operations.

In a twofold effort to one; mitigate the risk of spreading COVID and two; provide priority to three-year-olds in the program during the FY 22-23 school year, OCHS decreased the number of children in several of the classrooms from 20 to 17. Providing priority to the three-year-old children will require OCHS to open additional classrooms because the number of three-year-old students cannot exceed 17 students per classroom. Orange County Head Start has

planned to open additional classrooms yearly to give priority to three-year-old children. Once the program has opened enough classrooms, the program will then revisit the eligibility priority ranking criteria to establish permanent adjustments.

Per the *Head Start Program Performance Standards 1302.14* ***If a program operates in a service area where Head Start eligible children can enroll in high-quality publicly funded pre-kindergarten for a full school day, the program must prioritize younger children as part of the selection criteria.*** In addition, adding a FSW to the manning table will decrease the caseload for all FSWs. The standard caseload of a Social Worker is between 24-31 families. Currently, the average caseloads of OCHS FSWs are 68-70 with the more seasoned staff at 75. Excessive caseloads have been found to contribute to both secondary traumatization and burnout, which often leads to higher staff turnover. Research also shows social service programs with staff with higher caseloads see a decline in both the quantity and quality of services provided to clients. Orange County Head Start strives to provide quality services to our families. Due to the number of federal regulations programs are required to meet, it is important that with additional funding we continue to add positions that will decrease the caseload of the FSWs, and ensure quality services are provided to the children and families.

With the opening of a new Head Start site, OCHS would also need to add a Center Supervisor position to operate in the Center Directors role. All OCHS sites are licensed by The Department of Children & Families. *The Florida Department of Children and Families Childcare Facility Handbook Section 402.305(2)(g) F.S., requires a childcare facility to have a credentialed director.* The Center Supervisor is responsible for coordinating activities, supervising educational staff, and managing program operations and delivery of services for the assigned center that must meet standards set by federal, state, and local guidelines. The Center

Supervisor assumes teaching duties when necessary and monitors classrooms for compliance and provides support to the parent committee and policy council representative. Adding the FSW and Center Supervisor positions ensures OCHS follows local, state, and federal regulations and supports the opening of a new site.

Family Service Worker

Amount Allocated	Description	Items	Cost
\$66,140	Family Service Worker	\$40,164 – Salary \$ 3,073 – FICA \$ 5,053 – Retirement \$17,850 - Insurance	\$66,140

Center Supervisor

Amount Allocated	Description	Items	Cost
\$74,148	Center Manager	\$46,825 – Salary \$ 3,582 – FICA \$ 5,891 – Retirement \$17,850 - Insurance	\$74,148

Administrative Specialist

Orange County Head Start would like to add an Administrative Specialist to support operational functions of the Fiscal Unit. Over the last five years, the funding for OCHS program has increased over 25%, and with the added funding increase there is a higher level of additional requirements. The Fiscal Unit has expanded its role to include several other responsibilities and the unit has increased its overall workload. Over the last three years, the program has applied and

received disaster funding that included a new set of responsibilities. The Information Systems and Services is also under the Fiscal Unit. During COVID, OCHS developed a goal in the five-year strategic plan that would allow the program to focus on making strides in technology. The goal which states, **OCHS Program goal 4: *Orange County Head Start will design and build a technology infrastructure that will provide students, families, and staff with access to resource and education to increase children's achievement of the skills needed to thrive in a globally connected world,*** has required a high level of work involving technology. The Fiscal Unit has processed over 1 million dollars in spending to upgrade, create and build a technology infrastructure. In addition, the Fiscal Unit also oversees the Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) budget and spending as well as the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) budget. With both VPK and USDA funding, the Fiscal Unit is required to complete and submit state applications, complete massive amounts of paperwork, adhering to the policy and procedures of the State organization. Fiscal currently receives several external audits a year as a contractual obligation of receiving the funds. This area has begun to experience significant challenges in keeping up with the paperwork impacting deadlines and quality. To meet these growing expectations, we are requesting one full time Administrative Specialist to provide administrative support functions. Currently, administrative support functions are being completed by the Fiscal Manager; impacting her ability to perform her core duties and responsibilities. The approval of an Administrative Specialist would provide the needed relief and would enable the unit to meet expectations.

Administrative Specialist

Amount Allocated	Description	Items	Cost
\$57,263	Administrative Specialist	\$32,781 – Salary \$ 2,508– FICA \$ 4,124– Retirement \$17,850 - Insurance	\$57,263

Quality Assurance Data Coordinator

Orange County Head Start would like to increase the program’s ability to access, conceptualize and use data to provide more informed decision making. A Quality Assurance Data Coordinator can assist the program by improving data collection through using Head Start data bases. The *Head Start Program Performance Standards 1302.102* states ***“A program must implement a process for using data to identify program strengths and needs, develop and implement plans that address program needs, and continually evaluate compliance with program performance standards and progress towards achieving program goals. Program must: Ensure data is aggregated, analyzed, and compared in such a way to assist agencies in identifying risks and informing strategies for continuous improvement in all program service areas.*** Currently OCHS utilizes 9 software systems to collect data and generate reports. A Quality Assurance Data Coordinator will help to streamline the process and ensure all systems are aligned to identify strengths and areas of improvement.

The Quality Assurance Data Coordinator will ensure OCHS is using the data to develop and implement teaching practices, staffing and professional development practices, policy and procedures and ensuring all spending is aligned with program needs and outcomes. This position

will assist with the development and tracking of quality outcomes and assist with program compliance.

Quality Assurance Data Coordinator

Amount Allocated	Description	Items	Cost
\$74,148	Quality Assurance Data Coordinator	\$46,825 – Salary \$ 3,582 – FICA \$ 5,891 – Retirement \$17,850 - Insurance	\$74,148

5.0% Increase for 22 Positions

Orange County Head Start and Orange County Board of County Commissioners have supported the retention and recruitment of all county employees. During COVID-19, the decline in recruiting and retaining qualified teachers proposed a challenge to the program. With support from the county, all Teachers, Assistants, Center Supervisor, Family Service Workers, and Mental Health & Disabilities Coordinator positions were reviewed, and employees received a salary increase. This increase was based upon a thorough wage study by Orange County Human Resources Compensation Unit. This increase was in addition to the across the board increase of 4.0% for all Head Start employees. Of the total employees in position, 22 positions were not included in these special pay increases. Many of the positions listed are in middle management and have important functions that are necessary for the program. OCHS is requesting \$58,207.00 to support the 5.0% salary increase for 22 positions. A 5.0% salary increase will adjust the salaries of these positions to meet the baseline where the other employees have been compensated.

Positions suggested for Increase

- Mentor Coaches (2)
- Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator
- Contract Administrator
- Business Systems Analyst
- Quality Assurance Coordinators (2)
- Sr. Fiscal Coordinator
- Fiscal Officer
- Administrative Assistant
- Head Start Field Operations (2)
- Behavioral Intervention Specialist
- Education Coordinators (3)
- Registered Nurse
- Facilities Maintenance Coordinator
- Maintenance Technicians (2)
- Head Start Director

Temporary Employment Contracts

OCHS is requesting funds in the amount of \$14,841.00 to assist with the cost of temporary employment. Onboarding has proposed a challenge to meet the needs of the program. OCHS uses these temporary employment contracts to start new employees during onboarding. The \$5,964 will be used to support the use of temporary employment contracts.

In-Kind Match

The Orange County Head Start program is requesting an In-Kind waiver for this COLA award.