**Kentucky Head Start and Preschool Program Guidance: *Enhancement and Blending***

**What is enhancement?**

“Enhancement” refers to the option of double-counting four-year-old children in Head Start and state-funded Preschool for funding purposes. In this option, a local Head Start program provides supplemental services to four-year-old children who are already served through the Kentucky Preschool Program.

This option is only allowed when certain conditions are met, as specified in the “Local Agreement for Full Utilization of Head Start.”

The **conditions** are as follows:

* The Head Start program must already fully fund and serve at least the minimum target enrollment of four-year-olds in an *unduplicated* count. These four-year-olds are enrolled in Head Start and are not enrolled in state-funded Preschool.
* The children to be counted for enhancement are four-year-olds eligible for Head Start and most in need of services. Children must meet eligibility guidelines for both programs.
* The children must receive *comprehensive* services: preschool services are funded through the preschool program and intensive supplemental services are funded by Head Start. All state-funded preschool regulations, Head Start regulations and performance standards apply. Whenever there are differences between state and federal standards and requirements, the higher standard applies.
* The “enhancement” option must be agreed upon in advance by the local school district and the Head Start program and reflected in their “Local Agreement for Full Utilization of Head Start.”

All four conditions must be met in order to enroll a four-year-old child in state-funded Preschool and Head Start during the school year.

State-funded enhancement is the only exception to the rule that Head Start children cannot be included in the Kentucky Fall and Spring Enrollment Counts for funding purposes.

**What is blending?**

“Blending” refers to the option of operating classrooms shared by Head Start and state-funded Preschool Program students, where children in the rooms are financially supported through several funding sources and agencies. Programs may be partially blended (e.g., one or more classrooms are blended at one or more sites, but not all classrooms are blended) or fully blended (e.g., every classroom offered by Head Start and state-funded Preschool includes both Head Start and state-funded preschool students). Note that other sources such as Title I and private tuition may be used to support the enrollment of other children.

Blended classrooms share the following characteristics:

* Costs are shared, meaning they are prorated to each funding source.
* Separate audit trails are maintained for each funding source.
* The classroom must meet the operating requirements of all funding sources. When standards are not comparable or the same, the most stringent standard applies.
* Children receive all services for which they are eligible.
* Wrap-around services (before- and after-school childcare) are coordinated with child care providers and Family Resource Centers.
* Programs coordinate with medical, health, mental health and social service agencies to meet the comprehensive needs of children and families.

Blending represents the most effective use of state and federal preschool funds, providing a comprehensive system of early childhood service delivery for preschool children. School districts and Head Start programs are encouraged to choose partial or fully blended model options depending on local needs and resources.