

## NEXT STEPS TO RESPOND TO THE FULL ENROLLMENT INITIATIVE: ADDRESSING UNDERENROLLMENT AT YOUR AGENCY

**Is your agency at risk of losing funding?** A strategic response to underenrollment and an action plan that focuses on risk mitigation will help programs to demonstrate their efforts and work toward full enrollment.

What are you doing to reduce or eliminate underenrollment?

1. Determine the primary cause of your underenrollment: Have you completed data analysis to identify factors impacting enrollment?
  - Complete the Self-Assessment to identify areas of need
  - Determine if factors are/will be temporary or long lasting
  - Develop a continuous program improvement plan to guide your response
2. Step up ERSEA activities and monitoring: What are you doing to reach full enrollment?
  - Ensure ERSEA Policies and Procedures are up-to-date
  - Document all activities to recruit children and families
  - Leverage technology to implement new recruitment strategies
  - Maintain an active waiting list and fill all vacancies
  - Document eligibility of families on the waiting list
3. Focus on STAFFING: Are you addressing staff needs?
  - Analyze human resources data (e.g., recruitment, vacancies, turnover)
  - Implement permanent wage increases
  - Offer hiring and retention bonuses, short-term pay increases, or other financial incentives
  - Continue to offer compensation during closures due to a natural disaster
  - Provide information about [Public Service Loan Forgiveness \(PSLF\)](#)
  - Support professional development and career advancement
  - Request a qualifications waiver for Head Start Preschool teachers, if needed
  - Document efforts to support staff wellness and mental health
  - Survey staff to understand their priorities and support retention efforts
4. Ensure you are actively PLANNING: Have you completed a community assessment recently?
  - Collect data to show strengths and barriers impacting enrollment
  - Identify areas of greatest need – poverty, homelessness, children in foster care, etc.
  - Identify areas impacting enrollment
5. Assess your PROGRAM DESIGN: Are you meeting community need?
  - Should slots be converted from HS to EHS? From home-based to center-based?
  - How many slots need to be reduced?
  - Do you need to eliminate or reduce partners?
  - Do you need to increase service duration?
  - Do you need to provide transportation?
  - Does your budget support program design, including staffing and the organizational structure?
6. Activities to support a CHANGE OF SCOPE: Have you completed the following?
  - Community Assessment
  - Self-Assessment, Program Improvement Plans, and Ongoing Oversight
  - Workforce stabilization, including completing a Wage Comparability Study
  - Review of administrative and supervisory staff structure
  - Review of your service delivery model, including proposed program design
  - Address any equity considerations that may arise from reducing services
  - Develop a budget to support the proposed program design