


<b>Performance Standard:</b>	School Readiness Act of 2007	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>INCA Community Services</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Head Start &amp; Early Head Start Policies and Procedures</b></p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>
<b>Sub Category:</b>	Human Resources	
<b>Reference:</b>		
<b>PC Approval Date:</b>	6/2008, 8/2014,	
<b>GB Approval Date:</b>	6/2008, 8/2014. 10/2022	
<b>Form:</b>		
<b>Responsible:</b>	Education Manager, Head Start Director	

## Tuition Assistance

### Policy

INCA established and implements a structured approach to staff training and development. This system is designed to help build relationships among personnel and to encourage them to acquire and increase the knowledge and skills needed to fulfill their job responsibilities. For those employees needing financial assistance from the agency in order to pursue higher education the following procedures have been established. The tuition assistance policy is built upon personnel need, Performance Standards Requirements, and fund availability.

Based on the “Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007” 50% of Teachers nationwide will be expected to receive their baccalaureate degree by Sept. 30, 2013. Teachers without a baccalaureate degree by Sept 30, 2011 must have an Associate degree, State of Oklahoma awarded certificate for preschool teachers and a CDA with a minimum of an Associate degree by Oct. 1, 2011. All Head Start teacher assistants must, by Sept 30, 2013, have at least a CDA credential or be enrolled in a program leading to an associate or baccalaureate degree or be enrolled in a CDA credential program that will be completed within two years.

### Funding Eligibility Requirements

- All eligible personnel are encouraged to seek out schools and funding sources to allow them to further their education.
- Federal mandates set priorities in funding education for staff.
  - The current priorities are for full time personnel.
  - Other Head Start personnel wishing to request financial support for continued college curricula are invited to apply;
  - Funding is contingent upon availability of funds designated for training and college classes, and will be determined on an individual, case by case basis.

## Eligible Personnel

- Head Start Personnel who work full time (40 hours a week).
- Personnel that have successfully completed the introductory period are eligible to enroll in College coursework.
- Personnel are eligible to enroll in Agency approved courses through INCA on their first day of work.

## CDA Credential Program

INCA Head Start will assist:

- *eligible* personnel in pursuing a CDA Credential.
- with securing enrollment in course work to meet the CDA requirements, and
- with the cost of securing the CDA Credential.

## College Credit Hours/ Degrees/ INCA Funding Availability

- The amount of funding available to each staff person will not exceed \$3,000 plus two books per semester. (Fall, Spring, Summer) if funds are available.
- The cost exceeding \$3,000 plus two books per semester (Fall, Spring, Summer), will be at the expense of the employee.
- Personnel will be required to apply for a Pell Grant and/or Tribal financial assistance for tuition and books before applying to INCA for funding for tuition and books.
- A copy of the financial aid award letter must be turned in to the Education Manager each year. INCA will pay up to the allotted amount or the difference, if the grant does not cover the total bill.
- Staff must provide the Education Manager with a copy of a bill at the time of Enrollment each semester, or INCA will not be responsible for the bill.
- INCA reserves the right to approve or disapprove both degree plans and institution choices.

## College or CDA class requirements do not precede job duties.

If it is determined by management that an employee's job performance or classroom effectiveness is hindered by class load or schedule, **their job performance has priority** and the proper adjustments will be made to ensure the classroom is running effectively and efficiently.

## Professional Development Staff Agreement

INCA personnel will participate in the completion of and sign the Agreement upon employment with INCA which will outline an individualized plan for them. This agreement will contain objectives and deadlines for meeting their Professional Development goals. The Education Manager and/or Compliance Officer will meet with personnel as needed to provide assistance and ensure accountability on meeting their personal goals.

## College Courses Procedure

- Eligible employees will consult with the Education Manager and/or Compliance

Officer regarding career development plan procedure, school of choice, and class load.

- Employees will contact the approved school of choice to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aide (FAFSA), confirm classes offered and meet with potential academic advisors.
- INCA Application to Attend College/Training Form must be completed with supporting documentation attached before being approved to attend college classes.
- Employees **must** have approval of the Education Manager **and** the Head Start Director to attend more than two (2) - 3 hour classes per semester.
- College courses must be job related.
- After completion of the class, a statement from the school's record keeping department must be given to the Education Manager. This record must indicate the grade received for the class as well as college credit hours given.
- Employees **will** be responsible for the bill if a class is dropped after the deadline or the employee has left the agency.
- Employees must maintain a "C" average.
- Employees will be responsible for the bill if a class must be taken again.
- Permission to attend a class during work hours **must** be approved **each** semester by the Education Manager **and** the Head Start Director upon written request.
- Employees will not be charged annual time to attend a pre-approved class, during work hours if they have been present at work the day of college class.
- If an employee is absent from work on a college class day, they will not be able to claim work hours for attending the college class.

### **Master Degree**

INCA encourages Head Start personnel to further their education, however, INCA does not provide funding or time off from work schedule to pursue a Master's Degree. This shall be done on the employee's own time and expense.

### **Transportation/Other College Activities**

INCA will not be responsible for:

- mileage or transportation to and from college classes,
- enrollment for college classes,
- or any other college related activity.

### **Definitions/Acronyms**

PC - Policy Council  
GB - Governing Board  
INCA - Head Start and Early Head Start programs  
HS - Head Start program  
EHS - Early Head Start program  
FEC - Family Engagement Coordinator

### **Dissemination of Policy**

The policy will be made available to all Head Start employees through the agency's website @ [www.incacaa.org](http://www.incacaa.org). The agency will educate and train applicable employees and supervisors regarding the policy and any conduct that could constitute a violation of the policy.