

Calendar of Events

May 21, 2026

[May 21, 2026] Statewide HS/EHS Directors Meeting

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CST

Cathy Welsh, 2173815007

cwelsh@ilheadstart.org

ABOUT

The Illinois HS/EHS Directors Meeting is a monthly working group built for Head Start and Early Head Start leadership across Illinois. Executive Directors, Program Directors, and other senior leaders come together to share challenges, exchange solutions, and walk away with practical tools they can apply directly in their programs. If you're in a leadership role at an Illinois Head Start or Early Head Start agency, this group was built for you.

WHY JOIN

Senior leaders in Illinois Head Start/Early Head Start carry a unique set of responsibilities that most professional development spaces don't address. This group does. You'll get a candid peer environment to work through real problems, stay current on federal and state policy, funding, and regulatory updates that affect your program, and connect with other leaders across Illinois who understand the work firsthand.

Being part of this group automatically includes you in the listserv, where members share questions, resources, and timely information between meetings so you're never waiting a month for an answer you need now.

WHEN

Every 3rd Thursday at 10:00 am each month

May 28, 2026

Deadline to Sign up for A.I. Training and Coaching Series

varies

Cathy Welsh, 2173815007

cwelsh@ilheadstart.org

June 1, 2026
- June 3, 2026

The Vanessa Rich Leadership Experience | June 1-3, 2026

Herrington Inn & Spa

15 S River Ln

Geneva, IL 60134

Monday: 12PM-5PM / Tuesday: 8:30AM-5:00PM / Wednesday: 8:30AM-12:00PM

Cathy Welsh, 2173815007

cwelsh@ilheadstart.org

The Vanessa Rich Leadership Experience is a two-and-a-half-day working retreat for Head Start and Early Head Start leadership across Illinois. If you hold a management or leadership role at an Illinois HS/EHS program, this event is built for you.

You will spend time with peers who are doing the same work, tackling the same challenges, and managing the same pressures. The format is designed around real problems and practical takeaways, not lectures.

Named in honor of Vanessa Rich, who dedicated 40 years to Head Start and served as Deputy Commissioner of Children Services for the City of Chicago

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

Times: Monday: 12PM—5PM / Tuesday: 8:30AM—5:00PM / Wednesday:

8:30AM—12:00PM

Registration Fee: \$460.00 member / \$610.00 non-member; Three or more from the same agency: \$410.00 per person

Meals Included: Monday Lunch and Post meeting activity (Dinner on your own) /

Tuesday: Hot Breakfast & Lunch (Dinner on your own) / Wednesday: Hot Breakfast

UNIQUE EMAIL ADDRESSES REQUIRED: When completing a registration please enter the unique email address of the person attending the training, not the email of the person completing the registration. A unique email address is required for each attendee in order to access the training event AND materials.

June 3, 2026
- June 5, 2026

Statewide HS/EHS Directors Institute | June 3-5, 2026

Herrington Inn & Spa

15 S River Ln

Geneva, IL 60134

Wednesday: 12PM-5PM / Thursday: 8:30AM-5:00PM / Friday: 8:30AM-12:00PM

Cathy Welsh, 2173815007

cwelsh@ilheadstart.org

? Calling all Head Start and Early Head Start Leaders in Illinois! ?

If you're a Head Start or Early Head Start director in Illinois, this event is for you. The 2026 Directors Institute is your chance to step away from the day-to-day and connect with people who get what you're navigating—because they're in it too. Executive directors, program directors, and leadership teams from across the state come together to learn, share, and grow as a community.

We know the landscape is shifting. With evolving guidance from the Administration for Children and Families and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, directors are being asked to do more, respond faster, and lead with greater clarity. This Institute is designed to help you do just that.

Why attend?

You'll get updates that matter, straight from experts who understand the latest from ACF and HHS—and how it affects your work.

You'll leave with real tools and strategies, not just big ideas. Everything is tailored for the realities of running a Head Start or Early Head Start program in Illinois.

You'll connect with your people. Whether you're a seasoned leader or stepping into the role, this is a place to swap ideas, solve problems, and build relationships that last.

Come ready to talk honestly, think creatively, and walk away with ideas you can actually use. The 2026 Directors Institute is more than a training—it's a leadership recharge.

SPACE LIMITED - REGISTER FOR YOUR SPOT EARLY!

Schedule

Wednesday, June 3: 12:00 PM – 5:00 PM (Lunch provided)

Thursday, June 4: 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM (Breakfast and Lunch provided)

Friday, June 5: 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM (Breakfast provided)

Registration Rates

| <i>Registration Type</i> | <i>Rate</i> | <i>Availability</i> |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Individual IHSA Member</i> | <i>\$399</i> | <i>All registration</i> |
| <i>Team (3+ from same agency)</i> | <i>\$349</i> | <i>Through May 1</i> |
| <i>Non-Member</i> | <i>\$575</i> | <i>All registration</i> |

Team Registration Details

- Team rates are available for groups of three (3) or more attendees from the same member agency or program.*
- All team members must register together in one transaction.*
- Team pricing is available through May 1, 2026. After that date, all registrations default to the individual member rate of \$399.*
- If only one person registers at the team rate, IHSA will contact that individual for the*

\$50 balance.

Venue & Hotel?

Herrington Inn and Spa Guest Room Rate for IHSA Directors Institute: [Individuals must reserve on their own]

The Herrington Inn & Spa, 15 South River Lane, Geneva, IL 60134

Occupancy tax: 11% added to room rate

To book: Call the front desk at 630.208.7433 and ask for the Illinois Head Start / Directors Institute block.

Hotel cutoff: May 4, 2026. Rooms after this date are subject to availability and may not be at the group rate.

Check-in: 4:00 PM | Check-out: 12:00 PM (noon)

Room options:

Courtyard Double or King: 209.00/night

One Bedroom Suite: 259.00/night

River Premier: 259.00/night

Townview Room: 209.00/night

Please reserve your lodging early: Accommodations are subject to availability. Any additions in excess of the Guaranteed Block after the Cut-off Date (May 4, 2026) will increase the Guaranteed Block by an equal amount.

Make your reservation by calling the front desk directly at 630.208.7433 and use your company and group name [IHSA Directors Institute].

July 16, 2026

[July 16, 2026] Statewide HS/EHS Directors Meeting

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CST

Cathy Welsh, 2173815007

cwelsh@ilheadstart.org

ABOUT

The Illinois HS/EHS Directors Meeting is a monthly meeting for Executive Directors, Program Directors, and senior leaders from Head Start and Early Head Start programs across Illinois. It meets every third Thursday at 10:00 a.m.

WHY JOIN

The meeting covers Head Start and Early Head Start updates, policy, and the timely issues that are front and center at the federal, state, and local level. Members use the time to ask questions, brainstorm solutions, and share resources with colleagues who are dealing with the same issues. Between meetings, the listserv connects members through peer questions and responses facilitated by IHSA.

WHEN

Every third Thursday at 10:00 a.m.

HOW TO JOIN

When you register, you will receive a confirmation with the Zoom link for that meeting.

August 20, 2026

[August 20, 2026] Statewide HS/EHS Directors Meeting

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CST

Cathy Welsh, 2173815007

cwelsh@ilheadstart.org

ABOUT

The Illinois HS/EHS Directors Meeting is a monthly meeting for Executive Directors, Program Directors, and senior leaders from Head Start and Early Head Start programs across Illinois. It meets every third Thursday at 10:00 a.m.

WHY JOIN

The meeting covers Head Start and Early Head Start updates, policy, and the timely issues that are front and center at the federal, state, and local level. Members use the time to ask questions, brainstorm solutions, and share resources with colleagues who are dealing with the same issues. Between meetings, the listserv connects members through peer questions and responses facilitated by IHSA.

WHEN

Every third Thursday at 10:00 a.m.

HOW TO JOIN

When you register, you will receive a confirmation with the Zoom link for that meeting.

Coming Soon

PD @ a Glance Roll Out

Illinois Head Start Association

3435 Liberty Drive

Springfield, IL 62704

12:00 AM - 12:00 AM CST

Cathy Welsh, 2173815007

cwelsh@ilheadstart.org