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ANNUAL REPORT

May 2018

2016–2017 Year End Report

WHAT IS HEAD START?

Head Start is a federally funded, comprehensive interdisciplinary, Early Childhood Development Program for eligible children and their family

ENROLLMENT

Total Funded Enrollment:
1020 Preschoolers
 100% full enrollment
 Period 11/1/16-10/31/17 & 7/31/2016 to 6/30/2017

476 waitlisted on first day Head Start
 100% eligible applicants enrolled in program for full enrollment

60 Infants & Toddlers
20 Pregnant Mothers
 100% full enrollment

133 waitlisted on first day
 100% eligible applicants enrolled in program

EHS-CCP funded 128 infants and toddlers full enrollment at all sites.
 16 El Campito Full enrollment
 72 Jimtown
 40 Lafayette

133 waitlisted on first day
 100% eligible applicants enrolled in program

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WHO WE ARE

The Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties Head Start Consortium has completed its 13th year of operation. The consortium comprises of eleven school corporations within the two county areas as designated by the grant award that formulate a collaboration for the purpose of providing quality services to children and families. Superintendents, who are part of the decision making governing board, bring an impressive amount of expertise and resources from each corporation that will continue to support the needs of Head Start children and families from the community to

the corridors of the school. This is truly a powerful initiative as the goals are structured and intentional to deliver high quality services and to ensure the heart of Head Start is a part of a positive experience for children who will be entering school.

The Consortium Board has a commitment to ensure that Head Start remains successful and has provided full support of their commitment through time, energy, expertise, and resources that will offer the best in quality services through partnerships and collaboration within their own corporations and departments. This has

been proven through the mission statement and goals that continue to be revisited to maintain the integrity of the Consortium. Subsequently, the program continues to demonstrate a seamless system of education that will provide children and families an early opportunity to become familiar with a system which will impact their lifelong love for learning and growth.



OUR MISSION

Our mission is to create a seamless system of education and child development for underserved infants and toddlers through pre-school children by providing a nurturing learning environment to ready them for kindergarten. We recognize the comprehensive approach to

the child's development is essential. Therefore, in addition to the interdisciplinary educational component, the program has a comprehensive health component with strong family and community support.

We believe that we must strengthen and em-

power our children and families to overcome these obstacles and create a solid, secure foundation upon which to build.

HEAD START GOALS

- A journey of life-long learning can begin in a child who begins at a school based Head Start program.
- Create a holistic approach by supporting the need of implementing health and social services as part of the educational process.
- Create a secure, solid foundation using available community systems of coordinated care.
- Allows children and families to develop rich relationships with teachers, staff and to be proactive in approaching educational development.
- Allow opportunity for children

and families to assimilate into the culture of school by establishing relationships through the transition process from Early Head Start and/or Head Start to Kindergarten.



KINDERGARTEN READINESS PROGRAM

Head Start provided a link to each school corporation by being actively involved in the preparation for kindergarten. Our staff assists in kindergarten enrollment at each of our sites, with 549 of our Head Start graduates enrolling in kindergarten in a consortium school system. Another 40% returned to Head Start another year and a small percentage left our districts.

- Kindergarten Transition Packets given to schools and parents containing Medical (physical, dental, immunizations, birth certificate) and Education information (Transition Summary, COR Summary, Letter ID checklist).
- Kindergarten Visits each classroom, provides a documented visit to a kindergarten classroom in their elementary school building for their Head Start children.
- Many children are registered at their schools for kindergarten during the last Head Start parent site meeting.
- Letters were sent to the parents with the dates and times of kindergarten registration for the school at which their child would be attending kindergarten.
- Throughout the year at home visits and conferences, teachers informed parents of kindergarten skills that could be worked on at home to better prepare their children for kindergarten.
- Home work activities were sent home weekly to engage parents in kindergarten skill development with their children. (Literacy bags, writing activities, Math activities, etc.)
- Site meetings in March and April were dedicated to kindergarten transitions. Principals, school nurses, and kindergarten teachers were the presenters for these meetings.
- Parents received kindergarten transition kits from Head Start with materials and instructions for parents to continue kindergarten preparedness at home over the summer.
- Parents received information from Head Start.
- Monthly newsletters to the parents contained information about kindergarten registrations and school activities.
- Kindergarten Transition Activity-each classroom had field days or programs celebrating the accomplishment of completing the Head Start program and the placement of the children next year into the kindergarten program. Attendance by the parents was nearly 90% at most sites.
- Transition Meetings, in preparation for Kindergarten, the Head Start sites provided parents a transition kit to use over the summer as a calendar of activities that will help their children retain skills during the summer. These meetings were well attended at many of the sites as parents are interested in their child's preparation and expectations for kindergarten. The kits were prepared by staff and grantee staff as training was conducted by consultants so parents can effectively implement the kit at home.

Transition Celebrations were held at each site to bring the Head Start school year to closure. Many children will transition into kindergarten and parents were excited about the day to see their child engaged in activities through songs and stories. About 98% of the parents attended this event.

Paths to Quality: The Consortium has entered into a new phase in support of the Head Start Performance Standards by participating in the QRIS or Paths to Quality System. In addition to the participation the centers must be childcare licensed by the State. The Consortium began working on this process and signed an agreement (MOU) to receive coaching and support through the process.

Practice Based Coaching: Family Connections received training from Head Start and began coaching teachers, this has brought about change and continuous professionalism to our teaching staff!



PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Open House:

Late August/each site hosted an open house event to acclimate the children and have parents view their child's classroom. We had a majority of the enrolled families attend the Parent Orientation events and the orientation was conducted in Spanish and English as needed.

Site Meetings:

The first site meetings were held at each site in September. The focus was an introduction to the Governance procedures for parents and the relationship to the Policy Council and Board. Parents receive this training as a precursor to electing representatives from the Site level to the Policy Council level.

Additionally, each month a site meeting was conducted with some sites having excellent attendance. The topics for these meetings was selected by the parents and items mandated by the Office of Head Start and there were many opportunities to learn more about Head Start, resources that are available to the parents, especially information about kindergarten readiness.

Policy Council:

November is an opportunity for the Policy Council members to vote in a new council based on the Site level elections. The Policy Council at this time is comprised 100% of parent representatives to include former parents

representing the community seats. We had a celebration for the dedicated services of the Policy Council by recognizing their work and welcoming the new Policy Council members. At this meeting new Policy Council members were trained, particularly in areas of holding an office for the council, membership responsibilities, and other items. During the October meeting, parents had a Site Meeting Level election to vote for representatives that will serve on the Policy Council.

The distribution of representatives is based on one parent for every 100 children enrolled within a school corporation site to serve on the Policy Council. This year the Policy Council needed to expand in size as the newly operational programs for EHS-CCP needed representation. We now have an additional 3 members to the Council to represent the Early Head Start Child-Care Partnership program.

Additionally, we have 4 active Community leaders serving on the Policy Council. A former Superintendent of Schools, President of the NAACP South Bend, a Grandparent whose grandchild was a Head Start child and a former Head Start parent.

Family Summit:

November – December was an exciting event for parents and staff as the Grantee office coordinated its 11th Annual Family Summit. The Summit was presented in a workshop/conference format and held at Jimtown School in Elkhart, Lafayette School in South Bend, and Maple City Church in Goshen. The location was ideal and conveniently located for Head Start/ EHS/EHS-CCP parents to attend. Child care and translation services were available for all parents and those needing translation for Spanish.

The workshops focused on parenting skills, health and nutrition awareness, mental health and relationship building, fatherhood support, several kindergarten readiness activities and budgeting/finance seminars for parents.

Speakers brought expertise level of information to our parents to include our very own Dr. Phil, and story teller Pastor Greg and Dietician Anna.

Each parent that attended received a literacy bag filled with a new book, stuffed animal, and activities sponsored by Kohl's Department Store, and educational board games, along with other items to fill two conference bags. Throughout the day, prizes were given to parents that were either donated or purchased.

The event was highly attended by 700 parents and staff, and based on survey results from the parents, it was an excellent event with many positive comments and request to continue for future years to come.

Fatherhood Initiatives:

In January, a Fatherhood Training was held in Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties. The St. Joseph County event was conducted at Lafayette School, and the Elkhart County was conducted in Mishwaka, the training was attended by 90 fathers.

The training comprised of various topics that

concern fathers and their role in the lives of their children. Dads were given conference bags, children's activities and a gift to take home to their significant other. Each father also received an incentive item for attending the workshops. The Dads completed a survey and based on the survey results were satisfied with the opportunity to participate in the conference.

In December, as a result of many teen dads attending the Fatherhood event, a half of day of training teen parents was held to support their relationships and how to build a strong connection for the future. This event was attended by 99% of the teen parents. After the training the parents were able to make gifts, and wrap them for their child for the holidays. Parents enjoyed making, wrapping gifts, but mostly enjoyed making memories.

Healthy Relationships Banquet:

During the month of February three banquets were held to celebrate couples, we had 200 parents come for a night of entertainment, training for better communication, skill building through Healthy Relationships building. This was a night of fun for parents.

Love and Logic Training for Parents:

As part of the Site Meetings this year, parents were provided an opportunity to participate in a Parenting Skills Training track that uses making right choices as a form of redirecting behaviors. Many parents took advantage of the training series and commented that results were evident as a result to implementing this technique in the home.

Goshen Music College and Music Together:

Music Together is a wonderful program uniting parents, teachers, and children to learn about music and how it is within us to develop many skills through this form of expression. Music Together is a project developed through Princeton University and as a partner, the Consortium benefits from this research.

This project of joining together music and brain-based curriculum continued in Early Head Start. At the end of the a ten week session parents were brought together for an evening with their children and teachers to celebrate the music, culture, and learning by the families.

Waitlisted Children Served:

During this reporting period Head Start had 424 children on the waitlist for both counties. In an effort to try and provide services for the children and families, the Board agreed to have a series of parenting and classroom exposure for the waitlisted families. Waitlisted parents were invited to some of the events held, and some took advantage of this opportunity.

Additionally, South Bend Schools contracted the Consortium's Head Start program to provide Prek services for 324 children who otherwise would have remained on the waitlist. As a result, these children received services mirroring what is offered through Head Start. Therefore, significantly reducing the number of children on the waitlist.

ELKHART AND
ST. JOSEPH
COUNTIES HEAD
START CONSORTIUM



Head Start

Visit our website for more program
and eligibility information