



Jefferson County Board of Education Head Start / Early Head Start Program

Program Approach

Program Design and Management

Program Governance

The Jefferson County Board of Education (JCBE) is the governing body for the grantee. The board is supportive of the early childhood programs. Each year the Policy Council is established as required by Head Start Standards. The council is composed of 51% parents and 49% community partners. The community partners are dedicated to serving on the Policy Council and they bring valuable information and resources to the program and families. In addition to operating Head Start and Early Head Start, the grantee also operates state-funded preschool and tuition-based preschool programs.

As required by the Head Start Act, the JCBE and Policy Council receive monthly reports on the program. Policy Council members are offered a variety of governance trainings, serves on such committees as school readiness, family engagement, program planning, and are participants in program activities. Council members are actively involved in the review and approval of business items presented to them.

Management Systems and Procedures

Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) has departments that support the Head Start program, including financial services; human resources; nutrition services; transportation; information technology; exceptional child education services; compliance and investigations; and student assignment.

The Data Management Planning and Program Evaluation department, along with the Materials Production department, supports a variety of projects across all Head Start systems. Their support includes, program handbooks, recruitment materials and newsletters. The *Classroom Assessment System and Community Access Dashboard for Education (CASCADE)*, is the district's electronic system for collecting and aggregating student assessment data. Head Start student assessment data is entered into this system by teachers allowing for analysis by classroom, by center, and by program.

Though the grantee has, electronic systems set up, efforts to continue improvement data collection and reporting is ongoing. This will continue to support the program's data analysis, planning, and communication system. The ongoing monitoring system is in its first year of implementation, and business rules have been established as processes and procedures are being refined.

Program Planning

Program planning includes Community Needs Assessment, strategic planning of long and short-term goals, Policy Council and Board training, self-assessment, ongoing monitoring and reporting, grant planning and budgets. Policy Council parents convene twice a year to help plan family engagement activities.

Human Resources

The JCPS Personnel department supports all personnel actions. In addition, the Labor Management and Employee Relations department is a liaison to the employee unions that Head Start staff has the option of joining. The program complies with all personnel policies established by the school board. Head Start staff are paid according to board approved salary schedules and can access a full array of benefits.

The grantee has a new Early Childhood director who also serves as the Head Start director. The program continues to have four key units, each led by a member of the core management team: Child Development and Health Services, Family and Community Partnerships, Operations, and Fiscal.

The Child Development and Health Services (CDH) unit has two specialists, two coordinators, five clerks and a team of eighteen resources teachers. All Head Start classrooms are staffed with a teacher, instructional assistant and typically a bus monitor. Early Head Start classrooms are staffed with two

teachers. In addition, all classrooms have access to a disabilities liaison to support services to children suspected of, or having, an identified disability or mental health concerns. To further support children with disabilities, a strong link to the grantee's special education department is provided through partnership with a special education consultant, who is a part of the early childhood management team.

The Family and Community Partnerships (FCP) unit has a staff of thirty-six. The staff is composed of three liaisons, twenty-six family service workers, and one clerk. Additionally, the FCP unit manager oversees the five Head Start and Early Head Start home based instructors. There is a specially trained intake team of eight designated to take applications year-round; however all family service workers are able to take applications when needed.

The Operations unit includes a transportation coordinator, data management technician, career development clerk, office manager and seven clerks. This unit collaborates with the grantee's transportation department, oversees technology services, coordinates database management and development of monitoring reports, and supports staff in career development and advancement activities. This unit also serves as the liaison to grantee support systems in the areas of facilities, information technology, telecommunications, materials production (printing and publication), safety and environmental services, and security.

The Fiscal unit has a staff that includes three clerks. This unit is responsible for financial activities including payroll, purchasing, and budgeting. This unit also serves as the liaison to grantee support systems in the area of financial services.

Early Childhood Development and Health

Education and Early Childhood Development

The program is located at 45 sites. In Head Start, the program operates 90 classrooms. The program has 19 Early Head Start classrooms. Services are provided to children for 6.5 hours.

Creative Curriculum is the program's primary curriculum for both Head Start and Early Head Start, however, additional curriculum resources are used as needed support instruction. The program uses the *Second Step* curriculum to enhance the social-emotional component; *Marvelous Explorations through Science and Stories (MESS)* for science; and *Everyday Math* for mathematics.

The *BRIGANCE Early Childhood Screens* are the developmental screening tools in both Head Start and Early Head Start. The *Work Sampling System* is used in Head Start as the ongoing assessment tool and the *Ounce Scale* is used in Early Head Start. The program has been using these tools for many years.

Child Health and Developmental Services

All children are required to provide dental and physical documents within the 90-day timeframe. The grantee is challenged with getting parents to comply and help the program meet the goal of 100%. The program will continue to collaborate with a variety of community partners to increase the percentage of families who comply with these requirements.

All children received the required screenings within the required 45-day timeline. Children that fail screenings receive follow up to determine if there are additional needs. The program then individualizes services for children based on their strengths and needs. There is strong community support for the Health Advisory Committee.

Child Health and Safety

The program follows grantee policies and procedures for medication administration, health emergencies and short-term exclusion. Although hand-washing procedures are in place, self-assessment has shown that there is additional training and monitoring that needs to occur to ensure consistency. All classrooms are equipped with first aid kits.

Child Nutrition

The JCPS School and Community Nutrition Services (SCNS) department provides meals and snacks to all children through the USDA National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. Children receive choices for their lunch in the same way as elementary students. Another positive step that has been taken by the grantee is a pilot program offering breakfast in the classroom. In schools where this program is being piloted, Head Start classrooms are participating.

Child Mental Health

The program has a contract with the University of Louisville, Kent School of Social Work to provide mental health consultation services. U of L has formed a committee that meets periodically to discuss mental health concerns and to plan staff professional development and other activities for parents. Consultants provide staff training and parent workshops, as well as direct services to children and families. The program works collaboratively with Family Resource Youth Service Center (FRYSC) to further support any parent or staff mental health needs. Staff also has access to mental health resources through the Employee Assistance Program at no cost.

Disabilities

The grantee is fortunate to have the full support of the JCPS Exceptional Child Education (ECE) department. The program works closely with ECE to recruit children transitioning from First Steps, the local Part-C agency. Children already enrolled in the program and suspected of having a disability go through the same referral process as all children in the district. The grantee consistently meets or exceeds the requirements for serving children with disabilities.

In addition to the disability coordinator and liaisons, the program has access to over 23 ECE Resource Teachers to assist them in serving children with disabilities. This is a great support for teachers who are working with challenging behaviors and diverse skill levels.

Family and Community Partnerships

Family Service Workers coordinates the Family Partnership Agreement (FPA) through two visits per year in the home. The first visit initiates the goal setting for the FPA and the second visit addresses the progress of the goal. Monthly, families receive follow up calls along with reminder notices about scheduled family engagement activities and missing or expiring health documents. Parent Center Committee Meetings (PCCM) are scheduled eight times during the school year at individual sites. In October and April program-wide, the program sponsors parent institutes. The parent institutes consist of a variety of workshops presented by program partners and community members. This year the grantee will take on a new approach to parent orientation to increase family participation. Parents are offered a wide variety of workshops and trainings that enhance their skills for supporting their child's education. This includes workshops and trainings for father/ male mentors and grandparents.

The *Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework (PFCE)* data will be tracked in ChildPlus in 2015-16. The data will be used to plan and develop program services and staff professional development. The grantee's school readiness plan includes the PFCE goals.

Community partners are representative of the services and needs of families in the program. Community partners include but are not limited to: Kentucky Science Center, Louisville Free Public Library, Kentucky Refugee Ministries, Legal Aid Society, Health Department, Cabinet for Health and Family Services, University of Louisville, Campbellsville University and the Governor's Office for Early Childhood. The grantee will continue to work toward increasing partnerships.

Facilities, Materials and Equipment

The program sites are supported by the grantee's infrastructure, including general maintenance, safety and environmental services, information technology, and telecommunications. The program receives in-kind support through unreimbursed costs such as utilities, custodial services, and maintenance. This in-kind is a generous gift from JCBE and demonstrates their commitment to the Head Start program. All classrooms provide at least 35 square feet of space per student and are fully equipped with local network and internet access.

Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance (ERSEA)

Eligibility

An eligibility criterion has been established based on Head Start Standards and with Policy Council approval. Processes and procedures include ongoing opportunities for application to the program, providing a variety of application sites, and developing a specialized intake team, with bilingual staff support, to determine eligibility and assist with applications. Ongoing monitoring efforts are in place to ensure accuracy of documentation and the grantee will continue to improve and maintain quality documentation.

Recruitment

The recruitment plan includes the distribution of an application calendar to community partners and the public. Application information, as well as general program information, is also found on the program's web site. Through the grantee's communications department, the program issues press releases to promote recruitment throughout the year.

The program will work toward increasing applications from ELL students. Efforts will be focused on identifying recruitment activities for Early Head Start children of all ethnic backgrounds. The program will collaborate with community partners and grantee ESL staff to develop a plan to support this effort.

Selection

The program uses ChildPlus to generate selection reports. Children are then selected and placed according to the Policy Council approved selection criteria. Children with the greatest needs are identified through a point system that considers income, age, disabilities, and social service needs, as well as family characteristics such as homelessness, grandparents raising grandchildren, foster care, and immigrant or refugee status. Children returning to the program from the previous year are given priority placement and their records are updated annually in November and December for the upcoming school year. Recruitment and placement both occur ongoing throughout the school year.

Enrollment

On the first day of school, the program meets full funded-enrollment. During the first week of school, families whose children are absent are contact by a team of staff that includes teachers, family service workers, administrative office staff and resource teachers to determine the reason for the absence and to offer assistance if needed. Children that are no-shows are withdrawn after the fifth day. The program has a consistent process for filling vacancies within the required 30 days.

Attendance

Attendance is electronically entered and data monitored through electronic reports. Teachers enter data Attendance is taken daily and monitored for three consecutive absences. Teachers write referrals and family service workers follow up on absences. Parents are informed during orientation, home visits, parent teacher conference, and Parent Center Committee meetings about the importance of their child's daily attendance. After repeated unsuccessful contacts with families to increase attendance, those children that do not comply with attendance are withdrawn from the program. Of the 1,800 children served this happens in less than 10 cases.

Fees

The program requirements are dictated by the standards; therefore, families do not pay for any services, materials or supplies.

Head Start Staffing and Program Options

All classrooms are staffed according to Head Start performance standards. The grantee is diligently in making sure that all instructional staff meets the minimum education requirements for their position. The program has a wide variety of volunteers working throughout the program.

The program's annual calendar provides for in-service training and professional development throughout the year for staff. In addition to trainings offer through Head Start the staff also has access to JCPS PD Central and community providers. The grantee will work toward finding additional days and/or creative approaches for professional development activities.

For the center-based option, all classrooms will operate on a five day week for 6.5 hours per day. The grantee operates 160 days per year as required by standards. Most instructional staff work 182 days per year, which allows them time to conduct home visits, attend professional development, and set up and close out the school year..

Changes for the 2015-2016 School Year

Through the refunding proposal letter the grantee has received information that the program will receive 11 months of funding for the 12 month grant. Given that the program operates classrooms from August to early June 97% of the grant is spent before the 12th month; this leaves a deficit of approximately 1.3 million dollars. To make up for this shortfall the grantee has removed Home Based Services, this is three Head Start and two Early Head Stat teachers. The grantee will continue to stay at funded enrollment for Head Start even with this loss but the grantee will reduce slots by 20 in Early Head Start. Parents have indicated they prefer the center based option so this decision was made. Through in-kind from the school district and support of state funded pre-school the grantee is able to maintain funded enrollment in Head Start with the center based option.