

Quality Improvement Application

Quality Improvement (QI) Narrative

In efforts to meet and support the needs of Orange County students, families, staff, and community, North Early Learning Center is addressing the department areas that would assist in buffering the impact of trauma by promoting resilience. The effects of trauma are lessened by improving strong parent-child relationships, relationships between staff and families, and families becoming active and contributing members of the community. Supporting staff wellness, which directly influences student and family wellness, will be a critical part of our trauma-informed approach to education.

North Early Learning Center realizes the widespread impact of trauma that recent events have displayed in addition to the economic hardships families currently face. As our community begins to reopen North Early Learning Center intends to respond by integrating awareness and offering trauma-based training to staff and families by organizing professional development/training, and collaborating with the community resources. The Head Start programs goal to create an environment and structure will reduce the impact for individuals by providing coping skills, resources, relationships, and minimizing triggers.

Mental Health Services

Increasing availability of mental health consultation from eight to sixteen hours per month for staff, families, and students will allow for an increase in individual and group therapy/counseling. The support will enhance the organization to improve on early signs and intervention of trauma. This will allow are mental health coordinator to have a proactive

approach by being available to demonstrate/educate teachers in social emotional approaches within the student's daily environment. The support and service will increase the budget by \$6,600. The Head Start program ensures mental health consultation and other related intervention services include a trauma-informed approach and are integrated at intake and orientation. North Early Learning Center will enhance collaborative services with local substance abuse and mental health treatment programs, domestic violence service providers, disaster response programs, child welfare agencies, and others.

Increase Classroom Quality

In efforts to provide classroom quality, the Head Start program follows the lead of the grantee who creates the salary schedule for all employees, including Head Start, and governs education/certifications applicable to each position. These policies enhance caregiver-child relationships, reduce stress related turnover, invest in professional development and staffing patterns that foster continuity of care, and consistent, predictable, and nurturing environments.

The proposed outlook for the increase in classroom quality is to increase 14 instructional assistant salaries after they have completed a Child Development Associates credential or obtained an Associates degree in Early Childhood. The cost of this increase will be \$7,716 (including fringe benefits). Each employee is valuable at North Early Learning Center. The Head Start program strives to attract, sustain, and compensate high-quality employees for long-term outcomes.

North Early Learning Center is training the Campus Instructional Leadership Team (CILT) members to provide ongoing coaching and support to education staff to address secondary stress and related turnover. The Head Start program will continue to improve upon the physical environments and learning spaces throughout the facility to help address the multiple domains of development and learning that are impacted by trauma.

Strengthen Family Services

In efforts to enhance services that strengthen families, promote relationships, decrease parental stress, and improve family safety and financial security, the Head Start program is looking to collaborate with its grantee, West Orange-Cove Consolidated ISD, as well as other community resources. These efforts expect to create a salary schedule that will increase the pay of current family advocates that have completed and received a family advocate credential, hire an additional family advocate to reduce family to casework load, and change remaining coordinators on an hourly pay schedule to salary which will support the necessary degrees needed for these positions. These expected increases are listed and include salary increases and fringe benefits:

- \$3,067 increase in total for four current family advocate salaries at the rate of 3% for completing family advocate credential training
- \$24,699 to hire one additional family advocate, and \$628 to increase advocate pay at 3% after credential has been received
- \$16,240 to reallocate at will content area management staff to a salary contracted employee

North Early Learning Center seeks to strengthen service provisions related to housing access and stability, help families better access healthcare and nutrition services, and improve collaboration efforts and alignment with family-serving agencies to lessen family confusion and stress in dealing with multiple agencies by enhancing community partnerships and implementing a program that will address all needs in one location.

Support a Trauma-Informed Workforce

North Early Learning Center strives to provide professional development in areas of need and expectation. It is the expectation of North Early Learning Center that all staff have approaches to learning that will demonstrate trauma-informed responses. Coaching staff and family advocates strive to meet the needs of all families within the North Early Learning Center community in need of support. A family support manual will be assembled to guide family advocates and other staff members to the accurate information that will better assist a family.

Training in areas of Love & Logic and Conscious Discipline will be delivered at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year. Love & Logic training series addresses multiple areas of need within and out of a classroom setting. The cost of \$450 will include:

- Strategies for Kids with Hurtful Past
- Success with Severely Disruptive Youth
- Love and Logic Parenting Online
- Success with Strong-willed, Stubborn, or Downright Defiant Kids
- Love and Logic Solutions for Early Childhood
- Painless Parenting for the Preschool Years

- Love and Logic for the Classroom & School Online
- How do I get these kids to behave?

Conscious Discipline training series covers the areas of Brain State Model, Safety, Connection, and Problem-Solving. Digital access will be granted to all North Early Learning Center staff with a licensing fee of \$779 and material fees of \$1,395.

Additionally, North Early Learning Center would like to offer two \$1,000 scholarships to staff members that are seeking to improve their educational status personally, within the school district, and throughout the community. The scholarships will be determined based on the type of degree that is being sought, and whether the candidate(s) will maintain employment within the school district for three years following the award.

Create a Program-wide Trauma-informed Environment

As we grow, North Early Learning Center will improve our trauma-informed environment by using a campus-developed system that will track improvement by integrating a trauma-informed approach. Procedures will be in place to assist and support the approach. The campus will work with our management team, governing bodies, and mental health consultant to ensure our system and approach are successful. Data will be presented at meetings for monitoring and accountability.

North Early Learning Center will continue to grow our community partners, specifically partners with our health service advisory committee in the area of trauma-informed approaches.

Information memorandums from Office of Head Start, agendas from leadership meetings, and

health service advisory committee minutes will determine the effectiveness of NELC partnerships. The Head Start program will be a leader of the community for services provided to families, staff, and community members.

Non-Federal Match:

The non-federal match for the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) and Quality Improvement (QI) funds due to the Coronavirus outbreak that created a national emergency is not applicable to qualify for this funding. The decrease amount of community resources predicts the lack of availability for Head Start grantees to meet additional match funds for the 2020-2021 school year. Office of Head Start (OHS) determined on April 3, 2020 the approval of all requests for waiver of non-federal match associated with COLA and QI. The request of waiver is submitted in the HSES application for COLA and I funding, Section C of the SF-424A.

North Early Learning Center Head Start program is committed to ongoing quality services to our enrolled children and families, as well as to the service area of the community. The QI award for the 2020-2021 school year will ensure that staff will have the appropriate tools to address the needs of all students regardless of the background or current situation. North Early Learning Center strives to give every family a head start in the community and create life-long learners.