



SOUTH SAN ANTONIO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Agenda Item Summary

Meeting Date: October 19, 2026

Agenda Section: Consent

Agenda Item Title: South San Antonio ISD Head Start Continuing Funding Application

From: Dr. Jennifer Gutierrez, Deputy Superintendent

Additional Presenters if Applicable: Ms. Iris N. Zepeda, Head Start Program Administrator

Description: The Office of Head Start (OHS), an agency within the Administration for Children and Families under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, allocates competitive federal grant funding to eligible public and private entities to deliver comprehensive early childhood development services to targeted communities. Approval of this continuing grant application (#06CH012472-03) will secure essential operational funding for the 2027–2028 school year, directly supporting classroom staffing, district operations, instructional technology, professional development, and quality improvement initiatives across district campuses.

Historical Data: For over a decade, the strategic partnership between the Office of Head Start and the South San Antonio Independent School District (SSAISD) has sustained high-quality early childhood education and family support services across the district. Through this collaborative effort, SSAISD has consistently delivered age-appropriate, research-based instruction that strengthens early language, literacy, cognitive, and social-emotional development in young learners. Beyond classroom instruction, the program actively engages parents as primary educators, establishing comprehensive family support systems that enhance overall household well-being and promote long-term academic success.

Recommendation: Approve the SSAISD Head Start Continuing Application for the 2027-2028 school year.

Purchasing Director and Approval Date: NA

Funding Budget Code and Amount: N/A

Goals: 1: Curriculum and Instruction - SSAISD will engage all students with a high-quality, research-based curriculum to achieve academic growth and excellence. 4: SSAISD will build strong partnerships with families, communities, and businesses to advance student success.



SOUTH SAN ANTONIO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
Head Start & Early Childhood

Approval of the Continuation Funding Application for SSAISD Head Start

This document acts as an official confirmation for the Continuation Funding Application of the Head Start program (#06CH012472) in the South San Antonio ISD. The application was reviewed and approved during the School Board meeting on October 19, 2026. The approved funding application will also be documented with the Office of Head Start and the Enterprise System to ensure proper acknowledgment. The funding period spans from February 1, 2027, to January 31, 2028.

Board of Managers Member *Printed Name*

Date

Board Member of Managers *Signature*

Date

Head Start
Continuation Application
2027-2028



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Conclusion

The South San Antonio Independent School District (SSAISD) Head Start program serves as a vital anchor for early childhood development across Bexar County, Texas. Operating across four elementary campuses, the program delivers comprehensive services to 288 children and their families living at or below the federal poverty line.

As a cornerstone of the SSAISD Early Childhood Department, the program builds on the district's strong tradition of educational leadership. SSAISD fosters school readiness by strengthening young children's cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development through three primary pillars:

- **Tailored Wraparound Services:** Delivering individualized health, nutritional, educational, and social support driven by thorough family needs assessments.
- **Whole-Child & Family Focus:** Engaging parents and guardians alongside students to build nurturing home environments where children thrive at every developmental stage.
- **Closing the Achievement Gap:** Directly addressing non-academic barriers to build equity and reduce educational disparities district-wide.

Guided by our mission to inspire, educate, and prepare every student, sustained federal Head Start funding will enable SSAISD to maintain this foundational support. By equipping young learners with the resilience, skills, and resources to reach their full potential, we advance South San as a learning community where all students achieve excellence today and beyond.

South San ISD Community Assessment Findings (2025–2026)

Data from the latest SSAISD Community Assessment Update underscores the urgent context in

which our program operates. Poverty remains the single most significant challenge facing families across our district, regardless of Head Start eligibility or campus enrollment.

Key statistical findings include:

- **High Child Poverty Rates:** Approximately **20.5%** of children under age 5 in SSAISD live below the federal poverty threshold. While on par with Bexar County (20.8%) and Texas averages (20.4%), this rate is significantly higher than neighboring school districts.
- **Depressed Median Household Income:** SSAISD's median household income sits at **\$52,309**—substantially lower than both the Bexar County median (72,341) and the Texas state average (78,476).
- **Severe Income Disparities:** A critical **7.4%** of SSAISD households survive on less than \$10,000 annually (nearly double the countywide rate of 3.8%), whereas only **2.0%** earn over \$200,000 (compared to 12.7% across Bexar County).
- **Persistent Long-Term Need:** Demographers project between **1,521 and 1,577 annual births into poverty** within overlapping ZIP codes through 2027, signaling an enduring, critical need for early intervention services.

Sub-Section A: Goals

1. Program Goals, Measurable Objectives, and Expected Outcomes for the project period

Goal 1: Improve School Readiness of All Head Start Students

- **Rapid Letter Naming:** Increase student recognition of uppercase/lowercase letters from 30% to 80% (+50 percentage points) on the CIRCLE subtest.

- **Rhyming:** Increase rhyming proficiency from **28% to 80%** (+52 percentage points) on the CIRCLE subtest.
- **Counting:** Increase student counting skills from **35% to 80%** (+45 percentage points) on the CIRCLE subtest.
- **Teacher Quality of Feedback:** Increase CLASS scoring from **2.2 to 3.0** (+0.7 points) to meet the required quality threshold.

Goal 2: Improve Family Functioning and Confidence

- **Parenting Classes:** Increase parent completion by 5% (from 51 to 56 parents), tracked via the Program Information Report (PIR).
- **Family Goals:** Increase the number of families completing at least one SMART family goal by **4%** (from 247 to 257 families) on the Family Goal Worksheet.

Goal 3: Improve Recruitment and Enrollment Services (ERSEA)

- The SSAISD Head Start ERSEA staff will increase the number of children on the waitlist at each campus by at least 11% from the 2026–2027 baseline by the end of the 2027–2028 program year, as measured by the Program Information Report (PIR) – Waitlist Report by Campus.
- The SSAISD Head Start Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA) staff will increase the percentage of enrolled Head Start students with identified disabilities by 1 percentage point, from a baseline of approximately 12.2% in 2026–2027 to at least 13.2% by the end of the 2027–2028 program year, as measured by the Program Information Report (PIR) – Enrollment Report.

- The SSAISD Head Start Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance [ERSEA] staff will increase the number of income-eligible Head Start students by **5.0%**, as measured by the *Program Information Report (PIR) Income Verification Subsection*.

Goal 4: Improve Health Services for All Head Start Students

- By the end of the program year, the SSAISD Head Start program will increase the number of enrolled students with verified medical health insurance by 2% (from 311 to 317 students), as measured by the *Program Information Report (PIR) – Health Insurance Verification Subsection*.
- By the end of the program year, the SSAISD Head Start program will increase the number of enrolled students with a documented physical examination prior to enrollment by 3.6% (from 328 to 340 students), as measured by the *Program Information Report (PIR) – Student Health Report Subsection*.
- By the end of the program year, the SSAISD Head Start program will increase the number of classrooms that comply with all safety requirements per Head Start Standards by 38.5% (from 13 to 18 classrooms), as measured by the Classroom Safety Audit Report.

Goal 5: Improve Students' Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Health

- By the end of the school year, the SSAISD Head Start teachers will increase the Emotional Support average by .16 points provided by teachers in the areas of Positive Climate, Negative Climate, Teacher Sensitivity, and Regard for Student Perspectives as measured by *CLASS [Classroom Assessment Scoring System]*.

The South San Antonio ISD Head Start program selected these specific goals and program options directly in response to the data and community needs identified in our **2025–2026**.

Community Assessment:

1. Selection of the Full-Day (8-Hour), Center-Based Model

- **Driven by High Poverty & Employment Needs:** With **20.5% of local children under 5 living in poverty** and a median household income of **\$52,309** (well below Bexar County and Texas averages), families require extended early care to maintain stable employment, complete job training, or pursue education without high childcare costs.
- **Addressing Educational Disparities:** Full-day center-based programming across our four elementary campuses (including expanded capacity at Armstrong and Benavidez Elementary) delivers the consistent instructional time required to build early literacy and math skills before kindergarten.

2. Targeting Rapid Letter Naming & Rhyming (School Readiness Goals)

- **Closing the Achievement Gap:** Assessment baselines showed significant opportunities for growth in early language and literacy skills (e.g., initial CIRCLE subtest scores of **30% in Rapid Letter Naming** and **28% in Rhyming**). Setting ambitious growth targets (aiming for **80% proficiency**) ensures children enter elementary school with the core foundational skills needed to read on grade level.

3. Prioritizing Wraparound Services & 10% Disability Inclusion

- **Mitigating Acute Poverty Barriers:** With **7.4% of district households surviving on less than \$10,000 annually**, academic success cannot be achieved without addressing basic health, nutrition, and mental health needs. Wraparound support ensures children arrive healthy and ready to learn.
- **Inclusive Early Intervention:** Committing at least **10% of funded slots (29 slots)** to children with disabilities ensures that high-need children receive early, individualized support in an inclusive environment alongside their peers.

Sub-Section B: Service Delivery

1. Service and Recruitment Area

Conducted every five years and most recently updated in August 2026, the Community Needs Assessment evaluates the demographic, social, and economic conditions across the South San Antonio ISD Head Start service recruitment area. The findings demonstrate an ongoing and urgent demand for targeted support and expanded early childhood services.

Key Community Demographics & Needs

Compared to broader county and state averages, families residing within SSAISD face distinct structural challenges:

- **Socioeconomic Vulnerability:** Residents experience heightened rates of poverty, lower overall educational attainment, and larger average household sizes.
- **Family Structure:** A significant portion of households within the district are led by single parents.

- **High-Priority Populations:** The district serves a disproportionately high percentage of low-income families, children with disabilities, homeless children, and youth in foster care.

Strategic Impact & Service Role

Given these intersecting challenges, the SSAISD Head Start program serves as a crucial intervention. By offering a safe, nurturing, and developmentally rich learning environment, the program addresses immediate non-academic barriers while laying the foundation for long-term educational attainment and economic stability. Continued investment in and expansion of these high-quality early childhood services remain essential to improving outcomes and disrupting cycles of generational poverty across the district.

2. Needs of Children and Families

The South San Antonio Independent School District (SSAISD) Head Start program continues to serve a population with significant, evolving needs, highlighting the critical importance of its comprehensive early childhood services. A refined assessment of community demographics and public health metrics reveals both persistent economic challenges and targeted areas of progress across the district.

Key Demographic & Programmatic Updates

- **Children with Disabilities & Special Needs:** Within SSAISD, an estimated 100 children under the age of five have diagnosed disabilities. For the updated 2025–2026 operational period, the Head Start program maintains a dedicated trajectory toward identifying and

serving eligible children, with projections remaining on track toward an estimated 358 children with disabilities potentially eligible for Head Start services by 2027. Currently, enrolled children receiving specialized intervention include **2.6% with diagnosed disabilities** and **16.3% receiving speech therapy**.

- **Family Instability & Housing Vulnerability:** Economic pressure and housing instability continue to affect district families. In the primary enrollee population, **3.0% (9 families)** are identified as unhoused/homeless. Across the broader SSAISD student body, broader district metrics indicate **1.4% (109 students)** experience housing insecurity. For the 2025–2026 reporting cycle, **0 foster care students** were formally reported.
- **Economic Hardship & Household Income:** Deep financial hardship remains prevalent throughout the SSAISD community. Nearly half of all children in the district reside in households reliant on public assistance (including SNAP, TANF, or SSI). Over **66% of families** report an annual income below \$40,000, with **26.2% living on under \$10,000 annually**. Caregiving responsibilities continue to present a primary barrier to full-time parental employment.
- **Public Health & Care Coverage:** Health indicators highlight ongoing challenges with adult obesity and depression within the district footprint. However, healthcare coverage among Head Start enrollees remains strong, with **93.9% of children insured** (primarily through Medicaid or CHIP).

3. Proposed Program Option(s) and Funded Enrollment Slots

The South San Antonio Independent School District (SSAISD) Head Start program continues its

full-day, center-based program option, providing an 8-hour school day to meet the needs of children and families in our community. We selected this program option based on the findings of our comprehensive Community Needs Assessment, which considers local demographics, poverty levels, and the needs of eligible families.

SSAISD Head Start has a funded enrollment of 288 children. The full-day, center-based option provides children with consistent, high-quality early learning experiences while allowing parents and caregivers the time needed to maintain employment, pursue education, and meet their family's needs. Through this model, we support children's school readiness, development, and overall well-being while strengthening family stability.

In accordance with Head Start requirements, SSAISD is committed to ensuring that at least 10% of its funded enrollment is made available to children with disabilities, with appropriate services and supports provided to meet each child's individual needs. We work collaboratively with families, school staff, and community partners to identify children who may benefit from additional services and to support their successful participation in the program.

4. Centers and Facilities

SSAISD Head Start serves children across four elementary school campuses. Our program structure, including the addition of classrooms at Carrillo and Hutchins Elementary Schools, reflects our ongoing efforts to respond to community needs and expand access to comprehensive early childhood services.

Our center-based program provides comprehensive services that address the needs of the whole

child and family, including education, health, nutrition, mental health, disability services, and family support. By combining a full-day educational program with these essential services, SSAISD Head Start remains responsive to our community's needs while supporting positive child outcomes and family well-being.

5. Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance

Regular attendance is vital to the success of children in the Head Start program. To support student achievement and ensure their safety and well-being, our staff monitors classroom attendance daily. SSAISD Head Start complies with district guidelines, which establish a 94% student attendance goal. Our program also follows applicable Texas compulsory attendance requirements. Staff work closely with families to promote regular attendance, address barriers that may prevent children from attending school, and support their success in the Head Start program.

To promote regular attendance and reduce chronic absenteeism, staff will attempt to contact parents when a student is absent without prior notification. Staff will document all absences and contact attempts in ChildPlus. After two consecutive unnotified absences, staff will schedule a home visit to provide families with resources, discuss barriers to regular attendance, and review program attendance policies and expectations.

These procedures remain in place to encourage consistent attendance, address challenges that may prevent children from attending school, and help every child get the most out of their Head Start experience. District Attendance policies remain unchanged.

6. Education and Child Development

The South San Antonio ISD Head Start program continues to use the *Frog Street Pre-K Curriculum*, which is approved by the Texas State Board of Education. This curriculum aligns with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (HS ELOF), focusing on five key domains: Approaches to Learning, Social & Emotional Development, Language and Literacy, Cognition, and Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development.

Our teaching philosophy respects each child's individual needs and developmental stage.

In collaboration with teachers and parents, our program utilizes the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social-Emotional (ASQ:SE-2) within the first 45 days of enrollment to establish baseline developmental data.

Individualized Instruction & Progress Monitoring: Teachers continue to collect ongoing authentic assessment data [e.g., *three times per year using the CIRCLE Progress Monitoring System*] to track individual developmental progress and inform instruction. For children identified with special needs or developmental delays, Head Start staff coordinate closely with the ISD Special Education department to implement IEP accommodations within the natural inclusive classroom environment.

Classroom Quality & Staff Qualifications: Classrooms are structured to support active learning through well-defined interest areas. High-quality teacher-child interactions are evaluated and maintained using the CLASS® observation tool. All Lead teachers meet or exceed Head Start degree requirements.

Parent Engagement & Kindergarten Readiness: Parents are active partners in their child's education, participating in at least two home visits and two parent-teacher conferences annually to review progress. To ensure smooth transitions into Kindergarten, SSAISD Head Start facilitates joint alignment activities, campus visits, and data-sharing protocols with local elementary schools.

7. Health

The South San Antonio ISD Head Start program will maintain its current operations with no changes for families. We will continue to assist families in securing health insurance, a critical service given that more than a quarter of families in Bexar County receive Medicaid, and the need for public assistance is even higher within our district. We understand that access to adequate healthcare is a significant challenge for our community. To address this and the ongoing issue of childhood lack of health insurance, our staff will continue to prioritize educating parents on the importance of being sure children are up to date according to their state's EPSDT (Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment) schedule. In addition, our commitment to student health extends to continuing all required Head Start screenings for height, weight, vision, hearing, and blood pressure, which will be conducted by our trained staff, campus nurses, and partners at UT Health. Furthermore, through our district partnership with Family Services, we will also provide mental health consultation services for both families and staff. These efforts ensure we support our children's health and well-being, setting the foundation for lifelong healthy habits and academic success.

8. Family and Community Engagement

The South San Antonio ISD Head Start program will maintain its current operational standards and practices without any changes for the upcoming application cycle. This applies to all our Family Service requirements, including the process for completing family assessments, family goal worksheets, and home visits. Program participants will continue to have the opportunity to participate in family engagement events and parent involvement activities such as monthly parent committee meetings and campus *Cafecitos*. The program will continue to partner with Empowerhouse of San Antonio, which offers an 8-week parenting program utilizing the Triple P parenting curriculum. In addition to parenting classes, the program will continue to partner with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Services, which provides an 8-week nutrition class to program participants. Family Service staff will also ensure families participate in district activities such as the Parent Symposium, Community Block Party, and the Mental Health Symposium, where they receive resources and have the opportunity to connect with community agencies, ultimately improving their family outcomes.

9. Services for Children with Disabilities

The South San Antonio ISD (SSAISD) Head Start program is committed to ensuring that 10% of the children served qualify for having a disability. Our staff works to ensure that every child receives the individualized support they need to thrive. We continue to use the district's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to provide early, targeted support through comprehensive documentation and tailored interventions. This process ensures children have access to high-quality learning opportunities before a formal evaluation.

As part of the district, we continue to support its Child Find efforts to locate and evaluate children who may have a disability. Our staff collaborates with the Special Education Department to make timely referrals when further evaluation is needed so that all of our students are provided with equitable access and are offered meaningful learning opportunities.

10. Transition

The South San Antonio ISD (SSAISD) Head Start program implements a comprehensive, campus-based Kindergarten Transition Plan designed to ensure continuity of learning and a smooth, confident transition for children and families. Transition strategies are embedded directly into each elementary campus, leveraging collaboration between the Head Start department, campus leadership, early childhood teachers, and family support staff to deliver personalized, accessible experiences tailored to each family's needs.

Key Transition Activities Vary by Campus, Include:

- **School & Classroom Familiarization:** Head Start children participate in visits with Kindergarten instructional staff to build comfort.
- **Joint Professional Development & Alignment:** Head Start and Kindergarten teaching staff collaborate on curriculum alignment, vertical planning, and sharing effective instructional strategies to maintain developmental continuity.
- **Family Engagement & Empowerment:** Campuses host Kindergarten Orientation events, offer registration support, and conduct specialized parent workshops that provide strategies for supporting home learning and navigating the transition to elementary.

11. Transportation

The South San Antonio Independent School District (SSAISD) Head Start program will not make any changes to its transportation procedures as part of this application. We will continue to follow the process outlined in our previously approved transportation waiver.

SSAISD Head Start operates two school buses specifically designated for transporting Head Start students. Transportation services are available to eligible students residing within SSAISD campuses. All Head Start students are secured in five-point harness restraint systems while riding the buses to help ensure their safety.

SSAISD Head Start will continue to submit a transportation waiver annually to document and support its ongoing practice of providing transportation without door-to-door service or dedicated bus aides, in accordance with the approved waiver.

Sub-Section C: Governance, Organizational, and Management

Structures

1. Governance

The South San Antonio ISD (SSAISD) Head Start program's governing body is a Board of Managers, appointed by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). This board is responsible for overseeing district operations and upholding a high standard of governance. The Board of Managers are appointed for up to five years, or until the district achieves a TEA rating of "A" or "B." As the district's rating improves, seats will be returned to the publicly elected district board in a phased manner. The program is further supported by

the fiscal management expertise of a new interim Chief Financial Officer and the legal guidance of the district's licensed attorney.

The SSAISD Head Start Policy Council is composed of ten dedicated members who play a crucial role in program governance. Eight members are parents of currently enrolled children, elected to represent one of the four Head Start campuses, ensuring that parent voices are central to decision-making. The remaining two members are local community representatives who are former Head Start parents chosen for their familiarity with the needs of low-income families. These individuals provide valuable insight and connections to community resources, strengthening the program's ability to comprehensively serve all families.

Both the Governing Body and the Head Start Policy Council continue to provide oversight and approval for program policies, procedures, planning, and grant applications, as outlined in Section 642(c) of the Head Start Act. To ensure transparency and accountability, they regularly review key reports on financials, enrollment, meals, audits, assessments, and performance. As a school district with an appointed Board of Managers, we continue to provide training to support informed decision-making, align with the SSAISD Call to Action, and ensure full compliance with all Head Start Performance Standards.

2. Human Resources Management

The South San Antonio ISD (SSAISD) Head Start program maintains a robust Human Resources Management system aligned with Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS 1302 Subpart IX) and district policy to recruit, hire, and retain highly qualified staff. The program

operates under a clearly defined organizational structure, detailed in the official organizational chart uploaded to the Head Start Enterprise System (HSES), which ensures effective governance, clear lines of supervision, and comprehensive fiscal and programmatic oversight.

Key HR Management & Staffing Components:

- **Rigorous Background Clearing & Safety Protocols:** To ensure complete child safety and regulatory compliance, SSAISD conducts comprehensive pre-employment screening for all potential hires prior to entry on duty. This process includes federal and state criminal history background checks, fingerprinting, child abuse and neglect registry checks, and sex offender registry screenings in accordance with 45 CFR §1302.90.
- **Structured Pre-Service Onboarding:** All newly hired personnel complete mandatory pre-service professional development led by the Head Start Program Administrator and leadership team. This onboarding covers Head Start Program Performance Standards, active supervision and safety procedures, reporting mandated child abuse protocols, emergency management, and program policy and procedure guidelines.
- **Continuous Professional Development:** Professional learning is designed as an ongoing, data-driven system. SSAISD partners with Education Service Center Region 20 (ESC Region 20) and Head Start Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) networks to deliver targeted professional development aligned with annual self-assessment data, staff professional development plans, and student progress metrics.
- **Practice-Based Coaching (PBC):** Master Teachers (Instructional Coaches) implement the evidence-based Head Start Practice-Based Coaching Model to provide individualized,

continuous mentoring to teaching staff. Through targeted observation, action planning, and reflective feedback, coaches support teachers in mastering effective instructional practices, optimizing CLASS® domain scores, and driving positive child outcomes.

3. Program Management and Quality Improvement

The South San Antonio ISD (SSAISD) Head Start program operates a well-established, data-driven management system designed to ensure continuous quality improvement, strict regulatory compliance, and active program oversight (HSPPS 1302 Subpart J). Demonstrating the strength and effectiveness of these operational systems, SSAISD recently completed its federal Focus Area 2 (FA2) monitoring review with full compliance, validating the program's ongoing commitment to fiscal integrity, active supervision, and high-quality service delivery.

To sustain operational excellence and build upon recent review findings, SSAISD maintains robust monitoring and safety protocols across all program areas:

- **Active Supervision & Transition Safety:** Teachers and staff strictly execute standardized child accountability protocols, including mandatory headcounts before, during, and after all classroom, hallway, and outdoor transitions, as well as routine visual body checks and active observations to guarantee child wellness and safety.
- **Environmental & Daily Safety Checklists:** Classrooms utilize a streamlined, one-page daily classroom safety checklist to ensure facilities are hazard-free, clean, and fully compliant with state and federal health standards prior to student arrival.
- **Streamlined Nutrition Operations:** Administrative procedures have been optimized by

eliminating manual snack logs for classroom teaching staff; the Child Nutrition Department directly manages and verifies daily meal and snack counts, allowing instructional staff to focus fully on active supervision and early learning.

- **Integrated Data & Quality Monitoring (ChildPlus):** SSAISD utilizes ChildPlus as its central management information system, integrating customized monitoring tools, health and safety checklists, and tracking modules for nutrition and oral health (toothbrushing) to ensure real-time oversight and data accuracy.
- **Transportation & Family Engagement Safeguards:** The program continues to operate under its approved federal transportation waiver while upholding strict transit safety practices. Additionally, updated parent orientation forms and intake workflows ensure families are fully informed of program expectations, rights, and active safety measures from day one of enrollment.

In summary, the SSAISD Head Start program stands as a vital cornerstone for early childhood development across our district. By combining a full-day, 8-hour center-based model with rigorous, evidence-based instruction through the Frog Street Pre-K Curriculum and MTSS frameworks, we effectively bridge educational disparities and promote long-term school readiness. Grounded in shared governance between our Board of Managers and Policy Council, and dedicated to reserving at least 10% of enrollment for children with disabilities, SSAISD Head Start remains steadfast in its mission to empower low-income families, cultivate inclusive learning environments, and disrupt generational poverty across South San Antonio.

2027-2028

SSAISD HEAD START BUDGET NARRATIVE

Personnel

Personnel	Number of Staff	Program Component	Federal Share*	Non-Federal Share*	Total*
Family & Community Services Coordinator	1	CHDP	\$66,388	\$0	\$66,388
Health/Nutrition and Safety Specialist	1	CHDP	\$65,201	\$0	\$65,201
Teachers	18	CHDP	\$618,407	\$618,407	\$1,236,814
Instructional Assistants	18	CHDP	\$204,204	\$0	\$204,204
Instructional Assistants Floaters	6	CHDP	\$107,712	\$0	\$107,712
Master Teachers (Instructional Coaches)	4	CHDP	\$236,924	\$0	\$236,924
Behavior Specialist	1	CHDP	\$64,000	\$0	\$64,000
Family Service Facilitators	8	FCPP	\$448,074	\$0	\$448,074
ERSEA Coordinator	1	FCPP	\$65,744	\$0	\$65,744
Head Start Program Administrator	1	PDMP	\$84,000	\$21,000	\$105,000
Head Start Secretary	1	PDMP	\$33,841	\$0	\$33,841
Head Start Fiscal Staff	1	PDMP	\$23,394	\$0	\$23,394
Transportation Staff	4	OTHER	\$20,328	\$0	\$20,328
Custodial Staff	4	OTHER	\$24,669	\$0	\$24,669
Head Start Part-time Class Monitors	4	CHDP	\$19,946	\$0	\$19,946
Volunteers [In-Kind]	18	OTHER	\$0	\$29,952	\$29,952
Personnel Subtotal	91		\$2,082,832	\$669,359	\$2,752,191

* Numbers may be off slightly due to rounding.

*Non-Federal Share amounts do not reflect actual pay, as they are much higher, but serve to better reflect our required non-federal match of 20% of federal funds awarded.

Family and Community Services Coordinator: This position reports to the Head Start Program Administrator and will ensure services are delivered in ERSEA, Health/Safety, Mental Health, and Family Services Components. This position will supervise a team of eight (8) Family Service Facilitators who work with participating families to ensure their needs are addressed through program services or by connecting them to area community resources. Additionally, this position will facilitate mental health/wellness services and training to participating families. Federal resources are anticipated to be used to pay \$66,388.

Health/Nutrition and Safety Specialist: This position develops, implements, and continuously improves the program's health and safety plans, procedures, and performance metrics to ensure program effectiveness. Responsibilities include conducting audits and inspections to identify hazards and recommend corrective actions, as well as coordinating community and healthcare resources for participating children and families. Additionally, the role ensures full compliance with applicable legislation, Head Start Program Performance Standards, CACFP regulations, and SSAISD policies, while actively contributing to the annual Head Start self-assessment and data analysis. Federal resources are anticipated to be used to pay \$65,201.

Teachers: These 18 degreed and certified positions will report directly to their assigned on-campus principals and are responsible for designing and implementing high-quality, age-appropriate educational services across all Head Start classrooms. Teachers manage daily classroom instruction, conduct ongoing child assessments to track developmental progress, and implement evidence-based curricula aligned with Head Start Program Performance Standards, Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines, and SSAISD policies. Additionally, they foster an inclusive learning environment, differentiate instruction for children with diverse needs, and maintain regular communication with families to support early childhood development and school readiness. Annual costs for these degreed and certified positions total \$1,236,814. The anticipated cost breakdown is \$618,407 paid by the Head Start grant and \$618,407 paid by SSAISD using non-federal funds such as local and state resources.

Instructional Assistants: These positions report directly to their assigned on-campus principals and support lead teachers in the daily delivery of educational services across Head Start classrooms. Key duties include assisting with small-group and individualized instruction, supporting classroom management and routine transitions, and helping maintain a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate learning environment. Additionally, assistants aid in tracking student safety, reinforcing evidence-based curriculum activities, and ensuring adherence to Head Start Performance Standards and district policies. Federal resources are anticipated to be used to pay \$204,204.

Instructional Assistants Floaters: These positions report directly to their assigned on-campus principals and support lead teachers in the daily delivery of educational services across Head Start classrooms. Key duties include assisting with small-group and individualized instruction, supporting classroom management and routine transitions, and helping maintain a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate learning environment. Additionally, floaters assist in maintaining Head Start required adult-to-child ratios, tracking student safety, reinforcing evidence-based curriculum activities, and ensuring adherence to Head Start Performance Standards and district policies. Federal resources are anticipated to be used to pay \$107,712.

Master Teachers (Instructional Coaches): These four positions report directly to the Head Start Program Administrator and are responsible for driving educational quality across all Head Start classrooms. Master Teachers actively coach teachers in effectively

implementing curriculum with fidelity, applying early childhood best practices, and continuously improving the quality of classroom instruction. They provide ongoing training, mentoring, and actionable feedback to teaching staff while monitoring classroom learning environments and child outcomes. Additionally, they oversee tailored plans for students receiving services under the Disabilities component and coordinate across program areas, including health, nutrition, and family engagement, to ensure integrated service delivery. Federal resources are anticipated to be used to pay \$236,924.

Behavior Specialist: This position delivers behavioral support services to foster children's social-emotional and behavioral development. Key responsibilities include consulting with teaching staff and implementing developmentally appropriate strategies, conducting classroom observations, and tracking referrals in ChildPlus. The Behavior Specialist collaborates with teachers and other key staff to gather student information to determine behavior or educational services needed to strengthen nurturing, supportive environments and relationships in the classroom which includes implementing positive behavior strategies, classroom management systems, and social-emotional tools. Additionally, this role coordinates with contracted mental health consultants to ensure integrated service delivery in compliance with Head Start Performance Standards. Maintaining compliance with the Head Start Performance Standards. Federal resources are anticipated to be used to pay \$64,000.

Family Service Facilitators: Reporting to the Family and Community Services Coordinator, these eight positions provide comprehensive case management to participating families, identifying individual needs, setting annual family goals, and connecting families with district or community resources. Facilitators work closely with the ERSEA Coordinator to support student recruitment, enrollment, and attendance monitoring. Additionally, they collaborate with the Health/Safety/Nutrition Specialist to facilitate baseline health and dental screenings at the start of the school year, connect families with ongoing healthcare services, and monitor medical and dental needs throughout the year. Federal resources are anticipated to be used to pay \$448,074.

ERSEA Coordinator: This position reports to the Head Start Program Administrator and oversees Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA) compliance in accordance with Head Start Performance Standards and district policies. Key responsibilities include managing the program's data information system (ChildPlus), generating cross-component reports to ensure accurate, data-driven decision-making, and training Head Start staff on proper ERSEA documentation procedures. Federal resources are anticipated to be used to pay \$65,744.

Head Start Program Administrator: Serving as the single point of contact, this position provides overall strategic, administrative, and operational leadership for the Head Start program. The Administrator facilitates governance communication, training, and shared decision-making between the Head Start Policy Council and the SSAISD Board of Trustees. Directing a team of Coordinators, Specialists, Master Teachers, and support staff, this role ensures all program service components—including education, health, family services, and ERSEA—are implemented in strict compliance with Head Start Program Performance Standards, federal grant guidelines, and district policies. Additionally, the Administrator oversees fiscal management, continuous quality improvement, self-assessment processes, and program evaluation. Federal resources are anticipated to be used to pay \$52,500 and SSAISD resources to pay \$52,500, totaling \$105,000.

Head Start Secretary/Clerical: This position is responsible for assisting the Head Start Program Administrator in collecting data, submitting required Head Start reports, coordinating meetings/scheduling appointments, handling incoming calls, tracking staff

schedules, creating and tracking purchase order copies, and other duties assigned by the Head Start Program Administrator. Federal resources are anticipated to be used to pay \$21,000.

Head Start Fiscal Staff. This position will assist the Head Start Director in complying with fiscal law, rules, and regulations. This position also minimizes the program's fiscal and legal risk by assessing liability exposure, improving internal controls, training staff, and monitoring their compliance with requirements. Federal resources are anticipated to be used to pay \$22,961.

Transportation Staff. Approximately 54 Head Start students ride SSAISD buses for transportation to and from school. Approximately 424 elementary students ride the buses throughout the district, meaning approximately 10% of the students that the elementary school bus drivers transport belong to the Head Start Program. Federal resources are anticipated to be used to pay \$30,100.

Custodial Staff. Specialized attention is needed to ensure that each Head Start classroom is thoroughly cleaned and sanitized daily. To assist Head Start staff with this essential endeavor, SSAISD employs four custodial staff. Federal resources are anticipated to be used to pay \$50,800.

Head Start Part-Time Monitors: These positions assist with daily classroom operations, student transitions, mealtime service, and playground supervision to maintain a safe, structured, and nurturing environment. Working under the direction of on-campus principals and classroom teachers, part-time monitors ensure required adult-to-child ratios are consistently maintained and aid in the implementation of safety and sanitation protocols in accordance with Head Start Performance Standards and SSAISD guidelines. Federal resources are anticipated to be used to pay \$19,946.

Volunteers [In-Kind]: The Head Start program will benefit from parent volunteers' regular participation in both the classroom and during program-related activities. The value of in-kind costs for an anticipated 16 volunteers (i.e., the goal is to average at least one per classroom) may average \$12 per hour of volunteer service (i.e., 16 volunteers x 156 hours [rounded] x \$12 per hour = \$29,952). The Head Start staff will track these hours, which will be reported as in-kind services.

Fringe Benefits

Fringe Benefits	Federal Share	Non-Federal Share	Total
SSAISD Basic Package (This package includes FICA and Workers Compensation)	\$36,421	\$10,592	\$47,013
Insurance Package (This includes health and life insurance for all full-time employees.)	\$174,919	\$41,766	\$216,685
Retirement (Based on total salary regardless of full to part-time status)	\$252,704	\$78,328	\$331,032
Part-time class Monitor staff fringe (Fringe rate for part-time class monitors)	\$289	\$0	\$289
Volunteers fringe (Fringe rate for part-time volunteer staff)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Fringe Benefits Subtotal	\$464,333	\$130,686	\$595,019

*Non Federal Share amounts do not reflect actual pay, as they are much higher, but serve to better reflect our required non-federal match of 20% of federal funds awarded.

Full-Time Staff SSAISD Basic Package – All full-time staff receive this package, which includes all legally required fringe benefits, including, but not limited to, FICA, Federal and State Unemployment, Worker's Compensation, etc. Federal resources are anticipated to be used to pay \$36,421.
Full-Time Staff Insurance Package - All full-time staff receive this package, which includes health and life insurance. The anticipated cost breakdown is \$174,919 from the Head Start grant.
Full-Time Staff Retirement - All full-time staff receive this package. Federal resources are anticipated to be used to pay \$252,704.
Part-Time Class Monitors Fringe Package - The fringe package for custodial staff includes the SSAISD Basic Package, which includes all legally required fringe benefits, including, but not limited to, FICA, Disability, Federal and State Unemployment, Worker's Compensation, etc. Federal resources are anticipated to be used to pay \$289.
Volunteer Fringe Package – Volunteers do not receive benefits from South San Antonio Independent School District.

The personnel compensation is in accordance with South San Antonio ISD's compensation plan.

Travel

<i>Category</i>	<i>Staff</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Months / Events</i>	<i>Rate</i>	<i>Federal Share</i>	<i>Non-Federal Share</i>	<i>Total</i>
Out-of-Area	5	1	1	\$2,050	\$10,250	0	\$10,250
Subtotal Travel					\$10,250	0	\$10,250

Out-of-Area Travel: To ensure alignment with federal compliance guidelines, updated policy requirements, and Head Start Performance Standards, federal funds are budgeted for five staff members to attend essential out-of-area training and professional development workshops. This covers registration, travel, and lodging at an estimated rate of \$2,050 per person for one annual event. The anticipated cost breakdown is \$10,250 from the Head Start grant and \$0.00 from SSAISD.

Equipment

<i>Name</i>	<i>Price Per Unit</i>	<i>Number of Units</i>	<i>Federal Share</i>	<i>Non-Federal Share</i>	<i>Total</i>
None Requested	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subtotal Equipment			\$0	\$0	\$0

Equipment – SSAISD is not seeking federal funding for equipment related to the district's Head Start program.

Supplies

<i>Item</i>	<i>Description of Cost Basis</i>	<i>Federal Share</i>	<i>Non-Federal Share</i>	<i>Total</i>
Office	\$1,200 per month x 10 school months	\$12,000	\$0	\$12,000
Children and Family Services	\$500 per month x 10 school months	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
Classroom	\$165 per classroom x 18 classrooms x 10 school months	\$29,700	\$0	\$29,700
Software	\$55 per classroom X 18 classrooms x 10 school months	\$9,900	\$0	\$9,900
Parent Events	\$375 per school x 4 campuses x 10 school months	\$15,000	\$0	\$15,000
Technology	19 department staff members	\$5,070	\$0	\$5,070
Subtotal Supplies		\$76,670	\$0	\$76,670

Office Supplies – Customary and routine office supplies required to operate the Head Start program across all sites and administrative offices. Supplies include paper, toner, staples, binders, file folders, and day-to-day administrative materials. The cost calculation is based on \$1,200 per month × 10 school months = \$12,000. The anticipated cost breakdown is \$12,000 from the Head Start grant and \$0.00 from SSAISD.

Children and Family Services – Supplies required to promote school readiness and support family engagement for Head Start students and their families. Customary and routine children and family service supplies include curriculum consumable supplies, home engagement materials, fidelity checklists, and family resources. The cost calculation is based on \$500 per month × 10 school months = \$5,000. The anticipated cost breakdown is \$5,000 from the Head Start grant and \$0.00 from SSAISD.

Classroom Supplies - Supplies for Head Start classrooms include general school supplies, backpacks, napping mats, writing materials, consumables, and manipulatives to support daily instruction and classroom activities. The cost calculation is based on \$165 per classroom × 18 classrooms × 10 school months = \$29,700. The anticipated cost breakdown is \$29,700 from the Head Start grant and \$0.00 from SSAISD.

Software Renewals - Yearly renewal of software licenses, such as ChildPlus, ASQ-3, and CIRCLE, to maintain program management, student records, and data retention. The cost calculation is based on \$55 per classroom × 18 classrooms × 10 school months = \$9,900. The anticipated cost breakdown is \$9,900 from the Head Start grant and \$0.00 from SSAISD.

Parent Events - Customary supplies and materials to support parent workshops and family engagement events across all campuses throughout the school year. Materials include paper goods, craft supplies, refreshments, flyers, and event materials for initiatives such as Fatherhood initiatives, Community Nights, and Head Start Family Nights. The cost calculation is based on \$375 per school × 4 campuses × 10 school months = \$15,000. The anticipated cost breakdown is \$15,000 from the Head Start grant and \$0.00 from SSAISD.

Technology – Funds are requested to replace broken and non-functioning computer equipment across the Head Start department on an as-needed basis. This ongoing hardware maintenance ensures program staff and administrative personnel maintain uninterrupted access to data management systems and instructional tools. Teacher classroom technology enhancements were made last year. The total allocation for department-wide computer replacements is budgeted at \$5,070. The anticipated cost breakdown is \$5,070 funded by the Head Start Grant and \$0.00 from SSAISD.

Contractual

<i>Provider/Service</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Federal Share</i>	<i>Non-Federal Share</i>	<i>Total</i>
Training/Technical Assistance	\$2,807.70 a month x 10 months	\$28,077	\$0	\$28,077
Office Copier	\$500 a month x 12 months	\$6,000	\$0	\$6,000
Consultants	\$3,000 a school month x 10 school months	\$30,000	\$0	\$30,000
Repair and Maintenance	\$1,650 per month x 10 months	\$16,500	\$0	\$16,500
Repair and Maintenance- Classroom, Playground, Outdoor Learning	\$1,000 a school month x 10 school months	\$10,000	0	\$10,000
Subtotal Contractual		\$90,577	\$0	\$90,577

Training and Technical Assistance Providers - The Head Start program will utilize Training and Technical Assistance (T & TA) funds to provide full-time staff with ongoing professional development, focusing on improving program quality and responsiveness to community needs. This includes engaging consultants to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment and offer expert guidance on implementing best practices. These efforts will ensure that staff are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to support children's growth and development effectively. The anticipated cost breakdown is \$28,077 from the Head Start grant and \$0.00 from SSAISD.

Office Copier - Maintenance costs for office copiers used to copy, fax, scan, and maintain accurate program records and documentation. The cost calculation is based on \$500 per calendar month × 12 calendar months = \$6,000. The anticipated cost breakdown is \$6,000 from the Head Start grant and \$0.00 from SSAISD.

Consultants – SSAISD will utilize external consultants to assist staff in analyzing and utilizing data from ASQ-3, CIRCLE, ChildPlus, CLASS, and Frog Street. Consultants will work with staff to implement these evidence-based curricula, observation tools, and management platforms to enhance instructional quality, classroom practices, and student outcomes. The cost calculation is based on \$3,000 per school month × 10 school months = \$30,000. The anticipated cost breakdown is \$30,000 from the Head Start grant and \$0.00 from SSAISD.

Repair and Maintenance – The Head Start program is responsible for funding routine maintenance and occasional repairs to ensure that buses remain in safe and reliable operating condition. The cost calculation is based on \$1,650 per month × 10 school months = \$16,500. The anticipated cost breakdown is \$16,500 from the Head Start grant and \$0.00 from SSAISD.

Repair and Maintenance: Playground, Outdoor Learning Equipment & Classroom - SSAISD will utilize funds for necessary repairs and maintenance concerning classrooms, playgrounds, and outdoor learning environments to ensure student safety and maintain high-quality learning environments. The cost calculation is based on \$1,000 per month × 10 school months = \$10,000. The anticipated cost breakdown is \$10,000 from the Head Start grant and \$0.00 from SSAISD.

Construction

<i>Name</i>	<i>Price Per Unit</i>	<i>Number of Units</i>	<i>Federal Share</i>	<i>Non-Federal Share</i>	<i>Total</i>
None Requested	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subtotal Construction			\$0	\$0	\$0

Construction – SSAISD is not seeking federal funding for construction related to the district's Head Start program.

Other

<i>Provider/Service</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Federal Share</i>	<i>Non-Federal Share</i>	<i>Total</i>
Nutrition	\$1.60 per day, per student x 288 students x 180 days	\$82,944	\$0	\$82,944
Field Trips/Admissions/Transportation	\$2,125 x 2 trips x 4 schools	\$17,000	\$0	\$17,000
Publication and Printing	\$1,000 per school month x 10 school months	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
Local Travel	5 admin staff members x \$0.76 per mile x 941 miles annually	\$3,576	\$0	\$3,576
Subtotal Contractual		\$108,520	\$0	\$108,520

Nutrition – To ensure that every student receives proper nutrition, the Head Start program will provide each student with an afternoon snack. This initiative not only ensures that students receive nutritious meals but also promotes lifelong healthy eating habits. The cost calculation is based on \$1.60 per day per student x 288 students x 180 days = \$82,944. The anticipated cost breakdown is \$82,944 from the Head Start grant and \$0.00 from SSAISD.

Field Trips/Admissions/Transportation– Many students in the SSAISD Head Start program come from disadvantaged backgrounds, making it crucial to provide them with enriching opportunities and experiences they might not otherwise encounter. Research indicates that field trips can significantly enhance literacy development in preschool students by exposing them to new environments and contexts. To facilitate these valuable experiences, the SSAISD Head Start program organizes two field trips each year across all four schools. The cost calculation is based on \$2,125 per trip x 2 trips x 4 schools = \$17,000. The anticipated cost breakdown for this initiative is \$17,000 from the Head Start grant, with \$0.00 from SSAISD.

Publication and Printing - To ensure the program meets its recruitment and enrollment numbers, print services are needed to highlight all the benefits of being in a Head Start Program. This will pay for advertising items such as banners, flyers, and posters. Costs are \$500 per school month x 10 school months = \$5,000. The anticipated cost breakdown is \$5,000 from the Head Start grant and \$0.00 from SSAISD.

Local Travel – Staff must travel between centers, students' homes, community partner clinics, and campuses to support program operations and attend district training events. The cost calculation is based on 5 staff members traveling an average of 941 miles annually per staff member at the IRS rate of \$0.76 per mile = \$3,576. The anticipated cost breakdown is \$3,576 from the Head Start grant and \$0.00 from SSAISD.

Total Direct Costs

<i>Description</i>	<i>Federal Share</i>	<i>Non-Federal Share</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Total Direct Costs</i>	\$2,833,182	\$800,045	\$3,633,227

Indirect Costs

<i>Description</i>	<i>Federal Share</i>	<i>Non-Federal Share</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Total Indirect Costs</i>	\$114,834	\$0	\$114,834

Indirect Costs – SSAISD's Restricted Indirect Cost Rate for the 2026-2027 school year is 4.054% per the Texas Education Agency.

Total Costs

<i>Description</i>	<i>Federal Share</i>	<i>Non-Federal Share</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Total Costs</i>	\$2,948,016	\$800,045	\$3,748,061