

Denton ISD
Head Start Program

Self-Assessment 2013

November – December
2012

Policy Council approved Jan. 11, 2013

Self-Assessment Plan

Executive Summary

During the period of October and November, 2012, a Self-Assessment was conducted by the Denton Independent School District Head Start Program. Administrators, staff, and parents participated in this assessment. The Program used the guide provided by Head Start in conducting this Self-Assessment. Each stage is critical and supports the program in meeting Head Start performance standards and in building programs of excellence.

The Guide is divided into four sections representing the stages of the Self-Assessment process:

- Stage 1:** Preparing
- Stage 2:** Collecting
- Stage 3:** Interpreting
- Stage 4:** Strengthening

The following is a summary of the results of strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations for each area.

The written Self-Assessment worksheets are on file.

Head Start Self-Assessment:

Your Foundation for Building Program Excellence

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Stage 2: Collecting and Synthesizing the Information

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Stage 3: Interpreting the Information

Stage 4: Strengthening your Program

i.e., developing Program Improvement Plan

Summary of Results

Strengths, Weaknesses, and Recommendations

1. Program Governance

Program Strengths

- Good Attendance, translation, strong team, well informed

Program Weaknesses

- More chairs are needed for meetings such as Head Start Parent Orientation and Graduation

Recommendations

- Investigate other options to meet facility and parent needs

2. Planning

Program Strengths

- Parent involvement
- Scheduled Team meetings
- Board of Directors (School Board) meets quarterly with city, mayor – HUD, New Development
- Data from School Readiness Outcomes is analyzed three times per year.

Program Weaknesses

- None

Recommendations

- None

3. Communication

Program Strengths

- Variety of ways to communicate
 1. Tuesday Folders/newsletters/phone calls/emails
 2. Beginning of year orientation
 3. Regularly scheduled meetings
 4. Primary language used for flyers, meetings, report cards, etc

Program Weaknesses

- Parking continues to be a concern and may hinder parent participation
- There is a continued difficulty in seating large crowds (over 60 participants)

Recommendations

- Explore alternatives for school arrival/dismissals.
- Explore other ways to facilitate meetings

4. Record Keeping and Reporting

Program Strengths

- Policies in place for confidential file access

Program Weaknesses

- The district utilizes multiple computer based programs for information storage.

Recommendations

- Explore a unified system by which necessary data can be easily obtained.

5. Ongoing Monitoring

Program Strengths

- Curriculum, goal setting for parent and teachers

Program Weaknesses

- Vision and hearing screenings need to be completed in the 45 calendar day time period

Recommendations

- Conduct screenings at registration

6. Human Resources

Program Strengths

- Three co-teachers have Bachelor's degrees, six co-teachers are CDA credentials, and three are currently enrolled in a CDA program.
- DISD offers strong support/complies with state and federal laws
- Registered nurse on campus full time
- Background checks mandatory for all staff and parent volunteers

Program Weaknesses

- Monitoring system for CDA renewal

Recommendations

- Determine appropriate Program Team member to monitor renewal dates

7. Fiscal Management

Program Strengths

- DISD – In-kind certified accountants – oversee budget, outside auditor, support staff, utilities, Directors salary
- The program as a whole shows consistent strengths throughout. Audit reports are accurate and well maintained for easy comparison and review.
- Collaboration between Fiscal officer and management team during and after the application process
- Budgets are carefully monitored

Program Weaknesses

- Budget impacted by economy

8. Prevention and Early Intervention

Program Strengths

- Nutrition, transportation, and mental health all work well to accommodate the students' needs and diversity

Program Weaknesses

- 45 day vision/hearing assessments and records informing parents need to be carefully monitored to assure compliance.

Recommendations

- Returning students will be tested at registration which is within the 45 day requirement.
- Review child file procedure with possible development of a single data form.

9. Tracking and Follow-up

Program Strengths

- Electronic health record system/individual student
- E-school immunization management

Program Weaknesses

- Screening for head start students need to be completed within the 45 day limit of the students initial enrollment date

Recommendations

- Student screenings on returning students will be screened at registration and Denton ISD will provide staff to accomplish task. Remaining students will be done when school begins and scheduled.
- Explore systems that allow for centralized data keeping.

10. Individualization

Program Strengths

- Families are involved in establishing goals for their children. Parents and teachers meet formally for home visits in the fall and spring. Beginning January 2013, parents and teachers will meet in January for parent teacher conferences to ensure continual two-way conversation about student progress.
- Students are assessed daily. Each 6 weeks, students are assessed using the DISD PK Report Card Assessment Tool and each quarter students are assessed using the School Readiness Outcome Assessment Tool. Parents receive individual and class summary of the school readiness outcomes and activities to incorporate at home to facilitate learning.
- Individualization address the 5 essential elements of the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework (which is aligned to the 2008 Texas PK Guidelines)
- Teachers monitor progress of student goals on the Individualized Development Plan (IDP). The goals are aligned to the TX PKG. Lesson plans reflect intentional teaching of individual goals.

Program Weaknesses

- Addressing certain individualization areas in student files, including student interests, learning styles, cultural background, languages, and health and nutrition concerns.
- No parent training specific to individualization based on oral language, early literacy, and academic skills

Recommendations

- Education Specialist and Head Start PLC collaborate to ensure all student files include all components of individualization.
- Education Specialist and Parent Engagement Specialist collaborate in planning and implementing parent training on individualization

11. Disabilities Services

Program Strengths

- All services provided on-site by the district
- Transportation provided for children with disabilities per the ARD process
- Full time educational diagnostician with doctorate in early childhood education provided as in-kind services
- Preschool classrooms for children with IEPs available on campus for inclusion of Head Start children with disabilities per ARD decision
- Special education teachers available on campus to consult with teachers in the development of individual development plans

Program Weaknesses

- While parents are supported in learning to advocate for their children in the ARD process, this should be expanded to include training for parents in how to advocate for services outside of the school and for how to tell their story
- IDPs do not consistently reflect IEP goals.

Recommendations

- Current procedures for sharing disability information should be reviewed
- Review Professional Development plans for possible training in individualization

12. Curriculum and Assessment

Program Strengths

- Curriculum (2008 Texas PK Guidelines) was developed by the State of Texas. It meets Head Start guidelines in that it is scientifically researched based and aligned with the HS Child Development and Early Learning Framework. Parents were informed of the curriculum during parent orientation.
- The curriculum contains core elements of sound child development, learning principles, and developmentally appropriate practices for young children (including dual language learners, children with disabilities)
- The implementation of the curriculum is evident in the classroom

Program Weaknesses

- In depth curriculum overview with all parents to ensure they are well informed of what age appropriate learning is taking place.

Recommendations

- Parent Engagement Specialist and Education Specialist confer with Policy Council and School Readiness Committee to obtain effective ideas implementing training.

13. Family Partnership Building

Program Strengths

- New tracking/reporting of outcomes
- All families have written goals

Program Weaknesses

- Increase meeting times with parent as appropriate per-case

Recommendations

- Increase meeting with families

14. Parent Involvement

Program Strengths

- Parent orientation and registration
- Involving parents in program policy-making , Parent Committee and PTA`
- Parent interest survey, parenting classes and school wide activities
- Adult classes on-site (ESL)
- Volunteer of the Month Recognition
- Provide families and children educational classes. F.R.E.D. (Fathers Reading Everyday) and math and science with moms.
- Amount generated by non-federal share of volunteer hours is commendable.
- Referrals
- Family engagement, culturally diverse

Program Weaknesses

- Documentation of volunteer time

Recommendations

- Provide new volunteer form (sign-in form)

15. Community and Child Care Partnerships

Program Strengths

- Continued communication with community childcare centers

Program Weaknesses

- Transportation is only available for Head Start students identified with a disability.

Recommendations

- None, DISD makes final decision about transportation.

16. Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance

Program Strengths

- Social Services Specialist is ERSEA Credentialed

Program Weaknesses

- None

Recommendations

- None

17. Facilities, Materials, Equipment and Transportation

Program Strengths

- Heat ticket system
- Public transportation pick-up and drop-off directly from their home
- DISD transportation provides in-kind services to students with disabilities who qualify
- All district buses are equipped with GPS systems
- Bus buddies are provided for all children
- The program complies with all relevant Federal, State, and local requirements through Denton ISD in-kind services
- Safety walk-through inspections are conducted monthly
- The facility, materials and equipment are designed to meet the needs of children with disabilities and appropriate for pre-school age children
- SRO available and can be called upon at any time.

Program Weaknesses

- Transportation services are not provided for all students
- Classroom entry doors cannot be locked.

Recommendations

- Submit request to Maintenance

18. Using Child Outcomes in Program Self-Assessment

Program Strengths

- Written Plans reflect approach to school readiness and are reflected in program planning, record keeping, reporting, and ongoing monitoring
- Gathering and analyzing data to determine program and student strengths and weaknesses.
- Program approach to school readiness

Program Weaknesses

- CLASS observations from November 2012 review reflect a need to address the instructional support domain (concept development, quality of feedback, and language modeling)
- School readiness assessment tool does not appear to include all necessary domains.

Recommendations

- Head Start PLC will undergo training to learn and apply instructional support domain of CLASS in the classroom routine and procedures
- Review school readiness outcomes to confirm it reflects updated Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework essential domains which are used to write school readiness goals.

19. Child Development and Health Services: Mental Health

Program Strengths

- Three-tiered team approach to mental health

Program Weaknesses

- Stronger communication to staff and parents as to how to access mental health resources through Head Start and the community
- More advanced planning for parent meetings (i.e., schedule for publicity of meetings and translation into Spanish of flyers and documents to be used)

Recommendations

- Develop a schedule which identifies dates 2 weeks prior to meeting and a plan for publicity of Mental Health Parent Meetings
- Review procedures during faculty meetings, Head Start staff meetings, Policy Council, and Parent Committee and include reminders in campus newsletter.