

Duluth Head Start
Enrollment Reduction Proposal
to Reduce Enrollment by 16 slots
As Per ACF-IM-HS-08-03
March 2016

1. Evaluate the current administrative structure and administrative costs.

We have reviewed our current administrative structure, addressing both the necessity and reasonableness of our Head Start staffing. Our current structure includes the Director who is responsible for the supervision of all staff, grant awards, community partnerships, Policy Council, Governing Board and overall program operations. Our Service Area managers are responsible for their content areas. This is best illustrated in the attached Organizational Chart. It is worth noting that we have worked over the past several years toward greater efficiency for Service Area Coordinators.

Our Disabilities Coordinator is also the Mental Health Coordinator. Classroom Mental Health support is available from our Mental Health consultants. The Health Coordinator has taken on oversight of the Nutrition Services and we contract with a registered dietician for a few hours each week. Just this year, we moved the responsibility for oversight of Parent Engagement to the Enrollment Coordinator. Until this move, the Director was filling that role. Because the enrollment pieces are so tied to work with families and the Enrollment Coordinator is licensed in that area, it was a prudent shift. This allows the Director position to focus less on direct services to families and more on the larger picture of Program Governance.

The Education Coordinator supports Head Start programming and is charged with making sure staff has the tools to implement our curriculum and meet performance standards. Further, the Education Coordinator trains and coaches our Minnesota Reading Corps members who work in concert with classroom staff to ensure each child is making good progress on School Readiness benchmarks

2. Evaluate supervisory structure.

The Head Start Director, Administrative Support Staff and Service Area Coordinator's wages and benefits are split 80% federal and 20% state Head Start dollars. Service Area Coordinators are members of the teacher's bargaining unit as Teachers on Special Assignment, (TOSA). As such, they are not able to evaluate their peers. The Head Start Director is solely responsible for hiring, supervising, evaluating staff and consultants as per our union contracts and has no additional responsibilities outside the Head Start program.

3. Examine staffing ratios for positions which do not have mandated ratios.

One of the chief concerns we have is the caseloads of our Family Advocates. Each Family Advocate is assigned to an elementary school where we have 1 or 2 Head Start classrooms with double sessions. The schools with 1 classroom share an Advocate with the other school with 1 classroom. This gives each Family Advocate responsibility for 64 families. Although we did increase their FTE in 2011, their workloads are still difficult to manage at 25 hours per week. This Enrollment Reduction would increase Family Advocates work week by 5 hours each.

4. Evaluate current fringe benefit packages.

Duluth Head Start, with our position within a school district is bound by our collective bargaining agreements for all staff. The Duluth Public Schools have taken steps to keep the costs of benefits and health care, down as low as possible. We calculate each staff person's cost to the program at 17% of their salary for fringe; however, health insurance is dependent on whether the staff person carries family or individual coverage.

5. Review travel and other discretionary costs.

We have very little available for discretionary spending after we account for wages, fringe benefits and other essential costs. We successfully negotiated a lower rate for Indirect Costs with our district Finance Department for a 1-year period. Most travel and conference fees are carefully budgeted in our Training and Technical Assistance grant. Staff must tie any requests for additional training directly to their goals for the year. Our Policy Council has funds allocated for them to attend State and local training

opportunities. They have made good use of this opportunity. Our Policy Council representative to our State Association has been elected to serve on the Region V Board. We are extremely proud of her work and her ability to bring a wide range of information back to the Policy Council and Parent groups. She has singlehandedly invited State and Federal Legislators to visit our program during her term.

6. Assess the need for any staff not integral to providing a quality Head Start program consistent with all statutory and regulatory requirements.

We staff our classrooms with a full time teacher and a full time paraprofessional. State Early Learning Scholarship funds aimed at program quality currently provide a third person in the room to cover the late morning and early afternoon. This person manages food service for both lunch periods and leads a small group as per our curriculum's schedule for the day. Other staff positions are clearly laid out in our Organizational Chart, attached to this document.

7. Review the reasonableness and cost effectiveness of program operations.

We are fortunate to be able to access our school district services for expenses such as the district print shop for copying, the storeroom for some supplies, food service for child meals and snacks, technology support, human resources and finance. We have found access to these services is more cost effective than contracting out for these services.

8. Program option.

Our 8 federally funded classrooms are located in elementary schools within neighborhoods with the highest concentrations of families living in economic poverty in the city of Duluth. We currently offer a half-day option for families. As a part of a school district with other early childhood programs, we are in the planning phase of a shift in how we deliver early childhood services to families. Our plan is to break down the silos we currently operate in and integrate classrooms to better reflect the makeup of a kindergarten room. Each room will be a mix of School Readiness, Community Education and Head Start funded families. Because we have the most stringent standards, all the classrooms will follow Head Start Performance Standards. We will maintain our structures behind the scenes but to the public, we will be a part of "Duluth Preschool." Beyond the benefit to children, this shift makes it easier for parents to navigate the early childhood offerings with a one stop enrollment structure.

Further, we have a plan to expand offerings to all elementary schools to ensure parents can send their children to their home school, their neighborhood school. Some classrooms will convert to full days (6-6.5 hours). Again, the families we serve benefit from these changes and we will be ready for the new Head Start Performance Standards and State guidance, which we anticipate will include full days. This comes at a cost to us as we have a finite number of children to serve and we know School Readiness and the district's Community Education preschool are serving some of the available preschoolers in Duluth. We also have knowledge that our preschool numbers are down in Duluth. (See attachment on population trends in Duluth.) In other words, we are sharing a smaller number of Head Start eligible families but because we will have a single intake form, we will have greater access to all families that fall within our allowable income guidelines. We believe this will ensure we will be able to meet our funded enrollment with this Enrollment Reduction.

9. Additional federal resources.

We have attempted to re-fund our Early Reading First grant in 2009 and an Early Head Start grant in 2009. Both of these requests were denied. We continue to keep abreast of other federal funding opportunities and are strongly committed to secure appropriate additional funding when the opportunity matches our community's need.

10. Seek alternative non-federal resources.

Duluth Head Start currently serves 59 children with State Head Start funds. We collaborate with 1 childcare center and provide Head Start services to families who are experiencing homelessness through an innovative State funded program option. We are just beginning a Home Base option for 12 families with new State Head Start dollars made available by our State legislature.

We have been successful in bringing in State Early Learning Scholarships, regional Family Service Collaboration dollars and smaller local foundation grants. This has allowed us to create a Dad's Group, use funds to increase our available Mental Health consultant hours, train staff on the Circle of Security attachment framework, as well as continuing work with our school district on PREK to Grade 3 Alignment.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Children Experiencing Homelessness

Our state innovative program option, Families in Transition, is structured to work directly with families experiencing homelessness. Traditional shelters offer no programming for children and close their doors during daytime hours. Children experiencing homelessness are a high priority for classroom enrollment as they transition from Families in Transition. This offers a safe, secure and stable environment for children while their parents make steps toward stabilization.

Recruitment and Enrollment

For nearly a year, we have been working with the Region V office on an Enrollment Action Plan. This was put into place because we were at or below the threshold for enrollment as per Head Start Performance Standards. We have worked hard to deal with this issue by stepping up our visibility in the community, blanketing the city with Head Start flyers, talking with our community partners and pulling names for our sister program's waiting list. We are consistently down by 20 children. We enroll 20 children and slowly but certainly we drop the same number. The factors at play here are lack of transportation, scheduling conflicts, lack of full day or wrap around care, parents with severe mental health issues and perhaps a very vulnerable group we have not connected with in spite of our efforts. Again, as discussed earlier, our community has seen a decrease in the number of preschool children for the last few years.

Current Cost per Child

Our current funding puts us in the bottom third of 38 Head Start programs in the State. We have absorbed annual increases in fringe benefits, rising health insurance costs and contracted salary increases of up to 2.5 % per year minimal cost of living increases in Head Start funds. Quality programming is expensive. 100% of our staff meet or exceed Head Start's mandate for teacher and paraprofessional credentials. Our staff turnover is very low and generally occurs through retirement. We have staff who believes so strongly in the Head Start mission, they continually and consistently turn down other district positions in order to continue working in Head Start. This consistency, coupled with tremendously skilled staff, directly benefits Head Start families. An Enrollment Reduction will enable us to continue to meet the needs of our community and maintain high quality programming and proven results

Cost Saving Breakdown

We will eliminate 16 preschool slots. This will result in the savings listed here:

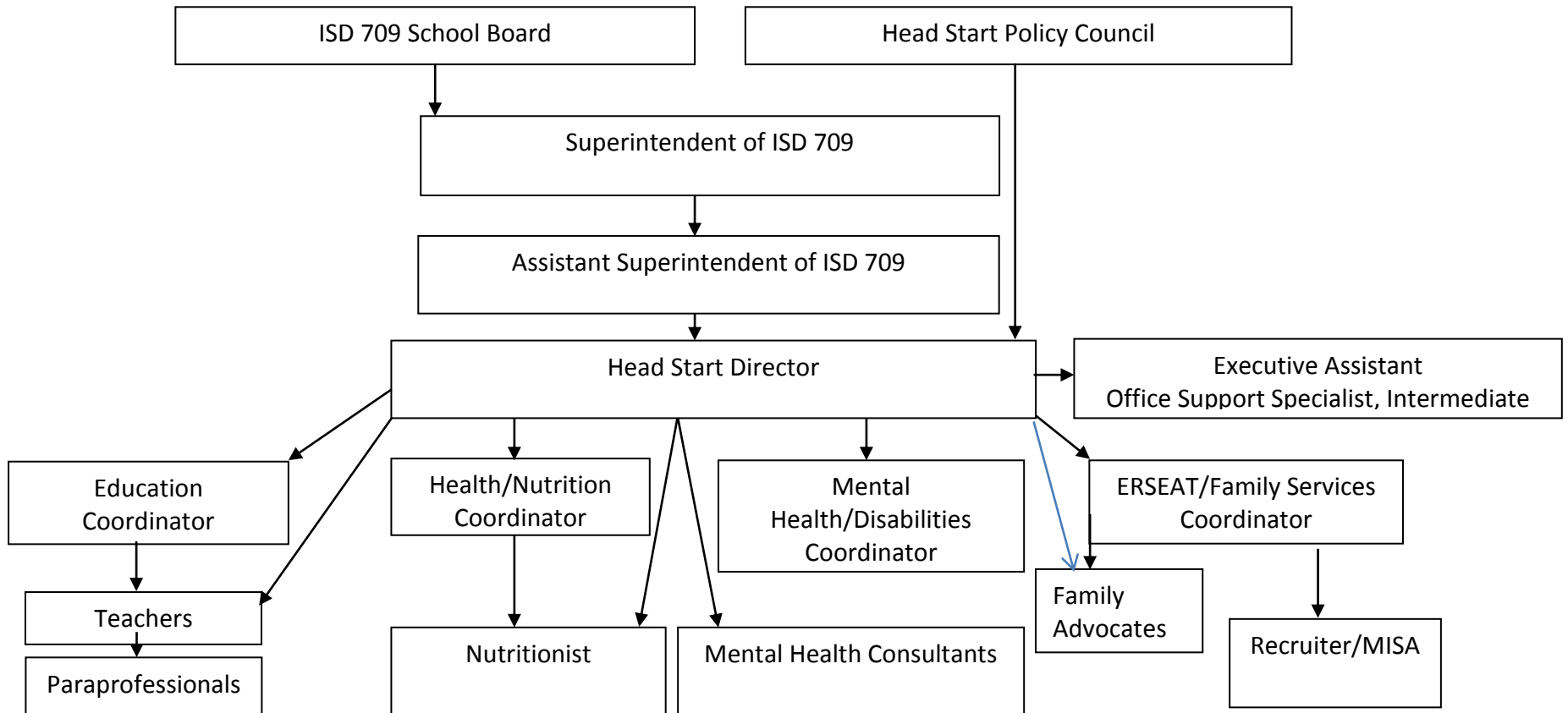
We will maintain quality services with the following utilization of cost savings:

Our current cost per child will increase by \$508.

Timeframe for implementing the proposed reduction

We are currently in the 2017 budgeting process with our staff, parents and governing board. A decision on this proposed reduction in enrollment would allow us to accurately plan and budget for the 2016-2017 school-year. Should this proposal be granted, we would not fully implement the reduction until the fall of 2016.

Duluth Head Start Organizational Chart



American Fact Finder Community Facts 5 year Population Estimates for Duluth

Community	Current Year Estimate	error +/-	MAX	Percent Birth to 4	Max * Perc Population 0-4	Error +/-	MAX Estimate Pop 0-4	Max Estimate divided by 5	Dif to Align
Duluth	86238	50	86288	5.60%	4832.128		4832.128	966.4256	
Township	1941	3	1944	6.50%	126.36		126.36	25.272	
Totals	88179	53	88232	6.05%	4958.488		4958.488	991.6976	146.512

Year	Actual Births	Diff	totals	birth-1	1	2	3	4	Dif from Previous Year
2004-05	1071	30	5434	1101	1103	1088	1112	1030	
2005-06	993	259	5656	1252	1101	1103	1088	1112	
2006-07	1036	182	5762	1218	1252	1101	1233	1088	
2007-08	1020	160	5830	1180	1218	1107	1171	1154	
2008-09	1059	218	5953	1277	1180	1218	1107	1171	
2009-10	1030	206	6018	1236	1277	1180	1218	1107	65
2010-11	1000	47	5958	1047	1237	1277	1180	1218	-60
2011-12	1103	52	5895	1155	1047	1236	1277	1180	-63
2012-13	1157	-87	5785	1070	1155	1047	1236	1277	-110
2013-14	1033	12	5419	1045	1036	1155	1047	1136	-366
2014-15	1054	-13	5207	1041	1033	1030	1103	1000	-212
2015-16			5105	1054	1041	1002	1030	978	-102
2016-17			0						
2017-18			0						
2018-19									
2019-20									