



SOUTH SAN ANTONIO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Agenda Item Summary

Meeting Date: February 23, 2026

Agenda Section: Consent

Agenda Item Title: Head Start Waiver for Facilitator Caseload

From: Dr. Gutierrez, Deputy Superintendent

Additional Presenters if Applicable: Rebecca Herrera, Head Start Program Administrator

Description: Since moving from eight campuses down to four, our team is much more centralized. We are requesting a waiver to increase facilitator caseloads by 5–10 units to reflect this new efficiency. By cutting down on travel time between buildings and streamlining our paperwork across fewer sites, facilitators can now handle a slightly larger workload without losing the quality of their support. To keep things balanced, we will check in every quarter to make sure the workload stays manageable and that our team can continue to focus on getting great results for our students and staff.

Historical Data: None. The 2026-2027 school year marks our first waiver request following the implementation of the updated Head Start standards.

Recommendation: To ensure operational efficiency, the SSAISD administration recommends that the Board of Managers adopt the Facilitator Caseload Waiver.

Purchasing Director and Approval Date: Funding Budget Code and Amount: N/A

Goals: 2 and 3- SSAISD will recruit, develop, support, and retain effective teachers, principals, and other instructional staff. - SSAISD will ensure all students are provided a learning environment centered on their well-being that impacts their learning and success.



SOUTH SAN ANTONIO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Early Childhood & Head Start

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Approval of the SSAISD Head Start Facilitator Caseload Waiver

Grant Number: 06CH012472-03

Grantee Name: South San Antonio Independent School District

This document serves as an official confirmation of the approval of the SSAISD Head Start Facilitator Caseload Waiver in the South San Antonio Independent School District (ISD). The Transportation Waiver was thoroughly reviewed and approved during the SSAISD School Board meeting that was held on February 23, 2026.

To ensure proper acknowledgment and compliance, the approved action plan will also be documented with the Office of Head Start and entered into the Enterprise System. This procedure guarantees that all relevant stakeholders are informed and that the action plan aligns with the regulatory requirements set forth by the Office of Head Start.

Printed Name of Board of Managers President

Signature of Board of Managers President

Date



Head Start

Facilitator Caseload Waiver

2026-2027



SOUTH SAN ANTONIO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
EARLY CHILDHOOD



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Date: February 3, 2026

To: The Office of Head Start – Region VI [Insert Regional Office Address]

Re: Waiver Request – South San Antonio ISD – 2026-2027 Strategic Staff Realignment

On behalf of South San Antonio ISD, we are submitting a waiver request regarding our Strategic Staff Realignment for the 2026-2027 school year. This request has been developed in coordination with our Human Resources department and aligns with our commitment to educational excellence.

In accordance with 45 CFR § 1302.21, South San Antonio ISD is formally requesting a programmatic waiver regarding facilitator caseload standards as outlined in the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS). Following our strategic restructuring, we are requesting a modification of the 40-case limit to a revised ratio of 45–55 families per facilitator to better align with our new centralized service delivery model.

In August of 2025, our program successfully underwent a significant structural shift, consolidating operations from 8 smaller campuses down to 4 primary, comprehensive campuses. This 50% reduction in physical sites is a strategic move to:

- Centralized Services: By moving from 8 sites to 4, we have created "Head Start Hubs" that offer a higher concentration of resources, including mental health services, disability support, and family advocates, all in one location.
- Optimize Infrastructure: We have streamlined administrative oversight and reduced the overhead costs associated with maintaining eight separate facilities.
- Improve Staff Logistics: Centralization has reduced travel time between disparate locations, allowing facilitators more face-to-face interaction time with families at these four centralized hubs.

A cornerstone of this realignment is the addition of a dedicated Instructional Coach to our leadership team. We believe that high-quality classroom instruction is the primary driver of student success. The benefits of this additional role include:

cc: Dr. Hinojosa, Superintendent Rita Uresti, HR Department



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- Job-Embedded Professional Development: Providing teachers with real-time feedback, modeling best practices, and side-by-side coaching to improve instructional delivery.
- Data-Driven Instruction: The coach will assist teaching staff in analyzing child assessment data to individualize lesson plans and close achievement gaps.
- Enhanced Fidelity: Ensuring that research-based curricula are implemented with high fidelity across all four hubs.
- Teacher Retention: By providing continuous support and mentorship, we reduce teacher burnout and build a more resilient, skilled workforce.

The transition to four larger, more robust campuses significantly increases operational efficiency. We believe that increasing the caseload capacity at these hubs will not diminish service quality for the following reasons:

- Immediate Access to Support: Facilitators at these 4 comprehensive sites now have immediate, on-site access to supervisors and specialized support staff, drastically reducing the time previously spent on cross-site administrative coordination.
- Enhanced Peer Collaboration: The 4-campus model allows for a team-based approach to family services, enabling facilitators to share resources and coverage more effectively.
- Fiscally Sustainable Alignment: This realignment redirects savings from the facility consolidation toward direct classroom support—specifically the addition of the Instructional Coach—and specialized student services.

To ensure that increased caseloads do not negatively impact family outcomes, South San Antonio ISD remains steadfast in its commitment to individualized care through a robust monitoring approach that utilizes ChildPlus for real-time engagement tracking, regular audits of Family Partnership Agreements (FPAs), and quarterly staff wellness surveys to prevent burnout. Ultimately, this strategic shift from eight campuses to four, coupled with enhanced instructional leadership, has strengthened our program's capacity to provide high-quality, comprehensive services to the most vulnerable children in our community.

Sincerely,

Dr. Hinojosa,
South San Antonio ISD Superintendent

Rebecca Herrera,
South San ISD Head Start Program Administrator

cc: Dr. Hinojosa, Superintendent Rita Uresti, HR Department



SOUTH SAN ANTONIO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Department of Head Start/ Early Childhood

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February 2, 2026

Subject: **Proposal for Strategic Staffing Realignment for the 2026-2027 School Year: Head Start Program**

Executive Summary

This Head Start proposal outlines a strategic shift in our staffing model to better align with the current instructional needs of our students and campuses. We propose the **elimination of two (2) Family Service Facilitator positions** to fund the **addition of one (1) Instructional Coach**.

To maintain compliance and service quality, South San ISD will submit a formal waiver to the Office of Head Start (OHS) to adjust the remaining facilitators' caseloads.

Staffing Realignment & Compliance

To optimize our budget while maintaining operational excellence, we intend to move toward a more instructionally-focused model.

- **Current Caseloads:** Managed according to standard OHS ratios.
- **Proposed Adjustment:** By submitting a waiver to the Office of Head Start, we will seek approval to increase the caseload for the remaining Family Service Facilitators to approximately 44–50 families per staff member.

This adjustment allows the district to maintain essential family support services while freeing up the necessary FTE (Full-Time Equivalent) funding to address a critical gap in classroom support.

The Impact of an Additional Instructional Coach

While the Family Service Facilitators are vital for community connection, the primary driver of student success in our current climate is high-quality, Tier 1 instruction. The addition of a dedicated coach will provide:

- **Targeted Teacher Mentorship:** Real-time feedback and modeling for early childhood educators to ensure evidence-based practices are implemented daily.

- **Data-Driven Intervention:** Enhanced ability to analyze student assessment data and pivot instructional strategies to close achievement gaps earlier.
- **Curriculum Fidelity:** Ensuring that Head Start performance standards and district-specific learning goals are met with consistency across all classrooms.
- **Campus-Wide Support:** A coach provides a multiplier effect—by improving the efficacy of five teachers, they directly impact the learning outcomes of over 100 students.

Strategic Rationale

The educational landscape of South San ISD requires us to be agile. By shifting our resources toward instructional coaching, we are investing directly in the "point of impact"—the classroom. This realignment ensures that we are not just supporting the family unit but providing the robust academic foundation necessary for our students to transition successfully into elementary school.

Next Steps for Approval

1. **HR Review:** Validation of the job description for the new Coaching position.
2. **OHS Waiver Submission:** Drafting and sending the formal request to the Office of Head Start regarding the increased facilitator caseload once we receive Policy Council and Board approval.
3. **Communication Plan:** Notifying affected departments and staff of the transition timeline for the next school year.