

# City of San Antonio Head Start Self-Assessment FY 2014-15



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## **Executive Summary**

The City of San Antonio Head Start Program annually engages in a process of self assessment as mandated by Head Start Performance Standards 45 CFR 1304.51(i)(1). This process is used to ensure regular evaluation of program services and delivery systems for the purpose of implementing improvements and reviewing the effectiveness and progress in meeting program goals and objectives within the Federal regulations. This year's assessment reviewed services provided by the City of San Antonio (City) and contracted education service providers operating direct program services to 3,020 children and their families in 27 sites located in San Antonio Independent School District (SAISD) and Edgewood Independent School District (EISD).

The City, as the program grantee, utilizes self assessment results in conjunction with the Community Assessment and ongoing monitoring results and reports to implement quality improvements related to policies, procedures, service delivery plans, and management systems for the upcoming school year and ensure that these operations effectively implement Federal regulations.

The process reviewed eleven Head Start content areas which were divided into six sections for a thorough review. Each assessment utilized City developed monitoring templates and guidelines and incorporated a four-stage process which allowed for each team to prepare the self-assessment, collect information, analyze data, and develop a report to strengthen our program. During the planning phase, the City ensured that an experienced staff member was assigned to the appropriate team.

The City reviewed the results and findings collected to identify the needs and possible improvements for the Head Start Program. During the analysis process, findings were reviewed to determine systemic patterns of non-compliance, program improvement, and strengths. Based on this review, the city developed agency specific program improvement plans and prepared a final report. The City completed the review of the education service provider reports as well as the Data Collection team reports to establish consistency in findings and set minimum thresholds of compliance, patterns, underlying causes, and systemic issues leading to priorities for program-wide improvement areas. The completion of the Self-Assessment process allowed the City and both education service providers to develop action items to address non-compliances and additional program improvement areas identified. Improvements include both short-term and long-term strategies to correct items out of compliance and to enhance systems.

Results of the Self Assessment reflect the strengths of established program systems and staff commitment to serving Head Start children and their families. Identified strengths include the areas of: PDM, ERSEA, Fiscal, Education & Early Childhood, Family and Community Partnerships, and Health Services. Despite these gains, the program also identified program improvements and/or non-compliances in the areas of PDM, Education, Family and Community Partnerships, Nutrition, Health, Transportation and Safe Environments. These findings were primarily related to recordkeeping practices.

The report includes program-wide findings: non-compliances (identified by two or more service providers); improvement areas (identified as a non-compliance or improvement area by one service provider); and strengths (identified by one or more service providers). The report also includes any City (grantee) specific non-compliances, improvement areas, and strengths.

As a part of the program strengthening process delivered within the 2014-2015 Self Assessment report, are improvement plans for any non-compliances or improvement areas. These program improvement plans relate to both short and long-term actions. The City with service providers is responsible for implementing both program-wide and agency-specific program improvements identified through the self-assessment process.

## **Program Design and Management (PDM)**

The City, as program grantee, directly oversees systems and infrastructure that support the provision of direct program services through implementation of a strong shared governance system, effective management systems, and ongoing programmatic oversight. City policy, content, and monitoring teams, provide direction, guidance, training and technical assistance to service providers. This is to ensure staff at all levels of the organization have the resources, knowledge, and support needed to deliver high quality program services.

The City reviewed PDM functions related to program management, governance, monitoring, communication, recordkeeping, reporting, human resources, and planning systems. Service providers reviewed these same functions pertinent to their roles in managing and overseeing contracted direct program services. Both City and service provider teams used a variety of data collection methods: document reviews, interviews, and staff file reviews.

### **Non-Compliances**

In reviewing the governing body meeting minutes and other documents, we were unable to determine if the following documents, policies, or procedures were reviewed and approved by the Head Start Policy council (HSPC) governing body:

- Financial Audits.
- Results from monitoring including appropriate follow-up activities.
- Selection of independent financial auditors who report all critical accounting policies and practices to the HSPC governing body.
- Improvement: Team recommends that the results from financial audits be reviewed and approved by the Head Start Policy Council (HSPC) and the Economic and Community Development Committee (ECDC). The results from monitoring and appropriate follow-up activities should also be presented to HSPC and ECDC.

### **Additional Program Improvement Areas**

- No program-wide PDM program improvement areas were identified.

### **Strengths**

The City's PDM team has dedicated staff members who work with the Policy Council members on a monthly basis and provide policy packets, trainings, reports, and emails. The PDM team monitors, documents, and updates all communication and information provided to internal and external sources. The City has an established and dedicated monitoring team. The monitoring policies and procedures were approved by the Head Start Policy Council and Economic and Community Development Committee. Both SAISD and EISD monitor all content areas of their programs. The City's Monitoring Team performs site visits and child file reviews on an ongoing basis and exclusive of each education provider. Annual monitoring calendar and schedules are used to ensure comprehensive coverage of all content areas.

## **Fiscal Management**

Fiscal controls include measures to manage programmatic and fiscal risks. These ensure transactions are properly authorized and comply with applicable policies, procedures, laws and regulations. In order to ensure the City's financial management system remains strong and the accounting system meets accounting, fiscal control, and reporting requirements, the City maintains oversight of the following: regulatory requirements; written policies and procedures; internal controls; reporting; matching requirements and in-kind contributions; time and activity documentation; budget controls; effective accounting system; cash management; and documentation of expenses. In addition to maintaining direct oversight of the aforementioned requirements, the City and service providers effectively oversee operations to ensure compliance with policies, procedures, laws and regulations.

The City and service providers' assessments of the Fiscal Management component include an analysis of budget development and monitoring, financial reporting, processing of funds, insurance coverage, timekeeping, salary and compensation, and communication with governing bodies. In total, the Fiscal Management section has six review areas: Financial Management Systems, Reporting, Procurement, Compensation, Cost Principles, and Facilities and Property. In performing data collection, the Fiscal Team reviewed documents, transactions, records, and conducted interviews.

The review identified strong internal controls to track allowable expenses and financial reporting.

### **Non-Compliances**

- No program-wide non-compliances were identified through.

### **Additional Program Improvement Areas**

- No program-wide Fiscal program improvement areas were identified.

### **Strengths**

EISD has strong internal controls to track expenditures through to payment. This is evident by EISD's general ledger which provides detailed descriptions and adequate information. EISD also has strong controls in place to ensure that staff are highly qualified and trained to carry out fiscal services. This is an added quality measure for the Program.

SAISD has strong internal controls to track allowable expenses. This is evidenced by their careful tracking of Head Start purchases on the Head Start General Ledger account. The program ensures that staff is qualified to carry out Head Start specific duties by utilizing the job descriptions included in the Service Provider Contract Scope of Work during the employee recruiting and hiring process for all Head Start positions.

The City has very efficient procedures in place to ensure that Head Start grant funds are expensed and charged to the proper accounts. The Head Start Division will receive a request and the new purchasing process is as follows: a request is made at the Division and the form is filled out, a Request for General Ledger /IO items from Department Fiscal Administrator is completed, and then Shopping Carts are created. The City engages in activities to ensure that Fiscal staff is highly qualified and trained in the area of fiscal services. The program has an adequate number of fiscal staff and individuals have separate duties. This better ensures accountability for the ways funds are disbursed and ultimately paid. Furthermore, the program has a very stable source of federal match funds because the program does not rent space. The use of space for in-kind is documented within the agency providing the space.

## **Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance (ERSEA)**

As the first point of contact with Head Start eligible children and families, ERSEA impacts how the community views the Head Start program and the future involvement and participation of Head Start families. ERSEA systems, policies and processes serve a central function in ensuring that families with the highest need for program services are identified and recruited. Criteria for selection is uniformly applied and children are appropriately enrolled and proceed to participate in the program.

The program has ongoing recruitment and outreach efforts that extend throughout the year to ensure an adequate waitlist is in place. The selection criteria is developed from the Community Assessment and approved by the Policy Council. The City and service provider ERSEA data collection teams utilized a variety of data collection techniques to gain a holistic view of services in this area. Analysis included reviewing policies, procedures and service plans, age and income verification documentation, child files, and interviews. Data collection techniques focused on four key compliance areas: eligibility and enrollment, attendance and participation, program options, and management systems.

There is a formal selection committee process that prioritizes children to be served based on the established criteria. Children are ranked on need and to be selected from the waitlist by a committee of two or more people. There is a systematic enrollment process that ensures 10% of funded enrollment is reserved for children with disabilities. The overall implementation of ERSEA is efficient with a high level of integrity.

### **Non-Compliances**

- No program-wide ERSEA non-compliances were identified.

### **Program Improvement Areas**

- No program-wide ERSEA program improvement areas identified.

### **Strengths**

Having the City as the grantee contracting with ISDs is a strength due to the level of accountability and adherence to ERSEA policies dictated by these agencies' organizational culture. The program continuously explores opportunities for comprehensive, innovative, and targeted approaches to enhance program services. Program efficiencies are high quality and are accomplished by utilizing Child Plus to maintain recordkeeping and current information with data entry and a scan and attach model. The 2014-2015 program year met its 10% mid-year disability goal and no waiver was required. The program ensured Grantee and Service Provider staff collaborates to establish a cohesive program in the area of ERSEA.

## **Education and Early Childhood**

During the 2014 – 2015 school year, the program has continued its focus on school readiness and the important role that parents and families play in ensuring children are ready for school. The overall school readiness approach and education and early childhood services system values the integration of physical, educational, social, and emotional services as central to a child's ability to learn.

This structured approach to learning is implemented in two types Head Start sites throughout the service area that includes Head Start learning centers and Head Start classrooms as part of elementary school campuses. The City and service provider education and early childhood data collection teams sampled a mix of classrooms, representing each type of site, to conduct observations, interviews, and document and file reviews.

The education component review was divided into nine compliance frameworks: oversight and management; staff qualifications; curriculum, individualization and assessment; child outcomes; social-emotional development; cognitive and language development; physical development; teacher/child interactions; and cultural and linguistic responsiveness. Overall, the self assessment review identified two program-wide areas of non-compliance in the 45-Day requirements and performance appraisals.

## **Non-Compliances**

The Education and Early Childhood Development Self-Assessment team found non-compliances in two areas:

### **Head Start Performance Standard 1304.20(b) (1)**

- Screening for developmental and behavioral concerns- In review of Monitoring Reports from school years 2013/2014 and 2014/2015, it was determined that there were several findings in Education and Early Childhood Development related to documentation of Screening for developmental and behavioral concerns. These findings were mostly related to completing screening forms properly and to total completion.
  - Improvement: In school year 2015/2016, additional training will be provided to teaching staff and education specialists at the Provider level. Additionally, the Grantee is updating monitoring tools to enable data analysis summary of findings for the purpose of providing additional training and technical assistance to staff in need of reinforcement. The Self Assessment team has also recommended that a system be put in place that ensures staff that does not receive training due to being absent or not yet employed receive this training and additional support.
- Lesson plans were not posted- In review of Monitoring Reports from school years 2013/2014 and 2014/2015, several findings in Education and Early Childhood Development related to Lesson Plans not being posted.
  - Improvement: In school year 2015/2016 additional training will be provided to teaching staff and education specialists at the Provider level. Additionally, the Grantee is updating monitoring tools to enable data analysis summary of findings for the purpose of providing additional training and technical assistance to staff in need of reinforcement.

## **Additional Program Improvement Areas**

No Program-wide Education and Early Childhood Development program improvement areas were identified.

## **Strengths**

EISD Teachers turn in lesson plans four weeks in advance. Lesson plans are reviewed by the Instructional Coaches (IC) who give feedback and notify teachers of any issues of non-compliance in their lesson plans by providing a Corrective Action Report with appropriate deadlines. The program has an assigned Instructional Coach on each campus.

## **Disabilities, Mental Health and Family and Community Partnership Services**

Disability, Mental Health, and Family and Community Partnership services focus on promoting family well-being, building strong collaborations with parents and families, and using community partnerships to maximize resources available to Head Start children and families.

Each education service provider assigned a data collection team to collectively review disability, mental health, and family and community partnership content areas. The teams used the following data collection techniques to present an overall picture of services in these content areas: document reviews, staff interviews, and child file reviews.

Head Start Performance Standards and other applicable regulations related to disability, mental health and family and community partnership services were divided into specific compliance frameworks. All three content areas included a review of staff qualifications and program planning and involvement. The disability service area also included a review of program coordination, individualization of services, and collaboration with families of the children.

Overall findings demonstrated service providers maintained compliance with the majority of requirements related to disability, mental health, and family and community support partnership services. The review did identify three non-compliance areas in disability services, mental health services, and family and community support services partnership services.

### **Non-Compliances**

#### **Mental Health Services:**

- City's Monitoring Summary Reports and Checklists from 2013/14 and 2014/15 program years revealed several weaknesses in proper documentation of Mental Health services provided at the both Education Providers.
  - Improvement: Although Education Service Providers were able to make corrections or provide adequate source documentation showing services had been successfully provided, the Self Assessment team recommends that the Grantee evaluate Mental Health policies and procedures to ensure quality services are provided. This process will take place in May 2015 and improvements are expected to be in place by the beginning of School Year 2015/2016.

#### **Family and Community Partnership Services:**

- City's Monitoring Summary Reports and Checklists from 2013/14 and 2014/15 program years revealed a lacked monthly follow-up documentation relating to the Family Assessment and Family Goals in ChildPlus. Although staff was very active in the performance of their duties, referral actions and documentation of follow-up was not entered in ChildPlus as required.
  - Improvement: Staff will receive additional training during the summer to prepare for the new school year and ensure proper documentation occurs. Additionally, the Grantee is updating monitoring tools to enable data analysis summary of findings for the purpose of providing additional training and technical assistance to staff in need of reinforcement

### **Program Improvement Area**

No Program-wide Disabilities, Mental Health and Family and Community Partnership Services program improvement areas were identified.



## **Strengths**

### **Family and Community Partnership Services:**

- In both EISD and SAISD, the ability of the Family Support Workers (FSW) to pull resources from the community and bring them into the schools in order to better serve both the Head Start children and their families.
- In SAISD, the Family & Community Support Coordinator's creation of the Early Childhood Parent Academies located at the (4) stand-alone centers. The Parent Academies are a forum in which we provide opportunities for Head Start parents to get education in a variety of areas such as family literacy, health, mental health, and nutrition.

## **Health, Nutrition, Safe Environments and Transportation**

The City of San Antonio Head Start Program's services in the areas of health, nutrition, safe environments, and transportation are structured to ensure children are physically and mentally prepared to learn and are safe while in care. This is in addition to guaranteeing that children and families receive educational supports to create life-long safe and healthy habits. During the 2014 – 2015 Program Year, the City and service providers implemented an array of targeted activities to help parents establish and model healthy lifestyle habits for their children and families. Each service provider was assigned a data collection team to review the health, nutrition, safe environments, and transportation content areas. In their data collection process, the teams used the following techniques: document reviews, staff interviews, and child file reviews.

The health content area review was divided into five compliance frameworks: staff qualifications; accessing health and dental care; screenings and follow-up; collaborating with parents; and health and safety needs of children. The nutrition content area review was divided into four compliance frameworks: staff qualifications; assessing and planning; managing nutrition services; and integrating nutrition into early childhood development. Safe environment regulations and questions were segregated into four compliance frameworks: facilities, materials, and equipment; hygiene; food safety and sanitation; and class size and staffing. The transportation content area review was divided into four compliance frameworks: transportation services management; providing transportation services; bus driver credentials, qualifications and training; and arranging for transportation services.

Universally, data collection team members found that the program is effective in ensuring children are physically and mentally able to learn and are safe while in care. The majority of services in these areas were also found to be compliant with City of San Antonio, Head Start, and agency-specific regulations.

## **Non-Compliances**

### **Health**

- 1306.32 (a)(2-6), 1310.10(g) – Review of summary reports indicated that the staff did not adequately document follow-up with families to ensure all children were up to date on their EPSDT schedule and that health concerns were followed-up in a timely matter.
  - Improvement: Staff will receive additional training during the summer to prepare for the new school year and ensure proper documentation occurs. Additionally, the Grantee is updating monitoring tools to enable data analysis summary of findings for the purpose of providing additional training and technical assistance to staff in need of reinforcement.

#### Nutrition

- 1304.23(a)-(c) - City's Monitoring Summary Reports and Checklists from 2013/14 and 2014/15 program years revealed several weaknesses in proper documentation of Nutritional services being provided to children. There were also findings related to inadequate follow-up of nutritional concerns.
  - Improvement: Staff will receive additional training during the summer to prepare for the new school year and ensure proper documentation occurs. Additionally, the Grantee is updating monitoring tools to enable data analysis summary of findings for the purpose of providing additional training and technical assistance to staff in need of reinforcement.

#### Safe Environments

- City's Monitoring Summary Reports and Checklists from 2013/14 and 2014/15 program years revealed a multitude of findings in Healthy and Safe Environments. Although Providers have made significant improvements there are still patterns of weakness spread across several performance areas. Areas of weakness include: Maintaining restrooms in clean and sanitary conditions, ensuring premises are cleaned daily and kept free of undesirable and hazardous materials and conditions, maintaining proper maintenance of playgrounds, and ensuring child rosters are maintained and properly used according to procedures.
  - Improvement: There are several quality improvements planned for the upcoming school year. The Grantee will increase the frequency and number of staff who receive Health and Safe Environments trainings. A Health and Safe Environments Committee will be established to meet quarterly with Provider Head Start and District facilities staff to review patterns of findings and create success measures for improvements in these areas. Additionally, the Grantee is updating monitoring tools to enable data analysis summary of findings for the purpose of providing additional training and technical assistance to staff in need of reinforcement.

### **Additional Program Improvement Areas**

#### Transportation

- 1310.21(a) – In review SAISD did not have a system in place to track children's pedestrian safety training on those children enrolling later in the year to ensure training occurred within 30 days of enrollment.
  - Improvement: The Grantee is working with SAISD and a planned correction is being drafted to ensure children who miss the scheduled pedestrian safety training receive it within 30 days of their enrollment.

### **Strengths**

#### Transportation:

- Overall, EISD did an excellent job and has shown significant progress in the area of transportation.

## Participants

The City invited internal staff, community stakeholders, and members of the HSPC and governing body ECDC to participate on both the City and service provider self assessment teams. City and service providers included a diverse representation of parents, community members, and staff from various organizational levels in their self- assessment process.

Team Members	City Training	EISD Training	SAISD Training
Akemy Gaytan, Head Start Parent			✓
Albert Martinez, Head Start Policy Council / Parent			✓
Amelia Martinez, Head Start Parent		✓	
Andrea D. Martinez, City of San Antonio- Head Start	✓	✓	✓
Brenda C Seguin, San Antonio Independent School District			✓
Cassandra Farias-Ybarra, City of San Antonio- Head Start		✓	✓
Cassy Bentley, City of San Antonio- Head Start	✓	✓	✓
Cynthia Dennis, San Antonio Independent School District			✓
Dani Salas, City of San Antonio- Head Start		✓	✓
Debra Canales, City of San Antonio- Head Start		✓	✓
Debra Macias, Head Start Policy Council Alternate/Parent			✓
Diane Mendez, City of San Antonio-Head Start		✓	✓
Dr. Kampol Surapiboonchai, San Antonio Independent School District			✓
Elizabeth Esparza, City of San Antonio- Head Start		✓	✓
Fatima El Khoury, City of San Antonio- Head Start	✓	✓	✓
Helen Rodriguez, San Antonio Independent School District			✓
Hilda Salas, San Antonio Independent School District			✓
Irasema Pizano, City of San Antonio- Head Start	✓	✓	✓
Jamie Rapp, City of San Antonio-Head Start			✓
Jayne Meals, San Antonio Independent School District			✓
Jeanette Rodriguez, Edgewood Independent School District		✓	
Jennifer Morris, United Health Services		✓	
Jenny Monarez, San Antonio Independent School District			✓
Jessica Trujillo, Head Start Policy Council Alternate/Parent		✓	
Jessica Zertuche, Edgewood Independent School District		✓	
Joe Juarez, Head Start Parent		✓	
Joshua Villela, City of San Antonio- Head Start	✓	✓	✓
Kathryn Franco, City of San Antonio- Head Start		✓	
Kathy Burriola, City of San Antonio- Head Start		✓	
Kim Jordan, City of San Antonio- Head Start		✓	✓
Laura Montemayor, Head Start Parent			✓
Leticia Coronado, Edgewood Independent School District		✓	
Liza Contreras, City of San Antonio- Head Start	✓		
Mary Vazquez, City of San Antonio-Head Start			✓
Mica Clark-Peterek, City of San Antonio- Head Start	✓		
Michelle Ortiz, City of San Antonio- Head Start		✓	
Mikel Brightman, City of San Antonio-Head Start	✓	✓	✓
Raul Castilleja, San Antonio Independent School District			✓

Rhonda Roach, City of San Antonio-Head Start	✓		
Rose Mary Orosco-Hayward, City of San Antonio-Head Start			✓
Sara Worfel, City of San Antonio- Head Start		✓	
Sherrie McDaniel, City of San Antonio-Head Start			✓
Sylvia Mantooth, City of San Antonio- Head Start	✓		
Tracy Jalon, Head Start Policy Council Alternate/Parent			✓
Yolanda Mejia, City of San Antonio- Head Start	✓		