

**City of San Antonio**  
**Department of Human Services**  
**Head Start Program**

**2022-2023**  
**Self-Assessment Report**



## Executive Summary

In accordance with 1302.102(b)(2)(i) of the Head Start Program Performance Standards, the City of San Antonio, Department of Human Services (DHS), Head Start Division annually engages in a self-assessment process. This process ensures timely evaluation of program services and delivery systems for the purpose of implementing improvements and compliance with Head Start requirements.

During the self-assessment process, staff reviewed services provided to a funded enrollment of 3,364 children and their families in 26 Head Start, six Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP), and an Early Head Start (EHS) home based/ center based (here after, DHS Head Start) sites located in San Antonio Independent School District (SAISD) and Edgewood Independent School District (EISD) boundaries. Self-assessment results, in conjunction with the Community Assessment Report and ongoing monitoring results, support quality program improvements for children and their families enrolled in the DHS Head Start programs as related directly to the Five-Year Strategic Plan, grant recipient policies, procedures, and management systems for the upcoming program year. During the 2022-2023 school year, the lingering effects of the COVID pandemic continued to impact schools and child-care providers with a reduction in enrollment, participation in their services, and availability of staff.

## Process

For the 2022-2023 school year, DHS Head Start conducted a data-driven self-assessment process that included Quarterly Data Review Meetings and the continued implementation of the Self-Assessment System for Continuous Improvement and Evaluation (SASCIE) Rubric.

The Quarterly Data Review Meetings allowed DHS Head Start to use data from Head Start service areas, including, monitoring, program benchmarks, Program Information Reports (PIR), Five-Year Strategic Plan, monthly reports, and education assessments. Prior to each meeting, data was collected and analyzed. The data was presented at the 2022-2023 Quarterly Data Review Meetings in February, April, and October. Throughout the self-assessment process, participants included a diverse representation of parents/guardians of children enrolled in the program, community members, and staff from organizations that partner with DHS Head Start and/or work with similar populations. Program staff, community stakeholders, and members of the Head Start Policy Council participated in the meetings. At each Quarterly Data Review Meeting, data and objectives were presented and discussed with attendees. Staff reported program progress, concerns, and areas of success, program risks, as well as actions taken to ensure Head Start compliance and status of program goals, objectives, and benchmarks.

The Self-Assessment System for Continuous Improvement and Evaluation (SASCIE) tool provides a self-assessment of the program's compliance with Head Start regulations and progress in meeting program goals and objectives. The SASCIE rubric is an instrument designed to function as a roadmap for the continuous improvement of program services. Integrated teams used the SASCIE tool to review the quality of program services and identify areas of non-compliance, strengths, and areas of focus.

This report includes results for the following Head Start and EHS service areas: Program Design and Management (PDM), Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA), Education and Disabilities, Family Community Support, Mental Wellness, and Health, Nutrition, Transportation, and Safe Environments.

## Results

The ensuing pages provide a description and a summary of the progress made towards the DHS Head Start Five Year Plan and strengths and areas of improvement identified during the self-assessment process.

### **Goal 1: Education** **Prepare children for school and life.**

DHS Head Start 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 approach to school readiness and early childhood services system values the integration of physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development as central to a child's ability to learn. DHS Head Start also works closely with our Education Service Providers, including six childcare centers and two school districts, to ensure the Head Start Program Performance Standards are met and the program meets the disability enrollment requirement.

For the 2022-2023 program year, DHS Head Start met the 10% Disability Enrollment in September.

Based on the Five-Year Plan, nine objectives were measured and reviewed for DHS Head Start in this service area. Below are the results of the objectives related to Education at the end of the program year.

#### **Objective 1: IN PROGRESS**

*Decrease the percentage of children enrolled in the Early Head Start Program with chronic absenteeism to 55% in 2023-2024.*

Chronic absenteeism is defined as a child missing 10% or more of days enrolled in the program. The program works to address the needs of children with chronic absenteeism and help remove barriers to attendance. During the 2022-2023 school year, 57% of the children enrolled in the EHS program were identified with chronic absenteeism, a 13% decrease from the previous year. Quarantine and illness exclusion policies continue to affect the percentage of children with chronic absenteeism. Staff will continue to work with families to emphasize the importance of attendance, provide information on illness prevention and mitigation, and assist in eliminating barriers and when needed work with the parent to establish an attendance improvement plan. With these continued efforts, it is anticipated attendance will continue to strengthen.

## **Objective 2: IN PROGRESS**

*Decrease the percentage of children enrolled in the Head Start Program with chronic absenteeism to 30% in 2023-2024.*

The Head Start Preschool Program continues to make progress towards achieving the objective. During the 2022-2023 school year, 45% of Head Start children experienced chronic absenteeism. Quarantine and illness exclusion policies continue to affect the percentage of children with chronic absenteeism in the Head Start Prekindergarten Program as well.

## **Objective 3: IN PROGRESS**

*Increase the annual Infant Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) score by .5 from 4.84 in Responsive Caregiving in 2017-2018 to 5.34 2023-2024.*

CLASS is a standardized, research-based tool that assesses the quality of teacher-child interactions in center-based classrooms that support children's learning and development. Each domain is scored on a scale of 1 to 7.

The Infant CLASS measure includes one domain: Responsive Caregiving. This domain captures the key interactions between caregivers and infants. The program continues to make progress towards achieving the objective. During the 2022-2023 program year, 100% of the infant classrooms observed. The table below provides the Infant CLASS scores for the 2017-2018 through 2022-2023 program years. The score for Responsive Caregiving increased from the previous year. Staff continue to work with teachers to improve the quality of interactions in the classroom and increase scores.

**City of San Antonio EHS Program CLASS Scores**

<b>Program Year</b>	<b>Responsive Caregiving Score</b>
2017-2018	4.84
2018-2019	5
2019-2020	4.41
2020-2021*	-
2021-2022	5.14
2022-2023	5.51

*\*Observations not conducted due to COVID-19*

## **Objective 4: IN PROGRESS**

*Increase the annual Toddler Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) scores by .5 in each domain, from 5.37 in Emotional and Behavioral Support and 3.33 in Engaged Support for Learning in 2017-2018 to 5.87 in Emotional and Behavioral Support and 3.83 in Engaged Support for Learning by 2023-2024.*

The Toddler CLASS measure includes two domains: *Emotional and Behavioral Support* and *Engaged Support for Learning*. The program continues to make progress towards achieving the objective. During the 2022-2023, 100% of the toddler classrooms were observed. The table below

provides the Toddler CLASS scores for 2017-2018 through the 2022-2023 school year. During the 2022-2023 program year, the score for *Emotional and Behavioral Support* and *Engaged Support for Learning* increased. Staff continue to work with teachers to improve the quality of interactions in the classroom and increase scores.

#### **City of San Antonio EHS Program CLASS Scores**

<b>Program Year</b>	<b>Emotional &amp; Behavioral Support</b>	<b>Engaged Support for Learning</b>
2017-2018	5.37	3.33
2018-2019	5.32	3.5
2019-2020	5.38	2.82
2020-2021*	-	-
2021-2022	5.52	3.6
2022-2023	5.72	3.68

*\*Observations not conducted due to COVID-19*

#### **Objective 5: IN PROGRESS**

*Increase the annual Prekindergarten Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) scores by .5 points in each domain, from 5.65 in Emotional Support, 5.02 in Classroom Organization, and 2.99 in Instructional Support in 2016-2017 to 6.15 in Emotional Support, 5.52 in Classroom Organization, and 3.49 in Instructional Support by 2023-2024.*

The Pre-K CLASS measure includes three domains: *Emotional Support*; *Classroom Organization*; and *Instructional Support*. The program continues to make progress towards achieving the objective. During the 2022-2023 school year, 60% of the classrooms were observed. Additionally, the program transitioned to the use of CLASS 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (CLASS 2.0). CLASS 2.0 includes enhancements with a focus on improving equity, access, and impact. CLASS 2.0 includes more diverse and inclusive definitions and representation, considerations for scoring across diverse settings, and guidance for reducing bias. Staff continue to work with teachers to improve the quality of interactions in the classroom and increase scores through professional development, including intensive coaching.

**City of San Antonio Head Start Prekindergarten Program CLASS Scores**

<b>Program Year</b>	<b>Emotional Support</b>	<b>Classroom Organization</b>	<b>Instructional Support</b>
2016-2017	5.65	5.02	2.99
2017-2018	5.78	5.16	2.98
2018-2019	5.75	5.19	3.12
2019-2020*	-	-	-
2020-2021*	-	-	-
2021-2022	5.88	5.32	3.25
2022-2023	5.92	5.39	3.09

*\*Observations not conducted due to COVID-19*

**Objective 6: IN PROGRESS**

*Increase the percentage of children enrolled in the EHS Program that show six months or more of developmental growth in all six domains on the Early Learning Accomplishments Profile (E-LAP) from BOY to EOY by 5% from 31% in 2017-2018 to 36% in 2023-2024.*

The DHS Early Head Start Program utilizes the Early Learning Accomplishments Profile (E-LAP) for children birth - 35 months old. The E-LAP is a criterion referenced assessment and provides a systematic method for observing the skill development of children. The results of the E-LAP are used to generate a detailed picture of a child's developmental progress across various domains so that individualized, developmentally appropriate activities can be planned and implemented. Students are assessed three times a year, Beginning of the Year (BOY), Middle of the Year (MOY), and End of the Year (EOY).

The E- LAP contains a hierarchy of 414 developmental skills arranged in chronological order within six domains of development: Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Cognition, Language, Self-help, and Social-emotional. The program continues to make progress towards achieving the objective. The table below shows the children enrolled in the EHS that showed six months or more of developmental growth across all six domains on the E-LAP. The data set includes children that received a minimum of 180 calendar days of instruction between the BOY and EOY assessments. During the 2022-2023 school 22% of the children enrolled in EHS show six months or more of developmental growth on the E-LAP. Fidelity to the assessment continues to be an area of the focus for our EHS program.

### Children enrolled in EHS with 6+months of developmental growth on the E-LAP

Program Year	E-LAP-3 Domains						% of Children with 6+ months of developmental growth in all <u>six</u> E- LAP Domains
	Gross Motor	Fine Motor	Cognitive	Language	Self-help	Social - emotional	
<b>2017-2018</b>	73%	67%	72%	80%	72%	67%	31%
<b>2018-2019</b>	72%	73%	69%	62%	64%	63%	17%
<b>2019-2020</b>	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
<b>2020-2021</b>	95%	92%	88%	82%	93%	100%	75%
<b>2021-2022</b>	74%	75%	76%	73%	65%	59%	36%
<b>2022-2023</b>	67%	69%	57%	60%	51%	57%	22%

#### Objective 7: MET OBJECTIVE

*Increase the percentage of children enrolled in the EHS Program that show six months or more of developmental growth in all seven domains on the Learning Accomplishments Profile-3rd Edition (LAP-3) from BOY to EOY by 5% from 41% in 2017-2018 to 46% in 2023-2024.*

The DHS Early Head Start Program utilizes the Learning Accomplishments Profile - 3rd Edition (LAP-3) for children 36 - 72 months old. The LAP-3 is a criterion-referenced assessment and provides a systematic method for observing the skill development of children. The results of the LAP-3 are used to generate a detailed picture of a child's developmental progress across various domains so that individualized, developmentally appropriate activities can be planned and implemented. Students are assessed three times a year: Beginning of the Year (BOY), Middle of the Year (MOY), and End of the Year (EOY).

The LAP-3 contains a hierarchy of 383 developmental skills arranged in chronological sequence in seven domains of development including Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Pre-Writing, Cognitive, Language, Self-Help, and Personal/Social.

The program continues to make progress towards achieving the objective. The table below shows the children enrolled in the EHS that showed six months or more of developmental growth across all seven domains on the LAP-3. The data set includes children that received a minimum of 180 calendar days of instruction between the BOY and EOY assessments. During the 2022-2023 program year, % of the children enrolled in EHS showed six months or more of developmental growth across all seven domains on the LAP-3.

### Children enrolled in EHS with 6+months of developmental growth on the LAP-3

Program Year	LAP-3 Domains							% of Children with 6+ months of developmental growth in all seven LAP-3 Domains
	Gross Motor	Fine Motor	Pre-Writing	Cognitive	Language	Self-Help	Personal/ Social	
<b>2017-2018</b>	84%	100%	86%	83%	83%	78%	81%	41%
<b>2018-2019</b>	81%	84%	89%	93%	80%	86%	86%	49%
<b>2019-2020</b>	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
<b>2020-2021</b>	96%	87%	85%	94%	87%	95%	96%	76%
<b>2021-2022</b>	91%	88%	91%	96%	89%	94%	100%	64%
<b>2022-2023</b>	87%	92%	85%	89%	87%	91%	89%	66%

### Objective 8: BASELINE ESTABLISHED

*Increase the percentage of children enrolled in the Head Start Program identified as PROFICIENT at EOY in Rapid Letter Naming, Rapid Vocabulary, Phonological Awareness, Letter/Sound Correspondence, Story Retell & Comprehension, and Book & Print Awareness on the CIRCLE Progress Monitoring System to 75% across all areas in 2023-2024.*

During the 2020-2021 school year, the Head Start Program began using the CIRCLE Progress Monitoring System Pre-K (CIRCLE), a standardized, criterion-referenced measure that relates well to established standardized tests and is sensitive to growth in a child's skills over time for children ages 3-5 years old. The results of CIRCLE are used to generate a detailed picture of each child's growth and development across 15 areas so that individualized, developmentally appropriate activities can be planned and implemented. The CIRCLE Progress Monitoring System provides a score for each area assessed. Children are described as PROFICIENT if they score at or above the cut point, or threshold, listed in accordance with their age, and indicates if the child is on track and has a developed understanding of the measure. Children are described as NOT PROFICIENT if they score below the cut point, or threshold, listed in accordance with their age and indicates an underdeveloped understanding of the measure and a need for more skill development or intensive intervention. The table below provides percentage of children identified as PROFICIENT for assessment areas related to language and literacy development. The program continues to make progress towards achieving this objective. Staff will continue to work with teachers on implementation of CIRCLE and using assessment results to plan individualized instruction to increase student outcomes.



**Children enrolled in Head Start proficient in *Rapid Letter Naming, Rapid Vocabulary, Phonological Awareness, Letter/Sound Correspondence, Story Retell & Comprehension, and Book & Print Awareness* on the CIRCLE Progress Monitoring System**

<b>Program Year</b>	<b>Rapid Letter Naming</b>	<b>Rapid Vocabulary</b>	<b>Phonological Awareness</b>	<b>Letter Sound Correspondence</b>	<b>Story Retell &amp; Comprehension</b>	<b>Book &amp; Print Awareness</b>
2020-2021	55%	67%	64%	76%	84%	69%
2021-2022	68%	69%	70%	82%	83%	71%
2022-2023	77%	70%	77%	87%	81%	74%

**Objective 9: IN PROGRESS**

*Increase the percentage of children transitioning to kindergarten enrolled in the Head Start Program identified as PROFICIENT at EOY in Rapid Letter Naming, Rapid Vocabulary, Phonological Awareness, and Mathematics on the CIRCLE Progress Monitoring System to 75% across all areas in 2023-2024.*

The program continues to make progress towards achieving this objective. The table below shows the percentage of children transitioning to kindergarten identified as PROFICIENT in Letter Naming, Rapid Vocabulary, Phonological Awareness, and Mathematics on the CIRCLE Progress Monitoring System. There was an increase from the 2021-2022 to the 2022-2023 program year across all areas. Additionally, fidelity to the assessment and assessment protocols to ensure all children receive an assessment continue to be areas of focus for the program.

**Children enrolled in Head Start transitioning to kindergarten proficient in *Letter Naming, Rapid Vocabulary, Phonological Awareness, and Mathematics* on the CIRCLE Progress Monitoring System**

<b>Program Year</b>	<b>Rapid Letter Naming</b>	<b>Rapid Vocabulary</b>	<b>Phonological Awareness</b>	<b>Math</b>
2020-2021	53%	59%	63%	74%
2021-2022	66%	61%	72%	76%
2022-2023	79%	77%	77%	79%

**Goal 2: Family Support**

**Promote the well-being of families to enable them to support their children’s learning and development.**

Family and Community Support and Mental Health & Wellness services focus on promoting family well-being, building strong collaborations with parents and families, and creating community partnerships to maximize resources available to all DHS Head Start children and families.

Based on the Five-Year Plan, four objectives for DHS Head Start in this service area are measured and reviewed. Below are the results of each Family and Community Support objective at the end of the program year.

### **Objective 1: IN PROGRESS**

*Increase the percentage of parents/guardians who make progress towards completion of an identified Family Self-Sufficiency goal by the end of the program year by 9% from 71% in 2019-2020 to 80% in 2023-2024.*

Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) goals are those that help families make progress towards economic security. Some examples of FSS goals include, but are not limited to, Advanced Education, Full Time/Part Time Employment, Home Ownership, Money Management, Public Housing, and Immigration. The program continues to make progress towards achieving the objective. During the 2022-2023 program year, 66% of families who set FSS goals made progress towards achieving their goal.

### **Objective 2: IN PROGRESS**

*Maintain the percentage of parents/guardians who make progress towards completion of an identified Family Life Practice goal at 90% or higher through the year 2023-2024.*

Family Life Practice (FLP) goals encourage quality parent/child interactions that support school readiness. Examples of FLP goals include, but are not limited to, Family Routines, Attendance, Parent Child Activities, Parent Involvement, Reading at Home, and Volunteering. The program continues to meet this objective. During the 2022-2023 program year, 92% of families who set FLP goals in made progress towards achieving their goal.

### **Objective 3: IN PROGRESS**

*Increase the percentage of program services received (such as emergency assistance, parenting education, asset building, or job training and education services) to promote family outcomes from 2.7 in 2021-2022 to 3.0 in 2023-2024.*

During the 2022-2023 program year, the average number of services received per family was 2.3. The program continues to make progress towards this objective, including focusing on data entry and networking with other agencies within the community to provide resources and referrals to Head Start families.

### **Objective 4: IN PROGRESS**

*Increase the number of parents/guardians that participate in the Head Start Triple P Parenting Program by 96 from 4 in 2020-2021 to 100 in 2023-2024.*

DHS Head Start continues to make progress towards meeting this objective. During the 2022-2023 program year, 47 parents/guardians participated in Triple P (Positive Parenting Program). This brings the cumulative total to 78. Family Wellness Specialists expanded their expertise by completing training and accreditation in Triple P Level 2 Seminars, which offers the ability to

facilitate the parenting curriculum in a group setting. This level targets a light touch of the program with three separate seminars offering key components of the curriculum. Parents/guardians are offered higher level of interventions for isolated concerns that target a customizable parenting strategy to address them.

### **Goal 3: Health**

#### **Children are healthy and ready to learn.**

Head Start Program services in the areas of health and nutrition are structured to ensure children are physically and mentally healthy in order to learn, are safe while in care, and that children and families receive educational supports to create life-long healthy habits. Head Start staff and service providers implemented targeted activities to help parents establish and model healthy lifestyle habits for their children and families.

Based on the Five-Year Plan, six objectives were measured and reviewed for DHS Head Start in this service area. Below are the results of the objectives related to Health at the end of the program year.

#### **Objective 1: IN PROGRESS**

*Increase the percentage of children who are up-to-date on TX EPSDT requirements at the end of the program year to 78% by 2023-2024.*

At the end of the 2022-2023 school year, 70% of the children enrolled in the program were up-to-date on the Texas Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) requirements. The method the program uses for calculating the EPSDT requirements was revised and required a revision to this objective. The program offered 4 Head Start Round Up well child exam clinics and 5 COVID and influenza immunization clinics along with health resources and health insurance assistance. The EHS program hosted 7 Flu clinics, 5 of those clinics also offered COVID vaccinations. The program continues to examine the barriers for parents/guardians to obtain an up-to-date well child/physical exam.

#### **Objective 2: IN PROGRESS**

*Increase the percentage of children who receive services following a referral for hearing concerns at the end of the program year by 10% from 55% in 2018-2019 to 65% in 2023-2024.*

DHS Head Start continues to make progress towards meeting this objective. DHS Head Start obtains or performs a hearing screening for each child enrolled in the program within 45 calendar days of entry. If a concern is noted, the child is either rescreened or referred to their medical home for further evaluation, testing, and/or treatment. Staff continue to follow up with parents/guardians each month, as appropriate, until a child receives evaluation, testing, or treatment. During the 2022-2023 school year, 61% of children identified with a hearing concern received services following a referral, a 23% increase from the previous year. The program continues to examine barriers to receiving services and research strategies to help address these barriers.

### **Objective 3: IN PROGRESS**

*Increase the percentage of children who receive services following a referral for vision concerns at the end of the program year by 10% from 70% in 2018-2019 to 80% in 2023-2024.*

DHS Head Start continues to make progress towards meeting this objective. DHS Head Start obtains or performs a vision screening for each child enrolled in the program within 45 calendar days of entry. If a concern is noted, the child is either rescreened or referred to their medical home for further evaluation, testing, and/or treatment. Staff continue to follow up with parents/guardians each month, as appropriate, until a child receives evaluation, testing, or treatment. During the 2022-2023 school year, 46% of children identified with a vision concern received services following a referral, a 7% increase from the previous year. The program continues to examine barriers to receiving services and research strategies to help address these barriers.

### **Objective 4: EXCEEDED**

*Increase the percentage of children identified as Class 2 following a dental evaluation that are designated as Treatment Complete by the end of the program year by 4% from 63% in 2021-2022 to 67% in 2023-2024.*

Tooth decay is the single most common chronic disease among children in the United States, and to ensure children are up to date on EPSDT requirements, the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services partners with the City of San Antonio Metropolitan Health District (Metro Health) Dental Division to provide onsite dental services. With parental consent, children enrolled in the program receive one dental evaluation and two fluoride varnishes during the program year. In addition, Metro Health provides a toothbrush, toothpaste and timer for all children, referrals for dental care, parent education sessions, information regarding local dental providers, and dental case management for children with identified oral decay. When a child is evaluated by Metro Health, they are assigned a dental classification. This classification determines the type of follow-up that is required. Any child identified as CLASS 2 requires follow up and treatment from their dental home. DHS Head Start exceeded this objective. At the end of the 2022-2023 school year, 73% of children identified as CLASS 2 were designated as *Treatment Complete* and received the appropriate follow-up and dental treatment. This is a 10% increase from the previous year. The program continues to examine barriers to receiving services and research strategies to help address these barriers.

### **Objective 5: BASELINE ESTABLISHED**

*Decrease the percentage of parents/guardians that report their child had 2 or more sugary drinks. The baseline will be established in 2022-2023 with a percentage decrease determined in 2023-2024.*

The program collaborated with the University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine and the Head Start Health Services Advisory Committee to develop a Wellness Assessment to identify behaviors of Head Start children related to obesity, nutrition, and physical activity. While the assessment was put on hold during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 program

years, the tool was reintroduced during the 2022-2023 program year. For the 2022-2023 school year 52% of families reported a positive change in behavior from the beginning of the year (BOY) to the end of the year (EOY) related to their child's consumption of sugary drinks. Using a matched data set at BOY 670 families reported that their child drank 2 or more sugary drinks a day and at the EOY 346 of those reported that their child drank 1 or less sugary drinks a day. The program continues to examine the data, implementation of the tool, and activities related to health and wellness.

#### **Objective 6: BASELINE PENDING**

*Increase the percentage of parents/guardians that report that mental health/wellness services/supports are available by 24% from 11% in 2021-2022 to 35% in 2023-2024.*

The Wellness Support Team provides support to children and families through a mental health consultation model. This consultation model ensures parents and staff receive education, intervention strategies and support in response to child and/or family wellness needs. To address individual needs of children, the Wellness Support Team may, in addition, provide a referral to a community agency when appropriate for direct mental health services.

Staff consulted with the Health Services Advisory Committee and the Education Services Advisory Committee to develop survey questions for parents/children related to health and wellness. The results from the 2022-2023 survey indicated that 35% of responding families reported that they were aware of Mental Health/Family Wellness services, an 24% increase from the previous year. The program will continue to implement strategies increase parent/guardian knowledge and understanding of wellness resources available to them.

### **Goal 4: Environmental Health and Safety** **Support the care of children by creating safe environments.**

Head Start Program Services related to environmental health and safety are structured to ensure children are safe while in care. DHS Head Start staff and Education Service Providers implemented an array of targeted activities to ensure the health and safety of all children enrolled in the program. The Head Start staff and Education Service Providers work in collaboration to evaluate findings in order to determine what additional action steps, training and/or technical assistance is needed.

Based on the Five-Year Plan, five objectives were measured and reviewed for DHS Head Start in this service area. Below are the results of the objectives related to Environmental Health and Safety.

#### **Objective 1: EXCEEDED**

*Decrease the percentage of findings in the Head Start Prekindergarten Environmental Health and Safety Monitoring Reviews by 2% from 5.8 % in 2016-2017 to 3.8% in 2023-2024.*

The DHS Head Start Program has a layered monitoring system. Program staff conducts three formal monitoring reviews of health and safety indicators across campuses. Two (2) of the three of these monitoring reviews are across 100% of the Education Provider campuses. The Head Start Prekindergarten Program continues to exceed this objective. During the 2022-2023 school year the percentage of findings for the Environmental Health and Safety Monitoring Reviews was 1.27%. Safety continues to be a top priority for the Head Start program.

### **Objective 2: EXCEEDED**

*Decrease the percentage of findings in the EHS Environmental Health and Safety Monitoring Reviews by .5% from 2.84 % in 2021-2022 to 2.6% in 2023-2024.*

The EHS Program also conducts formal monitoring reviews of health and safety indicators across all childcare centers. The EHS program continues to exceed this objective. During the 2022-2023 program year, the percentage of findings for the EHS Environmental Health and Safety Monitoring Reviews was 1.85%.

### **Objective 3: IN PROGRESS**

*Maintain fewer than 15 findings in the Texas Health and Human Services Commission Childcare Center Inspections across all seven Childcare Centers.*

All EHS sites must report licensing concerns to the State of Texas Health and Human Services Commission Childcare Center Inspections who will determine if a finding is warranted. EHS continues to make progress towards meeting this objective. During the 2022-2023 program year, there were a total of 17 findings From Health and Human Services Commission Childcare Center inspections. for the EHS-CCP and EHS Program.

### **Objective 4: IN PROGRESS**

*All six EHS-CCP Education Service Providers will maintain a four-star rating from the Texas Rising Star System (State of Texas QRIS) as a measure of quality by 2023-2024.*

Texas Rising Star (TRS) is the State of Texas Quality Rating Improvement System. Licensed childcare centers participating in the TRS program receive a Two-Star, Three-Star, or Four-Star rating based on certification criteria. TRS is a voluntary, quality-based childcare rating system for childcare providers participating in the Texas Workforce Commission's subsidized childcare program. At the end of the 2022-2023 program year, all six (6) EHS-CCP providers had a Four-Star rating. EHS-CCP staff continues to support centers as they work to maintain this objective.

### **Objective 5: IN PROGRESS**

*Increase the average score on the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) for the Head Start Prekindergarten Program. The baseline will be established in 2022-2023 with a percentage increase determined in 2023-2024.*

The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) is a comprehensive assessment tool that measures environmental factors as well as teacher-child interactions that affect the broad

developmental needs of young children. It also emphasizes the role of the teacher in creating an environment conducive to developmental gains. DHS Head Start continues to make progress towards achieving this objective. Due to priorities related to COVID-19, including classroom organization, availability of materials in the classroom, and social distancing recommendations, the program suspended the use of the ECERS tool. Program staff continue to explore the availability of environmental tools and checklists.

### **Goal 5: Highly Qualified Staff** **Recruit and retain highly qualified staff.**

The Program Design and Management (PDM) Team directly oversees systems and infrastructure which support the provision of direct program services through implementation of a strong shared governance system, effective management systems, and ongoing programmatic oversight. The PDM, Content/T&TA, and Monitoring teams provide direction, guidance, training and technical assistance to service providers to ensure staff at all levels of the organization have the resources, knowledge, and support needed to deliver high quality program services.

Based on the Five-Year Strategic Plan, six objectives were measured and reviewed for DHS Head Start in this service area. Below are the results of the objectives related to Highly Qualified Staff at the end of the program year.

#### **Objective 1: IN PROGRESS**

*Reduce the average number of days to fill a vacancy with the City of San Antonio Head Start Program by 16 days from 62 days in 2016-2017 to 46 days in 2023-2024.*

DHS Head Start continues to make progress towards achieving this objective. During the 2022-2023 program year, the average number of days to fill a vacancy was 53 days, a decrease of 10.9 days from the previous year DHS Head Start will continue to train staff on the hiring process and hiring database.

#### **Objective 2: IN PROGRESS**

*Maintain an annual retention rate for Family Support Workers at 90% or higher through the year 2023-2024.*

The program continues to work towards this objective. The retention rate for Family Support Workers was 82%. The program continues to focus on retention, onboarding, and staff wellness.

#### **Objective 3: MET OBJECTIVE**

*Increase the number of teaching staff that complete the Head Start Summer Institute from 23 participants in 2017-2018 to 44 participants by 2023-2024.*

The Summer Institute is partnership with Texas A&M San Antonio. DHS Head Start provides teaching staff the opportunity to earn up to 18 hours of master level education over two summers. There has been a total of 51 participants in the program, and 44 participants have completed the Summer Institute Program, earning 18 hours of master level education.

**Objective 4: IN PROGRESS**

*Increase the number of TEACH participants that earn a certificate or degree to 15 by 2024.*

The TEACH scholarship program provides assistance for instructional assistants/paraprofessionals to earn an early childhood certificate, associate's degree or bachelor's degree. The program began in Fall 2019. As of the 2022-2023 school year a total of 11 degrees have been awarded to participants, including six early childhood technical certificates, four associate degrees and one bachelor's degree. DHS Head Start continues to examine the best way to promote the TEACH Scholarship Program and factors affecting retention.

**Objective 5: IN PROGRESS**

*Increase the number of Early Head Start TEACH participants that earn a certificate or degree.*

At the end of the 2022-2023 program year, three EHS TEACH participants earned a certificate or degree. The Early Head Start Program continues to make progress towards achieving this objective examining the best way to promote the TEACH Scholarship Program and factors affecting retention.

**Objective 6: IN PROGRESS**

*Increase the percentage of staff reporting manageable stress levels by 4% from 71% in 2021-2022 to 75% in 2023-2024.*

During the 2022-2023 program year 71% of staff reported manageable stress levels. The program continues to make progress towards this objective. The Wellness Committee continues to explore ways to help increase morale, engagement, and health and well-being.

**Areas of Improvement & Strengths**

In addition, through the self-assessment process, the DHS Head Start Program identified strengths and areas of focus across both the Head Start and EHS programs in a number of key areas.

**Areas for Improvement**

- Monitoring, Systems & Analysis
  - Reporting, Monitoring & Data Use - While the program has a system to review strategic plan data quarterly, the program did not have a system for the Head Start Leadership Team to review data on a regular basis. The program will implement a plan for the Leadership Team to review data regularly in the 2023 – 2024 program year.
  - Incident Reporting - While the program has established policies and procedures to report critical incidents, the Education Service Providers did not report incidents within 24 hours as outlined in the policy. Due to conflicting priorities, the Head



Start Division was not able to provide formal training for principals related to Critical Incident Reporting. Training for administrative staff is a priority for the next school year. Additionally, The EHS Program did not have a system in place to audit or review incident reports. The program will work to develop a system for the 2023-2024 program year.

- Center Licensing - While the program has a system to report critical incidents, the Education Service Providers did not report all licensing violations/non-compliances that had the potential to impact the continued daily operation of the center to the City of San Antonio in a timely manner. Training was implemented during the program year to address this area of concern.
- Early Learning
  - School Readiness Goals - While the DHS Head Start Program has established School Readiness Goals, program staff did not consistently follow through on updating the Plan of Action. DHS Head Start will work to develop a new set of School Readiness Goals and update the Plan of Action for the new five-year grant. Additionally, with the adoption of a new curriculum for both San Antonio ISD and Edgewood ISD and updated Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines, staff will implement a plan to update the alignment to curricula and guidelines.
  - Student Assessment - The program saw inconsistent data related to the percentage of children that showed growth in the Early Head Start Program. Staff will continue to focus on fidelity to the tool and review data reports for accuracy.
  - CLASS - Due to turnover and recertification, there was a decline in the number of certified CLASS Observers. The program will continue to prioritize increasing the number of CLASS Reliable Observers. While DHS Head Start has an established classroom observation tool, the program does not have an established observation tool for the home-based program. Staff will continue to research various observation instruments appropriate for home-based programs.
  - Support for Curriculum Fidelity - The Early Head Start Program has an established curriculum fidelity tool and implemented a system of training and support for the Teaching Strategies Fidelity Tools. Six centers successfully implemented the Teaching Strategies Fidelity Tools during the 2022-2023 program year. Head Start Education Service Providers have tools for monitoring curriculum fidelity. SAISD adopted a new curriculum for use in the 2023-2024 school year. Edgewood ISD implemented use of new curriculum. The Head Start Program has a system in place to monitor individualized learning plans for students. The COSA Quality Assurance team identified 100% compliance related to curriculum fidelity. The COSA Quality Assurance team identifies less than 5% findings related to Individualized Learning Plans. Education Service Providers have tools for monitoring curriculum fidelity.
- ERSEA
  - Attendance - Quarantine and illness exclusion policies continue to affect the percentage of children with chronic absenteeism concerns. EHS & Head Start staff continue to promote the benefits of regular attendance to enrolled families and assist in removing barriers. The program continues to focus on improving internal procedures related to reviewing and documenting attendance.

- Recruitment Plan - The program continues to review and update the recruitment plan, working to identify various recruitment activities and responsibilities.
- Family and Community Engagement
  - Family Goals - The program has a system in place that provides guidance on the frequency and duration of goal follow ups. The goal form outlines a timeline for completion of individual steps that guides families through the process of completing their identified goal. Through ongoing monitoring and file reviews the need for improvement in the area of goal follow ups was identified. Follow ups were not always completed according to the documented timeline.
  - Family Assessment - The Head Start program entered their second year of services with a newly developed Family Assessment and Road Map. Family Support Workers missed key benchmark due dates associated to the completion of the Family Assessments. Barriers were identified which included the need for retraining Family Support team and revision of the Family Assessment Tool.
  - Site Visits - The Family & Community Support team faced multiple staff turnovers to include supervisor positions. As a result, site visits were not completed in a timely manner.
- Child Health and Safety
  - EPSDT - The program did not meet the goal set (95%) for the percentage of children that have an up to date well child/physical exam within the first 90 days of entry. The team will continue to collect new ideas and strategies to increase the percentage of children that meet this requirement.
  - Health and Wellness - The program identified a lack of documented follow up within appropriate timeframes related to critical health concerns. Staff will focus on updating guidance and training.
  - Health and Safety Monitoring - While Health and Safety Monitoring Projects were completed by the Quality Assurance Team, the program did not complete Corrective Action Plans to address any concerns and findings within the designated timeframe.
- Program Governance, Communication & Human Resources Internal Communication - COSA Staff
  - Engagement- due to lack of quorum, the Community Action Advisory Board meetings had to be rescheduled on multiple occasions. The program will meet with DHS to develop strategies to increase attendance.
  - Professional Development- While less than 10% of staff missed the established deadline, The DHS Head Start Program continues to develop a system to communicate the availability of ongoing trainings available to COSA Staff and ensure that staff complete required trainings within the established deadlines.
  - Communication - The Program identified a lack of information available to staff regarding the use of interpretation services.
  - The DHS Head Start Program identified that the staff did not follow the established system to ensure educational requirements are met and documented appropriately. The Program will implement an audit system to ensure information is documented in a timely manner.

## **Strengths**

- **Monitoring, Systems & Analysis**
  - **Data Review and Program Goals** - The program has a system to identify goals for the program. The DHS Head Start Program is data informed and has an ongoing system to review data at the classroom, campus, district, and program level across all content areas.
  - **Reporting, Monitoring, and Data Use** - The program Quality Assurance monitoring calendar was established prior to the school year, and the program conducted reviews in Education, Disabilities, Health, Dental, Nutrition, Mental Health, Safe Environments, Transportation, ERSEA, and Family & Community Support Services. The program shared data across the program, including Policy Council and Education Service Provider Administrative staff. The DHS Head Start Program utilized monitoring data to plan and address concerns.
  - **Incident Reporting** - The DHS Head Start Program updated procedures and guidance related to incident reporting, including suspected child/abuse and neglect. The program continued the ongoing review of Critical incident reports and used the information to provide additional support and training and updated policies and procedures.
  - **Center Licensing** - While the Education Service Providers did not report all licensing violations/non-compliances that impacted the continued daily operation of the center to the City of San Antonio in a timely manner, the Providers did follow reporting time frames per the Texas Health and Human Services Commission/Childcare Licensing. All licensing violations/non-compliances were abated or corrected by the specified due date. The Early Head Start Program has a tracking system in place to ensure all CCR renewals are completed on time. The program did not have any licensing violations/non-compliances that impacted the continued daily operation of the center.
- **Early Learning**
  - **School Readiness Goals** - The program has established school readiness goals that were communicated to all parents and included in the parent handbook, distributed to all classrooms.
  - **Student Assessment**- While program continues to focus on fidelity to the assessment tool and review data reports for accuracy, over 70% of the children in Head Start were identified as PROFICIENT in Rapid Letter Naming, Rapid Vocabulary, Phonological Awareness Composite, and Math Composite on the CIRCLE assessment at EOY.
  - **CLASS** - While the number of CLASS Observers decreased, the program conducted CLASS Observations across the program. The Early Head Start Program prioritize training for teachers and implemented an annual CLASS Training. All Infant and Toddler CLASS scores from the 2022-2023 program year exceed the previous year's scores in all domains. The Head Start Prekindergarten average CLASS scores exceed the OHS competitive thresholds and met the OHS National Quality Thresholds in the Instructional Support Domain.
- **ERSEA** -
  - **Enrollment, Eligibility and Selection** - The Head Start program met 10% enrollment of children with disabilities. Community Health Workers were provided Eligibility training and began assisting with program applications.

- Recruitment - Early Head Start and Head Start Staff, including a team of three Community Health Workers, conducted community outreach, and attended various community events which significantly increased program referrals and applications. Community partnerships with the San Antonio Public Library, Texas Workforce, Women, Infants, and Children program (WIC) were strengthened, resulting in increased recruitment efforts for both Early Head Start and Head Start.
- Family and Community Engagement
  - Family Service Credential - All Family Support Workers received their Family Service Credential Certification within 18 months of hire.
  - Family Assessment - a new Family Assessment was developed, and training was provided during the Summer of 2022 in preparation of the 23-24 program year. This new family assessment is expected to provide a higher quality rating system while minimizing time and providing for a more efficient process for families.
  - Parent Survey - Parent and Fatherhood surveys have been developed/implemented across all Head Start programs to obtain information from parents regarding their topics of interest and times and dates that best work for them to hold events.
  - Training - Ongoing training and support continues to be a program priority. All Family & Community Support staff receive ongoing training to include onboarding, summer training on relevant content area topics including health services, family & community support as well as ERSEA. Training provided may be large group, small group and one on one.
  - Summer Resources Fair - The program hosted a Summer Resources Fair for all Head Start staff. 41 vendors attended to include CoSA Ready to Work, CPS Energy, Restore Education, San Antonio Foodbank and several more. Staff were able to gather information and make contacts with community agency representatives.
- Child Health and Safety -
  - EPSDT - The program saw a 4% increase from the previous year in the percentage of children who were up to date on EPSDT at end of program year.
  - Health and Wellness - The program has established partnerships to assist families in need of services related to health, nutrition, and wellness. Additionally, the program increased membership of the Health Services Advisory Committee.
  - Medical/Dental Home and Insurance - The program exceeded the goal of at least 90% of children enrolled having a medical home, dental home, and insurance by the end of the program year.
  - Health and Safety Monitoring - Through the monitoring process identified less than 10% findings related to special diets.
- Program Governance, Communication & Human Resources
  - Program Governance- During our 2022-2023 program year our Head Start Policy Council attendance was above 50% or more for our monthly meetings so quorum was met monthly. All representatives received annual orientation that includes review of members roles and responsibilities as governing members. Additionally, Policy Council members were invited to participate in community events, trainings and interview panels.
  - Human Resources- The DHS Head Start Program was able to fill vacancies within 53 business days and held a retention rate for Family Support Workers at 82%.

- Communication- The DHS Head Start Program continues to meet bi-monthly with all staff, in addition the Leadership team meets regularly for planning and discussion of events and activities.

## **Summary of Report**

Overall, DHS Head Start continues to utilize program data to guide and inform the decision-making process. The program is compliant with the Head Start Program Performance Standards and continues to strive towards high quality through continuous improvement. While the program endeavors to meet or exceed the Five-Year Strategic Plan objectives, there is still room for improvement. The identified strengths and areas of improvement will assist the program in reevaluating goals and measures for the next Five-Year Strategic Plan. The Self-Assessment process will continue to be used for ongoing assessment of all program services to promote compliance with Head Start Program Performance Standards and to ensure the needs of DHS Head Start children and families are met.