

# **Approval of Early Head Start (EHS) request for waiver and program design change**





**Department of Human Services**

**Early Head Start Program**

**Program Year 2021-2022**

**Project Description**

The City of San Antonio, Department of Human Services (DHS), Early Head Start Program respectfully requests permission from the Office of Head Start to make two major changes to the newly established DHS Early Head Start program. After analyzing program data, DHS Early Head Start believes with the two changes in place the program would better meet the needs of the community we serve.

DHS Early Head Start has spent over a year recruiting for home-base families, educating community partners on the benefits and services of a home-base programing, reviewing sibling data for currently enrolled Head Start children for the specific purposes to engage families in the conversation of home-base services and the value added of bringing the EHS program to the parent and child at home. Collaborative efforts continue with the EISD Teen Parenting program to engage with the teen parents on the benefits of the home-base option. Recognizing COVID-19 has had lasting impacts in the San Antonio community, the proposed program design option would better meet the needs of the EISD community.

**Needs of Children and Families**

According to the DHS 2021 Community Assessment, there are an estimated total of 26,129 eligible children under five years of age within the DHS Head Start service area, including 4,136 within EISD. The service area also contains a higher concentration of Hispanic residents than most other Bexar County school districts, with EISD comprised of approximately 95% Hispanic

residents. EISD has greater proportions of Hispanic residents than does Bexar County (60%) and the state of Texas (39%). Also, 69% of EISD residents speak a language other than English, generally Spanish in EISD (69%).

Additional needs and considerations of DHS Early Head Start children and families stem from many participants and families being homeless, experiencing foster care, and/or having a disability. Additionally, in the Edgewood ISD area, there are 16 facilities that serve children 0-2 years of age with a capacity of 1,424 children. The estimated number of children aged 0 to 2 years in the Edgewood ISD is 2,446. This results in a lack of capacity for 1,022 infants and toddlers.

The average educational attainment among adult residents of EISD is less than that of the city, county, state, and nation. Half of the adult population of EISD has not completed a high school diploma. Only 5% of EISD residents had earned at least a Bachelor's degree, compared to the city of San Antonio (26%), and Bexar County (28%). Households in EISD rely on public assistance. Over one-third of EISD households use Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and 14% of EISD households rely on Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Women, Infants and Children (WIC) are other public assistance programs utilized in the Head Start service area. Local government and non-profit organizations provide additional support services to the DHS Head Start families. Metro Health provides Immunizations and Dental Services in the EISD service area while the San Antonio Food Bank provides food and grocery products to children and families in the DHS Early Head Start Program.

### **Proposed Changes**

The first change is for the request of a waiver under the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) 1302.24 locally designed program option. The second request is to make a

change to the current program design as approved in the 2021-2022 Early Head Start (EHS) Continuation application.

#### *1302.24 Locally designed program option*

Requesting a waiver under the locally designed program option would allow the program to increase group size and ratio for classrooms designated for children 24 months and older. Currently the center-based program at Stafford EHS has 10 classrooms and maintains a group size of eight children with two teachers. With the waiver for the locally designed program option in place, Stafford EHS program would increase classrooms for children ages 24 months and older to 10 children with two teachers. The program will continue to deliver the full range of services, consistent with HSPPS 1302.20 (b) and continue to achieve program goals as defined in subpart J of the HSPPS. DHS Early Head Start Program views this as an opportunity to support our oldest transitioning toddlers, which currently move from a classroom of eight to a classroom of 17 three-year-olds, in a more conducive environment to adjust to a larger group of children as many of our transitioning three-year-olds move from the EHS program to the Stafford Pre-K Head Start program.

#### *Change in current Program Design*

The second request is to make a change in the current program design. At this time, the DHS EHS Program is funded to serve 80 center-based slots and 48 home-based slots. With permission, DHS EHS proposes to convert 24 home-base slots to center-based slots. With this change, DHS Early Head Start would serve 104 infants and toddlers in a center-based option increasing from 10 classrooms to 12 classrooms while still maintaining 24 slots in the home-base option. To accommodate the 24 converted slots, two new classrooms would be added giving a

total of 12 classrooms. Utilization of the locally designed waiver, the program would have the ability to increase group size in four 24 months and older classrooms by adding two additional children per room in addition to opening two new classrooms. With the current analysis of the waitlist data, DHS and EISD believes the community would be better served.

Table one reflects the current program design and the proposed program design in addition to the implementation of the locally designed program option.

Table 1. Proposed Program Design for remainder of the 2021 – 2022 School Year

<b>Current Center-base</b>	<b>Ratio</b>	<b>Proposed Center-base</b>	<b>Ratio</b>
<b>10 classrooms = 80</b>		<b>12 classrooms = 104</b>	
10 classrooms	2:8	8 classrooms	2:8
		4 classrooms	2:10
6wks – 12mos	2:8	New classroom	2:8
13 mos – 17 mos	2:8	New classroom	2:8
18 mos – 23 mos	2:8	6wks – 12mos	2:8
18 mos – 23 mos	2:8	13 mos – 17 mos	2:8
24 mos – 29 mos	2:8	18 mos – 23 mos	2:8
24 mos – 29 mos	2:8	18 mos – 23 mos	2:8
25 mos – 30 mos	2:8	24 mos – 29 mos	2:8
30 mos – 35 mos	2:8	24 mos – 29 mos	2:8
30 mos – 35 mos	2:8	25 mos – 30 mos	2:10
30 mos – 35 mos	2:8	30 mos – 35 mos	2:10
		30 mos – 35 mos	2:10
		30 mos – 35 mos	2:10
Total	80	Total	104
<b>Home-base</b>	<b>Ratio</b>	<b>Proposed Home-base</b>	<b>Ratio</b>
48 slots	1:12	24 slots	1:12

DHS Early Head Start is committed to serving the EISD community and offer the best Head Start services every day to every child and family. With permission to move forward with these two requests we believe we can achieve just that.

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