



ADMINISTRATION FOR  
**CHILDREN & FAMILIES**

Office of Head Start | 4th Floor – Switzer Memorial Building, 330 C Street SW, Washington DC 20024 [eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov](http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov)

## Program Performance Summary Report

**To: Authorizing Official/Board Chairperson**

*Mr. Tano Tijerina*

*Webb County Commissioners*

*5904 West Drive, Suites 6 & 7*

*Laredo, TX 78044 - 2397*

**From: Responsible HHS Official**

**Date: 05/28/2020**

**Dr. Deborah Bergeron**

**Director, Office of Head Start**

From March 23, 2020 to March 27, 2020, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted a Focus Area One (FA1) monitoring review of the Webb County Commissioners Head Start and Early Head Start programs. This report contains information about the grantee's performance and compliance with the requirements of the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) or Public Law 110-134, Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007.

The Office of Head Start (OHS) would like to thank your governing body, policy council, parents, and staff for their engagement in the review process. The FA1 review allows the OHS to understand how programs are progressing in providing services in the 5-year grant cycle. The report includes the performance measures used to understand grantee progress towards program goals. You can use this report to identify where your program was able to describe progress toward implementing program services that promote quality outcomes for children and families. Please contact your Regional Office for guidance should you have any questions or concerns. Your Regional Office will follow up on the content of this report and can work with you to identify resources to support your program's continuous improvement.

### **DISTRIBUTION OF THE REPORT**

Mr. Kenneth Gilbert, Regional Program Manager

Ms. Aliza Oliveros, Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director

Ms. Aliza Oliveros, Head Start Director

Ms. Aliza Oliveros, Early Head Start Director

## Glossary of Terms

<b>Opportunity for Continuous Improvement (OCI)</b>	An OCI is identified when the grantee is determined compliant in an area; however, through intentional, continuous improvement strategies, the agency has the opportunity to enhance overall program quality.
<b>Area of Concern (AOC)</b>	An area for which the agency needs to improve performance. These issues should be discussed with the grantee's Regional Office of Head Start for possible technical assistance.
<b>Area of Noncompliance (ANC)</b>	An area for which the agency is out of compliance with Federal requirements (including but not limited to the Head Start Act or one or more of the regulations) in one or more areas of performance. This status requires a written timeline of correction and possible technical assistance or guidance from the grantee's program specialist. If not corrected within the specified timeline, this status becomes a deficiency.
<b>Deficiency</b>	<p>As defined in the Head Start Act, the term "deficiency" means:</p> <p>(A) a systemic or substantial material failure of an agency in an area of performance that the Secretary determines involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) a threat to the health, safety, or civil rights of children or staff;</li> <li>(ii) a denial to parents of the exercise of their full roles and responsibilities related to program operations;</li> <li>(iii) a failure to comply with standards related to early childhood development and health services, family and community partnerships, or program design and management;</li> <li>(iv) the misuse of funds received under this subchapter;</li> <li>(v) loss of legal status (as determined by the Secretary) or financial viability, loss of permits, debarment from receiving Federal grants or contracts, or the improper use of Federal funds; or</li> <li>(vi) failure to meet any other Federal or State requirement that the agency has shown an unwillingness or inability to correct, after notice from the Secretary, within the period specified;</li> </ul> <p>(B) systemic or material failure of the governing body of an agency to fully exercise its legal and fiduciary responsibilities; or</p> <p>(C) an unresolved area of noncompliance.</p>



## Program Design and Management

### Program Design

The grantee's program design and structure takes into account community strengths and needs.

### Program Management

The grantee has an approach for providing effective management and oversight of all program areas and fiduciary responsibilities.

### Program Governance

The grantee maintains a formal structure for program governance that includes a governing body, a policy council (or policy committee for delegates), and parent committees.

## Program Design and Management Highlight

The Webb County Commissioners (WCC) Head Start and Early Head Start program provided effective services to children and families through partnerships with the Local Education Agency's. The WCC agency provided direction to the program regarding service options by participating in the annual Self-Assessment and Community Assessment processes, and analyzing and using the results to inform the program design and services structures. The Head Start leadership staff ensured collaborations were established with two Local Education Agency's to serve Head Start children on school campuses, and also provided center-based services for both Head Start and Early Head Start children. Laredo Independent School District and United Independent School District and the Child Care Partnerships hired bilingual staff to support dual language learners and their families. The program provided services to eligible children, ages birth to five, and their families through collaborations and partnerships.

The program provided management and monitoring oversight for both center and school-based services. The program staff implemented a systematic approach to ongoing monitoring for all Early Head Start and Head Start classes and centers. The monitoring efforts included regular visits by members of the Management Team to all classes, centers, and campuses to ensure environments were safe, nurturing, and welcoming. External monitors also observed the Head Start classes located on the public school campuses for the University of Texas at Houston's Center for Improving the Readiness of Children for Learning and Education (CIRCLE) program for compliance with the literacy and school readiness program regulations. The classes located in the program's center-based locations were monitored by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Service Child Care Licensing division. The Management Team met with the Director for reporting and program data analysis. The reports were reviewed and analyzed for needed follow-up or course correction. The Director submitted the aggregated program reports to the Webb County Commissioners Court, and the policy council for oversight and approval.

The program's governance structure provided multi-faceted oversight opportunities. The Webb County Head Start Program acted as a department in Webb County, a governmental entity, and the Webb County Commissioner's court served as the program's governing body. The court comprised of a county judge and four county commissioners elected by the citizens of the county. As a county department, the Head Start program staff adhered to the Webb County Personnel Policies and Procedures and Head Start Program Performance Standards. The program had the added benefit of oversight services from county offices, such as the Webb County Auditor's Office, the County Attorney's Office, the County Civil and Legal Department, the County Treasurer's Office, and the County Purchasing Office. The program's policy council included parents and community members from the Early Head Start and Head Start programs, county, and community partners. The program's governance structure provided oversight by a variety of levels in the county and the program.



## Designing Quality Education and Child Development Program Services

### Alignment with School Readiness

The grantee's approach to school readiness aligns with the expectations of receiving schools, the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (HSELOF), and state early learning standards.

### Effective and Intentional Teaching Practices

The grantee has strategies to ensure teaching practices promote progress toward school readiness.

### Supporting Teachers in Promoting School Readiness

The grantee has an approach for ensuring teachers are prepared to implement the curriculum and support children's progress toward school readiness.

### Home-based Program Services

The grantee has strategies to ensure home-based program services help parents to provide high-quality learning experiences.

## Designing Quality Education and Child Development Program Services Summary

The program offered quality early education and child development services using research and evidence-based curriculums and practices. The program formed a School Readiness Team that developed school readiness goals and strategies aligned with the receiving schools and with the state's early learning guidelines. The expected outcomes of the school readiness goals guided the implementation of the Creative Curriculum. They assessed the Early Head Start and the center-based Head Start children using the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment. The commissioner's Head Start program also partnered with the United Independent School District and the Laredo Independent School District to provide Head Start services and participated in the CIRCLE school readiness program. As participants in this program, teachers used the CIRCLE Progress Monitoring Tool to monitor and report child outcomes for preschool-aged children. The program implemented and used data from the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale and the Infant and Toddler Environmental Rating Scale to measure the learning environments for print-rich materials, nurturing adult relationships, and engaging learning areas. Outcomes from the child assessments and environmental rating scales were used to plan individual teacher's coaching strategies, professional development opportunities, and for reporting to stakeholders. The program implemented curriculum and practices to ensure children participated in quality early education experiences.



## Designing Quality Health Program Services

### Child Health Status and Care

The grantee has an approach for ensuring the delivery of high-quality health services.

### Safety Practices

The grantee implements a process for monitoring and maintaining healthy and safe environments and ensuring all staff have complete background checks.

## Designing Quality Health Program Services Summary

The program's approach ensured access to comprehensive health services for children and families. During enrollment, parents met with the Family Service Workers (FSWs) to review the children's health and immunization records. Based on this information, the FSWs assessed the status of each child and family's medical and dental home; offered support with obtaining insurance coverage; and referred families for needed medical or dental care in the two local clinics which the program had established partnerships. Access to comprehensive health services was enhanced for children and families working collaboratively with the FSWs.

The program's Health Services Advisory Council (HSAC), comprised of local medical and dental professionals, school personnel, parents and community members, met semi-annually to assess community health issues presented by the Management Team and provided updates to staff on any health or dental community programs to assist the families they served. An example of community providers discussed by the HSAC included agencies, such as Gateway Clinic and the Laredo Health Department, who offered parents and staff training on the prevention of communicable diseases, and free flu vaccination to children and families. The HSAC provided support to the staff and families through access to community-based comprehensive health services.

The program staff ensured children were safe while in their care. Monitoring of learning environments included regular checks of the indoor and outdoor areas, child supervision, classroom management, and adult and child interactions, using rating scales, such as the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, the Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale, and the Classroom Environment Checklist from the Children's Learning Institute. Each site Manager ensured all staff was trained in the program's emergency preparedness procedure, updating the plan as changes in the program or community occurred. The program ensured all children were safe while in its care.



## Designing Quality Family and Community Engagement Services

### Family Well-being

The grantee has an approach for collaborating with families to support family well-being.

### Strengthening Parenting and Parent-Child Supports

The grantee has an approach for providing services that strengthen parenting skills.

## Designing Quality Family and Community Engagement Services Summary

The program supported family well-being through goal-setting and parenting education. Beginning after enrollment, the FSWs worked individually with families to determine their strengths and needs and to develop family goals. At three points during the program year, the FSWs met with families to discuss progress toward goal attainment, to determine barriers to success, and to provide necessary resources or referrals for families. The Family Partnership Agreements included family goals that were uploaded into the ChildPlus data system for tracking and reporting. The progress reports were provided to the policy council and the Webb County Commissioners for input and approval as needed. Families were also provided with parent education opportunities, through implementing the Abriendo Puertas Opening Doors curriculum. This evidenced-based curriculum structure presented ten sessions that enhanced and empowered Latino families by supporting their roles as their children's first teachers. The program's goal-setting and parenting education opportunities provided opportunities for increased family well-being.



## **Developing Effective Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA) Strategies and Fiscal Infrastructure**

### **Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance**

The grantee enrolls children or pregnant women who are categorically eligible or who meet defined income-eligibility requirements.

At least 10% of the grantee's total funded enrollment is filled by children eligible for services under IDEA or the grantee has received a waiver.

### **Enrollment Verification**

The grantee maintains and tracks full enrollment.

### **Fiscal Infrastructure, Capacity, and Responsiveness**

The grantee's fiscal staff have the qualifications needed to provide oversight of the grant.

The grantee has a budget development and revision process that includes stakeholders and appropriate approvals, and ensures continuous alignment with program design, goals, and objectives.

## **Developing Effective Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA) Strategies and Fiscal Infrastructure Summary**

The program's Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA) systems ensured enrollment opportunities were available to eligible children and families in the Webb County Commissioners service area. The program's Family Service Workers (FSWs) received applications and reviewed supporting documentation to determine the eligibility status. They based the ranked eligibility determinations on annually approved criteria, such as income, age, and family factors, including poverty level and grandparents raising grandchildren. Children were placed on the ranked waitlist when there were no vacant enrollment slots. Once children were enrolled, the FSWs tracked attendance and ensured full enrollment. The program's systems provided enrollment opportunities for eligible children.

The Family Services Supervisors provided the FSWs with ERSEA training to complete eligibility and enrollment duties. The program presented a cultural competency training that supported and improved customer service practices when working with families. The policy council and the Webb County Commissioners participated in regular training and information sessions related to the ERSEA systems to provide informed oversight for the program. Training opportunities provided the staff and the governing bodies with information to guide decision-making and oversight.

The Webb County Commissioners' financial management structure ensured fiscal oversight of budget development, implementation, and monitoring for the Federal funds. As a department of the Webb County government, the County Auditor's Office, and the County Purchasing Agent provided direct oversight of the program's operations and funding. The program also followed the county's approved procurement, accounts payable and receivable, and reporting policies and procedures. The Head Start Executive Director worked closely with the Chief Fiscal Officer of Webb County to review regular accounts of payable and receivable transactions. The Management Team received monthly reports generated by the CFO and presented them to the policy council before placement on the agenda for the monthly Webb County Commissioner meetings. The annual budget development process followed a similar path. The Management Team proposed draft priorities for the program's upcoming budget year to the CFO, who assigned funding levels based on the annual award letter from the Office of Head Start. The proposed annual budget was presented to the Management Team and the policy council for review and input. Noted changes were made before the final proposed budget was presented to the Webb County Commissioners for final approval. The Webb County Commissioners' financial management structure ensured Head Start funds were safeguarded.

----- End of Report -----