

**North Hudson Community Action Corporation
HEAD START / EARLY HEAD START**



2020 Self-Assessment Summary Results



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SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

Program Description

1. North Hudson Community Action Head Start has been in operation since 1965 and began providing services for Early Head Start in 1999. We currently provide services to 501 Head Start children and their families. We have five (5) centers that operate Head Start preschool classrooms, with centers located in each of the three (3) local school districts of North Hudson (West New York, Union City, and Kearny). In our West New York and Union City centers we provide Early Head Start services. North Hudson Community Action Corporation Head Start and Early Head Start has longstanding relationships and collaborative partnerships with the local school districts, community organizations, families, and the county at large. Funded enrollment for the 2020/2021 program year was 501 (367 Head Start, 104 Early Head Start and 30 pregnant women).
2. On March 20, 2020, the Governor of NJ mandated that all schools close due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our centers were shuttered until June 22, 2020 when our essential staff was allowed to return to work. During this closure, the main focus for our program was to ensure our families and students continue to receive the services they needed using safe means as outline by the Office of Head Start, Office of Licensing, Department of Education and Local State community partnerships. Administrative meeting was held virtually and communication among stakeholders was completed via surveys and telephone conferences.



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North Hudson Community Action Corporation Head Start/Early Head Start has established the following goals for our five- year grant:

- **Program Goal 1:** Education and Early Childhood Development Services: Improve each child’s school readiness outcomes.
- **Program Goal 2:** Health/Mental Health/ Nutrition Services: To strengthen the support provided to families on prioritized health and nutrition related issues.
- **Program Goal 3:** Family Engagement: To strengthen the services provided to our families that are timely and responsive to their needs.
- **Program Goal 4:** Program Design and management: To maintain the highest level of quality service, integrity, and professionalism
- **Program Goal 5:** Program Professional Development: To provide enhanced professional development opportunities for all staff.
- **Program Goal 6:** Safe environment/ Facilities/ Materials and Equipment: To ensure facilities comply with all state and local licensing mandates.



Context for the Self-Assessment

1. North Hudson Community Action Corporation Head Start/Early Head Start conducts an annual self-assessment in accordance with Head Start Performance Standard 1302.102 (b) (2). The self-Assessment process began January 2020 in order to ensure timely completion of the Self-Assessment and development of the Program Improvement Plan. The development of the Self-Assessment relied on program data, surveys, interviews and Community Assessment to complete an evaluation of the program's progress toward meeting goals, compliance with regulatory requirements, and the effectiveness of professional development and family engagement systems in promoting school readiness.
2. The Self-Assessment Planning teams were comprised of department managers, service area staff, Policy Council representatives, parents, and external community members with demonstrated abilities in data analysis and collaborative inquiry.
3. The topics selected for the 2020 Self-Assessment were in alignment with the requirements of Head Start Performance Standard 1302.102(b)(2) and best practices recommended by the Head Start Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center(ECLKC) for areas to focus on that will ensure an effective self-assessment process.
4. Summaries of the 2019 Self-Assessment Report/ OHS Monitoring results/ Program Goals Matrix and quarterly report results from each service area, progress on the program's five year goals and objectives, child outcome data, family engagement data, and professional development summaries were all used as data sources to identify program strengths, successes, and areas of improvement within the pre-determined focus areas.



5. Last year's Self-Assessment had the following recommendations, and we have included the progress on these recommendations to show the growth and quality improvement within our program:

Facilities & Learning Environment

- a. Identify new location for preschool classrooms located at our North Bergen center.

 In progress

- b. Identify additional funding opportunities to expand Early Head Start slots.

 Completed 2020 Early Head Start Expansion grant proposal

- c. Secure one-time funding for a proposed move to new North Bergen location.

 Not started

- d. Identify funding sources for possible purchase of new school bus.

 On-going

2. Data and Evaluation

- a. Continue to fine tune school readiness plan to include more advanced dual language learner initiatives.

 On-going

- b. Continue to develop uniformity in the reporting of data to Policy Council and Board by ensuring that it is more user-friendly.

 On -going

3. Training & Professional Development

- a. Ensure the program continues to demonstrate progress toward five-year program goals in reference to instituting a professional development program that ensures compliance with regulatory requirements.

 Completed

- b. Continue to ensure staff have the knowledge needed to meet program goals and objectives through service area workshops, college credit attainment, and curriculum training.

 Completed

- c. Continue to encourage all staff to register for state required webinars & **virtual workshops** that are relate to one's profession or job responsibilities including on-going monitoring.

 Completed

- e. Update Staff Orientation and Development Record form to include department specific trainings.

 Completed



- f. Continue to develop a plan to increase the ESL classes already being offered to staff.

Not started

4. Communication

- a. Increase networking opportunities to spread the Head Start Advantage message in the community.

Program videos were uploaded to YOUTUBE, continued to attend community outreach events, created vibrant banners and placed them in strategic locations around our community

- b. Update current NHCAC Head website to include parent friendly links.

in progress

- c. Identify systems to increase parent communications through text and email (myheadstart.org).

Progress: Beginning with the 19/20 program year, we began sending families, text/email message using myheadstart.org. We have developed guidelines that indicate that if a family does not respond to first text/email, a second text/email will be sent a week later. If families do not respond to the second text/email, a letter is mailed with a contact by date. If no contact is made, the application will be abandoned, and will not remain on the wait list. Most families are responding to the text/email, and are updating contact information regularly.

5. Fiscal Management

- a. Analyze current budget to find areas where cost savings can be achieved.

Completed: cost savings in kitchen / facility supplies

- b. Seek out district partnership-funding options

On-going

- c. Prioritize future COLA awards towards staff salaries not currently at the mandatory minimum wage rate.

Completed



SECTION 2 - METHODOLOGY

January 2020

Pre-Phase - Review of Program Data

Action	Purpose
Self-Assessment Planning Meeting	Planning for self-assessment process (creation of timeline)
Self-Assessment data review	Review of 2019 self-assessment goals and process of completion
Highlight trends/ patterns	Determine which area of 2019 Self-Assessment has not been fully achieved.

February 2020

Phase One- Design the Process

Action	Purpose
Design and collection of Program data/ quarterly reports	Look for trends, patterns in service
Division of responsibilities	Collect additional data and analyze already existing data
Summary of quarterly reports/ student outcomes/ parent surveys	Determine areas of focus

March thru June 2020

Phase Two- Engage the team

Met with Management team virtually to discuss process and timeframes for completion. Based on the review of last year's Self-Assessment Report and Improvement Plan, ongoing monitoring reports and the progress of Program Goals, the following subgroups were formed:

- Education/Disabilities & Mental Health
- ERSEA (Enrollment, Recruitment, Selection, Eligibility, and Attendance) and Parent, Family and Community Engagement
- Human Resources/Professional Development
- Fiscal
- Health & Safety/Nutrition/Facilities/Transportation



Data Collection Tools Used

The following is a sample list of tools and items used for on-going monitoring and support of the program. Each sub group used various tools to assess the areas of strength and possible areas for program improvement and/or course corrections.

- Attendance at Family Events/ parent committee meetings
- Birth – 5 School Readiness Goals
- Community Surveys
- Parent Survey
- Child Care Licensing Regulations
- CDC COVID -19 Recommendations
- Safe Schools Training Logs for staff
- Office of Licensing Mandates
- Family Goals for 19/20 and Family Interview Assessment Results
- Health and Safety Checklists
- Home Visit notes
- Policy Council minutes
- Staff Input and Feedback through conversations
- TS Gold Outcomes on School Readiness Goals – Fall and Winter Checkpoints for Preschool and Summer
- Volunteer Handbook/Personnel Policies
- Manager’s meeting minutes



SECTION 3 – KEY INSIGHTS

Phase Three- Analyze and Dialogue

Program Strengths

The following were found to be strengths and considerations within the NHCAC Head Start/Early Head Start Program:

Focus Area	Strengths	Considerations
I. Facilities & Learning Environments	Annual completion of Health and Safety checklist	Health and safety concerns: As reported in the 2018 Self-Assessment Report, our North Bergen center was found to have lead in some ceiling tiles. High levels of lead and copper were also found in the water. Remedies have been made but because of the growing concerns of future lead issues, a new location for our North Bergen classrooms is still a major priority. Learning Environment: As of March of 2020, demand for infant and toddler slots continue to be high. There is a great need to identify additional funding opportunities to reduce this waiting list and service more parents.
	2019-2020 funding has allowed for upgrading kitchen appliances, internet installations and additional air conditioning systems	
	COVID-19 funding allowed us to upgrade our facilities to meet the CDC recommendation and Office of licensing mandates	
	COVID-19 funding allowed program to offer in-person Summer program to Head Start families	



Transportation:

School bus will reach its maximum allowance of school transportation service by end of 2020.

<p>II. Data and Evaluation</p>	<p>Updates to School Readiness is aligned with student outcome data.</p> <p>Ongoing monitoring tool reviewed quarterly</p> <p>Monthly reports are presented to board and policy council every month</p>	<p>Continue to fine tune NHCAC School Readiness Plan to include more advanced dual language learner initiatives.</p>
<p>III. Training & Professional Development</p>	<p>Work Force Registry offers opportunities to attend trainings to all staff. Mandated State and licensing are offered to staff during preservice training.</p> <p>All Head Start teachers have earned a BA in Early Childhood Education or related field.</p> <p>All Head Start teacher assistants are enrolled in AA program.</p> <p>All Early Head Start teachers have CDA IT or higher education credential</p>	<p>Identify ongoing monitoring process training for non-administrative staff</p> <p>Further opportunities needed for ESL instruction for staff.</p>
<p>IV. Communication/ Social Media</p>	<p>Communication has been streamed line to include digital and written forms for staff, parents and community.</p>	<p>Continue Social Media exposure is needed</p>



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More Social Media exposure is needed to implement cellular communications for program events

Participation in Outreach events has increased

V. Fiscal

No increases in staff out-of-pocket Health Benefit costs

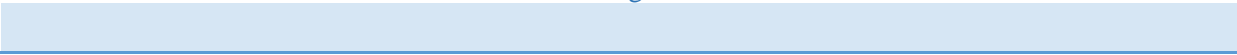
Mandated NJ minimum wage law will affect 50 staff as of 1/1/2022.

Salaries of all staff are within range of the 2018 Wage scale

Sequentially, wages must increase every year until the required \$15 is reached by 2024.

Minimum wage was increased to \$12.00 an hour following required NJ State mandates.

Quality Improvement grant helped in increasing low minimum wage staff





SECTION 4 Phase Four- Debriefing and strategic planning

September / October 2020

Date	Action	Purpose
Strategic Planning	Discussion group debriefing	Clarification on findings and recommendations from each sub-group

During Phase four, members of the self-assessment team, representatives from the Policy Council and HR director partook of the debriefing of findings from the self-assessment data collection results. Recommendations for the areas presented were added to already formulate suggestions. Self-assessment stakeholders discussed what the final recommendations. In addition to listing findings and recommendations self-assessment participants were also asked to identify whether the recommendations would help the program achieve progress toward a goal, solve a potential systemic issue, and/or further enhance the program.

Phase Five- Prepare the Report

Date	Action	Purpose
9/20	Development of Self-Assessment Report	Compile the findings and recommendations from the Self-Assessment team into a comprehensive report
10/20	Planning Team review	Key staff determined which areas to include in final self-assessment report
11/20	Draft review of Self-assessment Report	Review report draft for content and understanding of findings/recommendations

Phase five entailed the writing of the final Self-Assessment report, which included a compilation of all the findings and suggestions from the Self-Assessment team, as well as, any identified program strengths within one or more of the focus areas, areas for improvement to address potential risks to compliance, opportunities to enhance management systems and ensure progress on program goals and objectives. Draft of Self-Assessment report was presented to Management, Policy Council and NHCAC Board for further comments and recommendations.



SECTION 5 – Recommendations

1. Facilities & Learning Environment

- a. Identify new location for preschool classrooms located at our North Bergen center.
- b. Continue to seek out additional funding opportunities to expand Early Head Start slots.
- c. Secure one-time funding for a proposed move to new North Bergen location.
- d. Continue to seek out funding sources for possible purchase of new school bus.

2. Data and Evaluation

- a. Continue to fine tune school readiness plan to include more advanced dual language learner initiatives.
- b. Create an online tracking system to monitor credential expiration dates for staff certifications

3. Training & Professional Development

- a. Ensure the program continues to demonstrate progress toward five-year program goals in reference to instituting a professional development program that ensures compliance with regulatory requirements.
 - b. Continue to ensure staff have the knowledge needed to meet program goals and objectives through service area workshops, college credit attainment, and curriculum training.
- c. Continue to encourage staff to take college courses to attain AA/ BA or MA
- d. Begin to develop a plan to increase the ESL classes already being offered to staff.

4. Communication

- a. Continue to increase networking opportunities to spread the Head Start Advantage message in the community.
- b. Finalize updating current NHCAC Head website to include parent, community and staff friendly links.

5. Fiscal Management

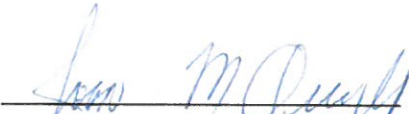
- a. Continue to analyze current budget to find areas where cost savings can be achieved.
- b. Continue to seek out district partnership-funding options

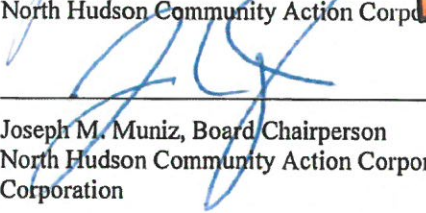


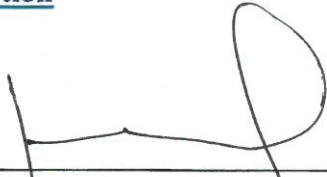
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Signature Certification



Joan Quigley, President/ CEO
North Hudson Community Action Corporation

Joseph M. Muniz, Board Chairperson
North Hudson Community Action Corporation

Jose Luis Chica, Head Start Policy Council Chair
North Hudson Community Action Corporation

Monica Charris, Head Start Director
North Hudson Community Action Corporation

Date of NHCAC Policy Council approval: November 10, 2020

Date of NHCAC Board approval : November 10, 2020



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NHCAC Head Start Administrative Team

Manager/Site Supervisor name	Service Area Assignment
Monica Charris - Tabares	Head Start / Early Head Start Director
Shelly Algoo	Education Director
Jay Johnson	Operation/Facilities Manager
Yanira Mendoza	Program administrative Assistant/ Transportation Supervisor
Lesvia Matos	Early Head Start 5800th Site Supervisor
Victoria Beauchamp	Early Head Start 4th Site Supervisor
Elizabeth Caravella	Education Site Supervisor
Carole Fabrizio	Education Site Supervisor
Kim Cerreto	Education Site Supervisor
Elizabeth Sanchez	Education Site Supervisor
Carol Larrabee	HS/EHS Health Services Manager
Jacqueline Marquez	Parent, Family, Community Engagement/ERSEA Manager
Jeniffer Garcia	Pregnant Woman Coordinator
Maria del Carmen	Mental Health Coordinator
William Fabrizio	HS/EHS Data/Technology Coordinator
Kimberly Castro	HS/EHS Nutrition Manager
Nury Escobar	Fiscal Specialist
Denise Honore	Disability Manager
Erika Pavon	Parent Engagement Coordinator
Linda Badawy	Food Service Supervisor
Belinda Flanigan	HS/EHS School Compliance Manager
Furcy Tejada	Facilities assistant