

Celina City Schools Mercer County Head Start

Self-Assessment Plan 2015-2016

<u>January 26, 2016 -</u>	Self-Assessment Team leads assigned during Administrative Team meeting
<u>February 2, 2016 -</u>	Self-Assessment Training for Managers
<u>February 4, 2016 -</u>	Board & Policy Council Members informed / trained on Self-Assessment process during Governance Training
<u>February 18, 2016 -</u>	Self-Assessment Plan approval by Policy Council – volunteer for teams
<u>February 19, 2016 -</u>	Education Staff trained on Self-Assessment
<u>February 26, 2016 -</u>	Social Service staff trained on Self-Assessment, team leads to have complete Self-Assessment teams
<u>February 29, 2016 -</u>	Self-Assessment begins
<u>March 11, 2016 -</u>	Self-Assessment ends
<u>March 16, 2016 -</u>	Self-Assessment reports due to Director
<u>March 18, 2016 -</u>	Team leads meeting / summarize findings
<u>March 29, 2016 -</u>	Self-Assessment report of findings & Program Improvement Plan delivered to management team & Superintendent
<u>April 18, 2016 -</u>	Self-Assessment report approved by Board
<u>April 21, 2016 -</u>	Self – Assessment report approved by Policy Council

MERCER COUNTY SELF-ASSESSMENT 2015-2016

Methodology

Mercer County Head Start began the self-assessment process in February 2016. The Executive Director obtained the Head Start Self-Assessment: *Your Foundation for Building Program Excellence* tool from ECKLC. Following the process within the tool, the Executive Director identified (5) five teams and team leaders. These individuals included: the Executive Director, Director of Early Childhood Services, Family Engagement Services Manager, Health & Community Services Manager, and the Information Technology Secretary.

Training on the self-assessment process and tool began on February 2nd with follow-up trainings provided to individual team leaders throughout the month of February. Self-Assessment trainings on the process were given to all staff through meetings during the month of February as well. Policy Council reviewed the self-assessment process and tool during the January and February meetings. The Board of Education was informed of the process during governance training in January and then again in February.

Team leaders were assigned areas of focus. Due to the size of the grantee, the assignment of areas of focus was very intentional; assuring that management staff were not responsible to review areas that they directly supervise. Current staff, community members, Policy Council members, Board of Education members and parents were asked to participate either in the capacity as an interviewer or interviewee. At all times, confidentiality of children, family, and personnel information were safeguarded to protect their rights to privacy in accordance with state and federal mandates as well as the OAPSE #457 contract.

Self-Assessment began on February 29th and concluded on March 11th. During the two-week period, staff participated in interviews, child-file checks, internal auditing, and review of agency reports and plans. On March 16th, the self-assessment leadership team met to review the data provided. At that time areas of strength, areas of opportunity, and beginning stages of planning were documented.

Areas of Strength

Education – The use of Creative Curriculum in all programs as well as the assessment tool TSGold were identified as strengths for the program. The interviews with the Director of Early Childhood Services and teaching staff indicated a clear understanding of the use, scope, and purpose of Creative Curriculum. In addition, the interviews indicated a clear understanding of the use, scope, and purpose of the TSGold system. Educational information from screenings and assessments are shared with parents during parent / teacher conferences and educational home visits. Parents are asked to work with teachers to develop common goals to help their child prepare for the transition to kindergarten.

Serving Children with Disabilities – Head Start programs are required to serve children with identified disabilities. The minimum threshold is ten percent (10%). At the time of self-assessment, 18% of enrolled children are receiving IEP services. Mercer County Head Start and the Mercer County Educational Service Center (ESC) have a long-standing relationship for many years. Itinerant teachers from the ESC work with children within the classroom setting and individually for specialized services. ESC teachers and Head Start teachers discuss child's progress and future planning.

Communication and Record-Keeping – These areas were identified together as a strength with a significant focus on the use of the COPA database system. Mercer County Head Start began using the COPA system in the fall of 2016. The previous database system (Genesis Earth) was not meeting the needs to produce reliable reports or PIR data. COPA training was provided via video-conferencing, emails, phone conferences, and on-going support via webinars. Staff feels confident in the reliability of informative reports the COPA database is able to produce.

Family Engagement – The Family Advocates and Family Engagement Services Manager were able to clearly define community partners who help provide services to enrolled families. In the feedback reports and review of child files there were a significant amount of referrals made for families to help them receive services they needed. Family Advocates are integrally involved in the ERSEA reporting process. This includes weekly enrollment reports, attendance monitoring, and completion of enrollment applications.

Safety – During an on-board observation on the bus, a reviewer noted the process in place to ensure that children are delivered to the appropriate adult at drop-off was consistently carried out. The bus aide escorted children and their information folder to the adult at the bus stop who met them at the bus door for exiting.

Fiscal – The Celina City Schools Treasurer's office is responsible to carry out the fiscal duties of the Mercer County Head Start grant in conjunction with the Executive Director. The physical separation of the two entities helps support checks and balances. In addition within the Treasurer's office the separation of grant application and oversight from accounts receivable as well as accounts payable secures fiscal integrity. The Treasurer's office ensures that the Head Start program participates in the annual fiscal audit.

Areas of Opportunity

Health – Utilizing the COPA system many reports specifically to health and screenings were reviewed. It was determined that there were some (over 5) missing physicals, (over 10) missing dentals, and a significant (over 20) missing leads and or hematocrits. In conferencing with the Health & Community Services Manager it was determined that the Ohio Department of Education licensing regulations do not exclude children from participating in a preschool setting due to a lack of a physical. Staff feel that without the authoritative power of exclusion that there will always be a population of parents who choose not to get a well- child exam for their child.

In regards to a lack of dental exams / screenings, it was determined that there are (2) two dental providers in Mercer County who accept the medical card as payment. These providers have specific rigid rules about who they will service and when. The Health & Community Services Manager scheduled a dental van from Ohio Dental Services to provide services to children in February 2016. There is a significant amount of children who are in need of dental follow-up that cannot be provided in this immediate area. Families were referred for services in neighboring counties and some as far as children's hospitals in Ft. Wayne, Indiana and Dayton, Ohio. In reviewing COPA reports for completion of lead and / or hematocrit screenings it was found that a significant amount of children did not have their screening completed at 12 months or 24 months as prescribed by EPSDT requirements. In further review, it was determined that in some cases doctors did provide an order to the parent for venous draws at the local hospital / clinic, but there was little to no follow-up by the parent. In other cases, it was found that the primary physician completed a lead "screen" on the family. If the family resided in a house that was recently built the physician made the determination no further testing was necessary. The Health and Community Services Manager will be utilizing the HSAC (Health Services Advisory Committee) and COLT (community Organizations Linking Together) Health Committee as a venue to discuss these trends and patterns with the health community at-large.

Plans of Action for specialized care were also identified as an area of opportunity. The process of establishing a plan, training for staff, education for parents, and communication between the Health and Community Services Manager, teaching staff, family advocates, and parents needs to be clarified. There is currently a policy in place that NO MEDICATION is to be transported on buses. This raises a significant concern as to how children would receive emergency medical treatment if needed while riding the bus.

Due to large caseloads assigned to each family advocate (79) there is not a substantial amount of time for follow-up on health-related items. These include but are not limited to screenings, orders on well child exams, concerns noted by physicians / specialists, and supports to other family members in need.

Management Systems – An over-arching theme that was repeated throughout several areas was a lack of a program planning calendar, systematic on-going monitoring of programmatic components, revisions and updates of service plans, new employee on-boarding and orientation, and centralized & uniform- mode of communication of information. For example, service plans and program policy & procedures stored in a central location both electronically and in paper document. In reviewing materials it is evident that there have been several attempts at updating & revising policies and procedures over the last few years. Please note, that the job descriptions were all updated in 2014 and are not in need of revisions at this time.

School Readiness – The management team is currently engaged in developing a more systematic approach to school readiness that involves all program components, parents, and the community

at-large. Previously, it was noted that the community was not informed of school readiness goals and practices.

Family Engagement – As previously mentioned in the Health section, Family Advocate caseloads were identified as a concern. With a caseload of 79 families, it is near impossible for family advocates to develop long-lasting positive relationships with families. Building positive rapport with families begins during recruitment, and carried thru application, recruitment, and on-going partnership building throughout the school year. The Office of Head Start is recommending caseloads on average of 45 families with no more than fifty assigned to a family advocate. Throughout interviews with staff, a lack of parental involvement in center activities, Policy Council, and / or POPS committee meetings could be directly linked to a lack of connection / relationship between family advocates and their families for no other reason than a lack of time to develop relationships and to clearly explain the expectations of the parental role in the Head Start program.

Community Partnerships – Previously in this report, community partnerships were identified as a strength for the program. Reviewers wanted documentation to reflect that currently there are no childcare partnerships. Mercer County Head Start is and always has been open to the possibility of partnerships in the community childcare centers to best serve children and families.

ERSEA – A statistically significant sample of child files were reviewed as per guidance of the self-assessment tool. In that sample it was found that 70% of files checked DID NOT pass the ERSEA audit. The reviewer commented that for the majority of files audited, a staff member, who is no longer with the program, had completed the ERSEA paperwork. Mistakes found included: lack of documentation, incorrect eligibility identified, and incorrect calculations. These concerns were immediately addressed with the Family Engagement Services Manager.

Communication – Earlier in the report, communication overall was identified as a strength. However, there is a “break” in on-going communication with the transportation staff. Transportation staff is located at the Celina City Schools bus garage. The physical separation of the two entities causes a disconnect between staff in the Franklin Building and transportation. Additionally, this separation fosters an “us / them” mentality which defeats the idea of a universal positive approach towards providing services to families and children.

Safety – During interviews, several staff members identified the lack of a physical boundary around the playground to be a specific concern to them. Teachers in particular are concerned that students may “run” away from the group which could lead to an unsafe situation. This concern was identified previously. In an effort to rectify the problem, trees were planted in the east-side of the playground providing a natural boundary between the playground and the parking lot. A permanent structure, fence, needs to be placed around the area to safely secure children during unstructured- outside play.

Disabilities – Disabilities was noted as being strength during the self-assessment process. There was one area that was identified as an opportunity, involving parents more in the IEP process as well as the child’s primary teacher. Currently, the structure in place between the ESC and Head Start limits the parental input as well as the child’s primary Head Start teacher. Head Start Performance Standards provide detailed guidance that supports the parent’s rights in IDEA.

Analysis and Conclusion

The Self-Assessment Leadership team met to review all the data and findings. Each team leader was able to provide a synopsis of their review and share specific items that were of significant strength or opportunities to improve. The team synthesized data with the intention of determining what areas of growth would be supported by the areas of strength, and which areas of growth directly impacted each other. For example, family advocate caseloads were determined to directly influence health needs follow-up and parental involvement. With that approach in mind the following determinations were made:

Items in Need of Immediate Planning

1. ERSEA – A systematic approach to training, form completion, collection of required documentation, review, and monitoring.
2. Management Systems – A systematic approach to developing & maintaining a program planning calendar, on-going monitoring of programmatic components, revisions and updates of service plans, new employee on-boarding and orientation, and centralized & uniform- mode of communication of information.
3. Family Engagement – Maintaining a workable caseload assignment for family advocates to ensure quality comprehensive services to families and children

Items to be addressed in Long-Term Planning

1. Health – A systematic approach to educate parents, staff, and community service providers on program expectations and requirements.
2. Disabilities – Continued partnerships with ESC & public school personnel to ensure families receive the quality services they deserve.
3. Communication – Enhance the relationship and systems between the Franklin building staff and the transportation staff.

The Self-Assessment Leadership team determined that through the current efforts being made by the School Readiness team that the items identified as an opportunity for growth would be rectified through careful planning and communication. In addition, the decision was also made that the concerns noted with the playground did not warrant action steps as the Executive

Director will communicate the needs to the Superintendent and work with the Treasurer to secure funding to fence in the playground.

MERCER COUNTY HEAD START SELF-ASSESSMENT PLAN PROGRAM YEAR 2015-16

FOCUS AREA	CONCERN	DESIRED OUTCOME	ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	SUPPORTS NEEDED	ANTICIPATED DUE DATE	FOLLOW-UP COMMENTS
ERSEA	70% of files were found to be completed incorrectly during an internal audit. Specific areas include: training, form, form completion, collecting required documentation, review, and monitoring.	100% of child files will pass an internal ERSEA audit. Staff will receive thorough ERSEA training. An internal ERSEA monitoring mechanism will be established. MCHS will meet all internal requirements of the new regs passed 3/15.	Staff will attend ERSEA training. FESM will develop ERSEA monitoring system that includes 2 levels of internal auditing. FESM will ensure that all current policy & procedure reflect new regs established by OHS 3/15.	Exec Dir. FESM Family Advocates	Training Form development	8/2016	
MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of program planning calendar On-Going monitoring systems of programmatic components Service Plan updates & Revisions New Employee on-boarding & orientation Centralizing information both electronically & physically on site(s) accessible to all 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Program Planning Calendar will be completed by April of each program year & shared with all staff An on-going monitoring system will be established for all programmatic components (Education, Family Engagement, Health, Mental Health, Disabilities) Service Plans will be revised and updated annually & reviewed by Policy Council and Board as prescribed by 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Program requirements, fiscal requirements, grant requirements, & training needs will be placed on a centralized planning calendar to ensure compliance. Each programmatic "expert" will develop a monitoring system that includes observations, audits, responsibilities, supports, identifies who is responsible for tasks, with timelines, and data analysis to feed into 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Exec Dir. Mgmt team DECS, HCSM, FESM Exec Dir, Mgmt team Exec Dir Secretary Mgmt team Exec Dir, IT Secretary, Mgmt team 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Grant, Fiscal requirements, training needs, TTA support, Grantee Specialist Service Plans, Performance Standards, universal format Standards Celina Schools new employee orientation procedure, OAPSE contract, Performance Standards Technology support from Celina Schools 	<p>4/2016</p> <p>7/2016</p> <p>7/2016</p> <p>8/2016</p> <p>10/2016</p>	

MERCER COUNTY HEAD START SELF-ASSESSMENT PLAN PROGRAM YEAR 2015-16

	staff	<p>the performance Standards.</p> <p>4. A system to welcome new employees, provide training, evaluation, and support will be established ensuring longevity of quality employees.</p> <p>5. Service Plans, forms, programmatic requirements, and resources will be centralized & categorized for easy access electronically on the P drive.</p> <p>Physical documents will be organized and accessible to all staff in the conference area and central office area.</p>	<p>overall program planning.</p> <p>Monitoring reports should include effective communication methods to reach all stakeholders.</p> <p>3. Every service plan will be revised ensuring that all components of the standards are covered. Each service plan will include the policies & procedures that support the standards.</p> <p>4. A new employee checklist will be revised, supportive efforts for the first 60 days of employment will be enhanced, orientation will be developed to cover human resources services, head Start policies & protocol, 7 training for the specific service area.</p>			
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MERCER COUNTY HEAD START SELF-ASSESSMENT PLAN PROGRAM YEAR 2015-16

<p>FAMILY ENGAGEMENT</p>	<p>1. Caseloads are too high 2. Follow up is inconsistent 3. Parental involvement is low</p>	<p>1. Caseloads will average 53 families 2. FAs will systematically follow up on referrals, goals, and needs in a timely manner ensuring quality services 3. Parents will be more engaged in</p>	<p>5. Out-dated documents & forms currently on the P drive will be archived as resources. New forms reflecting current practices will be developed and organize on the P drive allowing for easy access to all staff. Paper documentation will be located in the central office. Any and all resources including PIR data, service plans, etc. will be located in the front conference room / resource library.</p>	<p>1. Hire another FA 2. On-going monitoring plan will include a systematic approach to follow up including timelines, documentation, supervision, increasing goal success</p>	<p>1. Exec Dir 2. FESM 3. Family Advocates, Teachers</p>	<p>1. Budget analysis with Treasurer 2. Program Standards, training 3. Enhanced parent orientation procedures, handbook</p>	<p>1. 5/2016 2. 7/2016 3. 7/2016</p>
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MERCER COUNTY HEAD START SELF-ASSESSMENT PLAN PROGRAM YEAR 2015-16

		<p>Policy Council, POPs committee School Readiness committee, and volunteer opportunities</p>	<p>3. Parents will be recruited & educated about opportunities at enrollment / orientation, subsequent reminders will be placed in notes home, calendars, personal phone calls, etc.</p>				
<p>HEALTH</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Incomplete physicals Incomplete Dentals Incomplete lead / hmt screenings 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of enrolled children will have physical exam within 60 days of entry. 100% of enrolled children will have dental exam within 90 days of entry 100% of enrolled children will have lead / hmt screenings within 45 days of entry or per EPSDT guidelines 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Service plans, parent handbook will reflect program requirements for well child exams; FAs will assist families with identifying medical homes and providers ensuring compliance. See #1 See # 1, HCSM will investigate requirements to complete lead & HMTS on-site, HCSM will expand partnership with Health Department to do screenings on-site 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Exec Dir, FESM, Family Advocates Same HCSM 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Standards, Community Resource Guide Same MOUs, training, ODH guidance, purchase of equipment, purchase of supplies 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7/2016 7/2016 1/2017 	

MERCER COUNTY HEAD START SELF-ASSESSMENT PLAN PROGRAM YEAR 2015-16

<p>DISABILITIES</p>	<p>Lack of involvement of parent & primary educator in IEP process</p>	<p>1. Parents are involved in the IEP planning process and advocate for the needs of their children. Head Start staff including primary educators is included in planning process, updates, and transition meetings.</p>	<p>1. MOUS will clearly outline Head Start role & responsibility in the IEP process. Teachers and Family Advocates will provide parents with IDEA information ensuring families are aware of their rights in the IEP process.</p>	<p>1. Exec Dir, DECS, FAs, Teachers</p>	<p>1. Co-training with ESC staff including preschool supervisors, IDEA pamphlets for distribution, more frequent collaborative planning meetings between the entities</p>	<p>1/2017</p>	
<p>COMMUNICATION</p>	<p>Break in communication between Franklin building staff & transportation staff</p>	<p>1. Transportation staff will be integrally involved in day to day operations, meetings, trainings in collaboration with the Franklin Building staff.</p>	<p>1. Transportation mailboxes will be moved to the office area ensuring that transportation staff enter into the building coming into contact with as many staff as possible. Transportation staff will be invited to attend center staff meetings whenever a transportation issue is discussed. Transportation staff's attendance will be mandated. Transportation staff will be invited to</p>	<p>1. Exec Dir, Mgmt team, teachers, family advocates, bus secretary, Transportation staff</p>	<p>1. Mailbox space, policy & procedure, training schedule</p>	<p>1/2017</p>	

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				<p>attend trainings on-site, those trainings deemed required by ODE, ODOT, or OHS will be required attendance. Teaching staff will work with transportation staff ensuring clear & effective communication about the arrival & dismissal of students. Family Advocates and Transportation staff will honor & respect 2-way communication in regards to family needs / communications / issues.</p>				
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