



# **York County Head Start**

**2018-2019**

# **Self-Assessment Report**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Introduction .....	3
II.	Methodology .....	4
III.	Key Insights.....	6
IV.	Recommendations .....	9

## **Introduction**

York County Head Start (HS) provides comprehensive, high quality early childhood services to low income families residing in York County, Virginia. Services provided by York County HS are designed to promote the educational, social, nutritional and emotional development of children while providing family support services to their family. The staff of the Division of Children and Family Services operate the program, which is within York County's Department of Community Services. The mission of Children and Family Services is *"To develop partnerships that promote quality opportunities for children's educational readiness, at all levels of ability, and to foster success for families and staff."* The staff of York County Head Start strive to assist families in reaching self-sufficiency and to ensure children are prepared for school.

The program's specific long and short-range goals, objectives, and strategies are outlined in the program's School Readiness Plan, Training and Technical Plan, and Program Plan. Goals and objectives are derived from information gathered from the annual Self-Assessment, Community Needs Assessment, Child Outcomes Report, Program Information Report, and from other data sources. Data sources that include feedback and input from program staff, parents, community representatives, Policy Council members, and Board of Supervisors (BoS). Members of the BoS and Policy Council actively participate in the shared decision-making, review and approval of financial reports, personnel actions, program plans, grant application, and assist in the ongoing monitoring of the program. The York County Board of Supervisors is comprised of five elected York County citizens, one from each of the five election districts.

The York County Head Start program serves 117 children and operates **five (5)** days a week. The program operates three (3) centers in locations throughout the County: the **Griffin-Yeates Center** (four classrooms) in the upper portion of the County, the **Yorktown Center** (one classroom) in the mid portion of the County and, the **Bethel Manor Center** (two classrooms) in the lower portion of the County. The Yorktown and Bethel Manor centers consist of learning cottages (modular units) which are located on school property at elementary schools. The Griffin-Yeates Center hours of operation are 9:00 a.m. until 1:30 p.m., four and a half (4.5) hours per day, Monday through Friday. Both Bethel Manor and Yorktown Elementary classroom's operate six and a half (6.5) hours per day, Monday through Friday. Bethel Manor operates 8:30

a.m. until 3:00 pm and Yorktown Elementary operates 9:15 a.m. until 3:45 p.m. Afternoons and teacher workdays are used for meetings, in-services, trainings, parent teacher conferences, and home visits. All three centers are licensed through the Virginia Department of Social Services.

York County's 2018-2019 Head Start Self-Assessment process, mandated to be completed annually, involved the collection of information from a variety of sources to determine if systems and services have been implemented and are working effectively. In addition, the process allows the program to assess progress in meeting program goals and objectives along with identifying areas of strength and improvement. The results of the Self-Assessment serve as a driving force in setting program goals that will advance the program's services as well as acknowledge program successes. In conducting the self-assessment, program staff worked collaboratively with policy council members, parents, and community representatives on the self-assessment team to focus on improving services for enrolled children and families in three key areas.

## **Methodology**

In accordance with paragraph 45 CFR 1302.102(b)(2) of the Head Start Performance Standards, York County Head Start's annual self-assessment process was conducted in the winter of the 2018-2019 school year. The Self-Assessment purpose, process, and timeline was reviewed and approved by the Policy Council. After which, York County Head Start management team met to discuss program information and data in order to determine three (3) Focus Areas for the Self-Assessment team to explore. Summaries of ongoing monitoring results, information on the progress of the program's goals and objectives, and other program data were gathered and used to identify areas of strength, concerns, and issues that would benefit from further evaluation by the Self-Assessment (SA) team. Individuals were extended an invitation to become a part of the Self-Assessment Review Team. Individuals joining the team and receiving training on the process included: management and leadership staff (Director, Family Services Coordinator, Health Services Program Administrator, Education Coordinator, and Nutrition Specialist); program (Mentor/coach, administrative assistant and teaching staff); parents/policy council members; and a community partner.

**2018-2019 Head Start Self-Assessment Timeline of Events**

In order to complete the self-assessment, a timeline of events which identified activities and person(s) involved was developed. This timeline was used to ensure the self-assessment process was completed. See below for the chart listing events associated with the self-assessment process and timelines:

<b>2018-2019 Self-Assessment Time Line</b>	
12/19/2018	Self-Assessment Overview and Training of Management Staff and Policy Council/BoS
1/28/2019	Self-Assessment Team Engagement and Orientation
1/28/2019	Conduct Self-Assessment Process- Analyze and Dialogue
2/8/2019	Collate Information and Develop Self-Assessment Reports
2/27/2019	Provide Governing Body with a copy of the Self- Assessment Report for review and approval
2/27/2019	Provide Policy Council with a copy of the Self-Assessment Report for review and approval
2/2019-Ongoing	Management Team uses report for planning and goal setting
4/1/2019	Submit Report to the Regional Office

Conducted on January 28, 2019, the self-assessment process included an analysis and assessment of York County's systems, processes, and procedures followed in three specific Focus Areas by the Self-Assessment Team. During the Self-Assessment, information on the three specific Focus Areas were presented and discussed in order to assess and determine: 1) how the program was progressing towards meeting program goals, objectives, and mission; 2) potential systemic issues and program challenges; and 3) possible innovations and new resources that the program could consider. Data and information sources used at the Self-Assessment included ongoing monitoring summaries, program policies, procedures, records, forms, and reports including the parent survey/outcomes reports, Program Information Report (PIR), Annual Report, and the Community Needs Assessment. The Summary of results were discussed with program staff which included recommendations made by the Self-Assessment Review Team.

### **Key Insights: Successes and Opportunities for Improvement**

York County Head Start is dedicated to building a sustainable comprehensive early childhood education program that provides quality family support services to families. The program believes that the care and education of children requires partnerships and by putting families first will build a strong foundation for future generations. Some of the key strengths of the program and achievements of York County Head Start over the last year include:

- Continuing participation in the Virginia Quality Rating and Improvement System which recognizes the County's commitment to quality early childhood education programs which are aligned with the Commonwealth of Virginia educational standards.
- Meeting the overall program goal for the 2017-2018 program year of having at least 85% of the children meet or exceed the widely held expectations (Meeting or exceeding the color band range for their age) set by the Teaching Strategies Gold (TS Gold) assessment tool.
- Receiving and providing certificates from VSP Global to families to cover the cost of full eye exams and eyeglasses for students with vision problems.
- Partnering with Child Development resources to offer 24/7 Dad curriculum.
- Utilizing and implementing the *CSEFEL Positive Solutions for Families* curriculum in Parent Café's to help parents better understand children's behaviors, appropriate discipline strategies, and parenting.
- Implementing the use of Remind.com text messaging system and Facebook to improve communication with families.

The 2018-2019 Self-Assessment Review Team completed a review of York County Head Start’s services, systems, policies and procedures relating to: 1) Health Screenings ; 2) Staffing and Turnover; and 3) Staff Training/Data Entry. After analyzing and discussing the three focus areas, members of the Review Team made recommendations. Results were categorized as: Progress of the Program in meeting Goals and Objectives; Systemic Issues; and Innovations & New Resources. The chart below summarizes the results of how the program is progressing in meeting goals and objectives and systemic issues:

<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Progress of the Program in meeting its Goals and Objectives</b>	<b>Systemic Issues/ Opportunities for Improvement</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>HEALTH SCREENINGS</b></p> <p>➤ Follow up &amp; completions</p> <p>➤ Addressing BMI Outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Obtaining documentation of completed health screenings for children entering the program.</li> <li>● Developing a plan to streamline the input of health information into ChildPlus for consistency and training staff on the process for data entry.</li> <li>● Making improvements to the method for inputting health screening information into ChildPlus.</li> <li>● Providing resources to help families obtain insurance for their children that do not have health insurance.</li> <li>● Mailing cover letters to medical providers requesting screening information have been improved to better provide the necessary feedback.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Utilization of E-DECA in order to provide additional DECA resources for the parents and teacher staff.</li> <li>● Better communication and additional staff training on staff’s role in the health screening process.</li> <li>● Better collaboration with resources, i.e. WIC or through a Health Summer Screening Event, to reinforce to the parents individualized concerns regarding BMI.</li> <li>● Improve communication to parents on health and dental screenings for their children to better understand if there is or is not a need for follow up care.</li> <li>● Develop a more efficient method to ensure that the number of children are up-to-date on health screenings at the start of their enrollment.</li> </ul>

<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Progress of the Program in meeting its Goals and Objectives</b>	<b>Systemic Issues/ Opportunities for Improvement</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STAFFING AND TURNOVER</b></p> <p>➤ Bus Coverage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Providing fringe benefits and tuition assistance to employees for further educational growth.</li> <li>● Following a schedule similar to YC School Division, including snow days and paid holidays.</li> <li>● All employees are provided a variety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Assigning staff to the bus impacts the staff’s planning time and preparation for the day/end-of day.</li> <li>● Having consistent substitutes or the lack of impacts classroom continuity.</li> <li>● Analyzing career paths of potential</li> </ul>

<p>➤ Bus Assignment</p>	<p>of training opportunities, both online and outside the office.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Salaries and benefits for the Teacher Aides are higher than those from the YC School Division.</li> <li>● Paying 10 month staff over a 12 month period.</li> <li>● Partnering and contracting with YCSD for Transportation Services.</li> <li>● Having teaching staff with CDL to drive the bus for classroom field trips.</li> </ul>	<p>candidates during the interview process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The method for the exit interview process needs to be more consistent.</li> <li>● Strict requirements, such as CDL licensure, may cause some teachers to resign or decline the job offer.</li> <li>● Determining potential concerns or issues to be addressed by completing staff surveys twice a year.</li> <li>● Outlining the benefits provided by York County and providing a copy to staff regularly.</li> </ul>
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Focus Area	Progress of the Program in meeting its Goals and Objectives	Systemic Issues/ Opportunities for Improvement
<p><b>STAFF TRAINING</b></p> <p>➤ ChildPlus Data Entry Utilization</p> <p>➤ Orientation Process</p> <p>➤ Pre-Service and Ongoing</p> <p>➤ Team Meetings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All staff receive the required annual training in August.</li> <li>● Planning Pre-service during the summer.</li> <li>● Providing Orientation Training beginning at Day 1 for new employees where they meet with each content area coordinator/specialist.</li> <li>● Utilizing the Training &amp; Technical Assistance Plan to guide training throughout the year.</li> <li>● Providing CLASS/ECERs training and coordinating staff's attendance at Regional Training and offerings by VA Head Start Association, Office of Head Start, and/or Smart Beginnings.</li> <li>● Using creative methods to conduct team meetings, i.e. conference calls, email.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Providing refresher training for staff during the year.</li> <li>● Creating more opportunities for staff training such as peer observations and mentoring.</li> <li>● The orientation process for new employees provides only limited time for in-depth training. There is a need to strengthen and plan the process for training of new employees over time.</li> <li>● Utilizing a variety of methods to ensure consistent communication and staff meetings with staff to include video conferencing.</li> <li>● Creating ways to make staff meetings fun and something to look forward to such as staff round tables.</li> <li>● Coordinating ChildPlus data entry training/guides for staff to improve the consistency of data entry by staff.</li> </ul>



## Recommendations

Priorities have been identified for strengthening the program based on the recommendations provided by the Self-Assessment Review Team. The recommendations given during the self-assessment process were used to develop strategies to assist the program in its program improvement efforts. Strategies identified affect the school readiness and health and safety of children enrolled in the York County Head Start program. To address program improvements identified through the self-assessment, goals have been identified with actionable steps, timelines, and person(s) responsible, which are listed below. Strategies outlined for achievement of goals will be tracked over the next 12 months for effectiveness. Results will be monitored by the Head Start Director, program management team, and reported to stakeholders.

Focus Area	Strategies	Responsible Persons	Timeframe
<p><b>Health Screenings</b></p> <p><u>Goal:</u> Program staff and parents will be provided the information/documentation needed to obtain documentation of meeting EPSDT guidelines to decrease the number of screenings completed on-site after the first day of school by 20%.</p> <p><u>Desired Outcome:</u> Parents will recognize and understand the importance of their child receiving required screenings. The program will decrease the number of screenings completed onsite due to not obtaining documentation of the completion of required screenings for students.</p>	<p>Improve the methods to communicate with parents about required screenings so that parents understand the purpose and benefits of screenings.</p>	<p>Health Services Program Administrator</p>	<p>February 2019</p>
	<p>Revise and outline the information provided to parents during the application/enrollment process to include information on required screenings.</p>	<p>Family Services Coordinator</p>	<p>March 2019</p>
	<p>Review and update the application checklist used to include health screening information.</p>	<p>Family Services Coordinator</p>	<p>March 2019</p>
	<p>Train staff on the process and staff expectations for providing health screening information to families.</p>	<p>Family Services Coordinator</p>	<p>March 2019</p>
	<p>Plan and implement a summer screening fair for new and returning students.</p>	<p>Family Services Coordinator &amp; Health Services Program Administrator</p>	<p>March-August 2019</p>
	<p>Monitor and assess the implementation of health screening communication strategy and screening fair to assess improvement in obtaining documentation of completed screenings prior to the first day of school.</p>	<p>Health Services Program Administrator</p>	<p>March-November 2019</p>

Focus Area	Strategies	Responsible Persons	Timeframe
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Staff Turnover</b></p> <p><u>GOAL:</u> To decrease the staff turnover rate by 50% of staff resigning due to low morale that is directly related to staff having to work out of their initial scope of duties to serve as a Bus Driver/Bus Aide.</p> <p><u>Desired Outcome:</u> Staff morale will improve and the program will better attract qualified/experienced candidates for positions. Individuals will not be deterred from working within the program based on having to maintain CDL licensure or to work outside of their scope of duties as a Bus Driver/aide. Teachers have adequate support during planning time based on the availability of Teacher Assistants during Planning Periods.</p>	<p>Review and revise CDL requirement for Teachers.</p> <p>Review and revise the career ladder to offer more opportunities for Teacher Assistants.</p> <p>Develop a plan for bus coverage at the GYC that will minimize the use of Teacher Assistants on the bus to increase their availability to support Teachers during Planning Time.</p> <p>Develop and implement a consistent process to survey staff twice a year and during their exit to gauge morale, concerns, opportunities for improvement, and reasons for resignation when warranted.</p> <p>Develop a benefits sheet that outlines the benefits of working for York County government/Head Start. Hiring managers will give the benefits sheet to potential candidates during the interview process to increase excitement of possibly coming on board.</p>	<p>Director</p> <p>Director</p> <p>Education Coordinator</p> <p>Director</p> <p>Administrative Assistant II</p>	<p>March- May 2019</p> <p>March 2019- February 2020</p> <p>May 2019- August 2019</p> <p>September 2019</p> <p>June-July 2019</p>

Focus Area	Strategies	Responsible Persons	Timeframe
<p><b>Staff Training</b></p> <p>Goal: 100% of staff will attend staff training and staff meetings as planned/assigned for their specific content area and/or professional development.</p> <p>Desired Outcome: Improved staff engagement, effectiveness, and communication that will result in improved quality and performance.</p>	<p>Assess the use of online learning tools and platforms to assist the program in providing and monitoring staff training.</p>	<p>Director/ Administrative Assistant II</p>	<p>April –June 2019</p>
	<p>Revise the new employee orientation process to better coordinate the new employee orientation to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinating orientation training over a specific period of time;</li> <li>• communicating the start date to all content areas more timely;</li> <li>• revising new employee orientation checklist; and</li> <li>• developing content area training/information packets that will be kept in a central location that will be used for orienting new employees.</li> </ul>	<p>Administrative Assistant II</p>	<p>April-June 2019</p>
	<p>Review the program calendar to increase the number of staff training opportunities throughout the school year.</p>	<p>Education Coordinator</p>	<p>July 2019</p>
	<p>Plan in-service training days on the program calendar and outline a plan for training on specific topics during the year.</p>	<p>Education Coordinator</p>	<p>July 2019</p>
	<p>Develop data entry plan and reference tools to assist staff in knowing how data should be entered into Child Plus.</p>	<p>Family Services Coordinator &amp; Education Coordinator</p>	<p>July 2019</p>
	<p>Train staff on data entry plan.</p>	<p>Family Services Coordinator</p>	<p>August 2019</p>