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Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency

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2020

Self-Assessment Report

Self-Assessment Team Members

Supporting Cast
(involved in discussions outside of Self-Assessment day)
- Kerry Baughman, NMCAA Executive Director
- Dan Dewey, Fiscal Manager
- Early Head Start Program Services Coordinators
- Coaches
- Site Supervisors
- Family Engagement Specialists
- Collaborative Center Services Coordinators
- Policy Council Members
- Board Members

Team Members by Focus Group
(in no particular order)

PFCE
• Dru O'Connor, Education Coach and Disabilities Manager
• Shannon Phelps, Early Childhood Programs Director
• Kim Micham, Family Engagement Specialist
• Bethany Dugan, Collaborative Center Services Coordinator
• Deb Blair, Early Head Start Child Family Specialist
• Laura Backman, Early Head Start Child Family Specialist
• Juliann Ruelle, Head Start Teacher
• Emily Erwin, Early Head Start Program Services Coordinator
• Kenneth Watson, Program Intern

Recruitment
• Alicia Temple, ERSEA and Health Manager
• Corey Berden, Early Head Start Program Manager
• Katherine Kwiatkowski, Collaborative and EHS Center Based Manager
• Diane Boyer, Head Start Recruitment and Health Specialist
• Robyn Varney, Head Start Recruitment and Health Specialist
• Kris Hagen, Program Support Specialist
• Jeanette Hibbler, Early Head Start Recruitment and Health Specialist
• Gillian Gines, Early Head Start Child Family Specialist
• Stephanie Tysick, Family Service Specialist
• Rebecca Schichtel, Early Head Start Program Services Coordinator
• Kimberly Stackpoole, Site Coordinator
• Angie Norvell, TBA GSRP Early Childhood Coordinator

Health
• Alicia Temple, ERSEA and Health Manager
• Corey Berden, Early Head Start Program Manager
• Michelle Karns, Data Management Coordinator
• Jason Paca, Head Start Recruitment and Health Specialist
• Wendy Ernst, Early Head Start Child Family Specialist
• Michelle Jacobs, Family Engagement Specialist
• Melinda Coger, Head Start Teacher

- Keri VanSteenis, Family Service Specialist
- Mistie Watson, Education Coach
- Jennifer Kelly, Collaborative Center Services Coordinator
- Tara Riley, Early Head Start Program Services Coordinator

Safety

- Abria Morrow, Site Manager
- Katherine Kwiatkowski, Collaborative and EHS Center Based Manager
- Shannon Phelps, Early Childhood Programs Director
- Arleen Hocking, Family Engagement Specialist
- Tresha Schiemann, Family Engagement/Recruitment & Health Specialist
- Lindsey Ross, Head Start Teacher
- Michele Maxwell, Lead Primary Teacher
- Denise Daniels, Collaborative Center Services Coordinator
- Susan Chowen, Quality Improvement Consultant (Great Start to Quality)

Fiscal

- Stacey Parent, Mental Health and PFCE Manager
- Shannon Phelps, Early Childhood Programs Director
- Brandy Keeney, Policy Council Treasurer
- Michelle Jacobs, Family Engagement Specialist
- Tresha Schiemann, Family Engagement/Recruitment & Health Specialist
- Shellie Woods, Early Head Start Child Family Specialist
- Chris Welton, Data Entry Clerk
- Kristipher Daniel, Head Start Teacher
- Kim Stackpoole, Site Coordinator
- Ashley Olstad, Site Supervisor
- Kenneth Watson, Program Intern

School Readiness

- Corey Berden, Early Head Start Program Manager
- Dru O'Connor, Education Coach and Disabilities Manager
- Katherine Kwiatkowski, Collaborative and EHS Center Based Manager
- Megan Skowronek, Early Head Start Child Family Specialist
- Kim Micham, Family Engagement Specialist
- Liz Dykgraaf, Primary Teacher
- Morgan Boudrie, Head Start Teacher
- Marissa Larson, Early Head Start Coach
- Bethany Dugan, Collaborative Center Services Coordinator
- Betsy Rees, Human Resources Manager
- Kerry Baughman, NMCAA Executive Director

I.   Introduction

A.   Program Description

Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency (NMCAA) Head Start and Early Head Start Programs operate over a largely rural 10 county area in the upper northwest region of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. Total program enrollment consists of 991 slots; 546 Head Start Center Based, 108 Head Start Collaborative Center, 28 Early Head Start Collaborative Center, 42 Early Head Start Child Care Partnership, 32 Early Head Start Direct Operated Center Based, and 235 Early Head Start Home Based.

B.   Context for Self-Assessment

1. A complete needs assessment for NMCAA Early Childhood Programs was last conducted in 2017 and has received yearly updates since that time. 2020 updates to the needs assessment showed the following key findings:
    - The following factors continue to be prime community health concerns throughout the 10 county area: obesity, substance abuse, access to health services, mental health
    - From 2016–2018, population trends in NMCAA's 10 county service area have remained relatively stable
    - From 2016–2018, each of the 10 Counties in the NMCAA service area showed a decrease in the number of children, ages 0–5, living in households with incomes at or below 130% of the FPL, receiving food assistance
    - Throughout the 10 county service area, the number of students classified as homeless, as defined by McKinney Vento guidelines, are especially high in the Traverse City Area Public School District and Houghton Lake Community Schools, followed by Pellston, Manton, Lake City, and East Jordan
    - From 2016–2018, Grand Traverse County had the highest number of children in out of home care, followed by Wexford County; however, the rates of children in out of home care in these counties fell below the rates in both Roscommon, and Antrim Counties
    - In 2018, the percentage of children, ages 0–5, in special education in Charlevoix, Wexford, and Grand Traverse Counties exceeded the overall percentage of children, ages 0–5, in Michigan in special education
    - In 2018, the percent of single parent households in Roscommon and Wexford Counties exceeded the percent of single parent household throughout the state
    - In the majority of households, with children ages 0–5, throughout the NMCAA service area, all able adults were employed in 2018
    - In each of the ten counties, the 0–5 population in 2018 was larger than the number of available child care slots and preschool slots combined
2. As a part of Self Assessment and as a continuation of our ongoing monitoring, our Mini Management team, Policy Council, and other agency staff reviewed progress on our program's five year goals, including objectives and action steps set during last year's self-assessment process. At that time, we noted that our year five objectives have been met.
3. Quarterly data from ongoing monitoring; including data related to child development and education, comprehensive services, ERSEA, program governance and leadership, health and safety, fiscal, and management systems; collected during the 2019-2020 program year was combined in an annual summary and evaluated.

4. After taking the above mentioned factors into consideration, the following items were chosen to take to the Self-Assessment team:

Subgroup	Questions to Consider
PFCE	How might we strengthen our program's remote learning and virtual parent connection practices?
ERSEA	What can be done to strengthen our collaborative recruitment approach across all NMCAA 0-5 programs?
Health	What further steps can be taken to strengthen families understanding of the connection of health to school readiness? How can we further support families in completing program health requirements?
Safety	In what ways can our program further grow collaboration between staff and families in accounting for children's physical wellbeing and to enhance our culture of safety?
Fiscal	How might we grow community collaboration and support to increase program non federal share match collection?
School Readiness	In what ways can we strengthen staff's knowledge of practices to foster literacy skills in children to prepare them for the riggers and expectations of kindergarten and to prepare them to be lifelong learners?

II.   Methodology

An overview of the Self-Assessment process is outlined below.

Date	Action	Purpose
2/2020	Community Needs Assessment Updated	● For use in ongoing program planning
4/29/20	Self-Assessment Planning at Mini Management Meeting	● Develop Plan for Self-Assessment
5/14/20	Self-Assessment Discussion at Policy Council	● Approval of Self-Assessment plan ● Gathered input from Policy Council members on program strengths and focus areas
6/11/20	Reviewed updated community needs assessment data with Policy Council members	● Receive Policy Council thoughts and feedback on data and how it is applicable to programming
5/18/20-6/17/20	Data Discussions at Direct Supervisor Meetings	● Discussions and feedback regarding findings from ongoing monitoring to share at Mini Management meeting ● Compilation of findings from ongoing monitoring entered into Google Doc for sharing and discussion at 6/17/20 Mini Management meeting
6/17/20	Mini Management Meeting	● Finalized plans for Self-Assessment

		• Reviewed data collected during ongoing monitoring over the program year
		• Identified topics for Self-Assessment
		• Identified further members for participation in the Self-Assessment process
		• Divided Self-Assessment participants in to subgroups
		• Began save the date and informal invitation process
7/7/20-7/10/20	Emailed Official Self-Assessment Invitations and information for review to Subgroups	• Sent out official Self-Assessment invitations to identified members as follow up to save the date notifications
		• Invitations included an overview of Self-Assessment
7/15/20 and 7/16/20	Self-Assessment Team Orientation	• Provided participants with information on the importance of Self-Assessment and their role in the process
7/15/20 and 7/16/20	Self-Assessment Focus groups- Analyze and Dialogue	• Self-Assessment subgroups met remotely to delve into their focus area. Background information was provided to participants and discussion was by a series of guided questions (Attached)
7/15/20 and 7/16/20	Recommendations	• Subgroups compiled their ideas and recommendations and shared with the larger group (Initial compilation Attached)
7/31/20-8/18/20	Review of Self-Assessment ideas and recommendations with Mini Management	• Leaders from each Self-Assessment subgroup identified key points and revised priorities for the coming year (input from each Manager's team was also considered during discussion)
8/19/20-9/4/20	Preparation of Self-Assessment Report	• Report was drafted using information obtained throughout the Self-Assessment Process
9/10/20	Policy Council Approval	• Final Self-Assessment report was shared with Policy Council for approval
9/17/20	Board Approval	• Final Self-Assessment report was shared with the Board for approval

III. Key Insights

A. Strengths

1. The majority of staff are very strength based and able to empower parents to support their child's development with items they currently have in their home.
2. Education staff feel competent in using their Active Supervision skills, are skilled at spacing out and maintaining awareness of the environment, and Active Supervision practices are in alignment with written plans.
3. School readiness assessment data shows steady increases in literacy development from the beginning of the program year to the end.
4. Increased emphasis has been placed on reporting non federal share match (NFM) percentages to staff throughout the year. Each program option has paid more attention to

NFM within guidance and forms. NFM has been a focus of conversations at Policy Council to assess parent understanding of the importance.

5. Skilled recruitment specialists took 54% more applications than the number of slots available for HS and 38% more than the number of slots available for EHS.
6. There is a strong collaboration between NMCAA early childhood programs and community partners.
7. HS and EHS support families in acquiring dental/medical insurance, along with dental/medical homes and in meeting health requirements.
8. The EHS dental curriculums have been successful in working with families.

B. Systemic Issues

1. We need to ensure that all staff members, including subs and volunteers, realize they are important players in implementing effective Active Supervision.
2. When staff turnover occurs, we need to ensure there are professional development systems in place to strengthen literacy practices in the classroom.
3. We may not be utilizing all possible methods/tools to engage families to the fullest extent possible outside of the classroom.
4. In addition to continuing to communicate the importance of volunteering and non federal share match to parents, we need to explore missed opportunities for non federal share match collection through community and corporation support.

C. Progress in Meeting our Goals and Objectives

Our program identified two broad goals as a part of our five year plan. These goals, along with progress made during the 2019-2020 program year, are outlined below.

Goal #1

Create an organization that makes decisions based on a system of data collection that renders the optimal focus for program planning.

Objective: Evaluate new data driven practices, revise protocols, and re-train staff as needed to ensure fidelity of the implementation of timely data entry
Outcomes: All staff will utilize data in their daily decision-making; Managers will report out on staff's progress with the revised protocols.
Data Tracking: Monitoring results (individualization of services; CLASS)

Progress (including challenges encountered)
• EHS Staff were trained on 9.23.19 to understand how all data is important to School Readiness. Health, attendance, family partnership, GOLD, and observations were connected to School Readiness, along with the corresponding data - this data is now presented at all EHS quarterly meetings. The above data and connection to School Readiness was shared at the October Policy Council to support parents in understanding how all data supports School Readiness - parents made a list in October of how all of the above are connected and this is shared quarterly along with the data at Policy Council. The same information was shared with the Board. • EHS Manager began sending quarterly Monitoring Reports in September 2019 with the above data (health, attendance, family partnership) to PSC's quarterly for them to share with their direct staff, in order to improve and individualize services

This ceased during COVID19 as priorities changed, but is beginning in September of the 20-21 school year. PSC's discuss GOLD data quarterly, at a minimum, with CFS's to support individual child goals.

- The Site Manager scheduled data digs with the Site Supervisor Team at the beginning of the year. Staff were able to plan and prepare for their data share more efficiently. The team completed the Quarterly Summary of Monitoring Results form at Site Supervisor Meetings. This information was then shared with the Management Team.
- The Site Manager added data dig dates to the Site Supervisor Monitoring Schedule. This helped with preparation and planning.
- ChildPlus report numbers were added Teacher/Site Supervisor Monthly Recap form to assist in making recap time together more organized and efficient.
- Data dig information was added to the Program Information Summary that is shared at Policy Council.
- Site Supervisor and classroom forms were updated to meet the new Licensing and Regulatory Affairs requirements. This led to updating monitoring forms and data collection formats during the school year.
- Data digs were added to the Education Coach's meetings on a quarterly basis and this information was shared at the mini management meetings. Coaches were given reports from Teaching Strategies GOLD and CLASS and they went through a process of prediction and evaluation of the numbers and next steps for area of focus.
- Community of Practice agendas reflected the outcomes of the data digs so that staff saw a connection to data collected in their classrooms to the professional development focus areas.
- Education Coach recaps were created in ChildPlus so the information was easily accessible to the coaches. The ChildPlus data was used during the recap process for the pieces that the coaches are responsible for monitoring.
- Data dashboards were created for each coach so that they were able to stay on top of numbers at an easy glance throughout the year.
- A systematic process of adding IEP's into ChildPlus, reading the IEP's to ensure services were happening and the most current IEP was in ChildPlus. This process was reviewed at each recap with the coach manager and coach.
- ERSEA and R&H used dashboards for monitoring health requirements.
- Data digs were part of R&H meetings, looking at the grant questions and using information from the standards. Also looked at different data based on location and the amount of children that were served in each county.
- Data digs continue to be a part of the FES meetings and reviewing the FOT and Home Practices Reports. FES have Child Plus dashboards, but find reports more helpful. The FES group continues to utilize Child Plus.

Objective: Utilize quarterly summaries of ongoing monitoring at all scheduled programmatic level data digs.

Outcomes: Staff will make course corrections, according to programmatic level data, in a timely manner.

Data Tracking: Completed quarterly summaries of ongoing monitoring and data dig notes

Progress (including challenges encountered)

- Beginning in the 19-20 school year, EHS looked deeper at attendance data to better understand why visits were being missed, trained staff to be more intentional when tracking attendance in CP so the data is accurate. This data was used to support the attendance guidance ("Always Show Up") shared in August. Attendance guidance was ready in March, but delayed due to COVID19, and amended to support virtual attendance as needed. Review quarterly monitoring reports at PSC meetings to support program improvements.
- The Site Supervisor and Education Coach Teams scheduled time to research new information related to ongoing monitoring, data collection, and data sharing on the ECLKC website.
- The Site Supervisor and Education Coach Teams updated and completed the Quarterly Summary of Monitoring Results form at monthly Site Supervisor and Education Coach Meetings. This allowed the teams another opportunity to provide more input and have more ownership of the process. This information was then shared with the Management Team.
- R&H used the Quarterly Summary of Monitoring during data digs. This made us able to dig deeper into the goals. This also lead to better recaps with the R&H.
- Quarterly summaries are reviewed at FES meetings to dig deeper during data digs.

Goal #2

NMCAA Head Start/EHS will develop improved organizational capacity through an organizational structure that supports comprehensive service delivery and by supporting the professional development of staff.

Objective: Review and revise family outcomes analysis processes and approach
Outcomes: Staff utilize Family Outcomes Analysis Report through the year and make course corrections accordingly, especially in the areas of oral health, communication, and reading (practices related to program goals)
Data Tracking: Family Outcomes Analysis Report

Progress (including challenges encountered)
- The Site Supervisor Team prioritized ensuring classroom staff were more familiar with the role of the Family Engagement Specialist.   - The Teacher/Site Supervisor Recap form includes an area to discuss in-kind and communication with families.   - The Family Outcomes analysis Report was shared with the Education Coach group and discussions about the data took place. The process built an awareness of what the families were sharing and how we can better serve based on needs.   - The Family Outcomes analysis Report is reviewed at the FES meetings and shared with program staff, including reviewing at Policy Council meetings.

Objective: Review effectiveness of Coaching Needs Assessment related to staff achievement of goals and revise as needed
Outcomes: Modifications to Practice Based Coaching will be made as needed to meet the needs of the program and individual staff
Data Tracking: Monitoring results (individualization of services, CLASS); Staff survey results

Progress (including challenges encountered)

- All EHS staff received Coaching/PD training in December 2019. The EHS Coach/ Mentor and EHS Manager were trained in Together, Learning and Collaborating PD Model to support staff in setting PD goals in a group setting. The EHS Education Coach piloted a group Professional Learning Collaborative in August 2020 that will continue through the 20-21 school year. The Coaching Needs Assessment was reviewed and data from the 19-20 Fall observations was considered along with PSC input regarding the PAT home visiting practices to determine if any changes needed to be made to the Needs Assessment for the 20-21 year; data reflected that the Needs Assessment did not need to be changed. After meeting with our T & TA Specialist, it was determined to be most effective, all PD practices should be wrapped around one School Readiness goal to make the goals more intentional. After reviewing the data, although our practices all stayed the same, we worded them to wrap around Language and Literacy, as this data was the lowest of all areas. With this improvement, staff will be working on improved practices along with supporting increased language and literacy.

Objective: Review Child Care Partnership training approach (including staff feedback and participant feedback) and extend to other program options.
Outcomes: Future investments in child care partners and other program staff will be informed by the results of staff performance and child outcomes.
Data Tracking: Child outcomes, staff and participant feedback

Progress (including challenges encountered)

- The Site Manager and Child Care Collaborative Manager partnered throughout the year to share professional development opportunities among all involved in the Head Start program (examples: active supervision, policies/procedures, self-care, PFCE, health/safety)
- The Site Manager and Child Care Collaborative Manager partnered to update classroom forms, monitoring protocols, procedure manual policies/procedures, and the agency weebly websites.
- One of the challenges encountered is staff availability from year round, full day programming to attend trainings. As a result, platforms for delivering training opportunities were adapted from in-person to remote delivery models, such as self-guided trainings on the weebly website and Zoom platforms. The Collaborative Center team took a layered approach to ensure follow through and understanding was still achieved. For example, with the Active Supervision training at the beginning of every year, staff were directed to the self-guided training on the weebly website and then received individualized support with their coordinator at their next recap to discuss understanding, any questions, and problem solve any challenges with their classroom plan. Staff from the Collaborative Centers reported positive feedback regarding the Self-guided training for Active Supervision on the weebly website. Feedback included feeling as though they had a better understanding of Active Supervision.

IV.   Recommendations

As a result of the above Self-Assessment activities, including review of our most recent community needs assessment of progress on our program's five year goals, the following recommendations were made:

1. Ensure appropriate technology training for staff and support families with their technology needs in order to increase remote learning and family engagement opportunities.
2. Involve parents in Active Supervision and safety practices in the classroom by asking questions at application and orientation such as: How can we keep your child safe in the classroom? What strategies do you use at home that would also help support your child in the classroom?
3. Explore the possibility of an in-kind app.
4. Make sure to actively use current kids count and needs assessment data to determine if our slots fit the need for each county.
5. Review and revise, as necessary, program referral monitoring systems to ensure regular, timely follow up with families is occurring.
6. Increase/enhance communication throughout the program and in educating families and partners about program opportunities. Review/revise community messaging. The community may not know or understand the full extent of what the programming has to offer. Refer to the NHSA Language Playbook.
7. Consider including literacy training/professional development opportunities as a part of the onboarding process. Include an education tool that outlines how to incorporate literacy development into activities geared towards other areas of development, such as gross motor.
8. Offer training opportunities throughout the year for new staff and seasoned staff that promote phonological awareness
9. Create a new 'what is inkind flyer/explanation sheet for Early Head Start staff to clarify what counts and what does not count towards in-kind.
10. Put together materials for children and families in advance so they are prepared if a transition to remote learning needs to occur or if a child needs to be absent for an extended period of time (injury, illness, etc). Creation of totes to ensure families will have the basic supplies at home to complete activities should be considered.

V.   Conclusion

NMCAA Head Start has a strong belief in the importance of using data to work towards continuous quality improvement. The information obtained during the Self-Assessment process will be used in the development of program goals and a program improvement plan to be implemented in the upcoming program year.