



Hidalgo County Head Start Program

Policy Council Agenda

DATE: September 17, 2010

SUBJECT: Review of the Five (5) Year Strategic Plan

RATIONALE/NEED: Administration is recommending continued implementation of the Hidalgo County Head Start Program Strategic Plan. The Hidalgo County Head Start Program's Strategic Plan is a five (5) year plan (2009-2013) that was approved by the Policy Council on November 19, 2008 and by Commissioners' Court on November 25, 2008.

The Department of Health and Human Services mandates the development and implementation of a long range strategic plan to guide the future growth of the Program.

RECOMMENDATION:

COST: N/A

RELATED INFORMATION INCLUDES: Hidalgo County Head Start Program Strategic Plan

INITIATED BY: Edmundo Garcia, Assistant Program Director 

REVIEWED BY: Teresa Flores, Executive Director

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S APPROVAL: 

Strategic Plan Review 2010

STRATEGIC GOAL # 1: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Our primary objective in with our first goal is to ensure compliance with the latest Head Start mandates for teachers and assistant teachers, promote continuing education and leadership skills for senior staff, as well as for all staff in general and develop a competitive compensation plan.

Our strategic timetable when first developed, was to have 40% of our teachers and 60% of our assistant teaches registered in school or on their way towards complying with the 2013 mandate, by the first quarter of 2010. The Program currently has over 75 employees attending institutions of higher learning at the University of Texas at Pan-American and the Texas State College. Currently 94% of the teachers have acquired their either BA or AA degree. The remaining 4% are registered and well on their way towards obtaining their degrees. 83% of assistant teachers have completed their CDA requirements. This accomplishment places us well ahead of our original timetable and in a good position to meet the federal mandate before the official deadline.

We also continue to provide educational benefits in the form of time off, four hours of educational paid leave per week for all staff as well as tuition assistance to all teaching staff.

As per our Strategic Plan, we continue to focus on improving our compensation plan. Salaries were favorably impacted in 2009/2010 as a result of additional COLA and Quality funding. Teacher salaries, while still well below the salaries paid by the public schools, have continued to increase.

Promoting continuing education and leadership skills for senior staff continues to be achieved through the Program's success in presenting to the staff professional management consultants. Team building and leadership skills are enhanced and sharpened.

STRATEGIC GOAL # 2: INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Our objective in this section of the Strategic Plan is to improve our infrastructure, by evaluating and mapping out a way to upgrade or replace facilities and to improve our transportation system, as well as to evaluate and plan for the upgrade or replacement of technology.

In keeping with this goal, our facilities have undergone various renovations. Roofs and sidings have been replaced, with additional renovations planned for the third quarter in 2010, in accordance with the Strategic Plan timetable for 2010. Three new modular structures have been added to our inventory of capital properties.

In 2009 we developed a two year funding strategy, as per the Strategic Plan, to upgrade our technology capabilities. During the last quarter for 2010 we will upgrade our antiquated telephone system to a digital system with digital capabilities. Fifty computers have also been upgraded, ahead of our Strategic Plan timetable for 2011. The computer networked will also be expanded to allow access from any and all Head Start facilities within our service area.

Transportation services have been enhanced with the arrival of new buses and additional personnel in order to provide transportation to more children. Older buses have also been replaced with newer and more efficient buses. All buses are equipped with the appropriate child restraint system. Three new buses were purchased to help overhaul our transportation capabilities.

STRATEGIC GOAL # 3: PROGRAM AND SERVICES DEVELOPMENT

In this goal, our objective is to address some of the broader needs that were outlined in the community assessment such as the need to expand opportunities for healthy marriages and parenting skills. Also outlined was the need to promote healthy development through parental education in the areas of diabetes and developmental delays, and to expand Head Start and Early Childhood Development Opportunities.

In addressing this goal, our Program has implemented various initiatives. We sponsor our own Healthy Marriage Conference once a year. Head Start parents participate in discussions with professionals in the field. They are provided with strategies that will strengthen their marriage while simultaneously strengthening the proper child development atmosphere in the home.

Along with our healthy marriage initiative we also provide parents with training on parental skills. The "Exploring Parenting" curriculum teaches parenting skills based on the philosophy that parents are mature, capable adults who know their children best; and helps parents makes his or her own child-rearing decisions based on their values, beliefs, culture and experiences. This program helps parents to become more aware of what they are already doing well, provides a support group in which to examine

alternative ideas and techniques for parenting, and offers suggestions for positive parent/child interactions in everyday settings.

The Program has also been successful in extending Head Start services to more children in our service area. We have expanded Head Start Services to 120 additional children in 2010. This goal had been placed on the timetable for completion in 2011, however due to a successful expansion application; we were able to secure additional funding to accomplish this objective a year earlier.