



Hidalgo County Head Start Program

Policy Council Regular Agenda

DATE: August 14, 2013

SUBJECT: Discussion/Approval of Adjustment to the Hours of Operation

RATIONALE/NEED: The adjustment to the Hours of Operation will safeguard instructional time and will adjust nap time.

RECOMMENDATION: Administration recommends approval.

COST: None

RELATED INFORMATION INCLUDES: Memo to Policy Council

INITIATED BY: Teresa Flores, Executive Director

REVIEWED BY: Teresa Flores, Executive Director

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S APPROVAL: *Teresa Flores*



Hidalgo County Head Start Program

P.O. Box 0117 Edinburg, Tx. 78540-0117

To: Policy Council
From: Teresa Flores, Executive Director *Teresa Flores*
Date: August 6, 2013
Subject: Hours of Operation/Daily Schedule

Head Start is an important milestone in the educational lives of children. A positive “school” experience makes it much more likely that the coming years of schooling will also be positive. Research has demonstrated that the first five years are especially important to children’s future brain development. Head Start provides a tremendous opportunity to help children build a strong foundation in all areas of development. This can be done best by providing a wealth of hands-on activities where children can learn through play and exploration, with the guidance of a caring teacher who intentionally plans experiences for them.

It is the intent of the Hidalgo County Head Start Program to provide quality educational services to the children it serves, and to ensure future success in school. It is with this goal in mind, that a change to the hours of operation and the classroom daily schedule is required. After a careful review of the Federal Regulations, the new expectations for school readiness, and an extensive discussion with staff, it has been concluded that changing the hours of operation from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. to **7:45 a.m. to 5:15 p.m.** will allow the classroom staff to provide additional instructional time to the children. Other changes also include modifications to the daily schedule that will allow the program to safe guard instructional time. These changes include the following:

- Beginning the instructional day at 8:15 a.m.
- Specific time frames for skill development, and
- A shorter nap period (from two hours to one). This change will shorten the amount of time the children are left alone with one classroom staff. Although staff’s lunch break will be thirty (30) minutes, they will be arriving to work fifteen (15) minutes later and will be leaving fifteen (15) minutes earlier.

The new hours of operation will continue to allow time for working parents to drop off and pick up their children on time.

The Hidalgo County Head Start Program continues to look for innovative ways of providing quality services to children and families. Although financial resources have been reduced considerably, the Program continues to strive to achieve excellence in all areas of the program especially in the area of early childhood development. We look forward to another successful year and to a very successful Federal Review.