

Hidalgo County Head Start Program

Policy Council Regular Agenda

DATE: April 23, 2014

SUBJECT: Discussion/Approval to Accept Proposal to Increase the Enrollment of Three (3) Year Old Children in the Pharr-San Juan-Alamo (P-SJ-A) Area and Decrease Enrollment in Other Areas

RATIONALE/NEED: As the recruitment lists were reviewed, it is apparent that some areas of the County exhibit greater need for Head Start services than others. The P-SJ-A school district area is one area with extensive waiting lists. The plan is to relocate children slots for three (3) year old children from other parts of the county with less need to the P-SJ-A district Head Start Centers.

RECOMMENDATION: Administration recommends approval.

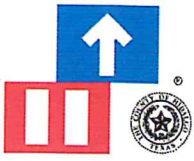
COST: N/A

RELATED INFORMATION INCLUDES: See Attached Memorandum Regarding P-SJ-A District Partnership

INITIATED BY: Teresa Flores, Executive Director

REVIEWED BY: Teresa Flores, Executive Director 

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S APPROVAL: 
Teresa Flores



Hidalgo County Head Start Program

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TO: Policy Council Members
Commissioners' Court Members

FROM: Teresa Flores, Executive Director *Teresa Flores*

SUBJ: Pharr-San Juan-Alamo (P-SJ-A) Independent School District Partnership

DATE: April 11, 2014

The Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District has a unique partnership with the Hidalgo County Head Start Program since 2005. The partnership began as a pilot and was later fully funded by the District. Essentially, the primary focus is to address School Readiness and to insure a seamless transition to the public school setting. One salient feature of the partnership is the provision of a certified district teacher for every two classrooms. In addition a district principal, a program specialist and a parent educator provide administrative and support services to the children and families in the district Head Start classrooms. Much collaboration, coordination, cooperation and communication has made this a very successful model for the delivery of services. The overall commitment from both district and program staff over the years has benefited children and families immensely. In 2012 the partnership earned the distinguished HEB Excellence Award as being the best early childhood education program in the state.

Services for Four Year Olds

During the past year several meetings were held with the superintendent, Dr. Daniel King, Ms. Connie Casas, Early Start Principal, and other district administrative staff to discuss options for expansion and further development of the model to continue integration of best practices. The plan is to provide an exemplary data driven model which could be replicated to insure that children will be "on level" as they began Kindergarten. The final agreement includes the following:

1. Relocate all incoming four year old children to a PSJA Elementary Campus.
2. The operation and administration of the classrooms would remain under Hidalgo County Head Start in its entirety. The only change will be the site.
3. The Program and District staff would continue all collaboration, coordination and cooperation activities as plans are carried out to improve on the model.
4. District facilities would be adapted to meet Head Start and Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards. This would include security and access to appropriate playground space and equipment.
5. Vacant children slots would be filled with children from waiting lists which may include three year old children when four year old children are not available.
6. District and program staff development and mentoring activities would continue as in the past.
7. All other areas listed in the Memorandum of Understanding between the district and the program would continue as agreed upon.

Hidalgo County Head Start Program
Memorandum - Policy Council Members and Commissioners' Court Members
RE: P-SJ-A Independent School District Partnership
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Expansion of Services for Three Year Olds

The waiting lists for the 2013-2014 are so extensive in the district Head Start centers that Program staff are proposing to relocate slots from other areas where the demand for services is not at critical. This relocation would place three year olds in the Head Start classrooms vacated by the four year olds. The district administrative staff has agreed to provide a certified early childhood education teacher for every two classrooms of three year old children as is the arrangement in all other district Head Start classrooms. Program staff and district staff believe that the additional classrooms in this setting would provide access to critically needed services with the best opportunity for success in early intervention.