

ELK GROVE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Pre-K-6 Education Department

Head Start Self-Assessment Summary 2019- 2020

Program Self-Assessment Process

Elk Grove Unified School District (EGUSD) conducted a self-assessment of the Head Start program between September 2019 and February 2020. Participants included administrators, fiscal staff, leadership staff, classroom staff, Head Start Parent Policy Committee representatives, and parents of students enrolled in the Head Start program. The assessment entailed collecting evidence of program strengths and opportunities for improvement in each of the content areas and completing an in-depth review of program systems and procedures to assure they were in alignment with the Head Start Performance Standards.

The self-assessment included: classroom observations using the EGUSD *Preschool LCAP Look and Listen Walk Through* form which is completed in every classroom quarterly; a review of indoor and outdoor environments in every classroom using the *Self-Assessment 2019-20 Health and Safety Checklist*; a parent survey and questionnaire; and review of the *Head Start Program Performance Standards*. In addition, the self-assessment team reviewed CLASS and ECERS data, DRDP and School Readiness Assessment data, the 2018-19 Program Information Report, and the 2018-19 Self-Assessment.

Program Strengths

ERSEA

As part of a school district, the program is able to recruit and advertise at school sites and on the district website. In order to help each family register for the upcoming year, the program holds registrations for the upcoming school year from January through July at various school sites throughout the district. Registration information is available at the front office of each school and on-line.

Education

Professional Learning in the 2019-2020 school year has focused on using the Creative Curriculum Teaching Pyramid and Second Step curriculums to enhance teacher's knowledge of how to implement Social Emotional strategies and use self-care. In each training session from October to March, instructional coaches and the social worker taught components from each of the curriculums. Teachers also presented and showcased best practices to colleagues using Second Step or Creative Curriculum so staff could learn from each other.

Classrooms were assessed with CLASS and provided with their CLASS scores. SETA and coaches provided coaching feedback sessions. The program provided a portion of each training session to examine ways to improve in each dimension. Teachers and paras were given time to assess their scores and draft an action plan of next steps for improvement.

Teachers meet monthly in teams with an instructional coach and individually throughout the month on an as needed basis. The on-line coaching instrument, *Coaching Companion*, is utilized as a tool to provide video support and feedback. Teachers continued using Learning Genie, a

digital tool created to enhance and simplify taking of anecdotal notes for the DRDP. Analysis of anecdotal notes and feedback from teachers indicate that this tool has made a significant change in the amount of time it takes to complete the DRDP assessment and the quality of the evidence collected to assess student progress.

Mental Health and Disabilities

Through collaboration with SETA Head Start, the program trained newly hired para-educators and new and returning teachers in CSEFEL/Teaching Pyramid. EGUSD has two certified Teaching Pyramid Coaches who support continued implementation of Pyramid philosophy and strategies. Teachers received additional training during monthly professional learning sessions with *Second Step* curriculum, and teachers continued to promote social-emotional development with ready-made lessons provided by the curriculum.

The program has a positive relationship with the EGUSD Special Education Department sharing a clinical psychologist who works as a liaison between the two departments. This partnership allows students who may need services to be assessed quickly, and if needed, a seamless transition between the Head Start program and special education. The social worker and clinical psychologist meet formally on a monthly basis, and informally as needed, to discuss classroom observations, referrals, and follow-up needs. A *PreK Seeking Support for Students Process* was developed to assist teachers with observing and documenting behavior, gathering assessment information, working with families, and making adaptations, as part of the referral process. This allows the social worker and/or clinical psychologist to have a more complete picture of the child and interventions that have been tried before they come to observe and has resulted in better support and follow-up. Teachers were also given training in the September/October meetings of the appropriate process when referring a child for services and including families in all steps of the way.

Health and Safe Environments

The program hired a retired nurse from EGUSD to assure hearing and vision screenings are completed within 45 days of the first day of attendance. Classroom staff, administrators, and parents completed a safety checklist in each classroom to assure the indoor and outdoor environments were safe and proper postings to meet CA licensing requirements were in place. Program educators and the program specialist spent the Fall semester reviewing and updating program procedures to assure they meet performance standards, State of California licensing, and SETA requirements. Representatives of the Parent Policy Committee also completed a safety checklist in the classroom he/she represents and communicated any concerns with the teacher and Program Specialist.

Family and Community Engagement

The program updated their process the previous year for developing and writing family partnerships and created and introduced a new Family Development Agreement form that has a less intimidating appearance than the form used in previous years. Two staff members who earned a Family Development Credential the previous year assisted with two classes for writing family partnerships.

Governance

The Head Start Parent Policy Committee meets monthly. A monthly report is given to both the EGUSD Board of Education and Parent Policy Committee members to update them on the Head Start program and to keep them informed regarding their oversight responsibilities. The program

specialist and parents on the 2019 – 2020 policy committee continued to look into how to improve attendance at policy committee meetings. Committee members also discussed ways to increase the return of the Education at Home sheets and get parents more involved. Members also discussed ways to promote Ready Rosie and get more parents involved.

Program Improvement Opportunities

ERSEA

Due to the program being under enrolled during the year, discussions were made about more ways to recruit and stay enrolled. The program will explore how to make registering for the program easier for our families, especially through electronic registration via the district website. Program wide monthly attendance averages have been 85% or above for the first half of the school year but range widely from site to site and classroom to classroom. The program will continue to look for ways to increase attendance at sites and in classrooms where attendance is low or inconsistent and work with site administration and using the District Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) model that supports increasing attendance.

Education

Program averages on CLASS reveal that the program scored slightly below the county average in Classroom Support and Classroom organization. Professional learning and coaching will focus on those areas. Classroom observations indicate that although the program has made strides in using *The Creative Curriculum* with fidelity, continued professional learning and coaching is needed. The program will incorporate assistance in training from SETA to address these concerns.

Mental Health and Disabilities

The program has found an increase in the number of children with challenging backgrounds and behaviors enrolling in the program over the past several years. Classroom observations completed by the social worker and clinical psychologist indicate a need to provide on-going training and support for both the teacher and the para-educator to work more effectively with these children and to maintain their own wellbeing. Teachers will be provided professional learning opportunities through a *Conscious Discipline* curriculum and will be provided activities to address social-emotional needs of our children. The program will also pilot a music and movement program to address trauma-informed care and social-emotional needs of students in the classrooms.

Health and Safe Environments

An analysis of the procedure for helping families make needed medical or dental appointments revealed that although a new process has been put in place to assist families in making appointments, continued support is needed in this area. Monitoring of the environment revealed a need to stay vigilant in keeping the parent and community resource information available in classrooms up to date. The program is continuing to explore options for updating information.

Family and Community Engagement

Program Educator staff will be providing more opportunities to engage families through workshops and trainings. Ready Rosie will continue to be used as a tool to enhance Family Engagement. Staff will also look to outside resources in the community to promote and enhance engagement by families.

Governance

The program will continue to explore ideas for improving attendance at Policy Committee Meetings.

Summary

Although there was progress made toward last year's goals, some of the goals will continue to be addressed in next year's Program Improvement Plan. After a thorough review, the Self-Assessment review participants determined that additional emphasis was needed in promoting regular attendance, more recruitment for keeping fully enrolled throughout the year, using *Creative Curriculum* with fidelity, CLASS, using CSEFEL/Pyramid techniques and Second Step curriculum, and having Program Educators play more of a role in assisting with families' needs in areas of Family and Community Engagement, Health, and ERSEA.