



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Office of Head Start | 4th Floor – Switzer Memorial Building, 330 C Street SW, Washington DC 20024 eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov

Program Performance Summary Report

To: Authorizing Official/Board Chairperson

Mrs. Garrett Mancieri
Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association, Inc.
204 Warwick Street
Woonsocket, RI 02895 - 6418

From: Responsible HHS Official

Date: 11/08/2022

Katie Hamm

Acting Director, Office of Head Start

From October 11, 2022 to October 14, 2022, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted a Focus Area Two (FA2) monitoring review of Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association, Inc. Head Start program. This report contains information about the grant recipient's performance and compliance with the requirements of the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) or Public Law 110-134, *Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007*.

The Office of Head Start (OHS) would like to thank your governing body, policy council, parents, and staff for their engagement in the review process. Based on the information gathered during this review, it has been determined that your program meets the requirements of all applicable HSPPS, laws, regulations, and policy requirements.

Please contact your Regional Office for guidance should you have any questions or concerns. Your Regional Office will follow up on the content of this report and can work with you to identify resources to support your program's continuous improvement.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE REPORT

Copies of this report will be distributed to the following:

Ms. Marina Winkler, Regional Program Manager
Ms. Mary Varr, Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director
Ms. Mary Varr, Head Start Director

Grant(s) included as part of this review

Grant Recipient Name	Grant Number(s)
Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association, Inc.	01CH011222

Glossary of Terms

Finding Type	Definition
Area of Concern (AOC)	An area in which the agency needs to improve performance. These issues should be discussed with the grant recipient's Regional Office for possible technical assistance.
Area of Noncompliance (ANC)	An area in which the agency is out of compliance with Federal requirements (including but not limited to the Head Start Act or one or more of the regulations) in one or more areas of performance. This status requires a written timeline for correction and possible technical assistance or guidance from the grant recipient's program specialist. If not corrected within the specified timeline, this status becomes a deficiency.
Deficiency	<p>As defined in the Head Start Act, the term "deficiency" means:</p> <p>(A) a systemic or substantial material failure of an agency in an area of performance that the Secretary determines involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) a threat to the health, safety, or civil rights of children or staff; (ii) a denial to parents of the exercise of their full roles and responsibilities related to program operations; (iii) a failure to comply with standards related to early childhood development and health services, family and community partnerships, or program design and management; (iv) the misuse of funds received under this subchapter; (v) loss of legal status (as determined by the Secretary) or financial viability, loss of permits, debarment from receiving Federal grants or contracts, or the improper use of Federal funds; or (vi) failure to meet any other Federal or State requirement that the agency has shown an unwillingness or inability to correct, after notice from the Secretary, within the period specified; <p>(B) systemic or material failure of the governing body of an agency to fully exercise its legal and fiduciary responsibilities; or</p> <p>(C) an unresolved area of noncompliance.</p>

Program Overview

Since 1974, Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association, Inc. has provided early education services to children in northern Rhode Island. The grant recipient receives Head Start funding to serve 190 children and operates classrooms using a combination of state and other federal funds. The recipient's five centers are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, approved by the Rhode Island Department of Education Standards for serving very young children, and each has at least a 4-star rating with the state's Quality Rating and Improvement System.



Program Management and Quality Improvement

Program Management

The grant recipient establishes a management structure consisting of staff, consultants, or contractors who ensure high-quality service delivery; have sufficient knowledge, training, experience, and competencies to fulfill the roles and responsibilities of their positions; and provide regular supervision and support to staff.

Ongoing Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

The grant recipient uses data to identify program strengths, needs, and areas needing improvement; evaluate progress toward achieving program goals and compliance with program performance standards; and assess the effectiveness of professional development.

Program Governance

The grant recipient maintains a formal structure of program governance to oversee the quality of services for children and families and make decisions related to program design and implementation.

The policy council is engaged in the direction of the program, including program design and planning of goals and objectives.

Program Management and Quality Improvement Summary

The recipient adjusted its organizational structure to address program needs. Before the pandemic, the management team identified two areas requiring additional support. The managers noted an inconsistency in the quality of child outcomes data across classrooms and the need for more robust mental health services. In response, the recipient added a director of early childhood education position to ensure that all education staff, regardless of funding source, received the same training and resources to conduct assessments. In addition, a mental health manager position requiring licensed mental health qualifications and two behavior specialists were added to increase the level of assistance provided to teachers and children. Through the revision of its organizational structure, the recipient improved the quality of services for children in its care.



Monitoring and Implementing Quality Education and Child Development Services

Alignment with School Readiness

The grant recipient's school readiness efforts align with the expectations of receiving schools, the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (HSELOF), and State early learning standards.

Effective and Intentional Teaching Practices

The grant recipient's teaching practices intentionally promote progress toward school readiness and provide quality learning experiences for children.

Supporting Teachers in Promoting School Readiness

The grant recipient prepares teachers to implement the curriculum and support children's progress toward school readiness.

Home-Based Program Services

Not Applicable.

Education Services Summary

Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association, Inc. supported teachers through a system of supervision, coaching, and professional development. Center directors met regularly with the education staff to discuss child outcomes data and their individual coaching needs. These data informed the teachers' professional development and coaching plans. The program also used classroom observations and several tools, including a teacher-child engagement assessment and an environmental rating scale, to target the support it provided. The education and mental health teams developed a monthly assessment plan to assist teachers with focusing on specific areas of child development. These efforts positively impacted children's school readiness. For example, after the teachers incorporated a lending library, literacy outcomes data showed an increase from 68 percent to 78 percent of the children meeting widely held expectations within 1 assessment period. By supporting teachers' professional growth, the program strengthened services for children.



Monitoring and Implementing Quality Health Services

Child Health Status and Care

The grant recipient effectively monitors and maintains timely information on children's health statuses and care including ongoing sources of health care, preventive care, and follow-up.

Mental Health

The grant recipient supports a program-wide culture that promotes mental health and social and emotional well-being, and uses mental health consultation to support staff and families.

Oral Health and Nutrition

The grant recipient maintains and monitors for effective oral health practices and nutrition services that meet the nutritional needs and accommodate children's feeding requirements and allergies.

Safety Practices

The recipient implements a process for monitoring and maintaining healthy and safe environments.

Services to Expectant Families

Not Applicable.

Health Services Summary

Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association, Inc. aligned with a state mental health initiative and fully implemented a mental health curriculum in response to an increasing need for support. When the state received funding to implement a mental health curriculum in preschools and throughout the public school system 4 years ago, the grant recipient participated in the initiative. A program manager attended the rollout and professional development opportunities, including participation in a 10-week certification process.

The program purchased the curriculum materials and equipment for each classroom, and all education and mental health support staff received 10 hours of training on its implementation. In addition to using the materials in the classroom, staff shared techniques with families. Subsequently, both teachers and parents described improvements in children's social and emotional development and their understanding of how to support skills like self-regulation. Since the curriculum was implemented, the number of referrals for mental health support had declined, and teachers reported feeling better supported in handling children's challenging behaviors.



Monitoring and Implementing Quality Family and Community Engagement Services

Family Well-Being

The grant recipient collaborates with families to support family well-being and, parents' aspirations, and life goals.

Strengthening Parenting and Parent-Child Supports

The grant recipient provides services that strengthen parent-child relationships and support parents in strengthening parenting skills.

Family Engagement in Education and Child Development Services

The grant recipient provides education and child development services that recognize parents' roles as children's lifelong educators and encourage parents to engage in their children's education.

Family and Community Engagement Services Summary

Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association, Inc. developed strategies to assist the number of families facing food insecurity during the pandemic. During the height of COVID-19, the program created a questionnaire to better understand families' concerns and found the majority needed food. The grant recipient then reached out to the Woonsocket Health Equity Zone Committee for help with addressing this growing need. Several partnering agencies came together to assemble food baskets large enough to provide an entire family with three meals per day. Family services staff transported and delivered the baskets daily. In addition, the program provided families with gift cards to grocery stores and referrals to local food pantries. These activities supported the program's efforts to connect families with food resources.



Monitoring and Implementing Fiscal Infrastructure

Budget Planning and Development

The grant recipient develops and implements its budget to sustain management, staffing structures, and the delivery of services that support the needs of enrolled children and families.

Ongoing Fiscal Capacity

The grant recipient plans and implements a fiscal management system that supports the organization's ongoing capacity to execute its budget over time and meet the needs of its organization.

Budget Execution

The grant recipient's financial management system provides for effective control over and accountability for all funds, property, and other assets.

Facilities and Equipment

The grant recipient complies with application, prior approval, and reporting requirements for facilities purchased, constructed, or renovated with Head Start funds.

Fiscal Infrastructure Summary

Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association, Inc. ensured funds were used to support program goals and objectives. The grant recipient's fiscal staff worked with managers from each content area and actively engaged the Board and the policy council to develop the Head Start budget. These stakeholders utilized program data to allocate resources to the highest priorities. For example, to support school readiness, the recipient purchased supplies so children transitioning to kindergarten could learn to carry food on a tray in a large space set up as a cafeteria. By aligning the budget to program priorities, the recipient ensured funds were used to benefit children.



Monitoring ERSEA: Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance

Determining, Verifying, and Documenting Eligibility

The grant recipient enrolls children or expectant mothers who are categorically eligible or who meet defined income-eligibility requirements.

Enrollment Verification

The grant recipient maintains and tracks enrollment for all participants including expectant mothers.

ERSEA Summary

Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association, Inc. recruited and enrolled eligible families for services. To educate local families on the benefits of Head Start, staff members participated in community events. At the events, teachers and family service workers met with parents one-on-one to discuss the curriculum, policy council opportunities, and the ongoing support families received while their children were enrolled. In addition, the recipient distributed program information and applications throughout the city and engaged community partners who served families with young children to promote enrollment opportunities. The recipient's recruitment strategy contributed to beginning the program year fully enrolled.

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