



## **2024 SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT & PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

### **I. Introduction**

#### **a. Program description**

Head Start Community Program of Morris County (HSCPMC) partners with families to provide comprehensive support for child development and school readiness, from prenatal to kindergarten ages, for the community's most vulnerable children. The vision of our program is to empower diverse families and strengthen communities. The program has a 59-year history of supporting at-risk children and families in Morris County, with its main site located in the heart of Dover. With the award of a second Head Start/Early Head Start grant in September 2019, which is now consolidated with our original grant, we provide free child development services for a total of 199 children through center-based Head Start programs, and 106 infants, toddlers and pregnant women through center-based and home-based Early Head Start programs, with a funded enrollment of serving a total of 305 individuals. For the 2023-2024 program year, the full funded enrollment of 305 received comprehensive, center-based and home-based services, with a cumulative enrollment of 346 (213 Head Start children, 119 Early Head Start children and 14 Early Head Start pregnant women).

School district collaborations for Head Start/public pre-k services at the Dover site included five Dover Public Schools classrooms and one Wharton Public Schools classroom. In addition to the Dover site, the program's 18-year collaboration with the County of Morris supported a site with six state-of-the-art classrooms at the Robert C. Grant Head Start Center (RCG) in Morris Plains/Parsippany. A four-classroom collaboration at the RCG provided Head Start/public pre-k services for Morris School District.

#### **b. Context and Methodology**

In the fifth year of the federal grant timeline, HSCPMC made steady progress on program goals and objectives. Due to the prior consolidation of two grants, the Project Period was extended to 70 months, from 09/01/2019-06/30/2025. Data to assess progress was obtained from multiple sources,



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including ongoing monitoring, health and safety/facilities reports, child and family outcomes, management systems, staff and parent feedback, the prior year's Self-Assessment Report and Program Improvement Plan, and review of outcomes on grant application goals and objectives. Identified areas of focus were examined to address systemic issues and develop innovative approaches to improve quality. With a strength-based focus, the 2024 self-assessment provides a key framework for program management, planning and oversight.

We were able to conduct much of the self-assessment data gathering and analysis process using technology, a process which has evolved since 2020, responsive to the pandemic. Platforms to support sharing of data included Zoom, Google Documents and Google Meet, Google Forms, and Creative Curriculum Cloud. Staff, parent, and stakeholder surveys provided key information for community assessment and self-assessment. The leadership team, Board of Directors, and Policy Council (including Parent Committee) reviewed Ongoing Monitoring reports which shared data on Program Governance and Leadership; Management Systems; Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment & Attendance (ERSEA); Comprehensive Services; Fiscal Management; Environmental Health and Safety; and School Readiness Outcomes, along with PIR data. Progress on goals and objectives was examined through these lenses. Data was also reviewed from external monitoring by the Office of Head Start in October 2022. Quantitative data in aggregate, along with qualitative data, were examined from multiple sources including professional development records; TSGOLD; Creative Curriculum Fidelity Tool; and CLASS/ITERS/ECERS/TPOT observations. Inquiries were supported by reference to standards and documents including the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework; Head Start Program Performance Standards; NJ Birth-to-Three Early Learning Standards; and NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards, as well as the Goals and Objectives in the Head Start/Early Head Start Application.

The self-assessment timeline was spring 2024. During April, May and June 2023, the HSCPMC leadership team met to plan the self-assessment design, review training materials and raw data, and manage assignments. During May and June, self-assessment data was reviewed and discussed via in-person meetings, including staff focus groups at each site, and Zoom meetings (March 28, April 17 and



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24, May 1 and 8), the Policy Council (June 18), and Board of Directors (June 25). The self-assessment team participating in these meetings was comprised of staff, parents and Policy Council members, members of the Board of Directors, and community representatives. Staff focus group sessions consisted of randomly selected individuals to encompass multiple positions and departments at both sites. Bilingual sessions led by the Human Resources Manager and Executive Director collected information from staff around their satisfaction, wellbeing, and ideas for program improvement.

The process for Self-Assessment involved five key steps: 1) Gather and analyze data on key issues; 2) Identify program strengths; 3) Highlight progress on grant goals and objectives; 4) Identify opportunities to improve services to children and families; and 5) Develop plans and strategies for continuous improvement.

Team members looked at outcomes data and discussed strengths, challenges, trends and solutions. Recommendations were compiled for development of this final report to guide planning for program improvement and share with stakeholders.

### **II. Key Insights: Successes and Opportunities for Improvement**

Noted strengths of HSCPMC over the 2023-2024 program year included the continuous delivery of comprehensive, high-quality, center-based and home-based services, with full enrollment despite myriad staffing challenges in an unstable employment market. Management systems to support programmatic excellence and standards-compliant services were reinforced with periodic training on policies and procedures, and reviewed through regular ongoing monitoring.

Outcomes for our School Readiness goals around strengthening systems to support children's school readiness in alignment with the HSELOF, NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards, and NJ Birth to Three Early Learning Standards were an area of great strength. Outcomes data from Teaching Strategies GOLD reflected overall steady progress by children in the program, with most children below widely held expectations at the fall checkpoint, showing growth at mid-year, and the overwhelming majority within or exceeding widely held expectations at the final checkpoint in spring. Year-to-year consistency was also evident, with scores being extremely consistent between the 2023-2024 program



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year and the prior program year. For Head Start youngsters, strong growth was seen in the areas of Language, Cognitive and Mathematics. For Early Head Start, strong growth was noted in the areas of Literacy, Language and Mathematics.

In terms of learning environments, outcomes data indicates that our school readiness goals around ECERS/ITERS and CLASS scores were achieved. ECERS-3 (conducted in partnership with public pre-k staff), ITERS-3, and CLASS assessments pointed to consistently high-quality environments. For Head Start Classrooms, program-wide ECERS scores all reached 5 or above, with average subscale scores of 5.34. For Early Head Start, scores averaged 6.71. CLASS scores also were extremely strong. Head Start scores for 2023-2024 exceeded national Office of Head Start CLASS averages and reflected our efforts to support social emotional development for the students and mental health for the staff. School readiness goals included improvement of CLASS scores in the areas of Instructional Support and Emotional Support for Head Start classrooms. Scores were remarkably consistent between 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. Scores for Emotional Support averaged 6.21 (6.14 the prior year), Classroom Organization averaged 5.87 (5.85 the prior year), and Instructional Support averaged 4.37 (4.26 the prior year). Early Head Start CLASS scores for Social-Emotional Behavior Support averaged 6.0 (6.1 the prior year), and Engaged Support for Learning averaged 6.3 (5.50 the prior year). Another School Readiness goal, CLASS Reliability for educational leadership team members, was achieved/maintained. The School Readiness goal for Inter-rater Reliability in Teaching Strategies GOLD was not achieved by all instructional staff, due to the high number of new staff without enough time in the program to access the professional development hours needed for Inter-rater Reliability study and testing. Attainment of this goal was challenging due to staff turnover, with limited availability of staff to cover the out-of-classroom training time needed to achieve Inter-rater Reliability. However, it remains an objective in staff individual professional development plans.

School Readiness Goals for implementation of curriculum to fidelity identified physical environment and program structure as the two areas of greatest strength in curriculum implementation for both Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms. Curriculum fidelity was assessed with a coaching lens by our coaching staff, who received extensive training in curriculum fidelity. In



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addition, the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) was also used by the (Reliable) Special Services/Mental Health Coordinator to observe and provide feedback to all Head Start classrooms. The strongest teaching practices observed were: Engagement in supportive conversations with children; schedules, routines, and activities; promotion of children's engagement; and collaborative teaming.

Data from *Teaching Strategies GOLD*, our Case Management process, and TPOT observations identified the continued need for social-emotional supports for children. It was clear that many children were entering the program with stress behaviors, difficulty adjusting, and challenges around interactions. A trauma-informed lens provides the perspective that children's social emotional outcomes were adversely impacted by the many challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic—even two years later—brought to a community characterized by poverty. With intentionality, we continued to focus on program-wide implementation of the Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children. We also provided an additional level of support through *Handle With Care* (HWC), a nationally accredited behavior management system used by Head Start programs and public schools. HWC provides strategies for de-escalation of challenging behaviors, with preventative actions to protect children from hurting themselves or others. Leadership team members received training for instructional certification, then trained staff in small groups. Feedback from staff was very positive for the HWC program.

For the 2024 program year, the outcomes examined led us to a deeper exploration of three specific issues which emerged as pivotal for Self-Assessment: 1) Retaining and Supporting a Highly-Qualified Workforce with a Focus on Staff Wellness (continued emphasis from 2022 and 2023) and 2) Supporting Children's Social-Emotional Development with a Focus on Prevention and Response to Children's Stress Behaviors in the Classroom (continued emphasis from 2023). A third, related issue arose over the most recent program year: 3) Families in Deeper Crisis. The Self-Assessment process looks at measures that have been taken to address these issues, along with overall successes and needs of our program over the past year, with reflection on the previous year's progress.

Data from our Human Resources analytics highlighted the continued need to work on retaining and supporting a highly-qualified workforce, with a focus on staff wellness. During the 2023-2024



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program year, out of 100 staff positions, 18% left the program. This was actually an area of improvement for our organization, since the turnover rate is approximately half what it was during the 2022-2023 program year, and we did not lose any staff from Early Head Start. Most left for positions with higher compensation, including members of the educational staff who left for positions with collaborating school districts or partners. Although we made strong progress in staff retention since the previous program year, it remains a persistent issue.

Our federal grant objective to establish best-practice program design and management systems to support staff professional development, and to attract and retain highly qualified staff, was impacted by challenges outside of our control—including a nationwide staffing crisis in early childhood programs. Staff surveys pointed to the need for higher pay—even though our salaries are competitive, according to wage study data compiled within the past program year. However, staff focus groups as well as the surveys brought forth a compelling request from staff for more paid time off. The public schools (with which we compete for staff) typically provide twice the number of sick days and paid time off than our program (5 sick days and 2 PTO days), along with school district calendar days off, which Head Start also provides. The majority of our staff are women, and many are parents. A great many staff members used their sick time well before the end of the school year due to their own or their children’s illnesses. As a result, many took unpaid sick days in the final third of the school year, as they had exhausted their available paid time off.

Focus group sessions provided the opportunity to hear from staff in a safe, non-judgmental environment that allowed them to freely share their thoughts and opinions. We learned about their sincere joy in serving children and that the program mission was a source of pride for staff. Seeing children and families benefit from our services gave them great satisfaction. Employees also enjoyed warm and supportive relationships with co-workers and felt good about our organizational culture—in which substantial investments to promote staff wellbeing have been made over the past year. Employees appreciated the efforts by the administration to make them feel valued and celebrated, and communication within the organization was a noted strength.



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Staff shared their stressors, which included the need for more paid time off, as noted. The rigorous and frequent classroom observations and documentation requirements were a source of stress identified by teaching staff members. Additionally, teaching staff noted the stressful environment created by the need to support children impacted by trauma, including stress behaviors and health/nutrition issues. At the Dover site, space continued to be an issue, with limited work spaces/offices and a shortage of adult restroom facilities. Although the additional spaces in the Dover plan address many operational and child service issues, they do not provide more adult restrooms. This issue will be added to needs for our facilities plan goals. Another problematic area was the expectation that school-year Head Start employees begin their school year two weeks before local school districts, with a week for training and a week for home visits/classroom preparation.

To help address our space issues, and also to ensure an efficient workforce, we have pivoted to hybrid work plans for some administrative staff whose tasks can be completed off site with technological support. Members of the team rotate spaces and alternate assignments at our two facilities, to the extent possible given their roles in the organization. Although this plan was originally put into place to address space issues, hybrid work models for administrative staff have proven to be a successful strategy to efficiently manage both time and space rotations at both sites. In addition, the ability to offer hybrid work models has been an important measure to retain highly-qualified senior staff who may not be appropriately compensated given their levels of skill and experience.

Our Staff Wellness Committee has continued to make intentional investments to build an organizational culture to promote employee wellness with a view toward staff who are happier, healthier, and less stressed. Staff surveys provided feedback that the efforts in wellness and nurturing employees have been appreciated and are a valued benefit in our workplace. Staff especially felt valued when hospitality was provided in the form of special breakfasts, lunches or snacks/treats. Contests and recognition activities were also very popular.

Our goal to strengthen parent, family and community engagement processes, and supports for family well-being and positive parent-child relationships was an area of ongoing progress, with effective, robust parent engagement. We learned that, for our families, paper surveys are a better



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way to capture data than electronic surveys. Survey data told us that 47% of families prefer to be contacted by phone, 39% by email and 13% by text. Parent engagement supported school readiness goals, with 100% of families reporting that they read with their children the free books provided by our Early Language and Literacy Program. In terms of engagement with children's education, 97% of parents found *Teaching Strategies GOLD* developmental learning reports helpful to understand their child's progress and in knowing how to support their child's learning. Comments on surveys were overwhelmingly positive, expressing satisfaction with the program.

However, areas for improvement were noted by parents. These included: communication between teachers and parents; improve the *Teaching Strategies* family app to help with communication; provide transportation; and extend the school schedule (for the Robert C. Grant Head Start site, which did not have aftercare). Prevailing concerns of families for their children were: Nutrition, behavior, social interaction, speech, and academic success.

Strengthening parent engagement was supported through implementation of the parenting curriculum, *Positive Solutions for Families*, and the *Parents Interacting with Infants (PIWI)* component used in the EHS Home-based program. Self-Assessment looked at attendance for these parent education meetings, which were attended by a total of 73 parents. At the Dover site, there were 37 Head Start participants and 28 Early Head Start participants over a 7-month curriculum program. At the RCG site, a total of 8 participants attended a 7-week virtual program. Families who could most benefit from parenting skills, in accordance with needs assessment, were prioritized for these services. Based on feedback from participants and program staff, we learned:

1 - Incentives (giveaways, gift cards, meals/snacks) and babysitting are important for in-person attendance. Head Start Board of Directors supported a fundraising initiative for this program.

2 - Parent education sessions are most effective when held in-person. However, the demands of work and school mean that parents have difficulty attending numerous in-person meetings.

Another parent education component is the Fatherhood Initiative; 40+ fathers participated in monthly meetings, with 10-15 regular attendees. This program, supported partially by the County of





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Morris, promotes peaceful, positive family relationships and fathers' engagement in children's school readiness.

Monthly School Readiness Calendars, full of culturally responsive activities to support parent-child relationships and child development, were an important source of non-federal match for the Early Head Start program. Parents regularly completed the daily activities, returning their completed calendars with notes, work samples and photos to connect learning at home with our programs. Overall, a total of 202 parents volunteered their time to support the program and/or their child's learning experiences with the program.

Significant progress was made on our facilities plan, which seeks to address the issue of space shortages for both personnel and children. After nearly five years of efforts to secure OHS approval to add critically needed space at our Dover site, we received federal approval for three connected 1303 Facilities applications in October 2022. The critically needed renovation and expansion project, conducted in multiple phases to ensure the safety of children and staff, commenced during the summer of 2023, and was on schedule for completion in summer 2024. The project provides bathrooms for classrooms and adds new classrooms and outdoor play spaces, enabling us to finally serve two additional classrooms of Early Head Start children with center-based services.

A specific area for improvement relating to facilities comes from self-assessment data provided by the staff of the RCG site, along with our registered dietician/nutritionist. The RCG lacks a full-service kitchen for food preparation, and children's meals are delivered by a vendor. Although the meals meet the minimal Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) requirements, there have been complaints about the taste, temperature and overall quality. Other vendors have been explored, but there is only one source in our local area that meets the CACFP guidelines. To address this, we have applied for funding from the NJ Economic Development Authority, to upgrade and extend the capacity of the full-service kitchen at the Dover site. We believe that meals could be prepared at Dover and delivered to the RCG facility.



**III. SUMMARY OF SELF-ASSESSMENT & PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Focus Area	Outcomes/Progress	Plans & Strategies for Improvement – 2024/2025 program year
<p><b>Systemic Issue: Retaining and Supporting a Highly-Qualified Workforce with a Focus on Staff Wellness</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Staff Wellness Committee spearheaded wellness activities/programs included: Jeans Fridays; Spirit Days; Ice Cream Socials; monthly wellness themes and activities; supervisor affirmation program to recognize staff efforts with gift cards, treats and notes, including Staff Appreciation Week.</li> <li>● Bilingual staff newsletter (in English and Spanish) recognizes staff birthdays/work anniversaries/special events and achievements, and provides key information and updates.</li> <li>● Annual mid-year/holiday staff wellness event provides opportunity for staff relationship building and recognition</li> <li>● Seasoned staff seeking a later return to work; new staff need supports to build community within the organization.</li> <li>● Mental health and related professional development services facilitated by Montclair University for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health provided consultation meetings in-person to support staff with strategies and address issues in service delivery for children and families. Structure of mental health consultation session program was modified in response to staff requests.</li> <li>● Robust organizational support to minimize staff healthcare contribution burden continued to receive strong priority with allocation of fiscal resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Staff Wellness Committee will continue to collect data on staff members wants, needs and personal preferences to support wellness and motivational activities</li> <li>● Continue to offer flexible opportunities for in-person consultation, responsive to individual needs, with bilingual mental health clinicians</li> <li>● Continue to support inter-departmental communication through monthly meetings between Family Services staff members and Education members who support the same families.</li> <li>● Continue with introductory staff meeting activities and celebratory atmosphere designed to build relationships among staff and set a positive, warm and nurturing tone for the school year, with new employee onboarding to precede return of full staff</li> <li>● Staff clothing link to be provided once again to</li> </ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Communication issues persisted between educational and family services staff, and extended to parental communications.</li> <li>● Most staff feel respected, well-prepared for their jobs, and have good communication with their supervisor, and feel that communication systems across the organization are strong</li> <li>● Staff reported taking pride in helping children and families as a positive aspect of their work</li> <li>● Challenges and causes of stress reported by staff included need for more paid time off, especially sick time; finding time to complete tasks, lack of office space, shortage of adult restroom facilities at Dover; starting the school year in mid-August; paperwork, the number of meetings requiring their attendance, multiple observations of teachers, technology, children’s challenging behaviors, and staff absences requiring coverage in classrooms.</li> <li>● Staff turnover levels at 18%--a 50% reduction from previous year. Competition among employers and school districts for well-trained Head Start staff continued.</li> <li>● Coverage for educational staff positions was frequently challenging, with Mondays and Fridays being days most impacted by staff absences. Staff noted the presence of a third staff member in classrooms enables active supervision and allows staff to take scheduled breaks.</li> <li>● Staff childcare classroom/slots provide free pre-k care for up to 10 staff children (by seniority). However, space and staff limitations currently impact available slots.</li> </ul>	<p>enable discounted purchase of Head Start attire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Dover renovation project to add office space for staff</li> <li>● Staff level commitment by administration for 3<sup>rd</sup> staff member for each classroom, subject to candidate availability and staff absences</li> <li>● NJ law mandates that payout of unused sick time up to 40 hours is required. Unused sick time will be paid out at conclusion of staff employment year; no more carryover of sick time.</li> <li>● One sick day will be added, bringing total to 6</li> <li>● One “self-care” (PTO) day will be added, which can be used without advance notice. Total of PTO days is 3 for staff who begin on or before January 31 of program year.</li> <li>● Strive for annual contribution to 401K accounts</li> <li>● Provide Financial Literacy training for staff</li> <li>● Continue to support staff healthcare premiums resulting in minimal staff contributions</li> <li>● Seek funding to add adult restrooms for staff at Dover facility</li> </ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review Head Start Eligibility Screening Tool to prioritize Head Start slots for staff, especially Over-Income staff who may not have other options for child care</li> </ul>
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Focus Area	Outcomes/Progress	Plans & Strategies for Improvement – 2024/2025 program year
<b>Systemic Issue: Supporting Children’s Social-Emotional Development with a Focus on Prevention and Response to Children’s Stress Behaviors in the Classroom</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Substantial number of children have entered the program with challenging and extreme stress behaviors</li> <li>● <i>Handle With Care</i> training for administrators supported facilitation of staff training to empower classroom staff to prevent escalation of children’s challenging behaviors</li> <li>● Each HS classroom received one Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) assessment over the course of the school year, with teacher feedback and follow-up. Areas for teacher coaching include teaching children to express emotions, teaching behavior expectations, and teaching friendship skills.</li> <li>● Staff professional development emphasized training for preventing and responding to children’s challenging and stress behaviors and Pyramid Model practices.</li> <li>● Parenting curriculum provided training for parents consistent with Pyramid Model practices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continue to provide <i>Handle With Care</i> training toward certification for administrators to enable them to turnkey for staff in small groups featuring opportunities for full engagement and role plays</li> <li>● Continue to support parents with <i>Positive Solutions For Families</i> curriculum and engagement to provide help with children’s social-emotional skills. Plan program sessions to follow in-person format with meeting incentives and babysitting services.</li> <li>● Update MOU with Montclair Center for Autism and EC Mental Health Services to encompass both clinical services and professional development</li> </ul>



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Focus Area	Outcomes/Progress	Plans & Strategies for Improvement – 2024/2025 program year
<p><b>Family Outcomes and Wellbeing: Responding to Families in Deeper Crisis</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Families benefit from HSCPMC health programs to keep up-to-date with children’s immunizations, check-ups and health records</li> <li>● Chronic absenteeism was an issue for some families, with support provided by the program. Transportation and family circumstances, including housing, impacted Head Start attendance. Early Head Start attendance challenges were attributed to documented illness and health issues.</li> <li>● Fatherhood Initiative has been a successful program for 9 years, with strong attendance and positive feedback.</li> <li>● <i>Positive Solutions for Families</i> was prioritized for families with documented need for parenting skills. PIWI, facilitated through EHS Home-based program, was well received with strong attendance. Attendance at in-person <i>Positive Solutions</i> sessions has seen challenges and multiple program models have been attempted. Family input was indicative of readiness to participate in in-person sessions and schedule input was sought with a variety of preferences.</li> <li>● Parents expressed a need for better avenues for communication with teachers. Text or phone communications are preferred by parents and technology was not the most effective way to exchange information. Child Plus information management system experienced issues with mass texts, and technology infrastructure was not robust enough to support organizational family communication needs.</li> <li>● Areas of strength included children’s continuous health care, up-to-date immunizations, and health insurance</li> <li>● Summer subsidy program offered to pre-k students prioritized social-emotional health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continue to support and develop community partnerships with health and dental providers</li> <li>● Continue emphasis on disease prevention efforts and continue to promote attendance with families through education and individual supports as needed</li> <li>● For parent meetings, prioritize in-person format for parenting curriculum, but revert to mainly virtual meeting format for parent committee and Policy Council meetings. Provide child care for parenting curriculum program and incentives for attendance.</li> <li>● Training for Family Services staff and Education staff to be provided around collaborative, culturally responsive parent communications.</li> <li>● Provide additional support and developer-based technical assistance for parent access to Creative Curriculum CLOUD app. Seek solutions to technology and format challenges for sending immediate/emergency contact text messages to families.</li> </ul>



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	<p>and outdoor gross motor play. Program pivoted to RCG site due to construction project at Dover, but enrollment/attendance was challenging and families expressed a preference for a program at the Dover site for ease of access.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Expand aftercare (Extended Care Program) to meet the needs of working families during the school year. Add classroom for children as young as 18 months of age at Dover site and for preschool-age children at the RCG site</li> </ul>
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Focus Area	Outcomes/Progress	Plans & Strategies for Improvement – 2024/2025 program year
<p><b>School Readiness Outcomes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Goal for Staff Professional Development (all Teachers/Teacher Assistants achieve Interrater Reliability in Teach Strategies GOLD) was not fully achieved due to staff turnover, absenteeism, and lack of sufficient staff to cover out-of-classroom learning time</li> <li>● Goal for Educational leaders was achieved: Team members maintained CLASS certification. Director of Education re-calibrated at State Anchor status for ECERS-3 and completed Preschool Instructional Coach Fellowship at NJ Department of Education.</li> <li>● Quality professional development provided through a variety of sources and platforms, including Grow NJ Kids, Teaching Strategies, in-house Zoom presentations, Google Docs, email links, and hybrid training models</li> <li>● Practice based coaching by School Readiness Coordinator, Director of Education, EHS Manager and other members of LT is informed by outcomes data and targets identified areas of need.</li> <li>● Staff were brought in for a week of training prior to start of school year. Agreement with neighboring facility for rent of space enables meetings and large gathering spaces.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Staff professional development plans incorporate timelines for completion of Interrater Reliability</li> <li>● Continue working toward full implementation of the TPOT and TPITOS instruments and the Creative Curriculum Fidelity Tool in classrooms</li> <li>● Continue interdepartmental team meetings between Education staff members and Family Services staff to ensure alignment of communications and addressing child and family needs. Provide targeted training on parent communications and parameters to promote shared, aligned communication channels.</li> <li>● Differentiate pre-service training and address staff schedule preferences by staggering training groups based on needs and time</li> </ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Professional Learning Communities take place via departmental Zoom trainings at regular intervals and address areas of need identified through outcomes data. Communities of practice led by teaching staff members.</li><li>● School readiness goals for learning environments achieved: ECERS/ITERS and CLASS scores all reflect high-quality programming and year-to-year consistency. Most classrooms achieve strong in curriculum fidelity.</li><li>● Outcomes data from Teaching Strategies GOLD reflected overall steady progress by children in the program, with most children below widely held expectations at the fall checkpoint, showing growth at mid-year, and the overwhelming majority within or exceeding widely held expectations at the final checkpoint in spring. For Head Start youngsters, strong growth was seen in the areas of Language, Cognitive, and Mathematics. For Early Head Start, strong growth was noted in the areas of Literacy, Language, and Mathematics.</li><li>● Monthly school readiness activities calendars were distributed to EHS families to support children's learning at home and the home-school connection, with robust volunteer time provided by parents</li></ul>	<p>with the program. Delay start of training year for returning staff for up to one week if possible. Support staff (Pas, PSTs) do not need to participate in home visits and can have later start date.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Continue to prioritize focus on children's social-emotional development and mental health with mental health consultation services, staff training around implementation of the Pyramid Model for Promoting Social- Emotional Competence in Early Childhood, and conduct TPOT observations to support classroom environments</li><li>● Continue to provide coaching support for implementation of curriculum to fidelity and to address data-informed professional development needs</li><li>● Continue to post monthly literacy or social-emotional support messages for families, and to provide new children's books at family engagement events. Re-apply for funding from Rotary club to support program.</li><li>● Continue to conduct CLASS observation as part of ongoing monitoring and to inform coaching needs during the school year.</li></ul>
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Focus Area	Outcomes/Progress	Plans & Strategies for Improvement – 2024/2025 program year
<p><b>Facilities Plan</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Major Renovation project at Dover site on schedule for completion to start the 2024/2025 school year.</li> <li>● Received one-time federal grant supplemental funding for electrical rehabilitation and upgrade project for Dover site</li> <li>● Received funding from NJ SAVE GREEN program through NJ Natural Gas for boiler replacement and LED lighting upgrade (70+% contribution with 0% financing) through NJ Natural Gas.</li> <li>● Applied for funding from the NJ Economic Development Authority to renovate/upgrade kitchen at Dover site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Finalize Certificate of Occupancy from Town of Dover</li> <li>● Finalize inspections for Office of Licensing for Dover site, including items needed for Safe Building Interior Certification from Department of Health (Preliminary Assessment with Response Action Outcome letter for NJ DEP, Radon Testing, Lead and Copper Testing of Water System, and Lead Hazard Safe status)</li> <li>● After completion of kitchen renovation/upgrade, review meal preparation and delivery to RCG site</li> <li>● Complete boiler and lighting projects</li> <li>● Seek funding to convert two children’s bathrooms to adult restroom facilities</li> </ul>

**2024 Self-Assessment Participants**





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Yesenia Sosa, Parent; Secretary, HSCPMC Policy Council

Michael Thompson, Esq., Treasurer, HSCPMC Board of Directors

Amy Tousley, Director of Education, HSCPMC

Maria L. Velez, Parent, HSCPMC Policy Council

Staff members from multiple departments, via anonymous surveys and focus group sessions

Program participant parents from all sites and program components, via anonymous surveys