



Georgia Head Start Association Strategic Plan

June 2015

All priorities goals and objectives are based on the results of the Needs Assessment for Georgia Head Start Association. The Strategic Plan was last updated in May 2015 by GHSA as a result of the Needs Assessment and additional priorities identified by the Office of Head Start and Region IV.

Although GHSA and the HSSCO will continue to work together to Blend Georgia Pre-K and Head Start classes,, most of the challenges have been eliminated and the relationship with Georgia Pre-K is one where there is a natural partnership.

Additionally, Medicaid renewals continue to be problematic, Georgia Head Start is limited until their data system is fixed to resolve the problem. It remains on hold.

1a. Partnering with State Child Care Systems, Emphasizing EHS-CC Partnerships

Long Range Goal 1a: EH/CC Partnerships will be successful meeting EHS standards and subsidy requirements.

Process goals 1a: The HSSCO will work with the EHS/CC grantees regarding the implementation of the program. The HSSCO will meet regularly with the grantees and the Regional Office and CCA to address needs and concerns

Short term goal 1a: all Grantees have operationalized the partnership.

Expected Outcomes 1a: EHS/ HS partnership grants will be in compliance after 18 months of operation.

Tracking 1a: Information will come from the results of monitoring.

Progress: This goal is new since the last refunding application. The HSSCO has worked with Child Care Administrator regarding changes favorable to subsidized families including removing parent fees. Initially, the state intended to apply for all 1500 EHS/CC slots. With input from the HSSCO, the state decided to work with grantees in a non-competitive situation and applied for 164 slots. Webinars were conducted for EHS grantees regarding the process and workshops were held at the GHSA spring conference. The HSSCO facilitated a follow up meeting after the EHS/CC orientation meeting. Additional meetings are scheduled. All grantees receiving the EHS/CC grants are included.

Program Impacts: Children who are in subsidized programs and are EHS eligible will receive wrap around EHS services. Additional children will be served in high quality facilities. EHS performance standards will have a positive effect on the quality of the child care partner, both center based and in home providers.

Long Range goal 2a: Head Start grantees will serve more homeless families by partnering with agencies engaged in serving the homeless.

Process Goals 2a: The HSSCO will participate in the Georgia Homeless Coalition.

Members of the Coalition will provide information and training at GHSA conferences.

The HSSCO will participate in DOE Homeless Liaison Conferences and Coalition

Conferences regarding how to serve more homeless families. The HSSCO will facilitate

the development of an MOU with the Georgia McKenny-Vento liaison regarding serving

the homeless population through HS/EHS services.

Short term goals 2a: MOU will be signed with DOE McKinney-Vento Liaison and DOE

regarding partnering and serving homeless families.

Expected Outcome 2a. Grantees will enroll more homeless children.

Tracking 2a: PIR data will be used to measure numbers of homeless children and

families served.

Progress: The HSSCO has facilitated the development of a draft MOU and is waiting for

approval from the Georgia Department of Education. The HSSCO is working with the

GHSA special Homeless Committee and training was provided at the spring 2015

Conference. The HSSCO and Homeless Committee chair are members of the Georgia

Homeless Coalition and participate in the activities. The HSSCO delivered two

workshops at the DOE Homeless Liaison Conference regarding how the liaisons can

more effectively partner with Head Start. Each year for the past 3 years there has been

an increase in the number of homeless children and families served.

Program Impacts: Additional homeless children and families will be served in high quality HS/EHS programs. This will increase stability for the child and result in more family stability, increasing the readiness of children for school success.

Long Range Goals 3a: HS/HS grantees will serve more foster children through partnering with HHS/DFCS in Georgia.

Process Goals 3a: Joint training will be provided for DFCS and HS/EHS staff in order to more effectively serve children in foster care.

Short Term Goals 3a: Meet with DFCS to develop a partnership. Complete an MOU with DFCS regarding serving foster children more effectively. Included will be joint training for HS and DFCS staff.

Expected Outcome 3a: Georgia HS/EHS grantees will serve more children in foster care.

Tracking 3: PIR data will be used to measure numbers of foster children served by HS/EHS programs.

Progress: This is a new goal. There is an initial meeting with DFCS, Region IV and HSSCO regarding effectively partnering to serve more children in foster care.

Program Impacts: Foster children will experience stability by being enrolled in a HS/EHS program. This will assist in reducing stress for the child and is an opportunity for grantees to work with parents in providing for the children. Ultimately, this will assist in school readiness.

Long Range Goal 4a: HS/EHS grantees will serve more military families.

Process Goal 4a: Develop a partnership and MOU with Military Liaison for Georgia. It will include joint training and processes.

Short term goal 4a: Meet with military liaison for Georgia to initiate a partnership.

Expected Outcome 4a: Georgia Grantees will serve more military families. Expectation is that there will be 5% increase annually.

Tracking 4a: PIR data will be used to determine numbers of military children are served.

Progress: Although this was on the HSSCO work plan, no effort has been made. The HSSCO will schedule a meeting with the Georgia military liaison in Sept 2015 to begin initial conversations toward how grantees can better serve military families.

Program Impacts: Military children and families will receive support from grantees and assistance in creating family stability and success in school.

Long Range Goal 5a. HS/EHS will serve at least 10% of children with disabilities.

Process Goals 5a: The HSSCO will facilitate the completion of a comprehensive MOU with DECAL, DOE, Department of Health (Babies Can't Wait) and GHSA. The GHSA will continue to serve on the State Inclusion Leadership. The HSSCO has been appointed by the Governor to serve on the State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC). The HSSCO will participate in meetings and training that will identify children with disabilities who are in foster care.

Short Range Goals 5a: All grantees will meet the 10% requirement for children with disabilities.

Expected Outcome 5a: All children in HS/EHS with disabilities will receive services.

Progress: The HSSCO serves on the SICC. A final draft of the MOU is waiting to be finalized and signed.

Program Impacts: Children with disabilities will be recruited and all will receive services.

1b. Work with State efforts to collect data regarding early childhood program and child outcomes.

Long Range Goal 1b: HS/EHS children will achieve better outcomes in public school that will lead to school success.

Process goal 1b: HS and HSSCO will participate on state assessment workgroup to define assessment measures

Short term objective 1b: Child assessment tools will be standardized in order to measure child outcomes.

Expected Outcome 1b: HS/EHS grantees will have access to HS public school outcomes in order to enhance and shore up curriculum in low performing areas.

Tracking 1b: Georgia unified Data System.

Progress: All Georgia grantees participate in data sharing agreements. Due to recompetition, one grantee will be replaced July1, 2015. The HSSCO will work with the new grantee to put a data sharing agreement in place.

Program Impacts: There will be a system that will appropriately measure child outcomes. Grantees will be able to look at child progress and determine any adjustments necessary.

Long Range Goal 2b: All HS/EHS children will be in the unified data system so information will assist their transition into public school.

Process goal 2b: 100% EHS/HS grantees will sign a data sharing agreement.

Short term objective 2b: HS/EHS children have a unique identifier and are in the unified data system

Expected outcome 2b: 50 % of HS/EHS children are in the unified data system. This will be revised as baseline data becomes available.

Tracking 2b: Report generated by the unified data system

Progress: The HSSCO is a member of the formative assessment work group that is identifying different child assessment tools so that assessment data will be entered into the system.

Program Impacts: Children will transition into public school and teachers will have information that will support the individual development of the child.

1c. Support for the expansion of, and access to, high quality workforce and career development opportunities for staff.

Long Range Goal 1c. Improve the quality of teaching staff by increasing the number of degreed teachers and assistant teachers.

Process goal 1 c: Develop additional partnerships with colleges and technical schools.

Short term objective 1c: Provide additional resources whereby teachers can enroll in degreed programs to include information on financial aid and Scholarships and Incentives.

Expected Outcome 1c. There will be an increase in the number of degreed staff.

Tracking 1c: Data from the PIR and Professional Development Registry will be used to track the increase in credentials.

Progress: A system for tracking the number of HS/EHS staff using Scholarships and Incentives is being developed.

Program Impacts: There will be a better prepared staff working with children birth-5 in Georgia. The field of Early Childhood will become more professional. Compensation will be increased. There will be less teacher turnover and more continuity of care for children.

Long Range Goal 2c: HS/EHS teachers will be enrolled in the Georgia Professional Development Registry.

Process Goal 2c: HSSCO will provide grantees with information and training on the Registry Application process.

Short term objective 2c: There will be a 5% annual increase in the number of Head Start staff enrolled in the Registry.

Expected Outcome 2c: HS/EHS staff and administration will have access to their documented personal professional development and information regarding their place on the career path.

Tracking 2c: Data from the Georgia Professional Development System will be used.

Progress: Approximately one-third of head start staff are currently enrolled in the Professional Development Registry.

Program Impact: The Registry will give information about specific areas where training and professional development should be concentrated to increase the development of a professional workforce and improve the quality of the program for children and families.

Long Range Goal 3c. EHS/HS family service workers and Great Start Georgia and other state agencies involved in Home Visiting will have a set of competencies, as well as a career ladder in the Georgia Early Childhood Professional Development System.

Process Goal 3c: The HSSCO will facilitate the development of Georgia Home Visiting Competencies and a Career Ladder for home visitors with Great Start Georgia.

Short term objective 3c: There will be a set of approved competencies and a career ladder for staff engaged in home visiting.

Expected Outcome 3c: EHS/HS Family Service Workers and other home visitors in Georgia will enroll in the Georgia Early Childhood Professional Development System Registry and be able to track their professional development. Home visitors/Family Service Workers will increase their degrees and credentials.

Tracking 3c: Once there is approval for the competencies and career ladder, results will be tracked through the Early Childhood Professional Development Registry.

Progress: Competencies and Career ladder for home visitors are in draft form and will be evaluated by DECAL for implementation. The HSSCO serves on the Leadership Team for Great Start Georgia Home Visiting program and co-chairs the professional development committee. EHS Family Service Workers are able to attend the Home Visiting Institute yearly.

Program Impacts: The field of Home Visitation will become more professionalized. The quality of services will improve for children and families.

1d. Collaboration with Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS).

Long Range Goal 1d: All HS/EHS grantees will be Quality Rated

Process Goal 1d: HSSCO will procure Technical Assistance for grantees on the application process.

Short term objective 1d: The number of HS/EHS centers participating in Quality Rated will increase by 10 % annually

Expected Outcome 1d. The quality of HS/EHS centers will improve as evidenced by an increase in the level obtained.

Tracking 1d: The data system for Quality Rated will be used to track improvement.

Progress: One third of all EHS and HS grantees have applied for Quality rated and one-third of those have completed the process and received a rating. The HSSCO will track the rating at each level. Training regarding the application process has been provided at all GHSA conferences.

Program Impacts: Grantees and staff will be recognized for being a high quality program. Grantees will benefit from free Technical Assistance and staff will receive bonuses for quality rating. The program will receive addition compensation to purchase equipment. In addition, grantees will be able to identify child care partners that are committed to quality.

1e. Work with State school systems to ensure continuity between

Head Start and Kindergarten Assessment (KEA).

Long Range Goal 1e: HS/EHS children will be assessed through a developmentally appropriate KEA that aligns with the Georgia Early Learning Standards.

Process Goal 1e: HSSCO will participate as a member of the work group that will design the KEA.

Short term goal 1e: The KEA is developed and implemented.

Expected Outcome 1e: HS/EHS and kindergarten teachers will share expectations for children's progress

Tracking 1e: KEA results for HS children will be tracked.

Progress: This is a new priority and is off to a slow start due to DOE.

Program impacts: Children transitioning into public school will experience a developmentally appropriate assessment that can be used for individualization in kindergarten.

Long Range Goals 2e: Attendance for HS/EHS children will improve.

Process Goal 2e: HSSCO will collect attendance data from the grantees to measure chronic absenteeism that prevents children from receiving services. HSSCO will provide information about the importance of attendance for School success. The HSSCO will continue to participate in Georgia Reads and on the National School Attendance Task Force.

Short term goal 2e: Attendance will improve.

Tracking 2e: Grantees will submit attendance that reflects the percentage of children who are chronically absent (absent 10% of the days enrolled)

Progress: Grantees are beginning to look at attendance and are developing activities to encourage attendance. The HSSCO is receiving data from 66% of the grantees.

Program Impact: By increasing attendance, children will be able to take full advantage of HS/EHS services. Research indicates that chronic absenteeism sets a pattern for later school attendance. Children who are chronically absent do poorly in school. Many do not graduate from high school. By increasing attendance habits will be set for children to be successful as they enter school.

1f. Regional Priorities. (Health and Safety)

Long Range Goals 1f: Parents and teachers will be aware of the negative effects of toxic stress on the development of a child. HS/EHS children will be identified early so that resources can be provided so that the child's development will not suffer and the family can function effectively.

Process Goal 1 f. The HSSCO will participate in the DPH/AAP Child Medical Home Project to implement a process for early identification and referral for toxic stress.

Short Term Goal 1f: An identification tool for toxic stress screening will be determined and a screening process will be implemented at one location.

Expected Outcome 1f. The process for screening and implementation will be evaluated for implementation in HS/EHS programs.

Tracking 1f: The process will be written and the number of children identified through the process and referred for further evaluation will be tracked.

Progress: This is a new goal. A tool will be selected for screening beginning in August 2015. This tool will be piloted at the Dunbar Center in Atlanta.

Program Impacts: Families will be identified early for possible home visitation needs and additional resources.

Long Range goal 2f: Decrease the number of HS children defined as obese by virtue of their BMI scores.

Process Goal 2f. The HSSCO will facilitate training provided by CACFP regarding nutrition, exercise, and farm to kitchen that will be implemented in the program.

Short term goal 1f: Grantees will participate in collecting BMI information both at the beginning and end of each school year.

Expected Outcomes 1f: Obesity rates will decrease.

Tracking 1f: PIR will be used to track Georgia BMI and grantees will report to HSSCO.

Progress: The University of Georgia has developed a system to train EHS/HS programs in implementing additional physical activity. The HSSCO will look at the grantees in this program and compare with grantees not in the program in order to measure effectiveness.

Program Impacts: Children will benefit by being healthy. They will suffer fewer diseases caused by obesity.

