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Introduction

Continuous quality improvement is the foundation of excellent Head Start programs. It is the goal of Lorain County Community Action Agency Head Start to not only meet, but exceed Program Performance Standards, moving toward program excellence in serving the children and families of Lorain County.

Head Start Performance Standards state that at least once each program year, Head Start agencies must conduct a Self Assessment of their effectiveness and progress in meeting program goals and objectives and in implementing Federal regulations (1304.51(i)(1)). Programs must also incorporate child outcome data into their Self Assessment process (ACYF-IM-00-18).

The goals and objectives of Early/Head Start are as follows:

I. To enhance children’s growth and development

II. To strengthen families as the primary nurturers of their children, and to support them as advocates for their children with regards to school readiness. LCCAA has established school readiness goals to ensure that Head Start children transition into Kindergarten “ready to learn” (see attached goals).

III. To provide children with educational, health, and nutritional services:

IV. To link children and families to needed community services.

V. To ensure well managed programs that involves parents in decision-making.
LCCAA integrates Self Assessment into a cycle of continuous planning, utilizing a four-step system approach that includes:

- Stage One: Preparing
- Stage Two: Collecting and Synthesizing
- Stage Three: Interpreting
- Stage Four: Strengthening

Data analysis gives important information utilized in program planning, including the grant application cycle. The results and benefits expected include:

- Obtaining objectives, reliable information about our program services and systems
- Promoting an atmosphere of shared understanding of Head Start goals and objectives with governing bodies, program stakeholders, and community partners.
- Integration of multiple data sources.
- Thorough analysis of program data.
- Effective Program Quality Improvement Plans.
- Meaningful Training and Technical Assistance Plans.
Preparing Our Self Assessment

Lorain County Community Action Agency uses the Self Assessment process as an opportunity to provide cross-service area training to Head Start Management Team members. Head Start Management Team members provide leadership to each team. The guidebook, Head Start Self Assessment, Your Foundation for Building Program Excellence, was utilized in conjunction with the HHS current Monitoring Protocol instrument to guide this process. Data mining and evidence gathering included utilizing the methodologies listed below in a standardized process linked to compliance areas.

- Interview Guides
- Observation Guides
- Document Review Guides
- Checklists

Raw data was collected by team leaders and organized. Head Start Management Team members then analyzed the presented data to address: Areas of Concern, Areas of Strength, and Areas of Improvement. A final report is compiled from this information. It includes a summary of these results and makes determination regarding opportunities for program quality improvement. This may take place in the form of QI Plans for Areas of Concern, Program Area Action Plans for Areas of Improvement, and the preparation of the annual Training and Technical Assistance Plan. It is important that data is analyzed to determine whether events occur in isolation, or if they are a part of a larger trend of system implementation issues.
## LCCAA Head Start

**Grant Application Timeline**

**FY 2012-2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Person(s) Responsible</th>
<th>Completion Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self Assessment Orientation/Team Mtg.</td>
<td>Head Start Director / Head Start Mgmt. Team</td>
<td>October 17, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Assessment Team Report</td>
<td>HSMT</td>
<td>December 19, 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self Assessment Report to H.S. Director</td>
<td>HSMT</td>
<td>January 9, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Results or Benefits Expected</td>
<td>Head Start Management Team</td>
<td>January 23, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Goals &amp; Objectives Updates</td>
<td>Head Start Director/Director of Education</td>
<td>February 10, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self Assessment Cumulative Report</td>
<td>Head Start Director</td>
<td>February 16, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Needs Assessment Update Year 3</td>
<td>Head Start Director</td>
<td>February 16, 2012</td>
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<td>School Readiness Goals</td>
<td>Head Start Director/Director of Education</td>
<td>February 16, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Approach (Strategic Planning)</td>
<td>Head Start Director w/HSMT</td>
<td>February 16, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joint Governance Meeting</td>
<td>Board of Directors/Policy Council/ HSMT</td>
<td>February 16, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Readiness/Child Outcomes</td>
<td>Director of Education</td>
<td>March 2, 2012</td>
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<td>Service Area Plans</td>
<td>Head Start Management Team</td>
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<td>Program Approach (Strategic Planning)</td>
<td>Head Start Director w/HSMT</td>
<td>March 6, 2012</td>
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<td>Program Accomplishments</td>
<td>Head Start Management Team</td>
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<td>Training Plan and Assessment</td>
<td>HSMT w/ STG Consultant</td>
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<td>Budget</td>
<td>Finance Director/Head Start Director</td>
<td>March 12, 2012</td>
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<td>Budget Justification</td>
<td>Finance Director/Head Start Director</td>
<td>March 19, 2012</td>
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<td>GABI</td>
<td>Finance Director/ Head Start Administrative/Fiscal Specialist</td>
<td>March 26, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review Full Grant Application</td>
<td>Head Start Director/Executive Director</td>
<td>April 2, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy Council Meeting ~ Approval</td>
<td>Policy Council</td>
<td>April 19, 2012</td>
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<td>Board Of Directors Meeting ~ Approval</td>
<td>Board of Directors</td>
<td>April 26, 2012</td>
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<td>Electronic Submission to ACF, Office of Head Start</td>
<td>Head Start Administrative/Fiscal Specialist</td>
<td>April 27, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service Area</td>
<td>Team Leader(s)</td>
<td>Team Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Child Development & Education** | Stefanie Drew, Carla Rodriguez | Andrea Miceli, Little Lighthouse Learning Center  
Christine Baughman, Home School Instructor  
Doreen Morrell, Clearview City Schools  
Nancy Warzecha, LCCAA Board of Directors  
Missy Wheeler, Nord Center  
Johnna Lyman, Lorain City Schools  
Deena Williams, Elyria YMCA  
Becky Nemeth, ODJFS- Joining Forces  
Nina Reed, Elyria City Schools  
Angela Hopewell, Lorain City Schools |
| **Child Health & Safety**     | Sharon Henry, Jessica Zvosec    | Gretchen Koch, Director of WIC  
Michelle Chivers, Hopkins- Locke Parent  
Tonya Anderson, Director of Hospice (RN)  
Dr. Samuel Getachew, Physician  
Stacey Schmidt, Children's Services (LSW)  
Andres Torres, Head Start Policy Council President  
Jose Flores, LCADA (LPN)  
Phyllis Molnar, Elyria Health Dept. (Dietician)  
Lourdes Gushue, Dentistry  
Staff, Lorain Health Department  
Jacquelyn McCurdy, Hopkins- Locke Parent  
Brian Orozco  
Shannon McCann |
| **ERSEA**                     | Deanna Gregg, Kate Bishop       | Caprice Ybarra, Ashland University Student; Horizons (North Olmsted)  
Cathy Fairbanks, Children’s Services Case Worker  
Mark Ballard, Director of Public Services (Lorain City Hall)  
Michelle Brown, Community Business Administration |
| **Family & Community Engagement** | Kathryn Isabell, Abraham Beltran | Scott Broadwell, LCCAA Board of Directors  
Carolyn Young, Community Representative  
Brenda Warren, LSW/VP of the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lorain County  
Corinna Kirkendoll, Policy Council/Hamilton Parent  
Tina Berrios, Policy Council/Hamilton Parent  
Holly O’Flaherty |
| **Fiscal Integrity**          | Shauna Matelski, Megan Greszler, Tracy Hough | Wakeem Sabeiha, First Dollar Bank  
Sue Horan, First Merit Bank |
| **Management Systems**        | Maria Vasquez                   | Staci Woods, Oberlin Parent  
Adam Gill – Technology Specialist |
| **Program Governance**        | Judie Emerine                   | Jody Kocak, Child Garden  
Laura Marvin, Elyria City Schools |
INTERPRETING THE INFORMATION

Program Strengths

Child Development and Education

Other Resources: Ohio Early Learning Content Standards, Teaching Strategies GOLD, ReacHigher meeting information, Early Childhood Task Force meeting information.

Framework #1 – *Integrating the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework*

- The program utilizes scientifically researched based curriculum and assessment through Teaching Strategies; Creative Curriculum and GOLD Assessment systems, which is aligned with the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework and the Ohio Early Learning Content Standards.
- School Readiness Goals have been established and implemented.
- Dual Language learning is addressed through a program called *Viva Spanish* where children have the opportunity to learn the Spanish language and enhance social and emotional skills.
- English Language Learners are addressed through ensuring children and families are linked to multiple resources.
- The agency provides multiple training opportunities for staff through pre-services and in-services that provide necessary training hours for quality rating systems as well as increasing staff's knowledge in Early Childhood Education.
- Data is aggregated from child assessment quarterly and child outcomes are reviewed and analyzed for program planning. Other assessments (i.e., Get It Got It Go) are also administered bi-annually to assess child outcomes.
- Program enhancements including technology, is utilized to achieve curriculum and school readiness goals.
- Curriculum topics and school readiness goals are discussed at parent meetings.
- Program reports, plans, tools and documentation provide sufficient evidence of program implementation.
Child Development and Education *continued*...

**Framework #2 – Supporting Social and Emotional Development**

- CLASS assessment scores are at or above the national mean.
- Conscious Discipline training was provided to staff and the practices will be implemented into their daily routines.
- Early Head Start has low staff turnovers.
- Multiple tools are used to assess social and emotional development.
- Developmentally Appropriate Practices are identified in all program options.
- Families provide insight on the development of goals.
- Children are very engaged with their daily routines and transitions.
- Home Visitors encourage family engagement and support of their child's development.

**Framework #3 – Individualizing**

- Teachers generated individualized plans for every child through Teaching Strategies GOLD.
- Parents participate in the individualization process and receive copies per request and consultation with teachers through home visits and conferences.
- Teachers demonstrate intentionality through planned activities the individualization process.
- Screenings are completed and recorded in the Genesis Earth data base system.
- There is a referral and IEP process coordinated by designated staff.
- Food service provides the essential daily nutritional meals for all children and a variety of food experiences and educational activities are implemented.
- Staff awareness of allergies is evident and a system in place to ensure safety for each child.
- Parent interviews and enrollment forms help to identify special accommodations to meet children and families needs.
- Mental Health schedules are provided of onsite services.
Framework #4 – *Monitoring Children’s Progress*

- School Readiness and Family Engagement goals have been implemented.
- EHS School Readiness goals are in process.
- Child outcomes are analyzed and reviewed by the Head Start Director and management team at quarterly reporting retreats.
- Professional Development opportunities are provided based on child outcome data.
- Classroom materials are supported through data results.

Framework #5 – *Quality of Teaching and Learning*

- Education Advisory Committee meets quarterly or more.
- All classrooms meet current staff credentialing requirements.
- Professional Development Plans (PDPs) are on file and reviewed with staff.
- Staff developed lesson plans for the children and classroom are monitored weekly.
- Home Visitors have participated in all trainings.
- The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) is utilized for monitoring.
Child Health and Safety

Other Resources: Local Health Department, Case Western Reserve, ODJFS Rules and Regulations.

Framework #1 - *Helping Families Access Health and Dental Care*

- Preventative and primary health care issues are addressed with families consistently.
- Health and Dental educational activities implemented everyday in the classrooms.
- Many avenues of communications are structured with parents.

Framework #2 – *Screening and Referrals*

- Health Screenings are provided onsite for convenience.
- Referral process is implemented and collaborates with the school districts.

Framework #3 – *Physical Environments*

- Serving areas are safe and clean.
- Chemical materials are labeled and out of reach of children.
- Safety committees meet quarterly or more to review facility needs.
- Daily playground and outdoor facility checks.
- Quarterly reporting on the conditions of outdoor playgrounds.
- ECKERS and ITERS tools are used to ensure safe classroom environments.
- Monthly fire drills, seasonal tornado drills and periodic lockdown drills are completed.

Framework #4 – *Healthy Practices and Routines*

- Family style meals and interaction at meal times is implemented.
- Menu plans show a variety of nutritional foods that are served daily.
- Staff practice hygienic routines (i.e., hand washing etc.).
- Early Head Start enforces appropriate diapering practices and disposal.

Framework #5 – *Group Size*

- ODJFS rules and regulations are enforced concerning ratio requirements.
- Systems are in place to ensure appropriate staff coverage in the classrooms.
- Requirements are exceeded with the SUTQ rated system benchmarks.

Framework #6 – *Safe Transportation*

- Early Head Start and Home Base vehicles are inspected and have regular maintenance checks for safety.
Family and Community Services

- Other Resources: Community Assessment information, Lorain County Quick Facts.

Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance

Framework #1 – Recruitment and Selection

- Recruitment plan is in place and entails a variety of activities.
- Pregnant women are recruited with the assistance and collaboration of the Health Department.
- LCCAA has met and exceeded the 10% children with disabilities requirement.

Framework #2 – Eligibility

- 100% of files reviewed had the appropriate income verification documentation.
- LCCAA is active in the “child find” efforts in collaboration with the school districts.
- 98% of files reviewed fall under the 100% poverty level and 2% are in between the 100-130% poverty guidelines.

Framework #3 – Enrollment

- Full enrollment was met on day one of school and the reporting of enrollment is done in an efficient and timely manner.
- LCCAA has a waiting list to enroll new families and a ranking system guides the process and is recorded through the Genesis Earth database system.

Framework #4 – Attendance and Participation

- Efficient tracking of attendance is done through the Genesis Earth database system
- Procedures and documentation are in place to communicate with families where there are attendance concerns.
Family and Community Engagement

Other Resources: Community Assessment Information

Framework #1 – Building Relationships and Strengthening Families

- LCCAA establishes, maintains and utilizes community partnerships to meet the needs of children and families.
- Needs assessments are completed and reviewed.
- Interagency Agreements are in place with collaborative partners and 17 local school districts.
- LCCAA is a very diverse and multicultural organization that is respectful to the cultural norms and values of families.
- A Health Advisory Committee meets quarterly or more.

Framework #2 – Promoting Positive Parent Child Relationships

- A comprehensive “Parent handbook” is given to families at orientations.
- Monthly parent meetings take place where topics (i.e., financial literacy) are covered and documented with agendas and minutes.
- Special events and family activities (i.e., Wild About Learning) take place quarterly where Language, Math, Science and Social Studies is targeted and families receive books and other materials as resources.
- Multiple modes of communication: Newsletters, Bi-weeklies, Home Visits, Parent Conferences, Website and Committees.

Framework #3 – Supporting Parents as their Child’s First and most Important Educator

- Parents feel they have opportunities to enhance their skills and engage in meaningful activities with their child.
- Through community resource parents are offered a 16 week parenting class.
- Parents give feedback on child outcomes and individualization.

Framework #4 – Developing Meaningful and Individualized Transitions

- Transition information is given to transitioning families monthly.
- A county-wide piloted document called “Traveling to Kindergarten” is utilized between the teacher and parent to gather child information for Kindergarten preparation.
- Assistance to families during the registration process for school districts occurs in Spring.
Fiscal Integrity

Other Resources: Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

Framework #1: *Financial Management Systems*

- There is evidence of procedures in place that are systemic to ensure integrity of agency credit cards, signing of checks, paying bills, monthly budget reviews and appropriate record keeping, CEO and BOD approvals.
- Records indicate the agency maintains appropriate insurance.

Framework #2: *Reporting*

- There is sufficient evidence of systematic reporting. The general ledger, IRS and tax information, Financial reports in accounting and budgets are recorded in a systematic way.
- Audits report no issues.

Framework #3: *Procurement*

- There is sufficient evidence and documentation of procurement policies and procedures.
- Contractual agreements of goods, services and payments are documented.

Framework #4 – *Compensation*

- There is sufficient evidence and documentation that compensation regulations are followed thoroughly.
- The agency follows wage comparable guidelines.

Framework #5 – *Cost Principles*

- There is sufficient evidence the program meets and has exceeded Non-federal share requirements.
- There is sufficient evidence and documentation that systems are in place to monitor direct and indirect costs, allowable and allocable costs.

Framework #6 – *Facilities*

- There is sufficient evidence and documentation that the agency follows Facility and property requirements and holds appropriate insurance policies.
- Appropriate inventory of equipment and materials are documented.
Management Systems

Other Resources: Community Assessment Information

Framework #1 – Program Planning

- Self assessment is completed and used for projected program planning.
- Quarterly reporting retreats are implemented to conduct ongoing program planning.

Framework #2 – Ongoing Monitoring, Record Keeping and Recording.

- A variety of monitoring tools are used for regular monitoring. (CLASS, ECERS/ITERS, Genesis Earth, File Reviews, Classroom Observations).
- School readiness goals are developed and used to guide monitoring.
- The agencies annual report is presented to the community at LCCAA’s annual luncheon.

Framework #3 – Human Resources

- We have met the staff credentialing benchmark of Oct.1, 2011
- Personal polices are current with mandated regulations.
- Staff orientations are organized.
Program Governance

Other Resources: Roberts Rules

Framework #1 – Structure

- Content area experts are in place for all areas.
- Policy Council members are established and the majority are current parents.

Framework #2 – Conflict of Interest

- There are NO conflicts of interest.

Framework #3 – Roles, Responsibilities and Training

- Governing body review, approves, denies and oversees all areas of Head Start.
- Shared governance meetings and training are bi-annual.

Framework #4 – Reporting to Governing Body and Policy Council

- Monthly council meetings are established where all areas of Head Start reports.
Strengthening the Program

Child Development and Education
Framework #3 – Individualizing
- The Self Assessment will be used to identify any staff training needs concerning medical and dental needs for children.

Framework #4 – Monitoring Children’s Progress
- Training will be provided to enhance and further English Language Learner (ELL) and Dual language Learner (DLL) needs.

Child Health and Safety
Framework #1 – Helping Families Access Health and Dental Care
- Revise and review training for completion of blood work.

Framework #3 – Physical Environments
- Continue to provide training on medication processes.

Family and Community Services
Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance

Framework #1 – Recruitment and Selection
- Add migrant and seasonal line to selection criteria form.

Family and Community Engagement
Framework #1 – Building Relationships and Strengthening Families
- Continue to strengthen communications with collaborative as well as provide training as needed.

Management Systems
Framework #3 – Human Resources
- Implement an action plan for the 2013 credentialing Bachelor Degree requirement. (see attached).