Kentucky River Foothills Head Start
Self-Assessment Results
2011-2012

School Readiness Plan

Program Strengths:

- Formal School Readiness Goals in the 5 domains of development have been created which align with both the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework and the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards.
- These School Readiness Goals were a collaborative effort from Head Start Directors across the state.
- TS GOLD assessment data aligns with the Head Start Development and Early Learning Framework/Kentucky Early Childhood Standards and is being used to determine program progress towards our school readiness goals.
- T/TA goals align with School Readiness Goals

Specific Program Weakness and Areas to Strengthen:

- Continue data collection that will allow the program to determine if progress is being made towards goals.
- Continue to provide training to parents and staff regarding the School Readiness Goals.
Program Governance

Program Strengths:

- There is a formal structure of shared decision-making and partnership between the governing board (Board of Directors), Area Policy Council (APC) and the staff to lead the Head Start program. (APC and Board meeting minutes documenting review and approval of programmatic decisions).
- A member of the governing board represents Head Start at Agency Board of Director meetings and attends APC meetings.
- The Area Policy Council meetings and agendas are well-documented and kept on file at the KRFHS Central Office (review of APC meeting notes and agendas).

Specific Program Weakness and Areas to Strengthen:

- The APC Representative who represented Early Head Start had to step down in summer 2011. We are recruiting another Parent Representative from Early Head Start and hope to have this position filled in the near future.
Program Strengths:

- Community assessment data and recommendations from self-assessment were presented to APC and a plan was developed to address findings. (Per review of Self-Assessment and APC meeting notes).
- In the areas where there were weaknesses or areas to strengthen noted from 2010-2011 self-assessment, there is a plan that outlines what actions have been taken and what results were achieved from the actions (2010-2011 Self-Assessment notebook).
- KRFHS collaborates with LEA’S in all counties and there are agreements for collaboration (Program Planning meeting notes and Full Utilization Agreement notebook).
- Program Plan changes were made at the February 17, 2011 APC meeting utilizing data from the Community Assessment, County Snapshots and Strategic Plan that had been presented at the January 2011 APC.
- Through our childcare partner in Laurel County, the program was able to change a location to a more populated area to better meet the needs of families.

Specific Program Weakness and Areas to Strengthen:

- Full Utilization agreements should address Head Start Performance Standard, USDA and CACFP food guidelines, and identify mealtime as an extension of the classroom for interaction.
Communication

Program Strengths:

- Each location now has email access, which affords much timelier communication between staff in the centers and staff in the Central Office.
- KRFHS has several ways to communicate with families (items sent home in backpacks, phone calls, home visits, parent conferences, newsletters and parent meetings).
- There is communication between LEA Preschool Coordinators resulting in seamless provision of services to Head Start children.
- KRFHS has written policies and procedures pertaining to communications systems (review of Procedures manual).
- The parents interviewed felt the Child Orientation was very informative and welcoming, and that this lessened the fears of their children about entering the program. (Per interviews with parents/guardians from Madison, Clark and Powell County).
- The Head Start Director informs the Area Policy Council of information before and during the meetings. The meeting minutes and reports for the meeting are mailed to the Area Policy Members prior to the meeting for review. Area Policy Members are always asked for input and the Director is open to their suggestions.

Specific Program Weakness and Areas to Strengthen:

- KRFH has a low internet presence. There is a need to create a website that can be used as a communication tool for our families, staff and community partners.
Program Strengths:

- To ensure accurate record keeping, KRFHS contracted with ChildPlus to provide training for HS and EHS staff in April 2011 on the use of this system.
- Review of Child/Family files reflects detailed record keeping.
- The setup of the EHS Child/Family files is systematic and efficient.
- Parent information tracking sheets ensure that requirements are being met in the designed timeline and are used to compare information in the files to information in ChildPlus.
- ChildPlus reports are reviewed during staff meetings and county team meetings and compared along with attendance reports, enrollment reports, PIR reports, and class lists to determine any concerns and develop a plan of action.
- Education Coordinators attended Teaching Strategies GOLD (TS GOLD) “Train-the-Trainer” sessions. As a result of this knowledge, staff using the TS GOLD system can get support directly from C/O staff in utilizing this system.

Specific Program Weakness and Areas to Strengthen:

- None Noted
Ongoing Monitoring

Program Strengths:

- KRFHS received an Early Learning Mentor coaching grant and has been able to utilize the mentors to go into classrooms to observe and monitor. The mentors have used ECERS, CLASS, and ITERS to score classrooms and give feedback and resources to the teachers. This has resulted in an increase in classroom scores on these tools.

- The management team completes Center Visit Checklists to monitor centers on a regular and ongoing basis. These reviews are rotated among management staff in order to give different sets of eyes and expertise to these reviews. The management team reviews findings (areas of concern) and responds in a timely manner (review of Checklist files).

- Center staff completes Monthly Center Checklists to ensure on-going self-monitoring (review of county team meeting notes and county team boxes).

- APC is given reports reflecting services delivered for review and comment. These reports include PIR, Mid Year and End of Year reports, Enrollment reports and Screening/Recruitment reports (APC meeting records).

- Parent Information Tracking forms are completed by the Family Services Workers/Teachers and are sent to the Health Services Coordinator weekly until all data is verified on ChildPlus.

- Monthly County Team Meetings provide the opportunity to share information regarding operations of each county or LEA. (Review of county team meeting notes and county team boxes).
KRFS has a comprehensive monitoring document. The Central Office Coordinators submit monthly Monitoring Reports to the Director to ensure accountability in all program systems and services.

Specific Program Weakness and Areas to Strengthen:
- Family Partnership data should be entered into ChildPlus on a consistent basis. ChildPlus can then be used to monitor Family Partnerships online at Central Office.

Human Resources

Program Strengths:
- PIR and staffing records show low staff attrition. This leads to continuity of care for KRFH families and children.
- Opportunities are afforded for on-going training and professional development.

Specific Program Weakness and Areas to Strengthen:
- None noted
Fiscal Management

Program Strengths:

- The division of power between Head Start Director and Fiscal Management Department at CAA office results in effective checks/balances system.
- The Annual Audit of funds is provided to APC and the Governing Board, and posted on the Agency website and available to the public.
- Area Policy Council and KRF board are given regular updates and reports of revenues and expenses from the Fiscal Department.

Specific Program Weakness and Areas to Strengthen:

- None Noted
Program Strengths:

- The program uses ChildPlus to track health event status for each child. ChildPlus data is compared to actual file data during folder checks to ensure accuracy.
- The program coordinates with 13 dentists to provide dental exams and treatment.
- The program has a procedure in place to ensure families in need have necessary assistance by providing payment for health care services (dental/health care) to meet the needs of the child.
- Mental Health Consultants are available for on-site consultations at all locations.
- Coordination with Community Resources (i.e., Health Department and County Extension Offices, who conduct trainings on wellness and nutrition, and school nurses who perform some health screenings).

Specific Program Weakness and Areas to Strengthen:

- None noted.
Tracking and Follow-up

Program Strengths:

- Folder reviews are conducted and compared with ChildPlus data to ensure the tracking system accurately reflects the file data.
- Health Events are effectively monitored and discussed at Staff Meetings and County Team Meetings.
- Child Outcomes are monitored, tracked, and shared with KRFHS APC, Governing Board, LEA partners, Child Care partners, and teachers.
- Child Outcome data is available from Birth to Five.

Specific Program Weakness and Areas to Strengthen:

- To bring our Family Service Worker caseloads in alignment with the recommendation from the 2007 Improving Head Start Act.
Individualization

Program Strengths:
- The files reviewed showed evidence of individualized planning for each child.
- Parents interviewed indicated that home visits and parent conferences were child-focused and very informative.
- Teachers use TS GOLD and CORE to assess each child to determine need for additional assistance.
- EHS teachers and parents complete a daily sheet which provides detailed information about the child’s day.
- EHS teachers complete individualized lesson plans weekly using TS GOLD.

Specific Program Weakness and Areas to Strengthen:
- Increase knowledge and use of TS GOLD for individual planning.

Disabilities Services

Program Strengths:
- The program has consistently recruited and enrolled well above the mandated 10% of children with disabilities.
- Parents are supported throughout the referral process and are included in the decision making process in regard to their child.
- ChildPlus.net has allowed for an on-line disability services tracking system.
All services including physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech are provided to the child in the least restrictive environment.

Specific Program Weakness and Areas to Strengthen:
- None Noted

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**Curriculum and Assessment**

**Program Strengths:**
- A standard curriculum is used which assists in aligning the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework and the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards.
- Teachers send parents information monthly emphasizing the areas being taught. Parents have the opportunity to encourage their child to participate in homework activities and classroom activities.
- The children are evaluated three times a year through TS GOLD or CORE, progress reports, and anecdotal notes.
- Professional Development opportunities are tied to the results of CLASS and Child Outcomes data.
- All assessment data is online which allows the Education Coordinators and Early Head Start Manager access to monitor data.

Specific Program Weakness and Areas to Strengthen:
- Increase Professional Development opportunities focusing on language development
Family Partnership Building

Program Strengths:

- The Family Services Worker had evidence of “Services Currently Receiving and Needed” and “Family Interest Surveys” to ensure resources were provided to families based on their specific needs.
- The APC meetings include community representative reports and programs to inform parents and support staff of community activities and agencies to meet needs.
- 100% of families received family services (PIR 2010-2011).
- Family Partnership Engagement training was held November 18, 2011.

Specific Program Weakness and Areas to Strengthen:

- To be better able to disseminate information to families about service availability and access in their community.
Program Strengths:

- KRFHS received a Bluegrass Community Foundation grant to provide additional training to parents in the areas of concept development, language development, language modeling and quality feedback. The program will be able to provide 5 training sessions to parents with this grant.
- Parents are given numerous opportunities to be involved with the Head Start program such as serving on the Area Policy Council, Health Advisory, Curriculum Committee, volunteer opportunities in school and PTO (APC meeting notes, Advisory Council meeting records).
- The program has provided parent trainings in the past year (i.e., Appelbaum and Conscious Discipline) with nationally accredited trainers. All parents (LEA, child-care partners, and Head Start) are invited to attend.

Specific Program Weakness and Areas to Strengthen:

- The program will work to increase family participation in parent meetings and activities.
Community and Childcare Partnerships

Program Strengths:

- Parents interviewed stated that families feel welcomed and that the program values parental input.
- Over 50% of our students are being served through a School System or Child Care Partner (Enrollment Report to APC).
- Collaborative agreements are in place with LEA’s in our service area, as well as First Steps, Comprehensive Care, Dental and Healthcare providers and Child Care providers.
- Staff members participate in many community activities and meetings including: The Bluegrass Early Childhood Advisory Board, Bluegrass and Cumberland Valley DEIC, Early Learning Leader Networks, the Madison County Interagency Council, Family Resource Center Advisory Board, Regional Training Center Advisory Board, and Bluegrass Christian Academy.
- There is coordination with Family Resource Center Directors to assist with community events, trainings and parent activities.

Specific Program Weakness and Areas to Strengthen:

- None Noted
Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance

Program Strengths:

- The program has met or exceeded funded enrollment at all times during the program year.
- The program has exceeded over 85% attendance in all months of the current program year.
- The program has screening/recruitment guidelines in place with each school district and conducts joint recruitment and screenings.
- The program has a variety of methods for reaching families about the Head Start program such as: newspaper articles, TANF mailings, backpacks, home visits, flyers, radio stations, and collaboration with LEA.

Specific Program Weakness and Areas to Strengthen:

- None Noted
Facilities, Materials, Equipment and Transportation

Program Strengths:

- Center Visit Checklists are completed to ensure facilities, materials and maintenance is being observed objectively. These are reviewed in monthly team meetings.

- On December 28, 2010 the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission implemented new crib safety standards mandating that any crib that does not meet the standards be replaced prior to 12/28/2012. To protect the safety of infants and toddlers, the program has already replaced the cribs well before the deadline.

Specific Program Weakness and Areas to Strengthen:

- None Noted.
Using Child Outcomes in Program Self-Assessment

Program Strengths:
- Trainings are planned based on outcome data.
- Child outcome data guides the program to plan for new changes based on assessment results and the KRFHS School Readiness Goals. The program has provided CLASS data to APC, Governing Board and teachers.
- Outcome data allows the program to make comparisons or to see trends from past years which then helps with program planning for the upcoming year.

Specific Program Weakness and Areas to Strengthen:
- Based on Outcomes data, professional development opportunities will be provided in the area of concept development and language development.
- KRFHS School Readiness Goals will be utilized in the development of our program plan.