

School Readiness Plan

1. Program Description

Suwannee Valley 4Cs Head Start and Early Head Start current funded enrollment is 426. All children are served under the center-based option.

Head Start Centers – Funded enrollment 242

The Learning Center – Columbia County (91)	Ft. White Learning Center – Columbia County (17)
Jasper Head Start – Hamilton County (17)	Live Oak Head Start – Suwannee County (66)
Jennings Head Start – Hamilton County (17)	Branford Head Start – Suwannee County (17)
Mayo Head Start – Lafayette County (17)	

All Head Start classrooms operate under the center-based, single session/full day standard. Voluntary pre-kindergarten series (VPK) are available to enrolled Head Start children (4-year-olds) which extend the day until 4:30 p.m. Classroom size is a maximum of twenty (2) children with no more than a 1:10 teacher to child ratio. The staff pattern in each classroom is one Lead Teacher plus one Teacher Assistant and a third part-time / full-time Teacher Assistant (VPK/HS classrooms). Head Start center staff is supervised by Site Coordinators and supported by floater teachers, Teacher Mentors and Regional Education Coordinators.

Early Head Start Centers – Funded enrollment 184

The Learning Center – Columbia County (16)	Lawton’s Place – Columbia County (72)
Jasper Head Start – Hamilton County (24)	Jennings Head Start – Hamilton County (24)
Azalea Park First Class – Suwannee County (56)	

All Early Head Start classrooms operate under the center-based, single session/full day/full year standard. Classroom size is a maximum of eight (8) children with no more than a 1:4 teacher to child ratio. (A classroom of eight children with two teachers.) Center staff is supervised by Site Coordinators and supported by floater teachers, Teacher Mentors and Regional Education Coordinators.

2. Program Philosophy

Suwannee Valley 4Cs believes that, supported by a high-quality early childhood program and access to comprehensive services when needed, every parent has the potential to raise successful, happy and healthy children. We believe that an environment that values and respects each family’s culture and strengths, and that supports and empowers families in areas of need, will produce children and families that are resilient, self-sufficient and successful. We believe that our role is to provide a safe, healthy, nurturing environment in which each child can develop at his or her own rate, supported by developmentally appropriate materials and activities, and to provide support and empowerment to parents as they fulfill their roles as their child’s primary and most important teachers.

3. Introduction to School Readiness

The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act makes it a top priority for programs to contribute to the school readiness of children. Specifically, the Head Start Act requires programs to *“establish...program goals that are aligned with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, State Early Learning Standards, and requirements and expectations of the schools the children will be attending.”* School readiness goals are the *“expectations that children’s statuses and progression across domains of language and literacy, cognition and general knowledge, approaches toward learning, physical well-being and motor development, and social and emotional development will improve children’s readiness for kindergarten.”*

4. The Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (HSELOF): Ages Birth to Five

HSELOF presents five broad areas of early learning, referred to as central domains. These domains reflect research-based expectations for learning and development. The framework emphasizes the key skills, behaviors and knowledge that foster children ages birth to five to help them be successful in school and life.

Domain¹ (HSELOF)	School Readiness Goals² <i>By the last assessment period of the school year, (Birth –Five)</i>
Social and Emotional Development	85% of children will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrate that social and interpersonal skills are emerging - demonstrate positive relationships and interactions with adults and peers - recognize and regulate emotions, attention, impulse and behavior
Approaches to Learning	80% of children will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - learn and demonstrate knowledge and concepts that align with information that is available in activities and materials - demonstrate an interest and engagement in large and small group experiences as well as cooperative play with peers - demonstrate the use of creative and imaginative expression such as music, movement, art and drama
Language and Literacy	80% of children will demonstrate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the ability to use language - an interest in books and their characteristics, and the ability to understand and get meaning from stories and information from books and other texts - knowledge of concepts about print and early decoding (identifying letter-sound relationships) - familiarity with writing implements, conventions and emerging skills to communicate through written representations, symbols and letters
Cognition and General knowledge (Mathematics Development and Scientific Reasoning)	80% of children will demonstrate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an understanding of math by counting, comparing, relating, identifying patterns and problem solving. - the ability to recognize, understand and analyze a problem and draw on a knowledge or experience to seek solutions to a problem - the ability to observe and collect information and use it to ask questions, predict, explain and draw conclusions - the understanding of one’s relationship to the family and community, roles in the family and community and respect for diversity
Physical Health and Development	90% of children will demonstrate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - and practice healthy and safe habits - age appropriate control of large muscles for movement, navigation and balance - age appropriate control of small muscles for such purposes as using utensils, self-care, building and exploring
English Language Development	80% of children who are dual language learners will demonstrate competency in their home language while acquiring beginning proficiency in English

¹ Head Start/Early Head Start children will demonstrate in authentic and routine activities in the classroom and at home abilities at or beyond the level of “widely held expectations” for their age groups.

² Collection and analysis of outcome data will reflect the relevance of goals to children’s age.

5. Strategies for High-quality Teaching and Learning to Achieve Established School Readiness Goals

- a) Evidence-based curricula Creative Curriculum System for Preschool (HS) and Infants, Toddlers and Two's (EHS), teaching strategies and assessment align with school readiness goals.
- b) High-quality teacher / child interactions support children's emotional and intellectual growth on a daily basis.
- c) Teachers and program staff have well organized learning environments, stimulating and purposeful materials, and management skills that promote social-emotional development, active engagement in learning activities and guides appropriate behavior.
- d) Teachers and program staff are proficient at teaching the curriculum and teaching school readiness skills within daily activities in a manner that is developmentally appropriate, meaningful to children and promotes skill acquisition and positive outcomes.

6. Curriculum

Creative Curriculum is consistent with HSPPS and aligns with *The Child Development and Early Learning Framework and Framework for Programs Serving Infants and Toddlers and Their Families*. It is developmentally appropriate and research-based. Additional curriculum resources are utilized to enhance planned activities for the children.

Head Start Curriculum – The Creative Curriculum for Preschool is aligned with HSELOF which is aligned with the Florida Birth to Five Learning and Development Standards (2017). The Creative Curriculum for Preschool has six (6) comprehensive volumes.

Volume 1 – The Foundation presents the theory and research behind the curriculum, helps teachers translate them into practice and explains the six components of teaching preschool children effectively.

Volume 2 – Interest Areas discusses the ten classroom interest areas and the outdoors, suggesting appropriate materials and presenting teachers with ways to promote children's development and learning.

Volume 3 – Literacy gives teachers the latest research-based strategies for supporting early literacy learning, helping them to teach intentionally and incorporate language and literacy learning into everyday classroom experiences.

Volume 4 – Mathematics explains the components and process skills of mathematics and provides teachers with practical strategies for promoting mathematics learning throughout the day.

Volume 5 – Science and Technology, Social studies and the Arts discusses how to make these subject areas a part of children's everyday learning through in-depth investigations, teacher-child interactions, changes to the interest areas, and family and community involvement.

Volume 6 – Objectives for Development and Learning presents the 38 objectives for development and learning; user-friendly, color-coded developmental progressions that show widely-held expectations for children and strategies to help every child progress.

Teaching is intentional and focuses on how preschool children learn. Meaningful play is key as teachers set up situations where children: can investigate and explore, have purposeful engaged play, and receive intentional, scaffolded instruction based on each child's developmental level. Teachers know when to intervene as appropriate to extend learning by asking questions and by direct teaching of specific skills. Teachers understand that different learning needs call for different kinds of teacher / child interactions.

The curriculum:

- Supports each child's individual pattern of development and learning;
- Provides for the development of cognitive skills by encouraging each child to organize his or her experiences, to understand concepts and to develop age appropriate literacy, numeracy, reasoning, problem solving and decision-making skills, which form the foundation for school readiness and later school success;
- Integrates all educational aspects of the health, nutrition and mental health services into program activities;

- Ensures that the program environment helps children develop emotional security and social relationships;
- Enhances each child's understanding of self as an individual and as a member of a group;
- Provides each child with opportunities for success to help develop feelings of competence, self-esteem and positive attitudes toward learning; and,
- Provides individual and small group experiences both indoors and outdoors.

Early Head Start Curriculum – The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Two's has three (3) comprehensive volumes.

Volume 1 – The Foundation provides the knowledge that teachers of infants, toddlers and twos need to create responsive environments and individualize care; outlines the research behind the curriculum and discusses the five central components of nurturing care and teaching.

Volume 2 – Routines and Experiences discusses the five routines and eight experiences that are essential to the development and learning of children birth to age 3; explains how to plan intentionally while maintaining the flexibility to respond to the changing interests and abilities of young children.

Volume 3 – Objectives for Development and Learning: Birth through Kindergarten explains the skills, knowledge and behaviors that matter most to the continuing development and learning of very young children.

Teaching is based on responsive caregiving by encouraging, supporting, respecting, comforting, engaging and responding to children. Program staff builds trusting and respectful relationships with families. Continuity of care integrates the family and their values and beliefs with caregiving that is responsive to the individualized needs and interests of each child. Trust and attachment are the context for learning and development in all areas – physical, social, emotional and cognitive.

7. Screening and Assessment

Screening Instruments

LAP-D (Head Start – Developmental and Social/Emotional)

The LAP-D developmental screening is conducted within 30 days of each child's entry into the program. This screening looks at the child's functioning in four developmental areas – fine motor, cognitive, language and gross motor. Teachers administer the screening and forward the results to the Health Services Disabilities / Mental Health Support Specialist.

Ages and Stages 3 (Early Head Start)

Ages and Stages 3 (ASQ-3) is completed within 30 days of enrollment according to each child's chronological age. ASQ-3 is a checklist that represents five key development areas – communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem-solving and personal / social.

Ages and Stages Social / Emotional (Early Head Start and Head Start)

Ages and Stages Social / Emotional (ASQ-SE) is completed within 30 days of enrollment according to each child's chronological age. The ASQ-SE provides a more in-depth look in the social / emotional area. Teachers administer the screenings and forward the results to the Health Services Disabilities / Mental Health Support Specialist.

Assessment System

Teaching Strategies GOLD Birth to Third Grade Assessment (Early Head Start and Head Start) aligns with HSELOF and Florida Birth to Five Learning and Development Standards (2017).

Frequency – Head Start children are assessed three (3) times per year, Early Head Start children are assessed four (4) times per year.

The assessment system (TS GOLD Birth to K):

- Serves children from birth to kindergarten;
- Measures the knowledge, skills and behaviors that are most predictive of school success;
- Aligns with the expected outcomes identified in state early learning standards;
- Inclusive of children with developmental delays and disabilities;
- Inclusive of children who are English-language or dual-language learners (DLL); and,
- Inclusive of children who are advanced learners.

The assessment system has 38 objectives divided into ten (10) areas of development and learning.

- Social / Emotional
- Physical
- Language
- Cognitive
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Science and Technology
- Social Studies
- The Arts
- English-language acquisition

Through assessment, teachers obtain useful information about children's knowledge, skills and progress by observing, documenting, analyzing and reviewing children's work over time.

8. Staff Support

Training

New teaching staff is required to have a teacher orientation to review the Teaching Staff Reference Manual (TSRM) which includes a description of the curriculum, assessment systems and school readiness. The manual gives guidance to teachers regarding lesson plans, curriculum, observations, children's portfolios, home visits, parent conferences, assessments, etc. Teachers utilize the Teaching Strategies GOLD Objectives for Development Guide which is particularly helpful in assisting teachers in identifying developmental levels and understanding developmental steps towards mastering an objective the guide supports observation and planning for all children, including DLLs, advanced learners and children with developmental delays / disabilities.

The program provides a one week pre-service training institute each summer focusing on effective curriculum implementation, assessments, special needs children, Head Start Program Performance Standards, and classroom activities ideas, etc.

During the school year, teachers are encouraged to ask questions regarding assessments and school readiness. These questions are shared with all staff so that everyone involved understands. Site Coordinators, Teacher Mentors and Regional Education Coordinators are available to staff daily and provide support regarding assessment and school readiness. Additional training / workshops are arranged as needed.

Planning

Lead Teachers and Teachers have dedicated time to plan curricular activities.

Professional Development

A Professional Development Plan (PDP) is completed by the supervisor for all education staff upon hire and with each annual performance evaluation. Necessary training support is provided to ensure proper implementation of the curriculum / assessment and to ensure appropriate teacher-child interaction through the CLASS Observation instrument. PDPs are updated throughout the year as necessary depending on individual staff training and professional development needs.

Coaching Strategy (See 1302.92 c)

Per HSPPS 1302.92 c, the program has implemented a research-based, coordinated coaching strategy for education staff that:

- Assesses all education staff to identify strengths, areas of needed support and staff who would benefit most from intensive coaching (CLASS and MITRCC);
- At a minimum, provides opportunities for staff identified for intensive coaching to be observed and receive feedback and modeling of effective teacher practices directly related to program performance goals;
- At a minimum, provides opportunities for research-based professional development aligned with program performance goals for staff not identified for intensive coaching;
- Ensures intensive coaching opportunities:
 - o align with program school readiness goals, curricula, and other approaches to professional development,
 - o utilize a coach with adequate training and experience in adult learning and in using assessment data to drive coaching strategies aligned with program performance goals,
 - o provide ongoing communication between the coach, program director, education director and any other relevant staff, and
 - o include clearly articulated goals informed by program goals as described in HSPPS 1302.102 and a process for achieving those goals; and,
- Establishes policies that ensure assessment results are not used to solely determine punitive actions for staff identified as needing support, without providing time and resources for staff to improve.

Technical Assistance

The program's Teacher Mentors provide direct assistance to teachers and classrooms regarding curriculum implementation including but not limited to – classroom arrangement, materials, equipment, classroom and playground activities, lesson plans, screenings / assessments, scheduling, early learning standards, quality teaching and learning, etc. Teacher Mentors conduct classroom observations and provide feedback regarding areas of praise and areas needing improvement. This information is also shared with supervisors for follow up.

Ongoing Monitoring

Ongoing monitoring is conducted regularly and includes, but is not limited to:

- Regular Teacher Mentor visits
- Bi-monthly classroom observations by the Site Coordinator
- Quarterly health and safety checks by Health Services
- Bi-annual classroom observations – CLASS, MITRCC (Site Coordinators, Teacher Mentors, Regional Education Coordinators)

- Random site visits by the Regional Education Coordinator, Director of Education and other staff
- ChildPlus reports

Supervisory staff share results of ongoing monitoring with teachers and provide follow-up and support where necessary.

9. Collection and Analysis of Child Outcome Data

During the school year, teachers and other staff are continually gathering child outcome information in various ways:

- Initial screenings (LAP-D, ASQ-3, ASQ-SE)
- Health screenings (hearing, vision, dental) within 45/90 days of enrollment
- TSGold Birth-K assessments
- Family conference following each assessment
- School readiness checklist for children entering kindergarten (Fall/Spring)
- IEP / IFSP for children diagnosed with a disability
- Mental health observations, as needed
- Written teacher observations
- Children portfolios (samples gathered monthly)
- Home visits / parent conferences
- Children and Families Enrollment Form

This information is constantly evaluated and included when planning daily for each child and the group as a whole.

When scheduled, teachers administer the TSGold Birth through Third Grade Assessment for each child taking into account all of the information gathered to date on the child. Teachers review the information previously collected to determine the level of each child for each assessment objective. Assessment results are entered in the program's data system to track child progress throughout the year.

10. Parent and Family Engagement

Parent and family engagement in Head Start and Early Head Start is about building relationships with families that support family well-being, supporting positive parent-child relationships and nurturing ongoing learning and development for both the child and parents. The *Parent, Family and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework* is a roadmap for progress in achieving the types of outcomes that lead to positive and enduring change for children and families.

Parents are encouraged to participate in their child's education experience in the program by assisting their child's teacher in setting up goals and developing a plan for progress over the course of the school year. Parents and teachers work together to assist the children in building the skills they will need in order to be successful in school and for later learning and life.

Teachers inform parents of their child's progress through home visits and parent conferences which are conducted throughout each school year. Information includes discussion about the child observations, family conference form and strategies for teachers and parents to assist the child in meeting goals.

Teachers look for every opportunity to involve parents in their classrooms. Parents are invited to visit the classroom any time. Teachers ask parents to participate in special activities / events, story time, community helpers, volunteer time, etc. Teachers provide a monthly activity calendar to the parents. Parents are encouraged to participate in parent meetings.

The program provides parent workshops during the school year (Transition to Kindergarten, Parents as Teachers, Literacy at Home, Child Growth and Development, etc.) to give parents new ideas and support in helping their children progress in school.

11. Use of School Readiness Data Results for Continuous Improvement

Teachers are able to immediately use information from ongoing monitoring and assessment results to plan for the classroom and individually for each child. The assessment results reflect where a child is progressing and where to focus future goal setting. Teachers plan activities for large and small group experiences that focus on learning goals for children.

Child Outcomes Committee members analyze assessment data, recommend improvements to systems and services to ensure children's progress and readiness for kindergarten. Following each assessment period, the committee meets to analyze aggregate data, review assessment reports and assess child progress. Standing members include: Site Coordinators, Health Services Coordinator, Disabilities / Mental Health Support Specialist (as necessary), Director of Education, Regional Education Coordinators, Teachers (as necessary) and the Family / Health Services Administrator.

Aggregate data is analyzed and used for problem solving and program improvement. The committee makes recommendations for program improvement (i.e. improvements to the assessment process, the learning environment for children, staff training). Meeting minutes are forwarded to the Executive Director.

12. Reporting Results

Individual child outcome information is shared with families during parent conferences / home visits and is documented on the Family Conference Form.

Aggregate data regarding school readiness is shared with the Policy Council and Board of Directors following each assessment period. Recommendations, if any, are presented for approval.

The program's annual report includes the required information regarding school readiness.

13. Integration of School Readiness Information in Program Management and Self-Assessment

Program management staff participate in child outcomes meetings following each assessment period and ensure appropriate participation, input and follow through regarding school readiness goals, challenges and recommendations for improvement.

During the annual self-assessment process, school readiness information is shared reflecting aggregate data gathered. Child progress is analyzed and participants discuss recommendations for program improvement. Established school readiness goals are reviewed and revised as necessary. Recommendations for improvement to school readiness systems and services are presented for approval to the Executive Director, Policy Council and Board of Directors.

14. Transition, Reference: Agency Work Plan – Transition Services

15. References

Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act, Sections 641A(g)(2)(A) – “(A) GOALS. An agency conducting a self-assessment shall establish agency-determined program goals for improving the school readiness of children participating in a program under this subchapter, including school readiness goals that are aligned with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework, State early learning standards as appropriate, and requirements and expectations of the schools the children will be attending.”

Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (HSELOF 2015)

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/school-readiness/article/head-start-early-learning-outcomes-framework>

Alignment of HSELOF and Florida Learning and Development Standards Birth to Five (2017)

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/school-readiness/article/head-start-early-learning-outcomes-framework>

Alignment of TSGOLD with HSELOF, and Florida Learning and Development Standards Birth to Five (2017)

<https://teachingstrategies.com/?s=alignment+>

https://teachingstrategies.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Head-Start-to-GOLD_2015-09.pdf

PFCE Framework

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/school-readiness/article/pfce-interactive-framework>

Creative Curriculum Birth to Five Alignments

https://teachingstrategies.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Teaching-Strategies_Alignment-to-Head-Start-Program-Performance-Standards.pdf