

Hinds County Human Resource Agency

*SCHOOL  
READINESS  
PLAN*



**Helping Families,  
Strengthening Communities**

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*School  
Readiness Plan*

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## INTRODUCTION

Research has established that preschool education can produce substantial gains in children's learning and development (Barnett, 2002). Studies also show that preschool education produces persistent gains on achievement test scores along with fewer occurrences of grade retention and placement in special education programs. (Barnett and Camill, 2002). Other long term benefits from preschool education include increased high school graduation rates and decreased crime and delinquency rates.

Hinds County Human Resource Agency Project Head Start continues to offer comprehensive, high quality Head Start and Early Head Start services for the families and their children 0 to 5 years old. Our highly qualified staff is equipped to foster partnerships with parents/families, school district staff, community partners, decision-makers and others to ensure that appropriate goals are established to improve school readiness for children participating in Head Start and Early Head Start.

## **HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

In the summer of 1967, Hinds County Human Resource Agency's (HCHRA) progenitor, Community Services Association (CSA), was created. Eight years later, CSA was discontinued and reborn in April 1976 as HCHRA, Hinds County's Official Community Action Agency. The Hinds County Board of Supervisors became the sponsoring agency of HCHRA and provided financial and other support and the City of Jackson donated space and resources.

Head Start, a comprehensive child development program, was established in Hinds County in 1965 through the combined efforts of the Child Development Group of Mississippi and the City of Jackson. HCHRA Head Start was organized in 1967 and placed under the Community Services Association (CSA). Once CSA was discontinued, Head Start was then placed under Hinds County's Community Action Agency.

HCHRA's mission is to empower disadvantaged citizens to become self-reliant and realize their full potential. The mission is forwarded by promoting and delivering a broad range of high-quality services for children, families, single adults, the elderly and the disabled.

HCHRA's vision is to become a more viable, highly visible and effective human and community service delivery entity. We desire to strengthen our ability to coordinate and integrate resources and services for the citizens we serve and do so in a timely and compassionate manner.

Hinds County Human Resource Agency serves 2,005 three- and four- year-old children and seventy-six Early Head Start children zero to three years old. Presently, there are nineteen (19) Head Start and Early Head Start centers. Four of the nineteen centers provide Early Head Start services. Fourteen centers are located in the City of Jackson and five centers are located in the rural areas of Hinds County.

Hinds County Human Resource Agency Project Head Start/Early Head Start provides comprehensive services including nutrition, disabilities services, education, family literacy, medical and dental health, parent involvement, social services, volunteer services, child development and mental health services to children and families.

Hinds County Human Resource Agency ensures that children who are dual language learners have the opportunity to interact and demonstrate their ability, skills and knowledge in their home language.

HCHRA also offers inclusive services to children with disabilities. Priority is given to children with disabilities who have been diagnosed with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP). HCHRA is committed to ensuring that children ages birth to five with disabilities are afforded the same opportunities for inclusive classroom settings as other students throughout the state.

## WHAT IS SCHOOL READINESS?

### **School Readiness Act of 2007**

*The Improving Head Start School Readiness Act of 2007* requires programs to address and strengthen school readiness for all children they serve, ages birth to five. The School Readiness Act and Head Start Program Performance Standard 1307.2 define school readiness goals as follows: School readiness goals mean the expectations of children's status and progress across domains of *language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge, approaches to learning, physical well-being and motor development, and social and emotional development* that will improve their readiness for kindergarten. In very board terms, the Office of Head Start's definition of school readiness is that "*children are ready for school, families are ready to support their children's learning and schools are ready for children.*" As Head Start leaders, we must identify the knowledge and skills children demonstrate when they are *school ready*.

Hinds County Human Resource Agency is committed to ensuring that children who leave our Head Start program are prepared when they enter the kindergarten program in the public schools by implementing *The Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework Domains*:

- Approaches to Learning
- Language and Literacy
- Cognition and General Knowledge
- Physical Development and Health
- Social and Emotional Development

With the implementation of these domains, Hinds County Project Head Start and Early Head Start will ensure that children (including those with disabilities) and families served are fully equipped with necessary skills to successfully transition to kindergarten.

# HEAD START APPROACH TO SCHOOL READINESS

## Overview

The Head Start Approach to School Readiness means that children are ready for school, families are ready to support their children’s learning, and schools are ready for children. Historically, Head Start often has led the early childhood field with a strong, clear, and comprehensive focus on all aspects of healthy development, including physical, cognitive, social and emotional development, all of which are essential to children getting ready for school. All agencies are required to establish school readiness goals, which are defined as “the expectations of children’s status and progress across domains of language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge, approaches to learning, physical health and well-being and motor development, and social and emotional development that will improve readiness for kindergarten goals” and that “appropriately reflect the ages of children, birth to five, participating in the program” (45 CFR Chapter XIII Head Start Regulation Part 1307.2 and 1307.3 (b)(1)(i), as amended). Head Start views school readiness as children possessing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in school and for later learning and life.

For parents and families, school readiness means they are engaged in the long-term, lifelong success of their child. Head Start recognizes that parents are their children’s primary teachers and advocates. Programs are required to consult with parents in establishing school readiness goals (45 CFR 1307.3 (b) (1) (iii), as amended). As Head Start programs and schools work together to promote school readiness and to engage families as their children make the transition to kindergarten, schools will be ready for children.

The Head Start Approach to School Readiness encompasses three major frameworks that promote an understanding of school readiness for parents and families, infants/toddlers, and preschoolers. The three frameworks and their accompanying graphics provide the foundation for implementing systemic and integrated comprehensive child development services and family engagement efforts that lead to school readiness for young children and families.

## HCHRA'S APPROACH TO SCHOOL READINESS

Hinds County Human Resource Agency has developed a School Readiness Leadership Team and Center Task Force Team. The School Readiness Leadership Team consists of administrators, supervisors, center staff, consultants, education specialists, parents, board members, policy council members and school district partners. The Leadership Team meets at our central office twice a year. The Center Task Force Team consists of center administrator, teacher, teacher assistant, custodian, family service staff, bus driver, security and parent/legal guardian. Each center has a Center Task Force which meets quarterly. In accordance with the 18 Month School Readiness Action Plan, the School Readiness Leadership and Center Task Force Teams plan to implement the following:

- Hold meetings in accordance with the scheduled meeting dates
- Review and share school readiness data with team members based on the Galileo Online Reports
- Review and share data/progress reports during the Head Start School Readiness Leadership Team and Local Education Agency (LEA) meetings in collaboration with team members from the school district to track the progress of Head Start children who attended Kindergarten
- Make recommendations to HCHRA administrators for staff trainings as documented in the 18 Month School Readiness Action Plan

HCHRA also believes School Readiness goals are expected to be established in consultation with the parents and families. At the beginning of the program year, the staff provides the parents with the Parent Education Continuum Request Form as a means of giving input on the readiness goals they would like their children to learn as referenced in the developmental domains. This form is kept with each child's individual record to be utilized during planning. The Galileo Individual Development Profile is shared with the parent and other family members as required during home visits, parent/staff conferences, weekly center activity reports, parent committee meetings, classroom/center visits, telephone interviews and others after each assessment period to show the goals learned in each domain/scale. A copy of the Galileo Individual Development Profile is another form of documentation that is kept in the child's record and used in the planning process.

Agency staff members are encouraged to engage in partnerships with families to further support their children's learning. Staff is available in the centers to support families by building strong relationships and responding to their interests and needs through formal partnerships.

In choosing which capabilities to include on the Galileo School Readiness Scale, Galileo staff analyzed the specific goals in the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, various state early learning standards, and Common Core Kindergarten Standards. Those capabilities that were common among the Framework and common core standards were identified as the school readiness goals for 5-year-old children transitioning into kindergarten.

## SCHOOL READINESS GOALS

Hinds County Human Resource Agency Project Head Start/Early Head Start in conjunction with our Local Education Agencies - Hinds County School District, Clinton School District and Jackson Public School District - will promote school readiness by ensuring that all children have the opportunity to engage in activities that support positive outcomes by implementing the following School Readiness Goals:

### **Goal 1: Approaches to Learning**

Children will show an interest in varied topics and activities, an eagerness to learn, creativity, and independence in their interactions with activities and materials.

### **Goal 2: Cognitive and General Knowledge**

Children will use math regularly and in everyday routines to count, compare, relate, identify patterns, and problem solve.

### **Goal 3: Language and Literacy**

Children will use and comprehend oral language for conversation, communication, and literacy and developmentally appropriate ways.

### **Goal 4: Social and Emotional Development**

Children will engage in and maintain positive relationships and interactions with peers and adults.

### **Goal 5: Physical Development and Health**







Children will demonstrate control of small and large muscles for movement, navigation, and balance.






































































































































### **Alignment References:**

- Creative Curriculum for Pre-School, Vol. 1-5
- Creative Curriculum for Infant and Toddlers, Vol. 1-3
- Head Start Child Development Early Learning Framework
- Galileo G3 Ongoing Assessment
- Parent/Staff Conference Form
- Home Visit Form
- Parent Education Continuum Form
- State Early Learning Guidelines/Common Core Standards
- LEA's Expectations



The following school readiness capabilities are included in each of the Galileo G3 Assessment Scales and the Creative Curriculum listed below and are inclusive of specific school readiness goals for children birth to five years old:

Essential Domains (Ages – color-coded) Birth to 5						
						
	(Birth – 1)	(1 – 2)	(2 - 3)	(3 - 4)	(4 – 5)	(kindergarten)
<b>APPROACHES TO LEARNING</b>						
<b>(1) Demonstrates positive approaches to learning</b>						
a. Attends and engages						
b. Persists						
c. Solves problems						
d. Shows curiosity and motivation						
e. Shows flexibility and inventiveness in thinking						
<b>(2) Remembers and connects experiences</b>						
a. Recognizes and recalls						
b. Makes connections						
<b>(3) Uses classification skills</b>						
<b>(4) Uses symbols and images to represent something not present</b>						
a. Thinks symbolically						
b. Engages in sociodramatic play						
<b>COGNITION AND GENERAL KNOWLEDGE</b>						
<b>(1) Uses number concepts and operations</b>						
a. Counts						
b. Quantifies						
c. Connects numerals with their quantities						
<b>(2) Explores and describes spatial relationships and shapes</b>						
a. Understands spatial relationships						
b. Understands shapes						
<b>(3) Compares and measures</b>						
<b>(4) Demonstrates knowledge of patterns</b>						
<b>LANGUAGE/LITERACY</b>						
<b>(1) Listens to and understands increasingly complex language</b>						
a. Comprehends language						
b. Follows directions						
<b>(2) Uses language to express thoughts and needs</b>						
a. Uses an expanding expressive vocabulary						
b. Speaks clearly						
c. Uses conventional grammar						
d. Tells about another time or place						
<b>(3) Uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills</b>						
a. Engages in conversations						
b. Uses social rules of language						
<b>(4) Demonstrates phonological awareness</b>						

a. Notices and discriminates rhyme and alliteration						
b. Notices and discriminates smaller and smaller units of sound						
<b>(5) Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet</b>						
a. Identifies and names letters						
b. Uses letter-sound knowledge						
<b>(6) Demonstrates knowledge of print and its uses</b>						
a. Uses and appreciates books						
b. Uses print concepts						
<b>(7) Comprehends and responds to books and other texts</b>						
a. Interacts during read-alouds and book conversations						
b. Uses emergent reading skills						
c. Retells stories						
<b>(8) Demonstrates emergent writing skills</b>						
a. Writes name						
b. Writes to convey meaning						
<b>(9) English Language Acquisition (DLL)</b>						
a. Demonstrates progress in listening to and understanding English						
b. Demonstrates progress in speaking English						
<b>SOCIAL - EMOTIONAL</b>						
<b>(1) Regulates own emotions and behaviors</b>						
a. Manages feelings						
b. Follows limits and expectations						
c. Takes care of own needs appropriately						
<b>(2) Establishes and sustains positive relationships</b>						
a. Forms relationships with adults						
b. Responds to emotional cues						
c. Interacts with peers						
d. Makes friends						
<b>(3) Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations</b>						
a. Balances needs and rights of self and others						
b. Solves social problems						
<b>PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT</b>						
<b>(1) Demonstrates traveling skills</b>						
<b>(2) Demonstrates balancing skills</b>						
<b>(3) Demonstrates gross-motor manipulative skills</b>						
<b>(4) Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination</b>						
a. Uses fingers and hands						
b. Uses writing and drawing tools						

# STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

## **Goal 1: Approaches to Learning**

Children will show an interest in varied topics and activities, an eagerness to learn, creativity, and independence in their interactions with activities and materials.

### **Strategies:**

- Specified child-initiated center time within the daily schedule
- Utilize open-ended questions during individualized, large and small group activities
- Art activities that encourage self-expression and decision making
- Demonstrates positive approaches to learning through curiosity and motivation
- Remembers and connects experiences through recognizing, recalling, and making connections

## **Goal 2: Language and Literacy**

Children will use and comprehend oral language for conversation, communication, and literacy and developmentally appropriate ways.

### **Strategies:**

- Utilize songs, chants, rhymes to promote language and literacy skills throughout the day
- Specified literacy learning time within daily schedule
- Print-rich environment that demonstrates literacy concepts throughout each center and on buses
- Introduction of varied spoken and written vocabulary through books, computer-based activities, music, and conversation
- Uses a variety of language, writing tools and materials to communicate with others

## **Goal 3: Cognitive and General Knowledge**

Children will use math regularly and in everyday routines to count, compare, relate, identify patterns, and problem solve.

### **Strategies:**

- Utilize open-ended questions to develop and encourage problem solving skills
- Utilize songs, chants and rhymes that incorporate math and numeracy throughout the day
- Explores and describes spatial relationships and shapes
- Uses number concepts and operations to gain a better understanding of their surroundings
- Demonstrate knowledge of patterns

#### **Goal 4: Physical Development and Health**

Children will demonstrate control of small and large muscles for movement, navigation, and balance.

##### **Strategies:**

- Incorporate physical activities into daily schedule
- Incorporate indoor and outdoor activities that support health and development
- Demonstrate fine motor strength and coordination
- Demonstrate gross motor manipulatives skills
- Demonstrate traveling and balancing skills

#### **Goal 5: Social and Emotional Development**

Children will engage in and maintain positive relationships and interactions with peers and adults.

##### **Strategies:**

- Develop, implement and encourage classroom rules to increase capacity to understand and follow rules and routines
- Utilize literacy and media activities to discovery, diversity and apathy
- Facilitate and encourage quality peer conversations and activities to foster a healthy environment of tolerance and diversity
- Ability to regulate own emotions and behaviors

## SCHOOL READINESS AND ONGOING ASSESSMENT

Hinds County Human Resource Agency selected Galileo Pre-K Online as its ongoing assessment system to track the progress and development for children 0 to 5 years old. Galileo Pre-K Online is fully aligned with and designed to support systematic implementation of the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework. Galileo is a researched-based online educational management system currently used by agency staff to support a collaborative, data driven and goal-directed approach to promoting positive child outcomes for children 0 to 5 years old.

Research shows that the social, physical, and cognitive environments that a child is exposed to in the first years of life have a lasting impact on how a child develops. The capabilities that children acquire during their formative preschool years have a profound affect on their successful transition to school, as well as on maintaining success while attending school. One of the fundamental goals of Assessment Technology Incorporated (ATI) is to assist programs in meeting the school readiness needs of children. To help programs target these valued educational goals, ATI has created the *Galileo School Readiness Scales*.

### **What are the Galileo School Readiness Scales?**

The *Galileo School Readiness Scales* are a set of reporting tools that consist of capabilities from the essential areas of learning and development reflected in the Galileo G3 assessment scales. The capabilities on these scales reflect valued school readiness goals that programs may use to report the progress their children are making in getting ready for successful entry into kindergarten. There are five *Galileo School Readiness Scales* which create a continuum for monitoring the progress of children from birth through five years. There is one *Galileo School Readiness Scale* for each of the Galileo G3 assessment scale age ranges - birth to 8 months, 8 to 18 months, 18 to 24 months, 24 to 36 months, and 3 through 5 years.

### **How were the goals on the Galileo School Readiness Scales selected?**

In choosing which capabilities to include on the *Galileo School Readiness Scale* for 3- through 5-year-olds, ATI analyzed the specific goals in the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, various state early learning standards, and Common Core Kindergarten Standards. Those capabilities that were common among the Framework, and standards were identified as the agreed-upon essential performance objectives for preschool-age children transitioning into kindergarten.

### **Are the Galileo School Readiness Scales aligned to the Head Start Child Development and Learning Framework and if so, what domains are included in the Galileo School Readiness Scales?**

Yes. The *Galileo School Readiness Scales* are made up of capabilities that are automatically linked to the skills articulated in the Galileo G3 assessment scales. The Galileo G3 assessment scales align to the domains and domain elements outlined in the Head Start Child Development and Learning Framework. The *Galileo School Readiness Scales* are organized into five knowledge areas: *Cognition and General Knowledge*, *Language and Literacy*, *Approaches to Learning*, *Social and Emotional Development*, and *Physical Development and Health*. Following is a table that shows how the school readiness knowledge areas align with the Galileo G3 assessment scales and the essential domains outlined in the Head Start Child Development and Learning Framework.

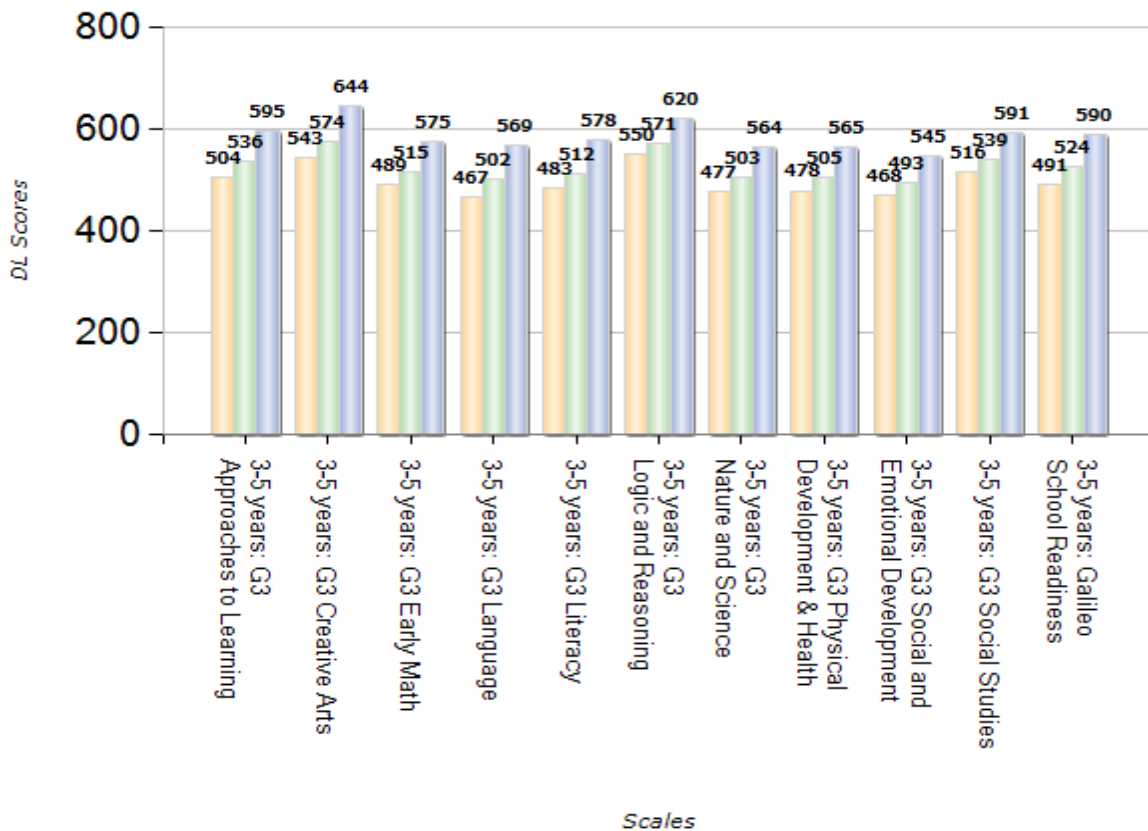
<b>Galileo School Readiness Scale</b>  <b>Birth-3 Years</b>  (Capabilities from each of the four birth-3 years age range scales in the following domains)	<b>Galileo School Readiness Scale</b>  <b>3-5 Years</b>	<u><b>Head Start Child Development and Learning Framework Domains</b></u>
Cognition and General Knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• G3 Cognitive Development and General Knowledge</li> <li>• G3 Social and Emotional Development</li> <li>• G3 Language, Communication, Reading &amp; Writing</li> <li>• G3 Approaches to Learning</li> </ul>	Cognition and General Knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• G3 Early Math</li> <li>• G3 Logic and Reasoning</li> <li>• G3 Nature and Science</li> <li>• G3 Social Studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mathematics Knowledge</li> <li>• Logic and Reasoning</li> <li>• Science Knowledge and Skills</li> <li>• Social Studies Knowledge and Skills</li> </ul>
Language and Literacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• G3 Language, Communication, Reading &amp; Writing</li> </ul>	Language and Literacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• G3 Language</li> <li>• G3 Literacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language Development</li> <li>• Literacy Knowledge and Skills</li> </ul>
Approaches to Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• G3 Approaches to Learning</li> <li>• G3 Cognitive Development and General Knowledge</li> <li>• Language, Communication, Reading &amp; Writing</li> </ul>	Approaches to Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• G3 Approaches to Learning</li> <li>• G3 Creative Arts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approaches to Learning</li> <li>• Creative Arts Expressions</li> </ul>
Social and Emotional Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• G3 Social and Emotional Development</li> </ul>	Social and Emotional Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• G3 Social and Emotional Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social and Emotional Development</li> </ul>
Physical Development and Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• G3 Physical Development and Health</li> <li>• G3 Language, Communication, Reading &amp; Writing</li> <li>• Cognitive Development and General Knowledge</li> </ul>	Physical Development and Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• G3 Physical Development and Health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical Development and Health</li> </ul>

## AGGREGATING, ANALYZING AND SHARING SCHOOL READINESS DATA

The staff aggregate and analyze school readiness data after each of the following assessment periods:

- Period One: August - October**
- Period Two: October - January**
- Period Three: January - April**

The following chart illustrates the 2012-2013 child outcomes.



The following six major types of Galileo Pre-K Online Reports enable program administrators, supervisors and specialists to generate data that reflect child outcomes. The reports can be produced at the individual, class, center and agency levels. The overall goals of the Online Reports are to provide access to information for use and setting educational goals, making and implementing plans to achieve those goals, and evaluating goal attainment.

1	Development Profiles and Learning Plans	Shows the count of children at each readiness level for each goal in a selected scale
2	Knowledge Area Proficiency Profiles	Shows the number and percentage of skills rated at the proficient level for each knowledge area
3	Development Milestones	Shows the percentage of children at each readiness level for selected goals in a scale
4	Development Summaries	Provides a series of four scores that summarize a child's development
5	Progress Reports	Shows change that occurred in children's development from an initial observation period to a subsequent observation period
6	Online Reporter	Expanded aggregated reporting on status, trends and progress

The Online Reports assist the classroom staff in making decisions during the planning process when children's readiness and skill levels are reflected in the data.

Agency Program Administrators share various Online Reports such as the Development Profile and Progress Reports with the parents, staff, school districts (LEA), Policy Council, Board of Directors and community partners. School readiness data is shared in the HCHRA Annual Report which is posted on the HCHRA web site.



## CURRICULUM APPROACH

- I. Our first priority is to ensure the safety and general well-being of all children enrolled in Head Start. We believe that young children learn best through active exploration of their environment. We strongly believe that the children should have choices and engage in meaningful developmentally appropriate activities throughout the school day. We also believe that classroom staff, parents, other family members and providers should form a team and work together to support the child's development and learning. The classroom staff is expected to show understanding and respect for each other, all children, parents, providers, consultants and others. They should use appropriate language to express needs and feelings.
- II. The Agency's written curriculum is *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool*, Volumes 1-5, 5th Edition, and *The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos*, Volumes 1-3, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. These curriculums include clear goals and objectives designed to meet the needs of multi-age groups that will help classroom staff to plan and implement individual and small group activities for children. *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool*, and *The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos* provide a knowledge base for how children grow and develop socially, emotionally, cognitively and physically. The classroom staff will be able to use this knowledge base in the weekly planning process. The classroom staff also uses the *National Head Start S.T.E.P. Teacher's Manual*, which was developed by the Center for Improving Readiness of Children's Learning and Education (CIRCLE) at the University of Texas. They also use the *Mississippi Early Learning Guidelines for Three and Four Year Old Children*, which is developed by the Mississippi Department of Education. This curriculum will assist to further develop the children's developmental readiness skills. Refer to page 46 for the names of other curriculums used by agency staff. Copies of the curriculums must be available for all classrooms.
- III. *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool* will be used to plan a program that meets the needs of individual children by determining where the children are in their development when they are enrolled in the centers. *The Battelle Developmental Inventory*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition will be utilized to screen the children within forty-five calendar days of entry into the program. The major areas of development that are included on the Battelle Screener are: Personal-Social, Adaptive, Motor, Communication and Cognitive. The parents will be asked to provide information on the children at the time of the enrollment process, during the screening process, the first parent-staff conference, the first home visit and during other contacts made throughout the school year. This information must be incorporated into an individualized lesson plan for each child.

## **PROVIDING PROFESSIONAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT TO PROMOTE SCHOOL READINESS**

Professional staff development is scheduled on the School Year Calendar during Pre-Service and In-Service Training. All staff will receive ongoing training on school readiness during Pre-Service Training in August and throughout the school year. The training agendas document an array of training topics that promote positive child outcomes for both Head Start and Early Head Start staff, such as:

- Opportunities for teachers and staff to enhance understanding of school readiness and early childhood education
- Familiarize teachers and staff with curriculum, effective teaching styles, and school readiness expectations
- Provide trainings to parents and staff concerning the importance of the following areas in school readiness, education, mental health, disability, nutrition, transition, and health

The administrative staff, center administrators and specialists conduct ongoing monitoring. They provide school readiness opportunities for immediate feedback and technical assistance to center-based staff. The staff will:

- Monitor children's progress in the attainment of established positive child outcomes through Galileo Pre-K Online
- Ensure that best practices are identified while monitoring
- Review Galileo data with center administrators, classroom staff and others as appropriate
- Monitor the specific classroom items on the ongoing monitoring tool that are referenced as elements of the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) observation instrument that promote teacher-child interactions

During the monitoring process, the administrative staff, center administrators, and Early Head Start specialists monitor specific classroom items and support teachers through developmentally appropriate dialogue, demonstrative teaching techniques, and mentoring/coaching strategies as needed.

## QUALITY TEACHER-CHILD INTERACTIONS

The CLASS observation instrument is used by agency administrators, supervisors and specialists to improve teacher-child interactions that support children's learning and development in the following defined areas:

- Emotional Support captures how teachers help children develop positive relations, enjoyment in learning, comfort in the classroom, and appropriate levels of independence.
- Classroom Organization focuses on how teachers manage the classroom to maximize learning and keep children engaged.
- Instructional Support involves how teachers promote children's thinking and problem solving, using feedback to deepen understanding, and help children develop more complex language skills.

All twenty-two (22) Center Administrators, four (4) Children's Services Specialists, two (2) Early Head Start Specialists, one (1) Children's Services Director and the Associate VP of Head Start and Early Childhood Programs have received CLASS training and they are CLASS reliable. These staff monitor classrooms using the CLASS observation instrument to further promote high quality teaching strategies and best practices in the Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms.

HCHRA will continue fostering an environment of encouraging positive teacher-child interactions by utilizing the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). Teachers will be assessed three times per year (September, December, March) utilizing CLASS to ensure and improve quality teacher-child interactions.

## TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

According to the Agency's 2013 Head Start Program Information Report, the following tables outline the qualifications earned by teachers, teacher assistants and infant and toddler teachers.

<b>TEACHERS</b>	
Associate Degrees in Early Childhood Education	24
Bachelor's Degrees in Early Childhood Education	66
Master's Degrees in Early Childhood Education	21
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>111</b>

<b>TEACHER ASSISTANTS</b>	
Associate Degrees in Early Childhood Education	55
Bachelor's Degrees in Early Childhood Education	21
Master's Degrees in Early Childhood Education	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>79</b>

<b>INFANT AND TODDLER TEACHERS</b>	
Associate Degrees in Early Childhood Education	0
Bachelor's Degrees in Early Childhood Education	19
Master's Degrees in Early Childhood Education	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23</b>

## **PARTNERING WITH PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN**

According to Head Start Program Performance Standard 1307.2 staff, parents and families are expected to ensure that “children are ready for preschool.” The center administrators, family services specialists and classroom staff work with the staff from Clinton, Hinds County and Jackson Public School Districts to plan and implement transition activities to the elementary schools to help promote a smooth transition to kindergarten.

During the LEA meetings, administrators and specialists review the LEA agreement to support a successful transition to kindergarten. Through the 18 Month Action Plan, the Head Start Leadership Team plans to strengthen partnership building by continuing to encourage parents to engage in transitional activities with their children.

## IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Families play an essential part in ensuring that children are ready for and successful in school. Hinds County Human Resource Agency Project Head Start/Early Head Start strives to form, maintain, and nurture Family Engagement throughout the learning process. While Family Engagement is constantly evolving and adapting to the needs and interests of children and families being served, strategies should always be systematic, integrated and sustained.

Systematic Family Engagement should be precisely and intentionally designed as core components of school readiness. Integrated Family Engagement is embedded throughout program systems, structures, and processes designed to ensure school readiness. Sustainable Family Engagement involves not only operating with adequate resources, but also forming and optimizing community partnerships and resources.

Our ultimate goal is to ensure that Family Engagement is meaningful, lasting and effective. By utilizing the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework, Hinds County Human Resource Agency Project Head Start/Early Head Start implements the following strategies:

- Professional Development
  - Staff training and workshops that educate and encourage Family Engagement within the classroom and home
  - Parent training and workshops that educate and encourage parents on the importance of being active participants in their child's education
  - Parent training and workshops that inform parents of their rights and train them to be advocates for their children
  
  - Assisting parents in career and educational advancement through effective Parent Engagement
  - Parent trainings, staff trainings and workshops addressing the importance of collecting accurate and meaningful data to guide decisions and support improvement
  - Staff training to build skills in cultural and linguistic diversity
  - Staff trainings and workshops to build capacity for staff promotions
- Community Collaboration
  - Connect families with community support systems and resources
  - Facilitate and participate in community meetings and initiatives that strengthen the Agency's ability to identify and meet the needs of the community
  - Engaging community partnerships that support the needs of expecting and existing families
  - Engage and facilitate effective partnerships with LEAs such as local school districts and day care centers

- Families are engaged as equal partners in the children’s learning development through:
  - Parent orientation
  - Parent-Teacher conferences (conducted two times a year)
  - Partnership plans/agreements (ongoing; based on the needs of the family)
  - Home visits (conducted twice per year)
  - Monthly parent meetings
  - Education Advisory Committee Meeting (conducted two times a year)
  - Health and Nutrition Advisory Committee Meeting (conducted twice per year)
  - Volunteer opportunities
  - Transition meetings to inform and facilitate the transition process

## CONCLUSION

Hinds County Human Resource Agency is committed to promoting universal school readiness requirements. We believe it is the responsibility of schools to meet the needs of children as they enter school and to provide whatever services are needed to help each child reach his or her fullest potential.

School Readiness involves more than just children. School Readiness, in the broadest sense, is about children, families, early environments, schools, and communities. Their skills and development are strongly influenced by their families and through their interactions with other people and environments before coming to school.

Therefore, HCHRA will ensure that all children are ready for a successful school experience in all areas of physical, cognitive, social, and emotional competence as well as positive attitudes toward learning.