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Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency

# Program Year 2021-2022

# Self-Assessment Report

# Self-Assessment Team Members

## Supporting Cast

(involved in discussions outside of Self-Assessment day)

- Kerry Baughman, NMCAA Executive Director
- Program Staff- representatives from all positions
- Policy Council Members
- Board Members
- Shannon Phelps, Early Childhood Programs Director

## Team Members by Focus Group

(in no particular order)

| **Health and Safety- Water Testing Processes** |
|---|
| • Abria Morrow, Site Manager *<br>• Kristin Ruckle, Data Analysis Coordinator<br>• Kelly Stockfisch, Facilities Coordinator<br>• Jessica Booms, Site Supervisor<br>• Brenda Pena, Lead Teacher<br>• Matt Butler, NW Water System Management |
| **Parent, Family, and Community Engagement- DEIB, Fatherhood** |
| • Stacey Parent, Mental Health and PFCE Manager *<br>• Kim Micham, Family Engagement Specialist Coordinator<br>• Heidi Flores, Collaborative Center Services Coordinator<br>• Denise Daniels, Collaborative Center Services Coordinaotr<br>• Kris Daniels, Lead Teacher<br>• Anne Kiogima, Early Head Start Child and Family Specialist<br>• Shannon Phelps, Early Childhood Programs Director<br>• Ashley Olstead, Site Supervisor<br>• Liz Dykgraff, Recruitment Specialist<br>• Marissa Larson, Early Head Start Coach |
| **Corrective Action Plan- Review and Follow Up** |
| • Katherine Kwiatkowski, Collaborative and EHS Center Based Manager *<br>• Alice Tobin, Policy Council Representative<br>• Bethany Dugan, Collaborative Center Services Coordinator<br>• Denise Daniels, Collaborative Center Services Coordinator<br>• Heidi Flores, Collaborative Center Services Coordinator<br>• Jenny Kelly, Collaborative Center Services Coordinator<br>• Kim Hagan, Site Coordinator<br>• Molly Nottenbaum, Site Supervisor |
| **Early Head Start Center Based Schedule** |
| • Katherine Kwiatkowski, Collaborative and EHS Center Based Manager*<br>• Kim Hagan, Site Coordinator*<br>• Chris Welton, Data Entry Clerk<br>• Debbie Blair, Child and Family Specialist<br>• Kimberly Steinacker, Family Center Specialist<br>• Kris Ostrander, Policy Council Representative<br>• Michele Maxwell, Family Center Specialist<br>• Tresha Schiemann, Recruitment and Health Specialist (HS) |
| **Eligibility- Enrollment Priority Criteria** |

- Alicia Temple, ERSEA and Health Manager *
- Arleen Hocking, Family Engagement Specialist
- Angela Johnson, Family Engagement Specialist
- Chris Welton, Data Entry Clerk
- Diane Boyer, Recruitment and Health Specialist (HS)
- Erica Canfield, Recruitment and Health Specialist (EHS)
- Kim Hagan, Site Manager
- Liz Dykgraaf, Recruitment Specialist
- Lynette Olson, Lead Teacher
- Michelle Karns, Health and Data Management Coordinator
- Robyn Varney, Recruitment and Health Specialist (HS)
- Tara Riley, Program Services Coordinator
- Tresha Schiemann, Recruitment and Health Specialist (HS)

**School Readiness Goals- Social Emotional, Perception/Motor/Physical**

- Dru O'Connor, Education Coach and Disabilities Manager *
- Julie Barber, Education Coach
- Dianna Medendorp, Education Coach
- Heather Miller, Education Coach
- Amy King, Family Engagement Specialist
- Keagan Dorrer, Early Head Start Teacher
- Maggie Manges, Direct Operated Teacher
- Rebecca Schichtel, Program Service Coordinator
- Linda Kadlec, Early Head Start
- Mandy Ordway, Direct Operated Assistant Teacher
- Kimberly Reitz, Early Head Start Center Based

**School Readiness Goals- Language and Communication, Literacy**

- Corey Berden, Early Head Start Program Manager *
- Emily Erwin, Program Services Coordinator
- Evie Hirdning, Child and Family Specialist
- Jenny Kelly, Collaborative Center Services Coordinator
- Megan Skowronek, Child and Family Specialist
- Rachel Buchner, Early Head Start Teacher
- Susan Lobb, Child and Family Specialist

**School Readiness Goals- Cognition, Attention to Learning**

- Katherine Kwiatkowski, Collaborative and EHS Center Based Manager*
- Bethany Dugan, Collaborative Centers Services Coordinator *
- Blair Cole, Policy Council Representative
- Heidi Flores, Collaborative Centers Services Coordinator
- Jason Paca, Recruitment and Health Specialist (HS)
- Marissa Larson, Early Head Start Mentor
- Tamara Risteau, Child and Family Specialist

* = group Leader

# I. Introduction

## A. Program Description

Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency (NMCAA) Head Start and Early Head Start Programs operate over a largely rural 10 county area in the upper northwest region of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. Total available program enrollment for the 2021-2022 program year consisted of 991 funded slots; 546 Head Start Center Based, 108 Head Start Collaborative Center, 18 Early Head Start Collaborative Center, 42 Early Head Start Child Care Partnership, 32 Early Head Start NMCAA Direct Operated Center Based, and 245 Early Head Start Home Based.

## B. Context for Self-Assessment

1. A complete community needs assessment was last conducted in December 2021. During that time, it was noted that prevalent social and economic factors affecting the well-being of area families include a shortage of affordable housing, a need for increased mental health services, and lack of affordable child care.
    - Based on the need for early care and learning opportunities, it was determined that we should reassess our program hours, starting with Early Head Start Center Based, to see if they are meeting the needs of our enrolled families and communities.
    - In light of other changing community factors, such as rates of homelessness, child abuse and neglect, increases in state four year old preschool slots, etc., it was also determined that our eligibility priority criteria would benefit from more extensive updates than what might typically take place from year to year.
2. Quarterly data from ongoing monitoring; including data related to child development and education, comprehensive services, ERSEA, program governance and leadership, health and safety, fiscal, and management systems; collected during the 2021-2022 program year was combined in an annual summary and evaluated.
    - As a part of this process, program goals and objectives were also reviewed and it was proposed that, in an effort to refine action steps and make appropriate course corrections for the coming year, these be examined in greater depth as a part of Self-Assessment.
    - Father involvement within our program has been limited. With ongoing discussions around diversity, equity and inclusion, the need to reevaluate the practices our program has in place to promote a sense of belonging for families, staff, and visitors was identified.
3. Our program went through a period of corrective action this past program year. While the area of concern was determined to be adequately addressed, we determined it would be beneficial to enhance our own policies and procedures around internal investigations.
4. We received a Focus Area Two review in March of 2022. During that time, we were asked to supply water lead tests for each of our centers. While this is not a licensing requirement in the state of Michigan, ensuring ongoing water testing makes sense to include as a regular practice, especially with issues such as the Flint water crisis and PFAS contamination occurring across the state.
5. After taking the above-mentioned factors into consideration, the following topics were chosen to include as Self-Assessment subgroups:

| Subgroup | Questions to Consider |
|---|---|
| **Program Schedule: Early Head Start Center Based** | Does the CB schedule meet the needs of the community, length of day, days of week?<br>Are the offerings in the community already meeting the need?<br>What other options may be available to fund or extend programming?<br>How might current staffing support any changes in schedule structure? |
| **Eligibility: Priority Criteria** | Is our eligibility criteria ensuring those with the highest need are prioritized for our programs? If not, what adjustments need to be made?<br>Being post COVID, what adjustments need to be made to the Priority Criteria? |
| **School Readiness Goals** | What progress have we made towards meeting our goals and what obstacles have been encountered?<br>What stands out when looking at the data?<br>What action step revisions do you suggest for next program year?<br>What budget considerations should be made? |
| **PFCE: DEIB and Fatherhood** | What are we currently doing to promote inclusivity, where are our gaps, and in what ways might we improve? |
| **Corrective Action Plan: Review and Follow-up** | How might we strengthen systems and procedures around special investigations? |
| **Health and Safety: Water Testing Processes** | What are the Head Start requirements regarding water quality?<br>What is our State/Licensing requirements?<br>How do we currently monitor water quality?<br>How will expectations of testing water quality be enhanced? |

# II. Methodology

An overview of the Self-Assessment process is outlined below.

| Date | Action | Purpose |
|---|---|---|
| 9/22-6/22 | Ongoing Monitoring and Quarterly Data Digs | ● Identify trends in data and make course corrections as necessary |
| 12/2021 | Community Needs Assessment Updated | ● Used in ongoing program planning |
| 1/21/22 | Community Needs Assessment Presented to the Board | ● Solicited questions, thoughts, and feedback |
| 2/10/22 | Community Needs Assessment Presented to Policy Council | ● Solicited questions, thoughts, and feedback |
| 5/3/22 | Self-Assessment Planning at Mini Management Meeting | ● Developed Plan for Self-Assessment |
| 5/12/22 | Self-Assessment Discussion at Policy Council | ● Obtained approval of Self-Assessment plan |
| 5/2022 | Data Discussions at Direct Supervisor Meetings | ● Discussions and feedback regarding findings from ongoing monitoring to share at Mini Management meeting |
| 5/17/22 and 6/7/22 | Mini Management Meetings Pre Self-Assessment Sessions | ● Reviewed data collected during ongoing monitoring over the program year<br>Identified potential topics for Self-Assessment |
| 6/9/22 | Self-Assessment Discussion at Policy Council | ● Finalized Self-Assessment topics |
| 7/1/22-7/14/22 | Self-Assessment Invitation and Orientation Email | ● Sent out official Self-Assessment invitations, specific to topic area groups, including an explanation of the Self-Assessment process and data and questions to consider prior to meeting dates |
| 7/11/22-7/22/22 | Self-Assessment Focus groups-Analyze and Dialogue | ● Self-Assessment subgroups met remotely to delve into their focus area. Background information was provided to participants and discussion was by a series of guided questions (Attached) |
| 8/2/22 | Self-Assessment Report Out | ● Subgroup representatives came together to share insights and recommendations with the larger group (compilation attached) |
| 8/2/22 | Review of Self-Assessment ideas and recommendations with Mini Management | ● Leaders from each Self-Assessment subgroup identified key points and revised priorities for the coming year to inform the Program Improvement Plan |
| 8/3/22-8/19/22 | Preparation of Self-Assessment Report | ● Report was drafted using information obtained throughout the Self-Assessment process |
| 9/15/22 | Policy Council Approval | ● Final Self-Assessment report was shared with Policy Council for consideration of approval |
| 9/22/22 | Board Approval | ● Final Self-Assessment report was shared with the Board for consideration of approval |

# III. Key Insights

Following our Self-Assessment sessions, each focus group compiled a list of strengths and obstacles. A compressed list of these, preceded by a summary of progress towards our program goals and objectives, can be found below.

## A. Progress in Meeting our Goals and Objectives

Our program identified two parent family and community engagement goals, in addition to six school readiness goals, as a part of our five year plan. These goals, along with progress made during the 2021-2022 program year, are outlined below.

### Goal #1 Expanding Connections with Families

NMCAA will strengthen and maintain relationships within programming by devising and implementing new systems through the utilization of technology and a variety of online platforms

| **Objective 1: Provide and maintain a reliable and accessible technology infrastructure** | |
|---|---|
| **Action Steps** | **Progress (including challenges encountered)** |
| Begin creation of a training video library containing trainings and support for new software (ex Office 360/5) and devices. This library may also include contact information for a resident expert who is willing to lend support. | Our IT department went through major staffing transitions this past year. A new system, with the ability to research resources, is currently in the pilot stage. |
| Enhance the device loaner system. Based on previous year's requests, order enough backup devices to ensure there are enough loaner computers available to support estimated need. | Devices are now being updated every three years, rather than every five. There is a supply of loaners on hand that have been meeting staff need. |
| Take in data of what levels of tech skills are around agency to address needs to improve these levels and to identify areas of expertise individuals are willing to share (resident experts). | A list of “resident experts” has been created and is available for staff to access when in need of support. |
| Complete creation of a central location for submission of training requests. | A system for surveying staff on professional development needs is being implemented. Optional training calendars are updated monthly in response to these surveys. |
| **Objective 2: Increase family engagement by offering innovative platforms to enhance communications and remove barriers to involvement** | |
| **Action Steps** | **Progress (including challenges encountered)** |
| Create survey, according to method identified in year one, to assess parent platform preferences and technology needs. | Communication platform preferences are varied. Learning Genie was identified as a platform that will allow messages to be translated in over 100+ languages and will promote parent engagement and tracking of in-kind activities. We will begin use of Learning Genie program year 22-23. |
| Create system for continued provision of iPads for families in need of technology. | I/T installed a program on all iPads to allow for yearly system updates and universal app downloads. iPad agreement forms were created to outline use and return expectations. It would be |

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| | helpful to create a digital tracking system for iPad distribution information to be more widely accessible. |
| Assess which engagement opportunities can continue to be offered virtually, in tandem with face to face offerings. | This was discussed during our 2021 Self-Assessment. Considerations to keep in mind included: developing relationships with families prior to moving to virtual offerings; keeping guidelines for technology use simple; ensuring the necessary technology is in place to make the event successful (big screen vs. little screen, SWIVL, what devices would be needed and accessible). We will begin offering in Person Policy Council meetings this fall with both face to face and virtual options. Challenges include navigating small group discussions and working to fully engage all attending parties. |
| Create a plan to begin building FES staff, according to identified need and cost. | ARP funds were used to hire additional FES staff. |
| Hire new family engagement staff. | A Change of Scope application, submitted in spring of 2022, incorporated the new family engagement staff salaries into the operations budget. |

## Goal #2 Resources

NMCAA Head Start will increase families' connections to resources for supporting their identified needs, beginning at recruitment

| **Objective 1: Enhance staff knowledge of resources, direct entry process and tracking to support frontline referrals and follow up procedures** | |
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| **Action Steps** | **Progress (including challenges encountered)** |
| Utilize summary of effective ways staff will be connected to internal agency services and community resources for family referrals. Modify components of the current referral system that are less successful. | Staff are actively taking part in an agency intake committee to better understand the changing services within NMCAA. A component of this committee is also a continuing focus on reviewing and improving the internal referral system. |
| Increase opportunities across staff and departments to connect with internal and external resources. | A list of key community and internal committees was created and staff have been strategically assigned for regular participation. |
| Enhance and utilize the new Family Needs Assessment and the Family Outcome Tool surveys and resources links. | This year both the Family Needs Assessment and the Family Outcome Tool surveys are being piloted in Learning Genie; a parent communication platform newly adopted by our agency. Staff are offered additional support as needed for the Family Outcomes Tools and Needs Assessment resources. A system for regularly reviewing and updating the resource links corresponding to the Family Needs Assessment and Family Outcomes Tool has been created. Information in the links is updated throughout the year. |
| Update training modules to reflect any changes to data entry and instructions for pulling corresponding reports for each program option. | ChildPlus direct entry guidance was reviewed and updated throughout program year 2021-2022. |
| **Objective 2: Strengthen the effectiveness of existing referral monitoring systems and ensure consistent implementation** | |
| **Action Steps** | **Progress (including challenges encountered)** |

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| Consistency and accuracy of Child Plus direct entry and reports guided by DMT, identified Managers and direct line staff with strong Child Plus skills. | ChildPlus direct entry guidance was reviewed and updated throughout program year 2021-2022 (mentioned above). Lead data entry staff will be attending a ChildPlus conference fall 2022 to further determine ways in which our referral monitoring system might be strengthened. |

## Goal #3 Approaches to Learning

Children will demonstrate positive approaches to learning by attending and engaging.

| **Objective 1: Families understand the importance of responsiveness and extending interactions during play with their child** | |
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| **Action Steps** | **Progress (including challenges encountered)** |
| Distribute and collect monthly activity calendars to and from families. | The sharing process has begun in all center based programs and families are receiving calendars for use with their children, with the option to return for in-kind. Early Head Start Home Based programming is distributing calendars to families who are interested and tracking in-kind hours on in-kind tracking sheet. |
| Create "We Miss You" bags/folders to give to families during absences. | Collaborative Center and Early Head Start Center Based programs created We Miss You Bags and continue to distribute to families during extended absences.<br>In Early Head Start Home Based programming, weekly contact is made by a socialization specialist when there is a home visitor absent. Extension activities are left at the previous home visit and can be continued throughout the next week if an absence occurs. |
| **Objective 2: Education staff know and understand how to plan for routines and set up learning experiences that engage children** | |
| **Action Steps** | **Progress (including challenges encountered)** |
| Implement fidelity checklists in all classrooms and analyze checklist results in comparison to CLASS results - Facilitated Learning, and Active Supervision results to determine correlations. | Fidelity checklists were completed in all the classrooms. The coaches used the checklist as an ongoing tool to make sure follow-up was completed. |
| Parents and teachers work together at parent teacher conferences to consider child's interest, temperament, and development and how to best engage them in learning. | Early Head Start Center Based and Collaborative Center staff completed two parent teacher conferences and covered engaging child in learning based on their individual development.<br>In direct operated Head Start classrooms, parent teacher conferences were completed. Discussions took place with parents regarding their child's development and how to engage them in learning. The program purchased at home kits for the parents to continue learning through the summer months. |
| Add component to Professional Development Survey to determine knowledge base regarding setting up environment and planning for routines. | In Early Head Start Center Based programming, components for setting up environment and planning routines are included in the fall 2022 Professional Development Surveys and measured using a Likert frequency scale.<br>For direct operated Head Start programs, this component will be added to the needs assessment that all teaching staff fill out for practice-based coaching. The coaches will bring their results to the October coach meeting to discuss needs of staff. |

## Goal #4 Social and Emotional Development

Children will increasingly regulate their emotions and behaviors in order to participate cooperatively in group situations

| **Objective 1: Enhance education staff capacity to effectively utilize program social emotional supports including curriculum components and other available resources (conscious discipline, e-deca, etc)** | |
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| **Action Steps** | **Progress (including challenges encountered)** |
| Based on staff wellness assessment, determine next steps to support staff well being (ex//design optional wellness opportunities to provide further support). | Staff suggested training topics and resources. Training topics ideas are considered ongoing and added to the optional trainings calendar.<br>We are meeting the request for networking time by having in person meetings this year. There is a continued need to build our substitute pool.<br>Self Regulation groups and Reflective Book Study groups in addition to Reflective Practice groups and 1:1 Reflective are offered to staff. Self-Care sessions are offered annually. Self-care, mindfulness and EAP resources are offered to staff.<br>We recently added Wellness Coach to our menu of staff wellness supports. |
| Design, advertise, and complete optional Social Emotional component trainings based on highest indicated needs in prior year's survey. | For Early Head Start Center Based and Collaborative Center staff, a facilitated staff training (0-5) took place in October 2021, which focused on regulating behaviors during transitions. The training included tools and strategies.<br>For all staff, annual training and 1:1 is offered for program social and emotional supports. |
| Assess and revise guidance on using Conscious Discipline and eDeca, beyond re-screening, including accessing techniques for staff and when to refer; Update as needed. | Conscious Discipline webinars and the Premium Conscious Discipline Resources Membership are available to staff. Conscious Discipline strategies are embedded within eDeca strategies for staff to individualize and also implement for whole groups of children. |
| If need is indicated, create action plan for enhanced behavior supports based on survey information. | This year we will be piloting NONI, a new social emotional support app. for teachers, available as an add on to Teaching Strategies GOLD. |
| Offer optional wellness opportunities or other supports identified in the staff wellness action plan | Reflective Practice, Reflective Book Study Groups, Self Regulation and Building Your Bounce and continued YJT and self care sessions will be offered. |
| Create an optional classroom social emotional support plan for documentation of team strategies designed to support the unique needs of the enrolled children in any given classroom | eDeca and Your Journey Together offer social and emotional support strategies and checklists for home and school. |
| **Objective 2: Education staff will support families in teaching their children the skills to effectively communicate and interact to build positive relationships** | |
| **Action Steps** | **Progress (including challenges encountered)** |
| Distribute and collect monthly activity calendars to and from families. | The sharing process has begun in all center based programs and families are receiving calendars for use with their children, with the option to return for in-kind. Early Head Start Home Based programming is distributing |

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| | calendars to families who are interested and tracking in-kind hours on in-kind tracking sheet. |
| Staff will offer information to support families in positive relationship building during Family Engagements, Workshops, etc. (ex. YJT, 5 protective factors, ACES, e deca and its resources, Conscious Discipline, Circle of Security ) | Face to face workshops were limited over the past year due to the pandemic, which made relationship building more difficult.<br>This year, we plan to return to more face to face events.<br>In addition to this information being offered during family engagement and workshop opportunities, resources are also offered at home visits, via text, email, and/or posting to support families based on their Family Outcomes Tool and Needs Assessment responses. |

## Goal #5 Language and Communication

Children will use language to express their needs, ask questions, and engage in short conversations in a variety of settings

| **Objective 1: Increase parent knowledge of the value in communicating/talking to their children, and how they can support language development throughout everyday experiences and routines** | |
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| **Action Steps** | **Progress (including challenges encountered)** |
| Generate ideas from the Policy Council group to enhance school readiness goals at home, school, and in the community. | Early Head Start Activity Calendars were shared with Policy Council parents for feedback and adjusted accordingly. Calendars are now being shared with families. |
| **Objective 2: Education staff will support families in teaching their children the skills to effectively communicate and interact to build positive relationships** | |
| **Action Steps** | **Progress (including challenges encountered)** |
| As applicable education staff create new Shared Goals and Action Plans (SGAP) or Professional Development (PD) Goals that target Language Modeling and Early Language Support in their goals. | Early Head Start Center Based and Collaborative Centers: December 2021 and Jan 2022 developed SGAP around Language where applicable.<br>Early Head Start Home Based 2020-21 Professional Development goals targeted language and literacy. Goals were supported on an individual and group level through Practice Based Coaching and EHS Academies.<br>Direct Operated Head Start classrooms: all teachers and assistants completed professional development goals, and language modeling were a part of those goals. |
| Update observation tools, recap forms, and or meeting agendas such as EHS Academy, etc. to include School Readiness Goals 3-8 when applicable. | Direct Operated Head Start Community of Practice data digs revolved around the updated school readiness goals so they were looked at as a group during the 3 checkpoint periods. |
| Ongoing CLASS Assessment completed in fall and spring to analyze and monitor growth in the areas of Early Language Support and Language Modeling. | Direct Operated Head Start classroom fall and spring observations were completed. Language modeling was 5.18 in the spring, with the national average at 3.4. We were well above the national average. |
| Ongoing Home Visit Rating Scales (HOVRS) Assessment completed in fall and spring to analyze and monitor growth in staff practices. | Observations were completed and tracked in ChildPlus to compare fall and spring and year to year easily. |
| Utilize CLASS/HOVRS Assessment and SGAP and PD Goals to plan and | HOVRS data, along with PD goals are taken into consideration at EHS Academies. The Professional |

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| implement targeted professional development opportunities | Development committee utilized this information when providing input on training offerings for the program year. |

## Goal #6 Literacy

Children will demonstrate phonological awareness by noticing and discriminating smaller units of sound

| **Objective 1: Strengthen education staff capacity to embed activities that promote listening and noticing smaller units of sounds within everyday activities and routines** | |
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| **Action Steps** | **Progress (including challenges encountered)** |
| Offer optional dialogical reading training for staff/teachers (reading books in an objective and purposeful way). | Two Collaborative Center Services Coordinators registered to attend B3 Literacy Essentials training fall 2022.<br>Suggestions to consider for the coming year include looking for dialogical reading You Tube videos to include on our school readiness library page. |
| Plan patterned activities during transitions, stomping, clapping, body movements, rhyming, etc. | Direct Operated Head Start classrooms increased activities were observed by coaches regarding phonological awareness activities in daily activities/routines. |
| **Objective 2: Families recognize opportunities to listen to sounds during everyday routines/activities with their child** | |
| **Action Steps** | **Progress (including challenges encountered)** |
| Identify age appropriate books (all program options) with rhyming/repetition for family distribution. Create inserts to include in books with age appropriate reading strategies and information about listening to sounds with their children for fall 2021 distribution. | Early Head Start Center Based classrooms distributed age appropriate books and included bookmarks with suggested activities related to the book and a link to a YouTube video of the book being read.<br>Early Head Start Home Based visitors distribute a book to each family 10 times a year. We have collaborated with Power Book bags to provide an additional book each month to each family; Our Mentor/Coach provides bookmarks to support developmentally appropriate ideas to use with the book that are handed out to each family. |
| Follow up with families on book distribution at home visits and during parent contacts. Encourage families to revisit the book regularly. | Early Head Start Center Based classrooms distributed books and include book on Facebook page for continued engagement. Socialization Specialists are provided the same book through Power Book Bags to revisit with families through socializations and Home Visitors can use the bookmark to encourage families to revisit the book. Following up on the prior visit is part of each home visit.<br>In Direct Operated Head Start classrooms, each family received 5 books this year that focused on rhyming and phonological awareness. The teachers provide an activity sheet to use to educate the parents on the importance of reading and activities to extend the learning beyond just reading. |

## Goal #7 Cognition and General Knowledge

Children will use play to increase their understanding of symbolic representation as it relates to mathematical concepts such as one to one correspondence and cardinality

| **Objective 1: Families understand how pretend play is connected to emerging/foundational mathematical skills** | |
|---|---|
| **Action Steps** | **Progress (including challenges encountered)** |
| Create or locate resources to share with families outlining how play contributes to learning, place in school readiness | Parents as Teachers (PAT) handouts are used to support family understanding how play continues to promote learning from enrollment on. Planned activities |

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|---|---|
| database his school readiness goal, list in school readiness database for targeted distribution (from all SR goals action plan) | with parents and the "What's in it for us" portion of the PAT activity page reinforces this weekly. |
| **Objective 2: Staff plan intentional activities and experiences to promote children's development of symbolic thinking, one to one correspondence and cardinality** | |
| **Action Steps** | **Progress (including challenges encountered)** |
| Partner with Newton's Road, a local STEM group, to enhance classroom STEM offerings. | A list of STEM Kits has been developed for all Head Start classrooms. STEM kits are being assembled by Newton's Road and will be distributed to classrooms by December 2022. |

## Goal #8 Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development

Child demonstrates safe and healthy behaviors with increasing independence with support from adults

| **Objective 1: Staff will promote safety and physical well-being so children can find and access what they need to stay healthy** | |
|---|---|
| **Year 3 Action Steps** | **Progress (including challenges encountered)** |
| Explore resources in the community and create a system to connect families with nutritious foods | Nutrition/healthy eating was embedded within the Needs Assessment and Needs Assessment Resources. Staff refer families to resources within counties to support nutrition. |
| Partner with Michigan State University to Implement the Happy Family, Healthy Kids Program (HFHK) | This program was piloted in 5 classrooms during the 21-22 program year. Children and families were introduced to a variety of healthy foods and teachers implemented a component from a healthy eating curriculum in the classroom weekly. |
| Enhance professional development opportunities to ensure education staff have an understanding of how to engage children in healthy practices that support overall well-being and independence. | In July 2022, the Collaborative Center and Early Head Start Center Based Weebly page was updated to include more resources and guidance for staff to use and refer to. In October 2021, a dietician presented nutrition information for 0-5 at a Health Services Advisory Committee meeting. In August 2022, a dietician presented 0-5 nutrition information at a beginning of the year all staff gathering. |
| **Objective 2: Education staff and families involve children in performing self-care routines and encourage them to perform routines with increasing independence, as developmentally and culturally appropriate** | |
| **Action Steps** | **Progress (including challenges encountered)** |
| Make visual routine cards and sequences available for use by staff. | Direct operated classrooms completed and distributed at the first Community of Practice for program year 22-23. |
| Analyze year 4 Family Outcomes Tool (FOT) survey data in comparison with baseline measures and determine next steps. | FOT data shows growth for families within the program year. The survey is being added to Learning Genie this year for easier tracking and parent access. |
| According to need identified through the Needs Assessment survey, staff will share sample routine information with families and assist in the creation of a home routine. | The Needs Assessment and FOT resources link offer family routines and the Caregiving Checklist within Your Journey Together resources for staff to choose from to share with families. |

## Action Steps Applicable to all School Readiness Areas

| Enhancing Program Practices | |
|---|---|
| **Action Steps** | **Progress (including challenges encountered)** |
| Create a training committee to explore ways to offer more intentional and individualized training. | The Professional Development Committee has been holding regular meetings and is active in reviewing school readiness data to assist with planning professional development opportunities. |
| Arrange optional training calendar in a way that identifies support of each school readiness goal (list goals at bottom of calendar and identify by number?). | This section has been added to the optional trainings calendar. |
| Plan one all staff PD day each year around a school readiness goal. | All staff professional development days are now taking place mid year, around February. This program year's school readiness goal focus has yet to be determined. |
| **Supporting Families** | |
| **Action Steps** | **Progress (including challenges encountered)** |
| Create a resource showing what families are already doing to support school readiness goals, identify a distribution plan | Activity Calendars, highlighting in home learning experiences, will be sent to families using Learning Genie. |

## B. Strengths

1. Water testing is completed in required areas on a regular schedule based on health department timelines.
2. Cornerstones of Culture provide a good foundation for working towards an inclusive environment.
3. NMCAA has strong base policies and procedures in place around special investigations that are updated regularly.
4. Both Head Start and Early Head Start data showed over 90% of children to be "meeting" or "exceeding" expectations in School Readiness Goal: Perceptual, Motor, Physical Development, Objective 1.
5. Data for Head Start School Readiness Goal: Language and Communication, Objective one, shows growth from fall to spring.
6. Data for School Readiness Goals: Cognition and Attention to Learning, showed positive upward growth throughout the year.

## C. Challenges and Systemic Issues

1. Licensing and Regulatory Affairs requires paint lead testing but not water lead testing for childcare facilities, despite identified water lead issues throughout the state and the country.
2. Recruitment event times are not always the most convenient for parents working day shifts.
3. The "face" of our organization is not largely diverse.
4. Familiar people in positions of authority might not have all of the required background checks and other pieces in place to be left alone with a child. Strong communication and awareness regarding which adults must be supervised when around children is important.
5. The need for Early Childhood Education and Care is high, but the lack of options has community level impacts on a regional economy that is eager for an expanded workforce.
6. Determining HiRisk, Crisis or Needs, using current eligibility criteria, is somewhat subjective.

7. Strong growth has occurred, from “below” to “meeting” expectations, in School Readiness Goal: Social/Emotional Development, Objective 1, but this goal is lower in the number of children shown to be “exceeding” expectations.

# IV. Innovations/Recommendations

As a result of the above Self-Assessment activities, and the highlighted findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Create/revise complete water testing process.
2. Consider recruiting (staff and families) in events that promote diversity, like Pride Parades, and recruiting men to have more diverse employees.
3. Form a committee to review and update forms with an eye towards DEIB and father involvement.
4. Update eligibility priority criteria for EHS/HS. Look to GSRP criteria to provide a better framework for current High Risk and Crisis categories.
5. Pilot the NONI app. with Lead Teachers and Coaches as an additional social/emotional support.
6. Utilize Teaching Strategies on-line professional development as a tool to train staff in curriculum.
7. Provide training on how to build relationships during this unique time of programming.
8. Provide easy access to e-DECA training videos for new staff to be trained in the tool.
9. Create Conscious discipline books to support families with social/emotional development.
10. Create visuals to be used by all teaching staff to teach independence to the children in the classrooms.
11. Extend Behavior Specialist role to participate in Family Engagement Activities throughout the service area.
12. Add Behavior Specialist section to Weebly with resources for all staff to access.
13. Strengthen staff understanding of the Special Investigation process and potential impacts.
14. Explore innovative ways to extend hours beyond currently offered school days to include longer days and Fridays.
15. Discover parent's perceived value in take home materials.

# V. Conclusion

NMCAA Head Start has a strong belief in the importance of using data to work towards continuous quality improvement. The information obtained during the Self-Assessment process, and the resulting recommendations, have been folded into the program improvement plan shown below and have also been used to update program goal action steps for the coming year.

| Program Improvement Plan | | | | |
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| **This plan will be reviewed and updated, as applicable, monthly by the Management team and with appropriate staff** | | | | |
| **Timeline** | **Responsible Party** | **Objective** | **Action Steps** | **Data, Tools, or Methods for Tracking Progress** |
| June 2023 | Site Manager, Facilities Coordinator, Data Analysis Coordinator, Director of Operations, Program Support | Create/revise complete water testing process | Update universal system to document well type to include all licensed child care centers. | Child/Family Development Water/Lead Tracking Form |
| | | | Lead testing is suggested yearly. Determine cost and feasibility to move forward with on-going water sampling. | Budget Reports, Grants (WIIN) |
| | | | Draft process for moving forward with initial licensing of a center and yearly testing follow-up. | Up-date licensing guidance. |
| October 2022 | Site Supervisors | Have staff run water for 15 seconds at the start of each day. | Add water safety section to safe environment checklist | Safe Environment Checklist |
| May 2022 | Site Supervisors | Staff use only cold water for cooking and drinking. | Look at safe environment checklist data | Safe Environment Checklist |
| August 2022 | ERSEA Manager and Eligibility Criteria Committee | Update eligibility priority criteria for EHS/HS | hold eligibility priority criteria committee meeting(s) to look at recommendations from Self Assessment and formatting | Updated Eligibility Priority Criteria with Policy Council and Board approval |
| September 2022 | | | Share final recommendations with Policy Council for consideration of approval | |
| September 2022 | | | Share final recommendations with the Board for consideration of approval | |
| September 2022 | Education Manager, Education Coaches, Teachers | All teachers NONI accounts activated and set up | Share with Teaching Strategies all emails that will have an account | Teaching Strategies NONI grid |
| | | | Assist teachers with any challenges that arise while activating account | Discussions with teachers on progress documented on recap |
| October 2022 | Education Coaches and Teachers | All teachers and education coaches trained in NONI | Staff will watch the 5 part NONI webinar series on Teaching Strategies Develop tab area | NONI report from Teaching Strategies |

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| | | | Support in the field and at COP in using the app with fidelity and to its fullest capacity | COP agenda and recaps |
| September 2022 | Education Manager | Teaching Strategies on-line professional development utilized by all staff to get training in curriculum | Renew subscription for Develop tab through Teaching Strategies | PO request and check request completed |
| October 2022 | Education Manager, Education Coaches | | Share with staff through training calendar, recaps and emails that all staff have access to the Develop tab for professional development | Documented on training calendar, recaps |
| | | | New staff receive curriculum training through Develop tab | New Staff Training Binder |
| September 2022 | Mental Health Manager | Conscious Discipline subscription renewed to provide support for SRG in social emotional | Mental Health Manager will renew subscription | Access to portal |
| August 2022-June 2023 | Training Committee | Provide training on how to build relationships during this unique time of programming | Provide training at pre-service on making connections with one another | Pre-service agenda |
| | | | Provide trainings throughout the year in the optional training calendar on building connections | Optional training calendar |
| November 2022 | Mental Health Manager | Providing easy access to e-DECA training videos for new staff to be trained in the tool | Share how to access videos on how to administer the e-Deca | Weebly |
| | | | Easy access to resources on using e-Deca | Weebly |
| November 2022 | Education Coaches | Creating conscious discipline books to support families with social/emotional development | Order supplies to create books | PO request and check request completed |
| | | | Creating and distributing books to teachers in the 10 counties | Recaps |
| September 2022 | Education Coaches | Creating visual to be used by all teaching staff to teach independence to the children in the classrooms | Order supplies to create visuals | PO request and check request completed |
| | | | Creating and distributing books to teachers in the 10 counties | Recaps |

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| December 2022 | Education Manager, Behavior Specialist | Behavior Specialist participating in Family Engagement Activities throughout 10 counties | Letting teachers know that the Behavior Specialist is available to be a part of family engagement activities | Discussions in the field, recaps |
| January 2023 | Behavior Specialist | Behavior Specialist section on Weebly with resources for all staff to access | Waja connecting with Kristin to create an area on Weebly | Recaps |
| | | | Waja creating a library of resources for all staff to access | Weebly |
| December 2022 | Site Manager and CC & EHS CB Manager | Strengthen staff understanding of the Special Investigation process and potential impacts. | Create Discovery Process/Special Investigation guidance and forms for what to expect when allegations are made, a special investigation is initiated, or violation established. Include a definition section | Forms created and included with procedure manual updates |
| January 2023 | Site Manager, Data Analysis Coordinator, CC & EHS CB Manager | | Create a training for Discovery Process/Special Investigations Include: elements to a corrective action plan, what will be required during discovery, how to plan and document increased monitoring during an investigation, etc. | Training created and added to PD Calendar |
| Winter/Spring 2023 | Site Manager, Data Analysis Coordinator, CC & EHS CB Manager | | Facilitate trainings developed for Special Investigations | Completed PD surveys |
| Spring 2023 | Mini Management Team | Explore innovative ways to extend hours beyond school day M-Th to include longer days and Fridays. | Explore DHHS Subsidy opportunity, partnering with an after school program | Meeting Minutes |
| | | | Collect parent preference of needs to ensure programming is responsive to the scheduling needs of families. | Survey, Learning Genie |
| May 2023 | MH / PFCE Manager | Explore and incorporate more DEIB and promoting Father Involvement | DEIB and Fatherhood Committee to meet for further exploring program awareness and sensitivity.<br>Add DEIB and Fatherhood within Family Goal form. | Completion of committee meetings and recommendations incorporated into programming |
| May 2023 for School Yr Programs and Aug 2023 for Yr | Mini Management | Discover parent's perceived value in take home materials. | Collect feedback from families. Ask, “was there value”? (home kit, miss you bags, etc) And what type of value? Did it help with SR? | Survey results, Learning Genie |

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| Round Programs | | | | |
| January 2023 | Data Analysis Coordinator, Mini Management Team | Finalize Data Postcard | Review base postcard, identify important data to be included, Managers meet with direct teams | Finalized list of data points |
| | | | Determine how often postcard will be shared and by whom | Schedule of postcard sharing developed, postcard shared regularly with staff |