



# Hidalgo County Head Start Program

## Annual Report to the Public 2022-2023

I am pleased to present the Hidalgo County Head Start 2022-2023 Annual Report. As the Executive Director for the Hidalgo County Head Start Program (HCHSP), it is a pleasure to work alongside a team of professionals, with unquestionable commitment to the Head Start Mission. This year, we have very exciting changes taking place in our program. Beginning in August, our program has been approved for a "change in scope" in program operations. This change allows us to restructure our program and continue to provide high-quality comprehensive services to the highest need children and families and at the same time improve the following: 1) Improve the quality of classroom instruction. 2) Improve the recruitment process by prioritizing Pre-K Head start classrooms first with ISD collaboration. 3) Improve staff professional development and quality of instruction by placing 4-year degreed certified teachers in Head Start classrooms. 4) Improve compensation for Head Start staff. 5) Improve staff retention and turnover percentage. 6) Increase the number of Head Start Classrooms on school campuses, thereby reducing maintenance, rent, utility and insurance costs. 7) Increase the number of staff to assist with the increasing number of challenging behavior cases.

Our goals, objectives, and information that you'll see throughout this report reinforce the dedication and commitment of this great team. I know how committed our staff are to the health and safety of children, and to providing the highest-quality early learning and development experience possible.

I thank our staff for their efforts, courage, hard work, and perseverance. I am proud to work alongside such amazing people.

Sincerely,  
Irma E. Peña,  
Executive Director

The Hidalgo County Head Start Program (HCHSP) has been educating children and engaging families in Hidalgo County, since the inception of Head Start under President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965, and directly under the auspices of the County Commissioners' Court as the Grantee Board, since 1982. We provide high-quality early learning and promote school readiness of preschool-aged children and support their growth and development in a positive learning environment through comprehensive services, which include:

**Education and Child Development Program Services:** Children's readiness for school and beyond is fostered through individualized learning experiences. Through relationships with adults, play, and planned and spontaneous instruction, children grow in many aspects of development.

**Health Services:** Each child's perceptual, motor, and physical development is supported to permit them to fully explore and function in their environment, using a system of health and safety practices that ensure children are kept safe at all times. All children receive health and development screenings, nutritious meals, oral health, and mental health support. Programs

connect families with medical, dental, and mental health services to ensure that children are receiving the services they need.

**Family and Community Engagement Program Services:** Parents and families are supported in achieving their own goals, such as housing stability, continued education, and financial security. Programs support and strengthen parent-child relationships and engage families around children’s learning and development.

**Our Vision:**

We are dedicated to the economic and social well-being of the children and families and committed to their safety, education, and healthy development with strong community support.

**Our Mission:**

Our mission is to break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy.

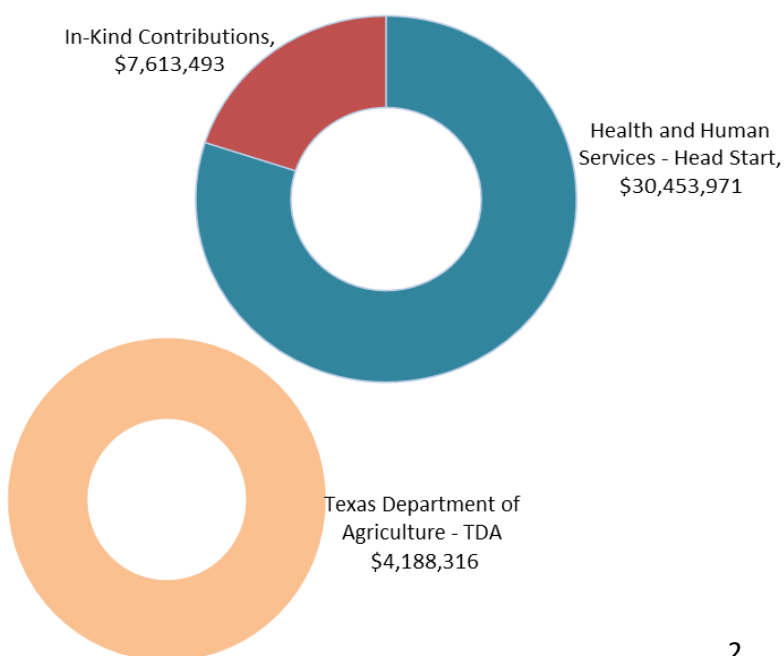
**Program Goals**

Our program goals, school readiness goals and PFCFE Framework are aligned and synchronized to ensure that high-quality, comprehensive services for children and families, ultimately improve children’s healthy development and readiness for school.

- *To provide high-quality comprehensive services to the highest need children and families and maintain 100% of funded enrollment*
- *To promote workforce professional development for employees and parents*
- *To increase parental engagement in their child’s educational activities, specifically in the areas of literacy and social emotional development*
- *To promote the health and safety of staff, children, and families*
- *To sustain the School Readiness Partnership Model (SRPM), Teaching Together with all school districts in our service area*

**Head Start Financials and Audit Results**

**Total Amount - All Funds Received**



**The results of the most recent Focus Area Two (FA2) Monitoring Review and the Financial Independent Audit**

In February of 2020, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted a Focus Area Two (FA2) Monitoring Review of the HCHSP to determine if performance and compliance with the requirements of the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS), Public Law 110-134, Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, and other applicable regulations were met. Based on the information gathered by the federal review team, they found that HCHSP met the requirements of all applicable HSPPS, laws, regulations, and policy requirements.

The latest financial independent audit for the year ending 12/31/2021 does not contain any findings and expresses an “Unqualified Opinion” by the external auditors.

The program was awarded \$5,525,661 under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA) and the American Rescue Plan (ARP) to combat the impact of COVID-19 in our service area. The program utilized a portion funds to support, sustain and retain our experienced workforce as well as address our high employee turnover. The funds remaining are being utilized to implement and develop an Outdoor Learning Environments and Discovery Park to promote the instructional activities with curriculum introducing the wonders of nature to every Head Start classroom.



### Budget vs. Actual Expenditures and Proposed Budget

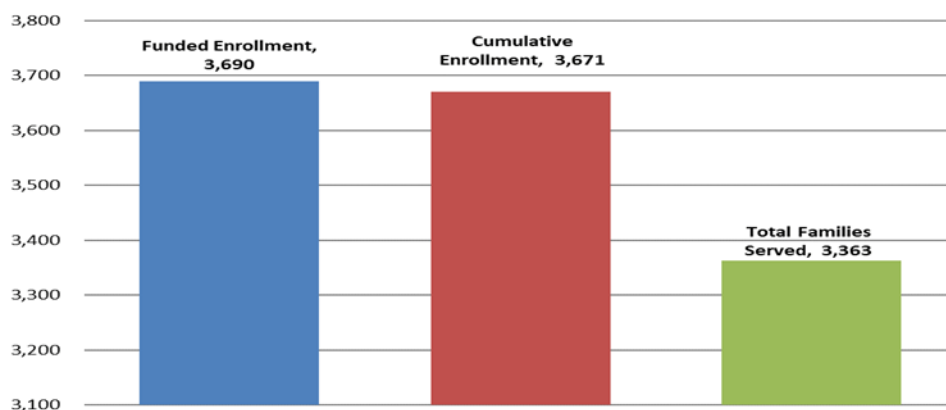
Description	Head Start			CRRSA/ARP		TDA		
	2022 Budget	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2022 Actual	2022 Budget	2022-2023 Budget	2022-2023 Actual	2023-2024 Budget
Revenues	30,453,971	29,690,851	33,435,675	5,525,661	2,736,041	4,188,316	3,295,803	3,340,800
Other In-Kind	7,613,493	7,613,493	8,358,919	0	0	0	0	0
Interest	0	0	0	0	0	0	9,474	0
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>38,067,464</b>	<b>37,304,344</b>	<b>41,794,594</b>	<b>5,525,661</b>	<b>2,736,041</b>	<b>4,188,316</b>	<b>3,305,277</b>	<b>3,340,800</b>
Expenditures								
Personnel	19,833,011	18,109,333	21,611,294	2,007,500	1,945,758	1,212,865	1,044,416	594,000
Fringe Benefits	8,548,763	7,609,516	8,485,427	208,896	287,871	627,508	488,024	295,677
Equipment	0	0	229,304	0	0	0	0	0
Supplies	538,313	2,333,586	1,680,684	53,062	53,961	286,768	172,429	296,604
Food Costs	0	0	0	0	0	1,801,224	1,425,632	1,937,664
Other*	1,533,884	2,401,536	1,428,966	10,050	34,000	255,951	162,071	211,855
Other Inter-Local Travel	0	0	0	0	0	4,000	3,231	5,000
Construction	0	0	0	3,246,153	54,450	0	0	0
Other In-Kind	7,613,493	7,613,493	8,358,919	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>38,067,464</b>	<b>38,067,464</b>	<b>41,794,594</b>	<b>5,525,661</b>	<b>2,376,041</b>	<b>4,188,316</b>	<b>3,295,803</b>	<b>3,340,800</b>

\*Other Costs includes costs associated with rent, utilities and telephone, insurance, building and vehicle maintenance, child services, parent services, accounting and legal fees, travel, and printing. Funds specifically earmarked for Training and Technical Assistance of staff are also included in this category.

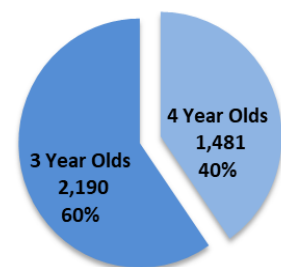
### Families and Children Served

Based on our 2023 community assessment update, the Hidalgo County Head Start Program (HCHSP) served approximately 34% of the eligible children population in Hidalgo County.

#### Number of Children and Families Served



#### Enrollment by Age



## Healthy children are ready to learn!

Health Care personnel together with our Family Service and Education personnel were very successful in working closely with families to ensure that they had a Primary Care Physician and Dentist for routine screening.

- 3,628 children had medical homes after enrollment
- 3,496 children were brought up-to-date on state's EPSDT schedule
- 3,242 children had up-to-date immunizations
- 3,628 children had dental homes after enrollment
- 274 children received an evaluation to determine IDEA eligibility
- 562 children had an Individualized Education Plan
- 2,299 families received services under (WIC)
- 338 special diets were prepared
- 1,240,714 nutritional meals were served

## Family Engagement!

Parent engagement is an interactive process where staff, families, and children build positive and goal-oriented relationships. Parent engagement is a shared responsibility of families and staff. It requires mutual respect for the roles and strengths each has to offer. Head Start supports opportunities that increase achievement of seven family outcomes: Family Well-being, Positive Parent-Child Relationships, Families as Lifelong Educators, Families as Learners, Family Engagement in Transitions, Family Connections to Peers and Community and Families as Advocates and Leaders. We encourage parents to take an active role in acquiring knowledge about child growth and development, as well as instilling ownership in their child's education. We engage parents by supporting participation in program governance through Center Parent Committees, Policy Council, planning meetings, surveys, special projects, center conferences, and home visits. We focus on empowering fathers by helping them understand the importance of their roles in their children's and family's healthy development, while maintaining sensitivity to the family's structure and culture. The Family Partnership Agreement (FPA) is aligned with the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework (PFCEF) and documented on MedStar, our computerized family information system, which gathers data and tracks progress toward individual goals and needs. After a family is enrolled and the FPA is completed, staff encourage the participation in their preferred language of both mother and father and other family members in program services. We provide parents with training on Financial Literacy and on improving parenting skills and engage in our research based bilingual parent curriculum, Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors.

### Services provided to children and families:

- 21% of Head Start employees are current or former Head Start parents
- 2 family members received Emergency Intervention
- 5 family members received housing assistance
- 91 families received mental health services
- 22 family members received ESL training
- 52 family members received assistance in enrolling into an education of job training program
- 1,682 families received training in a Research-based parenting curriculum
- 3,363 family members received supporting transitions between programs (i.e., Early Head Start to Head Start, Head Start to Kindergarten)
- 183 family members received education on nutrition



# School Readiness is our target.....



During the second half of FY 2023, HCHSP was granted a change in program scope designation to reinforce our commitment to

quality Head Start service in collaboration with great community partners. The change in scope focuses primarily on higher professional development goals for Head Start personnel, additional Head Start classrooms on school campuses, and shared transportation services for Head Start children. HCHSP has revamped the partnership agreements with local school districts into a highly professional collaborative service methodology, embraced by parents, professional educators, Head Start staff and the community at large. HCHSP and school districts staff train together as a team, making transitioning into public schools for our children and parents quite a natural seamless experience. HCHSP has been successful in securing certified teachers, additional classrooms space on school campuses, and transportation services for all dually enrolled Head Start children. Last year we served 1,992 Head Start children. This year under the newly revamped partnership agreements with the school districts we negotiated 116 Head Start classrooms serving 2,314 children on public school campuses.

## Children with Disabilities.....

Our inclusive program helps all children learn that we are all people with differing abilities, and we all have contributions to make and strengths to share. We served 562 HS children in regular classrooms. Some received special services according to their Individualized Education Program and some of these students required a disability aide for the 2022-2023 school year.



## School Readiness Goals

### Domain: Approaches to Learning:

**Goal:** The children will demonstrate emotional, behavioral, and cognitive self-regulation, show initiative and curiosity, and express creativity in thinking and communication.

### Domain: Social and Emotional Development:

**Goal:** The children will engage and maintain positive relationships with adults and other children and demonstrate emotional functioning and recognize a sense of identity and belonging.

### Domain: Language and Literacy:

**Goal:** The children will develop communication, speaking, writing and vocabulary, skills and demonstrate knowledge in phonological awareness, print and alphabet, comprehension and text structure.

### Domain: Cognition:

**Goal:** The children will develop skills in counting, cardinality, operations and algebraic thinking, measurement, geometry, spatial sense and learn how to use scientific inquiry, reasoning and problem-solving.

### Domain: Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development:

**Goal:** The children will exhibit skill acquisition in gross and fine motor, and demonstrate knowledge of self-care skills and personal safety, and knowledge that promote nutritional food choices.



## Nutrition

HCHSP provides nutritional meals and snacks for all children in the program according to Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. In addition, special events are held to inform and encourage parents to shop for and prepare healthier meals for their families.

- 1,240,714 Meals served
- 338 Special Diets served