

2020-2021 Annual Report

Austin Independent School District
Head Start

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Letter from the Director:

The 2020-2021 school year brought our earliest learners a year like no other. We begin by starting later than normal in a completely virtual environment and by October of 2020 we welcomed some students back to campus while others remained virtual learners. We gradually increased the number of learners on campus and by February we thought we were on the way back to normal with COVID-19 health and safety plans in place, when a winter storm like no other arrived in Central Texas. While school was closed for a week, we saw neighbors supporting neighbors and the community banding together in support during our time of need. While we may have had another eventful year that may not have gone the way we planned, we are excited to share all of the amazing work our teachers, staff and students engaged in during the 2020-2021 school year.

Austin Independent School District Head Start PK3 programs prepare children with the skills they need to have a successful transition into PK4 and beyond. We achieve this goal with the support of staff, families and the communities we serve. We have a big job to do and strive to provide the best possible outcome for children and their families. Our teaching staff work diligently to ensure high-quality learning experiences for all children, while our family advocates work to connect and support families with community resources and our Head Start management team works to provide additional supports to families, staff and schools.

Please take the time to learn about the great work that the Austin Independent School District Head Start PK3 staff are doing for children and families. You may access this annual report and other information including information on Head Start enrollment at www.austinisd.org/early-childhood/head-start.

Thank you,



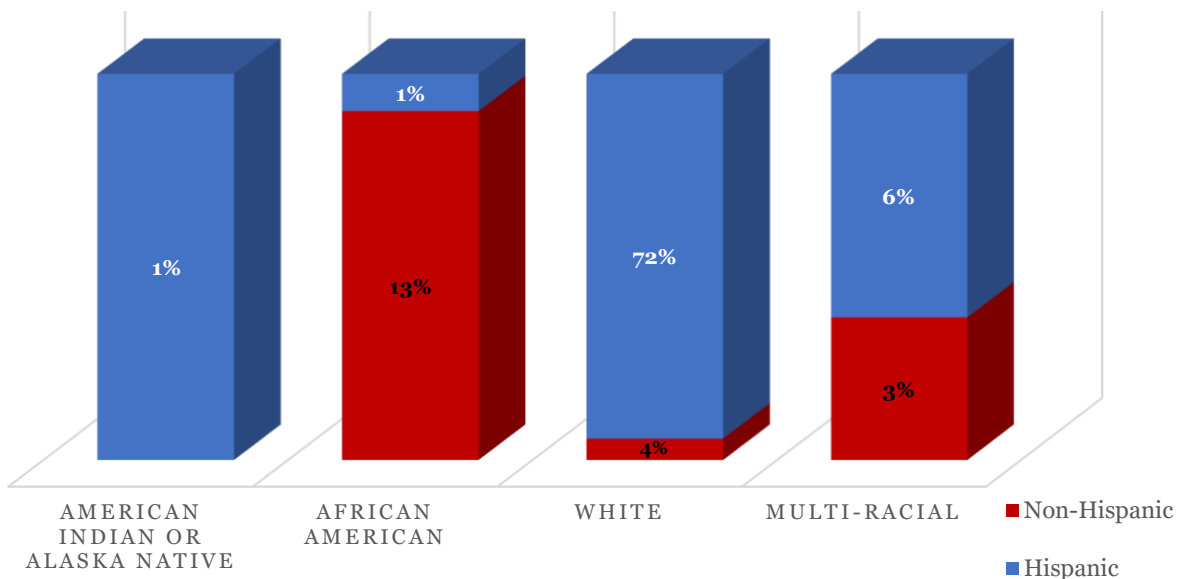
Ashlee Johnson
AISD Head Start Administrator

Program Information

Austin Independent School District Head Start (AISD HS) provides comprehensive, high-quality early childhood services to low income families residing in Travis County, Texas within the Austin Metropolitan area. In a review of our community needs assessment it was noted that Austin is one of the most economically and racially segregated large cities in the country and the need for full-day services for 3-year-old students was present in the area. The “eastern crescent” of Austin has both the highest concentrations of African-American and Hispanic residents and people living in poverty, while the highest concentrations of White residents and higher-income people live on the west side. This segregation is reflected in the enrollment patterns of AISD schools. The Head Start slots for AISD are placed at schools in this eastern crescent, where the highest need continues to exist. The Austin Independent School District Head Start program has the capacity to serve 204 children in 12 classrooms on 8 public school sites. All programs are housed inside of AISD school campuses operating 5 days a week following a typical school schedule of 8am-3pm with some minor time adjustments at each individual campus. The AISD HS program staff at the school level consists of one teacher and one teaching assistant in each classroom as well as a lunch monitor to maintain ratio and provide staff with breaks. Each classroom has the ability to enroll up to 17 children, all who turned 3 on or before September 1st of the current school year. Services provided by AISD HS are designed to promote the educational, social, nutritional and emotional development of children while providing family support services to their family.

Families and Students

Ethnicity Of Enrolled Families



English Language Learners
66% of enrolled students

Average Daily Attendance (ADA)
95%

Total number of students and families who received services*
215

*for 30 days or longer

Family Engagement

AISD Head Start offers a variety of opportunities for parents to be engaged in their child's learning and educational experience. Our goal is to ensure that the whole family is supported to maintain long-lasting and positive outcomes for all enrolled families. Each enrolled family has access to individualized family support services, access to mental health services and the support of a dedicated Family Advocate. Enrolled families were given the opportunity to complete a needs assessment with their Family Advocate to assist with identifying family strengths and determining family needs. Once the needs assessment was completed the Family Advocate and the family worked to establish individualized family goals. Families were also given the opportunities to attend parent-teacher conferences, home visits, monthly family meetings, parent-child activities, and resource meetings with various community partners. In addition to the events listed, Family Advocates facilitated parenting sessions using The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning: Positive Solutions for Families curriculum to promote school readiness and parent engagement including topics such as positive guidance, building relationships, and managing challenging behaviors. Families were also encouraged to participate in activities offered by the school Parent Support Specialist (PSS) who support the entire school community and work in collaboration with the Family Advocate assigned to each school site.

Education

AISD Head Start uses the Creative Curriculum for Preschool which aligns to the TX Prekindergarten guidelines and the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Frameworks. Teaching staff use the curriculum and related guidelines to create developmentally appropriate learning environments and experiences for students to build skills and meet our established school readiness goals:

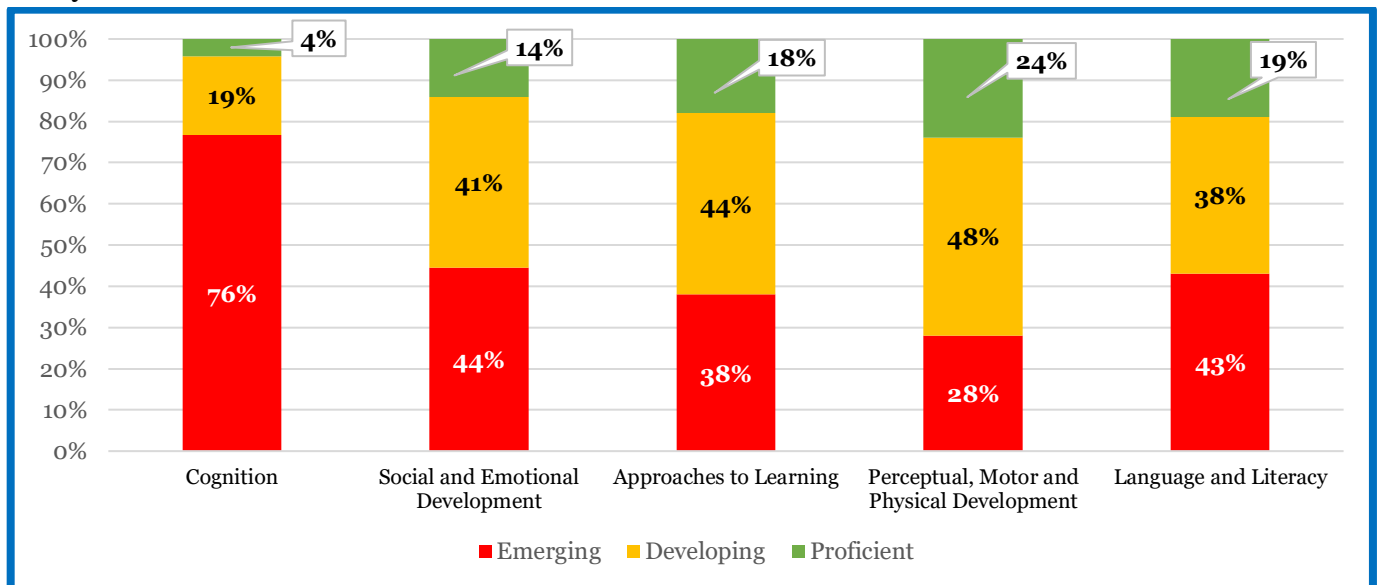
- Approaches to Learning: Child exhibits initiative and independence, demonstrates curiosity in situations and surrounding environment
- Social and Emotional Development: Child manages emotions with increasing independence and cultivates positive interactions with adults and peers
- Language and Literacy: Child understands and progressively uses complex language with peers and adults for a variety of purposes
- Cognition: Child demonstrates number and shape knowledge and engages in cognitive tasks and behaviors that can advance mathematical learning.
- Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development: Child expands knowledge, awareness, and willingness to make nutritious and healthy food choices and eating habits; demonstrate knowledge of personal hygiene and safety practices and routines.

Head Start teaching staff which includes both teachers and teaching assistants were offered the opportunity to engage in coaching cycles during the 2020-2021 school year. Coaching consisted of staff submitting videos of instruction, receiving feedback, selecting a goal, and a review of resources to support achieving goals during a virtual conference with the Education Specialist. This process was repeated every 4 to 6 weeks and nearly 80% of teaching staff participated in coaching cycles during the 2020-2021 school year.

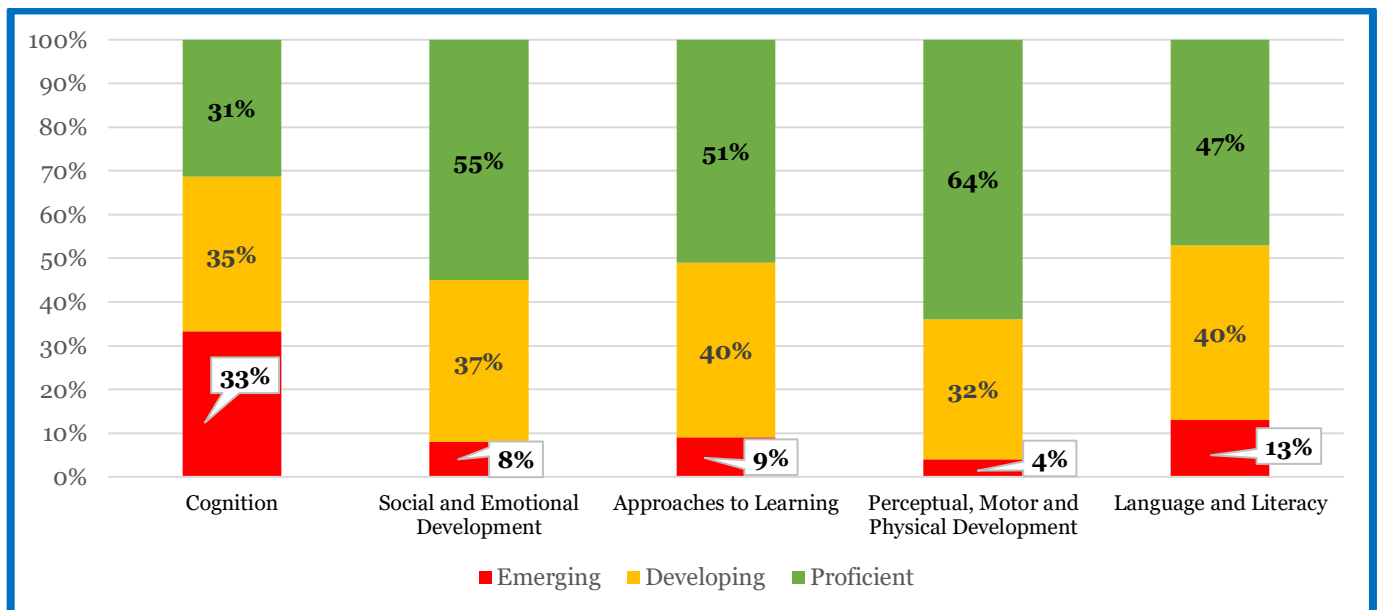
Student Outcomes Data

Below is an aggregate of the data collected on student progress by teaching staff using several CLI Engage checklists during the 2020-2021 school year. Entry scores were collected during Wave 1 of the CLI checkpoint period and due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, scores were determined in collaboration with families. As the school year progressed and more children returned to in-person instruction, teachers and caregivers continued to work in collaboration to determine student progress. Entry scores are reflected in the first table and were collected during Wave 1 in the fall of 2020 and exit scores were collected in the Spring of 2021 in the 2nd table. The percentage on the chart for each category is a collection of all students at each site who score in each of the 3 scoring levels: Emerging, Developing, and Proficient. Based on collected data, students made significant progress and are entering PK4 more prepared than peers who did not attend PK3.

Entry Data



Exit Data



Health - Medical and Dental

Head Start programs are required to assist families with barriers that may exist when accessing medical and dental services as well as providing vision and hearing screenings for enrolled students. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, some families abilities to get access to health/dental providers was limited and Family Advocates have been working to diligently to ensure improved access for families this year. The below table reflects data collected regarding enrolled student's various health statuses:

Students with continuous access to health care (insurance)	66%
Students with completed physical exam	54%
Students with completed dental exam	45%
Students with positive vision screening*	65%
Student with positive hearing screening*	67%

**Students with "failed" screenings or deemed "unable to screen" were provided referrals and vouchers to be served by local physicians.*

Community Partnerships

Partnerships were formed throughout the school year to assist with bridging gaps in available services between the schools, the community and enrolled Head Start families. The focus was placed on trying to address areas of need pertaining to health services, health education, safety, knowledge of community resources and overall access. Partnerships were formed to provide both direct services to enrolled students and families as well as indirect services in the form of parent education. In forming partnerships, it is our goal to create opportunities to both assist parents with gaining access to available services as well as educating parents on ways to navigate through their desired service independently. To ensure that the partnerships being formed were desired by the families being served, a mid-year survey was created to gain input and program feedback from families directly pertaining to community partnerships and family engagement. This data was used to help coordinate with the desired community partners to create opportunities for our enrolled families to receive the education and support that they determined to be most important to them.

Federal Review

During early March of 2020, the AISD Head Start program completed the Focus Area 1 (FA1) monitoring from the Office of Head Start. The monitoring consisted of a review of current program practices, education services, family engagement practices as well as fiscal processes and program management. The final report was sent to AISD in May of 2020 stating that the program was meeting all compliance requirements and we have yet to receive our FA2 review as this time.

Financial Reports

2019-2020 Grant Year 1 (7/01/2019 - 4/30/2020)

Total Funds Awarded \$ 1,551,470

Salaries and Benefits	\$ 1,227,701
Materials and Supplies	\$ 173,095
*Contracted Services	\$ 20,953
**Other operating expenses	\$ 62,159
Indirect Costs (required)	\$ 67,562

2020-2021 Grant Year 2 (5/01/2020 - 4/30/2021)

Year 2 Grant Funds Awarded \$ 1,551,469

Additional Funds Awarded
(COLA and Quality Improvement) \$ 86,025

Total Funds Awarded \$ 1,637,494

Salaries and Benefits	\$ 1,366,569
Materials and Supplies	\$ 129,162
*Contracted Services	\$ 28,320
**Other operating expenses	\$ 33,667
Indirect Costs (required)	\$ 79,776

2020-2021 Grant Year 3 (5/01/2021 - 4/30/2022)

Year 3 Grant Funds Awarded \$ 1,658,881

Additional Funds Awarded
Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) \$ 19,977
American Recovery Act (ARA/COVID-19)
Funds expire: 3/31/2023 \$305,484

Total Funds Awarded (without ARA) \$ 1,678,858

Salaries and Benefits	\$ 1,364,158
Materials and Supplies	\$ 136,216
*Contracted Services	\$ 18,840
**Other operating expenses	\$ 57,428
Indirect Costs (required)	\$ 81,128

**Contracted services expenses include contracted trainings from Teachstone and Conscious Discipline, communications, marketing, print, and COPA subscription.*

***Other operating expenses includes employee and non-employee travel, membership in TX and National Head Start Associations, cost of PK monitors to maintain ratios at all times and miscellaneous operating costs.*