



# **AISD Head Start Self-Assessment 2019-2020 Report**

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## **Introduction**

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. 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. The staff of AISD HS strive to assist families in reaching self-sufficiency and to ensure children are prepared for school.

AISD HS's long and short-range goals, objectives, and strategies are found in a variety of documents and sources including, the AISD HS School Readiness Plan, Training and Technical Assistance Plan, and our 5-year programmatic goals. These documents were created from information gathered using the community needs assessment and from other data sources. Data sources that include feedback and input from program staff, parents, community representatives, Policy Council members, and the Governing Board (AISD School Board). As this is AISD's first full year as a Head Start grantee, this will be our first Self-Assessment and data gathered during this process will be used to inform further program growth and development.

The Austin Independent School District Head Start program with the capacity to serve 204 children in 12 classrooms on 8 public school sites in the Austin Metropolitan area. All sites are located within Travis County, Texas. 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 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year.

AISD's Head Start Self-Assessment process, mandated to be completed annually, involved the collection of information from a variety of sources to determine if systems and services have been

implemented and are working effectively. Engaging in this process allows the program to assess progression in reaching program goals and objectives along with recognizing areas of strength and areas for continued growth. The results of the Self-Assessment provide a path forward in setting program goals that will improve the program's services as well as acknowledge the program successes. In conducting the Self-Assessment, AISD HS program staff worked in collaboration with policy council members, parents, and community representatives on the Self-Assessment team to focus on improving services for enrolled children and families in three focus areas.

## Methodology

In accordance with paragraph 45 CFR 1302.102(b)(2) of the Head Start Performance Standards, Austin Independent School District Head Start (AISD HS) annual Self-Assessment process was conducted in the early summer of 2020. The Self-Assessment purpose, process, and timeline was reviewed and approved by the Policy Council. After which, the AISD HS management team held a meeting to discuss program information and data in order to determine three (3) focus areas for the Self-Assessment teams to explore. Various sources of program data were gathered and used to identify areas of strength, concerns, and issues that would benefit from further evaluation by the Self-Assessment Review Team (SA) team comprised of individuals from several groups including management and leadership staff, policy council, and community partners. Training and support were provided for each group by a pre-determined group lead who helped to guide the discussion and gather feedback

### 2019-2020 Head Start Self-Assessment Timeline of Events

In order to complete the Self-Assessment, a timeline of events which identified activities and person(s) involved was developed. This timeline was used to ensure the Self-Assessment process was completed. See below for the chart listing events associated with the Self-Assessment process and timelines:

<b>2019-2020 Self-Assessment Time Line</b>	
<b>May 13<sup>th</sup> 2020</b>	Self-Assessment Overview and Approval by Policy Council
<b>June 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> 2020</b>	Self-Assessment Team Engagement and Orientation
<b>June 10<sup>th</sup> 2020</b>	Conduct Self-Assessment Process - Analyze and Dialogue
<b>June 15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> 2020</b>	Collate Information and Develop Self-Assessment Reports
<b>July 2020</b>	Management Team uses report for planning and goal setting
<b>August 2020</b>	Provide Governing Body with a copy of the Self- Assessment Report for review and approval
	Provide Policy Council with a copy of the Self-Assessment Report for review and approval (HSPC does not meet in June or July)
<b>September 2020</b>	Submit Report to the Regional Office

## **Key Insights: Successes and Opportunities for Improvement**

AISD Head Start is dedicated to building a sustainable comprehensive early childhood education program that provides quality family support services to families. The AISD Head Start program considers that the care and education of children requires partnerships and by putting families first will build a strong foundation for future generations. Some of the key strengths of the program and achievements of AISD Head Start over the last year include:

- 100% of parents surveyed reported that they felt their child had made academic growth during the school year.
- Most children enrolled in the program had health care coverage.
- 71% of families surveyed regularly attended parent meetings at their child’s school.
- Teachers provided families with multiple methods of communicating and ways to volunteer in the classroom.

The AISD Self-Assessment Review Team completed a review of the services, systems, policies and procedures relating to: 1) Health and Social Services; 2) Education and Disabilities; and 3) Parent Family Engagement. After analyzing and discussing the three focus areas, members of the Review Team made recommendations. Results were categorized as: Strengths in AISD Head Start; Opportunities for Growth; and Feedback and Innovations. The chart below summarizes the program strengths and opportunities for growth:

<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Strengths in AISD Head Start</b>	<b>Opportunities for Growth</b>
<b>Health and Social Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Number of students with health insurance coverage</li> <li>▪ Number of students with a completed dental/physical exam</li> <li>▪ Number of students and families receiving Mental Health referrals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Large number of students had health insurance</li> <li>▪ Majority of children received a vision and hearing screening</li> <li>▪ Easy access to mental health services for enrolled families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Offer multiple vision/hearing screening dates</li> <li>▪ Connect to more community agencies</li> <li>▪ Engage parents in conversations on the importance of physical, dental and mental health at parent meetings</li> <li>▪ Build resource guide to assist families with access to board-certified providers</li> <li>▪ More training for education staff around the importance of dental care and support</li> </ul>

Focus Area	Strengths in AISD Head Start	Opportunities for Growth
<p><b>Education and Disabilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enrollment of students with disabilities</li> <li>▪ Support for families of children with disabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enrollment (165) was good for being such a new program</li> <li>▪ Having the Head Start program spread out throughout the district gives many families the opportunity to benefit</li> <li>▪ Program runs for full-day rather than other programs which are half-day</li> <li>▪ All classroom teachers are certified teachers with proper training</li> <li>▪ Staff is easy to work with and easy to communicate and provide support so that makes collaboration easier</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Work with AISD ECSE staff to connect with possible ECSE families early on in school year</li> <li>▪ Provide trainings and support to staff and outreach to families so all involved understand that Head Start is an available service for ECSE students</li> <li>▪ Share information with ECI partners as an option for parents transitioning in the AISD</li> <li>▪ Train staff at campuses that do not have AISD Head Start about the program</li> <li>▪ Provide training and support to AISD Head Start staff about students with disabilities</li> <li>▪ Classroom tours for new families of children with disabilities to show them what a classroom might look like.</li> </ul>

Focus Area	Strengths in AISD Head Start	Opportunities for Growth
<p><b>Parent and Family Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establishing family goals and progress toward meeting them</li> <li>▪ Attendance at meetings/conferences</li> <li>▪ Types of meetings/family engagement opportunities as well as the level of participation at each</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Parent meetings offered at each school</li> <li>▪ Connections with the Parent Support Specialists (PSS)</li> <li>▪ Offering opportunities for families to create their own goals</li> <li>▪ Various ways for families to volunteer and support classroom</li> <li>▪ Good level of communication with families from teachers and Family Advocates.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Engage with families rather than just providing information</li> <li>▪ Hold a parent orientation to help families understand the purpose of Head Start</li> <li>▪ Add cultural proficiency component into family engagement</li> <li>▪ Offer meetings at multiple times to help accommodate family schedules</li> <li>▪ Use technology tools to share information (SeeSaw, Facebook, Twitter, text messages)</li> </ul>

## **Recommendations**

Based on the feedback and opportunities for growth the Head Start leadership has developed some strategies for how to assist in our program improvement efforts. Strategies identified affect the education, health, and parent-family engagement of all children and families enrolled in the AISD Head Start program. To address the opportunities for growth identified through the Self-Assessment, goals have been identified with actionable steps, timelines, and person(s) responsible, which are listed below. Strategies outlined for achievement of goals will be tracked over the next 12 months for effectiveness. Results will be monitored by the Head Start Director, program management team, and reported to stakeholders.

<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Responsible Persons</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<b>Health Screenings</b> <u>Goal:</u> 90% of enrolled students will have completed medical and dental exams within the 90 days of first date of attendance. Those not complete will receive follow up care to ensure the completion of this item.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improve the methods to communicate with parents about physical/dental exams so that parents understand the purpose and benefits of regular exams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Health and Social Services Specialist</li> <li>▪ Head Start Administrator</li> </ul>	August 2020
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Revise and outline the information provided to parents during the application/enrollment process to include information on exams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Health and Social Services Specialist</li> <li>▪ Head Start Administrator</li> </ul>	August 2020
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Train staff on the process and staff expectations around required exams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Health and Social Services Specialist</li> </ul>	Aug/Sept 2020
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Monitor the amount of health/dental exam forms returned and provide more outreach to families to help them overcome hurdles in access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Health and Social Services Specialist</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<u>Desired Outcome:</u> Parents will recognize and understand the importance of their child receiving regular health/dental exams.			

<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Responsible Persons</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<b>Education and Disabilities</b> <u>Goal:</u> Enroll a minimum of 21 students with disabilities throughout all AISD Head Start classrooms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Collaborate with ECSE office and ECI agencies to ensure all parties are aware of opportunities in Head Start</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Health and Social Services Specialist</li> <li>▪ Head Start Administrator</li> </ul>	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Outreach to all schools with information regarding AISD Head Start and the option of a transfer for eligible families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ AISD EC Director</li> <li>▪ ECSE Administrator</li> <li>▪ Head Start Administrator</li> </ul>	August 2020

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide training and information for staff in Head Start classrooms to they have the tools to help facilitate learning for students with disabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education Specialist</li> <li>ECSE Administrator</li> </ul>	Sept/Oct 2020
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor enrollment of students with disabilities and determine in additional steps are required to reach goal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head Start Administrator</li> </ul>	November 2020

Desired Outcome:

Children with disabilities and their families will be served in the least restrictive environment and have vital early learning experiences with their typically developing peers.

Focus Area	Strategies	Responsible Persons	Timeframe
<b>Parent and Family Engagement</b> <u>Goal:</u> Increase parent attendance at parent meetings and policy council meetings by 40%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create monthly activity calendars for enrolled families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family Advocates</li> <li>Education Specialist</li> <li>Head Start Administrator</li> </ul>	Summer 2020
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a yearly schedule of parent meeting topics to ensure all families are receiving similar information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health and Social Services Specialist</li> <li>Family Advocates</li> </ul>	Summer 2020
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide Parent/Guardian orientation session at first parent meeting of the new school year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health and Social Services Specialist</li> <li>Family Advocates</li> </ul>	August 2020
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create social media accounts to improve communication with enrolled and prospective families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head Start Administrator</li> </ul>	July/Aug 2020
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share meeting information for all parent monthly meetings with all enrolled families to ensure access if they are unable to attend a meeting at their enrolled school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head Start Administrator</li> <li>Health and Social Services Specialist</li> </ul>	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use social media accounts and Head Start database to share information about enrollment, upcoming events and parent meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head Start Administrator</li> <li>Head Start Team</li> </ul>	Ongoing

Desired Outcome:

Parents/guardians play a vital role in their child development and success in school, early and continued engagement of families will help to improve student and family outcomes.

**Step 1: Assess your partnership** - Identify committee team members and their affiliation. Designate a leader.

Committee Member	Affiliation
Ashlee Johnson	AISD Head Start Administrator
Gina Apostolou	AISD Head Start Education Specialist
Pat Bernal	Teacher PK3
Erika Arenivas	Teacher PK4
Jacqueline Martinez	Assistant Principal

Designated Leader: Ashlee Johnson

**Step 2: Identify goals** – Fill in goals for your transition team below.

1.	Support children being ready for PK4
2.	Assist families in gaining knowledge about what they can do at home to help children be ready for PK4
3.	Assist families with enrolling in PK4

**Step 3 and 4: Assess what's happening now** - Complete matrix with current transition activities practiced in your community, deciding what type of connection it fosters and the focus of the activity. You may have some blank boxes. **Identify data on current practices** – Complete the last column of the matrix with the evidence you have that practices are or are not working.

Type of Connection	Sharing Information	Building Relational Supports	Fostering Alignment Between Settings	Evaluation (Step 4)
<b>Child-School</b>	PK3 teachers talk and read books about moving to a new classroom	Through planning at the school, children meet their PK4 teacher before the school year ends, when possible	PK3 children have many of the same routines as PK4 as well as being in full-day session  Current PK3 teachers take students on "PK4 Field Trips"	Based on current data and as this is our first year, these steps appear to be working well.  Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some families did not get to meet the PK4 teachers.
<b>Family-School</b>	PK3 teachers provide families with information about the PK4 expectations and enrollment procedures  Begin to inquire if	As our programs are located in public school buildings, families are encouraged to meet with the principal and other school staff to begin to make connections	Parents are given a set of activities to do with children over the summer prior to their PK4 year	Information was shared with parents about PK4 enrollment and connections were made at the school level.  Due to the COVID-

	the student will remain on campus or transfer to another school, then help support the transition based on their decision	before the new school year starts.  Principal meets with parents before the end of the PK3 year to discuss PK4 expectations, learning outcomes, family engagement opportunities, etc.		19 pandemic, take-home activities were not created but will be for the 20-21 school year.
<b>School-School</b>	PK3 teacher discusses a child's strengths and challenges with PK4 teacher	PK3 and PK4 teachers meet to talk about common expectations	PK3 and PK4 teachers meet to talk about common expectations	More effort will be dedicated to this task in subsequent years.
<b>School-Community</b>	AISD makes PK4 registration announcement in a variety of modalities			Due to COVID-19, enrollment events had to be canceled. Efforts continue to be made to ensure families know the procedures and steps for PK4

**Step 5: Plan and prioritize** – Reevaluate your goals, create new ones if necessary, and plan steps to take. Brainstorm up to four activities that could either address areas in need or intensify areas already focused on. Consider the type of connection, type of activity, when in the year they would occur, who needs to be involved to make them happen, possible barriers, and who is responsible for follow-up.

Revised/refined goals (if necessary):

1.	Modification to goal 3 – Have conversations about PK4 enrollment by Jan. of each school year with all families to ensure they are informed about their options at the end of the PK3 year
2.	

Goal addressed	Type of connection and type of activity	Transition Activity	When does activity occur?	Who needs to be involved?	Potential Barriers	Who is responsible for the follow-up?
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3	<b>Family-School</b> <i>-Building Relational Supports</i> <i>-Alignment Between Settings</i>	Hold a meeting for parents at each school site to discuss a transition to PK4	January of each school year	-PK3 and PK4 teachers -Admin Staff @ sites -Head Start FAs -Head Start Admin.	Possible issues with meeting dates at various sites	Ashlee Johnson Head Start Administrator
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