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# MEMORANDUM

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR &  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Sara Bedford  
Director, Human Services  
Department

**SUBJECT:** Oakland Head Start Annual Report    **DATE:** March 9, 2022

City Administrator  
Approval

Date: Mar 17, 2022

## INFORMATION

City of Oakland Head Start delivers an annual report to the City Council on program services. Due to the changes in meetings related to COVID-19 and the focus on the new Head Start grant award, the annual report for this year is submitted as an informational memorandum.

### **Program Year FY 2020 – 2021**

The primary focus in this program year was responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, the return federal review and securing a new five-year grant award. The program opened to virtual services in July and by October to in-person services with reduced student numbers, and strict COVID-19 protocols. In September 2020 the program had a return Federal Review to demonstrate improvements of findings from the 2019 Federal Review. The program passed the review and was able to complete the final year of the award. The program was also now eligible to compete for the next five-year Head Start grant award. Table 1 shows the funded slots for program year 2020 - 2021.

**Table 1: PY 20-21 Funded Slots by Service Provider**

<b>Name of Service Provider</b>	<b>Funded Slots</b>
<b>City of Oakland (Grantee)</b>	<b>452</b>
Brighter Beginnings Home Based Program (Partner)	108
Laney College (Partner)	32
St. Vincent's Day Home (Partner)	46
<b>Total Partner Slots</b>	<b>186</b>
<b>Spanish Speaking Unity Council (Delegate)</b>	<b>368</b>
<b>Total by Program</b>	
Early Head Start	416
Head Start	590

<b>Overall Grant Funded Total</b>	<b>1006</b>
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**COVID-19 Response**

City of Oakland Head Start began Program Year 2020-2021 virtually, moving to in-person services in the classroom in September. The program used guidance from local, state, and national public health agencies, the Office of Head Start, and our Health Services Advisory Board to create policies and procedures for COVID-19 mitigation that reflected the best evidence to date. Staff were trained in the policies and procedures prior to re-opening in person and trainings followed throughout the year. As they occurred, Oakland Head Start reported all COVID-19 cases to Alameda County Public Health Department and followed their guidance for closure, quarantine, and isolation of staff and children.

When the COVID-19 vaccine became available in early 2021, the Program supported teaching and other frontline staff to receive the vaccine quickly by offering documentation of their role (proof they were eligible to immediately receive the vaccine), and assistance finding and making appointments. The Program continued vaccine outreach efforts through education opportunities, one on one conversations with Head Start health staff and trusted members of the City of Oakland Head Start Health Services Advisory Committee. A series of vaccine clinics were first held for families and the community in June 2021 and have extended into 2022.

**Head Start Grant Award FY 2021 - 2026**

Following a competitive application process, the new grant award was received starting July 1, 2021. The grant is awarded annually for a five-year period. The grant award is for \$12,252,694 to serve 622 children through a direct service and partner contract award. In September 2021, the City Council approved additional funding to reopen three sites, Arroyo Viejo, Tassafaronga, and Franklin Head Start to serve a further 52 slots for a total of 674 funded slots. Table 2 below shows the current grant funded slots.

**Table 2: PY 2021-2022 Funded Slots by Service Provider**

<b>Name of Service Provider</b>	<b>Funded Slots</b>
<b>City of Oakland (Grantee)</b>	<b>365</b>
Brookfield 9600	<b>32</b>
Lion Creek Crossing	<b>24</b>
San Antonio CDC	<b>24</b>
Sungate	<b>24</b>
Manzanita	<b>16</b>
Franklin (City Funded)	<b>16</b>
Tassafaronga (City Funded)	<b>24</b>
Mobile Classroom Program	<b>24</b>
85th Avenue EHS	<b>34</b>

<b>Name of Service Provider</b>	<b>Funded Slots</b>
Arroyo Viejo (City Funded)	12
Broadway	24
Home-Based Program	59
Home Based - Pregnant Mothers	10
San Antonio Park	18
West Grand	24
<b>Grantee HS Total</b>	<b>144</b>
<b>Grantee EHS Totals</b>	<b>169</b>
<b>City Funded HS/EHS Total</b>	<b>52</b>
Bananas Family Child Care (Partner)	59
Brighter Beginnings Home Based Program (Partner)	100
Brighter Beginnings Pregnant Families Program (Partner)	20
Peralta College - Laney and Merritt Child Centers (Partner)	52
St. Vincent Day Home (Partner)	46
<b>Partners Total Funded Slots</b>	<b>277</b>
<b>Total By Program</b>	
Head Start (HS)	292
Early Head Start (EHS)	330
<b>Overall Program Slots</b>	<b>674</b>

### Program Implementation

The Home-Based Program began services on July 26, 2021, and the Center Based Program began services September 1, 2021. The program delivered a two-week pre-service training period with staff that included COVID-19 protocol trainings for staff and families. The three sites supported by Council Resolution were opened in November 2021. Table 3 below shows the current progress with meeting Head Start Performance Standards up to January 2022, including partners, who serve up to 277 children. Partners receive close support from City of Oakland and the Family Services, Health, Mental Health and Disabilities, and Governance components are provided by City of Oakland Head Start staff.

**Table 3: January 2022 Head Start Program Performance Standard Measures**

	Head Start	Early Head Start	Current Total
Enrollment/Funded (No.)	202/332	226/342	428/674
Enrollment/Funded (%)	(61%)	(66%)	(63%)
Daily attendance	66%	58%	63%
Medical Home	97%	99%	98%
Health Insurance	93%	92%	92%
Current Physical exam/Well-baby check	87%	59%	73%
Updated immunizations	100%	95%	98%
Hearing Screening	90%	91%	90%
Vision Screening	90%	90%	90%
Growth Screening	85%	88%	87%
Dental Home	89%	93%	91%
Current Dental Exam	74%	73%	73%
Nutrition Screening	95%	92%	93%
Developmental Screening (ASQ)	97%	99%	98%
<i>Concerns Identified following ASQ Screening</i>	42%	33%	37%
Behavioral Screening – (ASQ-SE)	97%	99%	98%
<i>Concern Identified following ASQ-SE Screening</i>	23%	18%	20%
1 <sup>st</sup> Individualized Curriculum (DRDP)	93%	95%	94%
Initial Parent/Teacher Conference (IDP)	92%	89%	91%
Initial Home Visits	99%	95%	98%
1 <sup>st</sup> Family Outcomes Assessment	96%	96%	96%
Referrals to the Regional Center of the East Bay (RCEB)	n/a	4	4
Referrals to OUSD Center for Exceptional Children	16	n/a	16
Individualized family service plan (IFSP)	1	16	17
Individualized education plan (IEP)	19	n/a	19
Children enrolled with IFSP or IEP	20	16	8.9%

Participant recruitment and the application review processes occur year-round. The program had to pause enrolling new children into the program due to the COVID-19 surge that led to repeated site closures and staff quarantines. As the surge subsides the program has begun to enroll additional children in the Early Head Start / Head Start program.

Oakland Head Start continues to support families to attend well-child and dental visits. Community resources are overwhelmed, but the program collaborates with the Alameda County Department of Public Health - Office of Dental Health, Lifelong Medical Care, and Native American Health Center to offer dental education, supplies and plan on-site screenings as COVID-19 staffing impacts allow. While the community-based dental services have suspended on-site screenings for children, they will resume once the COVID-19 rates decrease. Oakland Head Start partners with

Samuel Merritt Nursing students to work with each family and provide information about COVID-19 including the vaccine. The percentage of children who are up to date on medical exams is 73%, reflecting the challenge of helping families, particularly those in Early Head Start, make and keep appointments during COVID. However, this number also reflects the successful efforts of staff to connect children to care, as it is higher than past years.

### **Mental Health**

Mental Health consultant contracts are in place, however there are a shortage of consultants in this program year. Program staff determine where needs are the highest and request interim temporary coverage or internal referrals (including developmental consultants) where possible. The program is releasing a request for proposals (RFP) to identify additional mental health consultants to work with the program in the next year.

### **Disabilities**

Program staff collaborate with families to complete and submit referrals to both the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) and Regional Center of the East Bay. Site Based “Multi-Disciplinary Success Teams” (MDST), meet to work on individual cases that have concerns identified through the developmental and behavioral screenings. They develop specific supports, classroom activities and mental health consultant observations while working closely with the family. As of January 31, 2022, there were 18 referrals in process.

### **Family Services**

Transition from Head Start into Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten is a key role of family services. Program staff work with families on transition plans, support enrollment applications and partner with Oakland Unified School District’s (OUSD) transition team to help families with a smooth transition into the OUSD program.

The Family Outcomes Assessment conducted three times a year, determined that the top two needs reported by families are now housing and employment. Family services works to identify families who are currently homeless or at-risk of homelessness and provides them resources to obtain stable housing. Program staff host workshops for families such as Oakland Private Industry Council (OPIC) on Employment Opportunities and Brilliant Babies for Financial Literacy. The technology lending library program continues to provide families with a laptop, hotspot, and technical support as needed.

All families received special holiday help including food boxes and groceries in November and toys as part of the toy drive that happens annually in December. Staff also continue to support families with diaper and COVID personal protective equipment (PPE) distribution. In April 2022, during the annual Week of the Young Child (WOYC), the in-person fieldtrip to Fairyland will return.

## **New Program Options**

### ***Family Child Care (FCC) Program***

The City of Oakland Head Start grant now includes a new Head Start family child care (FCC) component in the grant award. A licensed family child care home refers to childcare in an individual's private home; they can vary greatly in size from a few children to up to 14 children. This program option provides a smaller, more home-like setting for childcare which is often preferred by families, especially those with younger children. Family childcare homes are small businesses, typically led by women of color. During COVID-19 these businesses have been severely impacted, leading to closures. This partnership helps stabilize these critical services. City of Oakland is partnering with Bananas Resource & Referral Agency in the development of this program which is called Tiny Steps Family Child Care Program. Bananas will be responsible for identifying, contracting, training, and providing the Head Start educational oversight for each Family Child Care partner, with Oakland Head Start staff providing the rest of the comprehensive services that make up Head Start programming.

### ***The City of Oakland Head Start Mobile Classroom***

The Mobile Classroom is an innovative endeavor for the Oakland Head Start/Early Head Start program. The program is customizing a recreational vehicle (RV) to serve as a modified classroom. The Mobile Classroom will address and meet the developmental, educational, and support needs of families with children, birth to age 5, who are living in Oakland and experiencing homelessness.

The Oakland Head Start/Early Head Start program will work in collaboration with the Human Services Department's Coordinated Entry Program, *Family Front Door*, to conduct outreach and recruitment for the mobile classroom.

Home visitor staff will lead the mobile classroom implementation and provide one-on-one early care and education services that would normally be provided for families in the home. The mobile classroom will operate on a schedule and be parked at specific, safe, and easily accessible locations on different days of the week. As families transition to a stable home environment, the Head Start staff will remain with the family until they are able to transition to traditional program options of a classroom or home base programs. Renovations of the vehicle are underway, and we expect to receive the completed vehicle in April 2022.

## **Human Resources and Professional Development**

The reduced new grant award had significant impacts to personnel. Between retirements, promotions, and resignations, several due to COVID-19, the program lost 15 staff. City Council passed resolutions in September and December to reopen 3 sites and to retain all filled staff positions to support the program and deliver high quality services to Oakland families. The report outlining the funding for these positions will be presented to Council in March.

While nine positions have been filled, the program is still understaffed and has 33 vacancies remaining. The current vacancies are primarily for on-site and direct service positions, and

include Associate Instructors, Assistant Instructors, Family Services Specialists, Early Learning Specialists, Coaches, and Drivers. Human Services Department is working closely with Human Resources and the unions to create job specifications and recruit new staff.

### ***Training and Professional Development***

The City of Oakland Head Start Program has conducted significant training and professional development this year. The year began with a 2-week pre-service training ahead of the start of the school year. Approximately 20 teachers are currently participating in a yearlong training with The Center on Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) focused on promoting the social and emotional development and school readiness of young children birth to age 5. The program has also offered pediatric CPR and first aid for staff to have up to date certificates. Training has also been provided on child assessment and screening tools, as well as the programs three data base systems: Child Plus, Learning Genie and ASQ Online.

### **Program Governance**

The City of Oakland Head Start Parent Policy Council and Advisory Board decision-making is critical to the program's design, oversight, monitoring, and implementation. The Parent Policy Council is comprised of Oakland Head Start parents elected to the Parent Policy Council by the individual Parent Committee at each site, to serve as the Parent Policy Council Representative. The Head Start Advisory Board is comprised of up to 9 members. Key program decisions are reviewed and approved by the Parent Policy Council, who then submits their recommended approvals to the Advisory Board, for final approval. The Parent Policy Council consists of representation from program and partner sites. The Advisory Board currently has 7 active members. The program is currently recruiting to fill the remaining Advisory Board seats. The Advisory Board and Parent Policy Council meet monthly with translation available in Spanish and Cantonese, receiving program updates, monthly program and fiscal reports.

### **COVID-19 Response**

The program reviewed its COVID-19 protocols and procedures prior to the start of the 2021-2022 program year. Updates were made to reflect the latest information available on COVID-19 in early care and education settings. Staff were trained on updated protocols during the two-week pre-service. Training included sessions with local experts from Children's Hospital and the Office of Head Start.

In August 2021 and on an ongoing basis, staff trained and enrolled in a rapid testing program made available by the California Department of Public Health. This program allows staff to test themselves for COVID-19 up to five days a week at their site. As a result of the City of Oakland COVID-19 Vaccine Mandate and Office of Head Start Mandate (effective January 31, 2022) all current Head Start employees are vaccinated against COVID-19.

In December 2021, the Office of Head Start released its Interim Final Rule on the use of masks and COVID-19 vaccine mandate. As a result, Oakland Head Start is required to and continues to require mask use for all those aged two years and older in our program. The Program continues

to report cases to Alameda County Health Department as they occur and follows guidance regarding closures, quarantine, and isolation of staff and children.

Head Start continues to connect families to services to help manage the impacts of COVID-19 by distributing PPE, rapid tests, assisting with applications for financial assistance, and providing ongoing education opportunities. Through a partnership with Samuel Merritt nursing students, we are currently surveying families to ensure the entire family is connected to medical insurance and a doctor so that the entire family has access to trusted sources of information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine.

In anticipation of the approval of a vaccine for children under the age of five, the Spring Health Services Advisory Committee will focus on the development of the vaccine to give staff and families information on its safety. The program will focus on outreach and vaccine clinics when the vaccine is finally approved for this age group.

While the Omicron variant caused nine closures in January 2022 alone, classroom efforts to minimize the spread of COVID-19 are highly effective and there has not been spread in our classroom setting.

## **Priorities for Remaining Program Year**

### ***Strategic Planning***

As part of the five-year grant, the Program will work with staff, the Parent Policy Council and Advisory Board to develop program goals and objectives. The program is developing a continuation application to receive funding for program year 2022 – 2023. The Program will also complete our annual review and update of selection criteria to allow for key priorities to inform participant selection and enrollment based on the updated community assessment. The Selection Criteria is set to be approved by the program's Parent Policy Council, and the Head Start Advisory Board in March 2022.

### ***Facilities Updates***

The new Home-Based Program Site and Family Resource Center, funded by the Council Resolution, will formally open in April 2022. Program staff are working on setting up the lease agreement, maintenance, and supplies purchases for the new site on International Boulevard. In partnership with Allen Temple Church, Program staff are working to convert the 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue site into an Infant, Toddler and Preschool site so that families can remain at one location for the duration of their time with Head Start.



***Office of Head Start***

We are awaiting approval for the inclusion of the 52 slots approved by City Council to be formally incorporated into the Head Start grant. We continue to meet with the Regional Office monthly to provide updates on the progress of the grant award. There are currently no formal federal reviews scheduled at this time.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sara Bedford". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

SARA BEDFORD

Director, Human Services Department

For questions, please contact Sara Bedford, Director, 510-238-6794 or Diveena Cooppan, Head Start Manager, 510-238-3165

