

**Milwaukee Public Schools  
Head Start 05CH010537 (1370 seat)  
Quality Improvement Application**

**Summary of Current Head Start Program**

Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) is home to Milwaukee's most experienced Head Start program. The program provides high quality, full day center-based programming five days per week for four-year-olds, as well as full day and half day programming for three-year-olds serving 1,370 children and their families from low income households at 27 sites throughout the city of Milwaukee.

**Organizational Background:**

Milwaukee Public Schools Head Start Program is dedicated to enhancing the cognitive, social, emotional and physical well-being of children and families in Milwaukee County. The agency provides quality educational programs for preschool children, as well as supportive family services in partnership with parents and their communities.

Milwaukee Public Schools Head Start program strives to be a model collaborative, education agency promoting individual growth and personal achievement for children and their families.

The following core values reflect the agency's relationship with our children, parents, staff, Board of Directors, Policy Council members, collaborative partners, volunteers and community:

*The Head Start Program values:*

- The unique strengths of families and children
- Partnerships with families and communities
- Work that demonstrates our respect for each child, family, community and Head Start employee
- A learning environment that is inclusive and developmentally appropriate to the strengths and needs of children and families
- Diversity as a community-wide strength

**Needs:**

To support social-emotional needs, the MPS Head Start Program uses the Frog Street curriculum, including Conscious Discipline® strategies, and trauma-informed practices to teach staff and children behavior management and self-regulation. The MPS district provides trauma-sensitive training to all MPS staff, and the MPS Head Start program offers trauma training specific to Pre-K students and staff. The MPS Head Start mental health and disabilities staff trains and gives direct support to teachers and paraprofessionals in responding to challenging behaviors in the classroom setting.

Although the MPS Head Start Program provides high quality services to students and families, additional needs are apparent. The current Head Start grant supports twelve family partnership associates (FPAs) resulting in an average caseload of approximately 114 families per FPA. In addition, the FPA positions are only 75% FTE positions or thirty hours per week. This is extremely challenging and does not allow the program to sufficiently service the families and their increasing needs. By augmenting the number of family partnership associates, caseloads will become more manageable which will allow the program to strengthen family services. The FPAs will be able to build relationships using Relationship Based Competencies as well as provide more individualized family support. Moreover, additional FPA's will help to decrease the amount of wait time during the enrollment process.

Additional staffing hours are necessary to strengthen families, enhance relationships, expedite registration, recruit families, and provide professional development and training focused on trauma-informed care for Head Start staff and families. These additional hours will assist the

Head Start program during peak registration times and MPS district-wide recruitment and enrollment events.

As stated by Dr. Becky Bailey, stress and trauma cross all ethnic and economic lines with grave effects on health, learning, social-emotional development, and brain development (Bailey, 2014).

Teachers are facing the demands of becoming aware of and understanding how to deal with students of stress and trauma. Students are coming into the program each year with more exposure to stress and trauma and teachers are reporting an increased need for behavioral supports. Based upon parent reporting using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social Emotional (ASQ:SE), 28.1 percent of children entered the Head Start program received a higher-than-average score which may indicate a possible delay in social-emotional development and additional supports or interventions, and in need of possible further assessment. Also, the program's school readiness data has indicated an increased need for social emotional support.

The MPS Head Start school readiness goal in the domain of Social Emotional Learning indicated that *children will demonstrate self-regulation and personal sense of well-being and maintain secure relationships*. The progress made within the first semester for four-year-old students in the 2019-2020 school year was 3.64% percentage points and is indicative of the known developmental needs of children. As there are two education coordinators, one mental health and disabilities coordinator and one mental health staff attempting to meet the growing needs of 120 teachers and paraprofessionals, the Head Start program is recognizing an opportunity exists to further strengthen services. In order to address the growing needs of the Milwaukee community, the HS instructional staff need to understand trauma and the possible corresponding triggers, how to respond, and implement strategies in the classroom to support students and families in a trauma-sensitive manner. With improved understanding of trauma informed teaching strategies,

instructional staff will be able to more effectively address the academic needs of the students and prepare them, both academically and social-emotionally, with school readiness. Through the use of the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), teacher and student interactions are observed in the areas of emotional support, classroom organization and instructional support. The use of consultants to assist and guide teachers with school readiness, social emotional learning, behavioral interventions, and self-care will help to create consistent, predictable, nurturing environments and address the multiple domains of development and learning that are impacted by trauma.

### **Quality Improvement Implementation**

In an effort to alleviate the higher family caseloads, the Head Start Program will hire four additional FPAs, which will reduce caseloads, as well as work-related stress. This will allow the program to retain qualified FPAs and give individualized attention while effectively engaging families resulting in stronger relationships. Consequently, families will feel an increased level of support and engagement to the Head Start program and will be more likely to participate in district, programmatic and school events, programs, parent committees and policy council meetings. Upon receiving the funds, the Head Start program will post vacancies to hire four highly qualified FPAs, thus decreasing caseloads from an average of 114 families to an average of 86 families.

Additional staffing hours will benefit the Head Start program by strengthening families, enhancing relationships, expediting registration, recruiting families, and providing professional development and training focused on trauma-informed care for Head Start staff and families. The flexibility of additional hours will allow staff to assist the Head Start program during peak registration times and MPS district-wide recruitment and enrollment events. FPAs will be able to

work additional hours to support families in crisis, assist with registrations and participate in recruitment events. Instructional staff will be able to receive additional hours for coaching, classroom support and professional development around trauma informed approaches. Health and mental health staff will be able make use of additional hours to provide professional development and support for staff, as well as training and support for families.

The MPS Head Start program is facing an increase of families and students experiencing stress and trauma in their lives each year. Consultants, who will be trained on trauma informed care, will be beneficial to the Head Start staff. They will be able to provide coaching around signs and symptoms of trauma and integrate supports to assist in implementing trauma informed strategies within the classroom. They will be able to focus their support on school readiness, social emotional learning, behavioral interventions, and self-care for students, families and staff that will supplement the work that is already occurring within the program. The collaboration between consultants and the MPS Head Start administrative team will assist the program in meeting the needs of the instructional staff and families while allowing the permanent Head Start staff to complete their other assigned responsibilities. Upon receiving the funds, the Head Start program will contract with consultants for the 2020-2021 school year.

While every classroom should serve as a safe space for children in which teachers freely allow children to express themselves, calming areas in every classroom are beneficial for students to have an additional outlet. These calming spaces are referred to “Safe Places” are part of the board adopted Frog Street Curriculum. Calming areas allow students to practice self-regulation skills through personal reflection when they need a break from their peers. Every classroom will

have a calming area filled items such as large cushions, pillows, bean bag chairs, books, puppets, and soft handheld objects.

### **Objectives, Outcomes and Evaluation**

As the Head Start program hires additional FPAs, the Head Start program expects to see decreased caseloads, increased communication with parents, increased participation in Policy Council meetings and parent committees, as well as an increase in the attainment of family goals. Attendance at policy council and parent meetings will be monitored by program staff through sign-in sheets. Qualitative and quantitative data will be collected through surveys and ChildPlus reporting to determine family goal progress and family satisfaction with focused supports and services to determine program effectiveness.

Additional staffing hours will allow Head Start staff to participate at higher levels in recruitment and enrollment, resulting in full enrollment of the program as reported in monthly Head Start Enterprise System (HSES) reporting. The additional hours for FPAs will also increase parent satisfaction as measured through surveys, and higher student attendance rates as measured by monthly attendance reports. Additional hours for instructional staff will result in higher student outcomes as measured by Galileo Pre-K, and specifically the Social Emotional School Readiness Goal. Supplemental hours for supporting Head Start staff, such as mental health and health staff, will result in the provision of additional support and community resources to families and fulfilling program requirements such as vision screenings and dental exams in a more efficient manner as measured by ChildPlus reporting.

The program will see improved child outcomes, School Readiness Goals, and program-wide CLASS data by contracting with consultants to focus on trauma-informed support. The MPS

Head Start program expects to receive fewer referrals for mental health support from instructional staff as they receive additional assistance in the classroom from consultants and the administrative team. Teachers will be surveyed to monitor the effectiveness of the consultant, coaching around trauma informed practices and social emotional learning to determine feelings of satisfaction around collaboration, and increased individualized support.

The MPS Head Start Program is aware of the importance of trauma informed practices to meet the needs of students and families experiencing trauma and toxic stress. The addition of FPA staff, the flexibility to work additional staffing hours, and the support of consultants will reinforce the positive work that is already being done. The program will see the effects in the classrooms, within the families, and improved student outcome and program data. MPS Head Start students will exit the program ready for success in school and families will be prepared to support their lifelong learning.

**Budget Narrative**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Positions/ Hours</b>	<b>Federal Share</b>	<b>Annual Salary/Hourly</b>	<b>Federal Share</b>
<b>PERSONNEL</b>				
Family Partnership Associate	4	4	\$21,081	\$84,324
Professional Development - Teachers	1008	1008	\$42.39	\$42,729
Professional Development-Teacher Assistants and FPAs	1296	1296	\$17.56	\$22,758
Professional Development-Social Worker	16	16	\$54.42	\$871
Extra Hours (FPA)	300	300	\$17.56	\$5,268
Extra Hours (Secretary)	150	150	\$18.50	\$ 2,775
Extra Hours (Social Worker	80	80	\$54.42	\$4,354

<b>TOTAL SALARIES</b>				\$163,078
<b>FRINGE BENEFITS</b>				\$86,921
<b>TOTAL</b>				\$249,999
TRAVEL				\$0
EQUIPMENT				\$0
SUPPLIES				\$ 77,972
CONTRACTUAL				\$15,000
CONSTRUCTION				\$0
OTHER				\$0
TOTAL DIRECT CHARGES				\$342,971
INDIRECT CHARGES				\$21,449
<b>TOTALS</b>				\$364,420
<b>TTA</b>				\$0
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>				\$364,420

**PERSONNEL**

4 Family Service Workers (\$84,324) are budgeted and provide social services to children and families as guided by the Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework. Duties of the Family Service Workers include completing Head Start enrollments and family partnership agreements, attendance monitoring and follow-up, and providing support for families in their effort to ensure completion of required health services. The Family Service Workers work 30 hours per week.

Extra hours for professional development (\$66,538) will be budgeted to support the cost of training teachers, teacher assistants, and FPA’s in trauma-informed services. It is expected the training will be two-full days. The weekend hourly rate for teachers is \$42.39 (\$42.39 x 16 hours x 63 = \$42,729). The weekend hourly rate for teacher assistants and FPA’s is \$17.56 (\$17.56 x 16



hours x 81 = \$22,758). The weekend hourly rate for the social worker is \$54.42 (\$54.42 x 16 hours = \$871).

Extra hours for family partnership associates and the secretary are needed to cover peak activity months for enrollment, family and student conference to ensure sufficient support for the program in the summer, weekends and non-school hours. The average hourly rate for family partnership associates is \$17.56 at 1.66 additional hours per month for 10 months for the 14 project family partnership associates (\$5,268). The average hourly rate for the secretary is \$18.50 for 150 extra hours for the secretaries (\$2,775).

Extra hours the social worker will assist children and families with additional support and community resources to families and fulfilling program requirements. The average hourly rate for the social worker is \$54.42 for 80 extra hours (\$4,354).

### **FRINGE BENEFITS**

Fringe benefits are budgeted at a district average rate of 53.3%, this includes Social Security, pension and insurance for employees. The total budgeted is \$86,921.

**EQUIPMENT** -- Not applicable

### **SUPPLIES**

The \$72,900 budgeted for supplies are designated for the purchase of items needed for the office, educational materials, and classroom outfitting and health and wellness supplies. Specially, each site will be budgeted \$2,700 to create a calming space for students to use. In addition, \$5,072 is budgeted to support programming costs, such as duplicating and office supplies.

**CONTRACTUAL-Programming** – Not Applicable

### **OTHER**

**CONSTRUCTION** -- Not applicable.

**TOTAL DIRECT CHARGES**

The total direct charges equal \$342,971

**TOTAL INDIRECT CHARGES**

The MPS approved indirect cost is 6.54%. This is calculated on all direct costs with the exception of contractual line items. The total amount budgeted is \$21,449. Attached is the document that establishes the indirect rate agreement with the Department of Public Instruction.

Indirect funds

**NON-FEDERAL SHARE**

MPS has committed \$91,105 in non-federal resources. MPS will match the federal share of this project through transportation costs. Approximately 70% of three-year-old students in MPS participate in district provided school bus transportation. The average cost per three-year-old pupil is \$2,517 per the MPS Department of Transportation. This is based on a \$30,208 annual cost per bus route, servicing approximately 12 students per route. Therefore, the district commits to the costs associated with transporting 70% of the 981 three-year-old students to be served by this project (687 students) at a cost of \$2,517 per student for a \$1,729,179 total cost. The district has identified \$91,105 as the non-federal share to meet the requirement.