



Head Start Community Program of Morris County, Inc.

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2025 SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT & PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLAN

I. Introduction

a. Program description

Head Start Community Program of Morris County (HSCPMC) partners with families to provide comprehensive support for child development and school readiness, from prenatal to kindergarten ages, for the community's most vulnerable children. The vision of our program is to empower diverse families and strengthen communities. The program has a 60-year history of supporting at-risk children and families in Morris County, with its main site located in the heart of Dover. With a non-competitive continuation five-year grant award beginning in July 2025, the program provides free child development services for a total of 195 children through center-based Head Start programs, and 106 infants, toddlers and pregnant women through center-based and home-based Early Head Start programs, with a funded enrollment of serving a total of 301 individuals. A slight reduction in enrollment was granted for the 2025 award, with a funded Head Start Preschool enrollment moving from 199 to 195 children in order to support a 15-students-per-classroom alignment for public pre-k collaborations. For the 2024-2025 program year, a cumulative enrollment of 324 received comprehensive, center-based and home-based services (207 Head Start children, 105 Early Head Start children and 12 Early Head Start pregnant women).

School district collaborations for Head Start/public pre-k services at the Dover site included five Dover Public Schools classrooms, one Wharton Public Schools classroom, and one Mine Hill School District classroom. In addition to the Dover site, the program's 19-year collaboration with the County of Morris supported a site with six state-of-the-art classrooms at the Robert C. Grant Head Start Center (RCG) in Morris Plains/Parsippany. A four-classroom collaboration at the RCG provided Head Start/public pre-k services for Morris School District.

b. Context and Methodology



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In the sixth and final year of the federal grant project timeline, HSCPMC completed important program goals and objectives. Due to the prior consolidation of two grants, the Project Period was extended to 70 months, from 09/01/2019-06/30/2025. Data to assess progress was obtained from multiple sources, including ongoing monitoring, health and safety/facilities reports, child and family outcomes, management systems, staff and parent feedback, the prior year's Self-Assessment Report and Program Improvement Plan, and review of outcomes on grant application goals and objectives. Identified areas of focus were examined to address systemic issues and develop innovative approaches to improve quality. With a strength-based focus, the 2025 self-assessment provides a key framework for program management, planning and oversight.

The self-assessment data gathering and analysis process included the use of technology to collect survey data, as well as personal interviews in focus group format. Platforms to support sharing of data included Zoom, Google Docs and Google Meet, Google Forms, and Creative Curriculum Cloud. Staff, parent, and stakeholder surveys provided key information for community assessment and self-assessment. The leadership team, Board of Directors, and Policy Council (including Parent Committee) reviewed Ongoing Monitoring reports which shared data on Program Governance and Leadership; Management Systems; Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment & Attendance (ERSEA); Comprehensive Services; Fiscal Management; Environmental Health and Safety; and School Readiness Outcomes, along with PIR data. Progress on goals and objectives was examined through these lenses. Quantitative data in aggregate, along with qualitative data, were examined from multiple sources including professional development records; TSGOLD; Creative Curriculum Fidelity Tool; and CLASS/ITERS/ECERS/TPOT observations. Inquiries were supported by reference to standards and documents including the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework; Head Start Program Performance Standards; NJ Birth-to-Three Early Learning Standards; and NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards, as well as the Goals and Objectives in the Head Start/Early Head Start funding application.

The self-assessment timeline was spring 2025. The HSCPMC leadership team met to plan the self-assessment design, review training materials and raw data, and manage assignments. During May



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and June, self-assessment data was reviewed and discussed via in-person meetings, including staff focus groups at each site (June 4 and 5), and meetings of the Policy Council (June 17), and Board of Directors (June 24). The self-assessment team participating in these meetings was comprised of staff, parents and Policy Council members, members of the Board of Directors, and community representatives. Staff focus group sessions consisted of randomly selected individuals to encompass multiple positions and departments at both sites. Bilingual sessions led by the Human Resources Manager and Executive Director collected information from staff around their satisfaction, well-being, and ideas for program improvement.

The process for Self-Assessment involved five key steps: 1) Gather and analyze data on key issues; 2) Identify program strengths; 3) Highlight progress on grant goals and objectives; 4) Identify opportunities to improve services to children and families; and 5) Develop plans and strategies for continuous improvement.

Team members looked at outcomes data and discussed strengths, challenges, trends and solutions. Recommendations were compiled for development of this final report to guide planning for program improvement and share with stakeholders.

II. Key Insights: Successes and Opportunities for Improvement

Noted strengths of HSCPMC over the 2024-2025 program year included the continuous delivery of comprehensive, high-quality, center-based and home-based services, with full enrollment despite myriad staffing challenges in an unstable employment market. Management systems to support programmatic excellence and standards-compliant services were reinforced with periodic training on policies and procedures, and reviewed through regular ongoing monitoring.

Outcomes for our School Readiness goals around strengthening systems to support children's school readiness in alignment with the HSELOF, NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards, and NJ Birth to Three Early Learning Standards were an area of strength. Outcomes data from Teaching Strategies GOLD reflected overall steady progress by children in the program, with most children below widely held expectations at the fall checkpoint, showing growth at mid-year, and the majority within or



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exceeding widely held expectations at the final checkpoint in spring. For Head Start youngsters, strong growth was seen in the areas of Language, Cognitive and Mathematics. For Early Head Start, strong growth was noted in the areas of Literacy, Language and Mathematics.

In terms of learning environments, outcomes data indicate that our school readiness goals around ECERS/ITERS and CLASS scores were achieved at a high level. ECERS-3 (conducted in partnership with public pre-k staff), ITERS-3, and CLASS assessments pointed to consistently high-quality environments. For Head Start Classrooms, program-wide ECERS scores all reached 5 or above, with average subscale scores of 5.6. For Early Head Start, scores averaged 6.13. CLASS scores also were extremely strong. Head Start scores for 2024-2025 exceeded national Office of Head Start CLASS averages and reflected our efforts to support social emotional development for the students and mental health for the staff. School readiness goals included improvement of CLASS scores in the areas of Instructional Support and Emotional Support for Head Start classrooms. Scores were remarkably consistent between 2023-2024 and 2024-2025, even with the addition of two brand-new Early Head Start classrooms. Scores for Emotional Support averaged 6.28 (6.21 the prior year), Classroom Organization averaged 5.83 (5.87 the prior year), and Instructional Support averaged 4.32 (4.37 the prior year). Early Head Start CLASS scores for Social-Emotional Behavior Support averaged 6.3 (6.0 the prior year), and Engaged Support for Learning averaged 5.5 (6.3 the prior year). Another School Readiness goal, CLASS Reliability for educational leadership team members, was achieved/maintained. The School Readiness goal for Inter-rater Reliability in Teaching Strategies GOLD was not achieved by all instructional staff, due to the high number of new staff without enough time in the program to access the professional development hours needed for Inter-rater Reliability study and testing. Attainment of this goal was challenging due to staff turnover, with limited availability of staff to cover the out-of-classroom training time needed to achieve Inter-rater Reliability. However, it remains an objective in staff individual professional development plans.

School Readiness Goals for implementation of curriculum to fidelity identified physical environment, program structure and interactions as the three areas of greatest strength in curriculum implementation for both Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms. Curriculum fidelity was assessed



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with a coaching lens by our leadership staff, who have received extensive training in curriculum fidelity. In addition, the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) was also used by the (Reliable) Special Services/Mental Health Coordinator to observe and provide feedback to all Head Start classrooms. The strongest teaching practices observed were: Engagement in supportive conversations with children; schedules, routines, and activities; promotion of children's engagement; and collaborative teaming.

Data from *Teaching Strategies GOLD*, our Case Management process, and TPOT observations identified the continued need for social-emotional supports for children. It was clear that many children were entering the program with stress behaviors, difficulty adjusting, and challenges around interactions. A trauma-informed lens provides the perspective that children's social emotional outcomes were adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, even five years later. With intentionality, we continued to focus on program-wide implementation of the Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children. We also provided an additional level of support through *Handle With Care* (HWC), a nationally accredited behavior management system used by Head Start programs and public schools. HWC provides strategies for de-escalation of challenging behaviors, with preventative actions to protect children from hurting themselves or others. Leadership team members received training for instructional certification, then trained staff in small groups. Staff have been encouraged to pivot from the focus of challenging behaviors to behaviors that challenge us and understand that behavior stems from unmet needs rather than inherent negativity. With this shift, staff have been utilizing the training to find the why behind the behavior and how to support each individual child.

For the 2025 program year, the outcomes examined led us to a deeper exploration of specific issues which emerged as pivotal for Self-Assessment: 1) Retaining and Supporting a Highly-Qualified Workforce with a Focus on Staff Wellness (continued emphasis from 2022 and 2023) and 2) Supporting Children's Social-Emotional Development with a Focus on Prevention and Response to Children's Stress Behaviors in the Classroom (continued emphasis from 2023). A third, related issue arose over the most recent program year: 3) Improving Facilities to Support Children and Staff. The Self-Assessment process



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looks at measures that have been taken to address these issues, along with overall successes and needs of our program over the past year, with reflection on the previous year's progress.

Data from our Human Resources analytics highlighted the continued need to work on retaining and supporting a highly-qualified workforce, with a focus on staff wellness. During the 2024-2025 program year, out of 103 staff positions, 16.5% left the program. This was an area of continued focus for our organization, with improvement from 18% turnover in 2023-2024 and 36% from the 2022-2023 program year. Most left for positions with higher compensation, including members of the educational staff who left for positions with collaborating school districts or partners. Although we are on a path of continuous improvement in staff retention, it remains a persistent issue.

Our federal grant objective to establish best-practice program design and management systems to support staff professional development, and to attract and retain highly qualified staff, continued to be impacted by challenges outside of our control—including a nationwide staffing crisis in early childhood programs. Staff surveys pointed to the need for higher pay—even though our salaries are competitive, according to wage study data compiled within the past program year. However, staff focus groups as well as the surveys brought forth information about things which the organization can do to continuously improve staff morale. Last program year, a compelling request from staff for more paid time off resulted in added sick days and PTO days to the staff bank of time off. Staff were also paid for unused sick days at the end of the school year. These were small changes but staff indicated they felt heard and supported, to the extent that was possible for the organization.

The focus group sessions led by HR team members at both program sites provided the opportunity to hear from staff in a safe, non-judgmental environment that allowed them to freely share their thoughts and opinions. We learned about their sincere joy in serving children and that the program mission was a source of pride for staff. Employees also enjoyed warm and supportive relationships with co-workers and felt good about our organizational culture—in which substantial investments to promote staff well-being have been made over the past several years. Employees appreciated the efforts by the Staff Wellness Committee to make them feel valued and celebrated, and communication within the organization was a noted strength. Staff noted that they felt cared for and



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happy with the organizational culture and work environment. Small gifts like t-shirts, as well as a holiday bonus, were very much appreciated. Staff especially felt valued when hospitality was provided in the form of daily coffee, special breakfasts, lunches or snacks/treats. Contests, games, and recognition activities were also very popular. Staff requested a social activity such as a cookout or holiday party, to provide opportunities for staff from different sites and departments to get to know one another. The ESL classes which were provided for staff were an area of strong positive feedback. Negative feedback was received around the health insurance plan and rising out-of-pocket expenses, especially for medication costs.

Staff shared their stressors, many of which revolved around the children's stressed behaviors and health/nutritional issues. As in past years, the rigorous and frequent classroom observations and documentation requirements for school district partnerships were a source of stress identified by teaching staff members. Additionally, teaching staff noted the stressful environment created by the need to support children impacted by trauma, including stress behaviors and challenges experienced by children with special learning and emotional needs. At the Dover site, staff noted a shortage of adult restroom facilities, although they expressed satisfaction with the upgraded learning spaces. Staff were stressed by waiting in line to use the restroom, and coverage for classrooms at these times was challenging.

Our goal to strengthen parent, family and community engagement processes, and supports for family well-being and positive parent-child relationships was an area of ongoing progress, with effective, robust parent engagement. Parent satisfaction surveys provided important data in this area, and responses were overwhelmingly positive, expressing gratitude and satisfaction with the program. We also learned that families prefer conversations over electronic communication. Survey data told us that 69% of families prefer to be contacted by phone, 16% by email and 14% by text. Parent engagement supported school readiness goals, with 100% of families reporting that they read with their children the free books provided by our Early Language and Literacy Program. The program, with its monthly literacy messages, has worked to instill the value of daily reading in the home. Fully 38% reported reading with their child daily, 40% three times a week, and 19% weekly; 2% reported having



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difficulty finding time to read with their child. In terms of engagement with children's education, 100% of parents found *Teaching Strategies GOLD* developmental learning reports, shared by teachers in the Fall, Winter and at the end of the school year, to be helpful in understanding how their child was progressing with their skills. Upwards of 95% of parents noted that they participated in the development of learning goals for their child, kept informed about progress and that their child is well-prepared for success in kindergarten.

However, areas for improvement were noted by parents. Communication between program staff and parents as an area of note—parents wanted more open, responsive lines of communication and more follow-up from teachers and family service staff. While technology was noted as a possible solution, large numbers of parents expressed a preference for phone or face-to-face interaction rather than electronic communication. Parents also noted difficulty in complying with organizational volunteer requirements due to their limited availability; time demands to attend events of all children in the family and difficult work schedules were noted as obstacles. Parents also expressed input around program schedule needs: Having Head Start Preschool and Early Head Start both operate on an 8AM-3PM schedule, offer before-care, provide more family activities that parents and children can participate in together. There were some comments regarding the physical buildings, with the request for a security guard and complaints about parking at the Dover site. Competition for parking spaces from residents of the building across the street (improperly parked in 2-hour spaces) as well as parking tickets received by parents when they are dropping off their child.

Strengthening parent engagement was supported through implementation of the parenting curriculum, *Positive Solutions for Families*, and the *Parents Interacting with Infants (PIWI)* component used in the EHS Home-based program. Self-Assessment looked at attendance for these parent education meetings, which were attended by a total of 84 parents. The seven-week in-person parent education program was provided during the fall of 2024; 30 Head Start Preschool parent participants and 21 Early Head Start parent participants attended in person at the Dover site, and 13 participants attended in person at the RCG site. While in-person engagement has been found to be most effective, we responded to requests for a virtual program, and provided an option for virtual attendance



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program-wide in the spring of 2025, which was attended by 20 participants. The program was well-received, and we continued to incentivize attendance with incentives (giveaways, gift cards, meals/snacks) and provide babysitting services.

Another parent education component is the Fatherhood Initiative; 40+ fathers participated in monthly meetings, with 10-15 regular attendees. This program, supported partially by the County of Morris, promotes peaceful, positive family relationships and fathers' engagement in children's school readiness.

Monthly School Readiness Calendars, full of culturally responsive activities to support parent-child relationships and child development, were an important source of non-federal match for the Early Head Start program. Parents regularly completed the daily activities, returning their completed calendars with notes, work samples and photos to connect learning at home with our programs. Overall, a total of 201 parents volunteered their time to support the program and/or their child's learning experiences with the program.

A major accomplishment was the attainment of key milestones in the organizational facilities plan, which sought to address the issue of space shortages for both personnel and children. A major renovation and expansion project at the Dover site, for which OHS approval was sought for five years, was fully completed during the 2024-2025 program year. The project provided five state-of-the art Head Start classrooms and enabled the reconfiguration of spaces to add two new Early Head Start classrooms, as well as outdoor play spaces and much-needed office space for staff members.

A specific area for improvement relating to facilities comes from self-assessment data provided by the staff of the RCG site, along with our registered dietician/nutritionist. The RCG lacks a full-service kitchen for food preparation, and children's meals are delivered by a vendor. Although the meals meet the minimal Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) requirements, there have been complaints about the taste, temperature and overall quality. Other vendors have been explored, but there is only once source in our local area that meets the CACFP guidelines. To address this, we applied for and received funding from the NJ Economic Development Authority, to upgrade and extend the capacity of the full-service kitchen at the Dover site. In addition, we applied for one-time supplemental funding



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from the Office of Head Start, for additional appliances, supplies and materials to support the expanded services that the upgraded kitchen will provide. The two funding streams together would enable us to meet the goal of enabling the Dover kitchen to efficiently prepare nutritious, delicious meals for both sites, and having Head Start staff deliver breakfast and lunch to the RCG facility.

III. SUMMARY OF SELF-ASSESSMENT & PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLAN

| Focus Area | Outcomes/Progress | Plans & Strategies for Improvement – 2025/2026 program year |
|---|---|---|
| Systemic Issue: Retaining and Supporting a Highly-Qualified Workforce with a Focus on Staff Wellness | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff Wellness Committee spearheaded wellness activities/programs included: Jeans Mondays & Fridays; Spirit Days; Ice Cream Socials; monthly wellness themes and activities; and contests to build staff morale, including Staff Appreciation Week.• Bilingual staff newsletter (in English and Spanish) recognizes staff birthdays/work anniversaries/special events and achievements, and provides key information and updates. New electronic design is highly readable.• Staff attire with contribution from organization was not offered as in past years but high-quality t-shirts were given to all staff.• New professional development program in partnership with Literacy Volunteers of America provided free ESL classes for staff members and was very well received.• Staff requested annual mid-year/holiday staff wellness event; budget constraints at year-end due to flat Head Start funding prevented providing this event in 2024. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff Wellness Committee will continue to collect data on staff members wants, needs and personal preferences to support wellness and motivational activities. Seek to offer opportunities for staff from both sites to share in socialization events.• Continue to provide ESL classes for staff.• Continue with introductory staff meeting activities and welcoming atmosphere designed to build relationships among staff and set a positive, warm and nurturing tone for the school year, with new employee onboarding to precede return of full staff• Explore feasibility of providing staff clothing link |



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| | <p>Inclusive picnic which took place to honor a retiring staff member was well-received.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Seasoned staff returned to work for pre-service training later than new staff, helping to address staff preferences for a later start, better aligned with public schools.● Mental health and related professional development services facilitated by Montclair University for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health provided consultation meetings in-person to support staff with strategies and address issues in service delivery for children and families.● Robust organizational support to minimize staff healthcare contribution burden continued to receive strong priority with allocation of fiscal resources.● Communication issues persisted between educational and family services staff, and extended to parental communications.● Most staff feel respected, well-prepared for their jobs, and have good communication with their supervisor, and feel that communication systems across the organization are strong● Staff reported taking pride in helping children and families as a positive aspect of their work● Challenges and causes of stress reported by staff included need for more paid time off, especially sick time; finding time to complete tasks, shortage of adult restroom facilities at Dover; paperwork, multiple observations of teachers, children's challenging behaviors, and staff absences requiring coverage in classrooms. | <p>to be provided once again to enable discounted purchase of Head Start attire or offer a free staff shirt to all.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Strive for annual contribution to 401K accounts● Continue to offer flexible opportunities for in-person consultation, responsive to individual needs, with bilingual mental health clinicians.● Ensure follow-up for inter-departmental communication through monthly meetings between Family Services staff members and Education members who support the same families.● Provide Financial Literacy training for staff● Continue to support staff healthcare premiums resulting in minimal staff contributions to the extent possible. Substantial increase in premiums are anticipated for 2025-2026.● Seek funding to add adult restrooms for staff at Dover facility● Prioritize staffing levels to support a third staff member in all classrooms.● Annually ensure that Head Start Eligibility Screening |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff positively responded to the addition of another sick day (total of 6) and another PTO day for self-care (total of 3). Staff turnover levels at 16.5% was an improvement over 18% the previous year and 36% the year before. Competition among employers and school districts for well-trained Head Start staff continued. Coverage for educational staff positions continued to be challenging, with Mondays and Fridays being days most impacted by staff absences. Compliance with HR law means that staff cannot be prevented from being compensated for taking sick time the day before/after a holiday. Staff noted the presence of a third staff member in classrooms enables active supervision and allows staff to take scheduled breaks, and coverage of absences makes a third staff member essential. Staff childcare classroom/slots provide free pre-k care for up to 10 staff children (by seniority). However, space and staff limitations currently impact available slots. Changes in state funding limit child care subsidy reimbursements. | <p>Tool affords Head Start slots for staff, including Over-Income staff who may not have other options for child care</p> |
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| Focus Area | Outcomes/Progress | Plans & Strategies for Improvement – 2025/2026 program year |
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| Systemic Issue: Supporting Children's Social-Emotional Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substantial number of children have entered the program with challenging and extreme stress behaviors <i>Handle With Care</i> training for administrators supported facilitation of staff training to empower classroom staff to prevent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide <i>Handle With Care</i> training toward certification for administrators to enable them to turnkey for staff in small groups featuring |



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| <p>with a Focus on Prevention and Response to Children's Stress Behaviors in the Classroom</p> | <p>escalation of children's challenging behaviors. Schedule was challenging for individual training support for classrooms and aftercare staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each HS classroom received one Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) assessment over the course of the school year, with teacher feedback and follow-up. Areas for teacher coaching include teaching children to express emotions, teaching behavior expectations, and teaching friendship skills. Staff professional development emphasized training for preventing and responding to children's challenging and stress behaviors and Pyramid Model practices. Parenting curriculum provided training for parents consistent with Pyramid Model practices. | <p>opportunities for full engagement and role plays. Ensure aftercare staff members are supported.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support parents with <i>Positive Solutions For Families</i> curriculum and engagement to provide help with children's social-emotional skills. Seek parental input for scheduling and if possible, offer program sessions to follow in-person format with meeting incentives and babysitting services as well as providing a virtual program at another time of year. Update MOU with Montclair Center for Autism and EC Mental Health Services to encompass clinical services and professional development |
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| Focus Area | Outcomes/Progress | Plans & Strategies for Improvement – 2025/2026 program year |
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| <p>Improving Facilities to Support Children and Staff</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final phases of major rehabilitation project at the Dover site were completed, with Certificate of Occupancy obtained. Full rehabilitation of environmental issues at the Dover site, discovered during Preliminary Assessment, was completed, with Response Action Outcome letter obtained and new playground facilities became available to children. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize inspections for Safe Building Interior Certification from NJ Department of Health Follow up with contractor and architect for remedies to address the heating systems in new classrooms. |



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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A critical issue, determined to be a design flaw, was discovered with the heating systems for the new wing of classrooms at the Dover site. • A major HVAC upgrade was completed via funding received through NJ SAVE GREEN program with NJ Natural Gas for boiler replacement and LED lighting upgrade (70+% contribution with 0% financing). • A project funded by the NJ Economic Development Authority to renovate/upgrade kitchen at Dover site was completed. • An application was submitted to OHS for a one-time supplement for additional funding to support nutrition services with RCG meal preparation in the Dover kitchen. • All food services are now taking place in-house, with a variety of health foods, culturally responsive choices, and more efficiency and cost savings achieved. However, to maximize impacts of facilities improvement, additional kitchen equipment is necessary and more tools are needed to help students enhance food skills. • A need for additional adult restroom facilities is an issue impacting staff morale and classroom operations. | <p>Seek recompense as appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek funding to convert children bathroom to ADA-compliant adult restroom. • Review and monitor systems and supplies for preparation and delivery of RCG meals via the Dover site. |
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| Focus Area | Outcomes/Progress | Plans & Strategies for Improvement – 2025/2026 program year |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Family Outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families benefit from HSCPMC health programs to keep up-to-date with children's immunizations, check-ups and health records. • Fatherhood Initiative has been a successful program for 10 years, with strong attendance and positive feedback. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support and develop community partnerships with health and dental providers • For parent meetings, prioritize in-person format |



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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Positive Solutions for Families</i> saw improved attendance with varied attendance options, including in-person and virtual. <i>PIWI</i>, facilitated through EHS Home-based program, was well received with strong attendance. • Parents expressed a need for better avenues for communication with teachers. Text or phone communications are preferred by parents and technology was not the most effective way to exchange information. Technology infrastructure with Child Plus not supportive of group texting to communicate with families. • Areas of strength included children's continuous health care, up-to-date immunizations, and health insurance • Summer subsidy program offered to pre-k students prioritized social-emotional health and outdoor gross motor play at the Dover site. The Extended Care Program was expanded with an added classroom for children ages 18 months to 3. | <p>for parenting curriculum, offering a virtual format option. Offer majority of virtual meetings for parent committee and Policy Council with in-person meetings scheduled in response to parent wishes. Provide child care for parenting curriculum program and incentives for attendance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for Family Services staff and Education staff to be provided around collaborative, culturally responsive parent communications. • Seek solutions to technology and format challenges for sending immediate/emergency contact text messages to families. • Monitor state funding for wraparound care and respond accordingly. |
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| Focus Area | Outcomes/Progress | Plans & Strategies for Improvement – 2025/2026 program year |
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| School Readiness Outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal for Staff Professional Development (all Teachers/Teacher Assistants achieve Interrater Reliability in Teach Strategies GOLD) was not fully achieved due to staff turnover, absenteeism, and lack of sufficient staff to cover out-of-classroom learning time. • Goal for Educational leaders was achieved: Team members maintained CLASS certification. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff professional development plans incorporate timelines for completion of Interrater Reliability. • Continue working toward full implementation of the TPOT and TPITOS instruments and the Creative Curriculum Fidelity Tool in classrooms |



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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality professional development was provided through a variety of sources and platforms, including Grow NJ Kids, Teaching Strategies, in-house Zoom presentations, Professional Learning Communities, Google Docs, email links, and hybrid training models• Practice based coaching by School Readiness Coordinator, Director of Education, EHS Manager and other members of LT is informed by outcomes data and targets identified areas of need.• School readiness goals for learning environments achieved: ECERS/ITERS and CLASS scores all reflect high-quality programming and year-to-year consistency. Most classrooms achieved strong in curriculum fidelity.• Review and utilization of outcomes data from Teaching Strategies GOLD was challenging due to the data collection tools provided and tracking parameters. Overall, data reflected steady progress by children in the program, with most children below widely held expectations at the fall checkpoint, showing growth at mid-year, and the majority within or exceeding widely held expectations at the final checkpoint in spring.• Monthly school readiness activities calendars were distributed to EHS families to support children's learning at home and the home-school connection, with robust volunteer time provided by parents.• A second (final) round of funding to support the Early Language and Literacy Program at RCG was provided by Morristown Rotary Club. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that interdepartmental team meetings between Education staff members and Family Services staff occur on a regular schedule to ensure alignment of communications and addressing child and family needs. Provide targeted training on parent communications and parameters to promote shared, aligned communication channels.• Continue to prioritize focus on children's social-emotional development and mental health with mental health consultation services, staff training around implementation of the Pyramid Model for Promoting Social- Emotional Competence in Early Childhood, and conduct TPOT and CLASS observations to support classroom environments.• Review TSG data collection and compilation tools to determine the most meaningful and accurate way to collect and report outcomes data, with comparisons over time.• Continue to provide coaching support for implementation of curriculum to fidelity and to address data-informed professional development needs |
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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to post monthly literacy or social-emotional support messages for families, and to provide new children's books at family engagement events. Seek support from annual appeal for this program. |
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2025 Self-Assessment Participants

- Members of the staff of HSCPMC from all sites and program components
- Members of the Policy Council of Head Start Community Program of Morris County, including both parents and community members
- Members of the Board of Directors of HSCPMC
- Coaching staff of collaborating school districts, including Dover Public Schools, Morris School District, and Wharton Borough Public Schools
- Staff and volunteers from the County of Morris Department of Human Services