

SEARP&DC HEAD START & EARLY HEAD START PROGRAM

FY2020-2021

This annual report contains Southeast Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (SEARP&DC) Head Start/Early Head Start Program information for School Year 2020-2021. The SEARP&DC Head Start school year follows each service area public school calendar, which began in August 2020 and ended in May 2021. The Early Head Start Calendar began in August 2020 and ended in July 2021. However, due to the pandemic all schedules were readjusted. Early Head Start operates year-round; therefore, this report covers a 12-month period.

Our Head Start Program provides services to children and families in Barbour, Covington, Geneva, and Henry Counties. The SEARP&DC Head Start Program is funded to enroll 284 Head Start children (ages 3-5) and 32 Early Head Start children (0-3). However, during the pandemic our enrollment ranged in the low 80 precental. Office of Head Start regulations require 90 percent of children to be enrolled from families that are at or below the poverty guideline. In addition, it ensures that children eligible for services under IDEA fill at least 10 percent of its total funded enrollment. SEARP&DC Head Start Program maintains a full enrollment of 316 children. During the 2021-2021 school year, our Head Start Program had 61 full time employees.

The following provides an overview of SEARP&DC Head Start/Early Head Start Program in our four-county service area during 2020-2021:

SEARP&DC Head Start & Early Head Start Program Service Area

Barbour County:

Eufaula Head Start Center has three classrooms and enrolls 51 Head Start children. The Eufaula Head Start Center has 10 employees.

Henry County:

Headland Head Start Center has two classrooms and enrolls 40 Head Start children. The Headland Head Start Center has eight employees.

Headland Early Head Start Center has two classrooms and enrolls 16 children. The Headland Early Head Start Center has five employees.

Geneva County:

Geneva Head Start Center has three classrooms and enrolls 51 Head Start children. The Geneva Head Start Center has 11 employees.

Covington County:

Andalusia Head Start Center has three classrooms and enrolls 51 Head Start children. The Andalusia Center has 15 employees.

Andalusia Early Head Start Center has two classrooms and enrolls 16 children. The Andalusia Early Head Start has five employees.

Floral Head Start Center has two classrooms and enrolls 34 Head Start children. The Floral Head Start Center has six employees.

Opp Head Start Center has three classrooms and enrolls 57 Head Start children. The Opp Head Start Center has 11 employees.

Houston County:

The **Dothan Central Office** has four (4) administrative employees and one (1) LPN working directly in the managing of both the Head Start program. SEARP&DC Head Start Program also, financially supports administrative, accounting and human resources staff by cost sharing with other SEARP&DC programs.

Employee Fringe Benefits:

Employee fringe benefits include Blue Cross medical and dental insurance, Alabama State Employee Retirement Program, group term life insurance and disability insurance.

Enrollment for 2020-2021 School Year:

However, prevalent the State Funded Pre-K Program is, 2020-2021 SEARP&DC Head Start Program was very diligent in maintaining the required funded enrollment levels through the end of the school year in July 2021.

Enrollment by Eligibility Categories for 2020-2021 School Year:

Head Start Enrollment:

Based on a total enrollment of 284 children (including drop and replacement) 98.5 percent were eligible coming from families below poverty line and public assistance recipient families. 1.5 percent were from foster and children exceeding the allowed over-income enrollment with family incomes between 100 percent and 130 percent of the federal poverty line. However, due to the pandemic SEARP&DC HS/EHS maintained 82% enrollment level.

Early Head Start Enrollment:

Based on total enrollment of 32 children (including drop and replacement) 100 percent were eligible coming from families below the poverty line and receiving public assistance. The numbers are as follows:

Head Start Services to Children and Parents:

SEARP&DC Head Start Program provides education, health, nutrition, mental health, disability, and social services to children and families enrolled within our program. Program Service Managers expertise and continued monitoring of the aforementioned services within each Head Start Center. Center Directors provide local management of each Head Start Center.

Education Services:

The SEARP&DC Head Start Program utilizes Creative Curriculum to engage children in a comprehensive learning process for school readiness. Our professional teaching staff has earned college degrees in Child Development, Early Childhood Education or Child Development Associate credentials. Our program also utilizes the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) that measures teacher effectiveness and interactions with children.

Observations were conducted in preschool center-based classrooms using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). The CLASS tool looks at three domains and ten dimensions of teacher-child interactions and measures those observed interactions on a seven-point scale. The following results were noted:

- Emotional Support: 6.4643
- Classroom Organization: 6.3214
- Instructional Support: 2.7976

SEARP&DC Head Start has established School Readiness Goals and increased our collaborative efforts with public schools, parents and community partners. Once again, our school readiness efforts have been successful in engaging parents in supporting their children's growth in language, literacy, mathematics, science, creative arts, physical skills and social and emotional functioning. We continue to take a holistic approach within our program that includes health, nutrition, and disability services. We also have an ongoing transition program that engages parent's in supporting their child's ongoing learning and development efforts. When our children transition they are equipped for additional learning and development to the best of their abilities.

Nutrition Services:

The SEARP&DC Head Start Program participates in the USDA Child Nutrition Program to provide a continuum of healthy meals for all children enrolled in our program. Children receive breakfast, lunch and a snack during specified center operating hours. SEARP&DC Head Start receives reimbursements from USDA Child Nutrition Program.

Health Services:

We provide Medical and Dental exams to our children every year. During the 2020-2021 school year, we also provided medical services and dental preventative care services to children. Children also receive follow-up treatment on an as needed basis.

Mental Health Services:

The SEARP&DC Head Start Program contracts with Child and Family Services to provide Mental Health Services to the children and parents within our Head Start Program service area. A mental health professional provides classroom observations and reports findings to Service Managers and Center Directors. We were able to increase our mental health professional service consulting to four times a week. The mental health professional also addresses specific counseling needs as they relate to the parents.

Parent Involvement and Policy Council:

Each Head Start Center organizes a Parent Committee that selects Policy Council Members proportioned by the number of classrooms. Our Policy Council members have a variety of responsibilities including approval of budgets, funding applications, employment and program policies.

Parent volunteers provide local services to our SEARP&DC Head Start Centers. However, due to the pandemic we cancelled parent volunteer activities. We encourage our parents to be involved in our Head Start Program on an on-going basis. One way this was done was to encourage our parents to strongly participate in the virtual learning program that was implemented throughout the pandemic. We implemented several virtual learning platforms that enabled the parents/guardian to teach and assist their child. As an important part of our School Readiness Initiative, parents are encouraged to be actively engaged in their child's learning process.

Community Partnerships:

Head Start cannot operate without local community support. Head Start grants require a 20 percent local match of federal funds. Our Head Start Program collaborates with local government entities and school boards to received in-kind support for facilities, utilities and maintenance.

The SEARP&DC Head Start Program – Past, Present and Future:

The SEARP&DC Head Start Program opened November 1974 to serve children at the Eufaula, Headland and Opp Head Start Centers. With Expansion grant's SEARP&DC Head Start Program was able to enlarge our program to include the Geneva Head Start Center in 1991, Florala Head Start Center in 1996 and Andalusia Head Start Center in 2000.

As SEARP&DC Head Start Program enters our 47th year (FY2020) of providing educational and developmental services to children and families. We are very excited for another year for developing our children and preparing them to become school ready. School readiness is the number one priority for our program. SEARP&DC Head Start Program will continue to approach school readiness by partnering with parents in an attempt to establish readiness goals for their children that determines how well their child is doing in the important areas of speech, physical ability, social and emotional skills, and problem-solving skills. Therefore, staff will be able to identify each child's strengths as well as determine the areas that need additional support.

SEARP&DC Head Start Program is cognizant of the needs that our program children and families face on a day-to-day basis. Therefore, we will continue to provide high quality, compassionate, and reliable services on a continuous basis to ensure that each child and family achieves success.

Supporting Documents and Additional Information Provided Upon Request: