UAMS Head Start/Early Head Start School Readiness Plan Narrative

Philosophy:
The UAMS Head Start/Early Head Start program is committed to providing high quality early childhood education and comprehensive care to promote school readiness. Our philosophy reflects that commitment. Our curriculum illustrates that commitment. We recognize parents as the vital link between the child and the program and as the child’s prime educator. Our teaching staff and management exemplify the commitment to children and families and our centers embody that commitment. We also recognize the importance that advances in early childhood research, training and technology play in enhancing quality. Because we are a progressive program striving to provide best practices and produce the best possible outcomes for children; we have chosen a web based electronic assessment system to track children’s development and provide child outcome data for program planning and program improvement.

School Readiness Goals
In collaboration with parents, staff, community, and management, school readiness goals were established for infants, toddlers, and preschool children ages birth to five in the developmental areas of social and emotional development, cognitive and general knowledge, language and literacy, approaches to learning, and physical development and health. The goals adopted by UAMS Head Start/Early Head Start align with the curriculum, The Creative Curriculum, the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (HS ELOF), and the Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards (AR CDELS). School readiness data is evaluated and shared in a summary report with staff, Policy Council, community stakeholders, and Governing Board three times per year. Patterns of progress for individual and groups of children is reported. Data is evaluated and used to determine whether changes to policy and procedures, the environment, staffing, or professional development are needed. This information becomes part of the staff development plan of the T/TA plan for the following year.

Preschool School Readiness Goals
Preschool children have 20 School Readiness Goals, encompassing social-emotional, approaches to learning & play, language & literacy, math & science (cognition), social studies, the arts, and physical development and health, which are aligned with the five domains of the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five.
Head Start School Readiness Goals

Social-Emotional
(1) Children will interact with peers, cooperating and solving social problems.
(2) Children will develop self-regulation.

Approaches to Learning & Play
(3) Children will engage in play and other activities with purpose, persistence, attention and curiosity.
(4) Children will engage in sophisticated socio-dramatic play.

Language & Literacy
(5) Children will understand and respond to oral questions and directions.
(6) Children will use strong and varied vocabulary and will participate in conversations.
(7) Children who speak a home language other than English will progress in their ability to understand and use English.
(8) Children will demonstrate interest in books, comprehension of texts and ability to retell favorite stories.
(9) Children will hear and manipulate the sounds in oral language, noticing similarities and differences.
(10) Children will know many letter names and sounds.
(11) Children will understand the function of print and some print concepts, and will use early writing to communicate.

Math & Science
(12) Children will use counting and numerical representation in their activities, especially to solve problems.
(13) Children will demonstrate knowledge of shapes and their properties.
(14) Children will demonstrate understanding of patterns.
(15) Children will classify, sort and compare objects based on different attributes.
(16) Children will measure and compare objects based on length, weight, etc.
(17) Children will engage in scientific inquiry.

Social Studies
(18) Children will demonstrate knowledge of self, family and community.

The Arts
(19) Children will explore music, movement, dance, drama and the visual arts.

Physical
(20) Children will maintain physical health, age-appropriate physical development and fine/gross motor skills.
Infants, Toddlers, & Twos School Readiness Goals
Supporting School Readiness for infants and toddlers involves providing a secure foundation for early learning across all domains of development, ensuring children enter preschool ready to succeed. Moreover, secure, positive adult-child relationships are the context for learning and development. As required by the Head Start Act of 2007, we serve infants, toddlers, and their families by promoting secure parent-child attachments and by providing “early, continuous, intensive, and comprehensive child development and family support services that will enhance the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of participating children” (Sec.645A (b)(1)). Consequently, our program established 15 School Readiness Goals for children 0 to 3 years-old which are couched within a context of secure, positive relationships and are aligned with the program’s preschool goals.
Early Head Start School Readiness Goals

Social-Emotional Development & Approaches to Learning

1. Children will develop and maintain positive relationships with peers and familiar adults.
2. Children will demonstrate self-regulation, including an understanding of rules and independence in executing most daily classroom and self-care routines.
3. Children will demonstrate a positive self concept through identification with their family, culture, peers and familiar adults.
4. Children will initiate and engage in play, discovery and the arts with increasing purpose, persistence, attention and curiosity.

Cognitive & General Knowledge

5. Children will use all senses to investigate, problem solve, compare attributes and form individual understandings of the natural and physical world.
6. Children will demonstrate an increasing ability to connect new and known experiences and concepts.
7. Children will demonstrate an age-appropriate interest in numbers and counting during daily experiences and routines.

Language & Literacy (in home language and English)

8. Children will understand and respond to simple oral questions and directions.
9. Children will communicate using expanding language skills and vocabulary to express their needs, ideas and desires and to participate in conversations.
10. Children will demonstrate interest in books and a general comprehension of text/illustrations.
11. Children will demonstrate interest in early writing and reading, including an age-appropriate understanding of the function of print and graphic/symbolic representations.
12. Children who speak a home language other than English will progress in their ability to understand and use both languages.

Physical Development & Health

13. Children will maintain physical health and develop healthy habits related to eating and personal care.
14. Children will demonstrate age-appropriate gross motor skills and progress in their ability to control their bodies for movement/rhythm, navigation and balance.
15. Children will demonstrate age-appropriate fine motor skills.