

**Milwaukee Public Schools**  
**Head Start 05CH011018**  
**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 three-year-olds serving 136 children and their families from low income households at eight 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.

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 is one education coordinator, one mental health and disabilities coordinator and one mental health staff attempting to meet the growing needs of 16 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**

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.

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**

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 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 Hourly</b>	<b>Federal Share</b>
<b>PERSONNEL</b>				
Professional Development - Teachers	128	128	\$42.39	\$5,426
Professional Development-Teacher Assistants and FPAs	192	192	\$17.56	\$ 3,372
Extra Hours (FPA)	230	230	\$17.56	\$4,039
<b>TOTAL SALARIES</b>				\$12,836
<b>FRINGE BENEFITS</b>				\$6,842
<b>TOTAL</b>				\$19,678
TRAVEL				\$0
EQUIPMENT				\$0
SUPPLIES				\$17,867
CONTRACTUAL				\$15,000
CONSTRUCTION				\$0
OTHER				\$0
TOTAL DIRECT CHARGES				\$52,545
INDIRECT CHARGES				\$2,455
<b>TOTALS</b>				\$55,000
<b>TTA</b>				\$0
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>				\$55,000

**PERSONNEL**

Extra hours for professional development (\$8,798) will be budgeted to support the cost of

training teachers, teacher assistants, and FPA's in trauma-informed, specifically around signs and symptoms of trauma and integrate supports to assist in implementing trauma informed strategies within the classroom. It is expected the training will be two – one full days. The weekend hourly rate for teachers is \$42.39 ( $\$42.39 \times 16 \text{ hours} \times 8 = \$5,426$ ). The weekend hourly rate for teacher assistants and FPA's is \$17.56 ( $\$17.56 \times 16 \text{ hours} \times 12 = \$3,372$ ).

Extra hours for family partnership associates (\$4,039) 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 5.75 additional hours per month for 10 months for the 4 project family partnership associates (\$4,039).

### **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 \$6,842.

**EQUIPMENT** -- Not applicable

### **SUPPLIES**

The \$17,867 budgeted for supplies are designated for the purchase of items needed for the office, educational materials, and classroom outfitting and health and wellness supplies.

Specifically, each site (8) will be budgeted \$2,200 to create a calming space for students to use (\$17,600). In addition, \$267 is budgeted to support programming costs, such as duplicating and office supplies.

**CONTRACTUAL-Programming** - Not Applicable



**OTHER** – Not Applicable

**CONSTRUCTION** -- Not applicable.

**TOTAL DIRECT CHARGES**

The total direct charges equal \$52,545

**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 \$2,455. Attached is the document that establishes the indirect rate agreement with the Department of Public Instruction.

Indirect funds

**NON-FEDERAL SHARE**

MPS has committed \$13,750 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 \$13,750 as the non-federal share to meet the requirement.