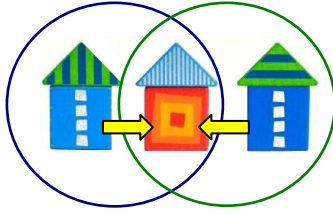


Strategy Sessions



Each table in the room is marked with a number and topic corresponding to the discussion items listed below. You will select a table to begin the process in which you have an interest in learning more about or have valuable information to share related to the topic. The table facilitator will assist the group discussion related to the guiding statements/questions and record the group's responses on flip chart paper. After fifteen minutes you will be asked to move to the next table and participate in a discussion surrounding that table's topic. (If all chairs around a given table are full, you will need to choose a different topic). You will have the opportunity to participate in **five** different discussions during this strategy session.

Table 1: Funding Childcare Options (Jeanette Paulson)– Funding full working-day services can be a challenge for administrators and fiscal staff. How have you managed to fund the childcare option to meet the needs of working families?

- a) Highlight ideas of how your agency has personally reached out to partners to fund full working-day services.
 - Provide transportation to other family and childcare options.
 - Pay per child stipend to enhance childcare services.
 - The child care program has provided the teacher for the Head Start services and wrap around care.
 - Head Start provides the center with technical assistance.
 - Teacher and technical assistance provided by childcare program.
 - Pay substitute salary so childcare teacher can come to staff meetings.
- b) Describe how blended/braided funding has allowed you to provide full working-day services.
 - School District's 4K funds.
 - Head Start funds.
 - Subsidy funds.
 - Head Start pays childcare center Director to come to meetings.
 - Choice school funds.
- c) How might cost allocation methods be employed most effectively and efficiently?
 - Spread funds across full year program.

Table 2: Parent programming/ program scheduling conflicts (Ruth Chvojicek)— Any time you partner with the public schools you learn to work with union issues and scheduling within contracts. Parents’ work shifts, evenings and weekends and may not be available during daylight hours. Childcare workers can only work so many hours in a day. All of these issues lead to difficulty in scheduling and implementing parent programming.

- a) Describe some strategies that have been successful in your provision of parent programming.
- Teachers connect with parents daily.
 - Survey parents to gather input services.
 - Big equipment day in collaboration with county staff.
 - Raffle of a night at the Lodge and each parent at the meeting is offered a raffle ticket.
 - Focus on family wellness and health.
 - “Celebrate the class of 2020” – 4K parents and students visited Head Start school. Head Start staff acted out a variety of careers. Worked with the curriculum instruction staff person to determine careers and acting. Provided snacks at this evening event.
 - Star Light/Star Bright Family Literacy Night.
 - Homecoming theme.
 - Community Day when parents talk about their jobs.
 - 4K/PTO sponsor first football game of the year and offer pre-game hotdogs, etc. 4K parents are invited to join the football game.
 - Holiday concerts. 4K kids put on the concert and Head Start participates too.
 - Marketing Head Start and sharing what a wonderful program it is.
 - Lunch & Learns. Invite community partners and do a brief presentation about Head Start on one of the program’s program-free days.
 - Give away dollar scholastic books to give to families.
 - If possible, give stipends or gas cards to attendees.
 - “Tela-Health Network” where centers connect using video conferencing.
- b) What creative scheduling methods have you found to be successful?
- Activities at 3:00 p.m. when elementary school dismisses.
 - Parents tend to come when children come. We schedule every Tuesday at 4:00 p.m.
 - Parent orientation within childcare center during evening hours.
 - Hold short sessions—a one hour minimum. Have food and fitness, safety, or high school student acting out a play.
 - Do training activity and meal at the end of the day. Parent/Child activities with a specific emphasis on family literacy are good. Head Start pays for the activity.
- c) How do full working-day services lend themselves to a more seamless system of parent programming?
- Centers have “sister sites” that work together to provide family activities.
 - Include childcare assistants in family activities and give them comp. time off later.
 - Family Advocate provides Head Start orientation to everyone in the collaborative classroom.

Table 3: Lack of Transportation (Dan Stickler)— Transportation can often be a barrier for low-income families. The cost of gas and lack of reliable transportation can often stand in the way of parent transportation.

- a) What approaches have you considered that have been successful in meeting mobility needs of families in full working-day programs?
- School district transports HS/4K kids, Head Start transports 3-year-olds and non-district 4-year-olds. (OHS transportation waiver for district buses.)
 - School districts cross district boundaries to transport Head Start kids to Head Start centers.
 - School district will also transport 3-year-olds.
 - Communication with school districts is key—getting buy-in from one Superintendent leads to other districts being receptive to providing transportation.
 - Community Action Agency (CAA) mobility programs.
 - “Bus Stop Option” provides option for child pick-up at gas station, parking lot, etc.
 - Shared transportation with school districts.
 - Head Start provides vehicle and bus aide while the school district provides the driver and vehicle maintenance.
 - Contract with county disabled/elderly transportation provider.
 - Allowable alternative vehicles used to transport kids and families.
 - Parents provide/arrange for transportation.
 - Public transportation.
- b) Describe some key strategies that you’ve employed to access or provide needed transportation resources.
- See above.

Table 4: Staffing (Linda Hurst)— When you put Head Start, Childcare, and 4K staff together it is important to discuss daily schedules. Who will come in early and who will stay late?

- a) Describe some key strategies for team building and successful staffing patterns.
- Finding planning time for full-day, five-day-a-week programming is a challenge. Substitutes are needed.
 - As child/staff ratios decrease early childhood staff time is decreased, though it puts more demand on Head Start staff.
 - Using a research-based program performance rating scale (example: ECERS) is helpful.
 - “Teaming” is helpful (such as a team of two a.m. staff--a teacher and teacher assistant who also serves as bus driver—and a separate team of two p.m. staff.
 - Keep staffing consistent as it is best for kids and families.
 - Support from Administration/Management staff is very important.
 - Blending of philosophies, missions, and visions is important at the outset.
 - Consistency in monitoring quality and child assessment
 - Set boundaries to protect staff from burnout.
 - When transitioning to new Administrators/Leaders, seek advocates and support at the school

board level and keep the school board informed of the collaboration's progress.

b) How can you ensure all partners are viewed as equal partners?

- Are comparable Head Start and childcare staff paid at the same level? Make efforts to equalize wages.
- Bring and discuss all options and possibilities before signing agreements.
- Teachers may be limited by Union requirements ("contract days," etc.)
- Have the same qualifications for staff.
- Invite all staff to professional development opportunities.
- Make meetings mandatory to bring all partners to the table.
- Co-sponsor trainings so staff can come together to build relationships.
- Have Administrators involved in staff planning meetings.

c) Name a successful communication tool used among collaborative teams.

- Open communication with willing partners. Partners must be willing to listen to and learn from one another.
- It takes time to nurture the relationships.
- Encourage staff to schedule meeting times and prioritize issues to discuss.
- The role of the coordinator is critical.
- Stay on track. Have an agenda and stick to it.

Table 5: Support for working families (Jen Bailey)– Specific families may have different needs for support and services.

a) Describe your process for successfully communicating with families whose primary language is not English.

- School district interpreter.
- Bilingual Education Specialist/bilingual Family Services Specialist.
- Having kids miss outside time while receiving support services is a challenge.
- Using phone calls instead of written notes.
- Use verbal communication. Past enrolled families are good language resources and count as in-kind too!
- Use telephone interpretation services.
- Use college students as interpreters.

b) Highlight ideas for maintaining supports for families as they transition from one program to another.

- Parent orientation.
- Involve Policy Council representatives in orientation.
- Combine paperwork when possible
- 4K collaborations assist with transition to kindergarten. Often familiar with the building when Head Start is in the school district.
- School district collaborations.
- All services under one roof.

- c) Describe ways to provide culturally appropriate services.
- A dual language focus group comprised of current parents, past parents, and employees.
 - Parent panel to staff; families offer workshops around food.
 - Services must be ongoing.
 - Utilize Office of Head Start Dual Language Learners webinar and checklist.
 - All-day in-service on Latino, Native American, etc. culture.
 - Develop policies and procedures for culturally responsive services.
 - Hire staff with varied backgrounds.
 - Hire bilingual staff.
 - Acceptance of children's home language used in the classroom.
 - Assist ELL families in connecting with one another.
 - Allow families to lead us and tap into existing supports.
 - Conduct parent meetings in Spanish.
 - Orientation in Spanish & Hmong.
 - Cultural diversity training for staff.

Table 6: Childcare Subsidies (Wendy Bowe)– One day it's here...then whoop, look... it's gone?

- a) Describe effective strategies for working with parents who lose their subsidy during the program year.
- Give 30 days after first notice; may be able to get back-dated.
 - Look at family circumstances.
 - An extra case-worker funded at the county level to deal directly with these issues
 - Family Advocate writes letter in support of family's need.
 - Head Start offers a half-day slot (over-enroll).
 - Some partners have funds to support families.
 - Help families seek out other sources of funding.
 - Head Start pays for the slot for up to 30 days.
 - Head Start provides other program options to the family.
 - Flexible scheduling in childcare.
 - Meet with Family Advocate and Childcare Director to determine status.
 - Head Start provides "emergency pay."
 - Head Start pays co-pay.
- b) How have you involved your partners in planning for the loss of subsidies?
- See above.