



## Portland Public Schools Head Start

January 11, 2022

### Director's Report

#### PROGRAM UPDATE:

- **Summary Financial Report/All Programs:** See Treasurer's Report.
- **Credit Card Report:** See Treasurer's Report.
- **Portland Children's Levy:** Mid-Year Report is due on January 31, 2022. The purpose of the Mid-Year Report is to provide information to the City of Portland about progress made related to program implementation. The information is used as a check-in to assess whether or not the program is on track to meet annual service goals and to understand any issues/challenges encountered. The report was completed by the Director (Dr. Cantwell) and Family Services Manager (Rhiannon Martin) and was submitted on January 4, 2022. A copy of the report will be reviewed with the Policy Council.
- **OPK RFI:** The state is offering increased funds and encouraging Head Start programs to convert part-day enrollment slots to full-day slots. Management Team input was gathered on November 30. Teacher input was gathered on December 7. Policy Council input was gathered on December 14, 2021. Our OPK RFI was submitted on December 15, 2021.
- **Personnel:** The district is recruiting for substitute educational assistants. Head Start is recruiting for mealtime aides. Mealtime Aides assist in the classroom during and around lunch time; working 14–19 hours per week. Staff must meet the No Child Left Behind requirements of 120 hours of college credit to apply for the part-time EA position and have a high school diploma or GED for the meal time aid position.

The following new hires are recommended for approval by Policy Council:

#### **Educational Assistants (Half Time)**

1. Sunshine Vortigern (Bachelor's)
2. Stephany Alvarado, Bilingual Spanish (Bachelor's)

- **Enrollment:** Our program is funded to serve 760 children this school year. We currently have a total 36 classrooms at 9 sites in north, northeast, and southeast Portland. We have 31 Extended Day (full-day) classrooms and five Double Session (½ day) classrooms.

The program was at 60% enrollment as of January 1st, with 455 children total enrolled. All vacancies in the program are to be filled within 30 days. The Office of Head Start is aware of current challenges due to COVID-19. The OHS will continue to monitor monthly enrollment, but has extended its delay in formally evaluating under- or fully-enrolled grantees through the year.

Head Start Performance Standards ask programs to prioritize enrollment for children in Foster Care and those who are experiencing houselessness. Currently our program is serving 11 children in Foster Care and 53 that are experiencing houselessness. 36% of the children speak a language at home other than English, 14 languages are currently represented in our program.

- **Attendance:** Attendance through the month of December was 80%. The program monitors attendance very carefully. If the daily average attendance for a month falls below 85%, we must analyze the causes and determine if the program needs to outline a plan to ensure minimum attendance.

**The performance standards state:** *Within the first 60 days of program operation, and on an ongoing basis thereafter, use individual child attendance data to identify children with patterns of absence that put them at risk of missing **ten percent** of program days per year and develop appropriate strategies to improve individual attendance among identified children, such as direct contact with parents or intensive case management, as necessary.*

As of January 5, 2021:

- 37% of enrolled children have missed between 10-20% of school days. This puts them at Moderate Risk for chronic absenteeism. Last month 30% of enrolled children were in this category.
  - 25% of enrolled children have missed more than 21% of school days. This puts them at Severe Risk for chronic absenteeism. Last month 27% of enrolled children were in this category.
  - Family Service Workers will work to create Attendance Support Plans for families whose children fall in the Moderate to Severe Risk categories and will continue to monitor and document progress monthly.
- **Disabilities Services:** PPS Head Start must ensure at least 10% of its total funded enrollment is filled by children eligible for Early Childhood Special Education services. We currently have 15% of our total enrollment receiving special education services. There are 46 additional children in referral for an evaluation. We continue to partner with Multnomah Early Childhood Program (MECP) to provide services to our children and families. MECP provides service in the classroom for students and can transition to remote services in the event a child is in quarantine. We continue to partner with district level transition teams to ensure students have a special education plan as they enter kindergarten.
  - **Screenings:** Head Start mandates all children have developmental and behavioral screenings within 45 days of enrollment. From our screenings, we have formally referred 68 children to the Multnomah Early Childhood Program and Portland Public Schools Early Childhood evaluation team per our Interagency Agreements. Upon completing the evaluations and eligibility determination, the files are sent to the Multnomah Early Childhood Program for Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) development with the child's parent(s), MECP Specialist, Head Start teacher and Inclusion Manager. Once the IFSP is developed, the children begin receiving special education services in the Head Start setting.
  - **Mental Health Services:** We have received 62 mental health referrals so far this year; 32 at the request of parents and 27 at the request of teachers (with parent permission). This is an unusual year, with parents requesting a lot more services as compared to previous years. We have approximately 94 children who need follow up from their social emotional screenings (ASQ-SE). Our team of mental health consultants are following up on these referrals and screenings.
  - **Health Services:** We've hit the ground running this week with an unprecedented amount of COVID cases or close contacts within our Head Start community. Keeping

our students in the classroom is of the utmost importance and we continue to remain diligent with our COVID-19 mitigation efforts.

➤ **Update on COVID testing in Head Start:**

- We now have a limited number of BinaxNow COVID test kits we're dispensing to families as needed.
- Oregon Health Authority (OHA) has also purchased at-home test kits for distribution to Head Start programs across the state. As of now, we haven't heard from OHA, but expect we'll know more in the next week or so. These kits will be a useful tool to keep our kids and families healthy and in the classroom.
- PPS is participating in a test-to-stay program starting on 1/5/2022. Our recent discussions with the Multnomah County Public Health Department and the Communicable Disease Team indicate our students do not qualify for the test-to-stay. Because we do not have an in-school testing program to support a test-to-stay program, Head Start students who've been exposed to COVID-19 will still be required to quarantine for the 10 day period.

➤ **Dental Screenings** At the end of the month our Dental3 partners will be back to screen kids at all our sites. Students will receive a brief dental evaluation and a preventative fluoride varnish. We typically catch a small percentage of students who require urgent dental care. In these situations Dental3 will work with the family to schedule an appointment for treatment in 1 to 2 days.

➤ **Federal Focus Area 2 Review:** We have been notified that we should expect a Focus Area 2 federal review this year as part of the typical 5-year grant cycle review process. This review will occur sometime between now and June 30, 2022. The Office of Head Start is required to provide 45-day notification. At present, we have not received notification. Policy Council members will participate in this review as requested by the OHS.

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**Next Policy Council Meeting:** February 8, 2022 at 5:30pm, virtual via Zoom, but we are exploring in-person and hybrid options.

***Policy Council understands approval of the Director's Report is approval of the contents of the report, unless otherwise specified in the recorded minutes.***

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