

NORTH CAROLINA
RACE TO THE TOP
EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE

Project [16]: [Head Start Family Engagement]

Agency Monitor(s) (completing report): Khari Garvin

Date of Progress Report: January 21, 2016 **[FINAL]**

Grants Management Team Monitor: Janet McGinnis/Sharon Loza

Reporting Period: October – December 2015

Activity 16.1: Competitive Selection of Head Start Hubs from Existing 58 Head Start Grantees in North Carolina

Description: This activity involves the competitive selection of Head Start Hubs from existing 58 Head Start Grantees in NC.

Key Accomplishments: COMPLETED.

- Twenty-two hubs were selected.

Activity 16.2: Technical Assistance, Demonstration, And Coaching Regarding Family Engagement Strategies Provided By Head Start Hub Sites To ECE Workforce In Non-Head Start ELD Programs.

Description: This activity provides technical assistance, demonstration, and coaching on family engagement strategies provided by Head Start Hubs to the ECE workforce in non-Head Start ELD programs.

Key Accomplishments:

- As of this reporting period, all Training Hubs (22 total) have completed their scopes of work.
- All Hubs have collectively reached 33.8% of all licensed childcare providers across the State for training and coaching.
- Many participating childcare providers are reporting changes in their practice as a result of the family engagement trainings that they are attending. Several examples of these were outlined in the April 2015 report. (See the attached page for additional information).
- The collaboration with Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute (UNC) to incorporate this family engagement content into North Carolina's Early Learning Foundations online modules continues. Approximately 30% of that work has been completed to date.

Challenges:

N/A

Upcoming Tasks:

N/A

Activity 16.3: Formative Evaluation of the Saturation, Intensity, and Impact of the Head Start Hubs.

Description: This activity provides for the formative evaluation of the saturation, intensity, and impact of the Head Start Hubs.

FORMATIVE EVALUATION RESULTS

Child care providers across the State of North Carolina provided the following feedback with regard to changes in their practice as a result of the training/coaching they received on strategies for family engagement:

Hub 1 (Macon Program for Progress~western NC)

- Reports providers creating strategic plans for Parent Engagement
- One provider reported utilizing lending library along with increased parental reading to children at home

Hub 2 (Verner Center for Early Learning~western NC)

- 69% of providers trained reported improvements in family-provider communications – being more intentional with how they speak with parents about topics like child development, disabilities, and behaviors.
- 52% of providers reported offering new or additional parent activities at their facility. For example, some added open houses, talent shows, fall festivals, ice cream socials, etc.
- 34% of providers reported having an increased focus on partnering with families to ease transitions into and out of their programs.

HUB 4 (BROC~western NC)

Hub #4 reported the following from providers...

- Improved relationships with parents that were previously “hard to communicate with”
- Have become more knowledgeable about community resources, as to where to go when parents need help”
- Assisting families better to make child transitions to Kindergarten easier for them
- We make a point to speak to each parent on a daily basis either by way of school bus or car transport
- We have worked on the center’s appearance and atmosphere to make it more inviting to parents and children
- I have shared my personal cell phone number with parents so they are free to communicate with me, and have been given permission to also call me over the summer break with any educational issues or concerns

HUB 5&21 (Guilford Child Development~central NC)

- Providers report having more communication with parents now (including sending home personal thank you notes to parents to create a classroom culture that promotes gratitude)
- Some providers added the term “guardian” in all places where “parent” was used (including handbook)
- Some providers reported being more sensitive to the different cultures of families in the community
- Some providers reported posting pictures of families in classrooms and greeting families upon arrival and departure

- Some providers reported inviting parents on field trips now
- Some providers reported being more diligent to find appropriate methods of communication with families (including email, text, etc.)
- Some providers reported making the office space at their facility a place where parents can use to assist their children with homework

HUB 12 (CCAP~eastern NC)

- Directors report now understanding the difference between “involvement” and “engagement” of parents
- Some providers report developing Parent Engagement Opportunities Surveys
- Some providers reported developing parent committees
- Some providers reported developing methods of 2-way comm with families (specifically email and newsletters)
- 80% of participating providers have included parent engagement statements or similar information in their Parent and Employee Handbooks
- Some providers reported implementing “family engagement” practices as a means to gain a quality point in the NC TQRIS

HUB 13 (EIC~eastern NC)

- Providers reported implementing a newsletter in the center.
- Providers reported teaching parents how to get involved in their children’s development in the home environment (e.g. Having their children write down positive learning things that they have done at home and at school)
- Providers reported using parent goals and achievements as well as children progress in Center to instruct parents that they are their child’s primary teacher.
- Providers reported using a Parent Curriculum Suggestion Form to be sent out monthly
- Providers reported implementing transition by contacting the elementary schools to set up transitioning contacts with those in charge to prepare when Kindergarten sessions begin
- Providers reported working with bi-lingual families and so now creating dual language signs in the classroom for families

HUB 14 (Pender Co. Schools~south, eastern NC)

- Many providers reported beginning to offer parenting classes and parent education classes
- Providers reported giving out Kindergarten information and packets to families
- Providers reported engaging parents to vote on something at least once per month (e.g. choice of field trips for children)
- Providers reported starting a lending library and/or “borrow closet”
- Providers reported sharing information with parents by creating information centers at the entrance of their facilities

HUB 15 (Southeastern Community & Family Services, Inc.)

- Some providers reported implementing parent support groups
- Providers reported sharing information with staff about cultural competence

HUB 16 (Union County Community Action~south, central NC)

- Some providers added other parent activities to promote two-way communication with families (e.g. sending book-bags home with children with information); as well as hosting a workshop at the beginning of the program year to get feedback from families
- Providers also reported implementing a self-assessment process within their programs to evaluate the quality of their family engagement
- Some providers elected to change their terminology from “parent involvement” to parent engagement”

HUB 17 (Cleveland Co. Schools~south, central NC)

- The majority of participants reported they were implementing family engagement activities through an increase in parent conferences.
- Other activities mentioned were home visits, center activities, a parent suggestion box, and parent input into curriculum.
- When asked whether or not they had implemented the 6 principles of partnership within in their practice 50 % said they had.
- 54% of participants stated they had implemented new practices within their work since the training.

HUB 19&20 (Alexander Co. Schools~western NC)

- The majority of participants reported they are consistently making families feel welcome, regardless of diversity.
- Most providers are now practicing active listening and positive communication with parents.
- Most are now treating parents like partners with regard to their child by asking for and honoring their input and suggestions.