A Systems Approach to School Readiness
Session Outcomes

• Describe the relationship between school readiness goals and program goals

• Write program goals that support sample school readiness goals in each of the five domains

• Identify the characteristics of a system

• Articulate how Head Start program management systems support school readiness goals
Warm-Up

Before
Truth or Myth?

After
Truth or Myth?
Why a Systems Approach to School Readiness?

Micro:
Children, parent, families, staff

Macro:
Program

Macro:
Local, State, National context
The Act and the HSPPS
• Defines:
  – School readiness goals
  – Child level assessment data
  – Aggregating child level assessment data

• Requires:
  – Aggregation and analysis of school readiness data 3 times/year
  – Use of data for individualizing
School Readiness Goals

• Broad statements that articulate the knowledge and skills for preschool children in the five essential domains as they enter kindergarten

• Articulate high expectations for children’s progress

• Establish the foundation for assessment
Developing School Readiness Goals

- Adapt and align with goals from the Child Development Early Learning Framework
- Align with state Early Learning Guidelines and expectations of local schools
- Develop in consultation with parents
School Readiness Goals
Five Essential Domains For Birth to Five

- Cognition & General Knowledge
- Approaches to Learning
- Physical Well-being and Motor Development
- Language & Literacy
- Social & Emotional Development
Four Strategic Steps

- Develop school readiness goals
- Create and implement a plan
- Assess child progress on going; aggregate and analyze 3x/year
- Examine data for patterns of progress; develop a Program Improvement Plan
Infant/toddler goals too?

Yes!
1304.51

Requires

- Both multi-year (long range) program goals
- Short-term program objectives
- Short-term financial objectives
The Head Start Act

(A) GOALS- An agency conducting a self-assessment shall establish agency-determined program goals for improving the school readiness of children participating in a program under this subchapter, including school readiness goals that are aligned with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework, State early learning standards as appropriate, and requirements and expectations of the schools the children will be attending.
School Readiness vs. Program Goals

Children will...  Program will...

PMFO  
OFFICE OF HEAD START
THE NATIONAL CENTER ON
Program Management
and Fiscal Operations
Integrated Goals...

- Help program staff to focus on priorities
- Show how all staff can be working on school readiness goals
- Make program communication and messaging simpler and clearer
- Create a shared vision and common goals
SR Goals Infused Into Program Goals

- School Readiness Goal
- Children will...

• Program goal
• Program will...
Program Goals Support SR Goals

Program goal

- School Readiness Goal

Program will...  

- Children will...
SR Goals Are Infused Into Program Goals

Sample

School Readiness Goal
• Children will demonstrate growing control of large muscles for movement, navigation and balance

Program Goal
• Program will improve the use of outdoor time ensuring that teachers plan outdoor activities and interact with children during outdoor time

Activities
• Provide PD on *I Am Moving, I Am Learning* and/or *Little Voices for Healthy Choices*
• Monitor outdoor time and weekly plans
• Talk to parents about *Let’s Move Child Care*.
• Introduce *Let’s Move: Child Care Initiative* and ask staff to make a commitment
Program Goals
Support SR Goals

Sample
Program Goal
- The program will increase child attendance so that all children will develop the habit of attending school regularly leading to success in kindergarten and opening the doors to college

School Readiness Goal
- This goal supports all school readiness goals

Activities
- Create an agency-wide campaign focused on improving attendance
- Develop and present awareness training to all stakeholder groups
- Ensure that parent orientation and initial home visit emphasize importance of regular attendance
- Track and monitor attendance for all program options
- Conduct required follow up for unexcused absences, cancelled home visits or socializations.
Program Goals
Support SR Goals

Program Goal
• Program will support families as lifelong educators

School Readiness Goal
• This goal supports all school readiness goals

Activities
• Talk about school readiness goals during home visits and parent meetings
• Incorporate achieving school readiness goals in family partnership agreements
• Provide transition activities for families to do with their children as they enter and leave the program.
• Include all staff in family engagement professional development
Program Goals and Objectives

Program Goals
- Statements of what program will accomplish and why it is important
- Long-range
- Most support SR goals
- **BROAD**
  - Beyond current expectations
  - Responsive
  - Organization-wide
  - Aspirational
  - Dynamic

Program Objectives
- Program and financial statements
- Short-term
- **SMART**
  - Specific
  - Measurable
  - Attainable
  - Realistic
  - Timely
Your Turn: Integrating School Readiness and Program Goals

• Find a partner

• Look at the sample school readiness goal for each of the 5 essential domains

• Develop a related program-wide goal/goals for each school readiness goal. (You may use the same one more than once.)
Management Systems

School Readiness Goals

- Fiscal Management
- Facilities, Materials & Equipment
- Self-Assessment
- Planning
- Program Governance
- ERSEA
- Human Resources
- Communication
- Ongoing Monitoring
- Record-keeping & Reporting

Facilities, Materials & Equipment
Self-Assessment
Planning
Program Governance
ERSEA
Human Resources
Communication
Ongoing Monitoring
Record-keeping & Reporting
Example

Sample School Readiness Goal:
Children will demonstrate growing control of large muscles for movement, navigation and balance
Management Systems

Children will demonstrate growing control of large muscles for movement, navigation, and balance.

Facilities, Materials, & Equipment
Self-Assessment
Planning
Program Governance
Human Resources
Fiscal Management
Communication
Record-keeping & Reporting
ERSEA
Ongoing Monitoring
Facilities, Materials, & Equipment
Self-Assessment
Planning
Program Governance
Human Resources
Fiscal Management
Communication
Record-keeping & Reporting
ERSEA
Ongoing Monitoring
A SR Goal and a System

Sample School Readiness Goal

• Children will demonstrate growing control of large muscles for movement, navigation, and balance

Facilities, Materials & Equipment

• How might this school readiness goal relate to facilities, materials, and equipment?
Your Turn  -- Your Systems

• Think about your program’s school readiness goals.
• Select one and write it in the circle on the handout.
• Answer the questions about strengthening your program’s systems to support school readiness
Thinking About Goals Through a Systems Lens

How do you determine the number of school readiness goals your program should have?

• What data will you need to collect?

• How are you going to track, monitor and evaluate activities and progress?

• With whom do you need to communicate your goals?
Thinking About Goals Through a Systems Lens

How do you determine whether you are meeting your school readiness goals?

• What data have you collected?
• How are you tracking, monitoring, and evaluating activities and progress?
Revisiting Your Goals

School Readiness Goals

• Fairly stable once established and aligned
• Reviewed and changed when context changes

Program Goals

• Developed based on community assessment, self-assessment, progress goals
• Reviewed annually
• Rewritten to reflect new national priorities or achievement of previous goals
Revisiting Your SR Goals

Has the context for your SR goals changed?

• Birth to five perspective
• Program demographics
• New information from update to community assessment
• Alignment with LEA and state context
• Need to involve parents in development
Telling Your Story

Who needs to know?

• All staff (including fiscal staff)
• Parents
• Governing Body and Policy Council
• Community partners
• LEAs; state agencies
• Regional Office and OHS
• Funders
Truths or Myths
Can you….?

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