



BCA Head Start Program



Sponsored by the Brooklyn Chinese-American Association

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2013 Annual Report

(2012-2013 School Year)

I. Introduction

The Head Start Program operated by Brooklyn Chinese-American Association (BCA) targeted to serve the low-income population in the Sunset Park and its surrounding areas, particularly the residential community between 4th Avenue to 12th Avenue and from 39th Street to 65th Street in Brooklyn, New York (Zip Codes 11219, 11220 and 11232). This low-income residential neighborhood, which encompasses the Sunset Park (Community District 7) and Borough Park (Community District 12) areas, has been home to low-income, poorly educated and/or limited English-speaking minorities and immigrants. The majority of children and families served by our Head Start program are new Asian immigrants from Mainland China and come from low-income households.

II. Program Philosophy

The philosophy of our Head Start Program is to create a nurturing environment and exploratory experiences for the young children to facilitate their cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth as well as to meet their nutritional needs. All these will build a healthy foundation for the children and prepare them adequately for school. BCA strives to embody the overall goals of the Head Start Program, namely, to ensure quality comprehensive child development and family services primarily to low-income households, underserved communities, and most needy populations including non-English language children and the disabled.

Given that the program serves a large number of immigrant children, especially Asian immigrants, it is geared towards helping them adjust to the mainstream culture and prepare them for their later entry into the public school system. In addition, the program targets to reflect and enhance the children's own cultural heritage and language backgrounds.

III. Program Sites

The Head Start Program was a center-based program implemented at the following sites. Both sites are licensed by the New York City Department of Health.

5002 8th Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11220

812 54th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11220

IV. Funding for the Head Start Program

Our Head Start Program was made possible with funding from the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families as well as Non-Federal Share. Last year, the Head Start program funding was as follows:

Funding Sources		Operation	T & TA	COLA	Total
Federal	Basic Had Start Award	\$909,003	\$12,682		\$ 921,685
Federal	Supplemental 2012	\$157,333	\$1,169	\$7,611	\$ 166,113
	Total	\$1,066,336	\$13,851	\$7,611	\$1,087,798
Non Federal Share					\$ 271,950
Total					\$1,359,748

Sources of Non-Federal Share

To provide the children and families with an extended day program, the Head Start Program wrapped around with the NYC DOE funded UPK Program which generated the major portion of the Non-Federal Share (\$182,540). Another major source was the disabilities services provided by local service providers to address the individual special needs of Head Start children. They contributed 2770 hours of disabilities services valuing \$138,500. Parents also contributed 4,876 volunteers hours valuing \$39,008 to help the Head Start Program in implementing various activities.

V. Program Budget and Expenditures

The program budget was planned and developed with the involvement of the Board, staff and Policy Council. Since the Head Start Program provided early childhood program services for 105 pre-school children and a wide array of activities to involve and engage the parents and the families, around 75% of the program funding was utilized for personnel costs. The major staff positions in the program included Program Director, Educational Director, Disabilities Services Coordinator, Family and Health Services Coordinator, Teachers, Assistant Teachers, Family Workers, Fiscal Officers as well as Health Services Consultant, Nutritional Services Consultant and Mental Health Consultant. This also paid for Consultants to provide on-site Staff Development workshops for program staff. During the program year, the program received the additional COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) funds to provide a .72 percent cost-of-living adjustment increase in the hourly rate of pay for all Head Start staff. This also resulted in the overall increase of Head Start Program pay scale.

The remaining program funds were utilized for OTPS (Other Than Personnel Services) costs. The major portion of it was utilized for facilities costs including the rent of six classrooms located in two BCA Head Start facilities and, utilities, telephone, security and fire alarm system service and maintenance, monthly pest extermination. Other costs included classroom supplies, field trips, family involvement activities. A small percentage of the cost was utilized for program operation such as insurance liability, contract services, audit, and printing, etc.

Expenditures of the Head Start Program (2/1/2012 – 1/31/2013)

	Actual Expenditures
Personnel Total	\$768,535
Facilities Cost	\$189,645
Supplies	\$56,325
Contract Services	\$14,051
Insurance	\$8,141
Trips & Travel	\$14,142
Family Involvement	\$4,519
Miscellaneous	\$32,440
TOTAL	\$1,087,798

VI. Children Served in the Head Start Program

Total Funded Enrollment: 105 Full-Day
Actual Enrollment: 106 Full-Day

The Head Start program was fully enrolled starting on the first day of the program (September 2012) and remained fully enrolled till the end of the school year. All children in the HS Program (100%) were from low-income households (income below 100% of federal poverty line). All children (100%) were of Asian descent. Of the 106 children, sixteen (15%) were 3-year-olds and ninety (85%) were 4-year-olds.

During the school year, fifteen Head Start children (14%) were determined eligible by the Department of Education to receive special education and related services. Eight of them had the IEP when they enrolled into the program and seven developed their IEP within the program year and secured the services they needed. The majority of them had speech or language impairments (73%).

The Head Start program served a total of 106 families. In most families (56.6%), only one parent had secured employment. Among the parents, 4 (3.78%) held associate degree and 44 (41.5%) graduated from high school. The remaining 54.72 % of parents were below high school graduate level. Comprehensive family services were provided to families to address their varying needs. During the school year, 6 parents (5.7%) attended job training or school; 17 parents (16%) received mental health services and with service referral, 38 (35.8%) attended ESOL classes offered by BCA.

VII. Health Services for Children and Families

Through working with the New York Downtown Hospital and Maimonides Medical Center, the Head Start Program arranged hearing, vision and dental screening for all Head Start children, so all children (100%) received the aforementioned screening during the first 45 days of the school year. Of the 106 children who received dental screening, 53 (50%) were diagnosed as needing additional dental treatment. The program worked with the parents and did follow-up to ensure that all these children received appropriate dental treatment.

The Head Start Program also retained two part-time registered nurses to serve as the Health Services Consultant. They tracked and brought the child up-to-date on age-appropriate schedule of well child care. They also worked with program staff in particular the Family Workers to assist the parents in making arrangements to bring the child up-to-date if necessary and would follow up to ensure that parents follow through with it. The Program also made sure that medical care was provided for the children and their families. If the child or family did not have it, the Consultant and Family Worker would assist the parents in accessing a source of care. At the beginning of the program year, only 50 (47%) of Head Start children were not up-to-date with their immunizations. At the end of the program year, all children's immunizations were up-to-date and all had an ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care.

The Nutrition Consultant conducted the BMI three times a year. For children who were underweight, overweight or obese, the nutritionist conducted consultation with parents to assist them in managing their children's health and nutrition issues. Nutritional workshops were held to instruct parents how to read food labels, how to shop and prepare healthy food, etc. The children made reasonable progress during the school year. The percentage of children with healthy weight increased from 38% to 78.3%. Those who were underweight decreased from 27% to 8.5 %; those who were obese or overweight also decreased from 35% to 13.2%.

During this school year, BCA retained three bilingual Mental Health Consultants. Though one Consultant primarily worked with the Head Start Program, Head Start parents could also access the services, workshops and guidance groups provided by the other two. During the school year, the Mental Health Consultant provided individual mental health assessment and consultation for 22 children (10.95%) and three of them had been referred to mental health services for more intensive mental health services.

This school year, with the retaining of three bilingual and experienced Mental Health consultants, BCA greatly enhanced its mental health services. Parenting groups were held once a month for parents to socialize and share their common concerns with the Mental Health Consultants. BCA also partnered with the Center For Family Life and implemented two "Parents Beyond Oceans" Group. Each group met for two hours a week and for ten weeks. The participants found those mental health support groups very beneficial and helpful. They had a chance to voice and share their concerns as new immigrants in this new country and work together to resolve their adjustment and everyday life problems.

VIII. Early Childhood Development & Education

At the beginning of the school year, BCA partnered with Comprehensive Kids to conduct screening for all children with BRIGANCE to assess their developmental and behavioral growth. Based on prescreening results, teachers' observation and parents' feedback, determination was made as to whether children needed to be referred for evaluation.

The child development and education approach in the BCA Head Start Program was to help children gain social competence skills and confidence necessary to be prepared for success in their present environment and in their educational experience as they prepared for their lifetime goals. BCA Head Start utilized the Creative Curriculum to facilitate the overall developmental growth of preschoolers. Program staff strove to be developmentally and linguistically appropriate in recognizing that children develop at individual rates according to their individual interests, temperaments, language, cultural background and learning styles. Children with different disabilities were included in all aspects of programming. Individual children's IEP (Individualized Education Program) were considered when planning all activities. The staff at BCA Head Start provided an environment of acceptance that supported and respected gender, culture, language, ethnicity and family composition. BCA Head Start

provided a balanced daily program of child initiated and adult directed activities, individual and small group activities as well as gross motor skills and outdoor play.

Since parents should be integral partners in the processes of planning and implementing the curriculum, the program provided training for parents and created more opportunities for them to be involved in the development of the program's curriculum and approach.

To better attend to "Individualization" in curriculum planning, staff had been receiving training provided by the Educational Director at the beginning of the school year. Teachers would be trained/re-trained to incorporate findings from developmental and behavioral screening tool, their observation, parents' input, etc. to plan curriculum for individual child.

During this school year, the Head Start Program utilized the Teaching Strategies GOLD as the assessment tool. The tool was selected because the domains and objectives of GOLD aligned with the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework as well as State early learning guidelines. Three assessments were conducted during the school year. After each assessment, parent-teacher conference was held for staff to share and discuss the assessment findings with parents and to make plans together to better assist the children in meeting the school readiness goals. Based on assessment results and parents' input, teachers structured the curriculum and individualized instruction and learning to help children achieve the goals and objectives.

After each assessment, the Head Start Program Director also worked together with the Educational Director in generating an aggregate snapshot report. Based on the aggregate assessment data, they identified the patterns of children's progress in various domains, determined program-specific learning needs and pinpointed areas where improvement was needed. These would be reviewed at staff meetings for teachers to discuss and brainstorm ideas and teaching approach to enhance their curriculum and lesson planning. The directors could also plan staff development to provide staff with any needed training and assistance.

School Readiness Goals and Objectives

During the last school year, it was one of the major goals of BCA's Head Start Program to set up the school readiness goals for the program. Head Start program staff, BCA board, Head Start Policy Council, parents and the community were involved in the process. To ensure that the school readiness goals align with the NY State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core as well as the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, BCA organized on-site staff development workshops for all teaching staff. BCA Early Childhood Program/Educational Directors also reviewed the NYS Early Learning Alignment Crosswalk and attended cluster meetings etc. to familiarize themselves with the various standards in order to formulate the school readiness goals. Input from parents and the community including local schools were also solicited. The goals were revisited this year with additional input from parents and staff as well as analysis of assessment results from children.

The Head Start Program also engaged families, staff/board members and community partners on an ongoing basis to review program-specific learning needs and to determine how to modify the school readiness goals to meet those needs. To engage parents, the program went over the program school readiness goals with parents at parent committee meetings. Teachers also discussed with parents at parent-teacher conference and as needed to review individual children's progress towards meeting the goals and to make plans to better help children achieve the goals. Board, staff members and Policy Council were involved in reviewing trends in child outcomes of the past year/months and in determining and setting the program school readiness goals. The Head Start Program staff also met with local kindergarten teachers to get their perspective on their expectations and needs of children transitioning

into their classrooms. Based on all the input, the program staff worked on developing and revising the program-specific school readiness goals which we would like our children to achieve. A comparison of children’s GOLD Fall and Spring assessment results indicated that children made great and impressive progress during the school year.

	Below their Level		Meeting their level		Exceeding Their level	
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
Social emotional	56%	2%	43%	70%	1%	29%
Physical – Gross Motor	30%	0	70%	87%	0	13%
Physical- Fine Motor	16%	1%	82%	68%	2%	31%
Language	83%	24%	17%	61%	0	15%
Cognitive	57%	3%	42%	68%	1%	30%
Literacy	53%	2%	47%	70%	0	29%
Mathematics	55%	2%	45%	57%	0	41%

IX. Parent Involvement Activities

BCA Head Start program targeted encouraging parent involvement in the program and implemented parent involvement activities to make parents feel that their involvement was fun, meaningful and a good learning experience for themselves.

At the beginning of this school year, with the assistance of program staff, parents were guided in setting the educational goals of their own child and selecting and approving the educational curriculum. The goals and progress towards achieving the goals were discussed at ensuing parent-teacher conferences. Three Parent-Teacher Conferences were held this year. At the conferences, teachers made efforts to involve parents and solicit their input about their child’s learning so that they could plan together and set or update the goals for their own child. Parents’ input were recorded, signed and dated as evidence of their participation in the planning process.

Regular monthly parent committee meetings and workshops were held to help parents understand more about early childhood education, basic learning goals and objectives for the 4-year-olds, learning and teaching approaches, etc. so that parents would feel more confident and comfortable in making recommendations to teachers and getting more involved in curriculum planning.

The program also put into effect a “Family Partnership Agreement” and all families participated in the goal setting process leading to the Agreement. The Family Workers worked with the families on goal setting during the first home visit and maintain regular contact with families through scheduled home visits, phone, etc.

To involve parents and help them understand more about the American culture with children, family events were held in celebration of Thanksgiving and Christmas. The Program also worked closely with the Policy Council in organizing the Chinese New Year and the Dragon Boat Festival activities to help children learn more about the own cultural heritage. Parents were actively involved in demonstrating how to prepare food and other decorations for the two major Chinese festivals. Parents were also invited to come to the classroom on a few occasions - Christmas, Chinese New Year, Mother’s Day, Father’s Day – to join their children in doing projects or participated in classroom activities. Such intergenerational activities were found to be helpful to enhance parent-child relationship and parents’ understanding and involvement in their children’s education.

The Head Start Program greatly encouraged parents to serve as volunteers. During this school year, over 90% of parents served as volunteers for the program. Altogether, they contributed 4,845 hours of services.

X. Preparing Children For Kindergarten

To prepare children for kindergarten, the following activities were implemented:

- Contacted school personnel of the neighborhood schools in February and March to obtain more information about the start date for kindergarten enrollment, and informed parents so that they could take prompt action to enroll their children. This was important this year as all local schools were overcrowded and it was expected that there would be a shortage of kindergarten slots in the neighborhood.
- Family Workers/Teachers contacted every parent to find out into which school the child successfully enrolled in May and June and provided information assistance to help parents locate a school if necessary.
- Arranged meetings with Principal or Parent coordinators of elementary schools where most children were assigned to coordinate activities to facilitate the transition.
- Met with kindergarten teachers of the elementary schools to obtain more information about the expectations of the school so that the program could do more to prepare children for their entry into the kindergarten.
- Arranged schools visits for children to PS 94 and PS 105 so that they were more familiar with the school setting.
- Coordinated with local schools to arrange parent orientations so that parents know more about the school, policies, regulations, expectations, etc.
- Met with parents to inform them of the differences between the two systems, such as staffing patterns, schedules, etc. and trained them to develop skills to interact with public school personnel, to function as advocates of their children and to be actively involved in their child's public school education.
- Helped parents to identify and locate community resources they might need in the future such as after school programs.

XI. Audit Results

The 2012 Audit were completed by the end of March 2012. There were no non-compliance findings or concerns related to Head Start.