

DECAL Early Head Start Child Care Partnership Self-Assessment Results from the 2017-2018 Program Year



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Introduction

This report presents results from the 2017-2018 Self-Assessment of the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) Early Head Start Child Care Partnership (DEHSP). The Executive Summary contains the following sections: Background, Key Findings, and Plan of Improvement. Following the Executive Summary, there are Detailed Population Findings (including Transitioning Families, Hub Staff, Child Care Learning Center Teachers, Family Child Care Learning Home Providers, and Child Care Learning Center Directors & Early Education Hub Directors), and Methodology.

Executive Summary

Background

In 2014, DECAL was awarded a federal Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership grant of \$3.5 million a year for five years. The purpose of the grant is to increase access to high-quality early education and comprehensive services for low-income infants and toddlers and their families.

Specifically, the DEHSP goals focus on:

- delivering comprehensive services to families;
- creating early education hubs to support programs and meet Early Head Start (EHS) standards;
- enhancing quality in the partnering child care programs to meet EHS standards;
- monitoring the project and measuring improvements to access and quality; and
- revising the state's child care subsidy policies to support Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships (EHS-CCP) statewide.

The Head Start Program Performance Standards state “every Head Start grantee agency is required to conduct a comprehensive self-assessment of its effectiveness at least annually” [1304.50(i)(1)]. The purpose of this process is to gather data to assess the success of the partnership in its support of child care centers and family child care learning homes in their delivery of comprehensive services to children and families.

DECAL's internal Research and Policy Analysis Team (Research Team) conducts the annual self-assessment to fulfill this requirement and to monitor progress toward meeting the grant's goals. This self-assessment utilizes a multi-method approach that includes surveys, interviews, and analyses of administrative data. The self-assessment ensures accountability for DECAL as the grantee. It also aids in the identification of systemic issues and innovative solutions to improve the partnership.

In 2016, the first self-assessment was completed using interviews, focus groups, surveys, and analyses of administrative data. It concluded that management systems and supports that had been implemented were working to support the hubs and partner programs. Furthermore, these findings provided a baseline for DEHSP to continue evaluating progress and identifying procedural changes that would strengthen the partnership.

The 2017 Self-Assessment was conducted with the same methods used in 2016. It concluded that family child care learning home (FCCLH) providers, child care learning center (CCLC)

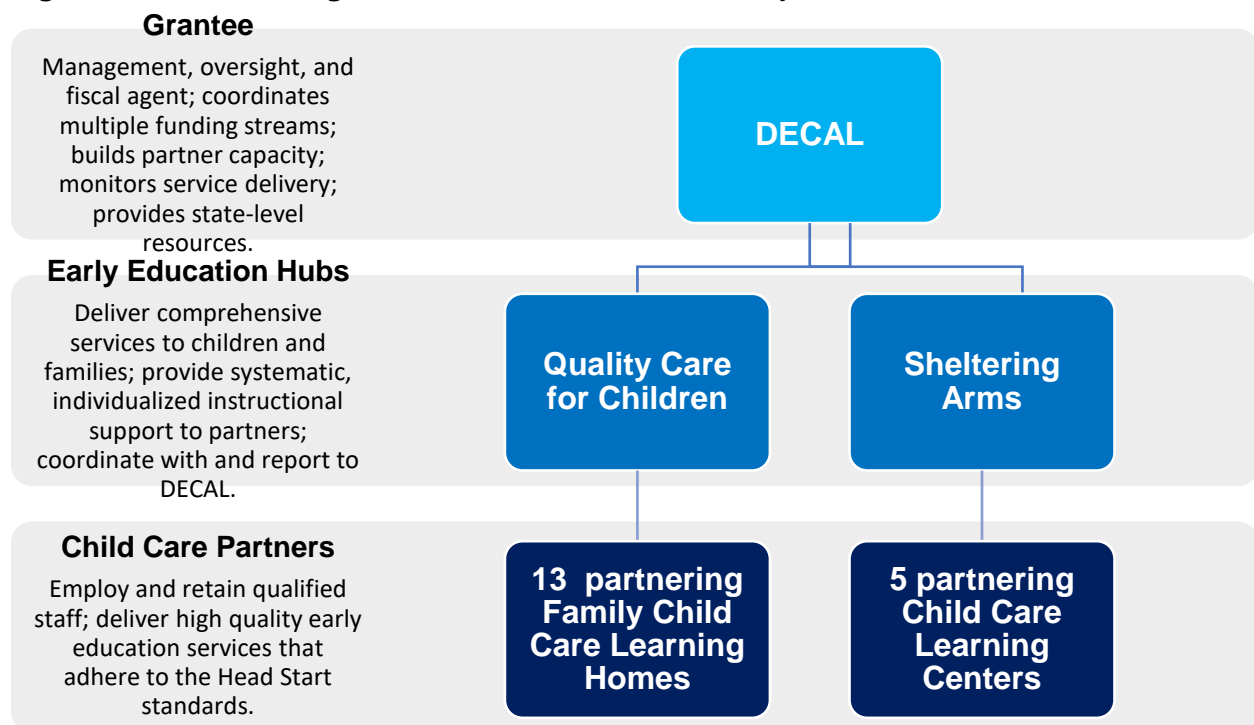
directors, early education hub staff, CCLC teachers, and families share similar opinions about many aspects of DEHSP. The groups held positive perceptions of the support DEHSP provides, its impact on classroom and program quality, and several of its services to families. The groups also were in accord on the need for additional supports and improved communication within the partnership structure.

The 2017-2018 Self-Assessment employed the same methods used in the assessments for program years 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 with the exception of focus groups. The assessment in this report examines the July 1, 2017-June 30, 2018 enrollment year, and includes surveys of FCCLH providers, hub staff, CCLC teachers, and transitioning families, interviews with CCLC directors and early education hub directors, and analyses of administrative data.

DEHSP Model

The DEHSP model includes two partner early education hubs that promote school readiness and provide comprehensive services to children and their families, Quality Care for Children, Inc. and Sheltering Arms, Inc. Quality Care for Children works with FCCLHs that serve dual language learners (DLLs) and Sheltering Arms works with CCLCs. In 2018, Quality Care for Children served as the hub for 13¹ participating FCCLHs and Sheltering Arms served as the hub for five CCLCs, together serving a cumulative total of 252 children and their families. Figure 1 charts the DEHSP management structure, as well as roles and responsibilities of each partner.

Figure 1. DEHSP Management Structure Roles and Responsibilities



¹ There were originally 14 FCCLHs, but one closed in the midst of the 2018 Self-Assessment. Reason for closure was that the owner moved. The Quality Care for Children Hub found other arrangements for the children who attended the affected FCCLH, placing them in slots across the other 13 FCCLHs where possible.

Key Findings

Summary Results of Surveys and Interviews

The Research Team conducted a series of surveys and interviews with partners across the DEHSP. This section presents the summary results of those efforts and includes direct quotes taken from comments made by respondents in the surveys and interviews. More detailed results are provided in the Detailed Population Findings section of this report.

Transitioning Families

The Research Team surveyed parents and families with children transitioning out of their EHS program to understand their experiences being served by the program and their experiences with transitioning out. This group is referred to as transitioning families. 40 transitioning families completed paper surveys in English and Spanish, and the majority completed the survey in person. Survey results suggest that this group was overwhelmingly happy with the program.

All respondents (n=36) indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their child's EHS experience. They reported liking the teachers' dedication to their children, the financial benefits, the facilities, the resources, and the educational benefits to their children.

“ I love how dedicated they are how much love they show to our kids and how well they maintain the facilities. ”

Overall, respondents seemed to feel connected to their EHS program. All respondents (n=38) indicated that their child's relationship with their teacher was positive or very positive. Most respondents (89%, n=32) reported that there were opportunities to volunteer

in their child's classroom, and that they felt valued by EHS staff (97%, n=36).

Results also suggest that respondents felt adequately supported by their EHS program. The majority of respondents reported being offered various resources and supports, such as child development information (92%, n=35), professional development and training opportunities (84%, n=31), and health care resources (74%, n=28). Most respondents (97%, n=38) reported that their EHS program helped them to be a better parent. Additionally, all respondents (n=32) reported that the EHS staff were very involved in their transition.

“ I had a very pleasant experience with this program and I'd highly recommend. I was able to finish college and buy a home thanks to this program. ”

Respondents were very satisfied with their child's education and development while at the program. All (n=39) indicated that their child's teacher used their child's goals to individualize teaching, and almost all (95%, n=38) reported that they noticed improvements in their child's language abilities.

Early Education Hub Staff

The Research Team surveyed hub staff through an online survey to understand the levels of connection and support they felt with the DEHSP, their satisfaction with communication, and how children and families in the partnership are supported. 17 hub staff (85%) completed surveys. Survey results indicated that respondents tended to feel more connected to the partnership than supported, and that some respondents were dissatisfied with communication

across the partners. Overall, however, the results suggest that hub staff have the resources, training, and support needed to be successful in their roles.

Most respondents (82%, n=14) reported that they felt connected to the partnership. All respondents (n=14) reported that expectations about their job performance are communicated to them. All respondents (n=15) also reported that they are motivated to see the partnership succeed.

Positive responses to questions related to support tended to be lower than those for connection. 65% (n=11) of respondents reported that they felt supported by the partnership and that they received the training they needed to perform their job duties. 59% (n=10) indicated that relevant professional development opportunities were available to them.

Most respondents (80%, n=12) reported being at least somewhat satisfied with communication between the hubs and program staff, while less (60%, n=9) reported satisfaction with communication between the hubs and DECAL.

Finally, respondents were asked how they collaborated with partners to support children and families regardless of whether they were in the DEHSP. They shared that they engaged in frequent communication with partners and families, collaborated with other specialists, and offered information and assistance to all families in the child care programs.

“
I support my team members in their implementation of Head Start greatness.”

CCLC Teachers

The Research Team surveyed CCLC teachers to understand how the DEHSP affected their classrooms, the level of support they received, how children in their classrooms were developing, and the level of parent involvement. 49 teachers (74%) completed paper surveys that were available to them at their centers.

Results for this group were mostly positive, suggesting that center teachers continue to feel supported and connected to the DEHSP and see benefits in their classrooms.

“
I learned so much about Early Head Start that I didn't know. **Early Head Start helps me to be a better teacher** in a small setting.”

The majority of respondents (74%, n=34) reported that they felt supported by the Partnership, while even more (92%, n=44) said that being a part of the DEHSP had a positive impact on the overall quality of their classroom.

In terms of classroom operations, the majority of respondents (63%, n=30) said that they had at least an hour for lesson planning during the work week. They reported some of the ways they supported the school readiness of the children they serve, such as by using age-appropriate activities and materials and setting individual growth goals for each child. The majority of respondents (64%, n=28) also reported using strategies to encourage attendance at their program.

Respondents provided their perceptions on the well-being and development of the children in their classrooms. Most (83%, n=38) reported that all or almost all the children in their classrooms appeared rested and well-nourished each day. For most domains of development, most respondents reported that most or all the children in their classrooms were on track.

Finally, respondents reported that parents volunteered, but not frequently. The majority of respondents indicated that they had at least one mother volunteer (53%, n=25) or at least one father volunteer (51%, n=24) less than once a month.

FCCLH Providers

The Research Team surveyed FCCLH providers to understand the level of connection they felt to the DEHSP, how it affected their classrooms, the level of support they received, how children in their classrooms were developing, and the level of parent involvement. 13 FCCLH providers (100%) completed paper surveys. Results indicate that FCCLH providers are overall very satisfied with the partnership.

All respondents (n=13) reported that they felt connected to the partnership and included in the process of delivering comprehensive services to families at their program. Additionally, they all (n=13) said that communication across the partners was good, very good, or excellent.

As with connection, all respondents (n=13) reported feeling supported by the partnership, too. All respondents (n=13) also said that being a part of the DEHSP had a positive impact on the overall quality of their classroom.

“EHS turned me into a professional in children’s education.”

In terms of classroom operations, most respondents (83%, n=10) said that they had at least an hour for lesson planning during the work week. They reported supporting the school readiness of the children they serve by using age-appropriate activities and materials, feeding them nutritious meals, and offering any supports they may need. All respondents (n=13) reported that they used strategies to encourage attendance at their program.

Respondents provided their perceptions on the well-being and development of the children in their classrooms. Almost all respondents (85%, n=11) reported that all or almost all the children in their classrooms appeared rested and well-nourished each day. All or almost all respondents reported that children in their classrooms were on track in all domains of development, and all respondents (n=13) reported that they communicated with parents about their children’s needs, growth, and development at least weekly.

Finally, most respondents reported that parents volunteered somewhat regularly. 75% (n=8) of respondents reported having at least one mother volunteer at least monthly and 50% (n=6) reported having at least one father volunteer at least monthly.

CCLC Directors and Early Education Hub Directors

The Research Team conducted one-on-one interviews with CCLC directors and hub directors (directors). Because of their small population sizes, the results of the interviews are reported together to maintain the confidentiality of the interviewees. Six CCLC directors (100%) and two hub directors (100%) were interviewed. In general, directors seemed to think that the partnership is succeeding at serving children and families, but that there are opportunities for improvement when it comes to communication across partners.

“All in all I love the partnership.”

Directors overwhelmingly reported that serving families and providing comprehensive services are the things they like most about their jobs. They also enjoy the partnership model itself and are proud of its success

overall and the professional growth of staff. They agree that the specialist services provided by hub staff and the support of the hubs in general are working well.

Directors were divided in their opinions of communication across partners. Some said communication is great overall, while others expressed that it is poor and inconsistent. Some suggestions to improve communication included using multiple modes of communication, taking care to provide timely responses, coordinating communication to reduce the number of emails, and assigning a hub staff member to each center as a main point of contact.

Summary of Administrative Data

This section examines administrative data to compare service delivery from the past program years of 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 to the program year discussed in this self-assessment, 2017-2018. The data used in this section comes from the DEHSP's Program Information Report, except for the chronic absenteeism data that comes from the DEHSP's Child Plus® database.

Enrollment Demographics

During the July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018 program year, the DEHSP had a total of 208 slots and a total cumulative enrollment of 252. Over the years of the grant the DEHSP has been able to serve more eligible children and families each year by layering Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) subsidies and using EHS carry-over funds. This has allowed the partnership to increase the number of children enrolled and expand the reach of the services to children and families beyond the funded classrooms. Table 1 below shows the cumulative enrollment for each program year.

Table 1. Cumulative Enrollment by Age

Age	# of Children at Enrollment 2015-2016	# of Children at Enrollment 2016-2017	# of Children at Enrollment 2017-2018
Under 1 year	69	63	76
1-year-olds	74	85	68
2-year-olds	70	75	91
3-year-olds	1	16	17
4-year-olds	0	1	0
TOTAL	214	240	252

In 2017-2018, a total of 107 children were returning students and 42 of those had been enrolled in the program for three or more years, demonstrating consistency of services for some families. 145 children were newly recruited. Of the 252 enrolled children, 138 (55%) also qualified for CCDF subsidies.

For the most part, children left the partnership because they aged out. Of the children who did age out, 39 entered a Head Start program, 22 entered another early childhood program, and 7 did not enter any early childhood program upon leaving.

Most children (n=191) enrolled in the DEHSP were identified as Black or African American of Non-Hispanic or Latino origin. 48 children identified as being of Hispanic or Latino origin. For 41 of the 252 children enrolled, Spanish was the primary language of their families at home.

Figure 2. Enrollment of Children Experiencing Homelessness

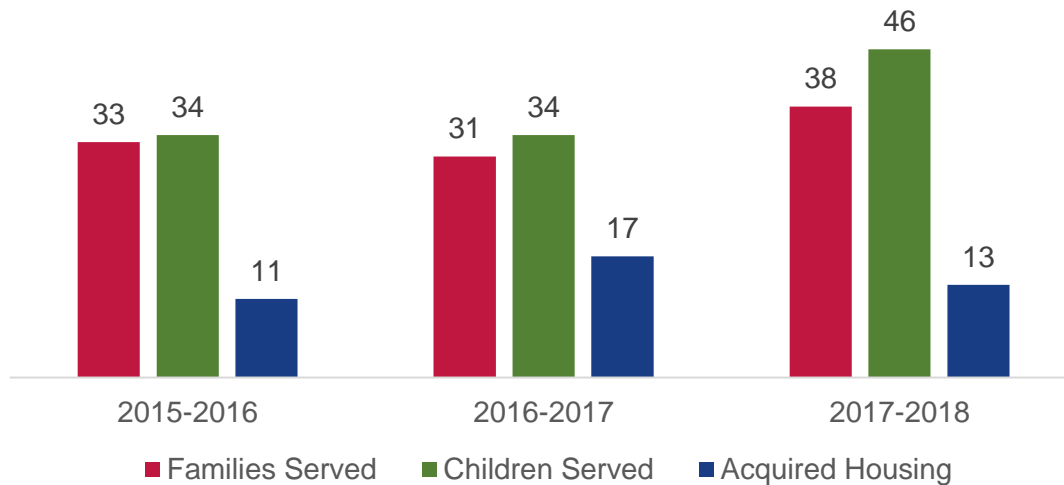


Figure 2 above displays the enrollment data of children and families who experienced homelessness across the past three enrollment years. During the 2017-2018 year, more children and families experiencing homelessness were served than during the two prior years. One of the DEHSP child care partners is in a homeless shelter and resource center, providing the partnership with a unique opportunity to serve this vulnerable population.

Children in foster care are an eligibility priority group for the DEHSP. In the 2015-2016 program year, 3% of enrolled children were children in foster care. This dropped to 1% in 2016-2017 and remained at 1% in 2017-2018. The DEHSP also enrolls children referred to the program by child welfare agencies. In the 2015-2016 program year, 1% of enrolled children came from these referrals, rising to 2% in 2016-2017 and 5% in 2017-2018.

Health and Disabilities Service Delivery

Figure 3 displays the percentage of children enrolled in the partnership who also had an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). Of the children enrolled during the 2017-2018 year, 8.7% were children who had an IFSP. This is less than previous years, and an area of opportunity for the partnership to expand service delivery.

Figure 3. Children with Disabilities Served



Figures 4 and 5 below display medical and dental services access data from the past three program years. By the end of the 2017-2018 enrollment year, 246 of the 252 enrolled children had continuous, accessible dental care provided by a dentist. Compared across the three program years, this is a higher total count of children and a higher percentage of the total cumulative enrollment at 98%. Similarly, 249 or 99% of the 252 enrolled children had an ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care. This is a higher total than the prior years,

but the 99% rate is the same as the 2016-2017 program year, demonstrating the DEHSP’s capacity to ensure children and families are receiving comprehensive health services.

Figure 4. Dental Services Over Enrollment Years

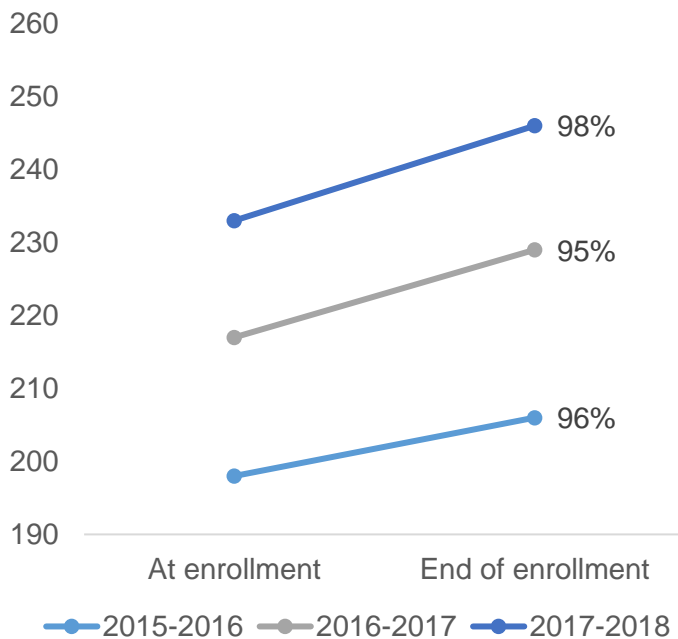
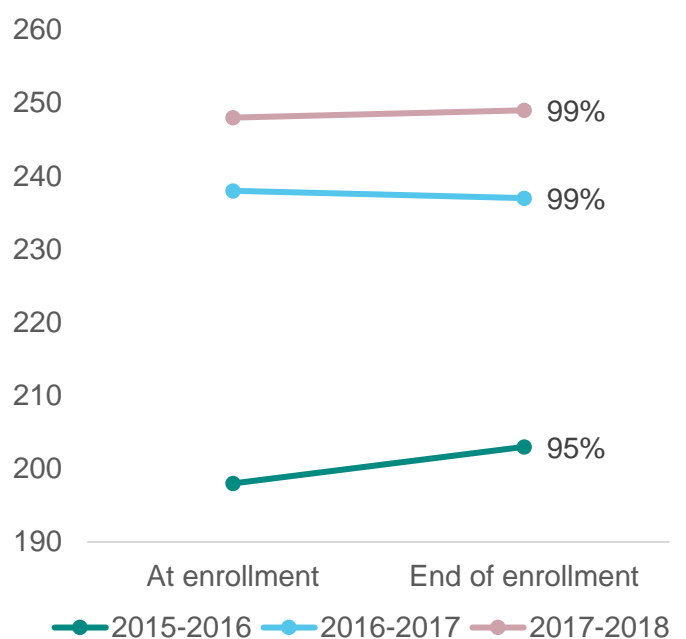


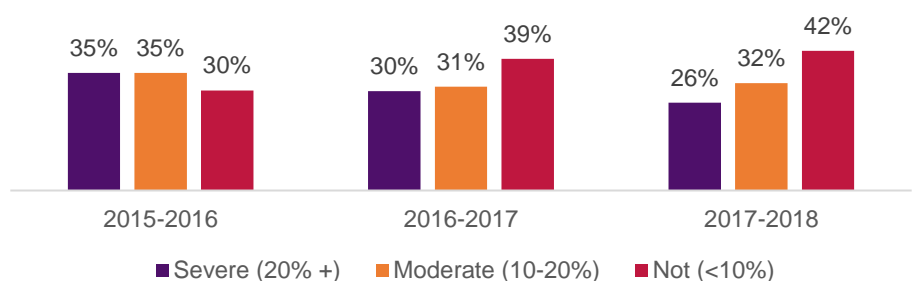
Figure 5. Medical Services Over Enrollment Years



Chronic Absenteeism

Figure 6 displays chronic absenteeism data from programs in the DEHSP over the past three program years. Child attendance data has been categorized by *severe* chronic absence, meaning the child has missed 20% or more of the program year, *moderate* chronic absence, meaning the child has missed between 10% to 20% of the program year, and *not* chronically absent, meaning that the child has missed less than 10% of the program year. From the 2015-2016 program year to 2017-2018, the *severe* chronic absences have decreased by nine percentage points and the *not* chronically absent has increased by twelve percentage points. This is a significant change and could be attributed to trainings offered by DEHSP leadership and program- and classroom-level strategies implemented by hub staff and teachers. Yet in 2017-2018, 58% of the children were absent more than 10% of the year, while 42% of the children were absent less than 10% of the year.

Figure 6. Chronic Absenteeism Across Enrollment Years



Conclusion

Based on this data, the DEHSP is clearly continuing to effectively deliver comprehensive services to children and their families. The program also continues to serve those children and families with complex needs, such as children in foster care, children and families experiencing

homelessness, and children with disabilities. DEHSP strengths include connecting children to medical and dental services and reducing the rate of chronic absences. The partnership should continue efforts to recruit children with disabilities to ensure that at least 10% of the slots serve children with disabilities.

Plan of Improvement

Review of 2016-2017 Plan of Improvement

Based on findings from the 2016-2017 Program Year Self-Assessment, the Research Team and DECAL created a Plan of Improvement to enhance the functioning of the DEHSP. The 2017 Plan of Improvement included recommendations related to the experiences of family child care partners, teachers, center and hub directors, and hub staff. In 2018, the Research Team gathered informal input from DECAL on how recommendations from the 2017 Plan of Improvement were implemented.

Family Child Care

In 2017, the early education hub for FCCLCs, Quality Care for Children, worked diligently with FCCLH providers to increase their understanding of the standards, rules, and regulations relevant to their child care programs. Specifically, they addressed the confusion around EHS programs not offering transportation services due to safety concerns.

DECAL connected this early education hub and its FCCLH providers with trained professionals to coach the partners on positive behavior supports, implemented the curriculum with fidelity, and technology use. DECAL has also begun the process of building a partnership with Georgia Piedmont Technical College so that FCCLH providers can earn their Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC) credential in Spanish. This work is an ongoing part of the professional development opportunities provided by the partnership, and DECAL looks forward to continuing this work in the next year.

The early education hub also successfully coordinated with the FCCLH providers to create seasonal holiday calendars that coincided with the local school system schedules. This effort greatly reduced scheduling conflicts.

In the last year of work, FCCLH providers saw a need for technical assistance to support, measure, and document family engagement. While the early education hub provided training during their monthly meetings, more targeted support on using the ChildPlus® online system and implementing the Creative Curriculum® is needed.

Finding available and qualified substitute teachers is a challenge across the child care industry. For FCCLH providers, it is especially difficult to find qualified Spanish-speaking substitutes, not to mention the added layer of trust needed for those individuals to work within the FCCLH providers' homes. This is an area that needs continued attention. DECAL can continue to support the FCCLH providers by providing resources.

Center-Based Child Care

In 2017, DECAL connected the early education hub for child care learning centers, Sheltering Arms, with training on implementing the curriculum with fidelity and using the formative assessment tool to individualize instruction. DECAL also provided all child care partners access to the Watch Me Grow® modules and classrooms kits as the teachers completed the training.

Related to curriculum, DECAL supported each center with the funding to employ a curriculum specialist whose expertise supported teachers in the classrooms as immediate needs arose. Though not all centers were able to hire a specialist until much later in the school year, DECAL looks forward to this increased collaboration that will be supported when all centers have hired family support and curriculum specialists. In the next year of work, the recently hired member of the DEHSP leadership team, an Education Program Specialist, will support the child care partners by implementing Professional Learning Communities.

In order for teachers to be successful, they need sufficient time to plan the education programs in their classrooms. In an effort to ensure that all teachers in every EHS classroom have ample time to plan, funding was provided to the centers to hire additional staff. Through the support of this initiative, DECAL found that additional staff in the classroom sometimes overcomplicated the work. Despite the industry challenges of finding qualified staff, DECAL will continue to support center directors in providing the optimal level of support to their teachers.

Though consistent coordination is a challenge for any partnership with many stakeholders, DECAL made efforts to share training calendars and opportunities with the early education hubs and child care partners. The most effective professional development is job-specific, so this initiative will also continue into the next year of work.

Hub Directors & Staff

Early in the program year, DECAL executive leadership facilitated a meeting among DECAL, hubs, and partners to identify strategies to improve communication and reduce the communication challenges experienced. This meeting was a successful start of an ongoing process of improving communication between all stakeholders in this partnership.

This milestone year ushered in the exciting challenge of transitioning children and families out of the partnership. Many of the transitioning children entered Early Head Start as infants and were enrolled three years. CCLC directors collaborated with hub directors and DECAL to ensure families transitioning out of EHS had the necessary supports to remain in high-quality child care. For this reason, this year's self-assessment includes a survey of some of these families to hear about their experience.

Stemming from a strategic focus on children's attendance, new strategies were employed to educate parents and educators about the importance of regular daily attendance. Training CCLC directors on the attendance tools and reports in ChildPlus helped them monitor attendance and initiate supports promptly. The rates of severe chronic absenteeism across children in the partnership have dropped.

The initial implementation and use of shared calendars has increased awareness of events, but there is still room for process refinements as DECAL is not always informed of partners' schedules changing.

As mandated by the performance standards, all programs in the DEHSP must have 10% of their enrollment filled by children with disabilities. DECAL will continue to work to meet this target by increasing recruitment efforts and building and maintaining partnerships with staff from Children's 1st, Babies Can't Wait, health departments, and the local education agencies (LEAs).

Serving children who have disabilities is a priority for participation in the partnership; however, it is difficult to find, recruit, and enroll infants and young toddlers who have identified disabilities

and an active Individualized Family Services Plan. More often, infants and toddlers have no identified disabilities when they first enroll in the DEHSP. As the children grow and develop, screening results and/or formative assessments suggest some children may have delays or disabilities. The families are referred to Children 1st for their children's evaluation and then to Babies Can't Wait if services are needed. Children may be aging out of Early Head Start by the time disabilities are diagnosed and services implemented. Meeting the 10% target is a challenge for Early Head Start programs that do not also have children enrolled in Head Start.

2017-2018 Plan of Improvement

The Research Team drafted recommendations for the 2017-2018 Plan of Improvement based on results of the 2017-2018 Program Year Self-Assessment. These recommendations were reviewed and refined in conjunction with the DEHSP and Policy Council. The resulting Plan of Improvement suggests refinement in the three major topic areas of training, resources, and data integrity.

Center-Based Child Care

CCLC directors reported various parent-related challenges, including communicating the importance of early education, regular attendance, and parental engagement in the classroom. There is an opportunity to include these topics in a variety of ways to engage families throughout the year—at enrollment, during orientation and Parent Leadership Organization meetings, in parent-teacher meetings, home visits, and when establishing family goals. Collateral printed materials and resources, such as the CDC's Milestone Tracker app, can be provided.

DECAL can support these directors with more resources, such as regular newsletters between all partners in the hub and in-person meetings. Developing relationships between DEHSP partners to ensure there is an equal and thorough understanding of the goals and operations of the partnership, along with the performance standards, will build capacity at the center-level.

DECAL will continue to encourage CCLC directors to develop their own partnerships with community organizations, support groups, and stakeholders who focus on serving children with disabilities.

Young children enrolled in Early Head Start have complex needs. Ideally, children are well-nourished and well-rested when entering their classrooms each day. 82% of CCLC teachers reported that all or almost all of the children in their classrooms appeared to be rested and well-nourished. Additionally, compared to other domains of child development, communication, language acquisition, and literacy appear to be challenge areas for some children served by CCLCs in the partnership, based on CCLC teachers' perceptions.

To strengthen communication, promote increased family engagement, and support teachers, DECAL implemented changes in the fall of 2018. Resources were provided so that each CCLC could hire a family support specialist and curriculum specialist for the center. Previously, these specialists were hub employees who traveled from center to center. As center employees, the specialists are available to families and teachers throughout the day. The self-assessment for the 2018-2019 program year will examine the impact, if any, of this organizational change.

Family Child Care

In the next year of work there is an opportunity for the early education hub to provide more training opportunities for FCCLH providers, particularly in the areas of behavior management and curriculum for infants and toddlers. Creating a forum for FCCLH providers to connect with one another and share their strategies for making time for lesson planning is a potential way to enhance their practices. It is recommended that DECAL continue building partnerships with technical colleges that can deliver coursework in Spanish to support the FCCLH providers in their efforts to earn their Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC) credentials.

Families and Children Served

The surveys indicated that families with children transitioning out of the partnership were very satisfied with their DEHSP experience. In the next self-assessment, the Research Team intends to capture feedback on the experiences of all families served in an Early Head Start setting, not only those with direct financial support from Early Head Start, to measure the DEHSP's goal of serving all children and families in partner child care programs.

Hub Directors & Staff

In each year of this partnership, the self-assessment has asked the degree to which hub staff feel connected to the goals of the DEHSP and how supported they feel by the DEHSP in their roles. To increase hub staff's feelings of connection and support, more relevant professional development opportunities can be provided. Throughout those opportunities, an emphasis on increasing hub staff's clarity of understanding on the importance of their work to the larger partnership goals will promote and further underscore their high motivation for partnership success. The implementation of a systematic onboarding plan that is specific and unique to the work of each hub staff member and their role within the larger DEHSP will improve program processes.

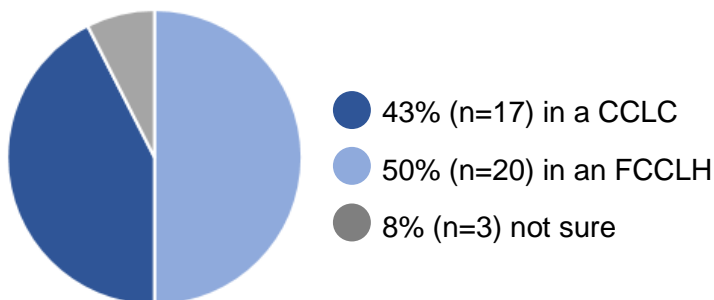
Detailed Population Findings

The Research Team analyzed the results of surveys or interviews for each of the following populations of the DEHSP: transitioning families, early education hub staff, CCLC teachers, FCCLH providers, and CCLC directors and hub directors. The following sections describe each of these populations and detail the results of their respective analyses. More information about the surveys and interviews can be found in the Methodology section of this report.

Transitioning Families Survey Results

Background

Families are at the heart of the DEHSP. The overarching goal of the Partnership is to provide comprehensive services to infants, toddlers, and their families. Parents and caretakers of children in the DEHSP also have a unique perspective on their child's development through their Early Head Start (EHS) program. The Research Team surveyed parents and caretakers with children transitioning out of their EHS program to understand their experiences being served by the program and their experiences with transitioning out. This group is referred to as transitioning families. **40 transitioning families** completed surveys. Respondents were almost evenly split between those who had a child in a CCLC and those who had a child in an FCCLH.



Satisfaction

100% (n=36) of respondents indicated that they were **satisfied or very satisfied** with their child's EHS experience.

“Early Head Start improved my life in so many ways. **I was able to work, go to college and buy a home** w/o having to worry about childcare.”

Respondents reported what they liked most about their child's EHS program, which included the teachers' dedication to their children, the financial benefits, the facilities, the resources, and the educational benefits to their children. Or, as one respondent put it, **“Everything! My daughter truly enjoyed every moment in this program.”**

Overall it is clear that respondents were generally

happy with their and their child's experiences with the program.

Connection

It is important that children feel comfortable in their EHS program and that parents/caretakers are involved and feel valued. These things make up their connection to the program, which affects their overall experiences. Children and families should have a positive connection to their program in order to reap the most benefits.

100% (n=38) of respondents indicated that their **child's relationship with their teacher was positive or very positive**, and most respondents (87%, n=34) indicated that their child was comfortable or very comfortable with their teacher. **“My child spoke about her teachers all the time. She even said she loved them.”**

Many respondents reported that EHS staff learned about their family (such as traditions or cultural background) during parent-teacher conferences (79%, n=30) and pick-up/drop-off time (76%, n=29). Many respondents (89%, n=32) also indicated that they were provided opportunities to volunteer in their child's classroom.

Finally, almost all respondents (97%, n=36) indicated that they felt valued as a parent by EHS staff, teachers, and providers.

“From the beginning **it's like a partnership with the EHS program; one is always involved.**”

Support

The DEHSP aims to support families by offering comprehensive services and resources, providing knowledge and tools to bolster parenting abilities, and preparing children and families for life after EHS. It is important that families feel supported in these ways to know whether the partnership is effective.

Most respondents reported being offered child

development information (92%, n=35), educational activities (89%, n=33), family goal setting (84%, n=32), and professional development/training opportunities (84%, n=31). Less respondents, but still a majority, reported being offered health care resources (74%, n=28), financial planning assistance (67%, n=24), and assistance with finding a job (51%, n=19). It should be noted that not every family needed each of these resources, which could explain why not all respondents reported being offered each resource. Most respondents (89%, n=32) agreed that they felt comfortable enough to use the resources provided to them.

Almost all respondents (97%, n=38) reported that their EHS program helped them see themselves as their child's first teacher and helped them to be a better parent.

“With the help of the program I was able to notice things about my child that she didn't show around me, which in terms **helped me understand how I could interact with her in a more positive way.**”

100% (n=32) of respondents indicated that the **Early Head Start Staff were very involved in their transition** out of the program. Specifically, they mentioned that the staff helped them locate a new program for the following year, assisted with paperwork, and provided relevant information about their transition process with frequent communication. **“The Early Head Start staff helped me find a GA Pre-K.”** Almost all respondents (97%, n=35) indicated that the EHS program prepared them and their child for the next school year.

Child Development

The Head Start Program and Performance Standards state that “All programs must implement a research-based curriculum, and screening and assessment procedures that support individualization and growth [...] and support family engagement in children's learning and development.”¹ Teachers should individualize teaching for each child and speak with parents/caretakers about their child's development.

100% (n=39) of respondents indicated that their **child's teacher used their child's goals to individualize teaching.** The majority of respondents indicated that they talk to their child's teacher about their development during pick up and drop off (87%, n=34) and at parent-teacher conferences (72%, n=28). They also indicated that these conversations happened during home visits, at parent meetings, and through calls and texts. No respondents indicated that they do not talk to their child's teacher about their development. **“We spoke weekly about her goals and what we wanted to achieve over a certain period of time.”** Most respondents (89%, n=32) agreed that the EHS program gave them the resources they need to support their child's development.

Almost all respondents (95%, n=38) reported that they noticed improvements in their child's language abilities as a result of their EHS program.

“OMG!! **He has improved 100%** He talks very clearly and people understand every single word he says. They even think my son is older than his age.”

Challenges & Opportunities

The transitioning families surveyed this year did not report any challenges. However, there is an opportunity to collect feedback from even more families in future self-assessments in order to gain a broader perspective of their experiences.

Early Education Hub Staff Survey Results

Background

Early education hub staff work across the two partnering hubs to support families, Child Care Learning Center (CCLC) directors, CCLC teachers, and Family Child Care Learning Home (FCCLH) partners. They reinforce the partnership by providing the necessary resources and supports to increase the quality of care and ensure the children's and families' needs are being met. The Research Team surveyed hub staff to understand the levels of connection and support they felt with the DEHSP, their satisfaction with communication, and how children and families in the partnership are supported. **17 hub staff** (85%) completed surveys.

Connection

It is important that hub staff feel connected to the partnership in order to be as effective as possible in their roles. Clarity around what is expected of them and feeling like part of a team supporting the partnership are important elements of hub staff's overall connection to the partnership.

Overall, 82% (n=14) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt connected to the partnership.

When asked about the clarity aspect of connection, **100%** (n=14) of respondents indicated that **expectations about their job performance were communicated to them**. Slightly less (87%, n=13) agreed or strongly agreed that they have the clarity in their role needed to perform their job and a clear understanding of the importance of their position in achieving the partnership's goals.

Somewhat less (73%, n=11), but still most, respondents indicated they feel like part of a team helping to fulfill the goals of the partnership. However, **100%** (n=15) of respondents said they are **motivated to see the partnership succeed**.

Support

Hub staff provide crucial support to partners across the hubs, and in turn need to feel supported by the Partnership in order to do their best work. Feeling supported may include availability of resources, adequate training professional development opportunities, and access to program staff. Overall, 65% (n=11) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt supported by the partnership.

87% (n=13) of respondents indicated that they were at least somewhat satisfied with office planning time, while 93% (n=14) indicated being at least somewhat satisfied with resources provided in general.

In terms of training, 87% (n=13) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their initial orientation was informative and 65% (n=11) agreed or strongly agreed that they have received the training they need to perform their job duties. 59% (n=10) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that relevant professional development opportunities were available to them.

73% (n=11) of respondents reported that it was often or always true that program staff were available to answer their questions.

Communication

The Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) names maintaining ongoing communication as one of the primary activities involved in implementing successful early care and education partnerships². At the crucial intersection of services provided and resources offered, it is important that hub staff have effective communication with other partners to ensure smooth functioning of the partnership.

²Del Grosso, P., L. Akers, A. Mraz Esposito, and D. Paulsell. "Early Care and Education Partnerships: A Review of the Literature." OPRE Report #2014-64. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, 2014. Retrieved from https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/early_care_and_education_partnerships_a_review_of_the_literature.pdf

80% (n=12) of respondents reported being at least somewhat satisfied with the communication between hubs and program staff, with 20% (n=3) somewhat dissatisfied. When asked about communication between the hubs and DECAL staff, 60% (n=9) reported being at least somewhat satisfied while 40% (n=6) reported being at least somewhat dissatisfied.

Supporting Children & Families

Hub staff were asked how they collaborate with partners to support children and families in Early Head Start (EHS). Some of the examples they shared included frequent communication with partners and families, collaborating with other specialists, and offering training to program staff.

“ I go into each classroom to speak with the teachers. ”

“ I provide help and assistance beyond my job duties as needed. ”

Hub staff were also asked how they support programs to include *non-EHS* families in the services they provide. Some of the practices they shared are including all children and families in events and meetings, providing information to entire programs, and offering assistance to any family who needs it. One respondent provided this compelling example:

“ I help any family that enters the center needing assistance. Just last week a non-EHS family need housing assistance. The family is in a shelter with an upcoming exit date, the mother is pregnant and she has limited access to conduct an apartment search plus she has extenuating circumstances that limits the complexes she can [apply] for. I searched for apartments in the area, called to verify they would [accept] the program she was on, completed online application if needed or provided with a contact to meet. Also printed a list of apartments for her to call if the ones we contacted did not work out and [gave] her my contact information if she needed additional assistance. ”

Challenges & Opportunities

Multiple challenges and opportunities for improvement related to support and communication are evident in hub staff's survey responses.

In general, hub staff reported feeling connected to the partnership and motivated to see it succeed.

Ideally, however, all hub staff would also report feeling like a part of a team helping to fulfill the goals of the partnership. There may be an opportunity to facilitate hub staff team building to ensure they are working together as effectively as possible.

When it comes to feeling supported, some hub staff reported dissatisfaction with the training and professional development opportunities offered to them. In the 2019-2020 program year, DECAL leaders will be implementing a more comprehensive onboarding process for hub staff with professional development plans for each role. This new training and professional development structure should alleviate this challenge.

Communication also appears to be a challenge, particularly, according to respondents, between the hubs and DECAL. There is an opportunity for both DECAL and the hubs to ensure that their communication practices are timely, transparent, and all-encompassing.

Child Care Learning Center Teachers

Survey Results

Background

Child Care Learning Center (CCLC) partner teachers (teachers) work across the five CCLCs in the DEHSP. They interact with the children and parents in the DEHSP nearly every day, and therefore have valuable perspectives on how the model is working and how the children are developing. The Research Team surveyed teachers to understand how the DEHSP affected their classrooms, the level of support they received, how children in their classrooms were developing, and the level of parent involvement. **49 teachers** (74%) completed surveys.

Support

“In my opinion **being a part of DECAL has been a big help in my classroom**. I use all the support tools to help ensure each child gets what they need.”

The hub specialists provide support to the teachers with regards to curriculum, lesson planning, quality assistance, and professional development training. The DEHSP should also be generally supportive of all partners. It is important that teachers feel supported in order to effectively teach and support the children in their classrooms.

74% (n=34) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt supported by the partnership, while 92% (n=44) of respondents said that being a part of the DEHSP had a positive impact on the overall quality of their classroom. **“This is my first experience working with Early Head Start. I must say that so far I have developed in ways I could not imagine.”**

Classroom Operations

It is important to know how things are functioning in the day-to-day operations of the teachers' classrooms. This helps the DEHSP understand the learning environments that the children are in.

The Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) are aligned with the Head Start Outcomes Framework and should therefore be used by the teachers. The majority of respondents reported using the GELDS for lesson plans (96%, n=46), activities (85%, n=41), and classroom assessments (67%, n=32).

When asked about time for lesson planning, most respondents, 63% (n=30), said that they had at least an hour to plan during the work week. 19% (n=9) of respondents reported that they did not have time and 13% (n=6) of respondents reported that they had less than an hour.

Respondents were asked about the ways they engage their students in supporting diverse cultures. Many teachers reported using books, music, dance, cooking and Spanish words to learn about and celebrate other cultures.

Respondents reported supporting the school readiness of the children they serve by using age-appropriate activities and materials, setting individual growth goals for each child, enforcing routine in the classroom, and introducing new vocabulary.

“Make sure **lesson planning is geared towards the appropriate age group** and approach the different lesson in a fun way to **keep students engaged in learning**.”

Regular attendance is important for children's development and school-readiness. 64% (n=28) of respondents reported using strategies to encourage attendance at their program. Some of the strategies teachers reported using include communicating the importance of regular attendance to parents, reminding children and parents of upcoming activities to make them excited about coming to the program, and offering incentives to children and parents for good attendance. **“We always greet and smile and**

encourage the parents to bring children to school because routine is important.”

Child Development

Supporting the development of children served by the partnership is a top priority of the DEHSP. The teachers observe the children nearly every day and see their growth over time, giving them a unique perspective on the children’s development and well-being. However, it is important to keep in mind that responses to questions about child development are opinion-based and may not reflect the true state of the children.

83% (n=38) of respondents reported that all or almost all the children in their classrooms appeared rested and well-nourished each day, while 11% (n=5) reported about half and only 2% (n=1) reported few or none. The majority of respondents reported that all or almost the children in their classrooms were developmentally on track in the domains of physical development and motor skills (78%, n=35), social and emotional development (54%, n=25), and approaches to play and learning (65%, n=30). Half of respondents (n=23) reported that all or almost all the children were on track with cognitive development and general knowledge, while 22% (n=10) reported that few or no children were developmentally on track with communication, language, and literacy.

53% (n=25) of respondents reported communicating with parents about their children’s needs, growth, and development daily, and 93% (n=44) at least weekly. No respondents reported never communicating with parents about their children’s development.

Parent Involvement

The DEHSP encourages the CCLCs to promote parent involvement in their child’s program through a variety of activities. Teachers can support involvement by having parents volunteer in their classrooms.

Respondents reported that parents volunteered, but not frequently. The majority of respondents indicated that they had at least one mother volunteer (53%, n=25) or at least one father volunteer (51%, n=24) less than once a month. 72% (n=34) of respondents reported that parents do not assist in planning activities for children.

Challenges & Opportunities

Multiple challenges and opportunities for improvement related to classroom operations, child development, and parent involvement are evident in teachers’ survey responses.

Some teachers reported having little to no time to plan during the work week. We do not know why some teachers have time to plan during the work week and others do not. There is an opportunity for CCLC directors to speak with the teachers in their centers about their workloads and learn how they can better support them in having sufficient time for lesson planning. Teachers should also connect with one another and share how they make time for lesson planning.

While the majority of respondents reported using strategies to encourage attendance, ideally, all teachers would be doing so. There is an opportunity for teachers to share their strategies for encouraging attendance with one another.

Ideally, all teachers would report perceiving all children to be rested and well-nourished. Starting in the 2018-2019 program year, family support specialists have been and will continue to be on site at the CCLCs. Specialists who are readily available to families to provide referrals to resources may help address this challenge.

Compared to other domains of child development, cognitive development and general knowledge and communication, language, and literacy appeared to be a challenge area for some children, based on teachers’ perceptions. Starting in the 2018-2019 program year, curriculum specialists have been and will continue to be on site at the CCLCs. Specialists who regularly coach teachers can help teachers improve their interactions and instructional practices to better support children’s development.

Respondents reported that parents of children in their classrooms volunteer rarely or never. Only a few reported that parents help plan activities. This suggests an opportunity to increase parent involvement by providing varied opportunities with reminders, and by communicating the importance of involvement to them.

Finally, respondents expressed wanting more training, specifically in Teaching Strategies GOLD, behavior management, and in teaching more advanced early learners. These topics should be considered when updating professional development plans.

Family Child Care Learning Home Providers Survey Results

Background

Family Child Care Learning Home (FCCLH) providers are those providers that serve children in the 13 FCCLHs. Similar to Child Care Learning Center (CCLC) teachers, FCCLH providers are responsible for instructing the children in their classrooms and interacting with the children and parents they serve nearly every day. Beyond their teaching role, FCCLH providers handle the administration and management of their FCCLHs and are therefore very involved in most aspects of the partnership. They have valuable insight on how the partnership model is working as whole, how the children in their classrooms are developing, and how the model is working specifically for FCCLHs. The Research Team surveyed FCCLH providers to understand the level of connection they feel to the DEHSP, how it has affected their classrooms, the level of support they receive, how children in their classrooms are developing, and the level of parent involvement. **13 FCCLH providers** (100%) completed surveys.

“What can I tell you? For me, this program has been a blessing because **I have grown so much as a professional**, and **the quality of the education of my children has improved very much.**”

Connection

It is important that FCCLH providers feel connected to the partnership, feel included in delivering comprehensive services, and feel that communication among the DEHSP is working in order for the partners and the families they serve to fully benefit from the partnership's resources.

100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt **connected** to the partnership and **included** in the process of delivering comprehensive services to families at their program.

Respondents reported some of the ways they helped

provide comprehensive services to families, including providing information on healthy habits, helping parents find jobs, providing information on helpful resources for low-income families, sending books home with children, talking to parents about how learning can continue at home, and helping new mothers with breastfeeding.

100% (n=13) of respondents rated the quality of **communication** across partners as good, very good, or excellent. **“At this time, it is excellent and it does not need to improve.”**

Support

The early education hub specialists provide support to the FCCLH providers with regards to curriculum, lesson planning, quality assurance, and professional development. The DEHSP should also be generally supportive of all partners. It is important that FCCLH partners feel supported in order to effectively teach and support the children in their classrooms.

100% (n=13) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt **supported** by the partnership and that being a part of the DEHSP had a **positive impact** on the overall quality of their classroom.

“...**it brought order to my work**, and now everything I do with the children has a meaningful intention and goals to fulfill.”

Classroom Operations

It is important to know how things are functioning in the day-to-day operations of the FCCLH providers' classrooms. This helps the DEHSP understand the learning environments that the children are in. The Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) are aligned with the Head Start Outcomes Framework and should therefore be used by the FCCLH providers. All respondents (100%, n=13) reported using the GELDS for lesson plans and activities, and almost all (92%, n=12) reported using

them for classroom assessments.

When asked about time for lesson planning, most respondents, 83% (n=10), said that they had at least an hour to plan during the work week, while 17% (n=2) reported that they did not have time.

Respondents were asked about the ways they engage their students in supporting diverse cultures. Many FCCLH providers reported using books, food, music, dance, and games to learn about and celebrate other cultures. “Since the children that come to my program are from different cultures, every single day we have conversations about their families, their cuisine or stories...”

Respondents reported supporting the school readiness of the children they serve by using age-appropriate activities and materials, feeding them nutritious meals, and offering any supports they may need.

“ I keep a clean place, with furniture and toys appropriate for the ages of the children that I have, and the wonderful Creative Curriculum that ensures the excellent work, and a lot of love.”

Regular attendance is important for children’s development and school-readiness. 100% (n=13) of respondents reported that they used strategies to encourage attendance at their program. Some of the strategies respondents reported using include communicating the importance of regular attendance to parents, reminding children and parents of upcoming activities to make them excited about coming to the program, and offering incentives to children and parents for good attendance. “I raise awareness in the families about how important it is for the children to be in the class every day and to comply with the schedule.”

Child Development

Supporting the development of children served by the partnership is a top priority of the DEHSP. The FCCLH providers observe the children nearly every day and see their growth over time, giving them a

unique perspective on the children’s development and well-being. However, it is important to keep in mind that responses to questions about child development are opinion-based and may not reflect the true state of the children.

85% (n=11) of respondents reported that all or almost all the children in their classrooms appeared rested and well-nourished each day, while 8% (n=1) reported about half and 8% (n=1) reported few or none. 100% of respondents reported that all or almost all the children in their classrooms were developmentally on track in the domains of approaches to play and learning and physical development and motor skills. The majority of respondents reported that all or almost all the children were on track in the domains of cognitive development and general knowledge (92%, n=12), social and emotional development (92%, n=12), and communication, language, and literacy (69%, n=9).

100% (n=12) of respondents reported communicating with parents about their children’s needs, growth, and development at least weekly, and 83% (n=10) reported doing so daily. No respondents reported never communicating with parents about their children’s development.

Parent Involvement

The DEHSP encourages FCCLH providers to promote parent involvement in their child’s program through a variety of activities. FCCLH providers can support involvement by having parents volunteer in their classrooms.

Most respondents reported that parents volunteered somewhat regularly. 75% (n=8) of respondents reported having at least one mother volunteer at least monthly and 50% (n=6) reported having at least one father volunteer at least monthly. About half (n=6) of respondents reported that parents assist in planning activities for children at their program, while about half (n=6) reported that parents do not (and one respondent was not sure).

Challenges & Opportunities

A few challenges and opportunities for improvement related to classroom operations, child development,

and parent involvement are evident in FCCLH providers' survey responses.

While most FCCLH providers reported having time for lesson planning during the work week, two did not. We do not know why some FCCLH providers have time to plan during the work week and others do not. There is an opportunity for FCCLH providers to connect with one another and share how they make time for lesson planning.

Ideally, all FCCLH providers would report perceiving all children to be rested and well-nourished. The well-being of the children served by these programs is of critical importance to the DEHSP. There may be an opportunity to ensure that the procedures for communication between FCCLH providers and family support specialists are sufficient and to bolster them if necessary. Effective procedures ensure that the appropriate resources and supports are offered to families to meet their children's needs.

While most respondents reported that parents volunteered somewhat regularly and half reported that they help plan activities, there is always room for improvement when it comes to getting parents involved in their children's classrooms. FCCLH providers have an opportunity to increase parent involvement even more by providing them with varied opportunities with advance notice and reminders, and by communicating the importance of involvement to them.

Finally, respondents expressed wanting more training, specifically in behavior management, using technology, and curriculum for infants and toddlers. Training was also suggested around children's conflict resolution and creative manual activities. These topics should be considered when updating professional development plans.

Child Care Learning Center Directors & Early Education Hub Directors Interview Results

Background

Child Care Learning Center (CCLC) directors and early education hub directors play critical roles in the DEHSP. Each CCLC director oversees one of the five centers, running the daily operations of the center and ensuring that Head Start standards are met. Each early education hub director oversees one of the two partnering hubs, ensuring that families are seamlessly served by specialists and programs receive support in meeting the standards. In past self-assessments, CCLC directors and hub directors have been surveyed and interviewed in mixed-population focus groups. This year, in an effort to gather richer feedback, the Research Team conducted one-on-one interviews with CCLC directors and hub directors (directors). They responded to questions about their perceptions of the partnership and communication across the DEHSP. Because of their small population sizes, the results of the interviews are reported together to maintain the confidentiality of the interviewees. **6 CCLC Directors** (100%) and **2 Hub Directors** (100%) were interviewed.

Perceptions of the Partnership

I'm most proud of the fact that **we're really making an impact on our community** by being here with the resources that we have to offer the families, and our neighboring communities.

Directors overwhelmingly reported that serving families and providing comprehensive services are the things they like most about their jobs. They take pride in seeing children and families develop and successfully transition from the program. They also enjoy the partnership model itself and are proud of its success overall and the professional growth of staff. **"The partnership has developed over the years and improved."**

Directors agree that the specialist services

provided by hub staff and the support of the hubs in general are working well in the model and are contributing to overall improvements in program quality. They also reported that collaboration across partners helps to support children and families with high needs.

...I think that's great where **everyone gets to collaborate**—the classroom teacher, the site director, and the hub representatives.

Communication

Effective communication across partners is essential for the DEHSP to operate smoothly.

Communication flows back and forth throughout the day and throughout the week.

It's **not as effective as it could be**, but it's ok.

Directors were divided in their opinions of communication across the DEHSP. Some said communication is great overall, while others expressed that it is poor and inconsistent. There was a shared sentiment that communication improved over time. As one director put it, **"I believe that compared to last year communication has definitely improved."** However, some directors expressed that there continues to be room for improvement. **"Perhaps it's gotten better but it's still rough."**

Among those directors who were not satisfied with communication, they suggested using multiple modes of communication to ensure important messages are received (e.g. email, calls, texts), taking care to provide timely responses, coordinating communication to reduce the number of emails (such as distributing weekly updates on a set

day of the week) and assigning a hub staff member to each center as a main point of contact.

Challenges & Opportunities

CCLC directors reported various parent-related challenges, including communicating the importance of early education and regular attendance to parents and lack of parent involvement. There is an opportunity to improve parents' understanding of the importance of early education and regular attendance by distributing materials to them that cover these topics and discussing the importance during parent meetings. Parents' involvement could also be improved by providing them with more opportunities to be present at the center, with early and frequent reminders.

Hub directors' challenges are not reported here because they are specific to each individual and do not share common themes with CCLC directors.

Methodology

For the 2017-2018 Self-Assessment, the Research Team administered surveys and conducted interviews. For past self-assessments, focus groups have also been conducted. The results of these focus groups highlighted broad themes among the partners that were used to refine questions for the 2017-2018 surveys and interviews. Therefore, it was determined that focus groups were not necessary for the 2017-2018 Self-Assessment. The surveys and interviews are described below.

Surveys

The Research Team surveyed FCCLH providers, CCLC teachers, early education hub staff, and transitioning families. Four different surveys were administered to each of these four groups with questions specifically tailored to their roles in the DEHSP. The surveys for FCCLH providers, CCLC teachers, and early education hub staff all covered topics related to connection to and support from the DEHSP and how children and families are served. The transitioning families survey included questions around the families' experiences with the program.

Unlike 2016 and 2017, CCLC directors were not surveyed. Instead, the Research Team conducted one-on-one interviews with CCLC directors. More information about the CCLC director interviews is presented in the next section.

2018 was also the first year that transitioning families were surveyed. In previous years, feedback was gathered from transitioning families in conjunction with non-transitioning families in the form of focus groups. For the 2018 Self-Assessment, the Research Team chose to collect feedback specifically from those families transitioning out of their Early Head Start programs in order to understand their experiences throughout their entire time in the programs, including the transition process. This group was surveyed rather than asked to participate in a focus group for the reasons previously mentioned and to make it as easy as possible for families to provide feedback.

Table 2 displays the type of survey each group received (paper or online), the language(s) it was offered in, and how it was distributed to them. For surveys offered in Spanish, the Research Team first developed the survey in English, then a contracted translation service translated the survey to Spanish. After responses were collected, they were translated to English by the same translation service.

Table 2. Survey Methods

Group	Type	Language	Distribution Method
FCCLH Providers	Paper	Spanish	Hub staff delivered copies to FCCLHs.
CCLC Teachers	Paper	English	Research Team delivered copies to centers.
Early Education Hub Staff	Online	English	Research Team sent link via email.
Transitioning Families	Paper	English & Spanish	Research Team distributed at a partner center's transition event and at a partnership-wide transition event.

Response Rates

Table 3 displays the number of surveys distributed, type of survey, number of responses, and response rate for each of the four groups. Table 4 displays the response rate for each group by year and indicates the type of surveys distributed that year.

Overall, response rates were high for all four groups in 2018. As seen in Table 4, in 2016 all surveys were administered online and in 2017 all surveys were administered with paper copies. Based on 2016 and 2017 response rates, the Research Team chose to administer surveys for FCCLH providers and CCLC teachers with paper copies and used an online survey for early education hub staff. For transitioning families, who had not been surveyed before, the Research Team chose to administer paper copies based on the recommendations of center directors and family child care providers.

Table 3. 2018 Survey Response Rates

Group	Surveys Distributed	Type	Responses	Response Rate
FCCLH Providers	13	Paper	13	100%
CCLC Teachers	66	Paper	49	74%
Early Education Hub Staff³	20	Online	17	85%
Transitioning Families⁴	40	Paper	40	100%

Table 4. Survey Response Rates by Year⁵

Group	2016 (online)	2017 (paper)	2018 (mixed)
FCCLH Providers	100%	93%	100%
CCLC Teachers	16%	53%	74%
Early Education Hub Staff	100%	30%	85%
Transitioning Families	<i>Not surveyed</i>	<i>Not surveyed</i>	100%
CCLC Directors	100%	40%	<i>Not surveyed</i>

Interviews

The Research Team interviewed all six CCLC directors and both early education hub directors (directors). The interviews were conducted in each director's office or other private area of their workplace by one member of the Research Team. With permission from the directors, each interview was audio recorded. These recordings were manually transcribed by the Research Team and coded for themes.

Each interview lasted between ten and fifteen minutes. While the interview protocols differed slightly for CCLC directors and hub directors, both covered key topics about the functioning of the partnership model, communication, and connection to the DEHSP.

³ There are 25 hub staff positions. At the time of the survey, 20 positions were filled.

⁴ The 100% response rate does not indicate that all families in the partnership were surveyed. Families had the option to complete a survey at two events. Surveys were distributed to 40 parents/care takers who opted to take the survey.

⁵ 2016 and 2017 response rates are as reported in their respective self-assessment reports.