

Semcac Head Start

An Equal Opportunity Provider

Annual Public Report for July 2010 – June 2011



*Our Mission: Building bright futures by educating young children
and empowering their families and communities*

Semcac Head Start has offered high quality preschool programming since 1967. The program serves six counties in Southeast Minnesota: Dodge, Fillmore, Houston, Mower, Steele and Winona. We operated 25 classes at 14 different sites in 2010-2011. Six classes are run in partnerships with three local school districts and Winona State University-Children's Center. Our focus is to serve families with children between the ages of 3 and 5 years of age and limited income. We welcome all families and their children.

A holistic approach is the best way to address the concerns of families identified in our community assessment. To serve the entire well-being of every child in the program, we work as a full-service support and development program. During 2010 – 2011, a total of 412 children and their families were in the program. Our average monthly enrollment was 370, meeting fully our funded enrollment total. Average monthly attendance was 87% which indicates our joint efforts with parents to encourage strong attendance for every child.

SCHOOL READINESS

Our program knows that focusing on what happens in the classroom is key to improving children's experiences while they are in Head Start. One of the ways we measure children's progress toward school readiness is through data collected in on-going classroom assessment. We have detailed development and learning outcomes data on our website (see below). Teachers met with parents at least four times during the year to share information and progress.

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There are 23 independent school districts in our service area along with three educational districts. We continually work at the linkages between Head Start programs and the public schools children will enter when they start kindergarten. Last year, we co-hosted two seminars on Community Planning for School Readiness and Transition for our region. Over 120 people attended from 11 counties, including 10 community teams. Our efforts supported a smooth transition of 234 children and their families into kindergarten for fall 2011.

Dual Language Learners

Rural Minnesota is changing. In 2010-2011, 26% of enrolled children were of Hispanic/Latino origin, and 32% were of a race other than white. Our program is ready to meet the needs of children and families from diverse backgrounds. Classrooms use English to better prepare children for successful entry into kindergarten in an English-based school system. While English is used in classrooms, we encourage families to use their home language. We welcome them to share family traditions as part of classroom activities.

HEALTHY CHILDREN

We conduct health and developmental screenings as early as possible on children entering the program. The following are illustrative results of what our comprehensive services achieved over the course of the program year, from the start of enrollment to the end:

- the number of children with an on-going source of continuous, accessible care increased in:
 - Health care from 344 to 383 or 93% of all enrolled
 - Dental care from 304 to 350 or 85% of all enrolled
- the number of children up-to-date on all immunizations for their age:
 - from 369 to 407 or 99% of all enrolled.

To achieve these high results, we are fortunate to have doctors and dentists who provide services to at-risk children. Many donate their services; others provide it at reduced costs when insurance does not cover.

Children with special needs are welcomed into our classes. In doing so, we are able to offer a developmentally-appropriate learning environment for them. Our screenings help to identify early on potential concerns. We are required to have at least 10% of our enrollment to serve children with special needs. During 2010-2011, we served 44 children or 12% with special education and related services.

The mental health of children and their families is also key to children's well-being. We provide professional support to staff and parents to assess children's mental health. When needed, we facilitate referrals to mental health services outside of Head Start.

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PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Head Start's success is based upon the creation of caring partnerships between staff and parents. We recognize parents as the primary educators of their children. Parent involvement in the classroom and in group events gives parents opportunities to observe their children. This helps parents see how well their children are learning and growing. The involvement also builds stronger parenting skills and engages parents to advocate for their children. One hundred twenty five parents volunteered their services.

Based on research that shows the critical role of fathers or significant males in the development of children, we have a focus on involving fathers. Last year, 237 fathers participated in regularly scheduled events.

Parents have opportunities to participate in the program in a variety of ways. One of the most important is sharing in program decisions. Each of our sites has a local parent committee that organizes events for parents. The events help further their education on a variety of family life and parenting topics. The local committees also elect representatives to a program-wide Policy Council. The Policy Council assists staff in planning program objectives and monitoring of progress.

Last year, the officers of the Policy Council were:

Chair	Rhiannon Peterson, Hayfield
Vice-Chair	Justin LaDoux, Preston
Secretary	Angela Tipton, Ostrander



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COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

We partner with local schools; local providers of child care; state and local preschool initiatives, public social, human and health services; and other community service providers for families. The partnerships ensure that all children receive the services they need on their road to success. And, all parents have opportunities to grow with their children. Last year, 310 families received a variety of services, such as emergency/crisis interventions, housing assistance, and health education.

Our coordination with schools is on-going, for example, to complete early childhood screenings. We also operate classes in partnership with the school districts of Austin, Houston, and Rushford-Peterson. Students from pre-school, Head Start, and special education share a classroom staffed by Head Start and the schools. The Winona State University Children's Center partnership allows families access to full day services.

BUDGET

The total amount of public and private funds received:

Federal Head Start:	\$1,997,498 (\$142,747 less than 2009-10)
State Head Start:	594,170 (\$4831 less than 2009-10)
USDA CACFP:	<u>139,675</u>
TOTAL:	\$2,731,343

Budget category	2010 – 2011 actual	2010 – 2011 proposed
Salaries and fringe	1,971,213	2,004,748
Travel	2,486	1,540
Equipment over \$5000	45,988	45,000
Supplies	82,489	89,608
Contractual	63,198	75,690
Other	565,969	514,757
TOTAL	\$2,731,343	\$2,731,343

AUDIT and OFFICE OF HEAD START REVIEWS

The independent audit report, submitted by Wipfli, LLP on 14 March 2011, covered the financial position of Semcac as of September 30, 2010, and the related statements of activities and cash flows for the year then ended. In summary, the auditor's report expresses an unqualified opinion on Semcac's financial statements. Further, no significant deficiencies relating to the audit of the financial statements are reported in the Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance With Government Auditing Standards.

The Office of Head Start (OHS) completed a review by external monitors of our program in March 2009. There were two findings which were corrected promptly. OHS issued an Overview of Findings on 20 October 2009, closing the review officially.