

TREC – Badlands Head Start: Annual Report

2014



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2014-15 program year saw many changes in the leadership structure at TREC – BHS. First, a new Executive Director assumed leadership in January, 2015. In addition to a new ED, a new Education and Disabilities Specialist was hired in June, 2015. Although there is new leadership, the focus on children and families remains the same. TREC – BHS continues to evolve and change in order to meet the needs of the families we serve. It is also worth noting that a transition to a more direct and focused 5 Year Grant Period was taking place as new leadership came on board. While the overall focus on children and families remains, there is particular attention being paid to a number of goals we wish to accomplish during the 5 Year Grant Period.

The last program monitoring cycle displayed the need for change in terms of systems and policies and procedures. Because of these results, TREC – BHS has stronger and more robust procedures to ensure the needs of children and families are met when it comes to comprehensive services. As mentioned in the preceding text, TREC – BHS was able to change systems, renew focus on ongoing monitoring, and shore up any weak points in our systems. We are proud to say that these efforts are paying off since the review. Our fiscal monitoring (yearly single audit) has proven, once again, the soundness of our financial policies and systems as there were no findings in the most recent fiscal audit.

TREC – BHS continues to work towards providing the best possible comprehensive services for children and families within our service region. As it relates to the education component, training and professional development are key to putting our best effort forward in the classroom. While most students are meeting academic expectations and classroom teachers have adequate CLASS scores, TREC – BHS is not content with the results. Our goals and efforts are directed towards helping the children we serve achieve success. In order to fulfill these goals, we use data to drive our individual teaching practices. TREC – BHS also uses professional development opportunities to bolster skillsets and reach as many children as we can. In terms of medical and dental outcomes, TREC- BHS does a good job of ensuring families have a primary care provider, are educated and receiving preventative health/dental care, and making follow-up appointments. At TREC – BHS, we help the whole child—not just education. Families are at the crux of what we do. Our family engagement model is strong and parents are taking an active role in the lives of their children. TREC – BHS still has work to do in order to reach the goals we set for ourselves.

TREC – BHS continues to see a need for services in all regions we have traditionally served. The Community Assessment project points out this need. While some areas need less, there are cities and towns where the need is growing. TREC’s Board of Directors, Policy Council, and agency leadership remain committed and driven to strengthening families in our rural communities.

If you have any questions regarding TREC – Badlands Head Start: Prenatal to Five, please feel free to contact members of the Board of Directors.

“Honoring and empowering children, families, staff and rural communities.”

On Behalf of the TREC Board of Directors,

Marcus A. Bevier
TREC – Executive Director

WELCOME

All Head Start funded grantees are required to produce and disseminate an annual report to the public. The annual report contains a number of both operational and fiscal elements meant to communicate summary data to the public. The following report is designed to fulfill this Head Start requirement for the 2014 fiscal year.

Technology for the Rural Enhancement of Communities (TREC) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation formed under the laws of South Dakota. TREC is also approved by the Internal Revenue Service as a charitable organization. As can be noted by the following, TREC has the capacity to serve rural West River South Dakota communities in numerous ways depending on the needs of the community and its members.

TREC'S VISION STATEMENT

ENHANCING RURAL COMMUNITIES

This vision views TREC as striving to enhance rural, West River South Dakota communities, through working with each community's members to build on the existing strengths of that rural area and the residents in order to better meet the needs of the community.

TREC'S MISSION STATEMENT

TREC works in partnership with the residents of rural, western South Dakota and is committed to providing quality services as well as access to community resources through responding to the evolving needs of rural communities with Head Start: Prenatal to 5 services, early childhood education, health and wellness programming, parent education and other needed community programs.

PURPOSES OF TREC

The purposes of TREC as stated in its corporate by-laws are as follows:

- Assure the successful emotional, social, physical, cognitive and self-esteem growth of children from prenatal to five.
- Provide children with safe and supportive learning environments.
- Strengthen parent skills, bonding and involvement.
- Strengthen the family.
- Collaborate with and strengthen local communities.
- Utilize technology to carry out TREC's purposes.
- Function solely as a charitable organization that promotes the well-being of families and communities.

BADLANDS HEAD START: PRENATAL TO FIVE MISSION

“To honor and empower children, families, staff and rural communities.”

During Fiscal Year 2014, Badlands Head Start: Prenatal to Five programs were the only programs for which TREC functioned as the grantee body. TREC’s Board of Directors assumes legal and fiscal responsibility for oversight of TREC’s programs and funding.

FUNDING SOURCES – PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

TREC – BHS only receives Federal funding from the Department of Health and Human Services in order to conduct program operations. TREC – BHS is primarily supported through a Head Start and Early Head Start grant. Within those grants, additional monies are built in to support professional development, training, and technical assistance. Federal dollars are supplemented by parents, Policy Council, and Governing Board members volunteering time in order to aid with program operations. The data below provide a picture of the proposed budget for the 2015 Fiscal Year as well as actual expenditures during that year.

In addition to Federal dollars from the Head Start and Early Head Start grants, TREC – BHS receives meal reimbursements from the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Approximately \$13,000 are reimbursed for to the TREC – BHS program as a result of its participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Because of a new Center-Based classroom in Belle Fourche, this number will increase. TREC – BHS also budgets monies in the grant application for the cost of food and snacks where CACFP reimbursement falls short.

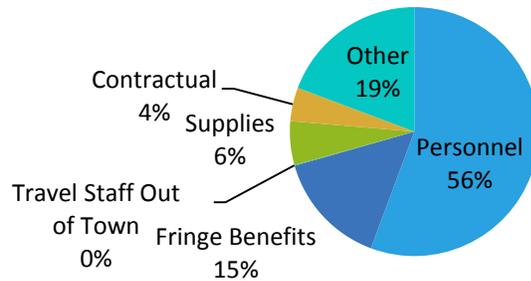
BUDGETARY EXPENDITURES AND PROPOSED BUDGET

Each year TREC – BHS develops a budget that coincides with the current needs of the program. Because the funding amounts from the Department of Health and Human Services are based on funded enrollment and rarely change, the budget remains relatively constant with few changes. Often times, changes to the budget are made based on program direction and focal points in terms of services delivered.

Below is a brief synopsis of TREC – BHS’ expenditures during the 2014 Fiscal Year.

Statement of Activities: Head Start – Fiscal Year 2014			
Object Class Category	Year to Date Spent	Budgeted Amount	Percentage of Budget Spent
Personnel	\$825,382.93	\$882,404.28	94%
Fringe Benefits	\$220,768.63	\$247,497.90	89%
Travel Staff Out of Town	\$1,709.34	\$2,530.00	68%
Supplies	\$83,868.31	\$48,150.00	174%
Contractual	\$64,842.31	\$88,356.80	73%
Other	\$285,786.84	\$243,933.02	117%
Totals	\$1,482,358.36	\$1,512,872.00	97.98%

Budget Percentages by Class Category

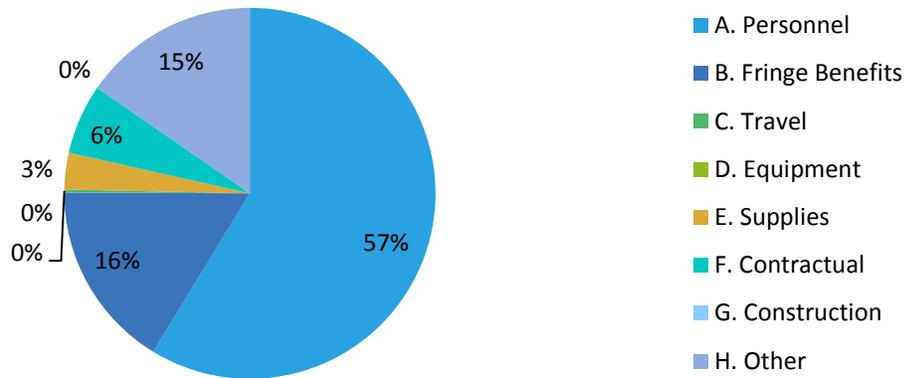


As one can see, the organization spent nearly all available funds during the 2014 fiscal year. TREC – BHS has continued to maintain sound financial practices and ensure our budget situation is always managed with care.

The proposed budget covers the 2015-16 Head Start and Early Head Start program year. The budget is broken into the major budget categories and distinguished by the Head Start and Early Head Start programs. As suggested, between 60 and 80 percent of the Federal share of TREC – BHS’ budget is put towards salaries and fringe benefits. This enables the program to hire quality staff in order to deliver top-notch services to children and families. Additionally, TREC – BHS is responsible for supporting the program through volunteer activities, called the Non-Federal Share. These are commonly referred to as “In-Kind Contributions” and are translated into real dollars within the budget. Essentially, the Non-Federal Share supports up to 20% of total program costs.

Object Class Category	Head Start	Early Head Start	Program Totals
A. Personnel	\$555,065.34	\$394,168.84	\$949,234.18
B. Fringe Benefits	\$139,896.66	\$124,761.48	\$264,658.14
C. Travel	\$2,275.00	\$2,775.00	\$5,050.00
D. Equipment	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
E. Supplies	\$26,350.00	\$25,250.00	\$51,600.00
F. Contractual	\$57,873.60	\$41,003.20	\$98,876.80
G. Construction	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
H. Other	\$146,432.40	\$101,945.48	\$248,377.88
TOTAL GRANT FUNDING	\$927,893.00	\$689,904.00	\$1,617,797.00
TOTAL TRAINING DOLLARS	\$16,716.00	\$17,026.00	\$33,742.00
TOTAL FEDERAL SHARE	\$944,609.00	\$706,930.00	\$1,651,539.00
TOTAL NON-FEDERAL SHARE	\$236,152.25	\$176,732.50	\$412,884.75
TOTAL GRANT	\$1,180,761.25	\$883,662.50	\$2,064,423.74

Percentage of Total Budget 2015-16 (FY15)



ENROLLMENT – CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVED BY TREC – BHS

During the 2014-15 program year, TREC – BHS was eligible to serve 134 children in its Center and Home-Based options for children who are Head Start age (e.g., 3 – 5 years old). As it relates to Early Head Start Children (e.g., 1 – 3 years old), TREC serves 60 children in a Home-Based setting each program year. The tables below illustrate the average number of students as a percentage of funded enrollment slots.

Program	Minimum Enrollment	Maximum Enrollment	Average Enrollment	Funded Enrollment	Avg. % of Funded Enrollment
Head Start	66	106	96	134	72%
Early Head Start	49	60	57	60	95%

As one can see, Head Start did struggle some to maintain the funded enrollment slots. The organization filled approximately 72% of its funded enrollment in 2014-15. Part of this was due to a slow start in terms of recruitment. In an effort to most effectively use resources and serve the population with most need, TREC – BHS proposed reducing the number of funded enrollment slots by 10% in the 2015-16 program year. In effect, this leaves TREC with 115 Head Start slots for all communities receiving those services. In addition, TREC – BHS also proposed lengthening the school day in most locations to deliver more individual attention to the children and improve the quality of services. Early Head Start, on the other hand was nearly full in terms of enrollment. The Early Head Start program filled an average on 95% of their enrollment slots. In the 2015-16 grant application, TREC – BHS requested to be funded for 60 children once again. This request was approved.

FISCAL AUDIT AND RECENT MONITORING

Head Start Regulations (e.g., Performance Standards and Head Start Act) dictate that programs delivering services must meet certain requirements in order to stay operational. TREC – BHS is not excluded from these regulations. Two such requirements are a triennial monitoring review¹ and an annual fiscal audit consistent with requirements found in the Office of Management and Budget’s circular schedule. In this section of the annual report, we shall provide an overview of our results from the most recent monitoring visit and our independent fiscal audit.

FISCAL AUDIT

The 2014 Fiscal Year (FY14) was another year in which TREC – BHS had no findings as the result of work conducted by our independent auditor, Ketel Thorstensen. The audit was a comprehensive review of financial systems, internal accounting controls, and Head Start/Early Head Start program compliance standards. The ‘clean’ audit is simply a testament to the strength of TREC’s internal control system which has been consistent with best practices in terms of financial management.

RECENT MONITORING

As mentioned above, Head Start grantees are monitored every three years to ensure compliance with the Head Start Performance Standards. The most recent monitoring visit occurred during the 2013 – 2014 program year. While TREC – BHS was allowed to continue operations without re-competition for another program year, there were a number of items that required some form of corrective action. These items ranged from a lack of corrective action when problems were found related to inadequate home visit rates to not meeting program and Federal deadlines associated with medical/dental and educational screenings. In addition, a findings were generated for failing to properly aggregate data for reporting and individualizing lessons. In all, there were 8 findings issued as a result of the monitoring visit. All findings were classified as non-compliances. In other words, the program failed to meet the compliance threshold related to the applicable Federal standard. It is not uncommon for programs to have monitoring visits that yield findings within program operations, but it is incumbent upon programs, such as TREC – BHS, to offer remedies in order to mitigate risk and provide high quality program services.

ADDRESSING FINDINGS

TREC – BHS accepted the challenge of correcting the findings quite readily. The team devised a comprehensive plan to address the weak points in policy, procedure, and ongoing monitoring to mitigate risk and ensure the standards were complied with. To be specific, our aggregation and individualization procedures were revamped to align with the requirements espoused in the Federal guidance. In addition, ongoing monitoring reports were also reconstructed and distributed more widely

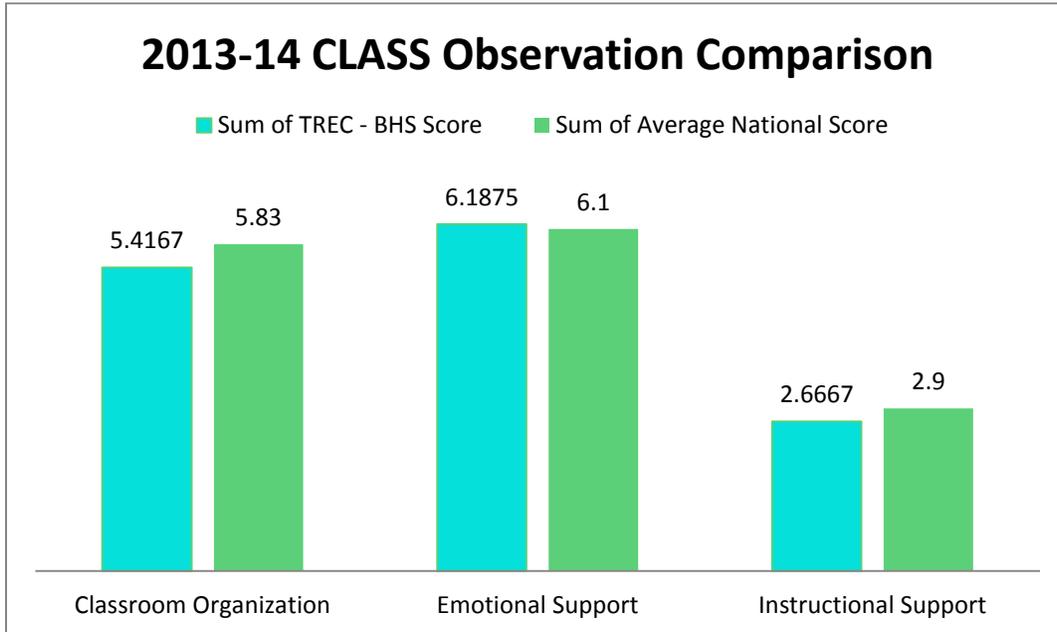
¹ Triennial monitoring is being replaced with a yearly, aligned monitoring system. Aligned monitoring systems focus on key components of comprehensive services.

to ensure the proper developmental and physical screenings occur within the allotted 45 and 90 day deadlines. Meeting these deadlines is critical to ensuring children enter the program physically healthy and able to work towards educational milestones that are developmentally appropriate for the child's age group.

All non-compliances have been resolved at this point and the improvement, from a systems perspective, has allowed the agency to move forward with quality programming.

CLASS SCORING FOR INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

Observations on classroom teachers and instructional support staff are used to analyze the quality of education services being delivered in a classroom. The observations are done using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). CLASS Scores operate on a scale from 1 – 7. Seven being the highest score a program can receive. TREC – BHS scores were in line with National and Regional averages during the most recent monitoring visit, which was conducted as part of the 2013-14 program year.



Preparing teachers for CLASS observations and strengthening teaching practices is an overall goal for TREC – BHS in the immediate future.

CHILD HEALTH – MEDICAL AND DENTAL EXAMINATIONS

The physical and oral health of children we serve is an integral part of the program and services we currently provide. At TREC – BHS, we aim to develop the whole child. Education is an important part of what we do as an agency; however, ensuring the children we serve have good oral and physical health plays a key role, too.

As part of our ongoing monitoring, TREC – BHS keeps close track of the general health of children attending our programs. This is also recorded by program in the annual Program Information Report. As you can see from the charts below, TREC – BHS takes seriously the notion of physical and oral health for the children and families we serve.

Medical Category	Area of Practice	Head Start	Early Head Start
Medical	Children who are up to date according to South Dakota’s Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment Schedule	76.77%	70.93%
Dental	Completed professional oral health examination	80.00%	94.19%
Medical	Up to date on Immunizations.	92.90%	87.21%

ENGAGEMENT – PARENT AND FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Badlands Head Start could not provide the quality services it does without active and engaged parents. Our program has been fortunate to have a very active Policy Council and groups of parents who are truly invested and engaged in the Head Start/Early Head Start programs. TREC – BHS sets individual program goals that align with the Parent Family Community Engagement (PFCE) framework. This framework and the goals set allow parents and families to see just how far they have progressed since joining Head Start. Also, TREC – BHS uses a number of tools to measure the level of engagement for families participating in the Head Start and Early Head Start programs, respectively.

Listed below are a series of tools that TREC – BHS and its families use to help inform programming and assess progress in terms of engagement. The information allows TREC – BHS to plan, tailor programming, and provide quality services to families that need them. Some services include: helping families procure health insurance, energy assistance, temporary housing, and many others.

1. Parent Interest Survey, which looks at parents interests and helps develop trainings at socializations
2. Strength Matrix, which assesses families’ strengths and needs leading to the Family Partnership Agreement
3. Family Partnership Agreement which is the written plan for family and child goal.

Parent Statistics from our 2014-15 Program Year²

² All parent statistics are derived from Parent Interest Surveys distributed and completed during the 2014-15 program year. Percentages are based on 83 respondents.

Percentage of parents that stated they had opportunities to volunteer in BHS: P-5 program or be involved in their child’s education.	95%
Percentage of parents that stated they gained knowledge from our program about strategies that helped them with their child’s behavior.	99%
Percentage of parents that stated that they gained knowledge from our program that helped them understand their child’s health care needs.	92%
Percentage of parents that felt that BHS: P-5 helped them make progress towards their written goals.	94%
Percentage of parents that related the quality of their relationship with their home visitor or child’s teacher as above average or excellent.	99%

SCHOOL READINESS – PREPARING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FOR KINDERGARTEN

School readiness is a major component of the services offered by TREC – BHS. The common goal we share with the families and community is to have our children prepared for educational experiences in Kindergarten and beyond. There are many pieces that fit into this puzzle, but the most important pieces are school readiness goals, qualified and competent staff, 5 year goals, supporting data, and professional development. This section shall address TREC – BHS’ efforts as it relates to the aforementioned components affecting school readiness.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

TREC – BHS uses the Head Start Act (§648A). and applicable performance standards when making personnel decisions (e.g., hiring personnel). In more concrete terms, our teachers, teacher assistants, home visitors and other personnel must meet the minimum requirements as mandated by the Federal government. This is spelled out in our policies and procedures. TREC – BHS prides itself on delivering quality services. Therefore, we adhere to the standards and aim to hire highly qualified, competent individuals with a desire to impact the lives of others. As TREC – BHS policy states,

The following table indicates the educational requirements and core competencies expected from each member of TREC’s staff. Whether it is education or administrative, TREC prides itself on hiring individuals with blend of education and experience and a distinct passion for helping others.

Staff Member	Minimum Qualifications	Competencies
HS/EHS Director (Exec. Director)	MPA, MBA, MSW, M.Ed, or directly related degree.	Leadership, program design, fiscal management, grant writing/management, staff supervision and development, program monitoring
Teaching Staff	AA in ECE, BA in ECE, BA in Education ³	Knowledge of pedagogical principles, best practices, and trends in Early Childhood Education. Skills managing and

³ With coursework in early childhood equivalent to a major.

		facilitating activities within a structured and unstructured classroom environment.
Health, Nutrition, and Safety	BS/BA in Nursing and 3 years' experience in community health	Knowledge of health, nutrition, human development; knowledge of ethics and nursing practices, ability to develop and maintain working relationships, oral and written communication
Fiscal	CPA, B.BA or B.Acy ⁴ (Accounting) and 2 years' experience using accounting software	Accounting principles, financial systems and management
Mental Health ⁵	M.A. in Counseling and appropriate licensure	Well versed in mental health practices related to children 0 – 5. Experience in counseling and treating children and uses techniques/strategies that follow industry best practice
PFCE Specialist	BA in Social Work, Human Services, or a related field and 5 years' experience in human services	Effective communication, developing and nurturing relationships, develop efficient systems, coaching/mentoring, knowledge of social service resources
Ed/Disability Specialist	B.A. in Early Childhood Education (Master's preferred)	Development of EC educational materials, manage disability services, knowledge of state/federal regulations and standards, experience in working with infants/toddlers and preschool age children
Home Visitor	Combination of education and experience. AA in ECE, CDA credential or willing to obtain the credential within 24 months.	Conduct developmental screenings, strong communication, ability to develop relationships, develop and carry out lessons on weekly home visits, detailed planning, ability to work with children and families from diverse backgrounds, knowledge of Early Childhood and Adult Education principles, knowledge of State and Federal regulations, knowledge of Child Abuse and Neglect protocol.

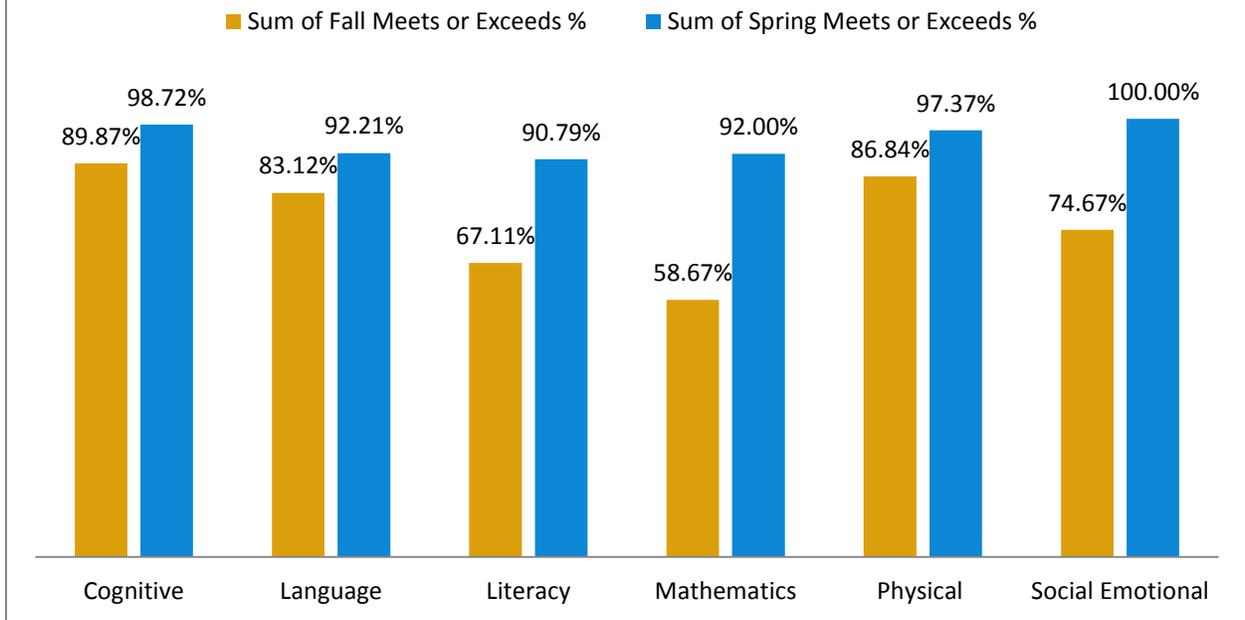
5 YEAR AND SCHOOL READINESS GOALS

The 5 Year and School Readiness Goals dovetail with one another in order to provide the maximum impact in terms of a child's educational experience in Early Childhood. Using the Creative Curriculum and Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment, TREC – BHS has been able to make inferences as to progress related to the domains espoused in our 5 Year and School Readiness goals. TREC – BHS generally focuses on the 5 domains found in the curriculum. They are Social Emotional Development, Physical Development and Health, Cognitive and General Knowledge, Language and Literacy Development, and Approaches to Learning. In addition, we assess progress on School Readiness at key benchmarks during program year. Below is a synopsis of the results.

⁴ TREC – BHS also hires a full-time accounting firm to carry out fiscal duties. Current staff aid in the process, but official figures are developed and reported by our CPA.

⁵ This is a contracted position.

School Readiness Progress 2014-15



One can see from the chart above that considerable progress was made in most domains. While this information is helpful in determining progress, it does not allow the organization to dig deeper into the data and assess where strengths and weaknesses exist within the five domains. To be clear, there are specific learning objectives within each learning domain that contribute to that area as a whole. In the near future, TREC – BHS will start to examine these objectives and pinpoint areas where the organization must make progress to give the children and families the best opportunity to be successful in school and life.

SUPPORTING DATA

Data drives everything we do at TREC – BHS. Although the data cannot tell us everything about a child's educational progress and development, it does provide an avenue for tailoring education to the individual child. Currently, TREC – BHS uses a number of data points to inform how we approach instruction for children in the Center-Based option and also parents in our Home-Based option. We do our best, as shown in the School Readiness table above, to ensure that the children and families we serve have the luxury of individually tailored lessons and activities. This will help to strengthen areas of development that require attention in order for the child to be at age level.