Keeping it Simple with Systems

School Readiness Focus

Questions to Consider
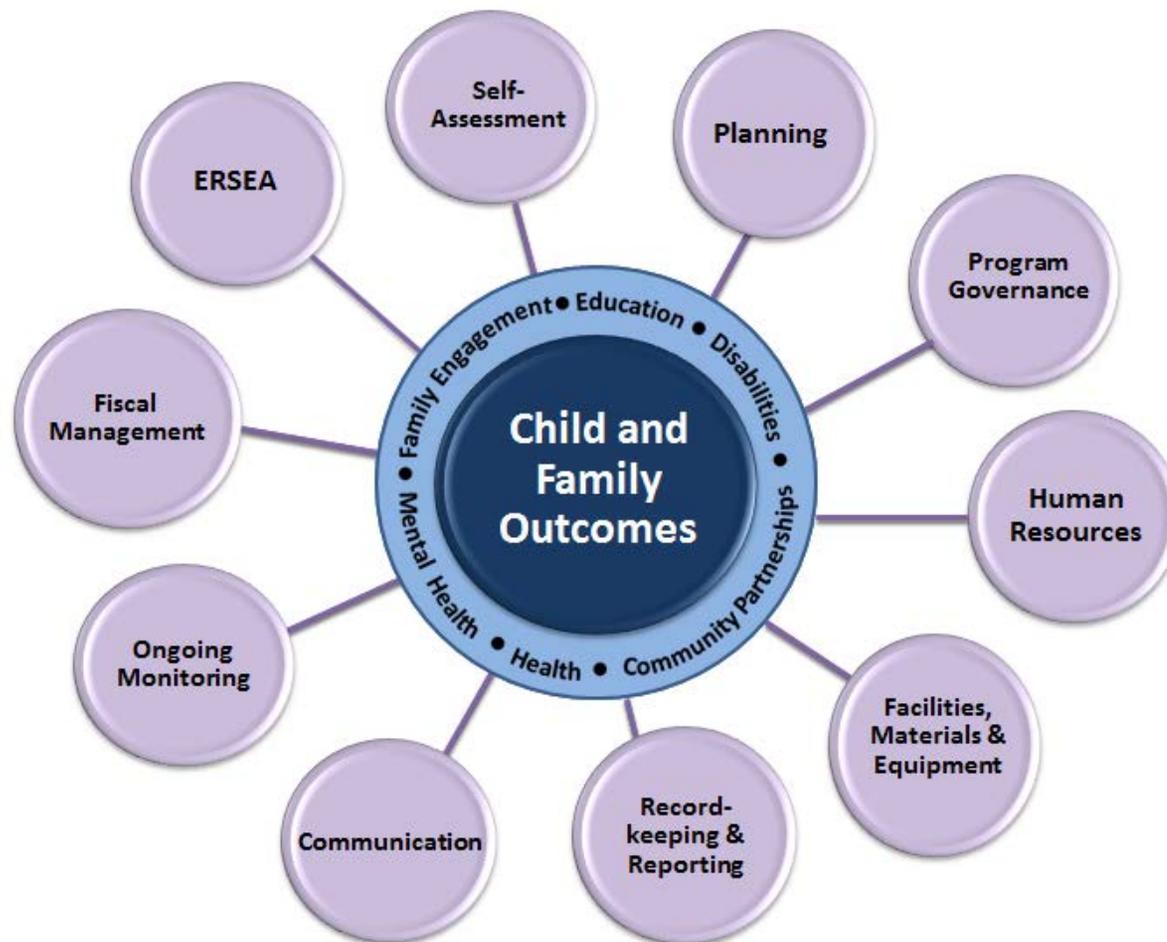
Keeping It Simple with Systems

Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS) programs are complex. Systems-thinking provides a fresh perspective and a "big-picture lens" that taps into a higher level of analyzing, problem-solving, and strategizing. This version of Keeping It Simple with Systems focuses on how each of the ten HS/EHS management systems supports school readiness.

When using this tool, the questions to consider are written to draw out *yes* or *no* responses.

> ➤ If the response is **yes,** determine why and provide an example.
> ➤ If the response is **no**, determine why and consider next steps to improve that system's effectiveness to support services and systems

In order to get an accurate overview of your program and how the Head Start management systems are supporting school readiness, you may want to have conversations with various stakeholders (staff, management team, governing body/Tribal Council members, Policy Council, community members), review data, or read existing reports (i.e. community assessment and Self-Assessment reports).

Before moving to the next Head Start management system, rate yourself and your program:

> ➤ Based on your observations and conversations, if you believe the management system is operating effectively, select **5**. Based on your review of data, existing reports and conversations, if you believe the management system needs **immediate** attention to improve its effectiveness, select **1**.
> ➤ Rate your knowledge of each as a Head Start management system: **5**- I am knowledgeable about how the management system operates in Head Start; and **1**- I need support to become more familiar with how the management system operates in Head Start.

Determine the average score. When finished with each management system, meet with your director to determine your next steps. As a tool, *Keeping it Simple with Systems* supports you, a new leader, *to begin your journey as a manager who is managing through a systems lens!*

Self-Assessment	
SR Focus • Do our program goals support our school readiness goals? • Do we review aggregated child outcomes data related to our school readiness goals during Self-Assessment? • Do we review data on quality of interactions and environments during Self-Assessment (e.g., CLASS, ECERS, ITERS, ELLCO, etc.) • Do we use the results of our school readiness data from our Self-Assessment to ensure that our school readiness goals are appropriate for our population and that children are making progress in achieving those goals? • Do we use the identified program strengths to leverage our achievement of school readiness goals? • Do we include the governing body member with early childhood education expertise or other early childhood experts from the community on our Self-Assessment team?	**How does Self-Assessment support progress towards your school readiness goals?**

Effectiveness of Self-Assessment as a system:	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
My knowledge of Self-Assessment as a Head Start management system:	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
AVERAGE TOTAL:	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐

Planning	
SR Focus • Do we ensure that school readiness goals and activities are incorporated into our Individual Professional Development Plans, our T/TA Plan, Services Area Plans, and Transition Plans? • Do we need to modify our plans to reflect our school readiness goals? • Do we have a plan to ensure school readiness data is aggregated in a timely manner to promote continuous program improvement? • Do we use our school readiness data to inform planning around curricula and daily activities to ensure children are making progress?	**How does Planning support progress towards your school readiness goals?**
Effectiveness of planning as a system:	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
My knowledge of Planning as a Head Start management system:	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
AVERAGE TOTAL:	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐

Program Governance					
SR Focus • Have we engaged our Policy Council and governing body in the development of our school readiness goals? • Do the governing body and Policy Council take an active role in reviewing our progress towards achieving school readiness goals through involvement in self-assessment and program planning?	**How does Program Governance support progress towards your school readiness goals?**				
Effectiveness of program governance as a system:	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
My knowledge of Program Governance as a Head Start management system:	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
AVERAGE TOTAL:	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐

Human Resources					
SR Focus • Do our staff members have the skills and knowledge they need to support school readiness? If not, what professional development activities/trainings are needed? • Does our education staff have their role in achieving school readiness/program goals written into their job descriptions and performance appraisals? • Does our non-education staff have their role in achieving school readiness/program goals written into their job descriptions and performance appraisals? • Is there an approach to staff development that includes annual performance appraisals, coaching, and individualized professional development plans for all staff?	**How does Human Resources support progress towards your school readiness goals?**				
Effectiveness of Human Resources as a system:	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
My knowledge of Human Resources as a Head Start management system:	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
AVERAGE TOTAL:	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐

Facilities, Materials, and Equipment	
SR Focus • What materials/equipment do we have that could be used more intentionally to support our school readiness goals? • What materials/equipment do we need that could be used more intentionally to support school readiness?	**How does Facilities, Materials, and Equipment support progress towards your school readiness goals?**
Effectiveness of facilities, materials, and equipment as a system:	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
My knowledge of Facilities, Materials and Equipment as a Head Start management system:	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
AVERAGE TOTAL:	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐

Recordkeeping and Reporting	
SR Focus • Is our child assessment tool providing us with reports that are useable and meaningful? • Do we have a recordkeeping and reporting system to track activities planned to support school readiness goals, as well as progress towards achieving school readiness goals? • Does our recordkeeping and reporting system give us the information we need to answer the questions we have around our children, families and programs in relation to school readiness? • Does our recordkeeping and reporting system enable us to track and report progress on children and families for whom there are no valid and reliable instruments? • Do we need to create new tools to track school readiness activities or make modifications to existing ones?	**How does Record-keeping and Reporting support progress towards your school readiness goals?**

Effectiveness of recordkeeping and reporting as a system:	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐	
My knowledge of Recordkeeping and Reporting as a Head Start management system:	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐	
AVERAGE TOTAL:	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐	

Communication	
SR Focus • How do we share our school readiness goals with our stakeholders? • How do we ensure that our stakeholders, including families, understand our school readiness goals? • How do we consistently and regularly communicate status and progress on our school readiness goals to all stakeholders?	**How does Communication progress towards of your school readiness goals?**
Effectiveness of communication as a system:	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
My knowledge of Communication as a Head Start management system:	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
AVERAGE TOTAL:	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐

Ongoing Monitoring	
SR Focus • Do we effectively use ongoing monitoring information in relation to progress on our school readiness goals to promote continuous program improvement? • Do we track progress on each school readiness goal to ensure the use of this information in making necessary adjustments to teaching and learning • Do we have a plan to ensure the *quality* of our school readiness data? • Do we ensure that our curriculum is being implemented with fidelity? • Do we need to modify and/or create new tools to better support ongoing monitoring of school readiness data and curriculum implementation? • Does our monitoring information allow us to gather information and make necessary adjustments specific to progress on school readiness goals for children who are Dual Language Learners and children with disabilities?	**How does Ongoing Monitoring support progress towards your school readiness goals?**

	1	2	3	4	5
Effectiveness of ongoing monitoring as a system:	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
My knowledge of Ongoing Monitoring as a Head Start management system:	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
AVERAGE TOTAL:	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐

Fiscal Management	
SR Focus • Do we have the resources available to support school readiness activities? • Are we using our school readiness data to inform our fiscal planning for school readiness related activities and materials? • Does our budget include adequate funding for professional development, materials and equipment. If not, how can we use SR data to support request for allocation of funds or resources? • Does our budget reflect our efforts to be inclusive of all cultures and languages by providing resources for consultants with cultural expertise, translation and interpretation consultants, authentic cultural artifacts/materials including music and books, and on-going mentoring/coaching for staff's professional development?	**How does Fiscal Management support progress towards your school readiness goals?**

	1	2	3	4	5
Effectiveness of fiscal management as a system:	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
My knowledge of Fiscal Management as a Head Start management system:	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
AVERAGE TOTAL:	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐

Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA)	
SR Focus • Do we discuss the importance of attendance with parents during our enrollment process? • Are we effectively monitoring attendance rates and promoting attendance as a strategy for successful school readiness?	**How does ERSEA support progress towards your school readiness goals?**
Effectiveness of ERSEA as a system:	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
My knowledge of ERSEA as a Head Start management system:	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
AVERAGE TOTAL:	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐