

Education Specialist Support

Head Start Performance Standard

§ 1302.92 (c)

§ 1302.102 (b) (1) (i), (ii),

§ 1302.102 (c) (1), (2) (i)

Policy

Community Action employs Education Specialists to provide ongoing support and coaching to our education staff members. In addition to coaching (see **Practice Based Coaching Policy and Procedure**), Education Specialists will provide staff with support to ensure fidelity to the curriculum, safety, and education policies and procedures. Education Specialists visit classrooms/ Home Visitors to build relationships with the staff members, observe the classroom/home visit, observe teaching/home visiting practices, and provide specific, meaningful feedback from a strengths-based perspective.

Education Specialists will use the **Education Snapshot** form in all preschool classrooms and the **Home-Based Education Snapshot** form with all Home Visitors. Education Specialists will provide staff with information, resources, ideas, and other supports as requested or to meet an identified need. Program Area Supervisors (PAS's) are responsible for follow-up regarding findings directly related to policies and procedures as well as observations. PAS's may review the snapshot data as needed if concerns regarding Policies and Procedures arise. Snapshot data may also be reviewed as part of the Prevention and Intervention Team Support. Staff will be informed prior to Snapshot data being reviewed by anyone as part of any kind of support planning.

Education Specialists will use the Curriculum Fidelity checklist in all Early Head Start classrooms. Education Specialists will provide staff with information, resources, ideas and other support as requested or to meet an identified need. PAS's are responsible for follow-up regarding findings directly related to policies and procedures as well as observations. Coffee Creek staff will get regular check-ins with their assigned Education Specialist to discuss their needs for support, which may include the Education Specialist joining a team meeting, class time or class visits for Coffee Creek.

Education Specialists will attend monthly check-in meetings with PAS's. Every effort will be made to include the Behavior Specialists in this meeting. Meetings may be held in person or virtually.

Education Specialists will use the information in the Coaching Contacts reports from ChildPlus and results from the **Education Snapshot** forms to analyze data to inform the identification of program strengths, support needs for individuals, classroom teams, and possible training needs for the overall program.

Procedure

Education Specialists will plan a time to visit each classrooms or a home visit with each home visitor using the appropriate form. Strengths-based feedback will be emailed to the teaching team or Home Visitor, along with their PAS after each visit. Coffee Creek staff will have an opportunity to meet with the Education Specialist to talk about their strengths and any opportunities for support or coaching identified by either the Education Specialist or the staff member.

The feedback session is another chance to build relationships, acknowledge strengths, successes and growth and identify one or two areas for collaboration with the Education Specialist. Education Specialists will enter data from the site visit in Coaching Contact in ChildPlus and will upload the **Education Snapshot** form as an attachment to the visit. Education Specialists will offer resources, recommendations, training and/or coaching as requested. These will be done either in the moment or as part of a planned follow-up developed with the staff member or classroom team. Supervisors are

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responsible for following up with staff to ensure any necessary corrections regarding policies and procedures have been made.

Coaching responsibilities take precedence over site visits. Every effort will be made to provide ongoing **Education Snapshot** site visits. All visits and meetings **are subject to cancellation without notice** if the Specialist is required by the managers or supervisor to support other program needs. If any Home Visitor or classroom staff member would like another visit and their assigned Education Specialist is unavailable, another qualified person or the Education Services Supervisor will complete a site visit as needed. The person conducting the site visit is responsible for all data entry and sharing the results of the visit with the assigned Education Specialist. Any needed support or follow up will be completed and documented by the site visitor, unless both the site visitor and the assigned Education Specialist make other arrangements. Staff will be given the choice to meet to talk with their Education Specialist about their site visit/home visit for more specific feedback.

Other supports will also be provided to any staff member when requested. Education Specialists will make every effort to schedule within one week of receiving the request. However, the timing of the response is subject to the Specialists coaching responsibilities and priorities as determined by their supervisor or program manager. In that event, the request may be shifted to another member of the Education team until such time as the assigned Specialists is available to provide ongoing support. Support may include any one or more of the following:

- Building adult-child relationships
- Building classroom communities
- Developing classroom agreements
- Revising the environment to meet the needs of the children enrolled
- Brainstorming ideas and solutions
- Planning
- Supporting classroom and parent events
- Child development
- Developmentally appropriate practices
- Developmental parenting
- Individualizing planned activities
- Scaffolding activities for various levels of ability
- Use of curriculum and lesson plans
- Daily schedules
- Establishing routines
- Smooth transitions
- Home visit practices
- Observations
- Guided or facilitated play
- Developing and implementing child directed studies
- Implementation and/or revision of rest time routines (in classes where appropriate)
- Identifying and providing visual supports

Education Specialist will try to coordinate with PAS's and Behavior Specialists to schedule regular monthly check in meetings for classrooms receiving ongoing Specialist support. These meetings will be a quick check in, allowing the exchange of information and open communication. Before discussing any concerns regarding a classroom, the PAS, Education or Behavior Specialist will ensure the concern has been discussed with the classroom staff prior to the meeting. Then, at the meeting, the conversation with the staff will be reviewed and next steps will be identified. Next steps will then be shared with the staff by the PAS or Specialists who raised the question or concern, or as otherwise agreed upon in the meeting. Topics for discussion may include:

- Sharing the strengths and successes of support.
- Maintain ongoing communication to ensure everyone, including the site staff, are aware of the next steps or status for any needed or ongoing support.
 - Prevention and Intervention Team meetings will be separate from this regular check in meeting.
- Clarify any confusion or misunderstanding regarding support and expectations.

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- Review any updates or changes to the Active Supervision and Safety plan, and/or ongoing Education Specialist support.
- Review outcomes from various observation tools, such as Snapshots, CLASS, HoVRS, TPOT, etc.
- Discuss any training requests or training needs observed by the PAS.
- Questions or support for curriculum fidelity and implementation and/or lesson plans.

Education Specialists can provide resources and brainstorming for supervisors to use in supporting their staff to grow their skills. Support may be provided in a variety of ways:

- Scheduled time to meet with the Education Specialist on site to provide needed support
- Scheduled virtual meetings
- Phone calls, emails, or Teams messages
- Written or video resources
- Observing peers in action

Education Specialists may find additional methods for providing resources in the **Coaching and Professional Development Options Protocol** located in the **Education Specialist e-Guide**. All support requests and the subsequent provision of those supports will be documented in the Coaching Contact module of ChildPlus.