

***Passaic Family Head Start  
2025-2026  
Annual Self-Assessment***





## ***Purpose of the 2025-2026 Self-Assessment***

The 2025-2026 Self-Assessment reflects Passaic Family Head Start's ongoing commitment to providing high-quality, safe, and responsive services for children and families.

This self-assessment was conducted during a year of program transition that included leadership changes, increased classroom behavioral needs, and updates to policies and procedures. The purpose of the assessment was to review how well program systems are functioning in daily practice and to ensure they continue to support children, families, staff, and leadership effectively.

# *Program Context*



During the 2025–2026 program year, Passaic Family Head Start experienced several changes that influenced program operations. These included new leadership at a collaborative site, new education leadership requiring Head Start–specific training, increased behavioral challenges within classrooms, and the need to align policies and procedures with current practice.

This context informed the focus of the self-assessment and ensured that the review was responsive to current program needs while maintaining compliance with Head Start requirements.

# ***Self-Assessment Approach***

The self-assessment was informed by multiple sources of information, including:

**Findings from the  
2024-2025 Self-  
Assessment**

**Ongoing monitoring and  
monthly data  
dives/MOCK reviews**

**Incident and safety  
reports**

**Classroom observations  
and MHC/coaching  
feedback**

**Input from program leadership and management staff**

This approach allowed the program to identify strengths, assess system effectiveness, and determine areas where continued improvement is needed.

*The self-assessment was conducted in alignment with Head Start Program Performance Standards.*

# ***Leadership Readiness and Shared Responsibility***

The self-assessment reviewed leadership readiness, training, and shared accountability across the program. The review found that leadership structures are in place to support program operations during a period of transition. Communication systems and decision-making processes support coordination across sites and service areas.

The assessment also identified the need for continued Head Start-specific training and alignment for new leaders to ensure consistent understanding of roles, responsibilities, and compliance expectations.



## *Teaching Quality and Classroom Support*

The self-assessment reviewed teaching quality, instructional consistency, and classroom support systems. The program continues to prioritize high-quality instruction supported by coaching, classroom monitoring, and professional development.

The review found that teachers benefit from ongoing coaching and support; however, increased classroom behavioral needs highlight the importance of continued certification, monitoring, and targeted support to maintain stable, emotionally supportive learning environments.

# ***Behavioral Health, Safety, and Classroom Support***

The self-assessment reviewed behavioral health and safety practices across classrooms. The program identified an increase in behavioral challenges that impact classroom dynamics and staff well-being.

The review found that the behavioral policy provides a clear framework for supporting children using developmentally appropriate and trauma-informed practices. Continued staff training, consistent implementation, and ongoing review of incident data remain critical to maintaining safe environments for children and staff.

## **Critical Focus Areas**

- Staff training
- Consistent implementation
- Ongoing incident review
- Safe environments

# ***Health, Safety, Policies, and Staff Wellness***

## **Health and Safety Systems**

The program maintains systems to monitor health and safety requirements and respond to incidents and emergencies.

## **Policy Alignment**

The review identified the importance of maintaining updated policies and procedures.

## **Staff Wellness**

Continuing to support staff wellness and self-care remains essential for maintaining classroom quality, safety, and staff retention.

The self-assessment reviewed health and safety systems, emergency preparedness, policy alignment, and staff wellness supports. Staff well-being was recognized as an essential component of maintaining classroom quality, safety, and staff retention.

# ***Governance Oversight and Accountability***

Self-assessment findings were shared with program leadership and will be reviewed with the Governing Board and Policy Council. This shared review supports transparency, accountability, and informed decision-making.

Governance oversight ensures that identified strengths are maintained and that areas for improvement are addressed through training, policy updates, and program planning.

# ***Overall Assessment Summary***

## ***Strong Foundation***

The 2025–2026 Self-Assessment found that Passaic Family Head Start maintains a strong foundation of services supported by committed leadership, dedicated staff, and established systems.

## ***Areas for Continued Attention***

While the program is operating effectively, the assessment identified key areas where continued attention is needed to support leadership transition, address behavioral challenges, and strengthen system consistency across sites.

## ***Conclusion***

This self-assessment represents a completed review of current program operations and system effectiveness. It confirms the program's readiness to respond to change while maintaining a focus on safety, quality, and positive outcomes for children and families.

Passaic Family Head Start remains committed to continuous improvement and to using self-assessment findings to strengthen services, support staff, and promote school readiness for all children served.