

General Information

Name of Agency: Children's Place Association

Program Number: 05CH8456/03

Program Name: Place Association: Arthur E. Jones Early Childhood Care and Learning Center and Home-Based Early Learning Program

Address: 700 N. Sacramento, Suite 300, Chicago, IL 60612-1046

Phone Number: 773-395-9193

Fax Number: 773-395-4486

Head Start Director Name: Porsche Snowden

Head Start Director Email: psnowden@childrens-place.org

Agency Web Site Address: www.childrens-place.org

Agency Type: Nonprofit. Center-based Head Start/Early Head Start, home-visiting Early Head Start

Agency Description: Children's Place Association has 133 Head Start/Early Head Start-eligible slots.

Children's Place provides comprehensive support services to children and families affected by illness and poverty. Programs include nursing for medically complex children, mental health counseling, case management, summer camp, foster care and adoption, emergency assistance, supportive family housing and early education services that include a Home-Based program and the Arthur E. Jones Early Childhood Care and Learning Center. The Early Learning Center serves 0-5-year-old children with age-specific classrooms, degreed teachers and specially trained aides, an onsite nurse, nutritious meals, transportation and a secure, private playground. The Home-Based program serves 0-3-year-old children, providing developmental and emotional screenings, nutrition education and assessments, monthly infant health checks by a Registered Nurse, advocacy, referrals and group socialization. The Center-based programs includes Head Start and Early Head Start programming, and the Home-Based program provides Early Head Start programming.

Site Locations:

Early Learning Center 1800 N. Humboldt Blvd. Chicago, IL 60647	Home-Based Early Learning Program 3059 West Augusta Blvd. Chicago, Il 60622
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Community Areas Served:

Both programs supported by Start Early operating out of Humboldt Park on Chicago's West Side. While a large percentage of Children's Place client families live near our program facilities, we serve children from across Chicago due to our capacity and experience in serving infants, toddlers and children living with illness or disabilities.

While Children's Place Association's catchment area is the entire city, the annual Community Assessment conducted by Start Early and Children's Place evaluates the areas surrounding/adjacent to the Early Learning Center since a large percentage of children served come from these areas. Some, such as Logan Square and West Town, are undergoing gentrification, but pockets of poverty remain; others face ongoing issues of high poverty rates and racial disparities. Humboldt Park had a high economic hardship index, high rates of unemployment and child poverty and increased crime rates.

Neighborhood demographics near the Center have changed as the Logan Square and East Humboldt Park areas continue experiencing gentrification. As a result, we may need to explore having more over-income slots for the next program year, if slots cannot be filled with families meeting the income guidelines.

Poverty rates for children in the evaluated communities varied greatly by race/ethnicity, with African American and Hispanic children having the higher rates than White children. (The exception was Hermosa, where poverty percentages were similar for all racial groups.) The majority of children served by Children's Place early education programs are African American and Hispanic. Approximately 34% of children served by the Early Learning Center are Black, 55% Hispanic, 10% multiracial, and 1% White. In the Home-Based program 94% of families are Hispanic and 6% African American. 85% of households with children in the program are single-parent families. Most are very low-income; 61% of families with children in our Center have annual incomes of \$10,000 or less, and nearly one third, 61%, subsist on annual incomes of \$5,000 or less. Many reside in low-income, high-crime communities on Chicago's west and south sides that have limited resources for ill, impoverished families. Most came from Chicago's Humboldt Park, Logan Square, Hermosa and West Town neighborhoods. 33% of children had an illness or disability, including heart ailments, autism, epilepsy, feeding disorders and developmental disabilities. Having a full-time, onsite Registered Nurse and Disabilities and Mental Health Coordinator on staff ensures our program can accommodate children with feeding tubes, complex medication regimens and/or serious developmental delays.

Despite these challenges and COVID-19, 100% of children made expected developmental gains during the year, toward a goal of 80%. 18 children graduated, all fully prepared for kindergarten as indicated by nationally recognized assessments – the 11th consecutive year of this achievement. Attendance plays a key role in accomplishing these goals. Attendance was 88%, surpassing the 70% goal.

Per US Census data, the poverty level begins at annual incomes of \$12-44,000 depending on family size; in our last fiscal year, FY 2022, 91% of Early Learning Center and Home-Based client families made annual incomes below the federal poverty level of \$5,000 or less.

Children's Place specializes in serving families and children with special needs. More than half of the children served in the Early Learning Center, 33%, in FY 2022 had an illness or disability. 14% of children in the Early Learning Center have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and receive early intervention services. In the Home-Based program, more than 28% of children in the Home-Based program have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and receive early intervention services.

Head Start Program Overview:

Financials Funding Year 2022

Total Funds:

SOURCE AMOUNT

Federal: \$ \$1,091,859

State: \$735,668

Local District: \$504,343

Private: \$75,000

In-Kind: n/a

Other: \$45,236

FY 2022 and Actual Expenditures		
	Budget	Actual
Sub-Recipient		
Personnel	\$1,971,878	\$894,437
Fringe benefits	Included above	Included above
Contractual	\$30,000	\$28,256
Other	n/a	n/a
Supplies	\$155,200	\$144,820
Travel	n/a	n/a
Equipment	\$5,000	\$0
Facilities/Construction	\$15,000	\$81,525

Our Children and Our Families

Number of Children Served in 2021-2022

	Funded Enrollment HS	Number of Children Served in HS	Funded Enrollment EHS	Number of Children Served in EHS
Center-based	41	42	32	34
Home-based	0	0	60	36
Family Childcare	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total:	41	42	92	70

Enrollment Statistics

Highest Level of Education by Family	Percent
Advanced/Bachelors	9%
Associate/Vocational/Some College	23%
High School Graduate/GED	38%
Less than High School Graduate	30%
Did not answer	N/A

Race / Ethnicity of Participants

Race/Ethnicity of Participants	Percent
Hispanic of any race	71%
Black or African American	22%
Asian	1%
White	54%

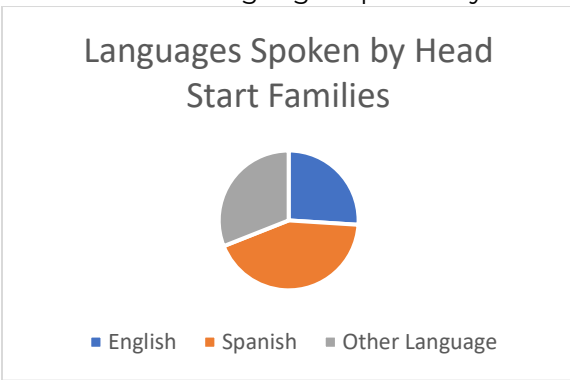
Multiracial/Biracial	14%
Native American	1.5%
Other	

Ages of Children and Pregnant Women Served in Head Start / Early Head Start

- % 28 4 years old
- % 76 3 years old
- % 43 2 years old
- % 43 1 year old
- % 10 less than 1 year old
- % 0 Pregnant Women

Languages Spoken by Head Start Families

Insert Chart of languages spoken by Head Start families



Preparing Children for Kindergarten

Teacher Level of Education	Percent
Master’s Degree 1	5%
Bachelor’s Degree 111111	35%
Associate’s Degree 11111	30%
Child Development Associate 11	10%
Home Visitor Credential	5%

Classroom Assessment Scoring System

Summary of CLASS observation:

In the most recent results, we were significantly above the National Average and Quality Threshold (Highest level). On a 7-point scale where quality ranges in 5 domains at 2.5 for the highest score, we scored 3-4 and where quality ranges in the other 4 domains at a 4.5 we scored 6-6.5 consistently. CPA has received several recognitions and awards for how high our classrooms are performing. An additional successful outcome is how classrooms are able to effectively manage children with diagnosed disabilities and medical health conditions.

Family Engagement

Summary of Parent Education Activities/ Parent Committee Meetings/Other special gatherings or activities Male Involvement/ resources provided to families.

Parent Committee Meetings:

Parent meetings are offered monthly. Parents participate in the planning of these meetings and suggest topics of interest, as noted above. The Parent committee also has a representative that attends our monthly Parent Policy Council Meetings. During that meeting, the representative provides an agency update that was discussed in a previous parent meeting. The representative then gathers the information discussed at the Grantee Parent Policy Meeting and shares it with the parents at the following parent meeting.

Other special gatherings or activities:

Home Based parents participate in socialization events every month, while Center Based parents are offered Parents As Teachers activities. They are also offered the opportunity to participate in a familygiving fall event, a winter party, and end of the year celebration with their children.

Families are encouraged to attend Parent Teacher Conferences, Home Visits, Parent Meetings, Parents As Teachers Activities, and Socializations to maximize participation and engagement with their children's education.

When advertising or discussing program events or meetings, staff use neutral language such as parent or guardian to ensure that fathers or male figures feel welcome and included.

We provide families with access to our lending library, Reading is Fundamental literacy activities, and we have partnered with UIC Center for Literacy to facilitate activities on introducing and improving at-home literacy skills. This year we were able to continue these activities virtually.

Male Involvement:

Children's Place hosts a quarterly Father/Male Figure Involvement event to encourage male participation in our program and provide an engaging, fun and educational event specifically for the fathers/male figures. Staff works to build relationship with families to learn what father figures or male role models each child has, and encourages that person/people to participate.

Pandemic Response

The needs of our families changed dramatically in the 20-21 program year due to COVID, but in the 21-22 program year allowed our program to return to some normalcies of times prior to the pandemic. For new children who remained home during the pandemic, our staff and parents noted higher levels of separation anxiety among students and increased difficulty interacting with peers. This is reflected in our parents reporting the need for Positive Parent-Child relationships, such as healthy attachments with their young children. Family Assessments and Family Partnership Agreement Goals also illustrate the need for housing. A few of our families have spent time in shelters and transitional housing programs, while many others remain doubled up or in housing that is subpar. For such participants, it is often difficult to find appropriate and available programming or resources, as many housing services have long waitlists or do not accept people who are not living in shelters or on the streets.

Certain parent meetings and family events have remained either virtual or hybrid based on parent/guardian feedback, who shared that being able to log in while commuting, cooking, or working has increased their ability to participate.

Family Support staff used an array of tools to assess families: conversations during the initial intake, the Family Assessment tool, COVID-19 Assessment tool, Home Visits, and Parent-Teacher Conferences, with this information we can complete the Family Outcomes Rating Scale (FORS) and update the Family Services Information tab in Child Plus. Family Support staff use the attached Outcome Rating Scale to determine each family's rating for every category. The FORS data then helps to inform connection with resources, frequency of follow up, and the topics addressed in parent meetings and newsletters. For example, families with a rating under 3 for Food would be connected to local food pantries and applicable social services and encouraged to attend meetings focusing on nutrition and grocery shopping on a budget.

For clothing, school supplies, hygiene products, and books we partner with Cradles to Crayons. Our partnership ensures that our Family Support staff can request weather-appropriate clothing and shoes for any child in the families we serve, as well as share additional supplies such as educational bags and bicycles.

Child Outcomes

Summary of 2022-2023 Child Outcomes

Center Base:

In Early Head Start classrooms teachers were helping infant and toddlers understand spatial awareness. Teachers were observed using more mathematical words, while communicating experiences with children. Teachers in Early Head Start classrooms were communicating with sound and sign language to show children all done and more. 89% of the children are meeting and exceeding expectations in physical development. Teachers have been utilizing Conscious Discipline to help with song and movement. Conscious discipline allows teachers and children to connect and make conscious decisions that supports movement. Teachers have been seen creating a safe space for children, taking them outdoors for more physical development when problems occur inside the classrooms.

Head Start data showed the majority of children meeting expectations. All 3–4-year-old children and 4–5-year-old children met widely held expectations. In preschool classroom teachers focused on phonemic awareness, letter sound, identifying letters, and story dictation. During family engagements and parent meetings, families were encouraged to read more books to the children daily. In the area of Social emotional 89% of the children in the program are meeting and exceeding expectations. Head Start classrooms continued to utilize conscious discipline to help support with strategies to help children cope and practice calmness. In the spring months the program teams collaborated and participated in transition planning to support staff, children and families in the process. Social-emotional development was a topic of great need. Teachers focused on Social-Emotional activities to support children and families to move to the next level of their education.

Children with diagnosed disabilities were on target, CPA has children who have a diagnosed disability who are currently receiving services through CPS and child family connections.

The data shows most of the children are meeting widely held expectations. Teachers have expressed the extra support has been helping the children maintain the daily routine. We have quite a few children who have been identified as a concern which reflects the data in Teaching Strategies.

In reviewing the data from the fall, winter, and spring there has been a shift in the checkpoint data showing an increase in all developmental domains. Over 85% of the children in the program are meeting and exceeding expectations in all developmental domains. Fall checkpoints showed strengths were Social-emotional, Physical, and Cognitive development. Winter check points showed strengths in Mathematics Literacy and Cognitive development with percentages above widely held expectations. During the Spring the data showed growth in all areas. There was an increase in communication within teams about data and use of data. More strategies

focused on intentionality and planning were implemented in the classroom environments and discussed with families on several meetings. Previous quarters showed percentages in some areas were over 20% below, but by the end of the year there was an increase in meeting expectations and no areas showed more than 14% below. The Program has discussed strategies to help staff, children, and families with their social emotional well-being. And there continues to be an increase in implementing conscious discipline strategies. The Disabilities and Mental Health Coordinator and Education Coordinator collaborated to develop a space to allow children to focus on physical development and breathing exercises. The interns have created a schedule to support children who need extra one-on-one time. Classrooms discussed having children complete more movement experiences to help them to control their bodies and emotions while talking through the behaviors they were experiencing. Overall, although there was a shift in data showing areas with strengths and areas to build on over 86% percent of the children are meeting and exceeding in each developmental domain with the increase from Fall to Spring data. We included focused coaching around routines and experiences. Teachers sent home weekly experiences for parents to engage in in the home environment. The children are meeting goals along with kindergarten readiness goals. All children who will be transitioning to kindergarten in the fall were screened in the ESI.K and met expectations all scoring OK. Transition meetings were also planned and completed to discuss placement and supports.

Home Base:

After analyzing classroom data, we observed a couple trends. Children are practicing expressive language through books and role play. Children are more independent and are trying to figure things out by themselves or with less support from parents. We also observed that we had more participation from parents during socialization events, but it consisted of the same group of parents. Observations were also not consistent due to several family cancellations due to a rise in illness. Families have also advocated for their children and having more child interactions and expressed their concerns with the staff seeking more mental health and nutrition support.

The specific objective with the lowest score and least gain was Approaches to learning, reflection with a score of -0.73 and creative arts, music with -0.73. A contributing factor is practicing individualization to support children with IFSP's and assigning tags accordingly. It is apparent that attendance greatly affected our documentation, but we did see strengths within the classrooms and overall program. The specific objectives with most children meeting/exceeding based on widely held expectations include Social Studies with 47% of children meeting or exceeding. It was an area of strength due to home-visitor's using strategies to keep families engaged by incorporating activities that supported the knowledge of self and others along with practicing geography on a consistent basis. Home-Visitors used plans to intentionally address this area of development as it has been an area to build on in previous periods. Language Learning was the highest score of 2. Creative Arts with 42% of children meeting or exceeding. Tools and Technology with a score of 1.73. Another area of strength was Physical Development and Health with 42% of children meeting or exceeding. Personal care and healthy behavior had a period score of 1.64.

After reviewing all 3 quarters of data it is visible that the 2nd quarter had the most children meeting/exceeding in most areas of development. Winter quarter met/exceeded 8/8 areas, fall children met/exceeded 7/8 areas. The Spring quarter had the most children falling below widely held expectations. From the data comparison I believe this was due to spring being the quarter of transitions between educators. Therefore, we observed more parents cancelling visits with new educators and communication not as consistent when scheduling home visits. Also, due to spring period being the first quarter that a home visitor practiced observations and tagging on COR. Although there has been a fluctuation in data results, we believe children are continuing to meet ongoing goals throughout the year which may not be reflected in this final period.

Services for Children with Special Needs

Summary of services provided to children with special needs during the program year 2021-2022

During the 2021-2022 program year, the Disabilities/Wellness Coordinator has maintained virtual and in person partnerships with CPS, LEAs, and Early Intervention to ensure that Early Learning families have up-to-date information for their diverse learners. Currently, the responsibility of the Disabilities/Wellness Coordinator is to serve as a virtual liaison, working collaboratively with families advocating for the rights of their diverse learner. The Disability/Wellness Coordinator provided ongoing support and advocacy to families, offering guidance on accessing community resources and services.

Additionally, to support with the individualization of children with disabilities, the program developed diverse learner educational bins that were dispersed during Children's Place pandemic donation distribution. These educational bags were specifically designed with sensory items, fidget toys, Play-Doh etc.

The Disabilities/Wellness Coordinator has worked collaboratively with the Family Support Specialists in both CB and HB programs to update the ERSEA/Disabilities recruitment plan monthly. Under the updated plan, our programs will remain fully enrolled, while maintaining more than ten percent of identified diverse learners, both in Early Head Start and Head Start programs.

During the 2021-2022 program year, the Disabilities/Wellness Coordinator has met with staff regularly to continue to develop and update Positive Behavior Support Plans, implementation plans, and interim plans for children with IFPS/IEP, or an identified disability to help guide their individualization. The Disability/Wellness coordinator collaborated with teachers, parents, and specialists to create tailored Individualized Support Plans for each child with special needs. These plans outlined specific goals, interventions, and accommodations to address the child's unique challenges and promote their development across different domains. To assess the effectiveness of interventions and services, the coordinator diligently tracked and monitored each child's progress. Regular data analysis allowed for adjustments to be made to the child's support plan as needed, ensuring continuous improvement and optimal outcomes.

The Disabilities/Wellness coordinator actively promoted inclusive practices within the classroom, working closely with teachers to adapt and modify activities to accommodate children with special needs. This ensured that all children could participate and engage in activities together, fostering a sense of belonging and positive social interactions.

The Disabilities/Wellness coordinator also engaged in professional development, organizing workshops and training sessions for program staff and families to enhance their knowledge, and understanding of working with children with special needs. These efforts contributed to a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for all children.

Children's Place specializes in serving families and children with special needs. More than half of the children served in the Early Learning Center, 14%, in FY 2022 had a disability % of children in the Early Learning

Center have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and receive early intervention services. In the Home-Based program, 13% of children had a disability or medical condition and 4% had a parent living with a disability or medical condition. More than 25% of children in the Home-Based program have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and receive early intervention services.

Health Services

Percent of Children Meeting Health Requirements 2021 -2022

	Health Insurance	Medical Home	Dental Home	Professional Dental Exam	Current EPSDT	Up to date Immunizations
Center-based Program	100%	100%	90%	59%	24%	94%
Home-based Program	100%	100%	89%	46%	6%	83%
Family Childcare Home	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Mental Health Services

Summary of mental health services provided during the program year 2021-2022

Parents participate in the annual meeting for planning mental health education. Parents recommend training topics for the monthly parent meetings. Parents receive ongoing wellness training and support as identified/requested. Individual therapy and group Play Therapy is available for those children in need through partnership with the Juvenile Protective Association, a leader in child mental health. Additionally, staff support groups are held monthly. Individual support is provided to staff through MHC, DIS/MH Coordinator, and internal CPA wellness program.

To support the Social/Emotional Development of children, the Disabilities/Wellness Coordinator has continued to implement the Conscious Discipline curriculum with “I Love You” Rituals, self-regulation activities, and videos for parents on the importance of connecting with their children, and how to navigate during tantrums.

The purpose of the Conscious Discipline curriculum is to implement a social/emotional supplemental curriculum that will support positive and nurturing caregiver and child relationships. The Disabilities/Wellness Coordinator facilitated monthly training sessions reviewing 10 chapters from Conscious Discipline.

During challenges with social/emotional development, families have reached out virtually to the Disabilities/Wellness Coordinator asking for support. The Disabilities/Wellness Coordinator worked collaboratively with families to identify appropriate activities that support the social/emotional goals on their IEP.

Additionally, this year we were able to conduct virtual classroom and/or individual observations by our Mental Health Consultant (MHC). The MHC was also able to provide trainings to staff and parents around topics that were specifically chosen based off needs of the families/staff. The MHC would also provide parent consultations and provide referrals to outside Mental Health facilities. A child would either be referred out for additional services or education and support staff worked in collaboration with the MHC and DWC to implement and carry out a PBSP. The plan is revisited as needed for adjustments based on child outcomes.

Our Community

Community Assessment Highlights

Each year, the Start Early supports Children’s Place Association in conducting/updating a community assessment outlining the strengths and needs of the communities served by the Children’s Place Early Learning Center and Home-Based early education program. The most recent community assessment was completed in June 2022, it includes new data from 2021 which, in accordance with Head Start Performance Standards, is used for program planning purposes.

As part of the Community Assessment, Children’s Place client parents and community partners identified additional issues and needs in focus groups. Although the participating parents and community partners cited many strengths and resources in their communities. Please see below chart for more information:

Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mobile clinics, more accessibility - Lessening the negative stigma around mental health - Families and individuals are advocating for themselves to receive services
Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increase in parents/individuals advocating for services - schools/Head Start focusing on screening and referring
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaboration among families - Education around vaccinations to families
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vaccination opportunities
Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food pantries providing additional services and supporting families
Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Medical cards getting extended - Other programs in the community extending services, creating partnerships - Covid has allowed programs and communications within the community to be virtual - More opportunities to learn about other services within the community - Chicago Public Library array of services/social workers

Children’s Place parent focus groups and community partners identified several strengths, they also could identify challenges and needs in their communities. Please see below chart for more information:

Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affordable services for adults - Decline in acceptable services post COVID - Long waitlists
Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More Early Intervention and CPS Care coordinators - More therapists - High level of children being referred, no one to assign them to or long wait times for evaluations
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staffing (Teacher shortages) - Pathways for educators and individuals within the community - High turnover rate - Services have long waitlists
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staffing!

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shorter wait times for school physicals during peak season
Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Healthy affordable options for busy families - Lack of educational courses on cooking/nutrition for parents
Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of anti-violence services - Lack of successful/effective violence prevention programs - Only specific insurances are accepted for certain services - Housing Accessibility – only have services for people who need emergency shelter and not transitional or affordable housing - Drug Overdoses have been increasing and there is not enough services being offered - Lack of education to individuals around the community - Language barriers, there is a lack of translators - Lack of visual/hearing impairment services
Immigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long term supports for immigrants and refugees - Influx of immigrants, but lacking services to support them

Partners and Volunteers

Children’s Place Association partners with local agencies in the community to provide resources and supports to families. Each year, host an annual Community Assessment Brunch. During this brunch new and pre-existing MOU’s are developed. Referrals to additional agencies are also revealed during the meeting. Additionally, throughout the year, FSS identify additional agencies that meet newly identified needs of the families we serve. CPA’s Development teams partners with local companies seeking out volunteer opportunities. CPA works with programs to identify needs and matches volunteer to the program based on volunteer request of service they are interested in providing.

Shared Governance

Board Involvement_

CPA is a partner agency with Start Early and is apart of their larger Board of Directors.

Head Start Policy Council Involvement

Children’s Place Association has a Parent Committee Board (PCB) that meets monthly. Our Parent Committee Board Representatives also sit on Start Early’s Policy Council. Each month, the representatives share findings and summaries of those meetings with the PCB. PC members also are responsible for, but not limited to, parent interviews, reapplication and budget approvals, new policy approval, self-assessment participation etc.

Summary of Audit Findings

Based on the audit findings, all content areas were overall on target. There were minor updates/areas of improvement that were all be rectified within a 30-60 day timeframe.

Summary of Information Required by the Secretary

Start Early Board of Directors and Policy Council were given brief summaries and links to all Program Instructions and Information Memorandums.

Summary of Annual Review Findings

During the 2022 annual review, it was identified that overall, all content areas were very strong with little to no non-compliance. Areas in need of support were those where there has been a shift in requirements and or in

need of data entry. As a part of reapplication for funding, CPA included a Data Entry Specialist to help support those needs.