



2022 – 2025

**Nueces County Community Action Agency
Strategic Plan Report**

Executive Summary

Nueces County Community Action Agency intends to use the strategic plan to provide direction and prioritize, focus decision making, and align resources to maximize results. The project offers the roadmap to ensure the capacity to meet the community's needs, guide governance and program management, and data-driven continuous quality improvement.

Nueces County Community Action Agency (NCCAA) works with partners to apply comprehensive strategies to eliminate the causes of poverty for the people of Nueces County.

NCCAA provides services including the Birth-to-Five Head Start (B5HS) Program serving children from 6 weeks through 5 years of age and ten expectant women; case management services providing financial assistance for educational attainment; housing for nineteen income-eligible tenants; the Weatherization Assistance Program providing home energy efficiency measures to eliminate potential high energy burdens; and the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program providing utility assistance and heating and cooling measures.

As Nueces County Community Action Agency continues the War on Poverty as President Lyndon B. Johnson declared in 1964, NCCAA utilizes the Results Orientated Management and Accountability management system to ensure the agency stays true to its mission. Nueces County Community Action Agency was founded in 1964 and currently employs about 300 staff that work at multiple facilities throughout Nueces County.

Introduction

The NCCAA strategic planning workgroup initiated the planning for the final activity in March of 2022. The team used the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs Strategic Planning Guide to organize all activities used in the process.

The workgroup consisted of the Planning and Development Manager, and the two Compliance Officers. The current nationally certified ROMA Implementer provided direction as needed. The Planning and Development team worked together to determine the timeline, facilities, people, and information used for the Strategic Planning Event. Data from the current Self-Assessment, Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment, School Readiness Goals, Program Goals, and the results from multiple surveys completed by the agency stakeholders were used to develop the plan. The surveys were issued to over 300 potential respondents, including public and private sectors, local community partners, and low-income families.

The workgroup was responsible for preparing for the final event and worked together to gather reports, outcomes to goals, and survey responses. Once all the information was collected and explored, a two-day session was planned to evaluate and analyze the data.

The following activities were involved in the planning event:

- Discussion of process and benefits of strategic planning
- Discussion of expected outcomes
- Review of the current Mission Statement
- Discussion of the mandates that govern the agency
- Review of the 2020-2021 Self-Assessment
- Review of the School Readiness Goals
- Review of the Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment
- Review of the Community Services Customer Satisfaction Survey
- Review of the Nueces County Community Action Agency Customer Satisfaction Survey
- Review of the NCCAA Stakeholder Survey Results
- Review of previous Strategic Planning goal outcomes
- Completion of a SWOT analysis
- Determination of Strategic Issues
- Logic Model for the top 5 needs (CNA)
- Determination of objectives and indicators

To ensure that there was a diversity in perspective and interpretation, the following were in attendance:

- Board Members
- Policy Council Representatives
- Executive Management
- Mid Management
- Facility Managers
- Community Services Staff
- Classroom Staff
- Family Advocates

The Mission of Nueces County Community Action Agency

The agency is intentional about using the current Mission Statement; the mission statement is posted in multiple locations at all agency facilities, recited at all agency training, printed on all Board and Policy Council Agendas, and repeated at all governance meetings.

The exercise to examine the mission statement commences with the recitation as an entire group. Group table activities were completed to identify and evaluate the four key elements of a mission statement. Each table was asked to identify the population, services, outcomes, and the relationship in the current statement. The participants determined that the population (whom we serve) was *Nueces County*, the services (what business are we in) is *comprehensive strategies*, the outcomes (what is our purpose) are to *eliminate the causes of poverty* and the final element of relation (who support us) is *partners*.

The panel was also asked to determine if the mission statement was realistic, clear, and easily understood and what image we wanted to convey about our purpose and organization.

There was minimal discussion about the language around eliminating the causes of poverty; there was an explanation that the agency was not trying to eradicate poverty and that there wasn't any individual program that could successfully eliminate poverty. The agency provides strategies to eliminate the situations that cause the essence of poverty. The consensus determined that the mission statement contained all four key elements and was realistic and easily understood. The group majority decided that the current mission statement was effective and should remain as written.

Nueces County Community Action Agency (NCCAA) works with partners to apply comprehensive strategies to eliminate the causes of poverty for the people of Nueces County. The team completed a table activity to discuss and analyze the mandates that govern the agency. The group determined that there were many governing mandates at local, state, and federal. The agency has a monitoring and compliance team that diligently evaluates compliance. The group analyzed the Self-Assessment report and determined that the agency maintains compliance in most areas. The areas of the predominant non-compliances were new procedures developed due to the increase of technology through the COVID-19 pandemic and areas where there was the new staff.

The agency is aware that there are many effects on the agency for not meeting the requirements. The mandates drive quality improvement for the services and ensure health and safety practices for children and staff. The local mandates categorized as policies and procedures are frequently assessed to determine the need and can be changed. Multiple service procedures had to be changed to safeguard services through the challenges of COVID-19.

Ultimately, the organization is in existence to make a difference in the quality of life for the families and children of Nueces County. The agency must comply with the mandates.

Summary of SWOT Analysis

The workgroups completed a SWOT analysis, and the following contains a summary of the identified agency strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Strengths:

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Options to Take Advantage</i>
Process and procedures	Ensure that all staff is trained and knowledgeable of the policies.
Multi-step verification	Continued monitoring to ensure policies are utilized
Multiple services	Market the agency to ensure community awareness
Transparency	Continue to cross-train, and encourage open communication.
Knowledgeable staff and staff development	Maximize skills and organizational performance
Program Management	Continue to implement policies and procedures that ensure success and transparency.
Partnerships	Focus on community partnerships that will create a more comprehensive service capacity
Use of technology	Continue to train and implement evaluative measures.
Active Board of Directors	Regularly scheduled board training to continually increase knowledge.
School Readiness Outcomes	Use client success stories as a motivational message to existing clients.

Weaknesses:

<i>Weaknesses</i>	<i>Options to take Advantage</i>
Communication	Implement a communication tree to ensure consistent information is shared promptly
Staffing / Attendance	Conduct a staff survey to determine the culture
Inconsistency in the implementation of policies	Implement staff training to ensure comprehension of policies
Workman's Comp Injuries	Implements safety and injury prevention program
Time constraints	Ensure that timeline expectations are shared with timely communication of deadlines
Workload understanding/cross-training	Implement a mentoring program to allow for support of the new staff and the opportunity to cross-train
Lack of facilities on the south side	Work with Regional Office to obtain facility grant.
In-kind	Create a Parent Engagement Action plan and request training from regional T/TA
Enrollment	Initiate marketing and referral system for recruitment of families

Opportunities:

<i>Opportunities</i>	<i>Options to take Advantage</i>
Obtaining grants /partnerships	Work with regional office and community partners to supplement
Marketing/ Advertising/ Social Media	Increase community awareness through social media platforms and seek training on the best use of social media and other cost-saving measures.
Recruitment Events	Attend community events, including success stories of current customers
Utilization of industrial growth in the local community	Meet with the local industries to seek donations to supplement grants
Utilization of the Health Advisory Committee	HA members to assist with the provision of health services or supplies.
Secondary Education / Internships	Partnerships with the local colleges for grant writing and marketing projects
Universal Pre-K	Conversion of pre-school enrollment into infant and toddler slots
Local independent school district collaboration	Provide preschool services with a partnership and allow current facilities to be used for additional infant and toddler classrooms

Threats:

<i>Threats</i>	<i>Options to Take Advantage</i>
COVID-19	The staff must be creative and implement the use of technology and educate families about the extra safety precautions.
Limitations/losing/funding	developing new funding streams to provide additional leverage to current and decreasing funding sources
Competitive pay	Provide other workplace benefits when not able to increase hourly salaries
Unqualified staff	Work with the local colleges to develop a placement program to recruit more qualified staff.
Lawsuits	The agency has to take on the added responsibility of providing documentation and preventing lawsuits.
Inflation	Due to inflation, the budget is very restricted. For the customers, the gas prices limit the willingness to drive to a location out of the way.
Staffing	Create a staff retention action plan based on survey results.
Fraud	Provide training on interviewing techniques of customers and potential consequences of fraud for staff.
Disgruntled families	Training all staff in customer service techniques
Competition and hours of private daycares	Strategies methods for increasing service hours in the Birth-to-Five Head Start Program
Cost of marketing	Take advantage of social media and develop a referral incentive program.
Political	Be proactive and plan for budget changes as applicable.

Strategic Issues Identified

The assessment of the weaknesses, opportunities, and threats were completed by determining the strategic issues for the agency.

The group decided the following to be true of the strategic issues.

Staffing is a chronic issue in the agency; there is a lack of qualified applicants, and as a result, the applicant starts in a position that is more stressful than they thought and resign soon after being hired. The agency is challenged to remain compliant due to the lack of staff, and the tenured staff experience frustration, and there is a decrease in productivity. When the agency resolves the staffing concerns, the employees will not suffer from burn-out, be happier and more productive, and attend work regularly. The agency will strive to recruit experienced/educated staff to endure that there is a complete understanding of the expectation of the employees. In-depth training and support will assist with continued staff development.

There is a concern with the workman's comp injuries; the insurance cost is becoming exorbitant. The injured staff cannot complete their assignments and create stress for those employees that receive extra responsibilities. The agency has implemented a safety and injury prevention program with notable results in the first two months.

The Birth-to-Five Head Start Program needs a facility on the south side of Nueces County. The population is shifting, and the program has not been able to provide centers in the area where the children are. The agency is currently working with the Office of Head Start Regional Office to determine the best strategy to move forward. During the event, there was a discussion to create a relationship with the local recently opened refineries to seek future program support. The Birth-to-Five Head Start is currently negotiating with the largest school district in Nueces County to establish a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to collaborate to provide pre-school services.

The agency continues to conceptualize plans to increase low-income housing for the community. There is a significant lack of affordable housing in Nueces County, resulting in long

waitlists, evictions, multiple generations and families residing in inadequate housing, and homelessness. When families are in crisis and lack regular fixed nighttime residency, the entire household struggles with insecurity and trauma. The agency needs additional funds to build housing and expand in Nueces County.

The community needs were evaluated to determine the current programs and services available to address the condition and if current funding sources can meet the need.

The community needs were identified through the following survey.

<https://forms.gle/Ski3KNk5YGCrZv5Y6>

The top five needs in order of priority are

1. The community lacks affordable housing.
2. Families lack affordable childcare for infants and toddlers.
3. Families lack adult education and job skills.
4. Families lack health and well-being literacy.
5. The agency lacks community resources.

Strategic Plan Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Outcomes

Need #1: The community lacks affordable housing.

Goal #1: Assist families in maintaining affordable housing.

Objective: Provide un-structurally sound homes with services to help support affordable housing.

Strategy: Provide weatherization, home preservation, and modification services, reducing the number of energy burdened homes.

Expected Outcome: 40 Households will receive comprehensive energy-efficient services through CEAP/LIHEAP or DOE-funded energy efficiency appliances or weatherization services.

Projected Success Rate: 40 out of 45 or 88% of HH will be alleviated from high energy burden costs while receiving energy-efficient services.

Need #2: Families lack affordable childcare for infants and toddlers.

Goal #1: Provide additional enrollment opportunities for infant and toddler care

Objective: Convert or Expand enrollment slots in the Birth-to-Five Head Start program

Strategy: Apply to convert Head Start into Early Head Start classrooms.

Expected Outcome: 72 Families will enroll in the Early Head Start Program and receive affordable child development services.

Projected Success Rate: 72 of 72 (100%) Families will enroll in the Early Head Start Program and receive affordable child development services.

Need #3: Families lack adult education and job skills.

Goal #1: Assist the families in obtaining job skills to earn a livable wage.

Objective: Increase adult education to assist families in obtaining job skills.

Strategy: Provide case management and adult education services to assist in higher education and job skills training

Expected Outcome: 42 Customers and staff will receive tuition assistance and enroll in higher education programs.

Projected Success Rate: 42 of 52 (81%) Customers and staff will receive tuition assistance and enroll in higher education programs.

Need #4: Families lack health and well-being literacy.

Goal #1: Increase community awareness regarding health and well-being.

Objective: Create a community that is educated about health and well-being.

Strategy: Provide training and resources around social, physical, and emotional well-being.

Expected Outcome: 18 community events/health fairs that will provide training and health, including mental and behavioral well-being.

Projected Success Rate: 18 of 23 (78%) (community events/health fairs that will provide training and health, including mental and behavioral well-being.

Need #5: The agency lacks community resources.

Goal #1: Leverage service through community partnerships.

Objective: Increase the number of working partnerships and memorandums of understanding.

Strategy: Create new connections by establishing contact points through outreach and awareness.

Expected Outcome: 4 additional MOUs or working relationships will be obtained

Projected Success Rate: 4 of 6 (67%) additional MOUs or working relationships will be obtained