



**HEAD START PRESCHOOL
EARLY HEAD START**



**COMMUNITY ACTION
AKRON SUMMIT**

2025/2026 YEAR-END REPORT

55 East Mill Street • PO Box 2000 • Akron, OH 44309 • 330.376.7730
www.ca-akron.org

Message From Malcolm J. Costa, President & CEO



We extend sincere gratitude to our families, board members, community partners, and staff for making the 2025/2026 program year meaningful and successful.

To our families, all of our staff, and our community, thank you for involvement, belief, encouragement, and partnership. Whether through participating in events, serving on committees, or supporting learning at home, your dedication has made a lasting impact on children's growth and success. Your engagement is one of our program's greatest strengths and we celebrate all you have contributed.

To our Board of Trustees, community partners, and other stakeholders, thanks for your collaboration and commitment to supporting children and families. Your partnership has strengthened our services and expanded opportunities for those we serve.

Together, we have built a caring community where children learn, families thrive, and futures are full of promise. We are proud to support parents as they strengthen their families and work toward self-sufficiency goals. Thank you for your trust and continued partnership.

We look forward to all we will accomplish together in the coming year.

Message From Allyson V. James, VP, Head Start & Early Childhood Programs



On behalf of the Head Start Preschool/Early Head Start team, a heartfelt appreciation to everyone who contributed to the 2025/2026 program year's growth, learning, and meaningful accomplishments.

To our Head Start Preschool/Early Head Start children, thank you for your curiosity, creativity, and love of learning. You have shown resilience and growth in so many ways. We are incredibly proud of your achievements.

To those who transitioned to kindergarten, congratulations on this important milestone—we know you are well prepared and will continue to shine.

To our parents, guardians, and families, thank you for entrusting us with your children and for your partnership. Your involvement and encouragement have been essential to their success, helping build a strong foundation for lifelong learning.

To our dedicated staff, thank you for your commitment, compassion, and professionalism. Your efforts have made a lasting difference in the lives of our children and families.

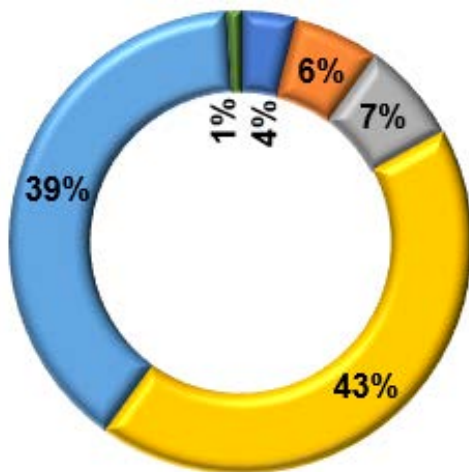
To our valued community partners, thank you for your collaboration and support. Your partnership has strengthened our program and enriched the lives of those we serve.

Head Start Works! We look forward to welcoming returning children and families and meeting new ones in another exciting year ahead.

Enrollment

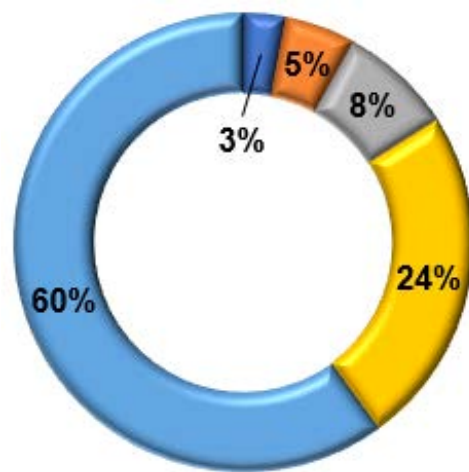
	Funded	Served
Pregnant Women	16	34
Infants and Toddlers (EHS ages 6 weeks - 3 years)	112	133
Preschoolers (HSP ages 3-5)	612	655

Children by Age
(at time of enrollment)



- < 1 Year: 4%
- 1 Year: 6%
- 2 Years: 7%
- 3 Years: 43%
- 4 Years: 39%
- 5 Years: 1%

Primary Eligibility
(at time of enrollment)



- Homeless: 3%
- Foster: 5%
- Over Income: 8%
- Below 100%: 24%
- Public Assistance: 60%

Prior Enrollment

(enrolled in Early Head Start or Head Start Preschool for:)

Early Head Start (EHS)



- 1st Year
- 2nd Year
- 3rd+ Year

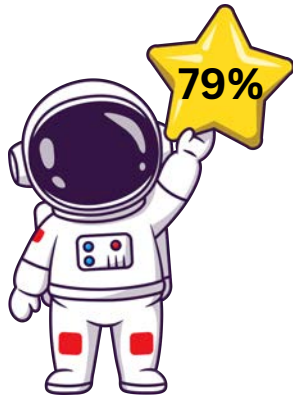
Head Start Preschool (HSP)



- 1st Year
- 2nd Year
- 3rd+ Year

Attendance

Shoot for the Stars. Attendance Matters.



Early Head Start
Infants & Toddlers



Head Start
Preschool

Percentage of children who met
85% or greater attendance goal.



Quality Rated Centers

All **nine** of our Head Start Preschool and Early Head Start Child Development Centers are **Gold Award-rated**! We continue to maintain the highest award rating in Step Up to Quality, Ohio's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.



Education Services

Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment

This is a research-based assessment tool used in early childhood programs to track children's development from birth through kindergarten. It relies on teacher observations to assess progress across key developmental areas such as social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, and math. The percentages below represent the children meeting or exceeding developmental levels for their age range.

Early Head Start



Social
Emotional



Physical
Fine/Gross Motor



Language



Mathematics



Cognitive



Literacy



Head Start Preschool



Social
Emotional



Physical
Fine/Gross Motor



Language



Mathematics



Cognitive



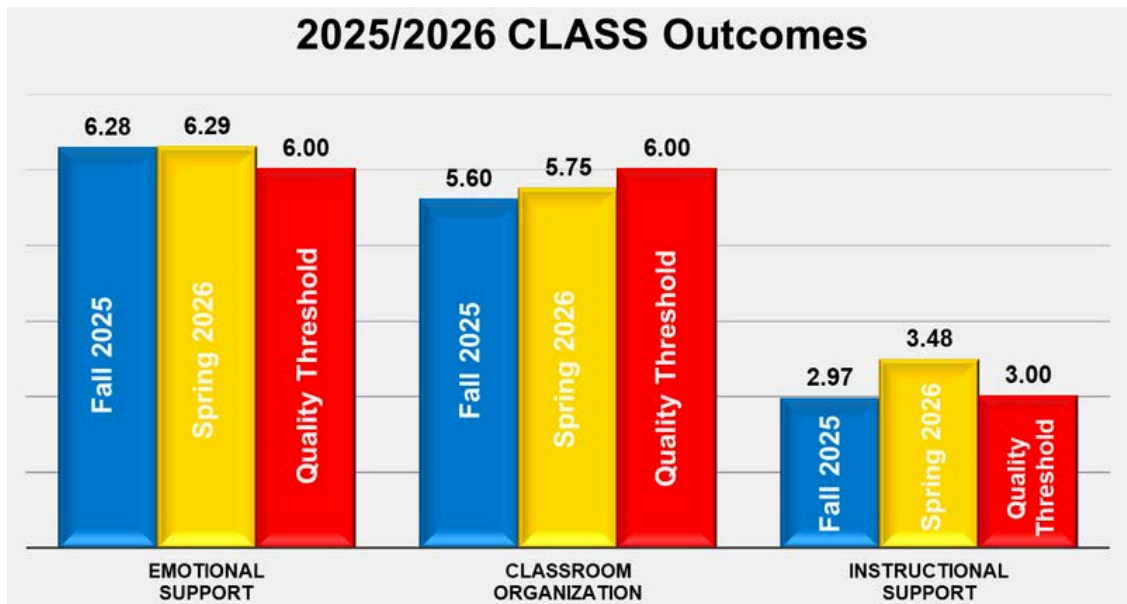
Literacy



Education Services

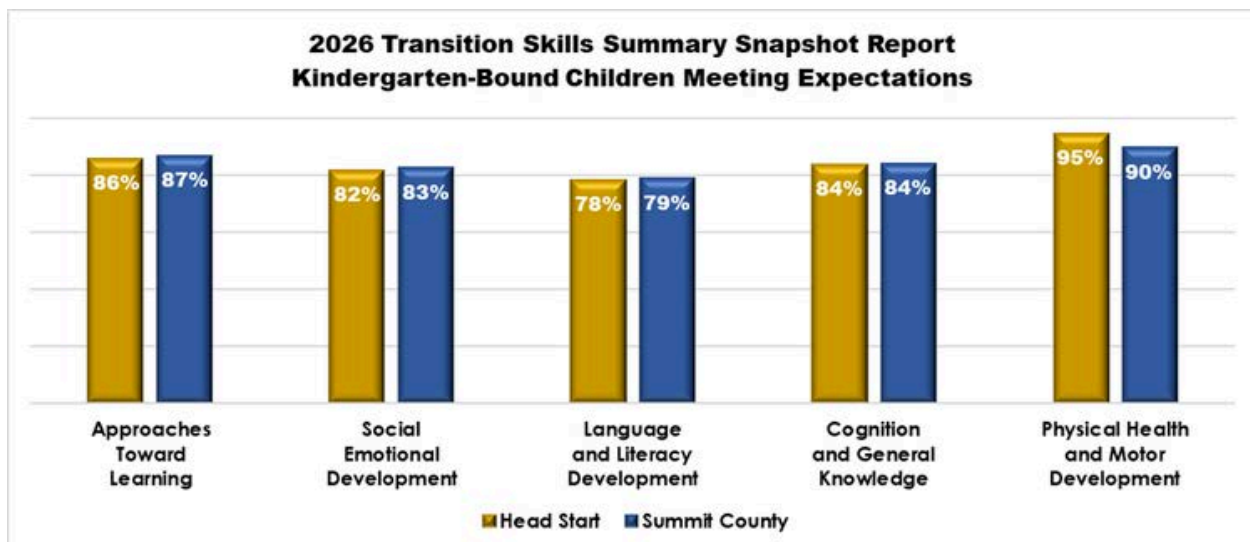
Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)

CLASS assesses teacher-child interactions across three areas, **Emotional Support**, **Classroom Organization**, and **Instructional Support**, using a seven-point observational scale. Below are our Head Start Preschool scores from Fall 2025 and Spring 2026 compared to the Quality Threshold benchmarks.



Kindergarten Transition

Head Start Preschool partnered with Summit Education Initiative (SEI) to complete the Transition Skills Summary (TSS), assessing kindergarten readiness across 47 skills aligned with Ohio's Early Learning Standards. Of **1,757** Summit County children assessed, **290** were Head Start children. The graph below shows the percentage of Head Start Preschool children "On Track" (90% or more of skills) across five key domains compared to all participating children in Summit County.



Education Coaching

Effective Teaching Practices

Practice-Based Coaching is a cyclical process that supports the implementation of effective teaching practices, leading to positive outcomes for children and families. It enhances educators' skills and strengthens classroom practices.

During this school year, **28** teaching staff members participated in coaching. Through this process, educators set goals, implemented action plans, and reflected on their teaching practices to support continuous improvement.

236 Goal Setting Meetings

219 Focused Observations

232 Reflection and Feedback Meetings

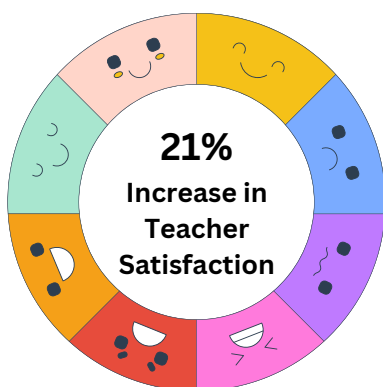
Mental Health Services

Social-Emotional & Behavioral Supports



Through a partnership with Wraparound Experts, LLC, our Head Start Preschool and Early Head Start Mental Health Team provided Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC) services to support children, families, and teaching teams. Services included classroom consultation, coaching, behavior support, and modeling social-emotional strategies to strengthen classroom practices and improve outcomes for children.

Together, we completed **291** classroom observations and consultations, and **237** coaching and modeling sessions. In response to teacher feedback on the mid-year feedback survey, services were adjusted to provide more classroom-based support, direct modeling, and collaborative problem-solving in **five** classrooms with ongoing behavioral concerns.



As a result, teacher agreement that coaching and modeling were effective, and teacher satisfaction increased by **21%**, while confidence in supporting children's social-emotional and behavioral needs increased by **15%** on the end-of-year feedback survey. Additionally, our staff reported greater satisfaction with receiving direct classroom support, practical strategies, and assistance in addressing challenging behaviors.

Disabilities Services

Individualized Learning

During the 2025–2026 program year, we served a total of **77** children with disabilities across our Early Head Start (EHS) and Head Start Preschool (HSP) programs. In EHS, **19** children received services through Help Me Grow, with **16** of their Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) addressing developmental delays and **3** addressing health impairments. In HSP, **58** children received intervention services from the Local Education Agencies (LEAs). Of which, **39** qualified under developmental delay, **13** under health impairments, and **six** under speech impairments. These efforts reflect our ongoing commitment to providing inclusive, individualized support for every child.

Speech & Language Therapy (SLT): Our HSP children and EHS children aged 24 months and older received a developmental speech and language screening. Screening results identified **249** children who required further evaluation. Of those evaluated, **239** children qualified for and received speech and language services during the program year.

19
IFSPs

58
IEPs

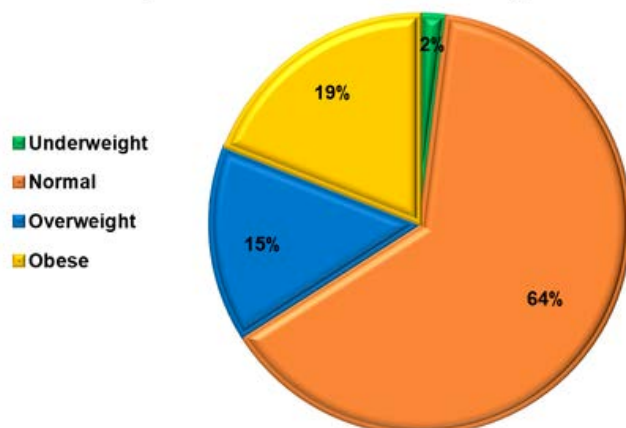
239
SLT

Child Nutrition Services

Encouraging Families to Build Daily Healthy Habits

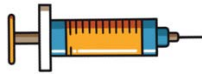
Nutrition services include nutrition assessments, nutritious meals approved by a dietitian, with modifications for children with special dietary needs, and education to empower parents to make healthy choices for themselves and their children. A total of **68,453** breakfasts, **80,705** lunches, and **61,255** snacks were served to children this program year. The growth assessment results for Head Start preschool children are illustrated in the graph below.

Growth Assessments
(Head Start Preschoolers Only)



Health Services

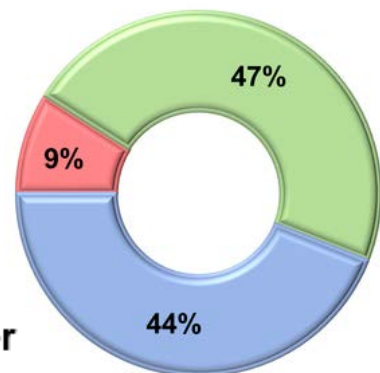
Services to Children

At the end of program participation, children with		EHS	HSP
	Health insurance	100%	100%
	Of these, with Medicaid	94%	95%
	An ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care	100%	100%
	Up-to-date age-appropriate preventive and primary health care	96%	98%
	Up-to-date or received all possible age-appropriate immunizations	96%	98%
	Continuous, accessible dental care provided by a dentist	99%	100%
	Up-to-date age-appropriate preventive/primary oral health care or received preventative treatment	97%	97%

Services to Pregnant Women

Initial Engagement in Early Head Start Pregnant Women Program by Trimester

■ 1st Trimester ■ 2nd Trimester ■ 3rd Trimester



At the end of program participation, pregnant women with



Health insurance	100%
An ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care	100%
Prenatal care during their pregnancy	100%
Parental education (nutrition, oral health, parental depression, fetal development, breast feeding, safe sleep, risks of substance misuse and abuse, and more)	100%

Services to Pregnant Women

Supporting Healthy Pregnancies Through Community and Education

We had a truly wonderful time with our pregnant moms during our **Pregnant Together Tea Program - A Time for Socialization, Mental Health & Wellness Education**. Together, we laughed, sipped tea, learned about enjoying tea during pregnancy and tea etiquette, and shared a delicious afternoon filled with tea, sandwiches, fresh fruit, and meaningful conversation. It was a beautiful opportunity to connect, build community, and focus on wellness.

A heartfelt thank you to our incredible staff, community partners, and supporters who helped make this special event possible:

- Our **Early Head Start Home Visiting Team**—Talecher Love, Delaine Reynolds, and Linda Fox—for the compassionate support and encouragement they provide to the pregnant women in our program every day.
- **Ginger DeFilippo** of the **AmeriHealth Caritas Ohio Bright Start Program** for your continued partnership and sponsorship of activities that uplift, educate, and empower pregnant women.
- **District Chief Sierjie Lash** of the **Akron Fire Department**, for the thoughtful surprise of **Safe Kids Kits**, provided in partnership with **Akron Children's Hospital**.
- **Renea Woods-Baylor and The Tea Lady, Inc.**, and your amazing team for being such gracious hosts and creating a joyful, welcoming, and wellness-focused tea experience.

Tea time was simply marvelous!



Parent & Family Engagement

Family Partnership Goal Setting

Head Start Preschool and Early Head Start staff incorporate family engagement as a strength-based process to build positive relationships in three steps: Family Partnership Agreement, Strengths and Needs Assessment, and Goal Setting. The Parent Family and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework identifies seven family outcomes that research has shown to promote positive child/family outcomes. Our Family Support Specialists work with parents to help identify and develop at least one goal in at least one of the seven areas of the PFCE Framework. This year, **780** families participated in goal setting, of which **94%** of goals were achieved during the program year.

89%

**Family
Well-Being**

89%

**Positive Parent-Child
Relationships**

93%

**Families as
Lifelong Educators**

100%

**Families as
Learners**

86%

**Family Engagement
in Transitions**

99%

**Family Connections to
Peers and Community**

84%

**Families as Advocates
and Leaders**



Parent & Family Engagement

Engaging Fathers and Father Figures

Male engagement is a vital aspect of parent, family, and community engagement. Head Start Preschool and Early Head Start staff actively engage and partner with fathers and father figures as advocates, lifelong educators, and their children's first teachers. Male family members and father figures play key roles in the healthy development of their children and families and have much to contribute to their Head Start communities. Through dedicated activities and events, our male involvement increased by **64%** this program year compared to the previous year.

307 Father/Father figures participated in early learning development experience (i.e., Parent/Teacher Conferences, Home Visits, Home-School Connections, and Classroom Activities)

101 Father/Father figures engaged in Family Goal Setting
116 Father/Father figures engaged in the program Family Assessment

66 Father/Father figures engaged in Parent Educational Workshops
9 Father/Father figures participated in Program Governance (i.e., Policy Council or Center Policy Committees)

Conscious Discipline Parent Education

Parents participated in the Conscious Discipline Parent Education four-week series titled "Positive Parenting." The curriculum is designed to strengthen parenting skills, promote positive family relationships, and support children's social-emotional development.

Branden and Monica Rossman participated each week, sharing how they incorporated the strategies they learned with their children. Branden shared: **"Teaching my children that there are other things to do with their hands besides hitting. I will get down on one knee, take their hands in mine, and clap them. They begin laughing. This has transformed my relationship with my kids. I came from a broken home, and this class has changed me in just four weeks, and how I interact with my children. Thank you so much!"**

Branden's experience highlights the program's impact on strengthening parent-child relationships, supporting families, and fostering stronger home-school partnerships.



Parent Experience Survey

Survey Highlights

The 2025/2026 Parent Experience Survey was conducted in May 2026. We achieved an outstanding response rate of **100%** among families enrolled in our Early Head Start Services for Pregnant Women program and **97%** among our Head Start Preschool and Early Head Start families.

Feedback from our parents and families is essential to our continuous program improvement efforts. It helps ensure that we provide high-quality learning experiences for children while fostering positive and meaningful experiences for all families. We sincerely thank all of our parents and families who took the time to share their feedback about their Head Start Preschool and Early Head Start experiences. Input from our parents and families plays a vital role in strengthening our programs and supporting the success of the children and families we serve.



94%

of Early Head Start Pregnant Women agreed they felt supported during their participation in the program during pregnancy and following childbirth through building relationships and connecting with community resources.



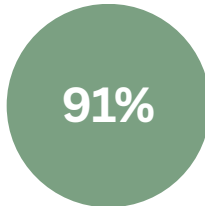
100%

of Early Head Start Pregnant Women expressed satisfaction with the referrals provided to support their pregnancy and families.



88%

of Head Start Preschool and Early Head Start families expressed satisfaction with referrals and resources.



91%

of families felt the program was helpful by providing early intervention support and in preparing their children to begin kindergarten.



92%

of Head Start Preschool and Early Head Start families, felt their parent engagement experience was positive. These experiences came from their participation in Parent Meetings, Classroom Volunteering, Head Start Policy Council, reading to their children, etc.

Parent Partner Spotlight

Leitza Burgos - Policy Council Chairperson

Leitza Burgos exemplifies the true spirit of parent leadership and service in Head Start.

As an extraordinary parent volunteer, Ms. Burgos currently serves as Chairperson of the Head Start Parent Policy Council, and as a parent representative on the Community Action Akron Summit Board of Trustees. She has represented Head Start at the National Head Start Conference and the State Association Annual Professional Development and Leadership Conference, continually expanding her leadership, learning, and advocacy skills.



Whether volunteering her time, elevating her voice, partnering with staff, or supporting fellow families, Ms. Burgos is always willing to serve. Her unwavering commitment to improving opportunities for all children and families in the Head Start program makes her an inspiring emerging leader and a valued Parent Partner. We are grateful for her dedication and the positive impact she continues to make in our Head Start community.

Community & Volunteer Investment

The Heart of Head Start Preschool/Early Head Start

The success of Head Start Preschool and Early Head Start is built on the dedication, generosity, and partnership of our parents, families, stakeholders, and community partners. Your time, expertise, and resources create meaningful opportunities for children and families by strengthening early childhood education, expanding access to comprehensive health and family support services, and fostering brighter futures for our communities.

Community and volunteer engagement remain at the heart of everything we accomplish. We are deeply grateful to our parents and families, as well as our valued partners—including our Board of Trustees, Head Start Policy Council, and the many school districts, community agencies, social service, mental health, and health care organizations and providers—whose commitment, collaboration, and volunteer service make our mission possible.

Together, your investment creates lasting impact for children and families. The snapshot below reflects the remarkable contributions and collective support that continue to strengthen our Head Start Preschool and Early Head Start community.

3,353
Hours

**Community Partners
& Volunteers, and
Stakeholders**

61,871
Hours

**Parent/Families
Volunteers**

11,095
Hours

**Foster Grandparents
Volunteers**

\$3,137,026
Value

**Non-Federal Match
Approximate Value
(Includes In-Kind Contribution)**

Program Funding, Assessment, and Monitoring

Revenue by Source

Fiscal Year 2025 - July 1, 2025 - May 31, 2026

Revenue by Other Source	Total Grant Budget	Total Expended
Federal Operating Funds	\$ 15,214,152.00	\$ 15,214,152.00
Non-Federal Share	\$ 3,803,538.00	\$ 3,137,026.33
Subtotal	\$ 19,017,690.00	\$ 18,351,178.33
USDA- CACFP Nutrition (10/1/2025-5/31/2026)	\$ 704,162.35	\$ 637,933.25
Private Donations	\$ 6,234.36	\$ 2,132.55
Renovation Project Arlington Building (9/1/2024-5/31/2026)	\$ 1,838,645.00	\$ 320,349.09
Renovation Project Wyley Building (9/1/2024-5/31/2026)	\$ 1,753,841.00	\$ 281,354.93
Total Revenue	\$ 23,320,572.71	\$ 19,592,948.15

Explanation of Budgetary Expenditures

Fiscal Year 2025 - July 1, 2025 - May 31, 2026 (Federal Operating Funds & Non-Federal Share)

Budget Categories	Total Grant Budget	Total Expended
Personnel	\$ 9,238,566.00	\$ 8,225,172.05
Fringe Benefits	\$ 2,601,040.00	\$ 3,811,015.83
Travel	\$ 23,835.00	\$ 0
Equipment	\$ 0	\$ 0
Supplies	\$ 866,523.00	\$ 521,073.17
Contractual	\$ 761,182.00	\$ 632,373.20
Construction	\$ 0	\$ 0
Other	\$ 1,557,982.00	\$ 1,904,448.42
Training and Technical Assistance	\$ 165,024.00	\$ 120,069.33
Subtotal	\$ 15,214,152.00	\$ 15,214,152.00
Non-Federal Share	\$ 3,803,538.00	\$ 3,137,026.33
Total	\$ 19,017,690.00	\$ 18,351,178.33

Buildings Renovation Project

The project is funded for the period of September 30, 2024, through September 29, 2026. Total expended amount reported is through 5/31/2026. No significant changes are anticipated to the renovation projects for the Arlington Head Start and Wyley Early Head Start buildings during this project period.

Proposed Revenue by Sources & Operating Budget FY2026

For FY2026 (June 1, 2026–May 31, 2027), no significant changes are anticipated in Head Start/Early Head Start funding for program operations, comprehensive service delivery, training and technical assistance, or ongoing professional development for staff and parents. The proposed budget will continue to support the effective use of federal resources to ensure high-quality services and achieve positive outcomes for children and families.

Results of Most Recent Financial Audit

The financial audit is taken to the Board annually for approval. The Independent Auditor's report by Wipfli, through December 2024 indicated no findings or questioned costs.

Self-Assessment & Federal Monitoring

The annual self-assessment, completed on January 30, 2026, evaluated progress toward program goals, compliance with Head Start regulations, and school readiness goals. The Policy Council approved the results on March 19, 2026, and the Board of Directors on March 27, 2026. No federal program monitoring review conducted during fiscal year 2025.

ENROLLING NOW

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DESERVES
A
HEAD
START**



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July 2026