

Tri-County Community Council Inc.
Head Start/Early Head Start
Annual Report
2020-2021



MISSION

Investing in children today for a better tomorrow.

VISION

Partnering with families and communities to reach our full potential.

PHILOSOPHY

You cannot make a positive difference in the lives of children without partnering with the whole family and the communities in which they live. We support parents as the primary educators of their children. We encourage their involvement at all levels of Head Start through volunteering in the classroom, participating on committees and advisory groups, and aiding in policy making through the Policy Council.

We ensure safety in a stimulating environment. We promote developmentally appropriate practices, family literacy, children's health and nutrition through sound practices and partnering with healthcare providers. We teach all domains of early learning to ensure success in school.



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Program Overview

Tri-County Community Council Head Start/Early Head Start is a federally funded, early childhood program that serves children age birth to five. Our Head Start program serves 203 preschool children from age three to five. The Early Head Start education service is provided in both center-based and home-based options. We serve 24 children in center-based and 12 children in home-based. In the home-based program, staff promotes learning by using the setting in which children spend the majority of their time in the home. The home visitor helps parents to better understand how simple household items and everyday experiences enhance learning. In center-based the teacher/caregiver promotes learning within the daily routine of care and by changing the environment as children learn new skills.

Our program uses Creative Curriculum, Partnering with Healthy Families, CLASS, Missouri Infant/Toddler Responsive Caregiving, ECERS/ITERS and our School Readiness goals to support children's growth and development in a positive learning environment. Our program uses the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, Creative Curriculum, and Partnering with Healthy Families to plan early learning activities for the children.

We also use supplemental resources to enhance the curriculum. The curriculum plan includes goals for children's readiness for school, the materials and individualized learning experiences through which children will achieve the goals, and what staff and parents will do to help the children. The play environment is set up to be responsive to the different temperaments, learning styles, language and cultural backgrounds of children in our program. Lesson plans include goals and objectives from the five domains of learning: Approaches to Learning, Social and Emotional Development, Language and Literacy, Cognition and Perceptual, Motor and Physical Development. The program's curriculum and assessment tool aligns with the domains of learning to ensure that children are making progress toward their expected goals. We use the CLASS™ and Missouri Infant/Toddler Responsive Caring tool to observe interactions between children and adults. We use information from Ages & Stages, Battelle Developmental Inventory (BDI), Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment (TSG), ongoing observation and information from the child's parents during home visits and parent conferences to determine how the program can meet each child's individual strengths and needs. Staff uses this information to set up the environment and determine the kinds of experiences they will offer based on their knowledge of each child and of the group of children. Staff provide purposeful learning moments that match children's needs to ensure on-going development and positive child outcomes. Head Start prepares children to be successful in kindergarten and beyond.

Families play a critical role in helping their children to prepare for school and a lifetime of academic success. It matters when programs engage parents and families in their children's development and learning. In fact, research indicates that:

- Children with supportive home learning environments show increased literacy development, better peer interactions, fewer behavior problems, and more motivation and persistence during learning activities.
- Among the youngest children, daily parent-child reading from infancy prompts cognitive skills as well as early vocabulary gains that lead to more reading and vocabulary growth, a pattern of growth that has been compared to a snowball.
 - Continued family engagement is important through the school years. Longitudinal studies of low-income children show that high family involvement offsets the risks of children growing up in a low-income household and in households with low parent education.

When parent and family engagement activities are systemic and integrated across program foundations and program impact areas, family engagement outcomes are achieved. This results in children who are healthy and ready for school. Parent and family engagement activities succeed when they are grounded in positive, ongoing, and goal-oriented relationships with families. Positive family engagement leads to positive child outcomes.

2020-2021 School Year Update

This has been a very challenging year. There was difficulty hiring staff, uncertainty of purchasing needed supplies, extra duties the staff had added to their regular job, as well as having to shut down on a few occasions. We were able to open our Head Start classrooms up at half-capacity and Early Head Start at full capacity. We also offered Head Start families virtual opportunities if not comfortable with in-person service. We opened our classrooms with safety in mind.

We did the following – check temperatures, limiting visitors, performing extra cleaning, eating in the classrooms, keeping classrooms together and not mingling with the other classrooms to name a few. We followed the CDC and Health Department guidelines to the extent possible. As the year went on, we were able to start adding more children for in-person services and were able to provide some family activities. Our staff and families have been troopers enduring and working through all the challenges we faced.

Our program could not do it without the faithfulness of staff and the trust of the families to send their children to our program. We understand that the challenges will continue for awhile and we will do what is needed to provide the safest learning environment for the children.

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OUR STAFF AND FAMILIES.

We cannot do this without you.



Sites & Staff

At each Head Start site there is a teacher and a teacher assistant for each classroom, a cook, center coordinator, family service advocate, and one site has a family service advocate/floater. One site also has a cook assistant, two sites also have center assistants, and one site has a part-time assistant. At Early Head Start there are two caregivers in each classroom, a cook/floater, a center coordinator, and a home visitor. There are five program coordinators, two specialists, an administrative assistant, a director's assistant, one floater/Extended care, and a director that support the centers. There are a total of 60 staff members.



CEEC
908-B Hwy 90 W.
DeFuniak Springs, FL 32433 32 children, 2 classrooms, 7 staff
Phone: (850) 892-6144



Chipley Head Start
1264 South Blvd.
Chipley, FL 32428 20 children, 1 classroom, 4 staff
Phone: (850) 638-9800



Early Head Start
265 S. 18th Street
DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435 36 infant, toddlers, and pregnant
Phone: (850) 951-0464 women, 3 classrooms, 10 staff



Walton Head Start
268 S. Davis Lane
DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435 74 children, 3 classrooms, 14 staff
Phone: (850) 892-7635



Westville Head Start
2499 Cypress Street
Westville, FL 32464 77 children, 4 classrooms, 15 staff
Phone: (850) 548-5630

On-Site Monitoring

FY 2021 Head Start Monitoring Protocols

Head Start monitoring protocols are used by the Office of Head Start (OHS) to gather data and other information to assess grantee program operation and performance. Reviews are held for the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®), Focus Area One, and Focus Area Two. OHS uses the information collected during reviews to understand the grantee's approach to program design and services. The information is also used to evaluate their performance and continuous program improvement.

FY 2021 CLASS®

The Pre-K Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) is an observation tool used to analyze and assess the effectiveness of interactions between children and teachers in preschool classes. Data from CLASS® observations can be used for a variety of purposes, including professional development, program improvement, policy-making, and monitoring.

FY 2021 Focus Area One Monitoring Protocol

Purpose - Focus Area One is an opportunity for grantees to discuss their program design, management, and governance structure. This focus area is designed to develop an understanding of each grantee's foundation for program services. Grantees will describe approaches to staffing structure, program design, health services, family services, fiscal infrastructure, and program governance.

FY 2021 Focus Area Two Monitoring Protocol

Purpose - Focus Area Two is an opportunity for grantees to demonstrate their effectiveness in implementing a high-quality program to promote positive outcomes and school readiness for children and their families. This focus area is designed to broaden our understanding of each grantee's performance and to determine if programs are meeting the requirements of the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS), Uniform Guidance, and Head Start Act.

Website - <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc>

On-Going Monitoring Results

Our program received the Focus Area One Monitoring Protocol in February 2020. The results were received and there were three areas of concern. The concerns were that two of our caregivers did not have their CDA and one teacher does not have a degree or CDA. The two caregivers have received their CDA and a waiver has been requested for the teacher to continue to work towards her degree.

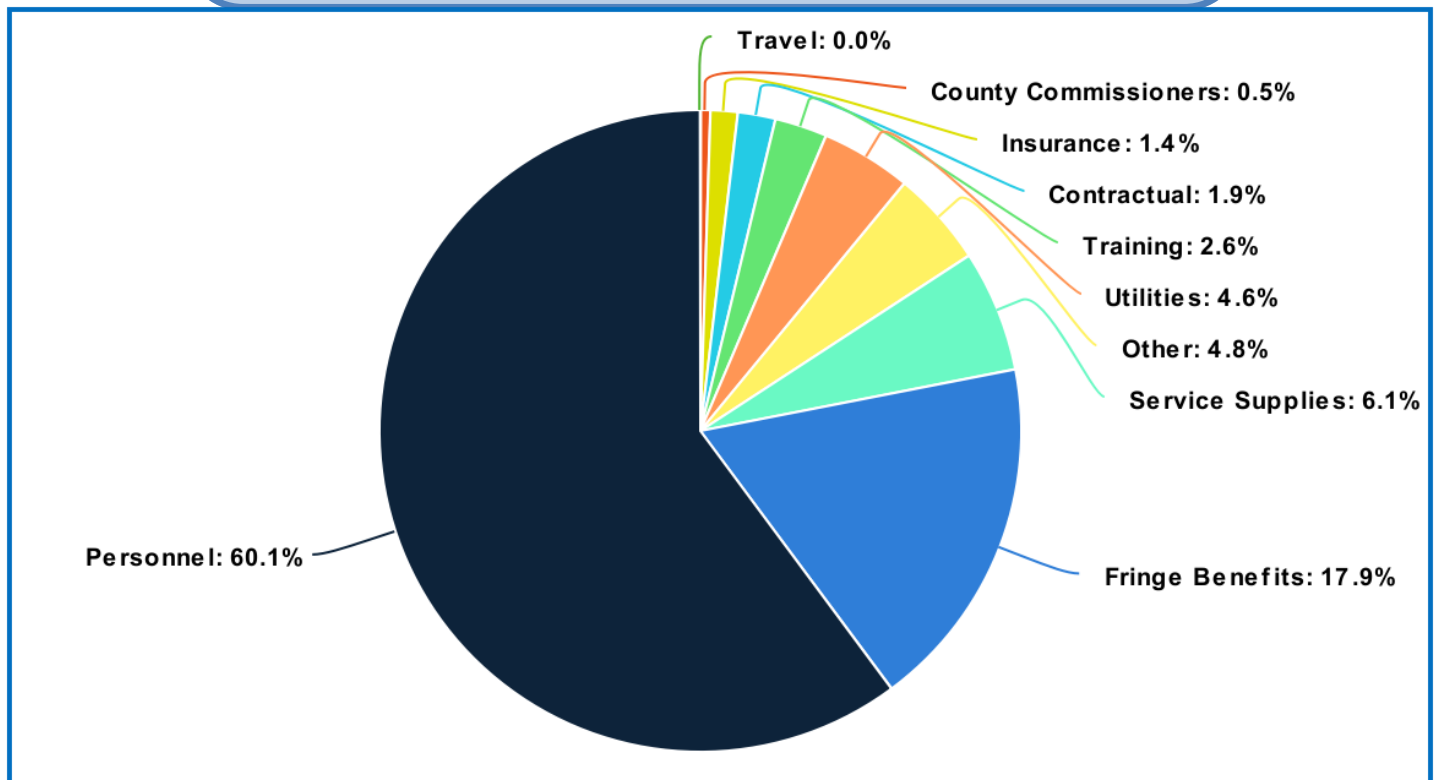
Annual Audit Results

Tri-County Community Council undergoes an annual audit which includes the Head Start/Early Head Start program. There were no findings during our most recent annual audit.

Head Start Budget Expenditures 2019-2020

Head Start

Federal Funds \$1,921,520
 Non Federal Share \$68,608
 Public funds:
 Board of County Commissioners \$9,400



■ Travel
 ■ County Commissioners
 ■ Insurance
 ■ Contractual
 ■ Training
■ Utilities
 ■ Other
 ■ Service Supplies
 ■ Fringe Benefits
 ■ Personnel

| Personnel | Fringe Benefits | Other | Service Supplies | Utilities | Contractual | Training | Insurance | Travel | County Commissioners |
|-------------|-----------------|----------|------------------|-----------|-------------|----------|-----------|--------|----------------------|
| \$1,161,374 | \$346,270 | \$93,232 | \$118,158 | \$87,992 | \$36,697 | \$51,146 | \$26,226 | \$425 | \$9,400 |

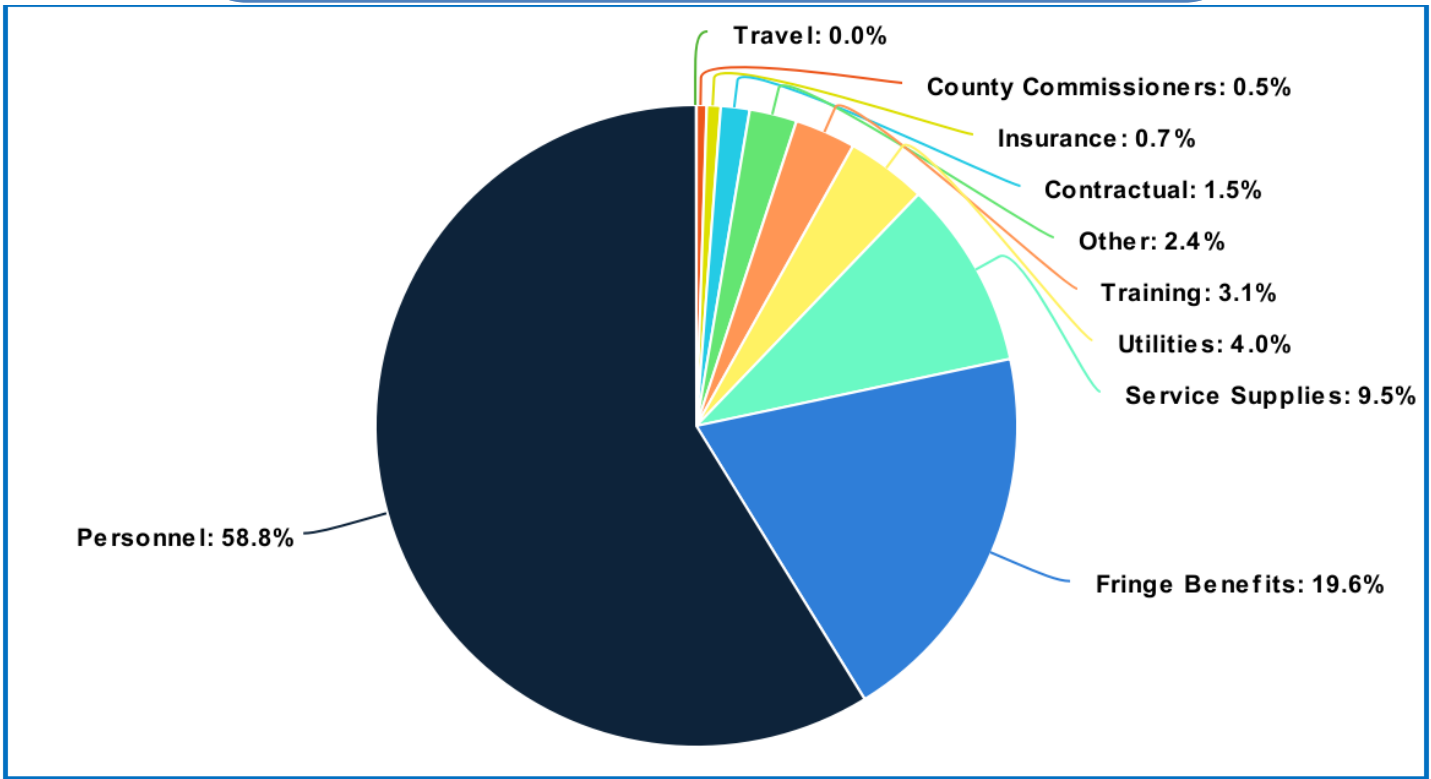
Our Head Start/Early Head Start fiscal year begins December 1st and ends November 30th.

Our program received a non-federal share waiver this fiscal year in the amount of \$389,352.

Early Head Start Budget Expenditures 2019-2020

Early Head Start

Federal Funds \$469,271
 Non Federal Share \$13,122
 Public funds:
 Board of County Commissioners \$2,400



■ Travel
 ■ County Commissioners
 ■ Insurance
 ■ Contractual
 ■ Other
■ Training
 ■ Utilities
 ■ Service Supplies
 ■ Fringe Benefits
 ■ Personnel

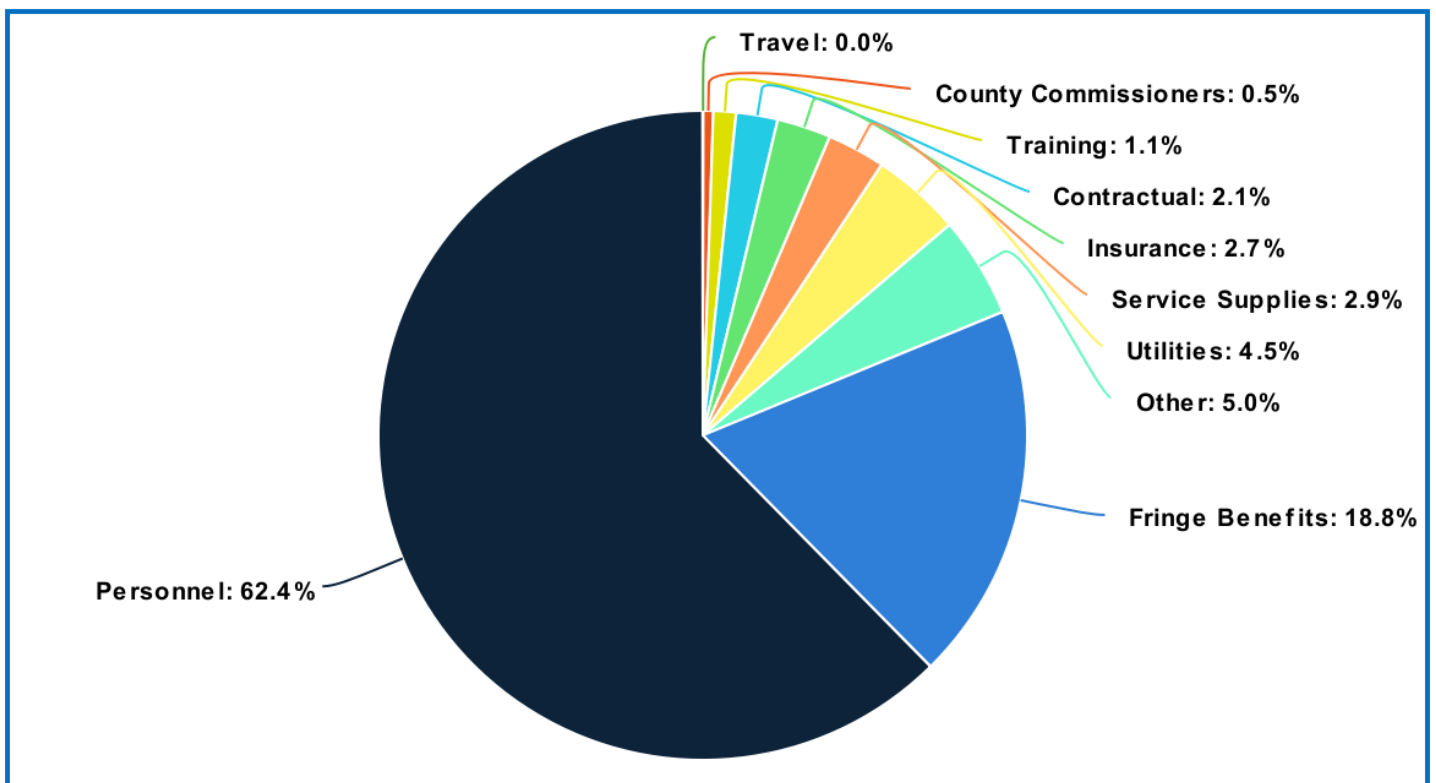
| Personnel | Fringe Benefits | Other | Service Supplies | Utilities | Contractual | Training | Insurance | Travel | County Commissioners |
|-----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|-----------|-------------|----------|-----------|--------|----------------------|
| \$277,235 | \$92,317 | \$11,286 | \$44,709 | \$19,065 | \$6,843 | \$14,487 | \$3,279 | \$50 | \$2,400 |

Our program received a non-federal share waiver this fiscal year in the amount of \$98,591.

Projected Head Start Budget 2021-2022

Head Start

Federal Funds \$1,945,204
 Non Federal Share \$486,301
 Public funds:
 Board of County Commissioners \$9,600



■ Travel
 ■ County Commissioners
 ■ Training
 ■ Contractual
 ■ Insurance
■ Service Supplies
 ■ Utilities
 ■ Other
 ■ Fringe Benefits
 ■ Personnel

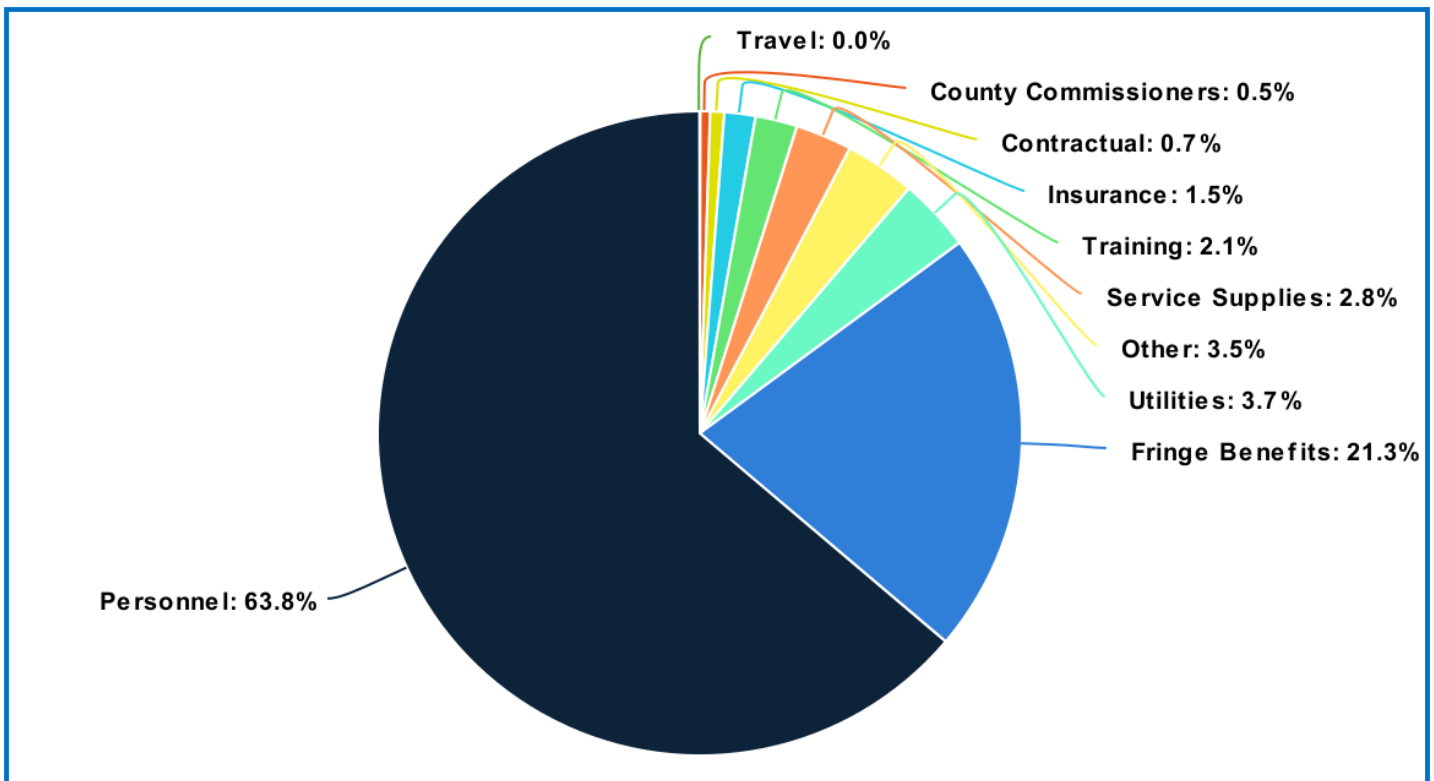
| Personnel | Fringe Benefits | Other | Service Supplies | Utilities | Contractual | Training | Insurance | Travel | County Commissioner |
|-------------|-----------------|----------|------------------|-----------|-------------|----------|-----------|--------|---------------------|
| \$1,219,510 | \$367,943 | \$98,270 | \$56,570 | \$87,105 | \$40,373 | \$22,316 | \$52,617 | \$500 | \$9,600 |

Our fiscal year begins December 1st and ends November 30th. Our school year begins July/August through May for Head Start and July for Early Head Start. Due to the timeframe of when our fiscal year and school year begin our expenditures are reflective of our budget year ending November 30th. Our projected budget will begin December 1st. A non-federal share waiver is being requested in the amount of \$486,301.

Projected Early Head Start Budget 2021-2022

Early Head Start

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Federal Funds | \$474,359 |
| Non Federal Share | \$118,590 |
| Public funds: | |
| Board of County Commissioners | \$2,400 |



- Travel
- County Commissioners
- Contractual
- Insurance
- Training
- Service Supplies
- Other
- Utilities
- Fringe Benefits
- Personnel

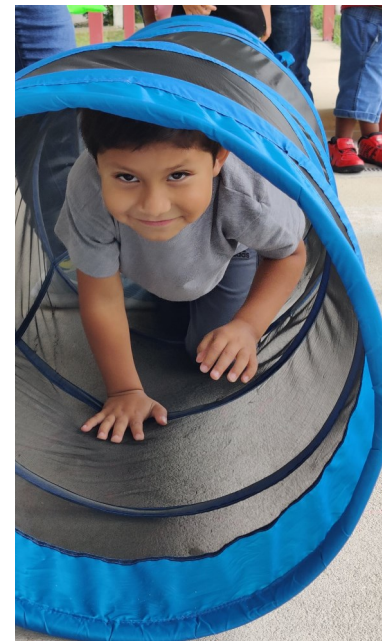
| Personnel | Fringe Benefits | Other | Service Supplies | Utilities | Contractual | Training | Insurance | Travel | County Commissioners |
|-----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|-----------|-------------|----------|-----------|--------|----------------------|
| \$304,901 | \$101,535 | \$16,850 | \$12,600 | \$17,575 | \$3,357 | \$10,041 | \$7,400 | \$100 | \$2,400 |

Our fiscal year begins December 1st and ends November 30th. Our school year begins July/August through May for Head Start and July for Early Head Start. Due to the timeframe of when our fiscal year and school year begin our expenditures are reflective of our budget year ending November 30th. Our projected budget will begin December 1st. A non-federal share waiver is being requested in the amount of \$118,590.

Head Start Annual Program Performance Indicators



| | |
|---|--------|
| Funded enrollment | 203 |
| Number of children served | 169 |
| Average daily attendance | 84% |
| Children with a diagnosed disability | 22 |
| Number of volunteers | 350 |
| Of the volunteers the number of current or former parents | 144 |
| Children projected to enter kindergarten 2020-2021 | 72 |
| Meals served | 50,635 |



Serving Families and Children

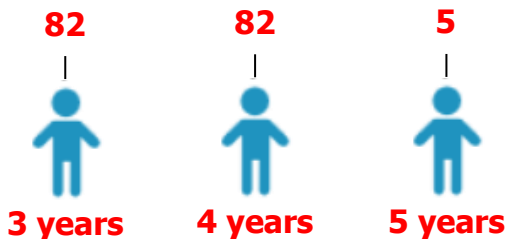
- 147 Families were served
- 16 Families are homeless
- 2 TANF
- 136 Children with families that earn less than 100% of the federal poverty level
- 7 Foster
- 8 Over Income

Spoken Language

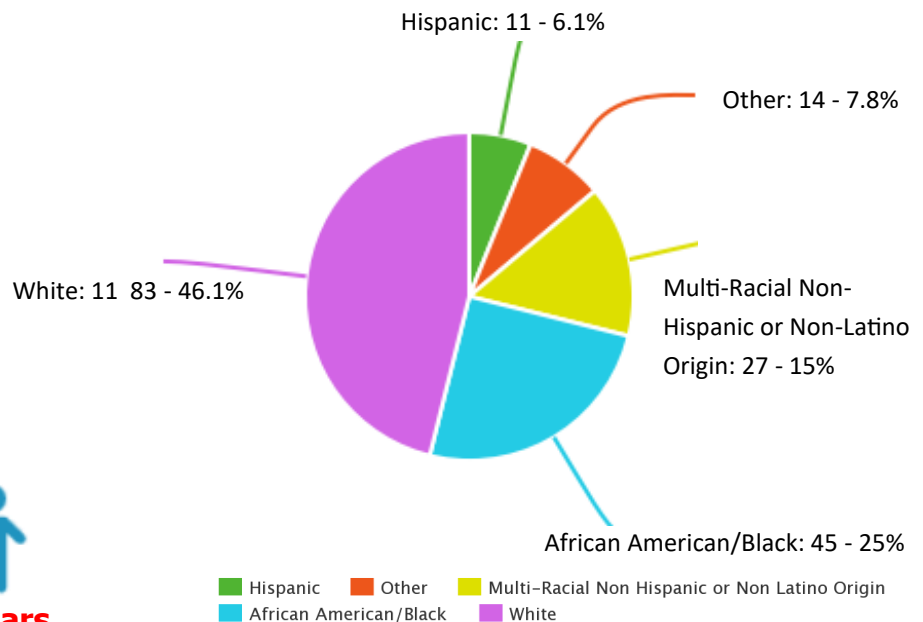
English 93%
Spanish 7%

Children per Center

- CEEC-32
- Chipley-20
- Walton-74
- Westville-77



Racial Demographics



Early Head Start Program Performance Indicators



| | |
|---|-------|
| Funded enrollment | 36 |
| Number of children served | 43 |
| Number of Pregnant women served | 2 |
| Average daily attendance | 74% |
| Children with a diagnosed disability | 5 |
| Number of volunteers | 100 |
| Of the volunteers the number of current or former parents | 36 |
| Children transitioning to Head Start | 7 |
| Meals served | 9,893 |



Serving Families and Children

- 36 Families served
- 3 families are homeless
- 39 children with families that earn less than 100% of the federal poverty level
- 1 Over income
- 2 Foster

Spoken Language

English 98%

Spanish 2%

12
|

Under 1 year

14
|

1 year

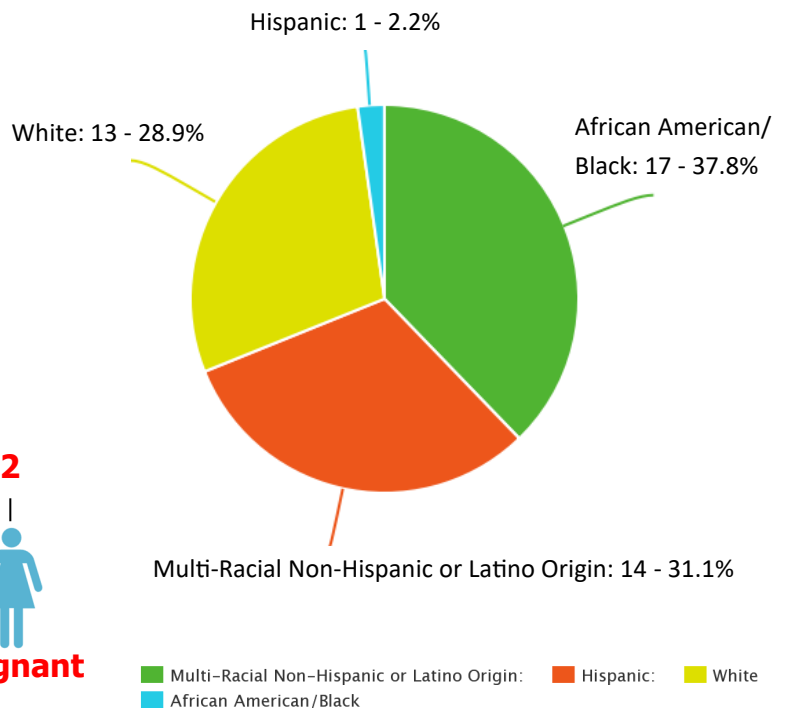
17
|

2 years

2
|

Pregnant women

Racial Demographics



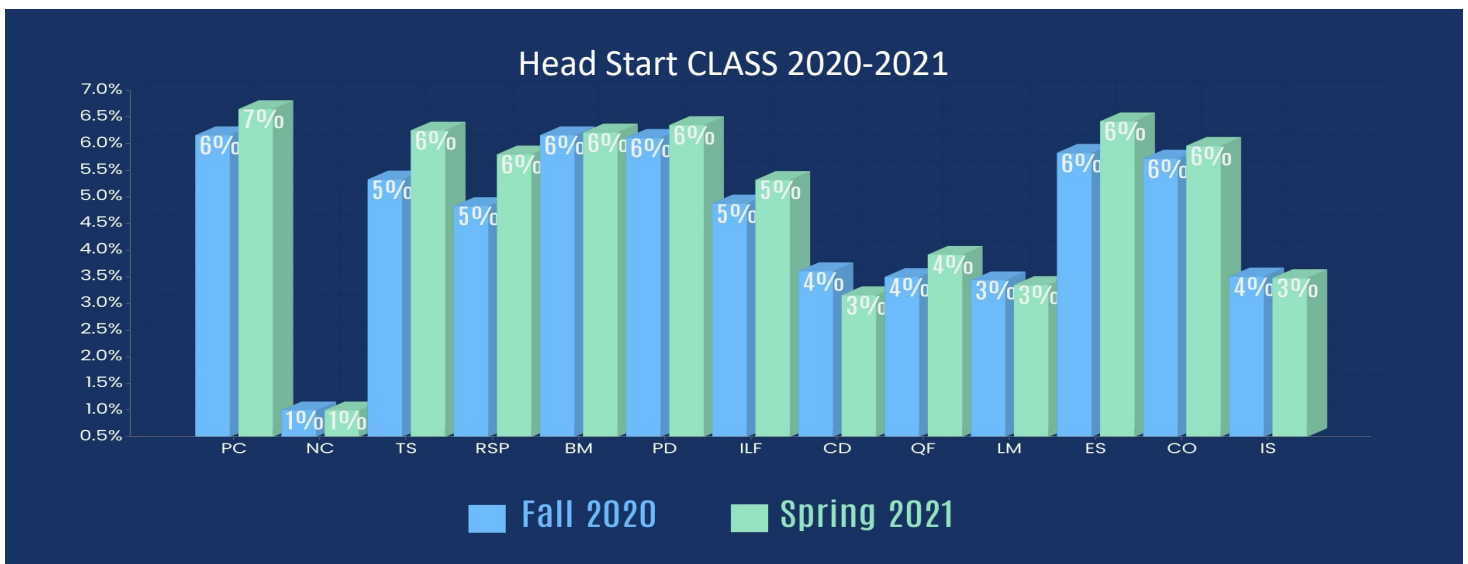
CLASS

Measuring Interactions with CLASS

Tri-County Head Start uses the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). The CLASS is a valid and reliable instrument developed at the University of Virginia (Pianta & Hamre).

This observation instrument focuses more on process quality such as high quality teacher-child interactions rather than environment quality. The three domains covered by the CLASS include emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support. These three domains are comprised of 10 specific dimensions of child-teacher interactions. Observations consist of a minimum of four observation cycles lasting approximately two hours. Observers assign scores (1-7) based on teacher-child and peer-peer interactions with an emphasis on the teachers.

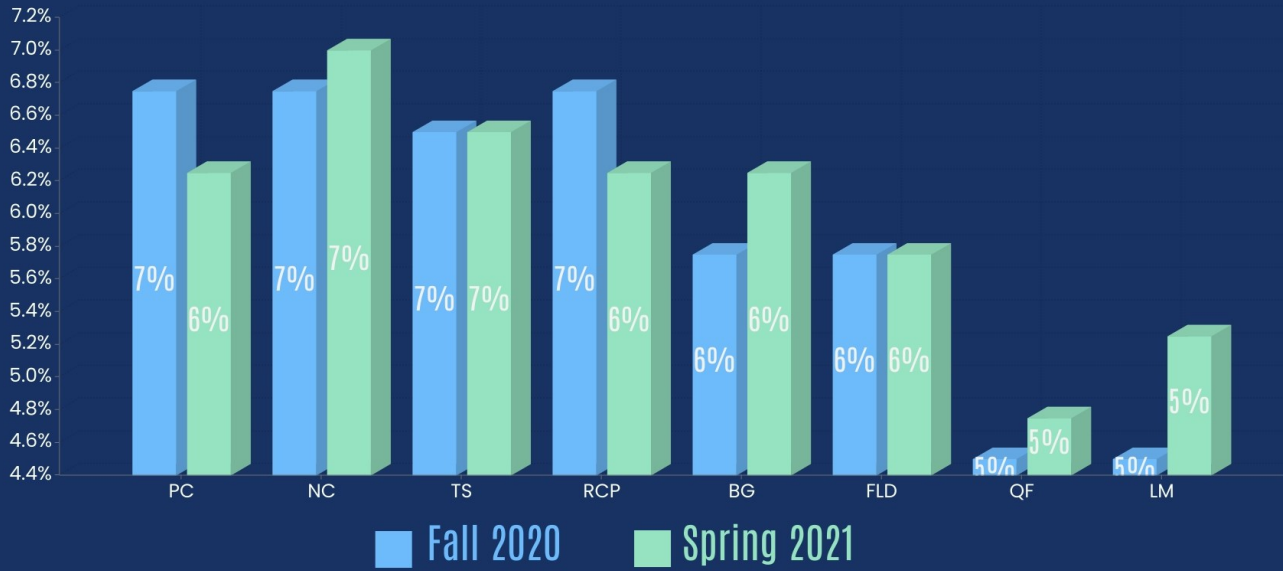
CLASS findings are used in the development of training needs for the classroom staff. The graphs below illustrates Tri-County Head Start's scores for Fall 2020 and Spring 2021.



| | PC | NC | TS | RSP | BM | PD | ILF | CD | QF | LM | ES | CO | IS |
|-------------|------|----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Fall 2020 | 6.16 | 1 | 5.33 | 4.83 | 6.16 | 6.11 | 4.88 | 3.61 | 3.5 | 3.44 | 5.83 | 5.72 | 3.51 |
| Spring 2021 | 6.65 | 1 | 6.25 | 5.8 | 6.21 | 6.35 | 5.32 | 3.16 | 3.92 | 3.35 | 6.42 | 5.96 | 3.48 |

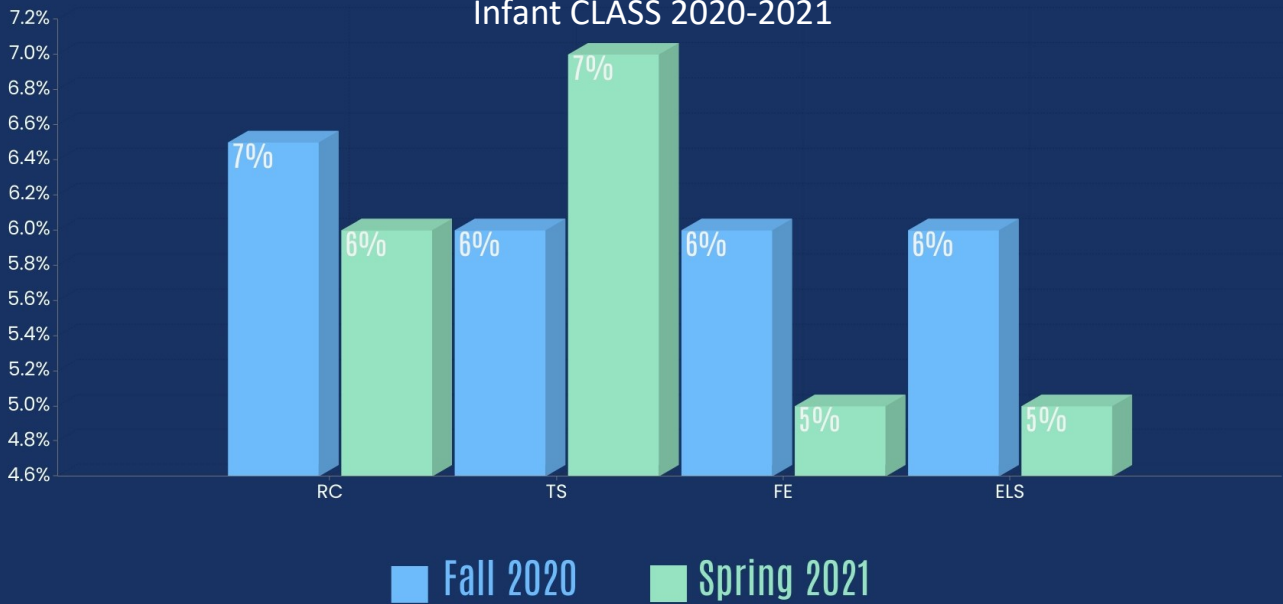


Toddler CLASS 2020-2021



| Toddler CLASS | PC | NC | TS | RCP | BG | FLD | QF | LM |
|---------------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|
| Fall 2020 | 6.75 | 6.75 | 6.5 | 6.75 | 5.75 | 5.75 | 4.5 | 4.5 |
| Spring 2021 | 6.25 | 7 | 6.5 | 6.25 | 6.25 | 5.75 | 4.75 | 5.25 |

Infant CLASS 2020-2021

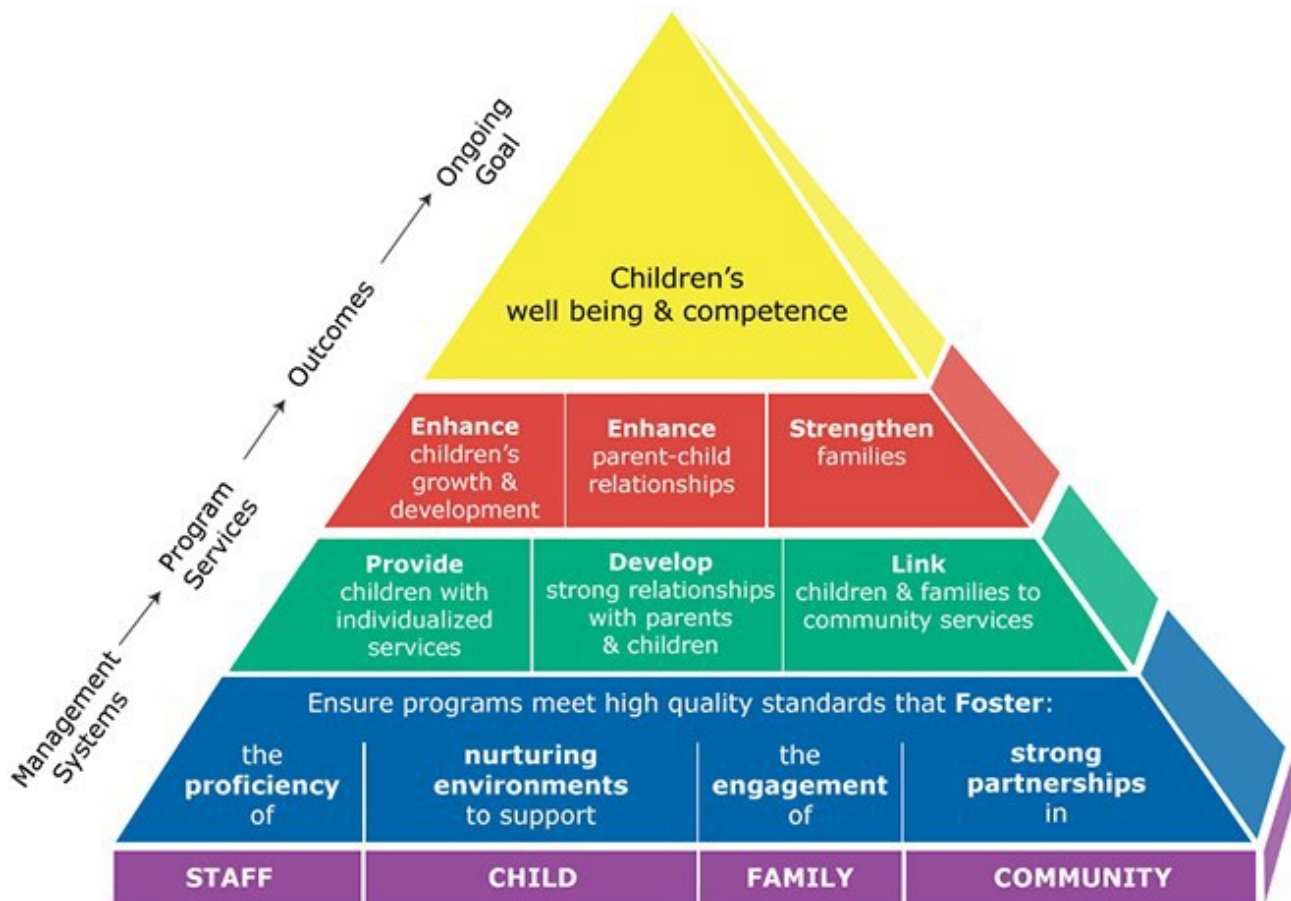


| Infant CLASS | RC | TS | FE | ELS |
|--------------|-----|----|----|-----|
| Fall 2020 | 6.5 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| Spring 2021 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 5 |

Learning Outcomes Framework

This is the newly revised Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. This new Framework is grounded in a comprehensive body of research regarding what young children should know and be able to do during these formative years.

| CENTRAL DOMAINS | | | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| | APPROACHES TO LEARNING | SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT | LANGUAGE AND LITERACY | COGNITION | PERCEPTUAL, MOTOR, AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT |
| ▲ INFANT/TODDLER DOMAINS | Approaches to Learning | Social and Emotional Development | Language and Communication | Cognition | Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development |
| ● PRESCHOOLER DOMAINS | Approaches to Learning | Social and Emotional Development | Language and Communication Literacy | Mathematics Development Scientific Reasoning | Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development |



Visit <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc> for more information on Head Start's Early Learning Outcomes Framework.



Tri County Head Start

Fall 2020-Winter 2021 Developmental Data Analysis

According to the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) “Head Start views school readiness as children possessing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in school and for later learning and life. Implementing and measuring progress toward school readiness goals helps programs individualize for each child and ensure that children know and can do what is needed to be ready for kindergarten.”

This Comparative Report is generated from checkpoint data associated with the objectives for development and learning for the prek-4 age group. The report scores readiness based on Social Emotional, Physical, Language, Cognitive, Literacy and Mathematical development and is a comparison of the Fall 2020-21 and Spring 2020-21 checkpoint periods as based on widely held expectations.

Teaching Strategies Gold defines the term *widely held expectations* describes the range of knowledge, skills, and abilities that children of a particular age or class/grade typically demonstrate over a year of life (birth through age 3) or from the beginning to the end of a program year (preschool 3, pre-K 4, kindergarten, first grade, second grade, third grade). These widely held expectations are based on the latest research in early childhood education, are demonstrated in the progressions for *GOLD® Objectives for Development and Learning 1–23* and are used to help determine if a child's (or group of children's) knowledge, skills, and abilities are below, meeting, or exceeding their age or class/grade's expected range of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Comparative Percentages Based on Widely Held Expectations (See Figure 1)

Social Emotional Development

According to ECLKC, “Social development refers to a child’s ability to create and sustain meaningful relationships with adults and other children. Emotional development is a child’s ability to express, recognize, and manage his or her emotions, as well as respond appropriately to others’ emotions.” Gold measures social and emotional development based on things such as the child’s ability to interact well with others, manage feelings, and take care of their own needs in an appropriate manner. Data shows in the Fall of 2020 when it comes to meeting the widely held expectations, 26% of the children were below in this ability while 74% were meeting or exceeding this ability. For the spring checkpoint period 15% were below and 85% were meeting or exceeding. The numbers show an improvement in meeting or exceeding of 15% in social emotional development.

Physical Development

Physical development refers to the child’s ability to use both gross and fine motor skills. These skills must be developed so children are able to complete everyday tasks in life such as walking, balancing, manipulating objects, and using writing tools. At the beginning of the school term 12% of the children were below in this skill while 88% were meeting or exceeding in this skill. For the spring period the number below decreased to 8% while those accomplishing grew to 92%. This shows a 4.5% improvement in accomplishment in physical development.

Language Development

In the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF) introduction to language and literacy, it says, "Communication is fundamental to the human experience and language and literacy are essential to children's learning." Language development is measured by the child's ability to comprehend language, follow directions, use expanding vocabulary, speak clearly, talk about another time or place, engage in conversations, and use the social rules of language. In the Fall of 2020 27% of the children were below in language development with 73% meeting or exceeding. Data from Spring 2021 shows 19% of the students were below and 81% were meeting or exceeding. This is an 11% increase in the language development among Head Start students.

Cognitive Development

Preschool cognitive development deals with studying a child's thinking and reasoning abilities. Teaching Strategies Gold measures if the child is attentive and engages during class time. Does the child persist in completing tasks and can he/she solve problems? Children should also show curiosity, be able to recognize and recall and make connections. Flexible thinking is another important component of cognitive development. This type of thinking helps children consider alternative possibilities, encourages them to find ways to resolve conflict, and solve problems with the tools and materials they have access to. During the fall checkpoint 38% of the children were below in cognitive development with 63% meeting or exceeding. By the spring checkpoint 73% show meeting or exceeding in this area. When comparing fall data to winter data, 15% improvement in those exceeding in cognitive development.

Literacy

Research has shown that children who do not learn to read and write by the end of the primary grades (3rd grade) are at risk for school failure. Effective instruction in the early years have a large impact on literacy development in children since listening, speaking, reading, and writing develop interdependently in children. Teaching Strategies Gold allows tracking of each of these areas. In the Fall of 2020 36% of the children in the Tri-County program were below in literacy development. At the spring checkpoint that number dropped to 22% with 78% meeting or exceeding in this area.

Mathematics

Studies show that a child's mathematical knowledge in kindergarten is an indicator of the future of success in mathematics throughout their school years. Children must be exposed to the skills of problem solving, reasoning, communication, making connections, and representing to learn mathematics. To have a solid foundation in math, children must be able to use number concepts and operations, explore and describe spatial relationships and shapes, compare and measure, and demonstrate knowledge or patterns. At the beginning of the school year, 46% of the program children were below in mathematic skills. At the spring checkpoint, 20% were below and 80% were meeting or exceeding in this skill.

Comparison of Meet/Exceed and Path Forward (See Figure 2)

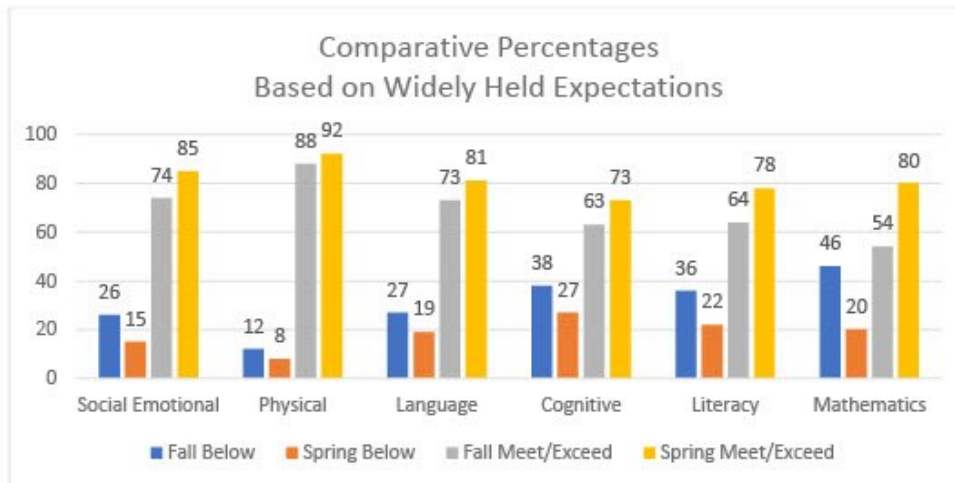
When examining the data for Fall 2020 and comparing it to the data for Winter 2021 an upward trajectory is noticed. While these are the desired results, they cannot be thought of as the ending results. Cognitive, Literacy and Mathematical development will need concentrated focus as the organization moves forward. This will mean increased teacher training in these developmental areas. Further analysis of individual classroom data will help determine specific areas of training need for each

teacher. The education team will work together to tailor individualized training for each teacher with classroom results falling below 85% meet/exceed.

It is important to note the impact of COVID-19 has presented a unique set of challenges to the organization. Special consideration will have to be given to the mode of individualized training as the organization works to keep all teachers and students safe. Most of the training will have to be offered virtually.

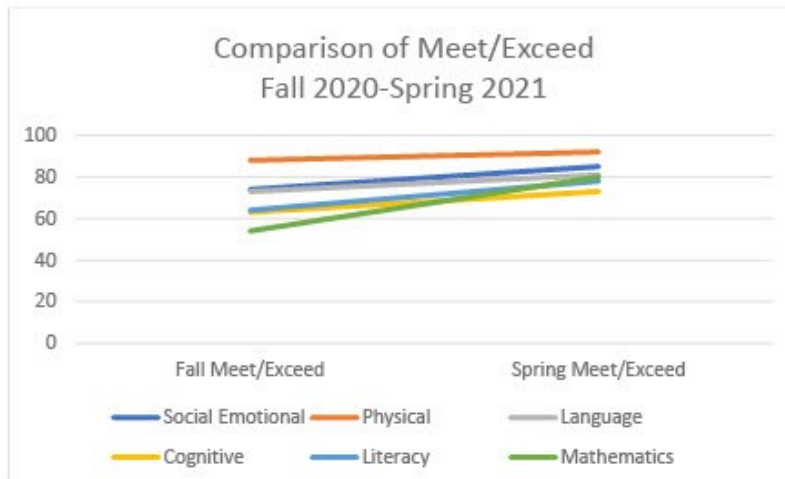
Assistance will be given in moving each classroom to curriculum fidelity (applying all aspects of the curriculum fully and correctly in the learning environment.) This move will ensure all developmental areas are covered in the classroom and assist with the improvement process. Training will also be offered on collecting and entering data to ensure accuracy in resulting reports.

Figure 1: Comparative Percentages Based on Widely Held Expectations.



Data obtained from Teaching Strategies Gold Fall 2020-Spring 2021 Checkpoint periods for Tri County Head Start.

Figure 2: Comparison of Meet/Exceed from Fall 2020-Winter 2021



Data obtained from Teaching Strategies Gold Fall 2020-Spring 2021 Checkpoint periods for Tri County Head Start.



Tri County EHS Head Start Fall 2020-Spring 2021 Developmental Data Analysis

According to the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) “Head Start views school readiness as children possessing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in school and for later learning and life. Implementing and measuring progress toward school readiness goals helps programs individualize for each child and ensure that children know and can do what is needed to be ready for kindergarten.”

This Comparative Report is generated from checkpoint data associated with the objectives for development and learning for the prek-4 age group. The report scores readiness based on Social Emotional, Physical, Language, Cognitive, Literacy and Mathematical development and is a comparison of the Fall 2020-21 (beginning of the year) and Spring 2020-21 (end of the year) checkpoint periods as based on Teaching Strategies widely held expectations.

Comparative Percentages Based on Widely Held Expectations (See Figure 1)

Before reviewing this data, it is important to note for Early Head Start children “Not Yet” achieving a level of development may be appropriate for their age. For instance, when looking at Mathematics it may appear infants and toddlers are above average in this developmental area. However, a 1-year-old would not be able to count and therefore “not yet” is developmentally appropriate. A 1-year-old not able to count would be meeting this objective based on widely held expectations. This analysis will exam data results of those meeting and exceeding expectations at the beginning of the year compared to end of the year results (See Figure 2).

Social Emotional Development

Social and emotional development is a foundational area of development that sets the stage for later growth and learning. Head Start plays an essential role in supporting infants’ and toddlers’ emotional functioning. Helping young children learn to express a range of emotions and to begin to recognize and interpret the emotions of others begins with nurturing and responsive interactions. Infants and toddlers should begin to understand they are a part of a community of caring adults. In the Fall of 2020 20% of EHS children were below in this area of development with 80% meeting or exceeding. Spring of 2021 shows 19% below with 81% meeting or exceeding.

Physical Development

Physical development refers to the child’s ability to use both gross and fine motor skills. These skills must be developed so children are able to complete everyday tasks in life such as walking, balancing, manipulating objects, and eventually using writing tools. EHS data shows 15% of the children were below expectations at the beginning of the year with 85% meeting or exceeding. Spring data shows 19% were below and 81% were meeting or exceeding.

Language Development

According to Teaching Strategies, it is important to develop receptive language in children. This enables children to comprehend what they hear and includes listening to, recognizing, and understanding the

communication of others. Tri County Early Head Start 25% of children were below expectations in the fall and 42% below at the end of the school year. The data also shows 75% of the children were meeting or exceeding expectations at the beginning of the year but the number decreased by 23% by the end of the school year.

Cognitive Development

According to the CDC, cognitive or brain development means the learning process of memory, language, thinking, and reasoning. Children should demonstrate positive approaches to learning, remember and connect experiences, use classification skills, and use symbols and images to represent something that is not present (for example, a block for a cell phone). In the fall of 2020 85% of EHS children met or exceeded the expectations for cognitive development. By the Spring of 2021 that percentage rate dropped to 81%. This is almost a 5% decrease in meeting or exceeding expectations for cognitive development.

Literacy

Research has shown that children who do not learn to read and write by the end of the primary grades (3rd grade) are at risk for school failure. Literacy learning begins at birth. It is important to note that children from middle-class families are read to, on average, 1000 hours before the age of 5. Children of families living in poverty have been read to about 25 hours during that same span of time (Teaching Strategies Gold). Head Start services children at or below the poverty level, so a focus on literacy is crucial to the future success of those enrolled in our program. EHS saw an increase in literacy from 85% to 88% among those meeting or exceeding. This is a gain of 3.5% in this area.

Mathematics

According to Teaching Strategies, research has made a clear link between early math skills and later school reading and math success. Studies have found that early math skills have the greatest predictive power of future mathematics success throughout the school years. This is followed by reading and attention skills. EHS children met the expectations for mathematics at a rate of 75% in the fall of 2020 and increased to a rate of 81% in the spring of 2021. This is an increase of 8%.

EHS Path Forward

While EHS is able to show gains in math and literacy, the drop in language and cognitive development presents some challenges. It is more than possible the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted these areas as the center faced several closures along with some child attendance issues.

As Early Head Start moves forward, and the pandemic showing no signs of slowing, strategies will have to be put in place to navigate the effects of the pandemic. Tri County Early Head Start will need to develop a plan for meeting these key areas of development among EHS children whether the center is open or closed. How this will take effect will require further planning and strategizing by the education team, the center coordinator, and the teaching staff. Further training of all staff on family engagement, and implementation of that training will be crucial. Families will need to be provided with tools and strategies they can use at home to help their child exceed developmental expectations.

Figure 1: Comparative Percentages Based on Widely Held Expectations. Data obtained from Teaching Strategies Gold

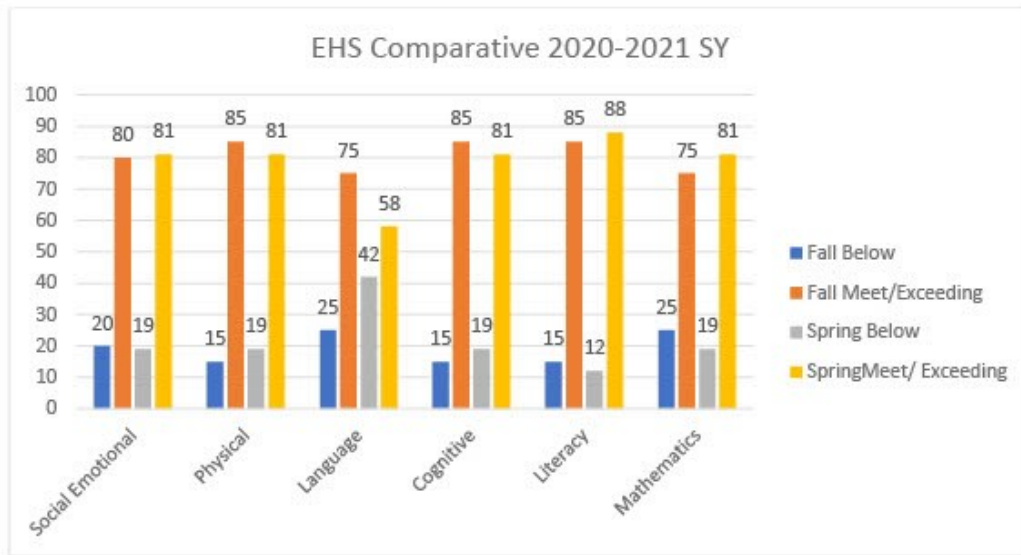
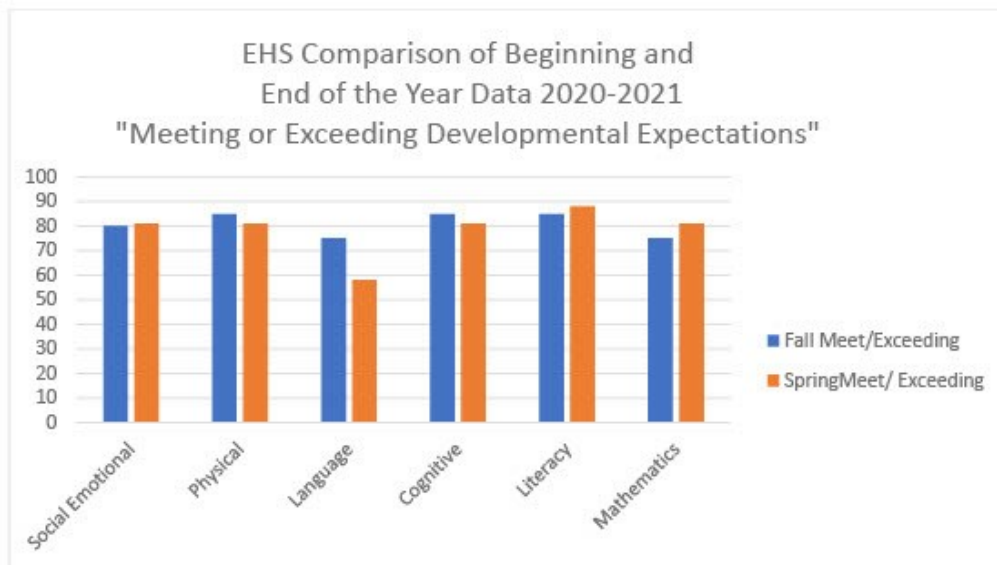


Figure 2: EHS comparison of Beginning and End of the Year Data 2020-21 "Meeting or Exceeding Developmental Expectations." Data obtained from Teaching Strategies Gold



Teaching Strategies GOLD[®] is an authentic, observational assessment system for children from birth through kindergarten. It will help you get to know children well: what they know and can do, and their strengths, needs, and interests. With this information, you can scaffold children's learning as you offer engaging experiences that help children build on their strengths and interests.

Teaching Strategies GOLD[®] blends ongoing, authentic, observational assessment across all areas of development and learning with intentional, focused, performance-assessment tasks for selected literacy and numeracy objectives. You collect evidence of children's knowledge, skills, and behaviors during meaningful everyday experiences in your program setting. The system is inclusive of children with disabilities, children who are developing typically, and children who demonstrate competencies beyond typical developmental expectations. It also supports the assessment of children who are English- and dual-language learners.

Teaching Strategies GOLD[®] recognizes that young children's development is uneven, that it changes rapidly, and that development and learning are interrelated and overlapping. The assessment system may be used with any developmentally appropriate curriculum; it is not linked exclusively to a particular curriculum.

The primary purposes of the *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] assessment system are to help you

- observe and document children's development and learning over time
- plan instruction and scaffold children's learning
- identify children who might benefit from special help, screening, or further evaluation
- report and communicate with family members and others

The secondary purposes are to help you

- collect and gather child outcome information as one part of a larger accountability system
- provide reports to administrators to guide program planning and professional development opportunities

Teaching Strategies GOLD[®] is not a screening or diagnostic tool, a readiness or achievement test, or a teacher- or program-evaluation tool. For accountability purposes, the information obtained should be used as just one part of a larger system of collecting data for decision making.

COPA[®] is a tracking program designed for Head Start to track PIR items, absences, CLASS scores, and various information that is necessary for data input and tracking.

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System[®] (CLASS) is a research-based observation tool used to help teachers and schools improve the effectiveness of classroom interactions.

The CLASS Lens

- Reflects the complexity of classrooms
- Provides a common language for teachers, coaches, observers, and administrators.
- Measures effective teacher-child interactions











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