

LAKE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT R-1

The Center  
Early Childhood Programs  
&  
Head Start

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2023-2024**

## The Center Early Childhood Programs & Head Start: 2023-2024 Annual Report

### Mission

Our mission is to serve and respect children and families by providing research-based early childhood services that promote the development of knowledge, life skills and self-esteem.

### About The Center

In 2023-2024, The Center operated six integrated preschool classrooms with children from all programs and backgrounds represented. All children learn respect for self and others and are prepared with skills and resources for success in both school and life. The Center believes that families are a child's first and most important teacher and makes developing relationships with families a priority.

**HEAD START** is the largest and best-known federal early childhood program. Head Start provides comprehensive education, physical and mental health, nutritional, and family development services with an emphasis on prevention and early intervention for eligible children ages three to five years. Ninety-three percent of the 44 families served in Head Start in Lake County have income at or below 130% of the federal poverty line or are otherwise categorically eligible, and 11% were identified with special needs. Head Start helps children enter Kindergarten ready for success in school, while also building strong relationships between families and schools.

~~**COLORADO PRESCHOOL PROGRAM** served 75 three and four-year-old children and their families with identified academic and other risk factors. Children and families receive many of the same services that are provided for Head Start families, including health and developmental screenings, family supports, and opportunities for parent involvement.~~

**UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL PROGRAM** served 45 four-year-old children and their families in the year before they are age-eligible for kindergarten. All four-year-old children receive at least 15 free hours of preschool and those with additional risk factors for school readiness can receive up to 30 hours of free preschool time per week. In addition, three-year-old children with risk factors, including being served on IEPs, may receive some free preschool time. Children and families receive many of the same services that are provided for Head Start families, including health and developmental screenings, family supports, and opportunities for parent involvement

**TUITION-BASED PRESCHOOL** serves children three and four year olds and their families on a sliding scale fee schedule. Families receive the same services as children enrolled in the Universal Preschool Program.

**CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS** ages three and four receive their services at The Center in an inclusive preschool setting.

**UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL (UPK)**—UPK offers a number of hours of free preschool services to children in the year before they are eligible for kindergarten and to some qualifying 3-year-olds, based on factors included in a family’s application. The application process for families in the UPK system began in the spring of 2023, with programming set to begin in the fall of 2023.

**EARLY HEAD START** is a Federal initiative providing child development and parent support services to low-income pregnant women and families with children birth to 3 years old. EHS home-based services offer home visits and group socialization activities for parents and their children. Ninety-three percent of the 13 families served in Head Start in Lake County have income at or below 130% of the federal poverty line or are otherwise categorically eligible, and none were identified with special needs.

Major Funding Received by The Center: FY2024

**Federal:**

Head Start \$746,360

**State:**

Universal Preschool Program \$366,291

**Private:**

Temple Hoyne Buell \$35,000

A.V. Hunter Trust \$10,000

Head Start FY2024 Budget

<b>Head Start Personnel</b> , including salaries & fringe benefits	\$549,820
<b>Head Start Training &amp; Technical Assistance</b> , including teacher education & professional development	\$9,083
<b>Head Start Other Expenses</b> , including medical, utilities, supplies	\$35,776
<b>Early Head Start Personnel</b> , including salaries & fringe benefits	\$128,926
<b>Early Head Start Training &amp; Technical Assistance</b> , including teacher education & professional development	\$2,848
<b>Early Head Start Other Expenses</b> , including medical, utilities, supplies	\$19,907
<b>Total Grant Amount</b>	<u>\$746,360</u>

### Proposed Head Start FY2025 Budget

<b>Head Start Personnel</b> , including salaries & fringe benefits	\$563,582
<b>Head Start Training &amp; Technical Assistance</b> , including teacher education & professional development	\$9,083
<b>Head Start Other Expenses</b> , including medical, utilities, supplies	\$35,776
<b>Early Head Start Personnel</b> , including salaries & fringe benefits	\$132,424
<b>Early Head Start Training &amp; Technical Assistance</b> , including teacher education & professional development	\$2,848
<b>Early Head Start Other Expenses</b> , including medical, utilities, supplies	\$19,907
<b>Total Grant Amount</b>	<u>\$763,620</u>

The Center operates through a braided funding model that allows services to be offered through a wide spectrum of sources. This year was the second year of our Core Knowledge Language Acquisition implementation and a continuation of our Early Head Start home visiting program.

Our financial records as of June 2023 were audited as part of the wider standard audit of all local, state, grand and federal funds at Lake County School District. Suggestions made by the auditors are being included in discussions around continuing improvement and enhanced transparency. A copy of this audit is available on the Lake County School District website at <https://www.lakecountyschools.net/about-us/financial-transparency/> or can be provided upon request.

### Head Start Facts

Total number of children served in Head Start, 2023-2024: 44  
Total number of children served in Early Head Start, 2023-2024: 15  
Total number of families served in Head Start, 2023-2024: 44  
Total number of families served in Early Head Start, 2023-2024: 13  
Percentage of eligible families served in Head Start: 100%  
Percentage of eligible families served in Early Head Start: 100%  
Average monthly Head Start enrollment: 94%  
Average monthly Early Head Start enrollment: 54%  
Average monthly Head Start attendance: 84%  
Total number of Early Head Start visits and check ins: 149  
Percentage of Head Start children receiving medical exams: 100%  
Percentage of Early Head Start children receiving medical exams: 93%  
Percentage of Head Start children receiving dental exams: 100%

Percentage of Early Head Start children receiving dental exams: 80%

### Opportunities for Family Engagement

The Center provides many opportunities for parent and family involvement, including:

- Family Fun Nights: At least 5 events throughout the year offering educational activities for parents and children to do together and opportunities to connect with and enjoy community resources. Parents have the opportunity to assist with planning these events via the Parent Activity Committee.
- Parenting classes: Offered in partnership with Full Circle of Lake County
- Home Visits: Offered twice a year
- Parent/teacher conferences: Offered twice a year
- Policy Council: Part of our shared governance approach, parents can serve on the Policy Council and influence program policies and goals, and budget development.
- Program committees: Including health services, family and community partnerships, and education.
- Take home practice packs: Allowing parents to participate in the curriculum directly with their child. Emphasize activities for learning, not worksheets.
- Special events: Catered to families' needs and interests.
- Interpretation Services: There are bilingual staff members available for our many Spanish speaking families to participate in events and activities.

### Family Engagement Highlights

Opportunities for Family Engagement are programmed to meet the needs of families with diverse work schedules and transportation needs. In-school celebrations generally include an October costume party, Thanksgiving Lunch, Winter Holiday party, Valentine's Day party, and end-of-the-year celebrations. These festive events are always very well attended.

Families are also invited to accompany classrooms on field trips throughout the year and have occasionally visited the public library, a bank, local parks, and the post office. Practice Packs describe activities that families can do together at home to further their educational goals for their child. Supplies are offered for families who request them. These include making a family tree, cooking projects, and easy ways to encourage early literacy.

Committee meetings are scheduled with the input of families who express interest in serving on those committees. Family Fun Nights (Parent Committee Meetings) are held in the evenings, so parents who work during the day may attend. Some of these are at the school and some are at community locales, including the public library and the climbing wall at a local community

college. Family Fun Nights offer parent education opportunities, information updates from Policy Council, connections to community resources, and fun activities for families.

### Kindergarten Transition

The Center works closely with Kindergarten leadership to ensure that skills taught in preschool help prepare children for school. In addition, several transition activities and events are offered each spring, including an Open House and Kindergarten Classroom Experience, to prepare children and parents alike for Kindergarten.

All children enrolled at The Center who will be entering Kindergarten in the fall receive a take-home bag of activities that will encourage reading and pre-Kindergarten skills during the summer. Parents also receive information on how to enroll their child in kindergarten and how to help prepare their child for public school.

Historically, data has shown that children who enter Kindergarten having attended The Center are well-prepared both academically and from a social-emotional perspective.

### The Center School Readiness Goals

The Center's school readiness goals were last reviewed and revised in November 2020, using child outcomes data from the previous year. The goals were revised with the participation of the Instructional Leadership Team and Policy Council and with advice from Region VIII. School readiness goals will be reviewed again at the beginning of the 2024-2025 program year using this year's 2023-2024 data on child outcomes.

*By the end of the school year, 80% of children will meet or exceed on the following Domains:*

#### **Approaches to Learning:**

Children will demonstrate an increased attentiveness and persistence when completing a task activity.

#### **Social and Emotional Development:**

Children will demonstrate engaging in and maintaining positive relationships and interactions with adults.

#### **Language and Literacy:**

##### **Language and Communication:**

Children will understand and respond to increasingly complex vocabulary, questions and stories from others.

##### **Literacy:**

Children will demonstrate an awareness that words are made up of smaller segments of sound and able to identify half the letters of the alphabet and associated sounds.

**Cognition:**

**Mathematics Development:**

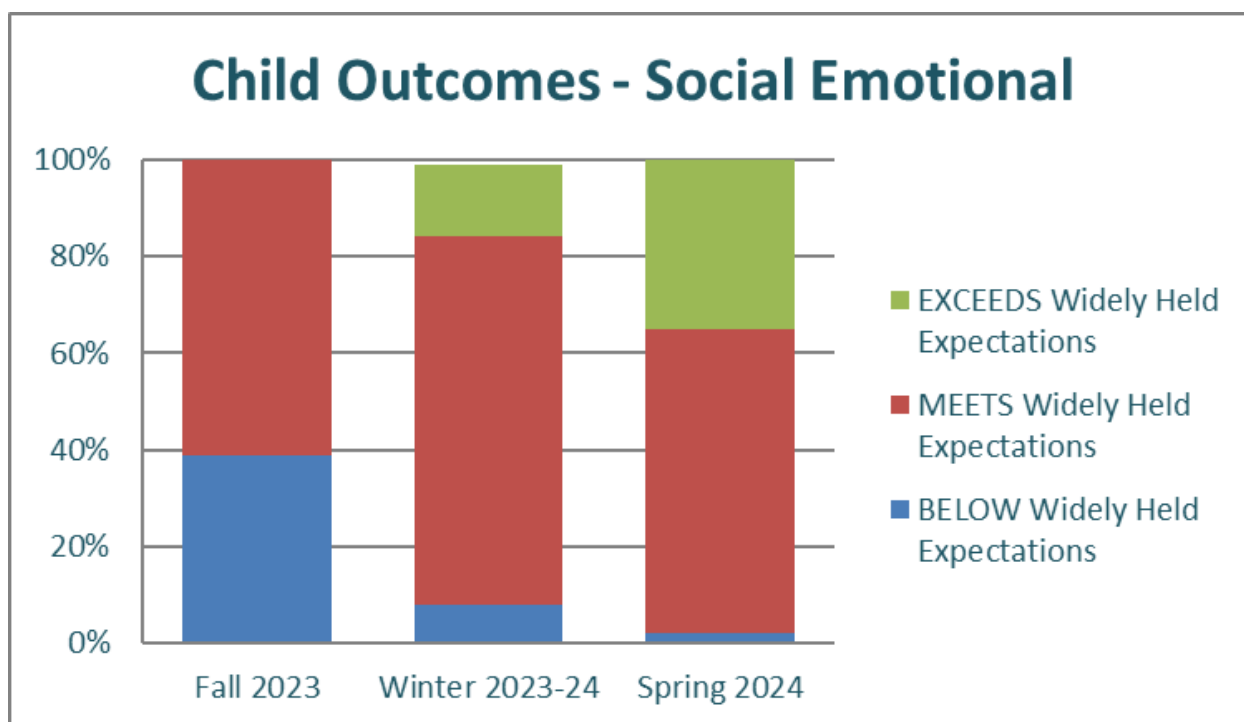
Children will demonstrate understanding of spatial relationships.

**Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development:**

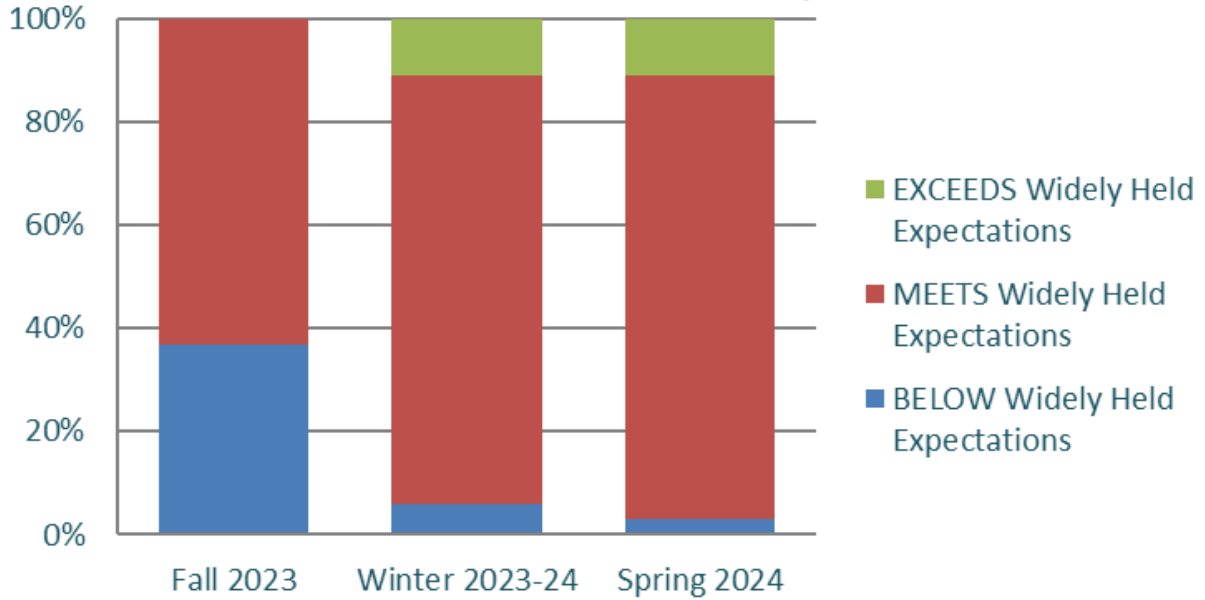
Children will demonstrate increased control, strength, and coordination of large muscles.

Head Start Child Growth & Development: 2023-2024

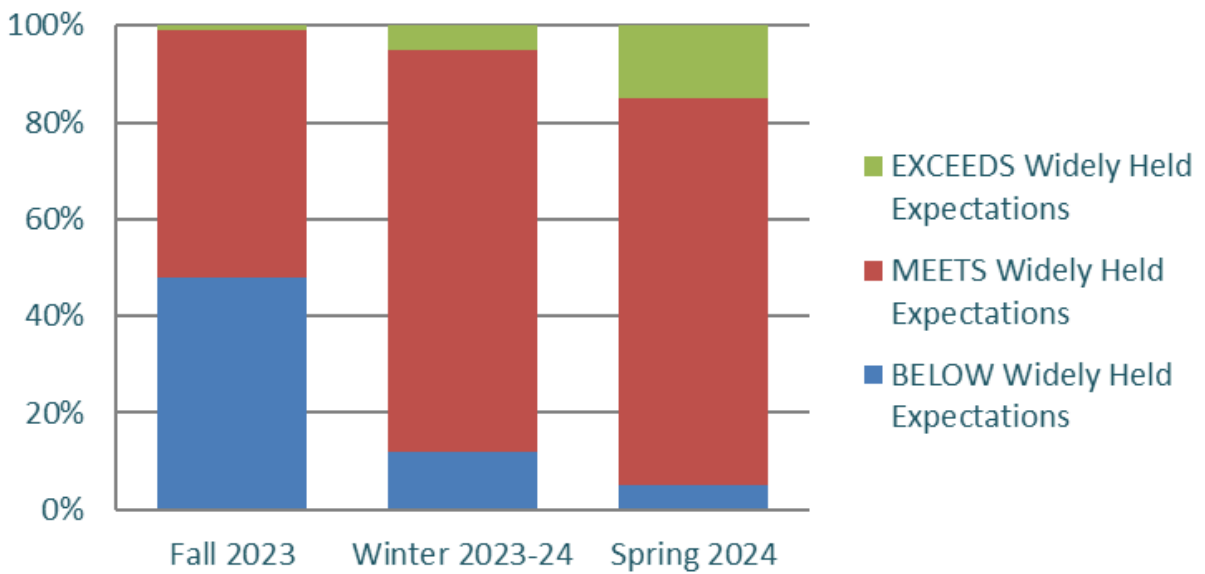
The following charts show the percentage of preschool children from the beginning of the 2023-2024 program year through the spring checkpoint. It shows the percentage of children who are below, meet, or exceed widely held expectations in each area of development at the time of the checkpoint. According to Teaching Strategies Inc., widely held expectations (WHE) in early childhood have been determined by researchers which allow teachers to see what skills children demonstrate according to their age. The end of the year target is to have 20% or less of our children within the below WHE in each area of development.



## Child Outcomes - Physical

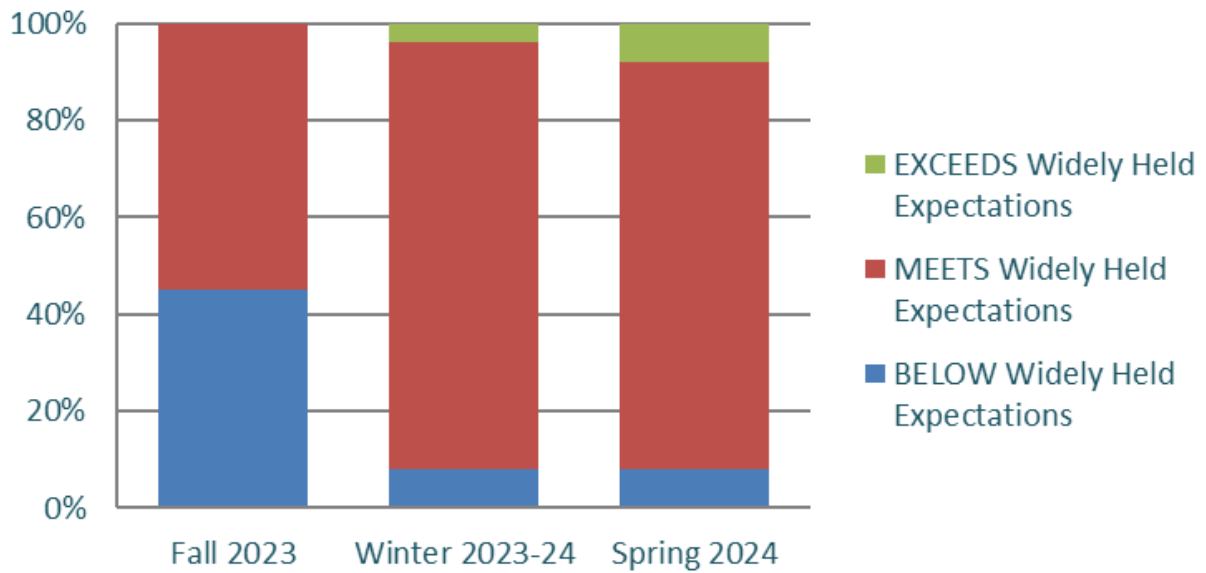


## Child Outcomes - Language

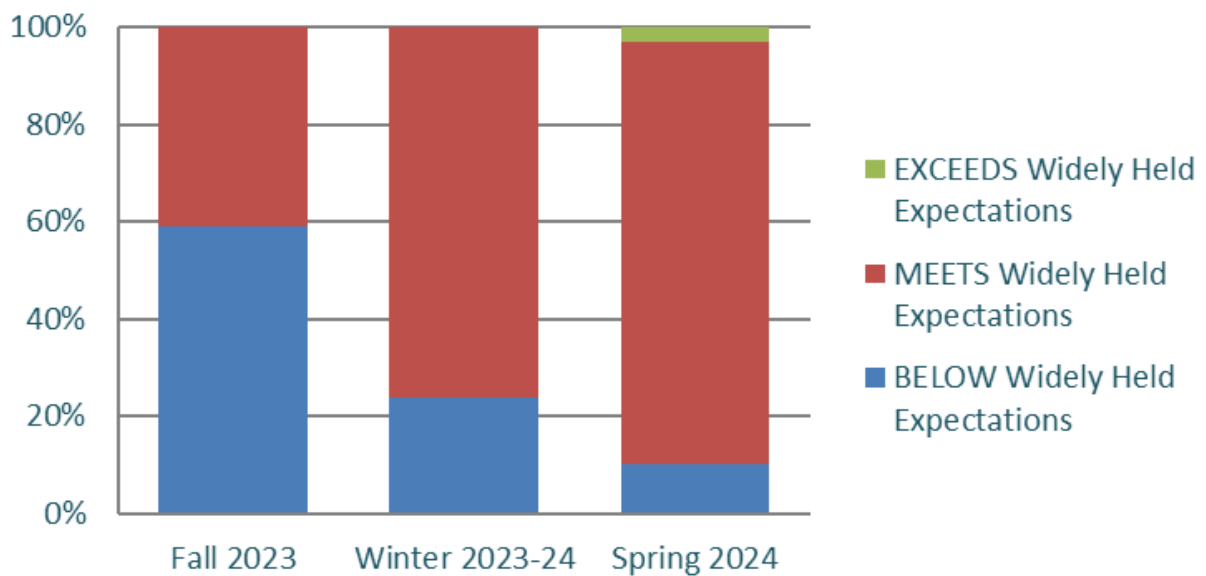


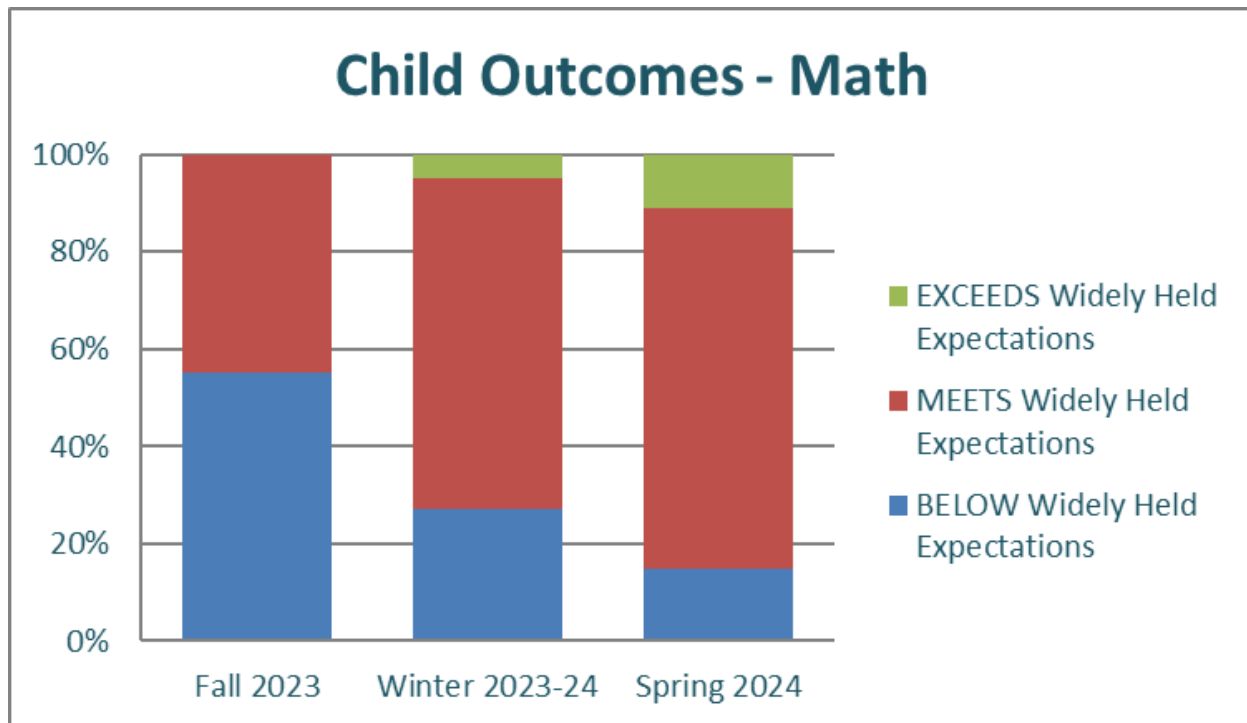


## Child Outcomes - Cognitive



## Child Outcomes - Literacy





#### Program Reviews and Monitoring

In accordance with Head Start Performance Standards and state licensing requirements, different aspects of our program are regularly reviewed and monitored.

Our program received a Focus Area 2 (FA2) review from the Office of Head Start during the week of June 5-9, 2023. Focus Area Two (FA2) 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 review is designed to broaden the Office of Head Start’s understanding of each grantee’s performance and to determine if programs are meeting the requirements of the Head Start Performance Standards.

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) results from the FA2 review showed that our staff is performing above the competitive threshold in all the domains of Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support. The highest scores were in the dimensions of Productivity, Behavior Management, and Positive Climate.

The results of the FA2 included two Areas of Concern and three Areas of Non-Compliance. These results provided the program with an opportunity for additional consulting from OHS to enhance practices and

services. The program participated in a plan to correct these areas. All have since been deemed corrected.

The Early Head Start program was placed on a Full Enrollment Initiative (FEI) plan in June of 2023. The purpose of this plan is to bring the EHS program up to full enrollment within twelve months. The program did reach full enrollment during the twelve months and will continue the enhanced recruitment efforts to remain at that level through the end of the project period. This FEI has allowed for reflection and data review, and has resulted in stronger connections to the Family Connectors and the McKinney-Vento service provider.