

**ANNUAL REPORT and PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS FY 21**

Kosciusko County Head Start/Early Head Start

**Introduction**

Head Start/Early Head Start promotes the school readiness of children ages birth to five from at-risk families of lower income by enhancing cognitive, social, and emotional development in learning environments that support children's growth in language and literacy, cognition and general knowledge, physical development and health, social and emotional development, and approaches to learning. The programs provide comprehensive services to enrolled children and their families including health, nutrition, social, and other services determined necessary by the family strengths and needs assessments with services designed to be responsive to each child and family's ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heritage. Head Start/EHS emphasizes the role of parents as their child's forever teachers, and the program builds relationships with families that support family well-being and positive parent-child relationships, families as learners and lifelong educators, family engagement in transitions, family connections to peers and community, and families as advocates and leaders.

Kosciusko County Head Start educated preschool children during the 2020-2021 school year in Warsaw, Leesburg, Claypool, North Webster, and Mentone. Early Head Start has resumed educating children age 0-3 and their families and pregnant women in year-round home-based services.

Although COVID-19 impacted the number of children and families served for 2020-2021 as well as restricting visitors in classrooms, Head Start was open for on-site classes with few quarantines, and EHS went back to home visits in April 2021. A five-week summer program funded with federal COVID monies was held for Head Start children transitioning to kindergarten who had not met kindergarten skill development levels and for returning HS children not meeting skill levels.

**Analysis of Performance**

**Business Functions**

The annual budget supports the expenses necessary to operate, staff, administer, and manage Head Start center-based and Early Head Start home-based options.

July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021 (Cardinal FY21)

Revenue Actual Budgeted

Federal Operating Grant and COVID Funds 1,909,990 1,717,621

USDA Reimbursement 67,691 106,091

United Way (Operating) 16,411 16,415

County Government (Operating) 20,750 15,862

Warsaw Schools Instructional Assts. Reimbursement 45,811 37,561

Other Community Donations/Grant Transfers 4,555 0

On My Pre-K State Funding \_\_\_24,508 \_\_79,200

$2,089,716 $1,972,750

Expenses

Personnel (Staff Wages) 1,099,609 1,124,679

Fringe (Health/Dental Insurance, Disability, Soc. Security, 516,925 423,370

Unemployment, Workers’ Comp, Employee Clinic)

Staff Development (Tuition, Books, Training Costs, etc.) 24,934 28,633

Supplies (Office, Child and Family Services, Food Costs) 116,875 123,090

Contractual (Online Family Info System, Ed Assessments, 30,263 21,028

Mental Health Assessments; Parenting Curriculum,

Van/Car Leases)

Other (Other Depreciation, Rent, Bldg/Grounds Maintenance, 128,963 134,456

Ins., Utilities, Agency Dues, Local Travel, Vehicle Costs)

Indirect Costs (General/Admin Expenses/Federal Depreciation) 172,147 117,494

$2,089,716 $1,972,750

**Service Delivery – All new goals for FY’21**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Objective** | **Goal** | **FY ‘21** | **FY ‘20** | **FY ‘19** |
| **Percentage of EHS families participating in Parent Engagement Activities assigned by Home Based Teachers** | 75% | 87% | --- | --- |
| **By end of enrollment year, percentage of Head Start children meeting at least one parent-initiated goal.** | 75% | 93% | --- | --- |
| **Through collaboration with First Steps, percentage of EHS children referred for disability services that upon qualification receive Individualized Family Service Partnership (IFSP) within 60 days** | 85% | 100% | --- | --- |
| **By end of enrollment year, CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) average of all HS classrooms score will be above most recent national median score (3.0) in the domain of Instructional Support** | 3.5 out of 7 | 3.24 | --- | --- |
| **By end of enrollment year (between fall baseline and spring final checkpoints), increase in percentage of HS children meeting age expectations in School Readiness Goal of Social and Emotional Development (Mental Health)** | 25% | 31% | --- | --- |

* All program parent activities were conducted virtually including monthly EHS home based program socializations, “Ready Rosie” parenting curriculum and other trainings in collaboration with community agencies, Policy Council meetings, and Health Services Advisory Committee. Volunteering in classrooms was not allowed due to COVID-19 restrictions.
* The Head Start program average CLASS Instructional Support score (measurement of quality teacher-child interactions) in fall 2020 was 3.14 out of 7. Children displaying mental health concerns continue to create challenges for staff in the classroom. All Teachers are supported by a HS Mentor-Coach as well as an Education Specialist. Mental Health professionals provide on-site support with children displaying mental health or emotional concerns.
* 91 HS children were enrolled in eight classrooms to increase social distancing.
* Head Start children’s school readiness skills were assessed at 3 checkpoints utilizing Teaching Strategies GOLD® Objectives for School Readiness Goal progress. Children’s skills were also assessed at the beginning and end of the school year utilizing the Kosciusko Countywide Kindergarten Readiness Checklist.
* 50 Head Start children (plus 5 On My Way Pre-K children) transitioned to kindergarten in 2021, including 21 diagnosed with and receiving services for learning disabilities through Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).
* Last year, HS served a total of 37 enrolled children (36%) with disabilities and 29 (28%) Dual Language Learners.

**Financial Audit and Monitoring Results**

* Blue and Co., LLC conducted the annual financial audit for the Cardinal Services, Inc. fiscal year ending June 30, 2020 with no findings.
* No federal reviews were completed since spring 2019 when one EHS health tracking noncompliance was found and corrected, and a CLASS review indicated all scoring areas were at or above the national average.

**Areas for Improvement/Action Plan/Proposed Changes**:

* Intensive training for managing mental health issues in classrooms continues to be presented to teaching staff. Mental Health professionals observe and work one-on-one with children displaying mental health concerns and meet with staff to support them in better ways to educate children experiencing trauma.
* An On My Way Pre-K classroom funded with OMW vouchers was planned for the 2021-2022 school year, but county applications were down due to COVID-19 and the agency made the decision not to pursue a classroom at this time.

**Efforts to Prepare Children for Kindergarten**

Head Start/EHS School Readiness Goals (SRGs) strengthen the program’s continuous improvement of kindergarten skill levels for all enrolled children. By the 3rd checkpoint in the spring the attainment expectation is a 90% overall program average for each School Readiness Goal (SRG). End of year results below.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| School Readiness Goals | 1. Approaches to Learning | 2. Language and Literacy | 5. Physical Development | 6. Social and Emotional Developmental | 7. Cognition |
| **Head Start** –  Overall Program Average | 95% | 88% | 96% | 89% | 84% |
| **Early Head Start** – Overall Program Average | 77% | 80% | 71% | 77% | 77% |

**Head Start:** All School Readiness Domains made consistent gains with all outcomes increasing at least 30% from fall to spring with Cognition increasing 51%. Teachers attribute this increase to having fewer children in classrooms which resulted in more intentional teaching in smaller group settings. Skill attainment increases from Fall to Spring Checkpoint in the other Domains were Social/Emotional, 31%; Language and Literacy, 38%; Physical, 14%; and Approaches to Learning, 41%.

**Early Head Start:** Skill attainment for children age 0-3 from Fall Checkpoint was observed virtually and with parent input until the Spring Checkpoint when Home Based Teachers assessed child skills after home visits resumed. Skill attainment results from fall to spring showed Approaches to Learning, decrease of 9%; Social/Emotional Development decrease of 2%, Physical, unchanged; Cognition increase of 2%, and Language/Literacy, increase of 1%. At the end of the 2020-2021 year, children who had received EHS services, attended Head Start, and were transitioning to kindergarten had an increase of over 5% higher skill attainment than transitioning Head Start children who had not received Early Head Start services.

**Demographic Data**

* Kosciusko County Head Start/ Early Head Start was federally funded in 2020-2021 to provide services to a total of 178 children and families: 74 Head Start children in 130-day, 6.5-hour classes and 64 children in 141-day, 7- hour classes during the school year. Normally, 40 Early Head Start children and families, including pregnant women, receive full year home based services with twice monthly socializations. Because of COVID-19 restrictions, the Office of Head Start allowed for the enrollment of fewer children with varied service methods in 2020-2021.

In the table below, the **Percentage of Eligible Kosciusko County Children Served** is based on information from the most recent [www.stats.indiana.edu](http://www.stats.indiana.edu). The most recent estimated population of children age 0-4 in Kosciusko County is 5,000, and approximately 11.1% of children under the age of 18 are living in poverty which calculates to an approximate total of 555 children age 0-4 living in poverty in the county.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Kosciusko County** | **Total # of Children and Families Served**  **Program Year ‘20-‘21** | **Average Monthly Enrollment**  **(% of Funded Enrollment)** | **Percentage of Eligible Kosciusko County Children Served** |
| Head Start/Early Head Start | 162 children  and 3 pregnant women | Not calculated due to  OHS Allowances | 29% |

The family/child information below is based on Program Information Reporting from all enrolled families and individual child documentation.

**2020-2021 2019-2020 2018-2019 Primary Language of Family at Home – HS/EHS**

English 122 173 176

Spanish 40 54 46

East Asian Languages 0 0 2

**Mental Health Services – HS/EHS**

Number of Teachers/Home Based Teachers who received assistance from a Mental Health

Consultant through observation and consultation 12 -- --

**Diagnosed Educational Disabilities with Individualized Education Plans – Head Start Only**

Speech and/or Language Impairment 22 19 15

Developmental Delay 14 17 28

Autism 0 0 1

Specific Learning Disability 1 0 0

**Strategic Considerations**

* COVID-19 created enrollment challenges and the Office of Head Start allowed flexibility for the 2020-2021 school year, but programs are now expected to be at full enrollment with all mandated services by January 2022, and the EHS program has yet to be fully enrolled despite numerous recruitment activities.
* Full staffing for HS has been challenging as the unemployment rate in the county is 3.1% and other county employers have had to increase wages to fill their positions, and employing skilled teaching staff with hourly wages afforded by the program’s federally funded operating budget is difficult. Cardinal Services made the decision to utilize agency endowment interest designated for Children’s Services to raise the lowest paid staff wages as well as provide seniority increases to employed staff beginning spring 2021 in an effort to assist with the staffing challenge.
* The number of enrolled children with educational disabilities and acute mental health/emotional concerns with challenging behaviors continues to require on-going staff training in trauma-informed care.

**Conclusion**

Kosciusko County Head Start/Early Head Start continually strives to successfully achieve, implement, and maintain the most effective, highest quality services in Early Childhood Education provided to young children and their families by following the Head Start Program Performance Standards, Indiana Child Care Licensing Regulations, Indiana Paths to Quality (PTQ) requirements, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Accreditation Standards, and by implementing state and local education requirements to meet all program and individual children’s goals and objectives. The program promotes and supports meaningful relationships with and effective instruction of children and their parents to improve developmental, educational, and essential life skills which are key to achieving future success in school and beyond.