



# ANNUAL REPORT and PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS FY 23

## 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 2022-2023 school year in Warsaw at the main building and in classrooms at Lincoln, Madison, Claypool, North Webster, and Mentone Elementary Schools. Early Head Start educated children age 0-3 and their families and pregnant women in year-round home-based services.

### 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.

	<u>July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023 (Cardinal FY23)</u>	
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>
<b>Revenue</b>		
Federal Operating Grant and COVID Funds	1,969,626	1,808,255
USDA Reimbursement	98,710	82,834
County Government (Operating)	70,331	67,840
Warsaw Schools Instructional Assts. Reimbursement	19,945	28,123
Other Community Donations/Grant Transfers	10,173	0
On My Pre-K State Funding	<u>90,243</u>	<u>10,000</u>
	<b>\$2,259,028</b>	<b>\$1,997,052</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Personnel (Staff Wages)	1,246,806	1,343,563
Fringe (Health/Dental Insurance, Disability, Soc. Security, Unemployment, Workers' Comp, Employee Clinic)	470,520	487,253
Staff Development (Tuition, Books, Training Costs, etc.)	19,181	26,668
Supplies (Office, Child and Family Services, Food Costs)	157,564	196,437
Contractual (Online Family Info System, Ed Assessments, Mental Health Assessments; Parenting Curriculum, Van/Car Leases)	28,427	39,283
Other (Other Depreciation, Rent, Bldg/Grounds Maintenance, Ins., Utilities, Agency Dues, Local Travel, Vehicle Costs)	115,653	117,365
Indirect Costs (General/Admin Expenses/Federal Depreciation)	<u>384,550</u>	<u>340,906</u>
	<b>\$2,422,701</b>	<b>\$2,551,475</b>

### Service Delivery (Some goals new in FY '23)

Objective	Goal	FY '23	FY '22	FY '21
Percentage of Annual Self-Assessment Improvement Plan Goals completed	75%	83%	---	---
Number of Head Start/EHS participants referred to BDDS	5	7	----	----
Percentage of EHS children completing well child exams within 90 days of enrollment	85%	100%	98%	---

<b>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</b>	3.25 out of 7	3.19	3.34	3.24
<b>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 Approaches to Learning</b>	20%	40%	30%	40%
<b>Percentage of father/male figure participation in engagement activities</b>	50%	48%	48%	33%
<b>Number of Action Plans for staff issues</b>	1	2	----	----

- Parent involvement activities resumed in-person, including bi-monthly EHS home-based program socializations, “Ready Rosie” parenting curriculum for all program parents and other trainings in collaboration with community agencies, as well as Policy Council meetings, and Health Services Advisory Committee meetings. In-person family engagement activities that aligned with curriculum lessons were offered quarterly in all Head Start locations.
- The Head Start program average CLASS Instructional Support score (measurement of quality teacher-child interactions) in spring 2023 was 3.19 out of 7. Children displaying mental health and behavior 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.
- Flexibilities from OHS for full enrollment continued through the 2022-2023 school year. While the program continued to build enrollment for both programs, staff shortages resulted in one Head Start classroom remaining closed the entire school year. 111 HS children and 35 EHS children/pregnant moms completed the 2022-2023 program year.
- 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.
- Two Head Start classrooms received NAEYC Accreditation this year, subsequently moving them to PTQ Level 4, the highest level allowed in the state. Four of the five Head Start locations are now NAEYC Accredited and PTQ Level 4.
- 68 Head Start children transitioned to kindergarten in fall 2023, including 26 diagnosed with and receiving services for learning disabilities through Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).
- Last year, 100% of enrolled HS children completed medical and 90% completed dental exams. 98% of enrolled EHS children completed medical exams and 71% completed dental exams.

### Financial Audit and Monitoring Results

- Blue and Co., LLC conducted the annual financial audit for the Cardinal Services, Inc. fiscal year ending June 30, 2022 with no findings.
- In March 2023, a child safety incident occurred in one of the Head Start offsite classrooms, resulting in a report to OHS and a finding of a deficiency (Report received June 1, 2023). A corrective action plan was put into place within the 30-day monitoring window for compliance and no further follow-up review has been scheduled.
- In April 2023, HS/EHS completed a Focus Area 1 Federal Monitoring Review with no findings.

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

- From October 2022-January 2023, three experienced members of the management team, including the HS/EHS Director left the program (due to attrition and retirement). This resulted in restructuring the duties of the managerial staff. A new Director was hired in January 2023.
- In May 2023, the North Webster Elementary site was permanently closed due to the school’s need for space due to an influx in kindergarten students for the upcoming school year.
- As part of the ongoing Corrective Action Plan, the Head Start classrooms will have an increased focus on Active Supervision and Standards of Conduct training. Beginning in August 2023, all classrooms will be monitored on a regular, ongoing basis for compliance of Active Supervision strategies. Managers will complete Active Supervision Checklists every quarter for every classroom and findings will be addressed immediately with an action plan.
- Continued intensive training for managing mental health issues in classrooms as well as increased staff wellness activities to promote staff well-being which could impact staff retention.
- The Lincoln Head Start site is currently a PTQ Level 3 and will begin working towards NAEYC Accreditation and PTQ Level 4.

### 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 3<sup>rd</sup> checkpoint in the spring the program’s attainment expectation is a 90% overall program average for each School Readiness Goal (SRG). End of year results below.

School Readiness Goals	1. Approaches to Learning	2. Language and Literacy	5. Physical Development	6. Social and Emotional Developmental	7. Cognition
<b>Head Start – Overall Program Average</b>	92%	82%	96%	84%	82%
<b>Early Head Start – Overall Program Average</b>	77%	77%	61%	100%	71%

**Head Start:** All School Readiness Domains made consistent gains with all outcomes increasing an average of 32% (average of 38 children) from fall to spring. Skill attainment increases from Fall to Spring (final) Checkpoint in the Domains were Approaches to Learning, 40%; Language and Literacy, 26%; Physical, 24%; Social/Emotional, 28%; and Cognition, 40%. The 40% increase in Cognition skills is the largest increase the program has seen from fall to spring since before the COVID-19 Pandemic school year of 2019-2020. Teachers reported intentionally planning more math-related activities such as sequencing, grouping, and construction opportunities on a regular basis to improve cognition skills.

**Early Head Start:** Skill attainment results for children age 0-3 from fall to spring showed decreases in Approaches to Learning, Physical Development, Cognition, and Language. By Spring Checkpoint, 17 of the 32 children enrolled in EHS had been diagnosed with disabilities: 8 with developmental delays, 8 with speech/language delays, and 1 with Autism. As children with disabilities moved into older age groupings and skills assessed, many receiving therapies and services for disabilities fell behind in skills expected for their age. A total turnover of 21 EHS children throughout the year also impacted checkpoint results as well as families who had lower attendance due to illness and work schedules that hindered making up missed visits. Additionally, staff turnover may have contributed to inconsistencies in determining school readiness outcomes. During the program year, the program saw turnover of three home-based teachers (one was promoted to another position in EHS, two left for higher compensation). EHS Home-Based Teachers attributed the increase in Social/Emotional Development to encourage parents to regularly engage with children through intentional activities such as reading and Conscious Discipline, I Love You Rituals.

### Demographic Data

- Kosciusko County Head Start/ Early Head Start was federally funded in 2022-2023 to provide services to a total of 175 children and families; 135 HS and 40 EHS. 38 Head Start children were to be enrolled in 130-day, 6.5-hour classes and 97 children in 146-day, 7-hour classes during the school year; and 40 Early Head Start children and families, including pregnant women, were to receive full year home based services with twice monthly socializations. The program worked toward full enrollment, but because of staffing shortages remained under-enrolled consistently throughout the school year.

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 4,926, and approximately 10.1% of children under the age of 18 are living in poverty which calculates to an approximate total of 498 children age 0-4 living in poverty in the county.

Kosciusko County	Total # of Children and Families Served Program Year 2022-2023	Average Monthly Enrollment (% of Funded Enrollment)	Percentage of Eligible Kosciusko County Children Served
Head Start/Early Head Start	178 children and 9 pregnant women	148 (85% of funded enrollment)	36%

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

	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>2021-2022</u>	<u>2020-2021</u>
<b>Primary Language of Family at Home – HS/EHS</b>			
English	145	159	122
Spanish	42	43	40
<b>Mental Health Services – HS/EHS</b>			
Number of Teachers/Home Based Teachers who received assistance from a Mental Health Consultant through observation and consultation	8	8	12
<b>Diagnosed Educational Disabilities with Individualized Education Plans – Head Start Only</b>			
Speech and/or Language Impairment	22	29	22
Developmental Delay	19	13	14
Specific Learning Disability	0	0	1
Autism	2	--	--

### Strategic Considerations

- In response to the ongoing staff retention issue, the program submitted an application to OHS for a Change in Scope Enrollment Reduction for the upcoming school year. Continuity of care and high-quality services provided are the driving force behind the proposed enrollment reduction. If approved, the saved funding will be used to increase staff wages to be more comparable to those of the public-school systems.
- The number of enrolled children with educational disabilities and acute mental health/emotional concerns with challenging behaviors continues to require on-going staff training, and staff well-being concerns continue to require increased staff wellness activities and services.

## **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.