

ANNUAL REPORT

Head Start/Early Head Start of Fayette County A National Center of Excellence 2024-2025



Head Start/Early Head Start of Fayette County

Annual Report 2024-2025

WHO WE ARE

The Private Industry Council of Westmoreland/Fayette, Inc. (PIC)

PIC was awarded the Head Start grant for Fayette County in 1994 and has been responsible for the operation and growth of the Head Start programming since that time. PIC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization headquartered in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, which operates employment, education, and training programs in Westmoreland and Fayette counties in southwestern Pennsylvania. PIC has strategically located offices throughout both counties to assist children and parents, youth, adults, dislocated workers, and the economically disadvantaged in attaining educational achievement, supporting their family growth, and obtaining and retaining employment. The organization works every day to achieve its mission of building tomorrow's workforce in southwestern Pennsylvania through early childhood development, employment and training, education, and business services.

PIC operates over two dozen programs through an organizational structure of three divisions - Early Childhood Development, Education, and Workforce Development. A fifteen-member Board of Directors governs PIC. PIC employs full-time and part-time professionals, who provide quality services, strive to exceed goals, and achieve objectives set forth for each division.

Presently, PIC:

- ✓ Administers Early Childhood Development programs in Fayette, Beaver, Westmoreland, and Allegheny Counties, including Head Start, Early Head Start including Early Head Start Childcare Partnerships, PA Pre-K Counts, and PIC Kidz Zone childcare center .
- ✓ Operates various in-school, out-of-school, and afterschool youth programs.
- ✓ Provides training and accredited education programs through its private licensed school, the Education and Technology Institute (ETI).
- ✓ Provides business services in customized job training, labor market information, job listings, and assessments.
- ✓ Provides services in job search assistance, job training, job placement, job coaching, assessments, and career counseling.



The PIC Mission Statement

Building tomorrow's workforce in southwestern Pennsylvania through early childhood development, employment and training, education, and business services.



We support this mission by:

Providing assistance to employers to meet their workforce needs

Identifying and removing employment barriers for individuals and families

Committing to a holistic approach in education, empowerment, and lifelong learning



Our Vision

Strengthening the economy by improving the quality of life in southwestern Pennsylvania



Head Start/Early Head Start Mission Statement

We, at Head Start/Early Head Start of Fayette County, are committed to
Educate, Encourage, and Empower our families and children.



What is Head Start and Early Head Start?

Head Start

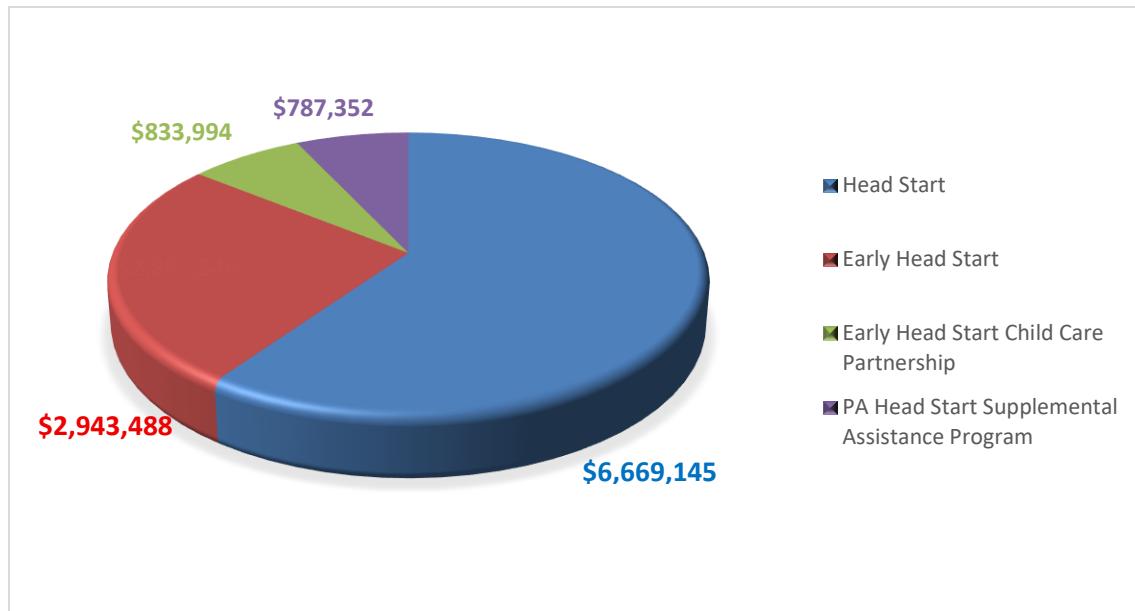
First funded in 1965 as a summer program, Head Start offers educational, health, social/emotional and family services to at-risk families. PIC has administered the Head Start Program in Fayette County since 1994. Operated by both state and federal funding, PIC was mandated to provide comprehensive services to 491 children, aged three to five, and their families throughout Fayette County during the 2024-2025 program year. Of the 491, 360 children were provided services in a classroom setting through federal funding, with ninety-five (95) children funded through the PA Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program (HSSAP). The other 36 children were serviced in a home-based setting which offers comprehensive services in the child's home with two monthly socialization experiences for children aged three to five.



Early Head Start

PIC has also administered the Early Head Start (EHS) program in Fayette County since 1997. During the 2024-2025 program year, 276 participants were to be served throughout Fayette County. All Early Head Start funding is federal. The Fayette County Early Head Start program offers comprehensive home-based services with at least two monthly socialization experiences for pregnant women and children birth to three years of age. In addition, PIC expanded its services during the program year to include 35 center-based slots funded through the federally funded Early Head Start Childcare Partnership (EHS CCP) program. Our agency is a sub-recipient for the EHS CCP through COTRAIC (Council of Three Rivers American Indian Center, Inc.) who is the grantee. The program offers center-based comprehensive services to families with a child enrolled at a partnering childcare center.

The breakdown of funding for these programs is shown below:



Service Areas

Program Design and Management

- ✓ To develop and implement a planning system that establishes goals that supports the programs' mission to positively impact the children, families, and communities we serve.
- ✓ To ensure the establishment of a policy group and well-functioning governing body that shares responsibility for overseeing the delivery of high-quality services to children and families in accordance with Head Start legislation, regulations, and policies.
- ✓ To establish dynamic and cohesive management systems that utilize data to support continuous improvement and foster commitment to providing the highest level of services to children and families.
- ✓ To ensure recruitment and selection of well-qualified staff and to provide training and professional development for staff, parents, consultants, and volunteers.
- ✓ To assure Head Start facilities, materials, and equipment support programming standards for children ages birth to five and pregnant women and support their individual needs.
- ✓ To continue to utilize technological resources and provide training that will strengthen program design and management functions, address children's computer-based skills needed for school readiness and support special learning needs.
- ✓ Utilize 2 Preschool S.T.E.M classrooms in Fayette County, at the following locations: Connellsville Area School District's Connellsville Township Building and the PIC Lemont Furnace building.

Parent, Family, and Community Engagement

- ✓ Continue ongoing communication with local schools to exchange information about children and align services for early learning, health, and family engagement.
- ✓ Provide families education, training, resources, and experiences that advance their own learning related to family and financial literacy, strategies for balancing schedules, oral health, substance abuse awareness/prevention, and state and federal school attendance guidelines.
- ✓ Encourage families to participate in leadership roles in their community, including in parent engagement in their child's education and in the programs administrative and managerial decisions.
- ✓ Continue to strengthen the relationship building process among staff, families, and community partners to support family well-being.
- ✓ Further strengthen families' understanding of how parents and other adult family members affect a child's education and success in school.
- ✓ Strengthen collaborative relationships with community partners providing support to low-income families, with a particular emphasis on programs addressing economic self-sufficiency.
- ✓ Ensure families have access to resources to further their career/education/personal development goals through the grantee's single point of contact center (PA CareerLink): job fairs, Dad's Matter, youth programs, workforce development, job preparation, HS/EHS, etc.
- ✓ Continue to use data to revise parent and staff training to support achievement of family outcomes and strengthen areas that are in need.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for social connections with peers that will be supported at PIC (Parents Impacting their Child's Success) Meetings, parent training, family engagement events, and day-to-day volunteering.
- ✓ Encourage families to support their child's school readiness by engaging in home visits, conferences, parent-child family activity events, parent group meetings and in the classroom.

- ✓ Identify ways to better help homeless families within the HS/EHS programs acquire their own permanent housing by collaborating with community agencies and participating in Fayette County Housing and Homeless Partnership (LHOT).

Child Development and Education

- ✓ Continue to provide opportunities for individualized learning by developing activities that enhance children's school readiness in the areas of cognition, language approaches to learning, social/emotional skills and physical development and health.
- ✓ Continue to establish School Readiness goals that are aligned with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework birth to five, PA Early Learning Standards, and expectations of the school districts and parents.
- ✓ Continue to strengthen families' understanding of child development and ability to address the social-emotional developmental needs of their children.
- ✓ Continue to combat obesity and support healthy eating and physical activity through age appropriate and purposeful movement activities and healthy food choices.
- ✓ Provide professional development activities and practiced based coaching to promote behavioral management, productivity and instructional learning formats.
- ✓ Provide professional development to staff in utilizing technology to enhance the learning environment.
- ✓ Continue to express the importance of sending your child to school every day and the value of participating in scheduled home visits and conferences with parents/legal guardians.
- ✓ Continue to strengthen collaborations with school districts to support smooth, successful transition into school age programming.
- ✓ Implement PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) to minimize challenging behaviors and promote positive behaviors.



Child Health and Safety

- ✓ Educate families on the importance of well child care, proper nutrition, immunizations, and follow up care for identified health, oral health, and developmental needs.
- ✓ Perform hearing, vision, developmental and behavioral screenings on all children.
- ✓ Address the individual health/nutritional/developmental needs of each child, in partnership with the family, through direct service, and in collaboration with medical providers, community agencies, and educational entities.
- ✓ Assist families in accessing medical and dental care and follow-up by providing available listings of facilities and resources, making referrals to medical facilities when needed.
- ✓ Provide nutrition services that are culturally and developmentally appropriate and that supplement and complement those of home and community.
- ✓ Educate pregnant women on the importance of healthy lifestyle choices, pre-natal care, and the nutritional value of breastfeeding.
- ✓ Provide educational support services to parents that encourage families to establish habits that nurture healthy development and promote life-long well-being.
- ✓ Identify high-risk pregnancies and make referrals to program's consultants, as well as offer resources.
- ✓ Educate families on the importance of creating a substance-free environment for themselves and their children.
- ✓ Educate staff on the signs/symptoms of trauma and Adverse Child Experiences and ways to support children and their families.

- ✓ Promote staff wellness by making mental health and wellness information available and offer Family Wellness Consultant's consultation services to all staff regarding personal and professional challenges that may affect their job performance.
- ✓ Provide ongoing information to staff and families on current health issues including how to access medical, dental and community services.

How We Serve

Center-Based

We have eight (8) sites located throughout Fayette County. Each location has classroom space for our three to five-year-old's, with age-appropriate room design, developmental toys, and furnishings, as well as state-of-the-art playground equipment, dedicated transportation, and on-site kitchen facilities. The classrooms operate five (5) days per week for six (6) hours per day. Children who attend class at a Head Start facility will be served three (3) meals per day, breakfast, lunch, and a snack.



Home-Based

A dedicated instructor visits the home weekly (46 visits), for an hour and a half (90 minutes). During these visits, the instructor meets with both the parent and the child to complete screenings and develop individual plans to set goals for the child and parent. The parent and instructor develop home activities to support the child in identified areas of need based upon the child's developmental age. The child is engaged in age-appropriate activities to support language, gross and fine motor skills, daily health practices, self-help skills, and cognitive skills, as well as social emotional development. In addition, at least twenty-two socializations where the parent and child are invited to socialize with other enrolled families.

Early Head Start also services pregnant women by assisting them to access comprehensive prenatal and post-partum care. A dedicated instructor visits the pregnant woman weekly for ninety minutes, with additional support by the school nurse and the program's consultants. The care includes obtaining prenatal care and access to dental treatment. In addition, a wellness assessment/profile and nutrition assessment/profile are completed on the pregnant woman. A newborn visit occurs once the baby is born to monitor the baby's height, weight, and head circumference as well as the overall appearance. A post-partum survey is also completed on the mother for post-partum depression. During the visit, transition of the baby into early childhood services is discussed with the parent(s) to support them in choosing the most appropriate option to meet their needs.

Early Head Start- Child Care Partnerships

In addition to receiving quality center-based services from the partnering childcare provider, a coordinator visits the childcare weekly to complete observations on the children. The coordinator works with the childcare staff to ensure high quality care and learning is taking place. The coordinator also completes monthly home visits with the family to complete family partnership plans and offer comprehensive services to the entire family.

Who We Serve

Head Start serves families with children 3 to 5 years of age. Early Head Start serves pregnant women, infants, and toddlers 3 years of age and under. Both programs serve families that meet financial guidelines at the

poverty level, are determined to be homeless under the McKinney Vento Act, have children with verified disabilities, are caring for children through foster care, or who have other identified “risk” factors.

We Provide...

- a program tailored to each child's individual needs based upon parent and staff input.
- books and language tools to develop early reading skills to promote school readiness.
- opportunities and environments to develop and support strong self-image.
- positive environment, positive behavioral changes, and social and emotional interactions.
- good, nutritional food choices and an example of healthy eating and living.
- instruction for parents on nutrition, health, child development, and mental health.
- opportunities for parents and children to have social interaction with others.
- tools for parents to learn to become their children's first teacher.
- a school readiness plan that provides information that is needed to ensure children are ready for school, their families are ready to support their children's learning and schools are ready for our children.

Head Start then and now...

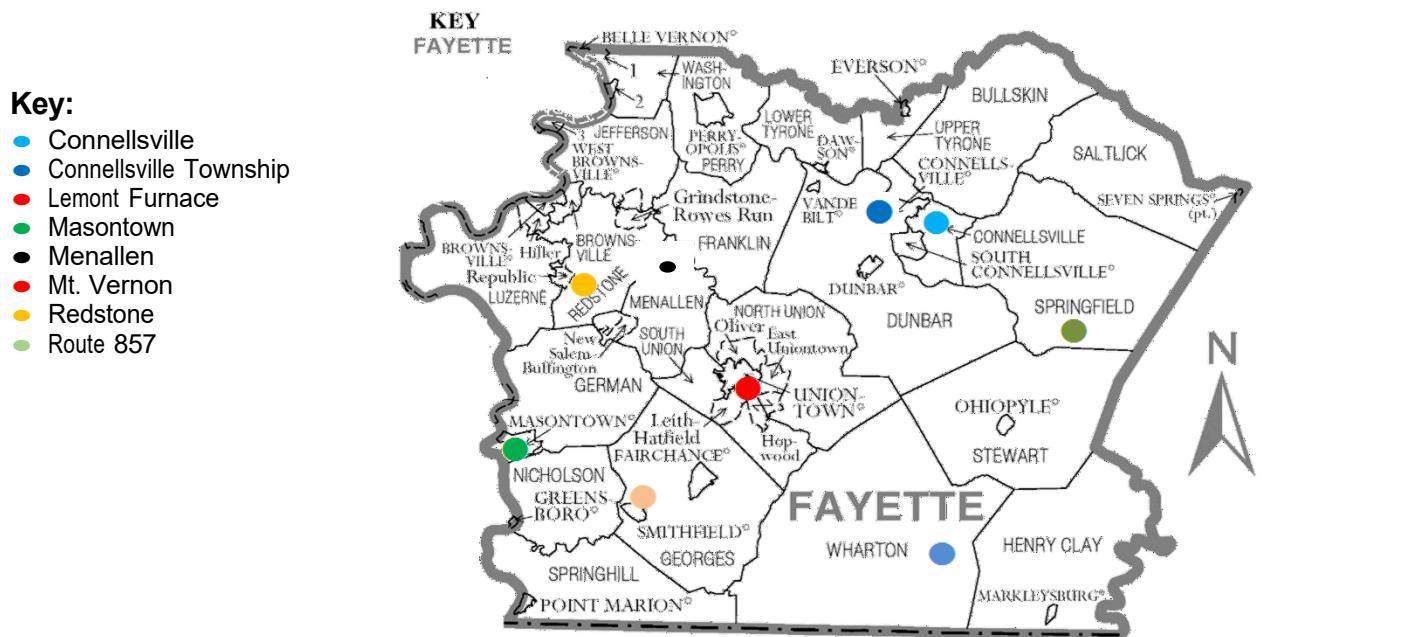
The National Head Start Program is now 60 years old; it was first funded in 1965 as a summer program by President Lyndon Johnson. The program now provides educational services and family support delivered by approximately 1,600 public, private, nonprofit or for-profit agencies across the U.S. Federal oversight is within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the Administration for Children and Families. The Head Start program serves about 1 million children and pregnant women in urban, suburban, and rural communities throughout America. Head Start services are provided in centers, family childcare homes, or in the family's own home. Each of the Head Start programs is organized into 12 regions by geographic location. Our program is part of Region III, which is headquartered in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



Fayette County Head Start/Early Head Start Program Centers, Facilities, Service Areas, and Recruitment Areas

During the 2024-2025 program year, Head Start/Early Head Start of Fayette County served a cumulative total of 1,014 children under 5 and pregnant women eligible for Head Start, Early Head Start, or Early Head Start-Childcare Partnership services in Fayette County. The following map and chart depict the center locations and number of children served in each.

2024-2025



HEAD START CENTER		HEAD START HOME BASED		EHS HOME BASED	
<u>Site</u>	<u>#Served</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>#Served</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>#Served</u>
Connellsville (3 classrooms)	60	Connellsville	12	Connellsville (5)	60
Connellsville Township (2 classrooms)	40	Lemont Furnace	12	Mt. Vernon/Nemacolin (6)	72
Lemont Furnace (5 classrooms)	100	Redstone	<u>12</u>	Masontown (1)	12
Masontown (2 classrooms)	40	Total	36	Mill Run (1)	12
Menallen (1 classroom)	20			Leckrone/Highhouse (1)	12
Mt. Vernon (4 classrooms)	75			Redstone (5)	60
Redstone (4 classrooms)	80	CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIP		Rt. 857 (1)	12
Rt. 857 (2 classrooms)	<u>40</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>#Served</u>	Smithfield (2)	24
Total	455	Little Blessings	6	Washington Twp. (1)	<u>12</u>
		ABC School	10	Total	276
		PIC Kid Zone	2		
		Hopwood Childcare	7		
		Kwalia's Daycare	8		
		Little Legends	<u>2</u>		
		Total	35		

Head Start/Early Head Start Performance Indicators 2024-2025

ENROLLMENT			
	Head Start	Early Head Start	Child Care Partnership
Total number of Children Served	561	401	52
Total number of Families Served	519	319	45
By Eligibility			
Income below 100% of federal poverty	58	56	13
Receive Public Assistance	396	275	38
Foster Child	18	8	1
Homeless	29	27	0
Over Income	60	35	0
Total Number of Children Served by Race			
White	369	265	26
Black/African American	74	57	8
Bi-racial or multi-racial	115	78	18
American Indian/Alaska Native	1	1	0
Asian	0	0	0
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	2	0	0
Unspecified/Other race	0	0	0

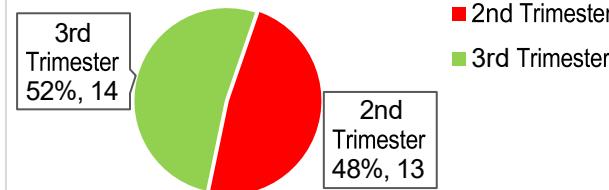
*This number excludes pregnant women

HEALTH SERVICES			
	Head Start	Early Head Start	
Up to date on Preventive and Primary Health Care	326	55%	118 30.64%
Number with a dental home	494	83.1%	255 66.2%
Number received preventative dental care (preschool only)	529	89%	
Number receiving dental treatment	36	16.5%	3 0%
Up to date on immunizations	543	92%	327 84.9%
Funded enrollment reported as children with a disability	158	26.5%	50 13%
Children with Health Insurance	556	93.6%	373 96.8%

TRANSITION SERVICES		
	Head Start	Early Head Start
Total number of children receiving transition services	594	385
Total number of children transitioned	212	84
Total number of children/families invited to participate in the Kindergarten visits	212	
Number of school districts involved	9	
Number of schools involved	23	
Number of school districts partnering in professional development	9	

Early Head Start Pregnant Women Services			
Total number of pregnant women	28	Facilitating access to substance abuse treatment	27
Received prenatal care	27	Breastfeeding education	24
Received postpartum care	24	Fetal development education	24
Mental Health interventions	0	High risk pregnancies	18
Substance abuse education	24	Received a professional dental exam	4

Enrollment of Pregnant Women



Program Design and Management

To provide leadership development and parent involvement opportunities, the program sponsors a variety of parent-led activities. The Policy Council assists the Grantee's Board of Directors in providing governance to the Head Start and Early Head Start programs. The Policy Council is comprised of parents (no less than 51%) and community representatives (no more than 49%).

The following were members of the 2024-2025 Policy Council:

<u>DELEGATES</u>	<u>COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES</u>
CONNELLSVILLE/ CONNELLSVILLE TOWNSHIP/MILL RUN Kira Berquist Michelle Hall Rebecca Burkholder	Michelle DeForrest Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration
LEMONT FURNACE	Christine Smith ELRC (Early Learning Resource Center)
REDSTONE/MENALLEN Chanel Grooms Felicity Sullivan	Dr. Elaine Barry Penn State University- Fayette PIC Board of Directors Liaison
MT VERNON Taryn Blaho – Chairperson Brittany Nicklow Abbey Smith	
MASONTOWN/RT. 857 Bethany Clites- Secretary Skylar Zopfi- Treasurer	

About Our Program Staff

During the 2024-2025 program year, PIC employed 169 qualified staff to administer and deliver services in Head Start/Early Head Start of Fayette County.

Head Start classroom teachers with an Early Childhood Education or related degree (AS, BA or graduate):	100%
Head Start home visitors with an Early Childhood Education or related degree (BA or graduate):	100%
Head Start classroom aides with/or working on an Early Childhood Associate Degree, Early Childhood Certificate or Child Development Associate (CDA):	100%
Early Head Start home visitors with an Early Childhood Education degree or related degree or degree with CDA:	100%

To provide an incentive for regular full-time employees to grow professionally, the corporation has a tuition reimbursement policy that will pay one-half tuition for undergraduate/graduate level courses. In addition, to support entry level positions and to support the ability for parents to enter the workforce the corporation offers 100% reimbursement for the CDA credential.

Head Start of Fayette County utilizes the Practice-Based Coaching (PBC) model which is a research and experience-based initiative developed by the Office of Head Start for the use of supporting teachers in their efforts of offering effective teaching practices. In program year 2024-2025 all staff received some form of coaching to sustain and focus on professional learning experiences. The program will be implementing the PBC model in the EHS Childcare Partnership Program in the upcoming program year.

Child Health and Safety

Health/Disabilities Services

During the 2024-2025 program year, Head Start and Early Head Start served 193 children with disabilities. This figure represents 23.9% of the Head Start children enrolled and 13.24% of the Early Head Start children enrolled, which exceeds the 10% Federal Regulations mandate.

Head Start/Early Head Start Children with Disabilities Program Year (2024-2025)		
	Head Start	Early Head Start
Number of Children with a Determined Disability	158	50
Head Start Diagnosed Disabilities		
Health Impairment	0	
Emotional Disturbance	0	
Speech or Language Impairments	51	
Intellectual Disabilities	0	
Hearing Impairment Including Deafness	0	
Learning Disability	0	
Orthopedic Impairment	1	
Specific Learning Disability	0	
Autism	18	
Traumatic Brain Injury	0	
Non-Categorical/Developmental Delay	88	
Multiple Disabilities	0	
Deaf-Blind	0	
Visual Impairment, Including Blindness	0	

Children with disabilities and their families receive all comprehensive services provided by Head Start/Early Head Start of Fayette County, as well as Early Intervention support services individualized for the child's special needs and the family's needs.

Early Intervention services may include speech, occupational, hearing, vision, and physical therapies to address diagnosed concerns, as well as special instruction for those diagnosed with developmental delays. Early Intervention services are provided through Intermediate Unit #1 or Intermediate Unit #7 for children aged three to school-age and by Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration for children birth to age three.

During the 2024-25 program year, all services for Head Start classroom children were provided in-person. For the Early Head Start and Head Start Home Based children, services were provided at the child's home.

Mental health consultation services are provided through Behavioral and Learning Support. The Family Wellness Consultants (FWC) observes and provides classroom and home support/training to staff and families. The FWCs assist in creating a physical and cultural environment that promotes positive social emotional functioning. The FWCs addresses parent and staff referrals, refers children and family members for evaluation and/or services as the need is determined. Mental health services can include individual and family counseling, classroom support, and in-home services.

When it is identified that children are receiving services from another agency, Head Start/Early Head Start of Fayette County obtains written parent permission to initiate procedures to obtain pertinent client information and for the Family Wellness Consultants to monitor services. The program collaborates with these agencies to provide services that best meet the needs of the family.

Child Development and Education

Curriculum

The *Creative Curriculum Sixth Edition* is used as the curriculum of choice in both the classroom and home-based options of the Head Start program. The Head Start Home Based option also uses, *Great Kids Inc.'s Growing Great Kids Preschool Curriculum*. The Early Head Start program currently uses *Partners for a Healthy Baby* as their primary curriculum and the *Creative Curriculum Infants, Toddlers and Twos Third Edition* as a supplemental curriculum. The *Partners for a Healthy Baby Curriculum* is a research-based, practice-informed curriculum used in evidence-based programs across the nation that achieved positive outcomes.

Partners for a Healthy Baby Curriculum was created to fill the need for a comprehensive home visit that provided a clear focus on the systematic approach to planning and conducting visits. The *Creative Curriculum* focuses on approaches to learning, social emotional, cognitive, physical, language, literacy and mathematic development of children ages birth to five. It also assesses the science, social studies and arts domains and English acquisition for those children that are determined to be dual language learners (in Spanish only). The classroom schedule is designed per the *Creative Curriculum* guidelines to assure a variety of teacher-directed versus child-directed activities. Also, the curriculum allows for a combination of activities throughout the day including small group, large group, table time, reading time, music time, movement time, gross motor time (indoor and outdoor), and free choice times. The same guidelines are followed for Head Start socializations, as well adapting the activities for children birth to three in the Early Head Start program. The *Growing Great Kids (GGK)* research-based curriculum is a strength-based partnership approach to building nurturing parenting skills while reaching developmental outcomes for preschoolers. *GGK* focuses on secure

attachment relationships, strong self-esteem, curious minds capable of creative and critical thinking, proficient receptive and expressive language and communication, cooperative peer relationships, age-appropriate impulse control, habits foundational to making healthy life choices, and social and academic building blocks for school success.

Head Start and Early Head Start of Fayette County School Readiness Goals and Outcomes for 2024-2025:

The Head Start Approach to School Readiness means that children are ready for school, families are ready to support their children's learning and schools are ready for children. All Head Start and Early Head Start programs are required to establish school readiness goals, across the five areas listed in the ***Head Start Early Learning Framework: birth to five and align with the PA Early Learning Standards.*** The five areas are: language & literacy development; cognition; approaches to learning; perceptual, motor, and physical development; and social & emotional development.

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	Mathematics Development	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development
			Literacy	Scientific Reasoning	

Below are the goals established by the School Readiness Committee for Head Start and Early Head Start children for the program year 2024-2025:

Social Emotional: Children will develop confidence in their own skills and positive feelings about self, as well as consistent, positive interaction through secure relationships with familiar adults.

Gross Motor: Children will demonstrate effective and efficient use of large muscles for movement and position, and demonstrate control, strength, and coordination.

Fine Motor: Children will use hands for exploration, play, and daily routines, and demonstrate increasing control, strength, and coordination of small muscles.

Language: Children will attend to, understand, and respond to communication and language from others and understand and respond to increasingly complex communication and language from others.

Literacy: Children will attend to, repeat, and use some rhymes, phrases or refrains from stories or songs, and demonstrate awareness that spoken language is composed of smaller segments of sound.

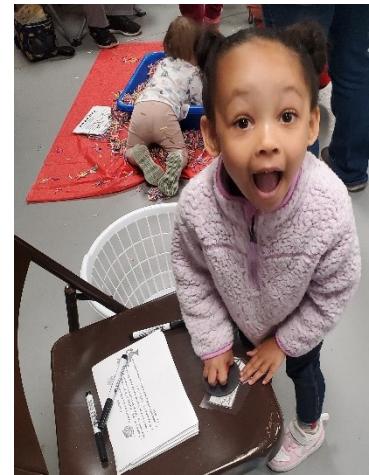
Approaches to Learning: Children will develop the ability to show persistence in actions and behavior

and persist in tasks.

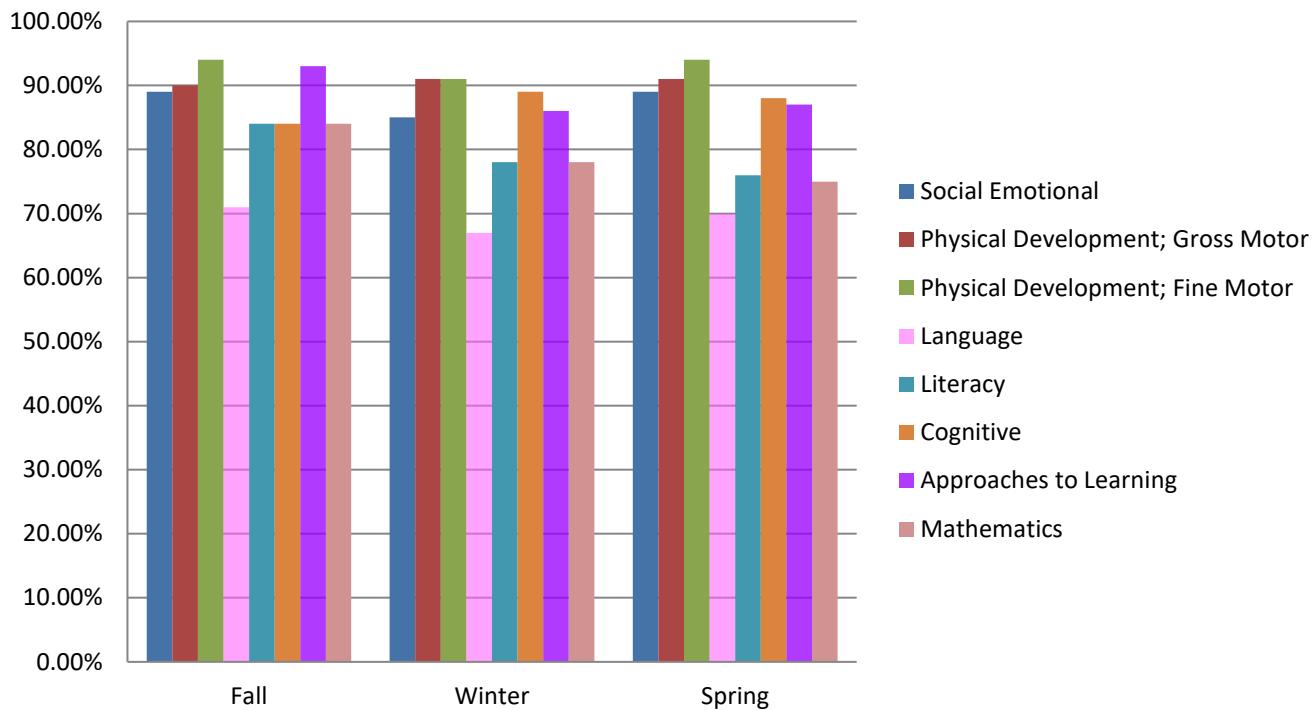
Cognitive: Children will use memories as a foundation for more complex actions and thoughts.

Math: Children will develop sense of number and quantity, counting and cardinality (the number of elements in a set or other grouping as a property of that grouping).

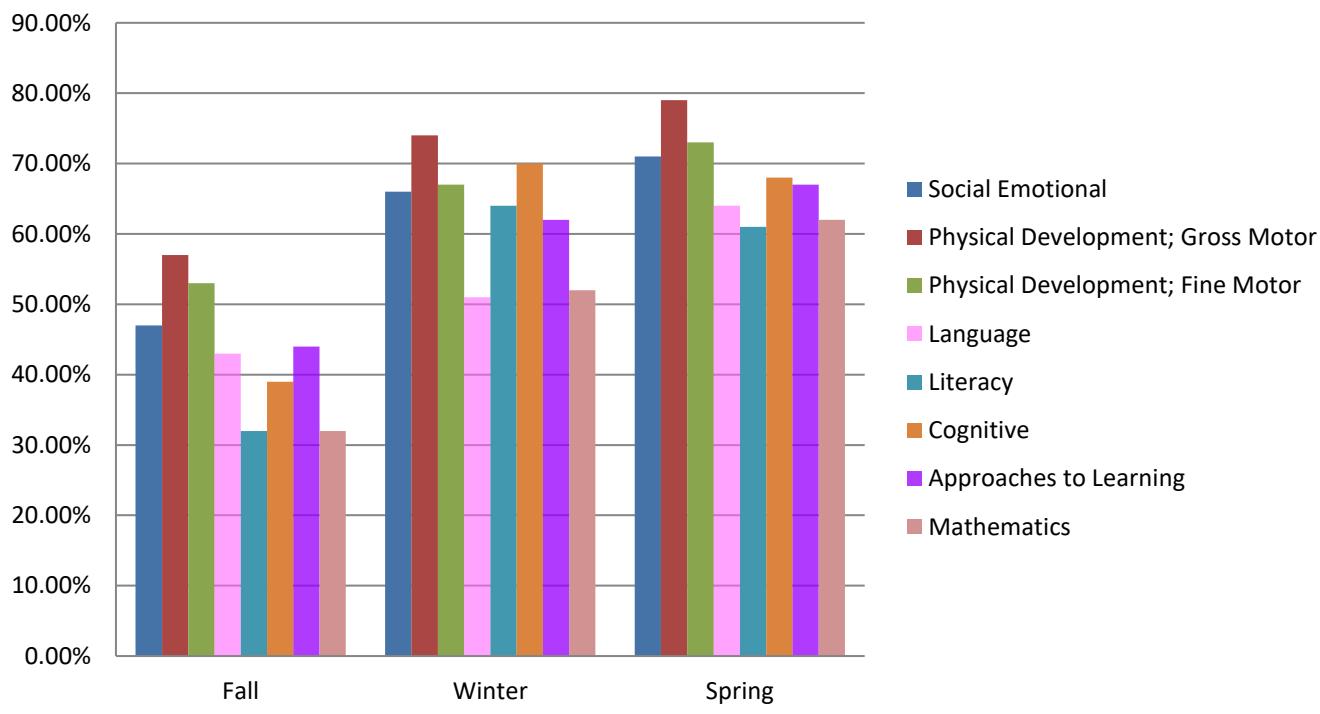
The charts below show the progress of children in the Head Start and Early Head Start programs from fall 2024 to spring 2025 encompassing seven domains of the GOLD Assessment that are aligned with both state and federal guidelines. Each column reflects the percentage of children meeting the established school readiness goal in each domain. The percentage is obtained by aggregating the information from the skill level of each child (as assessed utilizing the *Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment tool*.) The goal is to have children in our program display consistent gains in the established school readiness goals, as well overall in each domain from fall to winter and winter to spring. Research studies show it is normal for children to regress in skill development. Regression in skill area for young children is a normal pattern in children mastering a skill. Regression occurs due to a variety of environmental and physical factors such as illness, absence from school, family situations, change or instability due to moving or crisis. In Early Head Start the School Readiness Committee members determined that the regression throughout the year is due to the fluctuation of the age of the children on each caseload from newborn to transitioning 3-year-olds. Often a three-year-old may be replaced with an infant or toddler, which could cause a significant increase in scores of aggregated data. The program, therefore in this age group, closely monitors individual children's progress or regression and refers children for further evaluation if improvements in school readiness skills are not achieved. These outcomes provide evidence that the curriculums utilized by our program (the *Creative Curriculum, Growing Great Kids, and Partners for a Healthy Baby*) has a significant and positive impact on children's overall development, as well as their readiness for school age transition.



Fayette Early Head Start (Birth to 3) 2024-2025 Progress in SR Goals per Domains



Fayette Head Start (3 yrs. - 5 yrs.) 2024-2025 Progress in SR Goals per Domain



Transition

Early Head Start: Early Head Start had 63 children that aged out of the program in 2024-2025 per the Program Information Report. Of these children, 63 transitioned to Head Start services. The following materials were provided to all EHS families transitioning out of Early Head Start services.

- My Book about Preschool
- Helping Your Child Get Ready for Preschool
- Starting your Child in Pre-School Booklet for Parents
- The Night Before Preschool Storybook



Early Head Start staff continued to utilize two tools to assist with preparing families for their child's transition to preschool. The tools included the Transition Survey and the Transition Checklist. The survey helped staff to understand what parents knew about transitioning to preschool, how to go about identifying a quality early learning program and what challenges they faced with enrollment and location. Once the child completes their transition to preschool, Early Head Start utilizes the Transition Follow-Up tool. The Transition Follow-Up helps support families in a successful transition to their chosen preschool. It includes a visit to the preschool and contact with the parent once the transition has occurred.

Early Head Start also services pregnant women. Once the pregnant mom delivers, she is asked if she would like the newborn to transition into Early Head Start. The pregnant woman and newborn receive a two-week follow-up visit from the assigned school nurse. A post-partum questionnaire is completed 6-8 weeks after delivery. The questionnaire is then reviewed by the health team member to plan for any needed services or referrals.

Head Start: 227 Head Start children who would be attending kindergarten in the fall participated in a variety of transition activities in the spring, including virtual tours of their transitioning elementary school. Parents are encouraged to attend transition activities and are offered additional transition information during Head Start outings and parent/teacher home visits and conferences year-round.

Head Start management and staff engaged with 10 school districts, 25 elementary schools, in promoting school age activities in the early learning childhood environment.

Transition activities provided for all families throughout the 2024-2025 program year included:

- Asking parents to sign a permission form to share information with the school district in which their child attends and permission to monitor their child's progress.
- Conducting conferences/home visits to discuss transition information such as:
 - Kindergarten registration dates/times
 - Documents necessary for kindergarten registration
 - Transition activities to complete at home
 - Dates of PTO/PTA meetings
 - Kindergarten registration packets to complete prior to attending registration day
- Providing classroom/home-based activities that support transition
- Holding transition conferences for children with Individualized Education Plans (IEP)

- Held in February with Intermediate Unit 1 and 7, school district representatives, and parents.
- Schedule observations for parents of alternative classrooms.
- Attend school-age MDT (Multi-Disciplinary Team)/IEP meetings if requested by parent and/or school districts.
- Additional meetings are scheduled for newly added children, children with new IEPs and for children who may need additional evaluation or alternate classroom services.
- Providing backpacks to transitioning children and families containing:
 - Books for children
 - Resource Pamphlets
 - Transition activity calendars (Kindergarten, Here I Come)
 - Brochures
 - Other items such as pencil and pencil boxes, crayons, alphabet cards, scissors, and printing workbooks
- Holding transition meetings with schools and families upon request
- Preparing and distributing “Health Report Cards”. These report cards tell the school district the child’s health status (physicals, dentals, immunizations, and information if the child has a current IEP and/or is receiving mental health services).
- Preparing and distributing “Education Transition Reports.” These reports were sent to kindergarten teachers county-wide and provided important information regarding pre-k skills the children mastered upon leaving our program and prior to entering kindergarten. The list of skills assessed in the report aligned with the PA Early Learning Standards, the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework and the program’s child assessment tool, Teaching Strategies GOLD.

To assist in evaluating our work of transition, the “School Readiness Teacher Checklists” are sent to principals/kindergarten teachers each fall. The returned checklists provide the program with valuable insight and feedback of our transitioning children in their ability to demonstrate mastery of pre-kindergarten skills (per Office of Head Start and PA Early Learning Standards). The program utilizes the results, with the intent of improving quality of services, to develop and carry out new ideas/strategies assuring we are sending children to school districts prepared to learn the next level of developmentally appropriate skills. For the 24/25 program year 227 checklists were sent out (with parent signed permission) to the following school districts or private schools:

Albert Gallatin
 Belle Vernon
 Brownsville
 Connellsville
 Frazier

Laurel Highlands
 Mt. Moriah Christian School
 PA Cyber
 Uniontown
 Southmoreland

125 checklists were completed and returned as of December 2025 from a total of 13 elementary schools within and outside of the county. Of the 125 checklists returned, 4 checklists were not completed due to the child no longer being enrolled in that district or being cyber schooled. Information from the returned surveys were analyzed and calculated into the report on the next page.

SCHOOL READINESS CHECKLIST

Pre-Kindergarten Readiness Skills	Demonstrated this skill upon
• Recognizes and names some upper and lowercase letters (1.1 PK. B)	73%
• Recognizes Rhyming words (1.1 PK. C)	52%
• Answers questions such as who, what, when, where, why, and how after reading a story (1.2 PK. B)	72%
• Describes pictures in a book using details (1.3 PK. G)	74%
• Attempts to reproduce own name and/or simple words with most letters correct (1.4 PK. F)	74%
• Follows two-step directions (1.5 PK. C)	83%
• Rate counts to 20 (2.1 PK. A. 1)	59%
• Names numerals up to 10 (2.1 PK. A. 1)	70%
• Describes objects in the environment using names of shapes (2.3 PK. A. 3)	81%
• Recognizes difference between living and non-living (3.1 PK. A. 1)	94%
• Sorts objects according to shape, color, or other attributes (3.2 PK. A. 1)	94%
• Follows established rules and routes (5.3 PK. F)	81%
• Uses inside and outside vices (5.3 PK. F)	86%
• Responds with empathy to other's who are upset (5.3 PK. F)	94%
• Recognizes safe and unsafe practices (10.3 PK. A)	87%
• Engages in gross motor games (10.4 PK. A)	91%
• Uses scissors to cut a straight line (10.5 PK. A)	82%
• Uses writing and drawing instruments with pincer grasp (10.5 PK. C)	79%
• Expresses feelings that are appropriate to the situation (16.1 PK. A)	83%
• Shares and takes turns (16.2 PK. A)	90%
Parent Involvement/Partnerships for Learning	Most of the time
• Parent sends excuse if child is absent	90%
• Parent signs off on papers as required	91%
• Parents assure homework is completed & returned (meets assignment time frames)	90%
• Parent is receptive when teacher discusses concerns (i.e., attends conferences, returns phone calls, answers notes sent home, returns child's work folder)	92%
Special Education Services	
Child has current I.E.P.: 36	



Transition Activities

On August 15, 2024, students entering kindergarten for the 2024-2025 school year were invited to attend "Kindergarten Rocks," held at Private Industry Council's Lemont Furnace Head Start Center. Laurel Highlands School district and the United Way of Southwestern PA joined together with Fayette County Head Start/Early Head Start for the event to assist children that are transitioning to kindergarten from preschool programs in our county with a flawless transition to kindergarten. Children who transition successfully have a greater chance of demonstrating satisfactory performance, not only in kindergarten, but through grade school. The team planning the event consisted of staff and management members from HS/EHS and representatives from Laurel Highlands School District. Students and families were able to participate in several bedrock themed activities that included: rock painting, foam machines and building rock/cave structures, observing rocks, minerals, and fossils collections, bowling, dinosaur shadow tracing, dino dig for bones, volcano experiment, and a sensory pop rock experiment. The activities planned incorporated the programs school readiness goals to promote the development of skills in cognitive, fine motor, gross motor, approaches to learning, and social emotional. We also had areas with activities such as sidewalk chalk, connect 4, and Dino the Dinosaur present where families could mingle and engage with their children. All enjoyed popcorn and snow cones for refreshments. Students received school readiness kits from Laurel Highlands, books from the United Way, and from Head Start the "Welcome to Dinosaur School" book. Also in attendance was a representative from the Private Industry Council to educate families on the programs provided for youth and adults, such as CareerLink, Drome Camp, and Dad's Matter. In attendance we approximately had 97 attendees from approximately 31 families of those attendees 32 were transitioning children and 13 were adult males. We also obtained one pre-application for our program.



Parent, Family, and Community Engagement

The Parent, Family and Community Engagement service area provides a vehicle for parents/families and the community to volunteer and be involved in the Head Start and Early Head Start programs. In the 2024-2025 program year HS/EHS had a total of 1,087 volunteers participating in program activities; 754 were HS/EHS parents.

	Head Start	Early Head Start	TOTAL
Total volunteers for the program year	625	462	1,087
Number of volunteers who are current/former HS/EHS parents	457	297	754

Some of the activities planned during the program year for families by staff or parent groups were EHS and Home-Based socializations, Health Fairs in August, a Literacy Event in November, and a Math Event in the spring. In addition, our annual Munch, Mingle and Move Event occurred in person and our Annual Parent Training Event occurred in-person for enrolled parents/guardians and family members.

Parents, families, and community members are encouraged to participate and volunteer in several areas of the programs throughout the year. Participation can be by providing input for menus; completing surveys for different service areas such as in the PFCE area on parent training topics, the community assessment, and the self-assessment; attending socials; attending meetings; planning curriculum; making donations for classroom crafts and activities; helping with bulletin boards; and assisting in the classrooms.

The Parent, Family, and Community Engagement service area also supports parents in identifying and meeting their own goals monthly, nurturing the development of their children, and accepting the role of their child's first teacher. In addition, parents are updated on their child's progress at a minimum of three (3) times per program year.



Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA)

According to the US Census Bureau as of July 1, 2023 there were 123,915 residents living in Fayette County, PA. 4.4 % of which were children under the age of five living in Fayette County.

Recruitment of families continued year-round and occurred through various mediums, including several community sponsored events. Our largest means of recruiting is pre-applications obtained through community events and parent call-ins. The program also incorporated utilizing USPS to have direct mailers sent to residents of the county.

Families submitting applications were deemed eligible for HS/EHS by two factors: age/pregnancy and income. HS/EHS must follow the Federal Poverty Guidelines at 100% to determine a family income eligible. The second factor in determining eligibility is age (children ages 0-3 EHS and 3-5 HS) or pregnant women. In addition to child's age/pregnant women and family income, factors identified from the annual Community Assessment are used to ensure the neediest are prioritized for services. These include, among others, referred for services by a child welfare agency (CYS), children under age 1 referred due to low birth weight, children being cared for by individuals that are not their biological parents, children whose parents are incarcerated and children who parent/s are in substance abuse/treatment counseling and single-female head of household.

Selection of children to enroll was made by way of Community Assessment results which in turn provide for the Selection Criterion and ERSEA policies approved by the Policy Council and Board of Directors. The use of this criterion ensured the neediest or most at-risk children were given the opportunity to participate in HS/EHS programming. HS of Fayette County did maintain 97% enrollment throughout the 2024-2025 program year due, while EHS maintained 100% enrollment.

Programs are required by Head Start regulations to monitor attendance and maintain a minimum average attendance rate of **85%**. An attendance analysis is completed when the rate drops below the requirement to see if the program can alleviate the attendance problem. Excuses are collected from families for days their child is absent from school. Absences from home visits are also documented. The average attendance for 2024-2025 by month appears on the chart below. This chart does not include missed home visits.

PY 2024-2025		
	HEAD START	EHS CCP
August	N/A	93%
September	84.%	91%
October	74%	92%
November	76%	87%
December	66%	80%
January	57%	73%
February	71%	87%
March	76%	90%
April	76%	94%
May	77%	100%
June	75%	91%

Transportation Services

Fayette County Head Start has a fleet of buses used to transport children to the centers located throughout Fayette County. In addition to our bus fleet, we also contract with Mlaker and Rittenhouse to transport children to the centers. Bus runs are established before children begin classes and families are notified of their child's bus stop location and the times for pick-up and drop-off. The buses are equipped with five-point harnesses "BESI" seats and children are buckled into the seats for safety. In addition, buses have a child tracking system called ZONAR. This system tracks when a child enters the bus and then again when they depart the bus. This is done for each bus run daily both going to school and then when returning home from school. This is a safety measure to assist with ensuring "No Child is Left Behind". Our buses also have a trained bus monitor that rides the bus to assist children with buckling and ensuring "No Child is Left Behind". The drivers all hold a Commercial Driver License (CDL) and are trained on Head Start's emergency procedures. Fayette County Head Start strives to provide safe and reliable transportation services to the families we service.

Program Highlights

Child Development Associate

For the 2024-2025 program year HS/EHS of Fayette County continued offering the Child Development Associate credential class. Four staff participated in the 2024-2025 class. Participants attended class twice a week virtually. To date, sixteen staff have completed the CDA class.

Family Development Credential (FDC)

The FDC program is a professional development course and credentialing program for family workers to learn and practice skills of strength-based family support with families. The FDC emerged in 1994 from a research-policy collaborative between the Cornell University College of Human Ecology's Department of Human Development, New York State's (NYS) Council on Children and Families, NYS Department of State, and the New York City Dept. of Youth and Community Development. In 2010, the FDC program moved to University of Connecticut's Center for Culture (UConn), Health & Human Development (CHHD), which issues the credential and administratively oversees the program. Dr. Claire Forest remains director. In 2014, National FDC joined UConn's Department of Allied Health Sciences, where the Family Development Credential is jointly issued by CHHD and the Center for Environmental Health & Health Promotion (CEHHP). The family workers take 90 hours of training, prepare a Skills Practice Portfolio documenting their new abilities with guidance from an FDC portfolio advisor, and pass a standardized test. In the 2024-2025 program year, two staff from HS/EHS completed the course. A total of 74 staff members have received this credential since 2014.

ORAL HEALTH SERVICES



The program partners with Cornerstone Care Community Health Center and Golden-Onsite Dental to provide dental exams to our children during health fairs, family events and at classroom sites. Golden-Onsite Dental provided dental exams to children during the Munch, Mingle and Move Event. Cornerstone Care schedules days for the dentist and assisting staff to go to our sites to provide "knee to knee" dental examinations including prophylaxis and topical fluoride varnish. During the 2024-2025 program year, four dental clinics were held, and 52 children received dental services.

February of each year is considered ‘National Children’s Dental Health Month. The event is sponsored by the American Dental Association (ADA) to raise awareness about the importance of oral health. UMPC’s Registered Dental Hygienist provided dental education presentations for the Head Start classroom children and their families. UPMC provided bags to go home to each Head Start classroom child. Also provided were materials to participate in the presentation, toothbrush, and soapy tooth with sparkles.

Head Start/Early Head Start of Fayette County Hosts Barnyard of Books Parent Engagement Event

Families enrolled in Head Start and Early Head Start of Fayette County were invited to “Barnyard of Books” held at the Uniontown Mall on November 20, 2024. This literacy event’s activities were planned around the program’s school readiness goals. The theme of the event was to focus on literacy through farm themed activities. Our goal was to introduce families to as many barnyard themed books as possible and how they can interact with their child through an activity that went along with the book. Prior to the event, families were provided with an in-kind activity to make a replica of a farm if their family would live on the farm. They could include things like what their barn would look like, what animals they would have on the farm, and even what crops they would grow. The families all did a great job with this project as their creativity ran wild!



One hundred and ten HS/EHS staff members were present and eager to support families as they made their way through the activities. Families were greeted by staff at the doors with a farm themed headband for them to wear. The families were then able to participate in various activities. The activities included corn and bean sensory bins, infant discovery area, ring toss, making a farm animal puppet, gross motor farm action cards, counting animals on the farm, paper plate lacing, literacy letter match, bean bag toss, paper plate roosters, cardboard box tractor ride, duck on a tricycle course, shape tractors, three little pig house building, farm animal bingo, fruit market color matching, pattern blocks, counting cubes, playdough, and other various counting activities. Each activity was based off of a farm themed story book. The books that were featured for the activities were: The Little Red Hen, Sheep in a Jeep, Pete the Cat Old MacDonald Had a Farm, Otis, The Farm That Feeds Us, Duck on a Bike, Down by the Barn, Counting Animals on the Farm, Click, Clack, Moo Cows That Type, Charlotte’s Web, Big Red Barn, Barnyard Boogie, Barnyard Banter, Amara’s Farm, Harvesting Friends, Anywhere Farm, and Little Blue Truck. Our School Nurses were on site to share information about proper tooth brushing where children were able to brush the teeth of a giraffe and shark as a demonstration. Lastly, families were offered a light refreshment of berry fruit salad, trail mix, various fresh vegetables and dip, pumpkin fluff dip, various fresh fruits, various meats and cheeses, flavored milk donated by United Dairy, and water. The families were provided a bag upon leaving the event that included two books (The Farm That Feeds Us and Counting Animals on the Farm), a wooden cube puzzle, wooden puzzle, farm themed drawstring bag, and a farm animal stuffed animal.

We were joined by several community agencies at The Barnyard of Books. The Private Industry Council’s Youth programs, Dads Matter, and ETI were present, along with a representative from PA CareerLink. Fayette County Behavioral Health, Fayette County Community Action, Imagination Library from the Uniontown Library, WQED/PBS, and the United Way of Southwestern PA also joined in for the event.

In attendance were 123 families; 152 adults, 99 Head Start children, 50 Early Head Start children, and 77 siblings. There were also 5 families that attended that were shopping in the mall. Feedback from the families, included statements from parents such as “Loved it!” “Very Well Organized” “We will come to all events,” “Have more of these,” and “Everyone was so nice and helpful.”

Colorful Expressions: HS/EHS Children's Art Gallery Parent Engagement Event



Families enrolled in Head Start and Early Head Start of Fayette County were invited to "Colorful Expressions: HS/EHS Children's Art Gallery" held at the Uniontown Mall on April 8, 2025. The theme of the event was to focus on cognitive skills demonstrated to complete pieces of artwork that were displayed by each classroom and home visiting area. We also had several activities for families to do during the event as they walked through the art gallery. Prior to the event, families were provided with an in-kind activity to make a family portrait. The family portraits were on display the night of the event. The families all did a great job as the family portraits were beautiful.

One hundred and eighteen HS/EHS staff members were present and eager to support families as they made their way through the activities. Families were greeted by staff at the doors to sign in. The families were then able to participate in various activities. The activities included movement scarves, spin art, musical instruments, bubble art, mini canvas art, program canvas art, ink blot painting, sculpting, Dust Bunny puppets and rhyming, dance move dice, sensory area, and the art galleries to view. Our School Nurses were on site to share information about proper toothbrushing, hygiene, and staying healthy. Lastly, families were offered a rainbow of light refreshments that included fresh vegetables of carrots, bell peppers, and broccoli and dip, fresh fruit of blueberries, raspberries, kiwi, bananas, and plums, cheese sticks, pepperoni and salami, goldfish crackers, graham crackers, bottled water, and flavored teas and fruit juices. HS/EHS thanks United Dairy for the donation! The families were provided with a bag upon leaving the event that included two books (The Color Monster and This Little Artist), an art kit with various supplies for painting, and playdough.

We were joined by several community agencies at Colorful Expressions. The Private Industry Council's Youth programs, Dads Matter, and ETI were present, along with a representative from PA CareerLink. Fayette County Behavioral Health, Fayette County Community Action, Fayette County Plan of Safe Care, WQED/PBS, Laurel Highlands School District, Brownsville Area School District, and the United Way of Southwestern PA also joined in for the event. Two volunteers from Uniontown High School's National Honor Society also attended the event.

In attendance were 101 families; 198 adults (63 being male), 86 Head Start children, 37 Early Head Start children, and 81 siblings. There were also 21 families that attended that were not enrolled in HS/EHS but invited from our community partners. Feedback from the families, included statements from parents such as "This event was very planned out!" "We had a blast! Absolutely loved it!" "This was a very fun event!" "Love everything," and "This event was awesome!"

Annual Parent Training Event 2025 - Spring Fling

On May 15, 2024, Head Start/Early Head Start of Fayette County and Beaver County came together to host the 13th Annual Parent Training Event at the Holiday Day Inn, Canonsburg. The event was a time for parents to be recognized for their participation in our program as they learn about community resources.

We opened our event with parent testimonials. Our enrolled families were given time to share their individual experiences within our programs to the group. Listening to the parents tell how Head Start/Early Head Start benefitted their family was truly emotional for everyone present. All parents received applause for their participation in the program!

We are very appreciative of our community representatives for joining us. Each representative gave a brief overview of their services. The community representatives provided take home materials and information packets as they were available throughout the event for families to visit their tables. While visiting community representatives at their tables, parents were able to ask questions and gain information relevant to their family. Our special guest speaker Katie Hogsett, M.S., CCC-SLP, owner of *Over the Rainbow Speech Therapy*, engaged the crowd consisting of parents, staff, and community guests. Katie presented material with her expertise about early language development, articulation and phonological disorders, communication, play skills, and literacy-based therapy. Parents, community representatives, and staff were able to ask questions during the presentation. Katie also stayed afterwards to speak individually with those who had more involved questions.

Parents also participated in a fun game of trivia to win extra prizes donated by the parent policy council funds. Community partners also donated items that were given in baskets as door prizes during the event.

After enjoying a catered meal from Panera Bread, parents were given the option to have their photo taken as a keepsake capturing the event.

The day was full of fun learning experiences and a time of networking for parents. We are looking forward to planning the next annual event!

Munch, Mingle and Move 2025

Head Start/Early Head Start of Fayette County held their 19th annual Munch, Mingle, and Move Event on May 22, 2025 at the Fayette County Fairgrounds in Dunbar, Pennsylvania. The event is based on educating families on good health/nutrition habits. The 19th annual event was “Crunch, Jingle, Groove at Munch, Mingle, Move!” with a Dr. Suess theme. This year we had 129 families that consisted of 213 adults (47 of these were males), 163 enrolled children and 25 siblings attend the Munch, Mingle, and Move event. This represents a total of 401 attendees! The day started with families arriving at 10:00 am either by Head Start buses/vans or by transporting themselves to the Fayette County Fairgrounds Fiddler building. The families were welcomed by our staff at registration where they signed in and completed a pre-survey. Each family received a bag at check-in that included a “Horton Hears a Who” stress ball, and a Dr. Seuss book titled “Oh! The things you can do that are good for you, all about staying healthy.” The families then were able to explore the activities, community agencies and have photos taken at the photo booth. Families were able to make a Dr. Seuss hat to use on our Seussville Obstacle Course, they were able to create a house to take home their adopt-a-pet activity, and children were shown how to floss teeth. There were 21 community agencies and 16 different activities for the families to explore.

Community agencies this year included representatives from different insurance agencies, United Way, and Crime Victims Center plus many more. Also in attendance were different programs represented from the Private Industry Council that had information for our families to explore. Golden Onsite Dental was on hand providing families with the opportunity of having a dental exam. Eighteen families were given a dental exam with it being the first time for several of the children.

Some of the other activities included egg races, feeding the baby animals, and food group twister. Families were able to complete craft activities where they were able to make sleep masks and spin art with the ladies from Spring Valley – Bruderhof. Our little visitors were able to enjoy a crawling baby area with stuffed baby animals and bottles to feed them. Families were able to try red pepper dip, corn and black bean salsa, blue ocean dip (ricotta and blueberries), and a famous tuna dip. A grazing table style lunch was provided and served that included a ham or turkey sandwich, bananas, oranges, a variety of pickles, hulless popcorn, goldfish crackers, fruit/tea drinks and water.

The event was over at 2:00 pm. When families were done at the event, they filled out a post survey and names were drawn for donated items from the community vendors. The prizes were given to the staff to deliver to the enrolled families that attended.

Pre- and post-survey responses below showed positive results:

HOW MANY HOURS OF SLEEP DOES A 3-5 YR. OLD NEED AT NIGHT? 10-11 HRS

- Pre Survey: WRONG – 62% RIGHT – 38%
- Post Survey: WRONG – 57%RIGHT – 43%

HOW OFTEN SHOULD YOU FLOSS YOUR TEETH? 1 TIME

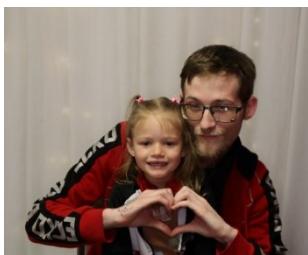
- Pre-Survey: WRONG – 31 %RIGHT – 69 %
- Post Survey: WRONG – 32 %RIGHT – 68%

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING IS A GROSS MOTOR ACTIVITY? RIDING A BIKE

- Pre-Survey: WRONG – 43% RIGHT – 57 %
- Post-Survey: WRONG – 46% RIGHT – 54%

Ninety-six percent of the families said they would attend another event and one hundred percent would refer another family to attend. In addition, some of the activities families noted as their child enjoying most were the flossing activity, adopt-a-pet and the food group twister game. Several families also indicated they were happy with the photo booth and getting to pet the furs provided by the game commission.

Some comments by families were “Love it! Great Staff!” “It was amazing!” “Everything was perfect, keep these activities, thank you!” Several post – surveys included a Thank you from families and noting they look forward to coming back next year



Overview of Findings for 2024-2025 FA2 Review

From March 3, 2025, to March 7, 2025, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted a Focus Area Two (FA2) monitoring review of Private Industry Council of Westmoreland/Fayette, Inc. Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

Program Design and Management

Performance Areas of Compliance:

- Program Design and Strategic Planning
- Program Governance
- Staffing and Staff Member Support

Education and Child Development Services

Performance Areas of Compliance:

- Teaching Strategies and Learning Environment
- Qualifications, Professional Development, and Coaching

Area of Concern:

- To complete or obtain developmental screenings for all children

Health

Performance Areas of Compliance:

- Mental Health and Social and Emotional Well-Being
- Child Nutrition
- Safe and Sanitary Environments

Area of Non Compliance:

- Child Health and Oral Health Care
- The grant recipients ensure staff members engage in appropriate safety practices.

Family and Community Engagement

Performance Areas of Compliance:

- Supporting Family Well-Being and Family Engagement
- Family Partnerships

CLASS Observation Review

Observations were conducted in the preschool center-based classrooms using the 2008 Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) tool. The CLASS tool looks at three domains and ten dimensions of teacher-child interactions and measures those observed interactions on a seven-point scale. The program opted for a video review. The review took place from October 7, 2024-December 6, 2024.

The Head Start Performance Standards include thresholds for each CLASS® domain. These quality thresholds represent the expectations of the Office of Head Start for the quality of the learning environment in every Head Start program. These thresholds do not relate to competition but instead reflect a quality improvement focus on teacher-child interactions, with the FY24 monitoring year, scores for CLASS® observations to be used in the Designated renewal System.

The results are below:

DOMAIN	PROGRAM SCORE	Quality Threshold	Competitive Threshold
Emotional Support	5.6118	6	5
Classroom Organization	5.3421	6	5
Instructional Support	2.4649	3	2.3**

The competitive threshold for Instructional Support is 2.3 for CLASS® reviews conducted through July 31, 2025, and then raises to 2.5 for the CLASS reviews conducted on or after August 1, 2025.

Head Start Fayette County met the competitive thresholds for instructional support for the 2024-2025 PY.

The Head Start (HS) and Early Head Start (EHS) programs have provided early childhood education opportunities and comprehensive support for low-income children and families since 1965 (HS) and 1994 (EHS). This report examines the needs and strengths of children and families served by the Private Industry Council Head Start and Early Head Start program of Fayette County (HSFC).

Overview of the Private Industry Council of Westmoreland/Fayette

HSFC is administered by the Private Industry Council of Westmoreland/Fayette, Inc. (PIC), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Greensburg, PA. Since its inception in 1983, PIC has been an advocate for economically disadvantaged families and individuals in southwestern Pennsylvania (the Pittsburgh region).

PIC is dedicated to building tomorrow's workforce in this region through early childhood development, employment and training, education, and business services. The organization supports this mission by:

- Providing assistance to employers to meet their workforce needs.
- Identifying and removing employment barriers for individuals and families.
- Committing to a holistic approach in education, empowerment, and lifelong learning.

PIC administers over two dozen programs in three divisions: Early Childhood Development, Education, and Workforce Development. As a result, the agency can holistically serve families' needs from cradle to career. PIC became the grantee of the Head Start of Fayette County in 1994 and Early Head Start in 1997. The program is part of the Early Childhood Development Division, which also includes the Head Start/Early Head Start of Fayette County, the PA Pre-K Counts Partnership, Early Head Start Child Care Partnership program.

PIC is governed by a 13-member board of directors (board). It expanded its board from 12 members in 2013, after designation as the grantee for the HSFC program. The board members represent Fayette and Westmoreland counties, where PIC maintains the majority of its programming.

The goal of HSFC is to promote school readiness and enhance social and cognitive development through the provision of health, educational, nutritional, social, and other necessary services with the objective that the families and their children will be healthy, confident, and better prepared to succeed in life. The EHS program is committed to serving low-income families with infants and toddlers. Our goal is to promote healthy outcomes and enhance the development of very young children, and support healthy family relationships.

HSFC offers classroom-based options to best serve the needs of the families in the area. Federal funding supports 396 slots per year. State funding supports an additional 95 slots per year.

HSFC Program Participants

There has not been a significant change in data since the last Community Needs Assessment. In Fayette County there are 6,591 children children aged 0 to 4 years¹. The poverty rate for the child population under four in Fayette County is 22.7%².

In Westmoreland County there are 15,699 children aged 0-4 years. The poverty rate of 15.9% indicates there are 2,452 children living in poverty under age four years.

The service area is becoming more diverse and disparities between children that are members of underrepresented racial-ethnic groups and their white peers are emerging. The child population is much more diverse than the adult population in both Fayette and Westmoreland County. For example, in Westmoreland, 92.95% of the adult population is white, compared to 13.74% of the child population under four years who live in poverty. In Fayette County the trend is the same, where 90.83% of adults are white, while just 15.74% of children under four living in poverty are white. The second largest racial-ethnic group is black/African American children which represent about 3.32% of the child population under four in Westmoreland County and 5.84% of the child population in Fayette County. Among children under four living in poverty, children of some other race (including Hispanic/Latino) represent nearly 46.36% of the population in Fayette County and about 38.12% in Westmoreland County.

Poverty, Race, and Primary Community Challenges

Both Fayette and Westmoreland, like many other places throughout the nation struggle with racial inequality which is reflected in the community assessment data. In Westmoreland County, the median income of white families is \$65,790, compared to a median income of \$30,742 for black/African American families. In Fayette County, the median income of white families is \$52,151 compared to \$26,557 for black/African American families. The lack of income impacts the resources

¹ United States Census Bureau. Population Under 18 Years by Age 2022. Table B09001.

² United States Census Bureau. Fertility 2021. Table S1301.

available to children, impacts housing and health, and places undue stress on parents which can impact parenting behaviors.

Families experiencing poverty face a range of challenges, including employment and housing instability. The poverty rate for families is 9.89% in Westmoreland County and 16.07% in Fayette County. The poverty rate for children under four in Fayette County is 22.7%, compared to 15.9% for Westmoreland County children under four years. 10.8% of Westmoreland County households are in poverty with single female-headed households rating at 54.2% of total households versus single male-headed households at 10.2%. 16.9% of Fayette County households are in poverty with female-headed households representing 54.6% versus single male-headed households which rate at 12.8%.

Poverty Rates

Report Area	Total Population	Population in Poverty	Population in Poverty, Percent
Report Location	1,852,659	206,914	11.17%
Allegheny County, PA	1,214,621	134,916	11.11%
Beaver County, PA	165,585	17,573	10.61%
Fayette County, PA	124,503	20,012	16.07%
Westmoreland County, PA	347,950	34,413	9.89%
Pennsylvania	12,568,252	1,482,811	11.80%
United States	321,897,703	40,661,636	12.63%



Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.
Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-21.



Health disparities are also a factor impacting child and family outcomes in the service area. Both Westmoreland and Fayette County have high rates of health insurance coverage, but limited access to health care due to lack of providers that accept public insurance. In Westmoreland County, only 2.6% of all children under eighteen do not have insurance and in Fayette County 4.25% of all children under eighteen do not have health insurance, but 25% of children in both counties are enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP.

Some of the most concerning outcomes are in regard to maternal child health. In both counties, the rates of child death are highest for black/African American children. In fact, the rate of black child deaths is twice that of the rate found for all children as a whole. The rate of infants born with a low birthweight is also greater for black/African American children at 15% in Fayette County and 13% in Westmoreland County, compared to a rate of 9% for Fayette County and 7% for Westmoreland County as a whole. As such, developmental issues may be a factor later on in their preschool years and beyond.

Early Care and Education Landscape

As seen in the last Community Needs Assessment, the early and education landscape is changing rapidly with expansion of state preschool (Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts) and the changing employment needs of families. When at least 85% of all children are served, it is typically assumed that an early childhood system has reached universal access. In Fayette County it is estimated that the current capacity for preschool slots reaches 100% of all preschoolers in poverty. The rate of access to early care and education for infants and toddlers is much lower at just 21% of all infants and toddlers in poverty.

In Westmoreland County, the same trend is illustrated. It is estimated that the current capacity for preschool slots reaches 100% of all preschoolers in poverty, indicating universal access to preschool has been achieved. For infants and toddlers, almost 25% of children living in a family with a low income can be reached. While the early care and education system is meeting the needs of preschoolers, the counties can still benefit from continued expansion of EHS Child Care Partnership programs.

Strengths and Needs

Program Level Strengths: The community survey respondent cohorts identified teachers, staff, and the ability to support children's development as key strengths of the program. Program data also noted that despite challenges in health, the program was able to ensure that children were up-to-date on their immunizations, health and dental exams, and that all children had a medical and dental providers.

Systems Level Strengths: PIC is an established community partner that delivers a diverse array of services. This facilitates information sharing and ensures that families are connected with the resources they need. Many families and board members that completed surveys noted the agency's history and partnerships as a strength.

Challenges

There is still a significant number of families in both counties that have a low income and racial disparities in income when data is disaggregated by race.

Households headed by single mothers are also more likely to live in poverty and are represented at a high rate among family types. A significant number of births are to mothers that are unmarried which will exacerbate this problem in the coming years.

Families lack the skills needed to obtain jobs that pay family – sustaining wages. Many families have only one parent working or no parents working. They also report transportation and educational attainment limit their employment options. Housing concerns include substandard housing and lack of affordable housing.

Community survey respondents indicated a need for more childcare slots and which operate for 10 hours a day to provide full-day and full year care. Affordable childcare was noted as a barrier to maintaining employment, increasing parental education, and to achieving financial stability.

Population: 122,714

Population Ages 0-4: 6,213

Head Start: 561 Cumulative Enrollment / 174 on Waitlist

Early Head Start: 401 Cumulative Enrollment / 158 on Waitlist

Early Head Start CCP I: 12 Cumulative Enrollment / No Waitlist

Early Head Start CCP II: 18 Cumulative Enrollment / 6 on Waitlist

Early Head Start CCP III: 22 Cumulative Enrollment / 10 on Waitlist

Children enrolled in Preschool

882 (35.49%) of children ages 3-4

Total # of Children in Poverty

Ages 0-4:

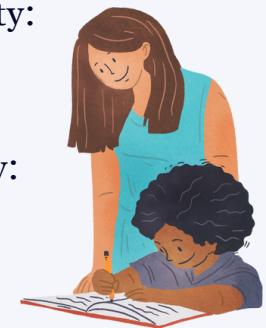
5,702

Total # of Children Under Age 18:

24.27%

Family Composition

Number of Female
Householders in poverty:
2,093



Percent Female
Householders in poverty:

54.6%

Per capita income:

\$56,093

Unemployment Rate



Fayette County: 3,101 (5.7%)

Pennsylvania: 301,408



Access to Transportation

People w/o vehicle: 8.96%

People w/10- 30 min. commute:

47.36%

Housing Cost Burden



Renters Spending over 30% of
income: 22.09%



Low Birthweight Babies

817

Percent of Population with High School
Diploma as highest level of education:



47.5%

Child Food Insecurity

79.5% receive free lunch



80% free or reduced lunch eligible

Financials

Budget vs Functional Expenses

July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025

	Budget	Head Start	Early Head Start	PA State Head Start	FC EHS CCP I	FC EHS CCP II	FC EHS CCP III	CACFP	Total
Wages	\$7,077,518.00	\$3,789,917.06	\$1,876,676.66	\$518,664.69	\$62,861.88	\$187,372.15	\$176,118.17	\$0.00	\$6,611,610.61
Fringe Benefits	\$1,962,908.00	\$1,023,930.02	\$483,411.14	\$144,370.00	\$16,008.98	\$51,753.85	\$43,694.67	\$0.00	\$1,763,168.66
Rent	\$347,450.00	\$260,008.92	\$77,769.63	\$45,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$382,778.55
Utilities/Telephone/Internet	\$186,848.00	\$127,524.66	\$43,289.02	\$12,750.90	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$183,564.58
General Office Supplies/Postage/Shipping	\$57,863.00	\$68,733.28	\$38,691.94	\$1,147.42	\$304.69	\$575.47	\$51.89	\$0.00	\$109,504.69
Program Supplies	\$209,437.00	\$124,087.93	\$20,398.51	\$2,687.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$44,725.09	\$0.00	\$191,898.53
Insurance	\$92,887.00	\$67,433.99	\$25,220.70	\$640.69	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$93,295.38
Local Travel	\$114,311.00	\$58,554.64	\$87,695.24	\$1,224.82	\$548.00	\$2,410.40	\$2,168.22	\$0.00	\$152,601.32
CTR/Audit/Fiscal/Legal Services	\$52,148.00	\$37,693.47	\$10,931.75	\$2,687.00	\$104.73	\$228.59	\$3.20	\$0.00	\$51,648.74
Health/Disabilities	\$71,500.00	\$75,600.00	\$6,510.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$82,110.00
Food/Nutrition	\$77,187.00	\$268,468.78	\$4,516.78	\$2,687.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$275,672.56
Transportation/Vehicle Main	\$371,600.00	\$340,896.44	\$1,525.05	\$30,245.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$372,666.49
Parent Services	\$9,000.00	\$5,586.78	\$3,442.57	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,658.17	\$0.00	\$13,687.52
Contracted Services	\$416,318.00	\$284,845.84	\$66,276.21	\$25,247.48	\$36,636.05	\$75,520.59	\$87,522.13	\$0.00	\$576,048.30
Training/Technical Assistance	\$132,154.00	\$91,198.24	\$119,692.87	\$0.00	\$496.16	\$5,589.00	\$3,332.61	\$0.00	\$220,308.88
Publications/Advertising/Printing/Member	\$54,850.00	\$44,664.95	\$29,497.70	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$74,162.65
CACFP Expenses	\$351,328.43	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$351,328.43	\$351,328.43
	\$11,585,307.43	\$6,669,145.00	\$2,895,545.77	\$787,352.00	\$116,960.49	\$323,450.05	\$362,274.15	\$351,328.43	\$11,506,055.89

- 57.46% Of the expenditures were for wages for the Director, Assistant Director, Management Team, Classroom Instructors, Classroom Instructor Aides, Homebased Instructors, Integrated Service Aides, Bus Drivers, Family Service Workers, Family Resource Specialists, Data Operators, School Nurses, Enrollment Specialists, Nutrition Specialist, Clerks, P/T Instructor Aides and P/T Nutrition Aides.

- Another 15.32.% covered benefits for the staff including FICA, Unemployment Comp., Worker's Comp., health, dental, vision, 401(k), life insurance, STD and LTD.

- Insurance costs include the following: Child Liability, Commercial Property, Comprehensive General Liability, Commercial Vehicle, Director and Officers Liability, Commercial Umbrella, Computerized Business Equipment, Blanket Employee Dishonesty, Sexual Abuse/Sexual Molestation and Professional Liability

- The Private Industry Council of Westmoreland/Fayette, Inc., receives Federal, State, and Local funds. During the Fiscal Year July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, of over \$29,000,000. As a result, PIC is required to have a yearly Single Audit completed by an independent auditing firm.

- The CPA Firm of DeBlasio & DeBlasio Associates will prepare and finalize the Single Audit for the fiscal year July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025. The audit will be presented to the PIC Board of Directors for their review and approval. Then the audit will be submitted to all the funding agencies.

- The audit will be available for review at the PIC Administrative Office, 219 Donohoe Road, Greensburg, PA 15601, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.

Related Revenues/Expenditures
July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025

Grant/Source	Funding Source	Time Frame	Grant/Budget Amt.	Actual Expenditures	% of Expenditures
Head Start Base Grant/Training & Technical Assistance	U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services	July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025	6,669,145.00	6,669,145.00	100.00%
Early Head Start Base Grant/Training & Technical Assistance	U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services	July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025	2,943,488.00	2,895,545.77	98.37%
PA State Head Start	PA Dept. of Education & Public Welfare	July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025	787,352.00	787,352.00	100.00%
Fayette County EHS CCP I	COTRAIC	September 1, 2024 - August 31, 2025	115,996.00	116,960.49	100.83%
Fayette County EHS CCP II	COTRAIC	September 1, 2024 - August 31, 2025	356,466.00	323,450.05	90.74%
Fayette County EHS CCP III	COTRAIC	March 1, 2024 - February 28, 2025	361,532.00	362,274.15	100.21%
Child and Adult Care Food Program	PA Dept. of Education Division Food & Nutrition	July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025	351,328.43	351,328.43	100.00%
Total			11,585,307.43	11,506,055.89	99.32%

FEDERAL IN-KIND MATCH REQUIREMENT

			Required Match	Actual Match	
Non Federal Match	Local Sources	July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025	2,348,654.00	2,348,654.00	100.00%
Non Federal Match	Local Sources	September 1, 2024 - August 31, 2025	118,116.00	118,116.00	100.00%
Non Federal Match	Local Sources	March 1, 2024 - February 28, 2025	90,383.00	90,383.00	100.00%

- The Fiscal Year for the Private Industry Council of Westmoreland/Fayette, Inc. runs from July 1 to June 30.
- The Federal Grant Year for the Fayette County Head Start and Early Head Start Programs ran from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025.
- Expenditures and funding for this report are based on the time period of July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 unless otherwise noted.
- For Program Year 2024 - 2025, 99.32% of the funds were spent.
- In-Kind Match funds are required. These in-kind contributions come from volunteers, donations of supplies, space, and parents' time.

