

Community Action Partnership of Cambria County

Early Childhood Programs

2024 Annual Report to the Public

This report will be posted on the agency's website: capcc.us

This report will also be shared with CAPCC's Board of Directors, the Early Childhood Policy Council and a hard copy will be available at All CAPCC Early Childhood Centers for viewing by program staff, families, and other visitors.

Federal and State Funding

During the 2023-2024 Program Year, CAPCC Early Childhood Programs received a total of \$5,789,343 with \$4,476,921 for the Head Start Program, \$289,864 for the Early Head Start Program, \$252,558 for the Head Start State Supplemental Assistance Program (HSSAP), and \$770,000 for the Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts Program.

Budgets and Budgetary Expenditures

Federal Head Start Base Grant: \$4,431,992
(4,003,720 was utilized)

Training and Technical Assistance: \$44,929

Non-Federal Share Required: \$1,039,623 (Short \$271,657 – Waiver Requested)

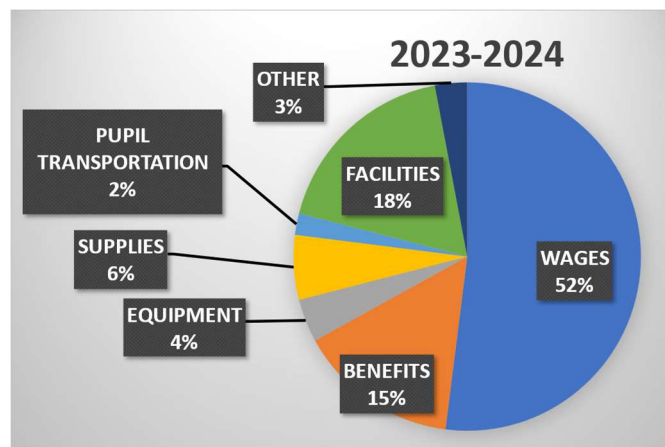


Figure 1 Head Start Base Grant % of Spending by Category

Federal Early Head Start Base Grant: \$282,687
(\$245,473.03 was utilized)

Training and Technical Assistance: \$7,177

Non-Federal Share Required: \$66,337 (\$40,925 Waiver Requested)

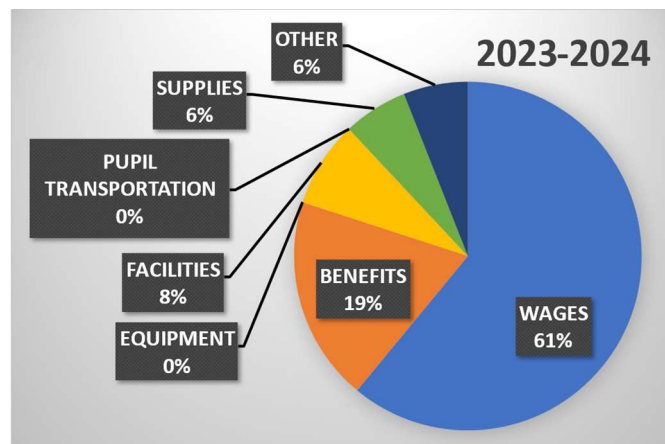


Figure 2 EHS Base Grant % of Spending by Category

Head Start State Supplemental Assistance Program (HSSAP): \$252,558
(100% was utilized)

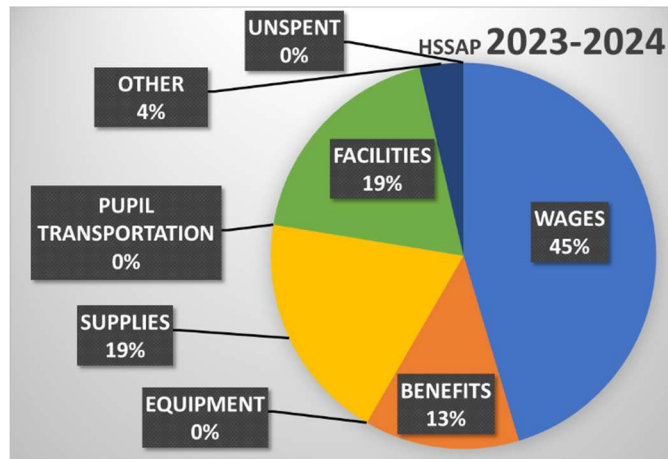


Figure 3 HSSAP Grant % of Spending by Category

Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts Program (PKC): \$770,000
(100% was utilized)

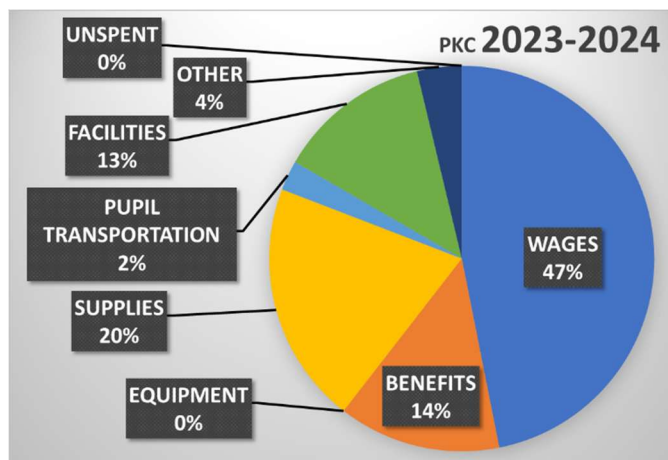


Figure 4 PA PKC Grant % of Spending by Category

Mount Aloysius, Johnstown, Northern Cambria, Salix and Admiral Peary Federal Head Start and Head Start State Supplemental Assistance Program Funding Enrollment

Head Start had a cumulative enrollment total of **286** students receiving services through Federal Head Start and the Head Start State Supplemental Assistance Program (HSSAP) funding. These students range in ages from 3 to 5 years old and live throughout Cambria County. Specifically, 145 were 3 year olds, 140 were 4 year olds, and 1 was 5 years old.

The number of funded enrollment slots through the Federal Head Start grant was for 311 students and the Pennsylvania Head Start Supplemental Assistance grant (HSSAP) was for

18 students. The cumulative enrollment total outlined above was lower than the funded enrollment due to not being able to open all classrooms because of insufficient staffing.

Our monthly enrollment totals remained low through the end of the program year. Federal Head Start average monthly enrollment was 226 or 70% of the 311 funded enrollment and HSSAP's average monthly enrollment was 17 or 95% of the 18 funded enrollment total.

Our waiting lists remained moderate at every center site location - the numbers fluctuated according to family need, area population, and the availability of other preschool programs in the community. Of the 308 applications completed and verified as eligible for Head Start, 286 or 93% of the eligible children received Head Start services during the program year.

Early Head Start in Northern Part of Cambria County

This was the seventh year we provided Early Head Start Home Based Services in the northern part of Cambria County. The county was divided by zip codes and serviced by either Professional Family Care Services (PFCS) or our agency (CAPCC). A strong collaboration was formed and continues between these agencies/providers. Early Head Start remained fully enrolled this program year with a cumulative enrollment total of **47** pregnant women and students birth to age 3 receiving services through Federal Early Head Start (EHS) funding. Specifically, 3 pregnant woman, 11 students under 1 year of age, 10 one-year olds, 13 two-year olds, and 10 three-year olds.

The funded enrollment slots through the Federal Early Head Start grant was for 24 pregnant women/students. However, the cumulative enrollment total outlined above was higher than the funded enrollment due to students transitioning to a Preschool Program, such as Head Start and dropouts and fill-ins throughout the program year.

Our monthly enrollment totals remained stable. Average monthly enrollment for the year was 23 or 94% of the 24 funded enrollment total with most vacancies being filled within 30 days as required by Federal Performance Standards.

Our waiting list remained minimal for this program providing services in the northern part of Cambria County. Of the 50 applications completed and verified as eligible for Early Head Start, 44 or 88% of the eligible applicants received Early Head Start services during the program year.

Additional State Funding Enrollment

CAPCC Early Childhood also provides Preschool Services through the **Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts Grant**. This program offers high quality preschool services at no cost to eligible families in Cambria County.

During the 2023-2024 Program Year, CAPCC Pre-K Counts provided 76 students (enrollees and dropouts/fill-ins included) ages 3 to 5 years, services through **5 different site locations** – Johnstown City, Salix, Cambria Elementary, Jackson Elementary and Ferndale

Elementary. Specifically, 48 students were 4 years old and 28 students were 3 years old based upon the school cutoff dates and enrollment into the program.

Program Eligibility

Head Start, Head Start Supplemental, and Early Head Start families must meet the income eligibility requirements which is equal to or below **federal poverty-level guidelines**, (i.e., in 2023, a family of 4 can earn up to \$30,000 at 100% poverty level).

The Head Start Act of 2007 passed an enactment that allows Head Start/Early Head Start programs to award an additional 25% of enrollment slots to families who meet the 130% federal poverty guidelines (i.e., in 2023, a family of 4 could earn up to \$39,000).

Therefore, we may enroll a total of 35% of Head Start/Early Head Start funded slots with families that fall between 100% to 130% federal poverty guidelines.

For 2023-2024 Program Year, **99%** of our Head Start enrollment were students from families whose income levels were **below 100%** Federal Poverty guidelines **or** were **categorically eligible** while **98%** of our Early Head Start enrollment fell into this eligibility. **1%** of Head Start families and **2%** of Early Head Start families enrolled into the programs earned between **100% to 130%** poverty level incomes. For **Early Head Start**, 15 students aged out of EHS and 14 transitioned to Head Start. One pregnant woman received EHS services until the time her infant was born when the enrollment slot transitioned to the newborn infant making this data point 100%.

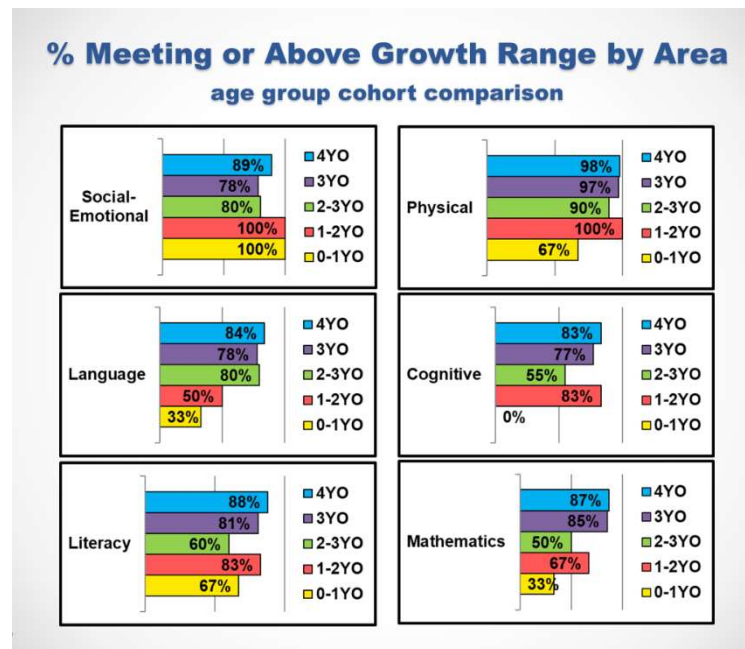
PA Pre-K Counts families must also meet specific eligibility guidelines and meet at-risk criteria in order to be accepted into the program. Families may earn up to **300% of federal poverty income** guidelines and still be eligible for these services, i.e. in 2023, a family of 4 may have earned up to \$90,000.

School Readiness / Child Outcomes

CAPCC collects child outcomes and progress 3 times a year for preschool age children and 4 times a year for children under 3 years old. A committee comprised of CAPCC staff, parents and community partners reviews all data collected and makes recommendations to help improve the School Readiness of all children enrolled in our Early Childhood Programs.

The following chart depicts the end of the year percentages of children at or above widely held expectations for their age in six developmental domains:

The following chart depicts the end of the program year average growth rates or progress made in six developmental domains by age:



Disabilities

A minimum of 10% of our Early Head Start/Head Start/HSSAP funded enrollments total 311 (which equates to **31 slots**) must include students with documented disabilities as mandated by federal Head Start Performance Standards. Diagnoses can occur before enrolling into the program or as a result of our developmental and sensory screening and referral process after enrollment.

Historically, our CAPCC Head Start program has maintained at least 18% enrolled in the program with various verified disabilities per program year. While the percentage of students with a diagnosed disability remains steady the severity of their disabilities is increasing.

For the 2023-2024 Program Year, our enrolled number of preschool aged students who either already had an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or received one during the program year was **20% or 56 out of 286 enrolled preschool aged** students while our Early Head Start Program had **14% or 6 out of 44 enrolled** infants/toddlers having an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). All students with individual needs receive ongoing support from Early Intervention Service programs in our community and stress the importance of comprehensive quality birth thru 5 programs such as Early Head Start and Head Start.

Mental Health

13 / 14 Classroom teachers received assistance from a mental health consultant for 1 or more enrolled students.

Medical and Dental Exams in Head Start and HSSAP Programs

In 2023-2024, according to our *Program Information Report* (PIR) statistics, out of a possible **286** students, (enrollees and dropouts/fill-ins included):

- 286 or 100% had a continuous source of accessible medical care or medical home.
- By the end of the program year 238 or 83% were up to date on preventative and primary health care--a 17% increase from the time of enrollment; 66 or 23% were diagnosed with a chronic condition needing medical treatment; and of those 39 or 59% received their follow-up treatment.
- Diagnosed chronic medical conditions included (some students may have more than one diagnosis): 5 autism, 4 ADHD, 15 asthma, 0 seizure disorder, 6 life threatening allergies, 1 hearing difficulties, 23 vision problems, 19 high lead levels, and 1 student with diabetes
- 45 or 16% were obese with a BMI at or above 95th percentile for child's age and sex which is the same from the previous year.
- 280 or 98% were up to date on all immunizations and 3 students were exempt.
- 241 or 84% had a dental home by the end of the year which was up 14% from the beginning of the program year.
- 220 or 77% had a completed dental examination during the program year.
- 23 or 10% were diagnosed as needing dental treatment.
- 10 or 43% received or were scheduled to receive needed treatment after the end of the program year.

Medical and Dental in Early Head Start (EHS)

In 2023-2024, according to our *Program Information Report* (PIR) statistics, out of a possible **47** (3 pregnant women and 44 students ages birth to 3), (enrollees and dropouts/fill-ins included):

- 47 or 100% had a continuous source or accessible medical care or medical home.
- 35 or 80% of students were up to date on preventative and primary health care.

- 2 or 50% of diagnosed students received medical treatment for a chronic condition, regardless of when the condition was first diagnosed by a health care professional.
- Chronic medical conditions included: 1 ADHD, 1 vision, and 1 high lead level.
- 41 or 93% were up to date on all immunizations.
- 100% or 3 pregnant women enrolled in the program received at least 5 of the following services while enrolled in EHS:
 - Prenatal health care, Postpartum health care, newborn visit within 2-weeks of giving birth, Substance Abuse Prevention, Education on Fetal Development, and Education on Benefits of Breastfeeding, Education on Importance of Nutrition, Education on Infant Care and Safe Sleep Practices, Education on risks of alcohol and/or smoking,
- 29 or 66% of students had continuous, accessible oral care per EPSDT recommendations based on age.

Nutrition Services

CAPCC Head Start (federal and state) provides breakfast, lunch, and snack to students enrolled in our programs and Pre-K Counts provides breakfast and lunch. Family members are also encouraged to sit and eat with their child when they are in the facilities to volunteer for the programs. Meals at 3 Early Childhood Centers were prepared in-house by trained cooks according to menus that have been pre-approved by a Registered Dietician. Meals at 2 of our centers was provided through contracted meal service. Meals at 2 of our Pre-K Counts centers were provided through the school district where they were located. All meals met CACFP guidelines.

Families are invited and encouraged to attend meal planning meetings offered by the Early Childhood Nutrition component to gather information, ideas, and suggestions about food choices, ethnic food-options, and special dietary needs.

Beginning June 2023 through June 2024 Head Start (federal and state) and Pre-K Counts provided **34,094 Breakfasts; 35,783 Lunches; and 25,457 Snacks to *286 HS and 74 PKC students** (*enrolled, drop-outs and fill-ins).

Because we participated in the USDA Child and Adult Care Feeding Program, Head Start and Pre-K Counts received reimbursement of most meals served, dependent upon the families' income level (free, reduced, or full pay).

The **total Food Claim reimbursements** received for the above-mentioned meals equaled **\$240,977,77**. These reimbursements received assisted in purchasing food, non-food supplies, and helped with the daily operations of the nutrition program.

Center Sites and Program Options

For the 2023-2024 Program Year, the enrolled 286 Head Start students and 47 Early Head Start pregnant women/students were provided services through five (5) center site locations: Johnstown City, Admiral Peary Vo-Tech in Ebensburg, Mount Aloysius, Northern Cambria, and Salix.

During the 2023-2024 Program Year, CAPCC Early Childhood Programs also provided PA Pre-K Counts services to 74 students through 4 different locations – Johnstown City, Jackson Elementary, Cambria Elementary, and Salix. Pre-K Counts Services provided: 5-day a week full day services with a minimum of 180 child days; 5.5 to 6 hours of direct curriculum; transportation to and from programming at 2 of the 4 locations, and community outings; breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon juice snack; nutrition, medical, vision, and dental services; needed social services; parent volunteering opportunities; and more.

Head Start services included: Transportation (mainly offered at scheduled bus stops) was provided to and from programming to the majority of students and meals were also provided to program participants. Other services included: social and economic referral services to students and families; medical and dental services, treatment assistance and referrals, community outings; consultation services; paid internship programs; Policy Council and program volunteering opportunities to parents; and more.

During this program year, CAPCC Early Head Start provided a minimum of 22 two-hour socializations at the Mount Aloysius or Northern Cambria Centers or in the community. Home Visits were scheduled weekly to last 1 ½ hours each. Program regulations require a minimum of 46 home sessions per program year. Other services included: social and economic referrals to students, pregnant women, and families; medical and dental services, treatment assistance and referrals, consultation services, and Policy Council volunteer opportunities for parents.

Parent Engagement Activities

During 2023-2024 Program Year, as in past program years, we were proud to offer a variety of **opportunities and volunteering experiences** for our parents/guardians and their families to become actively involved in the program. All parents and related family members were strongly encouraged to **volunteer** in their child's center. Through this partnership and time commitment, they are not only enhancing their child's education but solidifying their relationship with their child.

Parents were invited and encouraged to attend **monthly parent meetings**. During these meetings, parents discuss what is going on in their center, what activities they may like to have scheduled and other related needs. Community agency representatives are also scheduled to come to these meetings and talk about what they are offering to the community for assistance.

Parents are given the opportunity to serve on the Head Start/Early Head Start **Policy Council** which is made up of at least 51% parent representation and not more than 49% community representation. Policy Council is like a school board in that it offers a unique opportunity for parents to become involved in program development and shared decision making. There are numerous Committees established where parent representatives can serve for the benefit of the program. Parent representative(s) are also elected to attend State conferences and/or meetings, at which they attend workshops and network with

other parents and staff members from Head Start/Early Head Start programs across the state.

As a way to recognize all the hard work our Policy Council members and top volunteers do, we provided a **special recognition dinner at the end** of the Program Year.

CAPCC Early Childhood Programs also offered a Fatherhood Initiative Program called **“Dads’ Club,”** in which male role models are the primary participants. A paid consultant was contracted to lead the meetings. Dads’ Club provides male family members the opportunity to meet with each other, network, choose specific topics for discussion and training while their children are engaged in a project with our staff. Each meeting concludes a craft activity or other quality time activity together with their child.

8-week **Parenting Classes** were offered to parents remotely. This course was led by a staff member who is a certified trainer in the **Making Parenting a Pleasure** parenting curriculum.

During the holidays, we offered **Bake Workshops** at each of the center locations. Parents participated in making cookies and cheeseballs and helped to wrap holiday presents (usually books) that were donated or received from community members for each of our enrolled students.

Community members, such as the Penn State Cooperative Extension office offered cooking and budgeting classes for meal preparation.

“Literacy Nights” were held remotely where students and families participated in reading books and completing fun, interactive activities together!

We also utilized parents and family members to help represent the programs at community events by operating information tables, spreading the word through education about the program, and organizing other functions.

Kindergarten Readiness

We begin the **transition process** by obtaining written permission from the child’s parent to release and share information about the child’s educational progress with the home school district.

Students transition to **13 different school districts** and **several parochial schools** throughout the county. Each school is provided health and education data on each student entering **kindergarten** from our programs whose parents have given permission.

Kindergarten registration information and procedures are gathered from school districts, and families are supported through the process of registering their child for kindergarten.

The transition process begins each February when local school districts and our Intermediate Unit schedule transition meetings for students with **Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)**. Early Childhood Education staff meet with local school district

representatives and the parents in order to discuss the IEP goals and progress that have been made.

Transition meetings began in February for the rest of the students enrolled in the programs. Head Start/Pre-K staff and district personnel meet and share information. The Individual Child Reports (ICR) from Teaching Strategies Gold Online are shared with receiving school districts when permitted by parents.

Some school districts hosted a “**Welcome Head Start/Pre-K Counts**” Day where our students were able to tour their future classrooms and meet their upcoming teachers and building staff. Our students also ate lunch at their future “big school.” Parents were invited and encouraged to attend. Some school districts sent their staff to participate as a **Guest Reader** in our program rooms where they began to meet their future pupils.

Strategic Planning and Continuous Quality Improvement

We have implemented numerous procedures and protocols, reviewed and bolstered our existing plans, and continued to work on achieving the agency and early childhood goals/objectives outlined in our **Strategic Planning and Continuous Quality Improvement Plans** for the future of our Early Childhood Programs and entire agency.

Grant Cycle/Monitoring Reviews

CAPCC Head Start/Early Head Start had two monitoring events during the 2023/2024 program year. The CLASS review was held during the week of October 17, 2023. Our program met the Competitive Thresholds in all domains.

The FA2 review was held from March 18 to March 21, 2024. There was one deficiency cited and two non-compliances. The deficiency was for 3 part time fiscal staff that did not have clearances. The non-compliances stated that our Board of Directors was not being properly trained and that our Mental Health Consultant needed to be a Licensed Social Worker. The Office of Head Start has verified that all of these have been corrected.

Annual Audit

The audit for the year that ended June 30, 2024 is scheduled for January / February 2025. Once completed the results are published by the CAPCC agency.

Tracy Helsel, Early Childhood Director