

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022



**Mercer County
Head Start**

Early Head Start

PA Pre-K Counts

**Serving Pregnant
Women, Children Birth to
Age Five, and Their
Families in Mercer
County**

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[www. mchs-ehs.org](http://www.mchs-ehs.org)

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

As the Interim Director of the Mercer County Head Start / Early Head Start program, I take great pride in sharing the 2021-2022 Annual Report with our families and stakeholders. Throughout the 2021-2022 program year, the pandemic still presented us with many challenges to our program as well as our community, but we maintained committed to providing high quality services to pregnant women and children birth - five years of age. As we continue to navigate through these unprecedented times, we remain steadfast to the core values that guide our decisions and expectations for the services we provide to our children and families. Our priorities are to promote teaching and learning and meet the diverse needs of all the families that we serve. The staff's continued dedication to maintaining a safe and positive learning environment will help to ensure our children will gain the necessary knowledge and skills essential for meeting school readiness expectations.

Thank you to all Head Start / Early Head Start families for your support and cooperation over the past school year. Partnering with you has been crucial to our program's success especially as we faced the obstacles presented by the pandemic. I am grateful for the opportunity to work alongside not only a team of dedicated staff and teachers, but parents, family members, Policy Council, and Board Members. Our Head Start / Early Head Start community is deeply committed to the safety and well-being of our children and we look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,
Jennifer A. Zilla, Interim Director



MISSION AND VALUES

Mercer County Head Start/Early Head Start/PA Pre-K Counts connects children, families, schools and communities by partnering quality education with caring support services today for a better tomorrow.

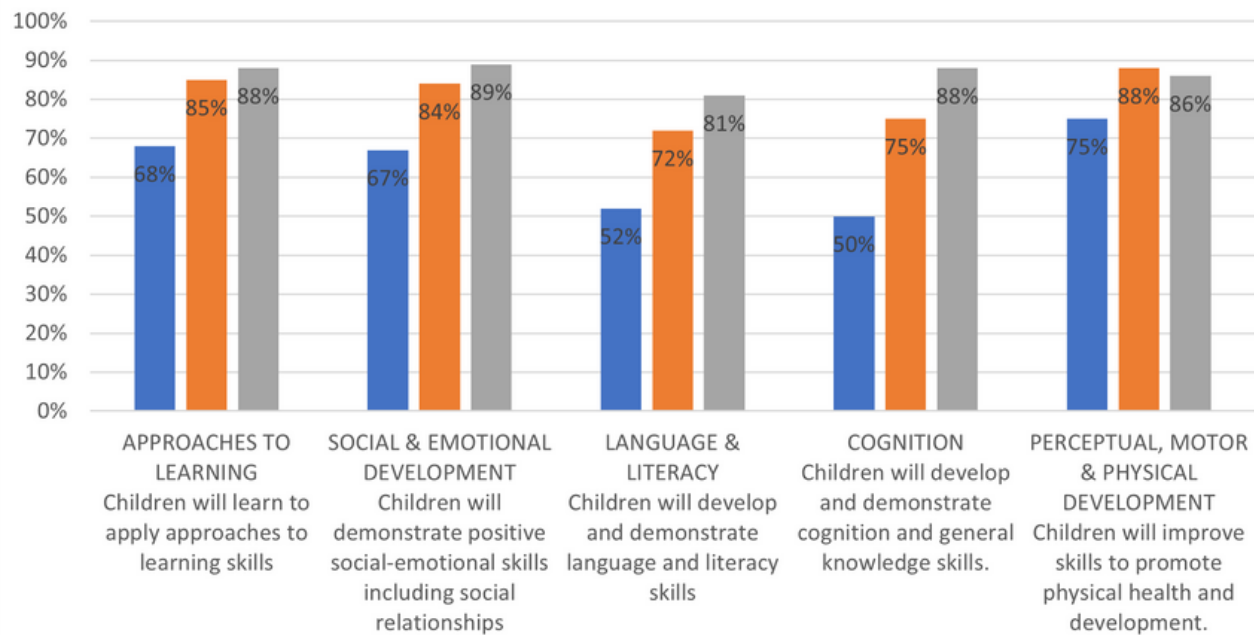


- **We believe that parents are a child's first and best teacher.**
- **We believe that our entire staff should be committed to children, families, fellow staff members and our community partners by demonstrating the highest levels of professionalism, dignity and respect.**
- **We believe that the key to self-sufficiency is through quality education, parental responsibility and community partnerships.**
- **We believe that education and the love of learning is critical to school readiness and a family's future success.**
- **We believe that providing comprehensive services for physical and mental health development are crucial to a child's overall development.**
- **We believe in the empowerment of families to ensure self-reliance.**
- **We believe that a child that has healthy nutrition and a safe environment can learn effectively.**

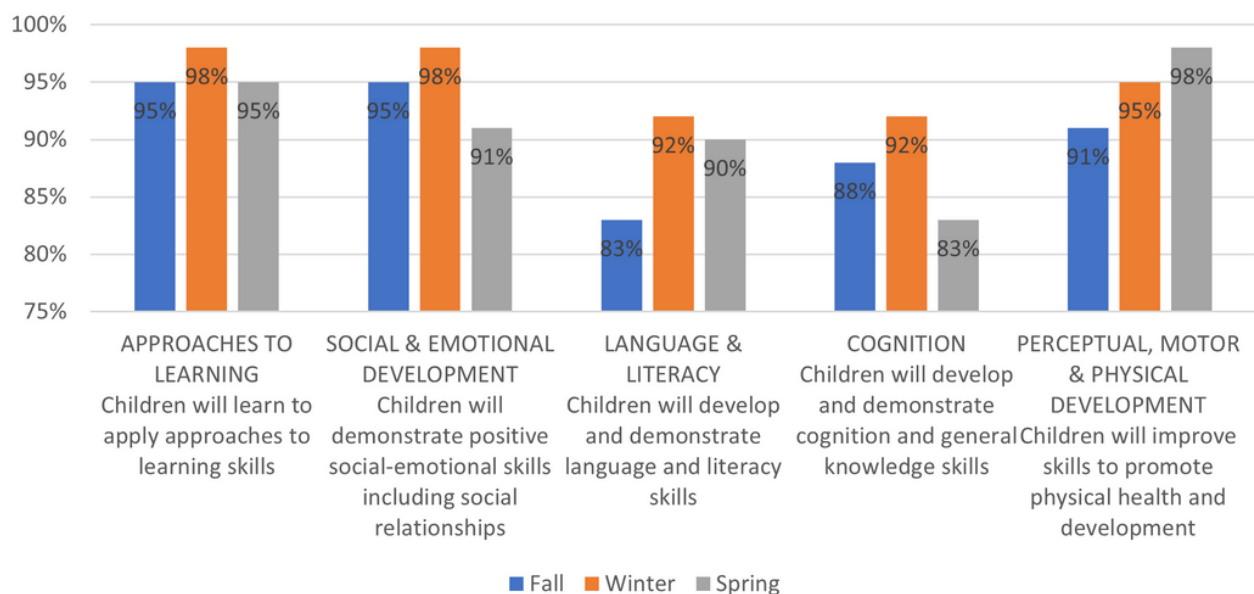
SCHOOL READINESS

Children are assessed three times per year using the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment system. Expectations are based on widely accepted developmental milestones. These goals are aligned with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework and the State Early Learning Standards.

OVERALL SCHOOL READINESS PROGRESS
PRESCHOOL
2021-2022



OVERALL SCHOOL READINESS PROGRESS
INFANT / TODDLER
2021 - 2022



During the 2021-2022 program year, center-based preschool classrooms moved back to 5 days a week of in-person instruction with flexibilities in place related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Every enrolled child and family received a Chromebook and/or hotspot, if needed, to support the need to move from in-person to virtual instruction, when temporary virtual situations occurred.



The Early Head Start home-based program moved back to in person home visits during the 2021-2022 program year. Early Head Start children and families were also provided with a Chromebook and/or hot spot, if needed, to participate in virtual visits. Staff used the Mercer County Head Start / Early Head Start COVID-19 Screening Form prior to conducting a home visit to determine if a temporary need for virtual services was identified.

There are 1,690 eligible children ages 3-4 that reside in Mercer County.

Mercer County Head Start/PA Pre-K Counts serve 29% of eligible children ages 3-4 in Mercer County

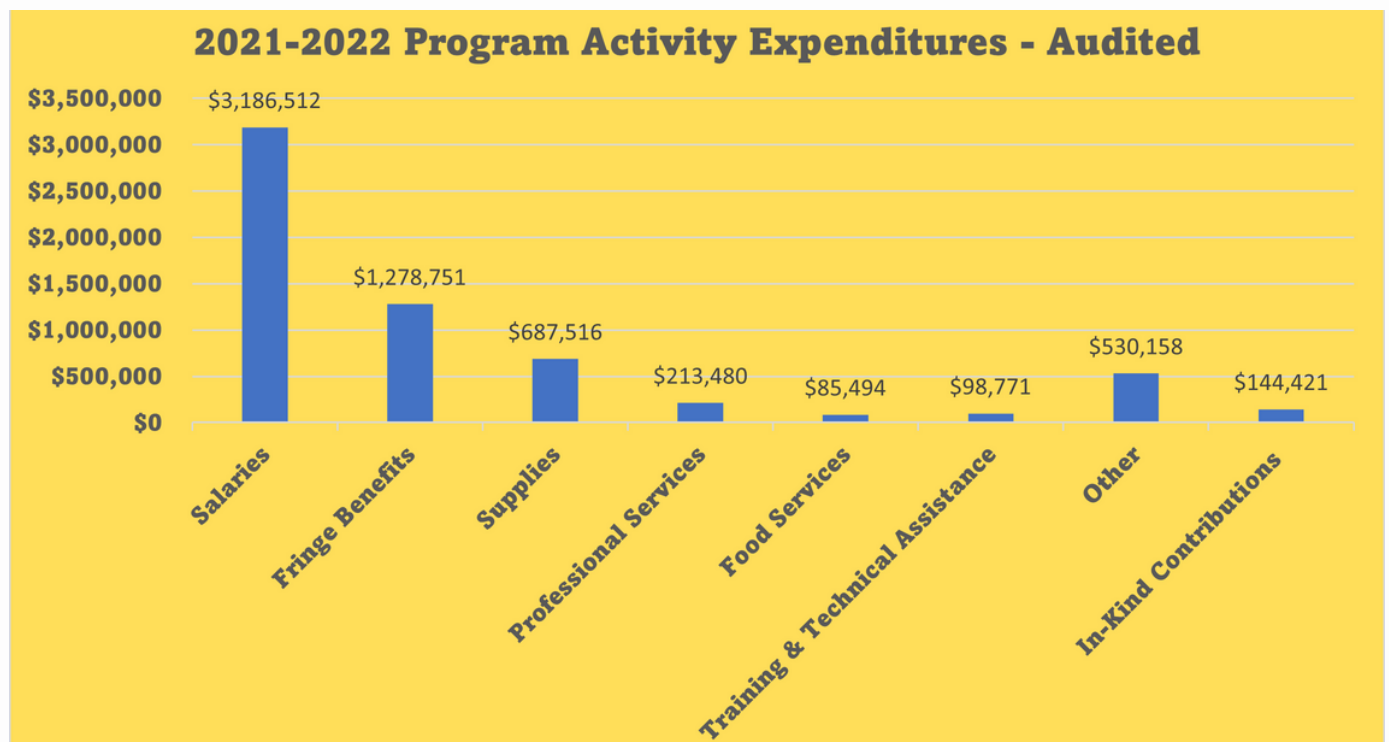
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Program receives Federal and State funding to provide comprehensive early childhood services to 567 pregnant women, infants, toddlers, pre-schoolers and their families. Federal funding is awarded by an 80% federal share provided by the Federal Government for the cost of the program and a 20% non-federal share expected to be provided by the Program in the form of cash or in-kind donations. State funding includes a Child and Adult Care Food Program to provide aid for the provision of nutritious foods that contribute to the wellness, healthy growth, and development of young children.

<u>2021-2022 Funding Type Description</u>	<u>Program Grant Revenues</u>	<u>Program Grant Expenditures</u>
Head Start(HS) Operating / Training & Technical Assistance	\$3,625,467	\$3,643,645
Early Head Start (EHS) Operating / Training & Technical Assistance	\$672,884	\$670,097
Head Start State Supplemental (HSSAP)	\$938,907	\$948,897
PA Pre-K Counts (PKC)	\$831,302	\$818,043
Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	\$297,715	\$255,483
Non-Federal Share (In-Kind)	\$144,421	\$144,421
2021-2022 Program Totals	\$6,510,696	\$6,480,586

AUDIT

Hill, Barth & King, LLC an independent auditing firm, conducted an audit of the combined financial statements and programs of Farrell Area School District-Mercer County Head Start, Early Head Start and PA Pre-K Counts programs. It was the opinion of the firm that the combined financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the programs as of June 30, 2022 and 2021, and the changes in their fund balances for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. In addition, there were no findings or areas of non-compliance reported during this audit.



HEALTH INFORMATION

Percentage of children/pregnant women with health insurance:

Head Start-99%

Early Head Start children-100%

Early Head Start pregnant women-98%

PA Pre-K Counts-100%

Percentage of children with a medical home:

Head Start-100%

Early Head Start children-100%

Early Head Start pregnant women-100%

PA Pre-K Counts-100%

Percentage of children with up-to-date physical examinations:

Head Start-71%

Early Head Start children-59%

Early Head Start pregnant women-100%

PA Pre-K Counts-72%

Percentage of children with up-to-date, or all possible immunizations:

Head Start-100%

Early Head Start children-98%

PA Pre-K Counts-100%

Percentage of children with a dental home:

Head Start-70%

Early Head Start children-95%

PA Pre-K Counts-96%

Percentage of children with up- to- date dental examinations:

Head Start -50%

Early Head Start pregnant women-56%

PA Pre -K Counts-59%



The % of children enrolled in the Head Start/HSSAP program who had an Individualized Education Program (IEP)-20

The % of children enrolled in the PA Pre-K Counts program who had an Individualized Education Program (IEP)-17

The % of children enrolled in the Early Head Start program who had an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)-17

Transition



Successful transitions from preschool to kindergarten happen when the schools and families work together and then their preschool teacher has the opportunity to engage with the receiving school. Mercer County Head Start / Early Head Start has a system in place to ensure as smooth a transition as possible. This includes Early Head Start to Head Start and Head Start / PA Pre-K Counts to kindergarten.

Mercer County Head Start has agreements in place with all 12 school districts. These signed agreements recognize and support the process in which our staff and school district personnel gather, along with parents, to successfully transfer students into kindergarten. With parent permission, we can transfer assessment data, health information and overall progress information from the preschool teacher.

- # of Children who transitioned from Head Start / PA Pre-K Counts to Kindergarten - 246
- # of Children who aged out of Early Head Start - 32
- # of Children who transitioned from Early Head Start to Head Start - 27
- # of children who transitioned from Early Head Start to another ECE Program - 2
- # of children who did not enter another ECE program - 3

Summer Learning Program

Following the 2021-2022 program year, Mercer County Head Start , offered a summer learning experience that was made possible by funds from the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act. During this four week session, 44 students at two locations - Farrell and Greenville participated in a 5 day a week, 5 hour a day program that was focused on math and literacy along with weekly field trips, daily outdoor activities, including a farm to table garden as well as breakfast and lunch being served.



Family Engagement

During the 2021-2022 Program Year, Ready Rosie was implemented as a Parenting Curriculum and a new approach to promote Family Engagement.

Ready Rosie aligns with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework as well as the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework.

Ready Rosie is an electronic platform that a family can access on any device at their own time.

The teacher / home visitor designs a play list of activities that are age appropriate and individualized to meet the need of the child and support social and academic skills that have been introduced in the classroom or home based setting. These are scheduled to be sent two times per month to the families.

Ready Rosie also gives families the opportunity to share their child's success with their teacher.

It aligns with the curriculum and assessment tool that is used in the classroom.

The Family Advocates are able to use the Ready Rosie Family Workshops as part of their Center Committee Meetings. Our Program saw an increase of 49% family participation with the use of Ready Rosie.

Family Engagement

There were 88 Early Head Start families served during the 2021-2022 program year.

In addition to weekly home visits the following activities were available to all families:

- Riverside Park Outdoor Exploration**
- Olympic Fun Center and Fostering Listening in your Child**
- Grove City Park Exploring Sights and Sounds**
- Apple Castle**
- Irons Mill**
- Farrell Police Department and Fire Department**
- Buhl Park Color Scavenger Hunt**
- Keystone Safari**



There were 401 Head Start families served during the 2021-2022 program year.

The Head Start program offered the following family and community engagement opportunities:

- Nutrition Lessons provided by the Nutrition Supervisor.**
- Welcome to School learning materials to supplement learning activities in the classroom.**
- Health and Safety information through the Family Engagement Staff and Center Committee Meetings.**
- Transition planning and meeting with receiving school districts or other kindergarten programs.**
- End of Year Carnival for all Families with a focus on Motor Skills and Summer Safety**

Community Partnership

During the 2021-2022 Program Year, a new partnership was formed with Golden Onsite Dental to help bridge the gap of dental exam options within our service area. Through an electronic platform, a dental hygienist is able to be onsite and provide a cleaning and have the dentist tele-dent in to complete the exam. Although Golden Onsite Dental is not considered a Dental Home, it has been a welcomed alternative for families because, due to COVID-19, there has been a backlog of appointment options of up to one year for families to choose for their child. If a child is found to need additional dental care / follow up, Golden Onsite is working with our staff and families to find a dental provider who can meet the child's dental needs.

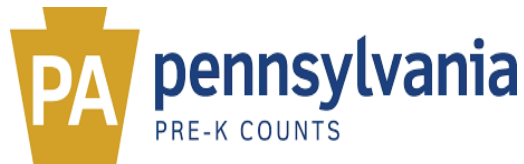


Mercer County Head Start, Early Head Start, HSSAP and PA Pre-K Counts are programs of the Farrell Area School District, a sub-recipient partner of the recipient and lead agency, Community Action Partnership of Mercer County. The programs prohibit discrimination against its customers, employees and applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, ability, sex, gender identity, religion, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by any federal or state grants.

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 **MercerCountyPaMCHS**

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