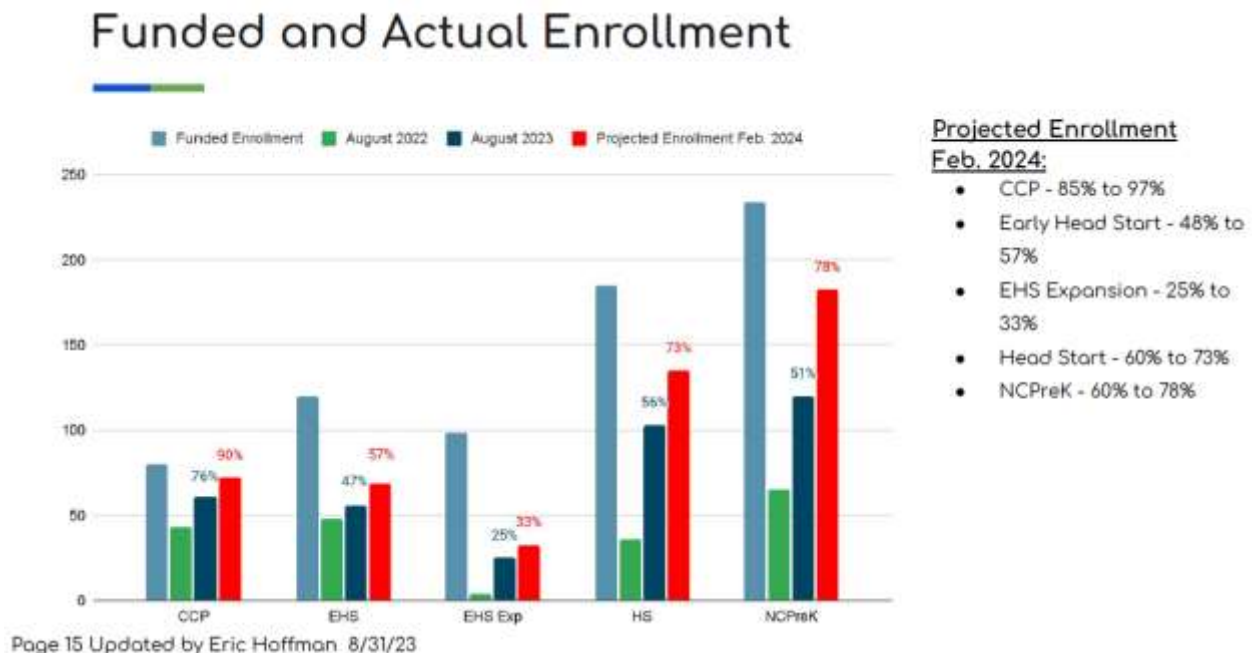


Recruiting Children and Families for Early Head Start, Head Start and NC Pre-K

In August I did detail the new classrooms WNCSource was opening by the end of October. We are now in the process of filling those classrooms. It has been a chicken and egg proposition. We could not bring the children and families in until we had a fully staffed classroom to serve them. Our Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection and Attendance (ERSEA) team is working diligently to fill the classrooms that are opening. The good news is how much progress we have made in the last year. Below is a graph with enrollment numbers for August 2022, August 2023 and where we expect to be by February 2024.



Currently, we have openings for 13 EHS children, and 55 Head Start/ NC Pre-K children in our open classrooms. If we can fill these classrooms we will be approximately fifteen percent closer to meeting full enrollment. We are looking into switching some of our recruiting efforts to recruiting children and families into our programs. Social media, community events and other outreach efforts will be increased. We also have made an offer, that has been accepted, for a new position (Bilingual Community Engagement Specialist) This employee will be focused on recruiting children and families for the program.

What to Know About WNCSource and Government Shutdowns

We certainly are glad the shutdown was avoided. I had communicated to our senior staff and some Board members that WNCSource is resilient, and well prepared for federal government shutdowns.

Our Head Start grant runs on a July 1 start date. That means our program would have still been funded for nine more months. Our Housing Choice Voucher program does run on a January 1 start date. Which means if there is a shutdown later this year, the clock could be ticking on our ability to send checks to landlords participating in the Housing Choice Voucher program. Our transportation services would be good until July 1, 2024. So, we are in good shape. Some other programs that WNCSource clients depend on, such as SNAP, might have been suspended.

I have been through a few shutdowns in my time with WNCSource. We draw down as much cash as we can before the looming shutdown date. We also have a \$500,000 line of credit we can use. So far, we have gotten through every shutdown without having to suspend services, or send employees home.