



# Operational Reports

April 2024 Information

May 9<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting

May 16<sup>th</sup> Policy Council Meeting



Empowering people, transforming lives

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# Program Information

Linda Carter, Children's Services Director

# Highlights



On Friday, April 26th, we held a Wellness Afternoon to help our staff rejuvenate. The event included hiking and art activities, gem mining, antiquing and was a wonderful opportunity for everyone to take a break from work.

The Office of Head Start announced a 2.35% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for 2024.

Community Assessment completed.

WNCSource Children Services is excited to announce the addition of two new Ford Escapes to our fleet, scheduled to be delivered on May 2, 2024.

Blue Ridge Health in Transylvania County has begun scheduling dental appointments for the WNCSource Children from our Hillview location. We are grateful to Nicole Villalon, a WNCSource Health Specialist, for advocating and campaigning for this change, as there were previously no dentist offices available to serve our students in Transylvania County.

# Classroom Closures



## April

### Unscheduled:

- 1 Classroom at Tebeau closed on April 1st due to lack of staff.
- 1 Classroom at Etowah closed on April 1st & 2nd due to lack of staff.
- 1 Classroom at Clear Creek due to lack of staff.
- 1 Classroom at Etowah closed on April 8th & 9th due to lack of staff.
- 1 Classroom at Hillview closed on April 9th due to lack of staff.
- 1 Classroom at King Creek, 1 classroom at Hillview & 1 classroom at Etowah closed on April 15th due to lack of staff.
- 1 Classroom at Hillview closed from April 15th - 22nd due to lack of staff/NHSA Conference attendance.
- 1 Classroom at Hillview closed on April 19th due to lack of staff.
- 1 Classroom at Hillview closed on April 22nd due to lack of staff.

### Scheduled:

- All Transylvania County Classrooms had a Teacher Workday on Monday, April 1st.
- All Rutherford County Classrooms were closed for the week beginning on Monday, April 1st for Teacher Workdays.
- Sugar Hill and Tebeau opened late on Monday, April 1st due to the floors being waxed over the weekend.
- All classrooms were closed on Friday, April 26th for our annual staff Wellness Day.

# Staffing Updates



## Staff Hired:

**Kimberly Hall** - EHS Teacher

**Eric Blore** - Area Manager

**Beranize Estrada** - Substitute

**Kathy Childers** - After-school Teacher

## Staff Departing:

**Britney Daily**, Floater

21 Trainees since 03/22- Program Inception

5 Apprentices hired 06/27/2023

38 Staffing Positions Open\*

*\*Not including After-school, Columbus, Substitute and Trainee/Apprenticeship positions. It does include positions that are currently being filled by Trainees.*

# Wrap Around Staff



## **Current Staff:**

- Henderson County: Abby Grossen, Rachel Dombeck, Rowan Long, Teodora Palomino, Hannah Powell, Michelle Quinn, Lindsay Ridgley, Alma Rodriguez, Dara Seetaram, Cynthia Sherer, Alejandra Vera, and Kaydence Wilson.
- Rutherford County: WA ended March 8th at this location
- Transylvania County: Kathy Childers, Lauren Street, and Gracen Wilbanks

## **In the Pipeline:**

- Emma Boothe (04/??), and Maggie Travis (04/??). ???

## **Needs: (only taking in consideration current numbers of children signed up for wrap around)**

- Henderson County:
- Rutherford County: N/A
- Transylvania County:

# Facilities



The construction of the Columbus Children's Center is progressing as planned and is expected to be completed in the middle of summer. We are currently in the process of exploring various options for classroom and office furniture. Anna Williams, our staff recruiter, has been proactive in filling the job positions for the center. She has attended job fairs, visited Polk County High School, and met with representatives from Isothermal Community College to kickstart the hiring process for qualified staff members.

The State of North Carolina and RTI International, a nonprofit research institute, have launched the Clean Classrooms for Carolina Kids program to tackle the issue of lead and asbestos hazards in public schools and licensed childcare facilities. This program will help these institutions identify and eliminate exposure to such hazards in their building infrastructure. Previously, the Clean Water for Carolina Kids program had tested all childcare centers in the state for lead in water at drinking and food preparation taps. The new Clean Classrooms for Carolina Kids program expands the previous initiative. WNCsource Child Services and our Safety and facilities team will partner with the NC Clean Classroom program, and all site supervisors will enroll in the program and receive a PIN for enrollment. All our Site Supervisors are on target to meet the May 1, 2024, deadline to register their children's center into the State portal.

# Program Instruction



**ACF-PI-OHS-24-02** Issuance Date: 4/24/2024 <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/pi/acf-ohs-pi-24-02>

**SUBJECT:** Fiscal Year 2024 (FY 2024) Head Start Funding Increase

## **INSTRUCTION:**

President Biden signed the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (P.L. 118-47), into law on March 23, 2024. The funding level for programs under the Head Start Act (the Act) is \$12,271,820,000, an increase of \$275 million over FY 2023. This funding level provides all Head Start, Early Head Start, and Early Head Start-Child Care (EHS-CC) Partnership grant recipients a 2.35% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA).



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# Enrollment

**Madeline Ortiz Méndez, Enrollment Coordinator**

# Enrollment

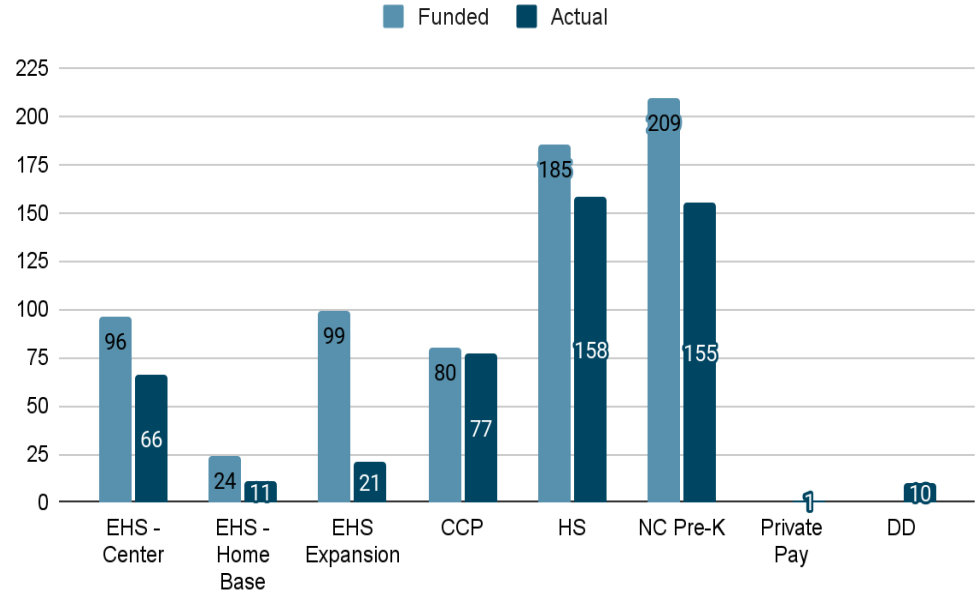
## Overall Enrollment

- Early Head Start (Center-Based) 69%
- Early Head Start (Home-Based) 46%
- EHS Expansion 21%
- EHS/CCP 96%
- HS-85%
- NCPK- 74%

## Waitlist

- **184** Participants on the Waiting List. Some children may be waitlisted for multiple program options.
- **47** Children are Waitlisted for the Early Head Start.
- 1 waitlisted for EHS Expansion
- 4 waitlisted for CCP Program
- **117** Children are Waitlisted for Head Start
- **15** NC Pre-K Program

## 2023-2024 Enrollment



# Attendance

April 2024

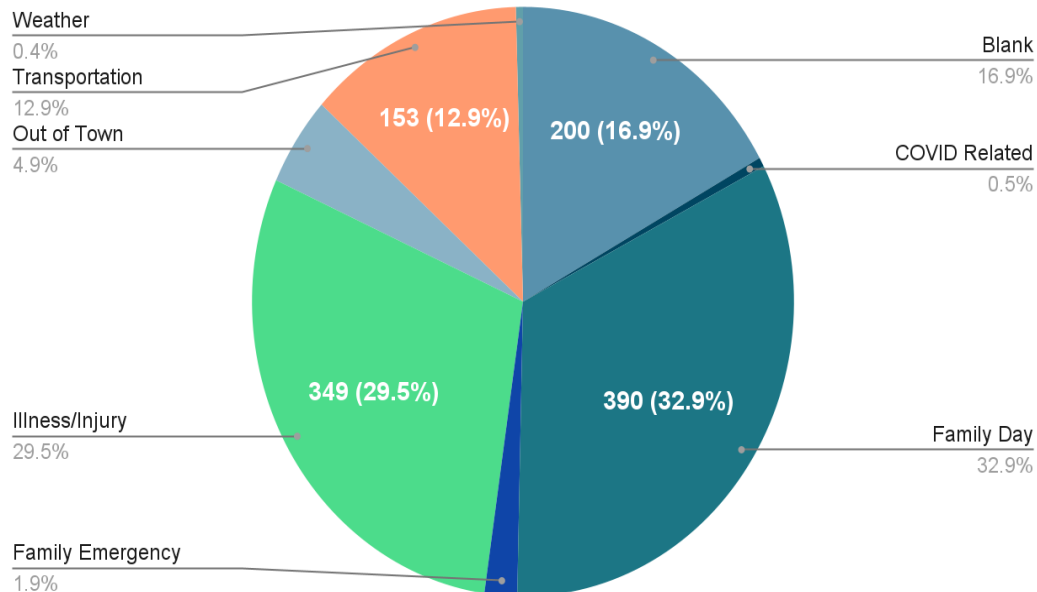
## Average Daily Attendance by Program Type

- EHS Average Attendance 79%
- EHS Expansion Attendance 77%
- CCP Average Attendance 82%
- Head Start Average Attendance 82%
- NC Pre-K Average Attendance 82%

## Absence Summary

- Total number of Absences from 3/01/24-4/24/24
  - 1184 (Increase of 124)
- 6 absences are related to COVID and a majority absences are due to Family Day (390).

## Absence Reasons



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# Early Intervention

Mary Hanson, Early Intervention Coordinator

# Disabilities Services

Grant	Open IFSP / IEP	Cum. Enrollment	% of enrolled	Referrals	Child Support Plans
EHS & HS	49	302	16%	21	16
CCP	16	130	12%	0	2
Expansion	5	55	9%	2	1
NC Pre-K	18	114	16%	10	15

Each OHS grant requires us to serve 10% of our cumulative enrollment with children who qualify for an IEP or IFSP. We include NC Pre-K for comparative. Disability Waiver was submitted for the Expansion Grant.

Diagnosed Disabilities include:

- Autism (22)
- Health Impairment (10)
- Developmental Delay (31)
- Speech or Language Impairment (13)
- Hearing Impairment (1)

Team is supporting 5 children with an initial Early Alert to determine any developmental needs.

# Mental Health

8% of enrolled children (37) received support from the Early Intervention Team during March for behavioral/mental health needs.

83 Behavior Incidents logged during March for 26 children in 12 different classrooms.

Team is supporting 5 children with an initial Early Alert to determine any behavioral needs.

Small groups with the AI's Pal's social-emotional curriculum are going well and have received positive feedback from teachers. The students seem to be enjoying the lessons and we will continue to monitor progress.

Center	% Receiving Support
Bruce Drysdale	17%
Clear Creek	22%
Dana	11%
Etowah	8%
Edneyville	11%
Flat Rock	7%
Forest City	9%
God's Gifts	0%
Hillandale	6%
Hillview	6%
Home-based	0%
Kids City Pisgah	9%
Kids Kingdom	0%
King Creek	3%
Laurie's	0%
Little Bright Minds	0%
Little Red	0%
Sugar Hill	11%
Tebeau	12%

# Early Intervention Updates



Our Classroom Specialist Nathalie Steffan Santos is starting support intensively in a classroom at Etowah which has a lot of diverse needs.

We sent out the first edition of our Early Intervention newsletter in March and are currently writing April's.

A survey is being sent out to parents whose children have IEPs and are moving into Kindergarten next year to talk about parental rights and the transition. We will follow up with any parent who requests it

We are working on a partnership with the Children and Family Resource Center to try to roll out Circle of Security trainings to staff and parents.

One of our Behavior Interventionists is leaving us so we will be looking at different ways to fill that vacancy in the most efficient way possible to support our current needs.

## Support Provided:

- Notify school systems and CDSA for IFSP IEP updates to stay current and help with classroom supports
- ASQ screenings and parent conferences
- Child Support Plan meetings
- Communications with parents and community partners
- Sensory tools and strategies
- Observations and development of BSPs and CSPs as well as small groups.
- Classroom teacher supports
- Working with HCPS ,TCPS, CDSA, Olson Huff, TEACCH, Key Autism Center, Carolina Peds, Mental Health Specialists, Children and Family Resource Center.

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# Health & Nutrition

Caitlin Cole-Ekman, Health & Nutrition Coordinator



# Well Child Check Status



Expired Well Child Checks as of 04/24/2024:

EHS: 19 Children; 80% up to date

CCP: 16 Children; 79% up to date

HS: 27 Children; 83% up to date

NCPK: 14 Children; 85% up to date

## Dental Status



Dental status as of 04/24/2024:

- 335/404 children >1 years old have dental homes
  - 83%!
- 113 have been seen in last 6 months
  - Many more had appointments but we haven't received paperwork

# Vision and Hearing Screenings & Referrals



April 2024

Heath team currently completing screenings for 2023-2024 program year

- 1st priority is to screen new participants
- All children are screened annually
- If a child fails screening 2x, we refer to them to their pediatrician for further screening/evaluation

Hearing - 903 completed, 4 children past 45 day requirement, 0 referrals needed

Vision - 927 completed, 3 children past 45 day requirement, 10 children are currently in the referral process

Numbers reflect full program year

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# Family Services

Kasheiva Jackson, Family Services Manager

# Parent Gauge

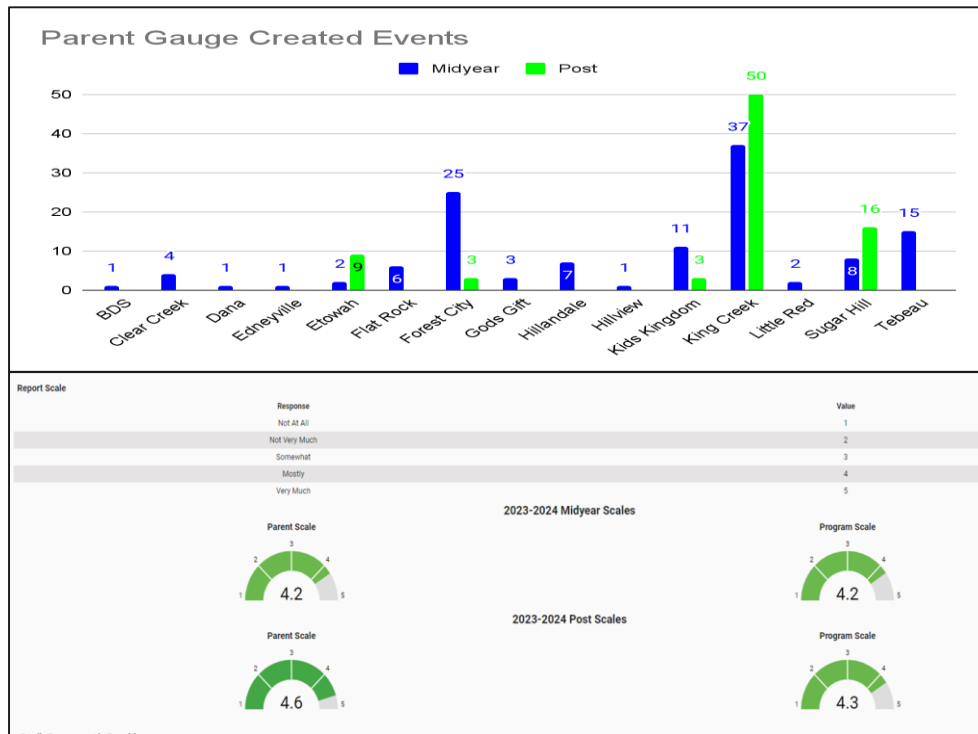
## What is it?

A Family Engagement Assessment tool designed for Early Head Start and Head Start programs to measure the impact of the program on the family and the parent's experience in the program related to engagement efforts.

- Building positive relationships
- Families as Lifelong Learners
- Family Growth & Stability
- Health & Nutrition
- Parent & Program

Midyear completed events: 93/123

Post completed events: 25/81



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# Program Updates

**Bridgett Librado, EHS Program Services Manager**

**Amy Smith, HS / NCPK Program Services Manager**

**Kathleen McDavid, CCP Coordinator**

**Hunter Weatherford, PD Coordinator**

# Head Start / NC Pre-K Program Updates

## Community Events: Giving Back to Non-Profits

- **Grace Lutheran Church “Servant Saturday” social ministries**
- April 20, 2024
- 8 volunteers completing projects such as staining outdoor materials/furniture, moving large river rock, assembling garden beds/filling with organic soil.



- **United Way “Day of Caring”**
- Days of Caring is an opportunity for Henderson County residents to connect with local nonprofits for a day of volunteerism on Friday, May 10, 2024
- This is an annual community event that welcomes individuals, families, businesses, and civic groups to volunteer to complete projects at local nonprofits



# Head Start/NCPK Classroom Highlights

## Gardening at our Dana Children's Center

Introducing gardening to preschool children at school offers a multitude of benefits:

1. **Educational Value:** Gardening provides hands-on learning experiences on observing the plant life cycle
2. **Promotes Healthy Eating Habits:** Gardening encourages a positive attitude towards fresh produce and can help establish healthy eating habits from a young age.
3. **Encourages Responsibility:** This fosters a sense of ownership and accomplishment as they watch their efforts yield results.
4. **Enhances Fine Motor Skills:** Activities like planting seeds, watering plants, and picking produce help develop fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination.
5. **Promotes Outdoor Activity:** Gardening encourages children to spend time outdoors, fostering a connection with nature and promoting physical activity.
6. **Fosters Environmental Awareness:** Through gardening, children develop an understanding of the environment and the importance of conservation.
7. **Stimulates Curiosity and Creativity:** Gardening stimulates children's curiosity as they explore the natural world around them.
8. **Promotes Emotional Well-being:** Gardening can have therapeutic effects, promoting relaxation and reducing stress and anxiety levels in children. It offers a calming and grounding experience, allowing children to connect with nature and express themselves freely.





# Partnership (CCP) Enrollment Update

Slide

1



Total Enrolled in Partner sites: 45 of 57

Little Red School - **Ten of 10 EHS Spots Filled**

- LR1 has 4 EHS children
- LR2 has 6 EHS children

**\*God's Gifts - Five of five EHS Spots Filled**

Pisgah/Rosman Kid City - **Eight of 13 EHS Spots Filled.**

**\*Family Child Care Home**

**\*Laurie's Child Care - Five of Five EHS Spots**

- Five of five EHS spots filled. One teacher

Kids' Kingdom - **Nine of eight EHS Spots Filled (spots recently reduced from 12 to an eventual eight)**

- Infants/Ones Room: Four of four EHS spots filled, Staff: Two teachers.
- Toddler 1 Room: 5 of four EHS spots filled.

Little Bright Minds - **Eight of 16 spots filled (spots recently increased from 8 to 16. Currently enrolling.**

- **Twos room: Eight with two teachers** (Three new teachers were just hired - Our enrollment team can soon enroll the remaining 8 children at LBM raising CCP enrollment to 53/57)

# Partnership (CCP) Updates

Slide 2



At this time we have six partners in the CCP program. Four in Henderson County, one (combination of two sites) in Transylvania county, and one in Rutherford County.

Our next CCP Creative Curriculum training for teachers is coming up in June 2024 conducted by a professional Teaching Strategies trainer. We look forward to the teachers enjoying their next session where they will learn more about implementing Creative Curriculum.

The curriculum trainings for CCP teachers will now be scheduled quarterly with supplemental monthly videos for the CCP teachers to watch to continue to build their curriculum implementation skills.