

TRI-COUNTY COMMUNITY COUNCIL, INC.
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START
POLICY COUNCIL MEETING
2499 CYPRESS STREET
WESTVILLE, FL. 32464

August 10, 2026

Present:	Absent:	Staff:	Guests:
Kayla Williams	Bridgette Capps	Kim Gillis	Heather Craft
Patty Baxley	Mykenzi Straw	Nicole Thomas	
Shannon Medina	Jabrona Lee		
Rochelle Howard			
Leana Andrews			
Jennifer Underwood			

Nicole Thomas called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm and took roll call with four members present. The group elected to continue with the meeting with any approvals being held until a quorum joins.

CENTER COMMITTEE REPORTS

Nicole Thomas gave the report for the Chipley Center as provided by the Center Director. No approvals or funds requested at this time. With it being the first week of school, no other reports were provided, but Nicole reported that all sites were in the process of conducting Open House's this week.

DIRECTORS REPORT

Kim went over the Directors Report numbers for June and July. No questions were posed regarding the information.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Heather Craft explained the financial statements and budget reports for the months of June and July, the SF-425 report and the 941 for 2026. No questions were posed regarding the information. Heather also discussed the agency switching from cost allocation to a de minimus method. We will be requesting approval to switch to the new method starting with the December 1, new grant year.

Two additional members joined the meeting during the reports, establishing a quorum. Kayla Williams made the motion to approve the minutes from the June 2026 Policy Council meeting. Rochelle Howard seconded, all in favor, none opposed.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

FYI/DISCUSSION

Training Topic: Child Abuse & Neglect/Code of Ethical Conduct/Child Safety/Eligibility

Kim reported we have switched back to the Conscious Discipline model to guide teachers with classroom management skills. Training for this was held during Pre-service as well as financial wellness training provided by The Beans, who were able to provide financial direction and resources to staff. Multiple trainers presented topics such as Child Abuse and Neglect, Intruder Safety, Medication Administration and Fire Safety training. Policies such as child safety, code of conduct, and eligibility were also reviewed in detail. Kim explained the eligibility requirements and how eligibility is determined and how selection occurs once a family is deemed eligible.

On-going Monitoring Plan

The plan is updated annually and presented to the council for approval. The plan was provided to council for review and shows the items to be monitored in each area.

Grant Budget & In-kind

Kim explained the way certain staff are cost allocated and the wage and benefits are over 80% of the budget, so only about 20% of the budget goes toward operating costs such as maintenance, supplies, contracted services, etc. Both insurance and maintenance costs have increased, which impacts the budget. She also reported one room at the Walton center had to be moved to a different building due to renovations taking place due to roof and plumbing leaks. Mold was found in the classroom, due to the damage, so an air test was conducted to ensure air quality is safe. The results came back negative for mold in the air, however the classroom has temporarily moved to the lunchroom building while repairs are made to the classroom. The new budget also includes a 2% raise for all staff. Kim asked for input on what the council thinks should be considered for the budget, no suggestions were given.

Kim explained that an in-kind waiver is in the works for the 25-26 budget year.

Staff Training

Head Start has used the allotted funds for their training, but we are still needing to schedule some training for Early Head Start, as they still have money to spend in this area.

PC/Board Training Plans

A copy of the training plans was provided to the council; no changes were requested to be made to this.

2025-2026 In-kind Waiver Request

Kim reported we were not able to collect the required amount of in-kind needed so far. We will still be collecting this until the end of November, but are requesting approval to submit a waiver since it looks like we will not be able to obtain the required amount.

Policy Council Annual Calendar

HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START REPORT TO POLICY COUNCIL AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DATE September 1, 2025

MONTH: August 2026

ENROLLMENT

ITEM	CHIPLEY	WALTON	WESTVILLE	HS TOTAL	EHS		EHS TOTAL
					West	DFS	
Funded	17	71	37	125	16	24	40
Actual in Center/Home- Base	17	71	35	123	16	24	40

ERSEA

ITEM	CHIPLEY	WALTON	WESTVILLE	EHS	
				Westville	Walton
Waiting List	1	6	0	7	23
Eligible	1	3	0	4	16
Over income	0	3	0	3	7
Vacancies	0	3	0	2	0
How Long	n/a	Not filled yet	n/a	3 & 10 days	n/a
Attendance	90%	89%	89%	90%	89%
Overall Monthly Attendance for School Year	89%			89%	

DISABILITY

ITEM	CHIPLEY	WALTON	WESTVILLE	EHS	TOTAL		Percentage	
					HS	EHS	HS	EHS
Diagnosed with an IEP/IFSP and receiving services	1	0	0	4	1	4	1%	10%
Dropped children with an IEP/IFSP/ IEP/IFSP closed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Concerns/In waiting/further evaluation/referral process/staffing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Referral Follow- up parent has not followed through	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

MENTAL HEALTH REFERRALS AND VISITS



Office of Head Start - Program Information Report (PIR) PIR Family Information Report - 2025 - Program Level

For a summary of the filters selected to generate this report, please see the last page of this document.

GENERAL INFORMATION

<i>Program Types</i>	<i># Programs</i>
Total	1
Head Start	1
Early Head Start	0
Migrant and Seasonal Head Start	0
Migrant and Seasonal Early Head Start	0
AIAN Head Start	0
AIAN Early Head Start	0

<i>Agency Types</i>	<i># Programs</i>
Community Action Agency (CAA)	1
Government Agency (Non-CAA)	0
Charter School	0
Private/Public For-Profit (e.g., for-profit hospitals)	0
Private/Public Non-Profit (Non-CAA) (e.g., church or non-profit hospital)	0
School System	0
Tribal Government or Consortium (American Indian/Alaska Native)	0

<i>Agency Descriptions</i>	<i># Programs</i>
Delegate agency	0
Grantee that delegates all of its programs; it operates no programs directly and maintains no central office staff	0
Grantee that directly operates program(s) and has no delegates	1
Grantee that directly operates programs and delegates service delivery	0
Grantee that maintains central office staff only and operates no program(s) directly	0

C.38 Total number of families in which:	# of families at end of enrollment	% of families
b. Neither/No parent/guardian is employed, in job training, or in school at end of enrollment (e.g., unemployed, retired, or disabled)	15	11.19%
1. Of these families, the number of families that were also counted in C.37.a	1	6.67%
2. Of these families, the number of families that were also counted in C.37.b	11	73.33%

C.39 Total number of families in which:	# of families at enrollment	% of families
a. At least one parent/guardian is a member of the United States military on active duty	1	0.75%
b. At least one parent/guardian is a veteran of the United States military	6	4.48%

Federal or other assistance

	# of families at enrollment	% of families	# of families at end of enrollment	% of families
C.40 Total number of families receiving any cash benefits or other services under the Federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Program	5	3.73%	5	3.73%
C.41 Total number of families receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	9	6.72%	10	7.46%
C.42 Total number of families receiving services under the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)	60	44.78%	49	36.57%
C.43 Total number of families receiving benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly referred to as Food Stamps	90	67.16%	83	61.94%

Family services

C.44 The number of families that received the following program service to promote family outcomes:	# of families at enrollment	% of families
a. Emergency/crisis intervention (e.g., meeting immediate needs for food, clothing, or shelter)	17	12.69%
b. Housing assistance (e.g., subsidies, utilities, repairs)	18	13.43%
c. Asset building services (e.g., financial education, debt counseling)	41	30.6%
d. Mental health services	16	11.94%
e. Substance misuse prevention	43	32.09%
f. Substance misuse treatment	43	32.09%
g. English as a Second Language (ESL) training	9	6.72%
h. Assistance in enrolling into an education or job training program	46	34.33%
i. Research-based parenting curriculum	49	36.57%
j. Involvement in discussing their child's screening and assessment results and their child's progress	92	68.66%
k. Supporting transitions between programs (i.e., EHS to HS, HS to kindergarten)	46	34.33%
l. Education on preventive medical and oral health	102	76.12%
m. Education on health and developmental consequences of tobacco product use	42	31.34%
n. Education on nutrition	99	73.88%
o. Education on postpartum care (e.g., breastfeeding support)	6	4.48%
p. Education on relationship/marriage	5	3.73%
q. Assistance to families of incarcerated individuals	2	1.49%

Report Filters

<i>Filter Name</i>	<i>Filter Value</i>
Program Year	2025
Program Acronyms	CH
Program Types	HS
Programs	04CH012406 - 000 - TRI-COUNTY COMMUNITY COUNCIL, INC

FUNDED ENROLLMENT

Funded enrollment by funding source

<i>Funded enrollment by funding source</i>	<i># of children / pregnant women</i>	<i>% of children / pregnant women</i>
A.1 Total Funded Enrollment	125	100%
a. Head Start/Early Head Start Funded Enrollment, as identified on the NOA that captures the greatest part of the program year	125	100%
b. Funded Enrollment from non-federal sources, i.e., state, local, private	0	0%

Funded enrollment by program option

<i>Funded enrollment by program option</i>	<i># of slots</i>	<i>% of slots</i>
A.2 Center-based option		
a. Number of slots equal to or greater than 1,020 annual hours for Head Start preschool children or 1,380 annual hours for Early Head Start infants and toddlers	125	100%
1. Of these, the number that are available for the full-working-day	125	100%
2. Of these, the number that are available for the full-calendar-year	0	0%
3. Of these, the number that are available for the full-working-day and full-calendar-year	0	0%
b. Number of slots with fewer than 1,020 annual hours for Head Start preschool children or 1,380 annual hours for Early Head Start infants and toddlers	0	0%
1. Of these, the number that are available for 3.5 hours per day for 128 days	0	
2. Of these, the number that are available for a full working day	0	
A.3 Home-based option	0	0%
A.4 Family child care option	0	0%
A.5 Locally designed option	0	0%

Funded slots at child care partner

<i>Funded slots at child care partner</i>	<i># of slots</i>	<i>% of slots</i>
A.7 Total number of slots in the center-based or locally designed option	125	100%
a. Of these, the total number of slots at a child care partner	0	0%
A.8 Total funded enrollment at child care partners (includes center-based, locally designed, and family child care program options)		

CLASSES IN CENTER-BASED

<i>Classes</i>	<i># of classes</i>	<i>% of classes</i>
A.9 Total number of center-based classes operated	7	100%
a. Of these, the number of double session classes	0	0%

CUMULATIVE ENROLLMENT

Total cumulative enrollment

<i>Total cumulative enrollment</i>	<i># of children / pregnant women</i>	<i>% of children / pregnant women</i>
Total cumulative enrollment	151	100%
Children	151	100%
HS Children	151	100%
Preschool Children - (HS all ages) and (MSHS age 3-5)	151	100%

Child care subsidy

<i>Child care subsidy</i>	<i># of children</i>	<i>% of children</i>
A.24 The number of enrolled children for whom the program and/or its partners received a child care subsidy during the program year	0	0%

Ethnicity and race

A.25 Ethnicity and Race	<i># of Hispanic or Latino Origin children / pregnant women</i>	<i>% of Hispanic or Latino Origin children / pregnant women</i>	<i># of Non-Hispanic or Non-Latino Origin children / pregnant women</i>	<i>% of Non-Hispanic or Non-Latino Origin children / pregnant women</i>
a. American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0%	1	0.66%
b. Asian	0	0%	1	0.66%
c. Black or African American	0	0%	43	28.48%
d. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0	0%	0	0%
e. White	9	5.96%	62	41.06%
f. Bi-racial/Multi-racial	6	3.97%	20	13.25%
g. Other	9	5.96%	0	0%
				<i># of children / pregnant women</i>
				<i>% of children / pregnant women</i>
h. Unspecified ethnicity or race			0	0%

Primary language of family at home

A.26 Primary language of family at home:	<i># of children</i>	<i>% of children</i>
a. English	139	92.05%
1. Of these, the number of children acquiring/learning another language in addition to English	5	3.6%
b. Spanish	11	7.28%
c. Native Central American, South American & Mexican Languages	0	0%
d. Caribbean Languages	0	0%
e. Middle Eastern & South Asian Languages	0	0%
f. East Asian Languages	0	0%
g. Native North American/Alaska Native Languages	0	0%
h. Pacific Island Languages	0	0%
i. European & Slavic Languages	0	0%
j. African Languages	0	0%
k. American Sign Language	1	0.66%
l. Other	0	0%
m. Unspecified	0	0%

Dual language learners

	<i># of children</i>	<i>% of children</i>
A.27 Total number of Dual Language Learners	17	11.26%

Report Filters

<i>Filter Name</i>	<i>Filter Value</i>
Program Year	2025
Program Acronyms	CH
Program Types	HS
Grants	04CH012406 - Tri-County Community Council, Inc.

Tri-County Head Start/Early Head Start End-of-Year Child Outcomes Report

Tri-County Head Start/Early Head Start uses the **Teaching Strategies GOLD® Assessment** to monitor children's growth and development across nine areas: Social-Emotional, Physical, Language, Cognitive, Literacy, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Social Studies, and The Arts. The objectives and dimensions in Teaching Strategies GOLD® are aligned with the **Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (HSELOF)** and support the program's **School Readiness Goals**.

Teaching Strategies GOLD® assesses children's knowledge, skills, and behaviors across **38 objectives and dimensions**. Teachers collect and enter objective observations and documentation throughout the year to determine whether children are **below, meeting, or exceeding widely held expectations** for their age.

Assessment checkpoints are completed three times each year—**Fall, Winter, and Spring**. The results provide the Education Team with information to monitor children's progress, identify areas of strength and need, and guide instructional planning and program improvement.

Demographic and Enrollment Data

Because the updated Teaching Strategies GOLD® report no longer provides demographic information, **ChildPlus Report #2175 – Child Cultural History** was used to provide demographic information for the end-of-year report. According to the report, **207 children** were represented in the demographic data for the program year.

The demographic profile included:

- **84 White children**
- **54 Black or African American children**
- **51 Multiracial and/or Multiethnic children**
- **14 Hispanic or Latino children**
- **4 Asian children**

The data reflects a diverse population of children served by Tri-County Head Start/Early Head Start. This information reinforces the importance of providing culturally responsive, inclusive, and individualized learning experiences that recognize the backgrounds, experiences, and needs of the children and families served.

ChildPlus data also indicates that **38 children dropped from the program during the school year**. Despite this enrollment turnover, the program continued to serve children throughout the year and maintained its focus on providing consistent educational and support services.

The demographic and enrollment information provides important context when reviewing the child outcome data. However, because ChildPlus provides current program data and does not allow the program to accurately match demographic information to individual GOLD checkpoint periods, the demographic data should be viewed as an **overall representation of children served during the program year rather than a direct comparison of Fall, Winter, and Spring checkpoint groups**.

Spring 2026 Checkpoint Period:

Area of Development	Below the Widely Held Expectations	Meeting the Widely Held Expectations	Exceeding the Widely Held Expectations
<u>Social- Emotional</u>	7%	81%	12%
<u>Physical</u>	2%	91%	7%
<u>Language</u>	7%	85%	8%
<u>Cognitive</u>	10%	82%	8%
<u>Literacy</u>	13%	79%	8%
<u>Mathematics</u>	20%	75%	5%

End-of-Year Child Outcomes Analysis

Fall 2025/2026 – Winter 2025/2026 – Spring 2025/2026

As shown in the tables above, children demonstrated **strong growth across all six areas of development** from Fall through Spring. In every area, the percentage of children **below widely held expectations decreased**, while the percentage meeting or exceeding expectations increased.

Social-Emotional Development

- Children below expectations decreased from **43% in Fall to 7% in Spring**.
- Children meeting expectations increased from **55% to 81%**.
- Children exceeding expectations increased from **2% to 12%**.
- **Reflection:** This strong growth suggests that children developed stronger social skills, emotional regulation, relationships, and classroom participation throughout the year.

Physical Development

- Children below expectations decreased from **36% to 2%**.
- Children meeting expectations increased from **63% to 91%**.
- Children exceeding expectations increased from **1% to 7%**.
- **Reflection:** Physical development showed the strongest Spring results, with **98% of children meeting or exceeding expectations**.

Language Development

- Children below expectations decreased from **44% to 7%**.
- Children meeting expectations increased from **54% to 85%**.
- Children exceeding expectations increased from **2% to 8%**.
- **Reflection:** The continued improvement suggests that language-rich interactions, conversations, storytelling, and intentional language instruction supported children's growth.

Cognitive Development

- Children below expectations decreased from **40% to 10%**.
- Children meeting expectations increased from **58% to 82%**.
- Children exceeding expectations increased from **2% to 8%**.

Checkpoint Period: Fall 2025/2026, Winter 2025/2026, Spring 2025/2026



2025–2026 Child Outcomes: Fall → Spring Checkpoint

Developmental Area	Below in Fall	Below in Spring	Spring Meeting/Exceeding
Social-Emotional	43%	7%	93%
Physical	36%	2%	98%
Language	44%	7%	93%
Cognitive	40%	10%	90%
Literacy	54%	13%	87%
Mathematics	48%	20%	80%

The most important takeaway from this year's data is that children made measurable growth across all six areas we reviewed.

Tri-County Head Start/Early Head Start

Eligibility Priority Criteria

Admin Use Only

Child's Name: _____ DOB: _____

Center Applied for: ☐ Head Start ☐ Early Head Start Family Size: _____

Type of Interview conducted: ☐ In Person ☐ Phone

Instructions: Circle allotted points based on information from the application and/or other sources. Sign the form below and attach it to the application.

Due to system limitations, ChildPlus allows only one selection per section. For accurate scoring, families receive points for each qualifying factor. In ChildPlus, this appears as "one factor," "two factors," or "three factors," representing the total points earned for that tier.

Categorically Eligible			
☐ Homeless/ ☐ Foster/ ☐ Kinship Care (documentation)			300
☐ SNAP/ ☐ TANF/ ☐ SSI Benefits (documentation)			100
Indicators			
Income:	76-100% below poverty guideline		90
☐ 1040	51-75% below poverty guideline		80
☐ W-2	26-50% below poverty guideline		70
☐ Written Statement from Employer	0 – 25% below poverty guideline		60
☐ Check Stub	0 – 25% over poverty guideline		20
☐ Declaration of Income	26-50% over poverty guideline		15
☐ Other: _____	51-75% over poverty guideline		10
☐ Housing Adjustment Used	76-100% over poverty guideline		05
Head Start Age by 9/1	Early Head Start Age at Application	0-2.11-year-old	20
		3.0-3.11-year-old	50
		4.0-4.11-year old	40
Disability:		Diagnosed Disability (IEP/IFSP)	100
		Suspected Disability	50
		No Disability	00
Parental Status:		Teen Parent	90
		Incarcerated Parent	80
		Single Parent	70
		Two Parent	00
Tier 1:		Dual Language Learner	10
		Transition from EHS	10
		Sibling(s) currently enrolled	10
		N/A	00
Tier 2:		Medicaid (Medicaid card attached)	20
		3rd Year Child	20
		Child of a Staff member	20
		N/A	00
Tier 3:		Social Service Involvement (case plan, safety plan, etc.)	50
		History of Family Trauma (DV, substance misuse, DCF, divorce, loss of parent)	50
		High Risk Pregnancy/Lack of Prenatal Care	050
		N/A	00
☐ Eligible ☐ Over Income		Total Points:	

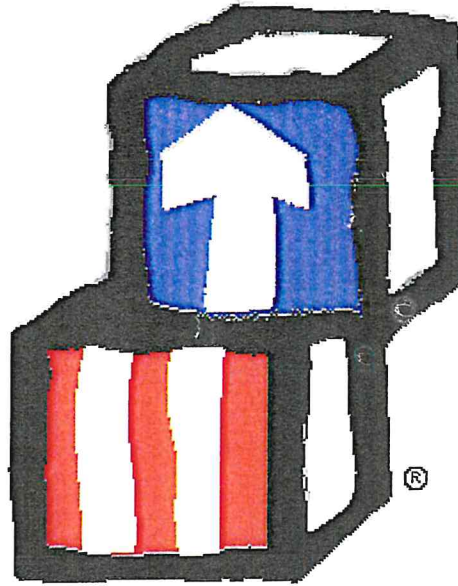
Michelle Myers, Family Service Coordinator

Date

Revised 9-10-25 9-26 kg-KLG

Pc approved 10-6-25

Bod approved 10-9-25



POLICY COUNCIL HANDBOOK

UPDATED: September 2008, September 2009, October 2010, September 2011,
September 2012, September 2013, August 2014, October 2015,
October 2017, October 2018, November 2019, September 2020,
September 2021, November 2022, October 2023, August 2025, September
2026



HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

Tri-County Community Council, Inc.

2499 Cypress St. Westville, FL 32464

(850) 548-9900 FAX (850) 548-5644

kim@tricountyheadstart.com

Dear Policy Council Representative,

Thank you so much for agreeing to serve on the Policy Council of Tri-County Community Council Head Start/Early Head Start. This has always been a very hard-working, important group of people who do a great service to the program. It is often difficult, as there are documents to read and understand, decisions to be made, and attendance is very key to its success, but everyone helps everyone else get through the process.

The Policy Council meets every month (except for December and July) at a time and place chosen by the Council. Every meeting is important, and there are often materials to be scrutinized before the meeting. **If, due to an emergency, you must miss a meeting, please call Nicole Thomas at 548-9900 to notify her of that fact. If you need to have childcare provided during a meeting, it is important that you call Nicole in advance, so she can make arrangements.**

The Policy Council members serve until new elections take place the following September/October. Even if your child moves on to an elementary school, you will continue to serve until the new members are seated. We do this as rapidly as possible at the beginning of the next school year.

Anyone who has a relative working for Head Start/Early Head Start may not serve on the Policy Council and no one may serve more than five years.

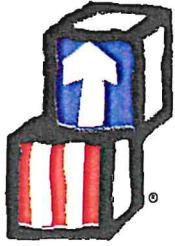
The Policy Council shares governances with the Tri-County Board of Directors.

Every year the Policy Council must review plans and goals of the Head Start/Early Head Start program. Members also participate in the annual Self-Assessment. Needed materials are provided, and meals are served at every meeting.

Thank you again for your service.

Sincerely,

Kim Gillis, Director
TCCC Head Start/Early Head Start



Tri-County Community Council Inc.

Head Start/Early Head Start

Policy Council Roster

_____	Community Representative-Holmes County
_____	Community Representative-Washington County
_____	Community Representative-Walton County
_____	Parent-Walton Head Start
_____	Parent-Walton Head Start
_____	Parent-Westville Head Start
_____	Parent-Westville Early Head Start
_____	Parent-ChIPLEY Head Start
_____	Parent-Early Head Start (Defuniak)



TRI-COUNTY COMMUNITY COUNCIL, INC.

HEAD START/ EARLY HEAD START



MISSION

Investing in children today for a better tomorrow.

VISION

Partnering with families and communities to reach our full potential.

PHILOSOPHY

You cannot make a positive difference in the lives of children without partnering with the whole family and the communities in which they live. We support parents as the primary educators of their children and encourage their involvement at all levels of Head Start/Early Head Start through volunteering in the classroom, participating on committees and advisory groups, and aiding in policy making through the Policy Council.

We promote developmentally appropriate practices, family literacy, ensure safety in a stimulating environment, protect children's health and nutrition through sound practices and linking up with health providers, and teach all eight domains of early learning to ensure success in school.

Program Goals

The Policy Council, along with our community assessments, needs assessments, and staff input, is responsible for helping plan our program goals. Goals are set every 5 years, with progress and updates being reviewed annually.

Our current program goals are listed below:

Program Goal 1: Tri County Head Start/Early Head Start will collaborate with families and the community to create an environment where children feel safe to learn and explore while developing social emotional skills and school readiness abilities.

Program Goal 2: Tri-County Head Start/Early Head Start will provide a safe, healthy, and positive work environment for all staff to feel valued and grow professionally in their jobs.

Program Goal 3: Tri-County Head Start/Early Head Start will build trusting relationships with our families by being culturally competent and recognizing parents as a child's first teacher by sharing knowledge of Early Childhood Education principles.

School Readiness Goals

Approaches to Learning- Children will be able to express themselves and be able to show a positive approach to learning through engagement, attentiveness, persistence, and curiosity.

Social and Emotional Development- Children will be able to show an increasing ability to manage their own emotions and behaviors as well be able to show an increasing ability to form positive relationships with adults and peers.

Language and Communication- children will demonstrate receptive and expressive language skills and communication strategies in their home languages(s). Children will also hear and distinguish the sounds and rhythms of language and begin to learn and demonstrate how print works through engagement with stories and books.

Cognition- Child will learn and begin to use math concepts during daily routines and experiences, as well as show multiple ways to solve problems and use their senses to investigate their environments.

Perceptual and Motor Development- Children will be able to show control of large muscles for movement, coordination and balance and develop control of small muscles for manipulation and exploration.

POLICY COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES

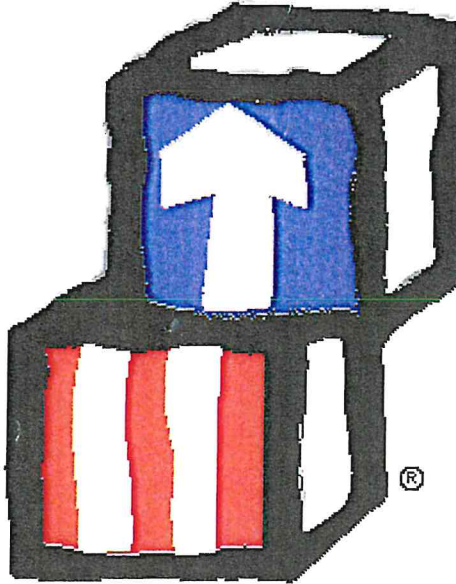
Working with management staff, members must approve or disapprove:

- All funding applications or amendments before submission
- Procedures describing how the governing body and the Policy Council will share decision making
- Procedures for program planning
- The program's philosophy and goals
- The composition of the Policy Council and procedures by which members are chosen
- Criteria for defining recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities
- Annual self-assessment
- Personnel policies and procedures, and changes to the policies
- Decision to hire or terminate the Head Start/Early Head Start director
- Decision to hire or terminate any Head Start/Early Head Start staff member

Policy Council members perform the following functions directly:

- Serve as a link to the Parent Committees
- Assist Parent Committees in communicating with parents about their rights and responsibilities, and opportunities in Head Start/Early Head Start
- Assist Parent Committees in planning, coordinating, and organizing program activities for parents and making sure funds are set aside for those purposes
- Assist in recruiting volunteer services from parents, community residents, and community organizations, and assist with the mobilization of community resources to meet identified needs
- Establish and maintain procedures for working with the grantee to resolve community complaints about the program.

Tri-County Community Council, Inc.
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START



POLICY COUNCIL BY-LAWS

Revised: September 2005, September 2006, October 2007,
September 2008, September 2009, June 2010, June 2011, June 2012,
June 2013, June 2014, August 2014, October 2018, November 2019,
September 2020, September 2021, October 2022(no changes), October 2023,
May 2024, August 2025, September 2026

TRI-COUNTY COMMUNITY COUNCIL, INC.
P.O. Box 1210/302 North Oklahoma Street
Bonifay, Florida 32425

BY-LAWS
TRI-COUNTY HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL

Article I: Name and Description

The name of this organization shall be Tri-County Community Council, Inc. Head Start/Early Head Start Policy Council and shall be governed as part of Tri-County Community Council, Inc., a non-profit agency incorporated under the laws of the State of Florida.

Article II: Purpose and Functions

Section 1: Purpose

This Policy Council will be responsible for establishing the goals of the Tri-County Community Council, Inc. Head Start/Early Head Start Program in Holmes, Walton, and Washington Counties and for developing ways to meet these goals within the guidelines of the Department of Health and Human Services.

The purpose shall be to implement the Head Start Program Performance Standards and Sec. 642 C 2 Policy Council of the Head Start Act. The policy council shall be responsible for the direction of the Head Start program, including program design and operation, and long- and short-term planning goals and objectives, taking into account the annual communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment and self-assessment. The Policy Council will perform the following functions directly:

- a. Serve as a link to the Parent Committees, grantee agency governing bodies, public and private organizations, and the communities they serve.
- b. Assist Parent Committees in communicating with parents enrolled in all program options to ensure that they understand their rights and responsibilities and the opportunities available in Early Head Start and Head Start, and to encourage their participation in the program.
- c. Assist Parent Committees in planning, coordinating, and organizing program activities for parents with the assistance of staff and ensure that funds set aside from program budgets are used to support parent activities (Parent Activity Funds).
- d. Assist in recruiting volunteer services from parents, community residents, and community organizations, and assist in the mobilization of community resources to meet identified needs.

Section 2: Functions

Tri-County Community Council, Inc. Head Start/Early Head Start Policy Council is responsible for the direction of the program, including:

- Program design and operation
- Long- and short-term planning goals/objectives

Board of Directors will be included as a liaison, but not as a voting member. The Board of Directors liaison's term will last as long as they maintain their position with the Board, or until a replacement is found.

Section 3: Term of Office

Policy Council members shall serve for a term of one (1) year. No member shall serve on the Policy Council for more than five (5) one-year terms.

Section: 4 Voting Rights

Each member of the Policy Council shall have one (1) vote. Actions of the Policy Council will be taken only by a majority vote of the members present, providing that there is a quorum. If no quorum is established, then the director's assistant will do a phone poll to meet the quorum requirement for any item that cannot wait till the next scheduled meeting.

Section: 5 Termination of Membership

Any member who is absent from three (3) successive meetings without a legitimate excuse, (jobs obligations, illness, death, emergencies, out of town, etc.), will be replaced by the Policy Council.

Section: 6 Resignation

A member shall give a written statement of reasons before resigning from the Policy Council.

Section: 7 Vacancy

All Parent Committees shall elect a new parent member to the Policy Council within 30 days whenever there is a vacancy from that center. If the vacancy is created by a community representative, that vacancy will also be filled within 30 days.

Section: 8 Conflict of Interest

No grantee agency staff (or members of their immediate families) may serve on the Policy Council. Members of the policy council shall not have a conflict of interest with the Head Start agency and shall not receive compensation for serving on the policy council or for providing services to the Head Start agency.

Article IV: Officers

Section 1: Officers

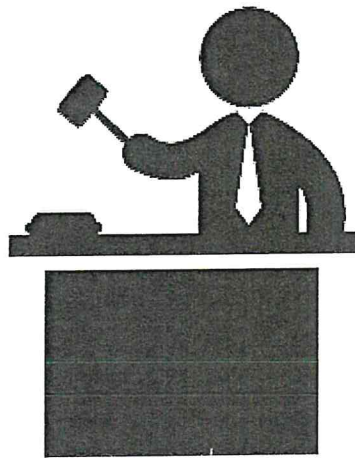
Officers of the Policy Council shall be Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary. Officers of the council shall be elected by the current members.

Section 2: Election and Term of Office

Each officer shall be elected by the full membership of the Policy Council once the full Council has been seated and shall serve a term of one (1) year. The Council will be seated in September/October of every year.

ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

Modified



Parliamentary Procedures

The following is a very simplified overview of the rules to be followed to conduct a meeting:

1. The president calls the meeting to order. The president states: "The _____ Advisory committee/council will now come to order."
2. The president instructs the secretary to call the roll. The president states: "The secretary will please call the roll."
3. Members respond. A quorum is determined.
4. Approval of minutes for the last meeting occurs. The president states: "Do you approve of the minutes as written?"
5. When appropriate, a member makes a motion to approve the minutes: "I move that the minutes be approved as written."
6. Another member seconds the motion: "I second the motion."
7. The president asks for a voice vote: "All of those in favor say 'aye'. All those against say 'nay', are there any abstentions?"
8. The president asks if there is any old business to be considered. Pending committee reports can be presented here.
9. Business for the day is considered. The agenda is taken step by step.
10. Motions are made in the following manner: 1. The person has to be recognized by the president: "May I have the floor?" 2. After receiving approval, the speaker says: "I move that..."
11. Motions must be seconded before a vote can occur: "I second the motion."
12. The president asks for discussion of motion: "All in favor say 'aye'. All opposed say 'nay'. Are there any abstentions?"
13. The president asks for a vote on the motion: "All in favor say 'aye'. All opposed say 'nay'. Are there any abstentions?"
14. Adjournment of the meeting is accomplished by the president. "Are there any other items for discussion? If not, this meeting is adjourned."

Petition	A formally drawn request, often bearing the names of a number of people, which is address to a person or a body of persons in power, soliciting some sort of right or favor or benefit
Point of Order	A motion that asks the chairperson to say whether the meetinng or part of it is being conducted properly
Question	Another name for a motion
Quorum	The minimum number of members who must be presented for a legal, official meeting and for conducting business or taking action on agenda iterns
Rescind	To take back; withdraw
Resolution	A policy statement or an expression of opinion or position of an organized society
Second	A sign from at least one other voting member of the committee who thinks a motion should be considered and is willing to second it so that it can be
Special Committee (or Ad Hoc)	A committee that is appointed or elected to handle only a specific thing; a temporary committee
Sub-Committee	A smaller committee formed within a committee
Table	To put off discussion or vote on a motion to a later date or to another meeting
Unanimous Vote	When everyone votes the same way
Veto	To disapprove an action taken by a governing body; usually reserved for the presiding officer if there is a separation of power between the executive branch and legislative branch of the governing body

If you want to...

11. Have a motion put aside until later.
12. Bring up a motion that has been until later.
13. End (or limit) a decision.
14. Put something off until another meeting.
15. Ask a committee or a member to study an idea or recommendation.
16. Change or add to someone else's motion.

You say to the chairperson...

11. I move we table the motion.
12. I move the motion be taken from the table.
13. I move we close (or limit) debate.
14. I move we postpone this matter.
15. I move we refer (or recommit) this to (whatever committee is involved).
16. I wish to amend the motion. (You can amend a motion only twice.)

Points 11 through 16 can be made when no other motions are being considered. All require a second. Points 11, 12, and 13 are debatable. Point 13 requires a vote of 2/3 to pass.

Tri-County Community Council, Inc.
Head Start/Early Head Start

in the event of impasse between the Policy Council and the grantee board, on the following issues:

- a.) Hiring or discharge of a Head Start Program Director or any staff member.
- b.) Approval of grant request, proposed work program or major changes in budget and work program while program is in operation.
- c.) Establishing and approval of the criteria for selection of children with applicable laws and ACF guidelines.
- d.) Establishing and approval of the program goals and plans.
- e.) Any other issue that requires mutual agreement from both parties.

Tri-County Community Council, Inc.
Head Start/Early Head Start

8. The results will be submitted to Tri-County Community Council, Inc., within one week confirming whether the applicant is clear or not to work in a caretaker's position. The clearance could take longer if the candidate lived out of state in the past five years. Once results are back and there are no disqualifying offences then the candidate will be offered the job.
9. If the candidate accepts the job, then orientation will be set up with the Tri-County Community Council Personnel Tech. Once orientation with Tri-County is completed, the new hire will report to the Education Specialist or designee to complete a HS/EHS orientation and begin the 5-day onboarding training.
10. When it is time to complete a five-year rescreen, Tri-county's HR Director or Personnel Technician will inform supervisors. The employee will set up a time to go to the Bonifay office to be fingerprinted and sign an Affidavit of Good Moral Character. All paperwork will be submitted through the Clearinghouse and results will be forwarded to the Center Director to place in the employee's file.
11. Contracted service providers and volunteers working 10 hours or more per month must also be rescreened every five years. A file will be kept in the office on each volunteer who volunteers more than 10 hours a month that includes the background check and signed orientation documents. Head Start/Early Head Start will follow state and local laws concerning appropriate screenings for communicable diseases. Volunteers will sign in and out to keep track of their hours. Center staff must supervise volunteers at all times and children must never be left alone with a volunteer. Center staff will ensure that in-kind forms are filled out properly for each volunteer.

Policy Council Training Plan

2026-2027

Policy Council			
Month	Training Provided	Expected Outcome	Trainer/Cost
January	Eligibility	The members will know the ERSEA process and understand the importance of it.	Director/Coordinator \$0
February	Shared Governance	The members will know their role and responsibilities for serving on the Policy Council.	Consultant \$1,000
March	Finance/Budget Development/ In-kind	The members will understand and be able to make informed decisions during budget development. The members will know the requirements for what is collected and how it is calculated. Also the members will know what is allocable, allowable, and reasonable in-kind.	Director & Chief Finance Officer \$0
April	School Readiness	The members will possess a good understanding of School Readiness and how it affects the whole program	Director \$0
May	Transitions/Grant Input	The members will understand the process of how transitions work for the children and families. The policy council members will understand the requirement, the importance of their participation, and the development of grant/budget.	Director \$0
June	Monitoring Reports	The members will understand the monitoring reports and what they mean. The members will be able to make informed input on making needed and desired improvements.	Director \$0
July	No meeting		
August	Pre-service topics Child Abuse & Neglect, Code of Ethical Conduct, Child Safety/Eligibility	The members will know the ERSEA process and understand the importance of it. The members will have a basic understanding of our pre-service training and the requirement involved.	Director \$0
September	PIR & Active Supervision	The members will be able to read and understand the Program Indicator Report (PIR)The members will learn the six strategies used in Active Supervision and keeping children safe.	Director \$0
October	Directors Report /Self-Assessment	The members will know why each area of the director's report is important information for them to monitor monthly. The members will be able to read and understand the Program Indicator Report (PIR).	Director \$0
November	Disability Requirement	The members will understand the 10% disability requirement and input ways/suggestions to make sure that all our communities are aware that our program serves children with disabilities.	Director \$0
December	No meeting		

In-Kind

The time you serve on Policy Council can be claimed by the program as in-kind. This is also known as non-federal share and is a requirement of the federal government as part of the annual Head Start/Early Head Start grant. For each four dollars received in the grant, we must earn one dollar through the donation of supplies or services to the program. You will be asked to fill out and sign an in-kind sheet each time you attend a meeting or other function as a Policy Council member. The time you spent traveling to and from the meetings or functions can also be claimed. Please include this in the number of hours you claim.

Reimbursement

The Policy Council votes annually to determine if the members will be reimbursed for mileage to and from Policy Council functions. Even though the members may vote to be reimbursed, individual members may refuse a check and put their mileage into in-kind. Mileage is reimbursed at a rate of \$.445 per mile. You will be asked to complete a form, "Policy Council Travel Voucher", for mileage. Mileage is recorded for a period of three meetings on each form. In the event of financial hardships and as long as the mileage reimbursement amount is over \$10.00 per meeting, a check can be sent to the member. If the amount is under \$10.00 per meeting, each meeting will be added until the total amount is over \$10.00, or when attending three (3) meetings have been met. When the form is completed, the Policy Council representative will sign it and turn it in to the Director's Assistant for payment. Your check will be mailed to the address you have provided.



HEAD START

Tri-County Community Council, Inc.
2499 Cypress St. Westville, FL 32464
PHONE (850) 548-9900 FAX (850) 548-5644

POLICY COUNCIL TRAVEL VOUCHER

I hereby certify that I am entitled to receive reimbursement for travel at **.445** cents per vehicle mile to designated Policy Council meeting place and return home.

Date	From (Home)	To (Meeting Place)	Round Trip Miles

This voucher will be turned in after every third meeting and a check will be issued in the amount of miles x **.445** cents.

Mailing Address: _____

Policy Council Member Signature

Policy Council Member Printed Name

Office Personnel Use:

Travel at **.445** cents per vehicle mile x _____ miles is _____.

Program: **Head Start**

Check #: _____ Amount: _____

Approved for payment: _____ Date: _____

(3) The foster parent or guardian of the child enrolled in the program. (4) The person who is adopting the child enrolled in the program (if the child is living with them, even if the adoption is not final.

Parent Activity Fund – The federal money set aside in the Head Start grant to be used by and for parents on activities that they develop themselves.

Parent Committee – A group of parents from a local center or from a local program option that works with the local Head Start staff. For instance, In a Head Start program that has multiple centers, there would be a Parent Committee in each center, comprised of only parents from that particular center. In a Head Start program operating under the home-based option, there would be a Parent Committee made up only of the parents of children being served under the home-based option. Finally, in a Head Start program that operates under both the center-based and home-based options, there would be a Parent Committee for each center, composed of only parents from that particular center, AND a Parent Committee made up only of parents whose children are being served in the home-based option.

Performance Standards or Head Start Program Performance Standards – This document outlines the rules and regulations that every Head Start or Early Head Start program must follow. In addition to explaining the roles of the parents in the program, the Performance Standards outline standards for educational and health services, and community and family services. The standards were revised in November 1996.

Policy Committee – A group that works in partnership with key management staff of the Grantee and the Head Start program. The committee is made up of Community Representatives and parents of children enrolled in the center for center-based programs, and at the equal level for other program options.

Policy Council – A group that works in partnership with key management staff of the Grantee and the Head Start program. The group is made up of Community Representatives and parents of children enrolled in the program. More than half of the Council's members must be parents. Parents are elected each year and serve one-year terms. No parent may serve more than three one-year terms.

Program Option – The term that refers to the type of Head Start or Early Head Start program. Options include center-based (children are served in Head Start centers), home-based (children receive services in their home), and combination (both center-based and home-based services are provided). There has also been a proposal for a new option called "Family Day Care." Additional program options may be proposed and/or recognized in the future by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF).

Self-Assessment or Annual Self-Assessment – A review of the operations of the Head Start or Early Head Start program. The self-assessment must be conducted every year and includes: (1)

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS IN HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

HEAD START LOGO

Registered on 3/11/86. The Office of Head Start authorizes Head Start grantees/programs to use it without further authorization.

HEAD START ACT

The document that re-authorizes Head Start as a federal program every 5 years. The last re-authorization was on December 12, 2007. The Head Start Act always outlines new requirements for the next five-year period.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The book of requirements for the Head Start program.

1301	Program Governance
1302	Program Operations
1303	Financial and Administrative Requirements
1304	Federal Administrative Procedures
1305	Definitions

OMB CIRCULAR (Office of Management and Budget)

Cost principles

A-122

Cost principles for non-profits

PART 74

Administrative requirements

INFORMATION MEMORANDUMS (IM)

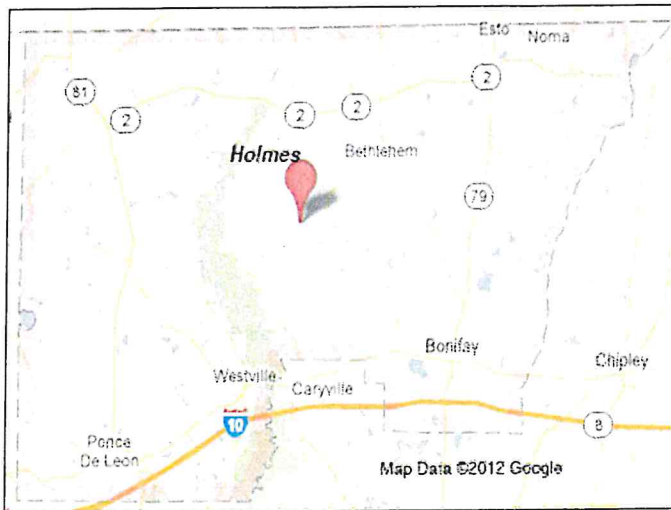
Changes or additions to the regulations directly from the Office of Head Start.

PROGRAM INSTRUCTION (PI)

Instruction for Head Start/Early Head Start programs from the Office of Head Start.

FY2020 Office of Head Start Monitoring Protocols

The Protocol is the document used by the federal government to review programs during their five year project period.



Holmes County

- Holmes is a sparsely populated county located in the Florida Panhandle with a 2021 population estimate of 19,784 residents.
- The population increased 7% from April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2021.
- As of 2021, there were 8,640 households with a 76% owner occupied housing unit rate.
- There are 41 persons per square mile in Holmes County as compared to 353.4 persons per square mile in the state of Florida in 2020.
- The county is located in the Choctawhatchee River Basin with 61% of its land mass covered in forest and 31% made up of cleared farmland.
- The area median income of \$39,215 in Holmes is below the median income of \$74,844 for the state in 2020.

Source: US Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts.
10/2022nt

-Snapshot-

Holmes County is a largely rural county located in the Florida Panhandle on the southern border of Alabama.

- Area: 478.78 square miles of land
- County Seat: Bonifay
- Cities: Esto, Noma, Ponce de Leon, Westville.
- Major employers: Holmes County School Board, Holmes Correctional Facility, Bonifay Nursing & Rehab Center, Doctor's Memorial Hospital, Holmes County Government, agriculture, and state and county government.



Holmes County
is home to:

**The Northwest Florida Championship
Rodeo**

**The Annual Biggest All-Night Singing
in the World**

**The Choctawhatchee River and Ponce
de Leon Vortex Springs**



Washington County

- Washington County, located in the Florida Panhandle, has an estimated population in 2021 of 25,436 residents.
- The population increased by .5% from April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2021.
- In 2021, there were 10,931 housing units with a 78.9% owner occupied housing rate.
- There are 43.3 persons per square mile in Washington County in 2020 as compared to 353.4 persons per square mile in the state of Florida.
- The land is heavily wooded in the north with sand regions to the south.
- The area median income of \$37,260 for Washington is below the area median income of \$74,844 for the state in 2020.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; State and County Quick Facts.

10/2022nt

-Snapshot-

Washington County is located in the central portion of Panhandle and is mostly forestlands with thousands of acres of sand hills in its southern region.

- Area: 582.8 Square miles of land
- County seat: Chipley
- Cities of Caryville, Ebro, Vernon, Wausau
- Major employers are WestPoint Home Inc., Wal-Mart, NW Florida Community Hospital, and various state and county government departments.



"Helping People"

**Washington County
is home to:**

The Panhandle Watermelon Festival

The Annual Possum Festival

**Crystal clear springs and the
Choctawhatchee River**



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Program Core Values

01 RESPECT

- Be Polite, Gracious, and Understanding of Others, in all Situations.

02 TEAMWORK

- Cooperate and Compromise with Others.

03 HONESTY

- Be Truthful, Acknowledge Your Mistakes, and Keep Your Word.

04 COMMUNICATION

- Good Communication Will Foster Trust and Build Relationships.

05 COMPASSION

- Be Kind and Caring.

06 PROFESSIONALISM

- Keep a Positive Attitude, Be Reliable and Strive For Excellence.



Program Governance

The governance of all Head Start Programs is shared by a Board of Directors and a Policy Council. The shared responsibility for policy oversight is relative to the quality of services for Head Start children and families, as well as the program design and implementation. The Policy Council is made up of parents of currently enrolled children, community partners, and a Board of Directors Liaison.

All parents are welcome to attend Policy Council meetings that meet once a month, with the exception of December and July, but only elected policy members are given the opportunity to vote on presented issues.

Board of Directors

There are three sectors that make up the Board of Directors. There is a Private, Public, and a Low-Income Sector. There are six committees with the members, the Executive, Personnel, Finance, Program Development, Head Start, and Board Development Committees. The board meets every other month on the second Thursday of the month each Committee meets before the regular board meeting. The other committees meet as needed before the Board meeting.

Policy Council

There are three Community Representatives - One from each of the three Counties that we serve. There are six parents, two from our Walton Center, one from Holmes County, and one from Washington County, and one representative for our EHS Center in Walton and one from our EHS Center in Holmes County. The Policy Council meets the first Monday of the month at noon.

Head Start

Tri-County Head Start is funded to serve **125 Children** throughout Washington, Holmes, and Walton Counties.

Head Start provides comprehensive services at no cost to eligible children **ages 3 to 5** and their families. Services focus on the core areas of:

- Early learning and school readiness
- Health and wellness
- Nutrition
- Family wellbeing
- Parent engagement and leadership

Parents are valued as essential partners in their child's education and are encouraged to participate in program activities and decision-making.

Early Head Start

Early Head Start provides early, continuous, intensive, and comprehensive child development and family support services to low-income infants and toddlers and their families.

Tri-County Early Head Start is funded to serve **40 children** and provides services through a **full-day, full-year center-based program**.

Early Head Start focuses on building strong relationships between children, families, and caregivers while supporting children's early development and preparing them for future success in school and beyond.

Through individualized support, early learning opportunities, health and nutrition services, and family engagement, Early Head Start helps children and families build a strong foundation for lifelong learning and wellbeing.



ON-SITE MONITORING

FY 2026 Head Start Monitoring Protocols

Head Start monitoring protocols are used by the Office of Head Start (OHS) to gather data and other information to assess grantee program operation and performance. Reviews are held for the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®), Focus Area One, and Focus Area Two. OHS uses the information collected during reviews to understand the grantee's approach to program design and services. The information is also used to evaluate their performance and continuous program improvement.

FY 2026 CLASS®

The Pre-K Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) is an observation tool used to analyze and assess the effectiveness of interactions between children and teachers in preschool classes. Data from CLASS® observations can be used for a variety of purposes, including professional development, program improvement, policy-making, and monitoring.

FY 2026 Focus Area One Monitoring Protocol

Purpose - Focus Area One is an opportunity for grantees to discuss their program design, management, and governance structure. This focus area is designed to develop an understanding of each grantee's foundation for program services. Grantees will describe approaches to staffing structure, program design, health services, family services, fiscal infrastructure, and program governance.

FY 2026 Focus Area Two Monitoring Protocol

Purpose - Focus Area Two is an opportunity for grantees to demonstrate their effectiveness in implementing a high-quality program to promote positive outcomes and school readiness for children and their families. This focus area is designed to broaden our understanding of each grantee's performance and to determine if programs are meeting the requirements of the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS), Uniform Guidance, and Head Start Act.

Website - <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc>

On-Going Monitoring Results

Our program received the Focus Area Two Monitoring Protocol on the week of March 10-12, 2026. The review determined that there were no findings or areas of concern. During 2025-2026 our program received a CLASS monitoring. This monitoring was during the period between December 8th - February 13th, 2026. Every Head Start classroom was videoed for the CLASS review. Our program scored higher than the average.

DOMAIN	YOUR PROGRAM'S SCORE	QUALITY THRESHOLD	COMPETITIVE THRESHOLD
Emotional Support	6.30	6.00	5.00
Classroom Organization	6.02	6.00	5.00
Instructional Support	3.71	3.00	2.30

Annual Audit Results

Tri-County Community Council undergoes an annual audit which includes the Head Start/Early Head Start program. There were no findings during our most recent annual audit.

EARLY HEAD START BUDGET EXPENDITURES 2025-2026

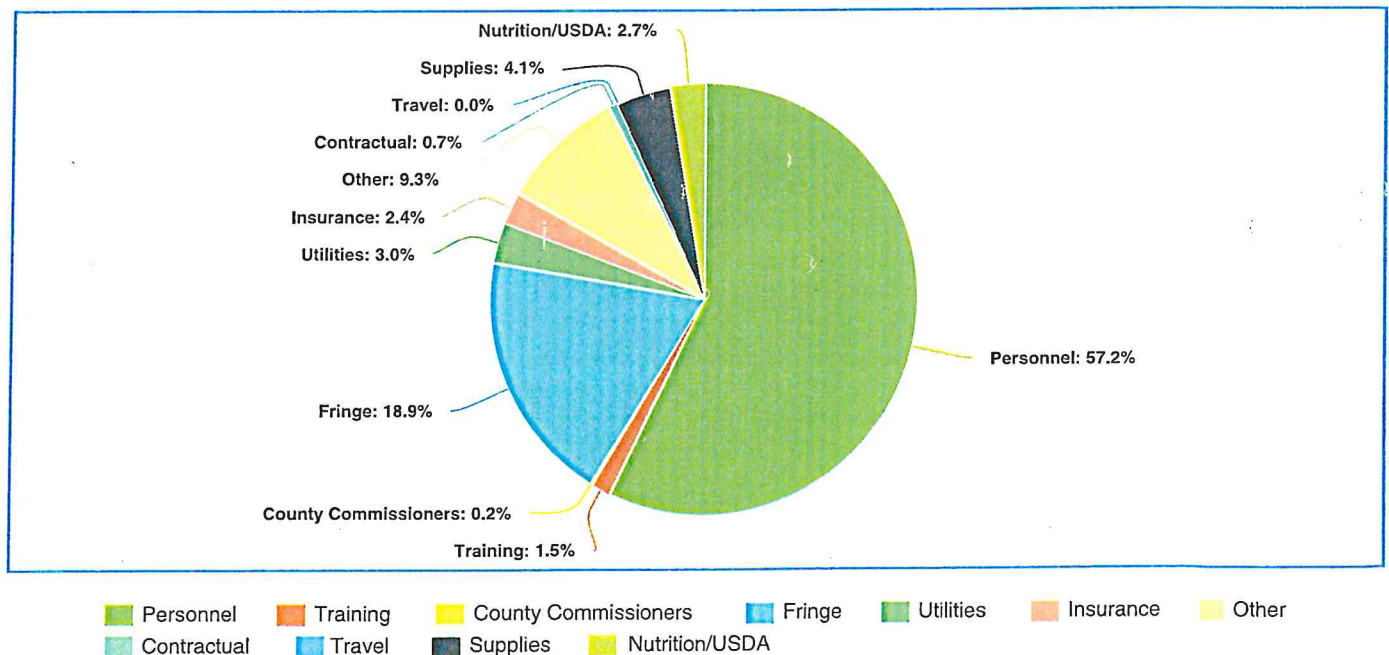
Early Head Start

Federal Funds : \$1,103,849

Non Federal Share \$275,962

Public Funds: \$0

Board of County Commissioners \$1,920



PROJECTED EARLY HEAD START BUDGET 2026-2027

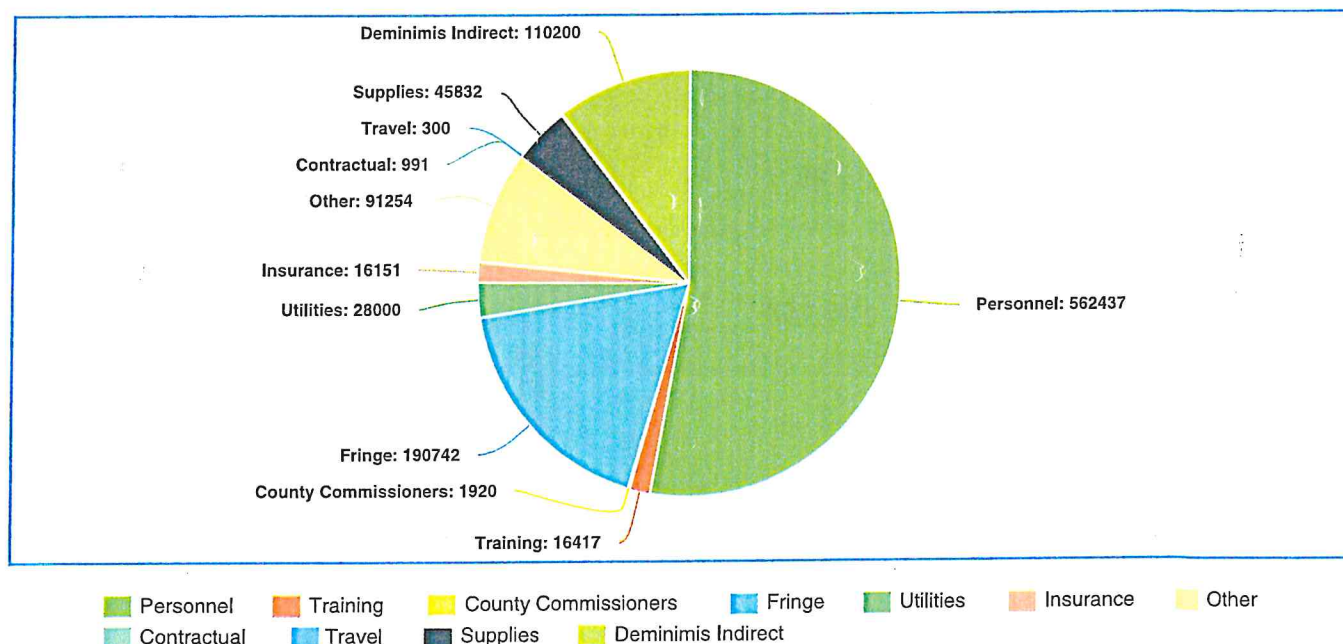
Early Head Start

Federal Funds : \$1,062,324

Non Federal Share \$265,581

Public Funds:

Board of County Commissioners \$1920

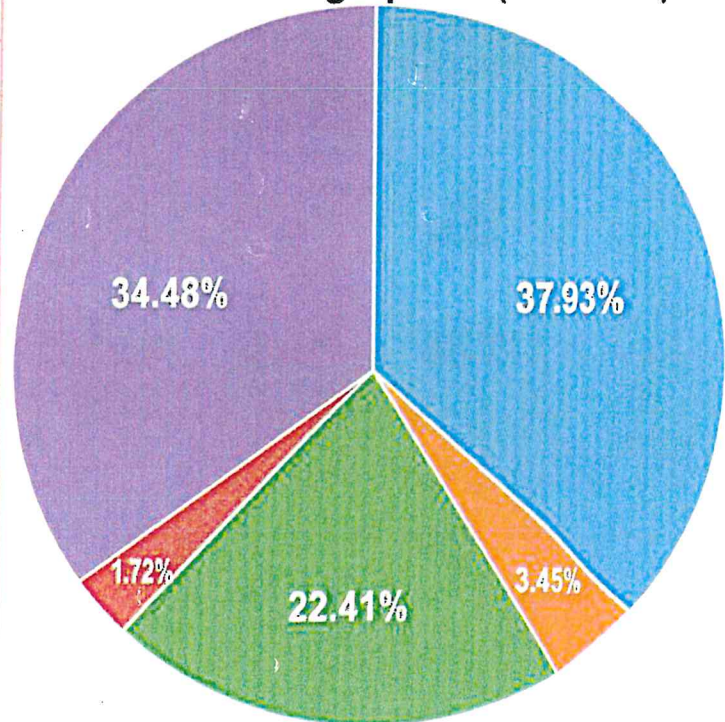


Our fiscal year begins December 1st and ends November 30th. Our school year begins July/August through May for Head Start and August through June for Early Head Start. Our projected budget will begin December 1st.

EARLY HEAD START ANNUAL PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Funded Enrollment	40
Number of Children Served	58
Children with a Diagnosed disability	8
Number of Volunteers	118
Of the Volunteers the Number of Current or Former Parents	73
Meals Served	15,406

Racial Demographics (Total: 58)



- 58 Families Were Served
- 2 Families Are Homeless
- 39 Public Assistance, SNAP
- 14 Children With Families That Earn Less Than 100% of the Federal Poverty Level
- 2 Foster
- 1 SSI

- White: 22 (37.93%)
- Asian: 2 (3.45%)
- Multi-Racial: 13 (22.41%)
- Hispanic: 1 (1.72%)
- African American: 20 (34.48%)

Age of Children Served

- 13 - Under 1
- 20 - 1 year Old
- 25 - 2 Year Old

Spoken Language

- English - 98%
- Spanish - 2%

END-OF-YEAR CHILD OUTCOME REPORT 2025-2026

Tri-County Head Start/Early Head Start uses the **Teaching Strategies GOLD® Assessment** to monitor children's growth and development across nine areas: Social-Emotional, Physical, Language, Cognitive, Literacy, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Social Studies, and The Arts. The objectives and dimensions in Teaching Strategies GOLD® are aligned with the **Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (HSELOF)** and support the program's **School Readiness Goals**.

Teaching Strategies GOLD® assesses children's knowledge, skills, and behaviors across **38 objectives and dimensions**. Teachers collect and enter objective observations and documentation throughout the year to determine whether children are **below, meeting, or exceeding widely held expectations** for their age. Assessment checkpoints are completed three times each year—**Fall, Winter, and Spring**. The results provide the Education Team with information to monitor children's progress, identify areas of strength and need, and guide instructional planning and program improvement.

Demographic and Enrollment Data

Because the updated Teaching Strategies GOLD® report no longer provides demographic information, **ChildPlus Report #2175 – Child Cultural History** was used to provide demographic information for the end-of-year report.

According to the report, **207** children were represented in the demographic data for the program year.

The demographic profile included:

- **84 White children**
- **54 Black or African American children**
- **51 Multiracial and/or Multiethnic children**
- **14 Hispanic or Latino children**
- **4 Asian children**

The data reflects a diverse population of children served by Tri-County Head Start/Early Head Start. This information reinforces the importance of providing culturally responsive, inclusive, and individualized learning experiences that recognize the backgrounds, experiences, and needs of the children and families served. ChildPlus data also indicates that **38 children dropped from the program during the school year**. Despite this enrollment turnover, the program continued to serve children throughout the year and maintained its focus on providing consistent educational and support services.

The demographic and enrollment information provides important context when reviewing the child outcome data. However, because ChildPlus provides current program data and does not allow the program to accurately match demographic information to individual GOLD checkpoint periods, the demographic data should be viewed as an **overall representation of children served during the program year rather than a direct comparison of Fall, Winter, and Spring checkpoint groups**.

The Education Coordinator recognizes the importance of being able to connect demographic and enrollment information more accurately with child outcome data. The program will continue to explore solutions for improving data collection and reporting so that future outcomes reports can provide a more complete picture of how children's developmental progress relates to the population being served.

Spring 2026 Checkpoint Period:

<i>Area of Development</i>	<i>Below the Widely Held</i>	<i>Meeting the Widely Held</i>	<i>Exceeding the Widely Held</i>
<u>Social- Emotional</u>	7%	81%	12%
<u>Physical</u>	2%	91%	7%
<u>Language</u>	7%	85%	8%
<u>Cognitive</u>	10%	82%	8%
<u>Literacy</u>	13%	79%	8%
<u>Mathematics</u>	20%	75%	5%

End-of-Year Child Outcomes Analysis

Fall 2025/2026 – Winter 2025/2026 – Spring 2025/2026

As shown in the tables above, children demonstrated **strong growth across all six areas of development** from Fall through Spring. In every area, the percentage of children **below widely held expectations decreased**, while the percentage meeting or exceeding expectations increased.

Social-Emotional Development

- Children below expectations decreased from **43% in Fall to 7% in Spring**.
- Children meeting expectations increased from **55% to 81%**.
- Children exceeding expectations increased from **2% to 12%**.

Reflection: This strong growth suggests that children developed stronger social skills, emotional regulation, relationships, and classroom participation throughout the year.

Physical Development

- Children below expectations decreased from 36% to 2%.
- Children meeting expectations increased from 63% to 91%.
- Children exceeding expectations increased from 1% to 7%.

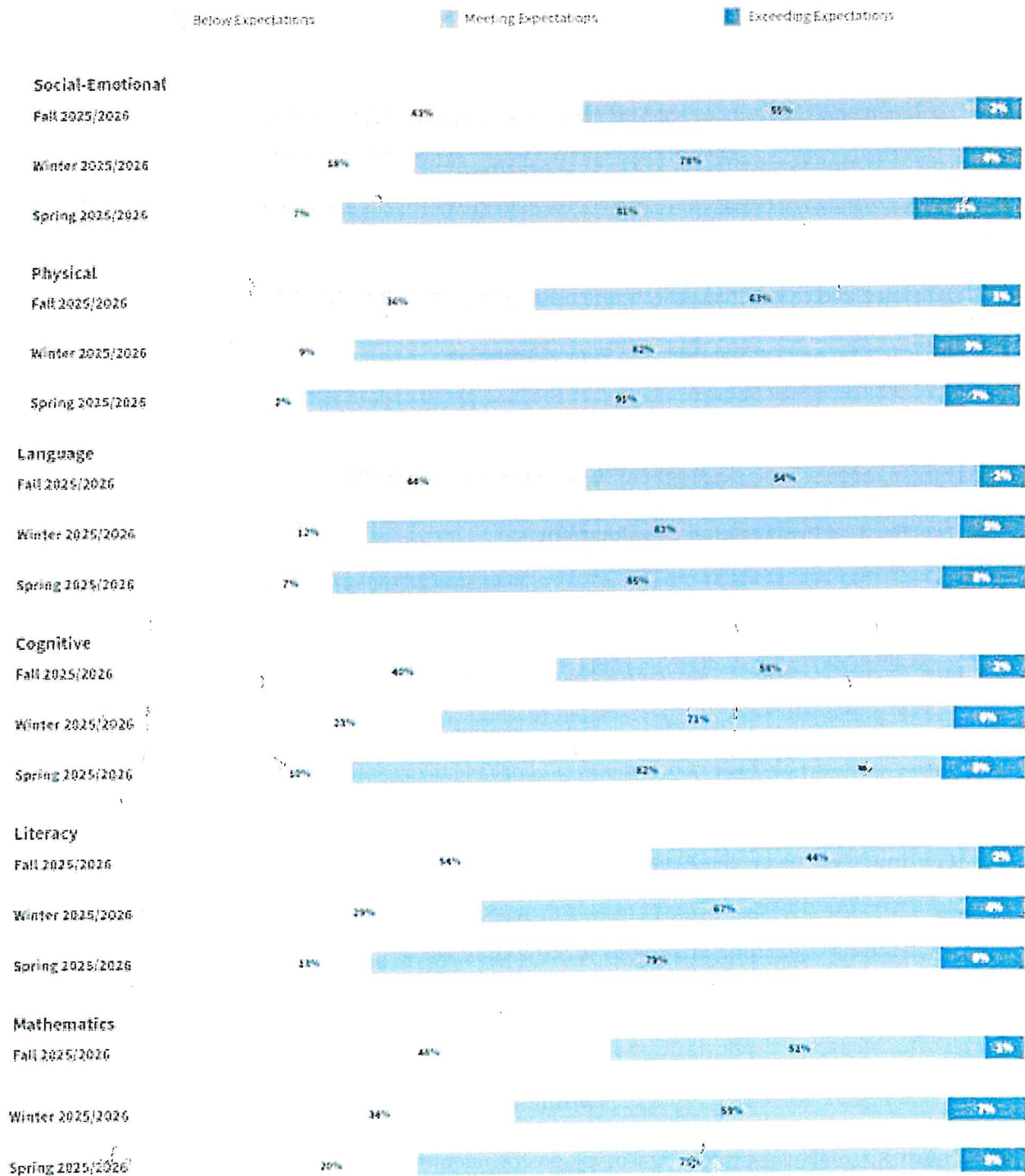
Reflection: Physical development showed the strongest Spring results, with **98% of children meeting or exceeding expectations**.

Language Development

- Children below expectations decreased from **44% to 7%**.
- Children meeting expectations increased from **54% to 85%**.
- Children exceeding expectations increased from **2% to 8%**.

Reflection: The continued improvement suggests that language-rich interactions, conversations, storytelling, and intentional language instruction supported children's growth.

Checkpoint Period: Fall 2025/2026, Winter 2025/2026, Spring 2025/2026



COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT UPDATE

Data Summary

This is a summary of updated demographic information and data that most affects the families living in poverty in the TCHS/EHS service area. For detailed information regarding the data, refer to the full text later in the document.

Demographics

All three counties show an increase in population, and the number of Spanish speaking families has increased in all three counties with Walton County having the largest Spanish speaking residents. There is a concern for the Hispanic families due to fear of deportation and staff needs to consider this concern as a critical issue for these families.

Economic Well-Being

Washington County has shown a rise in disadvantaged families from 73.8% in 2024 to 83.9% in 2025-2026 while Holmes County has shown a decrease in disadvantaged families.

Housing

Housing costs continue to rise and actual community information on homelessness is protected by agencies and private citizens who serve the homeless. Often agencies provide motel rooms for homeless families with children and while personally speaking with several of these families they mention their inability to work because they have no childcare. The families I spoke with had no knowledge of Head Start and services they could receive. Which indicates that Washington County has a higher percentage of homeless school-aged children and Maude Saunders school in Walton County also has a higher percentage of homeless.

Early Childhood Birth to Five

More births have been to married couples. The birth rate has declined over the years. Holmes County continues to have less children under the age of five which also affects Pre-K enrollment.

Child Welfare

Child Neglect is the leading factor of abuse for children under age of five. Many of the cases of neglect stem from parental substance abuse.

Health and Wellness

Domestic Violence and Substance Abuse are leading factors that affect the health and wellness of children and families.

Food and Nutrition

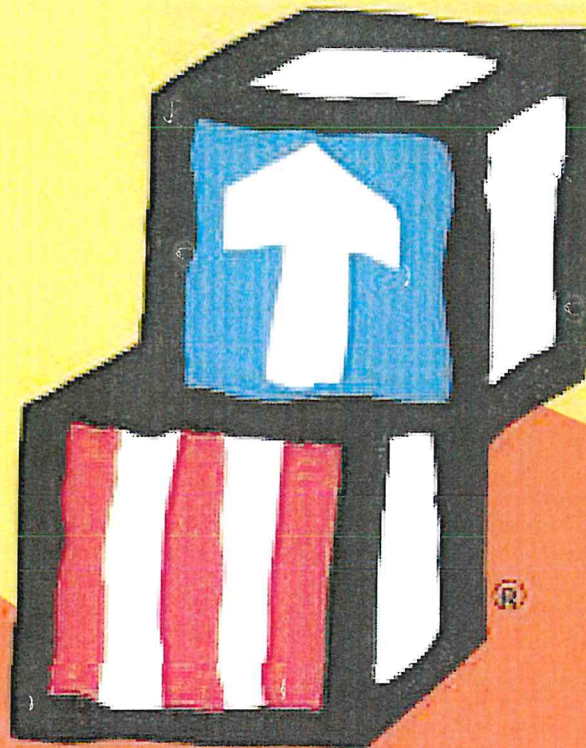
Changes implemented in the SNAP program will generate changes in the nutrition needs of families as there are new guidelines that some parents may have difficulty following. These changes may influence food insecurity for areas served by the program.

Transportation

There are no changes in this area as there is no public transportation in the three counties served by this program.







For More Information Contact Us at: Phone: (850) 548-9900
www.tricountyheadstart.com

