

## **Project Summary**

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Contra Costa County has been the continuous regional provider of Head Start since 1966, one of the longest serving providers in the nation. The County is the largest early childhood education provider in the county, and uniquely positioned to support children and families. Contra Costa Head Start families benefit from seamless coordination of services accessible through the full portfolio of County-operated programs including public assistance, nutrition assistance, health, housing, and child welfare. The County proposes to continue a commitment to accessible and high-quality Head Start services for our most economically and socially vulnerable families by applying for \$20,110,988 in federal funds with a \$5,027,747 in required match and 1,201 Head Start and Early Head Start slots. To achieve this number of slots, the County will overmatch the federal funds with an additional state and local funding totaling \$11,938,653. This application maintains continuity of services for currently served children and families. This application also improves services by dramatically increasing teacher compensation, introducing a new flex promote teacher classification which provides all qualified teachers the opportunity to reach the highest salary; expanding mental health services; and extending hours to 12 hours per day in some centers.

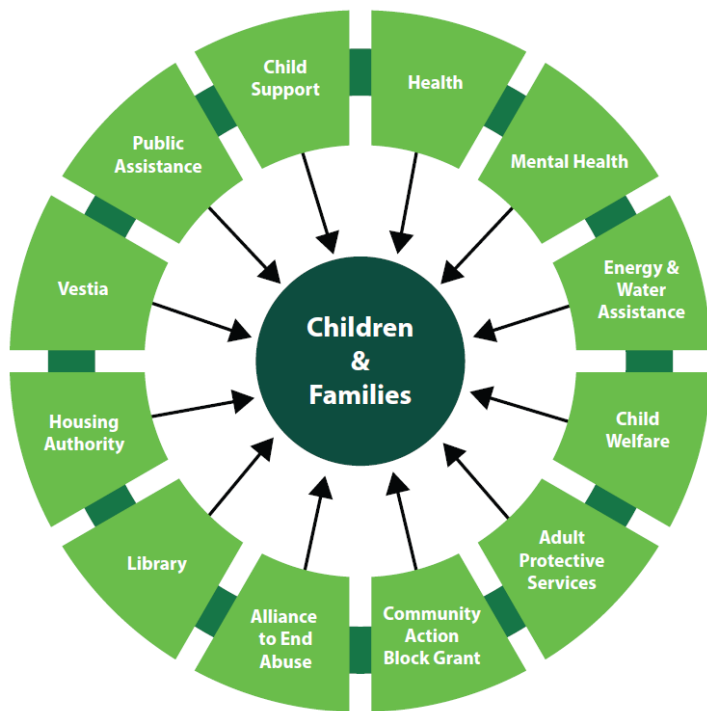
The need for Head Start services remains and increases as the county population grows. County centers, located in all low-income communities of the county, include full-day and part-day center-based services, a home visiting program, and a local option high-school based program for teenage mothers. Services provided by the County include 848 directly-operated slots, and extends long-term partnerships with four providers: Aspiranet (149 slots), KinderCare (152 slots), Mount Diablo Unified School District (20 slots), and Tiny Toes (32 slots).

The County Head Start program maintains deep and long-standing collaborations with community-based organizations to foster collective action in support of young children. The management team averages 21 years of experience in early education and complex social service programs. The County's strong governance structure provides effective fiscal, administrative, and operational oversight. Through a systems approach and a culture of continuous improvement, positive child and family outcomes are achieved. As one example, in 2023 the program exceeded goals for all six school readiness domains and exceeded federal thresholds for all three CLASS domains.

A wide range of elected officials support this application, including Senator Laphonza Butler; Congress Members John Garamendi, Mark DeSaulnier, and Josh Harder; California Superintendent of Public Education, Tony Thurmond; Contra Costa County Superintendent of Schools Lynn Mackey; the Contra Costa County Mayors Conference and every city in which the County delivers services (Antioch, Brentwood, Concord, Oakley, Pittsburg, and Richmond).

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The Contra Costa County Head Start program, situated within the county portfolio of health and social services, provides seamless access to children and families to an array of supportive services that promote family wellbeing and support child school performance.

## 1. DEMONSTRATION OF NEED FOR SERVICES

### **How HS and/or EHS resources will be directed to the geographic areas of greatest need**

Poverty is the primary factor driving the County's selection of communities to serve. The County identified a set of cities with the highest need based on poverty rate: Richmond (14.3%), Bay Point (14.3%), Antioch (12.1%) Pittsburg (9.9%), Rodeo (9.6%), and Concord (9.2%).<sup>1</sup> Locating centers in these cities ensures Head Start (HS) and Early Head Start (EHS) services are provided to other, geographically-proximate communities of high poverty, such as San Pablo (11.8%). In order to ensure that low-income children living in comparatively more affluent cities would still have access to service, three centers were located within or nearby low-income housing developments in Brentwood and Oakley, in the easternmost part of the county. These centers also enabled services to be available to two less-populous (fewer than 2,000 residents) but high-poverty communities, Bethel Island (17.8%) and Byron (11.4%). Image 1 (page 83) illustrates the locations of the County's centers, showing that their locations ensure that nearly all low-income children in the county are within a 4-mile radius of a center. This image also shows how the County is divided into five Supervisorial Districts, and the elected Supervisors from each District comprise the Head Start governing body.

The County further validated these center placements by examining a set of other measures of need, some of which are shown in Table 1 (page 88). For instance, Bay Point has among the highest uninsured rate (13.2%), proportion of households eligible for Medi-Cal health insurance (56.8%), and unemployment rate (6.8%), providing evidence to support the placement of three centers in this community. The largest concentration of our HS/EHS seats is in the western part of the County, serving the communities of Richmond, North Richmond, and San

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<sup>1</sup> United States Census, *Table S1701 (2024)*, United States Census Bureau

Pablo; the data shows clearly how these communities suffer disproportionately from the effects of poverty, as Richmond has the highest poverty rate (14.3%) of any city in the County with a population above 2,000, North Richmond has by far the highest proportion of homeless individuals (8.3 out of 1,000 from the County's Point-In-Time homelessness count) and Richmond ranks second in that metric (4.21), and San Pablo has the County's highest rate of food insecurity (21.2% eligible for CalFresh) and health insurance need (66.0% of households eligible for Medi-Cal). The County has three centers to serve the low-income residents of Antioch, the second-largest city in the County and one in which every measure of poverty is significantly above the county average.

**The rationale for which ages of children are proposed to be served by program type**

The County proposes to continue to serve pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and preschoolers through the HS and EHS programs based on the needs of each community. Contra Costa County is home to an estimated 37,778 children aged 0-2 and 40,808 aged 3-5. Of these, 11.7% (9,195) fall below federal poverty level and an additional 3.7% (2,884) between 100-130% FPL, including an estimated 2,510 pregnant women. In order to meet the varied needs of these families, the County provides an array of different program models; Table 2 (page 89) summarizes the variety of proposed models, and Table 3 (page 90) identifies how many children can be served by each model at each location.

Additionally, the County utilizes data from the Contra Costa County Office of Education Local Planning Council for Early Care and Education, tasked with assessing the County's overall childcare needs. The most recent Annual Zip Code Funding Priorities<sup>2</sup>, continued to indicate a high need for accessible infant/toddler service in priority 1 areas of Antioch (94509, 94531),

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<sup>2</sup> LPC Priorities, [www.cdss.ca.gov/child-care-and-nutrition/specialized-programs/child-development/contractor-information/lpc-priorities](http://www.cdss.ca.gov/child-care-and-nutrition/specialized-programs/child-development/contractor-information/lpc-priorities).

Concord (94520, 94519, 94521), Bay Point (94520), Brentwood (94513), Oakley (94561), Pittsburg (94565), and Richmond (94803, 94804). Antioch, Brentwood, Concord, Bay Point, Antioch, and Oakley are also designated priority 1 areas for increased access to preschool services. The County proposes to serve infants/toddlers in 40% of federally funded slots through this application.

**If the proposed options are the most appropriate to meet the needs of the community**

The County proposes to continue operating HS and EHS center-based, EHS home-based, and locally-designed variation teen parent programs (45 CFR 1302.20). To reduce barriers to access and to meet unique needs of special populations, the County will include part day, full day, and extended day options (Table 2, page 89).

The County has a high need for full-day services, with many families commuting and single parents. Communities with the highest number of children in single female-headed families include Pittsburg (3,084), Concord (4,115), Richmond (5,490) and Antioch (7,312). Critically, several communities have much higher proportions of children in families headed by single females including Antioch (26.6%) and Rodeo (39.2%). The highest poverty rates among single male-headed families occur in Brentwood (13.4%) and Pittsburg (15.8%).<sup>3</sup> The cities of Richmond, Antioch, Concord, and Pittsburg have the highest number of children aged 0-5 living below the Federal Poverty Line (FPL). These communities remain areas of high need and that would benefit greatly from continued access to full-day, full-year Head Start services.

EHS is operated through full day center-based, home-based, and locally designed program options serving pregnant women and children birth through age two. Needs of eligible

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<sup>3</sup> Diane Godard, *2023-2025 Community Assessment* (May 2023), Community Services Bureau, Contra Costa County employment and Human Services Department, p. 20

pregnant women, infants, and toddlers across the county are met through the EHS home-based program option.

Community Assessment data presents a need for comprehensive prenatal and infant services. Most significantly, 14% of Contra Costa women with births experienced food insecurity during pregnancy. Relatedly, 21% of women had inadequate weight gain during pregnancy. Additionally, 8% of newborns have low birthweight, and infant mortality was 3.6 per 1,000 in 2022.<sup>4</sup> On a positive note, in recent years teen pregnancy has declined. Year-round weekly home visits and twice-monthly group socializations are conducted by our partner Aspiranet EHS home educators in partnership with families to promote high-quality learning experiences in the home. A minimum of 22 group socialization activities are provided over the course of the program year (45 CFR 1302.22).

**Analysis of access to other early childhood education programs in the geographic areas**

The County conducted an analysis of the availability of early childhood education programs and concluded that a substantial unmet need for early childhood education slots exists in the county. In April 2023, the county had 27,444 licensed childcare slots, including 5,682 in licensed family homes, 19,580 center-based preschool slots and 2,182 center-based infant slots providing the capacity to provide center-based service to only 48% of the county's population ages 3-5 and 5.8% ages 0-2 years.<sup>5</sup> Not only are there not enough slots available to serve the county's 0-5 population, but lack of accessibility is compounded by the high cost of care, further limiting access to low-income families. Cost of care continues to increase, exacerbated by the effects of the pandemic. Since 2019, costs for full-time care for infants have risen between 7%

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<sup>4</sup> All data about births from California Department of Public Health, Maternal Child and Adolescent Health Division online Data Dashboard, accessed 3/25/24.

<sup>5</sup> Diante Godard, *2023-2025 Community Assessment* (May 2023), Community Services Bureau, Contra Costa County employment and Human Services Department, p. 91-92

and 18% and for full-time childcare by 9-10%.<sup>6</sup> These findings further emphasize the need for the high-quality, cost-free early childhood education that HS and EHS programs provide.

Our strategy for allocating HS/EHS resources has also been informed by changes in the services provided by local school districts. Since 2021, the California Department of Education has provided funding to dramatically increase availability of Transitional Kindergarten (TK) services for four-year-olds through school districts. In 2022, Contra Costa County districts served only 2,300 children.<sup>7</sup> As of the 2025-2026 school year, universal TK will be available at no cost to all four-year-olds. In response, the County has increased its capacity to serve children under 4 by shifting resources to provide more toddler services and lowering preschool class sizes to enable centers to serve more three-year-olds. In 2022, we had 30% EHS slots and 70% HS slots. In this proposal, we have 36% EHS slots and 64% HS slots.

In identifying center locations, the County also continues to consider the availability of HS/EHS services in the community provided by other grant recipients. For example, the Unity Council operates a Head Start center with a licensed capacity to serve up to 186 children in the Monument Corridor community in Concord. As a result, the County's Concord center is located in a different part of the city, so as to not duplicate services. Similarly, the YMCA operates a number of centers in Pittsburgh and Antioch – which is why the County has not devoted as many resources to those parts of the county. As a bottom line, however, this analysis suggests that Head Start currently funds a total of approximately 2,155 seats – or around 12% of the county's 17,822 children aged 0-5 with household income under 130% of the federal poverty level. While some of these children are provided with early childhood education through school districts' TK

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<sup>6</sup> Diante Godard, *2023-2025 Community Assessment* (May 2023), Community Services Bureau, Contra Costa County employment and Human Services Department, p. iv

<sup>7</sup> California Department of Education, *Data & Statistics- Enrollment* (2022), [www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov)

programs, and others are cared for in state-funded centers or home-based programs, it is clear that a significant need for high-quality early childhood education services remains.

**The plan to enroll children with disabilities**

To facilitate enrollment and services to children with disabilities, the County maintains formalized agreements with the Contra Costa Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) (Second File p. 17), whose membership includes sixteen Local Education Agencies, and with the Regional Center of the East Bay (the county’s Part C agency), which serves infants and toddlers with developmental delays. Through use of its data management system (CLOUDS), the County continuously monitors progress towards ensuring children with disabilities comprise at least the required 10% of enrollment through the enrollment team’s daily processing of referrals, waitlist, and enrollment and through monthly reports to management.

The County remains firmly committed to not only enrolling but fully meeting the various needs of children with disabilities. As explained in Section 2 below, the County works with all school districts to support the developmental needs of children ages 3-5 with disabilities across the county, in each center and classroom. Through collaboration with Mt. Diablo Unified (Concord) and West Contra Costa School (Richmond) Districts, children in need of additional support as identified through their Individualized Education Plan (IEP) receive services in designated full-inclusion or special-day classrooms. The County also remains engaged in the community of disability advocates by participating in the Contra Costa County Developmental Disability Council and Contra Costa Interagency Care Collaboration. The County’s program design, community engagement, and teaching strategies have contributed to our ability to serve children with disabilities, representing 14% of children served in the 2022-2023 program year<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Office of Head Start Head Start Enterprise System, *Program Information Report Summary Report (2023)*, 09CH010862-Contra Costa County Head Start



**How the need for full-day, full-year services in the community will be met**

In alignment with the Office of Head Start’s priorities, the County is proposing to provide full-day, full-year services through the majority of funded enrollment, with 83% (880 of 1,201) of center-based slots operating a full day, an increase of 155 new full-day slots. The County is proposing to convert an existing part-day room in North Richmond to full-day. Table 2 (page 89) details the planned number of hours per day, days per week, and weeks per year of program operation for each model. The County’s standard full-day, full-year model operates for 10 ½ hours per day, 5 days a week, 52 weeks per year. Sixty-six percent of children aged 0-5, live in families in which all parents work. In 2021, 86% of county workers commute with an average commute time of 37.8 minutes. Our strategic placement of centers throughout the county, such that virtually all families are within a four-mile distance of a County center, helps to ensure that parents have convenient access to high-quality early childhood education. Hours at select centers will be extended to better serve families with nontraditional work hours. These centers will allow drop off as early as 6 a.m. and pick up as late as 6 p.m.

**If applicable, how the proposed delegate agency is identified**

The County is not proposing a delegate agency.

**Engagement to improve service delivery, increase access, and prevent duplication**

The County’s Head Start governance structure, with an elected Board of County Supervisors serving as its governing board, is uniquely equipped to facilitate community engagement and ensure that decisions, including geographic locations of centers, are responsive to community needs. This distinguishes the County from other prospective Head Start entities in that the governing board is elected by and tasked with representing the entire population of the county and thereby directly accountable to the entire community. The County’s Head Start

leadership engages extensively and on an ongoing basis with the Supervisors, their staff members, and constituents from their districts, and all key programmatic and budgetary decisions must be approved, in hearings open to the public, by these elected representatives.

In addition, the County undertakes community engagement to improve service delivery, increase access to services, and prevent duplication through formalized partnerships, interagency agreements with school districts, and outreach. The County directly operates some programs, and partners with community providers via contract to deliver other programs. In this application the County proposes that partners operate 29% of the proposed seats, with the goal of increasing quality and access to childcare and development services in areas of need across the county. Selected through a competitive procurement process, the County proposes to partner with KinderCare Learning Centers, Mt. Diablo Unified School District, Tiny Toes and Aspiranet (see letters of commitment, Second File p. 20-23). The County and partners follow the same expectations in the areas of achieving early learning and development outcomes. Partners self-select an approach to service delivery, with County approval and oversight (Table 4, page 91). The County provides support to partners through monthly meetings, weekly site visits, ongoing training and data sharing, and quarterly Partner Learning Community Meetings. The County requires all partners and directly-operated sites to adhere to the same monitoring practices as outlined in Table 4 (page 91). These practices sustain improved service delivery, increasing the quality standards for childcare, and increasing access to high quality early education services across the county. Additionally, the County engages with two school districts, Mount Diablo Unified and West Contra Costa Unified, to operate full-inclusion and special-day service models in select Head Start classrooms in Concord and Richmond. This increases access to quality early education experiences in the least restrictive environments for our children with disabilities.

The County also engages in direct outreach to and engagement with the community. As a county government and the Head Start provider since 1966, we have deep roots in and connections to our communities. A specific example of how we engage, is the process to create the 2024/2025 Community Needs Assessment (CNA) and Community Action Plan (CAP), developed by the Economic Opportunity Council and funded by the Community Services Block Grant. To develop the CNA and CAP, the County convened a Community Action Plan Workgroup, conducted seven public hearings, and provided opportunities for public comment. These hearings took place in the community, including a homeless shelter for families, a free-lunch program, a library, and at a Head Start Policy Council Meeting. Through this process, 291 voices were heard. This process resulted in a set of findings and priorities that inform the County's work on its HS/EHS program and beyond.

## **2. ACHIEVING EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES**

### **Curricula and teaching practices**

The County uses *The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Two's* for EHS children, and *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool* for Head Start children. Both are evidence-based<sup>9</sup> and align with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF), meeting requirements under 45 CFR 1302.32. The County also utilizes additional enhancements to support social and emotional learning.

*The Creative Curriculum* explicitly describes how each interest area in the classroom and specific teaching practices support children's development across the different ELOF domains and sub-domains. The curriculum assists teachers in understanding how children develop in the

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<sup>9</sup>Research Foundation: *The Creative Curriculum*, Teaching Strategies, Inc. (2010)

classroom environment through use of strategies such as Mighty Minutes -- playful and engaging activities to intentionally teach language, literacy, math, social studies, and physical skills. An independent, two-year impact study found evidence that *The Creative Curriculum* for Preschool is effective in helping children achieve positive results, specifically higher literacy and math outcomes and increased teacher effectiveness.<sup>10</sup>

The County enhances the curriculum to reinforce social-emotional learning, ensuring teaching practices promote progress towards school readiness goals. EHS classrooms utilize relationship-based, responsive caregiving approaches of the *Program for Infant and Toddler Care* and Head Start classrooms utilize *Second Step Early Learning*. Both assist staff with teaching social emotional skills including identifying feelings and self-regulation. Teaching staff also use strategies of *The California Teaching Pyramid Framework* to encourage social-emotional competence in children. *The Teaching Pyramid* provides a systematic framework that encourages appropriate behavior, prevents challenging behavior, and addresses problematic behavior.

To support their understanding of curriculum implementation, teaching teams receive ongoing training and technical assistance throughout the program year. Each teacher receives orientation and introductory training on the curricula during their on-boarding by the Education Manager. Annually, teachers receive an Education In-Service training that details the use of the curricula to support children's growth. Use of the curricula is evident by lesson plan review and ongoing classroom observations. Site Supervisors review and approve each classroom's lesson plan weekly, in addition to observing classrooms routinely. Our complex monitoring system also captures the use of curriculum through various monitoring tools, including the County's

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<sup>10</sup> TS-Curriculum-Effectiveness-Study-2013.pdf (teachingstrategies.com)

Curriculum Fidelity Tool (Table 5, page 92, #12). Careful and detailed analysis of assessment data also supports evaluating curricula implementation and effectiveness. This data analysis then drives our decisions for additional training on curricula, assessment, and other early education enhancements.

Teachers also implement Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS™) strategies such as asking open-ended questions, modeling language, and using high level vocabulary with children. The program trains and encourages teachers to engage in conversations, use self-talk and parallel talk, and make real world connections to what students are currently learning. Teachers use techniques that foster a regard for student perspectives and help build a classroom community. They achieve this through children's classroom jobs and responsibilities, pictorial daily schedules, and by making room for student participation, allowing children to choose music and songs and assist at circle time and other times of the day. Teachers encourage children to make independent choices throughout the day. Lesson plans for infants and toddlers are open-ended and encourage teachers to look for signals that determine the children's interest level in the materials provided and activities presented.

Together, *The Creative Curriculum* and these enhancements provide children with developmentally appropriate educational content which supports engaged learning to promote progress in all developmental areas toward school readiness.

### **Establishing and measuring school readiness goals**

To assess school readiness, the County utilizes the Desired Result Developmental Profile 2015 (DRDP). The DRDP is a developmental assessment tool developed for children from early infancy up to kindergarten entry, including children with disabilities, and takes into consideration the specific cultural and linguistic characteristics of California's diverse population of young

children, with specific consideration for dual language learners (45 CFR 1302.33(c)). The DRDP addresses cultural and linguistic responsiveness in two primary ways: (1) “Teachers and providers observe and document children’s behavior in both the home language and English to obtain a more accurate profile of the children’s knowledge and skills across developmental domains,” and (2) “Teachers and providers rate children’s progress on two language development domains--Language and Literacy Development (LLD) and English-Language Development (ELD).”<sup>11</sup> The universal design of the DRDP makes it an effective assessment tool that gives all children of all ages the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills, including children with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)/Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSPs), and children who are dual language learners.

Teachers complete the DRDP for each child with a tool specific to their age range three times a year: within 60 days of enrollment, at the mid-point of the school year, and at the end of the year. The assessment results inform program planning and decision-making at individual, group, and program levels. Each fall, the County utilizes the first (baseline) DRDP assessment data, in addition to previous years DRDP data, to create agency-focused school readiness goals. The County then develops specific, measurable objectives to improve school readiness and utilizes the second (mid-year) and third (year-end) assessments to measure progress towards school readiness.

The *Approaches to Learning-Self Regulation* domain assesses two critical areas for children’s overall school success: approaches to learning, and self-regulation. The goal of this domain is for children to be able to maintain attention and to freely explore the environment to learn more about people, materials, and events. The *Social and Emotional Development* domain

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<sup>11</sup> California Department of Education, *DRDP (2015) Preschool Fundamental View*, [www.desiredresults.us](http://www.desiredresults.us)

assesses children's developing thoughts and skills on how to understand others, interact with others, and form relationships with the children and adults around them. The goal is for children to gain social and emotional understanding through varying social interactions.

The *Language and Literacy* domain assesses children in their progress of developing fundamental language and literacy skills. The goal is to support children with communication and understanding of what makes up a written word. Language development is the foundation for reading and writing as children grow and learn. The *English-Language Development* domain assesses the progress of children who are dual language learners. Dual language learners may demonstrate knowledge and skills in both their home language and in English. The goal for children who are dual-language learners is to increase their level of English language capabilities to support with listening, speaking, and reading.

The *Cognition* domain focuses on observation, exploration, and investigation of objects and concepts. Through active exploration, the goal of this domain is to increase the child's knowledge and skills regarding spatial relationships and simple math operations. Lastly, the *Physical Development and Health* domain focuses on motor growth and the development of routines related to the child. The goal of this domain is for children to gradually develop their gross and fine motor skills while learning about personal care routines for themselves, including dressing themselves.<sup>12</sup>

Images 2 and 3 (pages 84 and 85) present the 2022-2023 results for each developmental domain for preschoolers and pre-kindergarteners, demonstrating that the implementation of curriculum, age-appropriate activities and materials, positive teacher/child interactions, and family engagement led to outcomes that met and exceeded the expected outcomes.

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<sup>12</sup> California Department of Education, *California Preschool Curriculum Framework* (2010), [www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov)

Finally, each year, the County also uses the DRDP to establish and assess an annual system-wide Parent, Family and Community Engagement (PFCE) goal and expected outcome. Family engagement is a crucial component in the journey towards school readiness. To support the selected goal, families receive monthly take-home activities with written guidance or other materials to help increase their knowledge on a particular area of focus. For the 2022-2023 program year, the County focused on increasing parents' success as lifelong educators by supporting their children's knowledge about nutrition and healthy food choices. Survey results indicate that the implementation of hands-on materials and written guidance over the year increased caregivers' ability to support their children in learning to feed themselves, understand good nutrition, and make healthy food choices at home. Image 4 (page 86) presents the 2022-2023 results of the PFCE goal, PD-HLTH 10, Nutrition. Improvements in child nutrition demonstrate the effectiveness of family engagement. The next Section explains how the County uses these results with staff, families, the Policy Council, and the governing body.

**School readiness goals established in consultation with the parents**

The County develops agency-level school readiness goals annually in consultation with parents, through the process outlined above related to the DRDP. Education Managers present the DRDP data analysis and proposed school readiness goals for each age group to the Policy Council's standing Program Services Subcommittee. Subcommittee members engage in discussion with the Education Team and provide valuable input. Based on parent feedback, changes are made before presentation to the full Policy Council, where parents/caregivers have another opportunity to engage in conversation regarding goal establishment. To close the loop, the Education Team shares the School Readiness Goals at center parent meetings. This consultation and information-sharing process continues with the mid- and year-end update.



Additionally, parents/caregivers have ample opportunity (e.g. weekly lesson plan reviews and parent meetings) to give input into the weekly lesson plan, which support school readiness goals, by reviewing and adding components that support children's growth in certain developmental areas, such as social and emotional development. Parent involvement in the creation of their child's individual school readiness goals is a crucial component to children's success. Families can collaboratively create their child's specific goals with the teacher at the first Parent /Teacher Conference. This shared process helps to bridge and enhance the home-to-school connection.

**Meeting the needs of infants, toddlers, and/or preschoolers with disabilities**

In 2022-2023, children with disabilities comprised 14% of children served by the County, exceeding requirements under 45 CFR 1302.14(b). To ensure appropriate disability services, the County employs three strategies: partnering with two school districts, participating in local learning collaboratives, and creating individualized lesson plans.

*Partnering with school districts:* The County engages families in the screening and assessment of their child. If at any time concerns are present, staff facilitate a family meeting to support with appropriate assessments and referrals. Additionally, County staff participate in the IEP/IFSP meeting to learn about the child's needs and to support the child's education in the program. The County's family services team is well equipped to support families and children with suspected or documented disabilities due to an established communication system with Contra Costa SELPA, which includes the Contra Cost County Office of Education, 15 school districts, and the Regional Center of the East Bay (the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Part C agency). This collaboration provides opportunities and resources for children who require special education and services, as well as a smooth transition for children with disabilities from the County's Head Start program to public schools.

The County partners with Mt. Diablo Unified School District and West Contra Costa School District, to identify children with disabilities whose needs as identified in their IEP would be best supported by placement in designated full-inclusion or special-day Head Start classroom. Special-day classrooms are comprised of children with disabilities and instruction is led by School District specialists. Full-inclusion classrooms are comprised of both typically developing children and children with IEPs and are led by preschool teachers supported by School District specialists.

*Participating in local learning collaboratives.* To ensure continuous incorporation of emerging knowledge and approaches, County leadership participates in the Contra Costa County Developmental Disability Council and the Contra Costa Interagency Care Collaboration. The mission of the Developmental Disabilities Council of Contra Costa County is to promote the coordination, improvement, and growth of services and supports to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families and to advocate for their needs. Monthly council meetings focus on updates from the Regional Center, and State Disability Board, along with a presentation to educate the public on resources available in the community. The Contra Costa Interagency Care Collaboration is a monthly gathering of agencies across Contra Costa County that support children 0-5 years old. Agencies come together to share resources and network, building a robust partnership between agencies. Agencies that participate include the Early Childhood Mental Health Program, Contra Costa Health Services, West Contra Costa Unified School District, CocoKids, Vistability, Care Parent Network, First 5 Contra Costa, and Help Me Grow Contra Costa.

*Creating individualized lesson plans.* Teachers individualize daily lesson plans based on the child's goals as established in their IEP/IFSP. Specifically, each child is assigned a letter

code to document individualization on the lesson plan. Each week, Site Supervisors and at least one parent/caregiver review and approve lesson plans for each classroom. Lesson plans also include a safety component individualized to the needs of the classroom to ensure child health and safety remains an area of focus for all children and all classrooms.

**The plan to meet the needs of the applicant's targeted population**

*Children in the child welfare system.* Because the County administers the child welfare system within the same Department as Head Start program (Image 5, p. 87), a seamless referral system exists meeting 45 CFR 1302.13 standards, and providing direct pathways for communication between Head Start and staff and child welfare social workers.

The County employs strength-based and trauma-informed strategies in working with families who are involved with the child welfare system. Family services staff build positive and goal-oriented relationships with caregivers and support in achievement of individual family goals, intentionally aligning directly with existing goals established by child welfare whenever possible (45 CFR 1302.52(d)). This individualized approach, employing strength-based Family Development Credential strategies as discussed later in this Section, supports diverse needs of children through an equity, inclusiveness, and cultural and linguistically responsive lens.

Additionally, Head Start Family Services staff support families involved in child welfare in accessing parenting classes including encouraging participation in our Head Start researched-based family development curriculum, *Make Parenting a Pleasure* (45 CFR 1302.51(b)). The County also supports family engagement for children whose parents are incarcerated, whether engaged with child welfare or otherwise. Through involvement with REadingADvantage's *Storybook Connection* program, volunteers in the local county detention facilities work with incarcerated parents to teach the importance of reading to their child and provide a recordable

book that can then be brought to their child. Not only does this facilitate a love of reading, but it also helps to build and strengthen the bond between parent and child. Research has shown that recidivism rates decline for those that maintain healthy relationships with their children.<sup>13</sup>

*Dual language learners.* In 2022-2023, most children served by the County's Head Start program identified a primary home language as English (48%) or Spanish (45%). Of those reporting English as primary language, 15% of children were learning another language in addition to English at home. The remaining children spoke European/Slavic (2.4%) or Middle Eastern/South Asian (2.2%) languages, and less than 1% spoke Eastern Asian, African or Native Central/South American languages. *Creative Curriculum* includes many resources in both English and Spanish. Classrooms have color-coded bilingual labels in Spanish and English, and some have labels in additional languages as needed to support children with their home languages. The County supports dual language development through books, songs, classroom environment, and family involvement in the classroom. To further support language development and literacy outcomes, the County implements three literacy programs: *Tandem* (book share program), the *CSB Reads*, and *Storybook Connection*. Using multilingual, multicultural picture books as the starting point, these programs support learning across literacy, language, math, social-emotional learning.

The languages of children served informs the County's recruitment, hiring, and work assignment of bilingual and multilingual staff, further supporting dual language learner strategies. In 2022-2023, 63.5% of HS/EHS education staff were proficient in a language other than English, and 13% spoke more than two languages. At 40%, the more common language of

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<sup>13</sup> *Prison Reform: Reducing Recidivism by Strengthening the Federal Bureau of Prisons*, (Updated Nov. 2023) U.S. Department of Justice, [www.justice.gov](http://www.justice.gov)

dual proficiency was Spanish, followed by: 11% Middle Eastern/South Asian, 11% East Asian, and less than 1% Native North American, Pacific Island, and African languages.

*Homeless children.* From the first point of contact, the County supports children experiencing housing insecurity by identifying an ECE program that best meets the child's developmental and family support needs. Most services for housing-insecure families are administered by the County. Therefore, the County eligibility and enrollment staff utilize a county-developed housing screening tool at intake to identify those who are experiencing housing insecurity. All eligibility and enrollment staff have received training specific to supporting children experiencing homelessness, including completion of the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement's nine module *Supporting Children and Families Experiencing Homelessness* training, which includes knowledge checks, practice scenarios, and interactive learning modules designed to deepen understanding of family homelessness. Enrollment and Family Services staff are also trained on the McKinney-Vento Homelessness Assistance Act as it pertains to enrollment in Head Start. The County strives to build relationships with families as soon as possible following enrollment and the family services team utilizes a strength-based approach in conducting a family meeting, family assessment, and accessing resources. The Mental Health/Disabilities Manager, a content manager in the family services team (Organizational Chart, Second File p. 5), specializes in supporting homeless families and ensures adequate support and follow-up is provided, including support with applying for low-income housing. The Mental Health/Disabilities Manager is also part of a broad-based coalition, the Contra Costa County Council on Homelessness, to ensure unhoused families are part of an integrated system of care.

*Pregnant women.* The County provides EHS Services for pregnant teens (school-based program) and women (home visiting program) in partnership with two agencies: Crossroads High School and Aspiranet. Together with the county's family services team, they ensure the provision of services specific to needs of pregnant women, including education about and access to services for oral health, nutrition, infant care, and safe sleep practices. Crossroads High School collaborates with County-administered Family, Maternal, Child Health (FMCH) programs to monitor the health of mother and baby. Situated within the County family of services, expedited access to FMCH directly benefits our Head Start families. Using the evidence-based curricula *Growing Great Kids* and *Growing Great Families*, Aspiranet home visitors work from a strengthening-families approach to support parents' understanding of the importance of early parent-child relationships, basic care and health, attachment and bonding, healthy child development, and children's social/emotional competence. Clients are screened for depression by Aspiranet using the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-4) at enrollment, birth, and 16 weeks postpartum.

**Meeting health, mental health, nutritional, and oral health needs**

Specialized managers oversee the integration of assessments and services throughout directly-operated and partner programs in the areas of health, mental health, nutrition, and oral health, as represented in the Organizational Chart on page 5 of Second File. In alignment with the Head Start Management Systems Wheel, managers collaborate to ensure alignment and seamless delivery of the full range of family services systems to meet child and family needs.<sup>14</sup> The County achieves this through monthly managers' meetings and workgroups, which include data discussions identifying health, mental health, nutritional, and oral health needs of program

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<sup>14</sup> Office of Head Start, *Management Systems Wheel*, [www.eclkc.ohs.acf.gov/organiational-leadership](http://www.eclkc.ohs.acf.gov/organiational-leadership).

participants. The County has established clear guidance via desk guides and procedures to guide the work of the family services team and ensure quality child and family outcomes.

*Health/Oral Health.* The County family services staff provide one-on-one educational opportunities for parents that build their understanding of a variety of health-related topics such as the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment Schedule (EPSDT); safe sleep practices that reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and other sleep-related deaths; handwashing and tooth brushing practices at the Initial Home Visit; and side-by-side support to gain understanding of screening results, referrals, and navigating the health care system. In addition, the County provides a variety of group trainings on topics such as healthy eating and social and emotional well-being. Parent meetings, family meetings and other training provide learning opportunities for parents to ensure the delivery of high-quality health services.

The County teaching staff, through classroom activities and home visits, also model for parents the establishment of safe and healthy habits through practices such as handwashing, daily gum cleaning and tooth brushing, serving foods that are high in nutrients, low in fat and sugar, and meet the child's daily requirements, making water available for drinking, and supporting breastfeeding and on-demand feeding for infants and young toddlers. Children are brought to an "up-to-date" health status with family services staff support through access to preventive services, early intervention and ongoing treatment and care as identified through the completion of the Health History, 45-day hearing and vision screenings, and 90-day medical/dental exams, including screenings and assessments required per the Bright Futures EPSDT Schedule and immunizations per the Center for Disease Control and California regulations. The County completes the Screening Results Form for each child within 75 days of enrollment, and staff communicate with parents immediately when problems are suspected. The County values and

encourages parent input and staff observation, as they are critical to gaining understanding of the child's health.

*Nutrition.* The County offers a comprehensive system of child nutrition services for enrolled children and families. Nutrition services include well-balanced and nutritious meals that follow the United States Department of Agriculture's Food Program meal guidelines; nutrition screening and assessment; nutrition education at parent meetings and through menus and newsletters; a nutrition curriculum which promotes physical activity and healthy eating habits; and collaboration with community partners to support community-wide education aimed at reducing the persistent problem of childhood obesity.

*Mental Health.* For provision of mental health consultation services, the County collaborates with the Early Childhood Mental Health Program, a community-based organization whose mission is to promote the well-being and empowerment of our community by providing access to collaborative early intervention, mental health, and early education services that foster health development, strong relationships, healing, and resilience for infants, young children, and their families who face adversity. Over the past two years, a need for more mental health services has emerged as a common theme at public meetings throughout Contra Costa County. In response to this community priority, the County is proposing to expand mental health services with an increase in county employees. A new mental health team comprised of a Family Services Mental Health Supervisor and two Mental Health Specialists will support HS and EHS children, families, and staff. These staff will serve as leaders within a multi-disciplinary mental health team. These supports will provide County teachers more time and resources to best meet individualized mental health needs of children and families.



Positive health, mental health, nutrition, and oral health outcomes are achieved when working in partnership with families and empowering them as self-advocates. The County's family services staff continually assesses child and family strengths and needs and ensures successful referrals to all necessary services. Strengths-based family support skills are learned and practiced through the national Family Development Credentialing program (FDC) for family services workers. The FDC program provides family services workers with the knowledge and skills they need to coach families to set and reach their own goals for healthy self-reliance in their communities. Coaches and clients use the Family Development Plan to focus their sessions on reaching the client's goals. To earn the FDC, workers take 80 hours of classes based on *Empowerment Skills for Family Workers*<sup>15</sup>, complete a portfolio documenting their ability to apply these concepts and skills, and pass a standardized exam.

### **Observing teacher/home visitor practice and use for professional development**

The County administers a robust system of systematically observing teacher and home visitor practice as part of a multifaceted Ongoing Monitoring Plan, overseen by the Quality Monitoring Unit (QMU) and conducted by various County teams. CLASS-certified QMU staff monitor teacher-child interactions in a 50% sampling of preschool classrooms each year. Additional monitoring tools which observe teacher practice include Curriculum Fidelity (30% of centers conducted by QMU), the Child Safety & Transition Monitoring (100% of classrooms twice annually by senior managers), On-Site Content Area Compliance Checklist (100% of classrooms twice annually by family services managers), Education File Review (100% annually by family services and senior managers), Center Monitoring (30% of classrooms at each center annually by QMU), and Child Nutrition Health & Safety and Compliance (33% of centers

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<sup>15</sup> Forest, C (2015). *Empowerment skills for family workers*, Family Development Press.

annually by the nutrition manager). Home visitors are monitored using the County's Home Base Socialization and Home Visit Tools conducted annually by the QMU. Table 5 (page 94) outlines monitoring frequency, responsible individuals, and aggregated data review.

Each monitoring tool includes handbooks providing clear guidance to support compliance and data reliability. Compliance thresholds are set for each monitoring tool to determine the need for agency-wide corrective action plans which drive continuous quality improvement.

Monitoring results are shared with Site Supervisors and teaching teams to inform opportunities for professional development and practice improvement.

At the beginning of the program year, coaching staff conduct the Teaching Pyramid Classroom Snapshot on each classroom to determine areas of strength and areas that may need improvement.

With this data, in addition to previous classroom CLASS scores and Creative Curriculum Fidelity monitoring data, an action plan for areas of focus and improvement is created with teaching staff and the site supervisors to support each classroom team. This data also drives selection of intensive coaching participants. The frequency of intensive coaching is based on need; however, coaching staff meet with participants no less than once per week for an average of 8-12 weeks. Along with the annual survey regarding training needs completed by each teacher, monitoring data is reviewed and analyzed by the Education Team and Assistant Directors (at the onset of the program year and quarterly thereafter) to determine potential training and professional development needs for staff in the upcoming program year. A calendar of 12 training topics is then created, and the training courses are specifically designed to build applicable skills. For example, the survey conducted in the Fall of 2023 resulted in a detailed training and discussion on temperament in children, and how to navigate adult conflict.

Data collected through the ongoing monitoring system is aggregated and analyzed semi-annually to determine strengths and areas of improvement. In school year 2022-2023, the County's average CLASS scores exceeded the Head Start Quality Thresholds in all domains: 6.39 for Emotional Support (threshold = 6); 6.09 for Classroom Organization (threshold = 6); and 4.44 for Instructional Support (threshold = 3).

**The process for selecting the assessment tool and plan to use child assessment data**

The County utilizes the DRDP, described above, as its assessment tool. The county has historically used the DRDP as it is required by the California Department of Education and Department of Social Services and aligns with the HS Early Learning Outcomes Framework (45 CFR 1302.33(b)). Teachers use the DRDP assessment data to create specific, individual child goals in collaboration with family members to support children in gaining the skills, behavior, and knowledge necessary for school success and life-long learning. Family engagement is essential to goal setting for each child individually. During the first parent-teacher conference, the DRDP data from the first assessment is shared to help families create appropriate goals for their individual children for the remainder of the program year. However, engagement begins as soon as possible with families regarding any concern with their child's development, through parental concerns, screenings, or child assessment. Teachers and family service staff facilitate family meetings which support parents/guardians with understanding their rights and the referral process. If appropriate, a referral is made to the applicable local education agency or the Regional Center of the East Bay (IDEA Part C agency).

The County works in partnership with families to collect and monitor child-level data by conducting health screenings, developmental assessments (DRDP), home visits, parent conferences and family partnership agreements to understand strengths and needs which results

in individualized programming for school readiness. This engagement begins at program entry through an in-depth health and developmental history conducted with caregivers to gain an understanding of the child's needs. Within 45 days of enrollment, all children receive vision, hearing, cognitive, and social-emotional screenings (utilizing the *Ages and Stages Questionnaire 3* and *Ages and Stages Questionnaire- Social Emotional*) to support identification of potential concerns including developmental delays. Parents/caregivers are engaged during Parent Conferences in creating individualized goals created for each child based on cumulation of data collected. The County recognizes the important role that parents/caregivers, as their child's first teacher, play in their child's development, encouraging parent to volunteer in the classroom and bring lessons into the home.

As stated above regarding school readiness goal establishment, the County aggregates and analyzes child-level assessment data to not only develop individualized goals for each child but create agency-wide goals.

**Coordination in providing child health, developmental, and program management services**

The County's Head Start program coordinates these services both within county government and throughout the community.

*Within the county.* As an embedded program within the county portfolio of services, (Image 5, page 87), Head Start children and families benefit from expedited access to services to meet their needs and achieve family goals. A notable example is our health manager's recent coordination to implement use of the County's well-child exam form as a template available to doctors via Contra Costa Health Services' electronic medical record system. This unique form clearly identifies all medical screenings and assessments required under the state's EPSDT program, and flags which of them are currently missed or not documented. More complete and

accurate data collection by Contra Costa Health Services allows Head Start staff to better determine the child's up-to-date status and mobilize support to achieving up-to-date status (45 CFR 1302.42(b)(i)), and helps parents and caregivers continue to follow recommended well-child schedules and obtain follow-up care (45 CFR 1302.42(c)-(d)).

*Throughout the community.* County management regularly participates and plays leadership roles in a variety of community organizations and groups to coordinate with public and private entities and promote provision of child health, developmental, and program management services. Below are descriptions of entities and the County's role and length of experience collaborating with each. As demonstrated by this list, the County's long and successful history with Head Start has left it with a broad and deep array of partnerships rooted throughout the community of Contra Costa County.

First 5 Contra Costa (26 years, Commissioner, 9 Commissioners) - Aims to change systems of services and supports for children ages 0-5 and their families. In addition to funding five Family Resource Centers, First 5 coordinates collective action through advocacy and community engagement, research, capacity building, and connecting families and child care providers to resources.

Contra Costa County Interagency Collaborative (10 years, founding member, 40 members) - A meeting of community-based organizations to share resources and service opportunities with one another to better the service delivery options to families in Contra Costa County.

Ensuring Opportunity Campaign to End Poverty (7 years, leadership team, 16 members) - The goal is to end economic disparity by addressing the root causes of poverty through policy

change, focusing on these policy areas: Housing, Food Security, Economic Security, Health Security and Budget Justice (the county budget process).

Early Learning Leadership Group (16 years, leadership team, 8 members) - A think-tank group comprised of leaders in the field of early education who plan, strategize, advocate, and collaborate to achieve the best outcomes for children 0-5.

Comprehensive Prevention Planning Team (6 years, team member, 35 members) - The mission is to create and oversee a countywide prevention plan which impacts the social determinants of health for our children, families, and community.

Reading Advantage (10 years, Board member, 9 members) - Distributes new and gently used books to local schools and community organizations throughout Contra Costa County.

Health and Active Before Five (3 years, Executive Board Member, 20 members) - A collaborative that advances health equity through local policy and environmental changes to support the health and well-being of children ages 0-5 and their families.

Local Planning Council for Early Care and Education (6 years, Board member, 20 members) - In partnership with public and private entities, works to improve childcare and early education opportunities in Contra Costa County.

Los Medanos College ECE Advisory Committee (6 years, member, 20 members)- Collaborate with educational entities to inform and shape the ECE field.

The Family Economic Security Partnership (15 years, member, 30 members) - Private and nonprofit collaboration dedicated to increasing the income and building the assets of low-income families in Contra Costa County.

Diablo Valley College Advisory Board (5 years, member, 20 members) - Collaborate with educational entities to inform and shape the ECE field.

Tandem, Partners in Early Learning (5 years, community partner, 5 members) - Works alongside school districts, early childhood education providers and community-based organizations to co-create equitable, high-quality early learning literacy experiences for children ages 0-5.

Oral Health Collaborative for Contra Costa County (15 years, participant, 25 members) - Works in collaboration with schools and community partners to increase access to oral health services by linking children, youth and families to no or low-cost dental resources.

Contra Costa/Anthem Quarterly Community Advisory Committee (5 years, participant, 20 members) - Looks at trends in our community and assesses the trends to ensure needs are met for the families living in the community.

Building Healthy Communities (7 years, partner, 25 members) - Strives to implement healthy eating and physical activity practices within early childhood education programs.

**Services to enrolled pregnant women post-pregnancy and transition planning process**

The County facilitates transitions at three stages. First, post pregnancy transitions. Second, toddler transitions. Third, kindergarten transitions. In 2023, the County transitioned 448 children to their next developmentally-appropriate care and education environment.

*Post-pregnancy transition.* County staff collaborate with the two partners (Aspiranet and Mt Diablo School District) to provide services to pregnant women to systematically ensure continuity of care when transitioning their infant to EHS. Planning begins at least six months before the transition occurs. Teachers use infant assessment data to prepare individualized transitions to the next school experience. Teachers and family services staff regularly communicate with families through the transition process to help the family with their child's

transition to preschool. In the 2022-23 program year, 100% of pregnant women receiving home-based EHS services subsequently enrolled their infant in the program.<sup>16</sup>

*Toddler transitions.* The County strives to transition children to new slot in close proximity, often within same location. Teachers implement toddler transition plans with the child and family at 30 months, 34 months, and 35-36 months. The toddler transition planning includes collaboration between Site Supervisors, the Family Services Team, and the Centralized Enrollment Unit in identifying a plan for each toddler's next educational experience. This plan includes updated eligibility determinations for Head Start which are conducted in advance of child's transition. The Enrollment, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA) Manager monitor transitions. Based on family needs, such as relocation, the family services and enrollment teams support the transition to another childcare agency and enrollment, if possible, with childcare partners.

*Kindergarten transition.* Prior to the kindergarten registration period each year, site-based parent committee meetings provide Kindergarten Transition training and local school district kindergarten registration information. Teachers use the Getting Ready for Kindergarten Teaching Guide from *The Creative Curriculum* to plan activities during the last few weeks of school that focus on kindergarten readiness through literacy, math, arts, and technology. Teachers use the *Second Step* curriculum to support children's kindergarten transition. The last three *Second Step* lessons that focus on transitions to kindergarten are "Learning in Kindergarten", "Riding the Kindergarten Bus", and "Making New Friends in Kindergarten". Kindergarten transition plans for children with disabilities include engagement with the school district during IEP transition meetings and supporting families with understanding their rights and addressing any family

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<sup>16</sup> Office of Head Start Head Start Enterprise System, *Program Information Report Summary Report (2023)*, 09CH010862-Contra Costa County Head Start



concerns, priorities, or resources to support with the positive transition. For all transitions to kindergarten, the county provides backpacks with activities and supplies to support the parents/caregivers in preparing their child at home.

**Facilitating meaningful engagement of parents and reducing barriers to participation**

The County employs three strategies to ensure meaningful engagement with parents and caregivers to promote child wellness and school readiness (45 CFR 1302.34, 1302.52). First, staff remain flexible when scheduling home visits, parent conferences, and family meetings to reduce barriers to parent and caregiver participation, such as work hours or transportation. Second, the Policy Council meets in the evenings to allow working families to attend. Members receive reimbursement for their own childcare or can use the onsite childcare. Members and their children receive dinner and transportation reimbursement. Third, the County modifies the form of communications based on parent and caregiver preferences as identified in an annual Communication Survey. Based on survey results, for example, the County increased text messages and emails as primary forms of communication. Likewise, the County adopted Zoom to offer remote accessibility to the family curriculum, *Make Parenting a Pleasure*. Friday Flyers, a weekly collection of community resources announcing events in the Head Start program and the greater community, are now available to families on the web portal. A QR code posted on center Parent Boards links families directly to these electronic flyers, ensuring up-to-date information is readily available.

### 3. PAST PERFORMANCE

#### **Effectively administering a project the size, complexity, and scope of proposed program**

The County has been the provider of Head Start services in the county since 1966. The program has expanded over the years, and in the past decade, services have further expanded in scope. From 2015-2017, the County was awarded two EHS-Child Care Partnership grants, equating to an 84% increase in infant/toddler services for Contra Costa County. The County currently directly operates twelve centers and partners with eight community-based organizations to serve 1,916 child development slots through state and federal funding and has a proven record of effectively administering a program of the size, complexity, and scope of that which is proposed in this application.

All 12 directly-operated centers participate in the Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS), also known as Quality Matters, a systematic approach to support teaching staff with continuous quality improvement. QRIS also supports families with their understanding of what a quality program looks like. Our 12 sites have received QRIS scores of levels 4 (mastering) or 5 (exceeding) standards in the areas of health and safety, quality teaching and environments, and staff qualifications/education. As one of the pioneers of layered funding models in California, the county leverages state child development alongside Head Start funding to ensure the community's low-income, foster, and homeless children have access to quality educational experiences, safe and nurturing caregiving, and comprehensive services. Each year, the County conducts a parent survey which yields high rates of satisfaction with our services. In 2023, 99% of parents felt their child was safe and happy in the program.

The County has received recognition for innovative practices. The County was the first agency in California to implement electronic attendance and received the Merit Award from the

California State Association of Counties (CSAC) in 2015, recognizing the County's locally-designed database, CLOUDS, as an efficient, cost saving system. The County received a CSAC Merit Award again in 2020 for its development of an innovative and safe communication system, again for CLOUDS, to connect with families during the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the years the County has supported programs across the nation as presenters and panelists at numerous state and national conferences, including the annual Head Start California and the National Head Start Association's Innovation Summit.

**Professional experience for the management team**

The County's success is attributed to the management team having a wealth of expertise and experience. The program is led by a group of senior managers comprised of the Director, Deputy Director, Division Managers, Assistant Directors, and Program Managers. This group has an average of 20 years of experience leading teams in the Head Start/Education field. Notably, the team brings forth expertise gained through attainment of the Mentoring and Administrative Credential and completion of programs such as the Head Start Academy, UCLA Anderson School of Management Fellows Program, and New Director Mentorship Program along with other leadership programs including Facilitative Leadership and the Leadership Challenge. Additional information on the qualifications of management staff is included below in Section 4.

The Head Start program benefits from the support of the county administration due to the level of oversight, internal controls and governance systems afforded by the County.

Administrative staff's extensive experience in managing HS/EHS programs, including financial management competency, is detailed below in Section 6.

**Providing effective financial management in operating a HS and EHS program**

The County's Head Start program provides effective accounting and financial management. It formulates and maintains an adequate organizational structure that delineates lines of authority and responsibility; defines operational relationships; formulates lines of communication; and establishes a system of internal checks and controls. The financial management structure is comprised of the governing body that formulates financial policies, approves all budgets and contracts, and reviews operations and activities; the Head Start Policy Council Fiscal Subcommittee reviews, provides input and approves annual and supplemental budget changes; the EHSD Director is responsible for all financial operations; the Chief Financial Officer is responsible to the EHSD Director for all financial operations; the Departmental Fiscal Officer is responsible to the Chief Financial Officer for all financial operations; and all employees follow lines of authority per the organizational chart.

The County adheres to the eight standards of effective financial management that meet federal regulations through the following: Relates financial data to performance data and develops unit cost information whenever practical; Accurate, current and complete disclosure of financial results; Maintains records that identify source and application of funds; Effective control over and accountability for all funds, property, and other assets; Monthly comparisons of expenditures with budget; Written procedures to minimize time between transfer and disbursement of funds; Written procedures for determining reasonableness, allocability and allowability of costs in accordance with cost principles; and Accounting records that are supported by source documents.

The governing body sponsors the annual external audit of all federal funds (single audit) for all its accounts, books and records. Audit findings, if any, are reported to the Board and

County Administrator's Office for appropriate action. Corrective action on audit findings is immediately acted upon and implemented. The County maintains its accountability through its effective internal control structure which are integral parts of management. These controls include various methods used to safeguard assets and assure that they are used solely for authorized purposes, ensure reliability of accounting data, comply with management policies, grant terms and conditions, and federal and state regulations. There is a system of checks and balances to ensure accountability. The County maintains accountability by adhering to its accounting policies and procedures that conform to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and the County Administrative Bulletins.

The most recent audit found the County complied, in all material respects, with the compliance requirements that could have direct and material effect on each of its major federal programs for the year ended June 30, 2022, included in the Federal Financial Review Attachments. The County received one finding: Reporting - Material Weakness in Internal Control over Compliance with Instance of Noncompliance. The County promptly implemented corrective action through development of a tracking tool ensuring compliance with Appendix A (I)(a) of 2 CFR Part 170 to report each obligation action greater than or equal to \$30,000 in federal funds for a subaward to a non-Federal entity no later than the end of the month following the month in which the obligation was made.

**Violations and actions taken to address them**

From 2015 through the present, the County received 12 mandatory program audits. Eleven produced no findings.<sup>17</sup> One produced significant findings.

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<sup>17</sup> *Audits with no findings.* 1) February, 2015 ACF Environmental Health and Safety Review; 2) March, 2015 ACF CLASS Review; 3) April, 2015 ACF Fiscal Integrity/ERSEA Review; 4) March, 2016 ACF Family Services and School Monitoring Review; 5) June, 2016 ACF Leadership, Governance, and Management Systems Review; 6)

In 2022, the Office of Head Start (OHS) conducted a review which resulted in findings: one area of non-compliance in Program Governance, three deficiencies in Safety Practices, one deficiency in Ongoing Monitoring and Continuous Improvement, and one deficiency in Ongoing Fiscal Capacity. The governing body, leadership team, and all staff immediately engaged to develop and implement a one-year Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) supported monthly by the OHS Training and Technical Assistance team. The Office of Head Start conducted follow-up reviews in November 2022 and February 2023 and concluded that all findings were corrected. This experience catalyzed positive organizational change. As a result of investments in systems, staff, and families, the County Head Start program is safer and more fiscally accountable.

*Program Governance.* The governing body reviewed and revised policies related to governance, internal controls, and complaints (HS Act 642(c)(E)(ii), 75.303(a)). This included implementation of a new Head Start Committee which receives and reviews detailed information and promotes this information to the full governing body for review and approval. This Committee provides more time for the governing body to engage with the leadership team and provide guidance. The governing body also expanded the contents of the monthly report to ensure it includes all required legal and fiscal information and approvals.

*Safety Practices.* The County created and implemented a new, ongoing Culture of Safety Initiative (45 CFR 1032.47). This initiative includes family and staff engagement, training and professional development, technology enhancements, reinforced safety practices, and reporting of unusual incidents. Some examples include instituting the use of white boards and visible

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March, 2019 ACF Focus Area 1 Review; 7) May, 2019 California Department of Education Contract Monitoring Review; ACF; 8) October 2019 ACF Onsite CLASS review; 9) February, 2020 ACF Focus Area Two; 10) April, 2021 California Department of Education review of governance and administration, contract monitoring, and a pilot program; 11) January, 2023 California Department of Social Services Program Integrity and Improvement; 12) May 2023 California Department of Social Services Contract Monitoring. Additionally, internally, the County Auditor Controller's Office conducts quarterly credit card audits with no findings since 2003.

zoning maps to support active supervision, adding “supervision” to all parent meeting agendas to reinforce expectations with families, adding safety helpers in all preschool classrooms so the children can participate in keeping classroom environments safe, and adding “safety” to the weekly lesson plans to ensure age-appropriate activities are planned and implemented to support safe environments.

*Ongoing Monitoring and Continuous Improvement.* The County improved its multi-tiered monitoring system and standardized the use of monitoring tools across directly-operated centers and partner services (45 CFR 1302.102(b)(1)(i-iv)). The updated monitoring procedures focus on compliance with child rights, child supervision, and health and safety practices. This includes daily targeted self-monitoring by teachers and site supervisors, and regular secondary-level monitoring by management. Standardized procedures and electronic tools produce daily and weekly aggregate monitoring reports for the County leadership team to quickly identify trends and take appropriate action. Monthly and semi-annual aggregate monitoring reports are shared with partners, the Policy Council, and the governing body. Table 5 (page 92) provides a full list and description of the 20 monitoring tools and how they are used.

*Fiscal Capacity.* Improvements were made to Internal Controls which include annual self-monitoring, quarterly monitoring of subrecipients, trainings on allowable costs and contract payment review, and updated policies on Internal Controls and procurement to closely align with federal regulations (45 CFR 75.303).

### **Description of and actions taken to address ongoing under-enrollment**

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, like many programs nationwide, the County faced challenges reaching full enrollment. To address under-enrollment, in consultation with Region IX Head Start T/TA, the County conducted a root cause analysis and created an action plan to

address the primary contributing factor – vacancies. The County’s ability to maintain full enrollment has been hampered due to high vacancy rates and child recruitment challenges.

*High vacancy rates.* The County has implemented several strategies to grow the early education workforce amid nationwide staffing shortages. In fall 2023 the Board of Supervisors approved stipends for teaching staff to support recruitment and retention efforts, issued in two payments for a total of \$6,000 hiring and \$12,000 retention incentive. The County has also seen success in holding on-site hiring events for teaching staff, which was piloted at a community college in October 2023 and replicated at a community library in January 2024. In corroboration with two local community colleges, the County operates a work-study program. Through this program individuals interested in a career in early childhood education (ECE) are hired as Teacher Assistant Trainees with no prior experience required. They are supported with obtaining their 12 ECE units and applying for the Associate Teacher permit through the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. In February 2024, the County began holding virtual open houses as information sessions to recruit for teaching positions, including engaging currently enrolled families with career development opportunities available through the work-study program. To support these strategies, the County has increased marketing using social media, community relationships, and our families. As such, the County has been able to hire 16 various classifications of teaching staff since January 2024. This has resulted in reopening two previously closed classrooms and enrolling three classrooms to capacity that were previously limited enrollment due to staffing.

*Child recruitment challenges.* Community reengagement activities have supported increased enrollment in two areas: child recruitment and reopening unallocated slots through partnerships. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted a primary recruitment strategy, in-person



community outreach fairs. The County's centralized enrollment unit, led by the ERSEA manager and comprised of staff specializing in eligibility, leads community outreach and recruitment. As stated in Section 1, a robust recruitment plan is developed each year, which includes community events. Since January 2023, the County has attended 25 community outreach events. In targeting recruitment of special populations, the County sends quarterly recruitment flyers to all county TANF and SNAP (CalWorks and CalFresh) households with children under five years old. Since September 2023, 13,733 Head Start recruitment flyers have been sent. The county also engaged the community in efforts to open slots displaced through departure of partnerships, by publishing a Request for Proposals to solicit new partner agencies and engaging existing partners whose location supports an increased need for Head Start services. As of February 2024, the County increased slots through its partnership with KinderCare.

The County recognizes that the flexibility to respond to changing community needs is a key factor in achieving full enrollment. Therefore, our proposed shift in increasing infant/toddler care and full-day services as outlined in Section 1 accounts for staffing capacity and the need for increased full-day and infant/toddler care.

#### **4. STAFFING, COMPENSATION, SUPPORTING A STRONG WORKFORCE**

##### **Program director and key program staff's qualifications**

From the governing body, through the executive team, management team, and direct service staff and partners, the County's Head Start team meets and exceeds the standards in 45 CFR 1302.91. The organizational chart and resumes begin on page 5 of the Second File. Section 6 below discusses the governing body and executive leadership. This Section discusses all other

key program staff which includes the required positions of Director, Chief Finance Officer, Education staff, and Family Services staff.

*Director.* The County Head Start Director exceeds qualification required 1302.91(b) whereby a minimum of a baccalaureate degree and experience in supervision of staff, fiscal management, and administration is required. Mary Jane (MJ) Robb, MA in Public Administration, started her county career 27 years ago with the County Head Start program. Her experience includes supervision, financial management, human resources, contracts management, facilities oversight, and program administration of complex social service programs. Ms. Robb is certified in Public Sector Human Resource Management, Employment Law for Human Resource Professionals, and Federal Government Grant Financial Management.

*Deputy Director.* Scott Thompson holds a Masters in Teaching and Masters in Social Policy and began his career as a middle and high school teacher with 15 years of experience in the Education field. Mr. Thompson's experience includes serving a Vice President of Programs for a national education non-profit, overseeing teacher training programs for over 300 teachers annually.

*Chief Financial Officer.* The County Head Start Fiscal Officer exceeds qualifications required under 1302.91(c) whereby a baccalaureate degree in accounting, business, fiscal management, or a related field is required. Navdeep Singh, MA in Business Administration, brings 18 years in public and private organizations leading fiscal and administrative functions. Ms. Singh's expertise includes the complex California social services funding models and process improvement.

*Senior Management.* As seen on the Organizational Chart (Second File, p. 5), the County is led by an experienced team of Division Managers who work closely with the Head Start

Director. All have proven knowledge and skill in managing large projects with significant financial impact, and these three individuals have a combined 56 years of experience working for the County's Head Start program. Directly overseeing clusters of child development centers are the County's Assistant Directors who possess strong knowledge of HS/EHS services, and state licensing and child development program regulations. Assistant Directors, Jessie Black and Linda Frazier-Stafford, each hold a bachelor's degree in ECE and Teacher Credentialing Program Director's Permits. They have a combined 50 years of experience in the field.

*Family, health, and disabilities management.* Family and community engagement, health, nutrition, and disabilities/mental health management staff have baccalaureate degrees in the discipline they oversee or related field, as required under 1302.91(d)(1). Family and Community Engagement Manager, Ana Araujo, has 21 years of Head Start experience and a BA in Industrial Design with coursework in Early Childhood Education. Ms. Araujo has certifications in the Family Development Credential, Culturally Responsive Parent Engagement, Positive Parent Program Facilitator, Make Parenting a Pleasure, The Incredible Years Parent Group Leader, Teaching Pyramid, Devereux Early Childhood Assessment Mentor, and Financial Parent Education. Health Manager, Catherine Lucero, has worked with families in the early education field for 42 years, including 24 years working with pregnant and parenting teens. Ms. Lucero has a MA in Human Development with Specialization in Leadership in Education and Human Services and is a Certified Lactation Consultant. Catherine maintains a Program Director permit as well as Child Nutrition Program, Family Support Standard and Case Management certifications. Nutrition Manager, Irene Figueroa, has worked in the early education field for 14 years, has a BA in Early Childhood Education and is under supervision of Senior Manager, Michelle Mankewich, who has a BS in Nutrition. Disabilities and Mental Health Manager,

Jacqueline Lopez, has a BA in Social Welfare and has certifications in Teaching Pyramid, Adult and Children Together Facilitator Training, California Sexual Assault Counselor Training, Domestic Violence and Trauma Informed Practice. Ms. Lopez has 19 years of experience in early childhood education.

*Education management.* Education managers have a baccalaureate or advanced degree in early childhood education and early education teaching experience, per 1302.91(d)(2). Education Manager, Afi Fiaxe, has a MA in Organizational Management and Development and BA in Special Education and Education and Home Economics. Ms. Fiaxe has 30 years of experience in the field. Education Manager, Latonya Saucer, has a BA degree in Early Childhood Education and 30 years of experience as an educator in the County's Head Start program.

*Child and family services staff.* In accordance with 1302.91(e), the County ensures that Family Services Assistant Managers and Clerks have at minimum a credential or certificate in social work, human services, family services, counseling, or a related field within 18 months of hire by enrolling staff in the Family Development Credential program as part of the County's training and technical assistance plan. Family Services staff also complete updated refresher training in the areas of mental health, health, nutrition and family and community engagement.

*Center-based teachers.* The County maintains strict staffing ratios at all centers, including partner centers, with a 1:8 teacher-to-child ratio for preschool children; 1:4 for toddlers; and 1:3 for infants under 18 months of age. All the County and partner Teachers and Associate Teachers meet or exceed the qualification requirements of the Head Start Act 648(a)(3)(B) and all teachers possess Child Development Teacher Permits issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Possession of this permit requires a minimum of 24 ECE units of course work from an accredited college or university. As of June 2023, 98%

of County and partner Teachers and Master Teachers possess an Associate or Bachelor's degree in ECE or a closely related field. Teachers who do not have a degree currently are enrolled in college courses and are working diligently according to their Professional Development Plans. The Associate Teachers meet the requirements and possess Child Development Associate Teacher Permits. Possession of this permit requires a minimum of 12 units of course work in Early Care and Education from an accredited college or university. The permits are issued for five years and before their expiration date, each permit holder needs to renew her/his permit or upgrade it to a higher-level permit. All Teachers and Associate Teachers are required to maintain their respective Child Development Permits throughout the duration of their employment. This requires that every five years a teacher completes 105 hours of professional development training related to Early Care and Education, or to enroll in college classes leading to a degree in ECE or a related field. To maintain their permits, Associate Teachers must take college courses in ECE leading to Child Development Teacher Permit. In a five-year period, an Associate Teacher needs to complete at least 15 semester units leading toward a Teacher Permit. Each Associate Teacher has a maximum of 10 years to complete the requirements for a Teacher Permit and obtain 24 semester units in ECE and 16 semester units in general education. In addition, all the County Infant/Toddler Teachers and Associate Teachers, including those at partner sites, possess a minimum of six (6) ECE college units with a focus on infant and toddler development. The County provides ongoing training focusing on infant and toddler care and development, rooted in the Program for Infant/Toddler Care (PITC), as well as training on diverse early childhood education topics. The County teaching staff receive a minimum of 15 hours of professional development classroom-focused training annually provided by the County.

*Home visitors.* The home educators providing services to families with infants and toddlers through our partnership with Aspiranet meet the qualification requirements (1302.91(6)), possessing a minimum of 12 semester college units in ECE which also includes units focusing on infant and toddler development. Additionally, home educators are provided specialized training in structured child-focused home visiting; strength-based parent education; strategies for supporting early literacy and language skills, including strategies for working with families and children with limited English proficiency; strategies for helping families to cope with stress; comprehensive services and resources for families with young children; and diverse topics in early childhood education and development with focus on children ages birth to three.

**The plan to attract and retain qualified staff and evidence of competitive salaries**

In this challenging hiring environment, the County's governing body specifically prioritizes the recruitment and retention of qualified staff with increased salary opportunities and other strategies.

*Staff recruitment.* The teaching staff recruitment plan includes five strategies: financial incentives, robust incentives, a marketing campaign, expedited hiring processes, and ECE career development.

Financial incentives. For the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the governing body approved \$6,000 hiring bonuses for new teachers. This bonus has been provided to 16 new teachers totaling \$96,000. Additionally, in 2022, the governing body approved 20% salary increases over four years for all employees. To date, all County Head Start staff have received 10% increases. The remaining 10% will be added to salaries in FY24/25 and FY25/25. Finally, with this application, the County proposes to add an additional \$12,000 to the salaries of all teacher classifications.

Robust benefits. The County benefits package assists staff in maintaining health and financial security. Medical, dental, vision and life insurance options are available to County employees. Medical plan deductibles start at no additional cost to the employee. Additional benefits apply to Head Start staff including paid leave (vacation, personal holiday, administrative, sick leave), paid federal holidays, overtime pay and compensatory time, bilingual pay differential, deferred compensation, health care spending account, career development training reimbursement, professional development reimbursement, and commuter benefit program. The County also offers a defined benefit retirement plan which provides a fixed, pre-established benefit at retirement based on years of service and highest salary. For instance, an employee with a 20 years of services, and a maximum annual salary of \$100,000 will earn \$40,000 per year in retirement. The retirement plan supports financial security with inflation protection, survivorship benefits, and disability benefits. Additionally, the County Employee Assistance Program offers employees and their families, at no cost, a variety of resources, tools and confidential services including counseling, life coaching, digital emotional wellbeing, financial wellness, legal services, and discounts on products and services.

Marketing campaign. The County has developed a multifaceted marketing campaign that includes increased advertising of career opportunities on social media platforms, online job boards/sites, and local community periodicals. Advertisements highlight benefits of a career with the County's Head Start program including the hiring bonus. The County is mobilizing community-based organizations, sister-departments within the County, and Head Start families to expand advertising efforts.

Expedited hiring process. As stated in Section 3, the County designed and implemented a process by which applicants can complete an on-site interview during hiring fairs at locations

conveniently located within the community. These hiring events increase visibility of careers in the area of supporting healthy development of young children. Since October 2023, two hiring fairs at Contra Costa College and the Brentwood Library have included application and interview options.

ECE career development. The County's teacher career ladder begins with the Teacher Assistant Trainee work-study program, a crucial recruitment incentive. Work-study participants receive financial assistance for books and tuition, and support (e.g. tutoring for Dual Language Learners) with completing core courses to obtain permitting. Since 2018, 17 individuals have completed the TAT program. Additionally, amid the ECE workforce shortage and aligning with the proposed Head Start rule change to stabilize the workforce through increased compensation, the County proposes to create a flex-promote teaching series to provides all teachers the opportunity to achieve the highest salary. Historically, the governing body approves and funds a specific number of Teacher, Assistant Teacher, and Master Teacher positions, with Master Teachers having the highest level of qualifications and earning the highest salary. Existing teachers work to achieve the qualifications for Master Teacher but may wait for short or long periods until there is a vacancy in the classification. The County will negotiate with labor to convert these three existing classifications to a new flex-promote series which provides the opportunity for *all* teachers who achieve the minimum qualifications for Master Teacher (AA or BA in ECE or related, 2 years ECE teacher experience, and Master Teacher Permit from CA Commission on Teacher Credentialing) to flex promote into the Master Teacher classification. This innovation ensures that the highest paying classification, Master Teacher, is not limited to a small number of approved positions but attainable to any qualified teacher.



*Staff retention.* To support staff retention, the County recently offered bonuses, provides robust training and professional growth opportunities, and prioritizes wellness supports. These retention strategies foster a confident, competent, engaged, and productive team. According to the County HS/EHS Program 2022 Workforce Satisfaction Survey, 92% of respondents felt that the work they do contributes to the fulfillment of the agency's mission and 96% felt they create a positive working environment for colleagues and clients.

Retention bonuses. In FY23/24, the governing body approved two \$6,000 retention bonuses paid at two six-month intervals. In November, 146 teachers and site supervisors received the first bonus of \$6,000 or the applicable percentage for part-time staff for a total of \$790,815. The second bonus will be paid in July, 2024. As noted above, the County proposes to permanently add this \$12,000 to teacher salaries in FY24/25.

Professional growth. To support ongoing professional advancement, the County develops an annual training plan informed by the community assessment, self-assessment, Performance Indicator Report (PIR), on-going monitoring, federal and state reviews, individual staff annual performance goals, and staff surveys. In total, it meets the requirements of California's Community Care Licensing, Department of Education, and Department of Social Services, and Office of Head Start (45 CFR 1302.92). The annual training budget supports the implementation of the training plan which includes 1) position-specific new employee orientation; 2) ongoing *Creative Curriculum* training informed by curriculum fidelity monitoring and teacher surveys; 3) ongoing coaching and technical assistance delivered by education managers and the quality monitoring unit; 4) off-site training sponsored by other agencies; 5) monthly early closure days for just-in-time training such as running assessment reports for individual children, small caregiver groups, and entire classrooms; and 6) one-on-one intensive coaching based on CLASS

monitoring. Trainings include assessments learning and evaluations which supports continuous quality improvement of the training plan. In 2023, the County delivered 10 trainings.

Wellness supports. The County Wellness Initiative includes various programs to teach skills in stress management, maintain supportive environments for staff and families, improve the overall morale of the agency, and create a trauma-informed community. A multi-disciplinary team called SIA (Simple, Impactful, Actionable) develops and implements strategies to promote wellness and support individuals in Psychological First Aid. These strategies include, for instance, providing weighted blankets and white noise machines. These efforts are in addition to the Employee Assistance Program, one of the many benefits for County employees. Yearlong workshops on *Reflective Supervision*, (12 sessions in 2023) focus on enhancing staff's ability to provide empathetic, nonjudgmental environments in which honesty and a sense of safe space can strengthen trust and foster trauma-responsive efforts, are well-received across classifications. Staff also received training in *Culturally Responsive Self-Care Practices for Early Childhood Educators*, in addition to a *Mindfulness Training for Children and Adults* in May 2023 which provides strategies and tools recognizing that self-care is not one size fits all. This deep commitment to creating and maintaining staff wellness fosters the same environment for the infants, toddlers, and families we serve, resulting in more healing environments and trauma-informed systems.

**Strategies to understand and use information on wages for similar positions**

The County utilized two reports to ensure that County teacher salaries align with local norms: the 2022 Head Start California Salary Study and the 2024 UC Berkeley Study First 5 Contra Costa County study of community-wide early childhood care and education and wages (Table 6, page 95). First, the table illustrates that the FY24/25 proposed teacher salaries are 38%

higher than FY23/24 at the lowest step and 25% higher at the top step. Second, the table illustrates that the County teacher salaries are higher than the regional averages.

**ustainable mechanism for providing competitive compensation to staff**

To maintain competitive salaries and to multiply the number of slots, the County partners with the California Department of Education (CDE) and the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), participates in the Quality Rating Improvement Scale, benefits from low facility costs, and contributes County funding.

*Partnership with CDE/CDSS.* The County has received state funding for early childhood education since 1981. Since 2021-2022, CDE/CDSS funding increases have totaled 45%. The eligibility standard for CDE/CDSS services is 85% of the state median income which is, for example, \$83,336 annually for an infant/toddler in a family of three in 2024. However, CDE/CDSS accepts the Head Start income eligibility standard of 130% of the federal poverty level. Layering Head Start and CDE/CDSS funding increases the number of slots for the lowest-income families. In this grant application budget for FY24/25, Head Start funding (\$20,110,998) supports 651 slots, CDE/CDSS funding (\$5,022,747) supports 163 slots through the required 20% match of local funds, and the County overmatches an additional \$11,938,653 in CDE/CDSS funding representing an 32% additional revenue and an additional 387 slots.

*Facility costs.* The County realizes substantial operational cost saving as four of the facilities are county-owned with no mortgage and 10 are leased from other governments for an average monthly lease of \$3,355 per facility.

*County funding.* Contra Costa County benefits from a local, 20-year, ½ cent sales tax which produced \$238 million in county revenue in FY22/23. A Community Advisory Board (CAB) develops and maintains priorities for this funding. Increasing funding for early childhood

education salaries is a standing priority. Additionally, the CAB maintains a high priority for expanding mental health services. In this application, the County overmatch funding includes \$1,000,000 from this local fund to support the increased mental health services and increased salaries.

**Career development opportunities for professionals, paraprofessionals, and other staff**

The County provides ongoing training and professional development to support staff in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities and to ensure high-quality services (45 CFR 1302.91(a)). The County's training and technical assistance plan is updated annually to ensure resources are supporting these goals, accessing internal and external training opportunities such as Head Start conferences.

The County also provides ongoing professional development and technical assistance to maintain effective teaching practices. Annual curriculum refresher and bimonthly early closure training reinforce understanding and implementation of curriculum components, effective teaching strategies, health & safety, DRDP assessments, family engagement, and comprehensive services. Additionally, the County conducts a staff survey to identify training topics of interest and need. Supervisors work with their teachers to develop and support the achievement of individualized professional goals through the annual performance review process.

The County has designed and fully implemented a comprehensive career ladder for early educators. Teacher Assistant Trainees are supported in attainment of qualifications to become a permitted Associate Teacher. Through individualized professional development planning, staff have advancement opportunities including placement in Teacher, Master Teacher and three levels of Site Supervisor classifications. With each individual employee, Site Supervisors collaboratively complete a Professional Development Plan that connects the employee's

professional goals to training and educational opportunities that support attainment of such goals. Each plan specifically outlines the high-quality activities that will improve the knowledge and skills of staff as relevant to their roles and functions in a manner that will improve delivery of program services to enrolled children and families. Supervisors ensure that plans are regularly evaluated for impact on teacher and staff effectiveness.

Likewise, the County develops an annual schedule of training specific to the responsibilities of the family services staff. Staff engage in monthly meetings featuring presentations and training from visiting experts and the County's health, nutrition, disabilities/mental health, and parent, family, and community engagement managers. The family services staff is supported in their career development and internal advancement opportunities as entry level clerks may gain experience to be promoted to a senior level and apply for a family services assistant manager and/or manager position.

**Plan to evaluate job applicants.**

The County Head Start Program is a Bureau within the Employment and Human Services Department (EHSD), within the Contra Costa County (CCC) government. Job descriptions, which include required qualifications and competencies per 45 CFR 1302.91, are maintained by CCC Human Resources and are evaluated and updated as necessary every three years, or more often if needed. Vacancies are identified by the County Head Start leadership team. The hiring process is collaboratively coordinated by the Head Start leadership team, EHSD Personnel and CCC Human Resources. Hiring steps include posting and advertising a position, collecting applications, evaluating applicants, interviewing and scoring applicants, and making job offers. Related specifically to applicant evaluation, CCC Human Resources evaluates minimum qualifications and refers minimally qualified applications to the County Head Start. The Head

Start hiring managers review applicant experience and education, facilitate interviews and scoring, and identify applicants most capable of providing compliant and high-quality services. EHSD Personnel extends the offer of employment and manages all hiring activities. EHSD Personnel also conducts the initial New Employee Orientation. The Head Start program provides additional orientation content based on a specific orientation checklist for each Head Start classification. Existing staff considered for promotional opportunities undergo the same process, in addition to requiring a satisfactory annual performance evaluation.

## **5. PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION**

### **State and local licensing requirements for each proposed age group.**

The 12 County directly-operated centers and the 6 partner centers are all fully licensed for each age group served.

### **Appropriate facilities to meet requirements.**

As the current Head Start recipient, the County already maintains facilities that provide HS/EHS services as proposed in this application. All centers are currently fully licensed for each age group served.

The County proposes start-up funding of \$1,308,372 to renovate the foundation of two buildings at the George Miller Head Start Center in Concord, of which one is administrative and one holds classrooms with 20 infant-toddler slots. A 2021 appraisal indicated foundation and structural damage from soil conditions (e.g. cracking in floor tiles and separating wall panels), requiring foundation work to restore the structural integrity. This project can be completed with no disruption in services as a separate facility exists that can be temporarily licensed during construction.

Implementing this restoration requires 15 months including the following activities. 1) Obtain pre-approval, including for the 1303 application and receiving ACF approval (4 months); 2) Plan the logistics for the construction including developing architectural specs, securing a contractor, and ensuring no disruptions (5 months); 3) Complete the construction. (6 months); 4) Obtain all clearances including Head Start post-construction checklist.

**Plans for alternative service provision during start-up, until facilities are fully operational**

There will be no disruption in services to the currently 815 enrolled children and families. The County operates existing, fully-licensed facilities for the age groups as proposed in this application.

**Plan to acquire facilities in accordance with federal Head Start regulations**

The County owns or rents all necessary facilities for the proposed directly-operated services. The County partners already own or rent all necessary facilities for the proposed partner services. No plans for alternative service provision during start-up will be required.

**Recruitment, hiring, and training of qualified staff to support HS/EHS programming**

The County and partners currently employ teachers, site supervisors, family support teams, and all additional support personnel who are fully-qualified, trained, and currently providing EHS/HS programming.

This proposal includes the following new positions which will need to be filled: 8 teachers, 3 mental health professionals, 12 family services staff, 1 fiscal analyst, and 12 custodians. Classifications for all of these positions exist. Upon governing body acceptance of new funding, the Head Start leadership will initiate the recruitment and hiring process. Hiring these new positions does not delay the start of services. The existing program meets all Head Start Act requirements and Performance Standards. Mental Health consultation through the Early

Childhood Mental Health program will continue without interruption. The three new mental health professionals will expand these existing services.

## **6. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND GOVERNANCE**

### **Senior executive managers and governing board management capacity**

*Governing Board and Executive Director.* The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, an elected body comprised of five members, governs the County Head Start program. The governing body meets the composition requirements as members who oversee a public entity and are selected to their positions by public election under Section 642(c)(1)(b)(v) of the Head Start Act. The governing body has an average of 14 years governing Head Start with a range from 26 years for Supervisor John Gioia to 2 years for the newest member, Supervisor Ken Carlson.

The governing body is supported by the County Administrator, County Counsel, the County Finance Officer, the Auditor Controller's Office, the Head Start Executive Director, and the full Head Start team. Marla Stuart, the County Head Start Executive Director since 2022, has 35 years of progressively larger responsibility in administering complex social services programs. Dr. Stuart holds a PhD in Social Welfare and a Master's degree in social work. As the Director of the county Employment and Human Services Department, Dr. Stuart leads five program bureaus that collectively build brighter futures across the lifespan. These include the Community Services Bureau which administers the Head Start Program; the Children and Family Services Bureau with the Child Protective Services hotline, foster care, independent living services, and adoption; the Workforce Services Bureau with SNAP, TANF, and Medicaid; the Workforce Development Board working to enhance workforce capacity including early childhood education workforce; and the Aging and Adult Services Bureau which includes adult



protective services and in-home supportive services. Embedded within this Department, the Head Start program directly accesses these services for children and families, as well as the full range of services provided by all County departments, as illustrated in Image 1, page 83.

*Policy Council and parents in decision making.* The 28 member Policy Council (1 member for every 60 children) includes parent-elected community and parent representatives with at least 51% of members who are parents or guardians of currently enrolled children. All members stand for reelection annually. Through an annual in-depth orientation and ongoing training opportunities, the County management team ensures Policy Council members have knowledge necessary to perform their duties and capacity to engage in decision-making. The Policy Council meets monthly and standing and ad hoc subcommittees meet at the necessary frequency to review information about provide input, and report to the full Policy Council regarding all aspects of the program. The monthly report to the Policy Council includes program operations, federal communications, fiscal updates, monitoring data, program highlights and events, attendance and enrollment, and nutrition information. The Policy Council also receives intermittent updates including, for example, semi-annual program monitoring reports, self-assessment, and community assessment. Policy council approvals include all funding opportunities, the County's selection criteria, corrective action plans (if necessary), planning procedures, and all new or revised policies and procedures.

The County's current governance structure will not require any change to meet the Head Start Program Performance Standards.

*Representation of diverse community served.* The governing body encourages programs and actions that promote diversity, equity, inclusion and access. As such, the County Head Start program benefits from strategies at all levels:

Head Start program. The County launched a DEI Community of Practice (CoP) in 2020, in partnership with the Office of Head Start with three goals: 1) to engage in dialogue and deepen understandings related to equity, 2) to strengthen capacity to embed equity into program policies and practices, and 3) to create more equitable, inclusive, culturally, and linguistically responsive environments for children and families. As a result, for example, interview questionnaires have been revised to standardize equitable hiring practices across classifications.

Employment and Human Services Department. The EHSD DEI Core Team develops and executes strategies to improve and secure fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all EHSD employees and to improve and secure fair treatment, access, opportunity, and support for all clients. Examples include the following. EHSD ensures language access by providing the Language Line phone translation service to all employees, including Head Start staff. In 2023, through Language Line, EHSD translated 64,236 conversations in 67 languages. EHSD also ensures language and visual access to all webpages by enabling translation of main pages from English into 10 languages. “Page Assist” provides personalization options to enhance users’ visual experience (colors, fonts, font size, cursor size, text spacing contrast, formatting, etc.). In 2023, the DEI Core Team hosted a Hair Care Drive collecting over 2,100 hair care and personal hygiene products for African American (and other) foster youth, published mixed media infographics celebrating DEI months, sponsored artwork and poetry contests, and established a DEI staff library.

Contra Costa County: The Board of Supervisor deeply values diverse community input and, as such, sponsors 72 Board appointment commissions. Through these commissions, Board members continually hear about community needs. Twelve commissions specifically help inform and shape the Board’s considerations when they serve as the Head Start governing body. They

include African American Holistic Wellness Hub Steering Committee, Alcohol and Other Drugs Advisory Board, Commission for Women and Girls, Council on Homelessness, Developmental Disabilities Council, Economic Opportunity Council (hosted by EHSD), Family and Children's Trust Committee (hosted by EHSD), First 5, Housing Authority, Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council, Local Planning and Advisory Council for Early Care and Education, Workforce Development Board (hosted by EHSD). As the County Board of Supervisors, the Head Start governing body holds vast knowledge about and is deeply committed to improving the economic and social conditions experienced by families eligible for Head Start services.

In 2023, and after extensive community input, the County opened a new department, the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice. A Committee of the Board of Supervisors, the Equity Committee, supports this office. This Board Committee is comprised of Supervisor Federal Glover, the chair of the Head Start governing body, and Supervisor John Gioia, the chair of the Head Start Committee. As such, the work of this Equity Committee directly educates and informs the Head Start governing body.

*Monitor overall agency priorities and operational systems.* To provide effective oversight of program operations and accountability for federal funds, each month the governing body receives a report, provides direction, and approves actions related to enrollment, attendance, meals, expenditures (including credit cards), contracts, applications, monitoring reports, audits, communications from the Office of Head Start, and current events. Additionally, these monthly reports include annual information including enrollment priorities, the Annual Self-Assessment, updates on program goals and objectives, school readiness goals and updates, the annual report, and the community assessment, In sum, the monthly reports to and actions by the governing body included all elements required in the Head Start Act 642 (c)(E)(iv). As part

of their monitoring function, governing body members especially enjoy visiting Head Start centers and engaging with children, families, and staff.

Monthly reports are reviewed and vetted by the Head Start Executive Director, the County Administrators Office, and other County entities as necessary (e.g. County Counsel reviews contracts). Reports are provided to governing body members and posted publicly 96 hours before a meeting to ensure that governing body members and the public have adequate time to review reports and formulate questions.

In submitting this grant application, the governing body established eight priorities that align with the five Office of Head Start priorities (Table 7, page 96).

Related to **child health and safety**, the governing body prioritizes the full and complete implementation of the daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly monitoring program (Table 5, page 92) to ensure the highest level of safety for all children, staff, and visitors in directly-operated and partner sites and services.

Related to **partnerships with state systems**, the governing body prioritizes utilizing state funding to extend hours from a maximum of 10.5 per day to 12 per day. Additionally, the governing body prioritizes maximizing the Head Start funding contribution by providing matching state and local funding for 32% above the 20% minimum match amount as described above.

Related to **reaching children and families** of greatest need, the governing body prioritizes distribution slots equitably based on economic need.

Related to **investing in the workforce**, the governing body proposes to increase County teacher salaries by \$12,000 (in addition to the 20% increase for all employees from FY22/23 through FY25/26), and to increase partner rates by 24% so they may also increase their salaries.

Related to **quality environments**, and in response to community input, the governing body is providing an additional \$1,000,000 in local funds to expand County Head Start mental health services by creating a new team of three employees to support and train family services and teaching staff in directly-operated and partner services.

*Community assessments, annual self-assessments, and ongoing monitoring.* The County annually conducts (via contract) a community assessment which includes comprehensive community data, and which informs decision making and drives priorities and program goals. Information from the 2023-2025 community assessment supports this application. Additionally, the annual self-assessment includes a) input from management, the governing body and the Policy Council, and b) data and file reviews, site observations, and interviews. The self-assessment provides an opportunity to monitor progress towards achieving program goals, compliance with performance standards, and effectiveness across management systems. The 2023 Self-Assessment is included in the Second File, page 13. As previously described, the County's ongoing monitoring system (Table 5, page 92) produces regular aggregate reports which are analyzed by the management team to identify trends and to take necessary corrective actions, and then presented to the governing body. These monthly reports enable the governing body to understand programmatic needs and outcomes, and to provide effective oversight.

**The ability to plan, constitute, train the governing body in compliance with regulations**

The governing body meets governing body composition requirements as members who oversee a public entity and are selected to their positions with the public entity by public election under Section 642(c)(1)(b)(v) of the Head Start Act. No changes are needed to meet the requirements of the Head Start Act.

Upon election of a new member of the governing body, the Head Start Executive Director schedules an initial HS governance training within 180 days of appointment 45CFR1302.12(m)(3). The Executive Director trained the governing body's newest member, Supervisor Ken Carlson, 11 days after his appointment. The governing body receives annual and other training as necessary regarding their responsibilities as illustrated in the Head Start Management Wheel. This includes but is not limited to management procedures and functions; federal laws and regulatory compliance; the Head Start philosophy and the role of parents and the Policy Council in shared governance; and communication and collaboration between the governing board, the Policy Council and program management. The most recent governance training occurred March 19, 2024, and utilized *Head Start A to Z Guiding Principles* as the foundation for training materials and including all eligibility training elements under 45 CFR 1302.12(m).

**Systems for planning, communication, recordkeeping, self-assessment, monitoring**

The County planning calendar provides a road map and timeline for program planning, communication, recordkeeping, and self-assessment. The County monitoring plan drives monitoring activities (Table 5, page 92).

*Program Planning.* The Head Start management team ensures on-going planning at varying levels including meetings, staff summits, and management retreats. The planning calendar includes methods to ensure consultation with the governing body, the Policy Council, and program staff. The management team updates the planning calendar annually and edits through the year as necessary.

*Communication.* The County communication policy emphasizes courteous and confidential communication. The County employs several methods of communication such as

staff summits; trainings; regularly scheduled meetings; daily interactions; staff newsletters; internal memos; published policies and procedures; regular and ad hoc reports; and e-mail. External communications occur at community-based collaborations, meetings, and discussion groups.

*Recordkeeping.* The County's recordkeeping systems starts with the management information system, CLOUDS (Child Location, Observation, and Utilization Data System). Developed for the County under the direction of County staff, CLOUDS uses cloud computing to provide real-time information regarding all program systems and services and automates most processes such as enrollment, attendance, meal counts, head counts, monitoring and assessments. Real-time data entry occurs at any location using mobile technology, enhancing immediate data capture abilities within classrooms. As one example, teachers in every classroom, including both directly-operated and partner centers, use iPads to complete a daily monitoring tool immediately upon arrival to ensure the classroom environment is safe and ready for children. Any concerns are flagged as needing attention. Management reviews these assessments by mid-morning and facilitates remediation where necessary. As another example, parents record the arrival of their child on an iPad which changes the color of the border around the child's picture, creating an easily visible indicator for the teachers of which children are present. As a third example, management staff complete the quarterly Child Transition and Safety Monitoring Tool, entering their findings in real time on an iPad or phone resulting in an immediate report for action.

The County Head Start program exists within the Contra Costa County network, within which Head Start maintains secure storage of all emails and electronic files according to program guidelines, including all documentation within CLOUDS, maintaining confidentiality and HIPAA compliance, and meeting retention requirements. Training materials, guidelines, policies

and procedures are available to staff at all locations through this secure network. Staff are required to utilize county devices to ensure the security of information storage and safe communication of information. Additionally, all staff are required to complete annual cybersecurity and anti-phishing training. Compliance is monitored by EHSD staff development and reported to EHSD Executive Committee. The County maintains paper files in locked cabinets with sign-out protocols.

*Self-assessment.* The County conducts the annual self-assessment is conducted in partnership with childcare partners, parents, members of the governing body, and community representatives. In 2023, the County focused on of Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), program management and governance, quality education and child development program services, quality family and community engagement services, classroom health and safety practices, and fiscal oversight. The self-assessment allowed the County to celebrate significant improvements and continue discussions about further opportunities for improvement. There were no areas of concern requiring corrective action. See the Second File, page 13 for the 2023 Self Assessment.

*Monitoring.* The ongoing monitoring process, accompanied by handbooks and training to ensure appropriate and accurate implementation (Table 5 on page 92), is comprehensive in scope and overseen by a compliance analyst. Designated staff at all operational levels including teachers, site supervisors, family services staff, managers, senior management, the Head Start Director, the Policy Council members and members of the governing body participate in ongoing monitoring processes based on their expertise and function. and. In 2023, the County four monitoring trainings attended by 21 partner staff and 173 County staff. Any individual



conducting a monitoring task communicates concerns to the appropriate staff responsible and all staff involved in a situation document corrective action taken in CLOUDS until closed.

This comprehensive, coordinated, ongoing monitoring system provides a sophisticated method to examine service delivery at directly-operated and partnership locations that includes health and safety, mental health and disabilities services, family services, enrollment processes, education and early childhood development, child and family outcomes, human resources, and fiscal monitoring. CLOUDS provides real-time data capture and tracking of monitoring findings to closure. Aggregate reports identify issues to improve areas performing well. Bi-monthly monitoring meetings inclusive of partner agencies review recent monitoring data and discuss strengths and areas for improvement. The system allows program managers to note trends and isolated incidences and assists them in conducting root cause analysis and developing plans for improvement as appropriate in a timely fashion. Senior managers receive roll-up reports that verify corrections are made. The Executive Director, the Policy Council, and the governing body receive summaries of strengths and weaknesses, information about corrections, and provide feedback. This County ground-up and top-down monitoring program provides the foundation for the safe and excellent Head Start program administered by Contra Costa County.

## **7. BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION**

### **1. Head Start Budget Narrative**

The County proposes a Head Start (HS) budget of \$10,100,529. This budget supports direct costs of \$9,236,714, indirect costs of \$716,102 computed at 19% of salaries and T/TA costs of \$147,713. Budgeted expenditures reflect the program and priorities described above. The budget includes all required categories.

#### **(6a) Personnel**

**\$3,315,898**

Personnel costs include increased salaries for all staff of 5%, and an additional increase in salaries for teachers and site supervisors of \$12,000. Costs also include new mental health staff.

Personnel costs are computed based on the twelve months budgeted salaries and projected cost of vacant positions. Total budgeted salaries are based on the percentage of time worked in the Head Start program.

**1. Program Managers** **\$561,526**

All Program Managers or Family Services staff will devote 10% of their time to the HS Program with total salaries at \$450,431. This consists of twenty-four (24) Family Services Managers (FSM) with combined salaries at \$443,773, and eight (8) Family Services Assistant Managers (FSAM) with total salaries at \$117,753. FSMs and FSAMs manage a program of family services that includes the delivery of health, mental health, disabilities, nutrition, education, parent involvement, or social services to federal program eligible families and their children 3–5 years of age in childcare programs, and low-income residents in the HS Program.

**2. Child Site Supervisors** **\$249,331**

Fifteen (15) Site Supervisors with salaries at \$249,331 will devote 24% of their time to the HS Program. They provide the day-to-day administration of general childcare, infant/toddler care and/or pre-school services, and perform other related work as required.

**3. Teachers** **\$751,780**

To support recruitment and retention, teachers will receive higher salaries. This includes Master Teachers, Teachers, Associate Teachers, and Teacher Assistant Trainees. The 141 teachers devote on average 11% of their time to the HS program. Other teaching staff salaries in collaboration with the State are charged to the State and allocated to the HS Program under “Other - Family Services with State Child Development Program”.

**4. Home Educators** **\$-0**

This is a contract service, and costs are included in contracts.

**5. Health Services Personnel** **\$72,165**

Three mental health positions will provide mental health support to teachers, staff, and in classrooms. These positions will devote on average 24% of their time to the HS program. One (1) Mental Health Clinical Supervisor with salaries of \$24,055 and two (2) Mental Health Clinical Specialists with salaries of \$48,110.

**6. Nutrition Services Personnel** **\$79,525**

Nutrition Services Personnel will devote 18% of their time to the HS program. This includes two (2) Child Nutrition Cook with combined salaries at \$15,920, four (4) Child Nutrition Food Services Transporter with combined salaries at \$27,707, three (3) Child Nutrition Assistants with combined salaries at \$22,724 and one (1) Child Nutrition Food Operation Supervisor with salary at \$13,175. Also included under the Child Nutrition Program is a Nutritionist. The Nutritionist must possess and maintain throughout the duration of employment current registration as a Dietitian issued by the Commission on Dietetic Registration/Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Responsibilities includes overseeing and addressing nutritional issues such as abnormal weight and/or hemoglobin

and food allergies, reviewing menus to ensure compliance with certain USDA and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines, modifying meals for children with special dietary needs, and conducting CACFP facility reviews.

**7. Head Start Director** **\$16,059**

The Head Start Director will devote approximately 11% of time to the Head start program, including overall leadership guidance and activities (e.g. HS conferences/trainings, Policy Council activities). The Director's total salary of \$168,208 for FY2024-25 will not exceed the 2023 Executive Level II threshold of \$212,100 per year.

**8. Managers** **\$198,055**

Included in this budget is the Head Start Deputy Director who will devote 11% of time to the Head start program with a salary of \$15,748, as well as three (3) Division Managers with total salaries in the amount of \$124,873 will devote 33% of their time to the HS Program. One (1) Division Manager is responsible for the overall operations of the grantee's Children and Family Services which includes planning and implementing quality programs. Also included are four (4) Assistant Directors with total salaries of \$57,433 who will devote approximately 19% of time to Head Start. The Assistant Directors facilitate the: 1) Finance Committee, compliance/licensing, nutrition, purchasing and contracts; 2) Communications Committee, Head start Family Childcare Providers, Facilities and Quality Initiative, 3) Policy Council, Recruitment and Enrollment, Grants/Funding, and Family Services, including Disabilities and Mental Health, (4) Staff and Training Committees, Personnel, Partnerships, Home-based, and Training, and (5) Program Monitoring.

**9. Clerical Personnel** **\$802,021**

Included in this category are Clerical staff who devote on average 32% of time to Head Start. There are twenty-eight (28) Senior Clerks with total salaries at \$390,320, eighteen (18) Intermediate Clerks with combined salaries at \$292,967, one (1) Secretary Advanced Level with salary at \$9,824, three (3) Clerks Experienced Level with total salaries at \$46,338, one (1) Clerk-Specialist level with salary at \$32,163 and one (1) Clerk-Senior level with salary at \$30,409.

**10. Fiscal Personnel** **\$62,711**

Fiscal staff will devote 11% of their time to Head Start. The Fiscal Officer has a salary of \$11,702. Three (3) Accountant III at \$28,685, one (1) Accountant II at \$7,913, one (1) Accountant I at \$6,999 and one (1) Accounting Technician at \$7,412 to the HS Program.

**11. Other Administrative Personnel** **\$331,849**

The positions included in this Section are staff that devote approximately 30% of their time to the HS Program. This consists of eight (8) Administrative Services Assistant IIIs with total salaries of \$212,876, and two (2) Administrative Assistant Services II with total salaries at \$84,187. The role of the ASA series is program administrators responsible for administrative support activities in the HS Program. Also included in this category is one (1) Sr. Business Systems Analyst with salaries at \$12,711, one (1)

Business Systems Analyst with salaries at \$10,515, and two (2) Community Services Building Services Worker with combined salaries at \$11,562. Percentages are based on estimates of time spent with activities that can be directly related to the HS Program.

**12. Cleaning Staff** **\$190,876**

Specialty cleaning staff will clean classrooms to the required specifications. Cleaning staff will devote on average 55% of their time cleaning HS classrooms. Two (2) Institutional Service Worker leads with salaries at \$38,548 and ten (10) Institutional Service Workers with salaries at \$152,328.

**(6b) Fringe Benefits** **\$2,406,005**

The County has a defined benefit retirement plan which provides a fixed, pre-established benefit for employees at retirement. The amount of the benefit is calculated by factors such as salary and a member’s retirement service credit. Defined benefit pensions are based on a formula set by law, in this case the *County Employees Retirement Law of 1937 (CERL or 1937 Act)*, and the *California Public Employees’ Pension Reform Act of 2013 (PEPRA)*. PEPRA became effective on January 1, 2013. This law made substantial changes in public employee benefits, both for new and for existing retirement system members. These changes include new benefit tiers for members entering public retirement systems on or after January 1, 2013. Employer contribution rates and every other aspect of the administration of retirement benefits are determined by CCCERA, the board of retirement, and the actuaries that provide services to the board of retirement. The County’s other fringes include health, dental and life insurance, State Unemployment Insurance (SUI), Workers Compensation and Deferred Compensation, etc.

**Regular Personnel Fringe Benefit** **2,406,005**

Percentage of fringe benefits based on the County Budget is as follows:

<b>Fringe Benefits</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Regular HS Staff</b>
Social Security (FICA), State	11.37%	\$414,489
Disability, Unemployment (FUTA)	0.17%	6,197
Stat and Workers Comp	1.41%	51,401
Health/Dental/Life Insurance	26.23%	956,206
Retirement	25.20%	918,656
Other (Supplemental)	1.62%	59,056
<b>Total Fringe Benefits</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>\$2,406,005</b>

**(6c) Travel** **\$19,153**

This estimate is for airline expenses included in the Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) Budget.

**(6d) Equipment** **\$-0-**

**(6e) Supplies** **\$190,114**

Included are office supplies, children and family services supplies, transition supplies for children transitioning to kindergarten, computer supplies to support the HS classroom/site workstations/computers, health/safety, mental health/disabilities, and household supplies. The budget also includes allowable employee health and welfare costs for the improvement of working conditions, employer-employee relations, employee health, and employee welfare. The County has a Wellness Program for the well-being of its staff, as well as a Peer Recognition Program. Small purchases like pedometers for its “I Walk Challenge” and mugs for its Peer recognition program are budgeted under this category. This budget item is supported under the provision of Uniform Guidance 45 Part § 75.437 Employee health and welfare costs, which states that “Costs incurred in accordance with the non-Federal entity's documented policies for the improvement of working conditions, employer-employee relations, employee health, and employee performance are allowable.”

**(6f) Contractual \$1,365,910**

Includes expenses incurred in outsourcing services such as hiring temporary administrative support, contract with LVN Health Consultant, as well as costs for various childcare partners for the implementation of the HS Program.

**1. Administrative Services \$-0-**

**2. Health / Disabilities Services \$237,892**

A specialized Health Consultant will work with child health and safety, infectious disease prevention and control, disease intervention and management, and tuberculosis testing for parents and staff. The health consultant’s contract is \$78,050 with hourly rate at \$50.00 for 1,561 hours with \$45,485 being charged to HS. A contract will be created for Mental Health Services with an estimated cost of \$192,407 and a contractor to be determined.

**3. Food Services \$-0-**

**4. Training and Technical Assistance \$190,280**

The provision of T/TA under the HS budget is for One Solution Technology contract charges for the CLOUD System. Total contract for 2024 is \$49,934, 25% of which is charged to the HS budget for six-months. There are contracts for Leadership Trainings (\$98,853), Conferences (19,690) and Family Development Credential (\$21,80.)

Details and description of training and staff development are included under the T/TA budget.

**5. Delegate Agency Costs \$0**

Contra Costa County will not utilize a delegate agency.

**6. Other Contracts \$937,738**

The County has contracted with various childcare providers so that HS children will receive enhanced services at various contractors’ centers to bring them up to HS Performance Standards adding family services and children/family outcome measures through the HS comprehensive services provided to children under the California State

Preschool Program (CSPP). Higher slot rates will be paid to providers in the new proposal to allow them to invest in their programs.

<b>(6g) Construction</b>	<b>\$ - 0 -</b>
<b>(6h) Other</b>	<b>\$1,939,634</b>
<b>1. Building Occupancy Costs</b>	<b>\$278,731</b>
Site rents are related to HS share of rent costs at the Grantee’s Childcare Sites, partially determined by Contra Costa County’s Public Works Department.	
<b>2. Utilities and Telephone</b>	<b>\$84,328</b>
Projected costs are related to HS’s share of utility and phone costs with the HS Program, based on the available HS slots at the sites.	
<b>3. Building &amp; Child Liability Insurance</b>	<b>\$2,847</b>
Building insurance & child liability insurance is determined by the County’s Risk Management Department.	
<b>4. Building Maintenance/Repair &amp; Other Occupancy</b>	<b>\$328,946</b>
Buildings are properly maintained and/or repaired to ensure the health and safety of HS children and costs are partially determined by the County’s Public Works Department.	
<b>5. Local Travel</b>	<b>\$2,095</b>
This is to reimburse HS staff for mileage incurred during work related travel, estimated at 3,150 miles in 2023 at 65.5 cents per mile.	
<b>6. Nutrition Services</b>	<b>\$260,836</b>
Child Nutrition costs to cover children’s meals within the HS Program.	
<i>USDA and CACFP reimbursements</i>	<i>(\$95,901)</i>
<b>The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federal program that provides reimbursements for nutritious meals and snacks to eligible children and adults who are enrolled for care at participating childcare centers, day care homes, and adult day care centers.</b>	
<b>7. Parent Services</b>	<b>\$608</b>
These are costs associated with Policy Council parents' activities at sites, PC/BOS luncheon and appreciation meetings including venue and food costs (\$521), as well as childcare and mileage reimbursement (\$87). This was presented and approved by the Policy Council Parent Services Committee.	
<b>8. Accounting and Legal Services</b>	<b>\$50,967</b>
Accounting and legal services are determined by the Auditor Controller’s Office and the Department of Information Technology.	

**9. Publications/Advertising/Printing** **\$18,553**

This covers outreach printing costs (\$1,665) as well as job announcements, newspaper/website ads, digital marketing for teaching staff (\$16,888) to recruit new staff for the HS Program using new media such as buses.

**10. Training and Staff Development** **\$94,275**

This budget includes Family, Community and Parent Engagement (\$27,750), Mandatory Trainings (\$20,208) and Agency Memberships (\$46,318). Investing in staff and teacher training is a priority in this budget.

**11. Other** **\$913,348**

Site Security Guards (\$186,674): These are HS's share of security guard services at sites that are considered at risk and to ensure the safety of our children and staff, including the increased need for security at Brookside.

Cleaning Services (\$214,091): These are costs for specialty cleaning supplies for cleaning staff to clean and sanitize HS classrooms and other areas.

Vehicle Operating/Maintenance and Repair (\$89,492): These are HS's estimated cost associated with the county vehicles, as determined by the County's Public Works Department.

Equipment Maintenance, Repair & Rental (\$28,745): These are HS's share of classroom equipment maintenance and repair costs to make sure that equipment is properly maintained and/or repaired, as determined by the County's Public Works Department.

DHHS-211 Database (\$7,834): This is the HS Program's share of costs related to the 211 database project which houses resources and referral information for hundreds of agencies and programs specializing in health services, mental health, childcare and transportation needs.

Other Operating Expenses (\$122,888): These are other allocated costs such as county administration, Human Resources services, processing of payroll, contracts, purchasing and other County functions.

Family Services with State Child Development Program (\$263,625): The County implemented a layer 2 funding model that provides a unique opportunity to leverage and maximize resources utilizing Child Development funds. This budget line item funds estimated costs in a classroom with this collaboration model in which enrolled children that are served may include an enhanced curriculum, classroom supplies, materials, minor equipment, training and education for teachers, enhanced pay for teachers who meet HS education requirements, increased staffing to meet HS required staff-child ratio and group size requirements, and minor facility renovations or equipment needed to meet HS Performance Standards. These enhancements are paid for by HS that directly benefit HS children but are also expected to benefit other children sharing a classroom or service

environment with enrolled children. This budget represents the total estimated cost of enhanced services for the HS share in this collaborative program.

**(6i) Total Direct Charges (Summary of lines (6a) – (6h))** **\$9,236,714**

**(6j) Indirect Costs** **\$716,102**

Indirect Cost rate is calculated at 19% of direct salaries and wages (see File 2, page 24)

<b>(6k) TOTAL FEDERAL BUDGET (PA 22)</b>	<b>\$9,952,816</b>
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**TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE BUDGET (T/TA - PA 20)** **\$147,713**

Listed in the Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) document is the County’s itemized trainings, T/TA priorities, strategies and outcomes expected for the year. Training costs are budgeted for Mandatory Trainings, Conferences and Training by Content Area. Detailed description, purpose and number of staff attending the training is budgeted as much as practicable. However, if the specific training may not materialize due to any unforeseen events, the County has the flexibility to substitute the training/conference to similar or comparative training that is HS program-related in content and purpose. Budgeted training expenses include registration fees, air travel for out-of-state conferences, hotel costs, meal allowances, mileage, shuttle expenses, toll fees, training materials and other miscellaneous expenses related to staff development including food and venue.

**(6f) Contractual** **\$12,521**

4. Training and Technical Assistance **\$12,521**

T/TA includes the HS program’s share in various training providers, coaches and consultants for Family Development Credentials (\$12,521).

**(6h) Other** **\$135,192**

7. Parent Services **\$16,650**

These costs include parent conference registration fees and training (including food and venue costs), Policy Council orientation and parent trainings, materials and translation costs (including food and venue costs), and Policy Council meetings (including food and venue costs). These were presented and approved by the Policy Council.

10. Training or Staff Development **\$118,542**

Training costs are budgeted for mandatory training, conferences, and training by content area. The T/TA budget addresses the following training topics on Mental Health, Disabilities, Health, and Safety; Education, Curriculum and Home Based for Partners; Parent, Family and Community Engagement; Nutrition and Food Services; Program Regulations and Federal, State and Local Initiatives; Management Systems; Information technology and Business Systems; Continuing Education Program and Staff Development; and Mandatory trainings. The training needs of HS staff and parents will



be met by workshops, conferences, and various professional leadership training. Details of these training categories are included in the schedule of the T/TA budget.

<b>(6k) TOTAL T and T/A BUDGET (PA 20)</b>	<b>\$147,713</b>
<b>(6k) TOTAL FEDERAL BUDGET (PA 22 and PA 20)</b>	<b>\$10,100,529</b>
<b>TOTAL NON-FEDERAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$2,525,132</b>

For the twelve-months budget, Non-federal share or in-kind consist of:

**State Preschool Programs** **\$2,431,892**

This amount is determined by the County’s contract with California Department of Education Preschool Program, for the collaboration portion with the State’s Child Development Program. The State portion of the CSPP contract is \$22,353,205.

**Other – Volunteers (2,775 hours x \$33.60)** **\$93,240**

This is primarily coming from volunteer services recruited from volunteer hour match through parents and from other members in the community, valued at \$33.60 per hour, derived at by using the average rate per hour of an Associate Teacher at \$20.20 with fringe benefits and additional paid time off fringe of \$13.40 Total volunteer hours for half- year 2024 is estimated at 5,000 hours, with parents volunteering one hour per day assisting at our thirteen (13) child care centers for 6 months at 20 days based on the State’s Days of Operation. If these hours are not met due to lack of parent and community volunteers, in-kind can be generated from the balance of the State contract.

<b>TOTAL HEAD START FEDERAL AND NON-FEDERAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$12,625,661</b>
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**2. Early Head Start Budget Narrative**

Contra Costa County is requesting a Early Head Start (EHS) budget in the amount of \$10,010,459 in response to Funding Opportunity Number: HHS-2024-OHS-CH-R9-0104. This budget supports all direct costs of \$9,317,849, indirect cost of \$574,172, computed at 19% of salaries, and T/TA costs of \$118,438. Budgeted expenses reflect priorities of Contra Costa of child health and safety, partnership with state systems, reaching children and families most in need, investing in a highly skilled workforce through competitive salaries, benefits, support and training, and quality environments which strengthen the key components needed to keep the program operating most effectively. The budget includes the cost of direct salaries for teaching staff, personnel and fringe benefits, supplies, and childcare partners, training, and other costs such as building occupancy costs, utilities, and other operating expenses necessary to operate the EHS Program, as well as all required comprehensive services to eligible preschool children and families.

**(6a) Personnel** **\$2,658,692**

Personnel costs include an increase in salaries for all staff, and an additional increase in salaries for teachers and site supervisors. Costs also include new mental health staff. Personnel costs are

computed based on the twelve months budgeted salaries and projected cost of vacant positions. Total budgeted salaries are based on the percentage of time worked in the Early Head Start program.

**1. Program Managers** **\$450,232**

All Program Managers or Family Services staff will devote 13% of their time to the EHS Program with total salaries at \$450,232. This consists of twenty-four (24) Family Services Managers (CSM) with combined salaries at \$355,818, and eight (8) Family Services Assistant Managers (CSAM) with combined salaries at \$94,414. CSMs and CSAMs manage a program of comprehensive services that includes the delivery of health, mental health, disabilities, nutrition, education, parent involvement, or social services to federal program eligible families and their children 3–5 years of age in childcare programs, and low-income residents in the HS Program.

**2. Sites Supervisors** **\$199,914**

Fifteen (15) Site Supervisors with total salaries at \$199,914 will devote 13% of their time to the EHS Program. They provide the day-to-day administration of general childcare, infant/toddler care and/or pre-school services, and perform other related work as required.

**3. Teachers** **\$602,779**

Teachers will receive higher salaries to retain staff and to attract new teachers to become a part of Contra Costa’s Early Head Start program. Teaching staff salaries reflect increased salaries to help in teacher recruitment and retention and teachers will be able to move up to higher paying positions based on experience and proper qualifications. This consists of Master Teachers, Teachers, Associate Teachers, and Teacher Assistant Trainees. The 141 teachers in the teaching staff devote on average 11% of their time to the EHS program. Other teaching staff salaries in collaboration with the State are charged to the State and allocated to the EHS Program under “Other - Family Services with State Child Development Program”.

**4. Home Educators - (none)** **\$-0-**

**5. Disabilities Services Personnel - (none)** **\$57,862**

Three mental health positions will provide mental health support in the classroom. These positions will devote on average 21% of their time on the EHS program. One (1) CS Mental Health Clinical Supervisor will be added at \$19,287 and two (2) MH Clinical Specialists at \$38,575.

**6. Nutrition Services Personnel** **\$63,763**

Nutrition Services Personnel will devote 10% of their time to the EHS program. This includes two (2) Child Nutrition Cook with combined salaries at \$12,764, four (4) Child Nutrition Food Services Transporter with combined salaries at \$22,216, three (3) Child Nutrition Assistants with combined salaries at \$18,220 and one (1) Child Nutrition Food Operation Supervisor with salaries at \$10,563. Also included under the Child Nutrition Program is the Nutritionist who is a Family Services Manager, budgeted under the Program Managers. The Nutritionist must possess and maintain throughout the duration of employment current registration as a Dietitian issued by the Commission on Dietetic

Registration/Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Her responsibility includes overseeing and addressing nutritional issues such as abnormal weight and/or hemoglobin and food allergies, reviews menus to ensure compliance with certain USDA and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines, modifies meals for children with special dietary needs, and conducts CACFP facility reviews.

**7. Head Start Director** **\$12,876**

The Head Start Director will devote approximately 6% of time on the EHS program, based on the Director's time spent on overall leadership guidance and activities (e.g. EHS conferences/trainings, Policy Council activities) directly related to the EHS program. The Director's total salary of \$168,208 for FY2024-25 will not exceed the 2023 Executive Level II threshold of \$212,100 per year.

**8. Managers** **\$158,801**

Included in this budget is the HS Deputy Director will devote 11% of time to the HS program with salaries of \$12,627, as well as three (3) Division Managers with total salaries at \$100,124 will devote 29% of their time to the EHS Program. One (1) Division Manager is responsible for the overall operations of the grantee's Children and Family Services which includes planning and implementing quality programs. The other Division Manager is responsible for the overall administrative and analysis systems, grant planning and implementation, and new projects/programs for the bureau. Also included are four (4) Assistant Directors with combined salaries at \$46,050 who will devote approximately 8% of their time to the EHS Program The Assistant Director position has primary responsibility in the following areas: (1) the Finance Committee, compliance/licensing, nutrition, purchasing and contracts; (2) the Communications Committee, HS Family Child Care Providers, Facilities and Quality Initiative, (3) the HS Policy Council, Recruitment and Enrollment, Grants/Funding, and Family Services, including Disabilities and Mental Health, (4) Staff and Training Committees, Personnel, Partnerships, Home-based, and Training, and (5) Program Monitoring.

**9. Clerical Personnel** **\$643,062**

Included in this category are Clerical staff who will devote on average 12% of their time to the EHS Program. There are twenty-eight (28) Senior Clerks with total salaries of \$312,959, eighteen (18) Intermediate Clerks with total salaries of \$234,901, one (1) Secretary Advanced Level with salary of \$7,877, three (3) Clerks Experienced Level with total salaries of \$37,154, one (1) Clerk-Specialist Level with salary of \$24,382, and one (1) Clerk-Senior level with salary of \$25,789.

**10. Fiscal Personnel** **\$50,282**

Fiscal staff will devote 8% of their time on average to the Head Start Program. The Fiscal Officer has a salary at \$9,383. Three (3) Accountant III at \$23,000, one (1) Accountant II at \$6,345, one (1) Accountant I at \$5,611 and one (1) Accounting Technician at \$5,943 to the EHS Program.

**11. Other Administrative Personnel** **\$266,077**

The positions included in this Section are staff that devote approximately 13% of their time to the EHS Program. This consists of eight (8) Administrative Services Assistant IIIs with combined salaries at \$170,684, and two (2) Administrative Assistant Services II with combined salaries at \$67,501. The role of the ASA series is program administrators responsible for administrative support activities in the HS Program. Also included in this category is one (1) Sr. Business Systems Analyst with salaries at \$10,191, one (1) Business Systems Analyst with salaries at \$8,431, and two (2) Community Services Building Services Worker with combined salaries at \$9,270. Percentages are based on estimates of time spent with activities that can be directly related to the EHS Program.

**12. Cleaning Staff \$153,045**

Specialty cleaning staff will clean classrooms to the required specifications. Cleaning staff will devote on average 21% of their time cleaning EHS classrooms. Two (2) Institutional Service Worker leads with salaries of \$30,908 and ten (10) Institutional Service Workers salaries of \$122,137.

**(6b) Fringe Benefits \$1,929,138**

The County has a defined benefit retirement plan which provides a fixed, pre-established benefit for employees at retirement. The amount of the benefit is calculated by factors such as salary and a member’s retirement service credit. Defined benefit pensions are based on a formula set by law, in this case the *County Employees Retirement Law of 1937 (CERL or 1937 Act)*, and the *California Public Employees’ Pension Reform Act of 2013 (PEPRA)*. PEPRA became effective on January 1, 2013. This law made substantial changes in public employee benefits, both for new and for existing retirement system members. These changes include new benefit tiers for members entering public retirement systems on or after January 1, 2013. Employer contribution rates and every other aspect of the administration of retirement benefits are determined by CCCERA, the board of retirement, and the actuaries that provide services to the board of retirement. The County’s other fringes include health, dental and life insurance, State Unemployment Insurance (SUI), Workers Compensation and Deferred Compensation, etc.

**Regular Personnel Fringe Benefit \$1,929,138**

Percentage of fringe benefits based on the County Budget is as follows:

<b>Fringe Benefits</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Regular HS Staff</b>
Social Security (FICA), State	11.37%	\$332,339
Disability, Unemployment (FUTA)	0.17%	4,969
Stat and Workers Comp	1.41%	41,213
Health/Dental/Life Insurance	26.23%	766,686
Retirement	25.70%	736,580
Other (Supplemental)	1.62%	47,351
<b>Total Fringe Benefits</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>\$1,929,138</b>

<b>(6c) Travel</b>	<b>\$15,537</b>
This estimate is for airline expenses included in the Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) Budget.	
<b>(6d) Equipment</b>	<b>\$-0-</b>
<b>(6e) Supplies</b>	<b>\$152,434</b>
Included are office supplies, children and family services supplies, transition supplies for children transitioning to kindergarten, computer supplies to support the EHS classroom/site workstations/computers, health/safety, mental health/disabilities, and household supplies. The budget also includes allowable employee health and welfare costs for the improvement of working conditions, employer-employee relations, employee health, and employee welfare. The County has a Wellness Program for the well-being of its staff, as well as a Peer Recognition Program. Small purchases like pedometers for its “I Walk Challenge” and mugs for its Peer recognition program are budgeted under this category. This budget item is supported under the provision of Uniform Guidance 45 Part § 75.437 Employee health and welfare costs, which states that “Costs incurred in accordance with the non-Federal entity's documented policies for the improvement of working conditions, employer-employee relations, employee health, and employee performance are allowable.”	
<b>(6f) Contractual</b>	<b>\$3,068,886</b>
Includes expenses incurred in outsourcing services such as hiring temporary administrative support, contract with LVN Health Consultant, as well as costs for various childcare partners for the implementation of the HS Program.	
<b>1. Administrative Services</b>	<b>\$-0-</b>
This represents costs associated with acquiring temporary administrative support from outside for-profit agencies required throughout the year to support the HS program needs.	
<b>2. Health / Disabilities Services</b>	<b>\$190,743</b>
A specialized Health Consultant will work with child health and safety, infectious disease prevention and control, disease intervention and management, and tuberculosis testing for parents and staff. The health consultant’s contract is \$78,050 with hourly rate at \$50.00 for 1,561 hours with \$36,470 being charged to EHS. A contract will be created for Mental Health Services with an estimated cost of \$154,273 and a contractor to be determined.	
<b>3. Food Services</b>	<b>\$-0-</b>
<b>4. Training and Technical Assistance</b>	<b>\$152,567</b>
The provision of T/TA under the EHS budget is for One Solution Technology contract charges for the CLOUD System. Total contract for 2024 is \$40,037, 25% of which is charged to the HS budget for six-months. There are also contracts for Leadership Trainings (\$79,260), Conferences (\$15,787) and Family Development Credential (\$17,482) Details and description of training and staff development are included under the T/TA budget.	

<b>5. Delegate Agency Costs</b>	<b>\$-0-</b>
Contra Costa County will no longer utilize a delegate agency in the new proposal.	
<b>6. Other Contracts</b>	<b>\$2,725,556</b>
The County has contracted with various childcare providers so that EHS children will receive enhanced services at various contractors' centers to bring them up to EHS Performance Standards adding family services and children/family outcome measures through the EHS comprehensive services provided to children under the California State Preschool Program (CSPP). Higher slot rates will be paid to providers in the new proposal to allow them to invest in their programs.	
<b>(6g) Construction</b>	<b>-\$-0-</b>
<b>(6h) Other</b>	<b>\$1,493,342</b>
<b>1. Building Occupancy Costs</b>	<b>\$223,487</b>
Site rents are related to EHS share of rent costs at the Grantee's Childcare Sites, partially determined by Contra Costa County's Public Works Department.	
<b>2. Utilities and Telephone</b>	<b>\$67,614</b>
Projected costs are related to EHS's share of utility and phone costs with the HS Program, based on the available HS slots at the sites.	
<b>3. Building &amp; Child Liability Insurance</b>	<b>\$2,283</b>
Building insurance & child liability insurance is determined by the County's Risk Management Department.	
<b>4. Building Maintenance/Repair &amp; Other Occupancy</b>	<b>\$263,749</b>
Buildings are properly maintained and/or repaired to ensure the health and safety of EHS children and costs are partially determined by the County's Public Works Department.	
<b>5. Local Travel</b>	<b>\$1,680</b>
This is to reimburse EHS staff for mileage incurred during work related travel, estimated at 2,530 miles in 2023 at 65.5 cents per mile.	
<b>6. Nutrition Services</b>	<b>\$209,139</b>
Child Nutrition costs to cover children's meals within the HS Program.	
<i>USDA and CACFP reimbursement</i>	<i>(\$76,894)</i>
<b>The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federal program that provides reimbursements for nutritious meals and snacks to eligible children and adults who are enrolled for care at participating childcare centers, day care homes, and adult day care centers.</b>	
<b>7. Parent Services</b>	<b>\$487</b>
These are costs associated with Policy Council parents' activities at sites, PC/BOS luncheon and appreciation meetings including venue and food costs (\$417), as well as childcare and	

mileage reimbursement (\$70). This was presented and approved by the Policy Council Parent Services Committee.

**8. Accounting and Legal Services** **\$40,866**

Accounting and legal services are determined by the Auditor Controller's Office and the Department of Information Technology.

**9. Publications/Advertising/Printing** **\$14,876**

This covers outreach printing costs (\$1,335) as well as job announcements, newspaper/website ads, digital marketing for teaching staff (\$13,541) to recruit new staff for the EHS Program using new media such as buses.

**10. Training and Staff Development** **\$75,590**

This budget includes Family, Community and Parent Engagement (\$22,250), Mandatory Trainings (\$16,202) and Agency Memberships (\$37,138). Investing in staff and teacher training is a priority in this budget.

**11. Other** **\$670,464**

Site Security Guards (\$149,676): These are EHS's share of security guard services at sites that are considered at risk and to ensure safety of our children and staff, including the increased need of security at Brookside.

Cleaning Services (\$109,798): These are costs for specialty cleaning supplies for cleaning staff to clean and sanitize EHS classrooms and other areas.

Vehicle Operating/Maintenance and Repair (\$71,754): These are EHS's estimated cost associated with the county vehicles, as determined by the County's Public Works Department.

Equipment Maintenance, Repair & Rental (\$23,048): These are EHS's share of classroom equipment maintenance and repair costs to make sure that equipment is properly maintained and/or repaired, as determined by the County's Public Works Department.

DHHS-211 Database (\$6,281): This is the EHS Program's share of costs related to the 211 database project which houses resources and referral information for hundreds of agencies and programs specializing in health services, mental health, childcare and transportation needs.

Other Operating Expenses (\$98,531): These are other allocated costs such as county administration, Human Resources services, processing of payroll, contracts, purchasing and other County functions.

Family Services with State Child Development Program: \$211,375

The County implemented a layer 2 funding model that provides a unique opportunity to leverage and maximize resources utilizing Child Development funds. This budget line item funds estimated costs in a classroom with this collaboration model in which enrolled children

that are served may include an enhanced curriculum, classroom supplies, materials, minor equipment, training and education for teachers, enhanced pay for teachers who meet HS education requirements, increased staffing to meet HS required staff-child ratio and group size requirements, and minor facility renovations or equipment needed to meet HS Performance Standards. These enhancements are paid for by HS that directly benefit HS children but are also expected to benefit other children sharing a classroom or service environment with enrolled children. This budget represents the total estimated cost of enhanced services for the HS share in this collaborative program.

**(6i) Total Direct Charges (Summary of lines (6a) – (6h))** **\$9,317,849**

**(6j) Indirect Costs** **\$ 574,172**  
 Indirect Cost rate is calculated at 19% of direct salaries and wages.

<b>(6k) TOTAL FEDERAL BUDGET (PA 22)</b>	<b>\$9,892,021</b>
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**TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE BUDGET (T/TA - PA 20)      \$118,438**

Listed in the Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) document is the County’s itemized trainings, T/TA priorities, strategies and outcomes expected for the year. Training costs are budgeted for Mandatory Trainings, Conferences and Training by Content Area. Detailed description, purpose and number of staff attending the training is budgeted as much as practicable. However, if the specific training may not materialize due to any unforeseen events, the County has the flexibility to substitute the training/conference to similar or comparative training that is EHS program-related in content and purpose. Budgeted training expenses include registration fees, air travel for out-of-state conferences, hotel costs, meal allowances, mileage, shuttle expenses, toll fees, training materials and other miscellaneous expenses related to staff development including food and venue.

**(6f) Contractual** **\$10,040**

4. Training and Technical Assistance  
 T/TA includes the EHS program’s share in various training providers, coaches and consultants for Family Development Credentials (\$10,040).

**(6h) Other** **\$108,398**

7. Parent Services \$13,350  
 These costs include parent conference registration fees and training (including food and venue costs), Policy Council orientation and parent trainings, materials and translation costs (including food and venue costs), and Policy Council meetings (including food and venue costs). These were presented and approved by the Policy Council.

10. Training or Staff Development \$95,048

Training costs are budgeted for mandatory training, conferences and training by content area. The T/TA budget addresses the following training topics on Mental Health, Disabilities, Health and Safety; Education, Curriculum and Home Based for Partners; Parent, Family and Community Engagement; Nutrition and Food Services; Program Regulations and Federal,



State and Local Initiatives; Management Systems; Information technology and Business Systems; Continuing Education Program and Staff Development; and Mandatory trainings. The training needs of EHS staff and parents will be met by workshops, conferences and various professional leadership training. Details of these training categories are included in the schedule of the T/TA budget.

<b>(6k) TOTAL T and T/A BUDGET (PA 20)</b>	<b>\$118,438</b>
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<b>(6k) TOTAL FEDERAL BUDGET (PA 22 and PA 20)</b>	<b>\$10,010,459</b>
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<b>TOTAL NON-FEDERAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$2,502,615</b>
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For the twelve-months budget, Non-federal share or in-kind consist of:

<b>State Preschool Programs</b>	<b>\$2,427,855</b>
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This amount is determined by the County’s contract with California Department of Education Preschool Program, for the collaboration portion with the State’s Child Development Program. The State portion of the CSPP contract is \$22,353,205.

<b>Other – Volunteers (2,225 hours x \$33.60)</b>	<b>\$74,760</b>
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This is primarily coming from volunteer services recruited from volunteer hour match through parents and from other members in the community, valued at \$33.60 per hour, derived at by using the average rate per hour of an Associate Teacher at \$20.20 with fringe benefits and additional paid time off fringe of \$13.40 Total volunteer hours for half- year 2024 is estimated at 5,000 hours, with parents volunteering one hour per day assisting at our thirteen (13) child care centers for 6 months at 20 days based on the State’s Days of Operation. If these hours are not met due to lack of parent and community volunteers, in-kind can be generated from the balance of the State contract.

<b>TOTAL EARLY HEAD START FEDERAL AND NON-FEDERAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$12,513,074</b>
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<b>TOTAL FEDERAL AND NON-FEDERAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$25,138,735</b>
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### **3. Head Start Start-Up Budget Narrative**

Contra Costa County is requesting a Start-up budget in the amount of \$1,308,372 in response to Funding Opportunity Number: HHS-2024-OHS-CH-R9-0104. Start-up costs are requested to repair the foundation of Building 7 and Building 8 at the George Miller Center in Concord, CA. The George Miller Center has 100 Head Start slots and 28 Early Head Start slots for a total of 128 slots. The foundation repairs are necessary to provide a safe environment for all participants and staff of Contra Costa County’s Head Start and Early Head Start program. The modular buildings were paid for with Federal funds and the land under the building is owned by Contra Costa County.

<b>(6a) Personnel</b>	<b>\$-0-</b>
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<b>(6b) Fringe Benefits</b>	<b>\$-0-</b>
<b>(6c) Travel</b>	<b>\$-0-</b>
<b>(6d) Equipment</b>	<b>\$-0-</b>
<b>(6e) Supplies</b>	<b>\$-0-</b>
<b>(6f) Contractual</b>	<b>\$-0-</b>
<b>(6g) New Construction</b>	<b>\$-0-</b>
<b>1. Major Renovations</b>	<b>1,308,372</b>

2. Major foundation work needs to be completed to stabilize the buildings. The estimated costs are as follows:

Building 8	\$636,641	Site work, foundation repairs and other structural repairs
Building 7	\$527,789	Site work, foundation repairs and other structural repairs
Soft Costs	\$25,000	Permits and other costs
Subtotal	\$1,189,429	
Contingency	\$118,943	10% of costs
Total	\$1,308,372	

<b>3. Acquisition of Buildings/Modular Units</b>	<b>\$-0-</b>
<b>(6h) Other</b>	<b>\$-0-</b>
<b>(6i) Total Direct Charges (Summary of lines (6a) – (6h))</b>	<b>\$1,308,372</b>
<b>(6j) Indirect Costs</b>	<b>\$-0-</b>

<b>(6k) TOTAL START-UP BUDGET</b>	<b>\$1,308,372</b>
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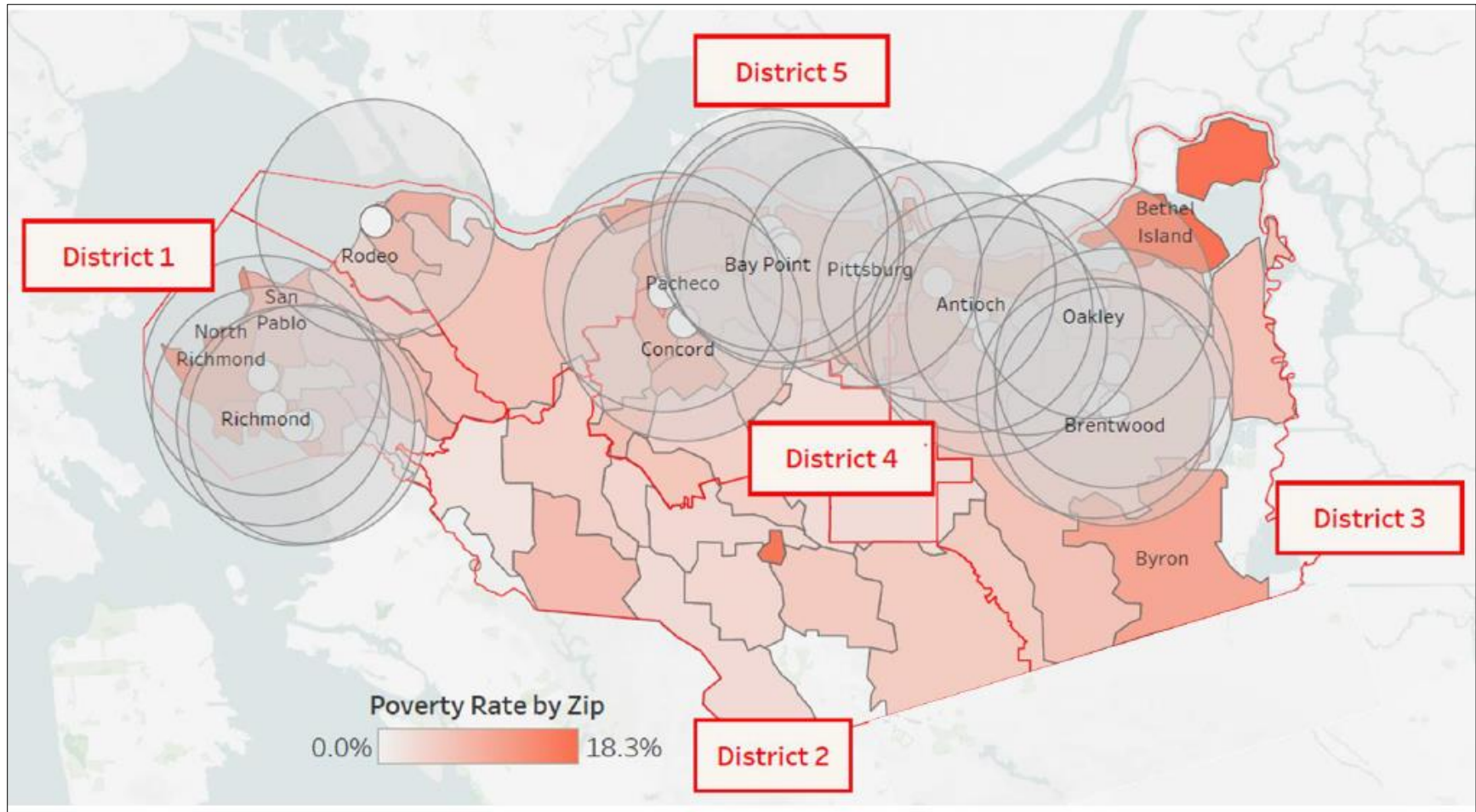
<b>(6k) TOTAL T and TA BUDGET</b>	<b>\$-0-</b>
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<b>(6k) TOTAL START-UP BUDGET</b>	<b>\$1,308,372</b>
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<b>TOTAL NON-FEDERAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$327,093</b>
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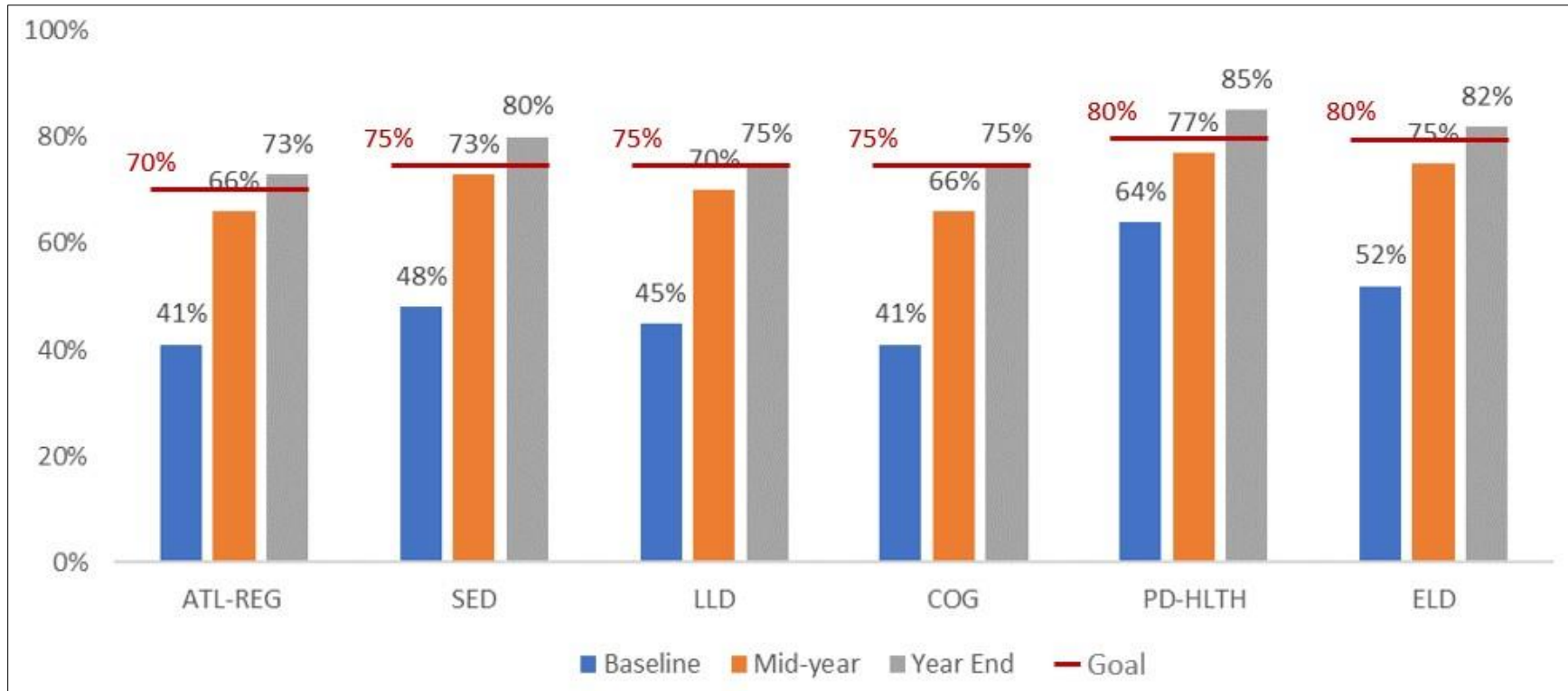
<b>TOTAL FEDERAL AND NON-FEDERAL START-UP BUDGET</b>	<b>\$1,635,465</b>
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**Image 1. Poverty by District and Proposed Center Locations with 8-mile Diameters**



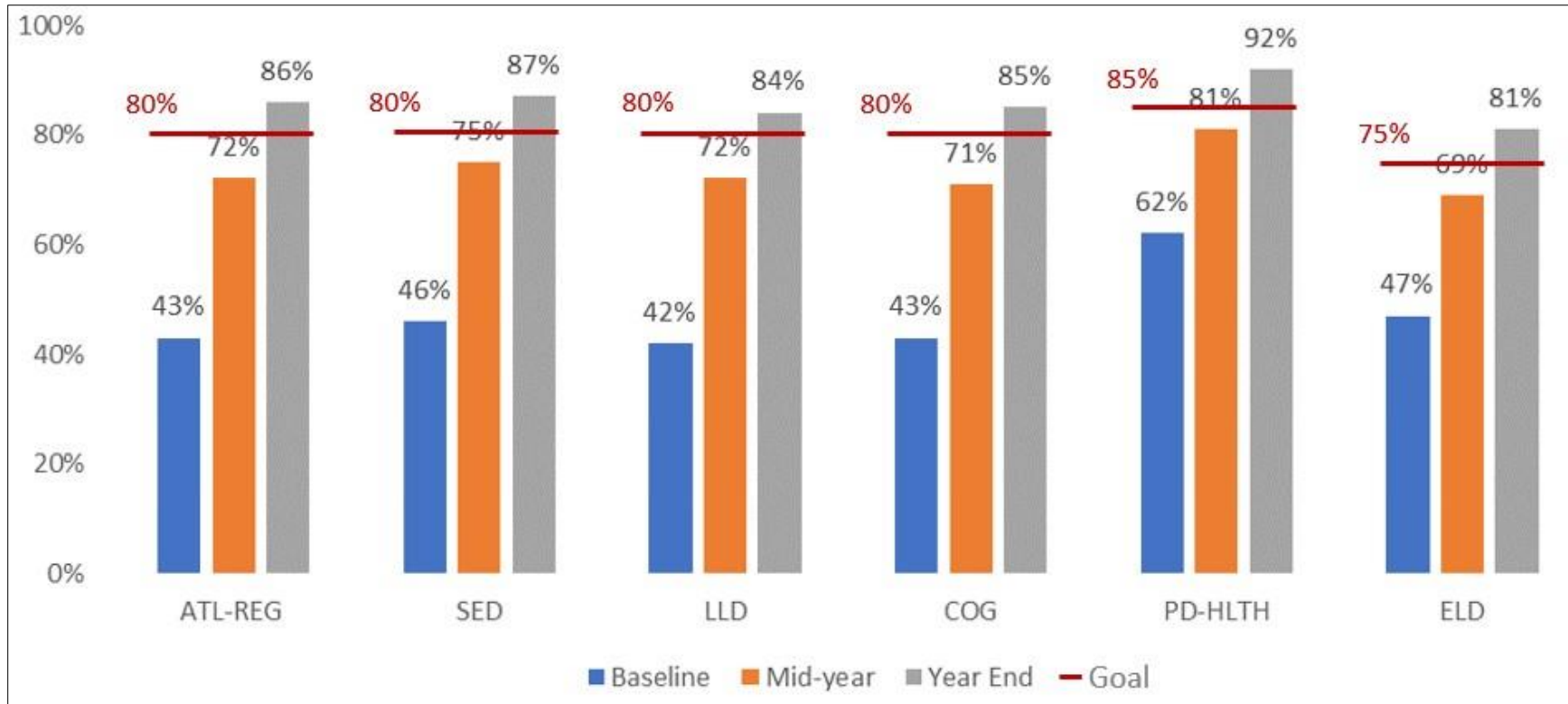
Note: Map does not include 149 Home Visiting slots as they are county-wide

**Image 2: 2023 Preschooler School-Readiness Outcomes Data**



**Image 2** illustrates the percentages of children that scored at, or above the Building Earlier level for each domain for Preschool children: Approaches to Learning-Self Regulation (**ATL-REG**), Social and Emotional Development (**SED**), Language and Literacy Development (**LLD**), English Language Development (**ELD**), Cognition Including Math and Science (**COG**), Physical Development–Health (**PD-HLTH**).

**Image 3: 2023 Pre-K School-Readiness Outcomes Data**



**Image 3** illustrates the percentages of children that scored at or above the Building Later level for each domain for Pre-Kindergarten children: Approaches to Learning-Self Regulation (**ATL-REG**), Social and Emotional Development (**SED**), Language and Literacy Development (**LLD**), English Language Development (**ELD**), Cognition Including Math and Science (**COG**), Physical Development–Health (**PD-HLTH**).

**Image 4: 2023 Nutrition, Parent Engagement Outcomes Data**

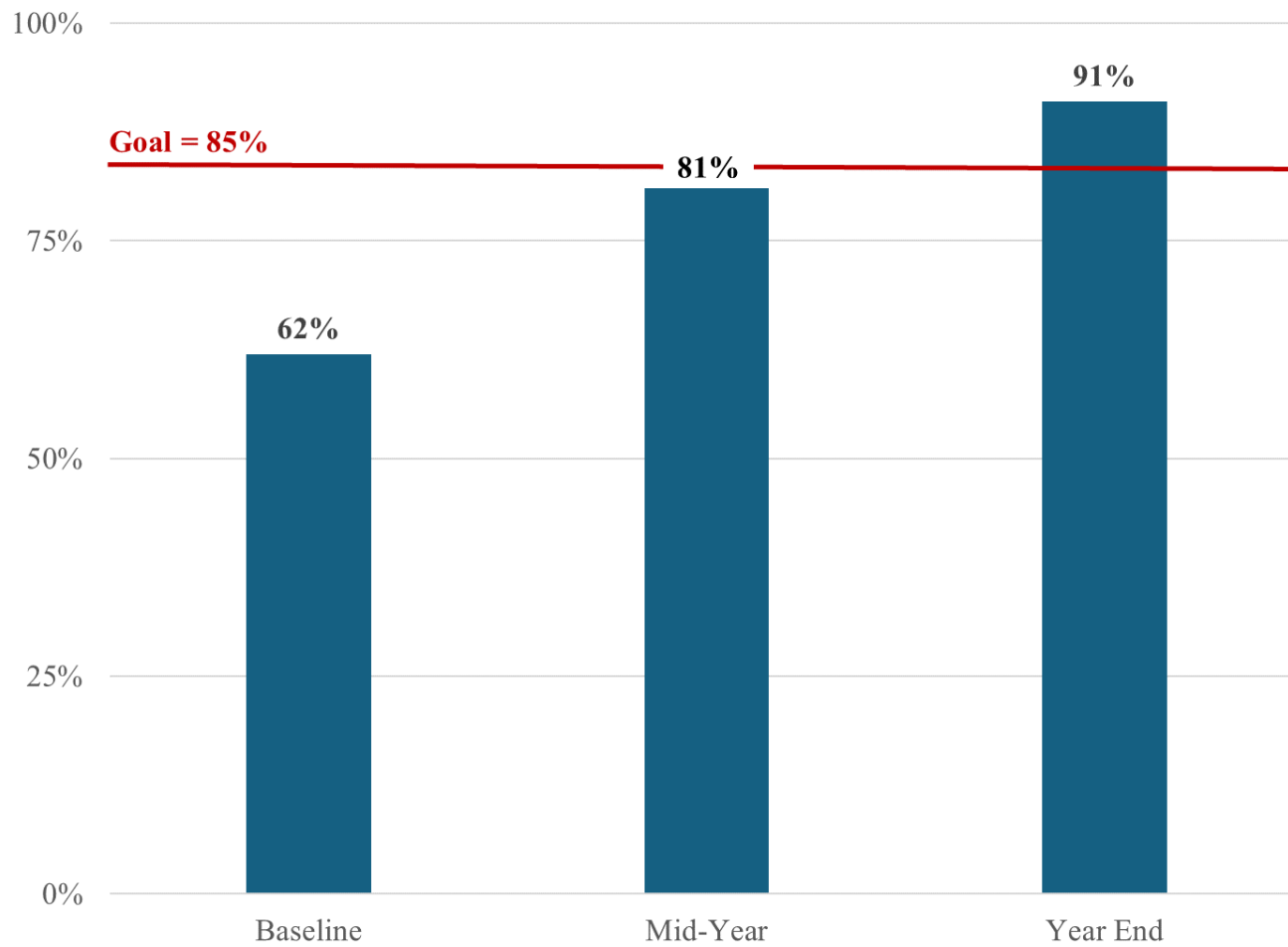


Image 4 illustrates the percentage of children that scored at or above “Building Later Level” on the DRDP Physical Development-Health: Nutrition measure (PD-HLTH 10). This measure illustrates improvement in child nutrition through a year of Parent, Family and Community Engagement (PFCE) related to

**Image 5. Head Start embedded in the Contra Costa County Portfolio of Services**



Contra Costa Head Start children and families are embedded within the full portfolio of Contra Costa County (CCC) services. This facilitates seamless access for Contra Costa Head Start children and families to all CCC services. Family Services workers maintain direct access to workers delivering this full array of services.

**Table 1. Evidence of Community Need**

<b>Bold indicates higher need than county average</b>							
<b>District</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Poverty Rate</b>	<b>Point in Time Homeless Count per 1,000</b>	<b>CalFresh Households</b>	<b>Health Access</b>		<b>Unemployment Rate</b>
					<b>Uninsured Rate</b>	<b>Medi-Cal Households</b>	
	<b>Countywide</b>	8.3%	1.42	8.9%	4.7%	25.6%	3.8%
<b>1</b>	Richmond	<b>14.3%</b>	<b>4.21</b>	<b>14.9%</b>	<b>8.0%</b>	<b>41.8%</b>	<b>4.6%</b>
	N. Richmond	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>8.30</b>	0.4%	<b>8.8%</b>	0.9%	2.1%
	San Pablo	<b>11.8%</b>	<b>1.50</b>	<b>21.2%</b>	<b>8.2%</b>	<b>66.0%</b>	<b>5.1%</b>
<b>3</b>	Bethel Island	<b>17.8%</b>	<b>3.01</b>	<b>20.9%</b>	4.2%	<b>41.5%</b>	<b>9.2%</b>
	Brentwood	6.9%	0.57	7.4%	2.2%	21.2%	3.8%
	Byron	<b>11.4%</b>	<b>2.61</b>	6.5%	<b>6.8%</b>	22.5%	<b>4.2%</b>
	Oakley	7.0%	1.33	<b>10.5%</b>	3.9%	28.5%	<b>4.0%</b>
<b>4 &amp; 5</b>	Concord	<b>9.2%</b>	<b>1.93</b>	<b>10.1%</b>	<b>5.8%</b>	<b>31.3%</b>	3.3%
<b>3 &amp; 5</b>	Antioch	<b>12.1%</b>	<b>2.90</b>	<b>17.8%</b>	<b>6.4%</b>	<b>40.8%</b>	<b>5.1%</b>
	Bay Point	<b>14.3%</b>	<b>2.05</b>	<b>17.8%</b>	<b>13.2%</b>	<b>56.8%</b>	<b>6.8%</b>
	Pacheco	7.6%	<b>3.97</b>	<b>9.5%</b>	<b>9.4%</b>	<b>26.9%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>
	Pittsburg	9.9%	0.76	<b>15.5%</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>40.8%</b>	<b>4.7%</b>
	Rodeo	9.6%	<b>3.86</b>	<b>15.6%</b>	4.0%	<b>35.5%</b>	<b>4.9%</b>
Sources <sup>1</sup>		Table SI701	PITH3	CalSAWS	Table S2701	CalSAWS	Table DP03

<sup>1</sup>Sources: Tables are from the Census. PITH3 is the Contra Costa County 2023 Point In Time Homeless Count. CalSAWS is the California public assistance system in which all eligibility is determined and maintained, benefits are issued, and cases are managed.



Contra Costa County Head Start/Early Head Start Application

**Table 2. Program Options**

<b>Program Option</b>	<b>Operation</b>	<b>Part Day</b>	<b>Full Day</b>	<b>Extended Hours</b>	<b>Home Visits</b>
<b>EHS Center-Based</b>	Hours / day		10.5	12	
	Days / week		5	5	
	Weeks / year		52	52	
<b>HS Center-Based</b>	Hours / day	3.5	10.5	12	
	Days / week	4	5	5	
	Weeks / year	36.5	52	52	
<b>EHS Home-Based</b>	Hours / day				1.5
	Days / week				1
	Weeks / year				52
<b>EHS Teen Program (Locally Designed)</b>	Hours / day		6.5		
	Days / week		5		
	Weeks / year		35.5		

Blank cells are not applicable

Contra Costa County Head Start/Early Head Start Application

**Table 3. Proposed Sites**

District	City	Center	Provider	Program Option	Age		Center Based Hours		
					EHS	HS	Half Day	Full Day	Ext Hours
	County-wide	Aspiranet (home visiting)	Partner	Home-based	149	0			
1	Richmond	Balboa	County	Center-based	32	132	52	112	
		Crescent Park	County	Center-based	30	20		50	
		George Miller III	County	Center-based	0	220	40	180	
		Verde	County	Center-based	0	40		40	
3	Brentwood	Los Nogales	County	Center-based	16	20		36	
		Marsh Creek	County	Center-based	0	40	40		
		Tiny Toes	Partner	Center-based	8	24		32	
	Oakley	Los Arboles	County	Center-based	16	20		36	
4, 5	Concord	MDUSD Crossroads	Partner	School-based	20	0		20	
		George Miller	County	Center-based	28	100	40	88	
3, 5	Antioch	KinderCare E. Antioch	Partner	Center-based	20	0			20
		KinderCare Lone Tree	Partner	Center-based	16	24			40
		KinderCare Mahogany	Partner	Center-based	32	20			52
Bay Point	Bay Point	Ambrose	County	Center-based	22	0		22	
		Lavonia Allen	County	Center-based	16	20		36	
		Riverview	County	Center-based	0	40		40	
	Pittsburg	KinderCare Pittsburg	Partner	Center-based	16	24			40
	Rodeo	Bayo Vista	County	Center-based	16	20		36	
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>437</b>	<b>764</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>728</b>	<b>152</b>

**Table 4. County and Partner Responsibilities**

<b>County Functions for All Services (County Operated and Partner Operated)</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recruitment and Enrollment</li> <li>2. Family Services Systems and Oversight                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Health</li> <li>b. Nutrition</li> <li>c. Family and Community Engagement</li> <li>d. Mental Health and Disabilities</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Program Information Report (PIR)</li> <li>4. Contract Monitoring</li> </ol>	
<b>County Functions for County Operated Services</b>	<b>Partner Functions for Partner Operated Services</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Attendance Promotion and Monitoring</li> <li>6. Meals Provision</li> <li>7. Education and Child Development</li> <li>8. Developmental Screenings</li> <li>9. Curriculum, Adoption and Implementation</li> <li>10. Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP)</li> <li>11. Facilities Procurement and Maintenance</li> <li>12. Family Services</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attendance Promotion and Monitoring</li> <li>2. Meals Provision</li> <li>3. Education and Child Development</li> <li>4. Developmental Screenings</li> <li>5. Curriculum, Adoption and Implementation</li> <li>6. Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP)</li> <li>7. Facilities Procurement and Maintenance</li> <li>8. Family Services (optional service enhancement option)</li> </ol>

Contra Costa County Head Start/Early Head Start Application

**Table 5. Continuous Monitoring Program**

Tool	Frequency	Responsible	Aggregated Data Review
1. Daily Health & Safety Classroom Checklist	100% Classrooms Daily	Teachers	<b>Bi-Weekly:</b> Cluster Assistant Directors (AD), Partner Staff <b>Monthly:</b> Sr. Managers, EHSD Director, Policy Council (PC), Board of Supervisors (BOS) <b>Semi-Annually:</b> Monitoring & Self-Assessment Subcommittee
2. Daily Playground Safety Checklist	100% Playgrounds Daily	Teachers	<b>Bi-Weekly:</b> Cluster Assistant Directors (AD), Partner Staff <b>Monthly:</b> Sr. Managers, EHSD Director, PC, BOS <b>Semi-Annually:</b> Ongoing Monitoring & Self-Assessment Subcommittee
3. Weekly Facility Safety Checklist	100% Centers Weekly	Site Supervisors	<b>Bi-Weekly:</b> Cluster Assistant Directors (AD), Partner Staff <b>Monthly:</b> Sr. Managers, EHSD Director, PC, BOS <b>Semi-Annually:</b> Ongoing Monitoring & Self-Assessment Subcommittee
4. Monthly Playground Safety Checklist	100% Playgrounds Monthly	Site Supervisors	<b>Monthly:</b> Sr. Managers, EHSD Director, PC, BOS <b>Semi-Annually:</b> Ongoing Monitoring & Self-Assessment Subcommittee
5. Child Transition & Safety Monitoring	100% classrooms 2x a year	Senior Managers	<b>Monthly:</b> Sr. Managers, EHSD Director, PC, BOS <b>Semi-Annually:</b> Ongoing Monitoring & Self-Assessment Subcommittee
6. On Site Content Area Compliance Checklist	100% classrooms 2x a year	Family Services Managers	<b>Semi-Annually:</b> Sr. Management, EHSD Director, BOS, PC, Ongoing Monitoring & Self-Assessment Committee
7. Education File Review & Family Services File Reviews	100% 1X a year	Family Services Managers & Sr. Managers	<b>Annually:</b> Sr. Management, EHSD Director, BOS, PC, Ongoing Monitoring & Self-Assessment Committee

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<b>Tool</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Aggregated Data Review</b>
8. Center Health & Safety Checklist	100% Centers Quarterly	Health and Safety Officer	<b>Semi-Annually:</b> Sr. Management, EHSD Director, BOS, PC, Ongoing Monitoring & Self-Assessment Committee
9. CACFP	100% Centers 3x a year	Nutrition Manager	<b>Semi-Annually:</b> Sr. Management, EHSD Director, BOS, PC, Ongoing Monitoring & Self-Assessment Committee
10. CLASS	At least 50% of preschool classrooms 1x per year	Quality Monitoring Unit Manager	<b>Annually:</b> Sr. Management, EHSD Director, BOS, PC, Ongoing Monitoring & Self-Assessment Committee
11. Environmental Rating Scale (ERS)	All classrooms 1x per year  QMU staff validate 20-30% of the classrooms.	Each County/Partner teaching team conducts ERS (by classroom).	<b>Annually:</b> Sr. Management, EHSD Director, BOS, PC, Ongoing Monitoring & Self-Assessment Committee
12. Curriculum Fidelity	30% monitoring of all directly-operated, partner, & delegate centers.	Quality Monitoring Unit Manager	<b>Annually:</b> Sr. Management, EHSD Director, BOS, PC, Ongoing Monitoring & Self-Assessment Committee
13. Center Monitoring	30% sample of classrooms at each center annually	Quality Monitoring Unit Manager	<b>Annually:</b> Sr. Management, EHSD Director, BOS, PC, Ongoing Monitoring & Self-Assessment Committee

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<b>Tool</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Aggregated Data Review</b>
14. Ages & Stages Questionnaires	100% of children annually	Teachers & Site Supervisors	<b>Annually:</b> Sr. Management, EHSD Director, BOS, PC, Ongoing Monitoring & Self-Assessment Committee (Included in File Reviews)
15. Desired Results Developmental Profile	100% of children 3x a year	Teachers & Site Supervisors	<b>Semi-Annually:</b> Sr. Management, EHSD Director, BOS, PC, Ongoing Monitoring & Self-Assessment Committee
16. Parent Satisfaction Surveys & Parent Interest Surveys	1x annually	Teachers & Family Services Team	<b>Annually:</b> Sr. Management, EHSD Director, BOS, PC (Included in Program Self Evaluation and Annual Report)
17. MOU Reviews	Ongoing	Contract Analysts	<b>Annually:</b> Sr. Management
18. Social Media Interactions	Ongoing	Social Media team (DMs, Analysts)	<b>Annually:</b> Sr. Management
19. Site Meetings	1x monthly	Site Supervisors	<b>Semi-Annually:</b> Education Team
20. Post Workshop Knowledge Checks	1x bi-monthly	Assistant Directors, Education Team	<b>Quarterly:</b> Education Leadership

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**Table 6: Maximum Annual Teaching Salary Comparison to Neighboring Head Start Recipients**

<b>Contra Costa County Salary Information</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Teacher Annual Salary Range</b>	
		<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
Head Start Current	Contra Costa	\$36,054 <sup>1</sup>	\$60,733 <sup>1</sup>
Head Start Proposed with 5% + \$12,000 increase	Contra Costa	\$49,857	\$75,770
Increase from FY23/24 to FY24/25		↑38%	↑25%
<b>California and Bay Area Salary Comparators Information</b>			
2023 UC Berkley Study - All centers <sup>2</sup>	Contra Costa	\$41,600	\$52,000
2023 UC Berkley Study - Head Start/Title 5 <sup>2</sup>	Contra Costa	\$43,680	\$54,080
	Comparators Average	\$40,747	\$51,428
	County Head Start as % of Average	122%	147%

<sup>1</sup>Contra Costa County minimum salary is Step 1 for the classification of Associate Teacher. Contra Costa maximum salary is Step 5 for classification of Master Teacher. This illustrates the salary progress available to all teachers who earn the required qualifications with the new flex-promote series.

<sup>2</sup> UC Berkeley Study: Powell, Muruvi, Austin, Copeman Petig, (January 2024). The Early Care and Education Workforce of Contra Costa County, [www.first5coco.org](http://www.first5coco.org).

<sup>3</sup>Head Start California, Compensation & Benefits Study (February 2022).

**Table 7. OHS and Contra Costa County Governing Board Priorities**

OHS Priorities <sup>18</sup>	Related County Governing Body Priorities
I. <b>Child Health and Safety:</b> Reduce or eliminate children’s risk of exposure to harm and hazards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to implement daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly monitoring to identify and remove environmental harm and hazards.</li> </ul>
II. <b>Partnerships with State Systems:</b> Expand Head Start programs’ capacity to coordinate services with state systems and national programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use state funding to extend hours to support commuting parents working varied shifts.</li> <li>• Maximize receipt of state funding by matching more than the required 20%</li> </ul>
III. <b>Reaching Children and Families:</b> Ensuring that Head Start resources are targeted to children, families, and communities of greatest need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribute slots equitably throughout the county based on economic need.</li> <li>• Increase the number of slots to serve closer to 100% of eligible children and families.</li> <li>• Shift slots from Head Start to Early Head Start given that California public schools now offer free Transitional Kindergarten for children aged 4</li> </ul>
IV. <b>Investing in the Workforce:</b> Supporting a highly skilled workforce with competitive pay, benefits, and access to supports for staff wellness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attempt to achieve parity with local school district pre-school teacher salaries by increasing salaries for county employees and increasing rates for partners.</li> </ul>
IV. <b>Quality Environments:</b> Strengthening the key components of infrastructure that assist Head Start programs with operating most effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand mental health for children and families.</li> </ul>

<sup>18</sup> Head Start Work Is Heart Work: OHS Priorities | ECLKC (hhs.gov)