

# Early Childhood Education Program Update



March 17, 2026

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# Outline

Topic	Federal Head Start	State Child Care
Federal Environment Updates	To date	
Child Care Center Services	Jan 2026	Jan 2026
Policy Council Actions	Feb 2026	
Budget	Jan 2026	Jan 2026
Monitoring	Jan 2026	Jan 2026
Official Funder Communication	Feb 2026	Feb 2026
Recommendation	✓	
Appendices	For Information	

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- **Federal Environment Updates**
- Child Care Center Services
- Policy Council Actions
- Budget
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- Recommendation
- Appendices

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# Federal Environment Updates

## Sources of Information

1. Project 2025
2. Executive Orders
3. Federal Department Actions
4. Congressional Actions

## Categories of Impact

1. Potential Funding Reduction
2. Potential Funding Increase
3. Changes to Program Regulations
4. Change that may Impact Customers
5. Change that may Impact Contracts with Partners

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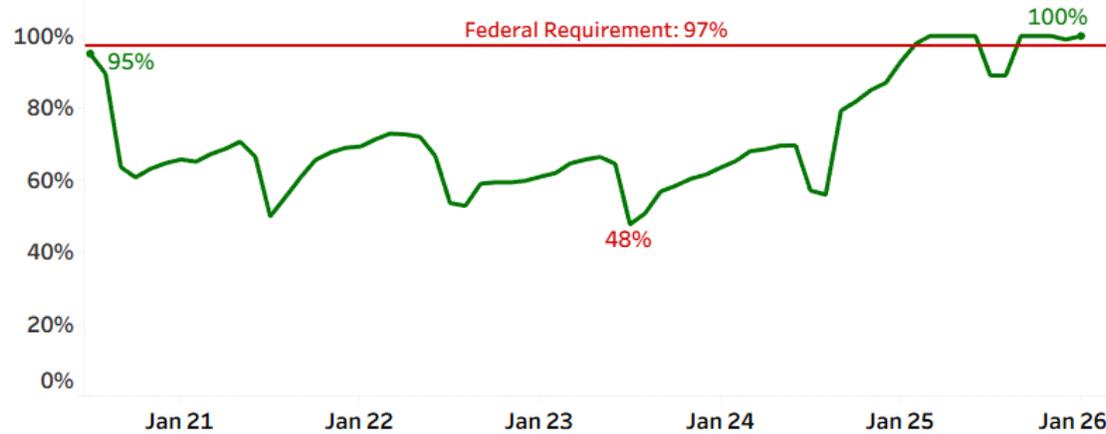
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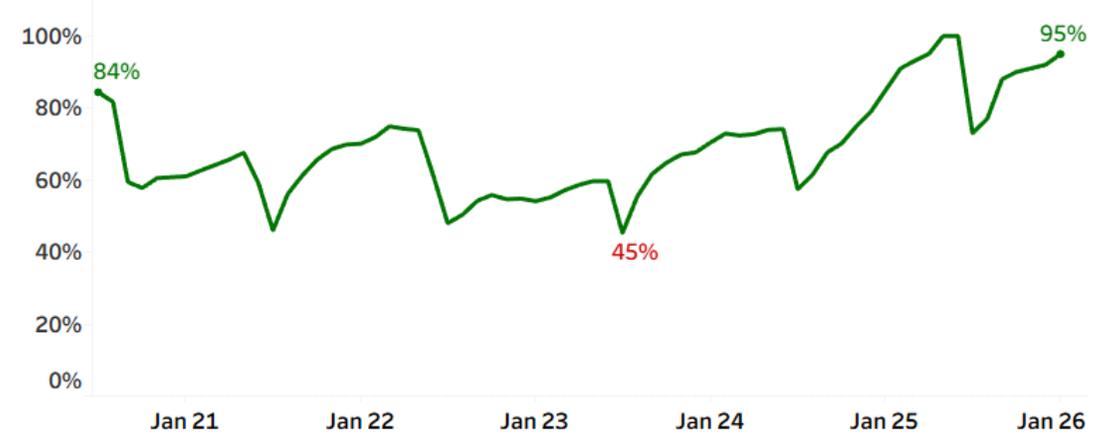


# Center Enrollment Rates

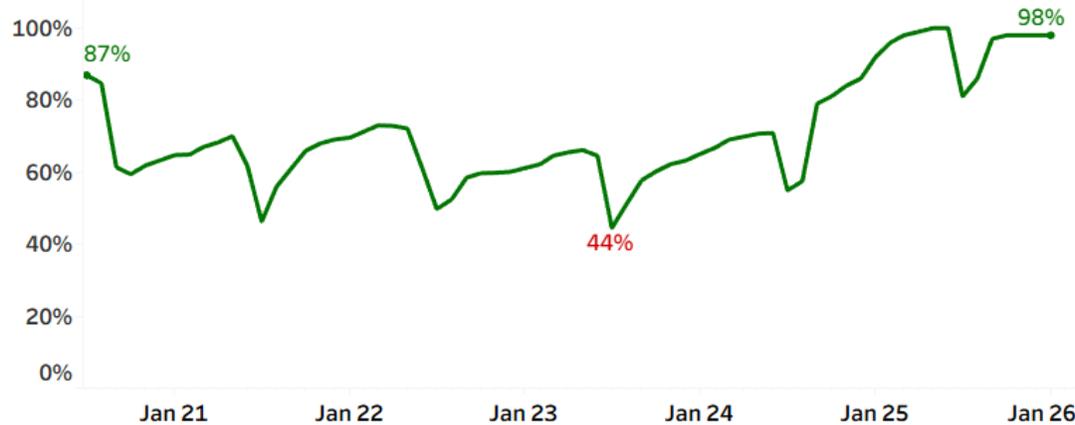
Federal Filled Slots



State Filled Slots



Total Filled Slots



**Current Slot Allotments:**

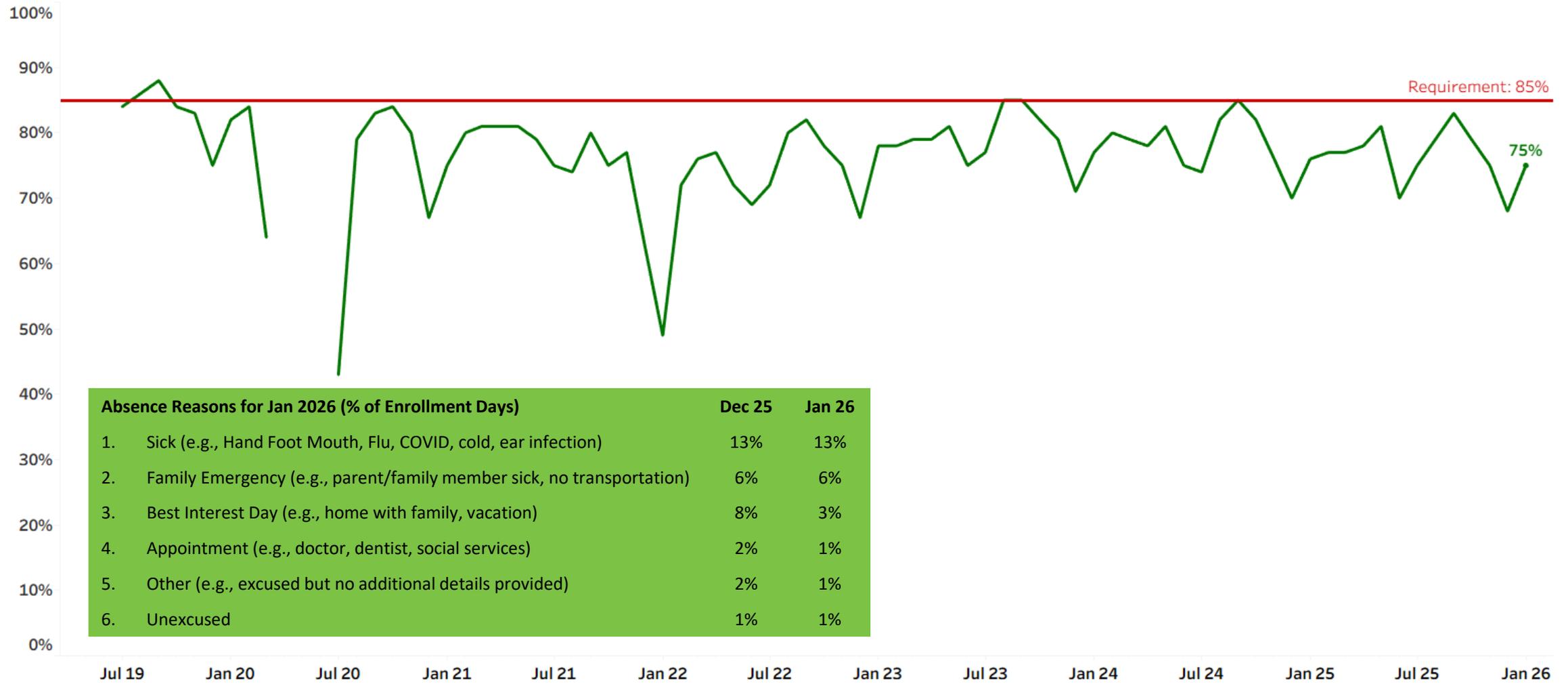
- Federal Slots (Head Start) = 1,201 (1,201 filled slots as of January 2026)
- State Slots (CDE and CDSS) = 764 (724 filled slots as of January 2026)
- Total Unique Slots = 1,345 (1,320 filled slots as of January 2026)

**Current Enrollment Requirements:**

- Federally Funded = 97% slots filled
- State Funded = Currently “hold harmless” meaning no penalties for not filling all slots. When “hold harmless” ends in June 2026, we will no longer be funded for unfilled slots.

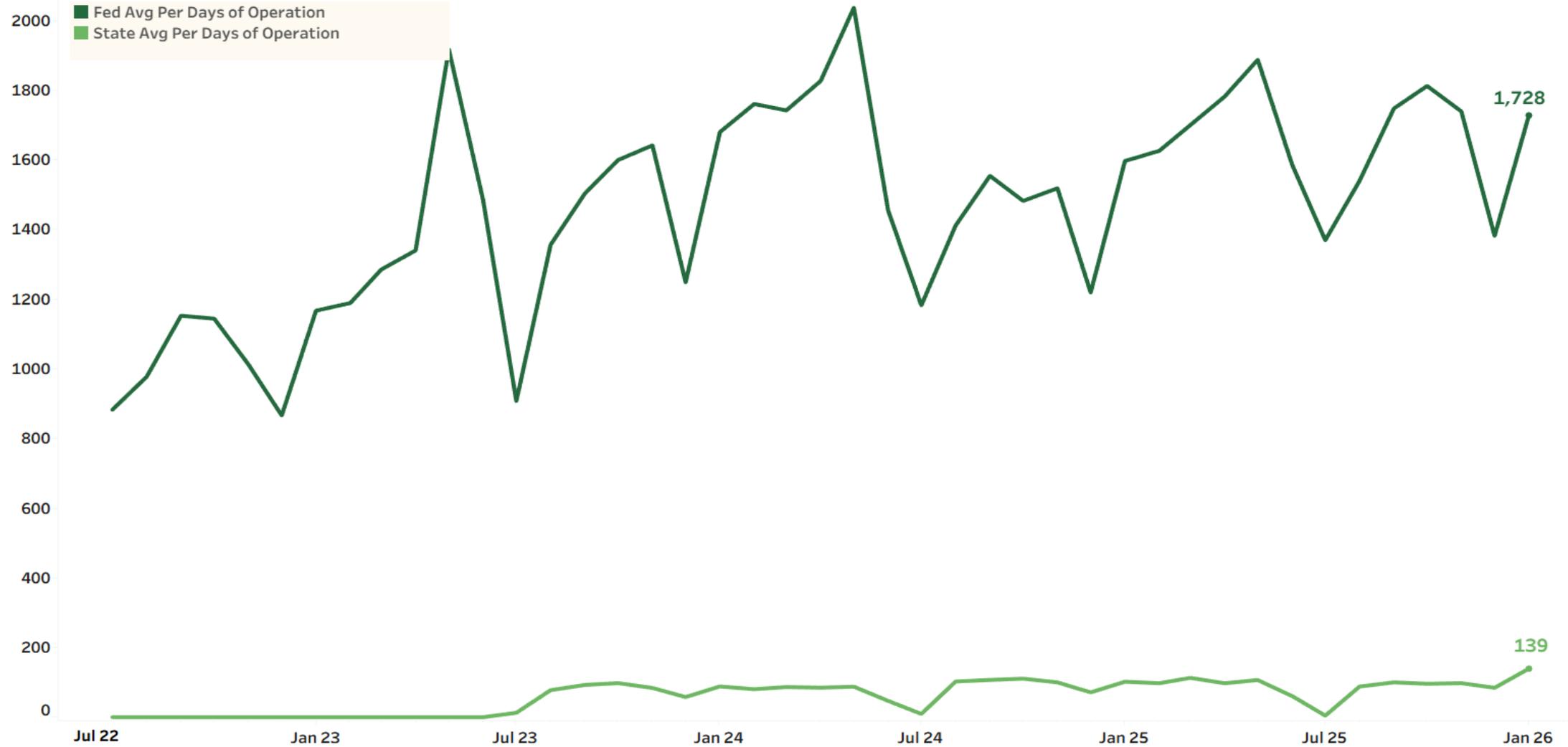
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# Center Attendance Rates



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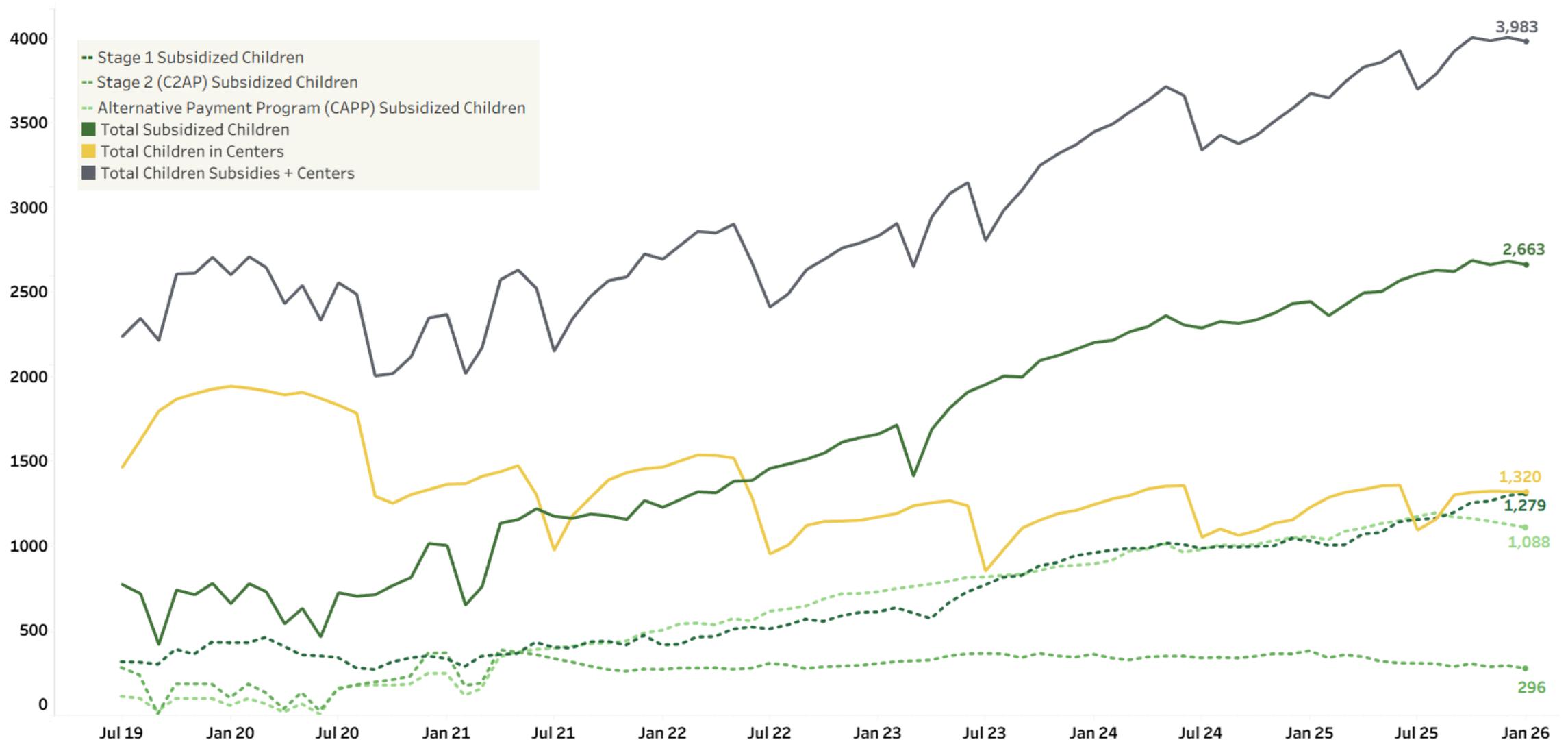
# Average Center Meals & Snacks Per Day



1. OHS Dietary Guidelines Email

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# Children Served in Child Care



“Total Children in Centers” includes children enrolled with federal (Head Start/Early Head Start) and state (CCTR, CSPP) funding sources.

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# February 2026 Policy Council Actions

The Head Start Policy Council convened on February 18, 2026. Key actions included:

- Received standard monthly administrative, fiscal, and child nutrition reports
- Received presentations on school readiness goals, mid-year monitoring results, and oral health
- No recommended actions for the Board of Supervisors

Supervisors are invited to attend a 2026 Policy Council meeting to 1) meet members; 2) express gratitude for their service; 3) share your vision for Head Start and hear theirs; and 4) observe and participate in their proceedings.

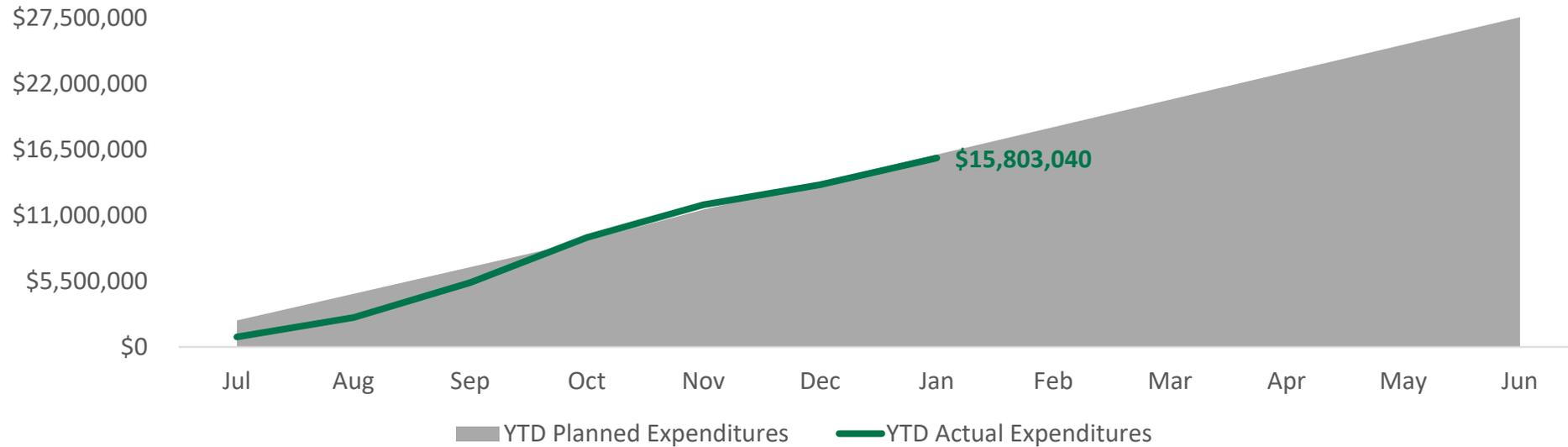


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# Head Start Budget Expenditures

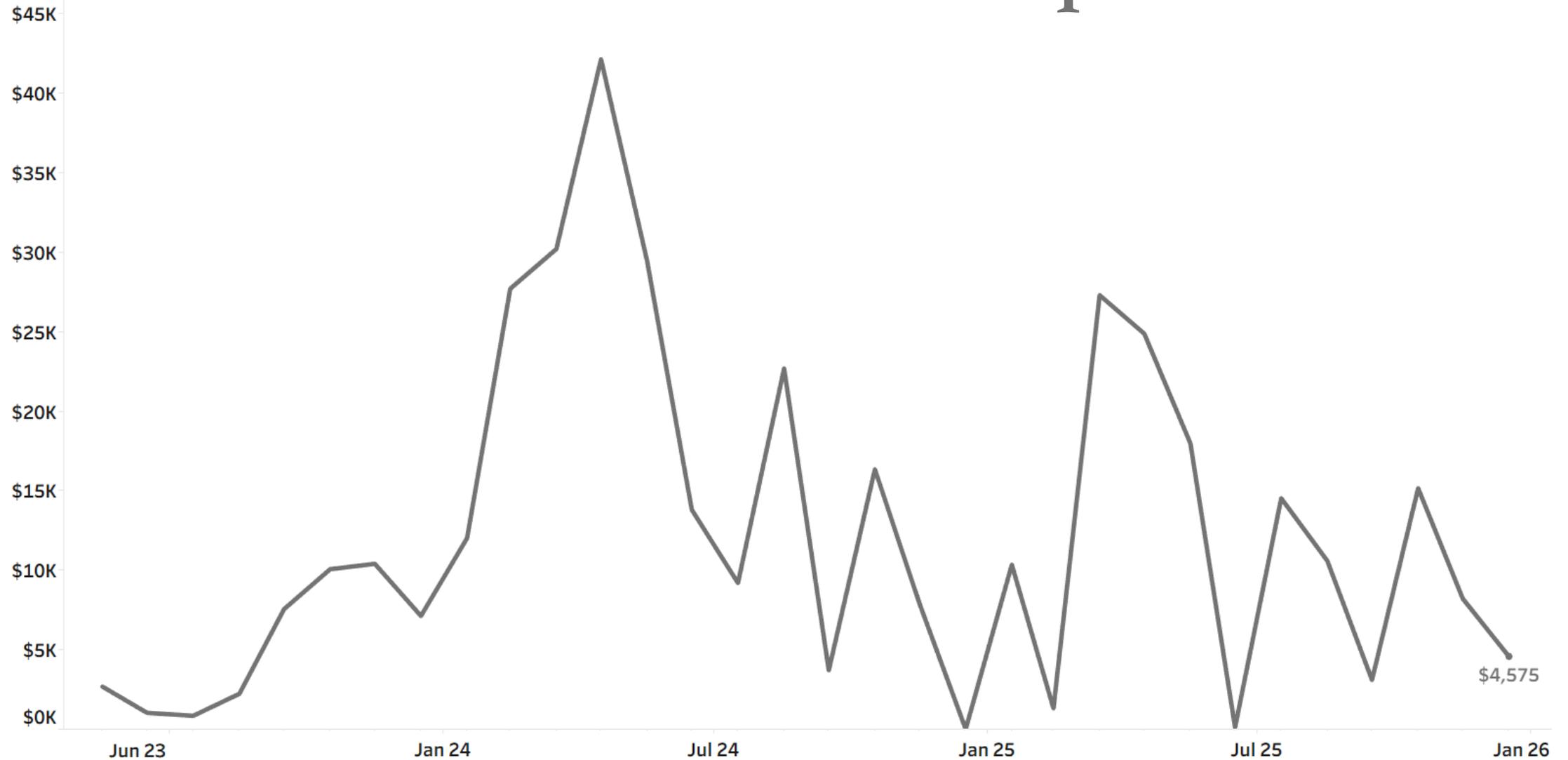


Category	FY25-26 Funding	Jan 2026 Expenditures	YTD Expenditures	Remaining Balance
Total Federal Funding	\$20,577,342	\$1,690,162	\$12,407,873	\$8,169,469
Required Non-Federal Share	\$5,144,336	\$422,541	\$3,101,969	\$2,042,367
Measure X Overmatch*	\$1,859,690	\$78,431	\$293,198	\$1,566,492
<b>Total Federal and Non-Federal</b>	<b>\$27,581,368</b>	<b>\$2,191,134</b>	<b>\$15,803,040</b>	<b>\$11,778,328</b>

\*Measure X Overmatch includes roll over funds as of 1/20/26.

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# Head Start Credit Card Expenditures



All credit card expenditures are made by authorized staff for budgeted purchases to support reasonable program expenditures.

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# FY26-27 Continuation Application

## Submittal Timeline and Status

1. Board of Supervisors Approval: 3/17/26
2. Policy Council Approval: 3/18/26
3. Electronic Application Submission: 3/31/26
4. Application Deadline: 4/1/26
5. Grant Budget Start: 7/1/26

## Application Summary

1. Total Funding: \$25,721,677
2. Total Slots: 1,201
3. Timeline: July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027
4. Service Area: Contra Costa County (no changes)



# FY26-27 Proposed Head Start Grant Budget

<b>Budget Categories</b>	<b>Current (FY25-26)</b>	<b>Proposed (FY26-27)</b>	<b>Change \$</b>	<b>Change %</b>
Personnel	\$6,261,244	\$6,744,926	\$483,682	8%
Benefits	\$4,136,150	\$3,939,596	(\$196,554)	-5%
Travel	\$57,213	\$64,427	\$7,214	13%
Equipment	-	-	-	-
Supplies	\$365,797	\$44,389	(\$321,408)	-88%
Construction	-	-	-	-
Contractual	\$6,057,509	\$5,752,034	(\$305,475)	-5%
Other	\$2,497,266	\$2,220,205	(\$277,061)	-11%
<b>Sub-Total of Direct Charges</b>	<b>\$19,375,179</b>	<b>\$18,765,577</b>	<b>(\$609,602)</b>	<b>-3%</b>
Indirect Costs	\$1,202,163	\$1,811,765	\$609,602	51%
<b>Total Federal Amount</b>	<b>\$20,577,342</b>	<b>\$20,577,342</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Required Non-Federal Share*</b>	<b>\$5,144,335</b>	<b>\$5,144,335</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total Federal and Non-Federal</b>	<b>\$25,721,677</b>	<b>\$25,721,677</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

\*OHS requires 25% non-federal match as shown in the table. In addition, we have an overmatch of \$1,000,000 for FY26-27 from Measure X funds.

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# FY25-26 Priorities, Program Goals, and Objectives

OHS Priorities	Related County Governing Body Priorities / Program Goals	FY25-26 Program Objectives
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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objective 1: Teaching staff, Site Supervisors and partners will participate in trainings on the monitoring system to reinforce consistent and accurate implementation.</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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objective 2: The County will increase enrollment levels by filling classrooms to maximum capacity to maximize state funding.</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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objective 3: The County will fully implement the shift of slots from Head Start to Early Head Start in new grant by completing classroom conversions and filling all Infant/Toddler teacher vacancies.</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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objective 4: The County will focus on successful implantation of the new flex-promote system as a means of increasing teacher and site supervisor satisfaction and retention.</li> </ul>
V. <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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objective 5: The County will execute a contract for enhanced mental health services funded by Measure X, and partner with the vendor to fully implement the additional services.</li> </ul>

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# FY25-26 Objectives Progress

FY25-26 Program Objectives	Progress as of February 2026
<p>Objective 1:</p> <p>Teaching staff, Site Supervisors and partners will participate in trainings on the monitoring system to reinforce consistent and accurate implementation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have had 7 monthly meetings to discuss the previous month’s monitoring results with Site Supervisors, Content Area Managers, and Senior Management. During these meetings, we use discussions and activities to reinforce staff understanding of the monitoring system and how to identify incidents.</li> <li>• We will continue these monthly meetings through the end of FY25-26. We are also following up with additional meetings for specific monitoring tools (e.g., Child Transition &amp; Safety) to ensure consistency in monitoring procedures.</li> </ul>
<p>Objective 2:</p> <p>The County will increase enrollment levels by filling classrooms to maximum capacity to maximize state funding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As of February 2026, we have maintained 10 months for Head Start and 6 months for Early Head Start meeting the federal 97% enrollment requirement.</li> <li>• In November 2025 following the success of maintaining HS-funded enrollment, we began enrolling into our planned state-only funded full-time slots in our directly operated centers. We have enrolled 10-15 children monthly and will continue expanding those enrollments through the end of the program year.</li> </ul>
<p>Objective 3:</p> <p>The County will fully implement the shift of slots from Head Start to Early Head Start in new grant by completing classroom conversions and filling all Infant/Toddler teacher vacancies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With the new Head Start grant in 2024 we shifted our Head Start (HS) to Early Head Start (EHS) slot ratio from 70%:30% to 64%:36%. We opened existing EHS classrooms to full capacity throughout the year due to successfully hiring 7 Infant/Toddler level teaching staff since May 2024. We are serving 20% more EHS children since the start of the grant in September 2024.</li> <li>• We continue to work on preparing 2 new toddler classrooms to be opened, pending licensing and staffing. Licensing is expected to be completed by July 1st. We are actively adding recruiting Infant/Toddler teaching staff through external advertisement and internal Work Study Program.</li> </ul>
<p>Objective 4:</p> <p>The County will focus on successful implantation of the new flex-promote system as a means of increasing teacher and site supervisor satisfaction and retention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As of February 2026, 4 site supervisors and 7 permanent teaching staff members have advanced through the flex-promote system, allowing them to transition into new positions within 1-2 weeks.</li> </ul>
<p>Objective 5:</p> <p>The County will execute a contract for enhanced mental health services funded by Measure X, and partner with the vendor to fully implement the additional services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The contract with Early Childhood Mental Health Program (ECMHP) was executed effective 8/1/25, following Board approval of item C13 on 8/12/25.</li> <li>• ECMHP supports our children, families, and staff with 3 classroom consultants, 1 program manager, 1 Early Childhood Specialist, and 1 Therapeutic Preschool Teacher. ECMHP is recruiting 3 additional Therapeutic Preschool Teachers and 1 Wellness Liaison.</li> </ul>

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# FY26-27 Priorities, Program Goals, and Objectives

OHS Priorities	Related County Governing Body Priorities / Program Goals	FY26-27 Program Objectives
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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objective 1: Review all 15 existing monitoring system tools to identify opportunities to strengthen them and provide training to staff on revisions.</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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objective 2: Expand availability of full-day child care and development services by transitioning 6 part-day classrooms into 3 full-day classrooms.</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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objective 3: Open and fill 2 new Early Head Start classrooms. Assess need for additional slot conversions based on updated community assessment findings.</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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objective 4: Conduct salary study to compare salaries with local school district pre-school teachers per HSPPS 1302.90(e) to support the Board’s governing role.</li> </ul>
V. <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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objective 5: Develop and implement tracking system of mental health support provided by mental health contractor (ECMHP) to children, families, teaching staff, and admin staff.</li> </ul>

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# Slot Distribution Status

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	# 0-5 Population	# 0-5 Population Below FPL <sup>1</sup>	% of 0-5 Population Below FPL	% of all 0-5 Population Below FPL	# Federal Funded Slots <sup>2</sup>	# State-only Funded Slots <sup>3</sup>	Total Slots	% of Total Slots	Future Possibilities
<b>1 District 1</b>	11,468	2,630	23%	28%	401	48	449	37%	
<b>2 District 2</b>	12,615	782	6%	9%	0	48	48	4%	
<b>3 District 3</b>	16,520	1,754	11%	19%	237	0	237	20%	Planning to open 16 new slots in Brentwood during FY26-27
<b>4 District 4<sup>4</sup></b>	14,580	1,596	11%	17%	20	24	44	4%	
<b>5 District 5</b>	16,013	2,491	16%	27%	394	24	418	35%	Planning to open 16 new slots in Bay Point during FY26-27  Considering new slots (number TBD based on need, capacity, and funding) at new ORESJ African American Holistic Wellness center
<b>6 District Totals</b>	71,196	9,253	13%	100%	1,052	144	1,196	100%	
<b>7 Countywide<sup>5</sup></b>		-	-	-	149	0	149	-	

1. Below Federal Poverty Level (FPL) defined as at or below 100% of FPL, which is determined based on household size. Data based on available 2023 Census Bureau reports from Fall 2025.
2. Federally funded slots for Head Start/Early Head Start program (total = 1,201).
3. State-only funded slots for Early Childhood Education program (total = 144).
4. Following Supervisorial redistricting in 2021, the George Miller Concord location moved from District 4 to District 5.
5. These are home-based slots not assigned to a specific geographic area within the county.

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# OHS FY26 Federal Monitoring Review Results

Performance Area	Outcome	Compliant	Strong Practice	Area of Concern	Area of Noncompliance	Deficiency
Program Design, Management, and Improvement	Program Design and Strategic Planning	✓				
	Program Governance	✓				
	Staffing and Staff Member Supports			✓		
Supporting Safe and Healthy Learning Environments	Safe and Sanitary Environments			✓		
	Education and Child Development	✓				
Fiscal Infrastructure	Budget Development, Implementation, and Oversight	✓				
	Comprehensive Financial Management Structure and Systems	✓				
	Facilities and Equipment Management Systems	✓				
Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance	Eligibility	✓	✓			
	Selection	✓				
	Enrollment	✓				



# OHS FY26 Federal Monitoring Review Findings

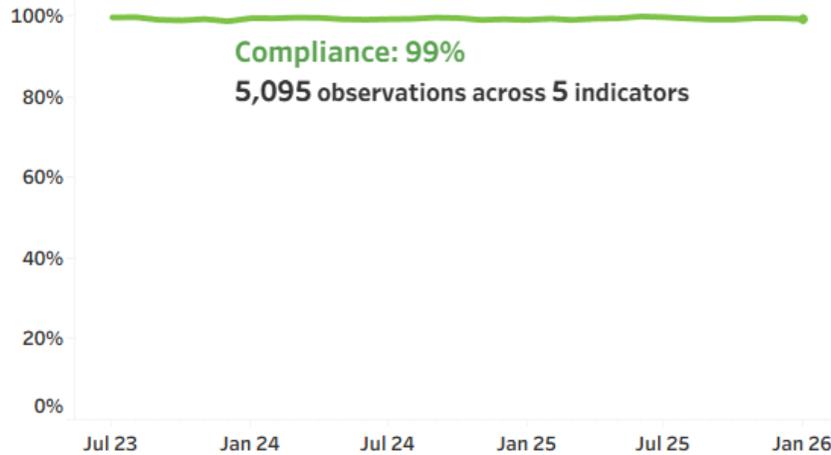
OHS notified that our program meets the requirements of all applicable Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS), laws, regulations, and policy requirements. No corrective actions are required.

## Findings Details

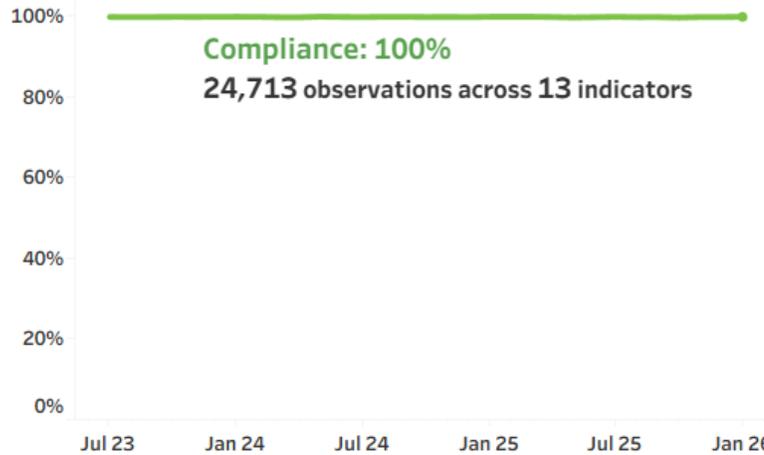
- 1. Strong Practice – Eligibility.** Grant recipient's eligibility verification process includes 3 staff members and ensures staff do not complete applications for friends or family. File reviews are completed bi-weekly, monthly, and semi-annually.
- 2. Area of Concern – Staffing and Staff Member Supports.** Grant recipient should improve its efforts to ensure all Early Head Start center-based teachers and all home visitors have minimum credentials. The staff who did not meet the required qualifications already have professional development plans in place.
- 3. Area of Concern – Safe and Sanitary Environments.** Grant recipient should test and inspect for lead in water at least every 2 years.

# Health and Safety Compliance

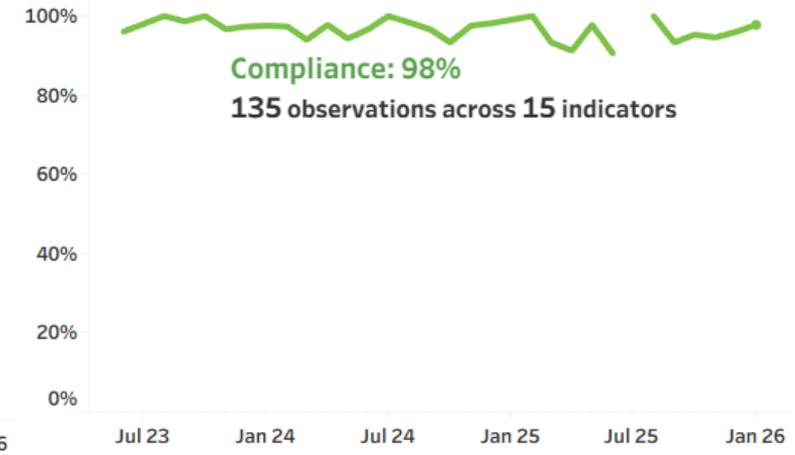
**Daily Playground Safety**



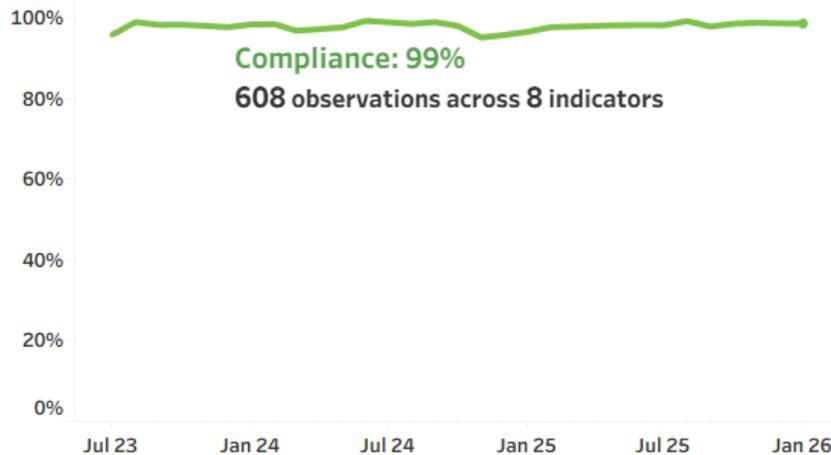
**Daily Classroom Health & Safety**



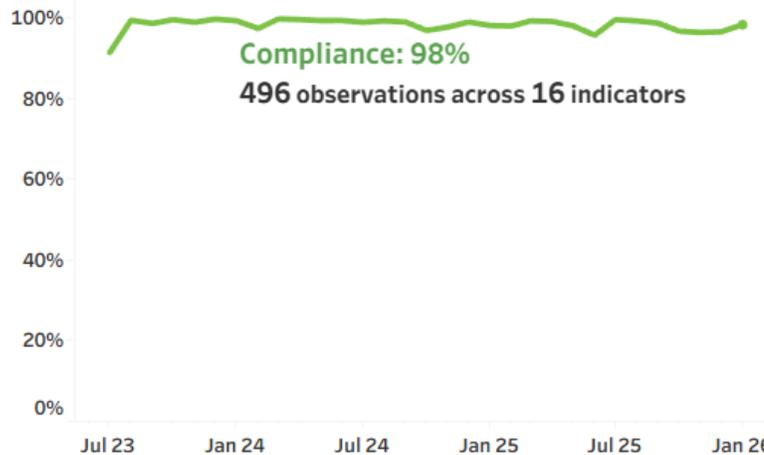
**Child Transition & Safety**



**Weekly Facility Safety**



**Monthly Playground Safety**



Indicators with non-compliance rates over 10% in Jan 2026:

1. The most recent site Weekly Facility Tool, Daily Classroom Health & Safety Checklist, and Daily Playground Checklist accurately reflect your observation today. (2/9 = 22%)
2. Classroom Transition Tracking Sheet is used correctly and accurately reflects current children in the classroom and/or in transition. (1/9 = 11%)

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# Reportable Incidents & Citations



**Reportable incidents as defined by the Office of Head Start (OHS)**  
 OHS considers a “significant incident” to be any incident that results in serious injury or harm to a child, violates Head Start standards of conduct at [45 CFR §1302.90\(c\)](#), or results in a child being left alone, unsupervised, or released to an unauthorized adult. A program must report all significant incidents affecting the health and safety of children with 7 days.

**California Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing Citations**  
Type A: An immediate risk to the health, safety or personal rights of children in care.  
Type B: If not corrected right away, may be a risk to the health, safety, and personal rights of the children in care.

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# CDSS Child Care Bulletin 26-02

**Child Care Bulletin 26-02 issued:** January 22, 2026

**Subject:** Implementation of Senate Bill (SB) 792

**Information:** Provides guidance to counties and child care and development contractors regarding changes enacted in SB 792, including a new definition of “Attendance” to expand the categories of excused absences, technical revisions to policies related to state median income (SMI) for CalWORKs Stage 3, and extension of the family fee exemptions for vulnerable populations. This relates to our state-funded early childhood education slots for infants and toddlers (0-3 years old) and family child care subsidy vouchers.

**Action:** Staff have updated procedures for determining absence reasons and family fees. CDE has not yet issued their bulletin.



# CDE Management Bulletin 26-02

**Management Bulletin 26-02 issued:** February 13, 2026

**Subject:** Fiscal Year 2025-26 Program Self-Evaluation for California State Preschool Program (CSPP) Contractors

**Information:** Notifies and provides guidance to CSPP contractors of the requirements and instructions for submitting the Program Self-Evaluation due on or before June 1, 2026. This relates to our state-funded preschool slots as an annual requirement to assess the areas in which we meet the standards of the CSPP contract requirements.

**Action:** Staff have begun collecting the required data to prepare the self-evaluation. It will be submitted ahead of the June 1, 2026 deadline.



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# Recommendation

**CONSIDER** accepting the monthly update on the activities and oversight of the County's Head Start Program and provide guidance, as recommended by the Employment and Human Services Director; and

**APPROVE** and **AUTHORIZE** the Employment and Human Services Director, or designee, to submit a continuation grant application to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, to provide Head Start and/or Early Head Start services to eligible children and families, and to execute a grant award agreement, including any amendments or extensions thereof, in an award amount up to \$20,577,342 for the budget period of July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027.

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# 2026 Head Start Governance Updates Calendar

	Federal Requirement*	1/20/26	2/10/26	3/17/26	4/14/26	5/19/26	6/23/26	7/14/26	8/25/26	9/15/26	10/20/26	11/17/26	12/15/26
<b>1. Monthly Program Updates</b>	HSA 642(d)(2) HSPPS 1301.2(b)(2)	Nov '25	Dec '25	Jan '26	Feb '26	Mar '26	Apr '26	May '26	Jun '26	Jul '26	Aug '26	Sep '26	Oct '26
<b>2. Monthly Financial Updates</b>	HSA 642(d)(2) HSPPS 1301.2(b)(2)	Nov '25	Dec '25	Jan '26	Feb '26	Mar '26	Apr '26	May '26	Jun '26	Jul '26	Aug '26	Sep '26	Oct '26
<b>3. Funder Communications</b>	HSA 642(d)(2) HSPPS 1301.2(b)(2)	Dec '25	Jan '26	Feb '26	Mar '26	Apr '26	May '26	Jun '26	Jul '26	Aug '26	Sep '26	Oct '26	Nov '26
<b>4. Annual HS Governance and Eligibility Training</b>	HSA 642(d)(3) HSPPS 1301.5, 1302.12(m)		Training										
<b>5. Annual Goals and Objectives (included in Grant application)</b>	HSPPS 1302.102(a)			Approval Item									
<b>6. Annual Non-Competitive Grant Renewal Application</b>	HSA 642(c)(1)(E) HSPSS 1301.2(b)(1)			Approval Item									
<b>7. Annual Community Needs Assessment</b>	HSA 640(g)(1)(C) HSPPS 1302.11(b), 1302.102(d)(2)				Share Results								
<b>8. Annual Self-Assessment</b>	HSA 642(d)(2) HSPPS 1302.102(b)(2)				Approval Item								
<b>9. Annual Selection Criteria and Recruitment Plan</b>	HSA 642(c)(1)(E) HSPPS 1302.13, 1302.14(a)						Approval Item						
<b>10. FY26-27 Planning Calendar</b>	HSA 640(g)(1)(D) HSPPS 1302.11(b), 1302.102(d)(2)						Approval Item						
<b>11. Annual County Single Financial Audit</b>	HSA 642(d)(2) HSPPS 1301.2(b)(2)						Approval Item*						
<b>12. Annual Program Information Report</b>	45 CFR Part 75											Share Results	

**As Needed**

CSB Agency Policies (HSA 642(c)(1)(E)). Results from Head Start Monitoring Activities (HSA 641(A)(c)).

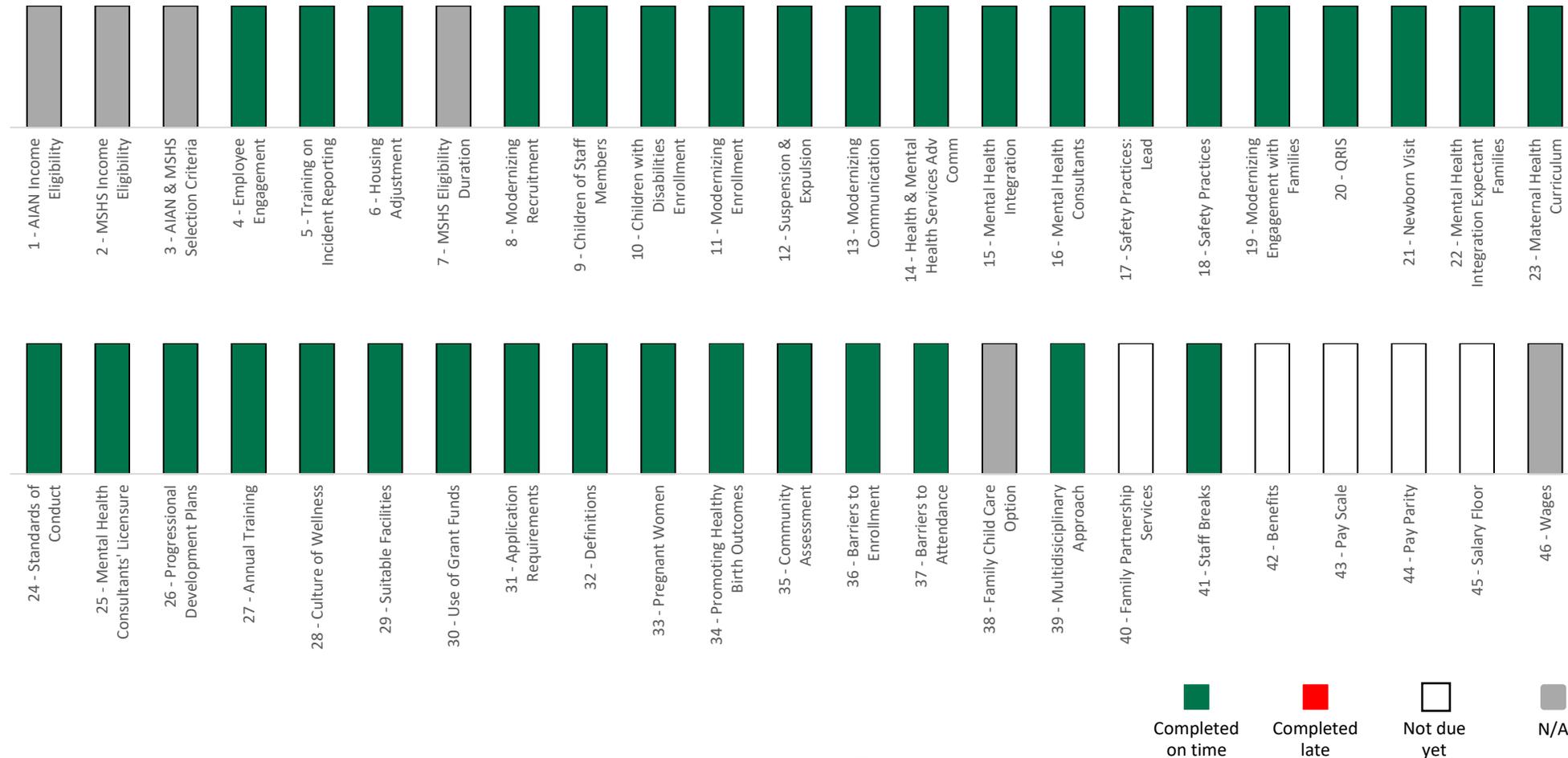
Contra Costa County Resolution 2023/274 includes all of these requirements.

\*Pending approval by Finance Committee of FY24-25 Single Audit.

\*#7 and #8 moved 1 month to align with Head Start Committee schedule.



# HSPPS Compliance Timeline Progress Chart



7. New HSPPS Compliance Timeline and Analysis

*Building Brighter Futures Together*