Annual Report

2024 - 2025

NEW CASTLE COUNTY
Head Start, Inc.

A Message from our Executive Director



It is my privilege to share the 2024–2025 New Castle County Head Start, Inc. (NCCHS) Annual Report. As I reflect on the past year, I am grateful for the children, families, staff, and community partners who make our mission possible. Together, we have created opportunities for children to learn, grow, and thrive while empowering families with the resources and support they need.

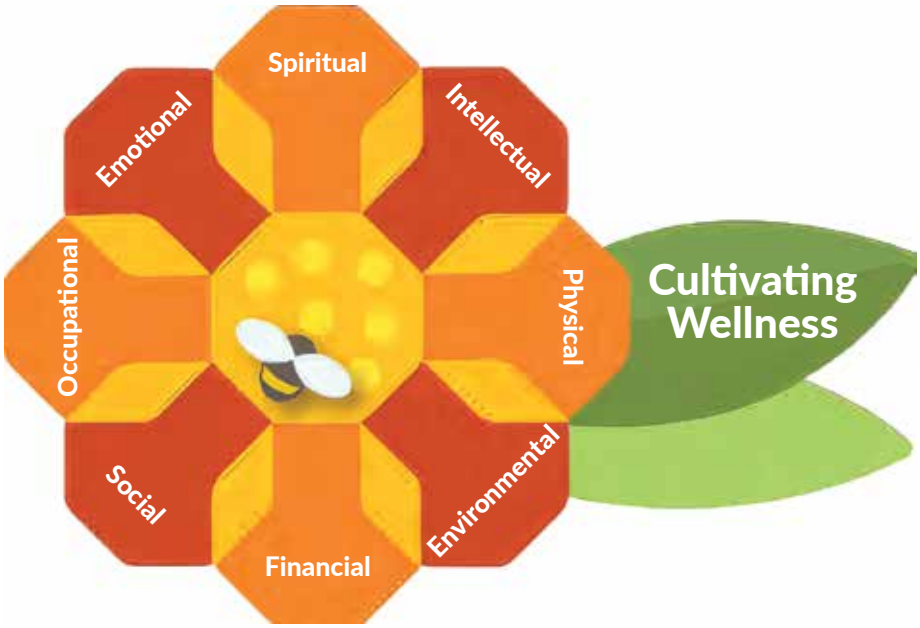
Providing high-quality services to children and families requires a strong commitment to excellence and continuous improvement. All Head Start programs are required to create and implement procedures that ensure compliance with the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS).

In August 2024, the Office of Head Start updated the HSPPS to provide clearer guidance on workforce compensation and benefits, mental health supports, health and safety standards, child health tracking, and enhanced guidelines to support child health, safety, and engagement between staff and families.

While most updates went into effect immediately, the Office of Head Start established a phased-in implementation for some requirements. During the 2024-2025 program year, we created, implemented,

reviewed, and revised when needed, to ensure we continued to make progress in establishing all of the new standards.

We are proud to share that NCCHS continues making progress in meeting all of the new standards. Our most notable changes during the 2024-2025 program year were:



- **Implemented a housing cost adjustment** when calculating family income, allowing more families who would otherwise be over the income limit to qualify for Head Start services by accounting for excessive housing costs during the eligibility process.
- **Established a Health Services Advisory Committee** to support the integration of mental health throughout all aspects of program service delivery.
- **Enhanced services for pregnant women** by identifying prenatal care services and resources that support healthy pregnancies. Through implementation of the Healthy Babies Curriculum, we are helping address disparities in maternal health and birth outcomes across multiple groups of pregnant women.
- **Continued support for a program-wide culture of wellness** that empowers staff to effectively accomplish their job in a high-quality manner. Through our new Staff Wellness Committee, we c onduct biannual staff wellness surveys that help guide initiatives supporting employees' occupational, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, physical, environmental, financial, and social wellness.

Wendy Marsilii,
Executive Director

2024-2025

Board, Advisory, and Policy Council

Board of Directors

- Linda L. Marks, *Chairperson*
- J.D. Lee, *Vice-Chairperson*
- Elaine Reilly, *Secretary*
- Caroline Horty Dickerson, *Treasurer*
- Judy Guttenplan
- Donzell Harmon
- Leslie Lee
- Shari Milewski
- Dr. Alethea Miller
- Carroll Shannon
- Michael Staman
- Todd Veale
- Holly Yoder



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- Diana Angel-Flores
- Lisbeth Arriaga
- Nancy Brohawn
- Anthony Dielevterio
- Anayeli Gomez
- Sabina Ladino
- Hilario Marcial
- Dee'Lisia Medley
- Tracie Mercado
- Zuleima Riveria
- Evelin Sanchez
- Lan-Jae Williams

Policy Council Members

- Thais Alvarado
- Irma Alvarez
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- Magdalena Aviles
- Alyssa Beard
- Sierra Cabrera
- Markeya Jackson
- Dorcas Johnson
- Masani Marks
- Beartriz Medina
- Dee'Lisia Medley
- Eboni Morales
- Yesenia Morales
- Shalicia Price
- Dorenda Richardson
- Guadalupe Solano
- Zaybeth Vazquez
- Nakea Wright

2024 - 2025

Strength in Numbers

477 **total children**
enrolled across all programs

402 **ages 3 to 5 years old**
- **306** in extended day
- **96** in year-round program

72 **birth to 3 years old**

3 **pregnant mothers**

76 **children with disabilities**
- **68** Head Start
- **8** Early Head Start

100% **continuous enrollment**
for both Head Start and Early Head Start

223 **children off to kindergarten**
100% of age-eligible children transitioned in fall 2025

Children received medical exams

96% Head Start

97% Early Head Start

Children received dental exams

93% Head Start

85% Early Head Start

446 total number of **families served**

383 **total Head Start families**

63 **total Early Head Start families**

466 total number of **families at or below the poverty level**

391 **total Head Start families**

75 **total Early Head Start families**

106 Total **number** of **staff**
100 Head Start | **6** Early Head Start

64 **Head Start staff**

30 **Head Start staff** are current or former parents

6 **Early Head Start home visitors**

2 **Early Head Start staff** current or former parents

Bachelor's degree or higher

76% **Head Start** classroom lead teachers

40% **Early Head Start** home visitors

100% **Head Start assistants** hold a Child Development Associate credential or an associate's degree

631 Total number of **volunteers**

561 **Head Start** volunteers

70 **Early Head Start** volunteers

Volunteers hours

20,413 Head Start

35,752 Early Head Start

Current or former parents

71% Head Start

89% Early Head Start

NCCHS Parent Volunteers

Thank you to all our parent volunteers for their dedication, time, and service to NCCHS during the 2024–2025 school year. We especially recognize Sierra Cabrera (Early Head Start) for the most volunteer hours, with a total of 728 hours.

Most hours per center

- **Francosca Sauce Perez** (Absalom Jones)
- **Quayoniah Stamps** (Jeffrey E. Benatti)
- **Nakea Wright** (Claymont)
- **Jareth Roman Arizmendi** (Lambson)
- **Guadalupe Tapia Solano** (Manor Park)

2024 - 2025

Our Accomplishments

Personalized financial coaching for families

Through our partnership with **Stand By Me** and the **United Way of Delaware**, families received one-on-one financial coaching.

STAND BY ME
Powered by the State of Delaware & United Way of Delaware

United Way
United Way of Delaware

50 increased savings **20** improved credit **60** stronger money skills

Strengthening early literacy

DCF

Invested a **Delaware Community Foundation** Literacy Grant to build early language and reading development in Head Start classrooms.

$10,476 Literacy Grant

Investing in our people

DELAWARE STARS
Young stars. Shining futures.

Received a **Stars Quality Improvement Award** supporting recruitment and retention through monthly retention and longevity bonuses.

$385,000 Quality Award

ReadyRosie

Learning that continues at home

Provided enrolled families with the **Ready-Rosie** Parent Curriculum — easy, everyday activities that support each child's learning and development at home.

Growing the early-childhood workforce

With **Delaware State University** and **ECIC**, secured funding for two CDA Coaches who help staff and community members in New Castle County earn higher ECE credentials.

$241,560 Fund for two CDA Coaches

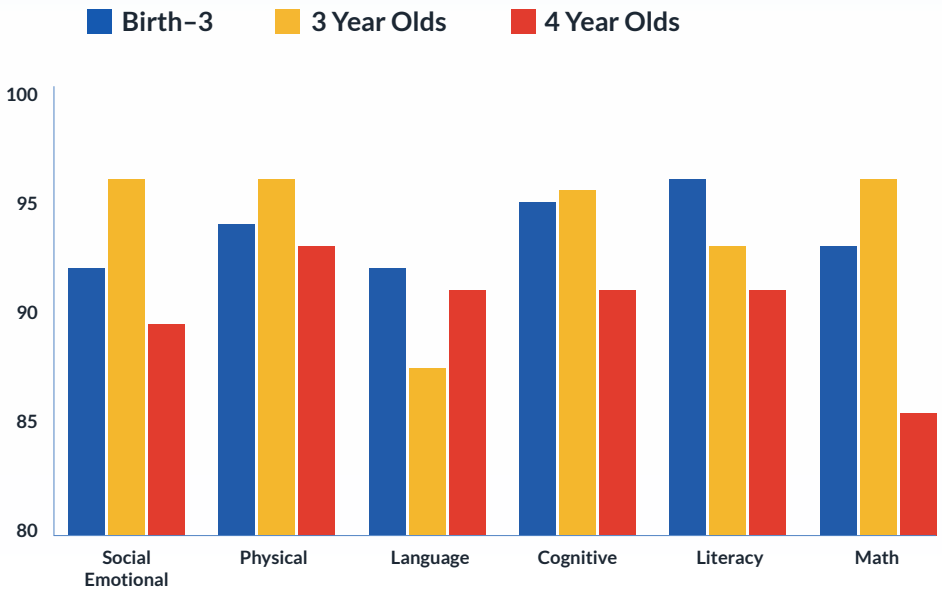
Delaware State University

ECIC
Early Childhood Innovation Center

2024 – 2025

Child Outcomes

NCCHS regularly measures each child's progress during the school year. The graph below shows the percentage of children in each age group at or above expectations across the essential domain areas for the 2024–2025 academic year.



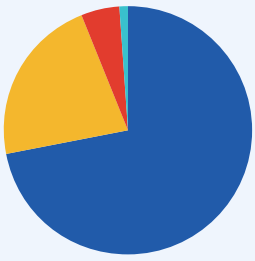
2024 – 2025

Budget

Our Board-approved operating budget for fiscal year 2024–2025, showing planned revenue by funding source and expenditures by category.

Revenue by Source

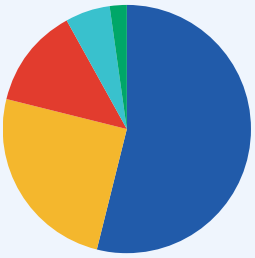
Total budgeted revenue — $7,586,516



Federal Grants (HHS)	72%	$5,439,489
State of DE Grants	22%	$1,701,597
USDA Food Program	5%	$351,680
Grants & Donations	1%	$93,750

Expenditures by Category

Total budgeted expenditures — $7,586,516



Salaries	54%
Fringe Benefits	25%
Other	13%
Supplies	6%
Contractual	2%

2024 – 2025

Financial Report

Statement of Financial Position (2025)

Assets

Cash and cash equivalents	$ 450,346
Grants receivable	$ 81,322
Prepaid rent	$ 29,075
Prepaid insurance	$ 55,106
Other assets and prepaid expenses	$ 5,821
Property and equipment, net	$ 306,056
Right-of-use assets	$ 1,120,510
Total assets	**$ 2,048,236**

Liabilities

Accounts payable	$ 81,482
Accrued salaries and compensated absences	$ 292,336
Payroll taxes and withholdings payable	$ 4,155
Refundable advances	$ 91,822
Operating lease liability	$ 1,130,676
Total liabilities	**$ 1,600,471**

Net assets

With donor restrictions	$ 40,970
Without donor restrictions	$ 406,795
Total net assets	$ 447,765
Total liabilities and net assets	**$ 2,048,236**

Support & revenue without donor restrictions

Federal grants	
Head Start	$ 4,866,961
Early Head Start	$ 650,373
Training & technical assistance	$ 48,611
Child & Adult Care Food Program	$ 389,333

Support & revenue without donor restrictions (cont.)

State grants	$ 2,106,500
Contributions – cash	$ 7,873
Contributions – in-kind	$ 1,279,067
Purchase of care – parent co-pay	$ 32,580
Interest income	$ 3,753
Net assets released from restrictions	$ 307,554
Total support & revenue	**$ 9,692,605**

Expenses

Program	
Head Start	$ 7,433,285
Early Head Start	$ 1,309,968
Total program	**$ 8,743,253**
General & administrative	$ 1,012,256
Total expenses	**$ 9,755,509**
Change in net assets without donor restrictions	**($ 62,904)**

Net assets with donor restrictions

Contributions – cash	$ 81,855
Other grants	$ 241,560
Net assets released from restrictions	($ 307,554)
Changes in net assets with donor restrictions	$ 15,861
Change in net assets	($ 47,043)
Net assets, beginning of year	$ 494,808
Net assets, end of year	**$ 447,765**

2024-2025

Program Review

NCCHS conducted a self-assessment to ensure alignment with the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS), evaluate program effectiveness, recognize areas of strength, and identify opportunities for continuous improvement. Key findings included:

Program Design and Management

The agency has two systems to ensure our program structure is designed to be responsive to community needs. Our Strategic Planning Committee is composed of members from the administrative team, members of our board of directors, and the policy council. This joint committee reviews and monitors strategic goals every other month.

Quality Education and Child Development

The agency has strong Early Head Start systems to facilitate connections to comprehensive services for expectant families. Teacher Home Visitors use transition plans, prenatal data, and the Healthy Baby curriculum to continue to support families when their newborn arrives.

Health Program Services

The agency partners with a variety of community mental health consultants to create a positive environment that promotes the mental health and social-emotional well-being of children.

Promoting Strong Parent-Child Relationships and Engagement in Children's Learning

The agency builds on parents' knowledge by providing the Ready Rosie curriculum at no cost. The mobile-friendly app provides over 1000 "modeled moment" video samples of children and families at play, with a focus on embedding learning while playing. Topics include healthy routines, language development, positive discipline strategies, and more.



2024 – 2025

Looking Ahead— 2026 and Beyond

Our priority is to deliver exceptional early childhood education while supporting families as their needs evolve. Key areas and corresponding goals include:



Our priority is to deliver exceptional early childhood education while supporting families as their needs evolve.

Support our children, families, and staff by expanding mental health and wellness services.

- enhance services that support child and adult mental health
- provide training to build knowledge and understanding of trauma
- expand opportunities for families and staff to build knowledge of how to heal from the effects of trauma and life stressors

Provide support to families during the child's developmental screening, evaluation, and disability determination process.

- support children and families by partnering with our local school districts to create classroom educational support plans to be implemented during the determination process
- support teachers by partnering with our school districts and requesting training on best teaching techniques to support children, while evaluation results are pending

Increase families' knowledge of child nutrition

- provide training, information, and resources for healthy meal options and easy meal preparation
- support children by increasing opportunities for physical activities and healthy foods across the curriculum
- partner with the Food Bank of Delaware and the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension to offer training opportunities in physical activity and nutrition

2024 – 2025

School Readiness Goals

Each school year, goals are established to strengthen the child-development areas where our children have the most room to grow.

Head Start

7 Growth Goals

1. **Form relationships with adults**
2. **Respond to emotional cues**
3. **Demonstrate gross motor manipulative skills**
4. **Engage in conversations**
5. **Write to convey ideas and information**
6. **Count**
7. **Understand spatial relationships**

Early Head Start

7 Growth Goals

1. **Manage feelings**
2. **Form relationships with adults**
3. **Respond to emotional cues**
4. **Interact with peers**
5. **Use fingers and hands**
6. **Engage in conversations**
7. **Attend and engage**

Thank you to our donors and community partners

Partner Organizations

- Brandywine School District
- Center for Child Development
- Christina School District
- Colonial School District
- DE Department of Education
- DE Health and Social Services
- Food Bank of Delaware
- Foster Grandparents Program
- POLYTECH High School
- Read Aloud Delaware
- Red Clay School District
- United Way of Delaware
- University of Delaware, Cooperative Extension College of Agriculture Resources
- University of Delaware, Department of Human Resources

Donors

- Delaware Community Foundation
- United Way Campaign

In-kind donors

- Becker School Supplies
- Delaware Children's Museum
- Lakeshore
- PNC Bank
- Sigma Data
- Wilmington Library

New Castle County Head Start, Inc.

Administrative Office
256 Chapman Road
Suite 103
Newark, DE 19702

T: (302) 452-1500
F: (302) 452-1509
www.ncchs.org
www.facebook.com/newcastlecountyheadstartinc

Center Locations

Absalom Jones
310 Kiamensi Road
Wilmington, DE 19804
(302) 999-8480

Jeffrey E. Benatti
931 Corbitt Road
Bear, DE 19701
(302) 832-2212

Claymont
3301 Green Street
Claymont, DE 19703
(302) 792-9065

Early Head Start
19 Lambson Lane
New Castle, DE 19720
(302) 777-5104

Lambson
19 Lambson Lane
New Castle, DE 19720
(302) 655-5070

Manor Park
1 Bassett Avenue
New Castle, DE 19720
(302) 328-9454

Volunteer or donate today!

NCCHS depends on community support by way of monetary or in-kind donations and volunteers. Call the Administrative Office at (302) 452-1500 for more information on donation needs and volunteer opportunities.