



YEARS
of OPPORTUNITY
HEAD START | 1965-2015

**Mercer County Head Start—
Early Head Start and Pre K Counts
2014-2015**



helping ♥
children develop
and fulfill
their potential

The best times of our lives

ANNUAL REPORT

1901 Memorial Drive Farrell, PA 16121 724-346-4482
www.mchs-ehs.org



WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO IN MERCER COUNTY, EVERY DAY.



Dear Community Leaders and Neighbors:

The Mercer County Head Start in June 2015 celebrated 50 years of service to children in this community. The program promotes school readiness by promoting cognitive, emotional and social development for low income children ages 3 to 5. The program also provides health, nutrition, disabilities, mental health and social services to meet the needs of the family.

Our programs, Head Start, Early Head Start and Pre K Counts are not only preparing the children for school but also works with the parents to understand their role as the child's first teacher and to help establish relationships with families to assist them in developing goals that will support, family well-being, families as learners and lifelong educators , family engagement in transitions and family connections to peers, and the community as well as families as advocates and leaders in their schools and communities.

We go beyond the academics of the classroom and look at the child and family holistically to assure we are reducing barriers to education and sufficiency. While the interest and studies continues on the benefits and effects of Head Start and whether it works or not, we here in Mercer County know it works. We hear the stories from the parents, kindergarten teachers and principals as to its effectiveness and we hold onto those truths.

We want to thank the Mercer County school districts, businesses, health and social service providers who give of themselves so that we at Head Start can continue to do the job we do of educating children and stabilizing families.

We are here to serve, with high expectations of achievement for our children, families and staff. Join us in our journey to achieving outcomes.

*Wilma V. Torres,
Executive Director*



EDUCATION SERVICES AND SCHOOL READINESS

2014-2015 SCHOOL READINESS

The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum that features exploration and discovery as a way of learning. *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool* is fully aligned with the *Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework* and state early learning standards.

Using exploration and discovery as a way of learning, *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool* enables children to develop confidence, creativity, and lifelong critical thinking skills.* <https://teachingstrategies.com>

ESSENTIAL DOMAIN: Physical Health and Development

- ♦ Children will improve skills to promote positive physical health and development.

ESSENTIAL DOMAIN: Language and Literacy

- ♦ Children will Develop and demonstrate language and literacy skills.

ESSENTIAL DOMAIN: Cognition and General Knowledge

- ♦ Children will develop and demonstrate cognition and general knowledge skills.

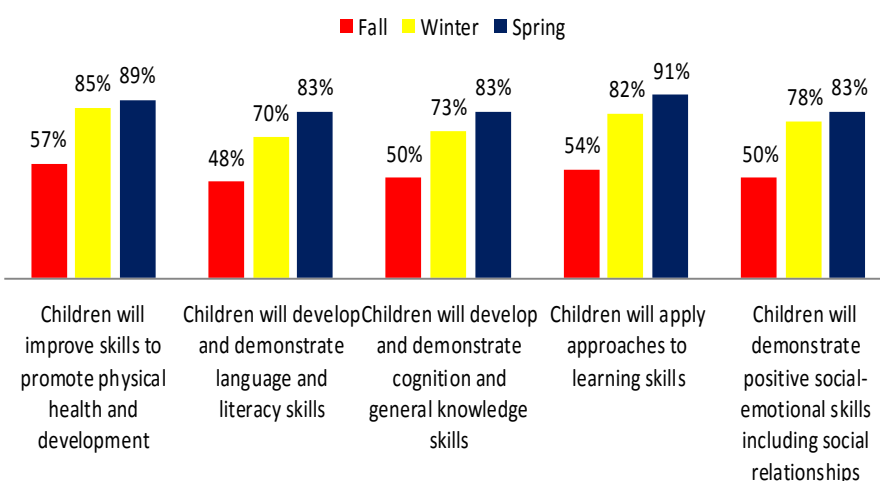
ESSENTIAL DOMAIN: Approaches to Learning

- ♦ Children will learn and apply approaches to learning skills.

ESSENTIAL DOMAIN: Social Emotional Development

- ♦ Children will demonstrate positive social-emotional skills including social relationships.

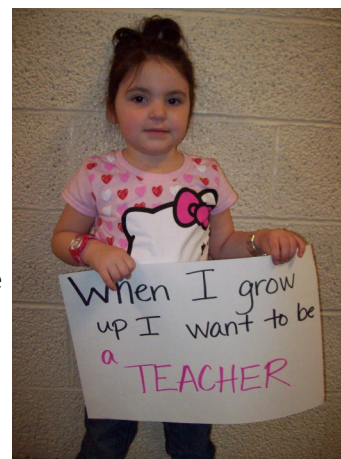
Overall School Readiness Progress 2014-2015



SCHOOL READINESS OUTCOMES

Of the 508 children enrolled in our Head Start / Early Head Start / PA Pre-K COUNTS classrooms with assessment data:

- ♦ There was a 32% increase of students between Spring and Fall of students who improved their physical and health development skills resulting in a total of 452 who were successful in meeting the goal.
- ♦ There was a 35% increase between Spring and Fall of students who developed and demonstrated language and literacy skills, with 422 who were academically successful in meeting the goal by the end of the year.
- ♦ There was a 33% increase between Spring '15 and Fall '14 of students who developed and demonstrated cognition and general knowledge skills with 422 students or 83% of the population reaching the goal.
- ♦ There was a 37% increase, between Spring '15 and Fall '14 of students who applied approaches to learning skills resulting in a total of 462 students were successful in meeting the goal.





FAMILY SERVICES and OUTCOMES

The Head Start and Pre K Counts Programs have classrooms in each of the 12 school districts in Mercer County, serving a total of 486 children ages 3 and 4, which represents 19.54% of the number of potentially eligible children in that age group in Mercer County. The Early Head Start programs provide for Home Based services to children and/or pregnant women, this program serves 60 or .017% of the potentially eligible children ages 0-2.

Family Engagement Activities

WHO ARE OUR CUSTOMERS?

37% of HS families and 57% of Early HS families are two-parent households
60% of HS families and 66% of EHS families are single-parent households
58% of HS families and 44% of Early HS families have one adult working
5% of HS parents and 1% of Early HS parents have a Bachelor's Degree
27% of HS parents 32% of Early HS parents have an Associates Degree
43% of HS children and 62% in Early HS have a HS Diploma or GED
92% of HS children and 83% in Early HS of children were at or below the 100% poverty line.
45% of HS children and 10% in Early HS received public assistance
26% of HS children and 15% in Early HS were African-American or Black
66% of HS children and 78% in Early HS were Caucasian or White
13% of HS children and 3% in Early HS were Bi- or Multi-Racial

- ◆ Policy Council Training
- ◆ How to Plant a Garden
- ◆ Dental Health
- ◆ Safety in the Home
- ◆ Volunteer Training
- ◆ Positive Behavior Management
- ◆ Child Abuse Prevention
- ◆ Child Development
- ◆ Transitioning Your Child to Kindergarten
- ◆ Healthy Eating
- ◆ Male Involvement Days

We strongly believe that the "Success of the Family" translates into success for the child. Our Family Advocates and Early Head Start Home Visitors work with Parents to establish a Family Advancement Plan, with goals and strategies to meet their aspirations, desires and needs. The Family Advocates and EHS Home Visitors conduct home visits and follow up with parents to see if they are working on their strategies to achieve those goals they set. Success is in all of our parents, sometimes, we have to help them believe it!!

FAMILY OUTCOMES for HEAD START & EARLY HEAD START



Of the 426 Families served in the 2014-15 program year. Of the families seeking assistance:

- ◆ 37 families maintained their utilities.
- ◆ 29 families maintained emotional and social well being.
- ◆ 12 families increased their literacy and educational skills.
- ◆ 18 families increased their job skills through training.
- ◆ 4 families decreased their dependency on substances.
- ◆ 363 families increased their knowledge in parenting skills.
- ◆ 55 dads engaged in their child's education through their involvement.
- ◆ 380 parents volunteer their time in the classroom.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

2014-2015 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Head Start Early Head Start

ENROLLMENT

Funded Enrollment	372	66
Cumulative Enrolled Children 3-5	459	0
Cumulative Enrolled Children 0-3 and Pregnant Women	0	118
No. of children enrolled for multiple years	114	53
No. of 3 year olds	192	0
No. of 4 year olds	267	0

HEALTH-DISABILITIES-NUTRITION

- 100% of families had a medical home 99% of children were enrolled in Health Insurance
- 98% of children were up to date on childhood immunizations
- 98% of children had a dental home
- 50% of children finished school with up to date age appropriate preventative & primary dental care
- 56% of the 48 children with chronic conditions received medical treatments.
- 22% of the children were identified as needing further dental treatment, and 8 needed specialty care.
- 95 children in HS, had an IEP-Individual Education Plan
- 14 children in Early Head Start, had a Individual Family Service Plan
- 109 referrals were made for Early Intervention Services
- 12 referrals were made for Mental Health Services
- 283 children were at Healthy Weight,
- 22 Underweight,
- 75 Overweight
- 74 determined as Obese at Enrollment

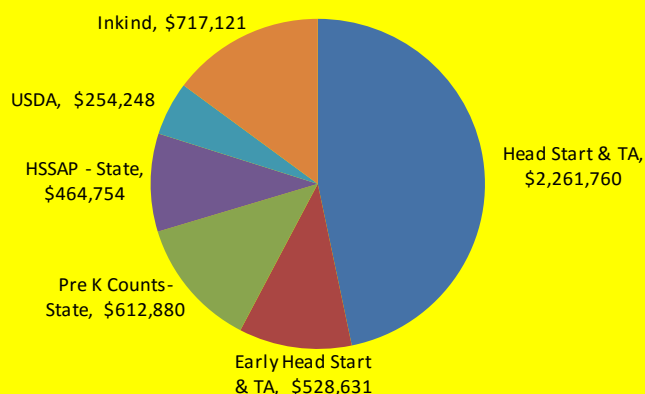


Average Monthly Enrollment * as Percentage of Funded Enrollment HS Funded Enrollment = 372

Sept 2014	372	100%	Feb. 2015	372	100%
Oct. 2014	372	100%	Mar. 2015	372	100%
Nov. 2014	372	100%	Apr. 2015	365	98%
Dec. 2014	372	100%	May 2015	359	96%
Jan. 2015	372	100%	June 2015	353	94%

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

2014-2015 Grant Funds Received



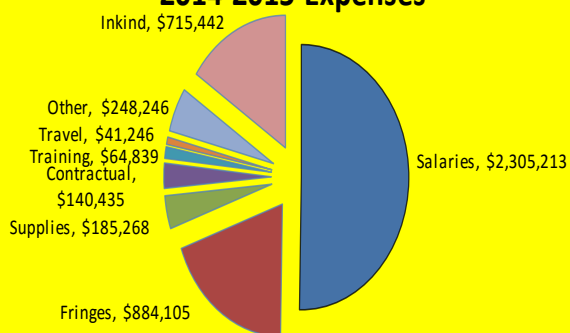
The program receives Federal and State funding to provide comprehensive Early Academic Preschool Services to children 0-5, and to Engage Families in their own sufficiency. Collectively, the four programs employed 112 staff persons, of which 23 are former or current parents.

The program must generate 20% of the funding to support its Federal Programs through volunteers, donations or cash and must also utilize USDA funds to support nutritious meals for children.

2014-15 Public and Private Funds

Grant Name	Received	Expended
Head Start & TA	\$ 2,261,760	\$ 2,258,309
Early Head Start & TA	\$ 528,631	\$ 533,748
Pre K Counts-State	\$ 612,880	\$ 612,880
HSSAP - State	\$ 464,754	\$ 464,415
USDA	\$ 254,248	\$ 239,958
Inkind	\$ 717,121	\$ 717,121
Totals	\$ 4,839,394	\$ 4,826,431

2014-2015 Expenses



In 2014-15, Head Start and Early Head Start benefited from the support of 447 persons who volunteered in the program, at a value of \$133,339 of Inkind Service. As well as donated space from the school districts in the amount of \$111,523.

Independent Audit and Federal Reviews

Hill, Barth & King, LLC, an independent certified public accounting firm, conducted an audit of the combined financial statements and programs of Farrell Area School District-Mercer County Head Start, Early Head Start and Pre K Counts Program. The firm, in its opinion, found that the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Programs as of June 30, 2015 and 2014 and the changes in its funds balance for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

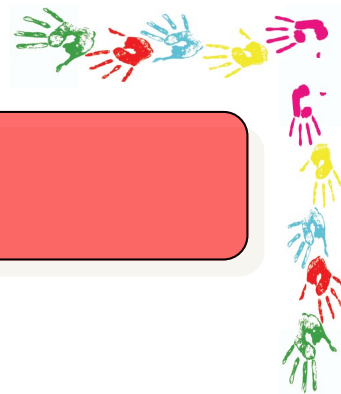
An on-site ERSEA & Fiscal review was conducted in February 2015 by ACF. An official "Overview of Findings" found the program had no area of noncompliance during the course of the review. Accordingly, there are no corrective actions required at this time.

An on-site Pre K CLASS review was conducted in March 2015 by ACF. Pre K CLASS measures teacher-child interactions and measures those observed interactions on a seven point scale. The findings indicate the Pre K CLASS Results to be: Emotional Support: 6.3125 Classroom Organization: 6.0463 and Instructional Support: 3.5741.

An on-site Environmental Health & Safety Review was conducted in April 2015 by ACF, An official "Overview of Findings" found the program had no area of noncompliance during the course of the review. Accordingly, there are no corrective actions required at this time.

An on-site Comprehensive Services and School Readiness review was conducted in February 2016 by ACF, An official "Overview of Findings" found the program had no area of non-compliance during the course of the review. Accordingly there are no corrective actions required at this time.

*****Official Review Documents are available for review at MCHS Administrative Office*****



The Best Times of Our Lives

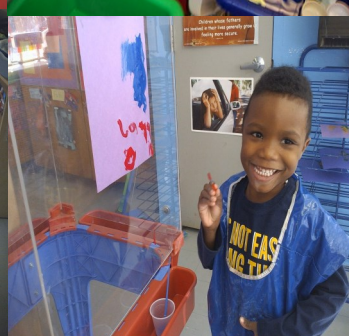
"Play is the highest form of research".....Albert Einstein

I AM in PRESCHOOL

I am not built to sit still
Keep my hands to myself,
take turns, be patient,
stand in line or keep quiet
all of the time.

I need
motion,
novelty,
adventure
and to engage the world
with my whole body.

Let me PLAY
(Trust me, I'm learning)



*If a child cannot learn in the way we teach,
we must teach in the way the child can learn.*

..Unknown



Mission Statement:

Mercer County Head Start-Early Head Start and Pre K Counts Programs connect children, families, schools and communities by partnering quality education with caring support services today for a better tomorrow.

Mercer County Head Start-Early Head Start and Pre K Counts
are programs of the Farrell Area School District a Delegate of Community Action Partnership of Mercer County.

Ron Errett, Chief Executive Officer
Community Action Partnership of Mercer County

Rev. Lora Adams-King, Superintendent
Farrell Area School District

Ray Benedict, Board Chair
Community Action Partnership of Mercer County

Rev. Terry Harrison, Board Chair
Farrell Area School District

Wilma V. Torres, Executive Director
Mercer County Head Start-Early Head Start & PA Pre K Counts

Angela Sweeney, Policy Council Chair
Mercer County Head Start-Early Head Start & PA Pre K Counts

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Mercer County Head Start, Early Head Start, HSSAP and Pre K Counts programs prohibit discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, ability, gender identity, religion, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by any federal and state grants.