

Pasco County Schools Early Childhood Programs
Annual Report 2020-2021



Learn Together, Grow Stronger



Early Childhood Programs

www.pasco.k12.fl.us/ecp

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Program Overview

HEAD START / EARLY HEAD START

Pasco County Schools is a Head Start/Early Head Start grantee. Through this federally funded grant, high quality early childhood comprehensive services promoting school readiness are offered to enrolled expectant mothers, children and families from pre-birth through age 5.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Federal Office of Head Start provides grants to local public and private non-profit and for-profit agencies to provide comprehensive child development services to economically disadvantaged children and families, with a special focus on helping preschoolers develop school readiness skills in the areas of early reading, mathematics and social skills. In 1995, the Early Head Start program was established to serve children from birth to three years of age in recognition of the mounting evidence that the earliest years significantly impact children's growth and development. In 2003, Pasco County Schools was awarded the Early Head Start grant.

Head Start/Early Head Start programs promote school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, parent engagement, health, nutritional, mental health and disabilities and other services to enrolled children and families. Program staff engage parents in their children's learning experiences and help them make progress toward their family outcome goals. Significant emphasis is placed on the involvement of parents in the governance of local Head Start/Early Head Start programs.

PROGRAM SERVICES

Early Childhood Development and Health

The Office of Head Start's commitment to wellness embraces a comprehensive vision of health for children, families, and staff to support school readiness. The objective of the program is to ensure that, through collaboration among families, staff, and health professionals, all health and developmental concerns are identified, and children and families are linked to an ongoing source of continuous, accessible care to meet their basic health needs.

The objective of education and early childhood development is to provide all children with a safe, nurturing, engaging, enjoyable, and secure learning environment, in order to help them gain the awareness, skills, and confidence necessary to succeed in their present environment, and to deal with later responsibilities in school and in life. Each child is treated as an individual in an inclusive community that values, respects, and responds to diversity within the program's communities. The varied experiences provided by the program support the continuum of children's growth and development, which includes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of each child.

Family and Community Engagement

Head Start/Early Head Start offers parents opportunities and support for growth, so that they can identify their own strengths, needs and interest. The objective of family partnerships is to support parents as they identify and meet their own goals, nurture the development of their children in the context of their family and culture, and advocate for communities that are supportive of children and families of all cultures through the Family Partnership Agreement process. The building of trusting, collaborative relationships between parents and staff allows them to share with and to learn from one another. Our program follows Head Start's/Early Head Start's *Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework* as a model of meeting the needs of our families to support self-resiliency and sufficiency.

Head Start/Early Head Start serves families within the context of the community and recognizes that many other agencies and groups work with the same families. The objective of community partnerships is to ensure that the grantee collaborate with partners in their communities, in order to provide the highest level of services to children and families, to foster the development of a continuum of family centered services, and to advocate for a community that shares responsibility for the healthy development of children and families of all cultures.

VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN (VPK)

VPK is a state funded early learning program designed to prepare children for success in kindergarten. Early Childhood Programs offers VPK during the school year to Head Start children as part of a blended funding model, which includes 540 hours of instruction. Eligible Pasco County children who do not participate in any school year VPK program have an opportunity to attend Summer VPK offered through Early Childhood Programs or private providers.

Mission and Vision:

We exist to provide a world class education for all students.

**All of our students and families achieving success
in college, career, and in life.**

Annual Performance Indicators

Head Start		Early Head Start	
Funded enrollment	660	Funded enrollment	128
Total number of children/families served	684	Total number of children/families served	146
Average monthly enrollment (% funded enrollment)	97%	Average monthly enrollment (% funded enrollment)	100%
Children who received dental exams	78%	Children who received dental exams	0%
Children who have a medical home	90%	Children who have a medical home	63%
Children up to date on immunizations	93%	Expectant mothers served	15
Children with Individual Education Plans (IEPs)	15%	Children with IEPs or Individual Family Service Plans	23%
Volunteer and meeting hours	40,732	Volunteer and meeting hours	249
Meals served	261,401	Meals served	20,823

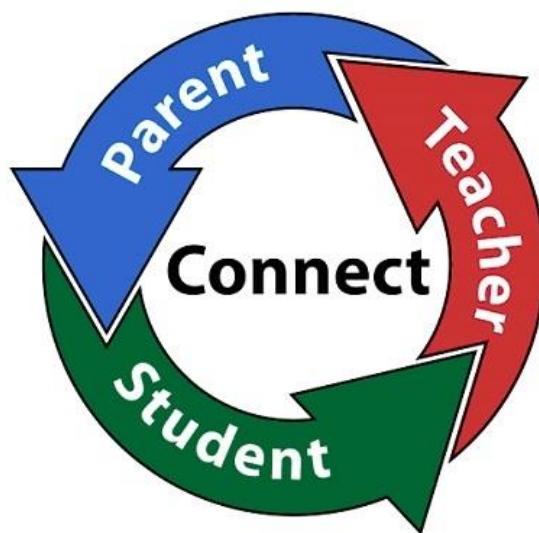
Who We Are & Who We Serve

Highly Qualified Staff	The Families We Serve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of Head Start Teachers hold Florida State Teacher Certificates • 100% of Head Start Teachers hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree • 85% Teacher, Caregiver, Home Services Worker retention • 100% of Head Start Instructional Assistants have a Child Development Associate (CDA) equivalency, AA, or BA degree • 100% of Early Head Start Caregivers have a CDA equivalency, AA, or BA degree. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45% Hispanic • 20% Black or African American • 18% Biracial, multi-racial • 26% Dual Language Learners (Spanish) • 4% children in foster homes • 38% unemployed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10% homeless • 19% families on public assistance • 47% of families receive WIC • 23% of parents have less education than High School Diploma • 61% single family homes

Family Engagement

Family engagement is a collaborative and strengths-based process through which early childhood professionals, families, and children build positive and goal-oriented relationships. It is a shared responsibility of families and staff at all levels that requires mutual respect for the roles and strengths each has to offer. Family engagement focuses on culturally and linguistically responsive relationship-building with key family members in a child's life. These people include pregnant women, expectant families, mothers, fathers, grandparents and other adult caregivers. It requires making a commitment to creating and sustaining an ongoing partnership that supports family well-being. It also honors and supports the parent-child relationships that are central to a child's healthy development, school readiness and well-being. Our program utilizes the Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework as a guide to learning how family engagement promotes positive, enduring change for children, families and communities.

This past year as we transitioned from distance learning to traditional learning, the team focused on strengthening and maintaining relationships with the children and families. The team participated in monthly social-emotional learning opportunities to support equity and strengthening compassionate schools. The team is grateful for the private donor who supplied multiple gift cards to supplement family needs during distance learning. Our children and families were able to benefit from weekly food drives within the school district and local community. In the spring, we had two Early Literacy drive-thru events, titled "Curbside with Clifford". Every family who attended received three new books to add to their home libraries. Families received reading strategies and tools to help their children develop literacy skills. Thank you to our community partners for supporting these events. We ended the year with volunteer recognition, to celebrate parent involvement and leadership.



SUPPORTING FAMILIES WITH ATTENDANCE

Did you know that participation in a high-quality preschool program has benefits for your child?

Missing 10% of preschool (even one or two days every few weeks) can make it harder for your child to develop early reading skills. (www.attendanceworks.org)

The Head Start/Early Head Start program continued to advocate for good attendance habits by supporting the families and helping families break down barriers, which may prevent them from having their students attend Head Start/Early Head Start regularly. Staff support families to complete a Family Attendance Plan. Ongoing parent education regarding the importance of attendance for the development of school readiness goals is provided in a variety of ways throughout the year.

Parent Survey Results

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% of families shared that the classrooms/Early Head Start <i>Learning through Fun</i> sessions had an open and welcoming atmosphere.• 99% of families were familiar with the Head Start and Early Head Start School Readiness Goals.• 99% of families reported their child made progress with his/her language and literacy skills.• 99% of families stated their child made social and emotional progress. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 97% of families reported their child made progress in mathematics skills.• 99% of families responded that based on screening and assessment data, they were involved with developing educational goals for their child.• 97% of families felt the goal setting process was helpful to themselves and their family.• 96% of families indicated their questions and concerns about services and resources for their family were addressed by program staff. |
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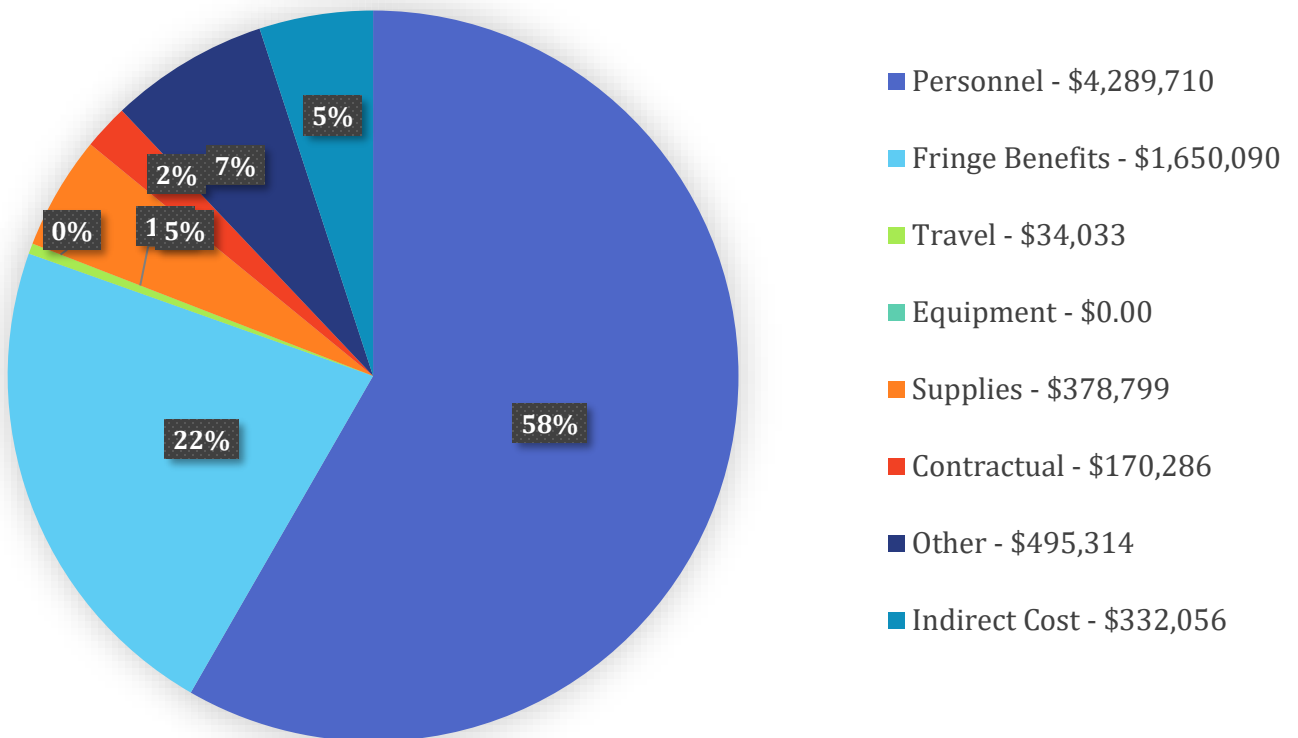
Funding



Head Start Grant	\$5,265,549
Early Head Start Grant	\$2,400,728
Total Program Funding	\$7,666,277
Total Non-Federal Share of Matching Funds	
Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK)	\$1,916,570
USDA	\$ 763,209
Title 1	\$ 257,278

The result of the District's Financial Audit can be accessed at: <http://www.pasco.k12.fl.us/finance/>

Head Start/Early Head Start Program Budget Expenditures



Special Initiatives

CONSCIOUS DISCIPLINE®

Conscious Discipline® is a comprehensive, trauma-informed and healing-centered self-regulation program, based on current brain research, that integrates social emotional learning, school and classroom culture, and restorative discipline. The Conscious Discipline® approach is an “adult first” model designed to develop awareness, shift mindsets, and build fundamental capacities and skills in teachers, staff, and parents. Adults can then more effectively model and provide coaching to students while offering organic opportunities to build meaningful relationships and practice skills. It empowers students to share ownership and responsibility for all aspects of their community to create safe and supportive classroom and school environments.

Conscious Discipline® is a universal tier I approach that benefits all students and can also be implemented at the tier II and tier III level as needed for additional support. It decreased aggression, impulsivity, hyperactivity, and discipline referrals, while increasing teaching time and academic achievement, and is recognized on SAMSHA’s National Registry of evidence-based programs and practices. Conscious Discipline® is one of only three social emotional learning programs reviewed by Harvard’s Graduate School of Education to offer schools extensive climate supports, and one of only six that offer professional development to explicitly build adult social emotional competence.

Conscious Discipline® has been fully implemented in Pasco County Schools Early Childhood Programs for the past two years. Each week, parent trainings are held virtually (with a variety of dates and times to better accommodate our parents) for all parents in the program, focusing on all seven skills and powers of Conscious Discipline® for parents to implement and reinforce at home with their children. Staff members have attended multiple trainings on Conscious Discipline® to implement the seven skills and powers with children in the classroom. Several elementary schools are implementing Conscious Discipline® school-wide, supporting trauma informed care practices. The program aligns with the district’s Social Emotional Learning Plan in better supporting the emotional well-being of our students.



CHILD DEVELOPMENT FOCUS AREA

This year, the Early Childhood Programs' Child Development team focused on continuing to improve three key areas:

- Social Emotional Support
- Curriculum Fidelity
- School Readiness Goals based on the objectives of ELOF and TS GOLD

Head Start teachers participated in bi-monthly professional learning communities focused on building strong social emotional learning and support in our classrooms through the implementation of Conscious Discipline. Teachers focused on a different skill of Conscious Discipline to learn and implement in their classrooms. A group of teachers attended the Conscious Discipline Elevate Conference in July 2021 to help with a higher level of implementation within the program.

Imagine Learning was a continued resource used in classrooms to support Dual Language Learners. Imagine Learning has proven to be a successful resource for all our students in supporting language development.

For the third year, Head Start participated in the school-wide implementation of the International Baccalaureate program at one of the elementary school sites.

The Creative Curriculum Cloud was added to our program's Teaching Strategies license. The new platform allows staff to access an enhanced library of curriculum resources and digitally upload into their lesson plans. The system also provides differentiated learning experience based on the assessment data that is uploaded into the system. This allows for more efficient and individualized lesson planning.

In 2020-2021, continued teacher observations using the CLASS tool were completed to assess areas of needed coaching supports in the classroom.



Health Services

COVID-19 TRADITIONAL LEARNING

For the 2020-2021 school year, students who were previously attending school virtually via mySchool Online, transitioned back to the classroom setting. Welcoming our students along with our staff was initially challenging. However, with a large number of staff and community members being vaccinated for Covid-19, practicing safety measures such as: social distancing, washing hands up to 20 seconds, wearing masks, and staying home when sick, Covid-19 numbers decreased, and students continue participate in face-to-face learning.

WHY IS A LEAD TEST IMPORTANT FOR MY CHILD?

One of the screenings that Head Start requests for every child is a lead blood test. High lead levels are highly toxic and produce adverse effects in nearly all organ systems in the body. There are many ways in which humans are exposed to lead: through chipped paint, household dust, bare soil, drinking water, air, food, hair dyes and other cosmetics.

Childhood lead poisoning has significant effects on the health of children and on community health. It is especially harmful to the developing brain and nervous system for children under the age of 6 years. All children who are 12 and 24 months old must have a lead blood test. Any child who does not have evidence of a previous lead test must have one drawn between the ages of 36 and 72 months. During the blood lead test, a small amount of blood is taken from the finger, heel, or arm and tested.

The finger-prick or heel-prick (capillary) tests are the first step to determine if a child has lead in their blood. While finger-prick tests can provide fast results, they can also produce higher results if lead on the skin is captured in the sample. Then, a second test (venous blood draw) is necessary to confirm the results.

HEALTH EDUCATION

We provided health education regarding Covid-19 prevention, flu season/flu immunization, breastfeeding, healthy eating, car safety, SIDS, potty training, and dental health. In response to the pandemic, our health education tools for families have become largely virtual. The Early Childhood Programs have partnered with district staff to implement CDC approved guidelines to ensure the safety of staff and families for the return of the 2021-2022 school year.

BREASTFEEDING

Breastfeeding education has been provided to all expectant mothers and we are happy to report that most mothers are breastfeeding successfully. Mothers within the program are encouraged to reach out to the health outcomes team if they have challenges with receiving a breast pump. The program encourages all mothers to breast feed as it lowers the risk of breast and ovarian cancer, as well as the chances of getting diabetes, hypertension, and osteoporosis. Breastfeeding reduces the chances of getting postpartum depression. In addition, breastfed babies may become healthier children, reducing allergies, eczema, asthma, with fewer cavities and childhood obesity.

Mental Health & Disabilities Notes

It is the responsibility of the Mental Health and Disabilities team to help ensure that each child receives a level of individualized support needed for school and life readiness. This process involves collaboration with families and staff to identify strengths, areas of concern, contributing factors, and to develop interventions to encourage growth in these areas. When an area of concern is identified, families and staff work as a team to constantly process the question, "How can we help this child be successful?". Then interventions are put in place to support and monitor a child's progress in the areas of need.

To support children's social emotional needs, we continued to expand the implementation of the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) for infant, toddlers, and preschoolers. The DECA is a behavior screening and assessment tool that focuses on identifying key social and emotional strengths and areas of need. It provides researched based strategies, including Conscious Discipline, to promote children's resilience, the ability to bounce back from difficulty. Teachers and families learn specific ways to help children get along with others, share how they feel, explore, and learn. We had teachers and parents complete an assessment on 48 children. The results were used to design individualized intervention plans for home and school, as well as monitor children's progress to ensure they have the strengths and skills necessary to reach their highest potential.

The Disabilities team consists of three Disabilities Coordinators/Interventionists, two of them serving Head Start, one is serving Early Head Start. Together they have provided intervention and follow-up for 354 children with developmental concerns. This has included 162 referrals to Early Steps and/or Local Education Agency/Pre-K Assessment Team for evaluations to determine eligibility and need for Exceptional Special Education Support. A child also may have an Individual Family Support Plan (IFSP) for children aged 0-3 or an Individual Educational Program (IEP) for children ages 3-5. The Head Start Performance Standards require 10% of enrollment to include children with disabilities. At the end of this year, Head Start/Early Head Start had 15.7% of children with IEPs.

The Mental Health team consists of three Mental Health Coordinators, two are serving Head Start, one is serving Early Head Start. The Mental Health Coordinators received and provided support for 130 children in Head Start and 37 children in Early Head Start. Consultations with staff and/or families, trainings, participation with intervention planning, and referrals to community-based counseling agencies resulted from the mental health referrals to support families and children. The Mental Health Coordinators developed solid partnerships with Chrysalis, Baycare, and a private therapist who provide mental health and wellness counseling and therapy at Medicaid rates. Baycare even has a budget for non-insured families and has agreed to work with our families.

The Mental Health and Disabilities team is excited to continue the work of prevention, identification, and interventions to support children's development for Head Start and Early Head Start families.

School Readiness Outcomes

SCHOOL READINESS GOALS AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

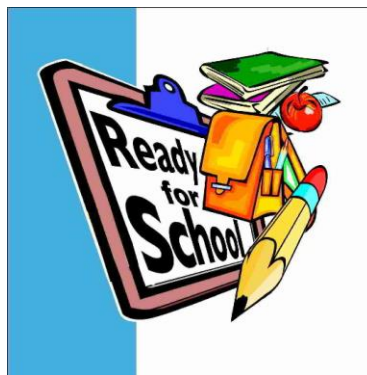
Head Start defines school readiness as *children possessing the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for success in school and for later learning in life*. Performance Standard 1307.3 and the Head Start Act of 2007 state that school readiness goals should articulate our program's expectations of children's status and progress of child development and early learning that will improve children's readiness for Kindergarten. The program has adopted the Teaching Strategies™ *Creative Curriculum* and assessment system GOLD. These curricular/assessment tools are used to collect and aggregate school readiness data four times a year.

EMERGENT LITERACY

Emergent literacy skills are developed through many opportunities for children to interact with print in a natural, developmentally appropriate learning environment. Young learners acquire literacy concepts and skills through active engagement, constructing their understanding of how written language works. Specific skills are embedded into daily activities using music, read aloud, big books, songs, charts, chants, games and environmental print. Skills in young literacy learners begin to emerge as their experiences are enriched. The onset and growth of these skills are captured through periodic and ongoing observations assessments.

EARLY MATHEMATICS

Math experiences include a variety of opportunities for young learner that actively engage them in their physical and social world to explore and utilize ideas and concepts. With an emphasis on problem solving, mathematics concepts are purposefully introduced and embedded into daily activities. Opportunities for exploration include measurement, pattern building, sequencing, numeracy, sorting & classifying, comparing, estimating, predicting and special relationships. Growth in these areas is captured through periodic and ongoing assessments.



GOLD Areas	Below Expectations				Meeting/Exceeding Expectations			
	Fall	Winter	Spring	EOY	Fall	Winter	Spring	EOY
Social and Emotional	58%	16%	9%	4%	42%	74%	91%	96%
Physical	41%	14%	5%	2%	59%	86%	95%	98%
Language	46%	24%	12%	7%	54%	76%	88%	93%
Cognitive (Including Approaches to Learning)	58%	28%	8%	5%	42%	72%	92%	95%
Literacy	70%	32%	13%	6%	30%	68%	87%	94%
Mathematics	78%	36%	15%	11%	22%	64%	85%	89%

ACTION STEPS

- Professional Development and implementation of Eureka Math in all Head Start classrooms
- Professional Development focus for Early Release Days on standards with a focus on CLASS interactions through project-based learning
- Professional Development in the area of Emergent Literacy Standards
- Implementation of Imagine Learning Language and Literacy learning modules to provide 15 minutes daily of individualized language and literacy experiences to all Head Start children in their native language (English, Spanish, Arabic, Haitian-Creole, Japanese, Mandarin, etc.).



Pasco County Schools

Providing a world-class education for all students

Kurt S. Browning, Superintendent of Schools

Pasco County School Board

Allen Altman, District 1

Colleen Beaudoin, District 2

Cynthia Armstrong, District 3, Chairman

Alison Crumbley, District 4

Megan Harding, District 5, Vice Chairman

Pasco County Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex/gender, religion, national origin, marital status, disability, age or genetic information in its educational programs, services or activities, or in its hiring and employment practices. The District also provides equal access to its facilities to the Boy Scouts and other patriotic youth groups, as required by the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act.

Questions, complaints, or requests for additional information regarding discrimination or harassment may be sent to:

Sheila Blue, Equity Manager/Title IX Coordinator

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