

Lewis County Head Start

Annual Report 2025-2026



MISSION STATEMENT

Lewis County Head Start's (LCHS) mission is to impact families and the community, through strong partnerships and high quality early childhood education services, so that families are more self-sufficient and children are school ready and prepared for lifelong learning.



Center Locations

Beaver Falls - 9601 Mira Lane Beaver Falls, NY

Lowville Class I - 7673 N. State St. Lowville, NY

Lowville Class II – 7671 N. State St. Lowville, NY

Lyons Falls – 6819 McAlpine St. Lyons Falls, NY

BOCES – 5836 NY State Rt 12, Glenfield, NY

Early Head Start - 6819 McAlpine St. Lyons Falls, NY

Enrollment was adjusted to support classes where there was a number of children diagnosed with disabilities. As children unenrolled in the program, staff/child ratio was changed to support the needs in all centers.

PROGRAM DESIGN



32 Staff support children and families through center based services.

*Beaver Falls -16 children

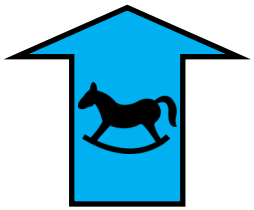
*Lowville –29 children

(Classrooms of 16 and 13 children)

*Lyons Falls - 14 children

*BOCES – 15 children

*EHS - 8 children



2 Early Head Start Home Visitors serve Lewis County

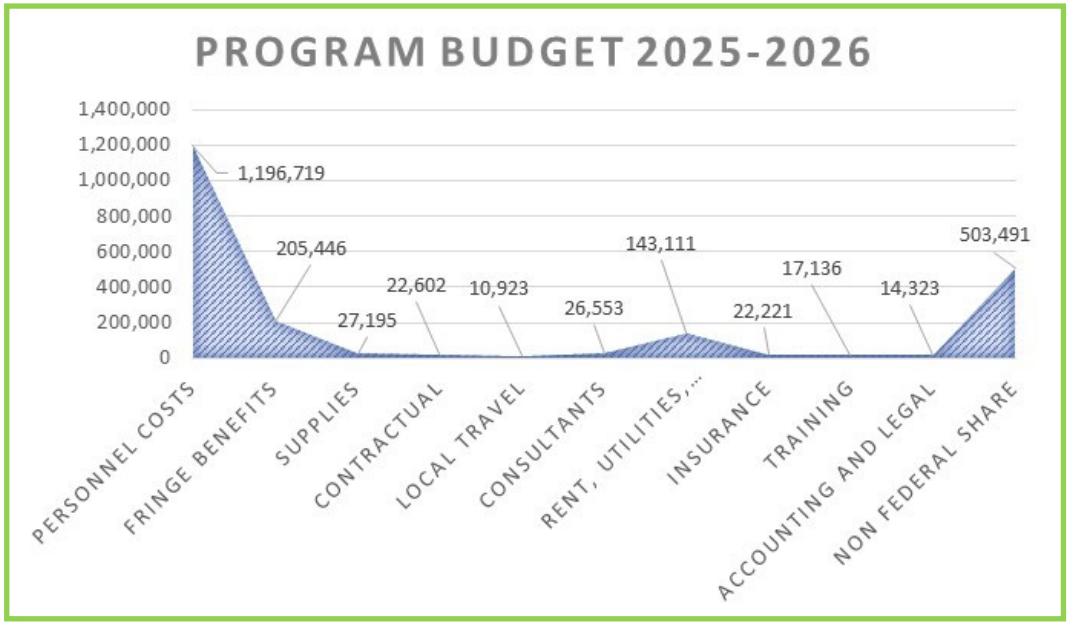
*Lowville - 13 children

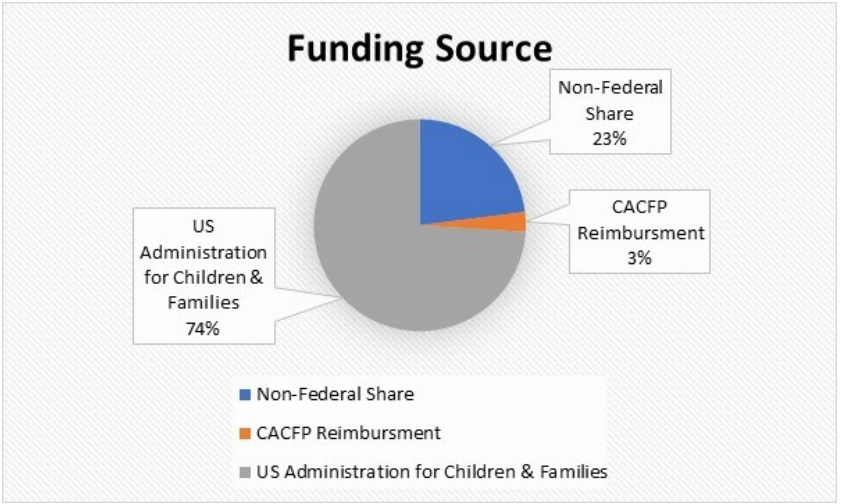
*Lyons Falls - 4 children

*Beaver Falls - 5 children



Head Start Program Budget





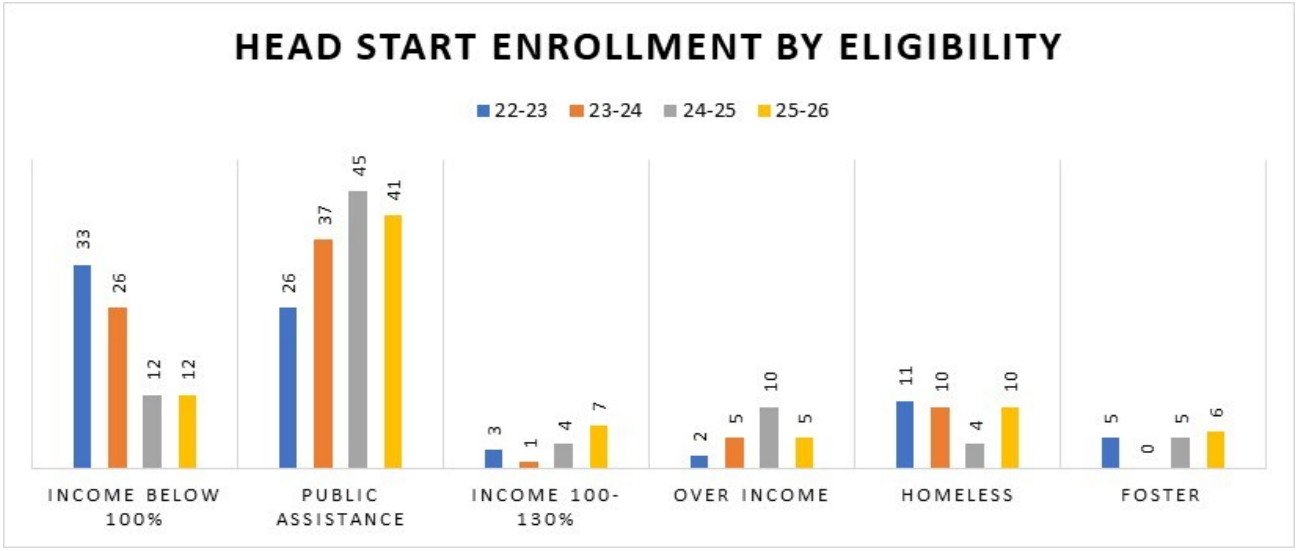
Financial Audit

Crowley & Halloran CPAs, P.C. accountants completed an independent audit of Lewis County Head Start's financial statements and internal controls for the 2025-26 fiscal year.

Auditors reported no significant deficiencies, material weaknesses or non-compliances.

Personnel Costs	$1,196,719
Fringe Benefits	$205,446
Supplies	$30,024
Rent	$63,120
Contractual	$22,602
Local Travel	$10,923
Consultants	$26,553
Rent, Utilities, Facilities	$79,988
Insurance	$22,221
Training	$17,010
Accounting and Legal	$14,323
Non-Federal Share	$503,492

Eligibility





Public Assistance

Public Assistance for Head Start includes anyone receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). Head Start began accepting SNAP as a categorical eligibility in April 2022. Below is the total for all families.

Head Start and Early Head Start:

2023-24 54 Children had SNAP, 4 Children had SSI in the family

2024-25 61 Children had SNAP and 3 have SSI

2025-26 59 Children had SNAP

Homelessness in Lewis County Head Start

14 Children are identified as Homeless in our Eligibility Criteria:

7 children live in Kinship Care with someone other than their biological parent.

3 were children of migrant workers, all moved out of the program due to a parent losing their job and the housing that was provided.

1 child moved into a hotel temporarily and parent has since obtained housing.

3 families live with grandparents and hope to find their own housing.

8 Children are identified as Foster children. 2 were reunited with a biological parent and left the program.

Home Base Visitors and Family Workers assist parents in looking for housing, obtaining vacancy lists, and looking online for leads. They also refer parents to other agencies.

ENROLLMENT



Head Start 2025-26

Cumulative Enrollment 81

7 children left after classes started

6 children not counted

5 to Pre-K, 1 moved from the county

Early Head Start

Cumulative Enrollment 34 for 30 Slots

4 children left after services started

Head Start 2024-25

Cumulative Enrollment 80

6 children left after classes started

9 children not counted

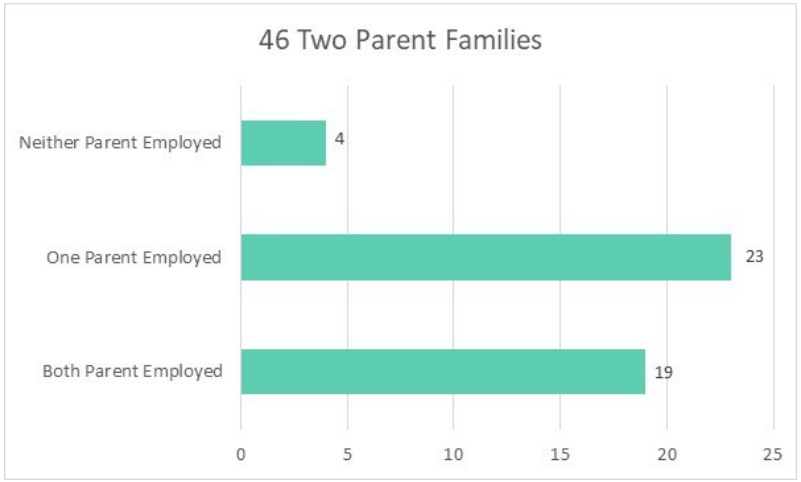
5 to Pre-K, 3 no transportation, 1 refused vaccines

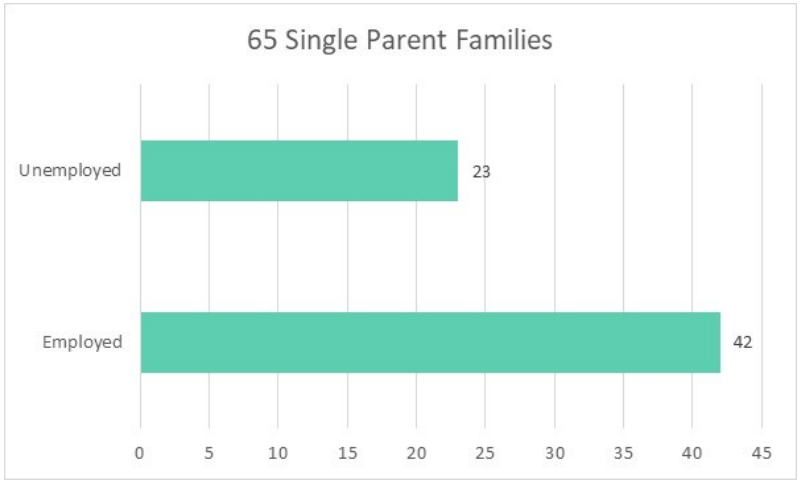
Early Head Start

Cumulative Enrollment 34 for 30 Slots

3 children left after services started

1 pregnant mom delivered baby, child enrolled







Parent Education

Based on 152 Parents

3 — Master's Degree

12 — Bachelor's Degree

8 — Associate's Degree

27 — Some college or training

81— High School Graduate or GED

21 — Less than High School Diploma

7 —11th grade

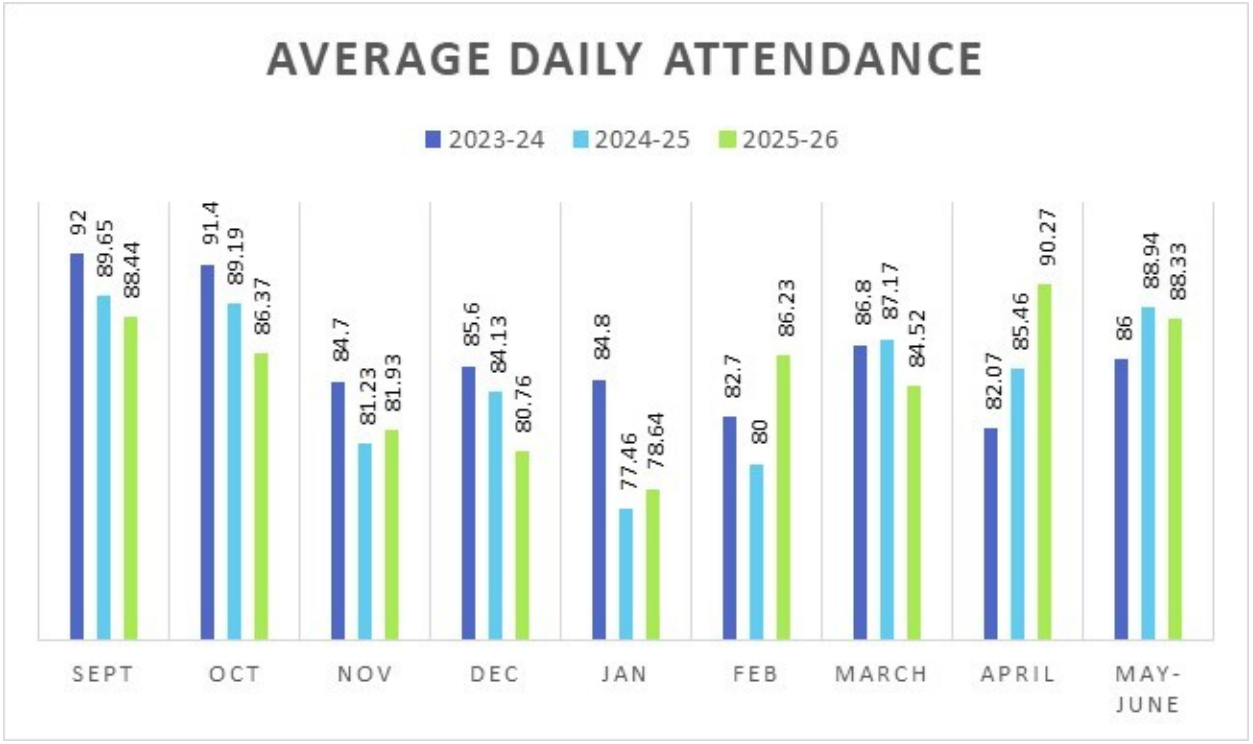
4 —10th grade

10 — 9th grade or below

Employment, job training and adult education referrals are based on individual family needs.

Attendance





Transportation

42 Children were transported on buses to and from school by 3 school districts.

38 Children were transported by parents throughout the year, 8 of these were EHS class children.

2 Children walked.

1 Child was transported by a district special education bus.

10 families were assisted with transportation by staff in Head Start vehicles due to weather, doctor appointments and illnesses, program activities, and family crisis situations.

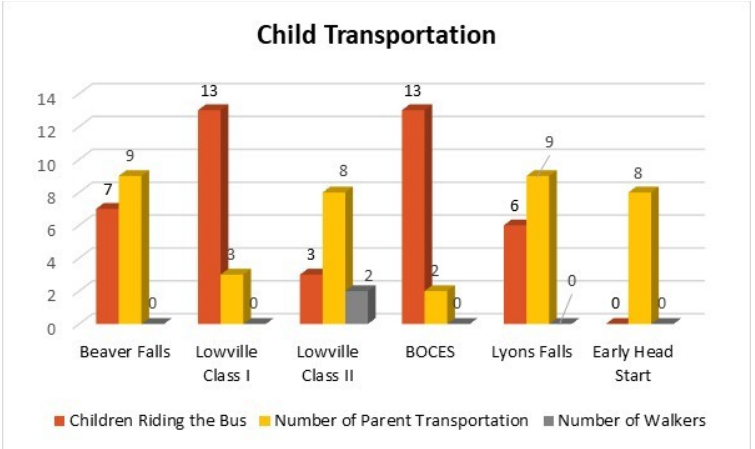
Yearly Average Daily Attendance has been consistent over the last three years.

2023-24 86.23%

2024-25 84.83%

2025-26 85.13%

The program had 55 chronically absent children. 47 continued until the end of the enrollment year. Attendance support plans were put in place with 4 families to bring attention to the benefits of regular attendance.



EDUCATION

Teacher Credentials

5 HS Lead Teachers:

40% - Bachelor's in ECE or Related Field

40% - Enrolled in ECE or Related Field

20% Associate's in ECE or Related Field

9 Teacher Assistants:

11% - Bachelor's in ECE or Related Field

11% - Associate's in ECE or Related Field

22% - CDA or Equivalent Course Work

44% - ECE Course Work, Teaching Certificate

11% -Enrolled in Preschool CDA

2 Home Visitors

50% - Bachelor's in ECE or Related Field

50% - Enrolled in ECE or related Field

2 EHS Center-Based Teachers

50% - Enrolled in ECE or Related Field

50% - Bachelor's in ECE





Disability Services

37 Children on the Disability Roster at the end of the 25-26 school year

24-25	Therapy Services	25-26
29	Speech/Language	25
27	Occupational	29
11	Physical	11
16	SEIT (Special Eduation Itinerant Teacher)	10
16	Psychological Counseling	17

24 Children entered Head Start receiving services

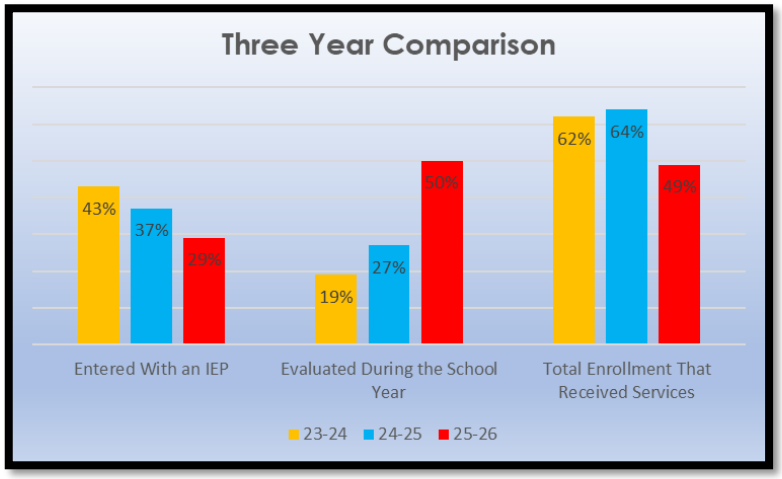
15 Children were referred for evaluations

1 Child did not qualify

2 Children left the program



24-25	Number of Services	25-26
8	Children received 1 service	5
9	Children received 2 services	11
10	Children received 3 services	13
5	Children received 4 services	3
4	Children received 5 services	2



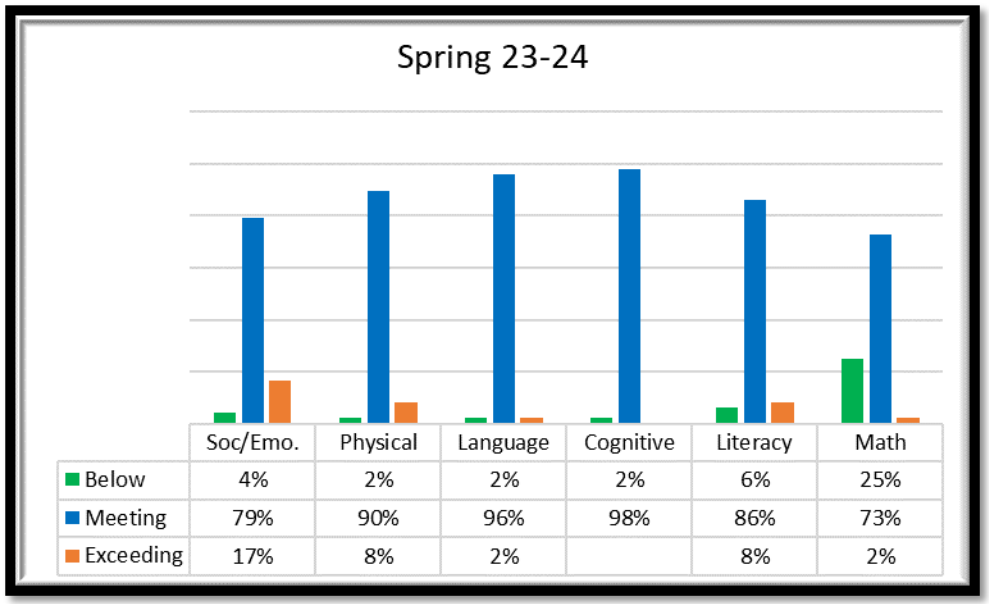
Welcoming children and families into the program and preparing them for their next experience is ongoing. A variety of activities and information are provided to support transitioning such as:

- **Orientation Home Visits and Open House**
- **Supporting parents through CPSE referrals, services and meetings**
- **Kindergarten Teachers, Principals and School Psychologists visiting classrooms, transition visits to elementary schools**
- **Small cartons of milk with lunch served weekly after April break**
- **Supporting parents through kindergarten registration, screenings, and summer transition programs**
- **Providing and conveying information to parents**
- **EHS transition visits to classroom environments**

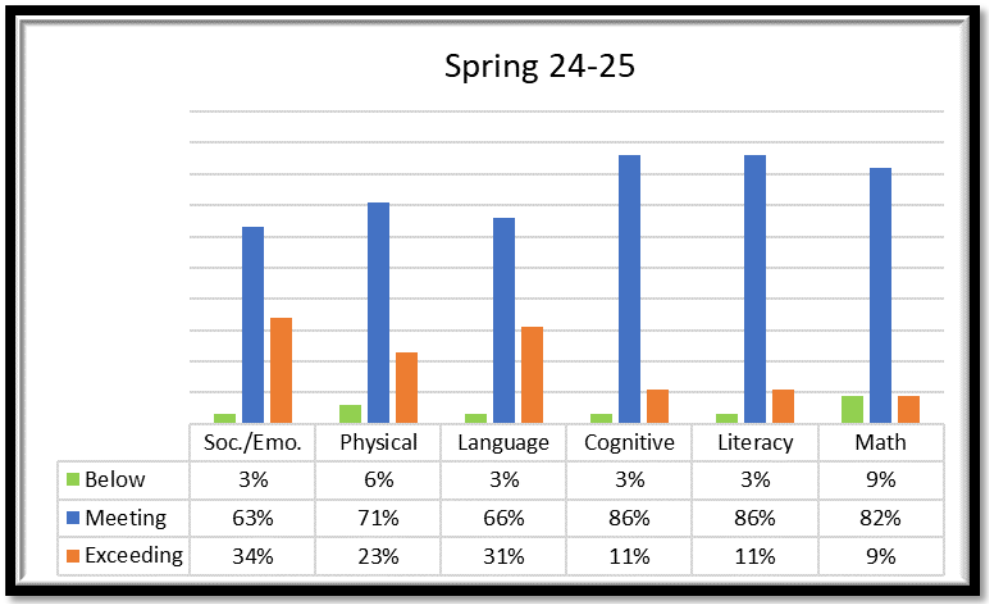


Education Outcomes—Three Year Comparison

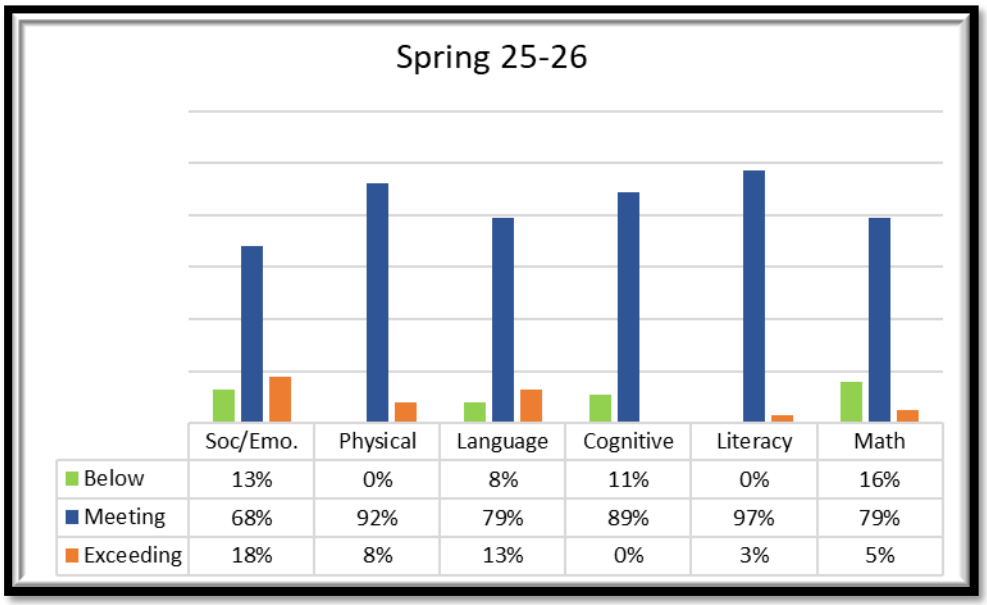
Children Entering Kindergarten



	Soc/Emo.	Physical	Language	Cognitive	Literacy	Math
Below	4%	2%	2%	2%	6%	25%
Meeting	79%	90%	96%	98%	86%	73%
Exceeding	17%	8%	2%		8%	2%



	Soc./Emo.	Physical	Language	Cognitive	Literacy	Math
Below	3%	6%	3%	3%	3%	9%
Meeting	63%	71%	66%	86%	86%	82%
Exceeding	34%	23%	31%	11%	11%	9%

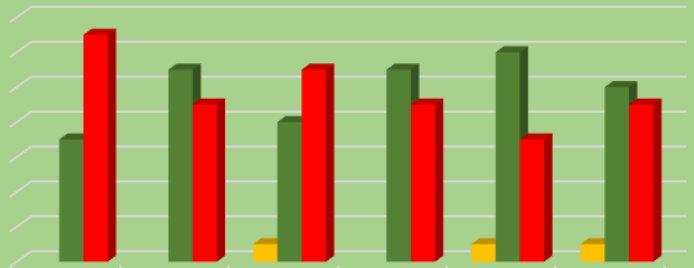


	Soc/Emo.	Physical	Language	Cognitive	Literacy	Math
Below	13%	0%	8%	11%	0%	16%
Meeting	68%	92%	79%	89%	97%	79%
Exceeding	18%	8%	13%	0%	3%	5%



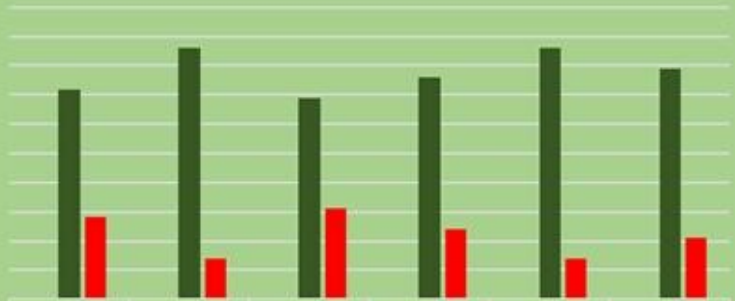
Education Outcomes—Three Year Old Children

Spring 2024



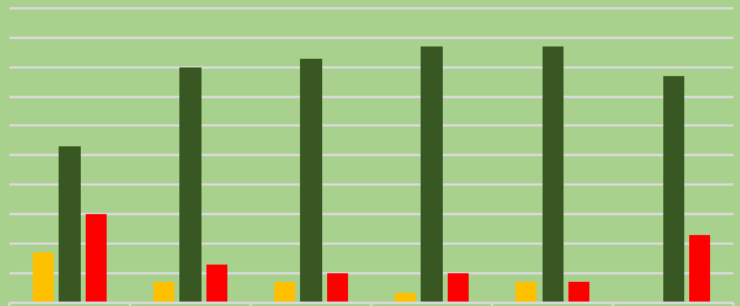
	Soc./Emo.	Physical	Language	Cognitive	Literacy	Math
Below			5.0%		5.0%	5.0%
Meeting	35.0%	55.0%	40.0%	55.0%	60.0%	50.0%
Exceeding	65.0%	45.0%	55.0%	45.0%	35.0%	45.0%

Spring 2025



	Soc./Emo.	Physical	Language	Cognitive	Literacy	Math
Below						
Meeting	72%	86%	69%	76%	86%	79%
Exceeding	28%	14%	31%	24%	14%	21%

Spring 2026



	Soc/Emo.	Physical	Language	Cognitive	Literacy	Math
Below	17%	7%	7%	3%	7%	0%
Meeting	53%	80%	83%	87%	87%	77%
Exceeding	30%	13%	10%	10%	7%	23%



Early Head Start

↓ EHS Home Base ↓

The ASQ-3, a developmental screening tool, has been used throughout the year to monitor the growth and development of children enrolled in the EHS Home-Based program. The questionnaire is organized according to an age-specific administration schedule, ensuring that children are screened using the appropriate questionnaire for their developmental age.

Screenings were conducted at regular intervals throughout the year. Results have demonstrated progression in developmental skills and have helped identify children who may benefit from referrals, additional support, or individualized activities designed to strengthen and refine specific skill areas.







Early Head Start Special Needs

8 Children Receiving Services

3 Entered with Services

8 Referred For Services (Three did not qualify)

Services Received

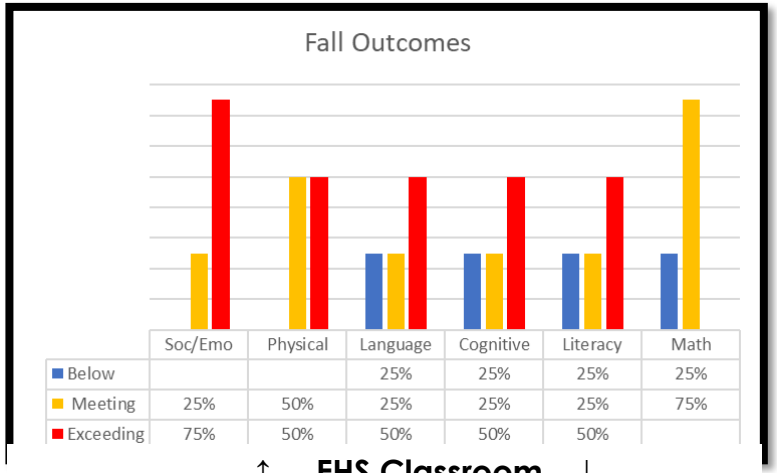
5 Speech/Language Therapy

1 Occupational Therapy

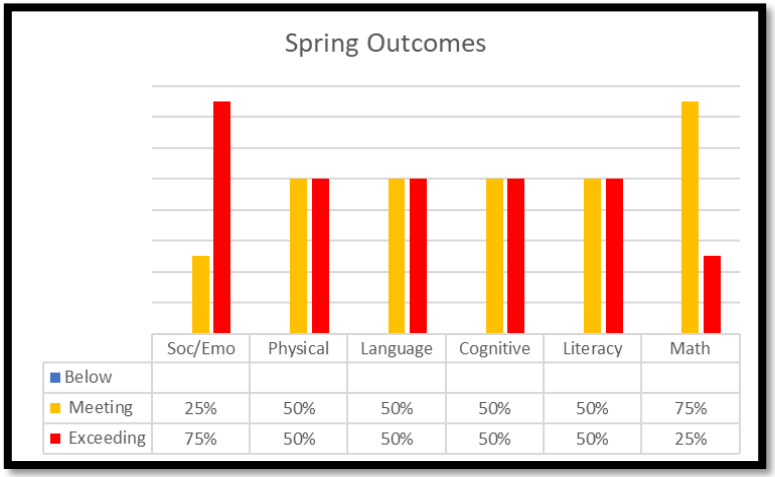
3 Physical Therapy

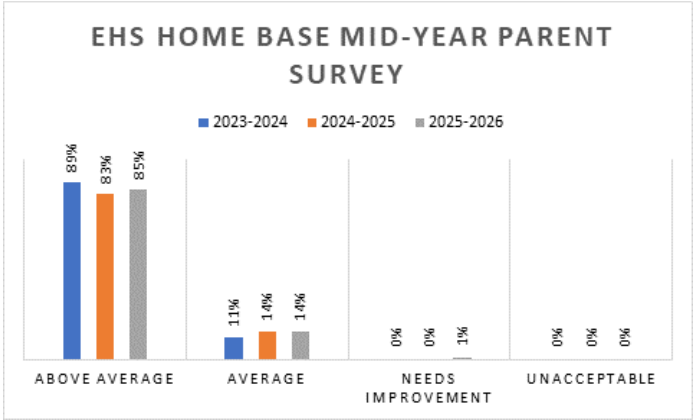
1 Special Education Itinerant Teacher, 1 on waiting list

2 Psychological Counseling



↑ EHS Classroom ↓





HEALTH SERVICES



Physicals and Immunizations

As of June 23, 2026 all enrolled children had received a physical exam for the school year.

All enrolled children are current with their immunizations. Infants are on schedule with routine immunizations. 2 Head Start children are currently in a plan to become fully immunized.

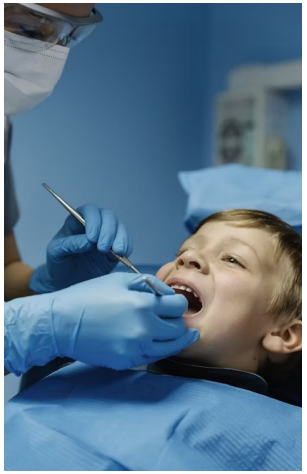
Dental Services

As of June 23, 2026

HS-EHS

64-17 Children completed a dental exam.

Percentage of children receiving preventative dental care is 78%. One dental clinic was canceled due to lack of a Dentist. The NCFHC would call when they had any openings and get our children into those open slots.





Vision Screenings

Lions Club completed free vision screenings for Head Start class children and some EHS children over 1 year old. Anyone not present was screened by Head Start staff.

All children received screenings

10 children were referred to an eye doctor for a comprehensive eye exam.

4 children were prescribed glasses/eye patches.



Mental Health Services

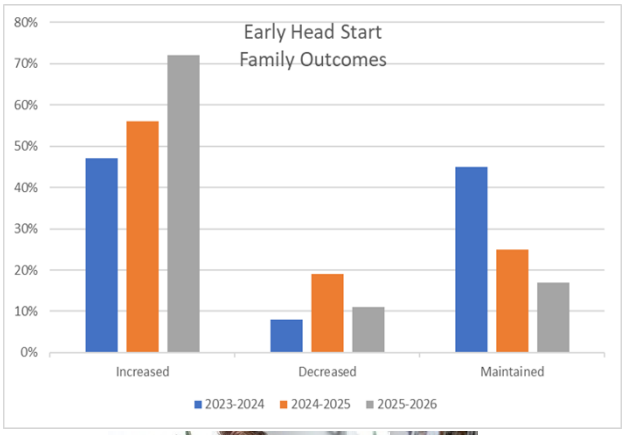
Sue Gydesen provided over 438 hours of mental health consultation to children, families and staff.

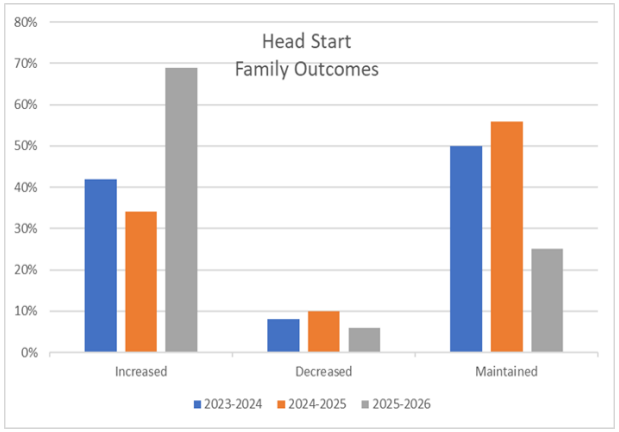
Hearing Screening

All children received hearing screenings.

5 Children were referred for a professional exam

Parent Engagement





Area of Increase: employment/income, financial security, management of credit/debt, budgeting, managing my child's behavior, developing routines for my child, educational level-continuing or furthering education, understands how children transition to the next school experience.

Area of Decrease: housing-safe and efficient, conversations with my child, introduce new vocabulary words, preparation towards my child's next school experience, connected to other parents and families with young children, volunteering in my classroom and school, awareness of state/federal issues that impact my child and family.



Family engagement benefits children's development, school readiness and strengthens families and the community. This year parent volunteers were present in classrooms and kitchens. Parent involvement was active in all areas of the program. Examples include: Home Visits, Open House, Policy Council and Advisory Meetings, Family Fun-Health and Safety Fair, Literacy Night, Grandparent's Day, Mother's and Father's Day, Holiday and Year End Activities.

Family Partnerships

Throughout the year, Head Start program provided comprehensive services to families. Staff partnered with families to promote their well-being through goal setting, identifying strengths, and providing resources to support the fulfillment of goals. Of the 97 goals established by families, 36 of the goals were met, and 61 goals made progress.

Goals were established in the areas of:

63-Parenting and Family Well Being

11-Housing

13-Financial Stability/Budgeting

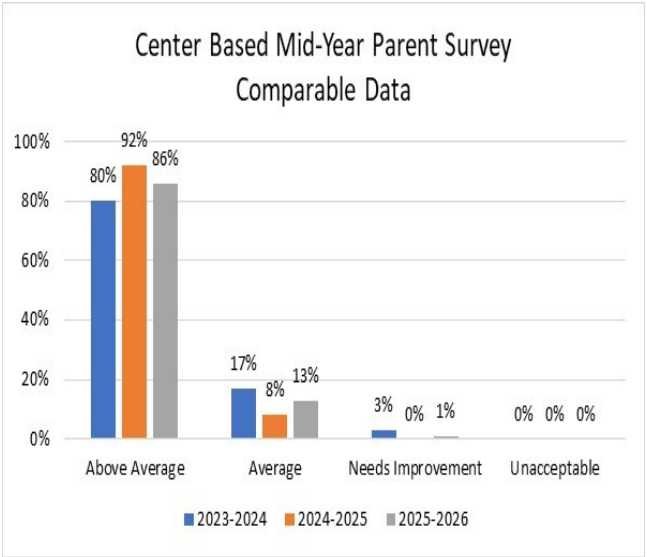
4-Employment

2-Adult Education

4-Transportation



3 Families participated in the Parenting Curriculum, "Positive Solutions for Families" on an individual basis in their homes with staff.



The Voice Of Parents

- Early Head Start is a great program. I hope it continues for the next years"
- "They have gone above and beyond. Particularly with her social, emotional and dietary needs. Very good lines of communication between parents and teachers
- "Head Start has been a blessing for our family. Not only has our child flourished in the classroom, but the program has also provided us with valuable resources and support"
- "Head Start staff go above and beyond for all the kids at school"
- "We are very happy with the Head Start program! It was exactly what our child and family needed"
- "My child is not as shy anymore. He is making friends and using his manners. You guys were able to find out he needed glasses, if it weren't for you guys I never would have known"
- "So far our experience has been nothing but positive. Any questions I have are answered promptly and thoroughly. I am alerted of any happenings and staff have been friendly."
- "Our child continues to thrive in this program. Realistic goals are set and accomplished. There is always excellent communication."
- "We love discovery days; the staff are welcoming and always have great activities"
- "We absolutely love this program! The staff are very caring and attentive to my children"
- "You guys are amazing"



Parents **R**eading **E**veryday **P**rovides **A**mazing **R**esults that are **E**verlasting **(PREPARE)**

Monthly books were sent home, along with activity ideas to be used with the book. Parents returned the survey provided with the book and gave feedback about what they liked and what the book taught children.

Parent Responses from the **PREPARE** Survey: The best thing about this book/activity was….

*"all the bunnies and making animal sounds" *"knowing that children go through many new experiences, so having a way to help their feelings of fear, anxiety or others is great to have"
*"seeing all the cool different patterns, and we liked trying to count all the snowflakes" *"he connected to the book because we have a brown bunny"
*"all the things you can do in the snow" *"Playing I Spy"
*"Reading together" *"we asked our child what did the frog forget to put on and she would l ook at the pictures and see what was missing"
*"It was silly and we laughed a lot!" *"Pete the Cat's positive attitude" *"Building a snowma n and hot chocolate" *"Reading it with little man and having him help turn the pages" * "reading it with my child" * "how funny and repetitive it was " * hearing him saying the words back without getting frustrated" * "the best thing about the book is that the grandmother woke everyone up with her snoring" * "how easily engaged both children were every time we read it" * "listening to my child retelling parts of the story" * "we read it as a family" * "the tip at the end of the book about singing a song while brushing"

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community partners enable us to provide family services needed as we assist families in gaining self-sufficiency and assisting their children to be healthy and ready to learn for success in their future. Our partners include:

- Local Doctors and Dentists
- Lewis County Public Health
- WIC- Appointments in the Lyons Falls center
- Lion's Club-administered Lion's SEE Vision Screenings
- County schools and their transportation departments
- Local Libraries
- North Country Prenatal/Perinatal Council
- Local Food Pantries
- Lewis County Opportunities- Partnered with Victims Services "Safe Funds" Program, and Car Seat Program
- Department of Social Services
- Cooperative Extension- Partnered with Healthy Families
- Snow Belt Housing
- Salvation Army
- Fidelis Care
- Local Fire Departments
- Local individuals for Spanish interpretations, and bringing the Spanish culture and language into classrooms and Discovery Days.
- Facebook posts sharing community resources and happenings

11 community agencies attended the Annual October Health-Safety Fair

Donations received from over 25 community members and agencies

Head Start partnered with 7 local libraries and offered a "Lewis County Head Start Literacy Across the County Night"



A Women, Infants and Children's (WIC) clinic continues to provide services in our Lyons Falls Center once a month. They provide services by appointment .



6 families were referred to Lewis County Opportunities Child Passenger Safety program throughout the year.

All 6 families were able to complete the referral process and received car seats for their children.

63 total referrals reflect a highly active year connecting families to critical community resources. 36 Informal referrals empowered families with direct contact info to navigate services independently, while 27 formal referrals involved hands-on staff assistance with applications and direct agency follow-up.



THANK YOU FOR THE WORK YOU DO FOR CHILDREN

Board of Directors

Rebecca Kelly

Wendy Hoskins

Brooke Pate

Ed Steckly

Jessica Young

Amanda Waugh

Rebecca Sweredoski

Meghan Harney

Sarah Metott

Health/Family Service Advisory Committee

Community Representatives

Brooke Pate	NCPPC
Amanda Waugh	DSS
Rebecca Kelly	Public Health
Angel Carter	WIC
Lamanda Cook	NRCIL
Rosetta Landis	WIC
Jamie Roberts	SPOA
Sue Gydesen	

Parents

Joyce Marshall	Lowville I and EHS
Jamie Roberts	Lowville I
Brianna Gerow	BOCES

Policy Council

Katie Steele

Duina Padilla

Elizabeth Zehr

Brittany Arcuri

Brianna Gerow

Emma Lane

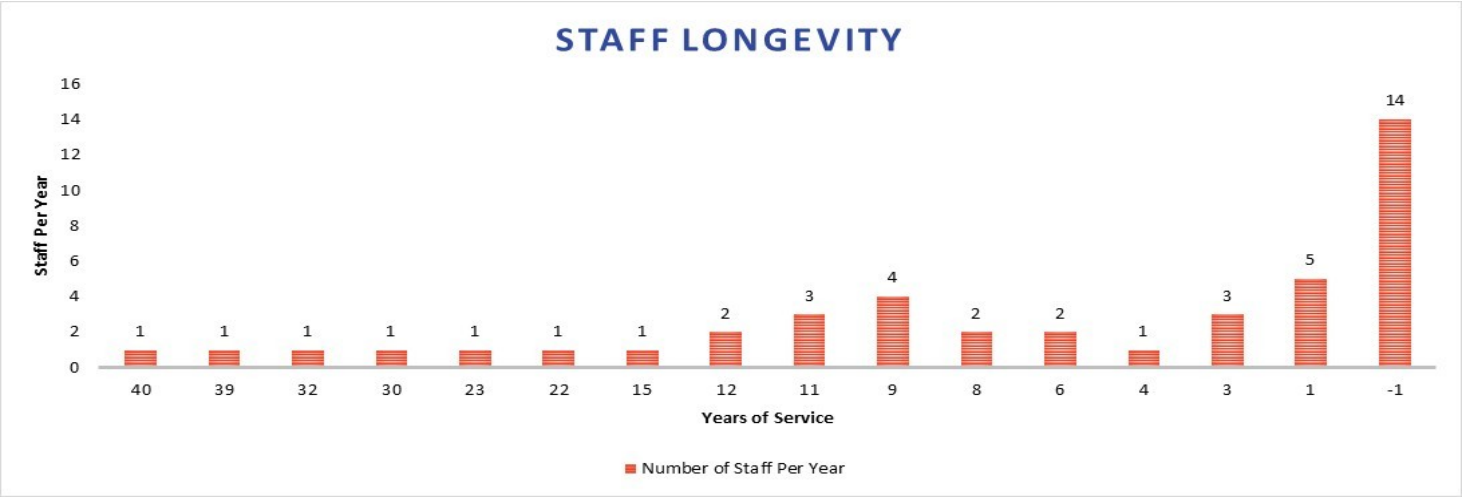
Joyce Marshall

Stephanie Houser-Fouse

Rosetta Landis

Deborah Rogers

Celebrating Staff



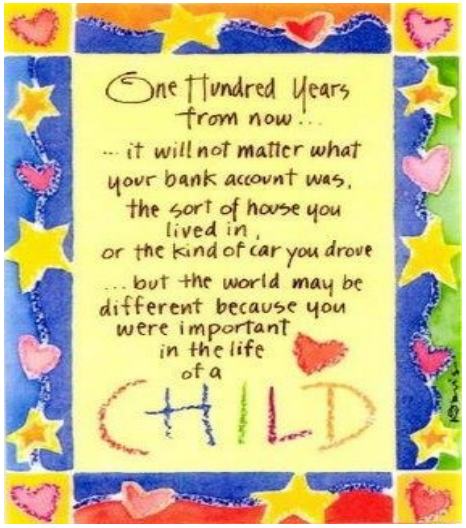
333 years of service to children and families

5 Year Anniversaries

40 Years: Sue Pierce

30 Years: Amy Marti

15 Years: Lynette Boliver



New Staff

Erica Farney	Sarah Hoag
Isabella Kelly	Rebecca Watson
Chanel Holder	Taylor Russell
Brooks McDonald	Brittany Lee
Melissa Kellogg	Emma Lane
Jessica Sterling	Adrianna Maxon
Cristen Stanford	Jennifer Yaddow

Lewis County Head Start would like to congratulate Rosalie Ritz on her 39 years of service and wish her the best in her retirement.