HEARTLAND EARLY EDUCATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



SALINA Public Schools
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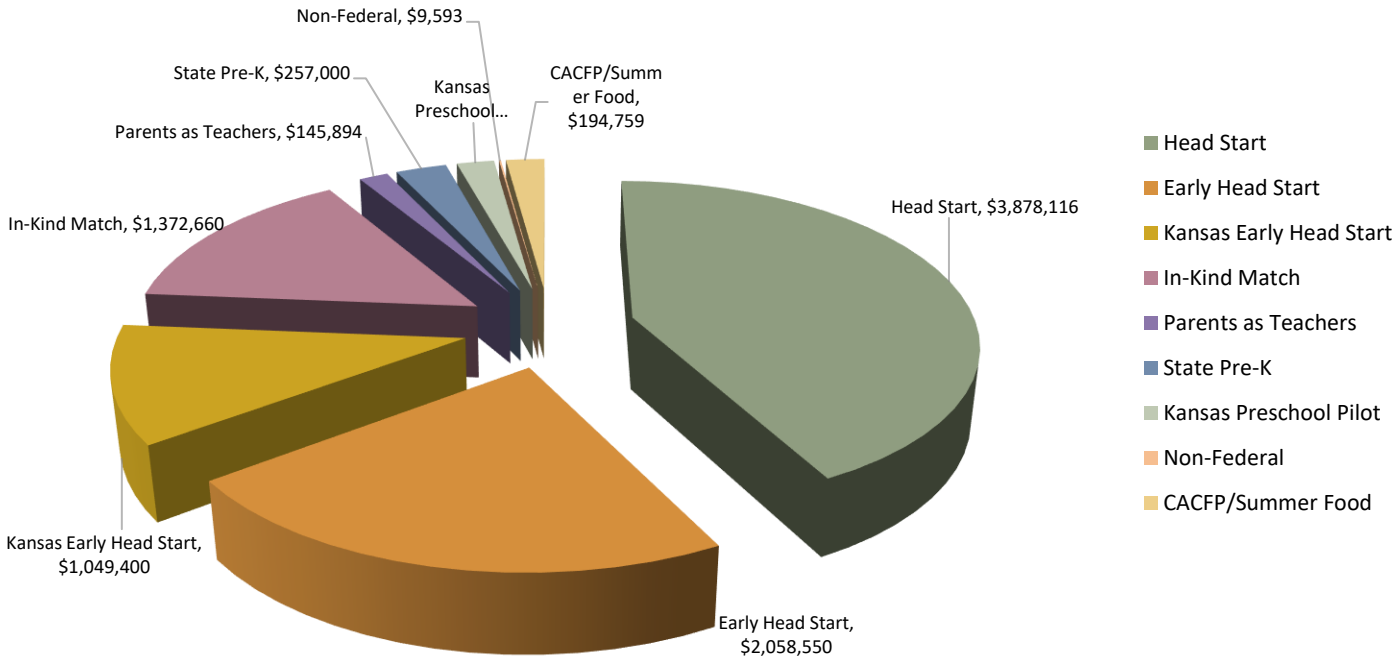
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Overview of Program

Heartland Early Education manages the Head Start, Early Head Start, Kansas Early Head Start (KEHS), Kansas Preschool-Aged At-Risk, and Parents as Teachers (PAT) grants. The service area includes Saline, Dickinson, and Ellsworth Counties.

FUNDING SOURCES

Funding comes from the Office of Head Start (OHS), Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF), Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE), and local in-kind donations and services. USD305 provides facilities, maintenance, accounting and program oversight.



TARGET POPULATION BY COUNTY

SALINE COUNTY:

Saline County has an estimated population of 54,303. According to the 2020 Kansas Statistical Abstract, the Saline County median household income was $57,643 in 2021 and 15.1% of children in Saline County were from families with incomes that meet the federal poverty level. According to the 2023 Kids Count Data Center, Saline County has 113 Head Start slots available per 100 children 3-4 years of age living below the U.S. poverty threshold. This correlates with census data and suggests that Saline County is over-saturated with Head Start slots. Kids Count Data also reported that Saline County has 37 Early Head Start slots available per 100 children birth to three years

USD 305 Preschool, designed to serve identified at-risk students and children with disabilities, is available at all eight elementary schools and has a capacity of 192 students.

DICKINSON COUNTY:

Dickinson County has an estimated population of 18,402. According to the 2020 Kansas Statistical Abstract, the Dickinson County median household income was $58,066 in 2019 and 13.7% of children in Dickinson County were from families with incomes that met the federal poverty level. According to the 2023 Kids Count Data Center, Dickinson County has 67 Head Start slots available per 100 children 3-4 years of age and 16 slots available per 100 children birth to three years living below the U.S. poverty threshold. USD 435 Abilene operates two state-funded preschool classrooms within the Kennedy elementary building.

ELLSWORTH COUNTY:

Ellsworth County has 6,376 residents and is basically a rural county of farm communities. According to the 2020 Kansas Statistical Abstract, the Ellsworth County median household income was $56,988 in 2019 and 12.1% of children in Ellsworth County were from families with incomes that met the federal poverty level. According to the 2021 Kids Count Data Center, Ellsworth County has 100 Head Start slots available per 100 children 3-4 years and 0 slots available per 100 children birth to three years living below the U.S. poverty threshold. Census data actually indicates a greater surplus of Head Start slots.

ELIGIBLE CHILDREN AGES 0-4 SERVED BY HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

County	Estimated % children < 18 in poverty	Estimated # children ages 0-4	Estimated # eligible children
Saline	14.3%	3418	489
Dickinson	10.6%	1020	108
Ellsworth	14.6%	272	40
		4710	637

EARLY HEAD START

County	Estimated # Eligible Children	Total Enrolled	% Served
Saline	293	198	68%
Dickinson	65	17	26%
Ellsworth	24	--	0%
	382	215	56%

HEAD START

County	Estimated # Eligible Children	Total Enrolled	% Served
Saline	196	145	74%
Dickinson	43	39	91%
Ellsworth	16	15	94%
	255	199	78%

Head Start & Early Head Start

FUNDED SLOTS	Early Head Start	Head Start
Saline County	91	208
Dickinson County	----	32
Ellsworth County	----	16
TOTAL	91	256

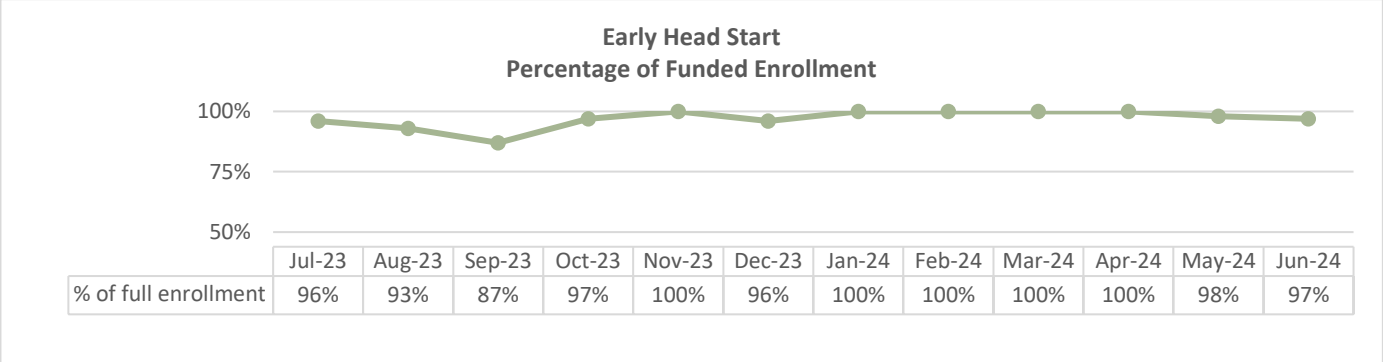
2023-24 CUMULATIVE ENROLLMENT	Early Head Start	Head Start
Saline County	140	124
Dickinson County	----	27
Ellsworth County	----	14
TOTAL	140	165

END OF MONTH (EOM) ENROLLMENT REPORTS

The effects of COVID-19 continue to suppress enrollment numbers. In Salina, three Head Start classrooms were closed throughout the year due to staffing shortages. Lack of staff also kept two Early Head Start classrooms and all Head Start classrooms below capacity. In addition, the child care director of Salina's only remaining child care partner retired in August 2023.

EARLY HEAD START

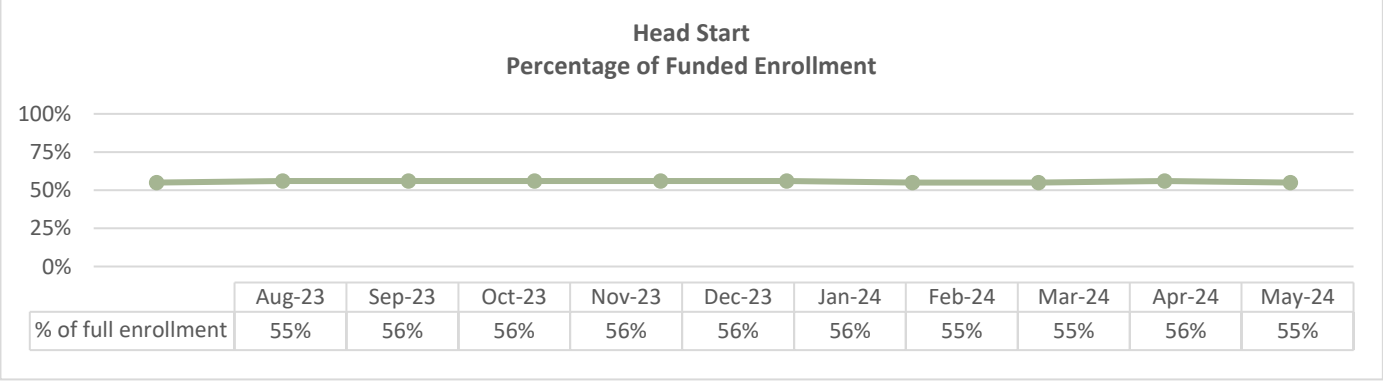
The Early Head Start program averaged 97% of full enrollment throughout the year.



	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24
% of full enrollment	96%	93%	87%	97%	100%	96%	100%	100%	100%	100%	98%	97%

HEAD START

The Head Start program only averaged 56% of full enrollment during the ten month school year.

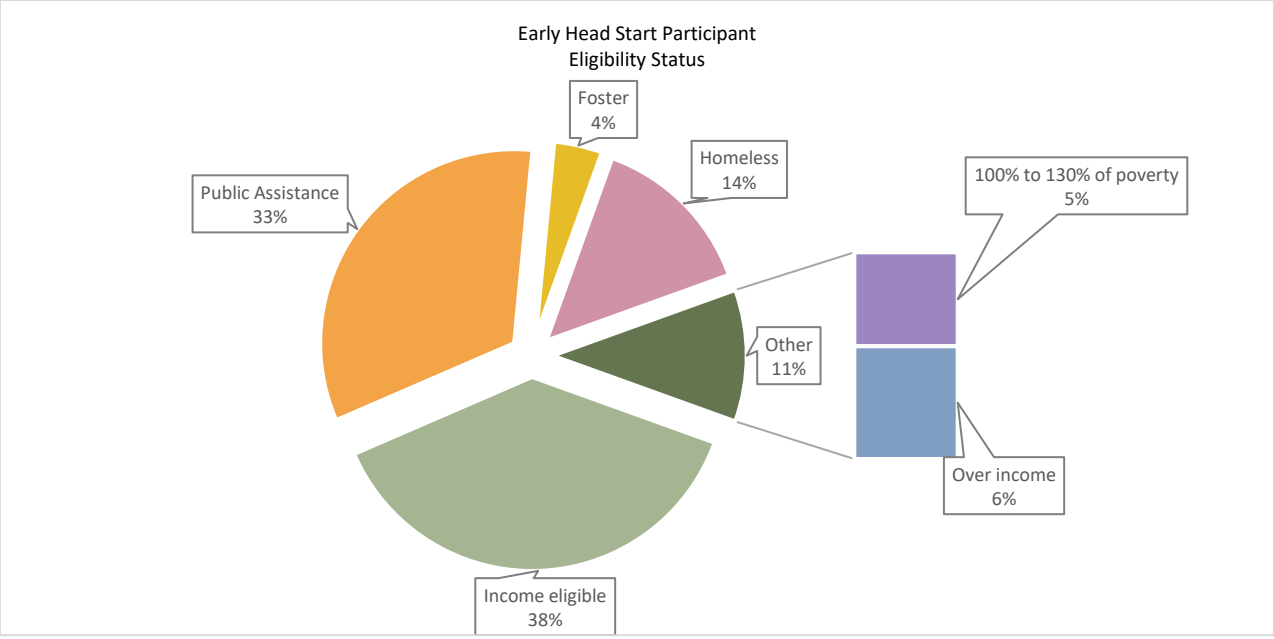


	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24
% of full enrollment	55%	56%	56%	56%	56%	56%	55%	55%	56%	55%

2023-24 PROGRAM INFORMATION REPORT (PIR) SUMMARIES

EARLY HEAD START

Population Served: 130 children and 10 pregnant women



Ethnicity: 31% Hispanic, 69% Non-Hispanic

Race: 74% White; 19% Multi-Racial; 6% Black

Language: 87% English; 13% Spanish

Health: 85% up to date on well child checks; 96% up to date on immunizations; 99% with health insurance; 99% with a medical home.

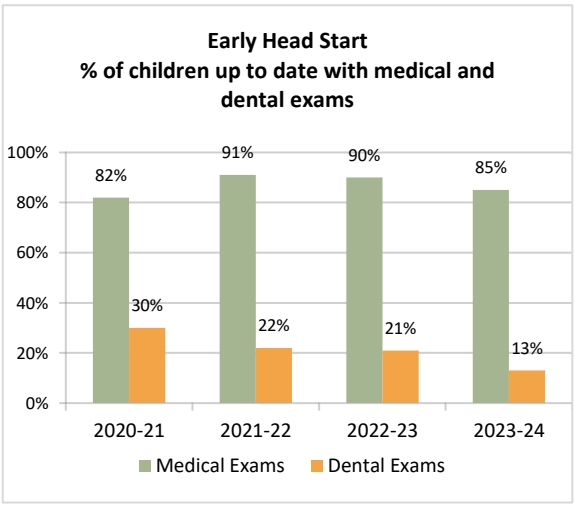
Dental: 38% have a dental home; 13% of children are up to date on dental exams.

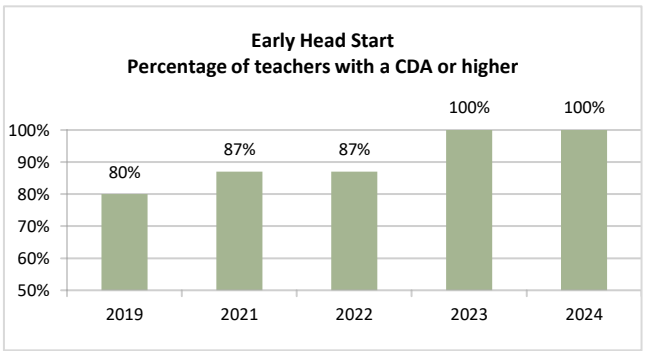
Mental Health: Mental health staff provide assistance to all classroom staff and home visitors through observation and consultation.

Disabilities: 28% of enrolled Early Head Start children had a diagnosed disability.

Homelessness: 4% of families experienced homelessness during the year. Of these, 40% were able to find permanent housing before the end of enrollment.

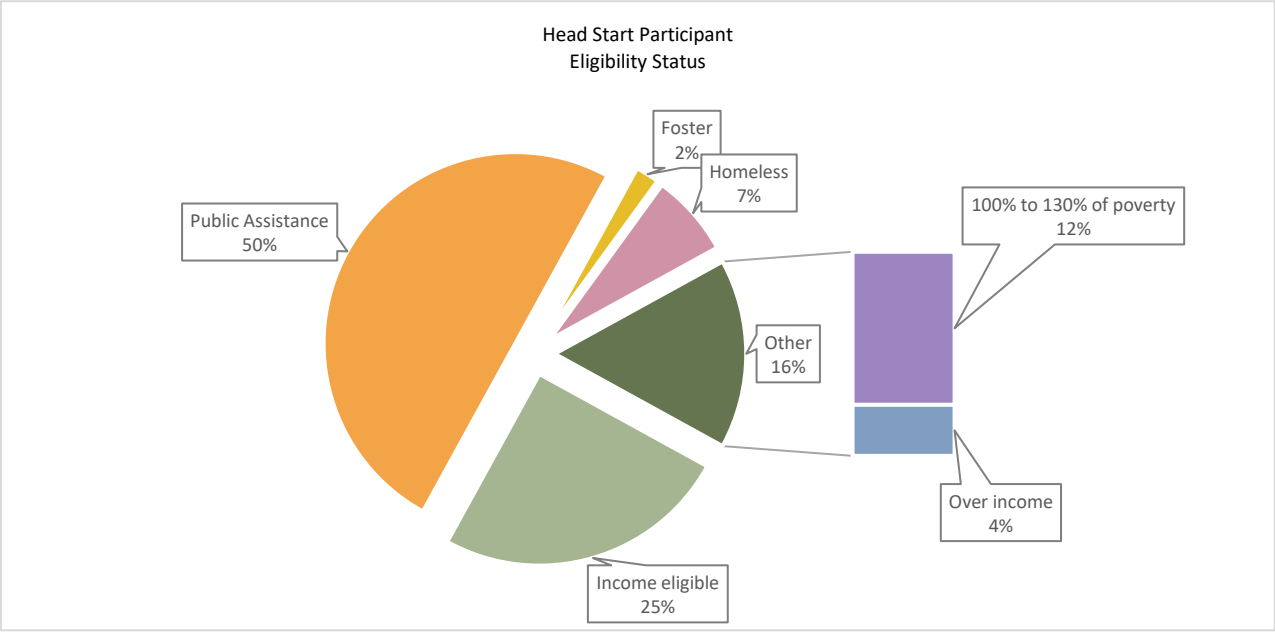
Teacher qualifications: Although it is still not possible to find EHS teachers with a CDA at hire, all 17 teachers met or exceeded education requirements by the end of the school year.





HEAD START

Population Served: 165 children



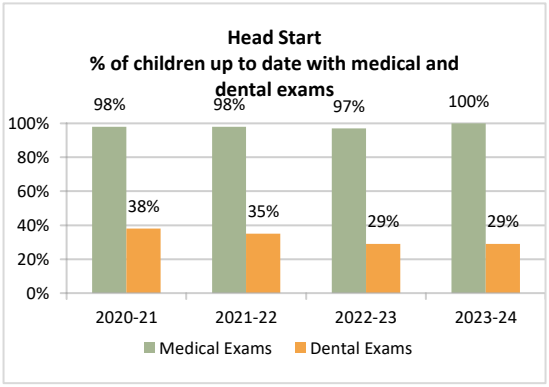
Ethnicity: 32% Hispanic, 68% Non-Hispanic

Race: 80% White; 14% Multi-Racial; 5% Black; 1% Asian

Language: 88% English; 11% Spanish; 1% Asian

Health: 100% up to date on well child checks; 99% up to date on immunizations; 99% with health insurance; 98% with a medical home.

Dental: 71% of children have a dental home; 29% of children had a dental exam during the school year

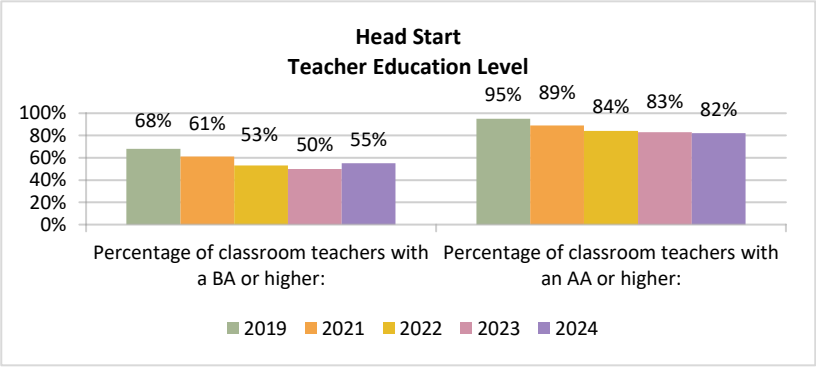


Mental Health: Mental health staff provide assistance to all classroom teachers through observation and consultation.

Disabilities: 35% of enrolled Head Start participants had a diagnosed disability.

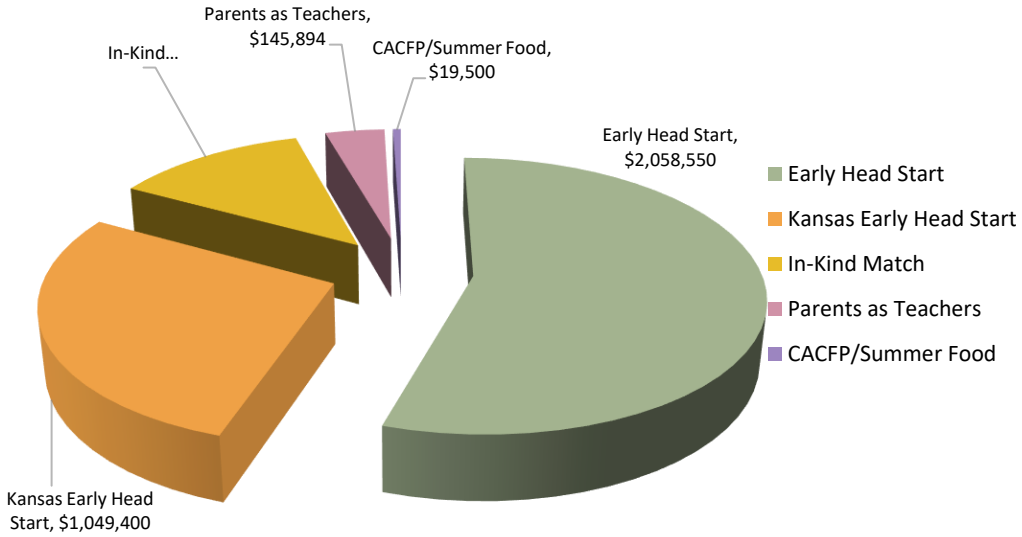
Homelessness: 8% of families experienced homelessness during the year. Of these, 17% were able to find permanent housing before the end of enrollment.

Teacher Qualifications: At least 50% of the Head Start teachers across the nation must have at least a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood or a related degree.



Program Options and Descriptions

PROGRAMS FOR PREGNANT WOMEN, INFANTS, AND TODDLERS



EARLY HEAD START – SALINE COUNTY

HOME-BASED EARLY HEAD START



Families in this voluntary program receive weekly 90 minute home visits with a family consultant (FC) trained in child development and social services. The FC shares information and resources with families to maximize their child's learning experiences. FCs are equipped with knowledge of community resources to help parents learn about budgeting, health, nutrition, mental health, job skills, and how to find other needed community services. During the 2023-24 school year, Saline County served 74 children and 10 pregnant women. Two of the 10 prenatal mothers served were teenagers.

Home-based families are required to be active participants in the program. They must have regular attendance for home visits and are strongly encouraged to attend monthly playgroups. Playgroups give parents the opportunity to interact with one another and create bonds with their children through organized, developmentally appropriate activities. Play groups also give families the chance to meet other families and build support systems.

Children are screened and assessed during the year by the family consultant and/or registered nurses. The ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE developmental screens are provided to help detect potential problem areas early in the child's life so appropriate referrals may be made for further evaluation. Hearing and vision screens are also conducted and referrals are made as needed.

EARLY HEAD START FULL DAY/FULL YEAR (FDFY)



Heartland operates seven FDFY classrooms. Due to staffing shortage, one to two classrooms ran at half capacity throughout the year. Hours of operation are 7:30am to 4:30pm Monday –Friday. The FDFY program helps reduce the cost of child care for income eligible families while parents are working or attending school at least 30 hours per week. Parents pay a portion of the cost. These classrooms served 56 children during the 2023-24 school year.

KANSAS EARLY HEAD START (KEHS) – SALINE & DICKINSON COUNTIES

Kansas Early Head Start (KEHS) began in 1998 as a way for the state to extend Early Head Start opportunities within the state. For the first several years all Kansas and Federal Early Head Start families received identical services. As Kansas changed the source of funding for the KEHS program, it was no longer possible to maintain eligibility requirements for center-based services.

KANSAS EARLY HEAD START-HOME VISITATION (KEHS-HV)

Families enrolled in KEHS-HV receive the same services as those enrolled in federal slots. Heartland is funded for 20 slots. A total of 28 children and two pregnant women were served during the 2023-24 school year.

KANSAS EARLY HEAD START- CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIPS (KEHS-CCP)

All families enrolled in KEHS-CCP must receive child care subsidy through the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Unlike federal EHS, families must go through the eligibility process at least annually. Changes in work/school requirements must be reported immediately and may result in immediate exit from the program.

Additional paperwork and requirements make the slots more difficult to fill. Heartland is funded for 30 slots. A total of 41 children were served during the 2023-24 school year.

PARENTS AS TEACHERS (PAT)

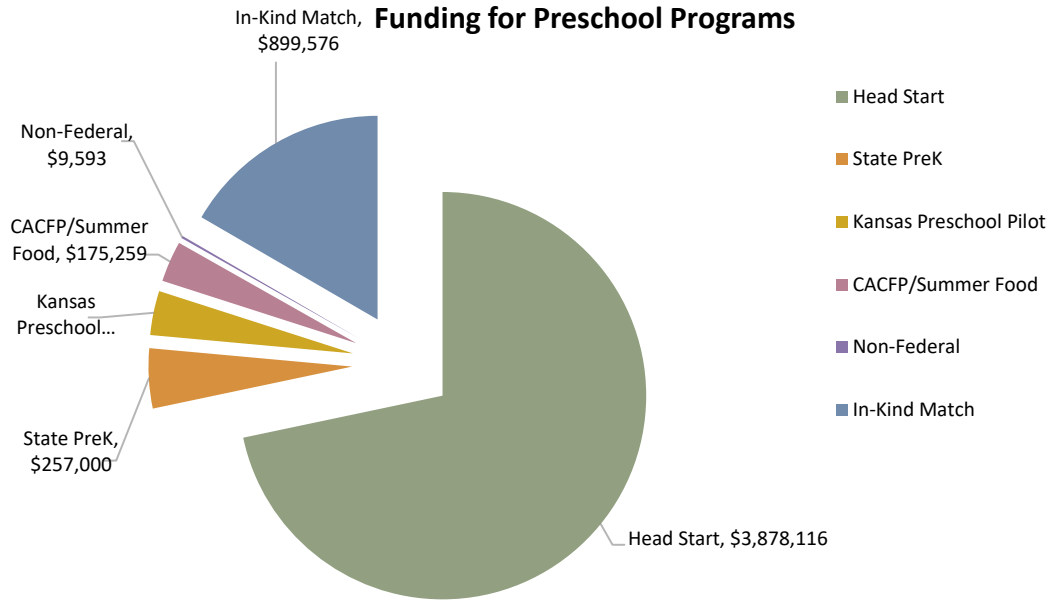
The PAT evidence-based affiliate model provides parents with the skills and knowledge they need to help make informed decisions regarding their child's education. The program includes personal visits, group connections, health, vision, hearing and developmental screenings, and supports family connections with other community services. Home visits are provided by certified PAT Parent Educators and last approximately one hour. Some families may qualify to have visits more frequently.

KSDE serves as the Parents as Teachers State Office and supports our program with implementing the PAT affiliate model. The PAT program is available to any parent, including fathers, relatives as caregivers, and foster and adoptive parents, who are pregnant or have a child under the age of kindergarten entry living within the USD 305 school district. Families can opt to remain enrolled until their child transitions to preschool or Kindergarten.

Evidenced based home visiting programs are proven to: support healthy and thriving children, increase parenting knowledge and confidence, strengthen the bond between a parent and a child, and help increase school readiness and success.

The Salina PAT program served 41 families and 63 children during the 2023-24 school year. The program met or exceeded all Essential Requirements and are now in the compliance status. Salina Public Schools Parents as Teachers program will now begin the Quality Endorsement and Improvement Process, QEIP. Affiliates that earn the endorsement are recognized by Parents as Teachers National Center as exemplary blue-ribbon affiliates, delivering high quality services to children and families. Not only is the endorsement an important national recognition of an affiliate's quality, the process provides valuable learning for staff and opportunities to make program improvements. Part of the process includes submitting our affiliate plan, our policies and procedures and completing a self -study. The self -study will be submitted by April 1, 2025.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS



HEAD START

Head Start is funded through a federal grant and serves Saline, Dickinson, and Ellsworth Counties. Head Start served 165 children during the 2023-24 school year.

Head Start serves income eligible children/families and is available for children ages three to five who meet income guidelines. FCs provide monthly home visits and are equipped with knowledge of community resources so they are able to help parents learn about budgeting, health, nutrition, mental health, job skills, and to find other needed services. FCs and teachers meet with parents during the year to discuss each child's progress and set goals for further development.

Heartland provided Head Start services through three program options; Part Day School Year (PDSY), School Day School Year (SDSY), and Full Day Full Year (FDFY). All programs encourage parents to be active participants by volunteering in the classroom, attending home visits and parent/teacher conferences, and attending parent meetings.



HEAD START PART DAY SCHOOL YEAR (PDSY)

PDSY classrooms provide less than 1020 hours of service through single or double session classrooms.

SALINA: Salina served 26 children Monday-Thursday during the school year with one double session classroom. Morning session operated 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and afternoon session from 12:15 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. Children were served two meals and transportation was available.

ELLSWORTH: Ellsworth served 14 children Monday-Thursday during the school year. Hours of operation were 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Children were served breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack and transportation was available.

ENTERPRISE: Enterprise served 17 children Monday-Thursday during the school year. Hours of operation were 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. during the school year. Children were served breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. Transportation was available.

HEAD START SCHOOL DAY SCHOOL YEAR (SDSY)



SDSY classrooms provide at least 1020 hours of class time throughout the school year. The SDSY option was offered in Salina.

SALINA: Salina served 74 children Monday-Thursday during the school year with five classrooms in the Salina building and one within the Salina Education Center (SEC). Hours of operation were 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Children were served breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack and transportation was available.

HEAD START FULL DAY FULL YEAR (FDFY)

Head Start FDFY services were offered in Salina and Abilene through child care partnerships. In Salina, Heartland partnered with Sharing and Caring Child Care and in Abilene, the FDFY services are provided by Abilene Child Care Learning Center.

FDFY services help reduce the cost of child care for income eligible families while parents are working or attending school at least 30 hours per week. Parents pay a portion of the cost. This program served 11 children in Salina and ten in Abilene during the 2023-24 school year.

Child care partners are required to meet Head Start Performance Standards and Kansas Child Care Licensing regulations. Heartland Early Education Specialists make both announced and unannounced visits several times each month to mentor teachers and ensure standards are being maintained.

Heartland ended its 25 year partnership with Sharing and Caring on August 31, 2023 when the director retired and sold the center.

USD 305 PRESCHOOL

USD 305 offered preschool at all eight Salina elementary schools through KSDE funding. These classrooms operated through a collaboration between USD 305, Heartland Early Education, and Central Kansas Cooperative in Education (CKCIE) to offer double-session preschool.

USD 305 Preschool is funded through two KSDE grants, Preschool-Aged At-Risk (At-Risk) and Kansas Preschool Pilot (KPP). Children enrolled through Preschool-Aged At-Risk (At Risk) must be three or four years old by August 31st and meet at least one at-risk eligibility factor. Factors include: qualify for free lunch, parent lacks high school diploma or GED, parent was a teen at the time of the child's birth, single parent, lower than expected developmental progress, or a written referral from Department of Children and Families (DCF). A total of 259 at-risk and special education children received services within a USD 305 Preschool or Head Start classroom.

School Readiness

SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM GOAL

Heartland Early Education utilizes Galileo as its child assessment system for infants, toddlers, and preschool. Heartland prepares children for school through the development of individualized goals based on ongoing assessment data, collected quarterly.



In addition to Galileo, a variety of supplemental screens and assessments are utilized, including:

- Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ3)
- Ages and Stages Questionnaire – Social-Emotional (ASQ-SE)
- Spot® vision screen
- Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE) hearing screen
- Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)

Galileo shows the growth of all children (birth – five years). Baseline data in the fall is used during parent/teacher conferences to inform parents and get their input in developing individual goals for each child. On-going assessments are used to guide teachers to group children according to their skill level, ensuring that teaching is designed for each child's individual needs. In addition, teacher observations provide daily guidance to teachers in planning for individual learning.

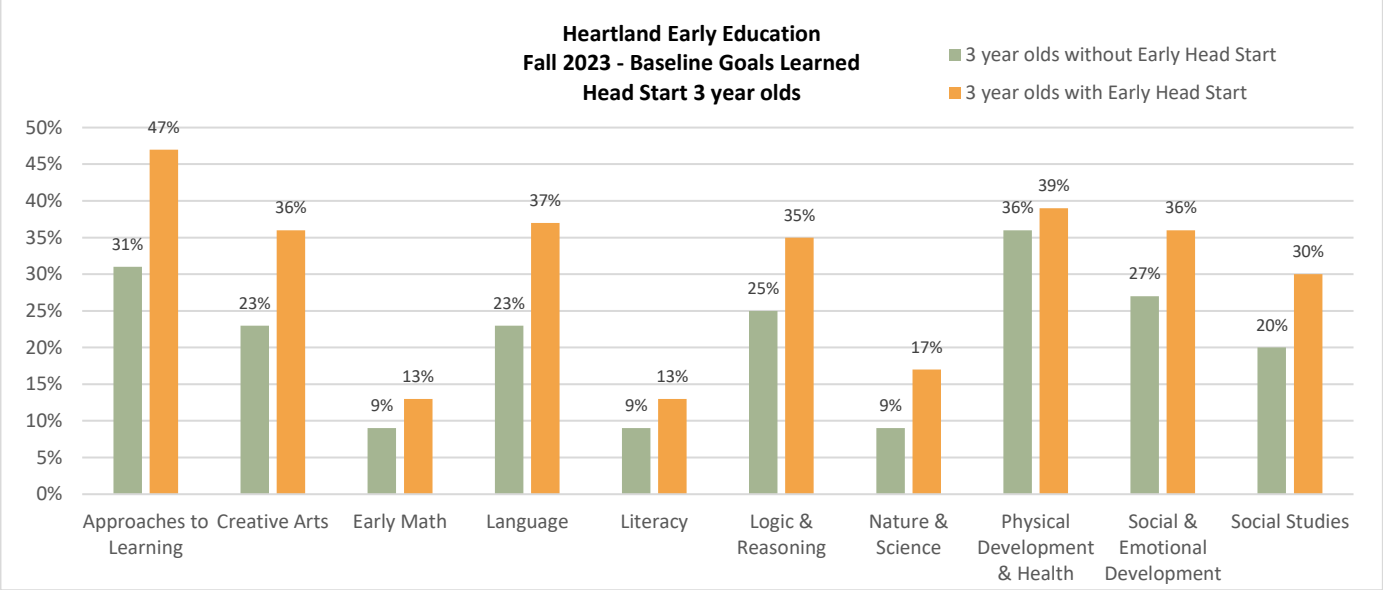
Intentional school readiness goals include a progressive degree of self-regulation, the ability to listen and attend, and the development of physical skills, social-emotional relationships, and language development. Ongoing assessment data, along with parent input, drives planning and goal setting for each individual child.

INFANT AND TODDLER ON-GOING ASSESSMENT

When concerns and possible delays are found in children under age three, families are referred to their medical homes and/or the Part C provider for further evaluation. With parental consent, results of pertinent Heartland screenings are shared with the medical provider. Heartland Early Education works very closely with both Part C programs in the service area. Infant Child Development (ICD) and Infant Toddler Services (ITS) work in collaboration with Heartland staff to provide joint home visits and to write joint family goals.

Just as Head Start prepares children for their next educational setting into Kindergarten, Early Head Start prepares children to transition into Head Start. The following chart categorizes three year old children who started Head Start in the Fall of 2023 and compares their child assessment data taken as baseline upon their initial enrollment into the classroom.

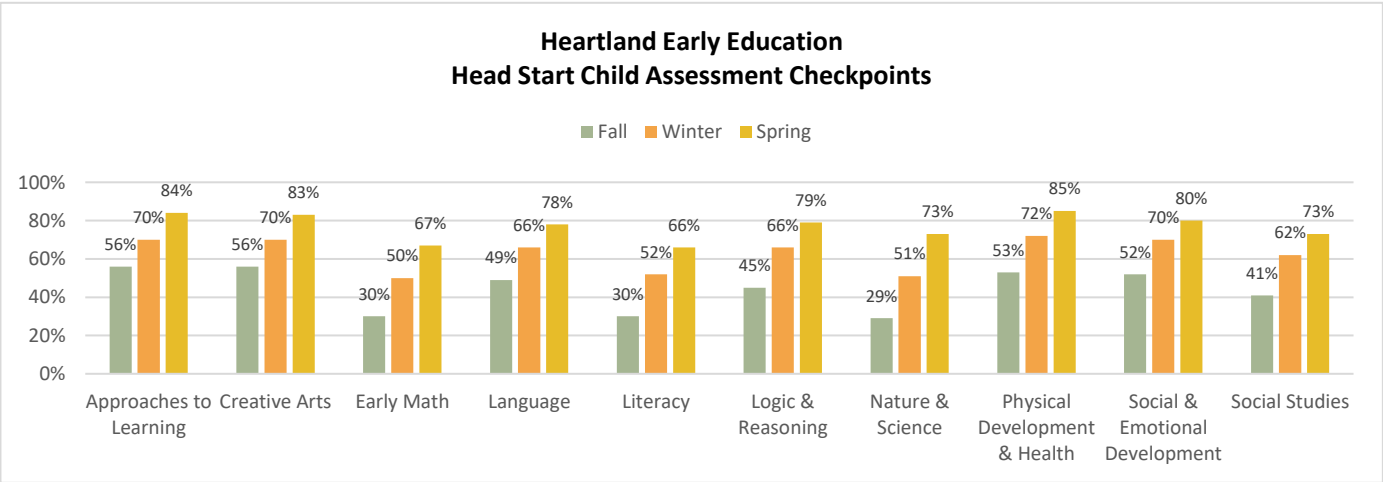
The children were categorized into two groups, 1) children with no prior enrollment in EHS; 2) children with EHS (center-based) experience. Data shows children who transitioned to Head Start from EHS scored higher in every domain than the children without EHS experience.



As infants and toddlers move through the natural sequence of developmental milestones, Heartland believes the role of Early Head Start staff is to support families through the process. This support comes in the form of many different services; home visits, parent/teacher conferences, referrals, screening, assessment, etc. These services are in place to support children as they develop the skills they will use for the rest of their lives.

PRESCHOOL ON-GOING ASSESSMENT

Children's progress is assessed on an ongoing basis; this information is used for lesson planning for groups of children and to individualize activities for each child. Data is used to track child growth and development and guide lessons so children are prepared for kindergarten. Data is aggregated and analyzed multiple times throughout the year at individual, classroom, site, and program levels; this information is used to adapt strategies to increase student learning. The chart shows growth of three and four year olds over the three checkpoints during 2023-24.



When concerns and possible delays are found in children ages three to five, families are referred to the Central Kansas Cooperative in Education (CKCIE), Part B, for further evaluation.

Special Program Initiatives

FOOD INSECURITIES

Through the Weekend Food Support program, staff are able to identify and refer children who are demonstrating food insecurity indicators such as behavior, physical appearance, school performance, and home environment factors. If parents consent to the program the child will receive a weekly food bag containing approximately 12 items to provide approximately 1500 calories and 45 grams of protein.

The table and chart below indicates the number of children, families, and total food bags distributed for the last six years. The food support program has provided 11,572 bags of food since it started in 2018. Every year, even when enrollment was cut almost in half, the number of referrals for this program have increased.

	Saline County	Dickinson County	Ellsworth County	TOTALS
2018-19	42 children / 35 families	11 children / 9 families	0 children / families	**53 children / 44 families**
	986 food bags	321 food bags	0 food bags	**1307 food bags**
2019-20	52 children / 35 families	11 children / 9 families	1 child / 1 family	**64 children / 45 families**
	1103 food bags	291 food bags	14 food bags	**1408 food bags**
2020-21	58 children / 35 families	7 children / 7 families	0 children / families	**65 children / 42 families**
	1809 food bags	228 food bags	0 food bags	**2037 food bags**
2021-22	54 children / 38 families	11 children / 9 families	2 children / 2 families	**67 children / 49 families**
	1816 food bags	276 food bags	49 food bags	**2141 food bags**
2022-23	66 children / 45 families	3 children / 3 families	5 children / 4 families	**74 children / 52 families**
	1921 food bags	97 food bags	163 food bags	**2181 food bags**
2023-24	74 children / 57 families	3 children / 2 families	6 children / 4 families	**83 children / 63 families**
	2265 food bags	62 food bags	171 food bags	**2498 food bags**

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

CONTINUING EDUCATION ASSISTANCE

As funds are available, Heartland Early Education will provide tuition assistance for an Early Childhood Associates and/or Bachelor's Degrees through an accredited Early Childhood Education Program for interested classroom staff and partnering staff up to the degree required for the position. For example, Head Start classroom staff may obtain a Bachelor's Degree. Early Head Start classroom staff may obtain an Associate's Degree. Barton County Community College and Hutchinson Community College have been selected for Associates Degrees and Fort Hays State University and Wichita State University for Bachelor's Degrees as these colleges are approved vendors through USD#305.

Heartland will provide tuition assistance up to 60 hours towards an Associate's Degree in ECE and 60 hours towards a Bachelor's Degree in ECE per staff person.

During the 2023-24 school year, 7 Heartland staff benefited from the continuing education tuition assistance program. A total of 99 hours in college credit were completed.

Family Engagement

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Home Visits

- **EARLY HEAD START HOME-BASED:** Weekly 90 minute home visits are provided by staff trained in child development and social services.
- **HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START CENTER-BASED:** Monthly home visits are provided by staff trained in child development and social services.
- **PARENTS AS TEACHERS:** Monthly home visits are provided by staff trained in child development and social services.

Socializations/Playgroups

Opportunities are provided at least twice a month for home-based EHS parents and children to interact with one another and to create bonds.

Parent teacher conferences

The families of all children attending EHS or Head Start classrooms are offered at least two parent teacher conference opportunities per year.

Parent Events

Regularly scheduled events are planned in order to share information about the program, learn about appropriate child development, and provide parent/child connections.

Hiring Process

Parents are invited to participate in the interview of new staff. Parent interviewers are full partners in hiring decisions.

Mom's Group

This group ensures all moms of enrolled children have opportunities to network with other moms while child care is provided.

Policy Council

Policy Council meets monthly to allow parents to participate in policy making and other decisions about the program. At least 51% of the members are current parents.

Surveys

Surveys are conducted annually to elicit feedback from parents, staff, and the community. Information is compiled and used within the Self-Assessment and Strategic Plan for on-going monitoring and improvement.

Five Year Grant Award, Goals, and Objectives

FIVE YEAR GOALS: 2020-2025

GOAL 1: **Heartland is committed to attracting and cultivating staff who will inspire and empower children and families.**	
Expected Outcome: **Qualified and trained staff will be knowledgeable and effective in their specific roles.**	
	Objective A: Heartland will successfully recruit qualified staff.
	Objective B: All employed staff (new and current) are effectively trained.
	Objective C: Build the coaching system to support effective implementation of service delivery
GOAL 2: **Heartland will intentionally integrate communication practices to strengthen relationships.**	
Expected Outcome: **Communication will flow and staff will be more knowledgeable in all areas of the program.**	
	Objective A: Assess and initiate transition practices
	Objective B: Build staff and parent communication and engagement
GOAL 3: **Heartland is responsive to the needs of children, families, staff, and community.**	
Expected Outcome: **Heartland will provide quality services based on a strong understanding of the impact of trauma and align with the district in terms of early childhood needs and opportunities.**	
	Objective A: Strengthen systems to support trauma informed practices for staff, children, and families
	Objective B: Explore opportunities for facilities and partnerships to support quality services

Fiscal Summary

BUDGET NARRATIVE

1. **PERSONNEL** – All Head Start salaries meet the CAP limitations. Heartland Early Education uses the same salary schedule as the Salina School District and wages are comparable for similar work in the community.
2. **FRINGE BENEFITS** – Includes social security, workers compensation, unemployment insurance, health insurance and retirement.
3. **CONTRACTUAL** – Contracts for services to include technical support from the Salina School district, transportation services for Enterprise Head Start students, and grant support from WIPFLI.
4. **CHILD CARE CONTRACTUAL** – Partnership with five child care centers in Saline and Dickinson counties to provide full day, full year Head Start and Early Start services to families.
5. **SUPPLIES** – Includes office and computer equipment; and office, classroom, educational, literacy, and building supplies.
6. **OTHER/CHILD SERVICES** – medical and dental care for children, mental health assessment and care, parent meeting child care, and classroom substitutes.
7. **OTHER/PARENT SERVICES** – Policy Council meetings, parent meetings, Fatherhood Support group meetings.
8. **OTHER/OCCUPANCY** – Telephone, internet, utilities, subscriptions, recruitment, Human Resource testing fees, transportation expenses, audit fees, building maintenance and repairs.
9. **TRAINING** – the amount of the training budget is required by the grant and provides training for staff, child care partners, and Policy Council members.
10. **EQUIPMENT** – vehicle replacement

Heartland Early Education Head Start/Early Head Start Annual Budget 2023-24

Fund 56 – Head Start / Early Head Start		
	Categories	**Budget**
1.	Personnel	4,339,787
2.	Fringe Benefits	825,017
3.	Contractual	38,000
4.	Child Care Contractual	71,625
5.	Supplies	152,150
6.	Other Child Services	30,480
7.	Other Parent Services	24,310
8.	Other/Occupancy	307,500
9.	Training	76,921
10.	Equipment/Facilities	238,840
	Total Grant	$6,104,630

Fund 59 – Kansas Early Head Start		
	Categories	**Budget**
1.	Personnel	818,805
2.	Fringe Benefits	167,416
4.	Child care Contractual	41,950
8.	Other/Occupancy	21,229
	Total Kansas Grant	$1,049,400
Other Grants		
Fund 10 – Parents as Teachers		145,894
Fund 57 – State Pre-Kindergarten		257,000
Fund 58 – Non Federal Funds		17,680
Fund 60 – Summer Food Program		0
Fund 69 – Child Food Program (CACFP)		210,000
Fund 70 – Kansas Preschool Pilot		189,800
	Total Other Grants	$820,374

Overall Grand Total $7,974,404