

Putnam County Head Start



*Annual
Report 2024*

A Note From The Director



We are excited and honored to share our Annual Report for the Putnam County Head Start Program. Our program is committed and invested in providing the highest quality of service to the children and families served within the Putnam County community. Our goal is to serve as a model of excellence in early care and education throughout the nation. We recognize that our success is only possible with the dedication of our staff and the support of our partners as well as our Board and Policy Council. Most of all, we would be remiss if we didn't recognize that parents are their children's first and best teacher. We are humbled by your trust in us to help educate and care for your children.

This report is just a snapshot of our efforts throughout the year, but we hope you find it an uplifting reflection of our commitment to cultivating positive and long-lasting experiences for our children and our community. During the 2023 -2024 many early childhood programs faced challenges in finding and retaining qualified staff to work in classrooms. This challenge was no different for us at Putnam County Head Start, through we remained focused on our "mission" of providing the services outlined in this year's Annual Report. We applaud and thank the community, staff and stakeholders for support and resources that have contributed to another successful year. We were grateful for the creativity, resiliency, and determination amongst our staff and stakeholder, which resulted in successful year. We revamped many of our services to include the use of more technology and networking, improving the efficiency of our service delivery. Working closely with our local board of education, we were able to leverage our funding stream to provide retention bonuses, salary adjustment, and comprehensive benefits for all staff.

Ensuring the safety of our children, parents, families, staff, and community partners has remained a top priority. Over the past year, our program has placed an increased emphasis on mental health and wellness for our staff, children and families. We researched wellness assessments and programs, interviewed staff to determine strengths, opportunities for growth, current wellness needs and concerns. For parents, we outlined plans for our monthly Family Engagement Meetings to include activities and resources for wellness and mindfulness. we established wellness rooms for staff that included comfortable seating, staff artwork, coffee/tea stations, etc. to allow staff to recharge as needed. Our efforts to foster unity among staff will allow them to bring their best efforts to the classrooms. In addition, we are continuing to build ways to recognize staff's value to our program, including setting up a staff advisory committee to promote involvement in decision making processes and spotlights on staff contributions.

The Putnam County Head Start Program is extremely pleased with the levels of parent engagement with high participation in Family Engagement Meetings held monthly as well as with other activities designed to bring educational and networking opportunities to parents of enrolled children. Our program utilizes the Rady Rosie Parenting Curriculum as support with families to promote family engagement and enhance school readiness in the home.

The Putnam County Head Start Program is committed to our principles of being family-centered and outcome-driven, advocates for our community's youngest and most vulnerable children. We are grateful of our community supporters, local school district and other organizations who have supported us throughout the past year. We look forward to our continued work together!

Christel H. Nelson, Program Director



How Putnam County Head Start Supports Growth and Learning

Supporting children's growth and development in a positive learning environment through a variety of services, which include:



Early Learning and Education: Children's readiness for school and beyond is fostered through individualized learning experiences. Through relationships with adults, play and planned and spontaneous instruction, children grow in many aspects of development. Children progress in social skills and emotional well-being, along with language and literacy learning, and concept development. PCHS works with families, school district and other entities to facilitate the transition of each child to

kindergarten.



Health: Each child's perceptual, motor, and physical development is supported to permit them to fully explore and function in their environment. All children receive health and development screenings and nutritious meals. Our program connect families with medical, dental, and mental health services to ensure that children are receiving the services they need. Support services exist, and are utilized, for building resiliency to cope with possible adverse effects of trauma and managing and/or overcoming mental health struggles.



Family well-being: Parents and families are supported in achieving their own family goals, such as housing stability, continued education, and financial security. Our program supports and strengthen parent-child relationships and engage families around children's learning and development.

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

Grantee: Putnam County Board Of Education Head

Start Grant Number: 04CH011501

Address: 162 Old Glenwood Springs Rd. Eatonton GA,
31024 Phone: 706-485-8081

Fax: 706-485-8424

Director: Christel Nelson

Website: www.putnam.k12.ga.us

Program Description: Putnam County Head Start is a grantee agency regulated by the Putnam County Board of Education for the city of Eatonton GA that provides services to all of the Putnam County area.

PROGRAM MISSION

The mission of the Putnam County Head Start program is to promote child development and school readiness for preschool-age children from low-income families, providing comprehensive services to empower diverse families and strengthen communities.

CENTER BASED FULL DAY PROGRAM OPERATION

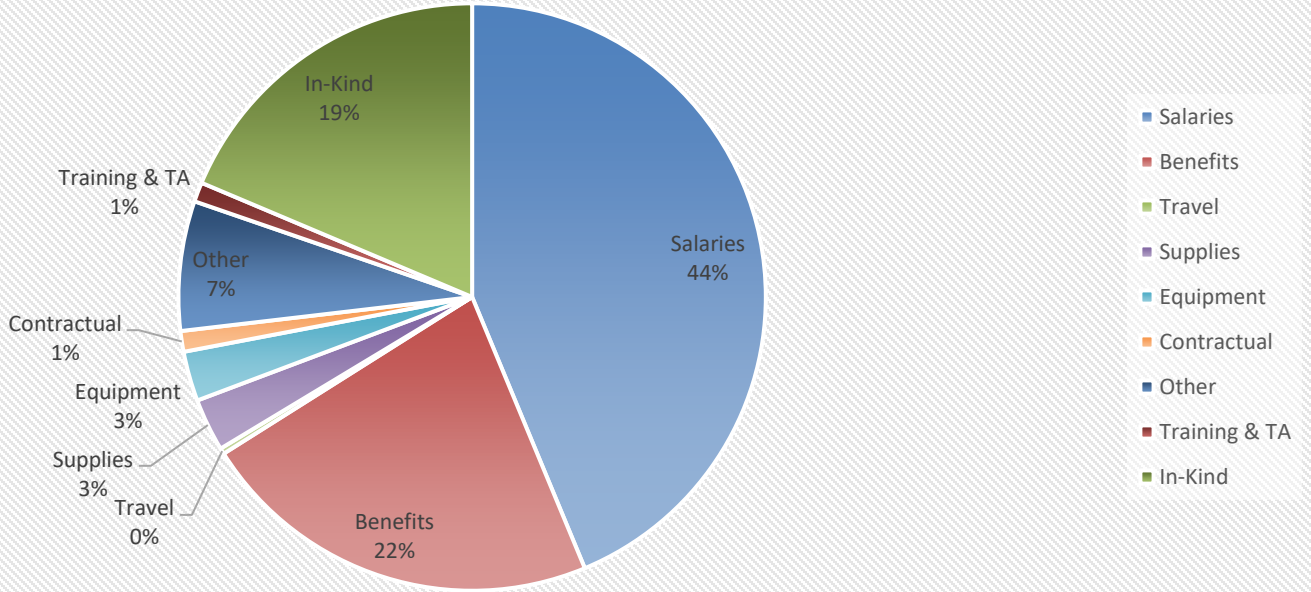
Putnam County Head Start operates 1-center-based program and serves the entire Putnam County, Eatonton GA area. The program operates full day sessions, Monday –Friday and function on the same calendar days as the local school system. The program serves 181-children and families.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

In-kind and community support play a vital role in the success of the Head Start of Putnam County each year. We are fortunate to have relationships with many groups, organizations and individuals who have provided support for our work by contributing in-kind donations. (Partial List of our partners)

- | | |
|---|--|
| ✓ Eatonton Service League | ✓ CVS Pharmacy |
| ✓ Putnam County Board of Education | ✓ Wal-Mart Pharmacy |
| ✓ Dr. Young Jones Dental | ✓ Tender Care Clinic |
| ✓ Subway of Eatonton | ✓ Dr. Rakesh Kumar |
| ✓ Golden Harvest Food Bank | ✓ Eatonton Pediatrics- Dr. Al-Hakim |
| ✓ Family Connections of Putnam County | ✓ Navicent Health Physicians |
| ✓ Putnam County Division of Family Services | ✓ Family Practice and Surgery |
| ✓ Putnam County Family Violence Task force | ✓ Putnam County Public Transit System |
| ✓ A Kids World of Peace Learning Center | ✓ Georgia Medical Non-Emergency Transportation Program |
| ✓ Stepping Stones Learning Center | ✓ Tri-County EMC Electricity |
| ✓ Ferst Foundation for Childhood Literacy | ✓ Eatonton Kiwanis Club |
| ✓ Mothers Against Crime | ✓ Eatonton Main Street |
| ✓ Habitat for Humanity of Putnam County | ✓ Life Source Food Distribution |
| ✓ Housing Authority of Putnam County | ✓ Lions Club |
| ✓ Georgia Dream Home Ownership Program | |
| ✓ Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health of Georgia | |

Head Start Budget Estimated Proposed FY 2024



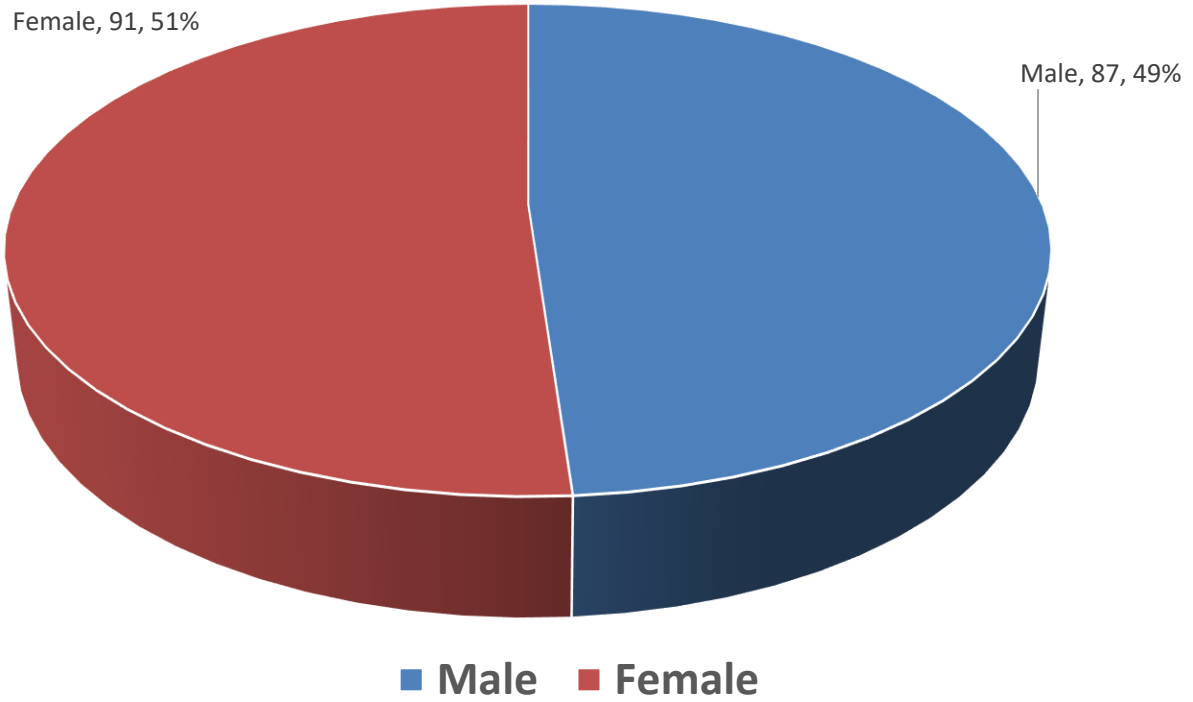
PUTNAM COUNTY HEAD START EXPENDITURE BY CATEGORY 06/01/2023 – 05/31/2024

Budget Category Description	Line Item Description	Cost for Program Operations	Cost for T/TA
Personnel Salaries:	Total	\$ 839,724	
Fringe Benefits:	Health Insurance	\$ 428,414	
	Retirement for full Time employees		
	Social Security (FICA), State Disability, Unemployment, Worker's Compensation, Dental/Life Insurance		
Travel:	Staff Out-of-Town Travel (Mileage, meals, lodging for training.)	\$ 6,176	\$3,137
Supplies:	Office, Classroom, Computer Software, Playground, Janitorial, Disability	\$ 55,718	
Equipment:	<i>Outdoor Learning Area</i>	\$ 52,635	
Contractual:	Medical/Dentist, Copier Lease, Insurance, Laminator Maint.,Contract Service BOE/Policy Council Governance/Training	\$21,838	\$13,059
Other:	Building Maint., Advertising, Dues/Fees, Putnam County Nutrition, Other Purchase Service, Telephone, Parent Services for Policy Council, Field Trips Lesson Extension Activity	\$ 137,039	4372.11
Totals:		\$1,541,540	\$20,568
In-Kind	In-Kind	\$ 357, 964	
Totals:		\$1,899,504	
Total Project		\$1,920,072	

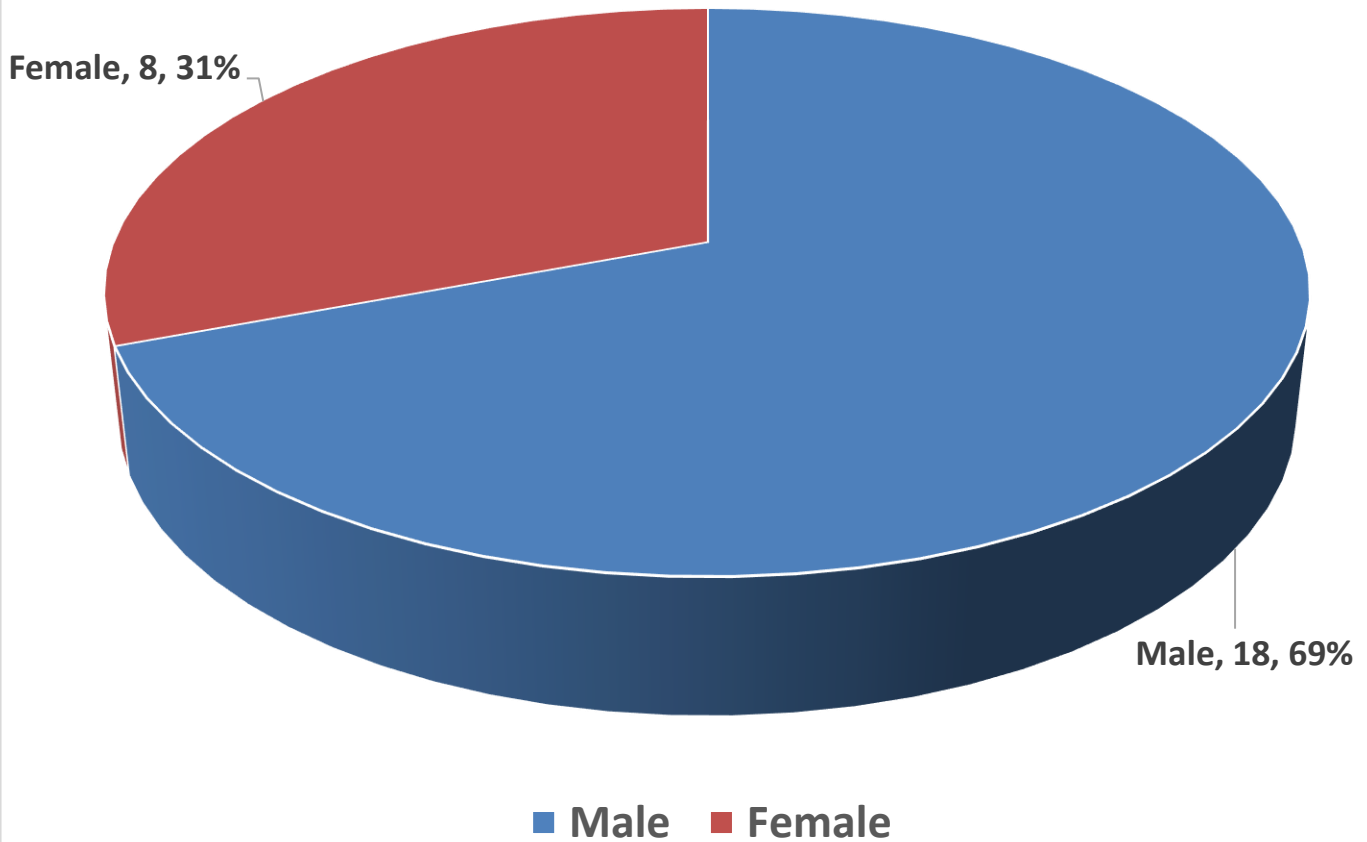
Program Demographic Charts For 2023 – 2024

- **General Student Population By Gender**
- **Enrollment by Eligibility**
- **Race Demographics**
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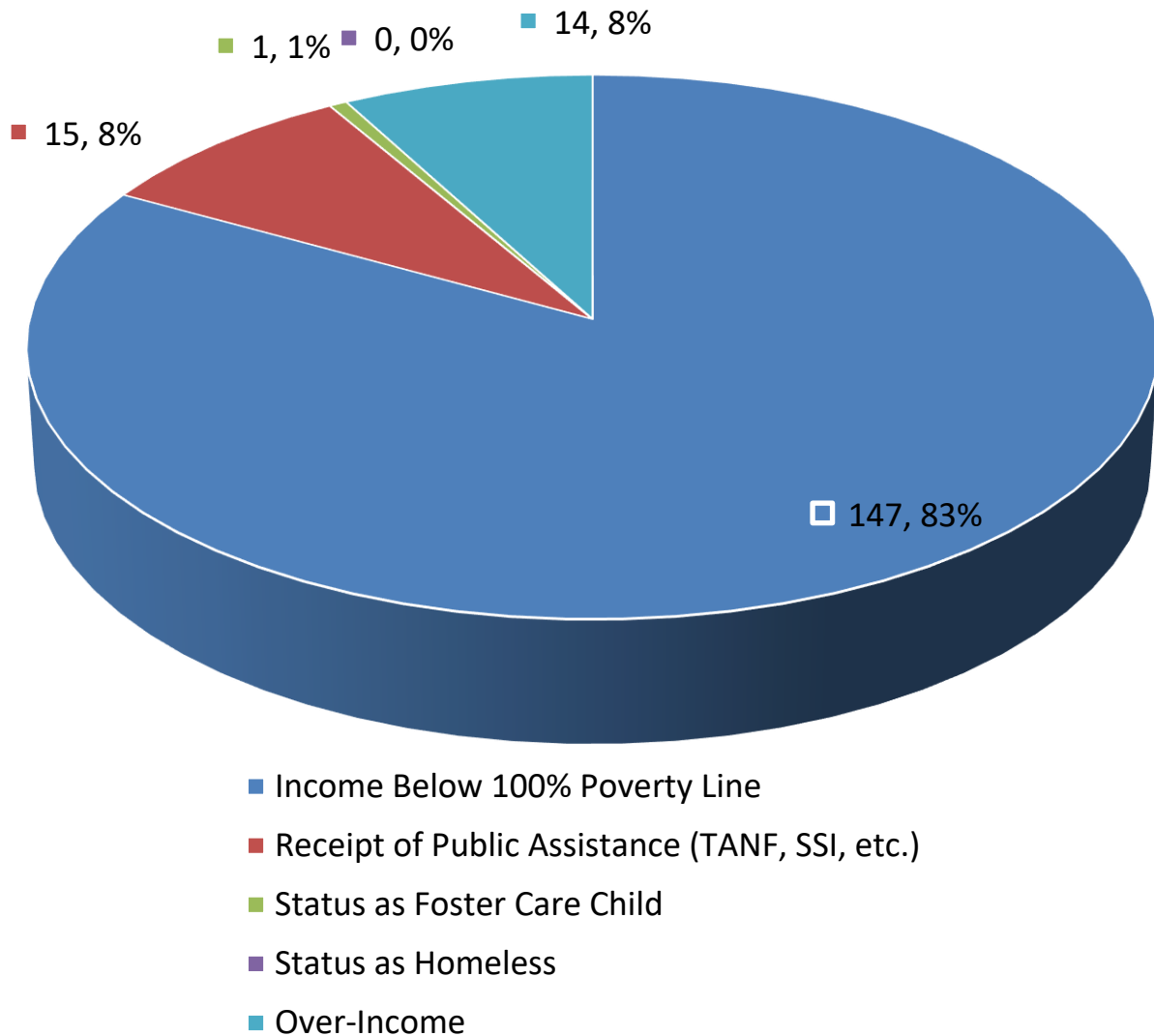
General Student Population by Gender 23-24



Student Population with Disability by Gender 23-24



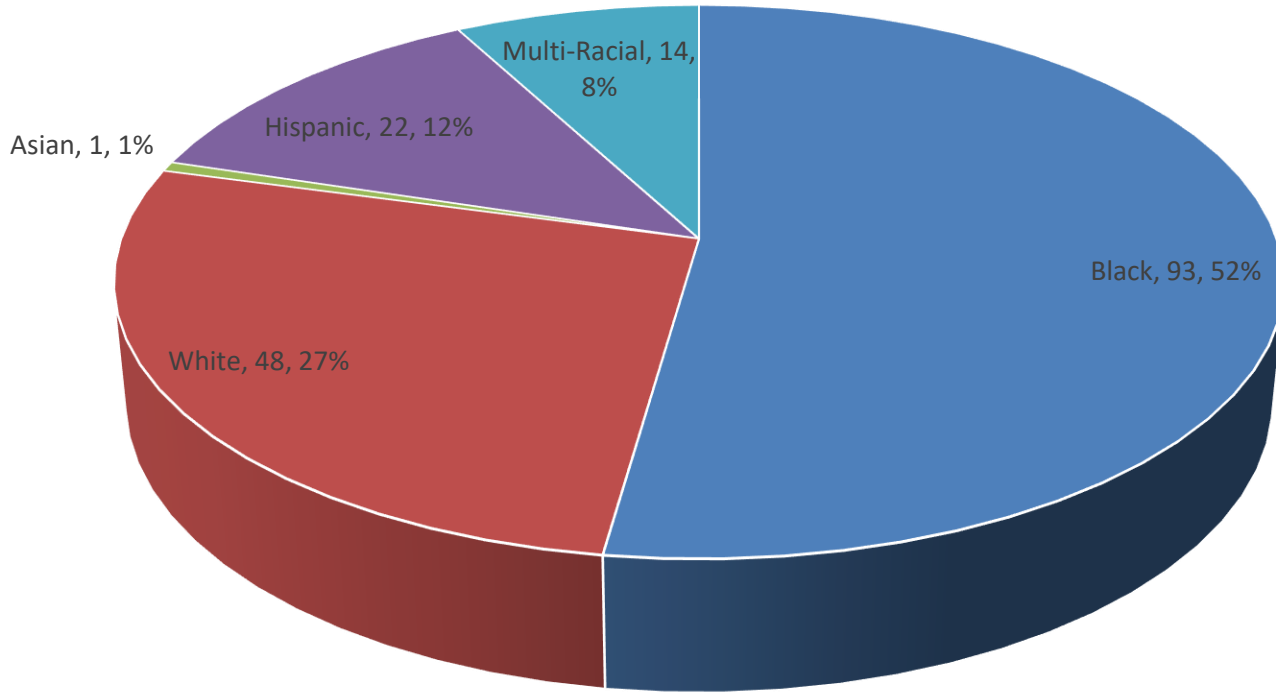
Enrollment by Eligibility 23-24



Enrollment by Eligibility

	Number	Percentage
Income Below 100% Poverty Line	147	85%
Receipt of Public Assistance (TANF, SSI, etc.)	15	1%
Status as Foster Care Child	1	1%
Status as Homeless	0	1%
Over-Income	15	12%

Student Race Demographics 23-24



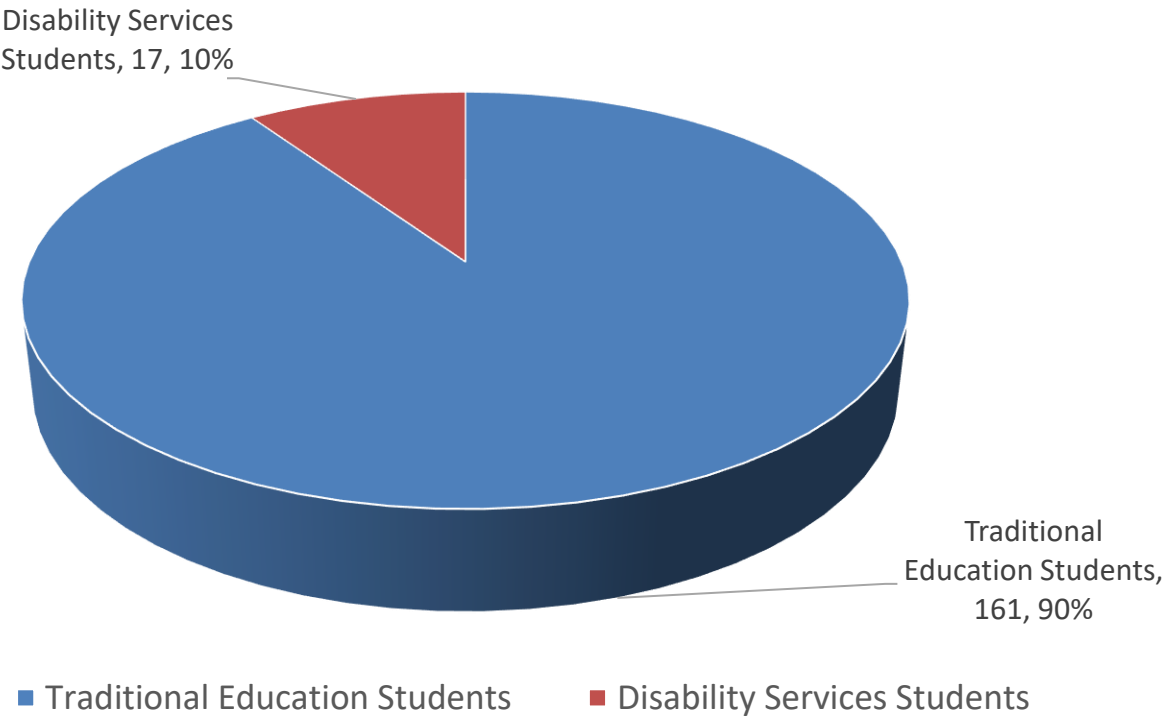
■ Black ■ White ■ Asian ■ Hispanic ■ Multi-Racial

Student Population Demographics

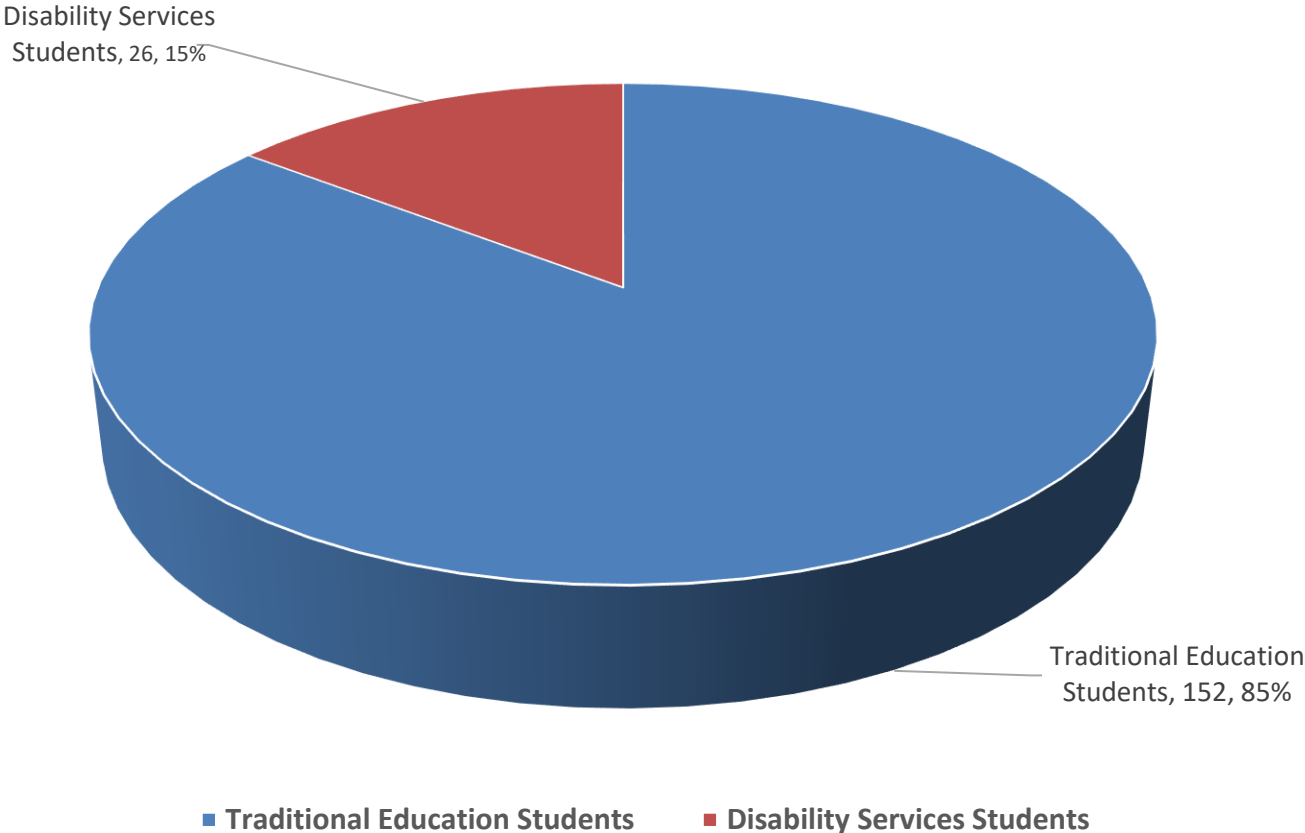
	Number	Percentage
Black	93	52%
White	48	27%
Asian	1	1%
Hispanic	22	12%
Multi-Racial	14	8%

Student Population With A Disability 23 – 24

Student Enrollment - (Day 1) 23-24



Putnam County Headstart Student Enrollment - Year End 23-24



PUTNAM COUNTY HEAD START HEALTH SERVICES INFORMATION

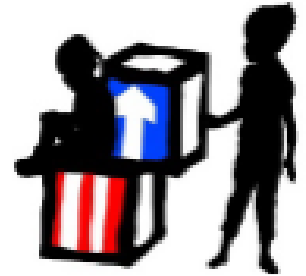
	ENROLLED	%TOTAL ENROLLMENT
Children With Health Insurance	188	100%
Number Enrolled in Medicaid and/or Chip	167	87%
Number of With Private Insurance	21	11%
MEDICAL HOME (at end of enrollment)		
Number of children With an Ongoing Source of Continuous, Accessible HealthCare	188	100%
MEDICAL SERVICES (at end of enrollment)		
Number of all Children Up-to-Date on:		
EPSDT Schedule	149	80%
Of These, the Number Diagnosed With a Chronic Condition Needing Medical Treatment	6	3 %
Of These, the Number Who Have Received or Are Receiving Medical Treatment	0	0%
Number of all Children who Received Medical Treatment of the Following Chronic Health Conditions		
Anemia	0	0%
Asthma	1	.6%
Hearing Difficulties	0	0%
Vision Problems	1	.6%
High Lead Levels	0	0%
IMMUNIZATION SERVICES (at end of enrollment)		
Number of Children Determined Up-to-Date	188	100%
Number of Children Exempt	0	0%
DENTAL HOME (at end of enrollment)		
Number of Children with Continuous, Accessible Dental Care Provided by a Dentist	188	100%

Ready access to on-going and affordable Pediatric Health Care remain a challenge for families. Families reported noticing and wanting help addressing the following, health related issue:

- Increase in children's behavioral or emotional problems
- Increase in children's sleep difficulties or nightmares
- Increase in mental health problems or mood swings and anxiety
- Increased screen time in children (phones, tablets, video games).

Putnam County Head Start

Survey Results for 23-24



Surveys to families, staff and community partners revealed the following about program strengths:

Families:

- 84% were satisfied with this year's Head Start Program.
- 73% felt they were kept informed about their child's classroom activities and what goes on in school.
- 96% felt free to contact child's teacher or assistant teacher.
- 96% felt free to contact the Head Start office with questions or concerns.
- 51% of you said that you participate in planning your child's education goal with the teacher.
- 58% received help on ideas on how to teach their child at home.

Top supports that staff felt would be most helpful in improving their professional role:

Staff:

- Professional development or training
- Coaching and/or mentoring
- Technology supports

Community Partners/respondents believe that COVID-19 has had the most impact on:

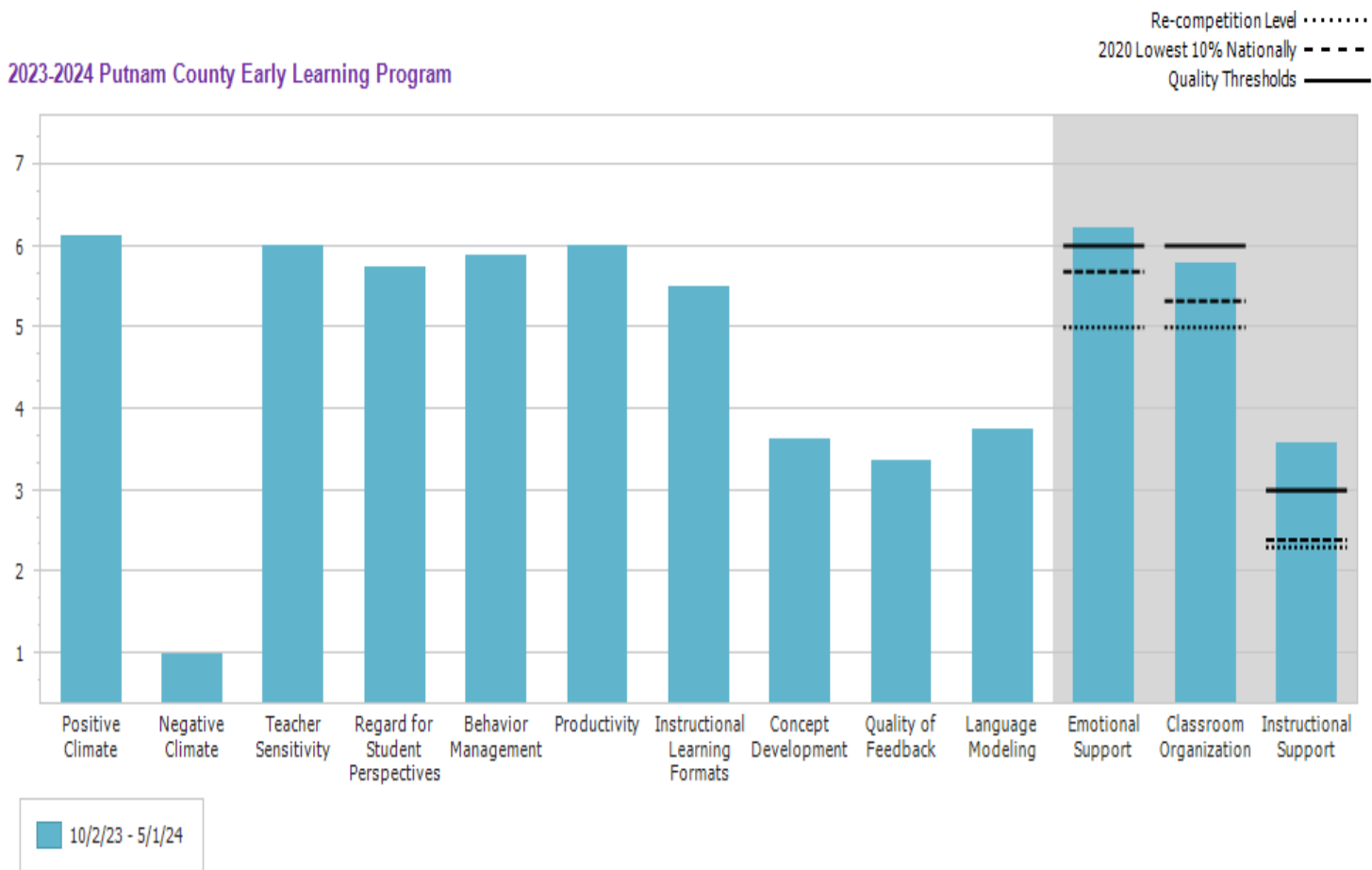
Community

- The average household income
- Domestic and community violence
- Job availability

Overall access to services has been most impacted by families' limited knowledge of what resources are available, fear/reluctance to access services, availability of needed services, access to internet/Wi-Fi, access to technology (devices) and affordability of needed services.



2023-2024 Putnam County Early Learning Program



	PC	NC	TS	RSP	BM	PD	ILF	CD	QF	LM	ES	CO	IS
10/2/23 - 5/1/24	6.13	1	6	5.75	5.88	6	5.5	3.63	3.38	3.75	6.22	5.79	3.58

CLASS Scores: (Classroom Assessment Scoring System)

Putnam County Head Start utilizes the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) tool as a valid and reliable instrument that assesses teacher-child interactions, classroom quality, and is linked to positive child outcomes. The chart below displays our 2023 – 2024 program scores and shows them in relation to the National Average and the lowest 10% National CLASS scores. Putnam County Head Start uses these averages to plan professional development for teaching staff. Results are shared with the governing board, policy council, management team, staff, parents and other stakeholders.

CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT, & OUTCOMES

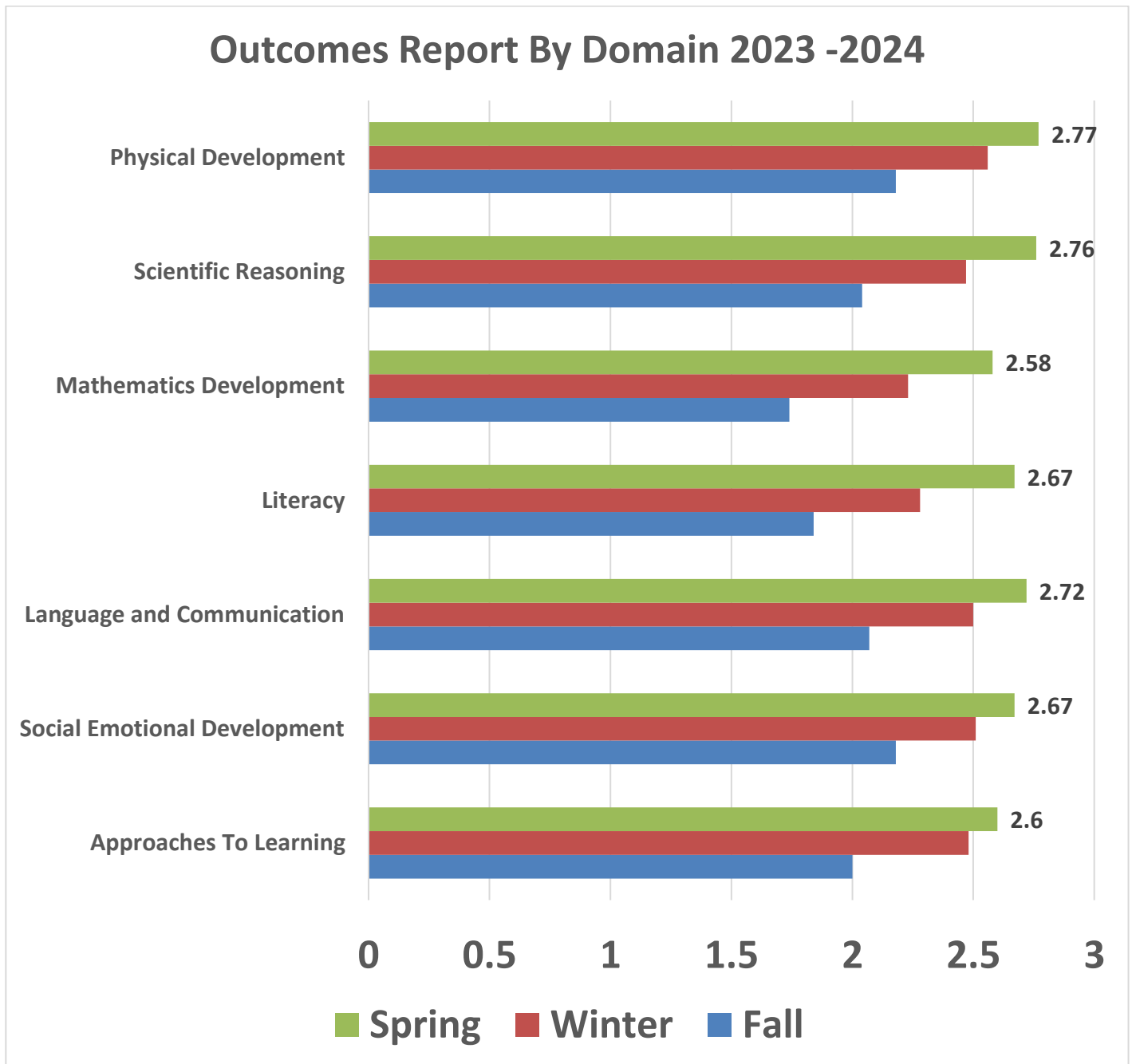
Putnam County Head Start, use the Creative Curriculum for preschool. It guides the teaching teams in addressing all aspects of development; social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language. Our staff build lesson plans for each week that promote literacy, math, science, social studies, art, and technology. The Creative Curriculum is consistent with the Head Start Performance Standards and is based on sound child development principles about how children grow and learn. The Creative Curriculum provides essential strategies the staff can use to make active learning a reality in the classroom.

Parental involvement in the programs' approach to child development and education enhances the ability of parents and staff to work together to support each child's growth and learning in the home program environment. Parental involvement also provides parents with the opportunity to share knowledge about their children so that staff can individual the program to support each child's individual pattern of development and learning.

The Creative Curriculum helps the program meet individual goals for the children's development and learning by providing experiences to meet such goals, and identifying the roles of teachers, staff member, parents, and aids to identify appropriate materials and equipment in both indoor and outdoor environments.

Achieving Developmental Outcomes for Children Analysis for 2023 – 2024

Developmental Progress is monitored through teacher observation, portfolio evidence of each child's work and parent input throughout the school term. Our approach to School Readiness means that children are ready for school, families are ready to support their children's learning, and schools are ready for children. Implementing and measuring progress toward school readiness goals helps programs individualize for each child and ensure that children know and can do what is needed to be ready for kindergarten.



The assessment demonstrated the spring progress report that the children are on target and meeting expectations. The children have developed skills and knowledge needed. Children going on to Kindergarten have at minimum a starting foundation to be successful and the children returning in the Fall have a strong Head Start!

Putnam County Head Start 2023 - 2024
Assessment Report: School Readiness/Outcomes Report
Analyzing and Addressing Outcome Results

The program area of strength as indicated are Perceptual Motor/Physical Development and Social and Emotional Development. The children scored highest in these two area and this can be attributed to the program's implementation of Circle Of Security (COS and Practice Based Coaching (PBC) which focuses on building strong, kind and, committed teacher child relationship.

The program area of need as indicated were Literacy and Mathematics. The children scored the lowest in these two area and the program plans to address these area of weakness by providing teachers professional development and resources that can be implemented into the classroom. In January, the Heggerty Curriculum will be introduced to the 3-year old teachers and be implemented into the classroom January 5th. Heggerty is a phonological and Phonemic Awareness Literacy program for preschoolers. We will also enhance the use of the apps, Khan Academy Kids, to provide literacy opportunities to the children during school and extend the learning experiences in homes of our families. We will also empower our parents to support their student's learning through enhanced use of our Family Engagement App Ready Rosie. The app incorporate video modeling & mobile technology to build partnerships between families & teachers to promote school readiness in all domains of learning (a focus on mathematics).

In addition our program will :

- 1. We will continue to send progress reports to parent(s)/guardian(s), three times a year. Information contained on the report includes gains, outcome/school readiness objectives, and attendance.*
- 2. We will continue to utilize parent engagement through progress report review and increased awareness of parental involvement importance to secure increased outcomes as partners in their child's education.*



SCHOOL READINESS GOALS

SCHOOL READINESS GOALS STATEMENT

Putnam County Head Start establishes the following goals for children's learning and development in Head Start. Program teaching practices and goals are aligned with the HSELOF, with state early learning standards or guidelines as appropriate, and with the requirements and expectations of the Putnam County Primary School System in which the children will be attending.

Social and Emotional Goals

1. Children will engage in and maintain positive adult-child relationships and interactions.
2. Children will engage in and maintain positive peer relationships and interactions.
3. Children will display levels of attention, emotional regulation, and behavior in the classroom that are appropriate to the situation and the supports available.
4. Children will learn and internalize (follow) classroom rules, routines, and directions.
5. All children will develop and display a sense of self, confidence in their abilities, and a strong identity that is rooted in their family and culture.

Language and Literacy Goals

1. Children will build, use, and comprehend increasingly complex and varied vocabulary.
2. Children will use and comprehend oral language for conversation and communication.
3. Children can identify and discriminate the sounds within words, as separate from the word itself.
4. Children will use and understand print as a system of visible marks that represent the sounds within words and words themselves.
5. Children will engage with literature in developmentally appropriate ways.
6. Children who are dual language learners (DLLs) will demonstrate increased competency in their home language while developing proficiency in English.

Approaches to Learning Goals

1. Children will show an interest in varied topics and activities, an eagerness to learn, creativity, and independence in their interactions with activities and materials.
2. Children will demonstrate persistence when working with materials, activities, and information.
3. Children will learn and use words and concepts that parallel the information available in activities and materials.

Cognition Goals

1. Children will use math regularly and in everyday routines to count, compare, relate, identify patterns, and problem solve.
2. Children will use observation and manipulation, ask questions, make predictions, and develop hypotheses to gain a better understanding of information and activities in their surroundings.
3. Children will use their skills in remembering information and in being aware of their own thinking.

Perceptual, Motor and Physical Development Goals

1. Children will demonstrate control of large muscles for movement, navigation, and balance.
2. Children will demonstrate control of small muscles for such purposes as using utensils, self-care, building, writing, and manipulation.
3. Children will identify and practice healthy and safe habits.

Putnam County Head Start

Between the ages of three and five, children experience a remarkable phase of growth and learning which sets the foundation for their future academic and personal development. The Putnam County Head Start Program nurtures this critical stage through a comprehensive approach to early childhood education. The program is designed to not only foster the cognitive development necessary for success in kindergarten but also to cultivate social, emotional, and physical skills that are equally important for a well-rounded upbringing.



**Georgia Dept
of Early Care
and Learning**

BRIGHT FROM THE START

During the 2023-2024 school term, the Putnam County Head Start Program received a Bright From the Start Grant for two summer transition programs: Rising Kindergartners and Rising Pre-K for Spanish-speaking students. These programs offer high-quality instruction focusing on language, literacy, and math to reduce the achievement gap. The Rising-K program has been running since 2023 while the Rising Pre-K program started in 2024 to support dual language learners. We are so excited for these summer opportunities for our Putnam County Preschool Scholars!

(Top to Bottom) Head Start student finds joy in learning about the butterfly life cycle. Our Head Start students enjoy several field trips each year, including the Arts and Sciences Museum and Washington Farms. Field trips play a crucial role in the learning journey as they provide students with real-world hands-on experiences that spark curiosity, stimulate critical thinking, and foster a deeper appreciation for the world around them.



Putnam County *Head Start*

A vast amount of learning takes place between the ages of three and five. During this time, a Head Start program can help a child develop skills that will promote success in kindergarten and beyond!



(Above)
Putnam County Head Start students in their community garden, plant seeds and enjoy the beautiful outdoors. Scan the QR Code to learn more about how Putnam County Head Start is growing young minds.



Accomplishments

• Summer Transition Grant

This grant was awarded to Putnam County Head Start/Pre-K for Rising Kindergartners from the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL). The Program was awarded to three rising kindergarten classes and will serve a maximum of 42 students this summer. The Summer Transition Program is a six-week intensive academic program for rising kindergartners.

• Trauma-Responsive Care Grant

Head Start was awarded a Trauma-Responsive Care Grant. The grant has helped build a more trauma-informed responsive community. Our collaborative has expanded to include over 25 mental health organizations that offer mental health services and care.

• Community Transformation Grant

Head Start was awarded a NEW Community Transformation Grant from DECAL. This grant targets children with social-emotional needs ages 0-8. This grant provides five paid Mental Health Endorsement opportunities from UGA for qualified candidates.

2023-2024 Grant Recipient Worldreader and Book Smart Free Tablets

During the 2023-2024 School Term, the Putnam County Head Start Program was the proud recipient of the Let's Get Children Reading Worldreader Grant. Being a recipient of this grant provided families access to Worldreader's complete BookSmart reading experiences as a tool to promote reading in and out of school. Through this innovative tool, families have found new ways to include reading in different environments, such as during family outings, in schools, and at home, among other places.



Parent Feedback:

I love having access to quality children's books on the go. Reading with my children as often as I can is important to me because I know the value of early reading. Worldreader and BookSmart allows me to provide a shared reading experience with my kids in a fun way, even on-the-go. Life gets busy, and Worldreader understands that and provides a valuable tool my family can use to help cultivate a love of reading at a young age."



At Putnam County Head Start, we believe that all children can succeed and achieve, and we work to empower families to advocate for their children and themselves. In addition to our educational staff, we have family services staff that support families in setting goals and connects them to community resources. We work diligently to provide each child and family high-quality learning experiences in a safe and nurturing environment that promotes school readiness and family-positive outcomes.

Ms. Christel Nelson

Putnam County Head Start Administrator