

**Sweetwater County School District #1 Head Start
Annual Report 2023-2024**



**Overland
Head Start
Bobcats**

Policy Council Approved November 5, 2024
SCSD#1 Board Approved November 11, 2024

The History of Head Start

Head Start is one of the most important social and educational investments for our communities, children, and families. The Head Start Project was launched in 1965 as a comprehensive child development program for children from birth to five years of age. Administered by the Office of Head Start, the Head Start model provides a range of individualized services in the areas of early education, health, mental health, nutrition, special needs, and parent engagement. Over the past 55 years, it has provided opportunities for success to millions of low-income and other vulnerable children and their families across the United States. Head Start programs have remained strong even with the ever changing fiscal and political surroundings because of years of success.

Our Mission Statement

Sweetwater County School District #1 Head Start is committed to empowering families by providing opportunities for early childhood development, family partnerships, and community involvement through quality, confidential services.

About Us

Sweetwater County School District #1 Head Start is a federally funded program that promotes school readiness of young children of all abilities from families with incomes below poverty guidelines. SCSD#1 Head Start serves children ages 3 to 5 by supporting their mental, social, and emotional development in a compassionate and collaborative manner. In addition to providing research-based education services, we also provide children and their families with adequate nutrition services, medical and dental care, as well as social/emotional interventions.

Our program emphasizes the involvement of parents in the lives of their children through home visits, parent leadership councils, and social events. We ensure that our community's children in the greatest need receive the care and education necessary to meet the developmental milestones necessary to successfully enter kindergarten and prepare for a lifetime of productive learning.

SCSD#1 Head Start works with families to engage them in their child's learning and development so they may support the lifelong success of their child. We recognize that parents are their child's primary teacher and advocate. Through the collaboration with parents and school, we are able to support families as their children make the transition to kindergarten.

Our Community Assessment

Our 2023-2024 Community Needs Assessment provides an evaluation of the needs and resources available to low-income families residing in the Sweetwater County School District #1 Head Start program service area. The report describes the context in which SCSD#1 Head Start operates and is useful for ensuring that the correct services are provided for the population.

Serving Children with Partners

Our Partners

- Sweetwater County School District #1
- Sweetwater County School District #1 Nutrition Services
- Sweetwater County Child Development Center
- Sweetwater County School District #1 Special Education Department
- Western Wyoming Community College
- Southwest Counseling Services
- Memorial Hospital of Sweetwater County
- Wyoming Department of Family Services

Through our partnerships, we are able to provide greater access to families, build capacity, and share in expert knowledge.

Eligible Children Served

In 2023-2024, SCSD#1 Head Start served a total of 122 children during the 2023-2024 school year and a total of 127 families. As of 2020, according to the Decennial Census, the population of our service area, Rock Springs was estimated at 23,526.

Children under Age Five in Poverty, Sweetwater County

Children Under Age 5		Infants and Toddlers		3 and 4 Year Olds	
Count	In Poverty	Count*	In Poverty	Count*	In Poverty
2,828	590 (20.9%)	1,697	354	1,131	236

*Estimated infants/toddlers (60%) and 3- & 4-Year-olds (40%) Source: American Community, 2020 5-Year Estimates

Our Children

Enrollment/Attendance

Families interested in Head Start must qualify by meeting a prioritized eligibility criterion. Our services are targeted towards children from low-income families, disabled children, children with incarcerated parents, foster children and homeless children. The number of families is greater than the number of children when a child's parents have separate households and both are involved in the program. Average monthly attendance in 2023-2024 was 84%. Head Start is required to report attendance each month to the Office of Head Start.

Demographics

Ethnicity

- 52 Hispanic or Latino origin
- 70 non-Hispanic

Race

- 3 American Indian or Alaska Native
- 3 Black or African American
- 0 Asian
- 1 Multi-racial/Bi-racial
- 0 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- 87 White
- 28 Other (specified Hispanic as race)

Family Type

- 46 Dual-parent Families; of which
 - 2 grandparents
 - 0 relative other than grandparent
 - 4 foster parents
 - 1 legal guardian not a relative
- 81 Single parent Families

Dual Language Learner

- 34 Dual language learners

Enrollment Age

- 49 children were 3-year-olds
- 73 children were 4-year-olds

Eligibility (categories determined by the federal government)

- 43 children qualified with income at or below the federal poverty level.
- 34 children on Public Assistance such as TANF, SSI or SNAP
- 6 children were in foster care at enrollment
- 17 children were homeless
- 12 eligibility based on other type of need
- 10 income between 100% and 130% of federal poverty line

Prior Enrollment

- 35 children were in their second year

Transition

- 59 children transitioned to kindergarten for the 2024-2025 school year

Parent, Family, and Community Engagement

Engaged families are essential to the well-being and development of young children. We see parents as a child's most important influence towards their child's success. Building a shared partnership with families gives parents opportunities to stay involved with the education of their child. SCSD#1 Head Start partners with families to provide and connect them with relevant services designed to strengthen families and provide a foundation for success. Our family advocate's work with families to develop individualized family partnership plans. These plans incorporate family goals and the support needed to make them achievable. We build relationships with families that support positive parent-child relationships, family well-being, and connections to peers and community. SCSD#1 Head Start encourages the role of parents as their child's first and most important teacher.

Parents, staff, and volunteers from the community work together to offer a variety of opportunities for engagement with children's education, personal growth, and family relationship building.

In 2023-2024, we had 237 program volunteers (parents, family members, and community members), that volunteered **3,350.30 hours** collectively to support our mission! This equivalated to **\$211, 272.72** of in-kind.

School Readiness

Sweetwater County School District #1 Head Start is a quality Early Childhood program that specializes in providing our students with the most optimal learning experiences possible to give the students a "Head Start" when beginning kindergarten. Our program utilizes Teaching Strategies Creative Curriculum as the foundation for lesson planning. Children are guided through a variety of studies while building development skills across all areas. The curriculum further includes a platform to connect parents with their child's learning in the classroom.

The 2023-2024 assessment tool that we utilize to assess children's school readiness skills is Teaching Strategies GOLD. The overall school readiness goals are for children to meet or exceed age expectations in the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework domains of Approaches to Learning, Social-Emotional Development, Language and Communication, Cognition, and Perceptual, Physical, & Motor Development. The teachers collaborate with co-teachers, parents, and management to plan for and support continued growth in each learning area.

Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework:

Central Domains					
	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Literacy	Cognition	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development
Infant / Toddler Domains	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Communication	Cognition	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development
Preschooler Domains	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Communication	Mathematics Development	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development
			Literacy	Scientific Reasoning	

CLASS-The Classroom Assessment Scoring System

CLASS is an observation instrument that assesses the quality of teacher-child interactions in center-based preschool classrooms. It monitors three domains of the interactions that support children's learning and development: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support. The CLASS scoring system is used in Federal Monitoring of Head Start classrooms. To ensure impactful child-teacher interactions, SCSD#1 Head Start conducts CLASS observations and scores classrooms to ensure our high-quality expectations and standards are maintained.

Health Services

Health, Nutrition and Mental Health

Sweetwater County School District #1 Head Start is committed to wellness and embraces a comprehensive vision for children, families and staff. Through collaborative relationships among families, staff, and health professionals; child health and developmental concerns are identified. Then, children and families are linked to an ongoing source of continuous care that meets their current health needs and in preparation for public school.

Health Stats

Physical Health

- 74 children were up-to-date on a schedule of well-child care at end of enrollment.
- 28 children diagnosed with any chronic condition by a health care professional

- 24 of these received medical treatment for their diagnosed chronic health condition.

Dental Health

- 76 children received dental exams.
- 2 children needed dental treatment.

Mental Health

- 6 children received play therapy through our Southwest Counseling Services partner.
- 3 children received play therapy through local providers

Insurance

- 110 children enrolled in health insurance at end of enrollment
 - Of these, 97 enrolled in Medicaid and/or CHIP
 - Of these, 13 enrolled in private or other insurance
 - 12 children had no health insurance

Nutrition

Nutritional meals are essential to healthy growth and development. Nutrition services include nutrition assessments, nutritious meals with modifications for children with special dietary needs, and education to empower parents to help them make healthy choices for themselves and their children. Our program provides two nutritious meals per day plus one snack per day (to full day children) following CACFP guidelines.

Financial Information

Our Head Start program is financially supported several ways as the chart below illustrates. Providing quality services to children and families could not be done without a variety of funding sources. The breakdown of funding is provided below for the 2023/2024 school year.

Budgeted Expenses Versus Actual Expenses

Revenues	
U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services/Head Start *COLA/QI Revenue Is included	\$ 1,512,480.00
USDA (Child and Adult Care Food Program)	\$ 122,886.85
Non-Federal Share	\$ 351,576.00
Total	\$ 1,986,942.85

Head Start Federal Funding

Budget Period 07/01/2023 - 06/30/2024

Category	Budget	Actual
Personnel	\$ 924,245.00	\$ 901,758.04
Fringe Benefits	\$ 453,726.00	\$ 365,977.33
Travel	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 561.94
Equipment*	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 5,817.00
Supplies	\$ 10,712.00	\$ 180,587.26
Contractual	\$ -	\$ -
Construction	\$ -	\$ -
Other	\$ 110,797.00	\$ 57,778.43
Total	\$ 1,512,480.00	\$ 1,512,480.00
Federal Share	\$ 1,512,480.00	\$ 1,512,480.00
Non-Federal Share	\$ 351,576.00	\$ 351,576.00
Total Federal & Non-Federal	\$ 1,864,056.00	\$ 1,864,056.00

Program Governance 2023-2024

Policy Council

Head Start Policy Council is made up of Head Start parents and community members who lead and make decisions about the program.

Will Lindsay – Chairperson

Kali Chatwin

Karie McGuire

Tara Thompson

Stephanie Thompson – SCSD#1 Board Liaison

Morgan Haddock – Vice Chairperson

Leah Gillen

Nicole Thompson

Katelen Wingard

SCSD#1 Board of Directors

Carol Jelaco – Chairman

Cole Wright – Clerk

Danielle Schumacher

Kari Cochran

Stephanie Thompson – Vice-Chairman

Andrea Summers – Treasurer

Anjelica Wood

Kelly McGovern -SCSD#1 Superintendent

Federal & Fiscal Monitoring

The Office of Head Start uses the Head Start Monitoring System to measure the performance and accountability of Head Start programs across the country. The Office of Head Start assesses grantee compliance with the Head Start Program Performance Standards, the Head Start Act, and other regulations. The reviews focus on a program's performance, progress and compliance, and also provides an opportunity for continuous improvement. The Office of Head Start conducted a virtual Focus Area 1 Federal Monitoring Review of our program in February 2024. There were no findings or areas out of compliance. No additional follow-up was needed.

An annual audit for fiscal year 2023 was completed by Carver, Florek & James with no findings.

The Office of Head Start awarded our program a five-year grant for the project period of July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2028.

Our Strategic Five-Year Goals 2023-2028

The goals below were developed during several program-wide strategic planning sessions and are intended to serve as a guide for the five-year grant. As part of the planning process, Sweetwater County School District #1 and Head Start developed annual measurable objectives and grant outcomes reported to Region VIII Office of Head Start while monitoring the progress of its efforts to sustain compliance and quality of the past 27 years.

Goal #1: Head Start will enhance the school readiness of students by providing high quality early education and child development services to enrolled students including those with disabilities and dual language learners to promote students' growth across each domain of development.

Goal #2: Head Start will empower families to be proactive in their student's success in school and beyond by strengthening and partnering with families to identify and address family needs and support family goals to improve family well-being.

Goal #3: Head Start will ensure that all students and families have access to quality Head Start support services by recruiting, hiring, training and retaining qualified staff.

Goal #4: Head Start will nurture a healthy environment for all students and families and promote a healthy lifestyle for students and their families.

Goal #5: Head Start will increase educational supports to foster positive social/emotional development and the lasting effects on students, families and staff.

Goal #6: Head Start will develop an effective communication process with all internal and external stakeholders to increase agency visibility and partnership opportunities.

Goal #7: Head Start will explore supplemental funding and/or converting enrollment slots from services for Head Start preschool-aged students to Early Head Start services for pregnant women, infants and toddlers based on the needs reflected in the Community Assessment.

SCSD#1 Head Start is committed to providing children with a high-quality early learning experience, built on a foundation of research, that prepares them for success in kindergarten and beyond. We continue to build a path of continuous quality improvement as we seek new ways to create the biggest impact on the children and families we serve.

Thank you!

Thank you to all those who have helped our Head Start program. Your time and talents mean so much to the success of our program.