

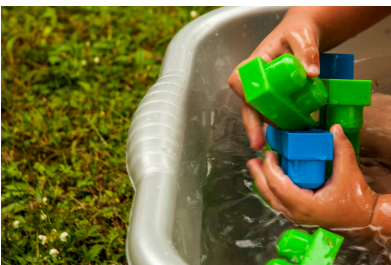


# Lower Columbia College Head Start/EHS/ECEAP

# 2025

## Annual Report





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# TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Dear Community,

I am filled with pride at how much we've grown together this year. To better serve children and families, we listened to needs and strengthened the foundation of our program.

**Working Day Hours** - We extended Head Start days and hours in five classes to support working parents. To implement this model, we increased teacher contracts and layered funding with child care subsidy reimbursement.

**Healthy Bodies, Well-Being, & Strong Routines** - We've made great strides in family support outcomes this year. Child dental and well-child exam completion rates increased, and we welcomed a new Mental Health Specialist to our team. We also made a major wage adjustment for all teachers. We know that stable, happy teachers lead to thriving classrooms. Child attendance was strong, proving that families see the value of both routine and every single day of learning.

**New Partnerships** - We also embraced the power of community by partnering with the Castle Rock School District. By working with them to directly provide ECEAP to 17 children, we've ensured that more children in our county have access to high-quality early learning, even as we continue to navigate teacher shortages and funding challenges.

We are honored to live, work, and learn alongside you.

Mindy Leasure, Program Director



# MISSION & VISION

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Lower Columbia College Head Start/EHS/ECEAP Program is a holistic program that provides quality early childhood education experiences through comprehensive services that support income-eligible children and families, prenatal to five.

We are committed to building healthier communities by providing school readiness to each child through:

- Working together with each parent/guardian in their role as the primary nurturer and educator of their child
- Nurturing each child's and family's unique qualities and potential
- Partnering with families; building upon their strengths
- Creating an environment that promotes respect and growth
- Collaborating with community partners in Cowlitz County

Our vision is that families be empowered to make a positive difference in their lives and in the community where we all live, work and learn.



we learn  
through  
play

# PROGRAM GOALS

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Through a collaborative process, our Board, Policy Council, and staff leveraged comprehensive community assessment and program data to define strategic goals for the 2024-2029 project period.

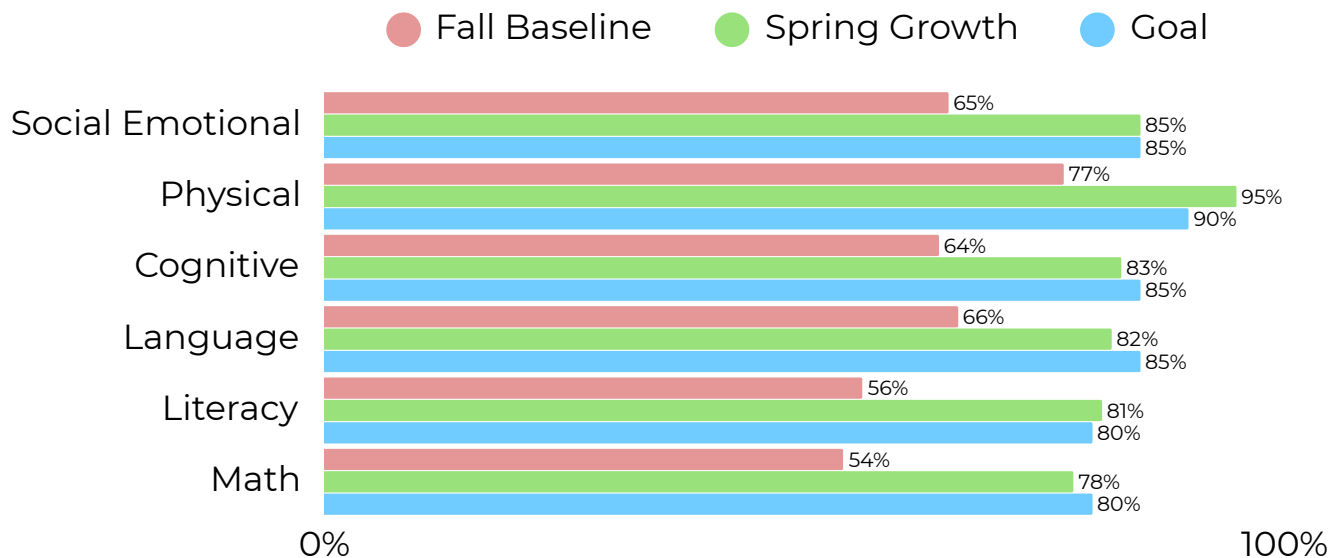
To provide consistent, high-quality services, the program will achieve:

- Workforce Stability
- Full Enrollment
- Safety
- School Readiness
- Health & Nutrition
- Family & Community Engagement



Contact our Program Director for a  
current copy of our  
Community Assessment  
[mleasure@lowercolumbia.edu](mailto:mleasure@lowercolumbia.edu)

# DEVELOPMENTAL OUTCOMES & SCHOOL READINESS GOALS



Goals	Infant/Toddler	Preschool - 3-5 year Old
Social/Emotional	Children will demonstrate improved social behavior, emotion regulation, and emotional well-being	Children will display healthy and positive interactions, self-regulation and increase social skills.
Physical Development/Health	Children will demonstrate improved perceptual, motor and physical development.	Children will learn healthy behaviors. Children will demonstrate skill in fine and gross motor
Cognition/Approach to Learning	Children will demonstrate improved positive approaches towards learning including improved attentions skills.	Children will stay focused, problem-solve, and engage with activities and materials.
Language	Children will demonstrate improved communication, language, and emergent literacy skills.	Children will communicate with others and expand vocabulary.
Literacy		Children will gain an understanding that print has meaning and will begin to identify letters and sounds.
Math	Children will be exposed to math vocabulary and simple math quantities.	Children will use math in everyday routines and play to count, compare and identify patterns.
Positive Parent/Child Relationships	Families will demonstrate improved positive parent child/relationships.	

# MEASURING PROGRESS

## Enrollment

Head Start 168  
ECEAP 68  
Early Head Start 58  
Total: 294

## Attendance

Preschool 85%  
Early Head Start 85%

## Nutrition

Nutrition Assessments  
Completed 98%  
  
Meals 252,078

## Family Services

Preschool Home Visits 1,269  
Parent/Teacher Conferences 478  
Family Partnership Goals 260  
Community Referrals 2,651

## Disability Services

Children with IEP 17%  
Children with IFSP 31%  
Children with an  
accommodation 26%

## Wellbeing

Mental Health  
Consultation  
Services 640

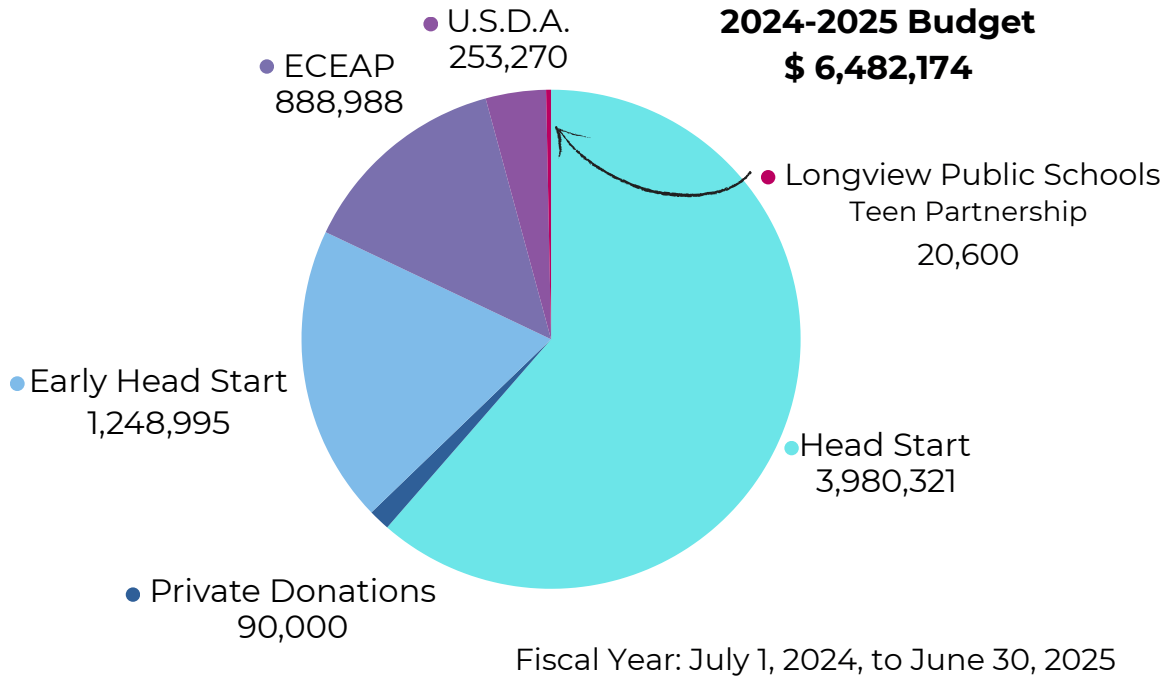
## Health & Dental

Health Insurance 100%  
Immunizations 91%  
Physical Exams 91%  
Dental Exams 93%

## Monitoring

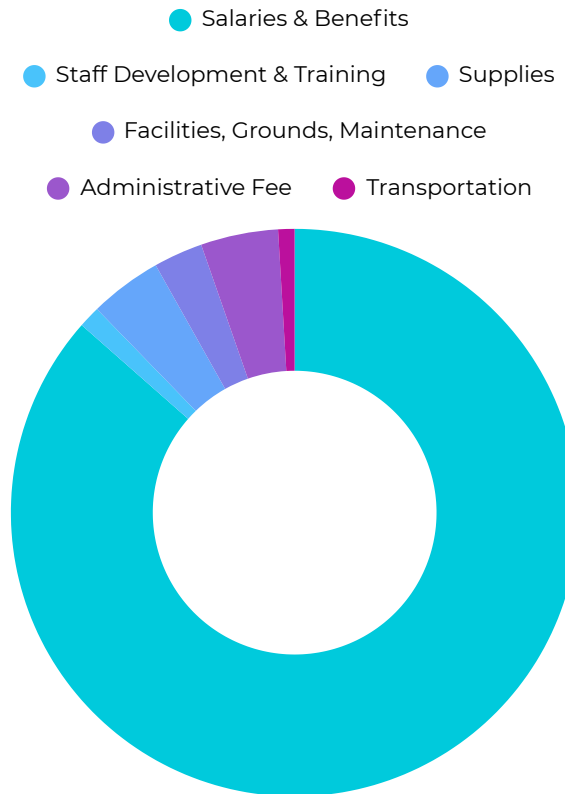
Monitoring Review - none  
Fiscal Audit - no findings

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY



**2024-2025 Expenditures**  
**\$ 6,405,052**

Salaries & Benefits	\$ 5,598,437
Staff Development & Training	\$ 65,347
Supplies	\$ 197,422
Facilities & Grounds	\$ 199,084
Administrative Fee	\$ 292,883
Transportation	\$ 51,880
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 6,405,052</b>



# FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

## Generous Donors & Volunteers

Monetary donations for Head Start go through the Lower Columbia College Foundation and are acknowledged annually in the Foundation's Report to the Community.

Many community members and organizations gift goods and services. Whether providing books, coats, diapers, clothing, or legal advice, your support helps us care for our children and families more deeply.

Classroom volunteers, your time reading, extending conversations, engaging in the handwashing line, and much more make a real difference in the day of children and teachers. Thank you!

## Parent and Community Leadership

Featuring dedicated parent representatives and esteemed community members, our Policy Council offers key governance with the Lower Columbia College Board of Trustees. At monthly Policy Council meetings, facilitated by trained parent leaders, they approve new hires, funding, policies, expenses, and other vital items.

Parents also have the opportunity to participate in advocacy efforts and even serve at the state-wide level.

## Why and How to Give

LCC Head Start/EHS/ECEAP has been changing lives since 1972 by pairing early care and education with wrap-around family support. When their children are young, families have the least resources and support. Head Start helps boost their journey up and out of poverty. You can help by donating to Head Start through the LCC Foundation. Donations are tax-deductible. Give online using the QR code or call 360-442-2130



## Community Partnerships

Leveraging strong community partnerships, we successfully facilitated an impressive 2,651 individualized referrals to our valued partner agencies, significantly expanding the support network available to families.

## Head Start is Much More than Preschool

My middle son started the Lower Columbia College Head Start program in September 2023; I thought we were signing him up for preschool to get ready for kindergarten. What we walked into was far bigger than that. We discovered a program that really envelops the family. Head Start at Lower Columbia College isn't just about ABCs and 123s. It's about social-emotional growth, health, nutrition, family goals—and ensuring parents feel supported, too. We felt like partners from the beginning — not just participants. That kind of wraparound support can show a difference, and it's one key reason that we truly love this program.

In our second year, I wanted to get more involved and started on the Policy Council as our classroom rep. I wanted to get a sense of how decisions were made and how parents could have a voice. I went on to serve as the Head Start State Representative for our program, which also got me on the PC Executive Committee. That experience taught me how powerful parent leadership can be. From there, I applied to be a Washington State Association (WSA) Parent Ambassador — and it started by just saying yes to get involved. I graduated from the program this month and received a certificate in Parent Leadership and Advocacy through Skagit Valley College. That is something I would never have thought of when we first enrolled.

Now, our daughter is starting her own Head Start journey, and it really feels like a full-circle moment. Knowing how this program has already benefitted my family, this moment is even more meaningful. I'm not only sending her to preschool—I am introducing her to a community I deeply believe in. I know she will be nurtured, supported, and prepared, as her brother was. Head Start prepared my son for kindergarten, but it also helped me become a stronger advocate and leader. This program not only educates children but also empowers families. I am extremely proud to be a Head Start parent and will use my voice to ensure families understand they belong here, too.

- Lexi Frampton