

Head Start Monthly Report September 2024

Conduct of Responsibilities –

Each Head Start agency shall ensure the sharing of accurate and regular information for use by the **Governing Body and Policy Council**, about program planning, policies, and Head Start agency operations, including:

- (A) Monthly financial statements, including credit card expenditures;
- (B) Monthly program information summaries
- (C) Program enrollment reports, including attendance reports for children whose care is partially subsidized by another public agency;
- (D) Monthly reports of meals and snacks provided through programs of the Department of Agriculture;
- (E) The financial audit;
- (F) The annual self-assessment, including any findings related to such assessment;
- (G) The communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment of the Head Start agency, including any applicable updates;
- (H) Communication and guidance from the Secretary;

In accordance with the New Head Start Performance Standards that went into effect on November 7, 2016:

1301.2 (b) Duties & Responsibilities of the Governing Body -

- (1) The governing body is responsible for activities specified at section 642©(1)€ of the Head Start Act.
- (2) The governing body must use ongoing monitoring results, data on school readiness goals, and other information described in 1302.102, and information described at section 642(d)(2) of the Act to conduct its responsibilities.

Please see Program Information Summary & attachments to this monthly report for monitoring reports.

Credit Card Reports \$50.62

8/19/24 \$50.62

Pizza Hut

Policy Council

A. Program Information Summary

Outside of the meetings and events listed below, the Director submitted the Base Application Grant for the upcoming 5-Year Project Period. Please see attachments to this report for program goals and school readiness goals for the next 5 years. DCY has absorbed ECE programming under their umbrella. That change has led to many new policies and procedures. MCHS offered over 20 hours of training for pre-service for staff in preparation of the start of the school year.

District affiliated events Director participated in include: Board meeting, HR duty transition mtg w/ Superintendent, Custodial meetings, Operational meetings for Ed Complex
External committees / meetings affiliated with Head Start – Weekly Directors meetings, OHSAI Executive Board, OHSAI Community of Learners Director , OHSAI Futures , COLT, Mtg w/ 0-5 local agencies – transition plan, FCFC

Internal committees / meetings – Policy Council meetings, Administrative meetings, Recruitment, Intake meetings accepting children, Pre-Service training meetings, OHSAI mtgs, State Collab Director mtg, monthly OHS call, Higher Ed Summit

Trainings provided – ERSEA, Dress Code Policy, New HSPPS, Pre-Service

Training received – New HSPPS, ECE new policy & procedures

The program continues to function under a Non-Federal match Waiver

Education – No report
Mental Health – No report
Disabilities – No report
Health – No report
ERSEA – No report
Family Engagement – No report

B. Enrollment / Attendance

Enrollment by program option

Attendance by program option

Enrollment by Program Option:

Half Day PY Head Start	
Full Day School Year (6 hour day)	

Attendance by Program Option:

Half Day PY Head Start	
Full Day School Year	

C. CACFP report – CACFP claimed meals

Month Served	August 2024
Total Days Attendance	
Total Breakfast	
Total Lunches	
Total Snacks	
Total Meals	

D. Financial Audit – Completed

E. Annual Self-Assessment

- Completed May 2024

F. Community Assessment - Attached

G. Communication and Guidance from the Secretary

Attached – HSPPS Implementation Timetable

Attachments to report:

Program Governance Service Plan

Shared Governance By-laws / handbook – Changed the number of parents and community members for Policy Council membership in anticipation of the reduction in enrollment.

Policy Council Nomination – policy update

Housing Calculation – policy update response to HSPPS

Child Abuse Reporting - policy update response to HSPPS

Selection Criteria – policy update response to HSPPS, recommendations by Policy Council

Facilities Lead Testing

From Grant Submission

Community Needs Assessment

Program Goals

School Readiness Goals

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Esser

Executive Director

HEAD START - 2024 GRANT

525-9924

	FEDERAL BUDGET	OTHER SOURCES	TOTAL REVENUES	REVENUE RECEIVED	REMAINING FUNDING
Federal Revenue	2,158,505.00	-	2,158,505.00	1,050,043.89	1,108,461.31
CACFP Revenue	-	100,000.00	100,000.00	63,566.42	36,433.58
Other Local	-	-	-	-	-
Refund prior year exp	-	-	-	-	-
Board advance	-	-	-	-	-
Total	2,158,505.00	100,000.00	2,258,505.00	1,113,610.11	1,144,894.89

EXPENSES

	FEDERAL BUDGET	OTHER SOURCES	TOTAL BUDGET	ACTUAL EXPENDED	EXPENDABLE BALANCE	ENCUMBERED/ REQUISITIONS	REMAINING BALANCE
Salary	976,269.00	-	976,269.00	688,173.62	288,095.38	-	288,095.38
Fringe Benefits	746,023.00	-	746,023.00	415,035.63	330,987.37	2,270.00	328,717.37
Programming	223,486.00	-	223,486.00	61,466.47	162,019.53	24,620.22	137,399.31
Supplies	159,912.00	58,687.00	218,599.00	69,051.40	149,547.60	58,542.72	91,004.88
Capital Outlay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Expenditures	5,270.00	-	5,270.00	4,179.00	1,091.00	-	1,091.00
PA22 subtotal	2,110,960.00	58,687.00	2,169,647.00	1,237,906.12	931,740.88	85,432.94	846,307.94

Training & Technical Services

Training & technical serv (job code 400)	419	22,835.00	-	22,835.00	14,716.20	8,118.80	1,374.00	6,744.80
Staff out of town travel	439	22,068.00	-	22,068.00	15,420.43	6,647.57	1,948.19	4,699.38
Subtotal Purch Service		44,903.00	-	44,903.00	30,136.63	14,766.37	3,322.19	11,444.18

Training & Tech Supplies

Subtotal Supplies		2,642.00	-	2,642.00	1,566.72	1,075.28	896.00	179.28
		2,642.00	-	2,642.00	1,566.72	1,075.28	896.00	179.28

T&TA -PA20

		47,545.00	-	47,545.00	31,703.35	15,841.65	4,218.19	11,623.46
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Return of Board Advance

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TOTALS

		2,158,505.00	58,687.00	2,217,192.00	1,269,609.47	947,582.53	89,651.13	857,931.40
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Federal Grant
Expenditures
1,206,043.05

155,999.36

TOTAL REVENUE OVER/UNDER TOTAL EXPENDITURES

(155,999.36)

CATEGORY	RATE	HOURS	AMOUNT	COMMENTS
PC BOARD	48.88	6.5	317.72	
AT HOME ACTIVITIES	0	0	0	SCHOOL NOT IN SESSION
PARENT VOLS COMM VOLS	0	0	0	NOT IN SESSION
TOTAL				
DONATED GOODS UTILITIES	175		175 2142	SCHOOL NURSE ESUPPLY
ECE MHC			8154	
TOTAL				
CCS SUPPORT				
SLP			5259.39	
IT			1163.73	
ASST TR I			506.34	
ASST TR II			373.09	
SUPT SEC			444.17	
CUSTODIAL			4949.54	
MAINTENANCE			1368.04	
TREASURER			657.37	
FRINGE			433.71	
BENEFITS			7769.76	
TOTAL			22904.66	
MO TOTAL			33,693.38	
YTD TOTAL			257,283.97	

INDIVIDUAL CARDHOLDER ACTIVITY

THOMAS S SOMMER 5553 7550 0001 0762	CREDITS \$0.00	PURCHASES \$400.00	CASH ADV \$0.00	TOTAL ACTIVITY \$400.00
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ACCOUNTING CODE:

Purchasing Activity

Post Date	Tran Date	Reference Number	Transaction Description	Amount
08-21	08-18	85140014280200010000073	ORIO ASSOCIATION OF SEB TRCV OH P.O. # 0100794 0105 5246 SALES TAX 0.00	\$400.00

Total Purchasing Activity

\$400.00

Miscellaneous Activity

Post Date	Tran Date	Reference Number	Transaction Description	Amount
08-23	08-22	35420004285745579201506	THE LANOVER INS. CO 5175452180 MA	\$57.00

Total Miscellaneous Activity

\$57.00

AMY ESSER 5553 7550 0001 0762	CREDITS \$0.00	PURCHASES \$50.62	CASH ADV \$0.00	TOTAL ACTIVITY \$50.62
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ACCOUNTING CODE:

Travel Activity

Post Date	Tran Date	Reference Number	Transaction Description	Amount
08-19	08-15	85700014220001151020270	PIZZA HUT 12757 CELINA OH	50.62

Total Travel Activity

\$50.62

DONNIE ROSE 5553 7550 0001 0762	CREDITS \$0.00	PURCHASES \$0.00	CASH ADV \$0.00	TOTAL ACTIVITY \$0.00
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ACCOUNTING CODE:

Purchasing Activity

Post Date	Tran Date	Reference Number	Transaction Description	Amount
08-15	08-14	85500004227000010002000	FIRST FOR INSPIRATION 603 6668003 NH P.O. # 1734003 SALES TAX 0.00	700.00
08-15	08-14	85500004227000010002000	FIRST FOR INSPIRATION 603 6668003 NH P.O. # 1734003 SALES TAX 0.00	1000.00
08-16	08-15	85495014220100001332575	WM SUPERCENTER #1433 CELINA OH P.O. # 00000010000 SALES TAX 0.00	0.00
08-16	08-15	85420004220110001007405	EZCATER SUBWAY 6004001003 MA P.O. # 1274017 SALES TAX 0.00	000.04

Mercer County Head Start Policies and Procedures

P/P Topic:	Housing Calculations	P/P #:	
Part:	1302 Program Operations	PC Approval Date:	9/12/24
Subpart:	<i>A – Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance</i>	Last Reviewed Date:	
Section Title(s):	<i>Verifying Eligibility</i>	Implementation Responsibility:	Family Advocates
Related Performance Standard(s):	1302.12(i)(1)	Monitoring Responsibility:	MH Manager

(A) Policy	<p>(ii) A program may make an adjustment to a family’s gross income calculation for the purposes of determining eligibility to account for excessive housing costs. A program may use available bills, bank statements, and other relevant documentation provided by the family to calculate total annual housing costs with appropriate multipliers to:</p> <p>(A) Determine if a family spends more than 30 percent of their total gross income on housing costs, as defined in part 1305 of this chapter; and</p> <p>(B) If applicable, reduce the total gross income by the amount spent on housing costs that exceed more than 30 percent.</p>
(B) Responsibility	Family Advocates
(C) Procedure	<p>At the time of application, Family Advocates determine eligibility by reviewing the family’s income for the relevant time period.</p> <p>Relevant Time Period is defined as (1) the 12 months preceding the month in which the application is submitted; or (2) during the calendar year preceding the calendar year in which the application is submitted, whichever more accurately reflects the needs of the family at the time of application.</p> <p>When determining income eligibility, the program will consider if the family has excessive housing costs. The program will request proof of payment for housing costs (i.e. bills, bank statements, or other relevant documentation including signed attestations from landlords or businesses) to calculate the total percentage of housing costs relevant to the family’s total gross income for the relevant time period.</p> <p>The program will complete the Housing Calculations worksheet encompassing mortgage / rent, insurance for the house / dwelling,</p>

	<p>taxes on the home / dwelling, electricity, gas, water, sewer, trash. To determine the percentage of housing costs relevant to total gross income utilize the following calculation (total housing costs / total gross income). If that percentage is over 30%, the program can subtract the amount over 30% from the total gross income to determine if the family is income eligible for the program.</p>
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Mercer County Head Start Policies and Procedures

P/P Topic:	Child Abuse Reporting	P/P #:	
Part:	1302 Program Operations	PC Approval Date:	9/12/24
Subpart:	I – Human Resource Management	Last Reviewed Date:	2/8/18
Section Title(s):	Training and Professional Development	Implementation Responsibility:	All Staff
Related Performance Standard(s):	1302.92(b)(2) 1302.47(B)(5)(I)	Monitoring Responsibility:	Director

(A) Policy	<p>As required by the Ohio Revised Code 2151.421 employees are to report any suspected instances of child abuse and/or neglect to the proper authorities.</p> <p>(b)A program must establish and implement a systematic approach to staff training and professional development designed to assist staff in acquiring or increasing the knowledge or skills needed to provide high-quality, comprehensive services within the scope of their job responsibilities, and attached to academic credit appropriate. At a minimum, the system must include:</p> <p>(2) Training on methods to handle suspected or known child abuse and neglect cases, that comply with applicable federal, state, local, and tribal laws</p> <p>(5) Safety practices. All staff and, consultants, contractors, and volunteers follow appropriate practices to keep children safe during all activities, including, at a minimum: (i) Reporting of suspected or known child abuse and neglect, , as defined by the Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) (42 U.S.C. 5101 note), including that staff comply with applicable Federal, State, local, and Tribal laws;</p>
(B) Responsibility	All staff

(C) Procedure	<p>In the event a child comes to the program with signs or indications of POSSIBLE / SUSPECTED abuse or neglect, or reports an incident indicating possible abuse and / or neglect the following steps will occur:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact the Director and / or your direct supervisor immediately. 2. If the staff person observing the possible CA/N is a teacher, the management team will make arrangements for the teacher to exit the classroom to make a report to the appropriate child protectives services agency. 3. The staff person making the report will have access to the COPA database to provide child protective services with identifying information: child's name, address, date of birth, who child resides with, session of attendance, etc. 4. Mercer County Head start will comply with all informative requests of child protective agency during the investigation. 5. The staff person who observed the possible CA/N is responsible to document the observation, the report, and the mandated reporter information on the <u>Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Form</u>, to be kept in a file separate from the child's file in a locked file cabinet. 6. Per Ohio Revised Code, all mandated reporters have the right to specific information about the CA/N report made. 7. After 5 business days, the reporter is to contact the child protectives services agency and request the Mandated Reporter letter. The letter is to be placed in the file with the case notes documenting the initial report. 8. Staff will adhere to the program's Confidentiality Policy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At no time, is a Head Start employee to conduct any type of investigation. This includes but is not limited to: questioning the child, taking photographs, contacting another person for additional information. 9. Any staff member in need of debriefing from a reportable incident may ask to speak with their direct supervisor or Executive Director. EAP or mental health services will be made available to any staff requesting additional services.
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	<p>10. All contractors and volunteers will adhere to this policy and procedure while providing services to children enrolled in the MCHS program.</p> <p>11. All staff, contractors, and volunteers will receive annual mandated reporter training. This training is to review the definition of child abuse and neglect, completion of the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Form, and how to make a CA/N report.</p> <p>12. This training does not supersede the required Child Abuse and Neglect training(s) (6 hour initial and 3 hour refresher).</p>
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Staff Signature

Date

Mercer County Head Start Policies and Procedures

P/P Topic:	Selection Criteria	P/P #:	
Part:	1302 Program Operations	PC Approval Date:	9/12/24
Subpart:	A. ERSEA	Last Reviewed Date:	9/14/23
Section Title(s):	Selection process	Implementation Responsibility:	Head Start Director
Related Performance Standard(s):	1302.14 (a)(b)(c)	Monitoring Responsibility:	Governing Body

(A) Policy	<p>A program must annually establish selection criteria that weigh the prioritization of selection of participants, based on community needs identified in the community needs assessment as described in 1302.11(b), and including family income, whether the child is homeless, whether the child is in foster care, the child's age, whether the child is eligible for special education and related services, or early intervention services, as appropriate, as determined under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)(20 U.S.C. 1400 et.seq.) and, other relevant family or child risk factors</p> <p>(4) If a program operates in a service area where Head Start Preschool eligible children can enroll in high-quality publicly funded pre-kindergarten for a full school day, the program must prioritize younger children as part of the selection criteria in paragraph (a)(1) of this section. If this priority would disrupt partnerships with local education agencies, then it is not required. An American Indian and Alaska Native or Migrant or Seasonal Head Start program must consider whether such prioritization is appropriate in their community.</p> <p>(5) A program must not deny enrollment based on a disability or chronic health condition or its severity.</p> <p>(6) A program may consider the enrollment of children of staff members as part of the selection criteria in paragraph (a)(1) of this section.</p>
(B) Responsibility	Director

(C) Procedure	<p>Annually, the Director and ERSEA team will review the community needs assessment, community trends and patterns, and enrollment trends and patterns.</p> <p>The Director will then draft a selection criteria that represents the children and families most in need of Head Start services in the service area.</p> <p>The Director will review and present the proposed selection criteria to the Policy Council for comment, review, and approval.</p> <p>The Director will then present the proposed selection criteria to the Board of Education for comment, review, and approval.</p>
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MERCER COUNTY HEAD START SELECTION CRITERIA

CATEGORICALLY ELIGIBLE CHOOSE ONLY 1		✓
Foster Care (must have legal document in file)	200	
Kinship Care (must have legal document in file)	200	
SSI / TANF (must have documentation in file)	200	
Proof of eligibility for childcare (must have documentation in file)	200	
Homelessness (completed Residency document)	200	
SNAP Benefits	200	
TOTAL		
Income at or below Federal Poverty Guideline (NA if categorically eligible selected)	200	
TOTAL		
4 years old by Aug. 1 st of current year	10	
3 years old by Aug. 1 st of current year	9	
3 years old after Aug. 1 st of current year	8	
5 years old by Aug. 1 of current year	5	
TOTAL		
Certified IEP	10	
Suspected Developmental Delay	7	
TOTAL		
Parent / Guardian is current Head Start employee	20 / 10	
No adults in home employed	10	
Drug / alcohol abuse in family	10	
Mental Health concerns in family (diagnosis / treatment)	10	
Incarcerated parent	10	
Parent / Guardian with debilitating illness / condition	9	
Single Parent	9	
No medical home or established med HX	9	
Lack of transportation	8	
Sibling enrolled	8	
DLL Student	8	
Returning Student	8	
Pregnant Mother	7	
Sibling in home, birth to 35 months	7	
Inadequate / unaffordable housing	5	
Teen pregnancy	5	
Immigrant Family	5	
Not up to date on immunizations (excludes exemptions)	5	
TOTAL		
Referral from Child Protective Services	10	
Referral from Mental Health Provider	10	
Referral from WIC, JFS, Health District, HMG, Physician, School District	5	
TOTAL		
Over-income 101-130%	10	
Over – Income 131-150%	7	
Over – income 151-175%	5	
Over – income 176 – 200%	3	
TOTAL		
TOTAL FOR ALL CATEGORIES		

Mercer County Head Start Policies and Procedures

P/P Topic:	HSAC	P/P #:	
Part:	1302	PC Approval Date:	9/12/24
Subpart:	<i>Subpart D – Health program Services</i>	Last Reviewed Date:	
Section Title(s):	Purpose	Implementation Responsibility:	H & S Mgr, MH Mgr
Related Performance Standard(s):	1302.40(b)	Monitoring Responsibility:	Director

(A) Policy	b) A program must establish and maintain a Health and Mental Health Services Advisory Committee that includes Head Start parents, professionals, and other volunteers from the community.
(B) Responsibility	HCSM
(C) Procedure	<p>At a minimum, the H & S Mgr will convene an HSAC committee meeting once annually.</p> <p>At a minimum, the MH Mgr will convene a MHSAC committee meeting once annually.</p> <p>The H&S Mgr is responsible to recruit various health professionals from the area who serve the Head Start population to participate in the HSAC committee. Likewise, the H&S Mgr is responsible to recruit parents of enrolled students to participate in the committee.</p> <p>The H&S Mgr is responsible to develop an agenda that covers health topics related to the Head Start population, review agency health policy, procedure, and protocols when needed, and staff health and wellness.</p> <p>The H&S Mgr will ensure meeting minutes are collected and distributed.</p> <p>The MH Mgr is responsible to recruit various mental health professionals from the area who serve the Head Start population to participate in the MHSAC committee. Likewise, the MH Mgr is responsible to recruit parents of enrolled students to participate in the committee.</p> <p>The MH Mgr is responsible to develop an agenda that covers mental health topics related to the Head Start population, review agency mental health policy, procedure, and protocols when needed, and staff mental health and wellness.</p>

	<p>The MH Mgr will ensure meeting minutes are collected and distributed.</p>
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Mercer County Head Start Policies and Procedures

P/P Topic:	Facilities Lead Testing	P/P #:	
Part:	1302 Program Operations	PC Approval Date:	9/12/24
Subpart:	D-Health Program Services	Last Reviewed Date:	
Section Title(s):	Safety Practices	Implementation Responsibility:	HCSM
Related Performance Standard(s):	1302.47(b)(1)(iii)	Monitoring Responsibility:	HCSM

(A) Policy	<p>A program must establish, train staff on, implement, and enforce a system of health and safety practices that ensure children are kept safe at all times. A program should consult Caring for our Children Basics, available at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ecd/caring_for_our_children_basics.pdf, for additional information to develop and implement adequate safety policies and practices described in this part.</p> <p><i>Administrative safety procedures.</i> Programs establish, follow, and practice, as appropriate, procedures for, at a minimum:</p> <p>(1)Facilities: All facilities where children are served, including areas of learning, playing, sleeping, toileting, and eating are, at a minimum:</p> <p>(iii) Free from pollutants, hazards, and toxins, that are accessible to children and could endanger the children's safety.</p>
(B) Responsibility	HCSM
(C) Procedure	<p>Per guidance from Care for our Children Basics the following standards have been implemented for Mercer County Head Start Facilities.</p> <p><u>Drinking Water:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drinking water, including water in drinking fountains, should be tested and evaluated in accordance with the assistance of the local health authority or state drinking water program to determine if whether lead levels are safe. • All water test results must be in written form and kept with other required records. • Water test results are to be requested at a minimum yearly from the local Health District or City Administrator. • Safe drinking water must be kept on sight for drinking, toothbrushing, and cooking at all times.

	<p><u>Facility Surfaces:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Centers in buildings/structures that were built prior to 1978 or have recently been renovated should have a licensed lead assessor complete testing.</u> • Centers where paint covers exterior interior surfaces are to be tested by a licensed lead assessor once during a 5 year project period. • Surfaces included and not limited to walls, floors, doors, playground equipment, etc. • All surface test results are to be in written form and kept with other required records. <p><u>Environmental Areas:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Centers in buildings/structures that were built prior to 1978 or have recently been renovated should have a licensed lead assessor complete testing of environmental areas.</u> • Any surface or grounds area that children use at the facility including dirt, grassy areas, and playground surfaces are to be tested by a licensed lead assessor once during a 5 year project period. • All environmental area test results are to be in written form and kept with other required records.
	<p>If the grant recipient can demonstrate that an issue has been resolved, there is no need for further testing.</p> <p>If an issue is found, the grant recipient must reasonably correct the issue Reports, as appropriate, to the responsible HHS official, governing body, and policy council will be completed by the Director, as soon as practicable.</p>

Head Start Program Performance Standards

Timeline for Compliance with Updated Requirements

Final Rule Publication Date: August 21, 2024

Review the timelines by which grant recipients must comply with the Head Start Program Performance Standards (the Performance Standards) updated in the final rule, Supporting the Head Start Workforce and Consistent Quality Programming.

Citation	Performance Standard Summary	Compliance
1302.11(b) Community Assessment	A program must collect relevant data while maintaining the community assessment's content focus on geographic location, race, ethnicity, etc. Requires programs to conduct annual updates only as needed, such as if there are significant shifts in community demographics. <i>In place</i>	August 1, 2025
1302.12(e) AIAN Income Eligibility	All families in an American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) program's service area with age-eligible children, or pregnant women, are eligible for Head Start services, regardless of income. <i>Not Applicable</i>	Immediately (Statutory change from March 2024)
1302.12(f) MSHS Income Eligibility	Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) programs may serve any child who has one family member whose income comes primarily from agricultural employment, regardless of total family income. <i>Not Applicable</i>	Immediately (Statutory change from March 2024)
1302.12(i)(1) Housing Adjustment	A program may adjust a family's income to account for excessive housing costs when determining eligibility. <i>Policy Submitted</i>	October 21, 2024
1302.12(j) MSHS Eligibility Duration	In MSHS programs, once an infant or toddler and their family are deemed eligible, they are eligible until they turn three years old. This is consistent with the requirement that children participating in the Early Head Start program remain eligible for the duration of the program. <i>Not Applicable</i>	October 21, 2024
1302.13 Modernizing Recruitment	A program must include modern technologies to encourage and assist families in applying for admission to the program, and to reduce the family's administrative and paperwork burden in the application and enrollment process.	October 21, 2024
1302.14(a)(2), (3) AIAN and MSHS Selection Criteria	Tribes may prioritize children in families for which a child, a family member, or a member of the same household, is a member of an Indian tribe. MSHS programs may give priority to children whose families can demonstrate they have relocated frequently within the past two years to pursue agricultural work. <i>Not Applicable</i>	Immediately (Statutory change from March 2024)

1302.14(a)(6) Children of Staff Members	A program may consider the enrollment of eligible children of staff members as part of the selection criteria. <i>Policy submitted</i>	October 21, 2024
1302.14(b)(1) Children with Disabilities Enrollment	A program must ensure at least 10% of its actual enrollment is filled by children eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). <i>Policy updated</i>	October 21, 2024
1302.14(d) Barriers to Enrollment	A program is required to use data from the community assessment to identify potential barriers to enrollment and attendance, including using data to understand access to transportation for the highest need families.	August 1, 2025
1302.15(g) Modernizing Enrollment	A program must regularly examine their enrollment processes and implement any identified improvements to streamline the enrollment experience for families.	October 21, 2024
1302.16(a)(2)(v) Barriers to Attendance	A program must examine barriers to regular attendance, such as access to safe and reliable transportation, and where possible, provide or facilitate transportation for the child if needed.	August 1, 2025
1302.17(a), (b) Suspension and Expulsion	Suspension continues to be a measure of last resort only when there is a serious safety threat. Programs must first engage with a mental health consultant, collaborate with the parents, and use appropriate community resources. Programs must explore and document all steps taken to address the behaviors and supports needed to facilitate the child's safe reentry and continued participation in the program.	October 21, 2024
1302.23(b)(2-4) Family Child Care Option	Family child care (FCC) services must comply with specified child ratios and group sizes for programs. There is no longer reference to the term <i>assistant provider</i> . All FCC providers who count toward ratios must meet the qualification requirements for FCC providers described in §1302.81(e)(4). <i>Not Applicable</i>	August 1, 2025
1302.34(b)(9) Modernizing Communication	A program must ensure it uses accessible communication methods and modalities that meet the needs of the community when engaging with prospective and enrolled families.	October 21, 2024
1302.40(b) Health and Mental Health Services Advisory Committee	Programs must establish and maintain a Health and Mental Health Services Advisory Committee. <i>Policy submitted</i>	October 21, 2024
1302.41 1302.42(b) 1302.46(b) Mental Health Integration	These program requirements consistently integrate mental health into all aspects of program service delivery.	October 21, 2024
1302.45(a) Multidisciplinary Approach	Programs must use a multidisciplinary approach to mental health and wellness supports. Mental health consultation services must be available at a frequency of at least once a month; if a mental health consultant is not available to provide services at least once a month, programs must use other licensed mental health	August 1, 2025

	professionals or behavioral health support specialists who coordinate with a mental health consultant. <i>In place</i>	
1302.45(b) Mental Health Consultants	A program must ensure mental health consultants provide consultation services that build the capacity of adults in a child's life to strengthen and support the mental health and social and emotional development of children. <i>In place</i>	October 21, 2024
1302.47(b)(5) Safety Practices	Programs must ensure all staff, consultants, contractors, and volunteers follow appropriate practices to keep children safe. Aligns the definition of <i>child abuse and neglect</i> with Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (another federal statute). <i>Policy Submitted</i>	October 21, 2024
1302.47(b)(10) Safety Practices – Lead	In facilities where lead may exist, programs must regularly inspect and test for the presence of lead and, as needed, conduct remediation and abatement. <i>Policy Submitted</i>	October 21, 2024
1302.50(a) Modernizing Engagement with Families	Programs must communicate with families in a format that meets the needs of each individual family.	October 21, 2024
1302.52(d) Family Partnership Services	Programs must ensure family service worker assignments do not exceed 40 families per family service worker. Programs may temporarily exceed the maximum during periods of staff absence and in emergency or recovery circumstances. A waiver is required to exceed the ratio of family assignments to family service worker if it will extend beyond a temporary period.	August 1, 2027
1302.53(b)(2) QRIS	Programs should participate in their Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) to the extent practicable if the state or local area has strategies in place to support their participation. <i>In place</i>	October 21, 2024
1302.80(d) Newborn Visit	A newborn visit must, at minimum, include a discussion of the following: maternal mental and physical health, safe sleep, infant health, and support for basic needs. <i>Not applicable</i>	October 21, 2024
1302.80(e) Pregnant Women	A program must track and record services an enrolled pregnant woman or pregnant person receives, both from the program and through referrals, to help identify specific prenatal care services and resources needed to support a healthy pregnancy.	December 19, 2024
1302.80(f) Promoting Healthy Birth Outcomes	Programs must help address disparities in maternal and birth outcomes across racial and ethnic groups.	February 18, 2025
1302.81 Mental Health Information and Services Integration for Expectant Families	Programs must ensure the required prenatal and postpartum information, education, and services are provided to enrolled pregnant women, mothers, fathers, and partners or other family members.	October 21, 2024
1302.82(a) Maternal Health Curriculum	If a program uses a curriculum in the provision of services to pregnant women and pregnant people, it should be a maternal health curriculum to support prenatal and postpartum education needs.	October 21, 2024

1302.90(c) Standards of Conduct	Programs must ensure that staff, consultants, contractors, and volunteers do not maltreat or endanger the health or safety of children, and that they report reasonably suspected or known incidents of child abuse and neglect.	October 21, 2024
1302.90(e) Wages	<p>Programs must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish or update a pay scale for all positions • Pay Head Start educators comparable to public school preschool teachers (or 90% of kindergarten teachers), as a marker of progress to pay parity for Head Start staff with K–3rd grade teachers • Pay all staff a wage at least sufficient to cover basic costs of living • Pay comparable wages across Head Start Preschool and Early Head Start <p>Small Head Start agencies with 200 or fewer slots are exempt from most of the wage requirements, but these agencies must still develop or update a pay scale that promotes competitive wages for all staff, and make measurable progress toward reducing disparities in wages between Head Start educators and public preschool teachers over time.</p> <p>The final rule includes an option for the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to establish in 2028 a limited waiver process for most of the wage requirements for eligible programs, if the prior four years of appropriation increases for Head Start are less than an annual average of 1.3%.</p>	August 1, 2031
1302.90(f) Benefits	<p>For full-time staff, programs must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide or facilitate health care coverage • Provide short-term, free, or low-cost behavioral health services • Provide paid leave <p>Part-time staff must be connected with health insurance options in the Marketplace.</p> <p>Programs must connect eligible staff with child care subsidy programs and the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program.</p> <p>Small Head Start agencies with 200 or fewer slots are exempt from most of the benefits requirements, but these agencies must still make measurable improvement in benefits for Head Start staff over time.</p>	August 1, 2028
1302.91(e)(8)(ii) Mental Health Consultants' Licensure	A program must ensure all mental health consultants are licensed or under the supervision of a licensed mental health professionals. Programs also must use mental health consultants with knowledge of and experience in serving young children and their families.	October 21, 2024

In Place

1302.92(b)(1) Professional Development Plans	Programs must develop professional development plans for full-time staff providing direct services to children, as required in Section 648A(f) of the Head Start Act. <i>In place</i>	October 21, 2024
1302.92(b)(2-3) Annual Training	Programs must ensure staff receive annual training on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory reporting • Positive strategies to understand and support children's social and emotional development • The knowledge, experience, and competencies to improve child and family outcomes <i>In place</i>	October 21, 2024
1302.93(c) Staff Breaks	A program must provide, for each staff member, regular breaks of adequate length and frequency based on hours worked. During breaks, one teaching staff member may be replaced by one staff member who does not meet the teaching qualifications required for the age, provided that this staff member has the necessary training and experience to ensure safety of children and minimal disruption to the quality of services. <i>In place</i>	August 1, 2027
1302.93(d) Culture of Wellness	A program should cultivate a program-wide culture of wellness that empowers staff as professionals and supports staff to effectively accomplish their job responsibilities in a high-quality manner. <i>In place</i>	October 21, 2024
1302.101(a)(2) Employee Engagement	A program must comply with enhanced requirements for employee engagement to promote more responsive management styles designed to identify and resolve barriers to high-quality job performance.	October 21, 2024
1302.101(a)(5) 1302.102(d) Training on Incident Reporting	A program must submit reports, as appropriate, to the responsible HHS official immediately but no later than seven calendar days following a health or safety incident. All staff are required to be trained to implement reporting procedures.	October 21, 2024
1303.42 Suitable Facilities	Grant recipients are no longer required to have a written statement from an independent real estate professional confirming the lack of other suitable facilities in the area.	October 21, 2024
1303.43 Use of Grant Funds	If a recipient seeks to use federal funds for reasonable fees and costs necessary to submit an application under §§1303.42 and 1303.44, they must be granted approval from the responsible HHS official. Once approval is granted, the funds are allowable regardless of the outcome of the preliminary eligibility determination.	October 21, 2024
1303.44 Application Requirements	Programs must adhere to updated application requirements, including the facility's value and additional information HHS officials may request as part of the 1303 process.	October 21, 2024

1305.2 Definitions	Programs must use new and revised definitions for <i>Early Head Start, Federal interest, Grant recipient, Head Start, Head Start agency, Head Start Preschool, Housing costs, Income, Major renovations, Migrant family, Poverty line, Purchase, and Suspension.</i>	October 21, 2024
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Celina City Schools / Mercer County HeadStart

Community Needs Assessment 2024

Amy Esser, Executive Director

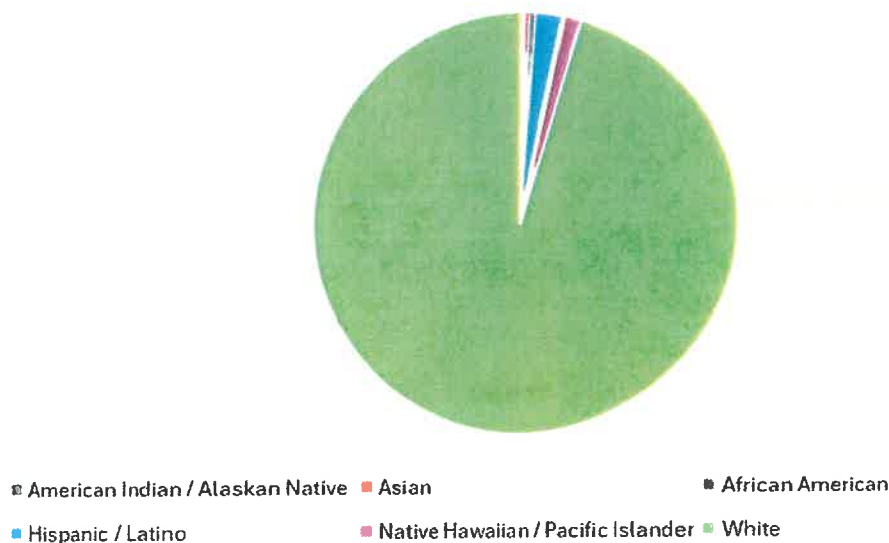
August 10, 2024

Demographics

Celina City Schools / Mercer Head Start provide services to children and families in Mercer County, Ohio. Celina City Schools is the largest school district in Mercer County. The school district is in the northwest quadrant of Ohio. The U.S. Highway 33 runs east and west, and State Route 127 runs north and South. While Mercer County is classified as rural there is a large industrial base that drives the local economy. The largest employers include Crown, CAPT, Cooper Farms, and Reynolds. Mercer Health provides services and employment opportunities to the community, one of the largest in the area. Mercer County is the largest agricultural livestock producer in the state. Even with all of these employment opportunities, the unemployment rates have risen from 1.9% in June, 2023 to 5.9% as of June, 2024. The median income of the county is \$63,688. Wright State University Lake Campus is located within the county along Grand Lake St. Marys.

As of 2020, there were 42,528 residents in Mercer County. The population is predominantly White Caucasian.

Mercer County Population



Statistics provided by United States Census Bureau

Total Households by Type of Households

in Mercer County, Ohio

DP02

Measure	Value
Married-couple family household	57.6%
Male householder, no spouse present, family household	15.3%
Female householder, no spouse present, family household	20.7%

Statistics provided by United States Census Bureau

In Mercer county, 93.6% of the homes are family homes, 15.3% are led by single fathers while 20.7% are led by single mothers. Which has increased from 8% of single mothers in 2018.

Children under 18 by Age Range

in Mercer County, Ohio

DP02

Measure	Value
Under 5 years	7.5%
5 to 14 years	14.0%
15 to 17 years	4.1%

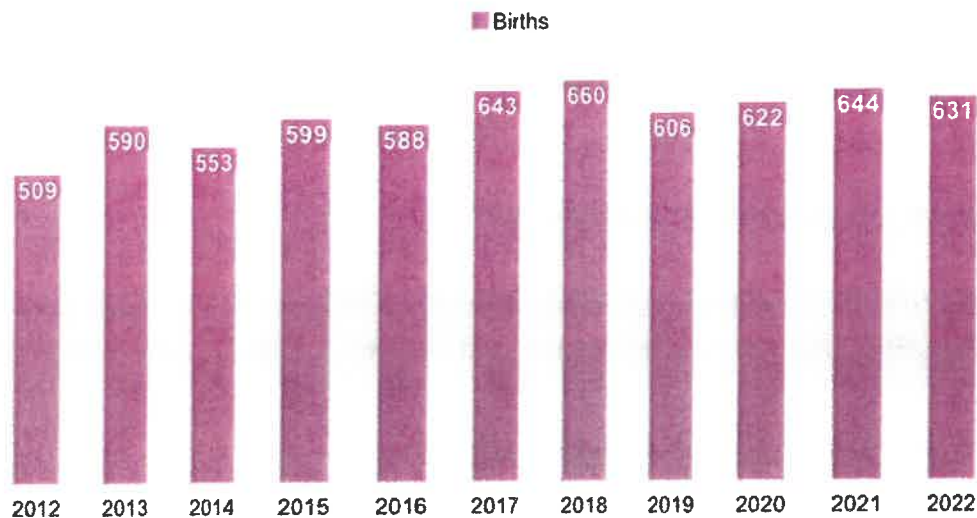
The percentage of 7.5% of children under 5 years of age has remained the same since 2018, while the percentage of children 5 to 17 years of age is at 18.1% which has decreased from 18.2%.

Head Start Eligible Children and Families

According to the 2022 census information, there are 3190 children under the age of 5 in Mercer County. Approximately 8.3% of the children are living in poverty, applying this to the children between the ages of 3-5 years old, there are approximately 158 income eligible children in the community. Though this has decreased since 2018 from 10% to 8.3%, this is due to the lowered birth rates. Unlike much of the rest of the United States, Ohio's birth rates remain below the average after the pandemic instead of increasing. According to Sarah Harafor, director of Ohio State's Institute for population states, "people feel more worried about the future than they might

have been several decades ago. They worry about the economy, childcare, and whether they can afford to have children.”

Birth Rates 2012-2022

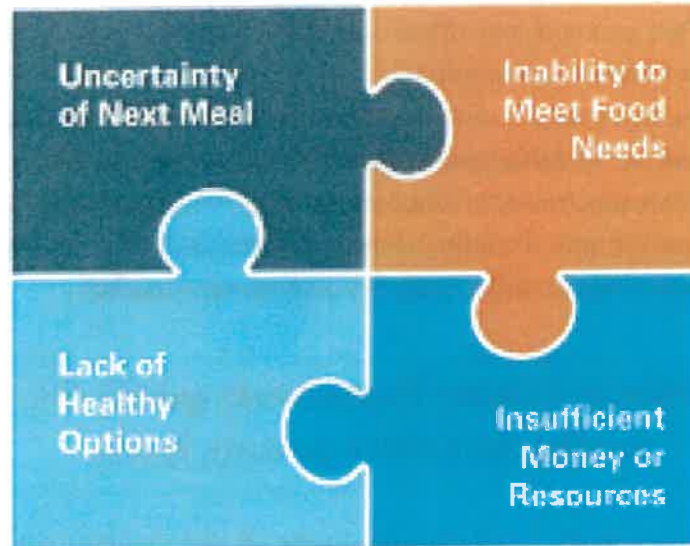


Statistics provided by the United States Census Bureau QuickFacts

The USDA defines food insecurity as a state in which “consistent access to adequate food is limited by a lack of money and other resources at times during the year.”

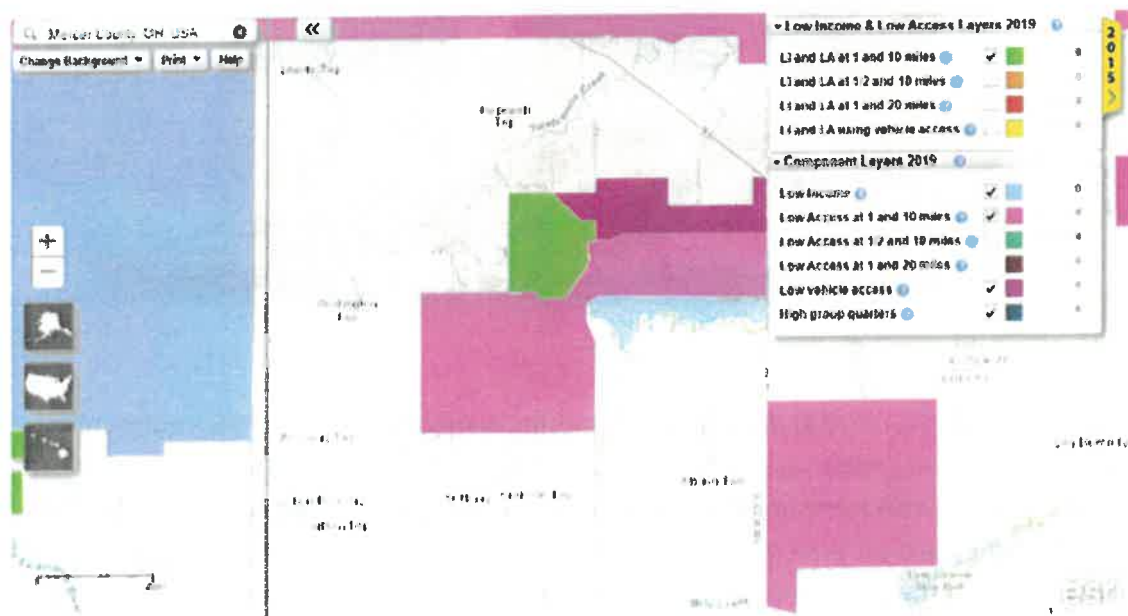


FOOD INSECURITY



In rural areas, farm consolidation and the impact of globalization on manufacturing are creating rural enclaves of hunger and poverty. Many of these areas are “food deserts” — areas without access to grocery stores or any affordable healthy food. People in urban areas can also suffer from lack of access to nutritious food. Cities often have high costs for transportation and rent, which can squeeze low-income families and put them at risk of hunger. Additionally, many seniors especially struggle from food insecurity in the U.S., with 5 million seniors living below the poverty line.

Food Desert Information for Mercer County



Green Shaded areas – This area consists of low-income residents are more than 1 mile (urban) or 10 miles (rural) from the nearest supermarket.

Pink Shaded areas - This area consists of at least 500 people or 33% of the population lives farther than 1 mile (urban) or 10 miles (rural) from the nearest supermarket.

Purple Shaded areas - This area tracts in which more than 100 households have no access to a vehicle and are more than 1/2 mile from the nearest supermarket, or a significant number or share of residents are more than 20 miles from the nearest supermarket.

20.1% - 25% of Mercer County Households qualify for assistance from foodbanks (200% poverty level).

In 2019, there were approximately 1,110 children (ages 18 and younger) who were food insecure in Mercer County. 78% of children were income eligible for federal nutrition programs (185% poverty level). The average cost of a meal was \$2.53. The county needed \$1,649,000 in additional funding to meet the need. In 2021, there were approximately 640 children (ages 18 and younger) who were food insecure in Mercer County. 97% of children were income eligible for federal nutrition programs (185% poverty level). The average cost of a meal \$3.10.



The county needed \$1,737,000 in additional funding to meet the needs of the community. Consider the following when analyzing the data. 2019 marked the beginning of the COVID 19 pandemic. In 2021, additional funding and legislative actions increase resources to families and communities. The cost of food continues to rise, and safeguards prescribed in legislative actions have expired returning eligibility guidelines for assistance to pre-pandemic levels. Communities should see an increase in need and stress on local food banks and other entities providing

food assistance to families and children.

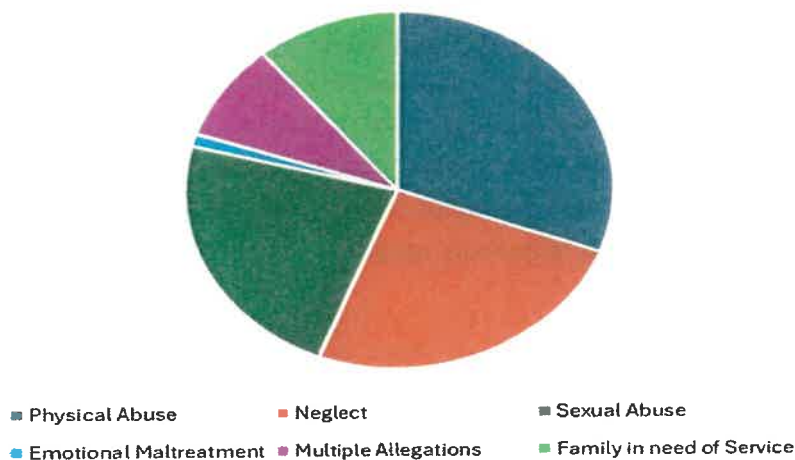
Women, Infant, and Children (WIC)

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides federal grants to states for supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk.

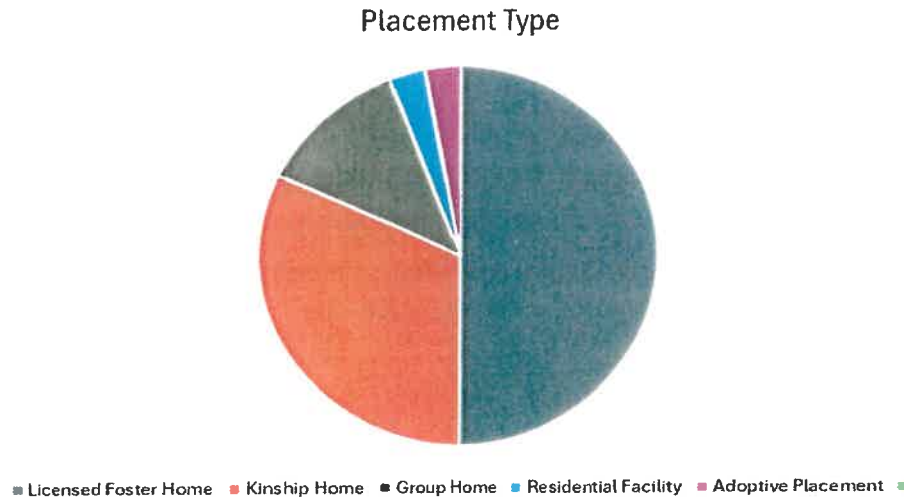
Child Abuse and Neglect

In 2021, there were 42,154 people in Mercer County, of that population 10,960 are children. 228 reports screened in by the Child Services agency. During that time 50 children were taken into custody. In that time 89 total children were served 34% were in custody while 66% were placed in a home. Out of 89 children, 29 of them were under the age of 5.

Type of Cases Reported



Statistics provided by Public Children Services from Mercer County Job & Family Services



Statistics provided by Public Children Services from Mercer County Job & Family Services

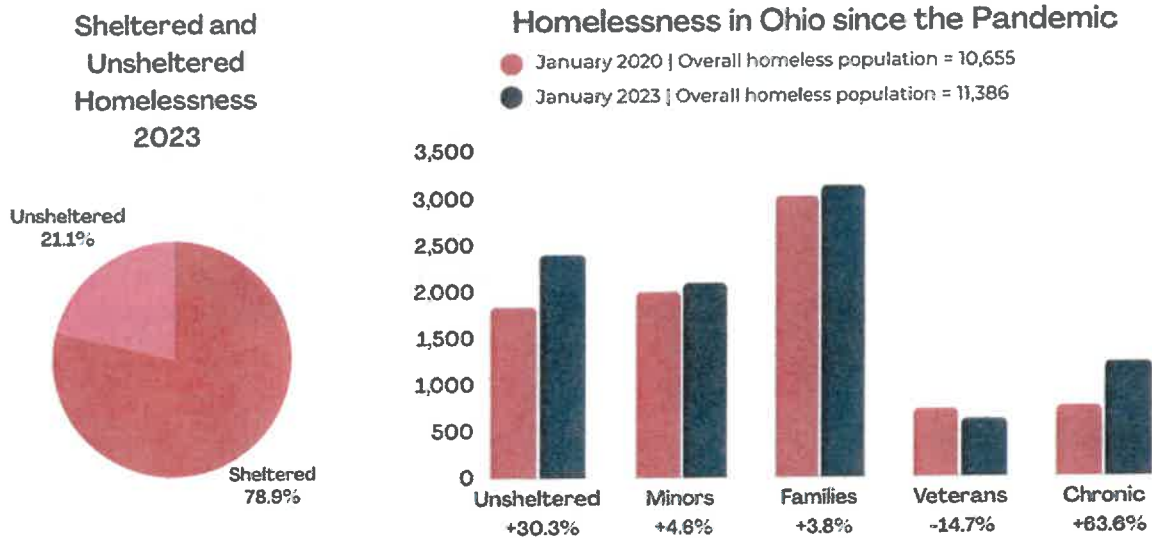
Public Assistance

The Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services provides a monthly report, Public Assistance Monthly Statistics Report that illustrates the numbers of individuals and households / groups that receive OWF (Ohio Works First), SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and PFCC (Publicly Funded Child Care). All three of these programs were allocated to children in 2023. Ohio Works First is assisting 101 children, receiving \$250 a month. SNAP is assisting 617 children, receiving the average of \$187 a month and there are 68 children authorized to PFCC. Resulting in 786 children receiving help every month.

Homelessness & Housing

While no reports provided illustrated a clear number of individuals experiencing homelessness in Mercer County; the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Ohio Housing Finance Agency provide information for the state of Ohio.

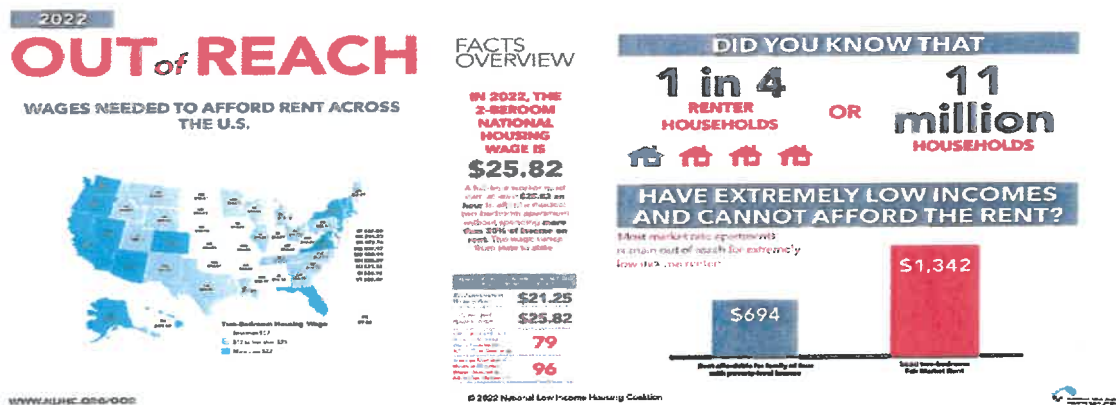
In 2023, HUD reported 10,345 Ohioans were experiencing homelessness as collected by the point in time study completed annually in January. 7,041 of those are individuals on their own. 3,304 are families and 643 are under the age of 25. In January 2023, Ohio had at least 11,386 people experiencing homelessness, which was a 6.9% increase from the previous year. This was about 10% higher than January 2019, when the rate was almost 9 per 10,000 people. The 2023 rate was also lower than the national average of 12%.



What is affordable housing?

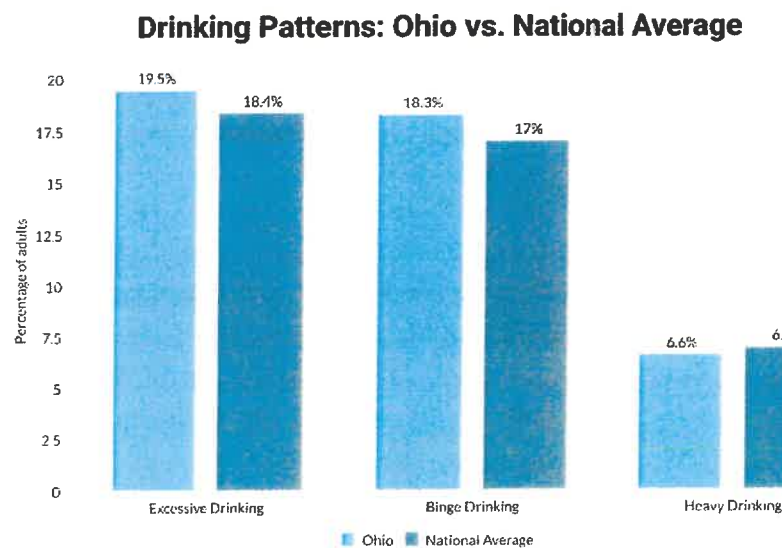
In 2022 there were a total of 18,185 housing units in Mercer County – definition: a housing unit is a house, an apartment, a mobile home, a group of rooms or a single room that is occupied (or if vacant, is intended for occupancy) a separate living quarter. This has only increased 0.96% increased since 2017, before the pandemic. In 2022 there was a total population of 42,439 and 16,022 family households. Each household consists of approximately 2.61 people per household.

In August 2024, there are still 9 low income housing apartment complexes which contain 609 affordable apartments for rent in Mercer County, Ohio. Many of these rental apartments are income-based housing (HUD) with about 435 apartments available. There are 103 Project-Based Section 8 subsidized apartments in Mercer County, and an additional 174 low-income apartments that don't have rental assistance but are still considered to be affordable housing for low income families. The average rent in Mercer County has risen from \$646 a month to \$749 dollars a month.



Drug and Alcohol

According to the 2016 CHA, 42% of Mercer County adults report binge drinking while the *County Health Rankings and Roadmap*, 20% of adults in Mercer County report binge drinking. Underage drinking is a concern. Nearly 15% of our community uses tobacco products. Use of opioids and other illegal drugs is also a serious problem in our community. As stated by White Light Behavioral Health center in 2024, Mercer County is the leading state in Ohio for binge drinking, 21.7% of adults in the county drink excessively ranking on a national scale.



WHITE LIGHT
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

The following information is provided via the Ohio Substance Abuse Monitoring Network (OSAM) as of June 2023. The OSAM staff has divided the state into regions, Mercer County is allocated to the Toledo Region which includes 17 counties in northwest Ohio. The largest metropolitan area is Toledo. The information was collected for the report through surveys and focus groups and it states;

- Meth availability has increased
- 12.8% and 11.6% of urinalysis are positive for cocaine and fentanyl
- BCI reports incidence increase in cocaine and heroin
- Consumers indicate cocaine is cut with fentanyl and meth
- Consumers indicate MDMA is cut with meth and meth is cut with fentanyl
- Law enforcement note xylazine in toxicology reports

In 2022 alone there were 74 arrests made in Mercer County under drug-related charges and charged with a total of 210 felony drug violations.



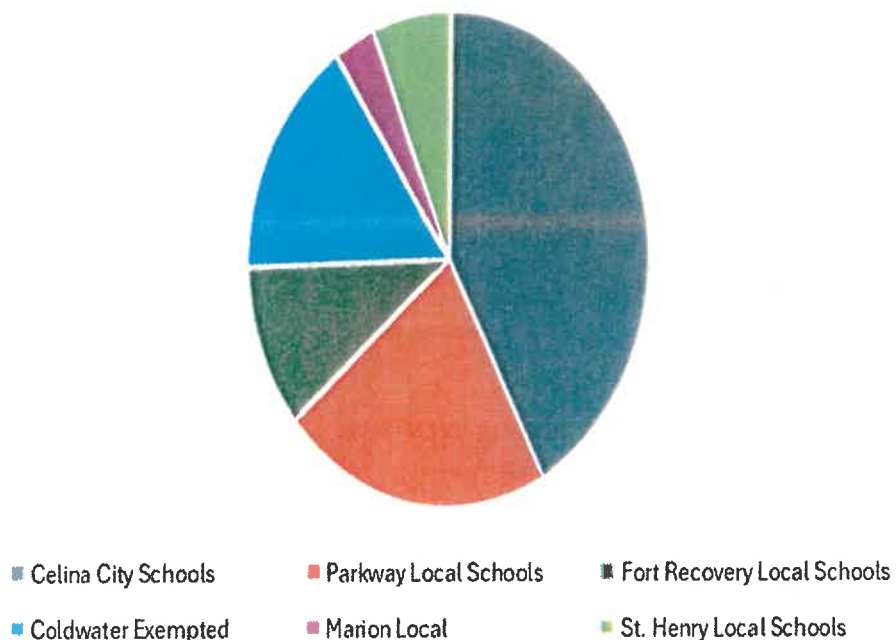
Education Level

In Mercer County, 93% of people over the age of 25 have received their high school diploma, leaving 7% that do not have this education. Compared to 2019 statistics, this has increased from 92.7%. Looking at a bachelor's degree, only 20.4% of people in the county possess this kind of education. This has also increased since 2019 from 16.6% to 20.4% by 3.8%.

Schools	Rates from 2019	Rates from 2024
Celina City Schools	93.9%	89.7%
Parkway Local Schools	94%	100%
Ft. Recover Local Schools	97.3%	94.9%
Coldwater Exempted	99.1%	99%
Marion Local	97.2%	98.6%
St. Henry Local Schools	98.7%	98.7%

The table below illustrates the comparison of disadvantaged students in each district in the county.

Economically Disadvantaged Students per District



Celina City Schools 38% Parkway Local Schools 20% Fort Recovery Local Schools 10%
Coldwater Exempted 14% Marion Local 3% St. Henry Local Schools 6%

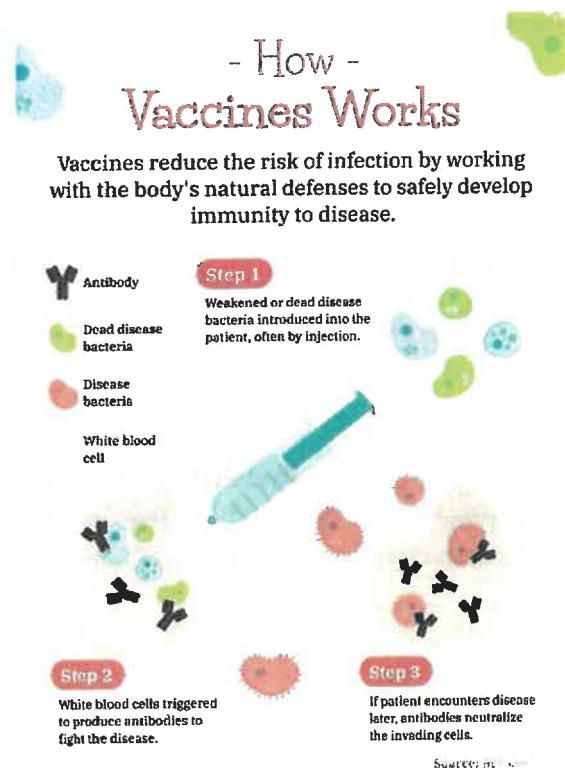
Health and Wellness

Ohio's youngest school children remain under-vaccinated in 2024, a trend that has persisted since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic both nationally and in Ohio (Source: "Vaccination rates in Ohio kindergarteners drop, sparking concern in health experts," Columbus Dispatch, July 24).

Data from the Ohio Department of Health shows a decrease from 86.5% of Ohio kindergarteners who met all vaccination requirements in the 2022-2023 school year, compared to 86.2% in the 2023-2024 school year. The numbers began falling in the 2020-2021 school year when the percentage dropped sharply from 89.9% in the 2019-2020 school year to 86.5%.

Data from the state health department also showed a record percentage of reported Ohio kindergarteners with a nonmedical or a "reason of conscience" or "religious" exemption to childhood vaccines, at 4% in the 2023-2024 school year, up from 2.6% in the 2019-2020 school year.

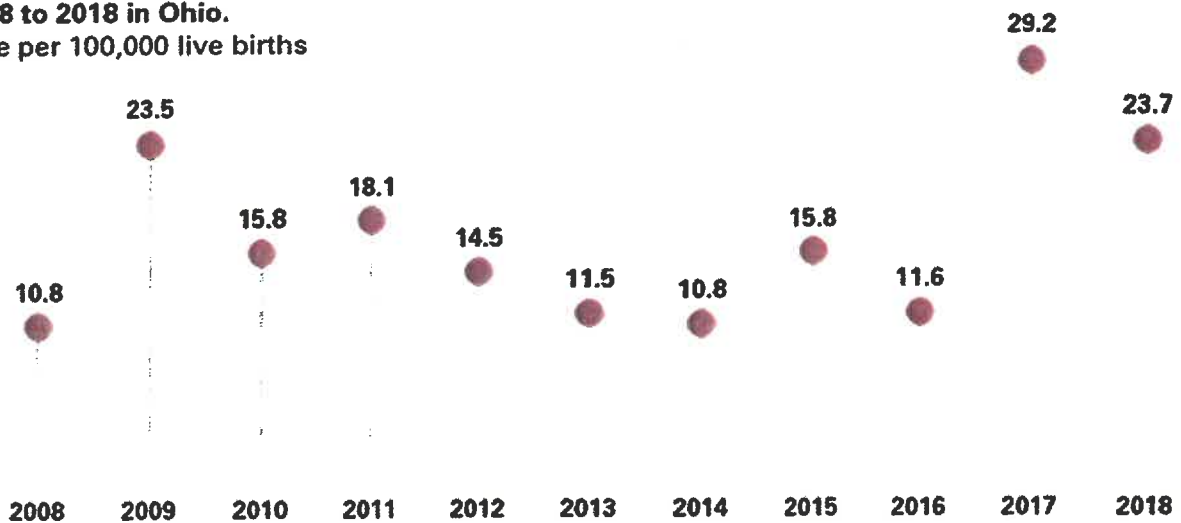
That's above the national average, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which sits at 3.2% for the 2022-2023 school year and has been rising since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic.



Prenatal and Infants

In Mercer County, Ohio, approximately 7.5% of women aged 15-50 gave birth in the past year¹. This rate is higher than both the state average of 5.5% and the national average of 5.2%.

Figure 2. Pregnancy-Related Mortality Ratios Have Increased From 2008 to 2018 in Ohio.
Rate per 100,000 live births



Data source: Maternal Mortality Review Information Application (MMRIA) and Ohio Department of Health (ODH) Bureau of Vital Statistics

In 2023, there was a total of 412 births split by 191 girls and 221 boys.

3 Ohio babies die each week in an unsafe sleep environment!

County Public Health and cribs are distributed as needed by MCHD in collaboration with Help Me Grow and Mercer Health Birthing Center. In 2023, 22 Pack 'N Plays were given to Mercer County families in need of a safe sleep environment for their baby. This was an increase in distribution from 2022.

Child deaths are often regarded as an indicator of the health of a community. While mortality data provides us with an overall picture of child deaths (by number and cause), it is from a

careful study of each and every child's death that we can learn how to best respond to a death and how best to prevent another. Recognizing the need to better understand why children die, the Ohio General Assembly passed Substitute House Bill Number 448 (HB 448) in July 2000, mandating Child Fatality Review (CFR) Boards in each of Ohio's counties to review the deaths of children under eighteen years of age. In January of 2023, the Mercer County Child Fatality Review Board reviewed the deaths of 2 children that died in 2022. The Mercer County Child Fatality Review Board is scheduled to meet in late February 2024 and reporting is due to the State of Ohio by April 1st, 2024. **The Ohio Five Year Average Infant Mortality Rates were reported in 2020 by the Ohio Department of Health. Mercer County was reported with a 2.9 – 5.8 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 Live Births.**

Child Care Availability

There are a variety of childcare / preschool options for children and families throughout Mercer County. Below is a table showing the name, location, population served, licensing agent, and SUTQ participation.

Name	Location	Population Served	Licensing Agent	SUTQ participating / Rating
Above & Beyond Daycare & Learning Center	Coldwater	Infant – SA	ODJFS	No
Creative Discovery Preschool	Celina	Preschool - 134	ODJFS	NO
Kids Kastle	Celina	Infant – SA – 231 (88 – Pre)	ODJFS	NO
Little Flower	Celina	Infant – SA – 88 (46- Pre)	ODJFS	Yes – 4
Bright Futures Daycare & Preschool	St. Henry	Infant – SA 124	ODJFS	NO
Chapel Hill	Maria Stein	Preschool - 75	ODE	NO
Coldwater Preschool	Coldwater	Preschool	ODE	Yes – 5
Daycare Discoveries	Maria Stein			NO
MCHS Education Complex	Celina	Preschool - 138	ODE	Yes – 5
Ft. Recovery Preschool	Ft. Recovery	Preschool	ODE	Yes – 5
Grace Land	Celina	Toddler – SA 37	ODJFS	NO
Rockford Head Start	Rockford	Preschool - 20	ODE	Yes – 5
Parkway Preschool	Rockford	Preschool	ODE	Yes – 5
St. Henry Preschool	St. Henry	Preschool	ODE	Yes - 5
ESC Preschool	Celina	Preschool	ODE	Yes - 5
Giggles & Wiggles Preschool	Coldwater		ODJFS	
Immaculate Conception	Celina	Preschool		
Marion Local Preschool	Maria Stein	Preschool		Yes - 5
Victorum Learning Center	Celina	Infant – SA	ODJFS	No

Little Flower childcare is the only provider in Mercer County that accepts publicly funded

childcare assistance (PFCC). For new applicants, the income threshold for childcare assistance is 142% of the federal poverty level. For a family of four to qualify, the income could not exceed \$3692 per month.



Step up to quality is a five-star quality rating and improvement system administered by the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. SUTQ recognizes and promotes learning and development programs that meet quality program standards that exceed preschool licensing and school age child care licensing health and safety regulations. Step Up to Quality program standards are based on national research identifying standards which lead to improved outcomes for children.

Starting July 7, the new Step Up To Quality (SUTQ) standards will go into effect. All currently rated programs will have until July 1, 2025, to begin implementing the new SUTQ standards. Quality rating banners will feature Bronze, Silver and Gold awards. This rating system change is being made throughout Ohio.

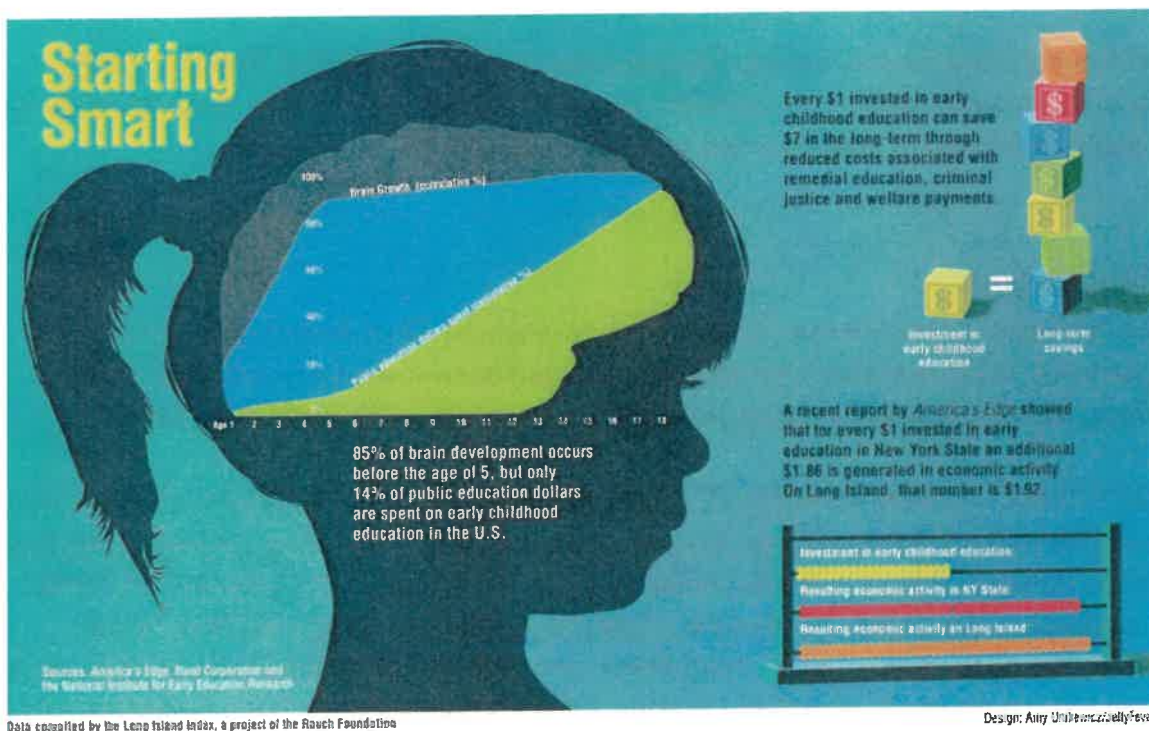
This rating and improvement system was previously administered by the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. The newly minted Department of Children and Youth (DCY) is now overseeing SUTQ and the migration to the new rating system. The system will continue to recognize programs that exceed licensing requirements by meeting quality standards in learning and development.

Child care programs were previously rated from one to five stars, depending on the standards they met. For example, one-star programs were required to have teachers complete 20 hours of specialized training every two years, be familiar with Ohio's Early Learning Development Standards (ELDS), focus on building relationships with families and be committed to continuous improvement.

In comparison, five-star programs were required to have higher education qualifications for staff, lesson plans for each child, assessments to evaluate and improve learning experiences and value families and the community.

Current	New	Highly Rated
One Star	Bronze	
Two Star		
Three Star	Silver	Silver
Four Star	Gold	Gold
Five Star		

What are the benefits of early education?



THE IMPORTANCE OF CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

A bright start

The brain
grows most during
the first 3 years of life.
Brain development
continues to be rapid
until 12 months,
when it begins to
slow down. It doesn't
stop until 18 months
and then it
continues to grow.



This means that
much of the effort in nurturing
and education must be put
forth before children reach
their fourth birthday.



Children who get
the start they need
early in life do better in
school and are likely to
have higher test scores
and higher graduation
rates than children who
do not.



It's important for
every parent to
provide a rich
learning environment
for their child.

When they are awake and with their parents,
1- and 2-year-old American children
begin an average of

340
words

1,440
words



It's important for
every parent to
provide a rich
learning environment
for their child.



Mercer County Head Start is the only free preschool provider for eligible families. Mercer County ESC provides free special education preschool services for children identified with an Individualized Education Plan. All other providers require a fee for services.

Transportation

"Smart businesses do not look at labor costs alone anymore. They do look at market access, transportation, telecommunications infrastructure and the education and skill level of the workforce, the development of capital and the regulatory market." -Janet Napolito

In 2022, 87.1% of workers in Mercer County, OH drove alone to work, followed by those who carpooled to work (7.39%) and those who worked at home (3.17%). Using averages, employees in Mercer County, OH have a shorter commute time (19 minutes) than the normal US worker (26.7 minutes). Additionally, 2.31% of the workforce in Mercer County, OH have "super commutes" in excess of 90 minutes. Information garnered from Data USA website indicates that there are approximately 2 cars owned per household in Mercer County. This information may be misleading as lower income and aging households may not own 2 vehicles if any at all.

The Ohio Statewide Transit Needs Study reports that the population of Mercer County continues to grow in the aging population and lower income individuals and families. These populations rely heavier on public transit service more so than families and individuals in employed to middles to high income groups. The study indicated that while a need was suggested for public transit to support the working populations in the southern part of the county it would be “difficult to operate cost-effective services”. Another suggestion made by the study was the possibility of connecting Celina to St. Marys with public transit services. Currently there are no public transit services available. The Council on Aging does operate transportation services for those over 65 years of age. Medicaid eligible clientele can utilize Medicaid benefits for transportation; however, there are no contracted providers in the areas at this time.

Communication

90.9% of households have a computer at home and 88.4% of households have broadband internet subscriptions.



Though in the survey completed by Head Start parents in 2018, a computer was defined as a “smart phone” and not a desk top computer.

Resources Available to Address Needs of Eligible Children and Families

For this section, the author will refer the reader to the *Mercer County Resource Handbook*.

Below is a generalized list of services available to children and families.

- Mercer County Department of Jobs and Family Services
- Mercer County Education Services Center
- Mercer County Head Start
- Mercer County Library
- Mercer Health
- Mercer County Health District
- C.A.L.L. Food Pantry
- OUR Home Family Resource Center
- WIC
- Choosing Life Pregnancy Center
- Foundations Behavioral Health Systems
- Help Me Grow

Medical and Dental

Information provided by County Health Rankings and Roadmaps
(www.countyhealthrankings.org)

1 Primary Care Physician to 2,010 patients as compared to 2019 when it was 1 Primary Care Physician to 2,270 patients.



1 Dentist to 2,820 patients as compared to 2019 when it was 1 Dentist to 3.410 patients.

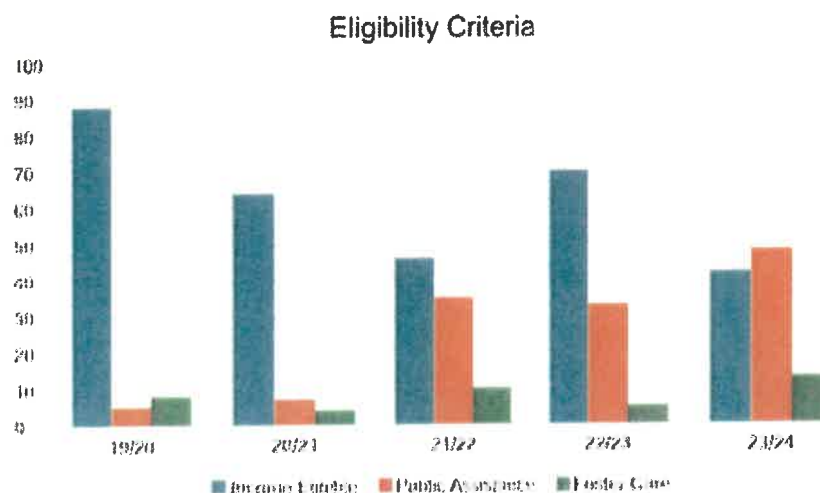


Even though these statistics have improved there is a scarcity of pediatric dental providers in the immediate area who accept Medicaid and perform pediatric oral surgery. Families travel to Lima, Ohio, Dayton, Ohio, or Ft. Wayne, Indiana to receive needed oral surgery.

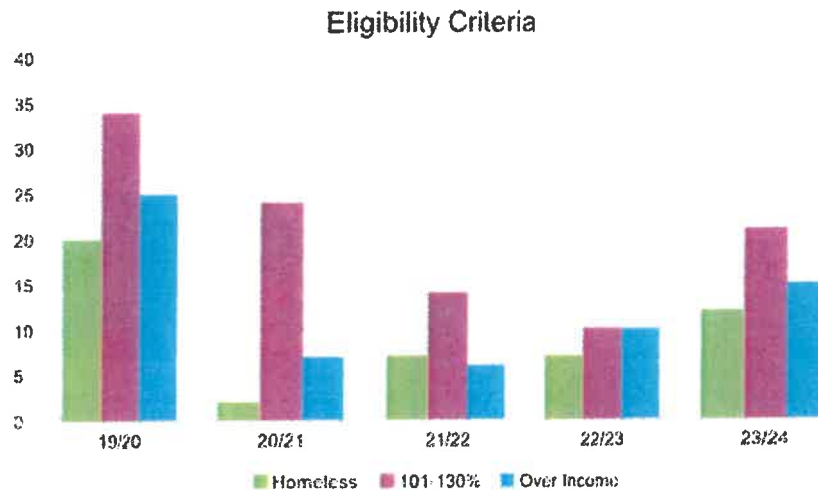
Mercer County Head Start Program Information Report

Each year, Head Start programs must submit a Program Information Report (PIR) to the Office of Head Start. The PIR provides data that reflects the Head Start grantee's community and services provided by the Head Start program. Below is the summary / comparison of a few of the objectives listed in the PIR as reported by Mercer County Head Start. (This summary is not reflective of all services and reporting of the PIR submitted.)

5 Year Reflection of Eligibility



Over the 5-year project period, the number of children who are income eligible for the program has a downward trend. The number of enrolled children receiving public assistance is on an upward trend. While children in foster care were maintaining a steady line, there is an indication of an upward trend.



There is a downward trend in enrolled children as 101 – 130% FPL income range. While there was a deep dive in homeless children being enrolled in 20/21 (the height of the pandemic) the number is steadily increasing indicating a definite upward trend. Children identified as over-income but admitted to the program follows the same trend pattern as homeless children.

Note on children admitted as over-income. To be admitted under these criteria, the family has several factors on the eligibility criteria list. For example, incarcerated parent, immigrant family, pregnant parent, single parent, mental health concerns, chronic and debilitating illness, drug and or alcohol addiction to name a few common examples.

Conclusions

Like many communities across Ohio, Mercer County is building back from the pandemic. Costs of every day goods rose out of alignment with increases in wages. Simply stated, while individuals experienced increased wages, it was not enough to combat increasing costs. Homelessness is on the rise. Drug and alcohol misuse continue to be a problem for the area. Access to medical and dental care continues to be a struggle for families. Lack of transportation continues to be an issue that many community leaders have attempted to address over the past several years.

Many of these issues can be seen in rural communities across the nation. In Mercer County, families continue to grow as witnessed by our birth rates after the pandemic. Babies are born healthy as evidenced by our low infant mortality rate. Food shortages and support are combatted through local providers such as C.A.L.L. and WIC. Local innovative partnerships are created so children and families can receive critical family preservation services in their hometown. Employers continue to hire workers and expand local businesses and services.

There are solutions to our problems and together we will find them.

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Mercer County Sheriff Annual Report, 2022-2023
Ohio Department of Education, School District State Report Card
Ohio Department of Health – Network of Care
<https://datausa.io/profile>
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Mercer County Family Resource Handbook
<https://www.good.is/infographics/infographics-the-importance-of-early-education>
Mercer County PIR report



MERCER COUNTY HEAD START

585 EAST LIVINGSTON STREET CELINA OH 45822 419-268-0301

MERCER COUNTY HEAD START SCHOOL READINESS GOALS

Approaches to Learning Goal: Children will manage emotions and follow classroom rules and routines with increasing independence.

Social and Emotional Development Goal: Children will engage in and maintain positive peer relationships and interactions including cooperation and resolving conflicts.

Language & Literacy Goal: Children will understand and use a wide variety of words for a variety of purposes and show understandings of word categories.

Language & Literacy Goal: Children will demonstrate understanding of narrative structure and information from the content of a story.

Cognition Mathematics Development Goal: Children will demonstrate understanding of number names and order of numerals, the order of size or measures, the number of items in a set, and use math concepts and language regularly during everyday experiences.

Cognition Scientific Reasoning Goal: Children will use reasoning and problem-solving as they ask questions, gather information, make predictions, and conduct investigations.

Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development Goal: Children will identify and practice healthy and safe habits.

OUR CORE VALUES

Trust
Integrity
Excellence

OUR MISSION

We invest in individualized, comprehensive services which champion school ready children and self-sufficient families.

OUR VISION

To establish Mercer County Head Start as the foremost leader in early childhood services.

Human Resources

Mercer County Head Start will increase staff retention by implementing individualized professional development plans for all employees, refining our onboarding process to achieve high satisfaction rates from new hires, and perfecting our operational systems to create a high-quality work environment.

Objective 1 : Create and implement individualized professional development plans for all employees.

Year 1: Develop and implement policy and procedures including forms that meet the requirements and expectations of local / state licensing agents, Head Start regulations, and employee needs. Professional development plans are continuous improvement planning reflecting real time goals and objectives and record progress.

Objective 2: Refine onboarding processes clearly defining roles and responsibilities and timelines.

Year 1: Create and implement policy and procedure that reflect Meaningful and logical systems to support staff.

Objective 3: Restructure organizational duties to align with newly created Human Resources Manager position.

Year 1: Review existing policy and procedure reassigning human resources responsibility to Human Resources Manager.

Mental Health

Mercer County Head Start will increase self-efficacy and resiliency through mental health support provided through the program.

Objective 1: Mercer County Head Start will connect enrolled parents to local mental health resources (counseling services or support groups).

Year 1: Assess parental needs through interviews and parental needs assessments. Make referrals to local resources as indicated.

Objective 2: Mercer County Head Start will increase enrolled parents' knowledge of positive parenting by providing parenting workshops or provide parenting education individually.

Year 1: Parenting classes offered onsite for families interested in a group learning setting, individual parenting classes offered to individual families during home visits.

Objective 3: Mercer County Head Start will expand innovative partnerships to increase timely access to mental health resources.

Year 1: Mercer County Head Start will seek out and partner with multiple Mental health providers in the local community as well as state resources.

Objective 4: Mercer County Head Start will educate Mercer County Head Start Employees on the necessity of self-care and stable mental wellness.

Year 1: Mercer County Head Start will provide resources and education For self-care and mental well-being to all staff through workshops, Resources, and educational materials.

Family & Community Engagement

Mercer County Head Start will enhance preschool engagement and parental skills, fostering positive parent child relationships and promoting self-advocacy.

Objective 1: Increase child attendance.

Year 1: Educate parents on attendance policy and the importance of children attending school every day.

Objective 2: Increase parenting skills and knowledge.

Year 1: Provide monthly parenting workshops utilizing Conscious Parenting curriculum.

Objective 3: Increase positive parent child relationships.

Year 1: Provide monthly parenting workshops focusing on child development, social emotional development, and basic parenting skills.

Objective 4: Increase self-advocacy and leadership skills.

Year 1: Provide coaching and educational materials focused on self-advocacy for children.

Education

Mercer County Head Start will provide a safe nurturing environment in which children thrive, and educators feel empowered to provide the highest quality education utilizing innovative strategies and tools.

Objective 1: Provide a safe nurturing environment for children.

Year 1: Refine policy and procedure to ensure that children are safe at all times. Train staff repeatedly on expectations. Monitor policy and procedure routinely. Collect data on child behavior and staff responses.

Objective 2: Demonstrate fluent understanding of program curricula and the accompanying child assessment tools and strategies.

Year 1: Education staff will utilize curricula and child assessment tools and strategies to create innovative teaching practices and environments.

Objective 3: Utilize data to respond to unique needs of individual students.

Year 1: Education staff will demonstrate a working knowledge of data at the individual child level and classroom level to create meaningful and responsive lesson plans for children.

Objective 4: Increase student growth in literacy and math domains.

Year 1: Increase intentional literacy and math learning materials and activities in classrooms.

Health

Mercer County Head Start will increase parental engagement in preventative oral health, health, and lead poisoning resulting in healthier, children, families, and community.

Objective 1: Increase parental engagement and knowledge in preventative oral health Care.

Year 1: Implement an oral health campaign, including educational materials, resources, and activities on developing healthy oral habits. This campaign includes local partners and resources to collect and distribute educational materials.

- Objective 2:** Increase parental engagement and knowledge in preventative care.
Year 1: Implement a preventative health campaign, including Educational materials and activities on developing preventative health Behaviors. Partner with local providers to ensure health services are Readily available for enrolled children and families.
- Objective 3:** Increase parental engagement and knowledge in the prevention and treatment of lead poisoning.
Year 1: Provide education and resources on lead poisoning and Prevention to all enrolled families. Facilitate the completion of lead testing for enrolled children. Implement a lead awareness campaign.

Nutrition

Children and families will have increased access to nutritious food and increased knowledge of local resources to obtain nutritious foods.

- Objective 1:** Mercer County Head Start will strengthen partnerships with local nutrition providers and community leadership.
Year 1: Ensure all families eligible for SNAP and / or WIC have applied.

MCHS Service Plans Program Governance Updated 9/24

Head Start Program Performance Standard Reference	Head Start Act	Performance Standard	Action Plan	Policy / Procedure	Responsibility	Form
1301 – Program Governance						
1301.1 Purpose		An agency, as defined in part of 1305 of this chapter, must establish and maintain a formal structure for program governance that includes a governing body, a policy council at the agency level, and policy committee at the delegate level, and a parent committee.	Celina City Schools Board of Education serves as the governing body for Celina City Schools Mercer County Head Start (MCHS) program. MCHS will establish a policy council to share in program governance with the Celina City Schools Board of Education. MCHS has no delegate agencies that require a policy committee. All parents of enrolled children are members of the grantee's parent committee.		Director Board of Education	Board of Education membership Policy Council membership Governing Board / Policy Council Handbook
		Governing bodies have a legal and fiscal responsibility to administer and oversee the agency's Head Start and Early Head Start programs.	The Policy Council and Board of Education share in joint responsibility to administer and provide oversight to MCHS program.			Governing Board / Policy Council Handbook

		Policy Councils are responsible for the direction of the Head Start and Early Head Start programs.	The Director of the Celina City Schools Head Start program provides information to the Policy Council to ensure accurate and responsible decision making.			Governing Board / Policy Council Handbook
1301.2 Program Governance – Governing Bod	(c) Program Governance- Upon receiving designation as a Head Start agency, the agency shall establish and maintain a formal structure for program governance, for the oversight of quality services for Head Start children and families and for making decisions related to program design and implementation. Such structure shall include the following: (1) GOVERNING BODY- (B) COMPOSITION- The governing body shall be composed as follows: (I) Not less than 1 member shall have a background and expertise in fiscal management or accounting.	(a) Composition. The composition of a governing body must be in accordance with the requirements specified at section 642(c)(1)(B) of the Act, except where specific exceptions are authorized in the case of public entities at section 642 (c)(1)(D) of the Act.	Celina City Schools Board of Education is an elected board by the public. Section 642 © (1) (D) applies to the Celina City Schools Board of Education.	Voting Constituents of the Celina City Schools District	Election results	

[illegible]

	such conflict to the Secretary; and (ii) if the position held as a result of public election or political appointment provides compensation, such individual shall not be prohibited from receiving such compensation					
	(C) CONFLICT OF INTEREST- Members of the governing body shall-- (i) not have a financial conflict of interest with the Head Start agency (including any delegate agency); (ii) not receive compensation for serving on the governing body or for providing services to the Head Start agency; (iii) not be employed, nor shall members of their immediate family be employed, by the Head Start agency (including any delegate agency); and	Agencies must ensure members of the governing body do not have a conflict of interest, pursuant to section 642 (c) (1) (c) of the Act.	All members of the governing body sign a statement outlining conflict of interest:(C) CONFLICT OF INTEREST—Members of the governing body shall: (i) not have a financial conflict of interest with the Head Start agency (including any delegate agency); (ii) not receive compensation for serving on the governing body or for providing services to the Head Start agency; (iii) not be employed, nor shall members of their immediate family be employed, by the Head Start agency (including any delegate agency); and	Mercer County Head Start Code of Conduct for Policy Council and Governing Boards ADM 11	Director	Conflict of Interest Policy ADM 12

	(iv) operate as an entity independent of staff employed by the Head Start agency.		(iv) operate as an entity independent of staff employed by the Head Start agency.		
	<p>(E) RESPONSIBILITIES- The governing body shall—</p> <p>(i) have legal and fiscal responsibility for administering and overseeing programs under this subchapter, including the safeguarding of Federal funds;</p> <p>(ii) adopt practices that assure active, independent, and informed governance of the Head Start agency, including practices consistent with subsection (d)(1), and fully participate in the development, planning, and evaluation of the Head Start programs involved;</p> <p>(iii) be responsible for ensuring compliance with Federal laws (including regulations) and applicable State,</p>	<p>(b) Duties and responsibilities. (1) The governing body is responsible for activities specified at section 642 (c) (1) (E) of the Act.</p>	<p>The governing body is responsible for the safeguarding of federal funds.</p> <p>The governing body participates in the development, planning, and oversight of the MCHS program in collaboration with the Director and management team.</p> <p>The governing body determines the service area of the program utilizing data gleaned from the community needs assessment.</p>	<p>Grant Submission</p> <p>Community Needs Assessment</p>	<p>Board of Education meeting minutes Policy Council meeting minutes</p> <p>Board of Education Policy Council Director</p>

	<p>tribal, and local laws (including regulations); and</p> <p>(iv) be responsible for other activities, including--</p> <p>(i) selecting delegate agencies and the service areas for such agencies;</p> <p>(ii) establishing procedures and criteria for recruitment, selection, and enrollment of children;</p> <p>(iii) reviewing all applications for funding and amendments to applications for funding for programs under this subchapter;</p> <p>(iv) establishing procedures and guidelines for accessing and collecting information described in subsection (d)(2);</p> <p>(v) reviewing and approving all major policies of the agency, including--</p> <p>(aa) the annual self-assessment and financial audit;</p>		<p>The governing body determines the procedures and criteria for all aspects of ERSEA following guidance provided by the community needs assessment and internal data from the program.</p> <p>The governing body reviews all applications submitted for funding opportunities.</p>	<p>Selection Criteria</p> <p>Recruitment</p>	<p>Board of Education Policy Council Head Start Director</p>	<p>SS 24</p>
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	<p>(bb) such agency's progress in carrying out the programmatic and fiscal provisions in such agency's grant application, including implementation of corrective actions; and</p> <p>(cc) personnel policies of such agencies regarding the hiring, evaluation, termination, and compensation of agency employees;</p> <p>(VI) developing procedures for how members of the policy council are selected, consistent with paragraph (2)(B);</p> <p>(VII) approving financial management, accounting, and reporting policies, and compliance with laws and</p>		<p>The director provides a monthly report to the governing board satisfying all requirements in subsection (d) (2).</p> <p>The director provides information and guidance to the governing board for all major policies: annual self-assessment, fiscal audit, grant applications, corrective actions, personnel policies, procedure for policy council selection, fiscal policies, fiscal management, all major</p>	<p>Director's Report</p> <p>Self-Assessment Fiscal Policy Manual</p>	<p>Head Start Director</p>	<p>Director's Monthly Report</p>
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<p>regulations related to financial statements, including the--</p> <p>(aa) approval of all major financial expenditures of the agency;</p> <p>(bb) annual approval of the operating budget of the agency;</p> <p>(cc) selection (except when a financial auditor is assigned by the State under State law or is assigned under local law) of independent financial auditors who shall report all critical accounting policies and practices to the governing body; and</p> <p>(dd) monitoring of the agency's actions to correct any audit findings and of other action necessary to comply with applicable laws (including regulations) governing financial statement and accounting practices;</p> <p>(VIII) reviewing results from monitoring conducted</p>		<p>fiscal expenditures, annual approval of the operating budget, and selection of the auditor. The board must provide approval for all aforementioned items.</p> <p>Celina City Schools Board of Education has established policies for the hiring, evaluation, compensation, and termination of administrative level employees. HSPPS expectations are more stringent; therefore, MCHS has supplemental policies to ensure full compliance with HSPPS.</p> <p>Additional policies in areas addressing monitoring of any possible audit findings, conflict of interest, and complaints against employees. Celina City Schools Board of Education contracts with attorneys to serve in the event arbitration or mediation would need to be convened.</p> <p>Celina City Schools Board of Education receives</p>	<p>Interviewing / Hiring of Personnel / Separation of Employment</p> <p>Policy Council Nomination / Election</p>	<p>Board of Education Director</p> <p>Board of Education Policy Council Head Start Director</p> <p>Board of Education Treasurer Head Start Director</p>	<p>Celina City Schools personnel policies, Union Negotiated contracts</p> <p>MCHS Personnel Handbook</p> <p>Governing Body / Policy Council Program Governance Handbook</p> <p>SS 13</p> <p>Financial Policies & Procedures</p>
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<p>under section 641A(c), including appropriate follow up activities;</p> <p>(IX) approving personnel policies and procedures, including policies and procedures regarding the hiring, evaluation, and compensation, and termination of the Executive Director, Head Start Director, Director of Human Resources, Chief Fiscal Officer, and any other person in an equivalent position with the agency;</p> <p>(X) establishing, adopting, and periodically updating written standards of conduct that establish standards and formal procedures for disclosing, addressing, and resolving--</p> <p>(aa) any conflict of interest, and any appearance of a conflict of interest, by members of the governing body, officers and employees of the Head Start agency, and consultants and agents</p>			<p>guidance and assistance from the director and management team on the development of procedures for the selection of policy council members.</p> <p>Celina City Schools Board of Education is responsible for the approval of financial management policies / procedures ensuring compliance with applicable laws. The Celina City Schools Treasurer along with the Head Start Director provides information to the Board of Education to ensure clarification on any and all financial responsibilities / tasks.</p>		
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	<p>who provide services or furnish goods to the Head Start agency; and</p> <p>(bb) complaints, including investigations, when appropriate; and</p> <p>(XI) to the extent practicable and appropriate, at the discretion of the governing body, establishing advisory committees to oversee key responsibilities related to program governance and improvement of the Head Start program involved</p>		<p>Celina City Schools Board of Education with guidance provided by the Treasurer chooses / assigns / accepts the auditor responsible for oversight of the program's financial accounting practices.</p> <p>Celina City Schools Board of Education is responsible to monitor any actions of the Head Start program if warranted by a finding within a financial audit.</p> <p>The Head Start Director and management team will make available and review any monitoring reviews / findings / corrective action plans with the governing board.</p> <p>Please see above section (cc). Personnel policies / procedures established are</p>	<p>Monitoring Reviews</p>	<p>Head Start Director Management Team</p>	<p>Monitoring Reviews correspondence</p>
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			<p>written for all employees of Celina City Schools with supplemental policies written specifically for MCHS employees to ensure compliance with HSPPS.</p> <p>The governing board with support from the Head Start Director and management team periodically reviews written standards of conduct, impasse procedures, and employee union contracts.</p> <p>Celina City Schools Board of Education may establish any advisory committees as deemed necessary to support any improvements to the Head Start program or additional oversight to program governance.</p>	<p>Code of Conduct Parent Handbook Internal investigation Union Negotiated Contract Parent / Community Concern Notification to the Regional Office</p>	<p>Board of Education Policy Council Head Start Director Management Team Board of Education</p>	<p>Parent Complaint Form / Procedure Code of Conduct Conflict of Interest statements</p>
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	<p>(d) Program Governance Administration-</p> <p>(2) CONDUCT OF RESPONSIBILITIES- Each Head Start agency shall ensure the sharing of accurate and regular information for use by the governing body and the policy council, about program planning, policies, and Head Start agency operations, including--</p> <p>(A) monthly financial statements, including credit card expenditures;</p> <p>(B) monthly program information summaries;</p> <p>(C) program enrollment reports, including attendance reports for children whose care is partially subsidized by another public agency;</p>	<p>(b) Duties and responsibilities (2) The governing body must use ongoing monitoring results, data on school readiness goals, other information described in 1302.102, and information described at section 642(d)(2) of the Act to conduct its responsibilities.</p>	<p>Monthly and periodically throughout the program year, the Director of MCHS program provides the governing board information from ongoing monitoring tools (annually in July), school readiness goals (annually in July), program goal updates (annually in July) and monthly board reports which include:</p> <p>(2) CONDUCT OF RESPONSIBILITIES—Each Head Start agency shall ensure the sharing of accurate and regular information for use by the governing body and policy council, about program planning, policies, and Head Start agency operations, including:</p> <p>(A) Monthly financial statements, including credit card expenditures;</p> <p>(B) Monthly program information summaries;</p>	Director's Report	Director	Director's Monthly Report Program monitoring tools School Readiness data	

	<p>(D) monthly reports of meals and snacks provided through programs of the Department of Agriculture;</p> <p>(E) the financial audit;</p> <p>(F) the annual self-assessment, including any findings related to such assessment;</p> <p>(G) the communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment of the Head Start agency, including any applicable updates;</p> <p>(H) communication and guidance from the Secretary; and</p> <p>(I) the program information reports.</p>		<p>(C) Program enrollment reports, including attendance reports for children whose care is partially subsidized by another public agency;</p> <p>(D) Monthly reports of meals and snacks provided through programs of the Department of Agriculture;</p> <p>(E) the financial audit;</p> <p>(F) the annual self-assessment, including any findings related to such assessment;</p> <p>(G) the communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment of the Head Start agency, including any applicable updates;</p> <p>(H) communication and guidance from the Secretary; and</p> <p>(I) the program information reports.</p>			
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MCHS Service Plans Program Governance Updated 9/24

			(c) Advisory Committees (1) A governing body may establish advisory committees as it deems necessary for effective governance and improvement of the program.	Celina City Schools Board of Education may develop an advisory committee for the purpose of effective governance and improvements to the program.		Board of Education	Board of Education meeting minutes
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	level, and a policy committee at the delegate level. If an agency delegates operational responsibility for the entire Head Start or Early Head Start program to one delegate agency, the policy council and policy committee may be the same body.					
	<p>(b) Composition. (1) A program must establish a policy council in accordance with section 642 (c) (2)(B) of the Act, or a policy committee at the delegate level in accordance with section 642(c)(3) of the Act, as early in the program year as possible. Parents of children currently enrolled in each program option must be proportionately represented on the policy council and on the policy committee at the delegate level.</p>	<p>(2) POLICY COUNCIL- (B) COMPOSITION AND SELECTION-</p> <p>(i) The policy council shall be elected by the parents of children who are currently enrolled in the Head Start program of the Head Start agency.</p> <p>(ii) The policy council shall be composed of--</p> <p>(l) parents of children who are currently enrolled in the Head Start program of the Head Start agency (including any delegate agency), who shall constitute a majority of</p>	<p>MCHS program informs parents at the time of enrollment about the opportunity of participating in the policy council. Parents who indicate they are interested in being on policy council are then elected by their peers to serve on policy council for the year. Five seats on policy council are reserved for parents of currently enrolled children. Four seats are reserved for community members, totaling 9 members on policy council. Elections are completed by October each year annually.</p> <p>The Mental Health Manager is responsible to educate local service</p>	Policy Council Nomination / Election	Family Advocate	<p>Parent Handbook</p> <p>Policy Council Candidate Information Form</p> <p>Policy Council Ballot</p>

		<p>the members of the policy council; and</p> <p>(II) members at large of the community served by the Head Start agency (including any delegate agency), who may include parents of children who were formerly enrolled in the Head Start program of the agency.</p> <p>(3) POLICY COMMITTEES- Each delegate agency shall create a policy committee, which shall--</p> <p>(A) be elected and composed of members, consistent with paragraph (2)(B) (with respect to delegate agencies);</p> <p>(B) follow procedures to prohibit conflict of interest, consistent with clauses (i) and (ii) of paragraph (2)(C) (with respect to delegate agencies); and</p>	<p>providers of the opportunity to sit on policy council as a community member.</p>			
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		(C) be responsible for approval and submission of decisions about activities as they relate to the delegate agency, consistent with paragraph (2) (D) (with respect to delegate agencies).				
	(b) Composition. (2) The program must ensure members of the policy council, and of the policy committee at the delegate level, do not have a conflict of interest pursuant to sections 642(c)(2)(C) and 642(c)(3)(B) of the Act. Staff may not serve on the policy council or policy committee at the delegate level except parents who occasionally substitute as staff. In the case of tribal grantees, this exclusion applies only to tribal staff who work in areas directly related to or which directly impact administrative, fiscal, or programmatic issues.	(C) CONFLICT OF INTEREST- Members of the policy council shall- (i) not have a conflict of interest with the Head Start agency (including any delegate agency); and ii. not receive compensation for serving on the policy council or for providing services to the Head Start agency. (B) follow procedures to prohibit conflict of interest, consistent with clauses (i) and (ii) of paragraph (2)	Policy Council members cannot have a conflict of interest with MCHS. In addition, policy council members cannot receive compensation for services provided to the grantee by serving on policy council. Staff cannot serve on policy council. Parents of currently enrolled children who provide substitute services to the program on an <u>occasional basis</u> MAY serve on policy council.	Conflict of Interest	Director	

	<p>(C) Duties and responsibilities (1). A policy council is responsible for activities specified at section 642© (2) (D) of the Act.</p>	<p>(D) RESPONSIBILITIES— The policy council shall approve and submit to the governing body decisions about each of the following activities: (i) Activities to support the active involvement of parents in supporting program operations, including policies to ensure that the Head Start agency is responsive to community and parent needs. (ii) Program recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities. (iii) Applications for funding and amendments to applications for funding for programs under this subchapter, prior to submission of applications described in this clause. (iv) Budget planning for program expenditures, including policies for reimbursement and participation in policy council activities.</p>	<p>Policy Council meetings will always be scheduled and conducted prior to the monthly meeting of Celina City Schools Board of Education. This allows the policy council to submit decisions to the Board in a timely & effective manner.</p> <p>The Director and Program Managers provide guidance and information to the policy council on: Parent engagement, ERSEA, applications for funding opportunities, program budgets and policies, bylaws for policy council, personnel policies, employment of program staff, election of policy council members, and the service area of the grantee. Policy Council members make decision and submit approvals to the Celina City Schools Board of Education for consideration.</p> <p>A Celina City Schools Board of Education member sits on Policy Council as a non-voting member to serve as</p>	<p>Director Program Managers</p>	<p>Program Planning Calendar</p>
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		<p>(v) Bylaws for the operation of the policy council.</p> <p>(vi) Program personnel policies and decisions regarding the employment of program staff, consistent with paragraph (1) (E) (iv) (IX), including standards of conduct for program staff, contractors, and volunteers and criteria for the employment and dismissal of program staff.</p> <p>(vii) Developing procedures for how members of the policy council of the Head Start agency will be elected.</p> <p>(viii) Recommendations on the selection of delegate agencies and the service areas for such agencies.</p>	a liaison between the two entities.					Director's Monthly Report Program monitoring tools School Readiness data
	<p>(C) Duties and Responsibilities (2) A policy council, and a policy committee at the delegate level, must use on-going monitoring results, data on school readiness goals, other information</p>	<p>(2) CONDUCT OF RESPONSIBILITIES- Each Head Start agency shall ensure the sharing of accurate and regular information for use by the governing body and the policy council, about</p>	Monthly and periodically throughout the program year, the Director of the MCHS program provides the policy council information from ongoing monitoring tools (annually in July), school readiness	Director Program Managers				

	<p>described in 1302.102 , and information described in section 642(d)(2) of the Act to conduct its responsibilities.</p>	<p>program planning, policies, and Head Start agency operations, including--</p> <p>(A) monthly financial statements, including credit card expenditures;</p> <p>(B) monthly program information summaries;</p> <p>(C) program enrollment reports, including attendance reports for children whose care is partially subsidized by another public agency;</p> <p>(D) monthly reports of meals and snacks provided through programs of the Department of Agriculture;</p> <p>(E) the financial audit;</p> <p>(F) the annual self-assessment, including any findings related to such assessment;</p> <p>(G) the communitywide strategic planning and</p>	<p>goals (annually in July), program goal updates (annually in July) and monthly board reports which include:</p> <p>(2) CONDUCT OF RESPONSIBILITIES—Each Head Start agency shall ensure the sharing of accurate and regular information for use by the governing body and policy council, about program planning, policies, and Head Start agency operations, including all items outlined in the Act.</p>		
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MCHS Service Plans Program Governance Updated 9/24

		needs assessment of the Head Start agency, including any applicable updates; (H) communication and guidance from the Secretary; and (I) the program information reports.				
	(d) Term (1) A member will serve for one year (2) If the member intends to serve for another year, s / he must stand for re-election (3) The policy council, and policy committee at the delegate level, must include in its bylaws how many one-year terms, not to exceed five terms, a person may serve. (4) A program must seat a successor policy council, or policy committee at the delegate level, before an existing policy council, or policy committee at the delegate level, may be dissolved.		MCHS provides governance training annually which informs parents of the term limits of policy council and the requirements to be re-elected each year with a maximum of 5 terms. Included in program governance training is the annual schedule for elections. Elections occur at the end of September annually, ensuring that a new policy council is seated in October and receives program governance training at the first meeting.	Policy Council Nomination / Election	Director Family Advocate	Policy Council election ballot

	(e) Reimbursement. A program must enable low-income members to participate fully in their policy council or policy committee responsibilities by providing, if necessary, reimbursements for reasonable expenses incurred by the low-income members		<p>Mercer County Head Start provides a \$15 stipend to parents to help cover the cost of childcare while attending to policy council duties.</p> <p>MCHS recognizes that all parents of enrolled children would be considered "low income".</p>	Policy Council Stipend	Director	Attendance Roster Purchase Order
1301.4 Parent committees	<p>(a) Establishing parent committees</p> <p>A program must establish a parent committee comprised exclusively of parents of currently enrolled children as early in the program year as possible.</p> <p>This committee must be established at the center level for center-based programs and at the local program level for other program options.</p> <p>When a program operates more than one option, parents may choose to have a separate committee for each option or combine membership.</p> <p>A program must ensure that parents of currently enrolled children</p>		<p>During enrollment and orientation, parents are informed of the various opportunities for parent engagement. These opportunities are listed and described within the parent handbook as well.</p> <p>All parents of currently enrolled children are automatic members of the parent committee. Utilizing information gathered from the family interest survey, family engagement staff works closely with parents to develop meeting agendas covering topics of interests for parents.</p> <p>Policy Council elections are announced via communication sent home with child, verbally to parents during the</p>		Family Advocates	<p>Orientation</p> <p>Parent Handbook</p> <p>Family Interest Survey</p>

	understand the process for elections to the policy council or policy committee and other leadership opportunities.		enrollment process and are also included within the parent handbook.			
	(b) Requirements of parent committees. Within the parent committee structure, a program may determine the best methods to engage families using strategies that are most effective in their community, as long as the program ensures the parent committee carries out the following minimum responsibilities:		Family Engagement staff utilize events and meetings to solicit input from parents on program operations including curriculum ideas, school readiness objectives, program policies, and program goals. Policy Council minutes are posted on the main parent information board. Members of the parent	Family Engagement staff	Attendance Roster Meeting minutes Policy Council meeting minutes	

	<p>(1) Advise staff in developing and implementing local program policies, activities, and services to ensure they meet the needs of children and families</p> <p>(2) Have a process for communication with the policy council and policy committee; and</p> <p>(3) Within the guidelines established by the governing body, policy council or policy committee, participate in the recruitment and screening of Early Head Start and Head Start employees.</p>		<p>committee may submit through written form information to the policy council or may attend a policy council meeting to address the council in person.</p> <p>Whenever possible, parents are included in the recruitment / interviewing process of potential employees.</p>			
1301.5 Training	<p>An agency must provide appropriate training and technical assistance or orientation to the governing body, and advisory committee members, and the policy council, including training on program performance standards and training indicated in 1302.12(m) to ensure the members understand the information they receive and can</p>		<p>Annually in January, the Director provides governance training to the members of the Board of Education and newly seated Policy Council. Resources used to provide this training come directly from the T/TA system and ECKLC website.</p> <p>ERSEA final rule (3/15) training is provided at this time as well.</p>	Director	Attendance Roster	

MCHS Service Plans Program Governance Updated 9/24

	effectively oversee and participate in the programs in the Head Start agency. 1302.12(m) references eligibility training					
1301.6 Impasse procedures	<p>(a) To facilitate meaningful consultation and collaboration about decisions of the governing body and the policy council, each agency's governing body and policy council jointly must establish written procedures for resolving internal disputes between the governing board and the governing council in a timely manner that include impasse procedures. These procedures must:</p> <p>(1) Demonstrate that the governing body considers proposed decisions from the policy council and that the policy council considers proposed decisions from the governing body;</p> <p>(2) If there is a disagreement, require the governing body and the policy council to notify the other in writing why it does not accept a decision; and,</p>		<p>MCHS provides members of the governing board and policy council with a handbook for governance procedures for the Head Start program.</p> <p>In the policy and procedures section of the handbook, includes impasse procedures which include: resolving internal disputes, use of arbitration, and mediation.</p> <p>Annually, the handbook is reviewed by the governing bodies for any possible revisions and updates.</p>	Director	Board of Education Policy Council Shared Governance Handbook	

	<p>(3) Describe a decision-making process and a timeline to resolve disputes and reach decisions that are not arbitrary, capricious, or illegal.</p> <p>(b) if the agency's decision-making process does not result in resolution and an impasse continues, the governing body and policy council must select a mutually agreeable third party mediator and participate in a formal process of mediation that leads to a resolution of the dispute.</p> <p>© For all programs except American Indian and Alaska Native programs, if no resolution is reached with a mediator, the governing body and policy council must select a mutually agreeable arbitrator whose decision is final.</p>					
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MERCER COUNTY HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL HANDBOOK

Our Core Values: Mercer County Head Start has established core values that lead and exemplify the work that we endeavor to complete in every aspect of our mission and vision. These core values include Trust, Integrity, Excellence.

Our Mission: Mercer County Head Start invests in individualized, comprehensive services which champion school ready children and self-sufficient families.

Our Vision: To establish Mercer County Head Start as the foremost leader in early childhood services.

It is our fervent belief that by living our core values throughout our mission, we will accomplish our vision. Children, families, community members, stakeholders, and peers will benefit from the exemplary work accomplished.

Mercer County Head Start staff will hold true to our core values, mission, and vision displaying the compassion needed to combat poverty, inequity, and social injustice; forever impacting our local, state, and national communities

1301.1 Purpose:

Celina City Schools Board of Education serves as the governing body for Mercer County Head Start program. Mercer County Head Start (herein known as MCHS) will establish a policy council to share in program governance with the Celina City Schools Board of Education. Mercer County Head Start has no delegate agencies that require a policy committee. All parents of enrolled children are members of the grantee's parent committee. The Policy Council and Board of Education share joint responsibility to administer and provide oversight to Mercer County Head Start program. The Executive Director of the Mercer County Head Start program provides information to the Policy Council to ensure accurate and responsible decision making.

The Head Start program is a comprehensive early childhood education program for low-income children and families that instills confidence, strengthens abilities, and encourages creativity. Children are provided with an environment, experience, and services, which meet their individual needs in the areas of intellectual, physical, social, and emotional growth. It is recognized that parents are the primary educators of their children and encourage their involvement in many ways. Nationally the program began in 1965 during the "war on poverty" as a six-week summer program to assist "disadvantaged" children in preparing for school.

Parents have a lead role in decision-making within the organization. Mercer County Head Start's Policy Council members help plan and develop the goals of the program, approve various policies, approve hiring and firing decisions, and approve budget and work plans.

Beyond decision-making, parent participation takes place in many other ways. Parents volunteer in the classroom, assist with field trips, organize parent activity events, provide input on curriculum, and act as liaisons to community groups. Head Start offers positive social experiences for both parents and children. The Head Start families have played a vital role in making our program a success.

There is a set of Head Start core values that helped build the foundation of Head Start's success.

- Establish a supportive learning environment for children, parents, and staff, in which the process of enhancing awareness, refining skills, and increasing understanding are valued and promoted.
- Recognize that the members of the Head Start community: children, families, and staff have roots in many cultures. Head Start families and staff, working together as a team, can effectively promote respectful, sensitive, and proactive approaches to diverse issues.

- Understand that the empowerment of families occurs when program governance is a responsibility shared by families, governing bodies, and staff, and when ideas and opinions of families are heard and respected.
- Embrace a comprehensive vision of health for children, families, and staff which assure that basic health needs are met, encourages practices that prevent future illnesses and injuries and promotes positive, culturally relevant health behaviors that enhance lifelong well-being.
- Respect the importance of all aspects of an individual's development, including social, emotional, cognitive, and physical growth.
- Build a community in which each child and adult is treated as an individual while at the same time, a sense of belonging in the group is reinforced.
- Foster relationships with the larger community so that families and staff are respected and served by a network of community agencies in partnership with one another.
- Develop a continuum of care, education, and services that provide stable, uninterrupted support to families and children during and after their Head Start experience.

1301.2 Governing Body

Celina City Schools Board of Education is an elected board by the public. Section 642 (c)(1)(D) applies to the Celina City Schools Board of Education.

All members of the governing body sign a statement outlining conflict of interest :(C) CONFLICT OF

INTEREST- Members of the governing body shall:

- i) not have a financial conflict of interest with the Head Start agency (including any delegate agency).
- ii) not receive compensation for serving on the governing body or for providing services to the Head Start agency.
- iii) not be employed, nor shall members of their immediate family be employed, by the Head Start agency (including any delegate agency); and
- iv) operate as an entity independent of staff employed by the Head Start agency.

The governing body is responsible for the safeguarding of federal funds.

The governing body participates in the development, planning, and oversight of the Mercer County Head Start program in collaboration with the Executive Director and management team.

The governing body determines the service area of the program utilizing data gleaned from the community needs assessment.

The governing body determines the procedures and criteria for all aspects of ERSEA following guidance provided by the community needs assessment and internal data from the program.

The governing body reviews all applications submitted for funding opportunities.

The Executive Director provides a monthly report to the governing board satisfying all requirements in subsection (d)(2).

The Executive Director provides information and guidance to the governing board for all major policies: annual self-assessment, fiscal audit, grant applications, corrective actions, personnel policies, procedure for policy council selection, fiscal policies, fiscal management, all major fiscal expenditures, annual approval of the operating budget, and selection of the auditor. The board must provide approval for all aforementioned items.

Celina City Schools Board of Education has established policies for the hiring, evaluation, compensation, and termination of administrative level employees. Included in these policies are areas addressing monitoring of any possible audit findings, conflict of interest, and complaints against employees. Celina City Schools Board of Education contracts with attorneys to serve in the event arbitration or mediation would need to be convened.

- Celina City Schools Board of Education may develop an advisory committee for the purpose of effective governance and improvements to the program.

- Celina City Schools Board of Education structure and protocol provide the ability to ensure that all requirements of the entity's duties are completed when committees are developed.
- Celina City Schools Board of Education communicates directly with the regional office if such committees are developed.

Policy Council Ground Rules

1. The Chair runs the meeting.
2. There must be quorum (51% of attendance) for business to be conducted.
3. Show up on time and read your packet before the meeting.
4. Raise your hand to be acknowledged by the Chair.
5. Speak loud enough so others can hear you.
6. Avoid side talking.
7. Debate the issue, not the person.
8. Encourage others to speak.
9. Be respectful and listen to others.
10. Summarize or restate a point. Ask for clarification.
11. Consider other perspectives.
12. Be creative in problem solving.

Member Responsibilities

1. Inform (R.S.V.P. the office staff) if you cannot attend the monthly meeting.
2. Share information from the Policy Council with the other parents in your classroom.
3. Represent Mercer County Head Start in a professional manner.
4. If you resign inform the Executive Director in writing to allow for a replacement in a timely fashion.

Expectations around Teamwork

1. Remember, communication will improve as we learn about each other.
2. Expertise of many will be used.
3. Problems will be resolved - this is a business.
4. A unified group will develop.
5. Ownership and personal accomplishments will be felt.

Qualifications

1. Must be a parent of a currently enrolled child in Mercer County Head Start and be elected by the parent committee.
2. A representative of the community that has an interest in low-income families, can contribute to the program, and has been approved by Policy Council.

Tasks

1. Attend New Policy Council Orientation - offered in the fall.
2. Attend Policy Council meetings: will be held monthly with the time and day to be decided within the first couple of meetings. Policy Council parents, who attend the meeting, will be provided \$15 stipend to help cover cost of childcare and transportation.
3. Share in decision-making process for Mercer County Head Start.
4. Assist the parent committee with helping enrolled parents know their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities.
5. Encourage parent participation in the program.
6. Recruit for open slots in the program.

Areas of Responsibility

Monthly and periodically throughout the program year, the Executive Director of the Mercer County Head Start program provides the policy council information from ongoing monitoring tools (annually in July), school readiness goals (annually in July), program goal updates (annually in July) and monthly board reports

which include:

(2) CONDUCT OF RESPONSIBILITIES-Each Head Start agency shall ensure the sharing of accurate and regular information for use by the governing body and policy council, about program planning, policies, and Head Start agency operations, including:

- A. Monthly financial statements, including credit card expenditures.
- B. Monthly program information summaries.
- C. Program enrollment reports, including attendance reports for children whose care is partially subsidized by another public agency.
- D. Monthly reports of meals and snacks provided through programs of the Department of Agriculture.
- E. The financial audit.
- F. The annual self-assessment, including any findings related to such assessment.
- G. The communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment of the Head Start agency, including any applicable updates.
- H. Communication and guidance from the Secretary; and
- I. The program information reports.

Policy Council Minutes

One of the Policy Council Secretary's duties is to keep accurate records of all Policy Council business. A program secretary is available to assist with this process if needed.

The minutes should contain the following information:

1. Names of those in attendance
2. Approval of previous minutes; corrections of previous minutes
3. All reports, motions, and actions taken
4. Who made the motion, who seconded the motion and the number of members who opposed or abstained?
5. All information which is needed at future meetings

Minutes are mailed at least five days before the meeting. If you are not getting your minutes, please check in with the Family Engagement Services Manager to verify your correct address.

To be well prepared, it is **important to read the packet of information and note questions or suggestion beforehand** so that you are prepared when the issue/vote comes up at the meeting.

A sample of the agenda/minutes is on the following page.

MERCER COUNTY HEAD START
POLICY COUNCIL
Agenda FOR (Month) 2022



Date: 2022

Time: Noon

Location: CJ's High Marks / ZOOM

Roll Call (P-present, A-absent, R-regrets)

Policy Council Parents:

Policy Council Community Reps:

Others Present:

Previous Month's Minutes

Motion to Approve:

Second to Approve:

Approved by vote: _____ Yea _____ No

Fiscal Report

Motion to Approve:

Second to Approve:

Approved by vote: _____ Yea _____ No

Director's Report

Motion to Approve:

Second to Approve:

Approved by vote: _____ Yea _____ No

New Hire/Resignations:

Motion to Approve:

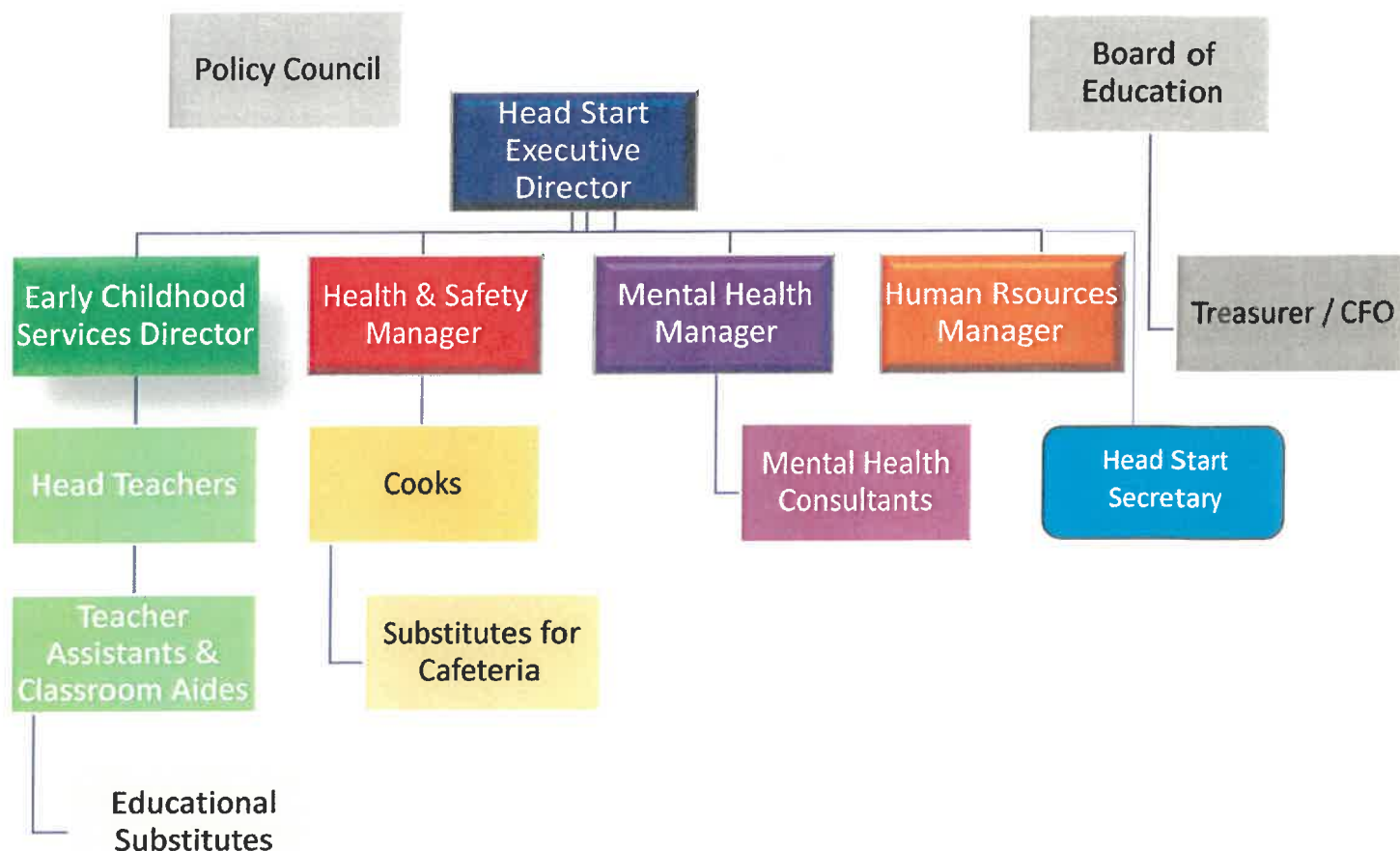
Second to Approve:

Approved by vote: _____ Yea _____ No

Next Meeting:

2022

12:00 pm



1301.3 Policy Council

Mercer County Head Start program informs parents at the time of enrollment about the opportunity of participating in the Policy Council. Parents who indicate they are interested in being on policy council are then elected by their peers to serve on policy council for the year. Five seats on Policy Council are reserved for parents of currently enrolled children. Four seats are reserved for community members, totaling 9 members on policy council. Five voting members must be present to make a quorum. Elections are completed by October each year annually.

Policy Council meetings will always be scheduled and conducted prior to the monthly meeting of Celina City Schools Board of Education. This allows the policy council to submit decisions to the Board in a timely & effective manner.

Mercer County Head Start program has established a Policy Council for the program. Mercer County Head Start program has no delegate agencies as such no policy committee is required.

Parents who indicate they are interested in being on Policy Council are then elected, through a ballot by their peers, to serve on policy council for the year. A quorum (majority of voting seats) must be present to vote. If quorum is not met, a vote can be taken by phone or email. Elections are completed by October each year annually. The Mental Health Manager is responsible to educate local service providers of the opportunity to sit on policy council as a community member. For those individuals who are selected as voting members of Policy Council attendance is required. If a voting member misses (2) consecutive meetings without contacting the Executive Director, that member will be excused from Policy Council.

Monthly and periodically throughout the program year, the Executive Director of the Mercer County Head Start program provides the governing board information from ongoing monitoring tools (annually in July), school readiness goals (annually in July), program goal updates (annually in July) and monthly board reports which include:

(2) CONDUCT OF RESPONSIBILITIES—Each Head Start agency shall ensure the sharing of

- A. accurate and regular information for use by the governing body and policy council, about
- B. program planning, policies, and Head Start agency operations, including:
- C. Monthly financial statements, including credit card expenditures;
- D. Monthly program information summaries;
- E. Program enrollment reports, including attendance reports for children whose care is partially subsidized by another public agency;
- F. Monthly reports of meals and snacks provided through programs of the Department of Agriculture;
- G. the financial audit;
- H. the annual self-assessment, including any findings related to such assessment;
- I. the communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment of the Head Start agency, including any applicable updates;
- J. communication and guidance from the Secretary; and
- K. the program information reports. See also Governing Body 1301.2

Policy Council Meetings are public meetings, and, because of this, people often attend the meeting who are not members of the Policy Council. However, only voting members will vote on decisions made by the Council. If a quorum is not present, then a vote via email is utilized to ensure business is conducted in a timely manner.

The Executive Director and Program Managers provide guidance and information to the policy council on:

Parent engagement, ERSEA, applications for funding opportunities, program budgets and policies, bylaws for policy council, personnel policies, employment of program staff, election of policy council members, and the service area of the grantee. Policy Council members make decisions and submit approvals to the Celina City Schools Board of Education for consideration.

A Celina City Schools Board of Education member sits on Policy Council as a non-voting member to serve as a liaison between the two entities.

Policy Council members cannot have a conflict of interest with Mercer County Head Start. In addition, policy council members cannot receive compensation for services provided to the grantee by serving on policy council. Staff cannot serve on policy council. Parents of currently enrolled children who provide substitute services to the program on an occasional basis MAY serve on policy council.

The grantee has no delegate agencies and is not a tribal grantee.

An Open Invitation

All parents have an open invitation to attend Policy Council meetings.

1301.4 Parent Committee

We believe parents and families are the most important influence in their child's education and development. One of Head Start's goals is to support you in this role. We make information, experiences, and other resources available throughout the year that can make your job a little easier. Family engagement in every part of the program is necessary to assure the most benefit for Head Start children.

You will have many opportunities for several kinds of direct involvement:

- In promoting school readiness for your preschooler(s).
- In decision-making for planning and operating the program.
- In activities you and other parents have helped develop.
- In the classroom and other educational activities.
- In the home and community setting.
- In the community as leaders and strong advocates for young children.

Systemic family engagement also requires an overall program philosophy that upholds partnerships with families at all levels of agency functioning: at the administrative level; in hiring, training, supervising, and evaluating staff; in the design and use of the program's physical space; and in program policy. It is everyone's responsibility and reinforced within all aspects of the program.

All parents of currently enrolled children are automatic members of the parent committee. Utilizing information gathered from the family interest survey, family engagement staff works with parents to develop meeting agendas covering topics of interests for parents.

The parent committee is a parent/staff get-together held regularly during the program year, often combined with a social event. The parent committee provides you the opportunity to be involved in planning your child's program, decision-making, and other activities of your choice. Parent committees are run by and for parents! Classrooms often combine their family activity events so parents get a chance to know each other. Part of your role as a Policy Council member is to encourage attendance at the parent committee meetings and family activity events.

Family Engagement staff utilizes parent committee meetings to solicit input from parents on program operations including curriculum ideas, school readiness objectives, program policies, and program goals.

Policy Council minutes are provided to members of the parent committee. Members of the parent committee may submit through written form information to the policy council or may attend a policy council meeting to address the council in person. Whenever possible, parents are included in the recruitment / interviewing process of potential employees.

You will have several chances during the year to attend or even help plan educational, parent activity or social events with Head Start parents. This is also an important kind of parent involvement.

During enrollment and orientation, the Executive Director, Mental Health Manager, and Family Advocates inform parents of the various opportunities for parent engagement. These opportunities are listed and described within the parent handbook as well.

Contributions In-Kind / Non-Federal Match

Time and donations also add up to money. The Federal government requires each Head Start program to match 20 percent of its total grant in contributions from parents and the community. These contributions are called non-federal match.

Teachers and staff at each classroom and in the main office will have forms for parents to record their contributions. Policy Council representatives can assist their Family Advocate Staff in coordinating and documenting volunteer activities.

1301.5 The Role of Parent Representatives to the Policy Council; Trainings & Terms

Annually, the Executive Director provides governance training to the members of the Board of Education and newly seated Policy Council. Resources used to provide this training come directly from the T/TA system and ECKLC website.

ERSEA final rule (3/15) training is provided at this time as well.

Mercer County Head Start provides governance training annually which informs parents of the term limits of policy council and the requirements to be re-elected each year with a maximum of 5 terms.

Included in program governance training is the annual schedule for elections.

Elections occur at the end of September annually, ensuring that a new policy council is seated in October and receives program governance training at the first meeting.

Here are some personal characteristics to consider:

- Ability to listen, analyze, think clearly and creatively, work well with individual people and groups.
- Willingness to prepare for and attend Council and committee meetings, ask questions, take responsibility, and follow through on a given assignment, contribute personal resources in a generous way according to circumstances, open doors in the community, evaluate oneself.
- Willingness to develop certain skills if you do not already possess them, recruiting new members and other volunteers, learning more about the organization.
- Possess honesty; sensitivity to and tolerance of differing views; a friendly, responsive, and patient approach; community-building skills; personal integrity; a developed sense of values; concern for the organization's development; a sense of humor.

1301.6 Impasse Procedure

Mercer County Head Start provides members of the governing board and policy council with a handbook for governance procedures for the Head Start program.

The policy and procedures section of the handbook, includes impasse procedures which include resolving internal disputes, use of arbitration, and mediation.

Annually, the handbook is reviewed by the governing bodies for any possible revisions and updates.

Concern/Feedback Procedures for Resolving Complaints

Policy

The Head Start program encourages communication between parents, community members and Head Start staff. If there are concerns, these should be documented after attempts have been made to resolve them through direct feedback and problem solving with the staff and supervisors involved.

Procedure

1. Written concerns should include a description of the problem, date of occurrence, names of people involved and possible solutions. Parents should consult their Policy Council Representative for advice and assistance.
2. The written concern form will be completed by the individual(s) involved and given to the Executive Director within ten (10) working days. A meeting will be scheduled to discuss the situation. The Executive Director may invite all or part of the following to review the situation: Policy Council Chairperson, parent/community member, Policy Council representative, individual staff person addressed in the concern, Regional Manager, Consultants, Board of Directors Chairperson, or other members of the Board of Directors.
3. A written response will be prepared by the Executive Director outlining action taken and given to parent/community members within ten (10) working days of the meeting.
4. If parent/community member is not satisfied with the written response from the Executive Director, the parent/community member may request a joint meeting of the Policy Council and Board of Directors Executive Committee for final resolution of the concern through a written request to the Policy Council Chairperson.

This complies with Head Start Performance Standard 45 CFR Section 1301.6(a)(2).

(See a copy of Complaint Form on the following page.)

**MERCER COUNTY HEAD START
COMPLAINT FORM**

Date _____

Explanation of Concern:

Suggestions:

Name _____

Address _____

Phone # _____

Please mail and or hand deliver to:

**Amy Esser, Executive Director
Mercer County Head Start
585 E. Livingston St. Celina, OH 45822**

Parliamentary Procedure

In most organizations a process called "Parliamentary procedure" is used to run the meetings. This process was developed to help meetings run smoothly, to maintain order, and to make sure each member is given equal time and consideration for their input. To follow Parliamentary Procedure, one of things you must know is . . .

How a Motion is made

1. *Recognition.* Raise your hand to get the Chairperson's permission to speak: "Mr. (or Madam) Chairperson..."
2. *Make the motion.* Offer your recommendation to the rest of the group: "I move we have a spring picnic..."
3. *It must be seconded.* To support your idea, another member should say: "I second the motion..."
4. *Clearly state the motion.* The Chairperson puts the motion in words that everyone can understand and then states the motion: "It has been moved and seconded that we have a spring picnic..."
5. *Discussion.* The Chairperson invites members to discuss the motion: "Is there any discussion?"
6. *Restate the motion.* The discussion ends when the Chairperson prepares the members for voting by restating the motion: "The motion before us is to have a spring picnic."
7. *Motion.* The Chairperson calls for the vote. The vote can be done by voice, written ballot, or show of hands. If the vote is by voice, the Chairperson says: "All those in favor of a spring picnic, signify by saying, "Aye"; those opposed, say "nay"; those abstaining?"
8. *State the results.* The Chairperson announces whether the motion has carried or failed: "The motion carried."

Parliamentary Procedure Terms

Abstain: Not voting one way or the other.

Adjourn: Ending the meeting.

Adopt: To okay or accept.

Agenda: An outline of what is to be done at the meeting.

Amendment: Adding on to a motion usually to improve it, enlarges its intent, or make it more understandable.

Appeal: To question the Chairperson's decision and ask the group to change it.

Appoint: To place someone in a job or position.

By-laws: The rules that a group has agreed to follow and the goals of the organization.

Caucus: Getting together outside the regular meeting to decide on plans, position, and/or people to nominate.

Chair: The position held by the group's leader.

Committee: A small group that reviews and reports on a special task given them by the larger membership. A committee

General Consensus: Approval by the group. If even one member objects, a vote must be taken.

Majority Opinion: The decision of more than half the voting members.

Motion: A member's proposal for an action.

Nominate: To recommend a person for election to office.

Pending: Still "up in the air" and undecided.

Personal Privilege: Calling attention to something having to do with the well-being of the people at a meeting, such as asking to have a window opened.

Point of Information: Asking for more information before making a decision.

Point of Order: Correcting a mistake that is against the rules of the organization.

Pro tem: Temporary.

Proxy: Permission given (usually written) by one absent member for another member to vote in his name.

Question: A motion that is under discussion with a vote to be taken on it.

Recess: Taking a short break.

Rescind: To take back; withdraw.

Resolution: Usually a policy statement being suggested to the group for approval.

Second: Support for a motion. Before a group can handle a proposed action (motion), it must know that two people want it discussed.

Standing Committee: A committee that goes year-round, such as a program committee.

Special Committee: A committee selected to handle a single task or event (known in the By-Laws as "Ad Hoc").

Sub-committee: A small group of members serving on a large committee who take a special problem, study it, and report back to the whole committee so that a final decision can be made.

Suspending the Bylaws: Making an exception to the Council by-laws with approval from the body to suspend the by-law.

Unanimous vote: Everyone votes the same way.

Veto: To turn "thumbs down" (voting "no") on a motion or idea.

Scheduled Board of Education Meetings

September 16, 2024

October 21, 2024

November 18, 2024

December 16, 2024

Scheduled Policy Council Meetings

September 12, 2024

October 17, 2024

November 14, 2024

December 12, 2024

(Updated 9/05/2024)

Mercer County Head Start Policies and Procedures

P/P Topic:	Policy Council Nomination / Election	P/P #:	
Part:	Program Governance 1301	PC Approval Date:	09/05/24
Subpart:		Last Reviewed Date:	
Section Title(s):	1301.3 Policy Council & Policy Committee	Implementation Responsibility:	Director
Related Performance Standard(s):	1301.3(a)(b)	Monitoring Responsibility:	Head Start Director

(A) Policy	<p>Each agency must establish and maintain a policy council responsible for the direction of the Head Start program at the agency level, and a policy committee at the delegate level.</p> <p>A program must establish a policy council in accordance with section 642©(2)(B) of the Act, or a policy committee at the delegate level in accordance with section 642(c)(3) of the Act, as early in the program year as possible. Parents of children currently enrolled in each program option must be proportionately represented on the policy council and on the policy committee at the delegate level.</p>
(B) Responsibility	Director
(C) Procedure	<p>MCHS program informs parents at the time of enrollment about the opportunity of participating in the policy council.</p> <p>Parents who indicate they are interested in being on Policy Council are provided a <i>Policy Council Candidate Information Form</i>. An election ballot is then provided to all parents of enrolled children for voting purposes.</p> <p>Parents receiving the most votes are elected by their peers to serve on policy council for the year. (Parents can serve up to 5 years but must be re-elected each year.)</p> <p>Five seats on Policy Council are reserved for parents of currently enrolled children.</p> <p>Four seats are reserved for community members, totaling 9 members on policy council.</p> <p>Elections are completed by October each year annually.</p> <p>When vacancies occur, Director will contact candidate with the next highest number of votes to fill vacancy. If the vacancy cannot be filled by remaining candidates, the program will host another nomination / election process as defined above in the immediate time of the vacancy.</p>

	<p>If the program cannot meet the established requirements of 5 parents on the Policy Council, the Director will reconvene the existing members and review the need to modify the by-laws for the current year.</p>
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