



Head Start ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

The Unity Council
Children & Family Services Department



OUR MISSION

The Unity Council's mission is to promote social equity and improve quality of life by building vibrant communities where everyone can work, learn, and thrive.

OUR VISION

We envision a joyful, united, and engaged community where people have the power to shape their lives.

OUR VALUES

COMMUNITY

We create community with and for one another. We build on the strength that guides and nourishes our families, children, seniors, and partners to live and thrive.

EMPOWERMENT

We believe people and communities have the power, skills, knowledge, and leadership to gain control over factors and decisions that shape their lives.

EQUITY

We believe people have certain inalienable rights to live, work, and thrive in their neighborhood without regard to race, income, language, or background.

INTEGRITY

We are committed to living and working with honesty and transparency and believe this builds trust with and among partners and our community.

JOY

We believe in celebration, and that pleasure and happiness improves quality of life.

PASSION & SERVICE

We deliver community-focused services with heart, propelling positive and lasting systemic change in our neighborhoods.

ROOTED IN CULTURE

We welcome, embrace, and celebrate the beauty of our rich community diversity.

The Unity Council served 362 Head Start children and 349 Early Head Start children in our Concord and Oakland programs, totaling 711 children in the 2023-2024 year.

In the 2023-2024 school year, we still work to overcome challenges from the havoc that the



COVID-19 pandemic wrought throughout the world. We, just as other educational entities, relaxed our sick policy guidelines to a more appropriate level (we follow our local guidelines) and continue with in-person serves but we struggled with absences for a good part of the year, compared to pre-pandemic. One reason is that in addition to when children are kept home when they are sick, many still families choose to keep their children home when other members of their household are sick. Another reason may be that, in light of the pandemic toll, absences

perhaps do not seem as significant as before the pandemic. Staff continues to work to help families see the importance of attending school every day – it seems that norms changed so we have to continue working with families on this. Staffing continues to be an issue even though we raised wages, probably because other industries also raised their wages as well.

We continue our commitment to safety, for our families and their children, as well as our staff, as we continue to serve our community throughout this ongoing crisis and prepare children for kindergarten and beyond despite the covid challenges and are looking forward to maintaining being fully staffed going forward.

Overall, we believe that we continue to make strides in achieving better outcomes and face challenges head on in order to make progress.

Agency Audit

Ending September 30, 2023

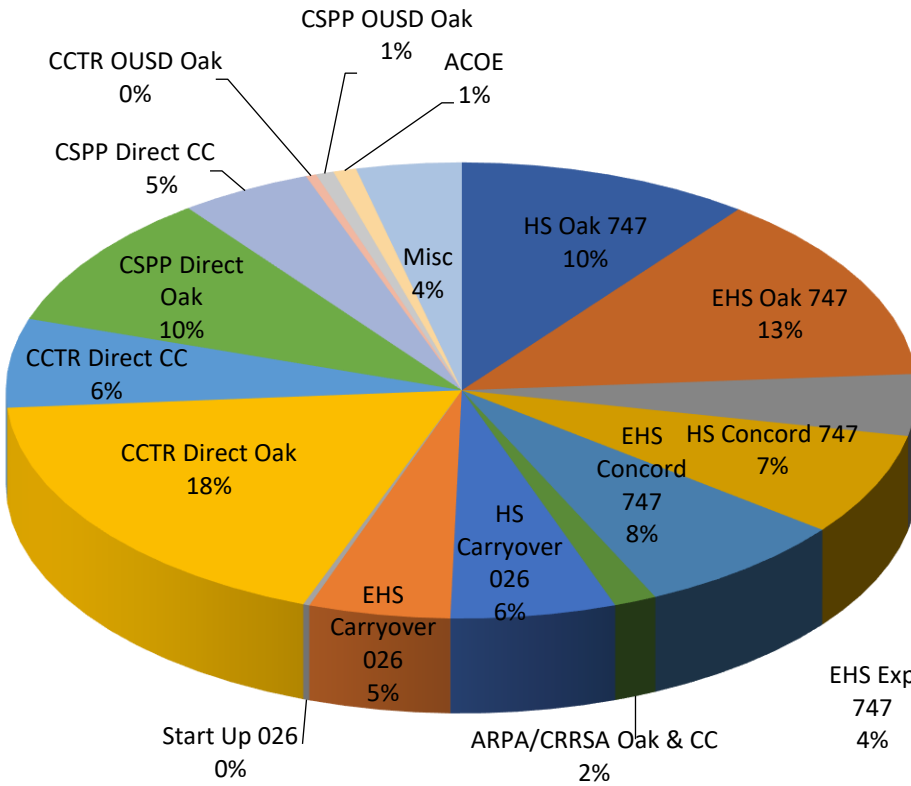
The auditor opined that the consolidated financial statements presented fairly, in a material respects, the financial position of the agency and the change in net assets and cash flows. Further, in planning and performing the audit, they considered the Unity Council's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the financial statements, not on effectiveness of internal controls, and do not express an opinion on such. A deficiency in internal control exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. Auditors identified certain deficiencies in internal control, described in the audit's schedule of findings and questioned costs. Management's views were noted as well as any subsequent corrective actions.

Agency Description

Aside from the Children & Family Services department, which operates the Head Start & Early Head Start programs as well as CSPP and CCTR programs, The Unity Council also operates multiple other programs/departments, including but not limited to programs for seniors; youth programs; career, financial, and housing services; small business assistance and community events; a social enterprise program, affordable housing, including senior housing; and a real estate department.

Total agency budget for FY 2022-2023: \$32,646,350

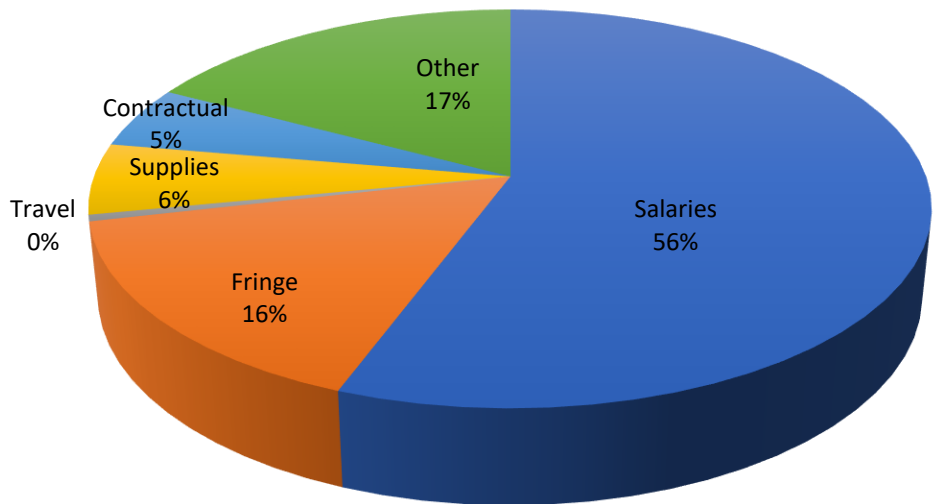
Department Revenue



Source	Amount
HS Oak 747	\$1,934,715
EHS Oak 747	\$2,501,368
EHS Exp 747	\$811,505
HS Concord 747	\$1,349,414
EHS Concord 747	\$1,403,292
ARPA/CRRSA Oak & CC	\$282,019
HS Carryover 026	\$1,090,748
EHS Carryover 026	\$933,911
Start Up 026	\$41,848
CCTR Direct Oak	\$3,371,313
CCTR Direct CC	\$1,170,778
CSPP Direct Oak	\$1,798,328
CSPP Direct CC	\$872,812
CCTR OUSD Oak	\$69,054
CSPP OUSD Oak	\$118,619
ACOE	\$152,238
Misc	\$694,625
Total	\$18,596,587

Department Budget

Category	Amount
Salaries	\$10,359,328
Fringe	\$2,921,317
Travel	\$97,267
Supplies	\$1,073,567
Contractual	\$935,811
Other	\$3,209,303
Total	\$18,596,587



Enrollment

The Unity Council’s Head Start and Early Head Start program enrollment is disaggregated by program in the following tables:

2023-2024 Total Funded Enrollment	
Head Start	362
Early Head Start	349
Total Funded Enrollment	711

2023-2024 Cumulative (Actual) Enrollment	
Head Start	383
Early Head Start	339
Total Cumulative (Actual) Enrollment	722

2023-2024 Average Monthly Enrollment as a % of funded enrollment	
Head Start	79%
Early Head Start	76%

Eligible Children Served

Program	% of Eligible Children Served
Oakland, HS	~20%
Oakland, EHS	~20%
Concord, HS	~19%
Concord, EHS	~19%



Family Engagement

The Unity Council works to provide various opportunities to engage parents and families in their child's learning and educational process as well as for their own benefit.

At the beginning of each program year, staff survey parents to find out what their individual needs and interests are. The survey results not only provide staff insight into how to best support families but also guide staff in planning workshops, activities, and other learning events for parents.

We offer parent engagement activities and workshops throughout the year on topics such as mental health, and health and nutrition, healthy cooking, domestic violence awareness/prevention, raising tolerant and empathetic children. In addition, we offer the *Abriendo Puertas* in Spanish and English trainings for parents.

Staff also actively engage parents in the education of their children by having parents establish school readiness goals for their children and families at the beginning of the year and then working towards those goals throughout the school year.

The Family Engagement staff encourage parents to participate in their child's center Parent Committee, in which they can stay informed and give their input, thereby providing guidance to the Center. Parents are also encouraged to run for the Policy Council as a Representative for their center or home-based program. Moreover, they are encouraged to run for leadership roles in both groups (Parent Committees and Policy Council).

Moreover, when possible, Policy Council Representatives are selected to go to certain out of town Head Start conferences and trainings – this really depends on the parents' availability to attend.

The Unity Council strongly encourages parent leadership, not only at their child's school but also in their larger community. Some parents continue to volunteer in the child's schools, either in the PTA or other school-related groups after they graduate from our program, and other community-based organizations.

Medical and Dental Care for Children

The Unity Council partners with various providers to ensure children have medical and dental homes. The primary providers for our families are La Clínica De La Raza and the Native American Health Center. La Clínica Dental and the Native American Health Center provide families with a dental home.

Service	Program	Number of Children	Percentage
Medical Home	Head Start	335	93%
	EHS - children	324	
	EHS - pregnant women	13	
	Early Head Start Total	337	97%
Dental Home	Head Start	321	89%
	Early Head Start Total	337	97%



Preparing Children for Kindergarten

The Unity Council’s Children & Family Services staff strive to ensure that all the children in our program are ready for school. Parents and teachers work together to develop school readiness goals for each program. Each school readiness goal was created using information from parents, teachers, and data collected through assessment and observation tools. The School Readiness Goals are developed in partnership with program management and the School Readiness Committee, which is comprised of members of the agency Board of Directors and the Policy Council and any other interested parents. Committee members offer further questions, input, and suggestions as the last step to ensure we have a well-thought plan before they are finalized and approved by the Board of Directors and Policy Council.

The Unity Council supports children’s school readiness by promoting:

- *Language and Literacy Development*
- *Cognition and General Knowledge*
- *Physical Growth and Health*
- *Social and Emotional Development*
- *Approaches to Learning*



Our School Readiness Goals delineate our expectations for children to progress across the five domains of development. After developing the School Readiness Goals, we develop a plan detailing how we will support children in the classroom, how to involve parents and how to support teacher’s professional development in order to reach those goals.

Research shows that the development of a positive parent-child relationship during the first three years of life significantly improves the child's long-term development. We recognize that parents are their child's first teacher and that a positive parent-child relationship is important for the child. As such, we also develop School Readiness Goals for Parents and an associated monitoring plan for our work with families to support the parents in supporting their child in getting ready for school.



In addition, our School Readiness Goals for the children and curriculum alignment ideas are shared with, supported by, and informed by parents. We do everything we can to include parents in the curriculum planning process for home visits, classroom activities and socialization events. Also, teachers who are home visitors place a great deal of emphasis on strengthening the parent-child relationship and include parents in both the social services and education components of the program.

Teachers also meet individually with parents four times a year to discuss their child's development and to design specific goals and strategies that will support the child's ongoing development at home and in school. Teachers create a classroom/socialization environment that incorporates aspects of their home environment (e.g., family pictures, books in their home language, dress up clothes from different cultures, special items from home) in order to strengthen the home-school connection. Teachers regularly share observations with parents and ask them about any concerns or observations of their children that they would like to share. Teachers support the parent-child relationship by talking with the children about their family, supporting the children and parents during drop-off and pick-up time, and meeting with parents when specific concerns arise.



Moreover, workshops on School Readiness are provided as a forum for parents to think more deeply about School Readiness and offer more input.

CLASS Results

The CLASS scores below are an aggregate of scores of Head Start classrooms:

CLASS Domains	Lowest 10% (2020)	National Median (2020)	Fall 2023	Spring 2024	TUC Goal
Emotional Support	5.67	6.05	6.19	5.79	6.25
Classroom Organization	5.3175	5.80	5.8	5.47	6.25
Instructional Support	2.3889	2.94	3.37	2.81	3.25

The CLASS scores below are an aggregate of scores of Early Head Start classrooms:

CLASS Domains	Age Group	Bay Area QRIS Average (2018)	Fall 2023	Spring 2024	TUC Goal
Emotional & Behavioral Support	Toddler	6.02	6.26	5.82	6.0
Engaged Support for Learning	Toddler	3.56	4.04	3.21	4.5
Responsive Caregiving	Infant	5.46	5.57	6.63	6.0

HOVRS Results

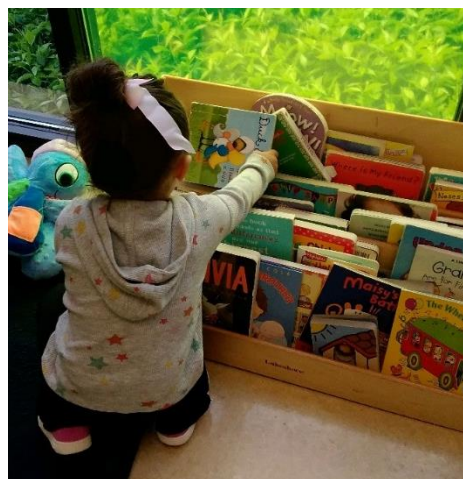
The Home Visitors' assessments below are an aggregate and the program averaged as follow:

Item	Responsiveness to Family	Relationship with Family	Facilitation of Teacher Child Interaction	Non-Intrusiveness & Collaboration	Caregiver Child Interaction	Caregiver Engagement	Child Engagement
Fall 2023	5.50	4.90	5.00	5.05	5.45	5.3	5.95
Spring 2024	5.85	5.3	5.00	5.70	5.60	5.50	5.90

Federal Review--Results

The Office of Head Start conducted a Focused Area 2 in February 2022. There were no Areas of Noncompliance, no Deficiencies, and one Area of Concern.

There were no federal reviews conducted in the 2023-2024 school year.



Board of Directors

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Ralph Holmes

Managing Director, Piper Sandler

Ana Cardenas

Insurance Agent/Mood Consultant

Claudia Burgos

Director of Legislative Affairs & Community Relations, AC Transit

Silvia Guzman

Head Start Representative/Community Member

Daniel Zamani

Sr. Manager, Product Management, Salesforce, Inc.

Mariah LaFleur

Thriving Schools Manager, Kaiser Permanente

Mirella Almaraz

Senior Research Associate, WestEd

Lili Gangas

Chief Technology Community Officer, Kapor Center

Roderick Roche

General Partner, G&M Realty Ventures

Sarah Yoell

Local Government Affairs Representative, PG&E

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Marci K. Davis, Interim Chief Operating Officer

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Aubra Levine, Vice-President of Real Estate Development

Heather Brown, Vice-President of Property Management

Rosanna McDonald, Vice-President of Fund Development and Communications

Teresa Estrada, Vice-President of Human Resources

Rafael Vasquez, Director of Community Programs

Tiffany Lacsado, Director of Economic Development

Yolanda Bronson-Davis, Director of Social Enterprise-Peralta Service Corporation

Contact us

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