



Head Start ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

The Unity Council
Children & Family Services Department



OUR MISSION

The Unity Council is dedicated to promoting social equity and enhancing quality of life by creating 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 own lives.

OUR VALUES

ROOTED IN CULTURE: We embrace and celebrate the beauty of our diverse and vibrant community.

COMMUNITY: We build a strong, supportive community that nourishes families, children, seniors, and partners to live and thrive.

EMPOWERMENT: We believe in the power, skills, and leadership of individuals and communities to control the factors shaping their lives.

EQUITY: We affirm everyone's right to live, work, and thrive in their neighborhood regardless of race, income, language, or background.

INTEGRITY: We are committed to honesty and transparency, knowing it builds trust within our community.

JOY: We celebrate together, recognizing that happiness and pleasure enriches our quality of life.

PASSION & SERVICE: Our community-focused services drive positive, lasting change throughout our neighborhoods.

The Unity Council started of the school year with 362 Head Start slots and 349 Early Head Start slots in our Concord and Oakland programs, totaling 711 slots. With a 20 slot reduction for Head Start in Oakland and an expansion of 220 slots for our entire program, we ended the 2024-2025 school year with the capacity to serve 911 children throughout Oakland and Contra Costa County.

During the 2024-2025 school year, we had significant changes to our program capacity. In our



Oakland community, less preschool aged children, as well as an increase in preschool slots in the public schools, negatively impacted our enrollment and we were placed on an under-enrollment plan. Given our circumstances, we were granted a slot reduction of 20 in our Head Start program in Oakland towards the end the calendar year 2024. By April 2025, we were able to meet the minimum enrollment required and continue to work on increasing our enrollment and hope to be officially exited out of the under-enrollment plan by the Office of Head Start.

Conversely, to help meet on-going unmet need in Contra Costa County, the Office of Head Start awarded us an additional 88 Head Start slots and 132 Early Head Start slots for our expansion there, including a new center in Pittsburg as well as various partnerships with previously existing child care centers (Richmond, Oakley, Antioch) to which we will provide Head Start model services. In addition, we increased our home-based slots and started the process of building a new center in Richmond.

Impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic can still be felt. We follow our local guidelines for our sick policies and our in-person services are back to pre-pandemic levels and strategies as much as is possible. Yet, we find that it seems as if absences do not seem as significant to families as before the pandemic - perhaps norms changed. So, staff continue to work to help families see the importance of attending school every day. Also, staffing continued to be an issue throughout the year even though we raised wages, maybe because other industries also raised their wages.

We continue our commitment to safety for our families and their children as well as for our staff as we continue to serve our community and prepare children for kindergarten and beyond. We will continue to face challenges head on in order to make progress and achieve better outcomes for our families and community.

Agency Audit

Ending September 30, 2024

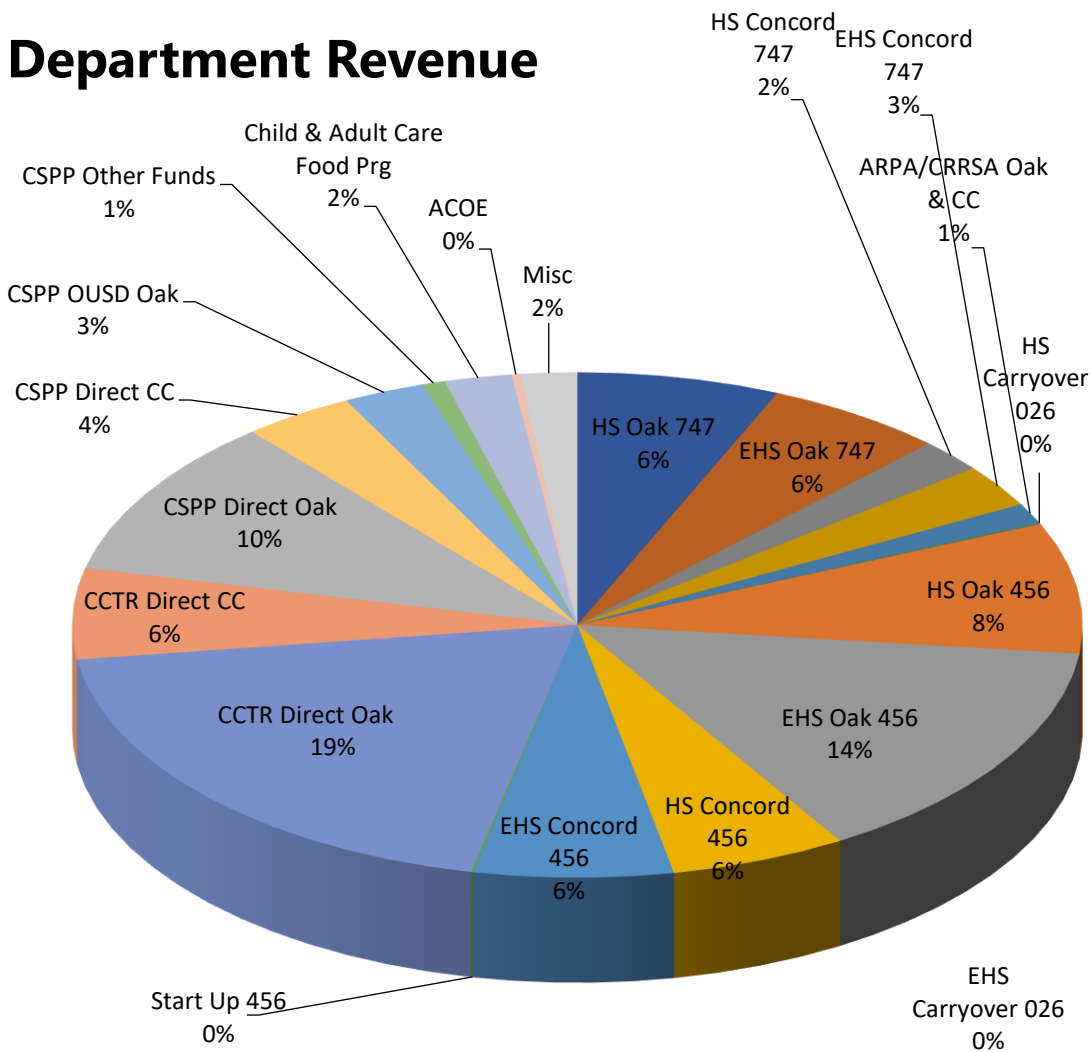
The auditor opined that the consolidated financial statements presented fairly, in a material respects, the financial position of the agency and the change in net assets and cash flows. Further, in planning and performing the audit, they considered the Unity Council's internal control over financial 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 other programs/departments, including but not limited to programs for seniors; youth; 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 2023-2024: \$20,876,743

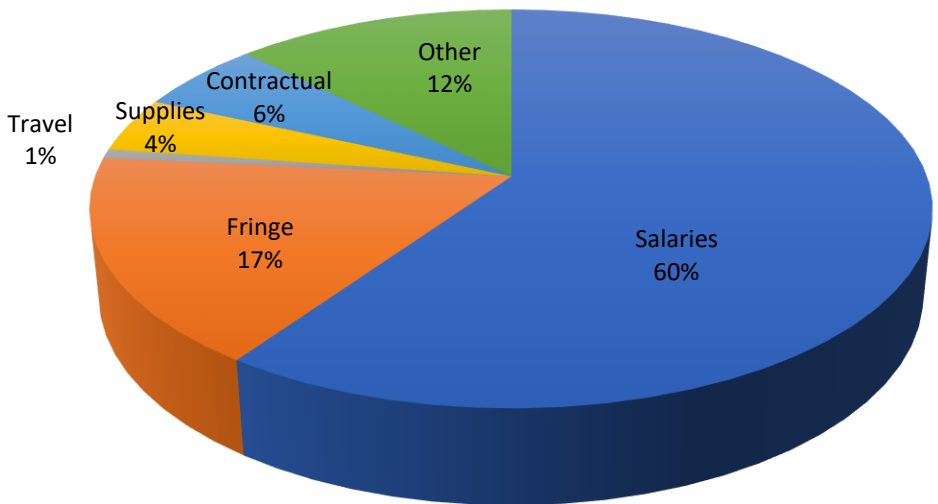
Department Revenue



| Main Sources of Revenue FY 2023-24 | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| HS Oak 747 | \$1,354,123 |
| EHS Oak 747 | \$1,203,156 |
| HS Concord 747 | \$438,079 |
| EHS Concord 747 | \$571,079 |
| ARPA/CRRSA Oak & CC | \$265,707 |
| HS Carryover 026 | \$13,006 |
| EHS Carryover 026 | \$7,562 |
| HS Oak 456 | \$1,745,616 |
| EHS Oak 456 | \$3,024,603 |
| HS Concord 456 | \$1,175,153 |
| EHS Concord 456 | \$1,328,006 |
| Start Up 456 | \$15,076 |
| CCTR Direct Oak | \$4,058,893 |
| CCTR Direct CC | \$1,212,301 |
| CSPP Direct Oak | \$2,135,264 |
| CSPP Direct CC | \$746,951 |
| CSPP OUSD Oak | \$543,119 |
| CSPP Other Funds | \$153,842 |
| Child & Adult Care Food Program | \$450,433 |
| ACOE | \$56,306 |
| Misc | \$378,468 |
| Total | \$20,876,743 |

Department Budget

| Expenditures FY 2023-24 | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Salaries | \$12,460,080 |
| Fringe | \$3,519,071 |
| Travel | \$156,865 |
| Supplies | \$924,038 |
| Contractual | \$1,188,716 |
| Other | \$2,627,973 |
| Total | \$20,876,743 |



Enrollment

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

| 2024-2025 Total Funded Enrollment | |
|--|------------|
| Head Start | 481 |
| Early Head Start | 430 |
| Total Funded Enrollment | 911 |

| 2024-2025 Cumulative (Actual) Enrollment | |
|---|------------|
| Head Start | 533 |
| Early Head Start | 432 |
| Total Cumulative (Actual) Enrollment | 965 |

| 2024-2025 Average Monthly Enrollment as a % of funded enrollment | |
|---|-----|
| Head Start | 99% |
| Early Head Start | 98% |

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.

The 2024-2025 parent education program represents a significant investment in family capacity building and demonstrates our program's commitment to comprehensive, two-generation approaches to supporting child and family success. Through the Financial Literacy and TOPS programs, we provided families with critical knowledge, skills, and community connections that will benefit children and families for years to come. These initiatives exemplify effective family engagement practice and contribute substantially to our program's mission of promoting school readiness and family well-being.

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). When possible, Policy Council Representatives also have the opportunity to go to certain out of town Head Start conferences and trainings.

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, and other community-based organizations after they graduate from our program.

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 Exams | Head Start | 379 | 87% |
| | Early Head Start Total | 312 | 64% |
| Medical Home | Head Start | 432 | 100% |
| | EHS – children sub-total | 483 | --- |
| | EHS - pregnant women sub-total | 25 | --- |
| | Early Head Start Total | 508 | 100% |
| Dental Home | Head Start | 424 | 98% |
| | Early Head Start Total | 473 | 97% |
| Dental Exams | Head Start | 294 | 68% |
| | Early Head Start Total | 321 | 67% |



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. The program creates school readiness goals using data collected through assessment and observation tools, as well as information from parents, and teaching staff.

The School Readiness Goals are developed and monitored 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*



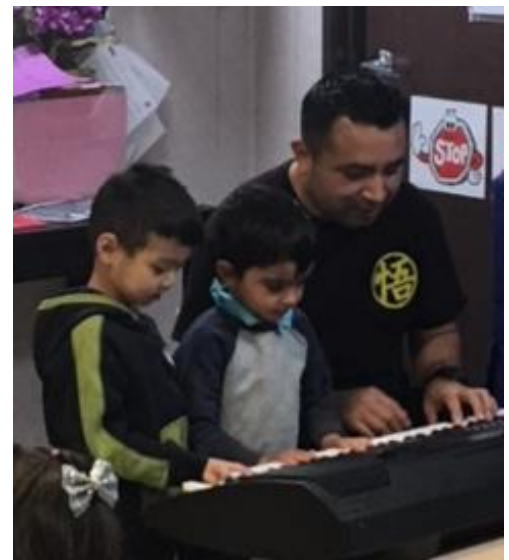
Our School Readiness Goals delineate our expectations for children to progress across the five domains of development. After developing the School Readiness Goals, we develop a plan detailing how we will support children in the classroom, how to involve parents and how to support teacher’s professional 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% | National | Fall 2024 | Spring 2025 | TUC Goal |
|------------------------|------------|----------|-----------|-------------|----------|
| Emotional Support | 5.67 | 6.05 | 5.99 | 5.54 | 6 |
| Classroom Organization | 5.31 | 5.80 | 5.68 | 5 | 6 |
| Instructional Support | 2.38 | 2.94 | 2.67 | 2.53 | 3 |

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

| CLASS Domains | Age Group | Fall 2024 | Spring 2025 | TUC Goal |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|----------|
| Emotional & Behavioral Support | Toddler | 6.24 | 6.05 | 6 |
| Engaged Support for Learning | Toddler | 3.87 | 3.78 | 3 |
| Responsive Caregiving | Infant | 7 | 6.63 | 6 |

HOVRS Results

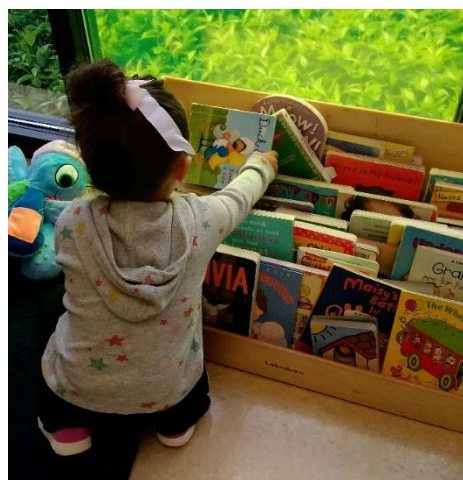
The Home Visitors' assessments below are an aggregate and the program averaged as follow:

| Item | Responsiveness to Family | Relationship with Family | Facilitation of Teacher Child Interaction | Non-Intrusiveness & Collaboration | Caregiver Child Interaction | Caregiver Engagement | Child Engagement |
|-------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Fall 2024 | 5.4 | 5.9 | 5.4 | 5.3 | 5.8 | 5.9 | 6.1 |
| Spring 2025 | 5.54 | 6.0 | 5.1 | 5.2 | 5.8 | 6.1 | 6.2 |

Federal Review--Results

The Office of Head Start conducted a Focused Area 1 monitoring review in May 2025. There were no Areas of Noncompliance, no Deficiencies, and one Area of Concern, which was under Health Services in Performance Area of Child Health and Oral Health Status and Care.

There were no other federal reviews conducted in the 2024-2025 school year.



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