

**Children's Learning Centers of Fairfield County  
Head Start/Early Head Start Program  
2022-2023 Annual Report**



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**Message from the Head Start Director**

Dear Colleagues and Friends of CLC,

It is my pleasure to present you with the Children’s Learning Centers of Fairfield County Head Start/Early Head Start 2022-2023 Annual Report. Since 1902, Children’s Learning Centers of Fairfield County (CLC) has been dedicated to providing high quality early care and education to young children and families in Stamford, CT. CLC enriches Fairfield County as a leader in the field of early childhood education, and it is the second largest early childhood education provider in Connecticut. The CLC Head Start and Early Head Start programs prepare the most vulnerable young children to succeed in school and in life beyond school. Our approach to comprehensive services includes providing high quality educational experiences for all children, as well as direct services and programs focused on health, nutrition, and family support.

Supporting the social emotional development of children, and the mental health/wellness of families and staff has been an important area of focus since the pandemic. Our partnership with the Child Guidance Center of Southern Connecticut provides critical mental health consultation and individual therapeutic services for children. In addition, reflective consultation groups provide an opportunity for teachers to engage in discussion and reflection with a CGC clinician that provides support, recommendations, and strategies to work with our most vulnerable children and families. Educational workshops are also offered to families that are responsive to children’s social emotional and developmental needs. In addition, CLC embeds the preschool RULER approach throughout its educational curriculum to foster the development of social emotional skills in young children.

CLC receives federal Head Start and Early Head Start funding, as well as state funding to implement state-subsidized ECE, and provide care to 236 children and families in the Head Start and Early Head Start programs. This multi-funded approach allows CLC to provide full-day, extended day, and full-year center-based services.

We would like to give our sincerest thanks and appreciation to our staff, parents and community partners for helping us to achieve successful outcomes for the children and families in the Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

Sincerely,

*Marsha Guthrie*

Head Start Director



**Our Mission:** *CLC builds nurturing and innovative early childhood educational experiences for all children and their families to succeed.*

**Our Vision:** *Shaping a just future through early childhood education*

**Our Values:** *Creativity, Kindness, Inclusion, Partnerships*

Children’s Learning Centers of Fairfield County (CLC) is committed to providing early childhood education for all families, with direct services and programs focused on health, nutrition & family support for children 6 weeks – 5 years of age.

CLC is a nonprofit agency accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) with multiple locations in Stamford. As the second largest early childhood education provider in Connecticut, CLC has been a leader in developing and implementing high-quality and affordable early childhood education and care programs since 1902.

CLC is a Fairfield County innovator in early childhood education outcomes, empowering families to be their own advocates in any circumstance, including when faced with early education obstacles. CLC also identifies and develops strategic relationships with community stakeholders to strengthen families and just educational outcomes.

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### **EDUCATION/SCHOOL READINESS**

CLC continues to strengthen our model to prepare young children entering Kindergarten to succeed in elementary school, which is the primary outcome that CLC's Head Start/Early Head Start programs strive to accomplish.

The HS/EHS leadership team and education staff utilize and implement a set of rigorous educational tools to create and consistently assess children's growth and progression. This starts with a research-based curriculum called the Creative Curriculum, and includes its accompanying online assessment instrument Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG) for both Head Start and Early Head Start. Each child is screened within their first 45 days of entry using the Early Screening Inventory 3rd Edition (ESI-3) and the Ages and Stages 3 (ASQ-3) and Social Emotional (ASQ-SE) questionnaires as the developmental and behavioral screening tools for Head Start and Early Head Start.

For assessment of child and teacher interactions, the Head Start program utilizes the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). Teachers also participate in coaching that focuses on each teaching team's skills as a collective unit, while still supporting their individual needs. The results of each classroom's CLASS scores and coaching goals inform our practice and help guide our professional development training plan on an annual basis. During the 2022-2023 school year, we focused on providing high quality educational experiences to promote school readiness and positive program outcomes in the following ways:

1. Virtual CLASS observations: Fall CLASS observations were conducted during the months of November & December 2022. We were able to establish a baseline for our CLASS scores during the Fall 2022 observations for all Head Start classrooms. In Spring 2023, we were able to average both Fall and Spring CLASS domain averages to establish our overall average for the 2022-2023 school year. For the 2022-2023 school year the Concept Development domain averaged in the quality threshold (3.24) as well as Emotional Support (6.09) and Classroom Organization averaged just under the quality threshold (5.88).
2. In January 2023 through March 2023, we participated in an Office of Head Start CLASS Video Pilot monitoring review. All CLC Head Start classrooms were chosen to be recorded, including Family Centers. The video pilot involved recording each classroom for an hour, submitting the recording for review and scoring to the Office of Head Start. We received our monitoring report of our results, and our average scores across each domain were above the Office of Head Start's Quality Threshold, Emotional Support 6.2375; Classroom Organization 6.0500; Instructional Support 3.0833.
3. We analyzed the child outcomes data for 3 checkpoint assessments (Fall, Winter & Spring).

TSG Assessment data demonstrated that children in both Head Start and Early Head Start made progress towards meeting school readiness goals during the 2022-2023 program year. Below is a breakdown of all children who met and exceeded the widely held expectations as assessed from the Spring 2023 checkpoint assessment. For the purposes of this analysis, "widely held expectations" is defined as knowledge, skills and behaviors of a child measured against widely held developmental expectations for children of the same age or same class/grade as determined by TSG.

#### **Aggregated data from TSG: Children Meeting and Exceeding Age Appropriate Expectations**

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All children are assessed using Teaching Strategies Gold assessment 3 times a year (Fall, Winter & Spring). This report will summarize the Spring assessment data and will focus on the following demographic groups:

- Overall Agency
- Children by age
- 1<sup>st</sup> year & 2<sup>nd</sup> year students
- Dual Language Learners
- Children with Disabilities

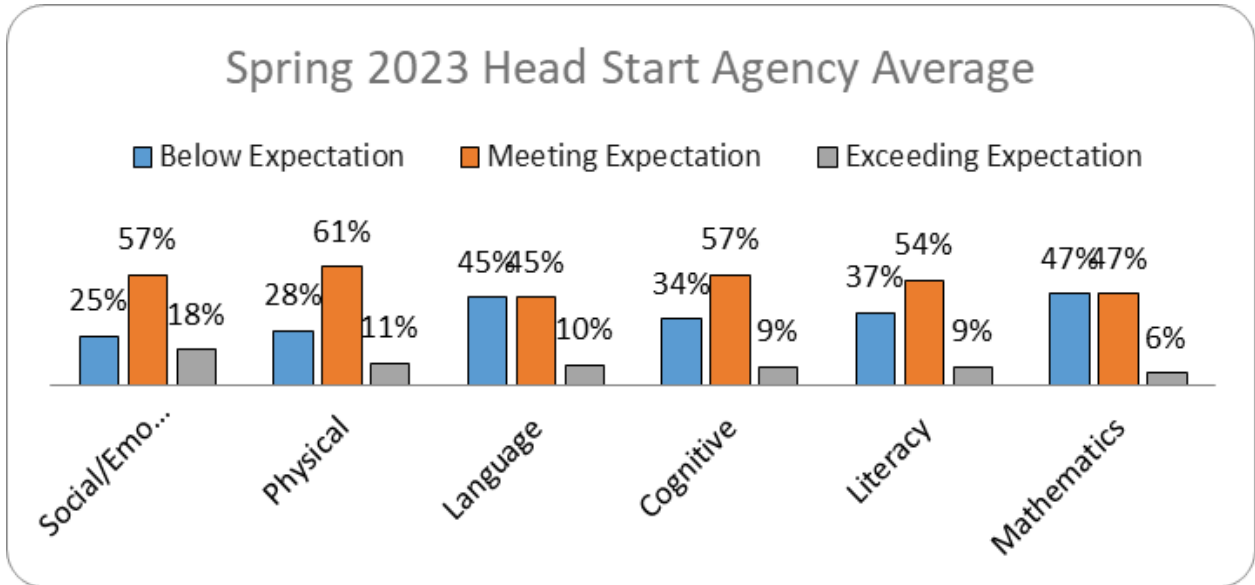
As an agency 64% of children met or exceeded expectations for the Spring checkpoint period. An increase of 20% from Fall to Spring.

Children with disabilities (classified with an IEP), demonstrated 42% of meeting expectations.

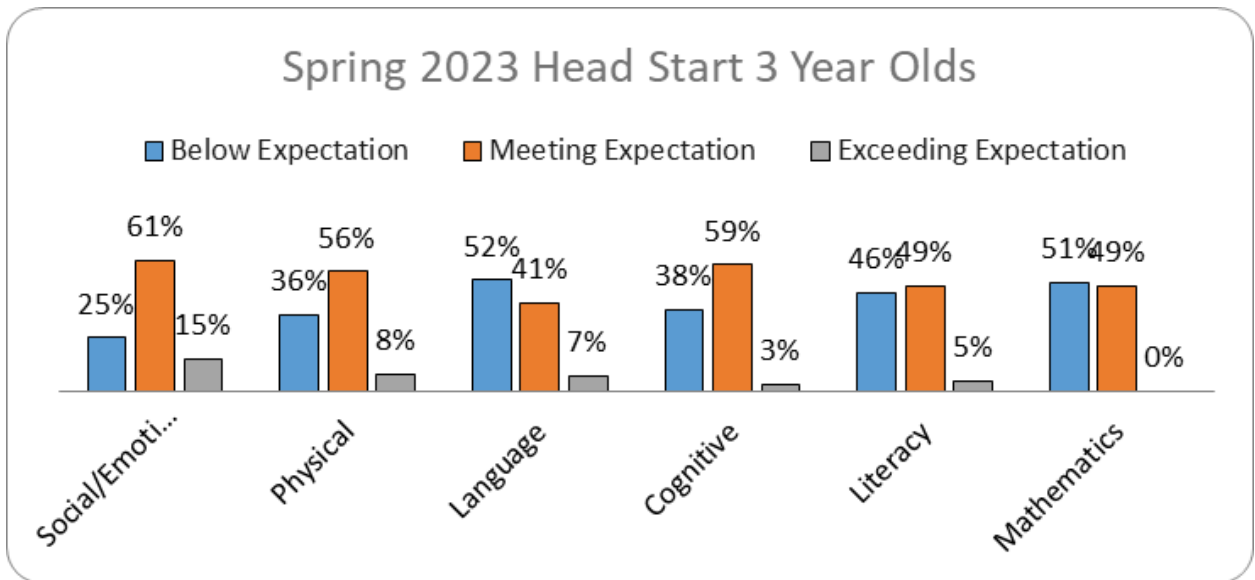
At the beginning of the school year we noticed that children were less verbal with their teachers as well as their peers, and engaged in more parallel/solitary play. This post-pandemic trend stayed consistent as we conducted our Fall CLASS observations during November/December 2022. One of the domains with the lowest percentage of children meeting or exceeding expectations was the Math domain at 53%, followed by Language at 55%. When children are compared by age, the data revealed that both 3 and 4 year olds had an overall average of 68% that met or exceeded expectations. When 4 year olds in their 1<sup>st</sup> year data were assessed, the data revealed 47% met or exceeded expectations. When 4 year olds in their 2<sup>nd</sup> year were assessed, the data revealed 63% of students met or exceeded expectations. When we reviewed Language for 3 Year olds, the data revealed 48% met or exceeded expectations compared to 60% for 4 Year Olds.

When reviewing the child outcomes data for children identified as Dual Language Learners (children whose home language is other than English) the data revealed 62% of children meeting or exceeding expectations. Children whose home language is English revealed 70% of children meeting or exceeding expectations. Based on the Fall checkpoint data; there was a 8% disparity between the DLL and Non DLL group which indicates that DLL children were not significantly behind children whose home language is English, and demonstrates their English language acquisition skills. We also encourage families to continue using their home language when speaking to their child, and discuss the benefits of bilingualism with them.

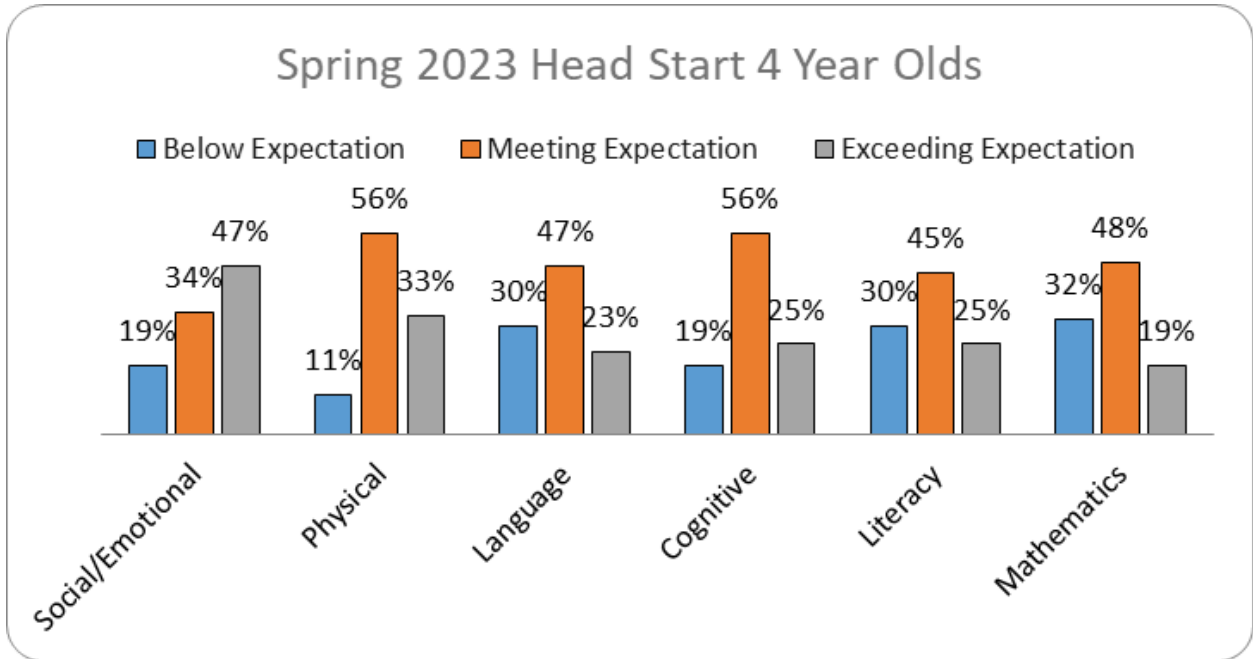
Overall we saw growth from the Fall checkpoint to the Spring checkpoint with an increase of 20% of children meeting/exceeding expectations as an agency average. Across the Social Emotional domain, there was an increase of 25% from Fall to Spring. In the Physical domain there was an increase of 23% from Fall to Spring. The cognitive domain saw an increase of 19% from Fall to Spring.



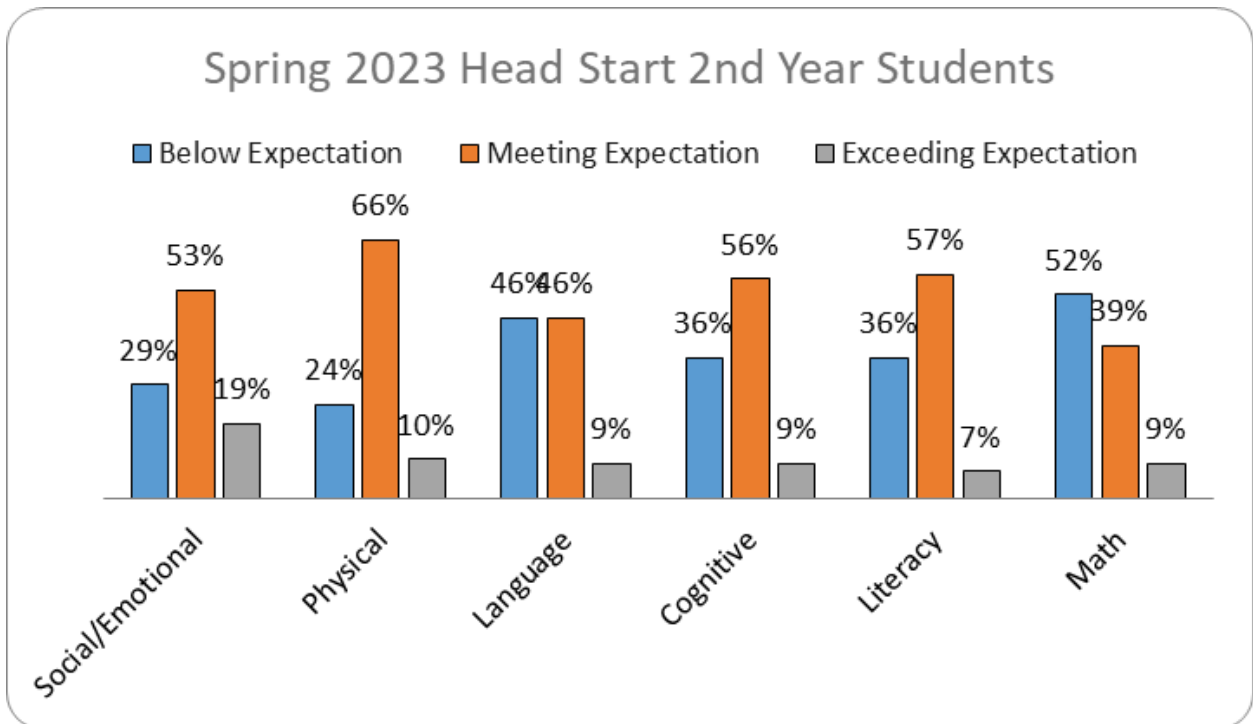
As an agency 64% of all children met or exceeded expectations across all learning domains.



The data here indicates that 68% of all 3-year-olds met or exceeded expectations this year in our Head Start program.

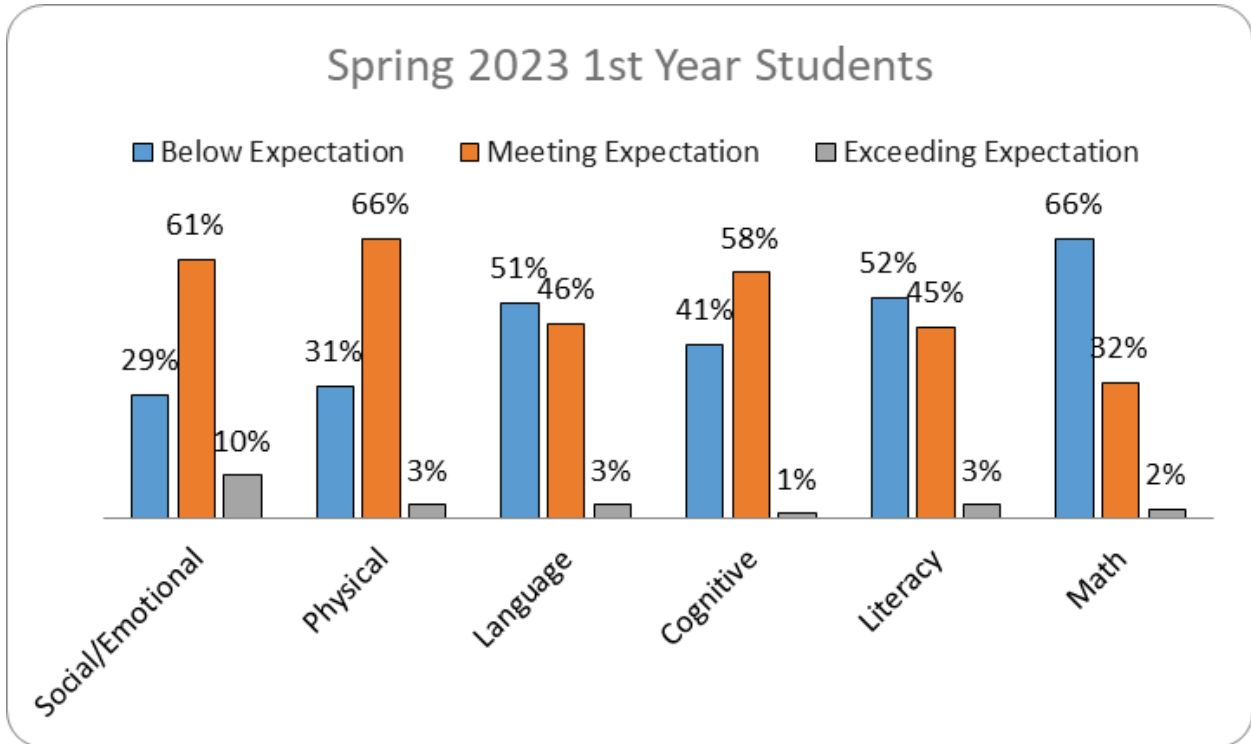


The data for all 4 year olds (children attending Kindergarten in September 2023) indicates 68% meeting or exceeding expectations for the Spring assessment.

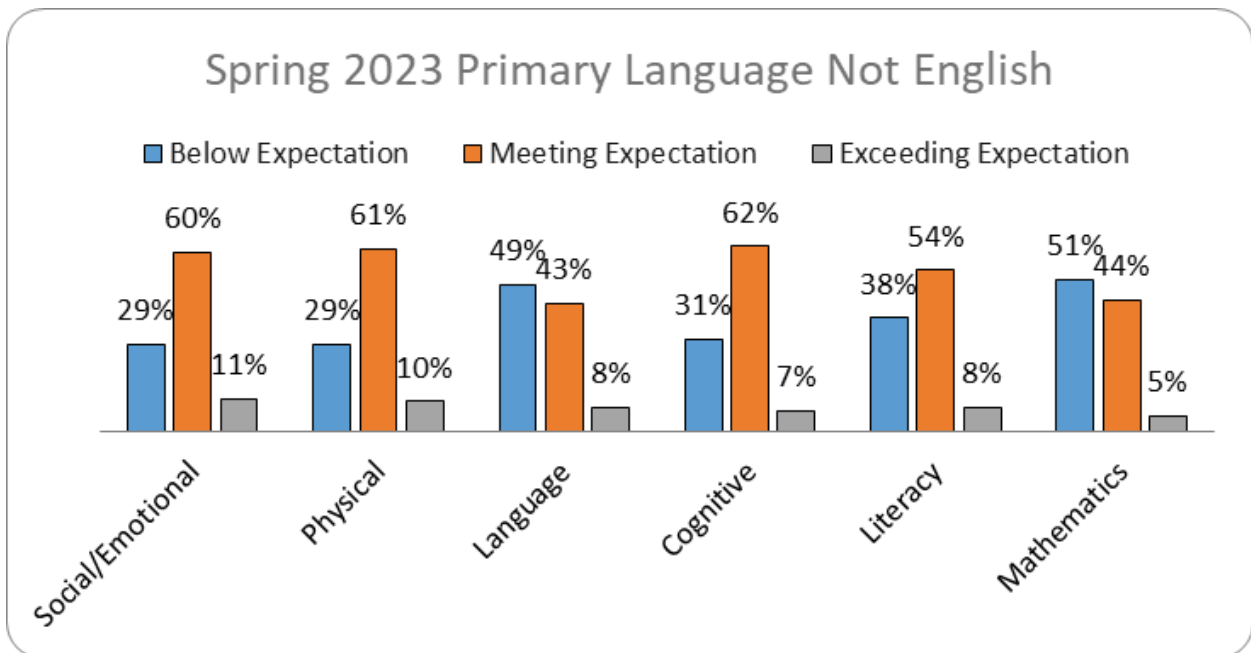


Children returning for their 2<sup>nd</sup> year of service in Head Start averaged 63% meeting or exceeding expectations.

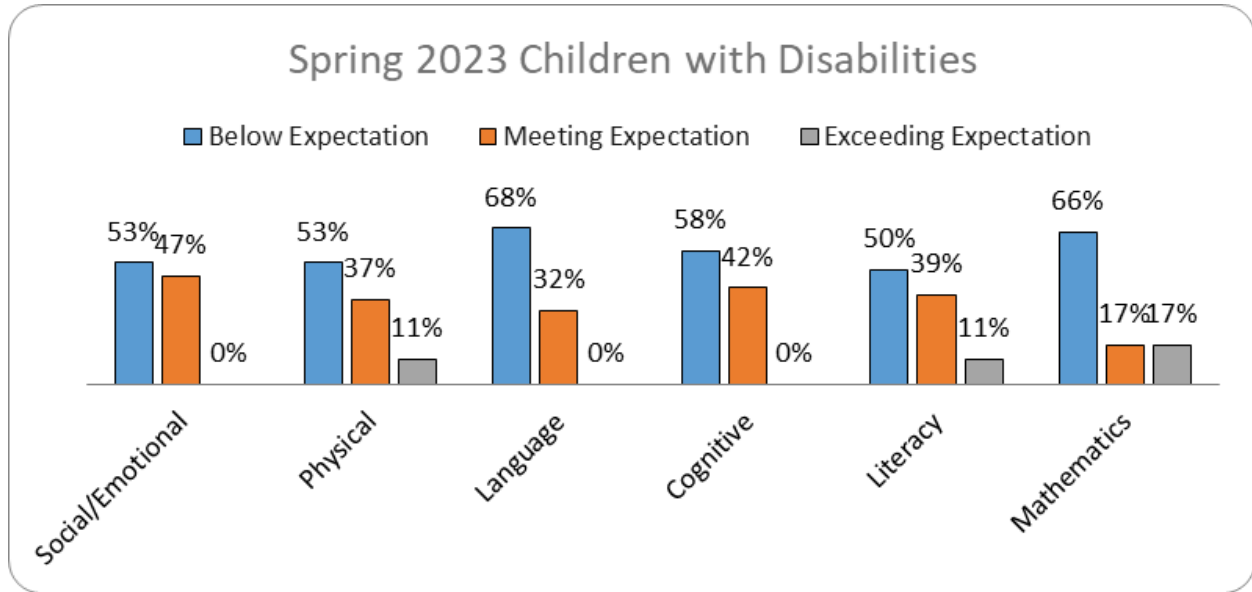




When 1<sup>st</sup> year 4 year olds are pulled from the 1st year students data, 55% of students met and or exceeded expectations.



When reviewing the outcome data for children identified as Dual Language Learners (children whose home language is other than English) 62% of children met or exceeded expectations and for the children whose home language is English, 70% of children met or exceeded expectations.



Children with disabilities (classified with an IEP), demonstrated 42% of children meeting expectations.

**SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES**

For the 2022-2023 school year HS and EHS exceeded the 10% enrollment requirement for children with special needs. Head Start averaged 13% (20) children with an IEP and EHS averaged 23% (11 children) with an IFSP. CLC partnered with The Stamford Public Schools Pre-K Team (APPLES) and Birth-3 Service providers to provide in-person special education services to all children in the Head Start and Early Head Start program. In addition, we continued monthly collaboration meetings with APPLES teaching staff. These meetings allowed for open communication between both Head Start and Apples teachers that share the same student to discuss effective strategies that could be implemented consistently between both classroom settings.

For the 2022-2023 school year we piloted an integrated special education classroom with Stamford Public Schools at CLC Maple Avenue Head Start. The identified children received all of their special education services onsite, and Stamford Public Schools provided a Special Education Teacher that worked together with our Head Start teaching staff to support the needs of the children with an IEP. This partnership and model of inclusion proved to be extremely successful for this school year, and will be continued in the upcoming 2023-2024 school year.

In addition, we continued to collaborate with our community partners to offer high quality special education services, and professional development training for staff on topics such as; developmental milestones, challenging behaviors, and working effectively with families of children with special needs. We have formal partnerships with early intervention agencies, and provider agencies such as; Abilis Birth to 3, Theracare Birth to 3, and the Stamford Public School Pre-K Apples program.

**HEALTH & MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

Nutrition services are coordinated by the CLC nutrition team. The nutrition staff monitor and follow up on all children’s nutrition and dietary needs, and maintain a food restrictions list for each classroom. The

nutritionist provides nutrition case management services which include; medical and nutrition assessments, anthropometric measurements and training, CACFP meal observations, nutritional counseling for families, monitoring food allergies, and nutrition education and support.

The school nurse reviews all children's medicals and follow-up on their health care needs; including children with a chronic condition that require an Individual Health Care Plan. In addition, the nurse will monitor Asthma Action Plans, and Medication Administration Plans for all children requiring special care. All services provided through these special plans are closely monitored by the school nurse. Health screenings are provided either by the school nurse or community partners; including follow up care. Children are also educated on proper tooth brushing, and good oral health practices.

The Education Manager is responsible for coordinating mental health consultation services for CLC HS and EHS. The Child Guidance Center of Southern Connecticut (CGC) provides mental health consultation for the agency. Consultation is provided in the form of classroom observations, feedback to the teaching staff on behavioral and classroom management strategies, supporting nurturing classroom environments, and offering a guided approach to promoting positive teacher-child interactions. Mental health consultation also includes school-based therapeutic services for children, and referrals for mental health services for families.

### **FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

CLC Head Start and Early Head Start Programs follow a two-generational approach that promotes family well-being, supports children's school readiness, and the healthy development of children in partnership with their families. This year, CLC HS/EHS continued to offer a wide variety of parent engagement activities, monthly parent education workshops, and fatherhood engagement activities.

CLC HS/EHS uses *Shine on, Families* as our research-based parenting curriculum that builds on parents' knowledge and offers them the opportunity to practice parenting skills to promote children's learning and development. *Shine on, Families* builds upon and enhances home learning by extending the classroom curriculum into the home while engaging families with multiple opportunities for modeling, practice, and reflection. *Shine on, Families* is designed to engage and reach every family to empower them as equal partners in their child's learning. In addition to *Shine on, Families*, CLC HS/EHS intends to implement the *Parenting Journey* curriculum. Parenting Journey is an experiential parenting program that engages parents in guided discussions and hands-on activities to support them in developing their parenting skills.

### **ERSEA Committee: Collaborative Recruitment Efforts, Partnerships & Highlights;**

The Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA) Committee guides the assessment of a program's practices for verifying the eligibility status of children and families who are receiving Head Start/Early Head Start services, and for ensuring appropriate enrollment of children. Each year, the Committee meets to review and update the Head Start and Early Head Start selection criteria to ensure it is in alignment with the Head Start Program Performance Standards, and that it reflects the composition of the communities our program serves.

CLC strives to ensure that our practice to assess communities, and recruit and enroll children and families most in need, includes the following activities:

- Training of all new staff who determine eligibility within 90 days of hire.
- Ongoing training of staff, Policy Council, and Governing Board on Head Start and Early Head Start Eligibility Guidelines.
- CLC HS/EHS meets with community partners regarding eligibility and referral process.
- Community outreach to secure partnership agreements that enhance recruitment opportunities.
- Ongoing monitoring to ensure recruitment efforts are ongoing.

### **OPPORTUNITIES FOR FAMILIES AND VOLUNTEERS**

Building trusting and sustainable relationships with families is integral to our family engagement work. We engage our families by offering individual case management services as well as supportive group workshops to support them in achieving their goals.

We engage parents in opportunities to participate in a shared partnership with CLC staff. This includes; the Parent Policy Council, Health and Nutrition Advisory Committee meetings, and various classroom activities, events, and monthly parent workshops.

CLC has established ongoing relationships with many community partners and organizations that support the children and families served in HS/EHS; including Stamford Public Schools (SPS), Stamford Cradle to Career, the Ferguson Library, Soundwaters, Bruce Museum, Filling in the Blanks, Mothers for Others, Family Centers, Building One Community, and Inspirica to name a few.

### **GOVERNANCE**

#### **Policy Council and Governing Board**

The CLC Parent Policy Council (PC) prepares parents/guardians to be advocates and leaders on behalf of their children, and cultivates them as community leaders. Parents on the Policy Council are provided with the opportunity to be fully engaged with program planning and decision-making, and work closely with the Head Start Director and Governing Board. CLC's Governing Body and Policy Council utilizes key program information established at the center-level parent committees which are discussed during monthly Policy Council (PC) and Board meetings to conduct their governance responsibilities. The Policy Council and Governing Board receive monthly financial statements; monthly HS/EHS program reports; all documents requiring HS Policy Council and Board approval; as well as communication and guidance from the Office of Head Start.

The CLC delegate agency at Family Centers Head Start in Greenwich conducts monthly Policy Committee Meetings, and business conducted at those meetings is shared with the grantee.

The CLC Board provides oversight of all CLC program operations, and maintains responsibility for safeguarding the assets of the agency in tandem with the CEO. Through its regular meetings and the exercise of its fiduciary duties, CLC Board members receive training on their roles and responsibilities with Head Start; including their legal and fiduciary responsibilities.

Parents on the CLC Parent Policy Council receive annual training on the Head Start regulations, a review of their roles and responsibilities, and eligibility training on federal regulations.

**NUMBER OF CHILDREN & FAMILIES SERVED**

**CLC Head Start Enrollment as of June 30, 2023**

Funded Enrollment: **154 (grantee)**

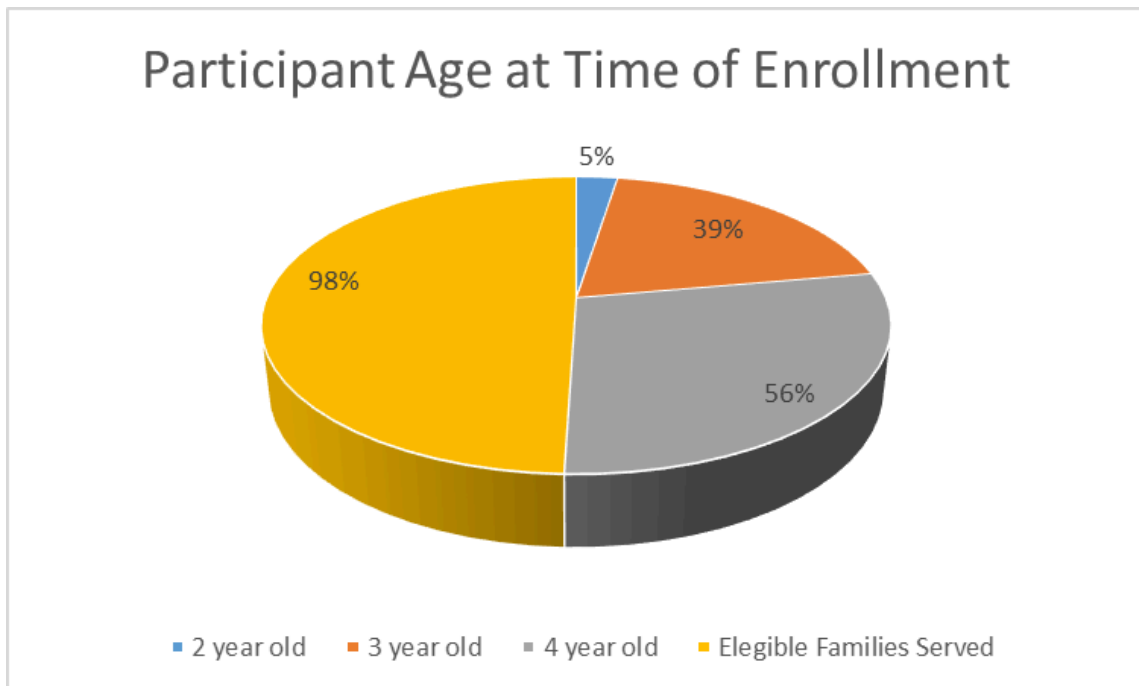
Cumulative Enrollment: **167**

**Number of Children served Year-To-Date in 2022-2023**

**Participants Age at time of Enrollment:**

- 5% of the children enrolled were 2 Years Old: **(8)**
- 39% of the children enrolled were 3 Years Old: **(65)**
- 56% of the children enrolled were 4 Years Old: **(94)**
- 98% Percentage of eligible children served: **(164)**

**Figure 1- Participants by Age & Percentage**



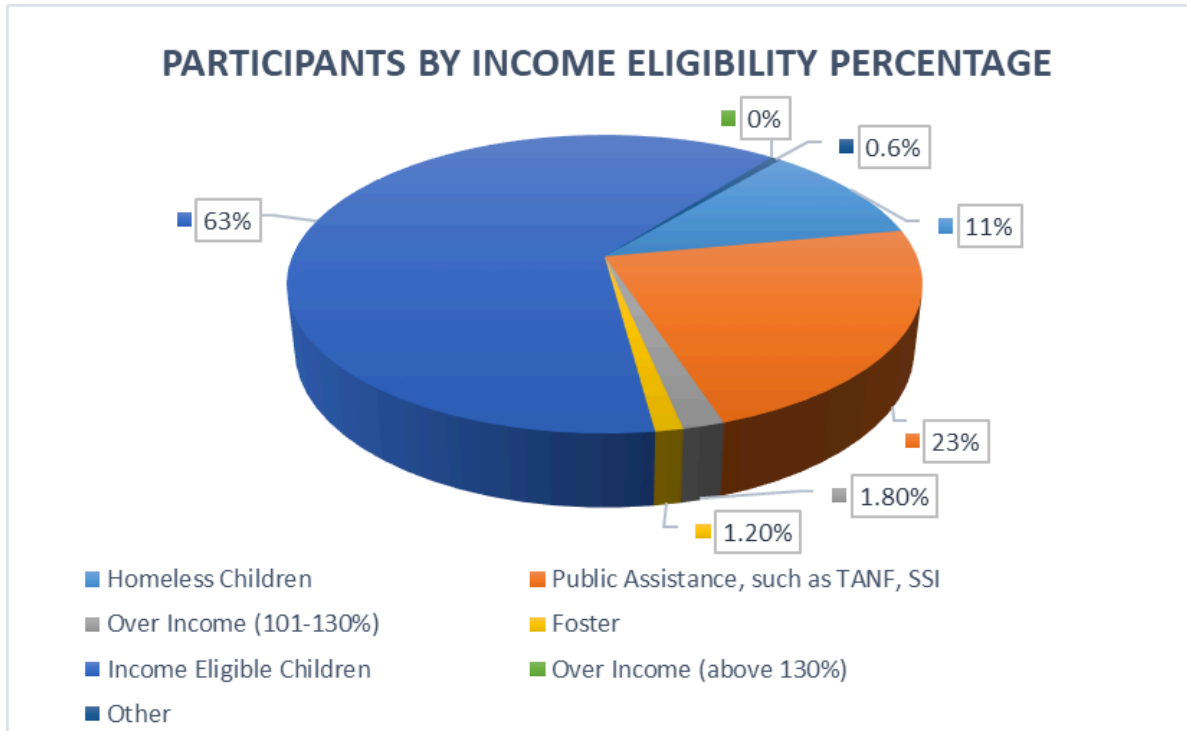


Figure 2- Participants by Income Eligibility Percentage

**Participants by Income Eligibility Percentage**

- 18 (11%) Homeless Children
- 2 (1%) Foster Care Children
- 38 (23%) Public Assistance such as TANF, SSI, SNAP
- 105 (63%) Income Eligible Children
- 1 (0.2%) Other
- 3 (1.8%) Over Income Children (101-130%)
- 0 (0%) Over income (above 130%)

**Volunteers**

- Total number of volunteers: 21
- Total number of these volunteers who are current or former Head Start Parents: 21

**Head Start Staff**

- Number of Head Start Staff: 42
- Number of Head Start Head Teachers: 8
- Number of Assistant Teachers/Aides: 16

**Families**

- There were more single-parent families served during this program year than two-parent families. We served 106 single-parent families, and 50 two-parent families.
- Father Engagement: 122 fathers
- 74 families received WIC services/other assistance
- 156 Families that received program services to promote family outcomes

**Health/Dental**

- Children with completed medical exam: 100%
- Children with up-to-date immunizations: 100%
- Children with a completed dental exam: 93%
- Children with health insurance: 88%
- Children with no health insurance: 12% (undocumented)
- Children with Special Needs/ IEPs: 13%

**Race and Ethnicity as of June 30, 2023 (Cumulative Enrollment)**

Race/Ethnicity	# of Participants	% of participants
American Indian or Alaska Native	24	14%
Asian	6	4%
Black or African American	32	19%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	0	0%
White and Hispanic	83	50%
White non-hispanic	4	2.4%
Biracial / Multi-Racial	7	4.2%
Other Race	11	6.6%
Unspecified Race	0	0%

**Primary Language of Family at Home as of June 30, 2023 (Cumulative Enrollment)**

Languages	# of Participants	% of participants
English	46	28%
Spanish	107	64%
Central American, South American, or Mexican	0	0
Caribbean	1	0.6%
Middle Eastern or South Asian	6	4%
East Asian	0	0%
Native North American or Alaska Native	0	0%
Pacific Island	0	0%
European or Slavic	7	4.2%
African	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Unspecified	0	0%

**NUMBER OF CHILDREN & FAMILIES SERVED (Early Head Start)**

**Early Head Start Enrollment as of June 30, 2023**

Funded Enrollment: **48**

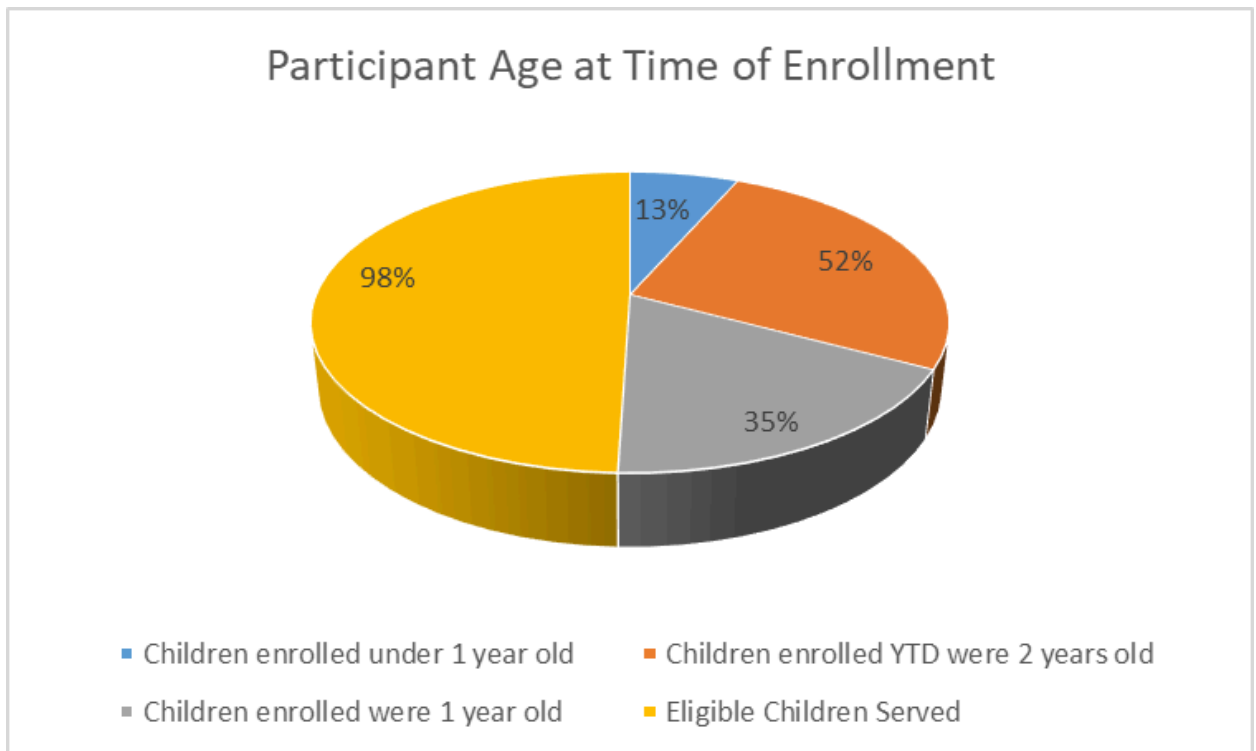
Cumulative Enrollment: **60**

**Number of Children Served Year-To-Date in 2022-2023**

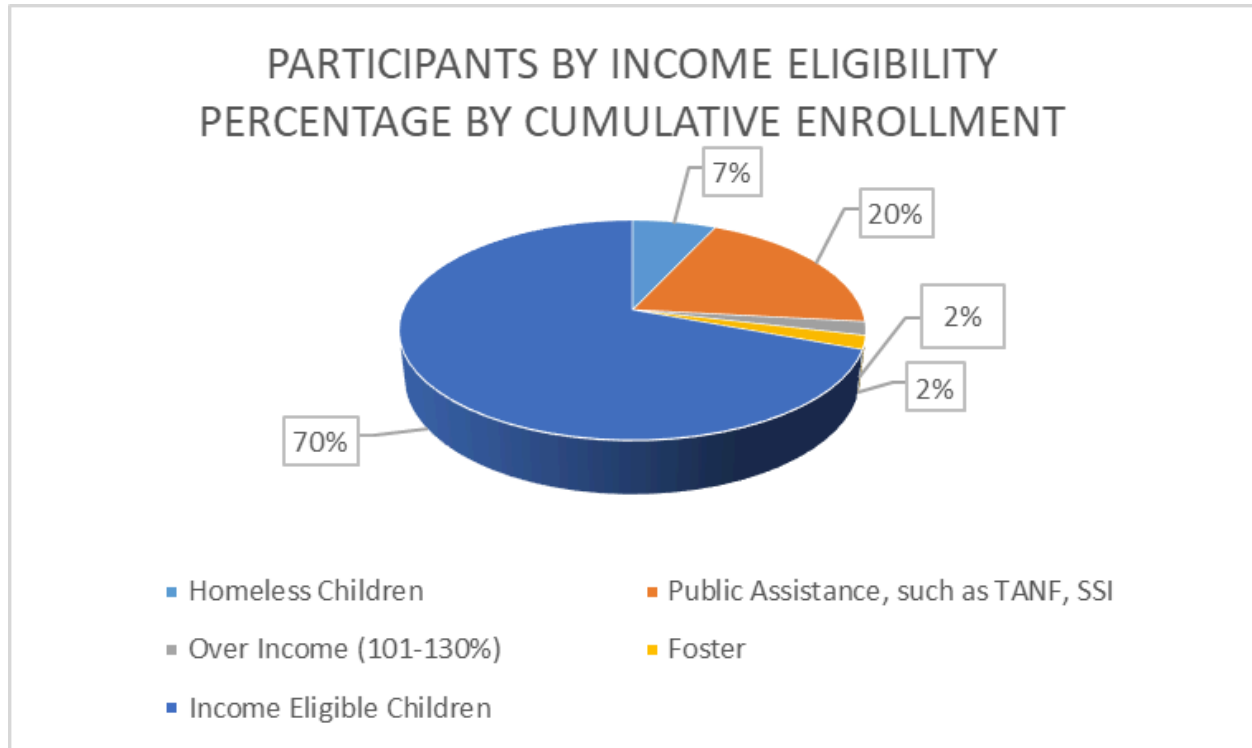
**Participants age at time of enrollment**

- 13% of the children enrolled were under 1 Years Old: **(8)**
- 35% of the children enrolled were 1 Years Old: **(21)**
- 52% of the children enrolled were 2 Years Old: **(31)**
- 98% Percentage of eligible children served: **(59)**

**Figure 1- Participants by Age & Percentage**







**Figure 2- Participants by Income Eligibility Percentage**

**Participants by Income Eligibility Percentage by Cumulative Enrollment**

- 4 Homeless Children (7%)
- 1 Foster Care Children (2%)
- 12 Public Assistance such as TANF, SSI (20%)
- 42 Income Eligible Children (70%)
- 1 Over Income Children (1%) (101-130%)

**Volunteers**

- Total number of volunteers: 6
- Total number of these volunteers who are current or former Head Start Parents: 6

**Early Head Start Staff**

- Number of EHS Inf/Todd Staff: 19
- Number of EHS Teachers: 14

**Families**

- There were more single-parent families served during this program year than two-parent families. We served 37 single-parent families and 19 two-parent families.
- Father Engagement: 30 fathers
- 41 families received WIC services/other assistance

**Health/Dental**

- Children with completed medical exam: 100%
- Children with up-to-date immunizations: 100%
- Children with a completed dental exam: 98%
- Children with health insurance: 100%
- Children with no health insurance: 0%
- Children with Special Needs/ IFSPs: 30%

**Race and Ethnicity as of June 30, 2023 (Cumulative Enrollment)**

Race/Ethnicity	# of Participants	% of Participants
American Indian or Alaska Native	4	7%
Asian	1	2%
Black or African American	19	32%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	0	0%
White and Hispanic	31	52%
White and non-Hispanic	2	3%
Biracial / Multi-Racial	3	5%
Other Race	0	0%
Unspecified Race	0	0%

**Primary Language of Family at Home as of June 30, 2023 (Cumulative Enrollment)**

Languages	# of Participants	% of participants
English	22	37%
Spanish	35	58%
Central American, South American, or Mexican	0	0%
Caribbean	1	2%
Middle Eastern or South Asian	0	0%
East Asian	0	0%
Native North American or Alaska Native	0	0%
Pacific Island	0	0%
European or Slavic	2	3%
African	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Unspecified	0	0%

**2022-2023  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START GRANT SUMMARY**

**Federal & CIK Actual Funded Revenue**

Federal Head Start	\$1,907,932
Early Head Start	\$1,556,050
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,463,982</b>

**Head Start Actual Expenditures**

Salaries	\$1,120,081
Fringe Benefits	\$313,623
Training	\$50,270
Equipment	\$0
Supplies	\$50,059
Contractual	\$35,121
Other	\$338,778
Allocated Indirect Cost	\$0
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,907,932</b>

**Early HS Actual Expenditures**

Salaries	\$832,698
Fringe Benefits	\$233,155
Training	\$25,979
Equipment	\$0
Supplies	\$50,059
Contractual	\$7,058
Other	\$66,160
Allocated Indirect Cost	\$340,941
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,556,050</b>

**FINANCIAL AUDITS AND FEDERAL REVIEWS**

Cirone Friedberg’s audit opinion from CLC’s last completed audit: “In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Children’s Learning Centers of Fairfield County, Inc., as of June 30, 2022, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.”

CLC Head Start/Early Head Start is in the fourth year of its grant award. In FY 23, ACF conducted a CLASS Video Pilot monitoring review and a Focus Area 2 monitoring review. CLC met the CLASS quality threshold, and maintained full compliance with the requirements of the Head Start Program Performance Standards, Head Start Act, and other applicable regulations.

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**Children’s Learning Centers of Fairfield County Executive Leadership**

Marc Jaffe, CEO  
Darrell Ingram, CFO

**HS/EHS Leadership Team**

Marsha Guthrie, Head Start Director  
Enrique Pabon, Education Manager

**Board of Directors**

Pam Koprowski, Chairwoman of the Board  
Emily Kroenlein, First Vice Chair  
Ellen Mellis, Second Vice Chair  
Ipashri Bharti, Secretary  
Bruce Blasnik, Treasurer  
Sherita Little Bald Eagle, Head Start Parent Representative  
Jaclyn Williams  
Dr. Janmeet Grover  
J. David Nelson  
Sanjay Sidwani  
Ernest Fleishman  
Anne Wichman  
Corey Kenyon  
Chuck Mosher  
Karen Gianuzzi  
Christine D’Annibale

**Policy Council**

Sherita Little Bald Eagle, Chairperson  
Veily Velasquez, Vice Chairperson  
Ivis Aguiriano, Treasurer

CLC Head Start/Early Head Start Sites

CLC Head Start  
90 Maple Avenue  
Stamford, CT 06902

CLC Early Head Start  
72 Franklin Street  
Stamford, CT 06902

