

# early childhood centers



**montrose county**  
*school district*

Head Start Annual Report



2023-2024

Montrose & Olathe, Colorado



# head start

## What is Head Start?

Head Start is a federally funded program that promotes the school readiness of young children from low-income families through local programs. Head Start programs support the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development of children from ages 3-5. In addition to education services, programs provide children and their families with health, nutrition, social, and other services. The program works to maintain the highest standards of quality in the delivery of strength-based, comprehensive, early intervention, and education services.

## Head Start in Montrose County

Montrose County RE-1J School District's Head Start Program has been a part of the Montrose and Olathe community since 1991 serving children and families that live within the school district boundaries. MCSD Head Start utilizes evidence-based approaches to serving children and families of low-income in a compassionate and partnering manner. Children receive services that promote child development across all domains. Families participate in a wide variety of family support and strengthening activities. From parent education and leadership, to family developmental activities, to support each family's specific goals for their child and their family, Head Start services are responsive to each child and family's ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heritage.



# about us

ECC administers its programming at three sites: one on the campus of Montrose County School District, one on the campus of Johnson Elementary School, and one on the campus of Olathe Elementary School — eleven miles north of Montrose. The majority of ECC children attend eight hours a day, four days a week and follow the Montrose County School District calendar.

# mission

In partnership with our families and our communities, the children of Montrose County School District RE-1J Early Childhood Centers will acquire a positive foundation for lifelong learning.





# from the program manager

Kristie Donathan  
ECC Program Manager  
2024



Greetings from the Desk of the Program Manager,

If families and caregivers can provide quality early childhood development, then children will start school ready to learn. Early experiences promote future learning, behavior and health.

If children start school ready to learn, they are more likely to read at grade level by 3rd grade. Remedial costs go down, potential lifelong gaps could be eliminated, and our entire school system is better for all kids.

I would like to take a moment to introduce myself. My name is Kristie Donathan and I am the new Program Manager for the Montrose County School District. I have worked in education since 2000, where I started as a Health Assistant in Delta County School District. I moved into Early Childhood in 2004 and worked in preschool until moving to first grade in 2009. In 2015, I went to work as the Assistant Director of Early Childhood in Mesa County Valley School District. I moved into the Director position in 2021. I am excited to lead the ECC program in Montrose.

The Montrose County School District (MCSD) Early Childhood Center's (ECC) 2024-2025 school year has brought about change in staff and positions. We have welcomed Amy Blaine from her position as Head Secretary into a newly created position as Head Start Grant Coordinator. We transitioned Abbie Sanchez into the Head Secretary position and hired Kim Wegelin as the new Health Tech. We have a few new teachers and paras.

I am excited to work with a wonderful team who are child and family centered. I am new to the role of Head Start Director and I am learning and growing everyday. We have strong systems in place that guide our program to supporting the "whole child" through early learning.

The Montrose County School District (MCSD) Early Childhood Center's (ECC) has a vested interest in our students and their social/emotional and academic growth. Our foundation is based on the 5 Social Emotional Core competencies:

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Decision Making
- Social Awareness
- Relationship Skills

The primary goal of social and emotional learning is to improve student's capacity to establish and maintain healthy relationships through establishing a safe, positive, and mutually beneficial environment.

MCSD ECC, guided by the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS), uses Creative Curriculum® for Preschool, to promote children's development and also positive program outcomes. Creative Curriculum promotes whole child development and learning in all developmental domains.

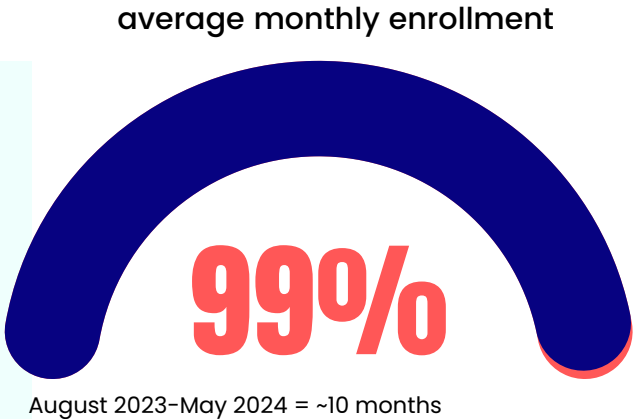
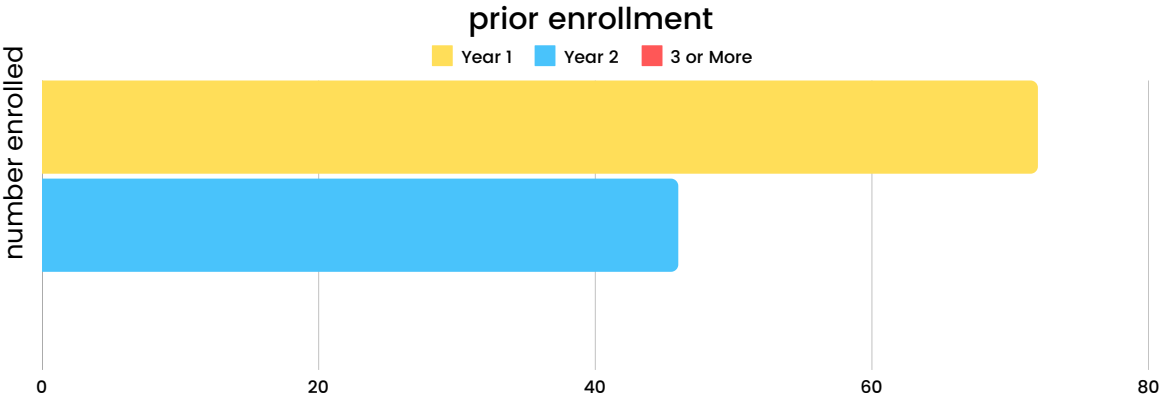
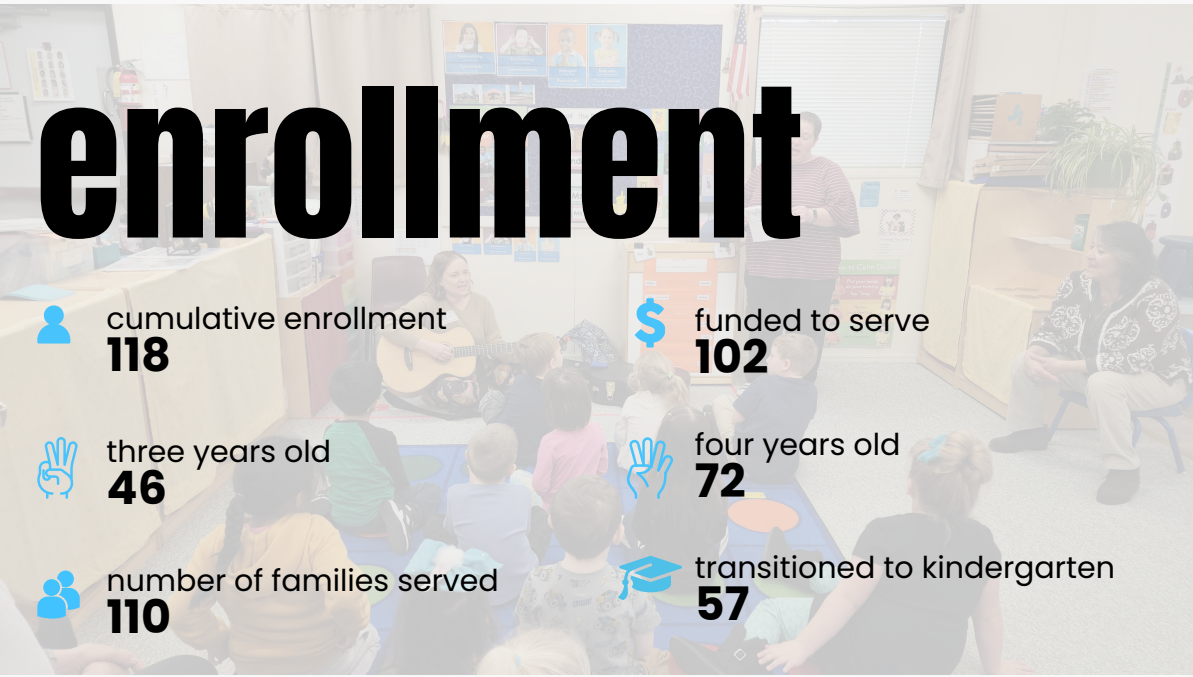
Our teachers are required to assess all children through Smart Teach which is connected to the Creative Curriculum. Data and reporting is used to inform instruction and drive program efficacy. This assessment system is monitored by CDE and OSEP (Office of Special Education Programs).

All of our work is valuable and necessary in order to meet the three goals included in our Strategic Plan: Providing a high-quality, research-based instructional experience that is relevant and engaging for all students to develop kindergarten readiness; Creating a culture that prioritizes respect and value and is continuously monitored to ensure that staff, students, and families experience an enjoyable, safe, and inclusive environment; and Creating well-structured and sustainable support system for staff, students, and families and maintaining safe and engaging facilities to enrich the ECC community.

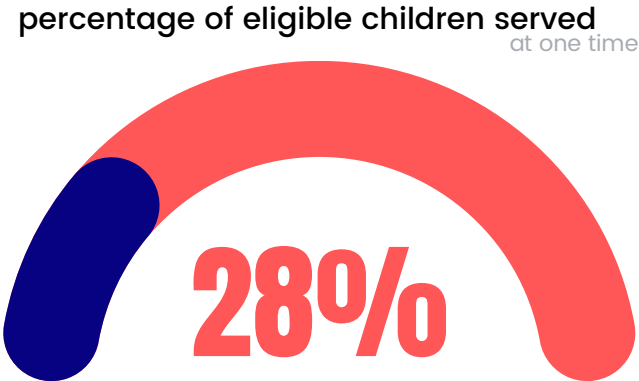
Thank you for the time. It is such a pleasure to be a part of a wonderful program, guided by strong program standards and guidance from Head Start.

Kristie Donathan,  
Early Childhood Program Manager  
Montrose County School District RE-1J Early





August 2023-May 2024 = ~10 months

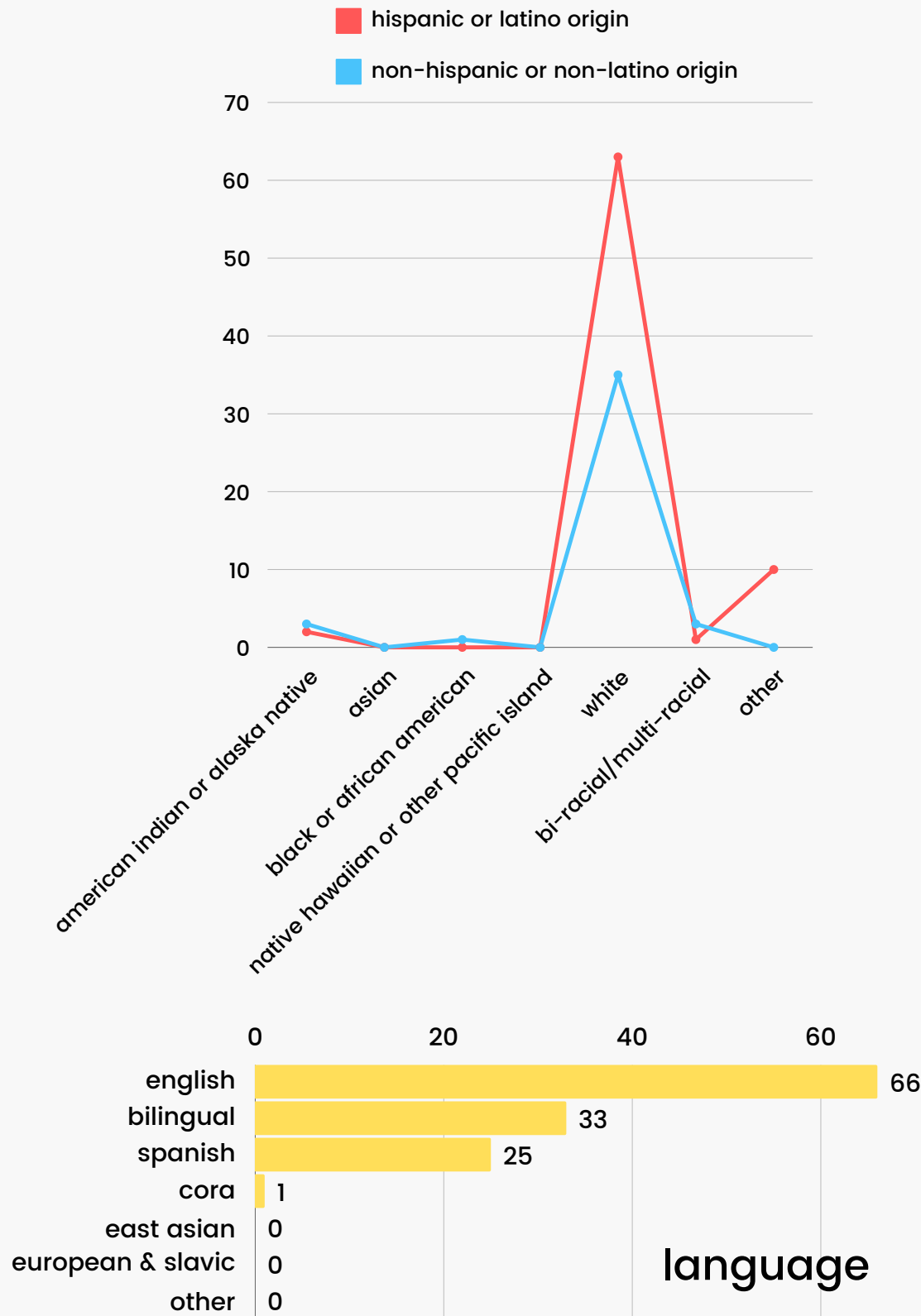


Estimated number of Head Start-eligible children in our service area = 423

\*2024 MCSD ECC Community Assessment (Page 25)

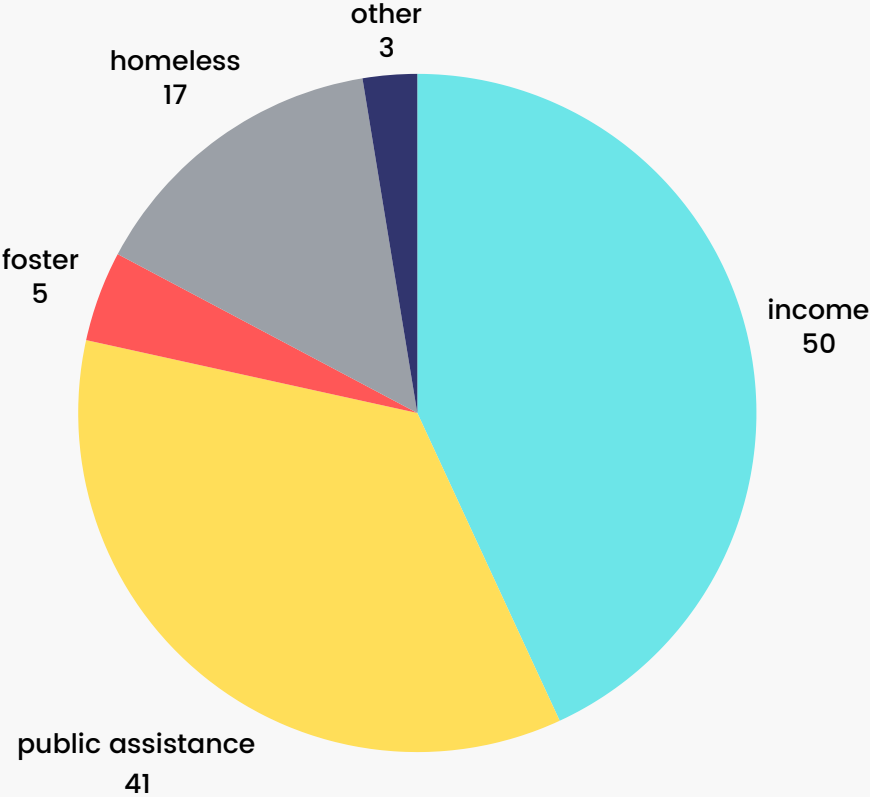


# demographics





# eligibility



Federal eligibility regulations require that the majority of families we serve fall below the federal poverty guidelines to ensure that all families have access to high-quality educational services regardless of their income.



# five-year goals

*Year 1 of 5*

- 🎯 ECC will provide a high-quality, research-based instructional experience that is relevant and engaging for all students to develop kindergarten readiness.
- 🎯 We aim to create a culture that prioritizes respect and value and is continuously monitored to ensure that staff, students, and families experience an enjoyable, safe, and inclusive environment.
- 🎯 ECC aims to create well-structured and sustainable support systems for staff, students, and families and maintain safe and engaging facilities to enrich the ECC community.



## annual objectives

each year, the ECC Leadership Team come together to develop that year's goal objectives



## carry-over

some goal objectives carry-over into the new year



## next five years

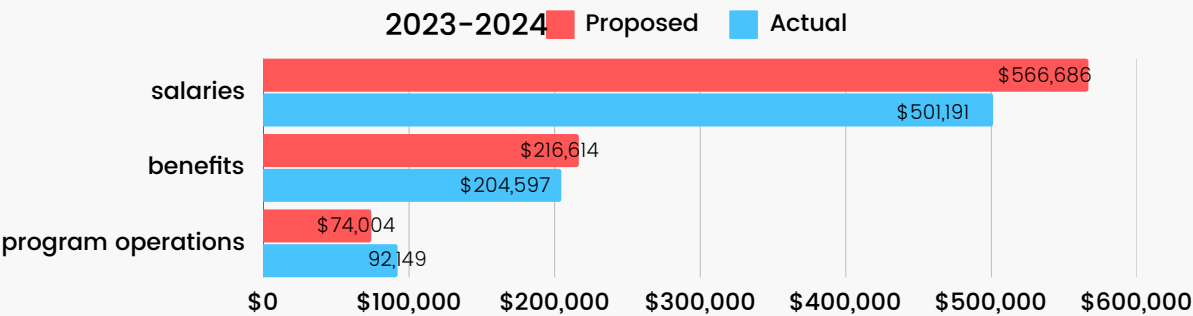
it is time to form a committee to develop the next five-year program strategic goals



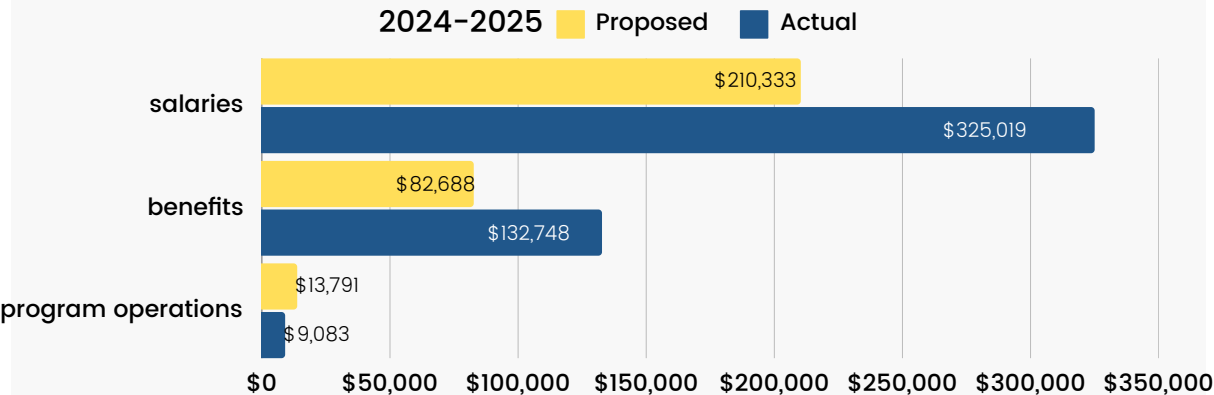
# financials

MCSD RE-1J ECC provides services to 102 preschool-age children, during the school district calendar year which begins in August of one year and ends in May of the following year. The fiscal year for MCSD RE-1J is July 1 through June 30. The Early Childhood Centers are funded by two Head Start grants during the school district calendar year due to the budget period of each award (April 1 through March 31).

MCSD RE-1J ECC federal award from Head Start for budget period 04/01/23 through 03/31/24 totaled \$1,227,251. Head Start Program Operations accounted for \$1,121,200 of the total award and \$14,396 was allotted for Head Start Training and Technical Assistance; \$91,655 COLA and Quality Improvement increase. Non-Federal Share (cash and in-kind) funds totaled \$283,899.



MCSD RE-1J ECC federal award from Head Start for budget period 04/01/24 through 03/31/25 totaled \$1,255,753. Head Start Program Operations accounted for \$1,212,855 of the total award and \$14,396 was allotted for Head Start Training and Technical Assistance; \$28,502 COLA increase. Non-Federal Share (cash and in-kind) funds totaled \$313,939.



# audit



## Montrose County School District No. RE-1J SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS AND QUESTIONED COSTS

Year ended June 30, 2023



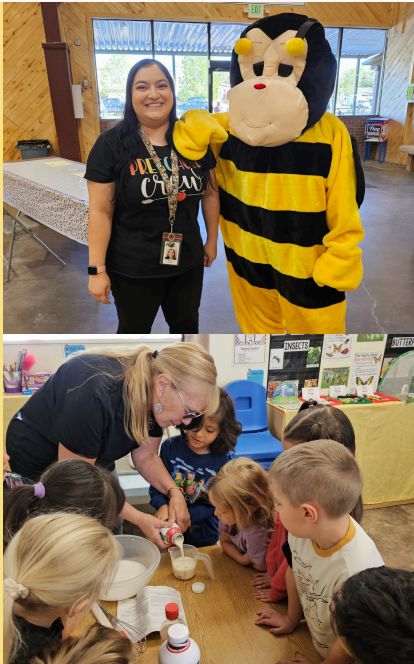
### SECTION II – FINDINGS UNDER GENERALLY ACCEPTED GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS

Our audit did not disclose any matters required to be reported in accordance with Government Auditing Standards.



### SECTION III – FINDINGS AND QUESTIONED COSTS – MAJOR FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Our audit did not disclose any matters required to be reported in accordance with 2CFR 200.516(a).





# family and community engagement

## parent involvement

Parents continue to be a vital part of our Head Start program. Parent and family engagement is about building relationships with families that support family well-being and gives parents/guardians opportunities to stay involved with the education of their child and support the development of kindergarten-readiness skills.

## community partnerships

- Angel Tree (Christmas gifts provided to the neediest children in each class, via the Cobble Creek Community)
- Tom Goodrich Warm Hearts Memorial Project (brand new winter coats for needy students)
- Grocery Store Gift Card Donations from the Cobble Creek Community
- Operation Home Front Toy-Drive Shopping
- Canyon Chiropractic (brand new hats & gloves for needy students)
- Kids Aid Backpack Program (non-perishable food bags prepared for needy ECC families)

## events

- Back to Preschool Orientation
- Budget/Grant Committee
- Classroom Volunteer x 1 a day
- Discovery Wonderland Carnival
- End of the Year BBQ
- End of the Year Drive-in Movie Night
- Health Advisory Committee
- Home Visits x 2 (in classrooms)
- Meet & Greet
- Parent/Teacher Conferences (PTC) x 2
- Policy Council (PC)

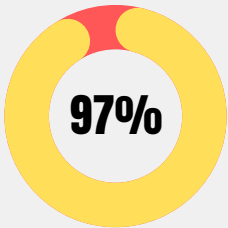
## policy council

- Natalie Patterson (President)
- Rebecca Culver (Vice President)
- Daryl Martinez (Treasurer)
- Jessica Ochoa-Kuykendall (Secretary)
- Kaitlynn Boyd
- Crystal Crane
- Estra Garcia
- Cassie Ordaz
- Mike Thomas
- Aylin Valenzuela

# child health

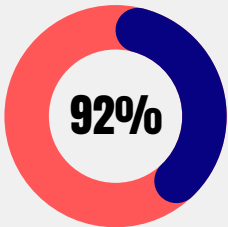
received  
medical  
exams:

114



received  
dental exams  
during the  
school year:

108



up-to-date on immunizations

93%

have an immunization exemption

6

healthy weight

BMI

76%

underweight

11%

overweight

9%

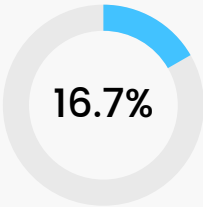
obese

4%



# disabilities

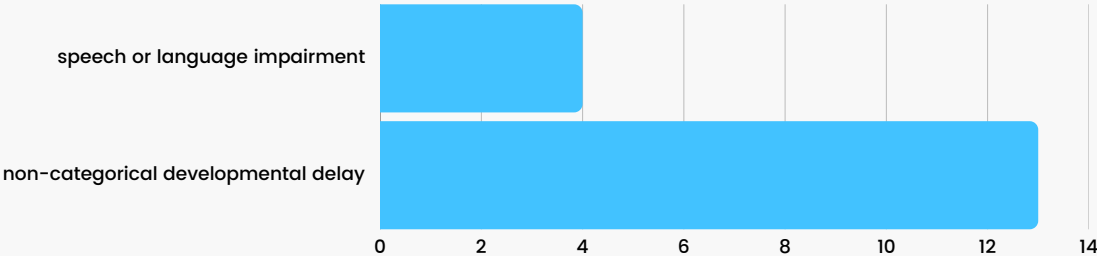
Our program's disability services are provided by our local LEA which is the Montrose County School District RE-1J. Our families are referred to Child Find—through the school district—if there is a concern when a child is in preschool. Once a referral is made, a child may undergo an evaluation process and then could be placed on an IEP (Individualized Education Program).



### head start students on an IEP

our program reported 17 head start students were on an IEP (individualized education program) at any point in the 23-24 school year

### diagnosed primary disability



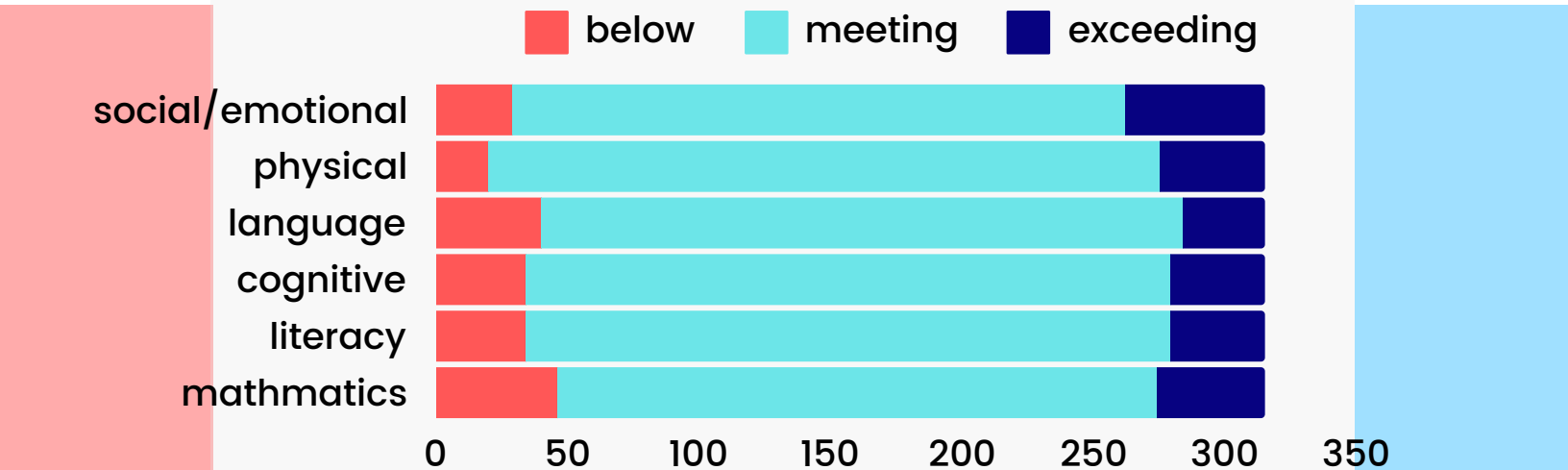
# kindergarten prep

Head Start focuses on the areas of the “Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework” (ELOF) which includes the following domains:

- approaches to learning
- language and literacy (including communication)
- cognition (including math and science)
- social/emotional
- perceptual, motor, and physical development

Our program uses ELOF and SmartTeach Child Outcomes Assessment data to develop goals

## SmartTeach spring 2024 results





# kindergarten prep

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- cognition (including math and science)
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- perceptual, motor, and physical development

Our program uses the Framework and SmartTeach Child Outcomes Assessment data to develop goals

SmartTeach fall 2023- %  
meeting or exceeding

SmartTeach spring 2024- %  
meeting or exceeding

social/emotional 60%	social/emotional 91%
physical 65%	physical 94%
language 57%	language 88%
cognitive 61%	cognitive 89%
literacy 55%	literacy 89%
mathematics 51%	mathematics 85%



# our grantee

montrose county school district RE-1J

## governing body

- Sarah Fishering (President)
- Stephen Bush
- Alice Murphy
- Tom West
- Neisha Balleck
- Jody Hovde
- Ted Valerio

## our staff

in the 23-24 school year, ECC employed a total of 55 staff members

### Thank you to all those who support ECC!

Our communities continue to grow and our program continues to evolve, but one thing remains the same — we have been here for over 30 years and plan on being here many more. The support of our families, staff, the school district, and communities of Olathe and Montrose keep us strong.



#### address

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#### telephone

(970) 249-5858



#### website

[mcsd.org](https://mcsd.org)