



**Economic Opportunities Advancement Corporation of Planning Region XI**  
**1800 N. Valley Mills Avenue**  
**Waco, Texas 76701**

## **Head Start & Early Head Start 2023-24 Annual Report**

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Mission: to serve people in need with compassion and dignity, help those who can achieve economic independence, and ease the pain of poverty barriers.

This Annual Report is available for public viewing on the EOAC website at [www.eoacwaco.org](http://www.eoacwaco.org)

# EOAC Head Start Community Assessment Summary

EOAC Head Start's latest full Community Assessment (CA), completed in 2023, documents the needs assessment process, results, analysis, and conclusions that Economic Opportunities Advancement Corporation (EOAC) will employ to address unmet or under-met needs of low-income families and the communities in which they live. It helps guide the agency in decision-making, strategizing, and moving forward with the organization's development.



The Kids Count Data Book, a primary source of data and information for the CA, is an annual publication that assesses child well-being nationally and across the fifty states. Using an index of sixteen indicators, the 2023 report

ranks states on overall child well-being in four domains: economic well-being, education, health, as well as family and community. The 2023 Kids Count Data Book ranks the State of Texas at number 44 overall in the nation for the well-being of its children. Furthermore, Texas ranked 39th in Economic Well-being, 27th in education, 48th in health, and 47th in Family and Community compared to other states in the United States.

While Texas does not have excessively high rankings among the four domains measured to determine a child's well-being, the state still has many strengths among its cities and counties. In 2021, the state lowered its average percentage from 2019 in the following family and community categories: children in single-parent families (34%), children in families where the household head lacks a high school diploma (16%), children living in high-poverty areas (12%), and teen births per 1,000 individual (20%). However, the state of Texas could improve its economic well-being and provide health services to residents. In 2021, the state saw an increase in their average percentage from 2019 in the following categories: children in poverty (20%), children whose parents lack secure employment (28%), children living in households with a high housing cost burden (32%), low birth weight babies (8.6%), child and teen deaths per 100,000 (30), and children and teens who are overweight or obese (40%).

Strengths of the program's service area and EOAC begin with the agency's ability to serve center-based Early Head Start-aged children. There is an immediate need for high-quality and affordable childcare for residents in both counties. While EOAC can provide services for a small population sample, the data displays a greater need than what is currently offered. There is an abundance of children and families that live in these counties and would qualify for Head Start services. Therefore, there is no shortage of individuals who could utilize and benefit from the program. Another great strength for EOAC and the community is the early intervention programs within the program's service area. With at least nine agencies willing and able to serve children in the service area, early detection can assist children and families in accessing the services needed for their children.

Challenges the program's service area and EOAC have encountered consist of but are not limited to the following: a lack of mental health support to low-income and at-risk families, high-cost housing rates causing people to relocate, and inequities among ethnicities and genders. While the health of McLennan County is in good standing, Falls County is among the unhealthiest counties in Texas. Additional support and resources are in dire need in Falls County. With high rates of preterm births, low birth weights, and infant mortality, pregnant women would benefit from the support and opportunities the program has to offer. While an expansion of EOAC services would benefit the community, the agency will have the challenge of locating additional space and addressing the pressing need for public transportation for families to get their children to school. One last challenge the agency has ahead of them is the vast differences between Fall County and McLennan County. Trying to provide services to children and families in these areas will have to be targeted toward the specific county where children reside and the centers are located. A one-size-fits-all approach cannot be applied to the two counties.

# EOAC Head Start at a Glance in 2023-24



<b>EOAC Service Area:</b>	Falls County and McLennan County
<b>Head Start &amp; Early Head Start</b>  <b>Center-Based Services &amp;</b>  <b>Home-Based Services:</b>	<b>Total Funded Enrollment: 699</b>  <i>Total Head Start Enrollment: 519</i> Head Start Classrooms: 28 Head Start Home Based: 24  <i>Total Early Head Start Enrollment: 180</i> Early Head Start Classrooms: 21 Early Head Start Home Based: 12
<b>Site Locations:</b>	<b>Head Start and Early Head Start</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Johnette Hicks - 510 S. 12th Street, Waco, TX 76706</li> <li>2. Marlin - 1134 N. State Highway 6, Marlin, TX 76661</li> <li>3. New Road - 1407 N. New Road, Waco, TX 76710</li> <li>4. Thurman E. Dorsey - 3221 Speight Avenue, Waco, TX 76711</li> <li>5. Woodrow Logan - 3510 Latimer, Waco, TX 76705</li> </ol> <b>Head Start</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Harmony Science Academy - 1900 N Valley Mills Dr, Waco, TX 76710</li> <li>2. Waco ISD South Waco - 2104 Gurley Lane, Waco, TX 76706</li> <li>3. Waco ISD West Avenue - 1101 N. 15th Street, Waco, TX 76707</li> </ol> <b>Early Head Start</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mitchell Ave EHS - 1824 Mitchell Avenue, Waco, TX 76708</li> </ol>

**Results of Most Recent Federal Monitoring Review**  
EOAC did not have a monitoring review this program year.

**Annual Financial Audit**  
The EOAC Annual Financial Audit Reports can be viewed on the EOAC website:  
<https://www.eoacwaco.org/administration/agency-financial-audit-reports/>

# Funds Received

## FY 2023 Budget

Funds from the US Department of Health & Human Services Administration for Children & Families:

<i>Budget Period 05.01.2023 - 04.30.2024</i>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Head Start Operations	5,515,836.00	4,944,143.66
Early Head Start Operations	4,572,260.00	3,550,824.93
Head Start Training & Technical Assistance	73,530.00	43,215.60
Early Head Start Training & Technical Assistance	33,309.00	28,333.31
<b>Head Start Total:</b>	<b>\$ 10,194,935.00</b>	<b>\$ 8,566,517.50</b>
<b>Head Start Non-Federal Share from Donations</b>	<b>\$ 2,135,612.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,910,915.60</b>
<b>Funds from American Rescue Plan Texas Workforce Commission: Childcare Relief 06.01.2022-11.30.2023</b>	<b>\$ 1,600,218.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,144,996.00</b>
<b>Funds from USDA Texas Department of Agriculture:</b>		
Child & Adult Care Food Program 10/1/2022 - 9/30/2023	\$ 754,689.60	\$ 445,373.22
<b>GRAND TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$ 14,685,454.60</b>	<b>\$ 12,067,802.32</b>

## FY 2024 Budget Projections

Funds from the US Department of Health & Human Services Administration for Children & Families:

<i>Budget Period 05.01.2024 - 04.30.2025</i>	<b>Budget</b>
Head Start Operations	5,631,587.00
Early Head Start Operations	3,740,132.00
Head Start Training & Technical Assistance	73,530.00
Early Head Start Training & Technical Assistance	33,309.00
<b>Head Start Total:</b>	<b>\$9,478,558.00</b>
<b>Head Start Non-Federal Share from Donations</b>	<b>\$ 2,369,640.00</b>
<b>Funds from USDA Texas Department of Agriculture:</b>	
Child & Adult Care Food Program 10/1/2023 - 9/30/2024	\$ 495,000.00
<b>GRAND TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$ 12,343,198.00</b>

## Children and Families Served

	Head Start	Early Head Start	Total
<b>Head Start Funded Enrollment</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>699</b>
<b>Total Number of Children Served</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>797</b>
<b>Average Monthly Enrollment</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>*82%</b>
<b>Percentage of Eligible Children Served</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Total Number Of Families Served</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>717</b>

### **\*Full Enrollment Initiative**

In 2023, EOAC faced challenges in achieving full enrollment, leading to classroom closures. These challenges stemmed from a shortage of qualified staff, recruitment difficulties, and staff retention issues. As a result, EOAC was placed under the Full Enrollment Initiative starting July 10, 2023, for 12 months. This initiative was required because the program operated below full-funded enrollment for at least four consecutive months.



EOAC was tasked with achieving at least 97% enrollment during this period. The organization implemented several measures to address under-enrollment, including completing the required monthly Center-Level Enrollment Reporting for each site, and collaborated with the Regional Office to develop a comprehensive plan and timeline for reducing or eliminating under-enrollment.

The plan included:

- Applying for a Change in Scope to reduce enrollment and increase staff salaries.
- Requesting waivers for Head Start teacher education requirements.

In 2023, EOAC was awarded a Change in Scope: Enrollment Reduction and secured teacher waivers for several staff members. In 2024, EOAC submitted an additional application for a Change in Scope: Enrollment Conversion, which was approved in August 2024. This timing delayed full enrollment due to securing classroom licensure, purchasing new equipment, and hiring 14 new EHS teachers.

Because of these efforts, we've progressed toward meeting full enrollment and anticipate meeting enrollment in January 2025.

# MEDICAL SERVICES

## THE PERCENTAGE OF ENROLLED CHILDREN THAT RECEIVED MEDICAL AND DENTAL EXAMS

Head Start			Early Head Start		
Medical Exams		Dental Exams	Medical Exams		Dental Exams
% of children	% of total children <i>minus</i> those enrolled < 45 days	% of children	% of children	% of total children <i>minus</i> those enrolled < 45 days	% of children
96%	102%	61%	84%	94%	67%



## Preparing Children for Kindergarten

### Curriculum

EOAC Head Start implements a robust educational framework using the Frog Street Pre-K, Frog Street for Twos, and Frog Street Infant curricula. To enrich the learning experience, curriculum supplements include *I Am Moving*, *I Am Learning (IMIL)*, CLI Engage, *Creative Curriculum*, *More Than Mudpies*, and *Choosy Kids*.

A key component of the Frog Street curriculum is *Conscious Discipline*, a comprehensive classroom management system designed to create a safe and nurturing learning environment. This system supports children's social-emotional growth and development, empowering EOAC Head Start staff to foster positive interactions and emotional resilience.

### Developmental Screening & Assessment

EOAC Head Start employs research-based tools to screen for developmental concerns and monitor children's growth and progress.

### Screenings

- **Developmental Screenings:** Conducted within 45 days of a child's enrollment in the Early Head Start or Head Start programs using the *Ages and Stages Questionnaire, Third Edition (ASQ-3)*.
- **Social-Emotional Screenings:** These screenings are also completed within 45 days of enrollment using the *Ages and Stages Social-Emotional Questionnaire (ASQ-SE)*.
- Screenings adhere to the Texas Periodicity Schedule.

## Referrals

When screenings indicate a potential need for further evaluation:

- Infants and toddlers are referred to Klaras Children's Center Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) with parental consent.
- Three- and four-year-olds are referred to the Local Education Agency (LEA) for additional assessment with parental permission.

## Developmental Assessment

Assessment data is critical for identifying individual growth, setting personalized goals, and tailoring classroom activities. It also informs staff development planning and ensures progress is communicated to parents and funding sources. Furthermore, this data tracks progress toward achieving School Readiness Goals.

# School Readiness Goals

## Developmental Assessment Systems



EOAC Head Start and Early Head Start programs utilize comprehensive, research-based assessment systems to monitor and support children's developmental progress. These systems ensure that each child's growth is tracked across critical developmental domains, providing teachers with valuable insights to guide individualized instruction and learning experiences.

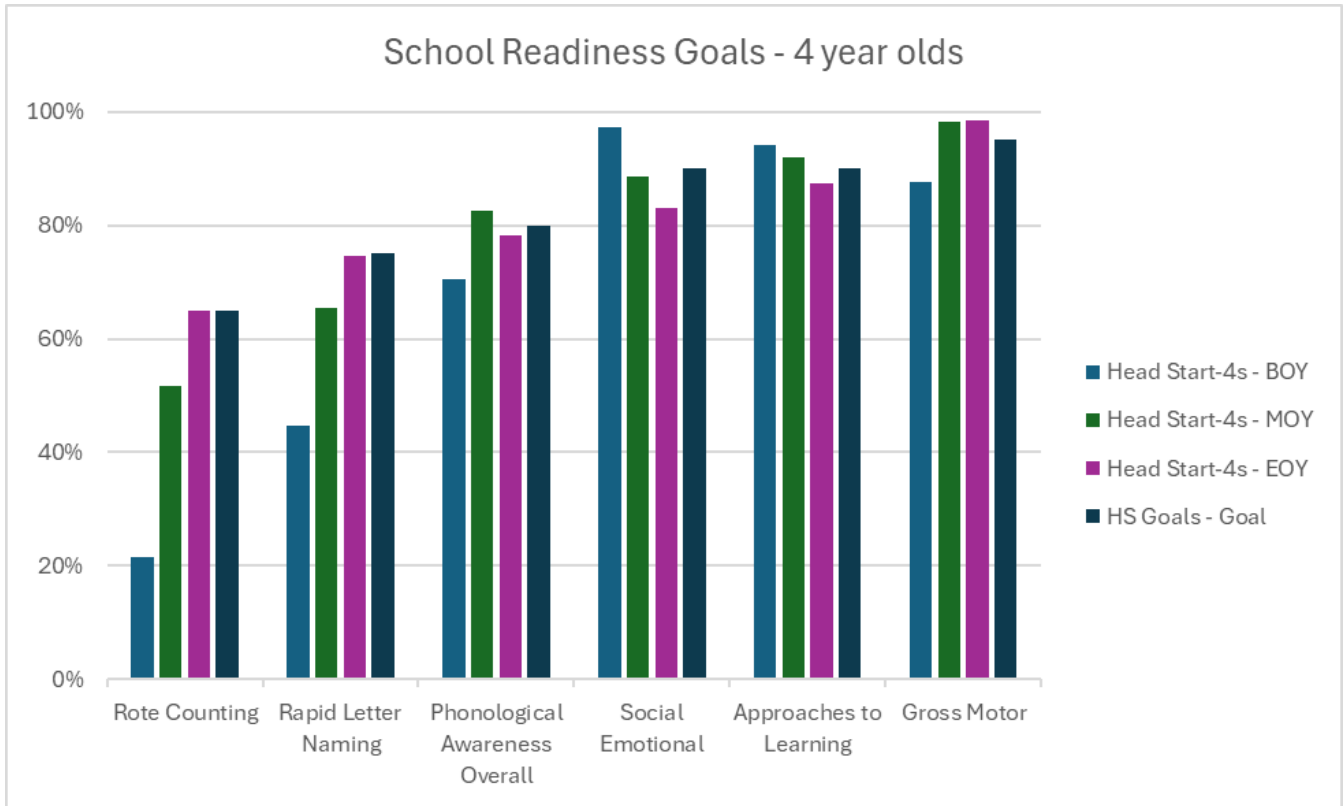
The Head Start program uses the *Children's Learning Institute (CLI) Engage Progress Monitoring* system. In contrast, the Early Head Start program employs *Teaching Strategies GOLD®*. Both systems are designed to align with state and federal early learning standards, including the Texas Early Learning Guidelines and the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. These tools enable teachers to evaluate children through direct assessments, ongoing observations, and family input. Data collected at multiple checkpoints throughout the year informs individualized learning plans, ensures alignment with EOAC school readiness goals, and facilitates communication with families and stakeholders about each child's progress.

The following sections provide an overview of each assessment system and its role in fostering the development and success of EOAC Head Start and Early Head Start children.

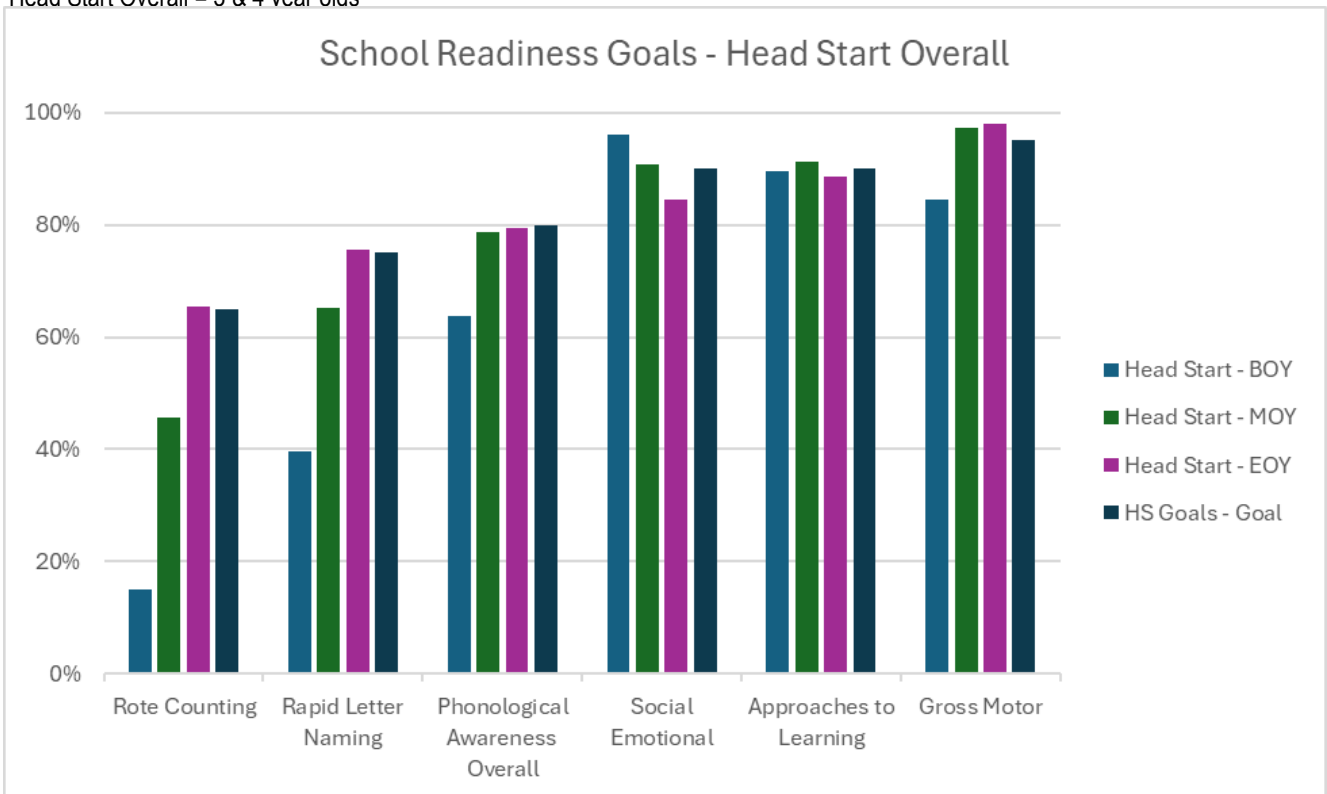
### Head Start Assessment System: Children's Learning Institute (CLI) Engage Progress Monitoring

- Utilizes 15 research-based measures to evaluate key developmental areas.
- Combines direct, one-on-one assessments conducted by teachers with observation-based assessments derived from ongoing student observations.
  - Direct assessments involve 9 measures conducted with individual children.
  - Observation-based assessments include 6 measures, with teaching staff documenting multiple weekly observations for each child.
- Progress is monitored at three key checkpoints: the Beginning of the Year (BOY/fall), Middle of the Year (MOY/winter), and End of the Year (EOY/spring).

## Outcomes of Head Start School Readiness Goals



Head Start Overall = 3 & 4 year olds





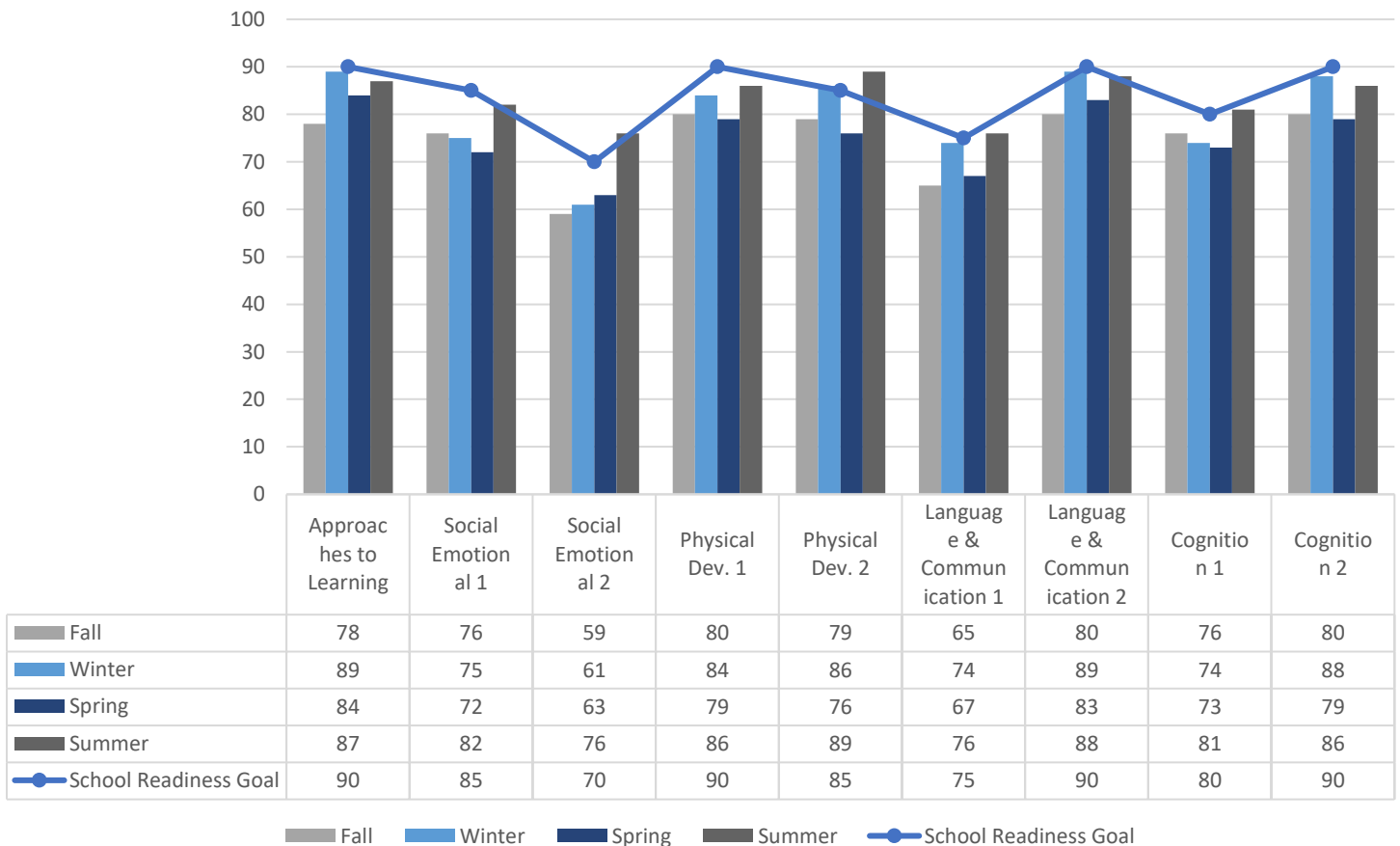
### Early Head Start Assessment System: Teaching Strategies GOLD®

1. Relies on teacher and family observations of children during everyday experiences. Teachers document multiple weekly observations for each child, focusing on 23 research-based objectives across six developmental domains: Social-Emotional, Physical, Language, Cognitive, Literacy, and Mathematics.
2. Features a color-coded system to represent widely held developmental expectations for children. Each objective includes color bands indicating expected developmental milestones by age group.
3. Enables teachers to create individual child profiles, identifying each child's current knowledge and guiding tailored scaffolding for further learning. Data is reviewed and summarized at designated checkpoints.
4. Checkpoints occur at the Beginning of the Year (BOY/fall), Middle of the Year (MOY/winter), End of the Year (EOY/spring), and summer.



## Outcomes of Early Head Start School Readiness Goals

EHS School Readiness Goals



## Family Services & Parent Engagement

EOAC Head Start/Early Head Start actively engages families through various services and activities designed to foster parent involvement, build community, and support children's development.



- **Parent Meetings:** Each EOAC Head Start/Early Head Start location hosted regular parent meetings via Zoom or in-person through their Parent Committees.
- **Policy Council:** Policy Council meetings were conducted monthly via Zoom, ensuring active governance and parental input.
- **Family Partnership Plans:** Child & Family Advocates work with families through a structured approach to engage families in their children's education and their own growth. It involves building partnerships between staff and families, identifying family strengths and needs, setting goals, and providing resources and support.
- **Home Visits and Conferences:** Families participated in two home visits and two parent-teacher conferences during the school year, promoting collaboration between teachers and families.
- **Special Events and Celebrations:** A variety of engaging activities were organized at the sites, including:
  - **Head Start Awareness Month** (October 2024)
  - **Grandparents Day** (September 2023)
  - **Father & Male Engagement Kickoff** (September 2023)
  - **Trunk or Treat Drive-Thru Health Fair** (October 2023)
  - **Harvest Meal** (November 2023)
  - **Winter Wonderland** (December 2023)
  - **Black History Program** (February 2024)
  - **Valentine's Food Activity** (February 2024)
  - **Box Car Show:** Children, with the help of their parents, created cars from cardboard boxes (March 2024).
  - **Transition Ceremonies:** Celebrations were held at each Head Start facility and collaboration site to honor students transitioning to kindergarten (May 2024).
  - **Muffins with Moms** (May 2024)
  - **Volunteer Recognition Banquet** (May 2024)
  - **Delicious Cookies with Dads** (June 2024)
  - **End-of-Year Father Engagement Activity:** A fun bowling event at Main Event (June 2024).

These activities reflect EOAC's commitment to fostering meaningful connections with families and creating a vibrant, inclusive community where children and their families thrive.



## **Parent Training Opportunities**

EOAC Head Start/Early Head Start offers a variety of training sessions and activities to empower parents and support family well-being. These opportunities include:

- Program Governance Training: Equipping parents with the knowledge and skills to participate effectively in program decision-making.
- Parenting Instruction: Featuring *Ready Rosie* and *Learning Genie* videos and activities to support parenting strategies and child development.
- Car Seat Safety: Ensuring families are informed about proper car seat usage and installation.
- CPR and First Aid Classes: Providing essential life-saving skills for emergencies.
- Health Fair and Trunk or Treat: Promoting health awareness in a fun, family-friendly environment.
- Healthy Living Workshops:
  - *Healthy Recipes, Cooking Classes, and Zumba*: Led by April Strickland from the Texas Agricultural Extension to encourage active and nutritious lifestyles.
  - *Healthy Food Preparation*: Guided by Lisa M. Hoelscher, RD, LD, to teach families how to prepare balanced and wholesome meals.

These engaging and educational opportunities are designed to support parents in fostering healthier, safer, and more nurturing environments for their families.



## **Education Resources Shared with Parents**

EOAC Head Start/Early Head Start provides parents with valuable information about educational and career advancement opportunities, including:

- GED and ESL Programs: Resources to support parents in earning their General Education Development (GED) diploma or improving English language skills.
- Child Development Associate (CDA) Certificate: Guidance for parents interested in pursuing a CDA credential to advance in early childhood education.
- College Courses: Information about local colleges and programs to help parents further their education.
- Library Cards: Encouraging family literacy by facilitating access to local library resources.
- Professional Licenses: Support for parents seeking certifications or licenses in fields such as:
  - Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)
  - Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC)
  - Truck Driving
  - Barbering

These resources are designed to empower parents to achieve their personal, educational, and professional goals.

# **Community Collaborations & Support**

## **Public School Partnerships**

EOAC Head Start is proud to collaborate with local school districts to maximize resources and provide comprehensive support for children preparing to enter kindergarten. Through these partnerships, Pre-K children are dually enrolled in the school district's Pre-K and EOAC Head Start programs.

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In this collaborative model, known as *Jumpstart*, Head Start teachers with degrees work alongside certified district teachers in district Pre-K classrooms. This joint approach ensures a cohesive learning environment that addresses each child's academic, social, and emotional needs. During the 2023–2024 school year, EOAC Head Start maintained Pre-K collaboration classrooms with the following districts:

- Harmony Science Academy
- Waco Independent School District

These partnerships reflect EOAC's commitment to fostering strong community connections and supporting children's success as they transition into kindergarten.

## **Community Support**

EOAC Head Start/Early Head Start is deeply grateful for the unwavering support of numerous providers, businesses, and community members who contribute to the success of our programs. Their generosity and partnership help us deliver essential services to children and families. Key contributors include:

- **Baylor University School of Social Work & Tarleton State University School of Social Work:** Social work interns supported serving our children and families.
- **Belmead Police Department:** Community support and engagement.
- **Better Living for Texans – McLennan County:** Nutrition education and family resources.
- **Health and Support Organizations:**
  - Andrea Zimmerman, Families, and Foster Care Coalition
  - Armando Galindo Flores BSW, United Healthcare Dental
  - Bosque Valley Children's Services,
  - Care Options for Kids, Hope & Believe, Waco Health Department, Texas Health Steps, Family Health & Dental Center, and Waco Family Medicine participate in quarterly EOAC Health Advisory Committee meetings.
  - Cheri Brock, Executive Assistant Chief of Police Bellmead Police Dept
  - David Hanlin M.S. Ed., LPC-S, Program Director, Heart of Texas Behavioral Health Network Klaras Children's Center ECI
  - Dawn Balloosingh, WIC Program Director
  - Dr. Patricia Sulak: Delivered weekly motivational mental health sessions using her Living Well Aware curriculum.
  - Elizabeth Solis and Brandon Lofton, Starry Fatherhood
  - Hannah Osborne, MSW, Methodist Children's Home (MCH) Family Outreach Center
  - Janelle R. Sokolowich, Ph.D., MSN/Ed.RN, Western Governors University
  - Kayleigh Cunningham, LMSW, Program Director Together for Good
  - Kim Sales McGee, Vocational Nursing Program.
  - Klaras Center for Children
  - Lisa M. Hoelscher, RD, LD, assists with menu preparation and conducts staff and parent training on healthy meal preparation.
  - Mathew Polk, Waco Family Medicine
  - Ms. Jarvis Lewis, CPI Alternative Response Program Director
  - Shelley Lowrey, Care Options for Kids



- Texas Agricultural Extension provided nutrition education and movement activities for families and staff.
- United Healthcare Children's Dental promoted oral health awareness.
- Waco Independent School District, Special Education Department.
- **Local Businesses and Organizations who provided essential support to our programs:**
  - Extraco Technology,
  - Fidelis Lodge 1127,
  - H-E-B, and
  - Masters Cleaners
- **Landlords:** The landlords of the Marlin and Mitchell Avenue facilities generously lease their spaces to EOAC for Head Start/Early Head Start operations.

The dedication and collaboration of these individuals and organizations strengthen our ability to serve the community and create meaningful opportunities for children and families.

## Volunteer Appreciation

EOAC Head Start held its 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Volunteer Recognition Banquet in May 2024. The Policy Council, EOAC Board, community members, parents, and staff attended. Sascee's Southern Style Eatery served dinner. Community and collaboration partners and top volunteers from each center/site were honored with a token of appreciation.



### 2023-24 Top Volunteers

Centers/Sites	Top Female Volunteer	Top Male Volunteer
1. Harmony Science Academy Jumpstart	Laura P.	Jose P.
2. HS Home Based	Maria C. & Magdalena A.	Jose G. & Luis M.
3. EHS Home Based	Marylin S.	Sergio F.
4. Johnette Hicks	Jacklyn B.	Jayden J.
5. Marlin	Tina M.	Jarvis D.
6. Mitchell	Karen G.	Arbelio V.
7. New Road	Aundrea D.	Lee G.
8. South Waco Elementary Jumpstart	Myra M.	Kenneth W.
9. Thurman E. Dorsey	Kimberly N.	Billie B.
10. West Avenue Elementary Jumpstart	Antoinette G.	Allen V.
11. Woodrow Logan	Brandi C.	Greglassia R.