

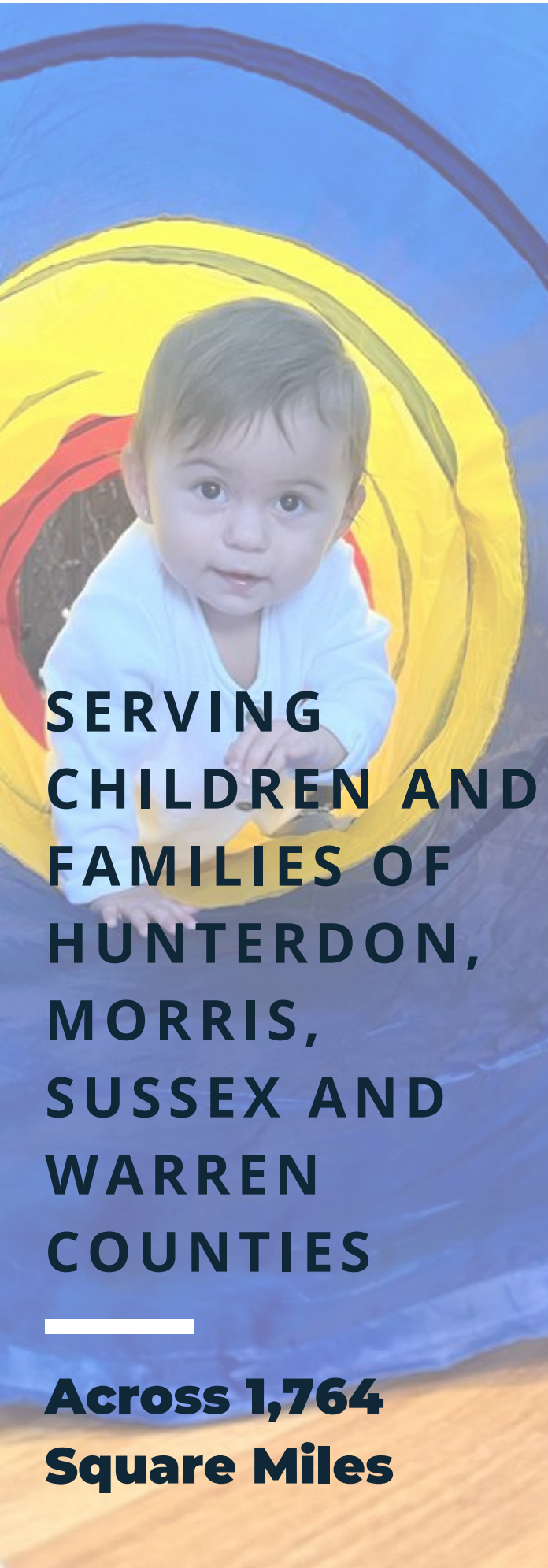


NORWESCAP
Head Start & Early Head Start



ANNUAL REPORT

2022-2023



**SERVING
CHILDREN AND
FAMILIES OF
HUNTERDON,
MORRIS,
SUSSEX AND
WARREN
COUNTIES**

**Across 1,764
Square Miles**

ABOUT NORWESCAP

Norwescap is a private, nonprofit corporation, established in 1965, serving the low-income population in Northwest NJ. We offer a comprehensive array of strategies, programs, and services to create opportunities and change lives.

At Norwescap we believe everyone should have access to high-quality educational opportunities which is why we provide educational services to young children, support youth and emerging adults in pursuing educational opportunities and help adults get an education that can fuel their careers. Norwescap is committed to supporting educational endeavors from birth through adulthood and beyond.

NORWESCAP HEAD START & EARLY HEAD START

Norwescap has provided high quality Head Start programs since 1965. Our programs promote the school readiness of young children from low-income families through the delivery of free education, health, nutrition, mental health, and social services.

HEAD START & EARLY HEAD START MISSION

Enhance the development of low-income pregnant mothers and children 0-5 in supportive partnership with their families and in collaboration with the community through the delivery of education, health, nutrition, mental health and social services.



COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Norwescap Head Start and Early Head Start provide services to 516 children and families in four counties of New Jersey. Hunterdon, Morris, Sussex, and Warren Counties are located in the northwest region of the state. The geographic location and rural environment allows for an innovative approach to the delivery of services.

Within these counties, there is a wealth gap for a portion of the population resulting in “pockets of poverty.” Meeting the needs of this vulnerable population is challenging for many different reasons. The Norwescap Head Start and Early Head Start Community Assessment provided the opportunity to analyze the assets, needs and trends in each community. The Community Assessment Update also provided the opportunity to collectively discuss ideas on the group’s ability to leverage resources in order to close gaps.





HEAD START & EARLY HEAD START POPULATION

High concentrated areas of poverty often lack basic resources to allow individuals to obtain and maintain sustainability. Norwescap Head Start and Early Head Start (HS/EHS) has identified those catchment areas within each county. The percentages listed below indicate the HS/EHS services provided to the estimated eligible population within each catchment area of the county.

Hunterdon		Morris	Sussex		Warren	
HS	EHS	EHS	HS	EHS	HS	EHS
37%	39%	10%	26%	16%	29%	11.4%



CONCERNS, GAPS, TRENDS

During the 2022-2023 Community Assessment, assets, gaps and trends within each of the four counties were identified. The areas of concern and key trends remain relatively constant within the four counties and are similar to the concerns raised during the 2021-2022 Community Assessment.

HOUSING

A lack of affordable housing within each county exists. In addition, some families are sharing housing to defer costs. During the community assessment, a home visitor explained that families are "stacking"- multiple families living in one dwelling in which housing costs and childcare is shared among dwellers. In extreme circumstances, lease-holders will rent out the use of a couch or bathroom. "Stacking" presents various health and safety concerns including established primary caregivers for infants and toddlers, disruptive routines for children and families, exposure to transient individuals with unidentified health concerns and basic building safety concerns. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of the Norwescap Head Start and Early Head Start families have either shared housing because of economic hardship or considered themselves homeless.



Although the counties served by Norwescap Head Start and Early Head Start are considered to be among the wealthiest in the nation, housing for the population we serve is a major issue. Households paying more than 30% of their income on rent are as follows: Hunterdon County 41%, Morris County 43%, Sussex County 38%, and Warren County 44%. Unstable housing contributes to family stress impacting family engagement, school readiness, and the health and safety of the occupants.

AFFORDABLE, QUALITY CHILDCARE

The cost and availability of childcare in general, and infant-toddler care specifically, is a major challenge for low-income families. Many counties experienced a decrease in the capacity of their licensed childcare centers, indicating that the remaining centers serve even fewer children than before. Within Hunterdon County, Morris County, Sussex County and Warren County, the number of licensed childcare centers and the capacity of those centers have experienced a steady decline for the past five years. The number of slots available for infants and toddlers likely to need childcare does not meet the demand.



TRANSPORTATION

The rural nature of the four counties makes transportation a challenge. The cost of gas, insurance and related automobile expenses put a heavy burden on families. The lack of public transportation and the remote location of each county hinder families from obtaining the necessary, critical services, including childcare.



Employees work diligently to connect families to services. However, services can be delayed while appropriate transportation arrangements are coordinated. As an organization, Norwescap has faced significant challenges in hiring and retaining qualified bus drivers. Further research has revealed a national driver shortage. The National School Transportation Association reported "...the pool for traditional driver applicants is shrinking." This means contractors and school districts are forced to be more resourceful in attracting new driver candidates with additional programs, such as recruitment and sign-on bonuses, which in turn increase costs. Added challenges include the rise in healthcare premiums, workman's compensation and vehicle insurance. In addition, the cost to replace school buses that cost \$85,000 to \$100,000 is straining budgets.

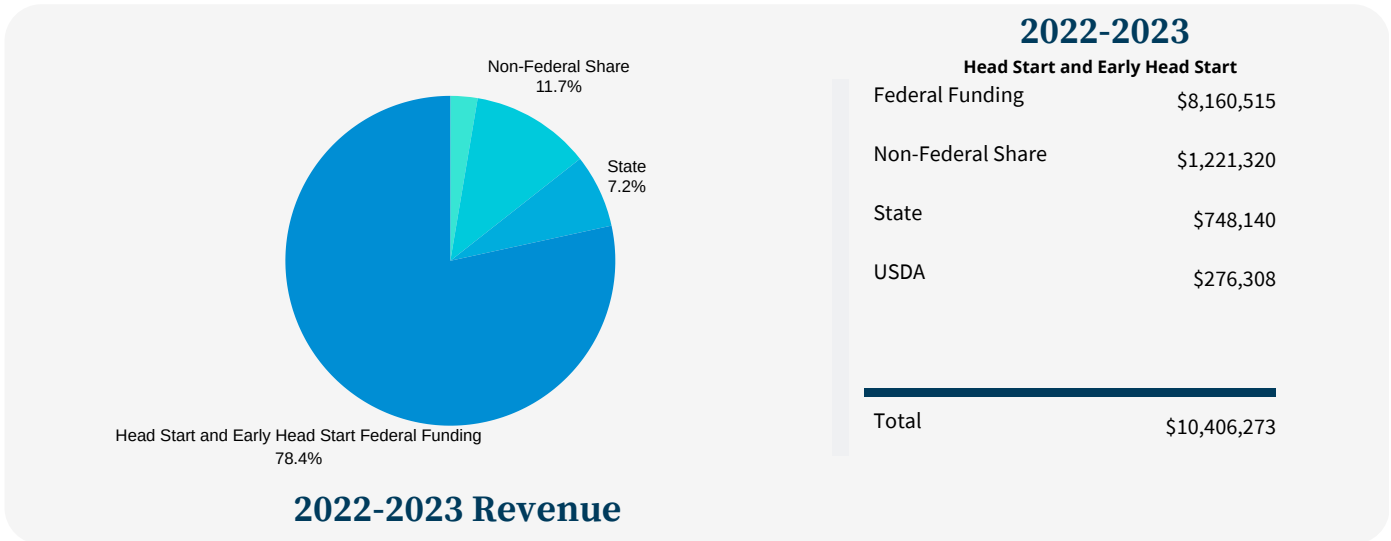
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Community mental health services have been reduced in all four counties. In addition, families have reported a reluctance to seek out mental health services because of a perceived stigma. Ten percent (10%) of Norwescap Head Start and Early Head Start parents/caregivers report having mental health concerns. In addition to parental health concerns, there is a rise in the number of preschool children presenting with severe challenging behaviors.





HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START BUDGET, REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES



Federal Funding	\$8,160,515
Non-Federal Share	\$1,221,320
State	\$748,140
USDA	\$276,308
Total	\$10,406,273

2022-2023 Head Start and Early Head Start Budget and Expenditures

<u>Budget Category</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>
Salary	\$4,898,752.00	\$4,734,206.82
Fringe	\$1,449,769.00	\$1,391,829.02
Total Personnel	\$6,348,521.00	\$6,126,035.84
Equipment	\$00.00	\$00.00
Travel	\$10,032.00	\$8,554.91
Supplies	\$68,333.00	\$101,099.78
Contractual	\$66,747.00	\$57,984.16
Other	\$1,089,981.00	\$1,292,948.06
IDC	\$576,901.00	\$573,892.25
Total	\$8,160,515.00	\$8,160,515.00

Program Services

Program	Head Start	Early Head Start
Funded Enrollment	236	280
Cumulative Enrollment	239	298
Categorically Eligible	94%	91%
Families Served	229	258

Monthly Enrollment

Month	Head Start		Early Head Start	
	Enrolled	% of Funded Enrollment	Enrolled	% of Funded Enrollment
September 2022	194	82%	175	63%
October 2022	211	89%	202	72%
November 2022	211	89%	222	79%
December 2022	211	89%	222	79%
January 2023	215	91%	231	83%
February 2023	214	90%	229	85%
March 2023	211	89%	226	81%
April 2023	213	90%	223	80%
May 2023	214	90%	230	82%
June 2023	78	87%*	224	80%
July 2023	Closed	0%	217	78%
August 2023	Closed	0%	185	66%

*146 HS slots end in May; 90 HS school district collaboration slots continue through mid-June.

PROGRAM MONITORING

Norwescap Head Start and Early Head Start monitor and manage multiple sites encompassing a combined total of 1,764 miles within Hunterdon, Morris, Sussex and Warren Counties. Systems have been designed to consistently reach Head Start goals, milestones, and deadlines.



Continuous, ongoing monitoring and quality program improvement is embedded through the delivery of services. Norwescap Head Start and Early Head Start have the organizational capacity and ability to successfully oversee program operations that comply with applicable federal, state and local regulations. During the 2020-2021 program year, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted the Focus Area 2 Review. It was noted that Norwescap Head Start and Early Head Start was in compliance with all aspects of the review including Program Management and Quality Improvement, Education and Child Development Services, Health Services, Family and Community Engagement Services, Monitoring and Implementing a Fiscal Infrastructure, and Monitoring ERSEA- Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance. *"Based on the information gathered during this review, we have found your program meets the requirements of all applicable HSPPS, laws, regulations, and policy requirements."*

Child Health Services

Program Information Report Indicators	Head Start		Early Head Start	
	Enrolled	%	Enrolled	%
Children are up to date on schedule of EPDST at end of year	239	100%	280	94%
Of the above, children with chronic health condition needing treatment	12	5%	15	5%
Of the above children, number who received treatment	12	100%	15	100%
Preschool children who completed a professional dental exam	198	83%	N/A	N/A
Of the above children, number who needed treatment	68	34%	N/A	N/A
Of the children needing treatment, number who received it	24	35%	N/A	N/A
Children with health insurance (end of program year)	227	95%	273	92%
Children with a medical home (end of program year)	239	100%	283	95%
Children up to date on immunizations (end of program year)	230	96%	261	88%



Child Disability Services

Performance Indicator	Head Start	Early Head Start
Funded Child Enrollment	236	280
Number of Children with IEP/IFSP	11	56
Of these, the number who were determined to receive special education and relates services (HS) or early intervention (EHS)		
Prior to enrollment		32
During this program year		24
Percentage of Enrollment	4.6%	20%

PARENT, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Families play a critical role in Head Start and Early Head Start. Norwescap Head Start and Early Head Start have an established Policy Council through which parents participate in making decisions about their Head Start program. The Policy Council assists in developing program policies, making decisions with regard to the hiring and terminating of staff, developing the budget and determining program priorities. A Parent Association Committee (PAC) is established at each center and is comprised of the parents of currently enrolled children. Parents are surveyed for the types of activities or workshops in which they would like to participate in during PAC meetings. Parents develop leadership skills and experiences as they take on the planning and development of these activities and services. Norwescap Head Start and Early Head Start is a community-based, parent program, which requires parent participation. Donations of goods or services reflect 20% of the Head Start and Early Head Start budget. Family workers and education staff encourage and invite parents to volunteer in the classroom, kitchen, and office. Parents are encouraged to work on special activities engaging parents with the program and each other.

- Families volunteered 57,701 hours during the 2022-2023 program year.
- Norwescap Head Start and Early Head Start reported \$1,969,460.00 in non-federal/in-kind match.



Fatherhood Engagement and Volunteerism

Fatherhood Engagement Performance Indicator	Head Start	Early Head Start
Number of fathers/father figures who were engaged in the following activities this program year:		
Family assessment	62	47
Goal setting	57	41
Involvement in child's developmental experiences	100	83
Program governance- Policy Council, PAC	3	8
Parenting education workshops	18	9
Volunteerism Performance Indicator	Head Start	Early Head Start
Number of persons providing any volunteer services to the program since last year	547	335
Of these, the number who are current or former Head Start or Early Head Start parents	352	269

EDUCATION AND SCHOOL READINESS

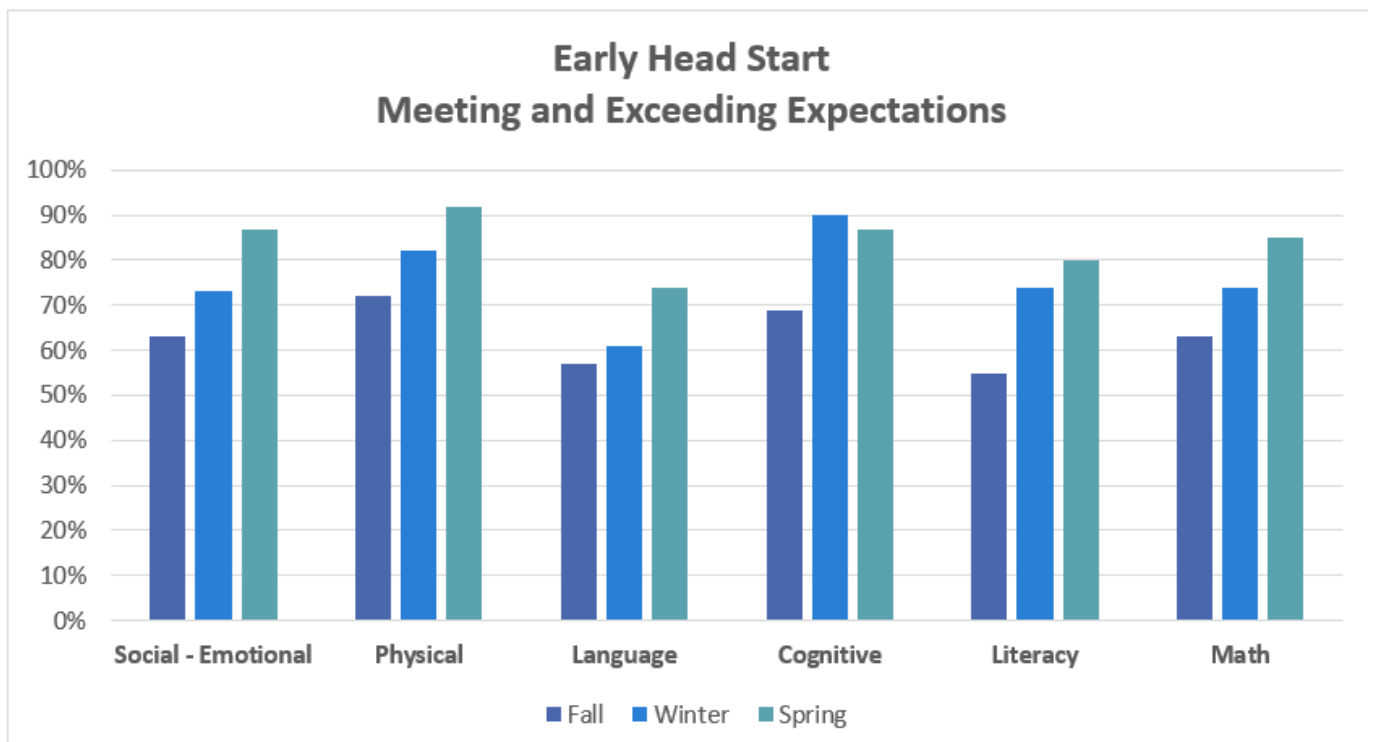
The education curriculum is reviewed with families on a regular basis to ensure that parents are involved in assessing the curriculum's effectiveness in meeting the needs and development of each child enrolled in the program. It is the philosophy of Norwescap Head Start and Early Head Start that parents are the primary educators of their children. Administrative and center staff recruit parents to become active members of the program and the community.

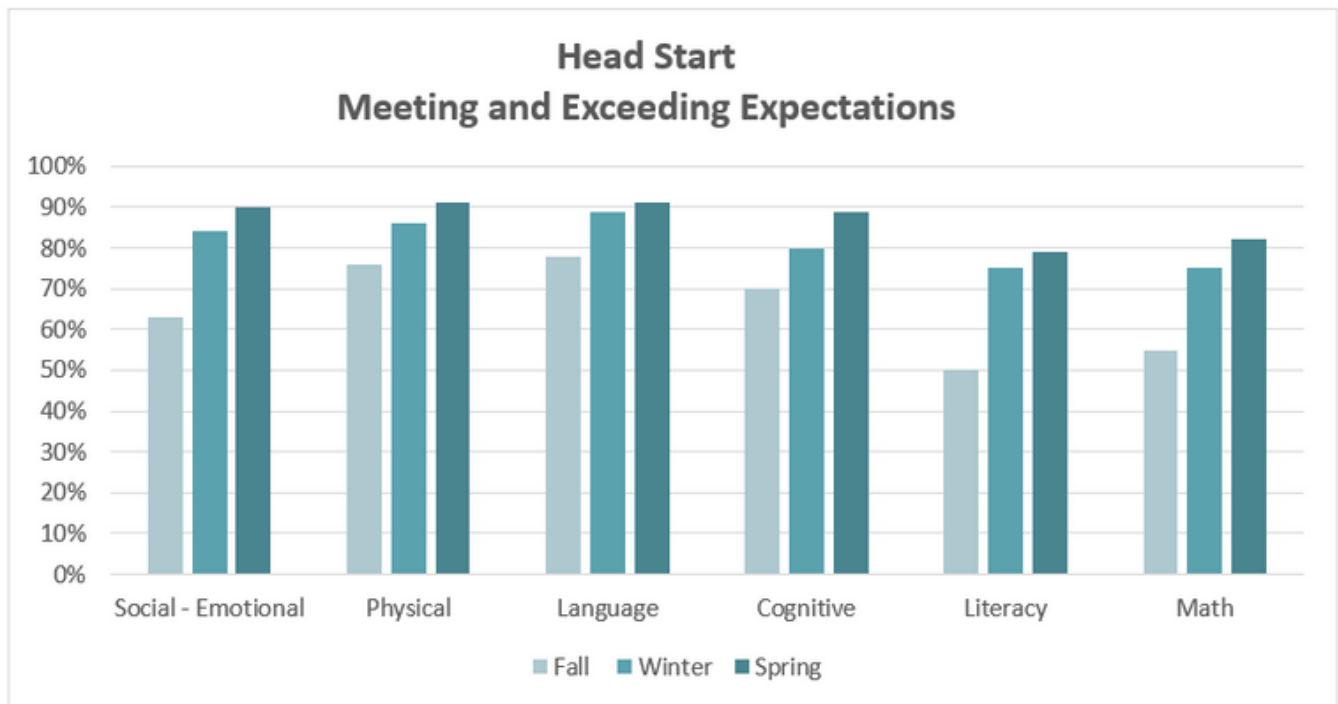
The curriculum process prepares children for kindergarten. After an initial screening using the Early Screening Inventory, preschool teachers and home visitors individualize their lesson plans by setting goals to meet the needs of each child. For children transitioning to kindergarten, this includes skills in the areas of physical health and development, social and emotional development, approaches to learning, logic and reasoning, language development, literacy mathematics, science, creative arts expression, social studies and English language development for dual language learners.



Throughout the year, the goals and accomplishments are updated and reviewed with each child’s parents. Additional assessments through the year, using Teaching Strategies GOLD, provide the necessary data to determine outcomes and to develop continuous improvement plans. Individual development plans for infants and toddlers are based on the results of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire screening and the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment. Infants and toddlers are being prepared for success in school by thoughtfully planned activities that develop social-emotional, physical, cognitive and language skills while promoting confidence, curiosity, intentionality, self-control, relatedness, capacity to communicate and cooperativeness.

**Norwescap Head Start and Early Head Start
2022-2023 Teaching Strategies GOLD
School Readiness- Areas of Development**





Outcomes for Program Year 2022-2023

The final checkpoints in Head Start reveal that over 87% of three- and four-year-olds are meeting or exceeding expectations. A higher percentage of growth was identified for three-year olds in the areas of mathematics and cognition. The final check points for the four-year-olds indicate the highest percentage of growth took place in mathematics and literacy. Ninety-six percent of the Head Start children transitioning to kindergarten completed 11 out of the 18 individual outcomes based on the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework - HSELOF.

Early Head Start showed growth in all areas, with the most significant growth in language. Based on HSELOF, 91% of the EHS children transitioning to preschool completed 9 of the 14 individual outcomes.



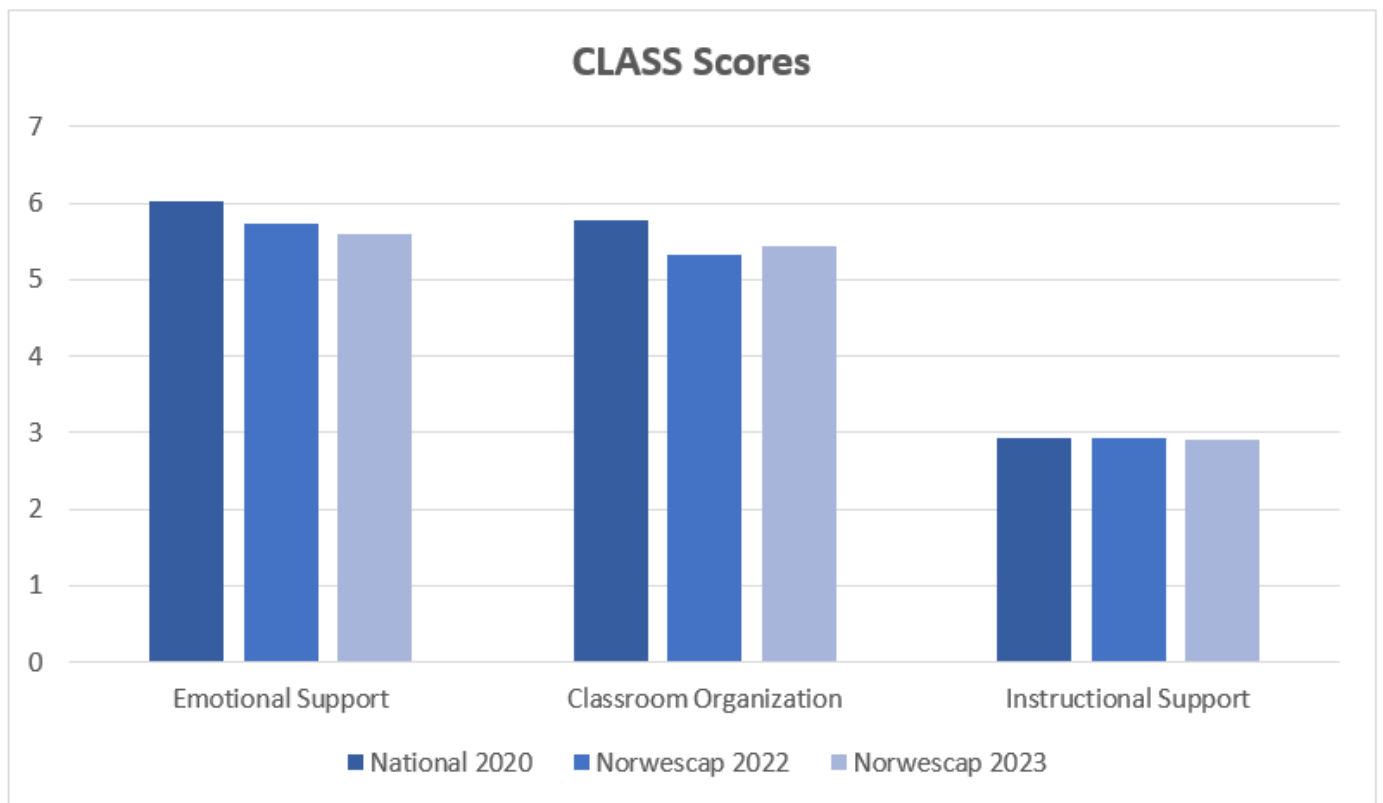


CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT SCORING SYSTEM (CLASS)

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System™ (CLASS™) is an observational instrument developed to assess classroom quality in PK-12 classrooms. It describes multiple dimensions of teaching that are linked to student achievement and development and has been validated in over 2,000 classrooms. The CLASS™ can be used to reliably assess classroom quality for research and program evaluation and also provide a tool to help new and experienced teachers become more effective.

The CLASS review scheduled for PY 2021-2022 was cancelled by the Office of Head Start. The data below reflects CLASS scores from previous years.

The chart below indicates the comparison of the National CLASS scores, and Norwescap 2022 and 2023 CLASS scores. Classroom Assessment Scoring System is used to define professional development needs and continuous quality improvement





EMOTIONAL SUPPORT:

Assesses the degree to which teachers establish and promote positive climate in their classroom through their everyday interactions. (National Average 6.03, Norwescap 2022 Average 5.73, Norwescap Fall 2023 5.59)

CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION:

Assesses classroom routines and procedures related to the organization and management of children's behavior, time, and attention in the classroom. (National Average 5.78, Norwescap 2022 5.32, Norwescap Fall 2023 5.44)

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT:

Instructional Support Assesses the way in which teachers implement the curriculum to effectively promote cognitive and language development. (National Average 2.94, Norwescap 2022 2.92, Norwescap Fall 2023 2.9)





NORWESCAP
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**Creating Opportunities.
Changing Lives.**

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