



# Annual Report 2023-2024

Approved by the Board of Directors December 12, 2024  
and Policy Council December 12, 2024

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# Executive Director's Message

Dear Families, Staff, and Community Partners,

As we reflect on the past year, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for the incredible accomplishments of our Head Start program. This has been a year of growth, resilience, and unwavering commitment to the children and families we serve. Together, we have continued to lay a strong foundation for lifelong success for the youngest members of our community.

Over the past year, we have expanded our reach, improved program outcomes, and strengthened partnerships to meet the evolving needs of our children and families. Through the hard work and dedication of our staff, the guidance of our governing bodies, and the support of our community partners, we have made tremendous strides in delivering comprehensive services that empower families and foster a love for learning in our children.

This year, we proudly served 81 children and their families, ensuring that each child received the individualized attention and resources they needed to thrive. From implementing innovative teaching strategies to enhancing our health and nutrition programs, every effort was made to nurture the holistic development of our children. These successes would not have been possible without the unwavering dedication of our staff, who go above and beyond every day to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

We also recognize that our work extends beyond the classroom. Engaging and supporting families as active participants in their child's education is at the heart of what we do. This year, we introduced Positive Solutions for Families, which have strengthened family engagement and fostered stronger community ties.

As we look ahead, we remain steadfast in our commitment to innovation, collaboration, and excellence. We will continue to adapt to the ever-changing landscape of early childhood education, leveraging data-driven practices and community insights to meet the needs of our families effectively. Together, we will ensure that every child in our program has the opportunity to reach their fullest potential.

Thank you for your continued trust and support. Your dedication to our shared vision inspires us daily and fuels our drive to create lasting change. We are honored to be part of your journey and look forward to another year of growth, learning, and shared success.

With gratitude and hope,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cherie".

Cherie Errecart  
Executive Director  
Central Montana Head Start





# Introduction

## **Introduction:**

CMHS is a comprehensive childhood development program that promotes school readiness in preschool age children from low income families. CMHS promotes education, physical and oral health, positive social/emotional development, and healthy nutrition. Enrolled children have access to a stable, nurturing and encouraging environment that prepares children for success with education and life. CMHS focuses on supporting families to identify strengths, work towards goals, and build the skills to be their child's first teacher.

CMHS incorporates Creative Curriculum for preschoolers, Child Protection Unit, Conscious Discipline, and Pyramid Model into all enrolled children's education. Every activity in our classrooms provides an educational opportunity for enrolled children to grow in relationship building, self regulation, ability to classify, sharing, recognize name or letters, and supplement vocabulary by listening and following directions.

CMHS serves 64 children and their families in Fergus County, 16 in Musselshell County, and 16 in Wheatland County, ninety percent of all children enrolled in CMHS must meet the federal poverty income guidelines. Ten percent of enrollment is required to be children with disabilities.

## **Our Mission:**

Central Montana Head Start is an Early Learning Center that empowers the whole child and family through health, education, and self-sufficiency.

## **Our Vision:**

Our vision is to continuously advocate for the growth and development of the whole child. With our nurturing and exceptional teams, we aim to maximize services for our children and their families by providing the best early childhood education and wellness programs in our community.



# Financial Report

2023-2024 audited financial statements available upon request. There were no findings or material concerns with regards to Central Montana Head Start's financial reports, compliance with major Federal programs or internal controls. This financial report is presenting information on the Head Start grant and related funding.

## 2023-2024

Head Start Grant	\$ 1,332,410
Cost of Living Adjustment & Quality Improvement Funding	<u>100,922</u>
Total Federal Head Start Grant	\$ 1,433,332
Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	66,430
Donations	800
Other Income	<u>40</u>
Total Funding Sources	<u>\$ 1,500,602</u>
Non-Federal Share Required	333,103
23-24 Actual Non-Federal Share	484,955

## EXPENDITURES

SALARIES	\$ 945,989.00
FRINGE BENEFITS	212,002.00
OCCUPANCY	93,522.00
OFFICE AND INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPLIES	32,934.00
COMPUTER EQUIPMENT/SUPPORT	32,714.00
TRAVEL & MILEAGE	24,325.00
CONTRACTUAL	28,545.00
OTHER	14,072.00
NUTRITIONAL SUPPLIES	34,236.00
TRAINING	9,176.00
BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS EQUIPMENT	<u>56,221.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	<u>\$ 1,500,602</u>

## Proposed 2024-2025 Budget

Head Start Grant	\$ 1,433,332
Cost of Living Adjustment & Quality Improvement Funding	<u>33,321</u>
Total Federal Head Start Grant	\$ 1,466,653
Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	<u>46,500</u>
Total Funding Sources	<u>\$ 1,513,153</u>
Non-Federal Share Required	\$ 366,663

## EXPENDITURES

SALARIES	\$ 972,662.00
FRINGE BENEFITS	254,556.00
OCCUPANCY	61,603.00
OFFICE AND INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPLIES	23,500.00
COMPUTER EQUIPMENT/SUPPORT	31,548.00
TRAVEL & MILEAGE	21,697.00
CONTRACTUAL	27,000.00
OTHER	11,700.00
NUTRITIONAL SUPPLIES	37,400.00
TRAINING	24,987.00
EQUIPMENT	21,500.00
BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS	<u>25,000.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	<u>\$ 1,513,153</u>



# Annual Enrollment

Central Montana Head Start (CMHS) is funded to serve 96 age and income eligible participants. Enrollment of the children served throughout the CMHS region is determined by the selection criteria which is based upon the community assessment and has been developed with the help of the Board of Directors, Policy Council, and staff. The Head Start Program Performance Standards along with CMHS policies and procedures are used as guidelines. CMHS was not fully enrolled in the 2023-2024 school year. In November 2023, CMHS was put on an Full Enrollment Initiative and applied for a Reduction in Enrollment/Change in Scope.

## Ethnicity of Enrolled Children

- 78% Caucasian
- 20% Biracial/Multi-racial
- 1% American Indian or Alaska Native
- 1% Asian
- 0% Other

## Eligibility of Children

- 68% 0-100% Federal Poverty
- 16% 101%-130% Federal Poverty
- 10% Over Income
- 6% Medically Underserved

## Average Monthly Enrollment

Month	# Enrolled	% Funded Enrollment
August	70	73%
September	73	76%
October	74	77%
November	74	77%
December	73	76%
January	73	76%
February	73	76%
March	73	76%
April	72	75%
May	72	75%



# Child Outcomes

CMHS uses the Creative Curriculum® System for preschool as its primary curricula. Creative Curriculum® is researched based and aligned with the Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF). Teaching Strategies GOLD™ is the on-line assessment CMHS uses to monitor children’s skills and progress in the school readiness goals.

## Central Montana Head Start Child Outcomes Data

Domain	Goal	Checkpoints	
Health & Physical Development	TSG 4, 5, 6, 21a	Fall 2023/ 2024	89%
		Winter 2023/ 2024	92%
		Spring 2023/ 2024	93%
Health & Physical Development	TSG 7a, 7b	Fall 2023/ 2024	90%
		Winter 2023/ 2024	93%
		Spring 2023/ 2024	97%
Language & Literacy	TSG 8a, 8b, 9b, 9d, 10a, 10b	Fall 2023/ 2024	78%
		Winter 2023/ 2024	88%
		Spring 2023/ 2024	89%
Language & Literacy	TSG 9a, 9c, 13	Fall 2023/ 2024	77%
		Winter 2023/2024	90%
		Spring 2023/ 2024	92%
Language & Literacy	TSG 15c, 16a, 16b	Fall 2023/ 2024	80%
		Winter 2023/ 2024	89%
		Spring 2023/ 2024	92%
Social & Emotional	TSG 1a, 3a, 3b	Fall 2023/2024	82%
		Winter 2023/ 2024	89%
		Spring 2023/ 2024	92%
Social & Emotional	TSG 2b, 2c, 2d	Fall 2023/ 2024	80%
		Winter 2023/ 2024	80%
		Spring 2023/2024	90%
Cognition and General Knowledge	TSG 20e, 20f	Fall 2023/ 2024	100%
		Winter 2023/ 2024	100%
		Spring 2023/ 2024	100%
Cognition and General Knowledge	TSG 20a, 20c	Fall 2023/ 2024	69%
		Winter 2023/ 2024	79%
		Spring 2023/ 2024	83%
Cognition and General Knowledge	TSG 21a	Fall 2023/2024	82%
		Winter 2023/2024	91%
		Spring 2023/ 2024	85%
Approaches to Learning	TSG 1b, 1c	Fall 2023/ 2024	88%
		Winter 2023/ 2024	93%
		Spring 2023/ 2024	97%
Approaches to Learning	TSG 11a, 11b	Fall 2023/ 2024	77%
		Winter 2023/ 2024	89%
		Spring 2023/ 2024	95%



# Health Services

In accordance with Head Start Program Performance Standards, CMHS uses the Montana EPSDT (Early, Periodic, Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment) guidelines to provide health services to enrolled children and families.

Our guidelines state within 30 days of entering the program, CMHS is required to determine if each child has an ongoing source of continuous, accessible dental and medical homes, and insurance. Children are required to have a vision. hearing, DECA, and Brigance screening within 45 days and are required to have physical exam, dental exam, lead and hematocrit test, and be up to date on all immunizations within 90 days of the first day of enrollment.

CMHS guidelines require our program to track any necessary follow-up appointments. Appointed Head Start staff work with families needing follow-up treatment to assist in setting up appointments to ensure that treatment can be completed.

## Physical & Dental Exams in 2023-2024 (81 Children Served)

Children with Medical Home	83%
Medical Exam Completed	72%
Medical Referrals	2%
Children up to date with ESPDT Schedule	67%
Children with Dental Home	63%
Dental Exam Completed	74%
Dental Referrals	2%
Dental Treatment Received	2%

## Children's Health Insurance

Healthy MT Kids	69%
Private Insurance	15%
Other Insurance	0%
No Insurance	7%

## Transitions

**Lewistown Center:** Each class was able to attend Garfield Elementary and visit/tour the school. They met the kindergarten teachers while they were there. One of the kindergarten teachers read them a book and provided a little activity. CMHS teachers and kindergarten teachers met and discussed placement of students. Transition celebrations were held for each class for parents and family to attend.

**Harlowton Center:** Harlowton students visit Hillcrest Elementary in the summer before school begins. CMHS teachers met the kindergarten teacher and discussed placement of students. Transition celebrations were held for parents and family to attend.

**Roundup Center:** Roundup students were able to go to Roundup Elementary and visit/tour the school. They spent time in each kindergarten class visiting with the students and the teacher read a book. They had recess and lunch with the kindergarten class. The principal made himself available to parents to answer questions or concerns they might have. Transition celebrations were held for parents and family to attend.





# Parent Involvement/ Community Partners

## Parent Involvement:

CMHS believes that as a child's first teacher, the role of the parent is to nurture, protect, and prepare their children for academic and social success. CMHS supports this by offering events like Read and Feeds, family engagement, parenting curriculum, and Parent Meetings in all sites.



## Community Partners:

CMHS had 151 volunteers in our centers this year. Our community partners include community agencies, school districts, service clubs, students, community volunteers, Retired and Seniors Volunteer Program (RSVP) volunteers, Musselshell Unity Drive, law enforcement, health providers, nursing students, faith-based organizations, and many more who make it possible for Head Start to continue serving low-income children and families in our communities. They give their time, energy, and resources so that Head Start can continue to enhance the lives of children and meet CMHS in-kind obligations.