



2023-2024 Annual Report

Prepared by

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SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five Vision Statement

Building on a cornerstone of success that inspires all children and families to reach their full potential.

This report is prepared to comply with the Head Start Reauthorization Act of 2007. This act states:

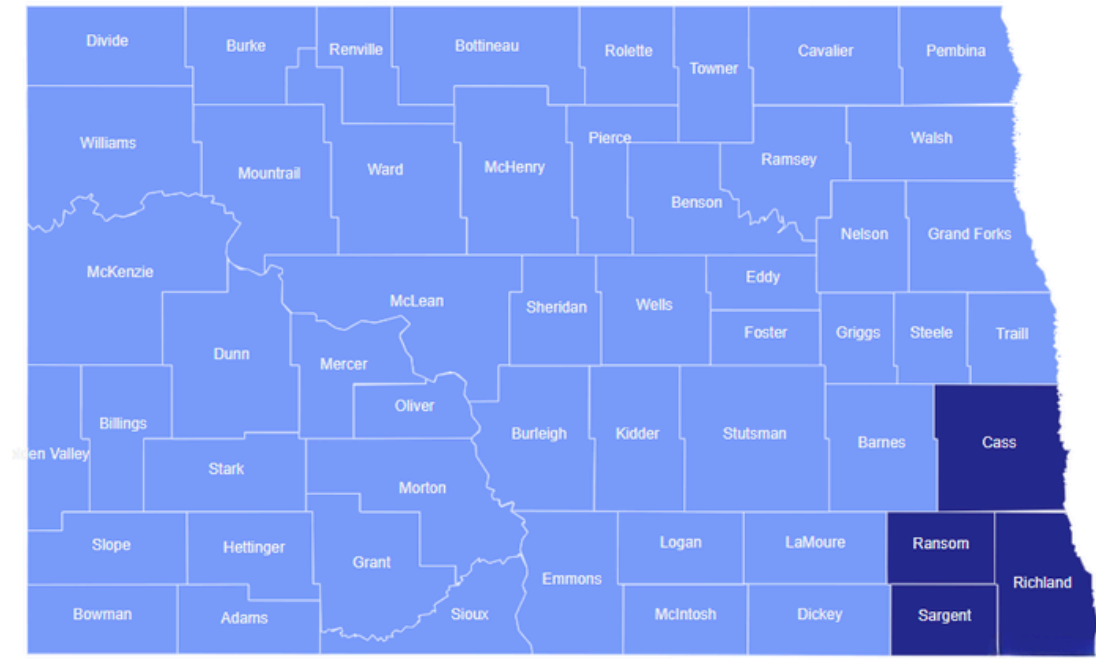
Each Head Start agency shall make available to the public a report published at least once in each fiscal year that discloses the following information from the most recently concluded fiscal year, except that reporting such information shall not reveal personally identifiable information about an individual child or parent:

- (A) The total amount of public and private funds received and the amount from each source.
- (B) An explanation of budgetary expenditures and proposed budget for the fiscal year.
- (C) The total number of children and families served, the average monthly enrollment (as a percentage of funded enrollment), and the percentage of eligible children served.
- (D) The results of the most recent review by the Secretary and the financial audit.
- (E) The percentage of enrolled children that received medical and dental exams.
- (F) Information about parent involvement activities.
- (G) The agency's efforts to prepare children for kindergarten.
- (H) Any other information required by the Secretary.

SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five Mission Statement

Creating a community of learners through nurturing children and engaging families.

ABOUT OUR PROGRAM



Head Start & Early Head Start programs exist to provide comprehensive early childhood education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to low-income children and their families. Our program provides services to a total of 361 children from birth to 5 years of age. Our Early Head Start program also has a Pregnant Moms Program, which reserves 4 slots to pregnant women. Our program provides support for emotional well-being, nurturing and responsive caregiving, and father engagement during pregnancy and beyond.

The SENDCAA (Southeastern North Dakota Community Action Agency) Head Start Birth to Five Program provides these comprehensive services to children and their families at our various locations across North Dakota. We have sites located in Lisbon, Wahpeton, West Fargo and Fargo. Our administrative team consists of the following: Project Director, Assistant Director, ERSEA/Family Partnerships Coordinator, Health & Nutrition Coordinator, Education Coordinators, Administrator of Operations, and Administrative Assistant. This team oversees and supports the overall direction of the program.

We have staff who provide direct services to children in the classroom- teachers, teacher assistants, and behavior support staff. With support of program Education Coordinators, Mental Health/Disability Coordinator, and our coaching team, these staff focus on providing services in the areas of Social-Emotional, Cognitive, Physical, Mathematics, Literacy, and Language. Our program implements the Creative Curriculum and Conscious Discipline in the classrooms.

The SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five Program also provides services to families in the areas of health, nutrition, and family involvement. Family Support Coordinators (Health Coordinators, Family Advocates) support families in maintaining overall child health & wellness, providing a variety of parent education and resources, and encouraging routine family participation. We have wonderful cooks who meet the nutritional needs of the children enrolled in our program.

5 YEAR GRANT GOALS

- To increase staff knowledge of community partnerships with service agencies in the community that will help us more effectively meet our family's overall needs. These partnerships will include health service providers, family service agencies, educational systems, and mental health and disability providers.
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- To effectively train new and current employees in their respective roles to promote longevity and success within the program.
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- To improve communication within the program to staff, parents, and the community.



EXPENDITURES & PROPOSED BUDGET

2023-2024 GRANT YEAR BUDGET

<i>Grant Revenue</i>	<i>Federal</i>	<i>State</i>
US Dept Health & Human Services	4,215,161.00	
USDA		283,271.00
In-Kind	1,275,044.00	
Total Program Revenues	5,490,205.00	283,271.00

<i>Program Expenses</i>		
Salary & Wages	2,575,432.00	109,819.00
Fringe	715,271.00	27,929.00
Contracted Services	47,660.00	
Supplies	147,768.00	
Travel	10,069.00	
Space Costs/Rentals	508,896.00	
Other Direct Costs	164,570.00	145,523.00
Insurance	45,495.00	
In-Kind	1,275,044.00	
Total Program Expenses	5,490,205.00	283,271.00

PROPOSED BUDGET 2024-2025

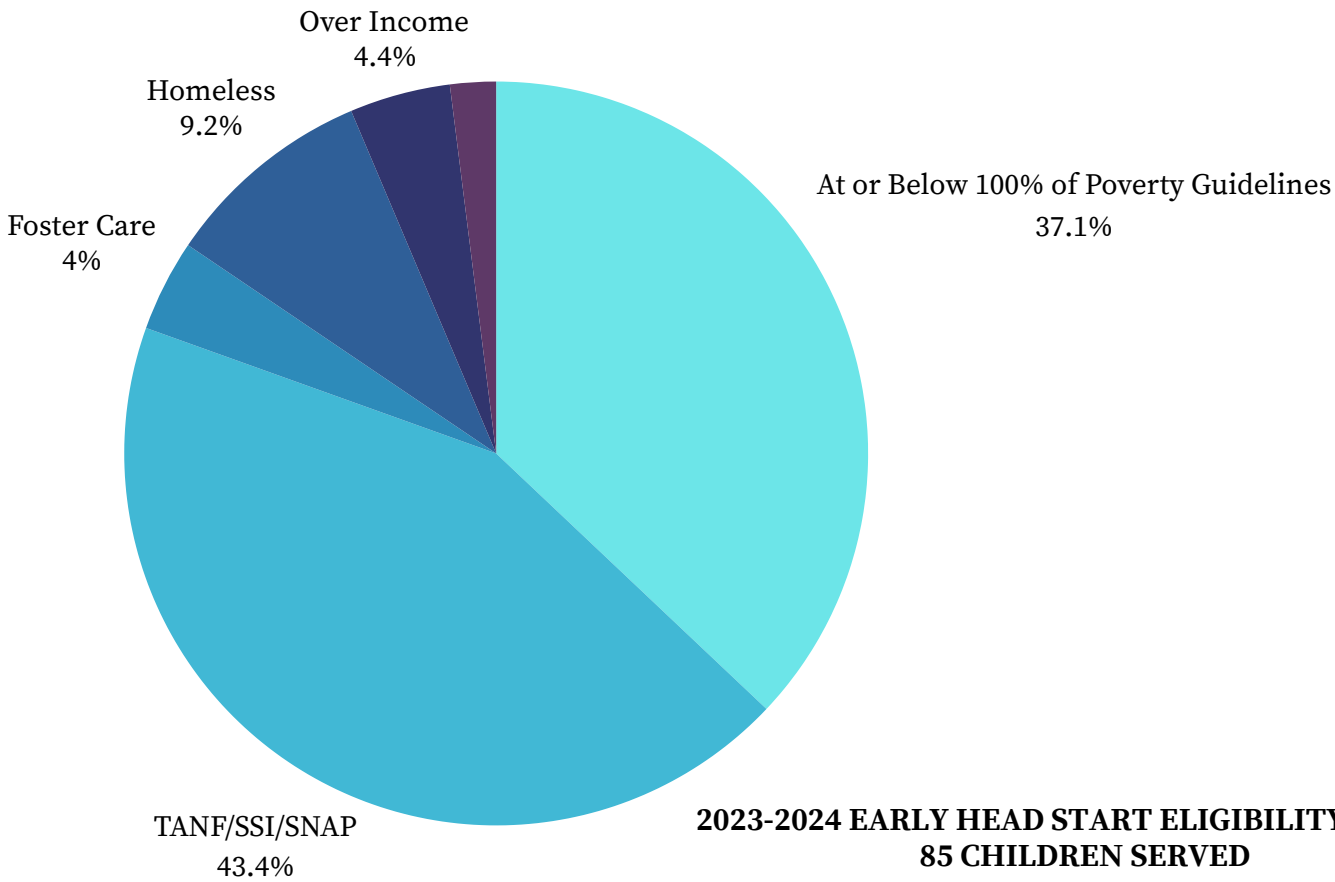
<i>Grant Revenue</i>	<i>Federal</i>	<i>State</i>
US Dept Health & Human Services	4,215,161.00	
USDA		359,969.00
In-Kind	1,053,791.00	
Total Program Revenues	5,268,952.00	359,969.00

<i>Program Expenses</i>		
Salary & Wages	2,824,864.00	130,974.00
Fringe	688,814.00	33,292.00
Contracted Services	79,072.00	
Supplies	36,210.00	
Travel	10,750.00	
Space Costs/Rentals	402,820	
Other Direct Costs	147,303.00	195,703.00
Insurance	25,328.00	
In-Kind	1,053,791.00	
Total Program Expenses	5,268,952	359,969.00

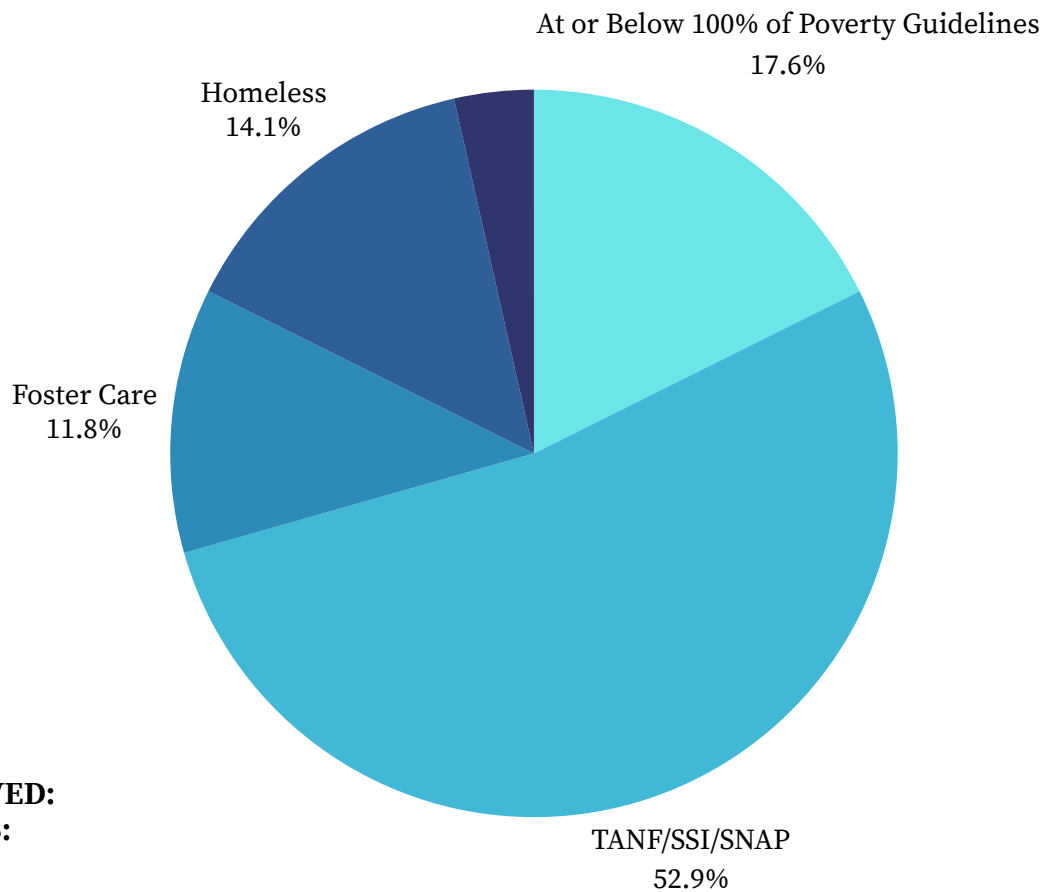
OUR PROGRAM'S FINANCIAL AUDIT WAS CONDUCTED BY WIDMER ROEL. IT WAS STARTED IN MAY 2024 AND COMPLETED IN NOVEMBER 2024.

MEET OUR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

2023-2024 HEAD START ELIGIBILITY STATUS 252 CHILDREN SERVED



2023-2024 EARLY HEAD START ELIGIBILITY STATUS 85 CHILDREN SERVED



**TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN SERVED:
MONTHLY ENROLLMENT STATUS:**

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SERVICES



Family Services Staff continued to work hard to engage our families throughout the school year through parenting classes, goal setting and day-to-day communication.

FAMILY GOALS

Our staff partner with community members to offer education related to common goal areas such as continuing parent education, finances and relationships between parents and their children.

SERVICES RECEIVED & REFERRALS

Community Partners our program utilized during the 23-24 school year include:

- Fix it Forward
- Pediatric Partners
- SENDCAA Child care
- Cass County Human Service Zone
- Coats for Kids
- MAT Bus
- SENDCAA Whole Family Coach
- SENDCAA Career Coach
- FM Sanford SafeKids
- Furniture Mission of the Red River Valley
- First Link (211)
- Salvation Army
- SENDCAA Emergency/Crisis Funds
- SENDCAA Weatherization
- YWCA
- Dakota Barber Academy

Other Community Partners that provided resources to our program during the 23-24 school year:

- Fargo Force
- FM Bikes for Kids
- FM Redhawks
- Courts Plus
- Skate City
- TNT Kids Fitness
- KidsCo Museum
- Clay Your Way
- Sandy's Donuts
- Scheels



POLICY COUNCIL

The Head Start Policy Council makes decisions about the overall direction of the program in Cass, Richland, Sargent, and Ransom counties. The council is made up of elected parent representatives, and individuals from community agencies. We had community representatives attend regularly from Cass County Social Services and Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota. Our Policy Council also has an active member from the SENDCAA Board of Directors. We offer both in-person and Zoom options for meetings.

PARENT COMMITTEE EVENTS

Parent Committees are held three times a year in October, December, and March. All of our meetings have topics that cover objectives from our curriculum. Our October parent committee meeting focuses on social/emotional, our December parent committee meeting focuses on mathematics, and our March parent committee meeting focuses on literacy. Each event has two components: a site level parent meeting and a classroom level family engagement activity. The meeting and engagement activity encourages parent involvement and fosters positive relationships with families. The parent meetings focus on a variety of topics such as site safety, community events and resources, attendance, and illness policy, and in-kind.



EDUCATION

Teachers use our curriculum Creative Curriculum, and our online platform SmartTeach. With Creative Curriculum-The Cloud, teachers have access to all the curriculum studies along with additional resources to share with their children and staff. The online platform also helps with the lesson plan layout, allowing teachers more time to individualize for their children and effectively plan their day. Teaching staff continue to implement Conscious Discipline (our social/emotional curriculum) and the Head Start ELOF (Early Learning Outcomes Framework) in their day-to-day activities. Each classroom has a daily schedule that incorporates mealtimes, large and small group times, outdoor play, and naptime.

COACHING

Our program continues to be intentional about providing coaching to our education staff. We assessed all classroom staff while using our Coaching Point System. This neutral system was created by our program to assess the individual strengths and needs of our classroom staff to determine where support is need.

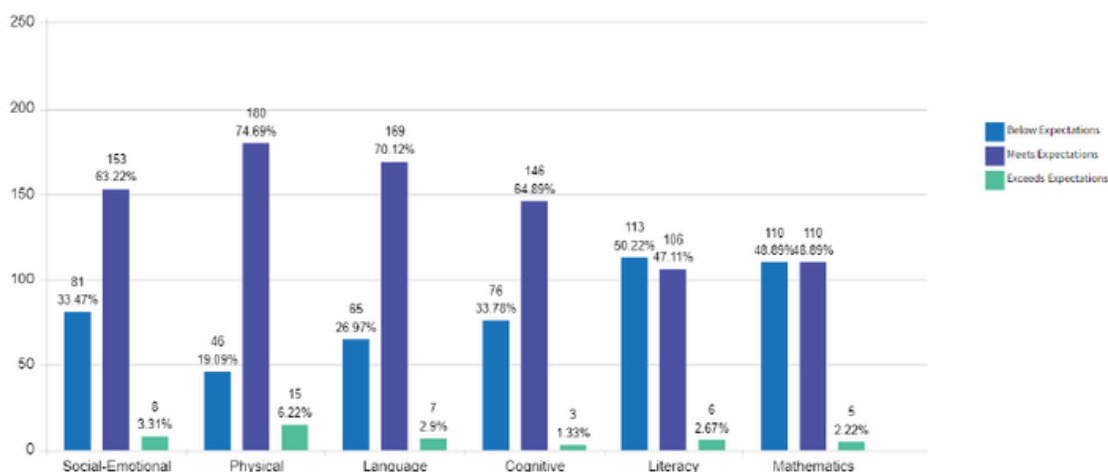
GETTING READY FOR KINDERGARTEN

Our program collaborated with local school districts to build strong partnerships with the schools that receive children transitioning from Head Start. With parental consent, our teachers completed kindergarten transition forms that are sent to receiving schools. Our program utilized the curriculum study, "Getting Ready for Kindergarten" to prepare children for what to expect in kindergarten. Our teachers promoted the importance of regular attendance, collaborated with parents on Individual School Readiness Goals, discussed child assessment data, and worked to provide ongoing opportunities on social-emotional skills to every child.

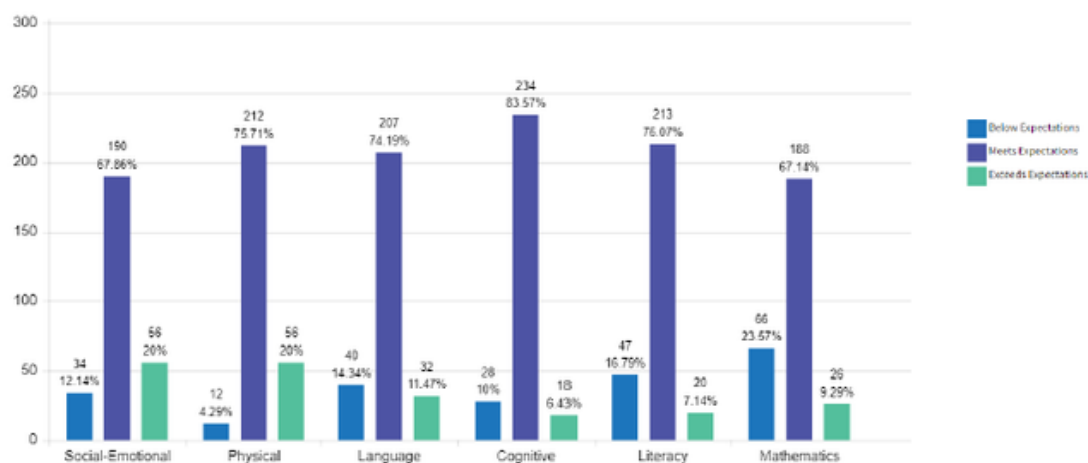
ASSESSMENT DATA

The following charts show our checkpoint data from Fall 2023 to Spring 2024. Our program saw growth in all areas in meeting and exceeding expectations.

Fall Overall Program Data



Spring Overall Program Data



HEALTH SERVICES

DENTAL

We still have our partnership with Family Health Care Dental in Fargo. Family Health Care Dental continues to visit our Early Head Start children four times per year to provide dental exams and fluoride varnish. Children receive services from Family Health Care Dental regardless of their insurance status. Family Health Care Dental also provides those same services to our pregnant moms regardless of their insurance status. As a bonus for our program, we are able to generate in kind from these services!

Our program continues to work with Family Health Care Dental by utilizing their mobile unit. The mobile unit is able to set up at any of our locations to complete dental exams, cleaning, x-rays, fluoride varnish, and dental treatment. Extensive dental treatment is completed at the clinic as needed. The mobile unit is set up for 6 dates in the spring and 6 dates in the fall.

NDSCS continues to be utilized by our Wahpeton and Lisbon sites for dental exams, fluoride varnish, and some treatment. These exams have been completed at NDSCS as well as at our Wahpeton location.

Our program was able to celebrate dental health month by sending home toothbrushes and toothbrush timers for each child along with dental information and activities for families. Seesaw was also utilized by Health Coordinators to promote oral health awareness for families.

NUTRITION

Our program continues to work with NDSU Extension for nutrition lessons. Visits to the Head Start classrooms occur once a month from January through May. Lessons about “Go” and “Whoa” foods are taught. Topics include healthy snacks, vegetables, fruits, and more. After each lesson, children are able to try a healthy snack, such as sugar snap peas, provided by the instructor. Our program celebrated Nutrition Month with sending MyPlates plates and utensils and educational information to our families.

WELL CHILD AND IMMUNIZATIONS

Due to a partnership with Sanford Health, some of our children were able to complete well-child exams and immunizations at Head Start. Influenza and Covid vaccines were also available. Sanford provided this service to children with and without health insurance. Due to another partnership with Public Health in Wahpeton and Lisbon, well child exams and immunizations were completed on site as needed. Seesaw was also utilized to share health flyers with families.

% OF CHILDREN WITH CONTINUOUS, ACCESSIBLE DENTAL CARE		
	AT ENROLLMENT	AT END OF ENROLLMENT YEAR
<i>Head Start</i>	56%	82%
<i>Early Head Start</i>	32%	87%



% OF CHILDREN WITH CONTINUOUS, ACCESSIBLE MEDICAL CARE		
	AT ENROLLMENT	AT END OF ENROLLMENT YEAR
<i>Head Start</i>	77%	87%
<i>Early Head Start</i>	80%	96%

MENTAL HEALTH/DISABILITIES

The Mental Health and Disabilities component is responsible for monitoring the social-emotional, cognitive, and physical development of all children enrolled in Head Start Birth to Five. At the end of our previous grant period we had hired on a full-time Mental Health/Disabilities coordinator. Before that time we had previously worked with a part time consultant. We saw the need in our program that our children and classrooms needed to work with a full time Mental Health/Disabilities coordinator.

Within 45 days of entry, all children are screened using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social-Emotional screener. Teachers screen all children, and parents are also asked to complete this tool. Furthermore, all children at Early Head Start are screened for global development using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire 3. All 3–5-year-olds are screened for global development using the Brigance Screen III.

The purpose of screening is to identify children who might need additional monitoring or referrals for outside services. These screening tools prove to be very effective in identifying children with such needs. In the area of Disabilities, in the 2023-2024 academic year, 55 children were referred for outside evaluation based on the results of the screens. Of these referrals, 5 parents chose not to accept the referrals, 7 children were evaluated but did not qualify, and 34 students received additional services as a direct result of our screenings and referrals. During the 2023-2024 school year our program served a total of 66 children who were on an IEP/IFSP.

Head Start served 4 children with ADHD, 2 children with autism, and 1 child with anxiety. As one can imagine, the area of mental health holds a lot of stigma and many parents resist referrals for these services. However, even when parents do not welcome a referral, the screening tool is still a valuable tool in having conversations with parents and teachers regarding areas of need and skills to work on with the child both in the classroom and in the home setting.



OPENING KAPPEL HEAD START



Our Kappel Head Start site open in October 2023 and provided services for 50 children and their families.

Kappel was named after our previous SENDCAA Executive Director, James Kappel. Our program made updates to the building in the kitchen, and expanded both classrooms to accommodate a large space for our children. During the summer of 2024 our program was chosen by Doosan Bobcat for their Day of Caring, where they made updates to the landscaping on our playground. In July we held an official open house and ribbon cutting ceremony in honor of James Kappel.

DOOSAN BOBCAT DAY OF CARING



KAPPEL OPEN HOUSE



WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD

In the beginning of April our program chose to highlight our classrooms in the community during the Week of the Young Child. Classroom art was displayed at Bonanzaville and the Fargo Public Library, and Lisbon True Value. Our Wahpeton classroom attended a community event during the week that promoted literacy. Brany Ink visited each classroom and provided science and gross motor activities.



BRAINY INK ACTIVITIES

Johnathan Repoyo with Brainy Ink spent two weeks visiting all of our classrooms and sites. He provided fun educational, STEAM activities!



KICK-OFF TO SUMMER PICNIC

To end our school year, we celebrated with an end of the year picnic! Families were able to enjoy a free meal and Lindenwood Park with each other and our staff. We had community partners set up tables to provide additional resources for families to access.



SAFE KIDS CAR SEAT SAFETY CLINIC & VEHICLE TEMPERATURE CHECK

In July, our program held a car seat safety clinic through SafeKids. Car Seat Technicians checked 31 car seats at our Early Head Start site. Six families were given 13 new car seats for their children and siblings! Safe Kids also lent our program their vehicle thermometer. We tracked the temperature inside our program van for the week to educate families on the importance of never leaving a child alone in a vehicle.



PROGRAM CHANGES FOR 2024-2025



Over the summer of 2024, our Head Start program went through a Change in Scope. Our program plans to reduce 84 slots, by transitioning 3 of our part-day classrooms into full day classrooms, and reducing our full day classrooms from 18-19 children to 15-16 children. . Our program will continue to have two-part day classrooms (one morning session and one afternoon session) due to an ongoing partnership with SENDCAA Child Care, who provides the wrap around care for families who would need care before and after our program hours, and on days when our program is closed. Our Head Start program also plans to reduce the number of days children are served each week from 5 days to 4 days.

These changes were necessary for the program due to the children needing more individualized instruction for pre-academic skills and social/emotional needs, addressing staff burnout, and difficulty maintaining full enrollment in our part-day classrooms.

Another huge change to our program for the 24-25 school year, will be the loss of our West Fargo Head Start site. West Fargo Public Schools needs more space for the growing need of early childhood special education services. We plan to move the two classrooms to open rooms at our Kappel and Early sites.



