



Head Start Collaboration Office

Needs Assessment

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Advancement, and Potential

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Introduction

On December 12, 2007, former President George W. Bush signed Public Law 110-134 "[Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007](#)" reauthorizing the Head Start program, commonly known as the Head Start Act. Section 642B of the Head Start Act, describes the duties and responsibilities of the Head Start Collaboration Office (HSCO). This assessment, as defined in the Head Start Act, outlines the needs of the Michigan Head Start agencies and the HSCO.

The HSCO in Michigan has designed a scope of work focused on the four national priorities and two regional priorities listed below. This assessment will identify the HSCO priorities and report on the information that was collected during 2023-2024. This assessment will be used to review current work and plan activities of the HSCO to best meet the needs of children, families, and the workforce in Michigan Head Start programs.

HSCO National Priorities

- Collaborate with state systems to align early care and education services and supports for children and families prenatally to age five.
- Work with state efforts to collect and use data on early childhood programs to guide decision-making and improve child and family outcomes.
- Support the expansion of and access to high quality workforce and career development opportunities for staff.
- Coordinate with school systems to ensure continuity and alignment across programs, as appropriate.
- Regional Priority: Ensure equal access of families experiencing homelessness to quality early care and education and comprehensive services.
- Regional Priority: Expand access to health and dental services, including mental health.

Acknowledgements

This report was composed of the contributions from the Michigan Head Start workforce and their child care partners, the MiLEAP Office of Early Childhood Education, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), the Michigan Head Start Association (MHSA), and the Michigan Department of Education (MDE).

Methods

This HSCO assessment was developed using qualitative and quantitative data from a variety of data sources, interviews, surveys, conversations, program visits, and meetings during 2023-2024.

Key Findings

- Head Start programs in Michigan need support in strengthening partnerships with English as a second language and general education degree programs.
- Head Start programs continue to struggle with workforce shortages and full enrollment.
- Michigan Head Start programs reported mixed feelings about serving additional four-year old children within the framework of the PreK for All initiative.
- Michigan Head Start programs saw an increase in the number of children experiencing homelessness.
- Head Start children, families, and staff need additional mental health and wellness supports.
- Michigan Head Start programs documented an increase in participating children with accessible dental care.

Profile of Michigan Head Start Programs¹

Total Number of Grant Recipients	Total Number of Sub Recipients	Additional Notes
46*	18	Including American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) Early Head Start, AIAN Head Start, Early Head Start, Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships, Head Start, and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start

*Two previous programs in Michigan are temporarily managed through the Office of Head Start and are not included in the table above.

Michigan Head Start Grant Recipients by Agency Type

Number of Grant Recipients	Identified Agency Type	Additional Notes
18	Community Action Agency (CAA)	
12	Private/Public Non-Profit (Non-CAA) (e.g., church, or non-profit hospital)	Telamon Migrant Head Start (included) operates in Michigan and is based in South Carolina
12	School System	8 Intermediate School Districts 1 Educational Service Agency 3 Community/Public Schools
3	Tribal Government or Consortium (American Indian/Alaska Native)	
1	Government Agency (non-CAA)	This is a Regional Educational Service Agency
46	Total Grant Recipients in Michigan	

Michigan Head Start Sub Recipients by Agency Type

Number of Sub Recipients	Identified Agency Type	Additional Notes
1	Community Action Agency (CAA)	This Community Action Agency is also a Grant Recipient
5	Private/Public Non-Profit (Non-CAA) (e.g., church, or non-profit hospital)	Buen Pastor is a sub recipient of Telamon Migrant Head Start and is included in this total. Telamon is based in South Carolina.
12	School System	12 Community/Public Schools
18	Total Sub Recipients in Michigan	

¹ Office of Head Start. (2024). All Program Locations and Contacts, State Michigan. Head Start Enterprise System. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

2023 Michigan Funded Enrollment-All Head Start Programs

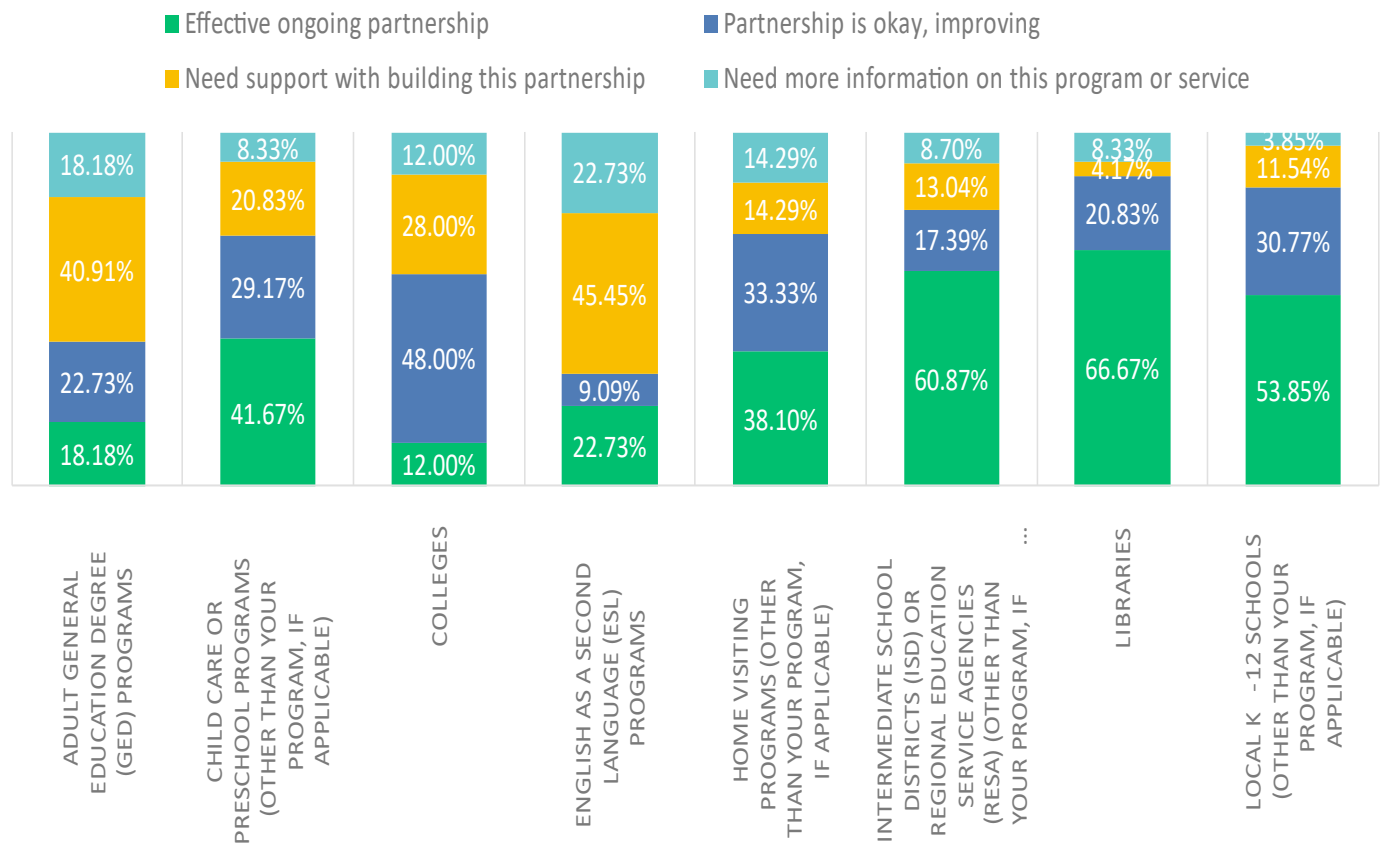
Center-based option	26,107
Home-based option	3,390
Family Child Care option	190
Locally designed option	56
Total Funded individuals in pregnancy	296
Total Funded Enrollment	30,039

Collaboration, Coordination and Alignment of Services

HSCO Priority: Collaborate with state systems to align early care and education services and supports for children and families prenatally to age five.

Below you will see a graph image of the responses to a survey sent to Michigan Head Start directors. The response rate for this survey was 37%. The graph shows Head Start director responses related to local early care and education partnerships. As you will see, the most effective partnerships recorded were with libraries and intermediate school districts. Respondents noted that the most support was needed in partnership with English as a second language programs and adult general education degree programs.

Local Early Care, Education-Please check one box in each line that closely matches your partnership with the programs or services listed.



The HSCO continues to support and encourage partnerships among Early Head Start and child care. There are currently six Early Head Start grant recipients that are engaged in a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Office of Child Development and Care and the Head Start State Collaboration Office to provide a braided model of Early Head Start-Child Care (EHS-CC) Partnership services in Michigan. The MOU agreement removes barriers by allowing Michigan's EHS-CC Partnership programs to bill for child care subsidy for the full number of hours that a child is deemed eligible under state and federal regulations.

The Office of Head Start Grant Level Summary Reports² show that funded enrollment in the EHS-CC Partnership programs with an MOU decreased from 2022 to 2023. Grant recipients reported that grant consolidations and changes in scope due to a lack of participating child care partners caused a decrease in funded enrollment for our EHS-CC Partnership programs. Please see the tables below.

2022 Funded Enrollment of Michigan Programs with an EHS-CC Partnership MOU

Partnership Center-based option	877
Partnership Family Child Care option	141
Total Funded Enrollment-Partnerships	1018

2023 Funded Enrollment of Michigan Programs with an EHS-CC Partnership MOU

Center-based or Locally designed option	88
Partnership Center-based option	678
Partnership Family Child Care option	144
Total Funded Enrollment-Partnerships	910

Leadership from the EHS-CC Partnership programs explained during their quarterly meetings that maintaining partnerships and sustaining a workforce are the greatest concerns for their programs. Additional concerns include the large number of days required per year and the number of hours per day that their partners are required to provide, the lack of professional learning days for partners, issues with securing subsidy reimbursement, and the need for additional funding to increase workforce compensation.

HSCO Priority: Work with state efforts to collect and use data on early childhood programs to guide decision-making and improve child and family outcomes.

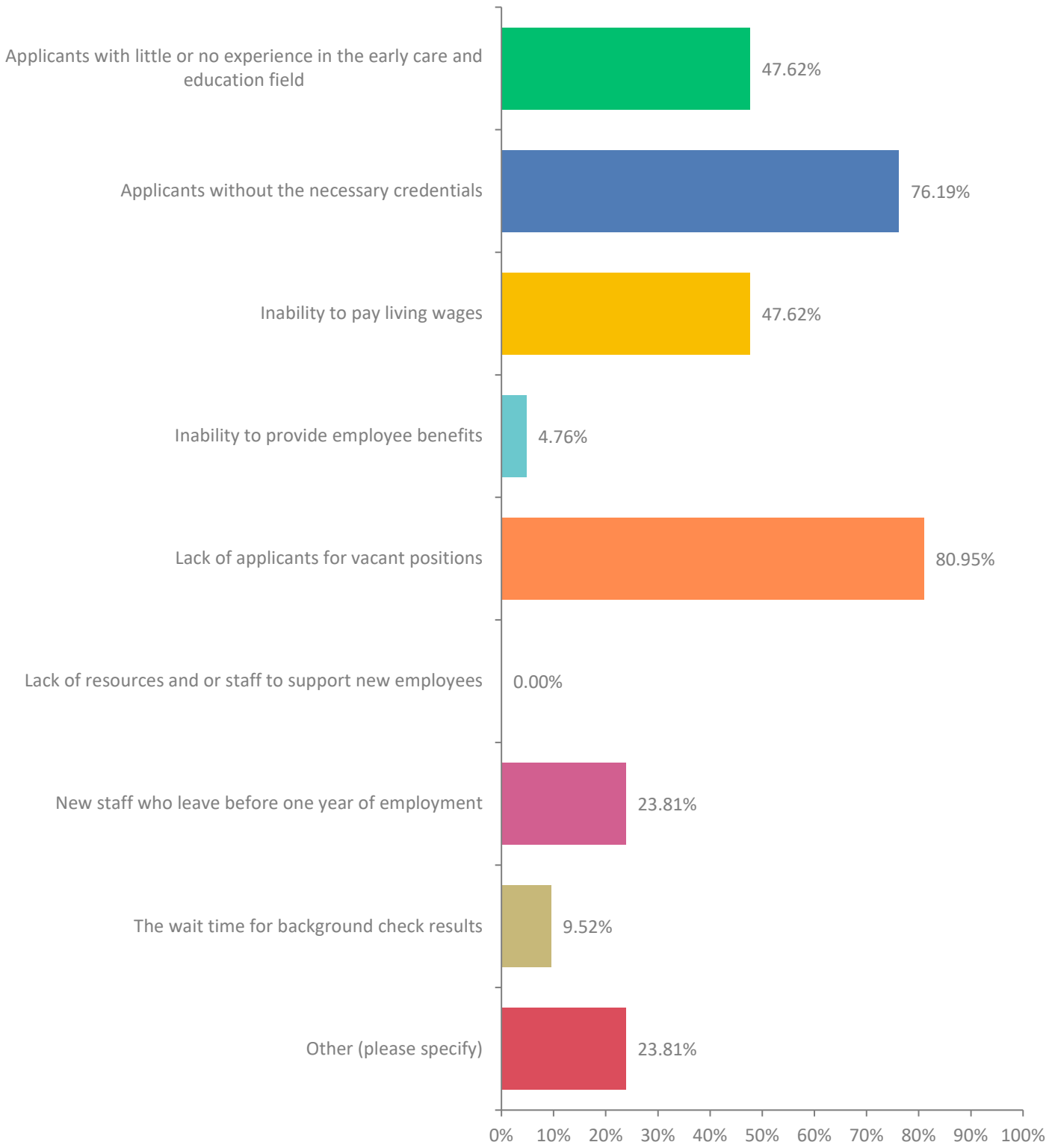
During the fall of 2023, the HSCO completed an update to the current Data Sharing Agreement (DSA) between Head Start programs and MDE to include Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipient data along with data from participants of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. The DSA has been established between MDHHS and MDE, and between Head Start grant recipients and MDE, to provide Head Start grant recipients with contact information for the purposes of aiding Head Start and Early Head Start recruitment and enrollment. The HSCO will continue to look for ways to share data that will support the Head Start programs.

HSCO Priority: Support the expansion of and access to high quality workforce and career development opportunities for staff.

Recruitment and retention of a high-quality workforce continues to be a struggle for Head Start programs. The workforce shortage is a common topic during Head Start program director meetings. Current state efforts include apprenticeship opportunities, education qualification variances from childcare licensing, and flexibility toward meeting credentials in state funded preschool programs. The graph on the next page shows the results of a question from a 2024 Head Start director survey with a 31% response rate.

² Office of Head Start (2022, 2023). Grant Level Summary Report. Head Start Enterprise System. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

What are your biggest issues about workforce recruitment?



“Other” comments: Wages only impact certain positions. Extreme behaviors within classrooms are causing burnout, especially with new inexperienced staff. It’s not necessarily living wages but competing with other employment opportunities where staff can earn more with less responsibility and stress. Competition with local school districts.

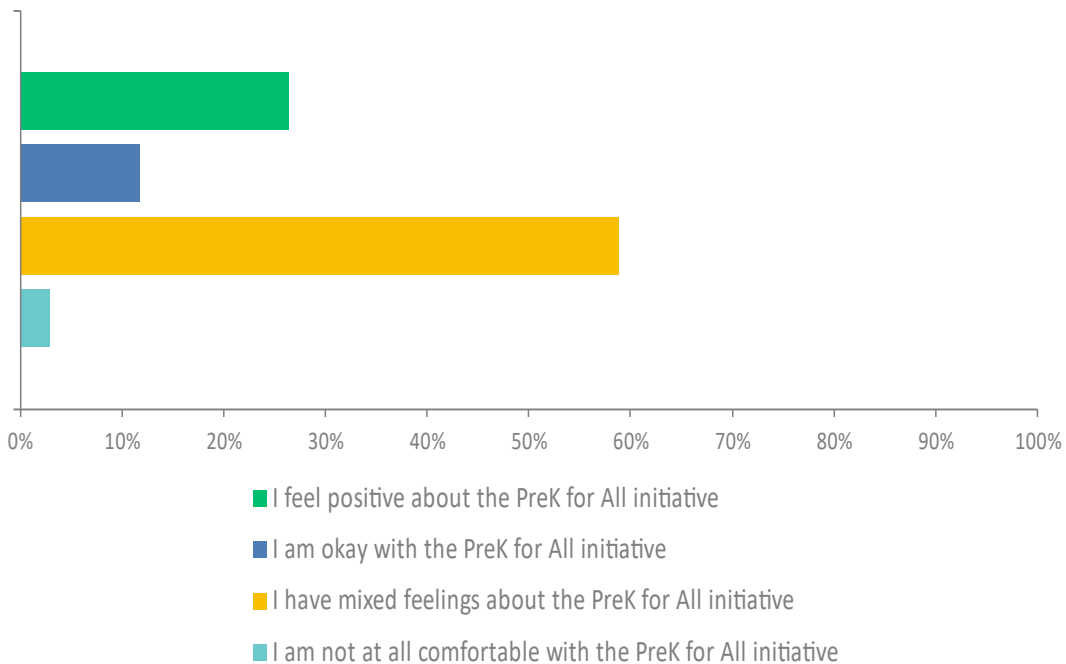
HSCO Priority: Coordinate with school systems to ensure continuity and alignment across programs, as appropriate.

PreK for All is Michigan’s universal PreK initiative, announced by Governor Gretchen Whitmer in her 2023 State of the State address. Governor Whitmer shared a bold goal; that by 2027, all Michigan four-year-olds can attend a free, high-quality PreK program, regardless of where they live, their race/ethnicity, ability, or family income. Following this announcement, GSRP received a \$254.6 million increase in funding for the state’s PreK program to expand eligibility to children from families with incomes up to 400 percent of the federal poverty level. Shortly after, a PreK for All action team was convened, including the President of the MHSA. The team developed a set of recommendations based on a combination of input provided through many conversations with residents, researchers, and other states.

Michigan’s Head Start is considered a vital component of PreK for All. The PreK for All roadmap, Making the Vision a Reality: A Roadmap for Implementing PreK for All³, was released in January 2024. In May 2024, Head Start directors were sent a survey to share their initial feelings about the PreK for All initiative. There was a 49% response rate to this survey. Below is a graph showing how they felt overall about PreK for All.

Q4: Please choose one answer below that best describes your overall opinion about the PreK for All initiative.

Answered: 34 Skipped: 0



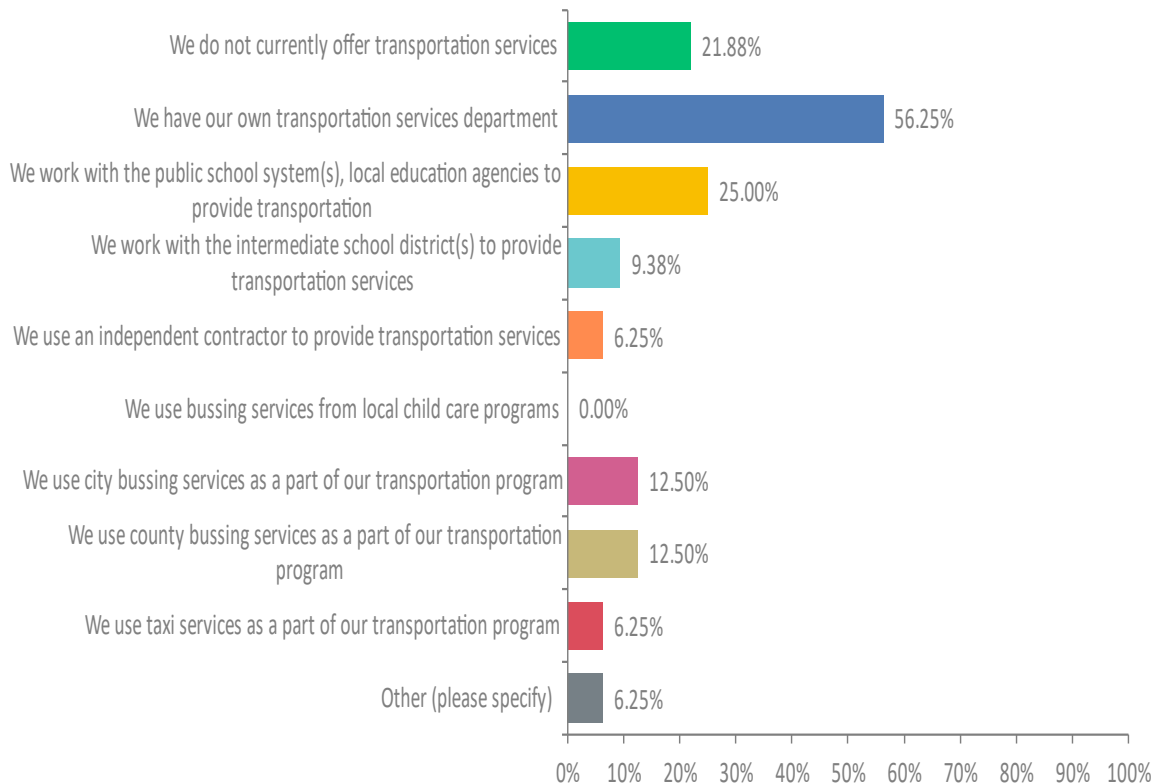
Powered by SurveyMonkey

³ MILEAP and Policy Equity Group. (2024). [Making the Vision a Reality: A Roadmap for Implementing PreK for All.](#)

As a part of the PreK for All implementation plan, the HSCO facilitated a transportation work group to support and expand access to transportation opportunities for PreK children and their families. The members of the transportation work group represent family leadership, public schools, intermediate school districts, Head Start programs, state preschool, early childhood special education, the department of education, and pupil transportation. This work group created a brief that outlined the barriers to providing transportation and defined suggestions and recommendations for improvement of transportation opportunities for children attending preschool in Michigan. The suggestions outlined in the brief will be used to create a safe and efficient transportation system for Michigan's PreK.

Below is an image of the results from a Head Start transportation survey conducted in May 2024. There was a director response rate of 46% with this survey. This Head Start transportation survey will assist us as we explore all options of PreK transportation. Head Start programs have been providing transportation to their children and families for many years and their experiences and expertise will support our safe and inclusive delivery of transportation services for PreK.

Please check all transportation services that you currently use in your program (in addition to family self-transport). Check the first box if you do not offer transportation services.



Powered by SurveyMonkey

“Other” comments: We did have a contract with an LEA at one point but was discontinued during COVID due to the vaccine mandate. They have not been willing to contract with us again. Transportation options vary across our service area.

HSCO Priority: Ensuring equal access of families experiencing homelessness to quality early care and education and comprehensive services

As noted in the table below, the number and percentage of children experiencing homelessness that were served by Head Start programs in program year 2021-2022 increased compared to the previous program year. In conversations with a Head Start program that is a member of the Early Childhood Homelessness Task Force, the HSCO learned that strong, effective local partnerships between Head Start programs and organizations that support families experiencing housing insecurity is key.

Total Number of Children Experiencing Homelessness that were Served During the Enrollment Year⁴

	2022 # of children	2022 % of children	2023 # of children	2023 % of children
Children Experiencing Homelessness	1,728	5.9%	1,785	6.5%

HSCO Priority: Expanding access to health and dental services, including mental health

As indicated in the table below, there was an increase in the percentage of Michigan Head Start children with access to health and dental services from 2022 to 2023. It is favorable to see that there was an increase in the percentage of Head Start children with accessible dental care, due to the increased need as indicated in the recent oral health survey report. During 2023, MDHHS partnered with the HSCO to provide informational and learning opportunities on the Head Start families and programs using data from the Basic Screening Survey report from collected data in 2022. This study gathered data about the oral health of Michigan’s 3–5-year-old Head Start children compared to 3–5-year-old children in the general U.S. population. The project showed a decrease in the oral health status and an increase in the needs of Head Start children in Michigan.

Health Services to all Children at the End of the Enrollment Year⁵

	2022 # of children	2022 % of children	2023 # of children	2023 % of children
Children with health insurance	28,207	96.6%	26,975	97.5%
Children with accessible health care	27,762	95.0%	26,856	97.1%
Children with accessible dental care	24,017	82.2%	23,209	83.9%
Families who received mental health services	2,559	9.7%	3,332	13.2%

Alignment of Curricula and Assessments with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework

The [Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Birth to Kindergarten](#) was published by MDE in November 2022. Development of Michigan’s Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Birth to Kindergarten aligns with the Head Start Program Performance Standards and the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF). The goals listed in the Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Birth to Kindergarten are identified in the document with the corresponding goal of the ELOF.

⁴ Office of Head Start (2022, 2023). Services Snapshot, State Michigan. Head Start Enterprise System. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

⁵ Office of Head Start. (2022, 2023). Services Snapshot, State Michigan. Head Start Enterprise System. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Curricula

Looking at Curricula, the 2023 Program Information Report shows that the greatest number of Michigan Head Start programs use HighScope for preschool. The second most often used curriculum for preschool is Creative Curriculum. The curriculum most often used for infants and toddlers was HighScope, with Creative Curriculum for infants and toddlers being the second most often used curriculum. Home-based curricula are more diverse with eight types of curricula identified and Parents as Teachers being identified the most often.

The Office of Head Start provides a comprehensive curricula review including summaries and ratings of infant and toddler, preschool, and home-based curricula. This review indicates the level of curriculum alignment with ELOF and is found on the Head Start informational website, The Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC).⁶ Please see the table below that shows the number of Michigan programs implementing the listed curriculum and includes notes from the ELOF alignment review found on the ECLKC website.

Center-based Curricula⁷ (programs choosing 1 or 2 curricula)

Name of curriculum used	Number of programs	Notes
HighScope-Preschool	32	HighScope's Key Developmental Indicators are aligned with the ELOF.
HighScope-Infant, Toddler	24	HighScope Infant-Toddler is mostly aligned with the ELOF.
Creative Curriculum-Preschool	26	The Creative Curriculum [®] for Preschool is fully aligned with the ELOF.
Creative Curriculum- Infant, Toddler	21	Aligned to early learning guidelines in each state and the ELOF.
Connect4Learning [®]	2	Connect4Learning [®] aligns to the ELOF as well as many state-specific standards.
Opening the World of Learning [™] (OWL) ©	1	OWL is mostly aligned with the ELOF.
Head Start Outcomes	1	n/a
SRA Building Blocks	1	No data
Total Programs Reporting	108	

Family Child Care Curriculum¹²

Name of curriculum used	Number of programs	Notes
Creative Curriculum for Family Child Care	2	Aligned to early learning guidelines in each state and the ELOF.
HighScope-Infant, Toddler	2	HighScope Infant-Toddler is mostly aligned with the ELOF.
Total Programs Reporting	4	

⁶ Office of Head Start. (2023). Alignment with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF). Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [Curriculum Consumer Report | ECLKC \(hhs.gov\)](#).

⁷ Office of Head Start. (2023). Program Information Report Center-based Curricula List Report-State Level. Head Start Enterprise System. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Home-based Curriculum¹³

Name of curriculum used	Number of programs	Notes
Parents As Teachers-Born to Learn	26	Parents as Teachers is fully aligned with the ELOF domains and sub- domains.
Growing Great Kids	9	Growing Great Kids™ for Preschoolers curriculum materials indicates that it is mostly aligned with the ELOF.
Partners for a Healthy Baby (Florida State University)	7	Partners for a Healthy Baby is fully aligned with the ELOF domains and sub-domains.
Creative Curriculum- Infant, Toddler	5	See note in table above.
Baby Talk	1	Baby TALK is fully aligned with the ELOF domains and sub-domains.
Creative Curriculum-Preschool	1	See note in table above.
Frog Street	1	Frog Street provides a comprehensive continuum of research-based curriculum and is aligned with the ELOF for children from birth to age five.
HELP at Home	1	Curriculum not found.
Total Programs Reporting	51	

Conclusion

Throughout the 2023-2024 program year, Head Start workforce shortages created a barrier to achieving full enrollment status and created frustration due to the Office of Head Start [full enrollment initiative](#). To ensure that all families eligible for services were aware of what Head Start has to offer, the Head Start programs began using the new SNAP participant contact information provided through the HSCO. Many programs mentioned that the SNAP participant report was a valuable recruitment tool, however, staffing issues continue to interfere with full enrollment.

In addition to the workforce shortage, Michigan Head Start programs were concerned about the new state initiative, PreK for All. Although mostly optimistic and engaged with the PreK for All initiative, Head Start programs are worried about the required increase in workforce and classroom space needed to accommodate the PreK opportunities. Throughout the past few years, the Michigan Head Start programs have faced many challenges but continue to be dedicated to doing what is best for Michigan’s children and families. The HSCO will create a plan of action that best responds to the strengths and needs of the vibrant Michigan Head Start community.

¹² Office of Head Start. (2023). Program Information Report Family Child Care Curricula List Report-State Level. Head Start Enterprise System. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

¹³ Office of Head Start. (2023). Program Information Report Home-based Curricula List Report. Head Start Enterprise System. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.