

**McIntosh Trail Early Childhood Development Council,
Inc.**

ANNUAL REPORT

2017 FISCAL YEAR

2017-18 SCHOOL YEAR

VISION

To reach eligible infants, toddlers, and preschoolers and their families in our service area and positively affect their lives by assisting them in obtaining the skills necessary to achieve social competence and be cognitively and physically ready to learn and grow.

Chairman's Message

Head Start and Early Head Start are on my mind. No wonder the McIntosh Trail Early Childhood Development Council, Inc. has been successful in providing Head Start services over the past thirty plus years. The Agency's most experienced Administrative Staff has completed thirty plus years of service. This Staff has watched over both programs while evaluating daily functions of operation to determine the weaknesses and strengths. The Staff used results from the evaluations conducted to make positive changes in areas showing weaknesses.

The Administrative Staff maintains focus on promoting excellent training to children from low income families enrolled in the Agency's multiple Head Start centers. The Staff further ensures the availability of appropriate facilities, learning materials, professional staff, parental involvement, and opportunities for the community to play a role in the education process.

The Administrative Staff is alert to how well the Agency is providing a positive learning environment that supports the growth of children in key developmental areas such as cognitive, social and emotional skills, language, literacy, and physical development.

The Board of Directors is fascinated and encouraged when it witnesses Head Start and Early Head Start children in a rich learning environment where they demonstrate happiness and success in a manner which meets the teacher's highest learning expectation.

The Board will continue to ensure that procedures for program planning are in place. It will ensure that all funding applications and amendments are submitted to HHS appropriately.

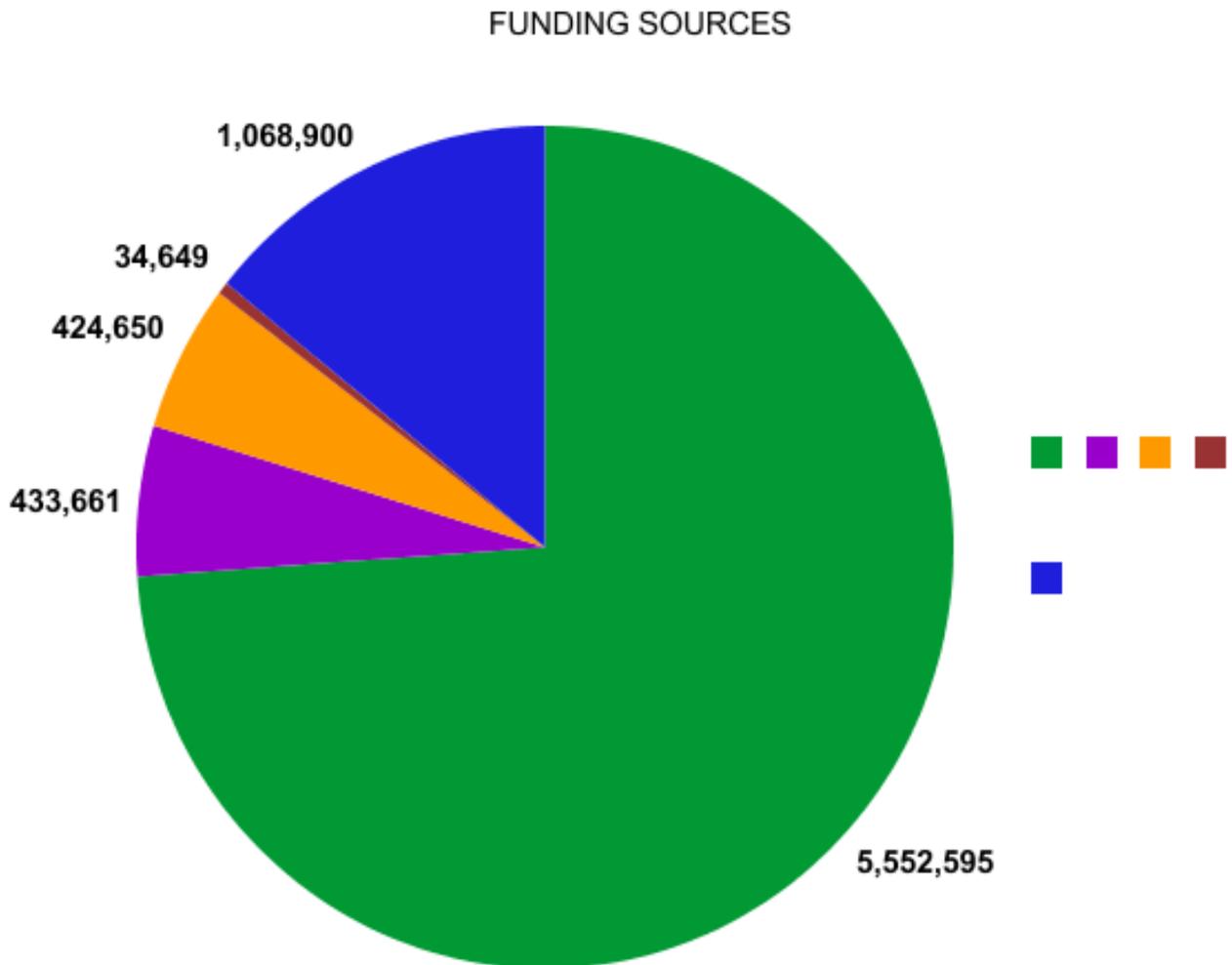
Very truly yours,

William Nesbit

Board Chairman

The following chart shows public and private funds received and the amounts:

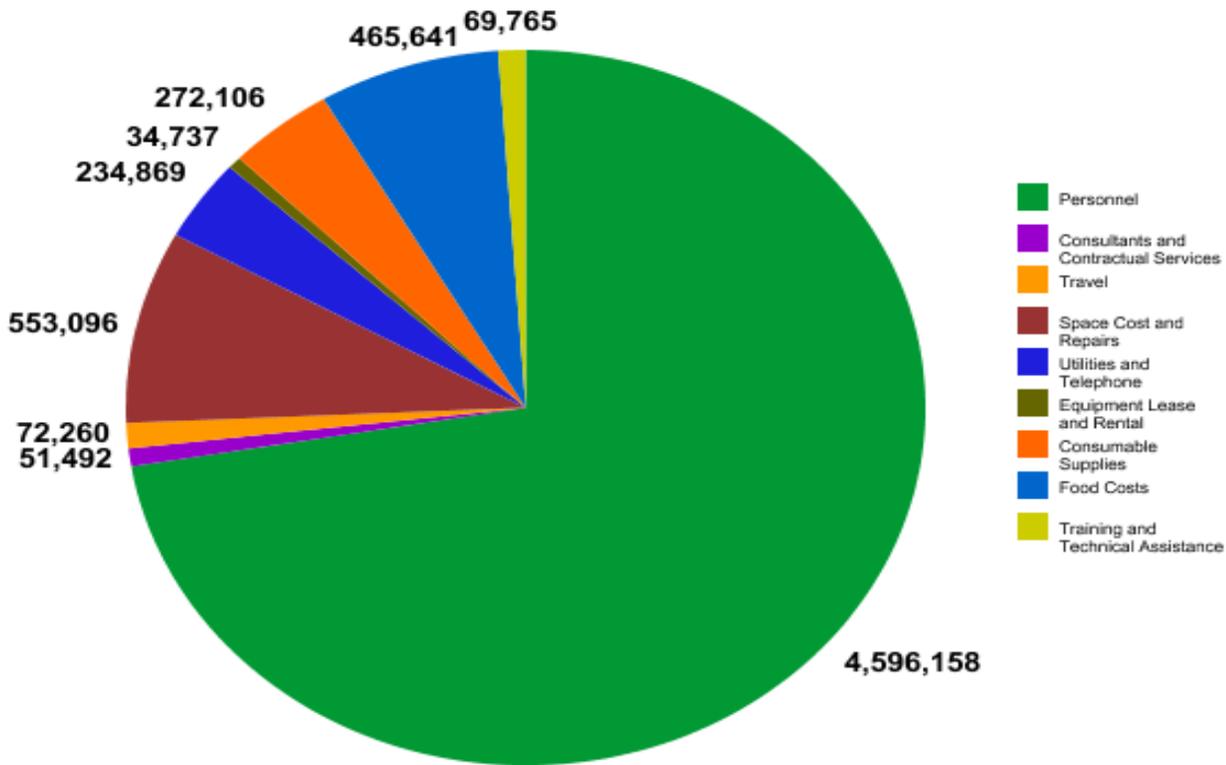
- Federal \$5,552,595
- State \$433,661
- State (pass-thru) \$424,650
- Local \$34,649
- In-kind donation \$1,068,900 (Donated Services, Volunteer, and Rent)



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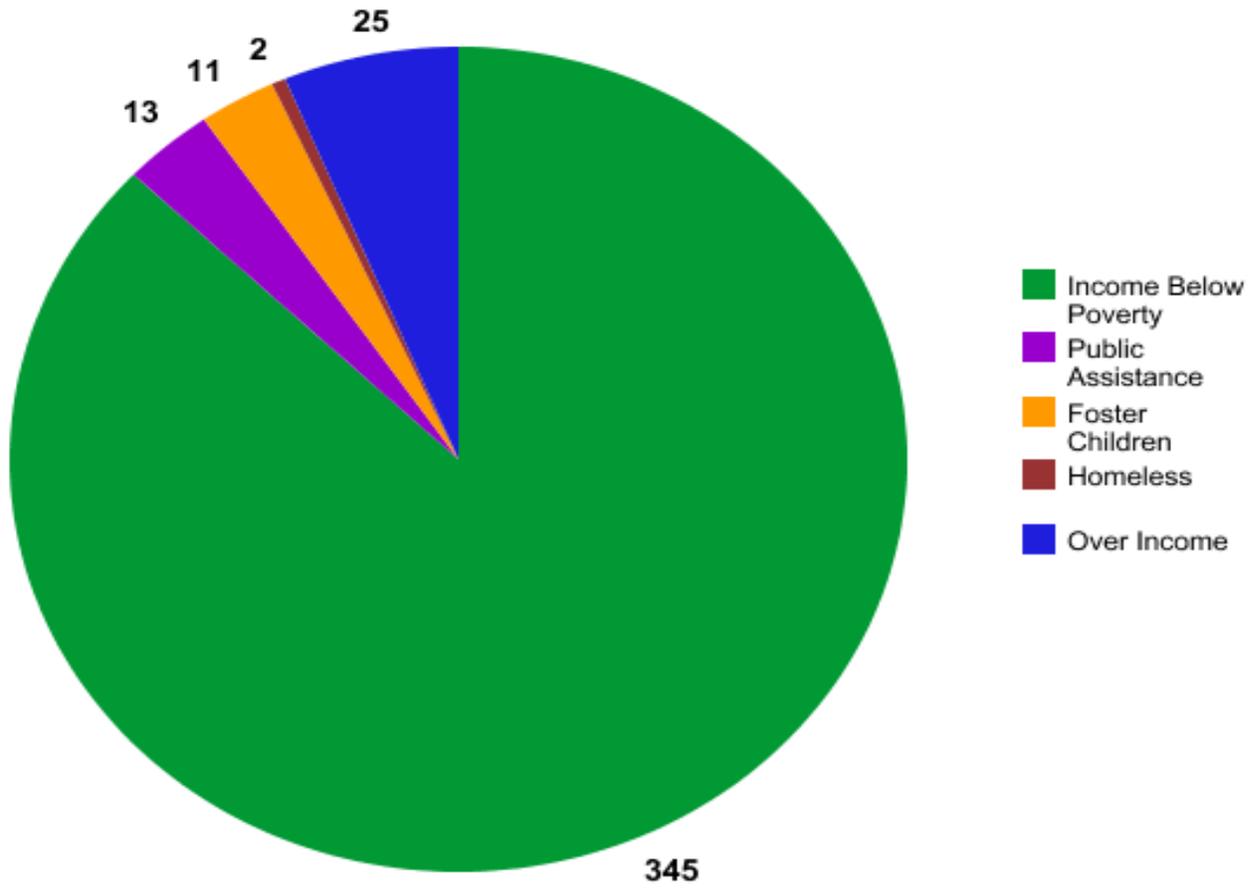
Budgetary Expenditures	2016-17	2017-18
Personnel	\$4,575,925	\$4,596,158
Consultants and Contractual Services	49,921	51,492
Travel	69,879	72,260
Space cost and repairs	629,495	553,096
Utilities and telephone	204,832	234,869
Equipment lease and Rental	36,815	34,737
Consumable Supplies	205,269	272,106
Food costs	495,768	465,641
Training and Technical Assistance	69,765	69,765

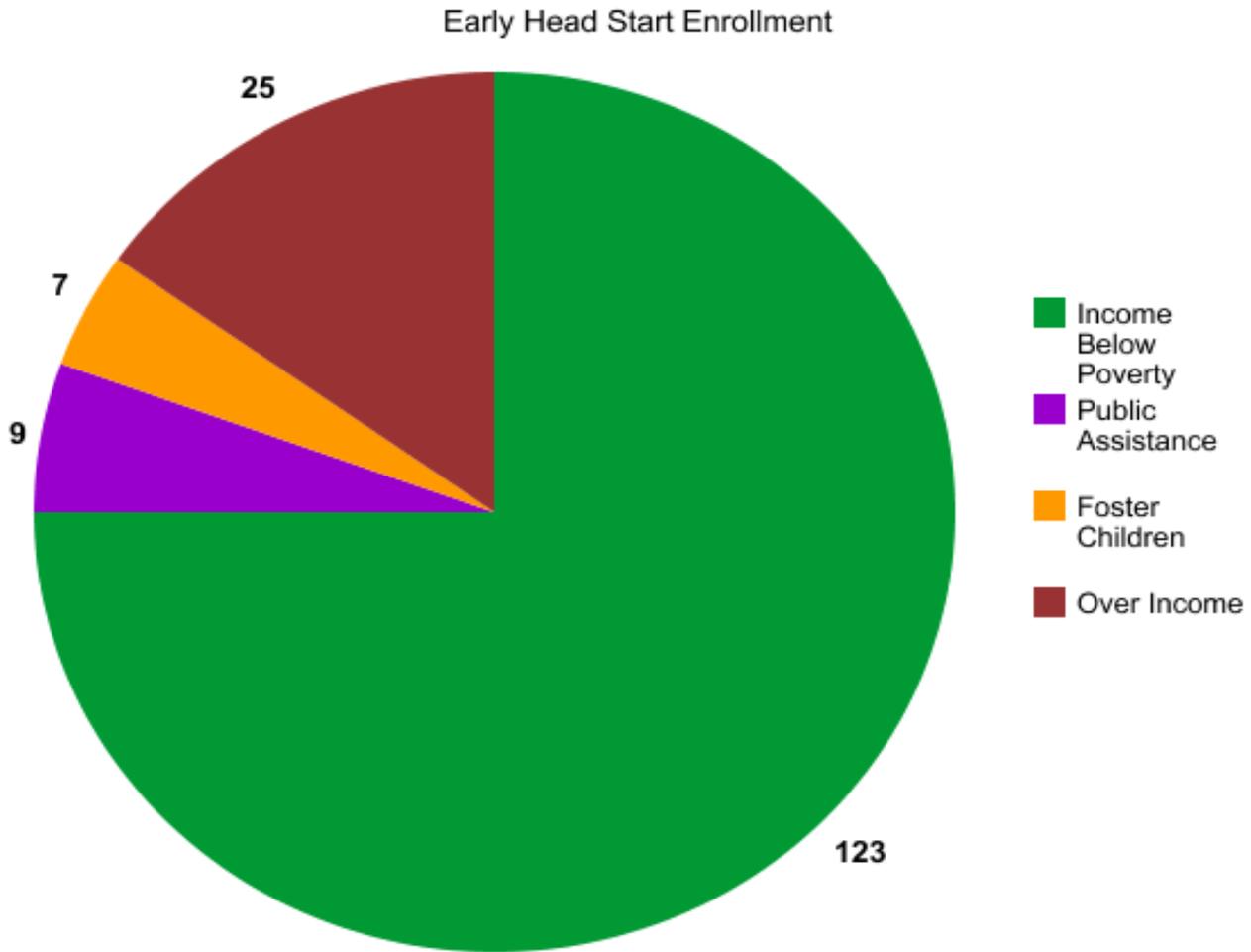
Budgetary Expenditures



The Head Start program was funded to serve 319 children and served a total of 396 in the 2017-87 school year as well as 372 families. Thirteen children were accepted based upon their receipt of public assistance. Three hundred forty-five children were income eligible according to the federal poverty guidelines. There were eleven foster children and two homeless. There were twenty-five children over income. Ninety-three percent were income eligible or met other criteria. Twelve percent or 37 children were diagnosed with a disability in the Head Start program

Head Start Enrollment





The Early Head Start program was funded to serve 128 pregnant moms, infants, and toddler and served 148 in the 2017-18 school year and 138 families. Nine children were accepted based upon their receipt of public assistance. One hundred twenty-three children (83%) were eligible according to federal poverty guidelines. There were seven foster children and no homeless. There were nine over income children. Twenty-six (18%) were diagnosed with a disability and received services from Babies Can't Wait.

McIntosh Trail ECDC Inc. entered a Five-Year Funding Cycle in 2015-16 and 2017-18 was the third year of the Five-Year Funding Cycle. As part of the process the Governing body and administration developed three long-term goals that were critical to providing quality services to the children, families, and community served by agency programs. They have reviewed and approved these goals on an annual basis.

LONG RANGE GOALS

Long Range Goal 1 (Service Delivery) McIntosh Trail ECDC Inc. Head Start and Early Head Start will enhance educational services to improve math development of children to maximize their potential to enter kindergarten with a solid foundation for academic building blocks and future concepts.

Long Range Goal 2 (Community Collaborations) Increase community collaboration with educational institutions in order to assist parents with accessing financial and community resources to pursue and obtain their GED or advanced degrees which will enhance their self esteem, job skills, and ability to serve as a positive role model in their community.

Long Range Goal 3 (Service Delivery) Facilitate steady, incremental improvements in student attendance by supporting strong links between good attendance and future academic and social success so that regular attendance will help children do better academically and be more likely to succeed in life and work by having a positive impact on the student, school, family, and community.

2017-2018 Progress on Long Range Goals:

Long Range Goal 1: In the previous two years of the Five Year Goals the program researched and chose the High Five Mathematize Curriculum. It is a researched based curriculum and identified by the School Readiness Committee, Policy Council, and Board of Directors as being appropriate to meet the identified math needs of the children, staff, and program. In the school year 2017-18 training was provided for the teaching staff and they received the curriculum book and a flash drive with associated materials. Additional support was provided to the teaching staff throughout the year with observations, teacher group meetings, and feedback in both directions. All new teaching staff are trained on the curriculum during the two weeks of orientation.

Long Range Goal 2: McIntosh Trail ECDC provided support for staff to implement collaborative agreements to assist parents of children enrolled in the program to be successful in meeting their desired education goals. Written collaborations were put into place with Piedmont College, Southern Crescent College, Mercer University, and Grand Canyon University to help parents obtain GEDs or higher educational levels.

To help parents increase their job skills and qualifications, CPR/First Aid and FDC, and CDA classes has been or will be offered to parents. The program is working on an Agreement to offer CNA classes. All parents are enrolled in the parent curriculum, Ready Rosie. Several trainings were provided to parents to inform them of the above services being offered.

Long Range Goal 3: The objective in 2017-18 was to provide staff and parents training on the risk of chronic absenteeism to reduce the rate of chronically absent children.

All staff were trained on attendance and the agency's revised attendance procedures and forms. Parents were trained on the new procedures and the importance of their child's daily attendance to school at parent meetings and trainings. Attendance information was sent home multiple times. Bookmarkers in English and Spanish were given to all parents. This was also a topic examined and discussed by the School Readiness Team. The local school system provided their absentee policy for the program to review and to be able to talk with parents transiting to the public school system.

ChildPlus report 2301 (Attendance) was given to the Management Team, Policy Council, and Board of Director members at each monthly meeting. All governance members are encouraged to visit their local centers and "meet and greet" parents to encourage their child's good attendance. Training on research, the importance of good attendance, and how to encourage good attendance was provided at all agency wide trainings, Pre-service, and Family Service monthly meetings.

Research has shown that children with chronic absenteeism have weaker math and reading skills than their co-students. Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing over five days of learning and school time over the period of one school year. The Early Childhood Education community states that when a 0-5 young learner misses five or more days they can be defined as "chronic". McIntosh Trail ECDC Inc. participated in Georgia Head Start Association's Chronic Absenteeism Tracking project.

State Funded Pre-K

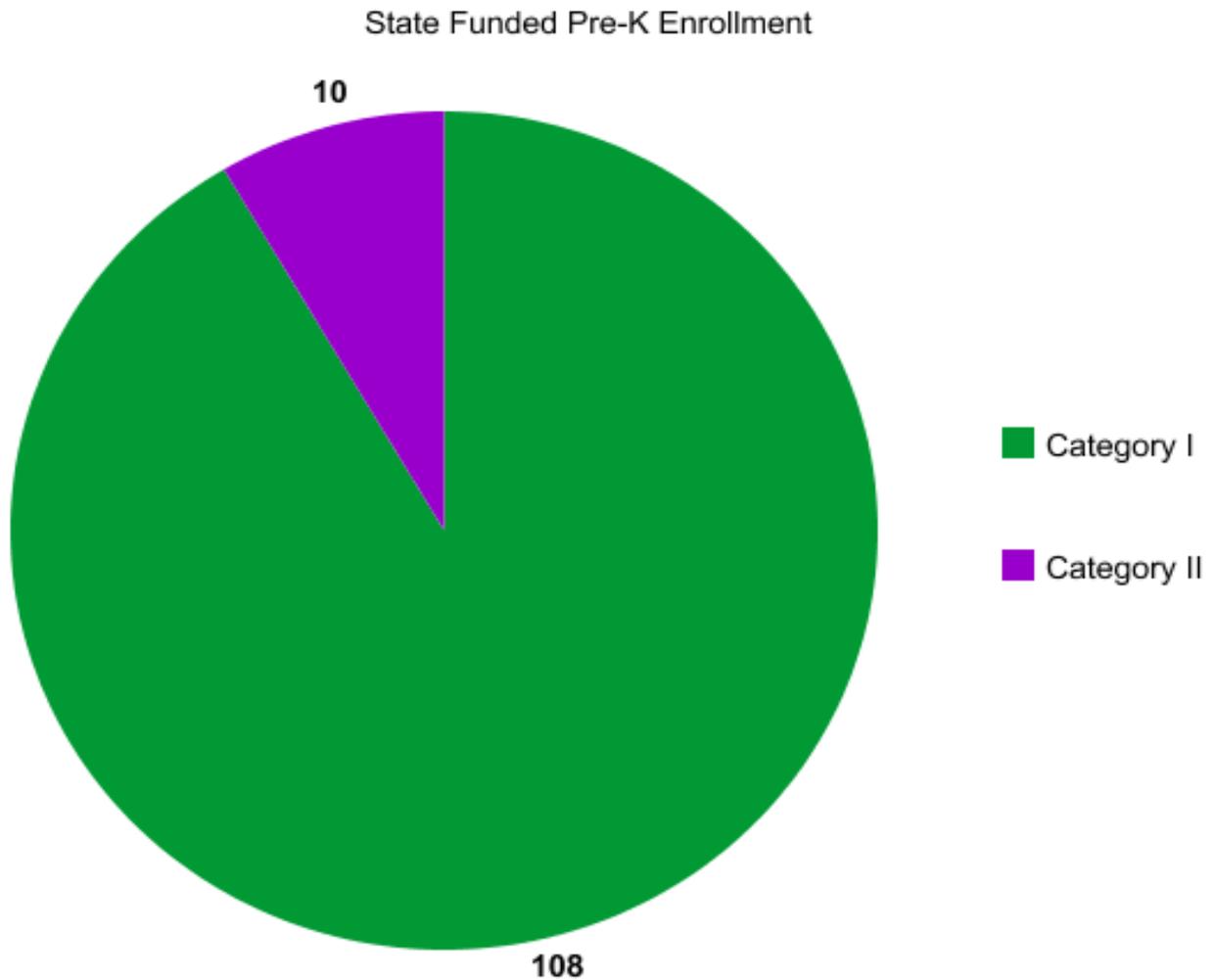
The state funded Pre-K program operated by McIntosh Trail Early Childhood Development Council served 108 children in five classrooms. This state funding is through the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL). The agency

provided Pre-K in Newton, Henry, Spalding, and Upson Counties. These state dollars funded teacher salaries as well classroom supplies, fieldtrips, technology, and training. Head Start provided wrap around services for the blended three classrooms which were in Newton, Spalding, and Upson Counties.

Being a blended classroom meant those children were dual enrolled in Head Start and Pre-K and received all services from both programs. Henry County is the only center with two Pre-K stand-alone classes. Pre-K serves only four year olds and there is no income eligibility requirement. The children in the blended classrooms must meet Head Start's income guidelines also. All children must be four years old by September 1st. of that school year.

Ninety-eight of those children were classified as Category I, which is similar to Head Start's eligibility requirements and denotes that those children met Federal poverty eligibility guidelines. The remaining 10 children (9%) were in Category II and had family income above Head Start's eligibility requirements.

Georgia was the first state to have a state funded Pre-K program. It began around 1992 and McIntosh Trail ECDC was the second Head Start program in the state to receive Pre-K funding. Many children and families who were above the income guidelines benefitted from the Pre-K programs operated by the agency.



Pre-K blended classrooms experience many of the same issues as Head Start classes. These classes also faced chronic absenteeism. The average attendance for the 2017-1 school year was 87.22% which was an improvement over the previous school year. State funding does not provide for Family Service positions, which are used in Head Start and Early Head Start to work with parents to encourage good attendance. Center Managers, teachers, and the existing Family Service staff try to work with such needs as possible.

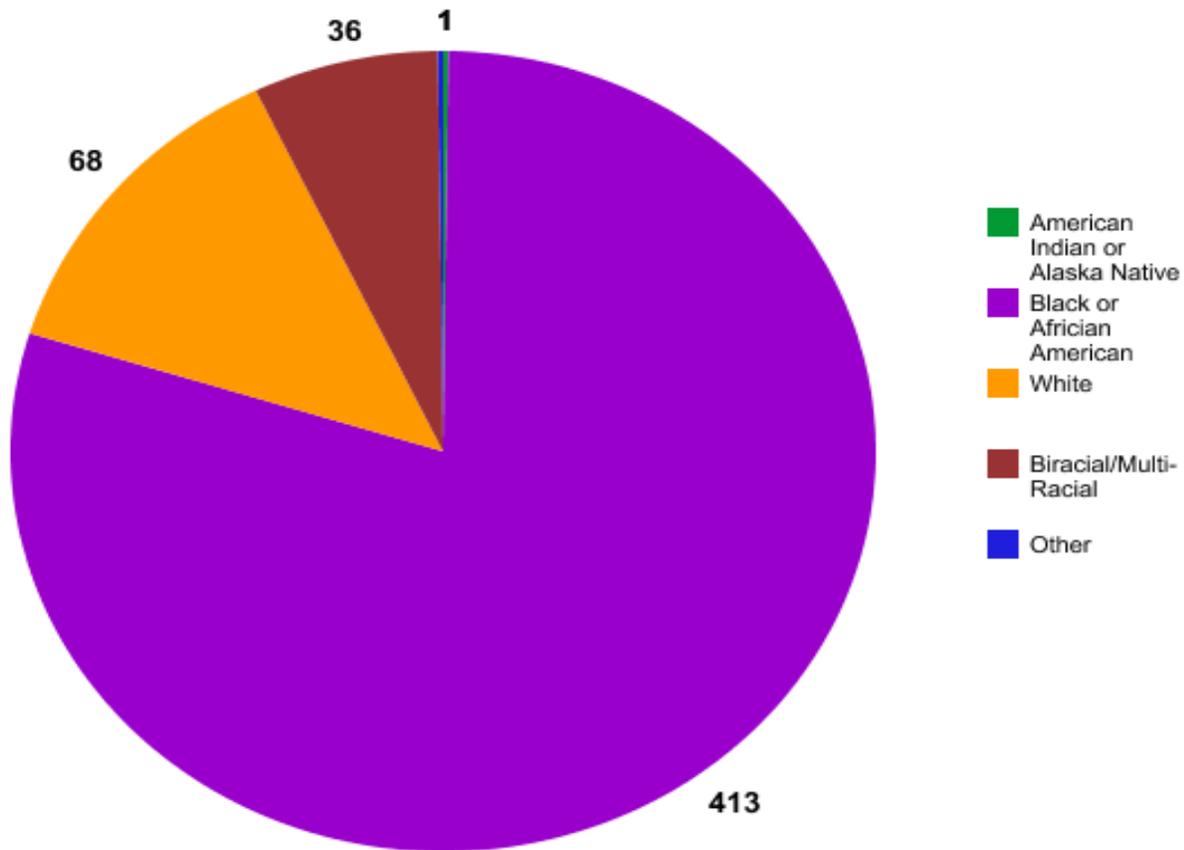
During the 2017-18 school DECAL continued to open and funding additional Pre-K classrooms in the local public school system. Children enrolled in Upson County center were recruited to fill the new school system classrooms and the agency classroom had great difficulty maintaining full enrollment. Because the classroom was blended it also affected the Head Start enrollment. It was the decision of the Policy Council and Board of Directors to close the Pre-K classroom and seek permission from the Office of Head Start to convert the classroom of twenty over to an Early Head Start classroom of eight pregnant moms, infants, and toddlers and two teachers.

Ethnicity in Head Start and Early Head Start

Families were asked to identify their children as one of eight possible choices for race and ethnicity. Thirteen children of the total enrollment were identified as of Hispanic ethnicity. The graph below demonstrates the information given by parents. Of the total number of children served that year, 594 stated that English was the primary language. One child spoke a Caribbean language and nine spoke Spanish.

Head Start program's systems and services support the cultural diversity of enrolled families. Individual staff members are trained to demonstrate their respect for and respond to the different cultures in their community and in their classrooms and center. Resources are provided to staff and families about key multicultural principles. Guidance and support to staff guide the implementation of these principles in their classrooms. Culture is a fundamental feature of Head Start program systems and services.

Ethnicity of Head Start Children

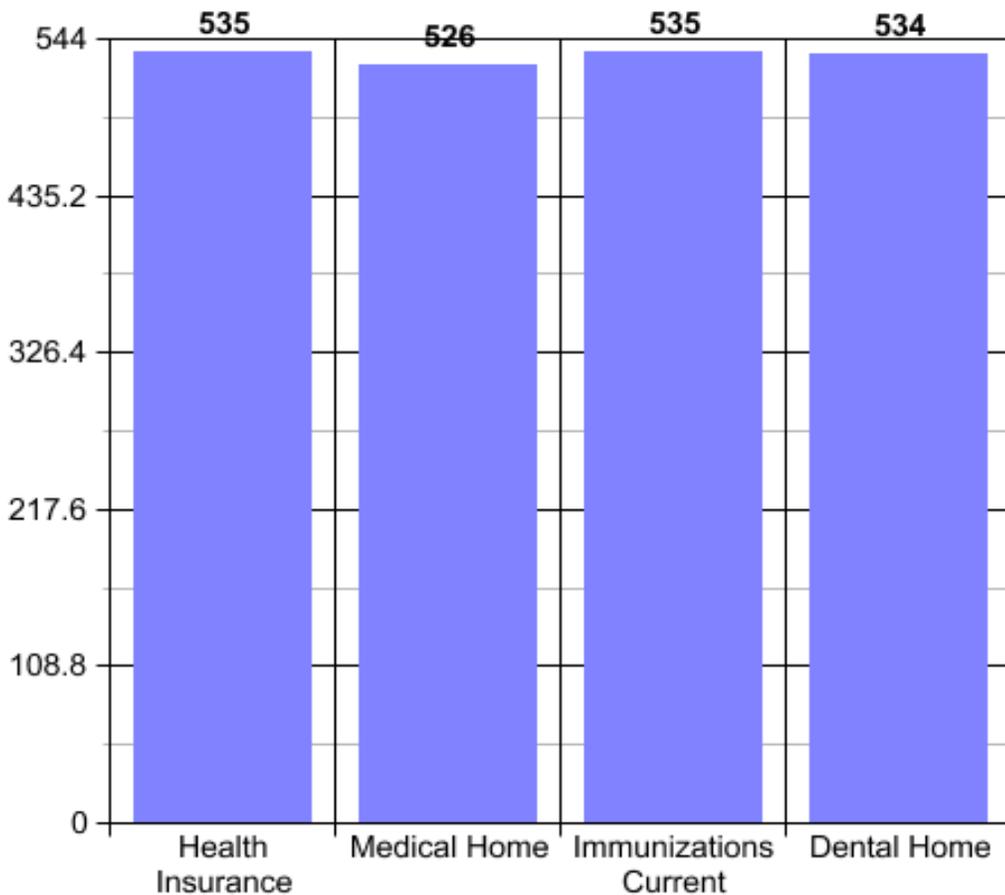


Experience shows a child with health problems, such as oral, mental, or nutrition, will have difficulty learning. Head Start staff provide high-quality health services, that will help each child grow. Children and families are connected with a health home in their local community which will support the family long after they transition into the public school system. The services must be developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate to support each child's growth and school readiness.

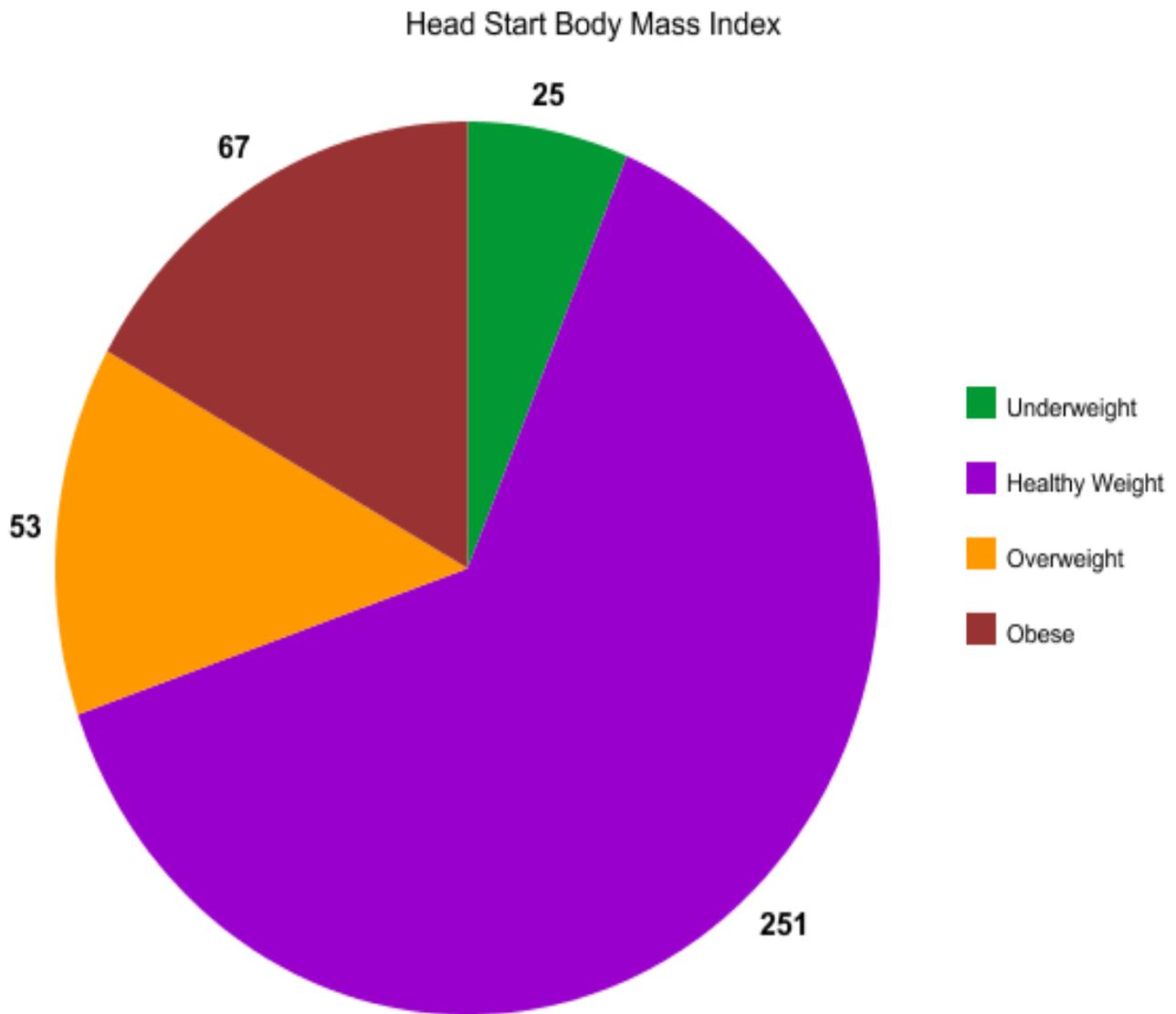
Additional medical and dental services are provided to all enrolled children and pregnant moms by both Head Start and Early Head Start programs. The program

served four pregnant moms in 2017-18. The program assists those pregnant moms to access services, become educated about her needs and the needs of her baby, and be ready to provide a nurturing and stable home for her newborn. Each child was linked to a medical and dental home in their community. If a child does not have health insurance Family Service Staff work with the family to refer to resources able to meet that need. Being current on immunizations is a state requirement that Head Start and Early Head Start must meet. Children not receiving services were due to dropouts, changes in enrollment, or parents refusing services.

Additional Medical and Dental Services



All children's height and weight are completed two times each school year. Any children found to be of concern are referred to the Nutrition Department who consults with a licensed nutritionist. They work with parents to discuss the nutritional needs of the child and help with menu planning. Referrals were made on 22% of the enrollment.



AUDIT

REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING AND ON
COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS BASED UPON AN AUDIT OF FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNMENT
STANDARDS

Information about Family Engagement Activities:

Fathers play a very important role in the success of their child's life. Children that have an absent father tend to have poor performance in school and are at risk for drug use, violent behavior, and criminal activity. One of the objectives of the program is to ensure program staff and parents have knowledge and skills needed to support the ongoing involvement of fathers in the program and in the lives of their children.

Fathers have a direct impact on the well-being and social behavior of their children. A father who has a good relationship with the mother of their children is more likely to be involved and to spend time with their children. Children with involved, caring fathers have better educational outcomes. The influence of a father's involvement on academic achievement extends into adolescence and young adulthood. Children with good relationships with their father were less likely to experience depression, and exhibit disruptive behavior.

In the 2017-18 school year staff continued to be innovative and work to keep fathers engaged in the centers. Some of the activities that were done to encourage fathers and students were: Father/Daughter Dance, Grandparents Day, various parent trainings, Thanksgiving luncheon, Donuts for Dads, Career Day, Dads reading to Children Day, Valentine Dance, Science Fair, and end of the year celebration".

Dads volunteered in the classrooms and on the playgrounds. Several fathers were door greeters in the morning, checking passes, talking to the parents and children, and encouraging good attendance and involvement. The agency had a total of 119 father figures to participate in the centers and programs for the 2017-18 school year.

As the agency puts additional emphasis on fatherhood each year staff have seen a decrease in behavioral problems in classrooms and the number of behavioral referrals that have been made to the Mental Health team. Research indicates there are beneficial physical, mental, emotional, academic, and spiritual impacts on a child who connects positively with a male role model. The following are ways that the staff have tried to improve the involvement of fathers:

- Increased communication with father figures
- Offer a greater variety of activities for both parents
- Schedule activities after work hours
- Encourage participation in the classrooms
- Be more vocal in appreciation of fathers that participate
- Met with fathers about the importance of student's attendance

Most fathers want to do their part in raising their children to be successful in life and as adults. Dads appreciate guidance, support, and encouragement to help them become better parents. All children benefit from happier families, working together to support their children's positive growth.

McIntosh Trail ECDC in an effort to increase services to parents has researched parenting curriculums which will assist with active family engagement. With the approval of the governing bodies ReadyRosie was implemented which is a research based parenting curriculum that builds on parent's knowledge. The implementation began in the summer of 2017.

Monthly parent meetings are held in each center with training provided. A total of 810 parents attended parent training compared to 537 during the year before.

The Agency's Efforts to Prepare Children for Kindergarten (School Readiness)

McIntosh Trail Early Childhood Development Council supports school readiness and positive child outcomes in Early Head Start and Head Start through comprehensive child development services, age appropriateness, individual appropriateness, meaningful curriculum, child observations, screenings, and assessments.

The School Readiness Team is composed of program administrators, retired and current public school teachers, assistant superintendents, principals, community partners, center managers, family service workers, and teaching staff. The School Readiness Team meets on a quarterly basis to review program goals, provide valuable input, and ensure that federal mandates and best practices are met. There were several parents, community partners, retired educators, as well as current local educational agency representatives from several of the counties within the service area that serve also on the team. The Policy Council and Board reviews and assists in the project. The team works together to develop School Readiness goals and a plan that will meet Federal regulations and Best Practices.

Each school year the School Readiness Team collects data from the Brigance, CLASS, Teaching Strategies Gold, and The Pyramid Infant-Toddler Observation Scale. The information was aggregated and analyzed for the 2017-178 school year. The administrative team reviewed the information and used it to determine a plan of action for the following school year. There was a significant increase in development across all areas with the exception of literacy. Literacy scores were still low in comparison to expected developmental levels. There was a significant increase in math development.

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) scores were similar across the seven counties:

	Program Score			National Average
	Fall	Winter	Spring	
Instructional Support	3.1	3.88	4.01	2.30
Emotional Support	5.78	5.99	5.89	5.70
Class Organization	4.61	5.13	5.10	5.32

Instructional Support and Emotional Support were above the national average in all three assessments. Classroom Organization was below the national average in all three assessments. This Dimension includes Behavior Management, Productivity, and Instructional Learning Formats.

Teaching Strategies Gold is a reach based assessment used by the teachers to assess the children’s development and follows the child from birth until age six. In the fall of 2017-18 the children were on average 36% below their developmental level. There was an overall average increase of 19% in children who moved from below the expected development to exceeding development from the fall to the spring. in the fall 36% of the children were not meeting their expected development. By the winter only 29% were not on level and in the spring only 17% still were not on their expected developmental level.

SPECIAL NOTES

Each Head Start and Early Head Start program (combined) is mandated to have at least 10% of the enrollment filled with children who have diagnosed disabilities. The program served 17% or 78 children birth to five.

McIntosh Trail ECDC underwent a Focus Two Federal Review. The program was found to be 100% in compliance with no recommendations.

McIntosh Trail ECDC voluntarily participated in the Quality Rated System sponsored by the Georgia Department Early Care and Learning. All centers underwent additional training and review as well as a visit to be observed in order to receive a rating level. Six centers received a Level 3 and one center was rated with a Level 2. Level 3 is the highest rating level possible. The Pike County Center received the highest Quality Rating Score in the state of Georgia.

In the past year, the agency, programs, and staff has been selected for several studies and projects centered on Birth to Five programs and services. Additional information about McIntosh Trail ECDC Inc. and its program is available on the agency's website, www.mtecdc.org.