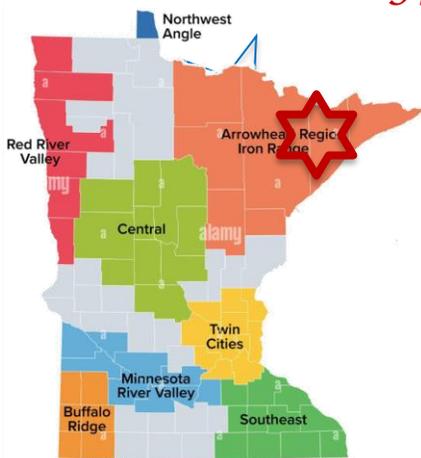




*Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency Inc.*

*Head Start & Early Head Start*

*Annual Report 2024-2025*



*This Report is distributed to the Head Start Staff, Policy Council and the AEOA Board of Directors. The public can access the report through the Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA) website at [www.aeo.org](http://www.aeo.org)*



## Arrowhead Head Start's Mission Statement:

Arrowhead Head Start works with community partnerships to provide comprehensive support to young children and families on their journey toward social, economic, and educational growth.

### Program Goals:

Goal 1: Strengthen teaching practices, knowledge, and skills to increased child outcomes.

Goal 2: Strengthen family engagement and positive parenting skills.

Goal 3: Modify the program's service delivery to best meet the needs of our communities.

Goal 4: Strengthen and support all staff.

### School Readiness Goals:

SR Goal 1. Approaches to Learning: With the help of familiar adults, children will demonstrate developmentally appropriate skills to manage their behavior with increasing independence.

SR Goal 2. Social & Emotional Development: Children will engage in positive relationships with others, appropriately expressing and responding to a broad range of emotions.

SR Goal 3. Language & Literacy: Children will increase communication and literacy skills through language-rich experiences.

SR Goal 4. Cognition: Children will actively explore their environment to increase their mathematical thinking and problem-solving skills.

SR Goal 5. Perceptual, Motor, & Physical Development: Children will develop healthy and safe behaviors.



# HEAD START FUNDING

2024-2025

<b>Federal Head Start</b>	<b>\$2,967,113</b>
<b>Federal Early Head Start</b>	<b>\$1,345,067</b>
<b>State Head Start/Early Head Start</b>	<b>\$787,180</b>
<b>USDA Child Care Adult Food Program-CACFP</b>	<b>\$153,044</b>
<b>MN Great Start Compensation Funding</b>	<b>\$150,363</b>
<b>MN Scholarships Pathway II</b>	<b>\$272,415</b>
<b>MN Scholarships Pathway I</b>	<b>\$75,791</b>
<b>MN Community Action Grant (MCAG)</b>	<b>\$7,418</b>
<b>Community Service Block Grant( CSBG)</b>	<b>\$9,570</b>
<b>Total Budget:</b>	<b>\$5,767,961</b>

## HEAD START Non-Federal Share

2024-2025

<b>Parent Site Volunteer</b>	<b>Parents At Home Activities</b>	<b>Community Resource</b>	<b>Donation</b>	<b>Facility Donation</b>	<b>Total 2024-2025</b>
<b>\$971.10</b>	<b>\$10967.84</b>	<b>\$3189.10</b>	<b>\$465.00</b>	<b>\$1,308,197.97</b>	<b>\$1,323,791.01</b>

# PROGRAM EXPENDITURES

**2024-2025**

Program Expenditure	Federal Head Start	Federal Early HS	State HS/EHS	USDA CACFP	CSBG-MCAG	Great Start	MN Scholarship Pathway II	MN Scholarship Pathway I
Admin	297,898.24	86,366.09	112,110.00					
Personnel	1,570,153.22	818,099.11	385,719.00		6,702.00	121,428.00	118,686.00	42,057.00
Fringe	694,256.68	445,799.44	169,569.00		4,468.00	28,935.00	30,061.00	17,468.00
Travel	19,520.08	20,799.73	6,902.00		284.00		123,668.00	16,266.00
Equipment	149,538.00							
Supplies	113,957.80	18,488.78	98,916.00	78.00				
Contractual			5,355.00		2,300.00			
Construction								
Other	206,142.57	35,603.14	8,609.00	129,426.00				
T/TA	32,357.00	6,966.12						
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,083,823.59</b>	<b>1,432,122.41</b>	<b>787,180.00</b>	<b>129,504.00</b>	<b>13,754.00</b>	<b>150,363.00</b>	<b>272,415.00</b>	<b>75,791.00</b>

## FINANCIAL AUDIT 2024

Walker, Giroux, Hahne, Ltd., conducted the annual financial audit for the year ending December 13, 2024. AEOA and Arrowhead Head Start was found to be in compliance with the requirements described in the U.S. Office of Management & Budget’s Uniform Guidance. All audit documents are available for public inspection.

## FEDERAL MONITORING REVIEW

**2024-2025**

From March 10, 2025, to March 12, 2025, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted a Focus Area One (FA1) monitoring review. An Area of Non-Compliance was identified (The grant recipient did not establish and maintain a Health and Mental Health Services Advisory Committee (HMHSAC).

August 14, 2025, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted a follow up review and based on this review, the finding was closed, found to be corrected.

## FUNDED ENROLLMENT 2024-2025

Federal Funded Head Start	226
Federal Funded Early Head Start	85
<b>Total Federally Funded</b>	<b>311</b>
State Funded Head Start	25
State Funded Early Head Start	15
<b>Total State Funded</b>	<b>40</b>
Total Head Start (3-5)	251
Total Early Head Start (0-3)	100
<b>Program Total Enrollment</b>	<b>351</b>
Average Monthly Enrollment	97%
Number of eligible HS & EHS children served cumulative	361
Number/Percent of over income HS & EHS children with other determining factors served cumulative	27 (7.48%)

## ATTENDANCE

Attendance Average 2024-2025	86%
Attendance Plans Initiated	191
Identified as Not Required	71
Attendance Plans Completed Successfully	92
Attendance Plans in Progress at Year End	28

The program uses attendance plans to help families identify barriers to their child attending class on a regular basis and supporting them with strategies to overcome these barriers to improve their child's attendance. Attendance plans were created for children below 90% attendance. Chronic Absenteeism Rate: 66% (54%) of absences were related to illness. (33%) Due to family situations.

## Community Needs



Arrowhead Head Start conducted a full Community Needs Assessment in 2023 and updated the data in 2024. The assessment data, along with the historical enrollment numbers and waiting list data, helped to identify one of the highest areas of need, the lack of available childcare, especially for infants through age three. 61% of community respondents reported there is an urgent need for childcare for ages 0-16 months old and 55% reported an urgent need for childcare for ages 17-36 months old. Applications for our program also indicated a high need for infant and toddler childcare. Since January 2024, of the 278 applications received for Head Start, 61% indicate a need for childcare. Of the families that indicated a childcare need, 71% specified the need is for the age range of 0-36 months old. Additionally, of those needing infant/toddler childcare, 56% indicated that the lack of available childcare is prohibiting them from working or attending school.

While the community needs assessment indicated a need for childcare, specifically in the age range of 0-3 years old, our program enrollment and waiting list data for children 3-5 suggested the program's need to consider a change in scope of programming. School district preschool program offerings have increased significantly over the past few years at a time when in addition we are seeing a declining population across our rural communities.

To meet the needs of the communities, the program requested a change of scope from the Office of Head Start in 2024 to reduced Head Start pre-school numbers and reallocating these funds to shift services to an Early Head Start infant -toddler center. The program has worked toward this goal securing additional grants for construction and equipment. We are anticipating a late fall of 2025 opening of the new center in the Virginia HRA Housing.

Our program has formed a relationship with our local HRA in both Virginia and Eveleth. In 2023-2024 we opened a Head start pre-school classroom at the Eveleth HRA Housing site. Through supplemental funding the Head start program was able to provide the community with a playground that will serve all of the children in the housing in addition to our head start children.

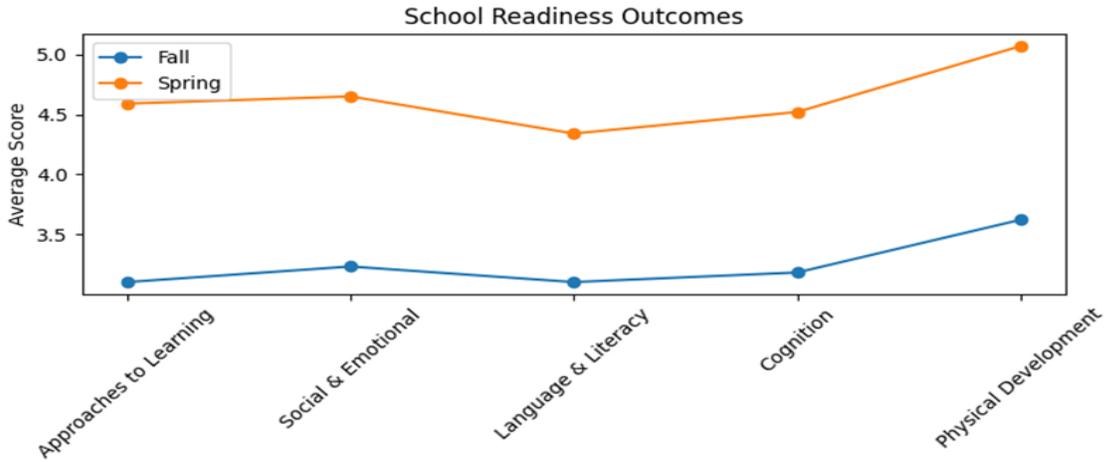


# School Readiness Outcomes



The COR Advantage Assessment has set benchmarks that indicate whether a child is ready for kindergarten. Children are determined to be school ready if they have an average score of **3.75** in each COR category and an overall average of **4.0** or higher. For children 0-3 we look for a score of 1 for a one year old, 2 for two year old, and 3 for a 3 year old at year end to determine if they are on track.

Assessment/Goal Developmental Domains	Under 1	1 Year	2 Years	3 Years	4 Years
Approaches to Learning	1.01	1.94	2.75	3.7	<b>4.59</b>
Social & Emotional Development	0.9	1.88	2.7	3.78	<b>4.65</b>
Physical Development & Health	0.97	2.22	3.19	4.32	<b>5.07</b>
Language, Literacy, & Communication	0.75	1.79	2.56	3.46	<b>4.34</b>
Mathematics	0.76	1.83	2.62	3.63	<b>4.52</b>
Creative Arts	0.92	1.98	2.73	3.96	<b>4.62</b>
Science & Technology	0.95	1.95	2.8	3.88	<b>4.70</b>
Social Studies	0.92	1.82	2.52	3.82	<b>4.83</b>
English Language Learning	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	<b>N/A</b>



The percentage of 4-year-olds determined to be ready for kindergarten increased throughout the program year. Period 1 scores indicated 4% of 4-year-olds were ready for kindergarten, 31% at the end of period 2, and 70% at the end of the 3rd and final scoring period. Of all children eligible for kindergarten, 7 out of 10 were determined to be ready across all learning domains. This includes the 26% of children with IEPs.

## Screening and Early Intervention

Program	Head Start	Early Head Start
New Enrollee Developmental Screenings Completed	145 (96%)	49 (92%)
Children Identified and referred for further evaluation	51	10

## Disability Services



Children with Special Education Plans	Diagnosed Prior To, or During Program Year	Pending Evaluation at Year-End	Total
EHS (IFSP)	24	0	24 (24%)
HS (IEP)	61	4	65 (26%)
Totals:	85	4	89 (25%)

## Social Emotional-Mental Health Referrals/ Services

ALL Enrolled Head Start and Early Head Start children receive a Social Emotional screening annually. **(29)** children were referred for additional mental health services



38% of the children referred completed mental health supportive services.

29% were undetermined-waiting for outside provider outcome reports at year end.

5% were unknown due to no response from the outside provider

12% In progress

2% Parent refusal

14% were unknown due to the child dropping from the program

# Health and Wellness



**Well Child  
Check-Ups Completed**  
**Head Start**  
**219 (89%)**  
**Early Head Start**  
**52 (47%)**

**VISION  
REFERRALS**  
**44/25%**

**HEARING  
REFERRALS**  
**23/22%**

**Professional Dental Exams  
Received**  
**Head Start 140 (57%)**  
**Early Head Start 33 (30%)**

**98% of children have an ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care by a health care professional**

**88% of children received an oral health screening**

**63 Children were diagnosed with a chronic health condition most common include: Hearing 24%, Vision 24%, Autism 19%**  
***Of the total number of provider or program screenings conducted, 137 resulted in referrals for additional follow-up care or additional assessments.***

**Up-to-Date Immunizations**  
**Head Start 92%**  
**Early Head Start 83%**

**82% of children have access to continuous, accessible oral care provided by an oral health care professional**

## FAMILY SERVICES

Head Start Family Information	
Total number of families served	312
Of these the number of two-parent families	152
Of these the number of single-parent families	160
The total number of families, the highest level of education obtained	
An advanced degree or baccalaureate degree	39
An associate degree, vocational school, or some college	143
A high school graduate or GED	96
Less than high school graduate	34
Total number of families with at least one parent is employed in job training or in school	240
<b>Family Services Provided</b>	<b># Participated</b>
Emergency/crisis intervention ( immediate needs for food, clothing, shelter)	181
Housing assistance (e.g., subsidies, utilities, repairs)	22
Asset building services (e.g., financial education, debt counseling)	8
Mental health services	60
Substance misuse prevention	20
Substance misuse treatment	14
English as a Second Language (ESL) training	0
Assistance in enrolling into an education or job training program	45
Research-based parenting curriculum	255
Involvement in discussing their child's screening and assessment results and their child's progress	311
Supporting transitions between programs (i.e., EHS to HS, HS to kindergarten)	186
Education on preventive medical and oral health	259
Education on health- developmental consequences of tobacco product use	63
Education on nutrition	258
Education on postpartum care (e.g., breastfeeding support)	42
Education on relationships/marriage	23
Assistance to families of incarcerated individuals	4

# Nutrition Services (CACFP)



Service	Number Served
Breakfast	20543
Lunch	20573
Snacks	9469
2024-2025 Reimbursement	\$153,043.81

## Family Engagement and Volunteering



**83** caregivers volunteered for **216.25** total hours in classroom, socialization or Policy Council activities.

**198** caregivers completed at-home extension learning activities totaling **10,738** hours. At home learning extension activities and reading has a positive impact on their children's success in school.





# GOVERNANCE



## Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency Board 2024-2025

AEOA is governed by a 25-member Board of Directors, representing an equal cross-section of low-income individuals, public officials, and private sector parties who live and work in the Agency's service area.

Executive Committee	Board Members	
Jeff Kletscher- <b>Chairperson</b>	Paul McDonald	Tina Koecher
Kevin Adee	Ricky Roche	Michelle Miller
Laura Perry- <b>Early Childhood Ed. Development Expert</b>	Gary Peterson	Gayle Goff- <b>Attorney</b>
Cathy Zelinski	Keith Nelson	Romit Jha
Cherie Averill-Manner	Derrick Goutermont	Victoria Thorsen
Michael Kearney	Michael Jugovich	Nathan Thompson
Casey Venema	Debra White	Crystal Royer
Les Northrup	Ben DeNucci	Dana Hiltunen
Rob Hietala- <b>Treasure -Chairperson Board Finance Committee</b>		



## Arrowhead Head Start Policy Council 2024-2025

Parents are encouraged to be involved through parent committee meetings and Policy Council. The Policy Council is made up of Head Start and Early Head Start parents and community members who lead and help make decisions about the program.

Executive Committee	Site Representatives
Stacey Roepke      Chairperson	Juhi Perkin      Ashley Minkkinen
Staisee Riggins      Vice Chairperson	Sara Flack      Shaynee Lakoskey
Alecia Varani      Secretary	Shay Marcelus      Kendra Feltus
Victoria Thorsen      HS AEOA Board Representative	Tayea Wheeler      Becky Robinson
Rob Hietala      AEOA Board Member Representative	Megan Rudesill      Tristin Spicer
Brandi Reamer      State Parent Affiliate Alternate	Bryan Hunt      Celina Hogan
	Cody Barth      Tristin Spicer
	Justice Veness      Brandi Casto