

Greater East Texas Community Action Program



Department of Early Childhood and Family Services



ANNUAL REPORT

"Improving Lives Through Community Involvement"

www.headstart-getcap.org

Legacy Grant

2023 - 2024

What is GETCAP DECFS ?

Greater East Texas Community Action Program's Department of Childhood and Family Services (DECFS) is a comprehensive program that encompasses a variety of program options for children and families. DECFS holds several community driven program, all focused on developing the children and families of East Texas. Head Start and Early Head Start are two programs that are operated under the umbrella of GETCAP DECFS. Head Start is a federally funded, comprehensive child development program serving low-income children age birth to 5 and their families. This program addresses children and their families with the overall goal of improving school readiness, foster healthy development, and preparing young children for future success in life and school.



GETCAP DECFS provides a range of individualized services in the areas of education and early childhood development; medical, dental, and mental health; nutrition; parent involvement; and family development. The entire range of DECFS's services is responsive and appropriate to each child and family's development, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heritage and experience.

GETCAP DECFS has a long tradition (since 1968) of delivering comprehensive, high quality services in areas that include: pre- reading, pre-writing, vocabulary, parent reports of children's literacy skills, access to health care, and higher use of educational activities by parents.

Administration



Executive Director: Karen Swenson

Chief Financial Officer: Rebecca Huss

Human Resource Manager: Gina OQuin

Chief Information Technology Officer: Hollis James

Governing Bodies

GETCAP Board of Directors

Happy Willhoite	Sinnie Myles	James Montoya
Whitney Burran	Caroline Garnder	Robert Crow, Chair
Lianna Berry	Sylvia Goff	Kermit Kennedy
Dennis Lee	Lauren Gaudette	Maylene Neal
Angela Kirk	Gary Roberts	Winifred Davis
Brenda Tankersley	Karen Bethel	Rev. Terrence Hicks

Policy Council Members

Name	County
Meredith Harrison, Chair	San Jacinto County
Sherry Hardy	Nacogdoches ISD
Sherrie Garner, Board Liason	Nacogdoches County
Jamie Sloan	Houston County
Britliana Aguilar	Nacogdoches
Karnada Lewis	Smith
Paola Rivera	Walker

Meet the Director

As the director of Greater East Texas Community Action Program's Department of Early Childhood and family services, Judy Hamilton's motto and vision for the department is "Forever Grateful- Seeking Greater".

With this vision in mind, Mrs. Hamilton has commissioned her team to operate in excellence, and strive to be the best that they can be to serve the children and families of East Texas.

With over 25 years of experience with Head Start, Mrs. Hamilton leads her team of highly qualified professionals with accuracy and clarity, so that the vision set before them can be accomplished with excellence and grace. The priorities of GETCAP DECFS remain true, to educate a generation, support families, and to change communities, all while providing excellent early childhood services to children and families to give them a Head Start in education and life.



Funding

Financial Summary for Head Start Activities per Audit of Fiscal Year Ended . GETCAP Head Start provides educational opportunities to children and services to their families made possible by a yearly grant provided by the Federal Government and USDA meal reimbursements.

Head Start Families and Community Volunteers generated the non-federal match to the federal grant dollars through volunteer time and donations.

Category	Head Start	Early Head Start	Total
Personnel	\$ 3,033,628.91	\$ 665,550.25	\$ 3,699,179.16
PT Tax & Fringe	\$ 1,101,895.58	\$ 234,245.73	\$ 1,336,141.31
Travel	\$ 3,719.01	\$ -	\$ 3,719.01
Training	\$ 98,334.57	\$ 3,337.08	\$ 101,671.65
Contractual	\$ 240,418.07	\$ -	\$ 240,418.07
Supplies	\$ 689,265.32	\$ 104,798.71	\$ 794,064.03
Insurance	\$ 35,442.53	\$ 4,264.15	\$ 39,706.68
Occupancy	\$ 519,794.09	\$ 101,323.68	\$ 621,117.77
Communciation	\$ 156,508.68	\$ 11,253.12	\$ 167,761.80
Food	\$ 14,258.12	\$ (4.42)	\$ 14,253.70
Equipment	\$ 190,934.33	\$ 41,475.36	\$ 232,409.69
Vehicle Expense	\$ 118,345.86	\$ 11,498.18	\$ 129,844.04
Other	\$ 671,060.76	\$ 151,477.85	\$ 822,538.61
Administration	\$ 1,017,351.43	\$ 42,780.08	\$ 1,060,131.51
Total Federal Dollars	\$ 7,890,957.26	\$ 1,371,999.77	\$ 9,262,957.03
Non-Federal	\$ 1,261,323.52	\$ -	\$ 1,261,323.52
Total Budget	\$ 9,152,280.78	\$ 1,371,999.77	\$ 10,524,280.55

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DECFS Locations



Coldspring Head Start
941 Slade Street
PO Box 10
Coldspring, TX 77331



Crockett Head Start
435 Texas Street
PO Box 822
Crockett, TX 75835



Huntsville Head Start
125 FM 980
PO Box 719
Huntsville, TX 77320



Nacogdoches County
1902 Old Tyler Road
PO Drawer 631938
Nacogdoches, TX 75963



Trinity Head Start
144 N. Martin Luther
King Junior Street
PO Box 15
Trinity, TX 75862

DECFS

Collaborations

Developing cooperative relations with partners at a local and state level is how GETCAP Head Start meets its high standards and generates important results for children. Over the years GETCAP Head Start increased collaborative efforts in the following areas:

- Early Intervention Program
- Partnerships with Local Education Agencies

Establish relationships with local colleges and universities as training ground for interns.

- Stephen F. Austin State University
 - o Social Work
 - o Child and Family Development
 - o Stanley Speech and Hearing Clinic
 - o Health Science
 - o Dietetic
- Sam Houston State University
 - o Dietetic
- Angelina College
 - o Child and Family Development
 - o Business
- Lone Star
- Panola College
 - o Nursing



Family Empowerment

Content Area Vision:

To equip, empower, and embolden families to be the best they can be for themselves, and the community, by providing time, resources, and support.



ERSEA

Eligibility. Recruitment. Selection. Enrollment. Attendance.

Greater East Texas Community Action Program (GETCAP) Department of Early Childhood and Family Service (DECFS) will ensure that all children that are receiving services from the GETCAP Early Head Start/Head Start program have been determined eligible according to the guidelines described in the Head Start Program Performance Standard (HSPPS). DECFS will ensure that it maintains its funded enrollment level and fills any vacancies within 30 days with qualified applicants. Service (DECFS) will encourage families to maintain consistent attendance in the Head Start program. Consistent attendance is defined as present or participating for 85% of expected hours, or more. Head Start staff help families in identifying barriers to consistent attendance. Staff initiate support as appropriate. If participation or attendance ceases, staff should make efforts to re-engage families to resume attendance. A slot is vacant when attendance does not resume and may be considered an enrollment opportunity.

2023-2024 Enrollment

DECFS Program	Total Number of Families Served	Total Number of Children Served	Total Funded Enrollment
Head Start	373	400	576
Early Head Start	98	111	104
Expectant Families	N/A	N/A	N/A

ERSEA

Eligibility. Recruitment. Selection. Enrollment. Attendance.

Percentage of Eligible Children Served

Program	Applications Received	Eligible Children Served	Percentage
Head Start	918	400	43.57%
Early Head Start	1175	139	11.83%
Total	2093	1226	58.58%

Services/Number of Families provided those services

Services	Number of Families Provided Those Services
Emergency/Crisis Intervention	104
Transportation	-
Mental Health	471
English as a Second Language	1
Job Training	6
Substance Abuse Prevention/Treatment	471
Child Abuse and Neglect	471
Domestic Violence	471
Health Education	471
Parenting Education	471

Family Engagement



Staff/Teacher

- Parent Teacher Conferences
- Home Visits
- IEP/IFSP Meetings



Program Planning

- Parent Club Meetings
- Advisory Meeting
- Policy Council Meetings



Family Engagement

- Family Fun Night
- Week of The Young Child
- Take Home Activities
- Red Ribbon Week



Male Engagement

- Donuts For Dad
- Dine With Dads
- Fathers Reading Every Day (FRED)



Volunteering

- Classroom Volunteer
- Center Volunteer



Parent Education

- Parent Workshop
- Parent Orientation

From the very first meeting with the family, parents are offered the opportunity to be involved with the program. Parents attend site parent meetings; serve on Policy Council, and Health/Social Services Advisory Council. Parents are always welcome in the classroom by helping with or leading activities or projects, planning classroom activities with the teaching staff, and introducing or sharing their culture with the class. There are a number of ways that parents can help teaching staff by sharing opinions, ideas and thoughts, working on projects at home, communicating with the staff, helping other parents feel welcome, and reinforcing learning at home.

As their child's first and most important teacher, parents have an important role in the program. Parents are encouraged to participate in lesson planning. We reach out to the parents for whom English is their second language to help them feel included in activities and meetings by providing interpreters and culturally sensitive activities. Along with regular site and committee meetings, there are Family Fun Nights that which are for all families in the program.

Wellness and Inclusion

Content Area Vision:

To promote and maintain the optimum health and well-being of children, families, and staff members by providing an inclusive environment necessary to initiate efforts through ongoing outreach and education.

Health Services

GETCAP's commitment to wellness embraces a comprehensive vision of health for children and their families. GETCAP, through collaboration among families, staff, and health professionals, assure all child health and developmental concerns are identified. Children and their families are linked to a continuous, accessible health care so that a relationship may develop between the provider and the family that will continue after the child leaves the Head Start program. Each child visits a health care provider, on a schedule of preventive and primary health care, to ensure that problems are quickly identified and addressed. Early identification and treatment of health problems reduce complications and improve health outcomes. With increased awareness of the long-term effects of childhood obesity, emphasis is placed on healthy meals, snacks, and cooking experiences throughout school activities and in communication with families. Staff Wellness Program is offered as an educational and recreational opportunity to staff. This program is also available to Head Start parents. The Staff Wellness Program is designed to motivate healthy choices among parents and staff to change lives, enhance health awareness, and to create a working environment that supports good health practices.

Children with the Following:	Early Head Start	Head Start	% of Enrolled Children
Continuous Accessible Health Care	111	381	96%
Continuous Accessible Dental Care	111	375	95%
Well Child Check-ups	96	166	51%
Up-to-Date Immunizations	85	334	82%

Nutrition

A child's nutrition is important to their physical and mental development. GETCAP Head Start's child nutrition services assist families in meeting each child's nutrition needs and in establishing good eating habits that nurture health development and promote life-long wellbeing. Through participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), children attending a Head Start center receive a nutritious breakfast, lunch, and snack that provides at least 2/3 of the daily nutritional requirement.

GETCAP Head Start nutrition consultant works with our program about 40 hours per month. Nutrition assessments are reviewed and completed for each child. Nutrition workshops, training, and cooking activities are available throughout the year.

Meal Type	Number of Meals Served
Breakfast	37,695
AM Snack (EHS Only)	12,151
Lunch	36,951
PM Snack	31,149
Total Meals Provided	117,946

Children with Special Needs Disabilities Services

GETCAP Head Start has been a pioneering meeting the needs of preschool children with special needs in a mainstream setting. Children with physical, emotional, and learning disabilities, and their non-disabled peers, learn from one another and from teachers, therapists and parents. The program works collaboratively with the Local Education Agencies and Early Childhood Intervention Agency to develop and implement individual education plans for children diagnosed with a disability.

Head Start also has an impressive history of providing services to children with disabilities by supporting their inclusion in all classroom and program experiences. Since 1972, Head Start has operated under a mandate to make available, at a minimum, ten percent of its enrollment opportunities to children with disabilities. Head Start and Early Head Start programs partner with Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and Early Childhood Intervention Agency to design individual education plans for children with disabilities and provide services to promote each child's development. During the 2023-2024 program year, GETCAP Head Start served 41 children with disabilities. This figure represents 9% of the total population of children served. Thirty four percent of the children receiving special services were identified through GETCAP Head Start screenings. Children with disabilities are supported with transition goals as they move from one program into the next to ensure appropriate educational support.



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Diagnosed Primary Disability:	# of Early Head Start Children receiving special services	# of Head Start Children receiving special services
Health Impairment	0	0
Emotional disturbance	0	1
Speech/Language impairments	0	14
Intellectual disabilities	0	2
Hearing Impairments, including deafness	0	0
Orthopedic Impairment	0	1
Visual Impairment, including blindness	0	0
Specific Learning Disabilities	0	0
Autism	0	2
Traumatic Brain Injury	0	0
Non-categorical /developmental delay	19	5
Multiple disabilities	0	0
Deaf-blind	0	0
Total	19	22

Mental Health

Mental Health

A child's mental health is just as important as his or her physical health. GETCAP Head Start makes mental health a priority by providing screenings and treatment services. Given the sensitivity of mental health issues, GETCAP Head Start strives to build trusting relationships between children, parents, staff, mental health professionals and the larger community. Mental health professionals visit on-site to assess children's needs; conduct parent workshops; train staff in making referrals to needed services; and act as a liaison between the families and community mental health resources. GETCAP Head Start, mental health professionals spent an average of 50 hours per month at the GETCAP Head Start sites. GETCAP Head Start staff consulted with mental health professionals regarding children. Individual mental health assessments were conducted on children. Of this number, 4 were found to need mental health services.



Education

Content Area Vision:

We are here to LEAD, RESPECT, EMPOWER, NURTURE, and BRIDGE the GAP so our children will learn, grow and be Kindergarten ready. To PROVIDE and BUILD social, emotional & academic skills around School Readiness goals that will lay a foundation for FUTURE SUCCESS!



Curriculum Approach

DECFS Head Start utilizes The Creative Curriculum for Preschool & The Creative Curriculum for Infant, Toddlers, & Two's. It is made up of goals and objectives designed to meet the needs of the different age groups that will help staff plan and implement individual, small and large group activities for children. This Curriculum provides the knowledge of how children learn and grow socially, emotionally, cognitively, & physically. When this information is gathered classroom staff utilizes it to plan for the upcoming days and weeks. This information is also used to make sure that all students are school ready.

It is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum that features exploration and discovery as a way of learning, enabling children to develop confidence, creativity, and lifelong critical-thinking skills. Creative Curriculum also provides teaching practices to support children's development, and it is consistent with how children develop and learn. The Curriculum is based on well-known theories of child development, and it meets all the criteria for developmentally appropriate early childhood curriculum.

We believe that young children learn best with hands-on activities and through active play in their environments. Children should engage in developmentally appropriate activities and have choices to determine their decision making. We encourage and strongly believe that all DECFS staff, families, and providers should and will work closely together to form a strong team to make sure we are all giving each other the tools and resources we need to be supportive in the child's development and learning.

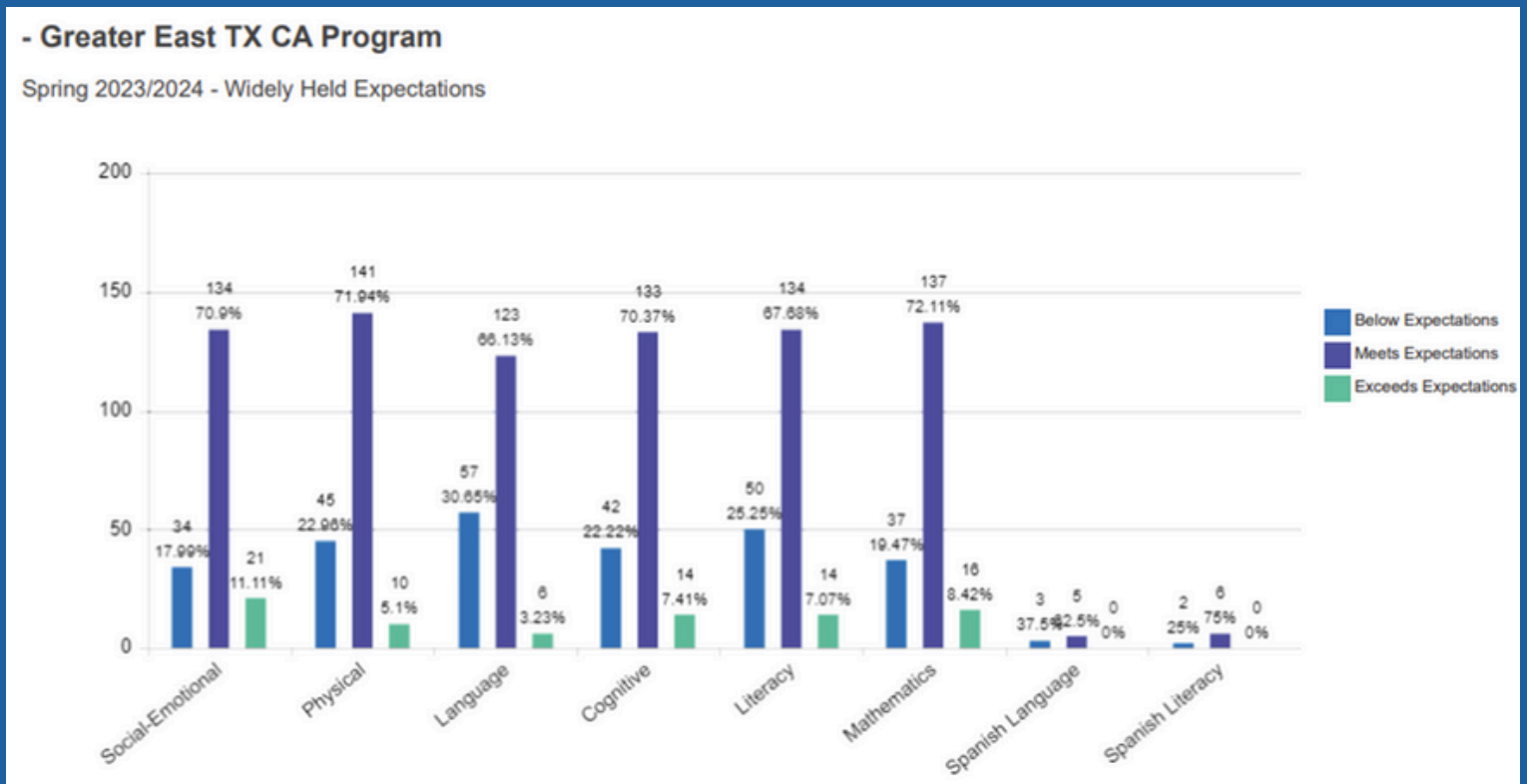
School Readiness & Ongoing Assessment

Teachers develop lesson plans that meet the developmental levels and needs of the children through small and large group activities and a variety of opportunities to explore materials and concepts. The assessment tool is scientifically and researched based. It addresses the criteria set out in Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, Head Start Performance Standards, and the curriculum. Each child's data is used to track individual development towards curriculum goals. Child observation data is used to plan and individualize instruction for children. Child data is used to inform the need for referrals as determined by child's progress and developmental norms for the chronological age of the child.

DECFS utilizes Smart Teach by Teaching Strategies because they offer different methods for collecting information that will work better with our Head Start system. Smart Teach is an authentic ongoing observational system for assessing children from birth through kindergarten. It helps teachers to observe children in the context of everyday experiences, which is an effective way to learn what they know and can do. The Child Assessment Portfolio/Objectives for Development and Learning (ODL) Rating Scale is how we assess the development progress of each child. Smart Teach is a researched based system that includes predictors of school success and are aligned with the Common Core State Standards, State early learning guidelines, and the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework. Smart Teach truly helps teachers focus on what matters.

Widely Held Expectations

Analysis of data for the Spring checkpoint focuses on data collection, entry and Teaching Strategies “Widely Held Expectations” to determine a baseline for children’s development to measure progress toward GETCAP’s School Readiness Goals. For this report, we looked at the agency ages Birth to 5 years and it shows that we failed below the 85% threshold. The graph provided tells how we did for the 2023-2024 school year.



Data Analysis

- Teaching Strategies progress by Area report indicates one location or several classrooms had significant amounts of missing data.
- Across the learning dimensions there are significant percentages of children rated as falling below widely held expectations.
- According to the data collected Social-Emotional & Literacy is still an area of development from the previous checkpoint.
- Data captured for infants and toddlers shows a clear picture of children's growth and development.

For the Spring we have experienced turnover at some of our locations and shifting of staff in different classrooms. These changes may also account for what appears to be a disproportionate number of children falling below the widely held expectations. A significant amount of the missing data has come from our ISD location in Nacogdoches.

Action Plans

- Review our resources to ensure it provides adequate information for our staff.
- We have targeted these areas and completed some training at our recent EHS & HS Boot Camps.
- Additional training will be conducted to assist us with the help and support that staff need to develop and see growth in all areas.
- Continue training, coaching, and making sure teachers are following the systems that are in place to gather, score data, and input data in a timely manner.
 - Retraining some staff as needed in capturing and inputting data.
- We will monitor missing accurate anecdotal notes closely to make sure they are used to assess students' achievement and measures progress towards goals.

Supporting Children's Transition

Head Start staff will inform parents/guardians of kindergarten programs in their local community. The parents will be notified of any kindergarten recruitment efforts in their nearby school district. Activities that allow parents and kindergarten staff from the school district to meet and discuss kindergarten requirements and materials should be planned. Parents will be offered transition activities that will include visits to the school district and meetings with school district personnel, as available. This will allow parents the opportunity to meet the school district personnel and gain information as to what is expected of children in kindergarten. Staff will also distribute public school information to parents and assist them with the registration process, if needed. Head Start staff will encourage and support parents as advocates for their child.

Ongoing communication and cooperation between Head Start staff and the receiving schools should communicate throughout the year. Each child should receive a transition packet of developmentally appropriate activities upon leaving Head Start. Head Start staff will assist in gathering and submission of pertinent information required for enrollment into kindergarten. The parent must give signed consent to release information prior to transfer of any child or family information to any other agency including school districts. The parent will be encouraged to play an active role in the enrollment of their child in the school district.

Children with special needs will receive all the previously mentioned services. The Head Start Staff should ensure that the transition plan is part of an ongoing transition process rather than an isolated activity. Additionally, the teacher should discuss and identify a child's strengths and concerns. At the end of the year parent-teacher conference discuss the child's progress and concerns, promote and support parents as they advocate for their child. GETCAP staff should review with the parent the progress on IEP goals, obtain consent to release IEP packet to the LEA, explain the screening process in the public school and what happens if the child continues to need special services upon entering kindergarten.



School Readiness

Providing Professional Development to Promote School Readiness

Professional development is generated on the school year calendar during scheduled pre-service and in-service days. All staff receive annual training prior to the school year starting and continue ongoing training throughout the school year. The training agenda consists of Active Supervision monthly and various topics that promote school readiness, health & safety, teacher child interaction, child outcomes, mental health, & professionalism.

The Center Managers conduct ongoing observations and provides feedback and technical assistance as needed and document it on their monthly report. During the monitoring process the School Readiness Administrator gathers and collects data to support, train, demonstrate, mentor and or coach teachers as needed.

Active Supervision

Our main priority is to ensure the health, safety and general well-being of all children enrolled in Head Start. Promotes a safe environment and prevents injuries in young children. It always requires focused attention and intentional observation. Staff use active supervision strategies to make sure children of all ages explore their environments safely. Keeping children safe is Head Starts top priority. Staff position themselves so that they can always observe children (watching, counting, and listening). During transitions they account for all students with name-to-face recognition by visually identifying each child. Staff also use their knowledge of each child's development and abilities to anticipate what they do, then get involved and redirect them when necessary. All Head Start staff and volunteers are responsible for making sure no child is left unsupervised. There are 6 strategies that put Active supervision in place: set up the environment, position staff, scan, and count, listen, anticipate children's behavior, engage and redirect.

Classroom Staff Observation & Mentor/Coaching

To support and develop teachers toward proficiency in teacher-child interactions, curriculum fidelity, lesson planning and teaching strategies that support optimal development in young learners, GETCAP Head Start has implemented systems of formal and informal classroom observations and mentor/coaching. The School Readiness Administrator, Center Manager & Coach are trained in appropriate observation strategies and tools. Each Head Start and Early Head Start classroom will be observed regularly to ensure age and developmentally appropriate lessons and activities are implemented in the classroom. The lessons will be observed for curriculum fidelity as well as appropriate teaching strategies. A formal observation for teacher-child interactions will be conducted in each classroom at a minimum of twice per year. Information from observations will be used to guide technical assistance, individual professional development, training needs, as well as mentoring and coaching opportunities. Center Managers are coaches. Coaches are trained in Practiced-Based Coaching strategies. Mentors are staff who have shown proficiency or expertise as teachers or in specific areas of instruction. Center Managers monitor classrooms using the CLASS observation tool to further promote high quality teaching strategies and best practices in the Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms.