



Department of Family
and Support Services

Children Services Division 2019-2020 Annual Report



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Introduction

The city of Chicago Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) manages a comprehensive human service delivery system to improve the quality of life for our most vulnerable residents. DFSS coordinates programs and administers resources to children and families, unsheltered homeless residents, survivors of domestic violence, workforce development for ex-offenders, youth, veterans, and senior services. In the core area of children services, DFSS is dedicated to providing children across the city with access to high-quality early learning through a citywide school system model in community-based programs known as Chicago Early Learning (CEL).

Chicago Early Learning Programs

Currently, DFSS' Children Services Division (CSD) administers funding for all community based CEL programs through small and large delegate agencies and partners. CSD's efforts to build this strong system of services are guided by three priorities:

- Maximize access to high quality early learning programs by matching investments to the needs of local communities and reducing the barriers to entry for children and families.
- Improve the comprehensiveness and quality of early learning across all programs to ensure that children and families' needs are met.
- Create a strong system of service providers by increasing support and reducing the administrative burden for community-based providers of early learning.

The CEL program models and options include the following federal, state, and local funding streams:

- 1) Federal Head Start (three to five-year-olds), Early Head Start (birth to three-year-olds and pregnant women), Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership (birth to three-year-olds), and Early Head Start Expansion programs during the program year 2019-2020 delivered through a network of 43 community-based delegate agencies.
- 2) State Early Childhood Block Grant for Preschool for All (PFA) (three to five-year-olds) and Prevention Initiative (PI) (birth to three-year-olds and pregnant women) programs in community-based organizations and state-funded site administered childcare in a small number of community-based organizations.

- 3) Local Ready to Learn Initiative enhancements for early childhood programming in community-based organizations.

The CEL program year runs from September to August, offering full year (12-month) and part year (10-month) programs. Children and families can enroll in center-based half or full day care, full day licensed family childcare home care, or home-based/home visiting programs. Different funding streams run on different fiscal year cycles as outlined in the Fiscal Year 2020 section.

Message from the CSD Deputy Commissioner

It is my pleasure to provide you with the 2019-2020 Annual Report. The report reflects the challenges and opportunities during the COVID-19 pandemic. While the early childhood landscape throughout the city has changed as a result of the pandemic, we have reformulated our vision around the delivery of high-quality early learning programming and services to children and families. Although we all have experienced uncertainty during this unprecedented time, those in our community with family commitments and caregiving responsibilities faced myriad challenges with the temporary closing and movement to virtual classes at all our early learning delegate agencies.

We worked hand in hand to support agency personnel and children and families to learn in new ways. As the pandemic stretched from weeks into months, CSD remained dedicated to the DFSS mission and frontline staff as centers opened with mandates for face masks, social distancing, and enhanced safety protocols. As we continue to navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic, the city of Chicago is working closely with the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Education and the Illinois Department of Human Services to ensure that the voices of those who have expressed concerns regarding new regulation constraints and limitations do not go unheard. DFSS will continue to follow guidelines and protocols from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH).

We want to thank you for your commitment to DFSS and to excellence and services to our city's most vulnerable children and families over the years.

Sincerely,

Cerathel Burgess-Burnett
Deputy Commissioner

Program Year 2019-2020 Highlights

Chicago Early Learning Conference for Delegate Agencies

In the fall of 2019, CSD convened a Chicago Early Conference to bring together new and legacy delegate agencies with Head Start and PFA/PI funding effective December 1, 2019. The conference required all agencies to attend and assisted them in preparation for the full roll-out of programming during the upcoming contractual agreement term. The conference program centered on the theme, “Moving Forward Together: Creating a Culture of Quality, Health, Wellness, and Safety.” Over the course of two and a half days, keynote speakers and workshops provided attendees with opportunities to engage with best practices in early learning and program management, with proactive strategies to keep children safe, with new CEL standards and expectations, and with the fundamentals of Head Start, Pre-School for All, and Prevention Initiative programs.

Response to COVID-19

In previous CSD Annual Report editions of the Program Year Highlights, one would expect to see a positive overview of the continuity of normal early learning services. CSD envisioned an exciting opportunity to work with new and legacy agencies for the start of a new 5-year Head Start program cycle, which kicked off with CSD organizing a CEL Conference. In addition, the Chicago Early Learning Standards Manual Version 2.0 (CELS 2.0) went into effect and aligned the Head Start/Early Head Start and Preschool for All/Prevention Initiative standards as much as possible to reduce the burden on agencies and create a seamless early learning program based on: 1) developmentally appropriate best practices in early childhood development and learning, and 2) organizational best practices that support program management and quality improvement. As we crossed over into 2020, everything dramatically changed in March 2020 when the world experienced the COVID-19 pandemic. The Governor of Illinois issued an executive order for the closure of childcare centers on March 17, 2020, and the city of Chicago followed suit.



As a result of program closures, our program operations transitioned to offer remote learning services, virtual professional development opportunities, virtual meetings, and trainings on trauma informed care. In addition, DFSS surveyed agencies to determine sites interested in operating under an emergency license to care for children of employees categorized as essential workers and were permitted to work. Ten delegate agencies opened their doors to operate an emergency childcare program that supported essential workers. DFSS increased meeting frequency with delegate agencies, promoted virtual home visits, distributed donated reusable child-size masks to our delegate agencies, shipped educational kits to help promote remote learning activities for every child enrolled, and distributed \$9.5M in federal COVID-19 relief funds directly to delegate agencies.



The CEL PrE Learning website was launched on May 22, 2020, which is an online educational platform geared for early learners (from birth to age 5) to seamlessly continue their education outside of the classroom and from the comfort of their home. The department was awarded \$1.28M under the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER Fund) to provide additional

resources for PFA/PI programs within disproportionately impacted zip codes as a direct result of COVID-19. Each center-based PFA/PI program within the affected areas received \$182.97 per child to purchase PPE, increase mental health consultation, professional development to support social-emotional learning and trauma-informed care, technology for parent support during remote learning and developmentally appropriate home learning educational materials to support child transitions.

CEL Head Start Support Services Request for Proposals

In the spring of 2020, DFSS' CSD began releasing Request for Proposals (RFPs) to seek support services providers with particular areas of expertise to supplement its management of programs. CSD released RFPs to seek subject matter expertise (SME) contracts in providing the following 11 services: health, mental health, dental, nutrition, community assessment, strategic communications, program design and management, professional development, transportation, disability services, and doula specialized services. As part of DFSS' commitment to become more outcomes oriented, CSD will actively and regularly collaborate with support service

providers to collect reliable and relevant data to ensure compliance, evaluate and review program performance, inform trends to be monitored, learn what works, adjust program delivery and policy to drive improved results, and develop strategies to improve program quality throughout the term of the contract.

Looking Ahead

Keeping Our Children Safe During COVID-19

DFSS recognizes the unprecedented challenge of operating programs during a national health pandemic. For this reason, the city of Chicago is preparing for a new normal with CSD delegate agencies offering both in-person and remote learning opportunities in the fall of 2020. The timeline of fully reopening services for children will be based on a number of factors, such as declining infection rates, releasing an effective COVID-19 vaccine to adult populations, and following state safety protocols. During this time, the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) “Protecting Chicago” framework, organized into five phases in alignment with the State of Illinois’ “Restore Illinois” plan, will advise Chicagoans on how to safely exit from shelter-in-place while continuing to prioritize the health of our most vulnerable residents.



At the Department level, CSD will work to maintain high standards of clarity and ease of access in communication, ensuring that high quality comprehensive services are readily accessible to children, families, and the community. Through our weekly newsletter, virtual meetings, and email communication we will continually provide pertinent information around personal protective equipment (PPE), mental health resources, and guidance around COVID-19 to Chicago Early Learning Partners and delegate agencies on a consistent basis.

Above all, the health and safety of children, families, and delegate agency staff are our primary concerns. CSD will work diligently to identify supportive strategies, innovate service delivery, and advocate for expanding early childhood investments. CSD strongly recognizes parents and caregivers are essential to equipping children with skills and resources to succeed. Though the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated many challenges for Head Start families, the collective voice will remain powerful to ensure children are ready for kindergarten and life-long learning.

Children and Families Served in Program Year 2019-2020

Program Requirements

Chicago Early Learning programs are built on two funding streams, federal Head Start and state Early Childhood Block Grant, and their associated requirements. Federal Head Start (HS) programs include Head Start for three to five-year-olds, Early Head Start (EHS) and EHS Expansion for children birth to three-year-olds and pregnant women, and Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership (CCP) program for children birth to three-year-olds. Early Childhood Block Grant includes Pre-school for All (PFA) for three to five-year-olds and Prevention Initiative (PI) for birth to three-year-olds and pregnant women. The opportunity to blend federal and state funding in center-based programs serves families with the greatest need while reducing the eligibility barrier of relying on state childcare funding.

Eligibility

Of the approximately 203,000 children under age six and their families living in the city of Chicago, approximately 109,000 of them are eligible for CEL programs. Approximately 49,000 of them are living at or below 100% of the federal poverty level (FPL) and are eligible for Head Start-funded programs. An additional 46,000 are living under 200% FPL are therefore eligible for PFA/PI-funded programs. In addition, children and families who are experiencing homelessness, living in foster care, or receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF) are categorically eligible for Head Start.

Enrollment

DFSS and its agencies prioritize the enrollment of underserved children, children with special needs, families with limited English proficiency, immigrant families, teen parents, grandparents raising grandchildren, and families experiencing homeless. DFSS encourages robust attendance, as it is important for learning outcomes. All agencies have attendance policies that require follow-up for unexcused absences and encourage working with families to relieve barriers to regular child attendance. In the program year 2019-2020, the city of Chicago served a cumulative of 12,289 children within the Chicago city limits through 43 Head Start, Early Head Start, Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership, and Early Head Start Expansion agencies. Additionally, community-based Preschool for All (PFA) and Prevention Initiative (PI) programs served a cumulative of 12,443 cumulative children through 81 delegate agencies.

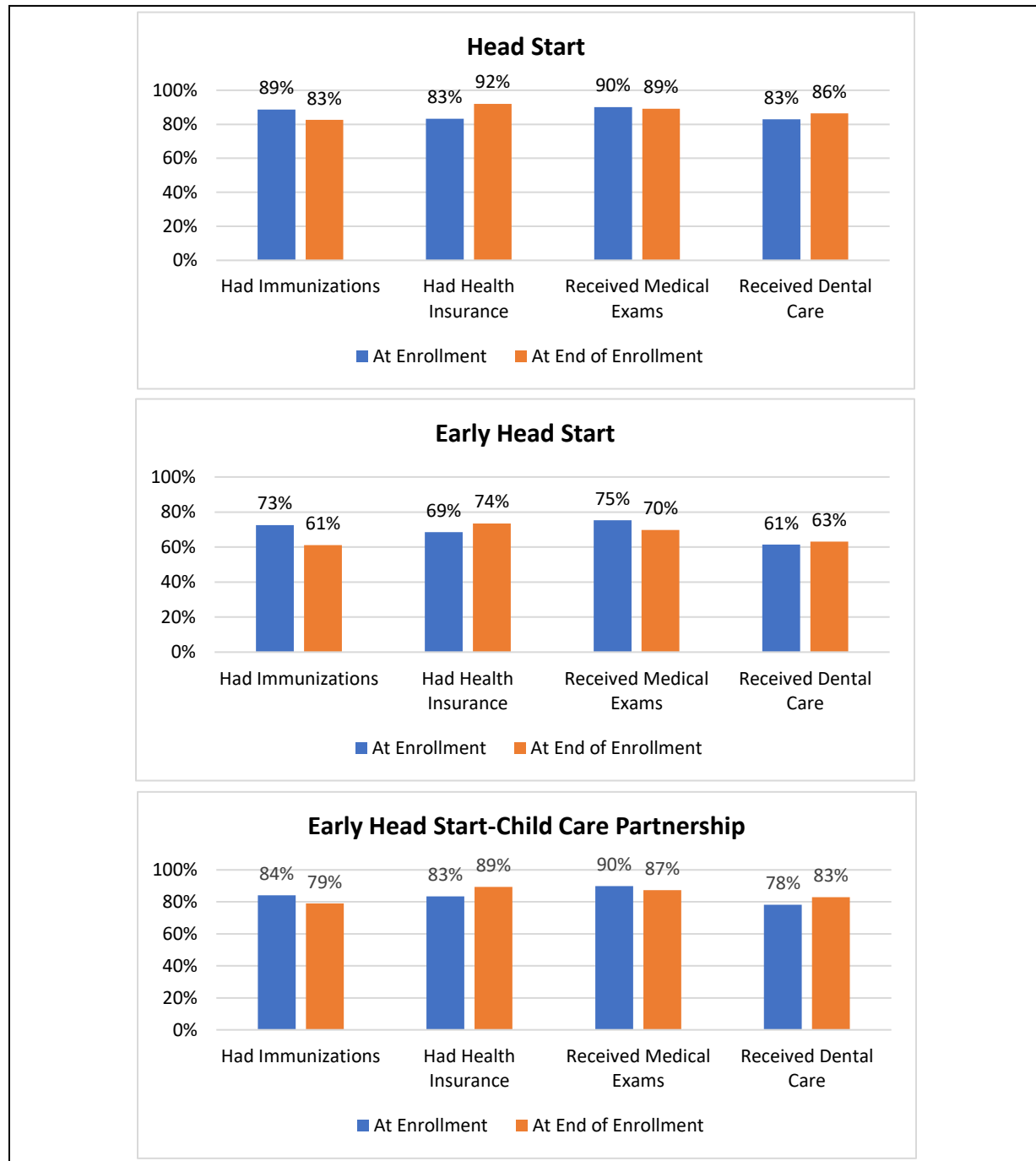
During program year 2019-2020, the city of Chicago received federal funding to serve 9,274 Head Start children and families, 2,162 Early Head Start children and families, 1,100 Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership children and families, and 200 Early Head Start Expansion children and families.

Average Head Start, Early Head Start, Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership, & Early Head Start Expansion Monthly Enrollment as a Percentage of Total and Funded Enrollment

	2019 Average	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Average
Head Start Capacity	10,987	10,987	10,987	10,987	9,274	9,274	9,274	9,274	9,274	9,274	9,274	9,274	9,274	
Head Start Actual Enrollment	10,186	5,406	5,617	5,695	5,768	6,144	6,470	6,548	6,362	6,365	6,356	6,163	5,651	6,045
Head Start Actual Enrollment as Percentage of Funded Enrollment	101%	49%	51%	52%	62%	66%	70%	71%	69%	69%	69%	66%	61%	62.31%
Head Start Average Daily Attendance	80.68%	88.16%	83.82%	81.90%	79.73%	80.93%	82.77%	77.39%	NA	NA	21.59%	32.70%	33.69%	66.27%
Early Head Start Capacity	1583	1,583	1,583	1,583	2,162	2,162	2,162	2,162	2,162	2,162	2,162	2,162	2,162	
Early Head Start Enrollment	1599	1,359	1,425	1,313	1,442	1,628	1,765	1,796	1,792	1,741	1,807	1,756	1,785	1,634
Early Head Start Enrollment as Percentage of Funded Enrollment	101%	86%	90%	83%	67%	75%	82%	83%	83%	81%	84%	81%	83%	81.01%
Early Head Start Average Daily Attendance	80.67%	84.32%	81.79%	79.94%	78.63%	80.31%	82.34%	78.51%	NA	NA	22.36%	38.15%	43.46%	66.98%
Early Head Start Child Care Partnership Capacity	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	
Early Head Start Child Care Partnership Enrollment	1,105	960	1,018	1,041	1,024	930	933	1,042	993	992	995	1,012	941	990
Early Head Start Child Care Partnership Enrollment as Percentage of Funded Enrollment	100%	87%	93%	95%	93%	85%	85%	95%	90%	90%	90%	92%	86%	90.01%
Early Head Start Child Care Partnership Average Daily Attendance	81.54%	90.07%	85.34%	83.43%	78.62%	80.88%	82.65%	77.77%	NA	NA	30.91%	42.96%	43.47%	69.61%
Early Head Start Expansion Capacity	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	
Early Head Start Expansion Enrollment		95	118	132	172	179	179	174	171	169	168	170	167	158
Early Head Start Expansion Enrollment as Percentage of Funded Enrollment		48%	59%	66%	86%	90%	90%	87%	86%	85%	84%	85%	84%	78.92%
Early Head Start Child Care Partnership Average Daily Attendance						76.04%	82.42%	76.83%	NA	NA	34.71%	32.94%	35.86%	56.47%
														Grand Total

Health Services

Collaboration and communication with parents on the procedures for health services begins during the enrollment process. Every child must have a medical home, dental home, and health insurance that will allow the family to access appropriate medical and dental care for the child. The following table shows the percentage of immunizations, insurance, medical care, and dental care received at enrollment and at the end of enrollment for the three main Head Start programs.



Parent Involvement

An important part of Head Start is family engagement in education and child development services. DFSS and its delegates offer parents many ways to be involved with their children's development, as illustrated in the table.

Parent Involvement Activities	Number
Number of families who received adult education such as GED programs and college selection	3,225
Number of families who received parenting education	4,411
Number of fathers/father figures involved in child's Head Start child development experiences (e.g., home visits, parent-teacher conferences, etc.)	964

To further support family and parent engagement, DFSS collaborates with the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) Center for Literacy Parent & Family Engagement Programs on multiple year-round initiatives. Each initiative is aligned with the national Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework. The PFCE Framework addresses family outcomes in seven areas: Family Well-being, Positive Parent-Child Relationships, Families as Lifelong Educators, Families as Learners, Family Engagement in Transitions, Family Connections to Peers and Community, and Families as Advocates and Leaders. Numerous studies have shown that when parents achieve personal well-being, get involved in their child's school, or increase their own language and literacy skills, their children demonstrate higher cognitive abilities and adaptive behaviors, better problem-solving skills, and higher rates of graduation. Therefore, each of UIC's key programs strive to impact learning and development for both parents and children.



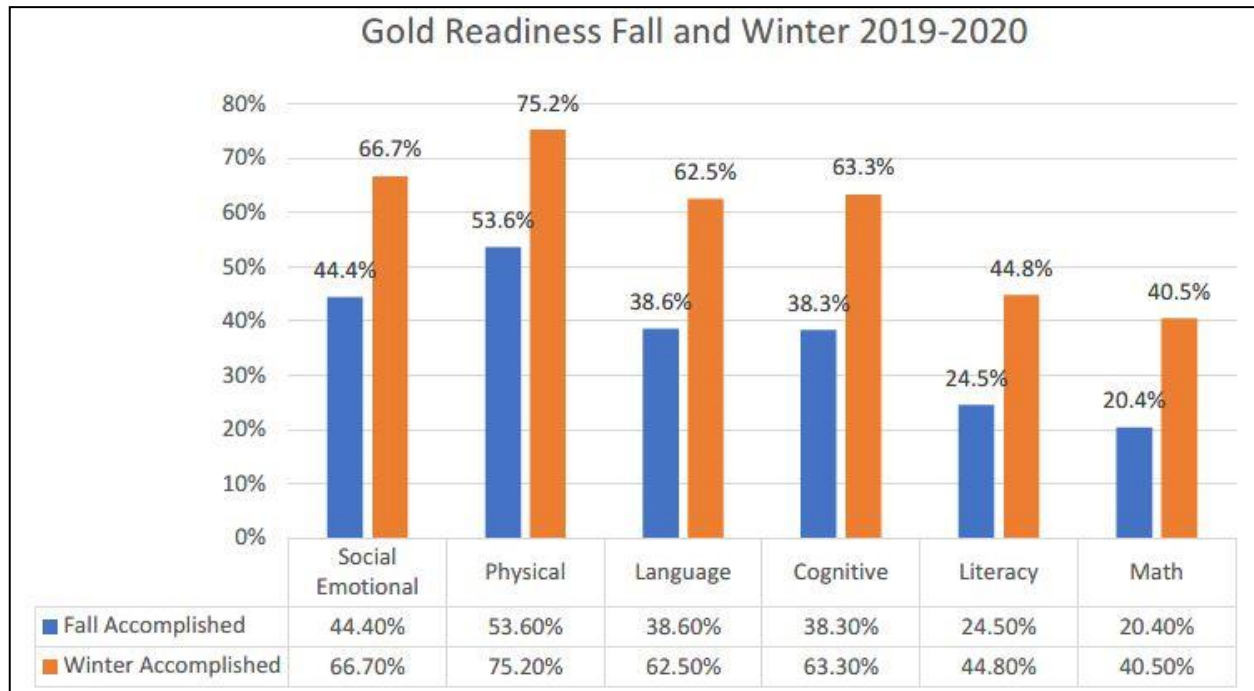
Major program year highlights include:

- In the Adult Education and Career Transition program (which provides free classes and tutoring to parents), a total of 201 parents participated in the High School Equivalency (HSE) courses (offered in-person in Quarter 1 and virtually in Quarter 2-4).
- A total of 591 early learning parents attended Parent & Youth Outreach (PYO) workshops on topics covering family literacy, employment readiness, and financial literacy; 104 males actively participated that were centered around the importance of male involvement in a child's life.

- At the Resource Center for Autism and Developmental Delays (RCADD), there were 80 trainings that focused on the autism and development delay community, outreach to 600 new RCADD patrons, and 675 parent consultations.

Kindergarten Readiness

DFSS and its delegates use Teaching Strategies *Gold™* (TSG) Online Assessment System to track children’s development in six developmental categories against widely held expectations for the child’s age group. Specifically, the TSG Comparative Report/Gold Readiness report is used to compare children’s scores to a readiness benchmark for kindergarten entry. The following chart shows the percentage of children whose skills, knowledge, and behaviors are emerging (below benchmark value) or accomplished (at or above the benchmark value).



Fiscal Year 2020

Head Start Program Budget and Expenses

Chicago Early Learning programs are funded through four major funding streams: federal Head Start programs, state Early Childhood Block Grant (including Preschool for All and Prevention Initiative), state Child Care Assistance Program, and local (city) Ready-to-Learn funding. DFSS is the recipient of four Head Start federal grants from the US Department of Health & Human Services: Head Start, Early Head Start, Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership, and Early Head Start Expansion. DFSS has a contract with the State of Illinois Department of Human Services to provide Site-Administered Child Care through two program models: Head Start-Collaboration and Child Care Only. In addition, DFSS receives city of Chicago corporate dollars, under the city's Ready-to-Learn Initiative, to enhance and expand the early childhood services it offers. DFSS receives funding for early childhood programs under four distinct fiscal years, as illustrated in the following table:

Funding Stream	Fiscal Year
Head Start	12/1 – 11/30
Early Head Start	12/1 – 11/30
Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership	12/1 – 11/30
Early Head Start Expansion	12/1 – 11/30
State – Early Childhood Block Grant (PFA/PI)	7/1 – 6/30
State – Site-Administered Child Care	7/1 – 6/30
Corporate – Ready-to-Learn	1/1 – 12/31

During Fiscal Year 2020, DFSS was awarded a total of \$282,753,504 million to provide services across all community-based Head Start and PFA/PI programs in the city of Chicago.

FY 2020 Actual Received Budget and Expenditures

Programs	Actual Budget	Actual Expenditures
Head Start	\$111,121,233	\$94,434,856
Early Head Start	\$34,008,576	\$28,391,243
Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership	\$16,655,365	\$14,106,617
Early Head Start Expansion	\$7,390,652	\$5,121,270
State – Early Childhood Block Grant (PFA/PI)	\$81,200,500	\$73,025,736
State – Site Administered Child Care	\$20,853,965	\$11,335,961
Corporate – Ready-to-Learn	\$11,523,213	\$11,457,867
Total	\$282,753,504	\$237,873,550

FY 2020 Head Start Expenses

Federal Budget Categories	Actual Budget	Expended	Expended/Actual Budget
Personnel	\$3,391,901	\$3,388,929	99.95%
Fringe Benefits	\$1,527,481	\$1,527,480	100.0%
Contractual	\$103,303,689	\$86,677,419	83.9%
Travel	\$6,700	\$5,436	81.1%
Supplies	\$505,200	\$449,330	0.0%
Equipment	-	-	-
Indirect Costs	\$2,386,262	\$2,386,262	100.0%
Total	\$111,121,233	\$94,434,856	84.9%
Non-federal share	\$26,637,772	\$18,921,836	

FY 2020 Early Head Start Expenses

Federal Budget Categories	Actual Budget	Expended	Expended/Actual Budget
Personnel	\$857,473	\$681,295	79.4%
Fringe Benefits	\$448,273	\$298,278	66.5%
Contractual	\$32,009,666	\$26,898,754	84.0%
Travel	\$2,000	\$1,032	51.6%
Supplies	\$42,600	\$0	0.0%
Equipment	-	-	-
Indirect Costs	\$684,564	\$485,084	74.7%
Total	\$34,008,576	\$28,391,243	83.4%
Non-federal share	\$8,143,651	\$5,968,443	

FY 2020 Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Expenses

Federal Budget Categories	Actual Budget	Expended	Expended/Actual Budget
Personnel	\$586,813	\$573,928	97.8%
Fringe Benefits	\$254,969	\$254,969	100.0%
Contractual	\$15,398,112	\$12,865,651	83.5%
Travel	\$2,500	\$1,599	63.9%
Supplies	\$2,500	\$0	0.0%
Equipment	-	-	-
Indirect Costs	\$410,470	\$410,470	100.0%
Total	\$16,655,365	\$14,106,617	84.7%
Non-federal share	\$3,985,300	\$2,424,071	

FY 2020 Early Head Start Expansion Expenses

Federal Budget Categories	Actual Budget	Expended	Expended/Actual Budget
Personnel	\$254,861	\$145,814	57.2%
Fringe Benefits	\$109,539	\$47,267	43.1%
Contractual	\$6,819,422	\$4,826,776	70.7%
Travel	\$9,230	\$4,912	53.2%
Supplies	\$17,026	\$888	5.2%
Equipment	-	-	-
Indirect Costs	\$180,572	\$95,613	52.9%
Total	\$7,390,652	\$5,121,270	69.2%
Non-federal share	\$886,830	\$623,232	

Summary of Audit Findings

The results of the latest 2020 audit performed by *Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP* were published in August 2021. There were no financial audit findings for the Grantee.

Fiscal Year 2021 Proposed Budget

The Fiscal Year 2021 proposed budget below supports all direct and indirect costs anticipated to operate the Head Start programs. For Head Start and Early Head Start, the timeframe is from December 1, 2020, to July 31, 2021. For Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership and Early Head Start Expansion, the timeframe is from December 1, 2020, to November 30, 2021.

FY 2021 Proposed Budget for Head Start Programs

Federal Budget Categories	Head Start	Early Head Start	Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership	Early Head Start Expansion
Personnel	\$3,807,947	\$1,036,454	\$523,206	\$87,687
Fringe Benefits	\$2,002,761	\$545,115	\$275,176	\$5,401
Contractual	\$99,066,453	\$30,897,022	\$15,071,451	\$3,41,293
Travel	\$6,700	\$2,000	\$2,500	\$5,600
Supplies	\$365,200	\$32,600	\$2,000	\$1,500
Equipment	-	-	-	-
Indirect Costs	\$2,886,179	\$785,565	\$396,556	\$68,588
Other	\$2,573,385	\$719,175	\$384,476	\$54,667
Total	\$110,708,625	\$34,017,331	\$16,665,365	\$3,689,736
Non-federal share	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Delegate Agencies

Head Start Delegate Agencies

Ada S. McKinley Community Services
Albany Park Community Center
Allison's Infant & Toddler Center
Asian Human Services
Board of Trustees-City Colleges of Chicago
Breakthrough Urban Ministries
Carole Robertson Center for Learning
Centers for New Horizons
Chicago Child Care Society
Chicago Commons Association
Chicago Youth Centers
Chinese American Service League
Christopher House
Easter Seals Metropolitan Chicago
El Hogar Del Nino
El Valor
Erie Neighborhood House
Family Focus
Gad's Hill Center
Gia Group dba The Learning Tree II
HANA Center
Henry Booth House

Higher Learning Daycare & Education Center
Hobby Horse Nursery School
Howard Area Community Center
It Takes a Village
Judah International Outreach Ministry
Kimball Day Care Center & Kindergarten
Marillac St. Vincent Family Services
Mary Crane League
Metropolitan Family Services
Montessori School of Englewood
N & K, dba Rainbow School
New Pisgah Day Care
Northwestern University Settlement House
Onward Neighborhood House
Salvation Army
Serendipity Child Care Center
SGA Youth & Family Services
Shining Star Youth & Community Services
Trinity United Church of Christ Child Care
Young Achiever's Academy
YMCA