

Blue Grass Child Development Programs  
 Head Start and Day Care  
 Annual Report 2015-2016  
 Agency website: [Bluegrasscommunityaction.org](http://Bluegrasscommunityaction.org)  
 Head Start Services

During the 2015-2016 school year, Blue Grass Head Start, sponsored by Blue Grass Community Action Partnership, Incorporated, received a budget of \$2,217,509 for general operating costs and \$29,861 for college courses and training from the Department of Health and Human Services/Administration for Children and Families. During the past fiscal year, the United States Department of Agriculture/Child Care Food Program reimbursed the Head Start program \$179,924 for expenditures made to provide nutritional services to over 400 children. The Head Start program served over 303 children and their families in the six-county service area, and the day care program served over 70 children. Average monthly child attendance exceeded 95%. Over 90% of the children enrolled were from families with incomes below the poverty guidelines. The Head Start budget increased by less than 1% during this school year; therefore, the staff received small pay increases, and the other operating categories remained budgeted at the same funding level as the previous year. With rising costs in the prices of gas, utilities, supplies, food, medical and dental services, vehicle and building maintenance and the other needs for operating a child development program, it was one of the most challenging years since the inception of the agency in 1965.

The 2015-2016 budget categories for Blue Grass Head Start for the grant award of \$2,217,509 were as follows:

Approved budget:

Personnel Costs (75 employees)	\$1,256,276
Fringe Benefits	\$ 376,563
Travel (out-of-town)	\$ 15,509
Supplies	\$ 51,510
classroom, medical & dental, disability, social services, parent involvement & food	
Contracts	\$ 10,475
mental health services, college courses & training for staff	
Other costs category	\$ 251,185
medical & dental care, nutrition consultant employee travel, maintenance of vehicles, fuel & oil, parent activity funds, licensing & regulations, utilities, telephones, building maintenance, insurance, printing & advertising and Policy Council	
Indirect costs	<u>\$ 226,130</u>
Total approved budget PA22	\$2,187,648
PA20 (Training & college courses)	\$ 29,861
TOTAL	<u>\$2,217,509</u>

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Total Federal	\$2,217,509
Total Nonfederal (volunteers)	<u>\$ 554,377</u>
Total Grant (Federal + Nonfederal)	\$2,771,886

Blue Grass Head Start has five Head Start centers and serves the counties of Anderson, Boyle, Franklin, Jessamine, Mercer, and Woodford. Classrooms in all five centers are part day/ part year. Blue Grass Community Action Agency operates two day care centers in Anderson and Franklin counties. All of the centers are licensed through the Commonwealth of Kentucky, Office of Inspector General, and Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Further, the centers are participating in the state voluntary quality child-care rating system that has been named "STARS" funded through the state KIDS NOW initiative. By participating in all of these quality rating systems, and complying with all Performance Standards, Head Start requirements, federal, state, and local regulations, the centers are providing high quality services to the Head Start and day care children and their families.

Turnover in staff for the program continues to be low. The majority of the staff members have been employed with the Agency for a minimum of ten years. All of the teachers have an AA, BA/BS, or master's degree. The assistant teachers have a CDA credential or are enrolled in the CDA program and some have degrees. Hiring preferences have continued to be given to past and present Head Start parents for entry level positions. Over thirty percent of the current Blue Grass Head Start staff consists of former or current Head Start parents and even past Head Start children.

The Blue Grass Head Start program has partnerships with Kentucky State University, University of Kentucky, Eastern Kentucky University, Morehead State University, Chapel Hill University and the Bluegrass Community and Technical College. Head Start staff members attend these universities which are located near their centers or have satellite programs nearby. Students from these universities also serve their internships in the Blue Grass Head Start program thus contributing to the enhanced services to children and families. Blue Grass Head Start has had collaborative programs with the University of Kentucky for the Healthy Marriage initiative; and such innovative programs as Kentucky State University with a preventing childhood obesity project, and also the children with incarcerated parents project; plus a music project in conjunction with a school music teacher and Chapel Hill University.

Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and State Local Agreements have been developed, signed, and implemented in cooperation with Blue Grass Head Start and the local educational agencies (LEA's). There are nine school districts in the six-county service area. The Local Agreements meet the requirements of the *Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007*, passed by Congress in December 2007. The new Head Start Act places an increased

emphasis on enhanced collaboration and coordination by Head Start grantees with public school and state funded preschool programs. Transition plans are developed to prepare Head Start children and their parents for entry into the public school system.

All of the children enrolled in the Blue Grass Head Start program received medical and dental exams. The Program Information Report (PIR) submitted to Washington documented the results of the screenings, exams, and follow-up care at 100%.

The Blue Grass Head Start program received a review from Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in December 2015 and February 2016. It was determined that Blue Grass Head Start was in compliance with all applicable Head Start Program Performance Standards, laws, regulations, and policy requirements at this time. The Blue Grass Head Start program has an excellent reputation and parents are anxious to have their children attend the program. Observations were made in classrooms using CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) and all classrooms scored above national average.

The Head Start parents participate in Parent Committees in each center and are elected to represent the parents on the Head Start Policy Council. Community representatives of different organizations, agencies, former parents and other advocates for Head Start are approved by the Policy Council to serve as members. Election of parent representatives comply with the regulation stating that over 51% of members of the Policy Council must be parents of currently enrolled Head Start children. Training is provided in many areas, e.g., parenting skills, food preparation, nutrition, interviewing techniques, teaching ideas, home and car safety, sanitation, personal grooming, play as learning, being an advocate for your school and child, and other locally designed sessions as requested by the parents.

The Blue Grass Head Start program has aligned their curriculum with the LEAs and has adopted the state's new screening tool, DIAL-4, and the state-approved assessment, Teaching Strategies Gold. Web-based results are shared and transition plans are developed and implemented with each of the nine school districts located within the six-county Blue Grass Head Start service area. Information from the Teaching Strategies Gold software and the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) is used to compile and analyze information to individualize the training sessions for each staff member using the reports generated from each child, classroom, and center. The reports generated are identified with the Head Start Outcomes and are used to link the progress of the children with the outcomes and goals.

School readiness goals have been adopted and are the focus of all activities within the program. School readiness goals will meet the expectations of children's status and progress across domains of language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge, approaches to learning, physical well-being and motor development, and social and emotional development that will improve their readiness for kindergarten. Head Start provides children with a learning environment and a variety of experiences designed to stimulate learning in all areas – physical,

social, emotional, and intellectual. All activities are designed to follow developmentally appropriate practices. The Blue Grass Head Start program focuses on the following areas: Approaches to Learning, Social and Emotional Development, Language and Literacy, Cognition

and Perceptual Motor and Physical Development. These domains are legislatively mandated in the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (Birth to Five) and progress is followed on each child to insure a strong academic foundation. By focusing on these outcomes, the children will have a smoother transition into kindergarten. Lastly, the Blue Grass Head Start program has also aligned their School Readiness Implementation Indicators and Action Plan with the revised Kentucky School Readiness Goals thus insuring that Head Start children will have the skills necessary to succeed in the school setting in kindergarten.

Transitions from Head Start to Kindergarten are looked at each year to ensure they are working. All Blue Grass Head Start Centers work with their school systems in their county to ensure that all information necessary for enrollment is collected and given to parents. This ensures there is no lapse in service for children with disabilities. Transition visits are planned to kindergarten classrooms where children meet new teachers and information is shared between the Head Start and local education agency (LEA) to ensure the receiving teacher has the best indication of where each child is developmentally and the child will enter kindergarten ready to learn.