

Community and Family Services

Orange County Head Start Annual Update

A stylized graphic of an orange with several leaves, rendered in a light blue color that blends with the dark blue background. The orange is positioned behind the main title text.

October 8, 2024



Presentation Outline

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- Overview
- Investment
- Achievements
- Innovative Practices
- Challenges & Needs
- Future Vision
- Final Thoughts



Presentation Outline

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- **Vision:** Orange County Head Start: School-Ready Children and Self-Reliant Families.
- **Mission:** Orange County Head Start provides high-quality comprehensive services to low-income children and their diverse families through collaborative partnerships.
- Full day / Full year program
- 1,536 Funded Enrollment
- 23 Center Based Sites
- 85 Classrooms
- 9 County Facilities
- 13 Orange County Public School Leased Preschool Sites
- 1 City Municipality Leased Preschool Site

Importance of Early Childhood Education

- Critical Brain Development: Early childhood is a period of rapid brain development, with 90% of brain growth occurring by age six.
- Foundation for Future Learning: Early childhood education lays the groundwork for future academic success, helping children develop essential skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and social interaction.
- Economic Benefits: Investing in early childhood education yields significant economic returns. Children who receive quality early education are more likely to succeed in school, graduate, and contribute positively to society.

Program Goals

- **Goal 1: Professional Development**
- **Goal 2: Staff Retention**
- **Goal 3: Physical Health and Mental Wellness**
- **Goal 4: Technology**
- **Goal 5: Families**

"It is crucial that our youngest residents have access to education and learning resources early to ensure their growth and success."

Mayor Demings





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Investment

Office of Head Start Economic Investments

- FY 22-\$14,704,441
- FY 23-\$15,953,825
- FY 24-\$16,326,113

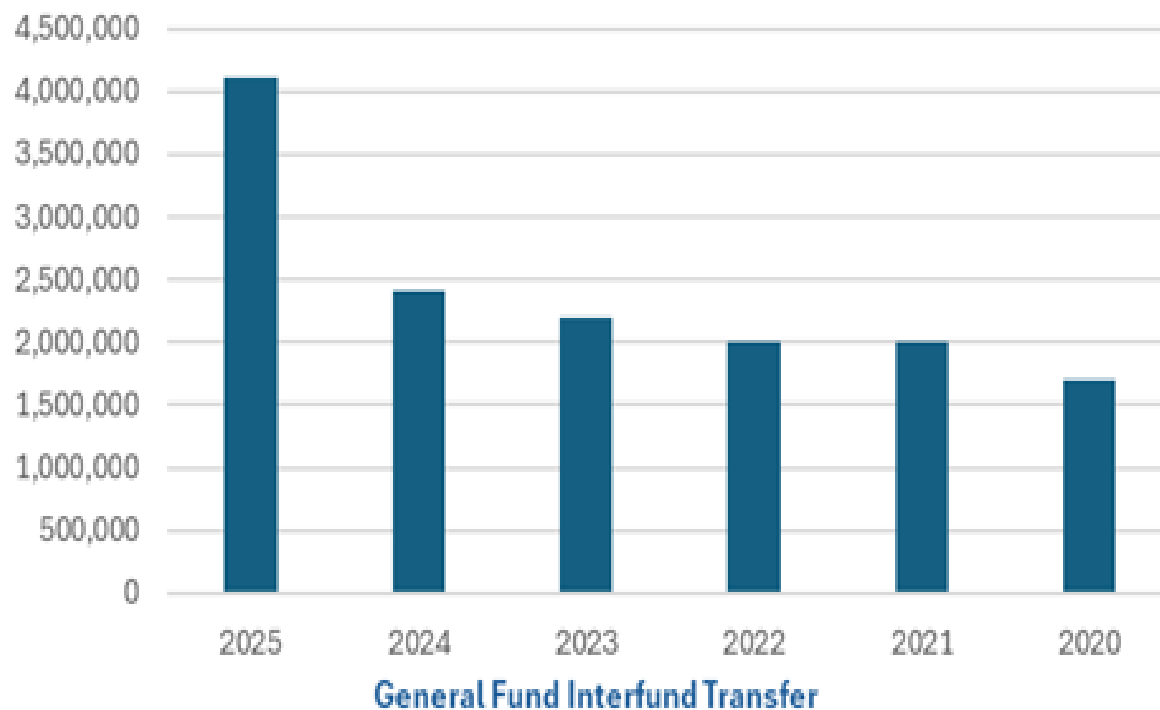
Orange County Government Economic Investments

- FY 22-\$2,482,100
- FY 23-\$2,682,100
- FY 24-\$2,983,983



Orange County Government Economic Investment

HEAD START GFIFT FUND BY FY



Orange County Government Economic Investment

- Orange County Head Start is one of fewer than five programs in Florida that has maintained its enrollment capacity without reducing slots for children.
- Orange County Head Start employees have received cost-of-living adjustments ranging from 3.5% to 9%, significantly surpassing the federal rate of just 2.35%, demonstrating Orange County's commitment to their financial well-being and support.
- Despite federal restrictions on using grant funds, Orange County Head Start employees benefit from longevity pay and additional incentives such as sign on bonuses, and referral pay paid with county dollars.



Integrated Support from Diverse Divisions of Orange County Government

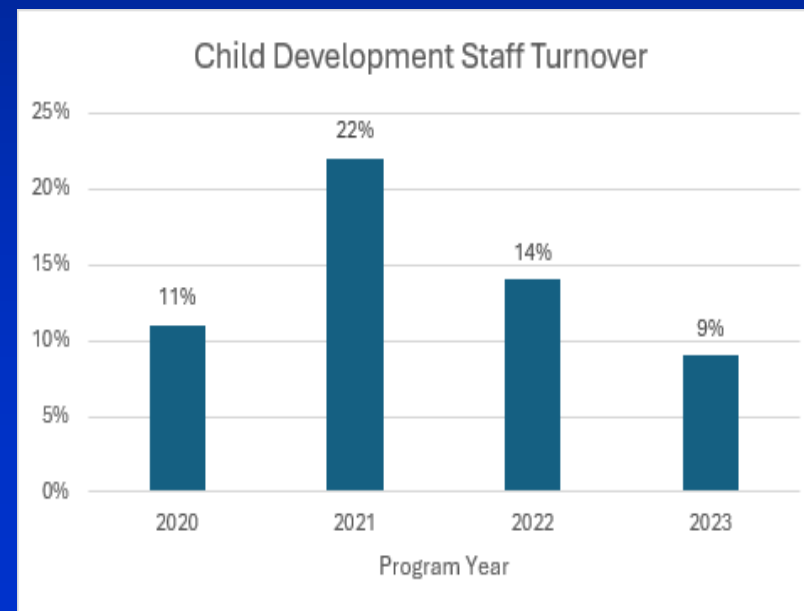
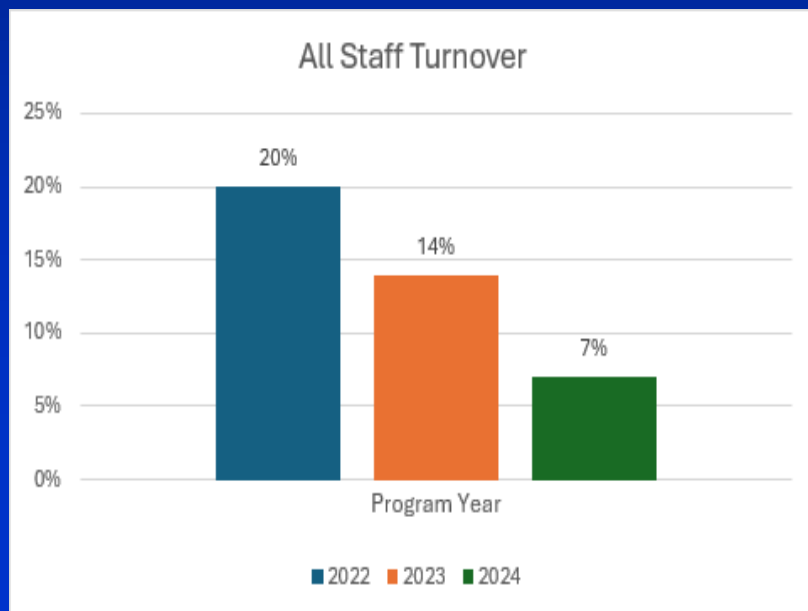
Orange County	Impact
Indirect Cost (County)	\$1,396,459
Orange County Convention Center	\$12,225 (Space)
Orange County Utilities	Lead testing
Information Service System	\$35,593 (Donated 20 computers)
Incentive Pay (Longevity, Referral & Sign-On)	\$286,100
Citizens Review Panel	\$216, 989



Turnover Rate

Key Retention Factors

- Mental Wellness Support
- Culture & Environment
- Hourly Pay
- Sign On Bonus, Referral Pay & Longevity Incentive
- Professional Development Opportunities





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Key Performance Metrics

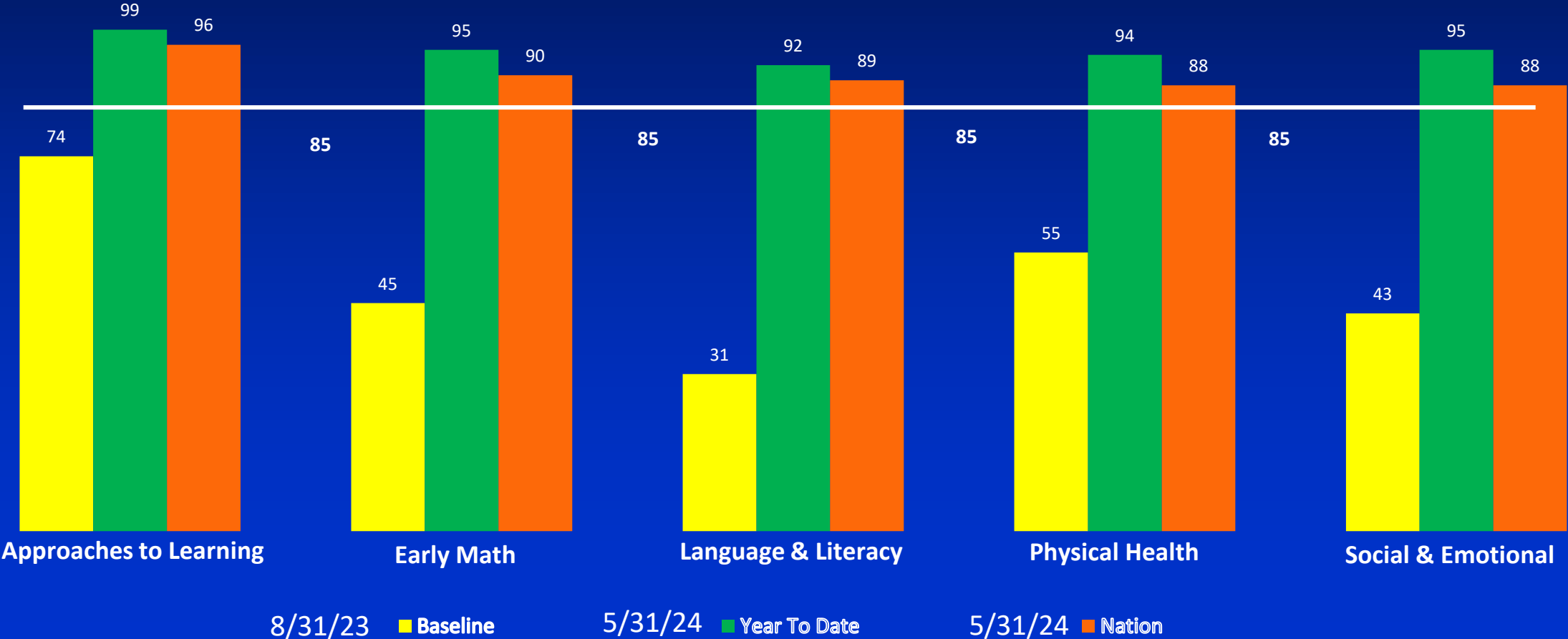
Characteristics	Totals
Total Number Served 2024	1,700
Total 3-year-olds	855
Total 4-year-olds	845
Income below 100%	399
Public Assistance	1,129
Foster Child	15
Homeless	147

Kindergarten Readiness & Beyond

- Head Start uses the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF) to set school readiness goals.
- The Head Start ELOF is aligned with the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards. These goals cover the five essential domains.
- This alignment ensures that Head Start programs in Florida effectively plan lessons that prepare students for kindergarten.



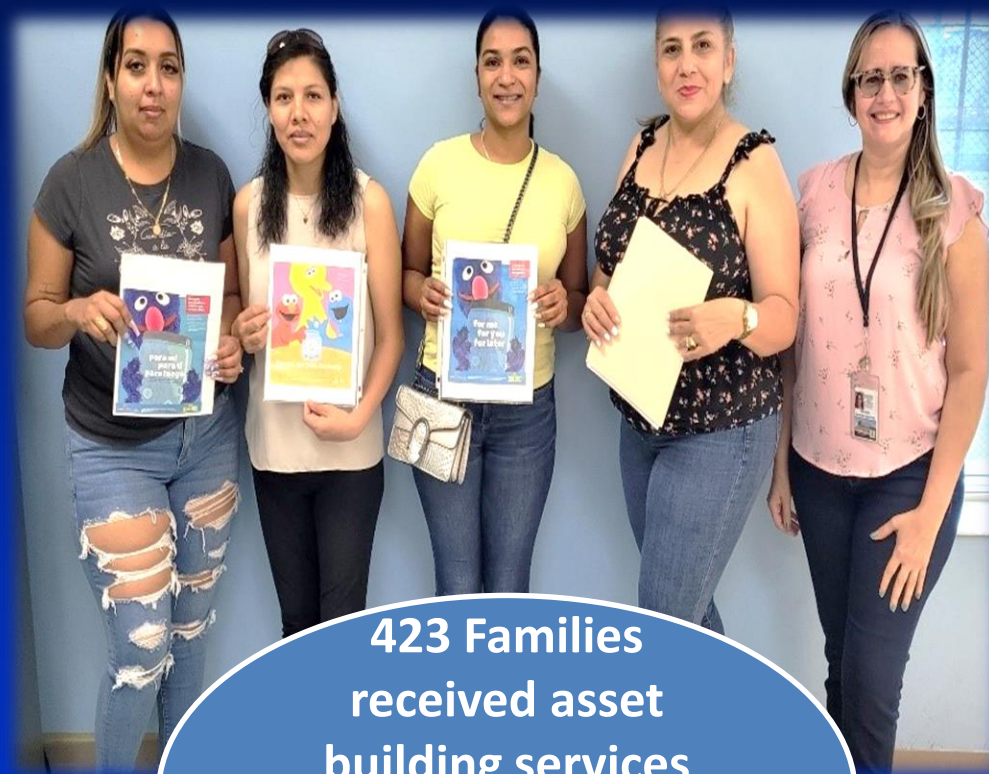
School Readiness 4 Years Olds





Parent Outcomes

Parents volunteered a
total of 44,174 hours
that equated to
\$1,170,128.83 in
In-kind



423 Families
received asset
building services
i.e. financial literacy,
& debt relief
counseling



Parent Outcomes

147 Homeless
Families
46 Families
Acquired Housing



Success Story

- From 2020 to 2023, Brittney Perra was a committed Head Start parent, participating in the Policy Council and serving as Vice Chair.
- While her daughter attended Head Start, Brittney was a full-time student at the University of Central Florida. In 2024, she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology.
- Brittney now applies her skills as a Recruitment Specialist in a casual role with Orange County Head Start.



- **Federal monitoring CLASS Assessment Results: Achieved scores that exceeded the quality threshold and placed us in the top 10% of Head Start programs nationwide, confirming our classrooms as high-quality learning environments.**
- **Awarded the 2024 Florida Head Start Association Corporate Award for the collaborative partnership with Orlando Science Center.**
- **Awarded the Florida Head Start Association 2024 Edward Zigler award, for the collaborative Partnership with the Delta Xi Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc & I.S. Hankins Johnson Foundation.**
- **Awarded the Florida Head Start Association 2024 Sargent Shriver award for the collaborative partnership with VyStar Credit Union.**



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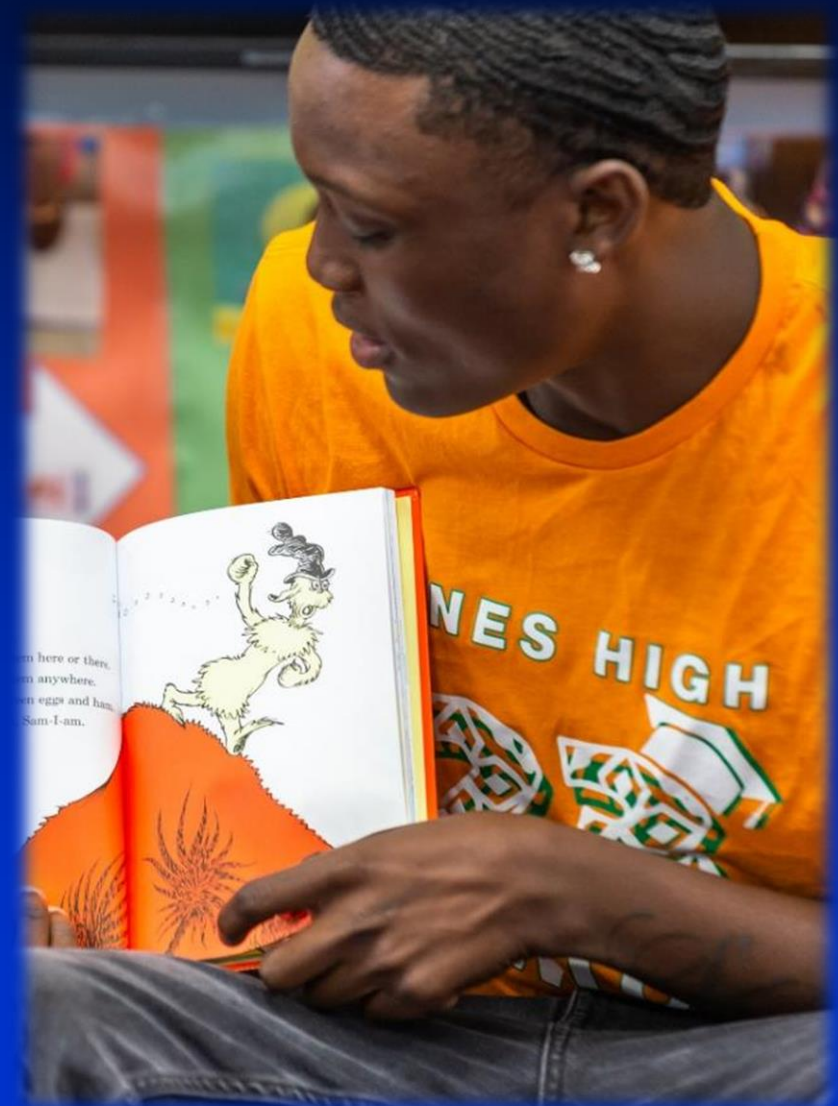


Innovative Practices

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Innovative Approaches

- Integrating STEM Education into the Curriculum
- Strategic Partnerships & Community Engagement
- Focus on Professional Development for Teachers
- Dynamic Recruitment & Employee Engagement Strategies
- Innovative Partnership with High School Students





Innovative Practices

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1. Innovative STEM Learning Environments
2. Cutting Edge iPad Apps
3. Interactive Image Alive Tools
4. Dedicated Assessment Computers
5. Technology Focused Professional Development
6. STEM Supplies and Materials





Innovative Practices

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Collaboration with Orlando Science Center-Ignite Discovery

- Ignite Discovery offers Interactive STEM experiences.
- Hands-on activities aligned with early learning.
- Field Trips to the Orlando Science Center.
- In-Class STEM kits and resources provided by Ignite Discovery.



Professional Development

- Training sessions for teachers on STEM curriculum integration.
- Workshops led by Orlando Science Center educators.
- Continuous support and resources for effective STEM teaching.
- In class instruction provided by Orlando Science Center's educators.





Innovative Practices

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Partnership with Delta Xi Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

- Establishment of lending libraries in Head Start centers.
- Regular book donations and literacy resources from Delta Xi Lambda.
- Special reading events and storytelling sessions with fraternity members.
- Enhancement of children's access to diverse reading materials.

Community Engagement

- Volunteer activities and mentoring programs for students.
- Mentoring and participation in the Fatherhood curriculum.
- Support for educational events and family engagement initiatives.



Innovative Practices

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Lending
Libraries





Partnership with Vystar Credit Union - Financial Literacy Projects

- Financial Literacy Education.
- Interactive workshops for children on basic financial concepts.
- Age-appropriate lessons on saving, budgeting, and money management.
- Collaboration with VyStar representatives for real-world financial education.
- Book give aways for students and family support.

Community Engagement

- Professional development sessions for staff on financial literacy.
- Family workshops to extend financial education beyond the classroom.
- Creation of financial literacy materials.





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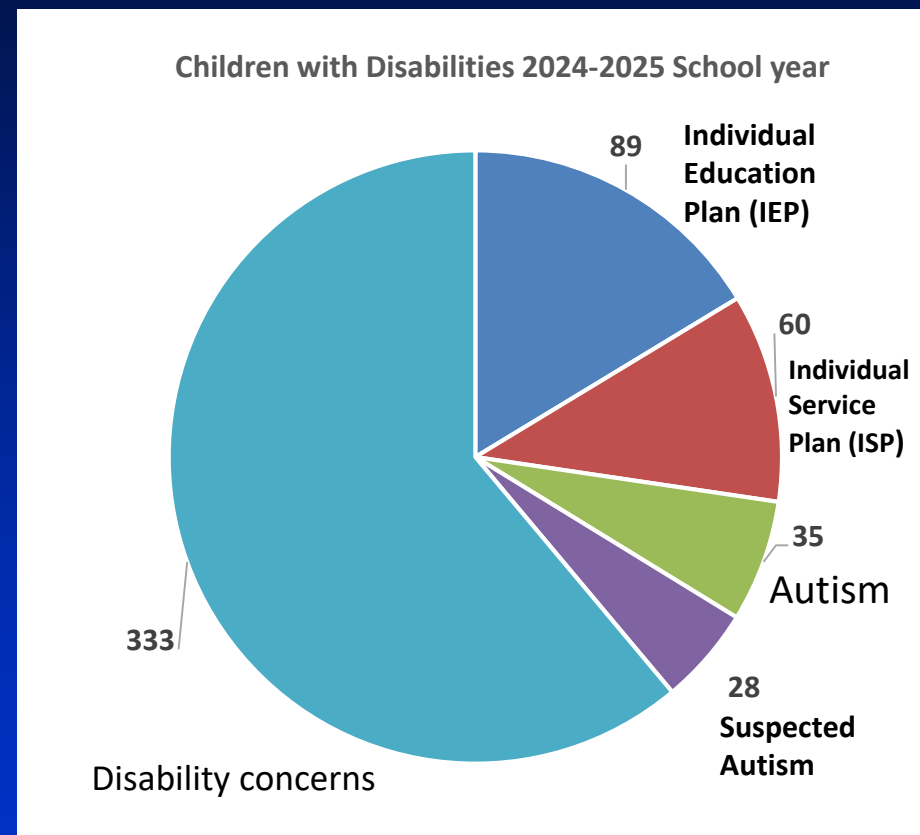
Challenges & Needs

Challenges

- Implementing all components of the Final Rule
- Growing Numbers of Children with Special Needs Requiring Support
- Growing number of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Needs

- Space – Office, Schools, & Classroom
- Additional Behavior Inclusion Specialist
- Additional Funding for Inclusion Services
- Third person in classrooms with high number of special needs





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Future Vision

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- **Seek Quality Improvement funding opportunities through the Office of Head Start to enhance program effectiveness and outcomes.**
- **Explore and apply for 1303 federal construction funding to support facility upgrades and infrastructure improvements.**
- **Broaden collaboration with community organizations to enhance and increase direct services available to families, thereby improving support and resources.**



Future Vision

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- Obtain financial resources to bolster inclusion support in classrooms, ensuring a diverse and supportive learning environment for all students.
- Collaborate with Orange County Public Schools and the Early Learning Coalition of Orange County to develop a comprehensive workforce initiative.
- Ensure compliance with the Office of Head Start's Final Rule by adhering to the specified guidelines and requirements.



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Final Thoughts

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THANK YOU



Orange County Head Start: Where **Joy** Lives,
Hope Grows and **Help** Happens