Mid-Columbia Children's Council



ANNUAL REPORT
2019-2020

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Mission

Educating children and families with innovative, high-quality early childhood learning opportunities and family partnerships to build better communities, one person at a time

Vision

Nurturing Children And Families Today,
Strengthening Communities for
Tomorrow



Executive Director

Dear Friends,

What a program year it has been! We have had growth, expanded partnerships, program and staffing changes, challenges and success, modified and virtual services and to top it off a global pandemic! Through all of this we have continued to demonstrate our resolve to provide critical services to children, families and the community. The COVID-19 pandemic not only changed the way we live and work, it also demonstrated just how amazing and dedicated people are in serving one another. We owe many thanks to the first responders and essential workers for being on the front line taking care of our friends and families. I also want to say thank you to all of our staff and parents for working together in developing and implementing modified services and summer programming through what has been a difficult and challenging time in our lives.

The 2019-2020 program year had many new opportunities for growing and expanding services. First, through a partnership with Hood River County Schools, MCCC opened a high quality preschool at the newly built May Street Elementary School. Second, MCCC received a new United Way of the Columbia Gorge grant award to enhance the use of our curriculum at all sites. Third, MCCC was awarded expansion slots for our Washington Early Childcare Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) at Carson and Goldendale. Fourth, MCCC was selected to implement an Early-ECEAP (infant/toddler) pilot program at our Goldendale center. Fifth, MCCC completed two proposals and was awarded funding for enhancement and expansion of our Oregon Prekindergarten program and adding Preschool Promise programing in Hood River County. Finally, MCCC completed a quality improvement supplemental application though Head Start to add two early childhood behavioral specialist positions. How exciting is all of this!

MCCC recognizes the foundation of our success is and will always be in the support we receive from you. The gifts of time, talent and assistance you've given are working to change the lives of children and families in our community. As always, MCCC will continue to search for and develop ways to improve and increase services, resources and programing to meet the growing needs of the communities we serve.

Thank you for believing in us, our mission and for supporting the work we do each day.

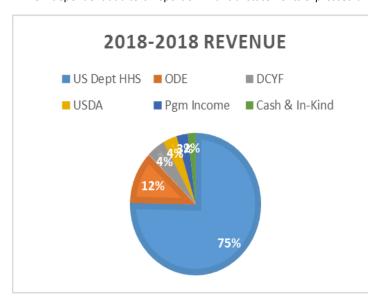
Paul Runyon

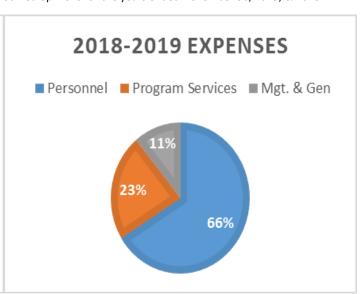
Financial Report

Fiscal Year Ending November 30, 2019

	For Year Ended 11/30/2018 Audited*	For Year Ended 11/30/2019 Audited*	2019-2020 Budgeted
Support and Revenues			
US Department of Health & Human Services	4,840,096	5,246,405	5,887,926
Oregon Department of Education	883,570	833,181	2,214,926
Washington Department of Early Learning	208,373	315,708	685,548
US Department of Agriculture-Child Care Food Program	244,711	249,241	324,416
Program Income	139,035	187,501	43,150
Other Grants	-	-	336,974
Cash and In-Kind Contributions	125,135	130,793	85,000
Total Support and Revenues	6,440,920	6,962,828	9,577,940
Functional Expenses			
Personnel	4,464,263	4,738,440	6,342,284
Program Services	1,386,579	1,642,502	2,041,742
Management and General	732,345	784,814	1,193,914
Total Expenses	6,583,187	7,165,756	9,577,940

^{*}The independent auditors' report on financial statements expressed unmodified opinions for the years ended November 30, 2019, & 2018





COVID-19 Impact



This school year was unlike any other. Oregon and Washington Governors ordered schools to close their doors to children and families to help stop the spread of the Coronavirus, beginning March 16, 2020. Although MCCC was unable to provide services in the usual way, staff continued to provide modified services to help support families as they navigated through unprecedented times. Families received phone calls each week as staff checked in on them to make sure each family had food and the resources they needed. Teachers had storytimes online and distributed homework packets to children so they could continue learning. The end of the year was celebrated by conducting staff parades past family homes. Throughout the pandemic, our staff stayed connected to families and served their needs.

Good-bye

This year we say goodbye and happy retirement to a mentor, teacher and friend. Karen Stafford worked with coordinators, teachers, families and children in our program for 15 years. She started her career with

Mid-Columbia Children's Council as an Educator/Disabilities Coordinator and then became the Education/Disabilities Manager. Karen was dedicated to her work in Early Childhood Education and it showed in everything she did. She valued the collective voice of the teachers, assistants, parents and children working together towards common goals. She was passionate about ensuring Dual Language Learners are provided the supports they need to succeed and helped to bring Conscious Discipline* to the our agency. She was always there to listen, offer guidance and to take a deep breath with you in hard times. We will miss you Karen but wish you well on your many new adventures.



"When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, "Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping."

Fred Rogers

Thank you Karen for being one of the helpers

Head Start Parents



By Sharon Gutierrez

I went to Head Start when I was 4 and 5 years old. My teacher was Vicky Waterbury. I had thought at that time that I would love to work there as a teacher. They always looked like they were having fun.

When I graduated high school, I still knew I wanted to work as a teacher for young children so I did my final project on being a preschool teacher and shadowed Vicky Waterbury in her new class. I spent the day learning some of the things preschool teachers look for in their students. Still I thought it had to be the best job ever.

Both of my children started Head Start 2018-2019 school year and I wanted to be involved, so I went to the parent meetings, I was on Policy council, and I went into the PEP class. I learned so much and I still had my dream of working as a teacher.



WSA Winter Association Meeting and Advocacy day 2020

This year two of our policy council representatives, Kate Johnson the Policy Council Chair and Korryn Co-



pher, had the opportunity to attend the WSA Winter Association meeting in Olympia, WA. This meeting gave Kate and Korryn the option to choose from a few different workshops that related to early education. Advocacy day was the day they got their creative juices out and made posters to go out and storm the capital. After the poster were done and with a little bit of training from the WSA team and the help of MCCC staff both Kate and Korryn went and talked to their perspective representatives about the importance of early childhood edu-

cation and why funding a program like Head Start, Early Head Start, OPK, and ECEAP is so important. After that everyone met up and marched to the capital where they chanted and listened to various speakers advocating for early education.

Parent Empowerment Program

The Parent Empowerment Program (PEP) was piloted in October 2016 to help MCCC grow teaching staff. This Parent Volunteer/Training Program offers free, on-the job trainings as a Head Start/Early Head Start Assistant Teacher or Substitute Teacher. This program combines training hours with hands-on volunteer experience. Trainings offered are related child development, health and safety, family engagement and diversity. Volunteer hours are structured to allow participants to use the skills learned in the training environment and to receive coaching and mentoring from experienced teachers. These trainings and volunteer time in the classroom are an opportunity for parents to explore their interest in working with young children and families.

Parents participating in PEP complete the MCCC Volunteer Application, TB screening, CPR/First Aid and food handler's training and pass a Criminal Background Check. Human resources staff supports parents through this process with no cost to the applicants. When a participant successfully completes the program they are invited to interview for a Teacher Assistant or Substitute Teacher position.

In our 2018-2019 Cohort, a parent our Dalles site, Sharon Gutierrez completed the PEP program and went on to become a sub at The Dalles Head Start site. In December 2019 she accepted a position as a Teacher Assistant and is currently working on her CDA credential. She is a wonderful addition to the teaching staff at our Dalles site and the MCCC program.

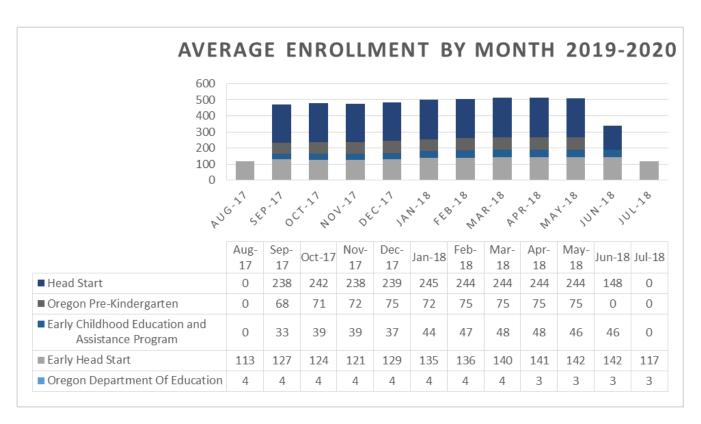
In our 2019-2020 Cohort Ian Haugen and John Phillips, parents from our Dalles site, were able to participate in trainings and volunteer until the March shutdown due to COVID-19. When asked about his favorite part John replied "The best part about PEP was the people teaching the classes. You get a good prospective and there is always a lot of good dialogue" Ian shared "The PEP classes have been really helpful in quarantine, I have reached out to friends to offer support. It's like when you build a house, you start with the foundation and it's been really helpful for me with my daughter" We are very excited they are part of the PEP program and look forward to seeing them in the classrooms again soon.





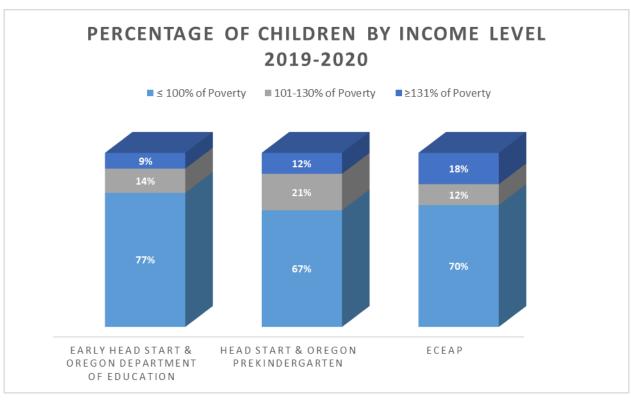
Enrollment

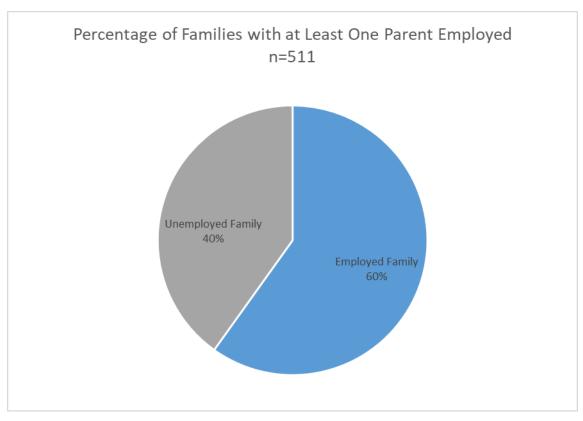
MCCC combines funding from a variety of sources to provide services to children and families in the Mid-Columbia area and in Madras, Oregon. Federal funds from the Office of Head Start provided funding for 398 preschool-age children, pregnant mothers, infants and toddlers in 2019-2020. Two state sources provided additional funding: the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) in Washington and the Oregon Department of Education. ECEAP provided funding for 48 classroom "slots" in 2019-2020 program year. The Oregon Department of Education provided 91 slots for preschoolers through Oregon Pre-Kindergarten (OPK) and 5 slots for birth to three through Oregon Department of Education (ODE). During the 2019-2020 program year, MCCC served 511 families. Of the families served 60% were employed overall. Of the children served 37 were foster children, 34 were homeless, and 78 were receiving





Enrollment





Education

Partnering to Provide Inclusive Services for Children

Mid-Columbia Children's Council embraces inclusion. All children, including those with diagnosed disabilities, are welcomed and supported to participate fully in program activities. Education coordinators, teachers and home visitors work closely with representatives and therapists from local agencies who provide Early Intervention (EI) services for children birth-age 3 and Early Childhood Special Education Services (ECSE) for identified children ages 3-5. MCCC has formal partnership agreements with Columbia Gorge ESD and Hood River County EI/ECSE in Oregon and ESD 112 in Washington. These agreements identify the ways agencies work together to ensure that all enrolled children have the individualized support they need to grow and learn.

Teachers and home visitors collaborate with families to complete developmental screening activities, typically during the first home visit. They talk with parents about their wishes for their children and jointly identify any areas of concern. They let families know evaluation by an EI/ECSE expert is an option, especially when concerns are great. MCCC teachers, home visitors and education coordinators work together to provide support to a family through the referral and evaluation process and communicate regularly with therapists conducting evaluations. All work together as a team to determine what is best for a specific child and to ensure understanding of the accommodations, modifications or supplemental services needed to ensure a child's full participation. EI/ECSE staff create a formal written plan for a child identified as having a disability. This plan includes developmental goals and steps to achieve them. MCCC staff members provide activities in the classroom to support a child in achieving individual goals and they encourage and support families to promote skill development at home.

EI/ECSE programs refer children they serve and their families to MCCC, when they believe a child will benefit from classroom experiences and the family will benefit from the additional comprehensive services MCCC provides. Therapists share information with teachers in advance so the classroom is ready to meet the needs of the child. When a child's needs are more complex, staff from pertinent agencies and family members meet well in advance of the child's classroom entry to promote a successful transition and overall experience.

The following chart shows the number of children with diagnosed disabilities jointly served by MCCC and EI/ECSE partners during the 2019-2020 program year. This data includes children enrolled for only a portion of the year. Twenty-one of the preschool aged children referred to ECSE for further evaluation and nine infants and toddlers referred to EI were diagnosed with a disability and received services from one of our special education service partners. On May 1, 2020, 106 children with EI/ECSE service plans were enrolled at MCCC, 19.6% of total enrollment.

Education

Categories of Diagnosed Disabilities	Speech or Language Impairment	Developmental Delay	Autism	Emotional Disturbance	Health Impairment
Total Number of Children Served	65	57	6	1	2
Early Childhood Special Education (Ages 3-5)	60	38	4	0	0
Early Intervention (Ages Birth-3)	5	19	2	1	2

Chart below refers to the number of children with a diagnosed disability served each month. Data reported on October 1 is for September. May 1 numbers and percentage are the peak because some children "Complete" the program year in May and are therefore not reflected in June 1 numbers.

	Oct 10/1/19	Nov 11/1/19	Dec 12/1/19	Jan 1/1/20	Feb 2/1/20	Mar 3/1/20	Apr 4/1/20	May 5/1/20
Funded Enrollment	542	542	542	542	542	542	542	542
IEP	64	66	72	80	80	82	86	88
IFSP	21	21	21	21	19	17	17	18
Total (IEP + IFSP)	85	87	93	101	99	99	103	106
Percent of Funded	15.7%	16.1%	17.2%	18.6%	18.3%	18.3%	19.0%	19.6%



Education—DECA

The Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA)

The DECA is a nationally standardized assessment that has been in use at MCCC since 2003. This tool helps teachers and specialists understand how children are progressing with respect to three key social and emotional skills:

- Developing healthy relationships
- Learning to regulate emotions
- Showing initiative

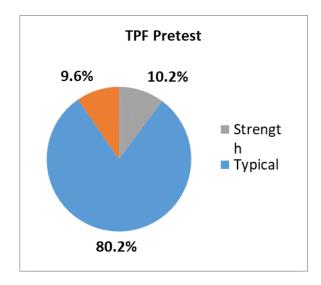
"Children with specific social and emotional skills are better prepared to wait their turn, listen to the teacher during academic lessons, share with others, and try new and challenging tasks -in or outside of the classroom." Susan Damico, Devereux Center for Resilient Children Director

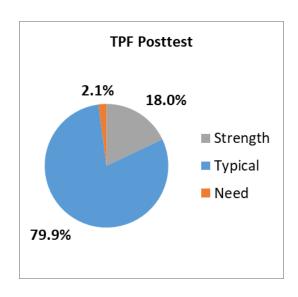
Child Protective Factors = Resilience

DECA assessments measure and reflect "child protective factors" in individuals and for groups of children. Protective factors can offset or diminish the effects of risk and adversity. Children with protective factors, such as **positive relationships**, **self-regulation** and **initiative**, tend to be more positive, productive and resilient. Conducting pre and post assessments enables teachers and specialists to monitor progress and examine how children respond to particular strategies and the overall Social Emotional Learning program.

The reports that follow represent outcomes for 334 preschool age children with both pre (Fall 2019) and post (April 2020) assessments.

DECA Total Protective Factors (TPF) 2019-2020



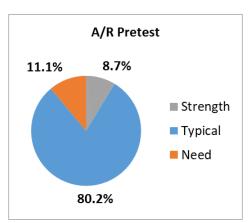


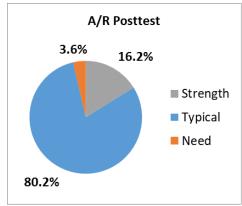
Education—DECA

Attachment/Relationships

Attachment describes the long-lasting, caring relationship between a child and the important people in his life. Secure attachment is important because it leads to trust --- the belief that the world is a safe place, filled with caring people who will meet one's needs. Attachment and trust give a baby the confidence to explore the world. Securely attached children tend to be curious and get along well with peers. They tend to be more successful in school and life than children who lack this protective factor.

DECA Attachment (A/R) 2019-2020

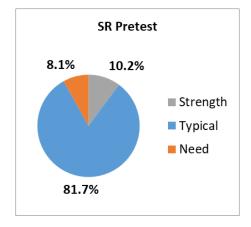


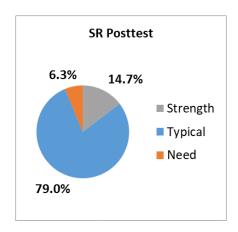


Self-Regulation

Children who can self-regulate experience emotions and impulses, and then think before speaking or acting. Self-control allows children to make decisions, solve problems, cooperate with others, and follow a few simple rules. These are important skills for young children because they will need to use them in school, on the job, and throughout life. Even adults struggle to control how they respond to feelings and impulses. However, we try to use self-control because we want to do what we believe is right and because we want to avoid conflicts, achieve goals, accomplish difficult tasks, and have financial security.

DECA Self-Regulation (SR) 2019-2020



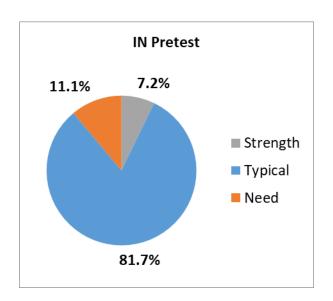


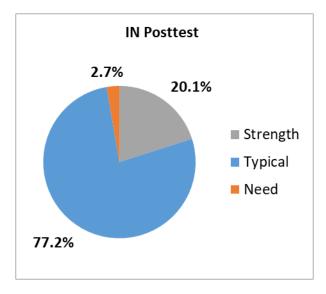
Education—DECA

Initiative

Initiative describes the ability to use independent thoughts and actions to meet one's needs. Young children have lots of energy and are eager to think and act on their own. They show initiative by asking questions, making and carrying out plans, exploring, experimenting, and using creativity. Initiative allows children and adults to be in charge of their learning and activities. This skill translates to increased success in school, on the job, and in family life.

DECA Initiative (IN) 2019-2020







Learning
Through
Studies
Supported
By
United Way

Learning Through Studies

Learning through Studies: Supported by United Way of the Columbia Gorge

People of all ages become more engaged in learning something new when the topic is interesting to them and relevant to their daily lives. *The Creative Curriculum*, that provides the framework for teaching and assessment of children enrolled at MCCC, includes a variety of resources designed to engage children in meaningful learning. A standard curriculum kit includes a few *Teaching Guides*. One called *Beginning the Year* is devoted to building a strong school community and establishing routines and expectations. The other *Teaching Guides* feature Studies.

Studies promote in-depth consideration of a topic through learning activities across developmental areas. Studies are most successful when children already know something about the topic and can have opportunities to explore and learn more through hands-on experience or direct observation. Fiction and non-

fiction books related to each study topic are included in the curriculum kit. Each study has a series of questions for investigation that tap into children's current knowledge and provide a path for investigation. Classroom displays document responses to questions, children's ideas, and their general understanding of the topic studied. These include lists, graphs, photos and artwork. As children and teachers explore a topic together, they invite families into the learning process to share artifacts and resources, providing enrichment and strengthening the school community.



Teaching Guides and accompanying children's book sets are available for purchase on a variety of preschool appropriate topics. Spanish language sets of children's books and discussion cards are also available. Teachers wanted to have a wider variety of study topics to choose from when developing lesson plans so they could more easily build upon the topics that emerge during children's play. Focusing on topics that interest children increases their engagement and development. In 2019, the United Way of the Columbia Gorge granted MCCC \$9000 for the purchase of Studies with Teaching Guides, children's books in English and Spanish and other related resources. The agency purchased sixty Study kits and distributed them to preschool classrooms across the program and thirty Spanish Book Packs provided to classrooms and centers that typically enroll children from families who speak Spanish.

Teaching staff and children explored topics such as trees, clothing, buildings, music and exercise. Children shared their knowledge and joined teachers to investigate, brainstorm, and problem solve. Together they created drawings, charts, graphs and sculptures to represent their understanding of topics. When a study ends, teachers help children reflect on the experience and celebrate what they learned. The Tree Study at the Tygh Valley Center ended with children, staff and family members gathered to investigate owl pel-

Pursing Equity

Pursuing Equity in School Readiness for Dual Language Learners

In 2011, the Office of Head Start began a new requirement that programs establish targeted School Readiness Goals in collaboration with community partners and with the input of families. MCCC School Readiness Goals for Preschool and for Infants and Toddlers were developed and first implemented in 2012. Each goal aligns with objectives in the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, Washington and Oregon state guidelines and the Teaching Strategies GOLD planning and assessment system. Assessment of child progress toward goals occurs three times each program year. The education team aggregates Child Outcomes data in a variety of ways and examines it for patterns of progress in order to revise, or develop and implement plans for program improvement. Teachers take advantage of midpoint aggregation and analysis of individual classroom data as an opportunity to make changes that can result in meaningful school readiness differences for children enrolled.

Staff, parents and elementary school partners participating in the November 2013 School Readiness Committee meeting set a high bar by establishing the MCCC objective that 90% of PreK children will meet developmental expectations for every School Readiness Goal before transitioning to kindergarten. Over time data showed that we were supporting children and able to meet this 90% objective for most School Readiness Goals. A few skills in literacy and math were the exceptions where the agency fell short of desired outcomes. In-depth data analysis showed that fewer children enroll having these skills than skills in other areas and that this was especially true for Dual Language Learners.

	Teaching Strategies GOLD: Literacy Skills for School Readiness						
Fall 2019 and Winter 2020 Compari-	Notices and	Notices and	Notices and	Identifies and	Uses letter		
son of Literacy Outcomes for Dual	Discriminates	Discriminates	discriminates	names letters	sound		
Language Learners (DLL) and Monolingual	Rhyme	Alliteration	smaller and		knowledge		
English Speakers (MES)			smaller units				
			of sound				
DLL Fall 2019 percentage of PreK children							
meeting developmental expectations	35	46	48	50	19		
DLL Winter 2020 percentage of PreK chil-							
dren meeting developmental expectations	57	53	66	70	26		
Change in percentage of DLL meeting developmental expectations	22	7	18	20	7		
MES Fall 2019 percentage of PreK children meeting developmental expectations	57	53	59	73	25		
MES Winter 2020 percentage of PreK children meeting developmental expectations	61	68	79	78	38		
Change in percentage of MES meeting developmental expectations	4	15	20	5	13		

School Readiness

A Learning Community focusing on services for Dual Language Learners met regularly from 2016-2018. The group reviewed research on best practices for instructional support, implemented and reflected on strategies used and completed program self-assessment activities pertaining to services for children learning more than one language and their families. A Head Start Region X Training and Technical Assistant supported these efforts and the development of a set of Key Strategies for Instructional Support of Dual Language Learners. Participants in the School Readiness Committee recommended adoption of the strategies for use agency wide. Education team members review information and expectations regarding services for Dual Language Learners with teaching staff at the start of each program year then monitor and provide coaching support as needed. This work is ongoing.

The charts show PreK Child Outcomes for literacy and math skills at the fall checkpoint and winter checkpoint. Teachers did not complete the Spring checkpoint due to COVID-19. The charts present data for Dual Language Learners (DLL) and Monolingual English Speakers (MES) separately to compare the increase in percentage of children meeting developmental expectations between fall and winter. Although a smaller percentage of DLL than MES met developmental expectations for literacy and math skills at the winter checkpoint, there is definitely evidence of comparable growth in knowledge and understanding between the two groups.

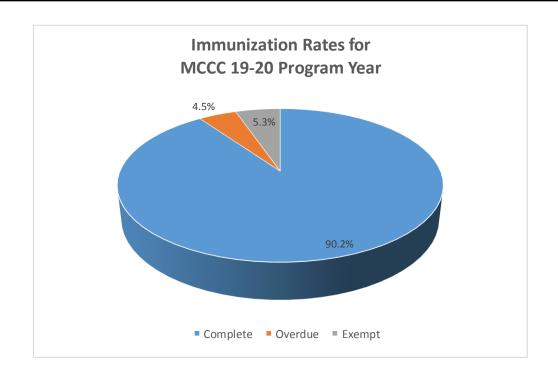
Fall 2019 and Winter 2020	Teaching Strategies GOLD: Math Skills for School Readiness						
Comparison of Math Outcomes for Dual Language Learners (DLL) and Monolingual English Speakers (MES)	Counts	Quantifies	Connects nu- merals with their quantity	Understands Spatial Rela- tionships	Understands Shapes		
DLL Fall 2019 percentage of PreK children meeting developmental expectations	56	48	35	48	38		
DLL Winter 2020 percentage of PreK children meeting developmental expectations	75	69	62	81	65		
Change in percentage of DLL meeting developmental expectations	19	21	27	33	27		
MES Fall 2019 percentage of PreK children meeting developmental expectations	61	61	49	72	52		
MES Winter 2020 percentage of PreK children meeting developmental expectations	77	77	74	86	70		
Change in percentage of MES meeting developmental expectations	16	16	25	14	18		

Mental Health Services

Mid-Columbia Children's Council is fortunate to have a full time Mental Health Specialist (MHS) on staff. The MHS monitors results of children's Devereux Early Childhood Assessment screenings for any concerns about social emotional skills and personal well-being. She observes classrooms, models interactions, and supports teaching staff as they develop strategies tailored to their classroom group as a whole and the needs of specific children. With parent permission, a teacher can request that the MHS conduct an Individual Child Observation to help discover the triggers or underlying concerns related to a child's big emotions and challenging behaviors. Greater understanding results in a plan that can better meet the needs of the child and family. Teachers and home visitors let families know they can request private consultation with the MHS regarding parenting questions or concerns. The MHS also provides information and activities at parent meetings on family topics of interest and leads an annual Learning Community for staff on Conscious Discipline and other trauma informed practices. She works closely with community partners such as the Center for Living, Comprehensive Healthcare, the Oregon Department of Human Services, and the Washington State Department of Social and Human Services.

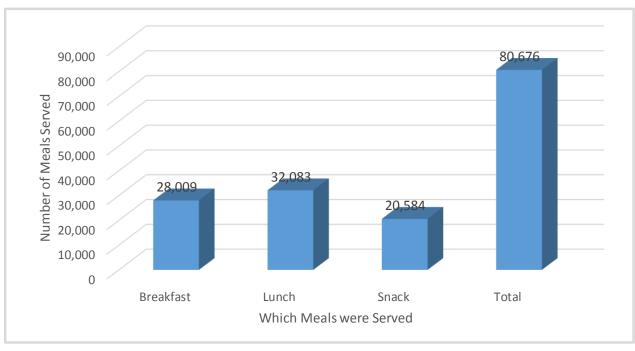
Activities of Mental Health Spe- cialist	Consultation with teaching staff regarding support for a child	Consultation with teaching staff 3+ times regarding same child	Consulta- tion with parent	Consulta- tion with same par- ent 3+ times	Conducted individual mental health assessment	Facilitated referral for mental health services	Child re- ferred to agency out- side MCCC	Child receiv- ing mental health ser- vices from outside agency
HS/OPK PIR #	26	21	21	10	14	18	5	2
EHS PIR #	6	3	6	4	1	7	0	0
ECEAP#	4	3	3	3	3	4	0	0
HRSD#	3	0	2	0	1	4	0	0
TOTAL	39	27	32	17	19	33	5	2

Immunizations & Nutrition



Mid-Columbia Children's Council is able to serve nutritious meals and snacks to our students while they are in class. While our physical time with students was cut short due to COVID-19, we were still able to feed enrolled children. Food that was not able to be used for the remainder of the program year was donated to families that needed it.

This year we were able to serve:



All publications that mention USDA Child Nutrition Programs must include the following revised nondiscrimination statement:

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the <u>USDA Program Discrimination Complaint</u> <u>Form</u>, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint-filing-cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
 Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
 1400 Independence Avenue, SW
 Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

Mid-Columbia Children's Council is an equal opportunity provider

Approved by

Policy Council: 08/27/2020

Board of Directors: 08/06/2020

Supported in Part By









