



**LCCAA Head Start
Annual Report**

2020-2021

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STAR**

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**I ♥
HEAD
START**

The Art of Adjusting

The joy of the young children we serve sustained us all through the last unpredictable year and a half in LCCAA Head Start.

Right alongside our students and parents, teachers and staff adjusted and re-adjusted in order to continue serving the vulnerable families who trust themselves to our mission.

Every time we turned a corner, there was a new obstacle. Teachers and staff pivoted without hesitation employing virtual learning and new procedures for smaller classes and highly sanitized spaces.

We handed out tablets so families could maintain virtual learning and school family relationships.

Kits for music, art and more were distributed and the Zoom scavenger hunt was born.

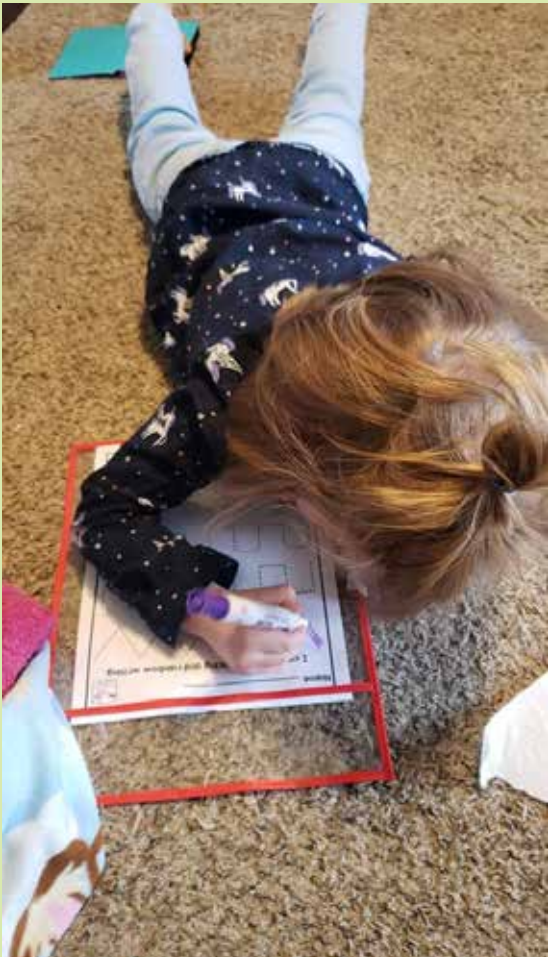
Food was a critical need during the school year, again met with creative solutions that served our families both as they stayed away from our centers and as they returned.

Time after time, everyone associated with LCCAA Head Start demonstrated strength and determination.

From the parents who made sure their children continued to learn, to the technical professionals who made all our new platforms work, to the maintenance staff who kept the germs at bay, we are grateful for every single one of you.

Shauna Matelski, Ed.D., Head Start Director

Jackie Boehnlein, President and CEO





Head Start Serves the Whole Family

Head Start and Early Head Start are federally funded programs focused on comprehensive child development. LCCAA is Lorain County's only Head Start provider. We offer center-based, school-based and home-based options.

Early Head Start supports pregnant women and monitors growing babies for unique needs. Head Start students prepare for kindergarten and become lifelong learners.

Head Start works with local school districts through screenings and referrals on a wide range of disabilities. LCCAA is deeply committed to early intervention.

Full- and part-day options are available. Students receive as much as 40 hours of instruction each week from teams of teachers.

Each child is unique and LCCAA Head Start's approach honors that uniqueness with a variety of teaching methods designed to prepare all of them for kindergarten success.

Who is Eligible?

Head Start and Early Head Start serve low-income children ages 0 to 5 and pregnant women.

Both programs use the 100% of the Federal Poverty Level for priority placement. In addition, the programs can serve 35% of families whose income is between 101 and 130%.

Additionally, 10% of families can exceed 130% of the FPL.

Families receiving TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) or SSI (Supplemental Security Income) are automatically eligible. Homeless children and children in foster or kinship care are also automatically eligible.

Head Start and Early Head Start also serve children with disabilities.

What is Step Up to Quality?



Ohio created its five-star rating system to recognize and promote early learning and development programs that meet quality standards over and above the minimum health and safety licensing requirements.

All of LCCAA's directly operated centers have earned the highest rating from Step Up to Quality: five stars. LCCAA has been fortunate to have partners who work hard to exceed minimum standards. Most of our partner centers are also rated at five stars and none has fewer than three.

Higher ratings are given to programs employing teachers with more specialized training as well as enhanced parent, family and community engagement, among other criteria.

For additional details on the program, visit <https://boldbeginning.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/bold/providers>.

High Standards

Many things changed in our Head Start program during the COVID-19 crisis. Two things remained steadfast: our high standards and our commitment to excellence.

LCCAA Head Start follows exacting standards from both federal and state agencies as well as our agency's own core values and strategic goals. Head Start graduates are curious, creative and ready for kindergarten. They can confidently leave their parents and caregivers, care for their own basic needs and are ready to learn to read and write. They are also beginning to reason and solve problems as they learn to imitate their teachers in becoming enthusiastic lifelong learners.

How We Do It

Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: a comprehensively researched set of standards regarding what young children should know and be able to do.

Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards: child development standards reflecting the rapid development of young children.

Teacher credentials: more than 50 percent of LCCAA employed teachers have a bachelor's or master's degree in Early Childhood Education or a related field.

Team teaching and coaching: all classrooms have two teachers and regular training, coaching and other learning opportunities are offered.

Screenings and Assessments: all students are evaluated within 45 days of enrollment so their unique needs can be met. Quarterly assessments monitor growth and progress.

Environment: classrooms are well-equipped with abundant supplies and both classroom environments and teacher interaction with students are regularly evaluated.



Head Start Framework

(many of the same domains are part of the Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards)

Approaches to Learning

- Approaches to Learning

- Creative Arts Expression

Cognition and General Knowledge

- English Language Development

- Logic and Reasoning

- Mathematics Knowledge and Skills

- Science Knowledge and Skills

- Social Studies Knowledge and Skills

Language and Literacy

- Language Development

- Literacy Knowledge and Skills

Physical Development and Health

- Gross and Fine Motor Skills

Social and Emotional Development

- Mental and Behavioral Health



Special thanks once again to Elyria artist David Spencer for our cover art and artwork throughout this report.
Learn more about David at www.mischief-factory.com.

Head Start's Pandemic Pivot

When school began on Sept. 3, 2019, Head Start teachers, staff, students and parents were focused on maximizing learning while settling in to new routines. Our LaGrange center was in its first year and our center inside Firelands Elementary its second.

Stories were read, milestones shared and screenings conducted. Events were held, meals were served and conferences conducted. There were parent meetings, projects, songs and pleas to complete 2020 Census forms.

Classrooms had just celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday and were preparing for a nutrition event when the entire State of Ohio ground to a halt.



LCCAA Head Start's

March 12, 2020: Gov. DeWine orders public schools closed from March 16 through April 3. LCCAA Head Start follows with a shut down of its programs for the same time period.

March 26: Facebook groups were created for each center and staff worked remotely as they could posting lessons, checking in with families and more. Many of our partners and curriculum providers began offering free resources to parents.

March 30: A virtual spirit week was held in an effort to stay connected to families.

March 31: The Governor extended the public school closure through May 1 and, again, LCCAA followed suit.

April 23: Again following the Governor's decision, LCCAA began transitioning to fully virtual services for the remainder of the academic year.

May 5: Teacher Appreciation Day was celebrated virtually.

June: The end of the year was celebrated in a whole new way with certificates, T-shirts and more sent to families and lots of photos posted online.

June 22: Procedures, including smaller classes, were announced for the 2020-2021 school year.

July 13: LCCAA announced that Early Head Start would be home-based for 2020-2021.

Essential Services Never Stopped

Lorain County Community Action Agency was considered an essential service during the COVID-19 crisis and never completely closed. Low income people were particularly hard hit as businesses shut down. Needs skyrocketed and **Head Start** wasn't the only program at LCCAA that needed to adjust.

Funding arrived in Lorain County when the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act passed and additional funding continues to be dispersed for a variety of assistance programs.

Although we had to cancel **Tech Connect** classes and stop conducting energy audits in customers' homes for **Community Connections**, LCCAA kept most programs going while reimagining how services were delivered across the board.

Getting Ahead classes moved online with 10 people completing classes between March 2020 and March 2021.

The **Winter Crisis Program** was in full swing when the State of Ohio shutdown in mid-March.

Energy Services advocates conducted appointments over the phone to continue to deliver services. A secure dropbox was installed outside our office to receive required documents for the programs.

Phone appointments continue to be the norm in the department. However, the agency's lobby reopened after a year to allow customers to bring their questions in person.

Beginning in September, LCCAA created a partnership to support the Second Harvest Foodbank. With assistance from the Lorain County Commissioners, LCCAA recruited and supplied 20 **Youth Services** workers to help Ohio National Guardsmen distribute food supplies to meet unprecedented demand.



Pandemic Timeline

Aug. 17: Virtual professional development began for Head Start staff.

Sept. 2-3-4: Students returned to centers in a staggered start and smaller groups.

Sept. 14: Virtual classes began on ClassTag

Oct. 23: Take home Try Days began with plums being sent home.

Nov 16: Head Start centers switched to virtual learning as case numbers spiked

Nov. 30: Support for our families continued in unique ways, including Care Bags of food.

Dec. 28: LCCAA announced Head Start will remain virtual after break, home learning kits distributed.

Jan 7, 2021: Head Start resumed virtual learning.

March 2: Students returned two days a week – just in time for Dr. Seuss' birthday. This hybrid program began for students transitioning to kindergarten.

April 13: Classroom capacity increased and students began attending four days a week.

April 19: LCCAA announced three week extension to school year.

June 1: EHS Students returned to center-based learning.

June 3 and 10: A unique year ended with unique celebrations, including drive by parades.

Defying Expectations

Widely Held Expectations are tasks and skills children of a certain age are expected to know and be able to do. They apply to all children in an age group regardless of their household income.

Children didn't stop growing and developing during the COVID-19 crisis and although we couldn't have them in our Head Start centers for most of the last 18 months, we did our best to continue to serve them. Measuring our impact has been another challenge.

Social Emotional Development

Social Emotional objectives focus on how children are learning to control their behavior and emotions as well as how they are getting along with other children. Here's how we continued to provide opportunities for our students to make friends and recognize clues to other people's feelings.

- ▶ Creating opportunities for virtual students to interact with in person students.
- ▶ Ohio Guidestone offered virtual programs and teachers continued their "I love you" rituals from Conscious Discipline.



Physical Development

Physical skills include things that adults take for granted such as walking, running and healthy eating. They also include gross motor skills such as throwing a ball and fine motor skills like holding a crayon to color a picture. Here's how we continued to encourage growth in these areas.

- ▶ Care Bags with food supplies were distributed while centers were closed.
- ▶ Meals were available for pickup for virtual students and extra food was sent home when students returned two days a week.
- ▶ Enhancements such as Tae Kwon Do were offered virtually.
- ▶ Kits and lessons sent home included practice with writing, using scissors, etc.
- ▶ Parents were reminded and encouraged to keep up with their children's visits to doctors and dentists and referrals were available.

Literacy

Children preparing to become readers learn to identify letters and their sounds while grasping concepts such as reading books from left to right. Here are the ways we continued to work with families on literacy.

- ▶ Teachers recorded read-alouds for their students.
- ▶ Lessons from Heggerty Phonics – or "purple book time" – were recorded and posted on first Facebook and then Classtag
- ▶ Parent Book Club meetings were held over Zoom featuring books that were sent home.
- ▶ Lorain County's Imagination Library (which provides free books to children under five) was heavily promoted.



While Defeating a Virus

Cognitive Development

Young children enjoy learning because they are curious. As their attention spans lengthen, they are more persistent in trying to solve problems. Here's how we continued to help students connect their experiences to each other and begin to understand symbolic thought.

- ▶ Zoom scavenger hunts encouraged connections between objects and their locations.
- ▶ Virtual lessons included lots of opportunities to comment as connections were made.
- ▶ Recorded and live lessons included simple experiments (i.e. sink or float) to spark critical thinking.



Language Development

Speaking and understanding words are skills that rapidly expand in the preschool years. Children learn to follow directions, hold a two-way conversation and use complete sentences. Here's how we continued to help them grow their vocabulary while learning grammatical and social rules of language.

- ▶ Teachers recorded and posted read-alouds daily.
- ▶ Even on Zoom, students were encouraged to take turns speaking and to answer verbally.
- ▶ In both recorded and live interactions, teachers used appropriate vocabulary, explaining new words and introducing concepts.

Mathematics

Counting, shapes, patterns and beginning measurements are all foundational math skills. Here's how we supported these early steps toward scientific inquiry and other complex concepts.

- ▶ Kits sent home included manipulatives for counting.
- ▶ Scavenger hunts included items with specific colors or other attributes to help build recognition.

Growth in widely held expectations was measured a bit differently in the COVID-19 environment.

Children continued to show tremendous progress with LCCAA Head Start services.

	Fall Data	Winter Data	Winter Growth	Spring Data	Spring Growth
Social & Emotional	68.71%	68.55%	-.16%	77.50%	+ 8.95%
Physical	76.03%	77.42%	+1.39%	80.45%	+3.03%
Language	69.39%	73.16%	+3.77	79.06%	+5.90%
Cognitive	60.82%	68.44%	+7.62%	75.31%	+6.87%
Literacy	57.43%	68.29%	+10.86	76.34%	+8.05%
Math	58.6%	66.04%	+7.44	74.80%	+8.76

Creating a Learning Environment



Classroom environments are evaluated using CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) which offers teachers feedback on how they interact with students.

“Our teachers are very intentional about how their classroom becomes a learning environment,” said Head Start Director Shauna Matelski, Ed.D.

CLASS uses a seven-point scale to assess three domains of teacher-child interactions that support children’s learning and development.

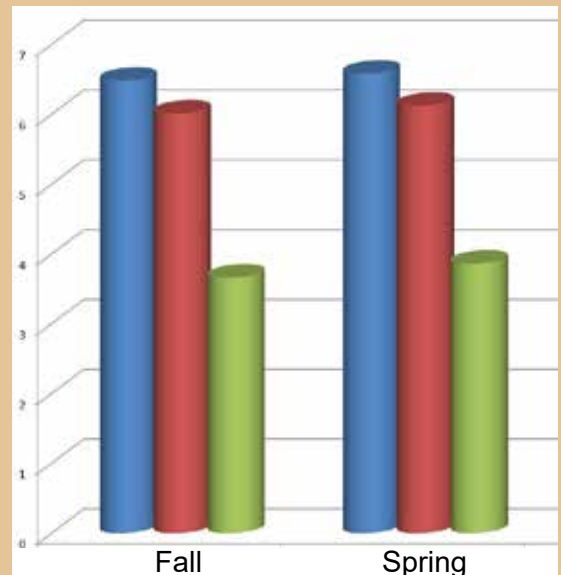
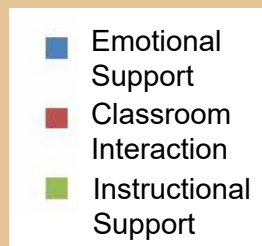
Emotional Support assesses the degree to which teachers establish and promote a positive climate in their classroom through their everyday interactions.

Classroom Organization assesses classroom routines and procedures related to the organization and management of children’s behavior, time and attention in the classroom.

Instructional Support assesses the ways in which teachers implement the curriculum to effectively promote cognitive and language development. This domain measures how teachers support and extend children’s thinking, problem solving and conversational skills, and vocabulary.

Fifty percent of each site’s CLASS observations were conducted. A total of 13 classrooms were observed and increases occurred in all three domains.

Emotional Support increased from 6.48 to 6.58. Classroom Interaction increased from 6.01 to 6.12 and Instructional Support increased from 3.66 to 3.86.



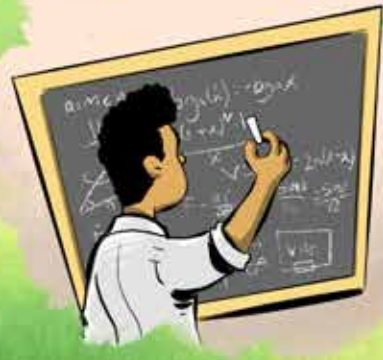
Meeting and Exceeding All Program Standards

LCCAA’s last federal review was conducted in November 2018. In the Focus Area 2, on-site review, the Office of Head Start is looking for grantees to demonstrate their ability to track and assess their program’s progress and performance, use data to drive results and make adjustments and corrections as needed.

The results of the review were stated in a letter from the Administration for Children and Families:

“Based on the information gathered during this review, we have found your program meets the requirements of all applicable Head Start Program Performance Standards, laws, regulations and policy requirements.”

Additionally, LCCAA’s fiscal audit for 2019-2020 has been finalized. There were no deficiencies relating to the audit of financial statements, no instances of noncompliance material to the financial statements and no deficiencies relating to the audit of the major federal and state award programs.



Policy Council Key Partners

Working with parents and supporting children and families along positive developmental pathways really does give families a good Head Start.

Head Start centers itself on strengthening parenting and supporting families so that children thrive and succeed.

Since we did not publish a report last summer due to COVID-19, we want to thank both the 2019-2020 and the 2020-2021 members of the Policy Council.

For 2020-2021, Policy Council met via Zoom and we especially thank the officers for their dedication.

“We know that parents are their child’s first teachers,” said Head Start Director Shauna Matelski, Ed.D. “It’s important to have a group of parents coming together to make decisions for their child’s program.”

“It gives them an opportunity to help us make decisions that are going to be right for the program and for their child,” she added. “So Head Start has always placed an emphasis on the Parent Policy Council.”

Parents are elected by their centers to serve on Policy Council where they make critical decisions for the entire program. The President of Policy Council holds a full, voting seat on the LCCAA Board of Directors.

2019-2020 Policy Council

Susan West, President
Katrina Juchnik, Vice President
Keishla Burgos Colon, Secretary
Shadaris Pineda, Asst. Secretary
Iney Danks
Kelli Elek
Felicia Jones
Sara Kovacs
Tana Panter
Jessica Santiago
Tabatha Smith
Samantha Waldrop

2020-2021 Policy Council

Susan West, President
Katrina Juchnik, Vice President
Katherine Reynolds, Secretary
Kristin Wandra, Asst. Secretary
Tameem Abdullah
Melissa Carroll
Jessica Hales
Rebecca Raines



Serving the Whole County

LCCAA Head Start meets children and families where they are by taking care to locate its centers and collaborative partners where needs are the greatest.

LCCAA also considers pockets of poverty in areas that are harder to reach due to lack of public transit – just one reason for offering a home-based option.

LCCAA has relationships with all 21 school districts in Lorain County. These and other collaborations extend the reach of Head Start.

Directly Operated

LCCAA Head Start @ Cascade, 233 Bond Street, Elyria

LCCAA Head Start @ Elyria, 631 Griswold Road, Elyria

LCCAA Head Start @ Firelands, 10779 Vermilion Road, Oberlin

LCCAA Head Start @ Hopkins-Locke, 1050 Reid Ave., Lorain

LCCAA Head Start @ LaGrange, 12079 LaGrange Road, LaGrange

LCCAA Head Start @ Wellington, 305 Union Street, Wellington

Partners

Horizon Educational Centers

2500 Colorado Avenue, Lorain

4911 Grove Avenue, Lorain

10347 Dewhurst Road, Lorain

104 Loudon Court, Elyria

Little Lighthouse Learning Center

1715 Meister Avenue, Lorain

Lorain City Schools – eight locations in Lorain



By the Numbers



6 directly operated centers

13 collaborative centers

489 enrolled in Head Start at the time of the shut down

30 enrolled in Early Head Start at the time of the shut down

407 members of Facebook groups in spring 2020

260 end of year packets mailed in June 2020

30 Early Head Start students served in home-based program

250 Head Start students served in person during 20-21

200 students served virtually during 20-21

14,842 meals served in classrooms and sent home in February, March and April

Head Start Works!



Proud to be in Head Start! Another year with this wonderful program - family as I would call it.
-Home Based Parent

Watching Audrianna grow over the last two years has been amazing!
-Griswold Parent

It's so amazing all the things Lydi has learned and experienced. Thank you for all the love and support.
- Hopkins-Locke Parent

Thank you all for another wonderful school year and for working so hard through all of the unexpected chaos.
-Firelands Parent

What a wonderful first year of preschool for both her and I. Thank you for making it a most memorable one.
-Wellington Parent

Ruby says 'I'm done with germs and wanna go to school!'
-Wellington Parent

Thank you very much! If I could have you as teachers every year, it would be good!
- Griswold Parent

Thank you teachers for caring during this crazy time.
-Firelands Parent

Benjamin did great writing his name before four years old. You are awesome!
- Home Based Parent

She has grown so much over the year thanks to you guys.
-Wellington Parent







We ♥ HeadStart!

Great Job!



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