



**2021**

HEAD START

# ANNUAL REPORT



AREA AGENCY ON AGING  
COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMS  
COMMUNITY JUSTICE SERVICES  
**HEAD START**  
HEALTHY YOUTH ALLIANCE  
STRATEGIC INITIATIVES  
WORKFORCE BOULDER COUNTY

**Generating a Lifetime of Opportunities**

## Our Classes, Our Kids!

Boulder County Head Start (BCHS) is a comprehensive preschool program for children ages 3-5. Head Start prioritizes serving foster and homeless children, those living in families with low-wages, and children with disabilities. BCHS is designed to meet the individual needs of children through a partnership between program and parents. The school year runs from late August through Memorial Day.

# 3

Boulder County Head Start locations:

### Woodlands Children's Center

2675 Mapleton Ave., Boulder – Pandemic Capacity: 20 Children

### Lafayette Community School

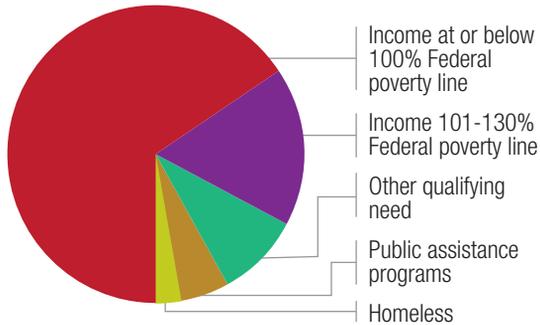
1135 Cimarron Drive, Lafayette – Pandemic Capacity: 30 Children

### The Dagny School at YMCA

2800 Dagny Way, Lafayette – Pandemic Capacity: 40 Children

## Who We Serve

BCHS serves a diverse array of young children and families, including multilingual children. BCHS has a bilingual program focused on meeting the rapidly developing language skills of young children. All native Spanish-speaking children receive instruction in both their home language and in English. BCHS's funded enrollment from the Office of Head Start was 134 children. BCHS served a total of 76 children during this time due to parent hesitation and pandemic-related social distancing recommendations per local public health department.



## Our Children

**88%** identify as Latinx

**65%** speak a language other than English at home

**61%** speak Spanish as the primary language at home

**100%** of eligible children who sought enrollment were served

**50%** of enrollment capacity was maintained on average during the year

## Our Services

**76** cumulative enrollment

**34** returned for their second year

**38** graduated to kindergarten at the end of the school year

**35** 3-4 year-olds served, cumulatively

**41** 4-5 year-olds served, cumulatively

## Serving Children with Disabilities

BCHS partners with Boulder Valley School District to diagnose children's learning disabilities and delays during the school year. Identified children received all therapeutic services in their BCHS classroom.

**6** children qualified for and received speech and language disability services

**3** children's disabilities were identified during the school year

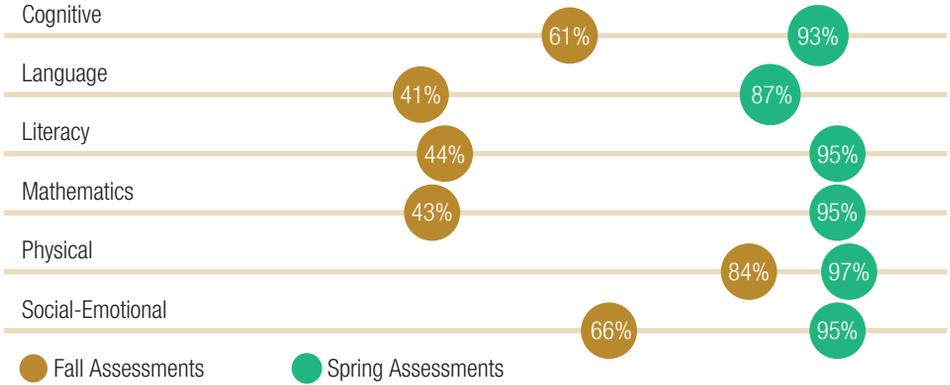
# Professional Education Standards

At Boulder County Head Start (BCHS), we are committed to educational excellence in service of our youngest residents. We monitor and track child development with ongoing assessments, family feedback, and classroom observations. To strengthen each child's school readiness, we invest in staff professional development and partner with parents employing research-based engagement practices and strategies.

## Child Assessments

BCHS uses the Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment system to assess student growth in all areas of development.

Between the first child assessment period in October and the final in May, students demonstrated the most improvement in mathematics, literacy, and language domains.



**In the 2021-2022 school year, the program saw the largest increase in children's school readiness in BCHS's program history.**

## Preparing Children and Families for Kindergarten

Our bilingual and bicultural approach to child and family services sets the foundation for lifelong parent-educator partnership during the early schooling years. We believe these are the keys to ensuring our school is ready for each child individually so that the child can meet their fullest potential for growth.

BCHS provides annual school readiness activities and actively partners with local service providers in support of Head Start families preparing for kindergarten transition. Kindergarten readiness and transition activities included but were not limited to:

- BVSD kindergarten open enrollment through parent kindergarten open enrollment night
- Technology access and staff support to complete online kindergarten registration
- May kindergarten transition units in classrooms
- Kindergarten transition home visits with collaborative parent-teacher goal setting
- Ready Rosie parent curriculum connected to the classroom curriculum and individual child development
- Summer backpacks with school supplies, including art and writing materials along with developmentally and linguistically appropriate books generously provided by Boulder Housing Partners *Bringing School Home* Program

### Growth of kindergarten-bound children in the cognitive domain



# Children and Family Supports & Services

Boulder County Head Start staff work in partnership with families to access resources in Boulder County that address identified needs and enhance resiliency.

## For Our Kids

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all non-essential adults were restricted from our buildings. This presented significant barriers in implementing our pre-pandemic approaches to completing health assessments in partnership with community resources. Considering this, BCHS staff increased hands-on and individualized support for families to access health services.

**57%** of children had at least one well child medical exam

**50%** of children were up to date on their immunization schedule by the end of the school year

**58%** increase in the number of children who were up to date on their immunization schedule from enrollment to the end of the school year

**2** enrolled children were exempted from immunization

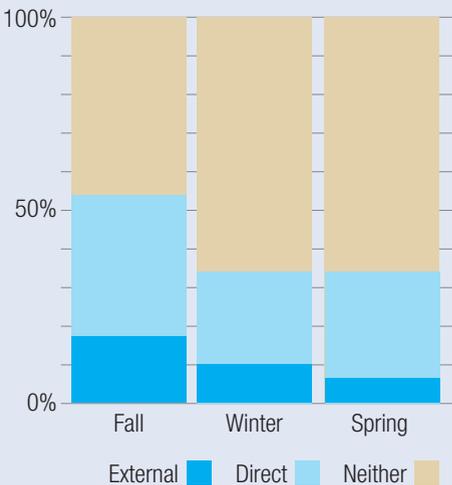
## For Our Parents

Family and Community Professionals (FCP) build relationships with families prior to the start of the school year through a personalized intake and application process. Pre-pandemic, all family partnership meetings were conducted in-person. During the pandemic, meetings with families were held virtually, indoors while masked and socially distanced, or in outdoor settings.

From the initial contact enrollment process, FCP staff begin to work with families to help identify strengths and goals. These goals are revisited throughout the school year. We make referrals to community resource partners for specialized services to help reach goals or attend to emerging needs.

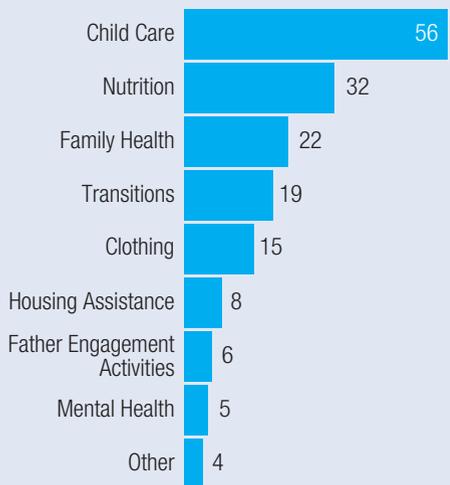
The following two charts demonstrate the referrals to in-house and community resources provided to families by BCHS family services staff. The table on the left illustrates the percent of families accessing both internal and external resources, while the table on the right shows which resource categories were most referred out for services.

**In-house and community resources received by season**



Most requests for services occur at the beginning of the school year. This is a key transition period as families enter or return to Head Start where they have increased access to resources and referrals.

**Community Resources by category**



The highest external referrals are for sibling childcare, summer recess, and to supplement the school day for Kindergarten-bound children. These families are specifically in need of programs that offer free or very low-cost full day childcare.

# Early Childhood Mental Health Services

Boulder County Head Start (BCHS)'s Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation program (ECMHC) entered its 5<sup>th</sup> school year. We ground our consultation practices in proactive and relationship-based approaches, which proved vital in the transition back to in-person services. For the second year in a row, an intern from Metro State University's master's in social work program joined the ECMHC team.

This year, we adopted the Conscious Discipline (CD) philosophy to better address the needs of our families and staff by implementing trauma-informed strategies. CD's vision is of "an interconnected world of conscious adults capable of responding instead of reacting to conflict, creating safe homes, safe schools and a safe planet."

All staff were provided training and resiliency support to help themselves and our families more effectively manage the ambiguity, fear, and fluctuating school requirements brought on by the pandemic. Program staff undertook the following implementation activities:

26 education, mental health, and management staff participated in the online 30+ hour training "Building Resiliency: Returning to School in Uncertain Times."

Three virtual training opportunities focused on implementing Conscious Discipline and building staff skills in mental and behavioral health.

ECMHC facilitated multiple virtual peer support sessions.

The Conscious Discipline Action Team (CDAT) launched in April 2021 to provide recommendations across the program on the adoption of CD. CDAT was comprised of 7 classroom teachers, 2 health staff, 1.5 ECMHC staff, and 2 managers. Between April and June, CDAT met 3 times up to 1.5 hours per meeting.

**13** families received mental health supports through embedded services

**100%** of teaching staff and classrooms received weekly observations, support, and consultation

**76** children received embedded services in the classroom environment

**100%** of classrooms were staffed with at least one teacher trained in the Conscious Discipline model

**20** families were referred to an outside mental health service

**76%** of children received support through individualized teacher consultations



Commissioner Matt Jones reads to children at BCHS's Lafayette Community School location

# About Boulder County Head Start

The Head Start program began in 1965 during the Johnson administration as a federal summer program for children in poverty entering kindergarten. Services began in Boulder County in that inaugural year.

Over the years, the program has evolved to meet the needs of three- to five-year-old children and their families living in poverty. The program has seen many changes over time, including shifting services from half-day (2.75 hours per day) to full working day (9.5 hours per day); adapting to changing population demographics from serving the Hmong community in the 1990s, to the Latinx community we largely serve today; serving increased rates of children with disabilities; and adopting new programming locations in order to best serve the community with the highest quality environments and facilities.

Boulder County Head Start opened The Dagny School in Lafayette in August 2019 in partnership with the YMCA of Northern Colorado. This expansion project was generously funded in collaboration by the residents of Boulder County through the Worthy Cause fund, Boulder County Commissioners, and the Office of Head Start.

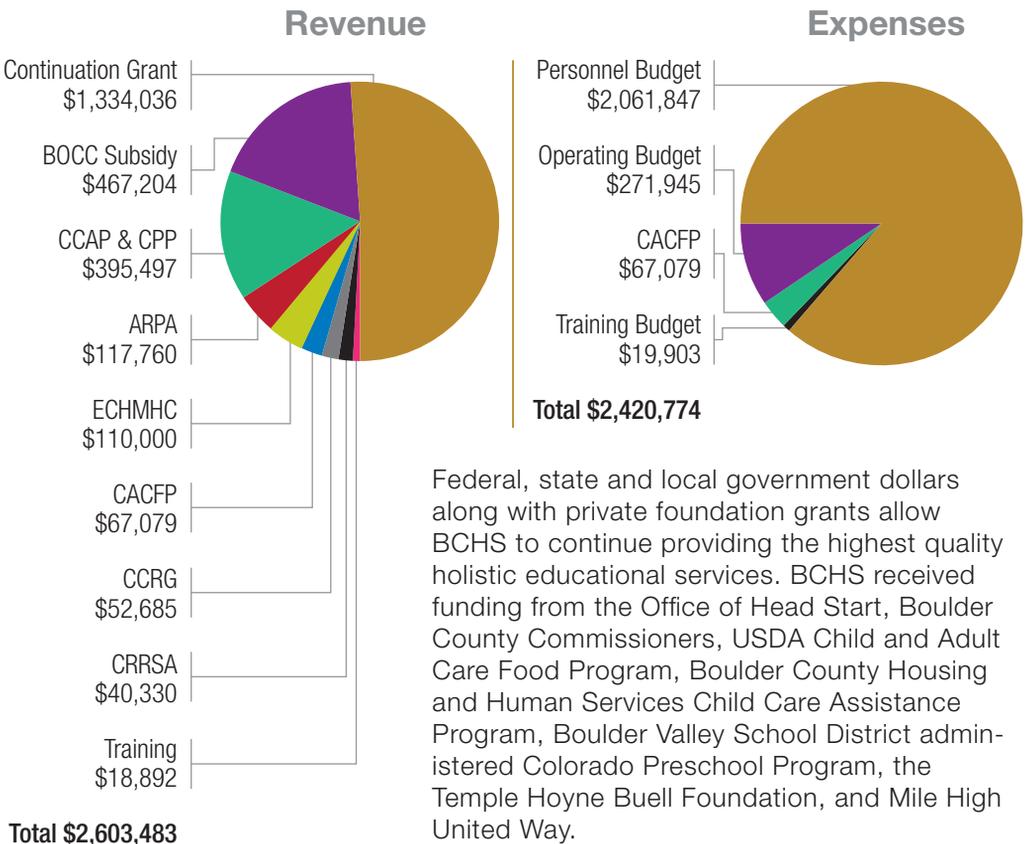
## Boulder County Head Start Policy Council

Boulder County Head Start's Policy Council is a parent oversight board comprised of both current and former parents and community members. Consistent with all other aspects of the program, BCBS' Policy Council was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic; Policy Council saw a 78% attrition rate during the 2021-2022 school year and throughout the pandemic.

BCBS wishes to deeply thank the Policy Council members for their dedication to our communities' children.

**Mari Camacho      Jennifer Barbera**  
**Jessica Aguirre**

## BCBS Revenue and Expenditures



Federal, state and local government dollars along with private foundation grants allow BCBS to continue providing the highest quality holistic educational services. BCBS received funding from the Office of Head Start, Boulder County Commissioners, USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program, Boulder County Housing and Human Services Child Care Assistance Program, Boulder Valley School District administered Colorado Preschool Program, the Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation, and Mile High United Way.