

**REACH-UP, INC.'S**  
**ANNUAL REPORT TO THE PUBLIC**

(Fall 2024)

**Mission Statement**

*Reach-Up Head Start & Early Head Start provides comprehensive education and support services that strengthen Children and their families who are experiencing low income.*

**Core Values**

*We Value:*

- *All relationships and base them on integrity, trust and respect;*
- *Strength-based partnerships with children, families, and community agencies;*
- *Uniqueness and diversity within communities.*

**Vision Statement**

*Reach-Up Head Start & Early Head Start is recognized throughout the community and state as a family focused early childhood developmental model of excellence that has lasting impact.*

350 Highway 10 South Suite 100 | St. Cloud MN, 56304  
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## Annual Report - 2024

### Actual Revenue 2023-24

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Federal Head Start/Early Head Start	\$4,217,608
State Head Start/Early Head Start/Great Start	1,196,291
MDE Early Learning Scholarships	208,134
USDA/CACFP	118,642
United Way of Central MN	29,758
Medica Foundation	4,125
Otto Bremer Foundation	75,000
Child Care Receipts	99,886
Other Receipts & Donations	37,016
Total	<u>\$5,986,460</u>
InKind	1,062,659
Total with InKind	<u><u>\$7,049,119</u></u>

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## **2024-25 Projected Budget**

Revenues	\$7,213,344
Expenditures:	
Salaries & Benefits	4,846,404
Contracted Services	40,809
Equipment	8,109
Supplies	67,525
Travel & Vehicle Repair	67,440
Space & Rental	625,520
Food	167,325
Professional Fees	34,064
Other Expenses	300,674
InKind	<u>1,058,621</u>
Total Expenditures with InKind	<u>\$7,216,491</u>
Excess Revenues over Expenses	<u>\$ (3,147)</u>

(a negative balance is merely timing of when the grant is received compared to when spent)

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## **Highlights 2023-2024**

### Enrollment

Head Start Funded Enrollment	216
Early Head Start Funded Enrollment	66
Head Start Avg Monthly Enrollment	67% (Sept 23'-June 24')
Early Head Start Avg Monthly Enrollment	93% (Sept 23'-June 24')

### EHS & HS Children Who Are Up-To-Date For Preventative/Primary

Health Care Services:	HS=98%, EHS=99%
HS Children With Continuous, Accessible Dental Care:	HS=66%, EHS=59%

## **Compliance**

### **Fiscal Reviews and Audits:**

An independent audit by CliftonLarsonAllen CPA firm for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024 provided an unmodified opinion which is the highest level of assurance a CPA firm can provide.

Minnesota Department of Education did a Fiscal Monitoring Review of the Head Start grant for the period ending December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023. No issues were identified.

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### **CLASS Mean Scores**

CLASS, or the Classroom Assessment Scoring System, is an observation tool developed by Teachstone and used by the Office of Head Start to measure and improve the quality of interactions between teachers and students.

CLASS scores are assigned based on a scale of 1–7, scoring behaviors that were consistently present and reflective of every child's experience.

The Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) include thresholds for each CLASS® domain(s). These quality thresholds represent the expectations of the Office of Head Start (OHS) for the quality of the learning environment in every Head Start program. These thresholds do not relate to competition, but instead reflect a quality improvement focus on teacher-child interactions, with support from OHS. The Quality Threshold scores are: 6, 6, 3. The competitive thresholds reflect the minimum score that programs must achieve in each CLASS® domain: 5, 5, 2.3.

	<b>CLASS OBSERVATION DOMAINS</b>		
	EMOTIONAL SUPPORT	CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION	INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT
<b>AVG. FOR 2023-24 PROGRAM YEAR</b> 1. Fall Reach-Up Internal Assessment 2. Spring Federal Monitoring Review	5.86	5.62	3.4
Variance from 2022-23 Scores	-0.06	+0.27	-0.47

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### **Parent Involvement Activities**

Parents and other family members are offered the opportunity to be involved in their children's programming from the initial enrollment. Specifically, families are encouraged to attend site-based parent meetings, to visit or volunteer in the classroom, to serve on the Policy Council, to serve on Reach-Up's advisory committees, to attend MHSA-sponsored trainings, to attend the annual MHSA parent conference, and to participate in other relevant activities. 96 HS and 45 EHS current and/or former Reach-Up parents volunteered in their children's programming throughout the 2023-2024 year.

### **Preparation For Kindergarten**

Reach-Up facilitates the successful transition of past Head Start children and their families into the elementary school system. Reach-Up supports families through individualized home visits and supports kindergarten teachers and/or principals through transition meetings.

During the 2023-24 program year:

- 89 families whose child enters kindergarten for the 2023-2024 school year received some type of Kindergarten Transition service.

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### School Readiness Goals

Reach-Up realizes that a critical purpose of all its programs is to prepare children to enter the K-12 educational system on an equal “playing field” with their peers. To that end, the following specific school readiness goals were set effective for the 2023-2024 program year:

Goal #1: 100% of the children who have been in the program all year will meet or exceed widely held developmental expectations in the five primary domains (Social Emotional, Language and Literacy, Approaches to Learning, Cognitive and General Knowledge, Physical Development) as measured by Gold-On-Line. These results are based on the following number of children (HS: n = 70 and Home based and EHS: n = 21)

Results: <u>4 year olds</u>	<u>3 year olds</u>	
100%	100%	Social-Emotional
100%	100%	Physical
100%	100%	Language & Literacy
100%	100%	Cognitive & General Knowledge
100%	100%	Approaches to Learning

Goal #2: 100% of the children who have been in the program all year will demonstrate developmental progress in the five domains (Social Emotional Development, Language and Literacy, Approaches to Learning, Cognitive and General Knowledge, Physical Development and Health) as measured by Gold-On-Line and Desired Results Developmental Profile.

Results: HS Center Base = 93% and EHS and HS Home Base = 73%

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## **Family Engagement in Transitions**

### **(Head Start → Kindergarten)**

100% of parents, who complete individualized kindergarten transition visits prior to kindergarten entry, will indicate increased knowledge and/or skills related to helping their children and families be ready for kindergarten as measured by the Kindergarten Transition Family Survey.

In 2023-2024, 100% of parents who completed individualized kindergarten transition visits prior to kindergarten entry indicated increased knowledge and/or skills related to helping their children and families be ready for kindergarten as measured by the survey.

## **Parent Engagement Goals**

- Re: Family Well-Being: 85% of families who set housing, financial, or health goals (and have follow-up) will meet at least one goal. 42% met this goal.
  
- Re: Positive Parent-Child Relationships & Families As Lifelong Educators: 47% of families who set an “achievement gap” goal (and have follow-up) will meet the goal. 60% met this goal..
  
- Re: Families As Learners & Family Connections to Peers and Community: A minimum of 200 Reach-Up families will demonstrate parent participation/education (e.g., parent meetings, parent education classes, socializations, parent conferences/referral visits). 124 families demonstrated participation.
  
- Re: Families as Advocates and Leaders: A minimum of 20 Reach-Up families will be represented in parent leadership positions throughout the agency (e.g., policy council, parent meetings). 22 families were represented.

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**Fall 2024 Community Assessment’s significance findings for Reach-Up Head Start**

Reach-Up Head Start as an ongoing practice, tracks and collects pertinent data for future planning. When comparing our most current data there has been new and relevant findings since our 2023 Community Assessment. Reach-Up’s goal is to address and revisit some of the relevant findings from the 2023 community assessment and review more recent data and come to a conclusion of new relevant findings.

Relevant Findings 2024	Importance to Reach-Up and steps Reach-Up may consider																
Poverty Rates in our Service Area	<p>Reach-Up was curious about the number of children living in poverty in our 3 county service area—Stearns, Benton and Sherburne Counties. This is not new information for Reach-Up to gather however, due to the pandemic, data has not been as accessible as in the past years. The Community Assessment Team dug through data to find that Stearns County has the highest rate of poverty of children younger than 18 years of age. Although when looking at information for children Birth-5 years old, we noticed that Benton County had the highest rate of poverty.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="524 835 1336 1108"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Stearns</th> <th>Benton</th> <th>Sherburne</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>MDH less than age 18 (2019)</td> <td>16.8%</td> <td>11.3%</td> <td>8.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kids Ct less than age 18 (2022)</td> <td>13.5%</td> <td>8.7%</td> <td>6.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WelfareInfo.org age b-5</td> <td>6.8%</td> <td>9.6%</td> <td>0.5%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Minnesota average 10.4% Birth to 5 years old</p> <p>This information was gathered from Department of Human Services, Kids Count, and welfareinfo.org. This information does conclude that Reach-Up is providing services to the highest poverty area with many sites in Stearns County primarily in the St Cloud area.</p> <p><i>Response:</i>  <i>As the Community Assessment Team analyzed the poverty information the Team concluded that we would recommend that Reach-Up reconnect with the local WIC clinics. Reach-Up had been part of WIC in the past but with WIC being moved from Tri-Cap to the County both the School District and Head Start was asked to not participate. The County Nurses have presented at Reach-Up Family Services events. Reach-Up will research and question about joining the WIC clinics again.</i>  <i>The Team also discussed the importance of our Staff understanding the ‘life’ of poverty. Reach Up has completed the Poverty Simulation at the December 2023 All Staff.</i></p>		Stearns	Benton	Sherburne	MDH less than age 18 (2019)	16.8%	11.3%	8.4%	Kids Ct less than age 18 (2022)	13.5%	8.7%	6.0%	WelfareInfo.org age b-5	6.8%	9.6%	0.5%
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Referrals to School district and Health Care agencies	The Community Assessment Team reviewed information gathered related to children who have been referred to receive further evaluation for health or educational concerns and the wait time until they could be seen in the clinic or agency. Children are referred to																

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	<p>agencies due to concerns around developmental delays, which could be related to food/eating. Children with food aversions may be referred to Occupational Therapy for services.</p> <p>A referral to Help me Grow may take up to 9 weeks, if the agency is able to connect with the family. The process for evaluation for a couple agencies are below:</p> <p>Help Me Grow:          -District contacts family within 1-2 weeks          -process for determining eligibility and developing the service must take place within 45 days of the referral for Birth to 3 and within 30 school days for ages three to five.</p> <p>Northway Academy: (Autism program, ABA services)          -Process: Intake – CMDE – assessment – treatment plan – start date scheduled          -Waitlist for children 0-5 is estimated to be a few months to a year</p> <p>Centra Care:          -ASD: must have a referral from their physician, then move onto the intake process          -Autism clinic is approximately a 2-year waitlist. Can schedule a consult within a few months to see if further testing is warranted          -SLP: must have a physician’s order          -SLP outpatient – approximately a year long waitlist          -OT/PT – approximately a 6-month waitlist</p> <p><i>Response:</i>  <i>The data supports that we need to help children while they are on the waitlist for an evaluation/diagnosis. This supports our current efforts at Reach Up, by working with the family to ensure the child can stay in our organization by adding resources such as a shortened day, added staff, transfer to HB until the child gets to the most appropriate placement for them to thrive. We also share resources with families such as the Autism Project, which is an organization that provides strategies from an evidence based Autism workshop</i></p>																
<p>Staff shortage/Unemployment          (Continuation of Reach-Up’s          Relevant Findings of 2022 &amp; 2023)</p>	<p>Staff shortages in our Head Start program could be a result of a variety of circumstances. Central Minnesota is experiencing low unemployment rates and Minnesota as a whole is experiencing a 3.10% unemployment rate. (Have Ychart. Com)</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="524 1543 1336 1680"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Stearns</th> <th>Benton</th> <th>Sherburne</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>July 23’</td> <td>4.0%</td> <td>2.3%</td> <td>3.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sept 23’</td> <td>3.9%</td> <td>2.5%</td> <td>3.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>October 24’</td> <td>2.5%</td> <td>2.8%</td> <td>2.6%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The unemployment rate greatly impacts our non-degreed positions such as Early Childhood Assistants, Cultural Navigators and Food Service Support staff.</p>		Stearns	Benton	Sherburne	July 23’	4.0%	2.3%	3.6%	Sept 23’	3.9%	2.5%	3.5%	October 24’	2.5%	2.8%	2.6%
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	<p>Our staff shortage could also be attributed to our inability to compete with nearby employers who are offering higher wages. This can affect both our non-licensed and licensed employees. Manufacturing and fast food employees are paying more than our starting pay for non-licensed staff and area school districts also pay much more than what Reach-Up can compete with.</p> <p><i>Response:</i></p> <p><i>2022</i>  <i>Reach-Up is researching a reduction in federal and state slots. We would ask for the same dollar amount but use those extra dollars to increase wages to entice future employees, and to allow us to increase current employee wages. We need to compete with the world outside of Reach-Up to bring those new staff members to us. Reach-Up also understands the value of our current staff and the time, effort and dollars invested into these individuals and how difficult it would be to replace them.</i></p> <p><i>2023</i>  <i>Reach-Up is currently waiting to hear about the decision on the Change of Scope to increase wages of all Staff.</i></p> <p><i>2022</i>  <i>Reach-Up has created a Marketing Team to identify effective strategies to best reach out community and partners, making them aware of our staff recruitment needs. Team members are regularly attending a variety of recruiting and resource fairs.</i></p> <p><i>2023</i>  <i>Continue to reach out to Higher Education and other Early Childhood agencies to attempt to make Reach-Up known in the community and share resources.</i></p> <p><i>2023</i>  <i>Increase hours for Early Childhood Assistants—Attract, Retain and increase Quality.</i>  <i>Reach-Up has worked with TT&amp;A services to write a Full Enrollment Initiative that will support the enrollment of all slots.</i></p> <p><i>2024</i>  <i>Reach-Up has completed a change of Scope with OHS and has been able to increase wages for all staff; with a significant increase to staff who work directly with children.</i></p>
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**2024 Community Assessment Team:**

- David Kaczor; Mental Health Coordinator
- Heidi Larson; Education Coordinator
- Emily Skelly; Ed and Disabilities Coordinator
- Jill Eickhoff; Executive Director

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