



Fairfax County

**Head Start/Early Head Start Program**

# 2019 Annual Report

## Head Start Mission

The Fairfax County Head Start program promotes school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of culturally inclusive education, health, nutrition, social and other services to eligible children, their families and pregnant women.



Fairfax County



Office for Children

## Overview

The Fairfax County Office for Children Head Start and Early Head Start (HS/EHS) program provides early care and education and comprehensive family services to income-eligible families in Early Head Start, which serves infants, toddlers and expectant parents, and Head Start, which serves children ages three to five years. Head Start services are designed to meet the needs of children and families within the cultural context of their family, school and community. This cultural context is an important factor in the development of critical life skills vital to children’s readiness for kindergarten, success in school and lifelong well-being.

The federal Head Start and Early Head Start grants are awarded to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. Fairfax County Public Schools and Higher Horizons Day Care Center, Inc. are delegates that manage and

operate programs. Services are provided in family homes, family child care provider homes and classrooms.

Families participating in the program are supported with:

- Early childhood education and disability services.
- Social services.
- Connections to community resources.
- Health services (medical, dental, nutrition, mental health and prenatal care).
- Parent education.
- Family literacy and resources for English language learners.

## Financials FY 2019 Total Funds: \$36.91 million

### SOURCE AMOUNT

- U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services  
\$9.18 million
- U.S. Dept. of Agriculture/Virginia Dept. of Health  
\$1.85 million
- Local County Board  
\$9.25 million
- Local School District  
\$9.88 million
- Virginia Department of Education  
\$6.5 million
- In-Kind  
\$.25 million

### FY 2019 Budget and Actual Expenditures

	Budget	Actual
<b>Delegate</b>	76.84%	77.00%
<b>Personnel</b>	11.67%	11.59%
<b>Contractual</b>	4.54%	3.89%
<b>Fringe Benefits</b>	5.33%	5.63%
<b>Other</b>	.84%	.92%
<b>Supplies</b>	.69%	.86%
<b>Travel</b>	.09%	.12%
<b>Equipment</b>	.00%	.00%
<b>Facilities/Construction</b>	.00%	.00%

*Fairfax County’s Head Start program braids multiple funding streams (federal, state and local) to comprehensively serve children. Fairfax County’s financial statements have been audited as required by the Code of Virginia and received an unmodified opinion by the accounting firm of Cherry Bekaert LLP. The Single Audit Report contains the independent auditor’s reports related specifically to the single audit. There were no findings related to the Head Start Programs in the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) of the County of Fairfax, Virginia for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019.*



## Number of Children Served

The Fairfax County Office for Children Head Start and Early Head Start program provides services at Greater Mount Vernon Community Head Start in Alexandria, Higher Horizons Day Care Center, Inc. in Bailey's Crossroads, Fairfax County Public Schools and family child care homes throughout the county.

The program is funded with federal, state and local dollars for 2,253 children in program options that include center based (children are in a classroom setting), home based (services are provided by a home visitor in the family's home), and family child care (children are cared for by a county-permitted and/or state-licensed provider in the provider's home). Children in Fairfax County Public Schools' Head Start program attend a school year program. All other options are year-round.

### The program composition is as follows:

#### Greater Mount Vernon Community Head Start and Family Child Care

(30 family child care providers)

- 200 Early Head Start (152 family child care, 48 center-based).
- 158 Head Start.

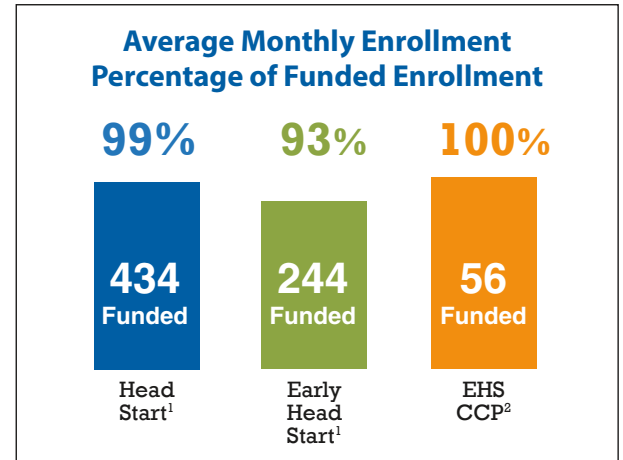
#### Higher Horizons Day Care Center, Inc.

- 52 Early Head Start (16 center-based, 36 home-based).
- 172 Head Start.

#### Fairfax County Public Schools

- 48 Early Head Start (center-based).
- 1,623 Head Start/Pre-K.

## Enrollment



The program is required to report the average monthly enrollment for federally funded slots.

In program year 2018-19, the program faced challenges in achieving full enrollment in Early Head Start child care option, mainly as a result of changes to eligibility for subsidy. This led to a request for reduction of 20 slots in the family child care option for program year 2019-20, which was approved by the Office of Head Start.

<sup>1</sup> Grant 03CH010411 – Head Start and Early Head Start

<sup>2</sup> Grant 03HP0003 – Early Head Start Child Care Partnership and Expansion



# Children and Families

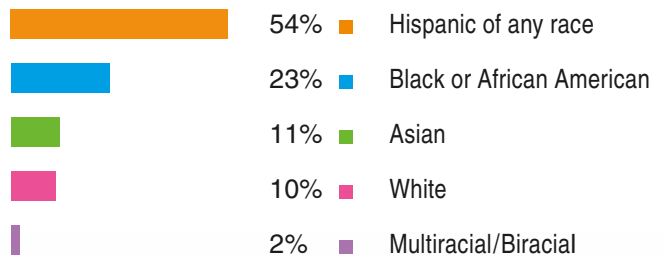
During program year 2018-2019, 2,522 children and 18 pregnant women from 2,345 families were served. Some families have more than one child in the program. Children from single parent families comprise 41 percent of the enrollment.

Of the children served in Head Start and Early Head Start, 96 percent of children were eligible because their families met the income guidelines, and five percent were categorically eligible (children in foster care, or families experiencing homelessness).

## Enrollment Statistics

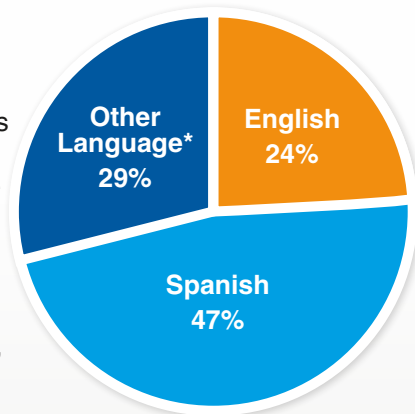
Highest Level of Education by Family	Percent
Advanced/Bachelors	15%
Associate/Vocational/Some College	24%
High School Graduate/GED	30%
Less than High School Graduate	30%
Did not answer	1%

### Race / Ethnicity of Participants

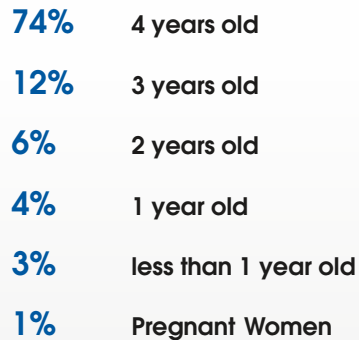


### Languages Spoken by Head Start Families

There are 39 different languages spoken by Head Start families.\*The Other Language category in this chart includes: Arabic, Amharic, Urdu, Vietnamese, Twi-Akan-Ashanti, Farsi, Pashto and Somali.



### Ages of Children and Pregnant Women Served in Head Start / Early Head Start





## Family Engagement

Engaging parents and families in their child's educational experience is central to Head Start's mission as well as an important element of school readiness. Parents identify their own strengths, needs and interests in the Family Partnership Agreements. Head Start provides support through parent meetings and referrals to relevant resources, as well as opportunities to serve on various councils and committees throughout the county to enhance leadership skills and stay involved in their child's education.

Several parents who have served on the Policy Council and Parent Committees were selected to represent the Head Start program in county-wide strategic planning initiatives and to serve on boards such as the Community Action Advisory Board and the Successful Children and Youth Policy Team.

### Nancy Elmore Scholarship Awarded To Local Head Start Parent

Congratulations to Abdeltif Bensouda! Mr. Bensouda is the Chairperson for the Fairfax County Head Start Policy Council and Fairfax County Public Schools' Head Start Parent Committee Chair. He was awarded the Nancy Elmore Scholarship this year by the Virginia Head Start Association, Inc. Named in honor of Nancy Elmore, who has been an integral part of Virginia Head Start programs for many years, the Elmore Scholarship provides a grant/financial award to one Virginia Head Start parent and one employee to further their education.

Mr. Bensouda's interest in Head Start began because he wanted to be involved in his daughter's education, and grew as he attended monthly parent meetings, first at Parklawn Elementary School and then the Parent Policy Committee and Policy Council. Mr. Bensouda has served the Head Start Program in 2010, 2014 and 2018 and is a strong advocate of the program. The scholarship will help Mr. Bensouda as he pursues a degree in Business Management at George Mason University.



## Parent Gauge™ Survey Results

ENGAGE, MEASURE, ACT

This year, family child care programs and Greater Mt. Vernon Community Head Start and Early Head Start utilized Parent Gauge™, a parent and family services interactive interview tool. Family service workers used it to gather details of the impact of family engagement efforts.

Parent Gauge was developed by the National Head Start Association and the independent research organization NORC at the University of Chicago. This innovative tool aligns with the Office of Head Start's Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework. Parent Gauge explores a family's experience with entry to the program and transition, knowledge of child development, empowerment and identity, relationships with staff, family growth and stability, and health and nutrition. It provides immediate feedback to staff regarding parent needs and data on program effectiveness.

Parents reported the program is doing an excellent job in several key areas. They credited the staff for encouraging regular program attendance, medical/dental care and proper nutrition. Parents surveyed said that the program\*:

- Helped me set goals for my child's development and learning (94%).
- Helped me gain new knowledge and skills about parenting (90%).
- Affected our healthy habits (88%).

\*Percentages provided are based on survey responses of Very Much and Mostly. Other responses were Somewhat, Not Very Much and Not at All.

# Promoting Children's School Readiness

## Our Teachers and Classrooms

**School Readiness** means preparing all children for kindergarten by supporting birth to age five programming, including early intervention services. The focus includes key classroom practices such as the use of high-quality curriculum and assessment, teacher-child interactions and individualized professional development as well as strengthening family engagement. Additionally, teacher credentials and experience are important factors impacting the quality of pre-kindergarten programs.

Teacher Level of Education	Percent
Master's Degree or Higher	53%
Bachelor's Degree	38%
Associate's Degree	6%
Child Development Associate	3%

### Classroom Assessment Scoring System

CLASS™ is a nationally recognized standardized assessment tool that measures teacher/child interactions and the emotional and instructional climate of the classroom. Research indicates that at the preschool level more effective teacher child interactions are associated with higher scores in vocabulary and math for children about to enter kindergarten (Marshburn et al., 2008). Results from the Pre-K CLASS administered in Fairfax in 2018-2019 were used to support professional development plans for staff, including training opportunities and resources for strengthening teacher/child interactions.

By the end of PY 2018-2019, 59 preschool classrooms, 30 toddler classrooms/Early Head Start family child care provider homes, and five infant classrooms/provider homes were observed across the program. The Office of Head Start determines a national average each year for the PreK CLASS, and the county's assessment scores were equal to or higher than the national average in all three domains.

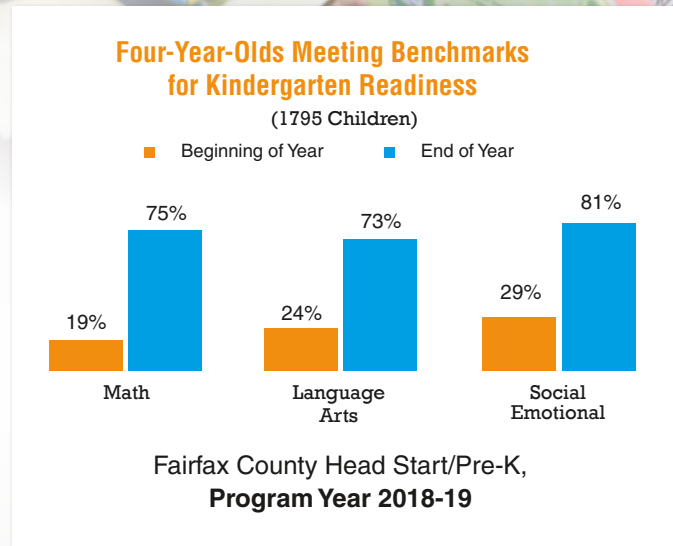
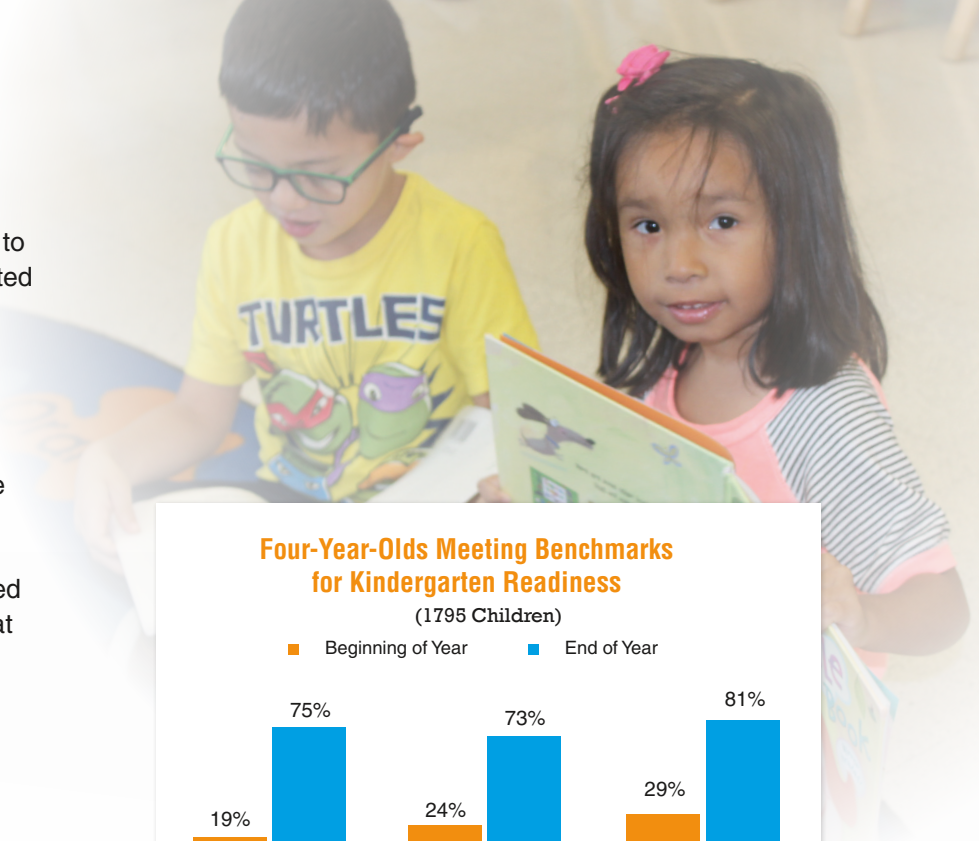
### Virginia Early Childhood Foundation's Preschool Development Grant Birth-Five

All Fairfax County OFC HS/EHS programs and options are participating in Virginia's Early Childhood Foundation Preschool Development Grant Birth-Five (PDGB-5). Beginning in March, 2019, 93 Early Head Start, Head Start/Pre-K classrooms and four family child care providers signed up to support the grant's overall goal of helping to improve early childhood education programs across the state. Objectives of the PDGB-5 align with the program's goals for strong best practices in instruction, families' improved access to quality early childhood education, and positive teacher child interactions.

## Child Outcomes

Head Start programs prepare children to succeed in school. In PY 18-19, 1,877 children transitioned from Head Start/Pre-K to kindergarten. Teachers observed, documented and evaluated each child's progress on an ongoing basis and entered developmental level scores at specified checkpoints during the year. Teachers used the assessment information to develop lesson plans and individualize each child's learning. There are two curricula and assessment tools used in the Head Start program. The Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment system is used with the Creative Curriculum for Preschool at Greater Mt. Vernon Community Head Start and Higher Horizons Day Care Center, Inc. The Early Childhood Rubric assessment system is used with the Pre-K Program of Studies at FCPS.

Children made substantial progress during the program year in all areas of development. Specifically, Math, Language/Literacy, and Social-Emotional are reported as county-wide performance indicators of school readiness for four-year-olds.



## Services for Children with Special Needs

Head Start programs must ensure that at least ten percent of funded enrollment is filled by children eligible for disabilities services. In PY 18-19, children with disabilities made up ten percent of federally funded Head Start and Early Head Start enrollment (79/783), six percent of EHS-CCP (5/78), and ten percent of all programs (263/2,522). The program screens all children for overall development of sensory, auditory, behavioral, motor, language, social, cognitive, perceptual and emotional skills within 45 days of enrollment. The program has an interagency agreement with the Fairfax County Public Schools' Early Childhood Special Education program and a service agreement with Infant & Toddler Connection of Fairfax-Falls Church. These agreements help ensure timely referrals and full implementation of special education and intervention services.



## First Lady of Virginia Visits Early Head Start Family Child Care Home of Silvia Gregorini

First Lady of Virginia Pamela Northam celebrated the start of a new school year by visiting early childhood education programs across Virginia and discussing the importance of school readiness. As part of her Back to School Tour, she visited early childhood programs in Fairfax County on Sept. 5, 2018. The first stop was the home of Silvia and Luis Gregorini, who have worked with Early Head Start since 2006 as family child care provider partners.

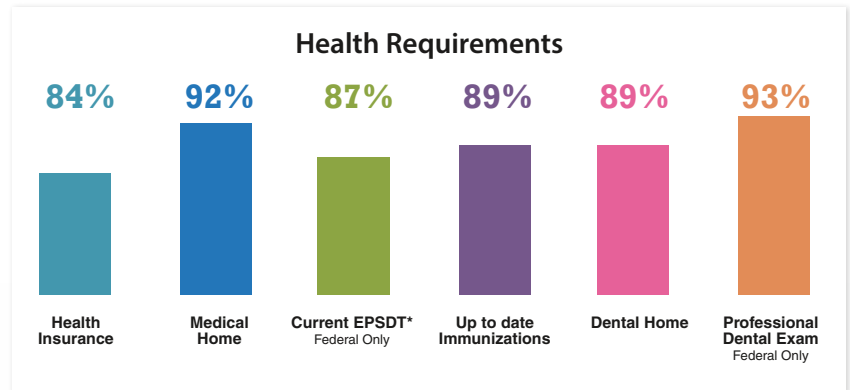
“All Virginia children are capable of, and deserve to be, entering kindergarten with the tools they need to succeed,” said Northam. “We are dedicated to unifying Virginia early education programs and providing access to quality care and education for children and families no matter who they are or where in the Commonwealth they live.”



Left to right: Silvia Gregorini, First Lady Pamela Northam, Noelia Miani.

## Health Services

As physical well-being contributes to a child’s readiness for school, Head Start places a strong emphasis on the overall health and well-being of the children served. Head Start and Early Head Start provide developmental and health screenings for children during enrollment, and health and family services staff follow up with families to ensure medical and dental treatments are received. The chart above provides information on the percentage of children meeting specific health requirements by the end of the program year.



\* EPSDT is the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment Program geared to the early assessment of children’s health care needs through periodic screenings. The goal of EPSDT is to ensure that health problems are diagnosed and treated as early as possible. [www.dmas.virginia.gov](http://www.dmas.virginia.gov)

## Mental Health Services

Head Start has always recognized that ensuring the healthy development of children includes attention to their mental health. As with physical health, Head Start’s primary strategy is to prevent problems by reducing risks and encouraging healthy habits. Each child receives a social-emotional screening when they enter the program to identify any possible need for services, such as skill-building, behavior support or counseling services. In the 2018-19 program year, 130 (5%) children were provided with evaluations and counseling services through a partnership with the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board and private consultants. Seventy-four of these children were referred for more intensive services within the community.

## Family Child Care Vegetable Gardens

Children enrolled in Family Child Care participated in a gardening program this year. Nine partners applied for and received gardening grants in the spring to support gardening with children and families. There were a variety of garden types – a container garden on a balcony, potato exploration, gardening on the vine, etc. The goal of the project is to teach children how to care for plants and encourage tasting new foods from the garden. This program enriched children’s physical health through hands-on gardening, outdoor activity and nutrition lessons. Partners, parents and children sampled new foods from the garden, adding foods to the Head Start daily menu and family-style dining. Gardening stimulates children’s five senses: touch, smell, taste, sight and sound.



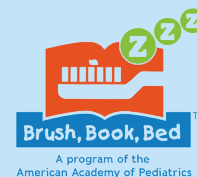
## Yoga Program at Fairfax County Public Schools Head Start/Pre-K

On May 10, 2019, FCPS hosted a wellness event for children and families. The special day included reading a yoga book, doing yoga poses on their own new yoga mat and enjoying a “Rosita’s Smoothie” from the Sesame Street cookbook. It was very well attended by parents and families left with a bag of goodies to support yoga and literacy at home.



## Dental Health

“Brush, Book, Bed” is an American Academy of Pediatrics Program with a simple and clear message for parents of children ages six months to six years. This program encourages parents to brush their children’s teeth, read a favorite book and get them to bed at a regular time every night. Research shows that these healthy routines can have a positive effect on health over a lifetime.



The children and families at Greater Mt. Vernon Community Head Start/Early Head Start and Early Head Start Family Child Care participated in “Brush, Book, Bed” activities this year.

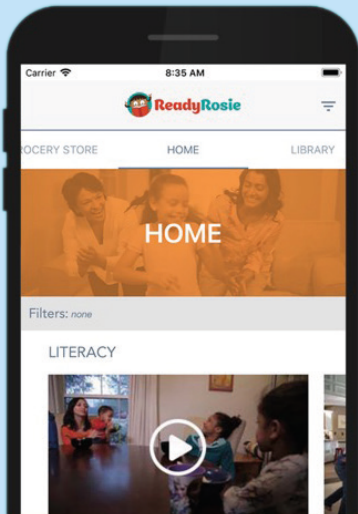




During PY 2018-19, Greater Mt. Vernon Community Head Start and Early Head Start implemented a new parenting curriculum. ReadyRosie is a research-based parenting curriculum that helps parents discover activities and games to play at home through an app on a mobile device or computer.

*“I was introduced to ReadyRosie by my worker and that has given me more support with parenting two young children. I have been able to talk with my worker and discuss my parenting concerns and she has taken the time to look through videos with me to see what could help me. Teachers have been able to give insight to my parenting also.”*

*“I’ve liked ReadyRosie. It has allowed me to try new things. I have learned my child’s strengths and figured out things that I can work on.”*



## Partners and Volunteers

Head Start collaborates and coordinates with public and private organizations and agencies to improve the availability and quality of service to children and families in the program. Established partnerships have enhanced services to ensure that the program is responding to the needs of the families and community. Partnerships in Fairfax provide families with coats and shoes, food for the holidays, free dental services, books and toys.

- Fairfax County Fire and Rescue, Penn Daw Station partnered with Operation Warm to provide coats, toys and books to children for the holidays.
- Neighborhood Health, Partnership for Healthier Kids, Anthem Healthkeepers Plus and United Healthcare Community Plan participated in a panel discussion to the Head Start Health Services Advisory Committee.
- Fairfax County Park Authority offered free sports and recreation classes to enrolled families.





## Shared Governance

The Head Start Policy Council and Fairfax County Board of Supervisors share decision-making responsibility regarding program goals and plans, setting program policies and procedures, budget allocations and personnel functions. The Board of Supervisors and Policy Council approve the bylaws, the annual self-assessment and shared governance policies. They review all major program reports and policies including personnel policies, financial policies, grant applications, the financial audit, the Program Information Report and the Community Assessment. They are active in program planning and monitoring. The Policy Council is a formal structure of Head Start program governance that provides parents and other community representatives with the responsibility and opportunity to participate in shared decision-making.

## Board of Supervisors



**Chairman, At-Large**  
Sharon Bulova

**Braddock**  
John C. Cook

**Dranesville**  
John W. Foust

**Hunter Mill**  
Catherine M. Hudgins

**Lee**  
Jeff C. McKay

**Mason, Vice Chairman**  
Penelope A. Gross

**Mount Vernon**  
Daniel G. Storck

**Providence**  
Linda Q. Smyth

**Springfield**  
Pat Herryty

**Sully**  
Kathy L. Smith

## Head Start Policy Council

Parents of children in Head Start and Early Head Start make up more than half of the membership of the Policy Council. These members are elected by their peers. The remaining members are community representatives. During monthly meetings and trainings, parents and community representatives learn more about changes and opportunities in Fairfax County Head Start and Early Head Start offer their own insights into the future of the program.



Policy Council members and officers sworn in by Supervisor Penny Gross

Pictured left to right: Supervisor Penny Gross, Abdelatif Bensouda, Chair; Heather Thomas, Vice-Chair; Munkhjargal Jamsran, Treasurer; Roneeta Chatila, Parliamentarian; Mekonnen Simore; David Aratuo; Yesenia Lemus; Mai Nour; Meg Marcus, Community Representative.

# Head Start Helps Prepare Children and Families for Success in School Through:

## Education

- Supporting social and emotional development.
- Developing language and literacy skills.

## Disability Services

- Screening for developmental delays.
- Accessing educational and behavioral services for children with special needs.

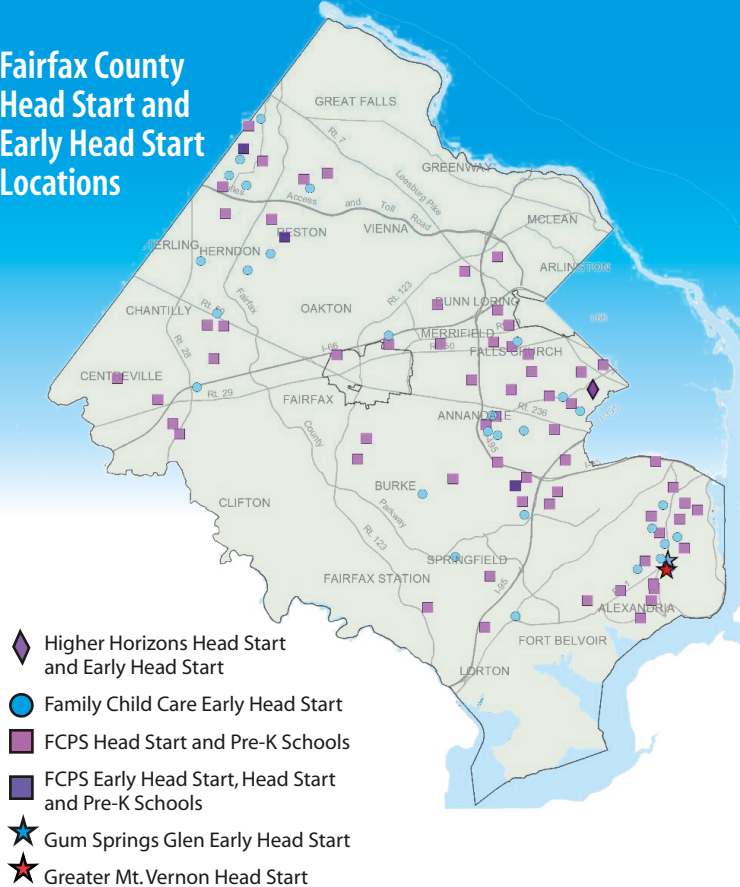
## Wellness

- Accessing healthy meals and snacks.
- Locating prenatal care for pregnant women.
- Connecting families to health care services, including dental and mental health services.

## Family Services

- Providing parenting workshops and offering job training.
- Encouraging parent participation and advocacy.
- Referring families to community supports.

## Fairfax County Head Start and Early Head Start Locations



Fairfax County

**O F C** Office for Children

Neighborhood and Community Services  
12011 Government Center Parkway, Suite 920  
Fairfax, VA 22035

703-324-8000 • [Fairfaxcounty.gov/OFC](http://Fairfaxcounty.gov/OFC)



Where a TTY number is not indicated, use 711/Virginia Relay. Reasonable accommodations made upon request; call 703-324-8290.



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