

ANNUAL REPORT

OHIO VALLEY EDUCATIONAL COOPERATIVE

2022-23



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CEO Message 2022-23

"Making educators' work more fulfilling and sustainable."



The drive from one end of the OVEC region to the other is two hours. During the 2022-2023 school year, OVEC staff regularly traveled along this 118-mile route to serve our member school districts and their communities.

New programs increased OVEC's capacity and allowed us to be **intentionally present** in and with our districts. This report shows the reach of our programs and the impact of our staff through pictures, stories, and stats.

Our Head Start program celebrated the grand opening of Pleasure Ridge Park Head Start/Early Head Start, completed renovations for Newburg Early Head Start, and moved to beautiful new facilities in Eminence Independent Schools and Bullitt County's Old Mill Elementary School. OVEC's newly appointed Head Start Director, Dr. Erika Nygard, has a passion for play-based learning that will inspire staff and spur the curiosity of young learners.

Our new Deeper Learning initiative energized educators. Under the leadership of Dr. Carmen Coleman, our Deeper Learning team coached, modeled, and trained educators on engagement strategies to improve students' experiences.

Deeper Learning's addition to our long-standing professional learning programs has given us a capacity unrivaled in our history. Because of the programs described in this report, we hosted conferences and workshops, participated in districts' and schools' professional learning days, delivered on-site coaching, and provided digital resources to a region of more than 9,000 teachers.

Yet another way OVEC can support our districts is through our new federal School-Based Mental Health Services program. Led by Santina Plottner, this project places 12 additional school counselors in 10 OVEC districts to help address the post-pandemic mental health crisis.

My personal vision as OVEC CEO is to make educators' work more fulfilling and sustainable. Our talented team of education experts makes that vision a reality by bringing resources, strategies, and support to educators. I am grateful for our team's dedication and for our member districts' invitation to be present in the transformative work of education.

Staff Directory

Administration & Support

Jason Adkins

Chief Executive Officer

Chrissy Jones

Chief Academic Officer/Deputy
CEO

Mark Elmore

Chief Operations Officer

Neal Anderson

Director of Technology

Samuel McIver

Technology Specialist

Vickie Johnson

Grant Writer

Kasey Wilmsmeyer

Communications Specialist

Renee Spalding

Development Associate

Santina Plottner

Project Director for School-Based
Mental Health Services

Kim Mosser

School Nutrition Analyst

Mark Ryles

District Facilities Consultant

Dennis Horn

Emergency Assistance to Non-
Public Schools Program
Coordinator

Tina Pacey

Executive Assistant/Office
Manager

Jennie Pate

Accounting/Human Resources
Coordinator

Kristen Wilcoxson

Accounting/Human Resources
Specialist

Amber Gibson

HR/Accounting Specialist

Lauren Tindle

HR/Accounting Specialist

Kara Owens

Guest and Staff Services
Coordinator

Exceptional Children Services

Christel Bogar

ECS Director

Mallory Vice

Low Incidence Consultant

Chris Sweigart

ECS Consultant

Tricia Kitzmiller

ECS Consultant

Debbie Mays

ECS Strategies Consultant

Lynn Schwallie

Literacy Consultant

Kricket McClure

ECS Math Consultant

Carrie Stith-Webster

College & Career
Readiness Consultant

Holli Blevins

ARP Transition Grant
Coordinator

Michael Biggers

Administrative
Coordinator

CRRSA

Lisa Smith

Collaborative Response to
Reimagine Schools for All
Coordinator

Amy James

Learning Acceleration
Specialist

Rebecca Martin

Learning Acceleration
Specialist

Jennifer Roederer

Learning Acceleration
Specialist

Molly Allen

Social-Emotional Learning
Specialist

Deeper Learning

Dr. Carmen Coleman

Chief of Transformational
Learning & Leading

Lacey Eckels

Design Specialist

Rachel Albright

Design Specialist

Adam Watson

Design Specialist

District Support Services

Dr. Alexandra Hughes

DEIB Consultant &
Strategist

Susan Robertson

Director of Professional
Learning & Support

Charley Preston

Stop School Violence
Project Coordinator

Head Start

Kim Fithian

Director of Head Start Programs

Mary Fleece

Executive Assistant

Amy Glass

Administrative Assistant

Michelle Breckenridge

Resource Supporter

Gil Jones

Facilities Technician

Kelsey Turley

Program Operations Manager

Tara Truckor

Family Engagement Specialist

Rachael Noyes

Family Engagement Specialist

Tamara Hoover

Family Engagement Specialist

Jasmine Exum

Family Engagement Specialist

Kim Luna

Program Services Coordinator

Debra Sierakowski

Program Services Coordinator

Heather Hood

ERSEA Manager

Patty Wireman

ERSEA Specialist

Carla Robinson

ERSEA Specialist

Deanna New

Data Coordinator

Shronda Powers

ERSEA Clerk

Donna Taylor

Education Manager

Gabrielle Kemper

Behavior Intervention Specialist

Samantha Behmke

Behavior Intervention Specialist

Jude Peckinpaugh

Behavior Intervention Specialist

Rachel Deckard

Behavior Intervention Specialist

Tia Smith

Disabilities Consultant

Cyndi Staples

Disabilities Consultant

Ashley Wild

Disabilities Consultant

Nikki Oliver

Child Development Specialist

Angela Rice

Child Development Specialist

Kim Fogg

Child Development Specialist

Kasey Goss

Child Development Specialist

Jennifer Goodlett

Health & Nutrition Services

Manager

Sarah Adams

Health Specialist

Cindy Monroe

Health Specialist

Erin Mahoney

Health Specialist

Jenny Benner

CCP Program Operations

Coordinator

Elizabeth Kelty

Quality Mentor

Jenny Tyra

Quality Mentor

iLEAD Academy

Alicia Sells

Director of Innovation and Strategic Relations

Jenna Gray

iLEAD Director

John Ashcraft

Engineering Teacher

Molly Sullivan

Leadership Mentor for iLEAD and EIR Grant (Teach Tech KY)

Eric Gray

Computer Science Teacher

Candy Osborne

Math Teacher

Beaumont Rand

English Teacher

Andrea Skaggs

School Nutrition

Procurement

Specialist/iLEAD Academy and Teach Tech KY

Executive Assistant

Board of Directors

Dr. Kelley Ransdell
Superintendent,
Anchorage Ind. Schools



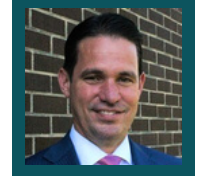
Dr. Jim Masters
Superintendent, Henry
County Schools



Dr. Jesse Bacon
Vice-Chair, Superintendent,
Bullitt County Schools



Dr. Marty Pollio
Superintendent, Jefferson
County Schools



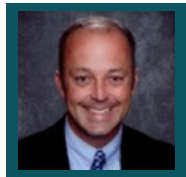
Mr. Casey Jaynes
Superintendent, Carroll
County Schools



Dr. Jason Radford
Superintendent, Oldham
County Schools



Dr. Buddy Berry
Chair, Superintendent,
Eminence Ind. Schools



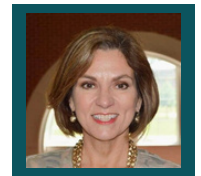
Mr. Reggie Taylor
Superintendent, Owen
County Schools



Mr. Mark Kopp
Superintendent, Franklin
County Schools



Dr. Sally Sugg
Superintendent, Shelby
County Schools



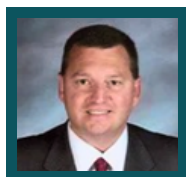
Ms. Sheri Satterly
Superintendent, Frankfort
Ind. Schools



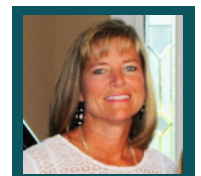
Mr. Chuck Abell
Superintendent, Spencer
County Schools



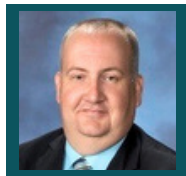
Mr. Chuck Cash
Superintendent, Gallatin
County Schools

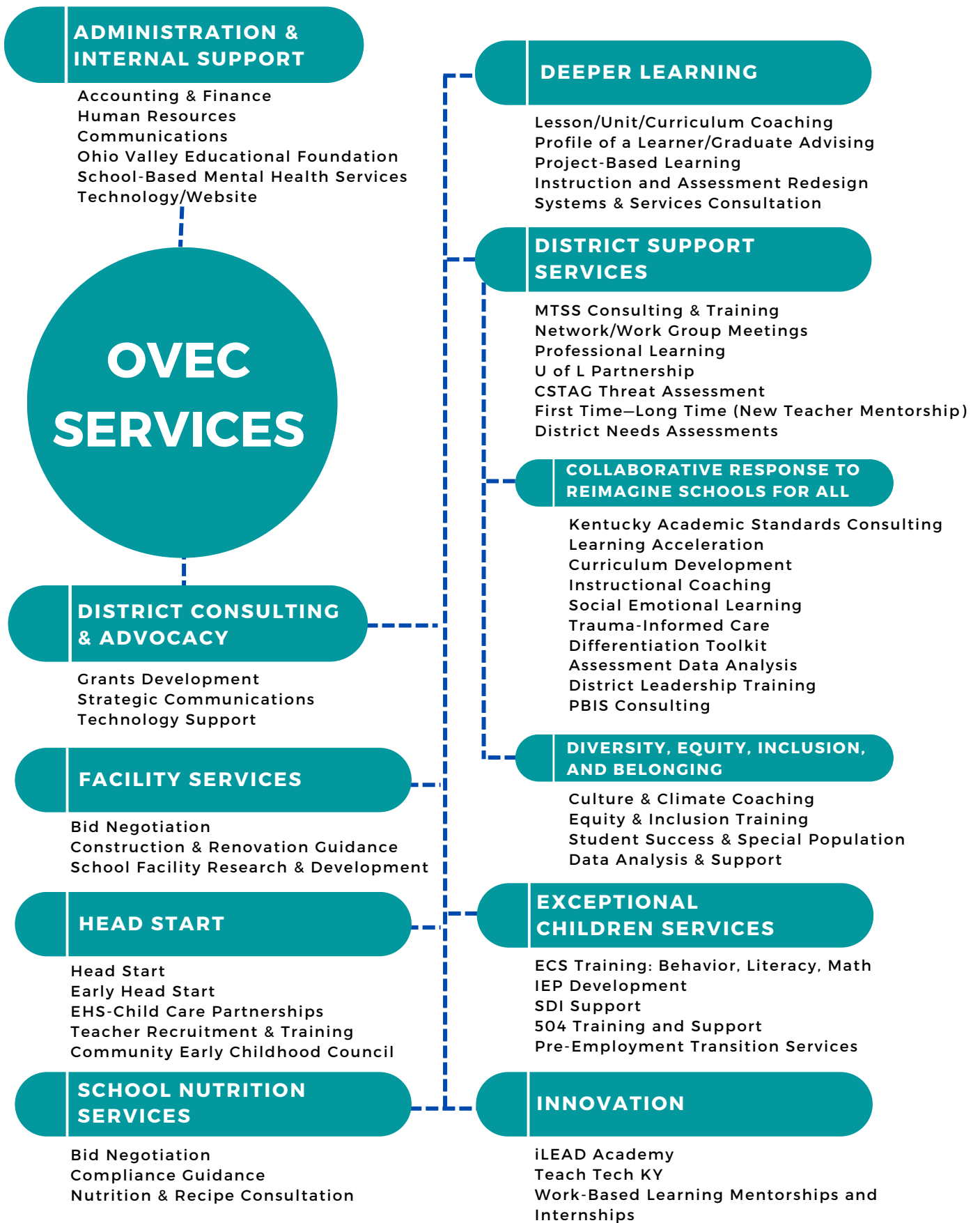


Ms. Jessica Wilcoxson
Superintendent, Trimble
County Schools



Mr. Matt Morgan
Superintendent, Grant
County Schools





OVEC MISSION

Support, lead, and inspire through professional learning, advocacy, and services.

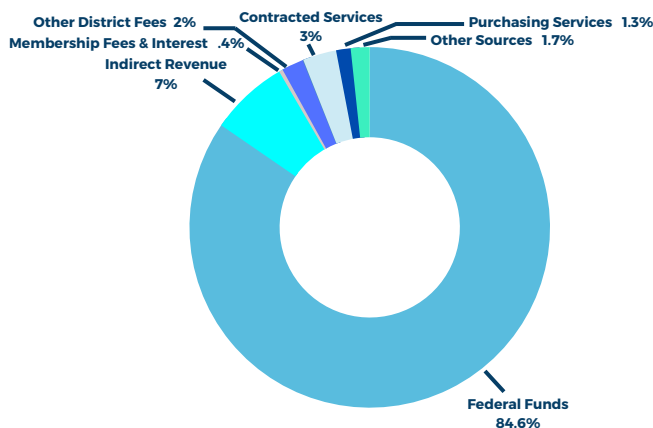
Financial Report 2022-23

Total Agency Budget

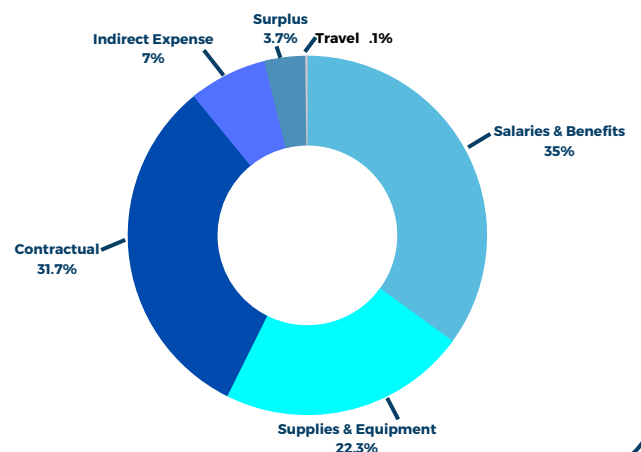
REVENUE	
Federal Funds	\$50,521,380
Indirect Revenue	4,201,608
Membership Fees	204,500
Other District Fees	1,176,184
Contracted Services	1,800,791
Purchasing Services	778,939
Other Sources	1,011,771
Interest	33,850
TOTAL	\$59,729,022

EXPENSES	
Salaries	\$16,812,717
Fringe Benefits	4,100,579
Contractual	18,957,633
Indirect Expense	4,201,608
Supplies	13,265,968
Travel	113,518
Equipment	76,459
Unbudgeted General Fund Surplus	2,202,540
TOTAL	\$59,731,022

Total Agency Income



Total Agency Expenditures



OVEC Is Growing

2022-23 Big Wins

- OVEC is reducing dues by 52%; however, benefits supplied by OVEC to districts have increased by thousands of hours of consultation and support.
- OVEC opened a new Jefferson County Head Start/Early Head Start location in Pleasure Ridge Park and partnered with Angel House to provide EHS—CPP services.
- OVEC is the recipient of a \$5.2 million grant to expand school-based mental health services. The grant will provide 12 schools (10 districts) mental health counselors who will work directly with students.
- OVEC continues to implement a \$4 million grant to improve computer science and computational thinking education in Kentucky. Through Teach Tech KY, dozens of teachers will receive 6 micro-credentials in STEM instruction.
- OVEC is leveraging federal coronavirus recovery funds to reimagine the student experience by adding our new Deeper Learning team. Deeper Learning staff have met with leaders, instructional coaches, and teachers in every OVEC district to help educators design transformational Profiles of a Learner/Graduate, brainstorm unit/lesson plans, model group and project instruction, and increase student stamina, which they term *joyful rigor*.
- New OVEC offices and a large, open-concept training room opened in Middletown in April 2023. The additional facility provides an additional 5,446 square feet of meeting space in a location convenient to our districts.
- \$28,241,850 in new and continuing grants were awarded to OVEC.
- New Head Start/Early Head Start playgrounds were installed with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.
- OVEC Nutrition Services negotiated food purchases for 14 districts, providing more than 3 million breakfasts and 5.3 million lunches to students!
- More than 50 districts across the state, including 7 OVEC districts, received consultation and saved millions in renovation and maintenance services with the help of OVEC Facility Services and its statewide partnerships.
- iLEAD Academy had 19 out of 26 students graduate with associate degrees in 2023. Since its inception, 94 out of 123 graduates have achieved associate degrees.
- This year, 41 engineering and computer science students at iLEAD Academy participated in the new Future 42 Mentorship program, including 6 paid senior internships.
- Exceptional Children Services provided 669 total hours of Professional Learning, 419 hours of ECS-specific instructional coaching and follow-up support, 214 hours of district/school consultation, and 504 hands-on developmental activities to help students grow.
- District Support Services served all 15 districts by providing more than 5,000 hours of Professional Learning training; Multi-Tiered Systems of Support consultation/systems design; and Kentucky Academic Standards, social emotional learning, trauma-informed care, and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging consultation.
- OVEC Technology & Communications staff completed a website upgrade with numerous new helps, contact information, forms, photos, and more.

District Support Services 2022-23

All About Student Success

System Development Via MTSS Collaborations

Jackson* is a 7th-grade student in an OVEC district. He has lots of friends and enjoys a variety of sports. He tries hard at school but is still struggling with math. In addition, he has shared some challenges he has at home with adults at his school. They are making sure Jackson has tools to succeed—everything from extra check-ins with school staff, to additional help understanding math concepts, to encouragement to participate in extracurricular activities. Jackson finished the year mastering grade-level standards and counts it as one of the best school years of his life.

Jackson's story may have been different just a couple of years before this. In 2019, OVEC District Support Services (DSS) worked with this district to conduct a needs assessment and implement a 5-year improvement plan focusing on a system under the umbrella of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). DSS worked tirelessly to help leaders at the district level understand the pieces they were missing in individualized student support. DSS collaborated with district leaders on how to view MTSS as a framework to make sure students' academic and social-emotional needs are met. From there, DSS led district administrators to team with Directors of Special Education, principals, and other key educators to learn best practices to reach every student. The work has paid off—the staff in this district has become much more aware of small-group instruction, behavioral plans, and discipline and engagement methods that lead students to feel more connected and confident.

This past year, DSS leaders Chrissy Jones, OVEC Chief Academic Officer, and Susan Robertson, Director of Professional Learning & Support, have consulted about half of OVEC districts through starting or continuing MTSS Teams. Spencer County is one of those districts. Amanda Butler, Chief Academic Officer at Spencer County Schools, says, "OVEC's guidance when forming our districtwide MTSS team and plan has been instrumental to our success. OVEC has been there since the beginning ensuring we are doing it the Spencer County way. With their help in our district approach, we have seen our school teams grow into effective and efficient MTSS teams that are now able to focus on the whole child for every Spencer County student."



Leading MTSS collaborations is just one of a dozen services offered by OVEC DSS. Districts also look to DSS for help with teacher recruitment, new-teacher encouragement, specialized training (Cognitive Coaching, PBIS, MTSS, Adaptive Schools, and more), curriculum development, data analysis, and more.

Network and Role Group Communities

One of the biggest supports provided to districts is the coordination of Network and Role Groups. These communities of like-minded educators are significant forums for sharing information, ideas, and compliance/legislation updates. DSS oversees 17 Network and Role Groups, including groups for principals, instructional coaches, English Language Learner instructors, and more. DSS has been gearing up for new Networks to begin in August 2023: Library/Media Specialists.



CRRSA and DEIB Work

This year, DSS staff have been busy expanding services in Kentucky Academic Standards and curriculum/learning acceleration consultation through Collaborative Response to Reimagine Schools for All (CRRSA) work, as well as growing the region's capacity for reaching every population with more opportunity and access through Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) training and consultation. (Please see CRRSA and DEIB articles for more details.)

First Time—Long Time

DSS helps districts with teacher recruitment. For a long time, DSS staff have served as a liaison to the University of Louisville School of Education, both as coursework advisors and as recruiters for OVEC districts. This year, DSS used new grant dollars to create a new program called First Time—Long Time to provide mentorship and encouragement to new teachers in their first 3 years and teachers seeking additional certification in a high-need area. The program, aimed at teacher support and retention, provides monthly meetings, weekly office hours, and a summer conference to support teachers, as well as tuition reimbursement. In 2022-23, more than 45 teachers participated in the program.



Network & Role Work Groups

- Board of Directors (Superintendents)
- Ohio Valley Supervisors Organization (OVSO)
- Personnel Directors
- Director of Special Education (DoSE)
- School Nutrition Directors
- English Learners Work Group
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Coordinators
- School Psychologists (School Psychs)
- Behavior Network
- Speech Language Pathologists (SLP)
- Occupational Therapists and Physical Therapists (OT/PT)
- Preschool Coordinators/Directors
- Ohio Valley Organization of Principals (OVOP)
- Ohio Valley Instructional Coaches Network (OVICN)
- School Counselor Network (SCN)
- 504 Coordinators
- Gifted & Talented Network (GTN)
- School-Based Mental Health (SBMH)
- Health and Physical Education Cadre
- NEW in '23-'24! Library/Media Specialists Network

CRRSA 2022-23

Bringing Joy Back to the Classroom

Did the British soldiers cause the Boston Massacre—or was it self-defense? How can a fifth-grade teacher in Kentucky teach kids how to find and interpret sources about this battle? And does how a teacher presents material matter to the class? Did the child on the playground call the other child a name? What does an administrator do when the other child reacts by cussing or pushing?



And how does a teacher coach a classroom of 10-year-old children to interact in positive ways when all of them feel behind? Coming out of pandemic lockdowns, teachers and students have faced many challenges. Students are struggling—self-regulating emotions and catching up on academic targets are just a few areas that need growth.

Teachers and administrators are trying to meet massive academic, social, and emotional needs of their students. The circumstances of the past couple of school years have sucked joy out of the classroom, but OVEC has found a way to reignite delight.



When the federal government announced Collaborative Response to Reimagine Schools for All (CRRSA) stimulus funds to give schools extra help, OVEC leveraged the opportunity to provide multifaceted, comprehensive support. Lisa Smith, CRRSA Coordinator, cast a clear vision for 2022-23: CRRSA staff would help schools develop quality curriculum around Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS), while also keeping in mind that students and teachers are much more than test scores.



“When we go into a school, we start by helping staff think about the child in the chair. What do they want for their students—not just in 40 weeks of lessons, but 40 years down the road? Of course, we all want to see academic progress. But every teacher I’ve met with wants more than that for their students. They want to see them develop qualities like responsibility, compassion, confidence, and purpose. Our job at OVEC is to help schools find a way to develop high-interest curriculum, create an encouraging classroom environment, and provide academic and emotional support for students that helps them get there,” shares Smith.

CRRSA funds underwrite three Learning Acceleration Specialists (LASs) and two Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Specialists, available to consult and train any district or school requesting help. This year, LASs have helped teachers in all 15 OVEC districts create meaningful lessons, establish a better balance with technology use, and find ways to bring fun back into the classroom through collaboration and engagement. Their three goals are to help teachers lead students to 1) acquire new learning (acquisition); 2) experience a meaningful connection with the learning (a-ha moments); and 3) apply learning to better their lives or academic understanding (transfer). LASs work hard to accelerate learning in schools and rebuild academic interest and capacity in students.

Additionally, SEL Specialists have trained school staff how to connect with students to help them rebound from the isolation and anxiety of the pandemic. Instead of offering a new program to add on, they teach educators how to integrate restorative and relationship-building practices into what they're already doing. And schools have seen a difference! Teachers report hearing kids speak more affirmatively about themselves and with others after employing these new techniques. This year, SEL has also provided a vodcast on YouTube for convenient training on social and emotional recovery techniques.

LASs and SEL Specialists often team with Deeper Learning and MTSS consultants, as well, providing an opportunity for schools to receive comprehensive guidance. Amy James, LAS, explains, "Our CRRSA team works together to interweave our support to reach the whole child. We want kids to love learning and teachers to remember why they love teaching. That's why we do what we do."



DEIB 2022-23

Looking Beyond the Moment

One OVEC school was struggling with more truancy than usual. Dr. Alexandra Hughes, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) Consultant & Strategist, met with school staff about an unrelated training and they mentioned their concern in passing. Dr. Hughes helped the school use DEIB analysis tools to get to the root of the problem. The school realized their large ELL population may have a different mindset about attendance, and staff began to address needs and communicate expectations. By the end of the school year, attendance and morale were on the upswing.

“DEIB is often misunderstood. It is not about promoting one or two groups within a school at the expense of others. The goal of DEIB is to give each student and population opportunities and access—and, I would add, understanding—that guarantee future success,” explains Hughes. “My job is to help schools discover who their students are and what supports, engagement techniques, and even teaching styles will help them thrive.”



Hughes helps schools create thoughtful and purposeful classroom experiences, tying these as much as possible to their unique populations. “Each district’s location, culture, and climate are different. This is true everywhere, but in Kentucky, the variety is especially beautiful. In OVEC, we have rural districts with farming families. Their needs are important, but very different from our inner-city students. In our classrooms, we can showcase each group’s strengths,” Hughes explains. Hughes believes that educators can take big and small pauses to improve their effectiveness. A big pause might include taking time to look at basic data analytics in their classroom.

The purpose of data is not to stereotype and label kids; it can be used to help schools proactively provide support when poverty, absenteeism, hunger, health, transportation, or other roadblocks keep kids from day-to-day school routines. Small pauses happen throughout the day when students struggle with academics or behavior. Hughes trains teachers to consider the whole child, not just the single moment of frustration.

“If we can learn to look beyond the moment and consider what else might be going on in this child’s life, what he or she is trying to tell us about anxiety or chaos at home, we can shape our response carefully. I believe our pause leads to positive interactions with each child. Our pause can transform the school experience for generations. That’s what equity and belonging are all about—giving each student a foundation and footing to take the next step in his or her growth. School can be an important circle of belonging. Every time we use a lesson plan or a communication with a student to draw them into relationships rather than pushing them away from school, we are benefitting students and become architects of their success,” Hughes says.

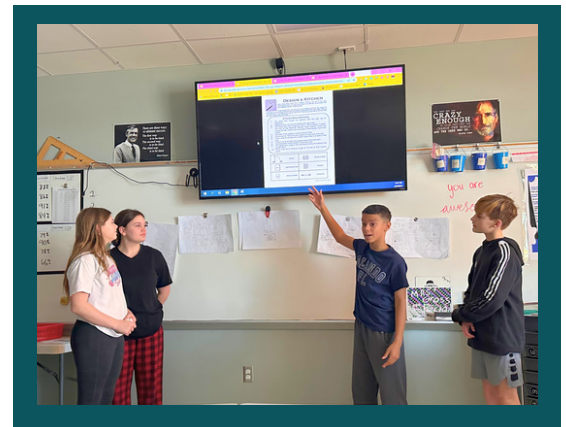
Deeper Learning 2022-23

Learning That Lasts

In Michelle Gross's seventh-grade math class in Spencer County, students design their future homes. They learn to calculate the square footage, compare real estate in the area, shop for mortgages with various down payments and interest rates, create a scale model, and calculate income needed to afford various house payments. This comprehensive unit, called the Dream House Project, teaches kids basic calculation, proportional reasoning, information gathering, decision-making, and goal-setting skills. Additionally, students present their projects to architects, contractors, teachers, and fellow students, increasing their practice at public presentation and interpersonal connection. The Dream House Project is just one way Gross is transforming the learning experience for students.



Gross believes if students see how math is relevant, they will be more excited about what they are learning. She works hard to connect kids to the many real-life ways math builds their success, even if students do not want to pursue a math-focused career. Finding a hands-on way to present math standards takes effort, Gross says, but it has significantly increased student engagement and recall.



“This is what Deeper Learning is all about—helping students look forward to being in class and leaving a lasting imprint long after. We want to teach students to delight and persevere in their learning, and to instill curiosity. We want to offer students the chance to be creative and find a sense of community. Ultimately, we want to equip them with the most important knowledge and skills needed for success in today’s world,” says Carmen Coleman, OVEC’s Chief of Transformational Learning and Leading.

Coleman explains that one goal of Deeper Learning is to improve academic outcomes. Another focus is to help students develop durable (also called soft) skills, aptitudes like problem solving, adaptability, working with others, and critical thinking.

“The school model that so many still follow was designed for the Industrial Age. That was a very different time. School served a different purpose. We have to find new ways to connect academic content with what drives students today,” Coleman continues.

“I like to explain Deeper Learning as the learning you remember; it’s the difference between taking the written permit test and actually driving the course for the license. The permit test ensures the foundational knowledge necessary for driving. However, before we ever put a new driver behind the wheel, we want to see that they can apply what they’ve learned to safely operate a vehicle. Deeper learning asks students to apply and grow their knowledge in the real world—invent new systems, design new products, serve others, and build a life they enjoy. We want to see learning that lasts in Kentucky classrooms.”

OVEC Deeper Learning Design Specialists focus their work around one driving question: How might we design learning experiences that are meaningful, relevant, and inspiring for all students? They assist districts with developing graduate profiles as a north star for deeper learning goal setting—and systems to bring those to life. They also help districts design meaningful performance assessments and find day-to-day shifts that create intentional, involved learning experiences that make academic standards come alive.

This past year, Deeper Learning staff provided support to district administrators, instructional coaches, and/or teachers in all 15 OVEC counties. They are especially excited about the launch of their new network, Teacher Navigators, as an opportunity for forward-thinking teachers to connect, share, learn, and grow together.



School-Based Mental Health Grant 2022-23

Time for Joy: Counselors Will Help Students Rebound

In one area middle school classroom, a teacher caught a student passing another kid a bag of pot to sell. In another OVEC elementary school, a 6-year-old was suspended for carrying a knife onto the playground and threatening to kill students and teachers. Since returning to the classroom from the pandemic, teachers and administrators have noticed a drastic increase in the severity and frequency of verbal and physical aggression, anxiety, depression, and other mental health concerns—and at much younger ages. Administrators are having to make daily decisions about student suicide risks, weapons, drugs, and impulsive behavior of all kinds.

Santina Plottner, Project Director for School-Based Mental Health Services at OVEC, explains, “Being out of the classroom ended up impacting kids in ways we didn’t think about. They didn’t develop the self-regulation that comes from being in a structured, cooperative group setting. Their ability to problem-solve, wait for help, develop endurance, and show patience to themselves and others—these have all been affected. Their stress is coming out in their behavior.”



Plottner explains that students need extra help to develop social and emotional awareness and coping skills. And staff need extra layers of support. Fortunately for the OVEC region, in the 2023-24 school year, schools will be able to receive that help.

OVEC is the recipient of \$5.2 million to expand school-based mental health services to 12 schools in 10 districts. The OVEC grant is part of a total of \$40 million of federal funding coming to Kentucky, which was pursued by Lieutenant Governor Jacqueline Coleman as part of her student mental health initiative.

The grant will provide school-based mental health counselors who will focus on being in classrooms, working directly with students. They will present curriculum, build relationships, and conduct team building that will help students feel more fulfilled and able to connect with peers, problem solve, and make decisions.

Plottner has spent 2023 hiring and training the new counselors and looks forward to seeing the benefit of their presence in area classrooms right away. “This grant will provide the kids an opportunity to grow. We are going to reintroduce joy,” she says.

School Nutrition Services 2022-23

Can I Have Your Kiwi?

“Hey, can I have your kiwi?” When a student in Trimble County tasted kiwi for the first time this school year, he liked it so much, he walked around asking other kids to share theirs. “His plate was full of kiwi peels,” laughs Toni Jackson, Trimble County School Nutrition Director. “Many of our students had never tried kiwi before, and seeing their reactions was priceless!” Jackson’s goal this year was to help kids experience all kinds of foods and enjoy school more.



She went above and beyond to give kids a taste of local game. “A lot of our families were posting on social media during hunting season. I wanted to connect what we eat at school with what they value at home,” Jackson explains. She found a USDA-approved venison processor and worked with staff to prepare a savory vegetable-venison stew. The meal, complete with cheesy bread, real-fruit frozen strawberry slush, and wavy-cut carrots with ranch dip, won the statewide KDE School and Community Nutrition Tray of the Month Award for the month of December. This was one out of the six Tray of the Month Awards that OVEC schools won during the 9-month school year.



Jackson worked with the Trimble and Henry County Cattlemen’s Associations to host a grilled burger day featuring local beef. To celebrate the end of the school year, volunteers grilled 1,200 burgers. She also arranged a foodtruck field day for one of Trimble’s two elementary schools. Kentucky Proud® farm Brenneman and Bucks provided the hot dogs and staff prepared the fruit, vegetable, and beverage portion of the meal.



Jackson strategized to reduce tardiness and absenteeism on Mondays by providing surprises and favorite offerings that day, such as hot chocolate. She also asked for input from the high schoolers, who suggested heartier breakfasts and spicier lunch options. The cafeteria ended up offering a chicken leg bar with 9 sauces with varying degrees of heat, as well as buffalo mac-n-cheese, which some families have told her has become an at-home favorite. By the end of the year, students were posting lunches on the high school’s TikTok page.

“I guess we’ve won them over,” remarks Jackson. “We do the most basic function of feeding, but we do more than that—we nurture students. Kids carry more than we know. Their teachers change every year. The administrators only interact with kids when they are really good or really bad. But the lunch lady is the constant that each kid needs—our staff will see the students’ faces every day of their school experience. We can’t underestimate our role. We are making a difference.”



Trimble is just one of 14 OVEC districts that provided more than 8.3 million delicious, nutritious, and creatively curated breakfasts and lunches to students this year*. Thanks to the hard work of all school nutrition directors, students enjoyed more Kentucky Proud® products on their plates and a fantastic new offering—charcuterie boxes filled with fruit, veggies, and protein.

The OVEC School Nutrition Analysis Program assists OVEC districts in many impactful ways. Besides negotiating food-purchasing bids that save districts hundreds of thousands of dollars, they also lead the way in helping schools adhere to federal and state nutrition guidelines; securing free meals for students through the Community Eligibility Program (a majority of OVEC schools qualify for this benefit); completing federal audits; training food service administrators; providing an online catalog of more than 7,000 local recipes; posting nutrition analysis and allergen information on OVEC bid items and local recipes; and providing guidance for everything that touches school kitchens, from sanitation to refrigeration to ice cream! The annual workshop and monthly meetings for School Nutrition Directors are a treasured time of sharing ideas, trying new products, sharing ideas, and going over updates to regulations. School nutrition employees continue to be an integral part of OVEC students’ experience.

“When kids look forward to meals at school and have full bellies, they can concentrate in the classroom. Providing nutrition is one of our goals, but building confident learners is the ultimate goal of everything we do at OVEC, including lunch!” says Mosser.

*Districts participating in OVEC Nutrition Services provided just over 3 million breakfasts and more than 5.3 million lunches. Jefferson County does not participate in OVEC School Nutrition Services.



Facility Services 2022-23

This year, it is not just students who are learning to use drones in their work. Schools are now using drones, LIDAR scanning, and other technology to create safer environments on campus. OVEC Facility Services procured services for 3D mapping, which use navigation & positioning software to provide local first responders with up-to-date, state-of-the-art interior digital plans and exterior campus plans. After mapping, when first responders need to help a school in an emergency situation, they can use a handheld tablet to navigate school properties and guide them to shutoff valves, hydrants, egresses, and more. The cloud- and location-based information can also be utilized for maintenance and long-range facility planning.

OVEC Facility Services, through its partnership with Kentucky Purchasing Cooperative, continues to provide advocacy and guidance regarding school facility legislation and regulation, helping to save schools and districts millions in renovation, construction, and maintenance fees through best value procurement. Facility Services procured bids for Kee roofing systems, interior bleachers, Modified Bitumen roof systems, Sprayed Urethane Roof Systems, Roof Systems and Services, and Guaranteed Energy Savings Contracts (GESCs).

Facility Services are also working to procure an affordable nano-technology water treatment system to remove harmful forever chemicals (PFAS) from drinking water. They have continued promoting EPA indoor air quality Tools for Schools and air-cleaning protocols regarding best practices for humidity levels and air quality.

More than 50 school districts and public entities outside OVEC were also served by District Facilities Consultant Mark Ryles in a cooperative arrangement. A significant win, Ryles assisted Fleming County Schools to receive a grant award through the School Facilities Construction Commission for \$9.5 million to get out of unsafe facilities and construct a new school.

Facility Services staff and associated vendors assisted seven OVEC districts through planning and completing renovation and construction projects—Anchorage, Bullitt, Gallatin, Grant, Henry, Jefferson, and Shelby. The photo below shows Roof Systems and Services procured by OVEC Facility Services for a roofing renovation project at New Castle Elementary (Henry County Schools).

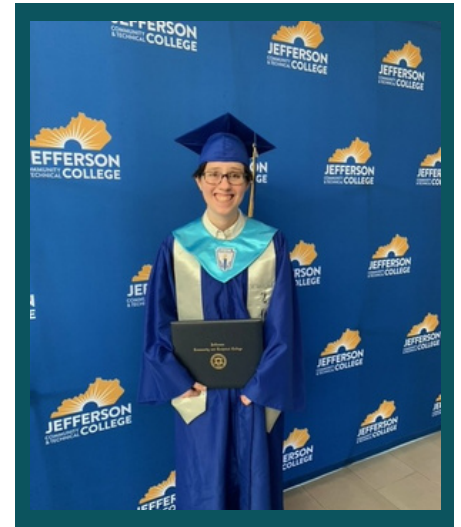


iLEAD Academy 2022-23

iLEAD Helps Students Pave New Paths

Four years ago, Isabella “Bo” Sileo, a quiet eighth grader from Henry County, finished signing her paperwork to start high school at iLEAD. She was only 13 years old. She didn’t know what she wanted to do for an adult career. She didn’t know what she was good at. But she was sort of interested in computers, so she decided to give iLEAD a try.

Just a few weeks ago, Sileo presented her capstone project in Computer Programming to the Kentucky Computer Science Teachers Association. She shared all she accomplished in her paid internship at Nucor, a steel production facility in Gallatin County.



“I learned so much more than basic academics at iLEAD. I learned about myself. I learned what I was good at and that I could meet challenges I never thought I could. I also learned what real-world jobs were out there, so I could make an informed decision about my career path. I made friends and experienced the power of mentorship. I earned my associates degree and a full-tuition scholarship to Thomas Moore University in addition to the salary I bring home from my internship. My high school experience has paved the way for a life I will love. I am so grateful.” Sileo said about her iLEAD experience.

iLEAD is Kentucky’s first regional public high school. It serves students from Carroll, Gallatin, Henry, Owen, and Trimble Counties. It focuses on preparing students for high-demand, high-wage jobs in fields like technology (computer programming and robotics), engineering, and the medical field. With success stories like 94 out of 123 graduates earning associates degrees the past eight years, students receiving generous scholarships, and competitive job offers for graduates, iLEAD has always prepared students well. But this year, mentorships have catapulted student engagement.



iLEAD has been partnering with corporate leaders through the INTERalliance of Greater Cincinnati for several years. Some of America's largest employers, such as Procter & Gamble, Kroger, and 5/3 Bank, provide iLEAD workforce development guidance. This year, a new work-based learning (WBL) partnership with Future 42 offered 41 students engineering and computer science mentorships. Future 42 is composed of manufacturers along the U.S. Highway 42 corridor, industries who need a skilled workforce of engineers, equipment technicians, programmers, IT specialists, scientists, designers, and more. To keep their employee pipeline cutting-edge, they joined together to provide students hands-on experience and help them discover their career interests and strengths.

For Kentucky students and industries, iLEAD's path leads to success. OVEC's Director of Innovation and Strategic Relations Alicia Sells explains, "No matter a student's background, we want to show them their opportunities are limitless. A hands-on electrical engineering job, working with patients in healthcare, analyzing data or programming, or designing brand new products—all of these exciting career paths are wide open in Kentucky, and students can get more than halfway there during high school. At iLEAD, we show them how. And we model for other schools how to configure STEM and computer science pathways in high school. As we increase career exploration and accelerate degree completion in our high schools, we transform students' futures," Sells explains.



Teach Tech KY 2022-23

Endless Possibilities

A mini-drone takes off and flies around Aleshia Edwards' classroom in Bullitt County. Edwards helps students explore ways drones are used in sports, such as helping to calculate and plan football plays. From there, students practice subtracting positives, adding negatives, multiplying integers, and combining like terms.

Presenting these concepts with drones and sports helped students understand how integers and algorithms related. They enjoyed learning how to program the drones and became more at ease with math. One student who never talks—and I mean never—asked me one day if we were going to use drones. The engagement in our math lessons has skyrocketed as a result of techniques I learned through my Teach Tech micro-credentials,” says Edwards.

Teach Tech KY is a \$4 million initiative funded with an Education Innovation Research (EIR) grant from the U.S. Department of Education (USED). It is administered by OVEC and evaluated by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) and BloomBoard. The program provides math teachers with six self-paced online micro-credential units focused on teaching students computer science and computational thinking, skills that make students better problem solvers and critical thinkers. Teachers also have the benefit of group coaching, curriculum consulting, a stipend to host a family engagement night to introduce computer science and computational thinking concepts and careers to parents, a \$4,050 award for completing the program, and the opportunity to use that award to complete a rank change.

Computer science and information/data manager positions are high-wage, high-demand jobs. Yet, teacher preparation programs in Kentucky did not graduate a single new teacher qualified to teach primarily computer science in the past four years. These are the issues this grant is designed to address.

The benefit of Teach Tech KY is immeasurable—from students' personal career goals to the state economy. “If we want to develop a prepared workforce for tomorrow, we must help our students become more confident and persistent problem solvers today,” says



Alicia Sells, OVEC Director of Innovation and Strategic Relations and administrator of the EIR grant. “Some people say teaching computational thinking and direct technology skills, such as computer programming, is impossible to do in public schools. Not only is it possible, but it is taking root. Yes, math is a hard lift. But our Teach Tech graduates have a passion for helping our students see all they can accomplish. Together, we are improving math and tech preparation for students.”

Exceptional Children Services 2022-23

Help for the Journey

Imagine leaving a job in a medical office because you feel called to help exceptional students thrive. You complete the challenge of qualifying for Option 6 (an alternate teacher certification pathway), interviewing, and securing your first job in a school. In the classroom your first day, students come with worries as big as yours, joys, disappointments, and needs. What you need most is a mentor to talk with—someone to ask about everything from IEPs and group projects, to behavior techniques and instructional strategies. This year, first-year fears were alleviated by the support of OVEC’s Exceptional Children Services (ECS) staff. ECS buoyed new special education teachers by providing a series of coaching sessions on a variety of topics. Teachers could attend online live, but sessions were also recorded and made available for professional learning credit. The sessions have gone a long way to give new teachers confidence in managing their classrooms.

“I have been working with a coach from OVEC. It is wonderful to know that people are willing to go the extra mile to help me be good at what I do. Then I can give my students the best foundation,” said new teacher Ruby McCoy.

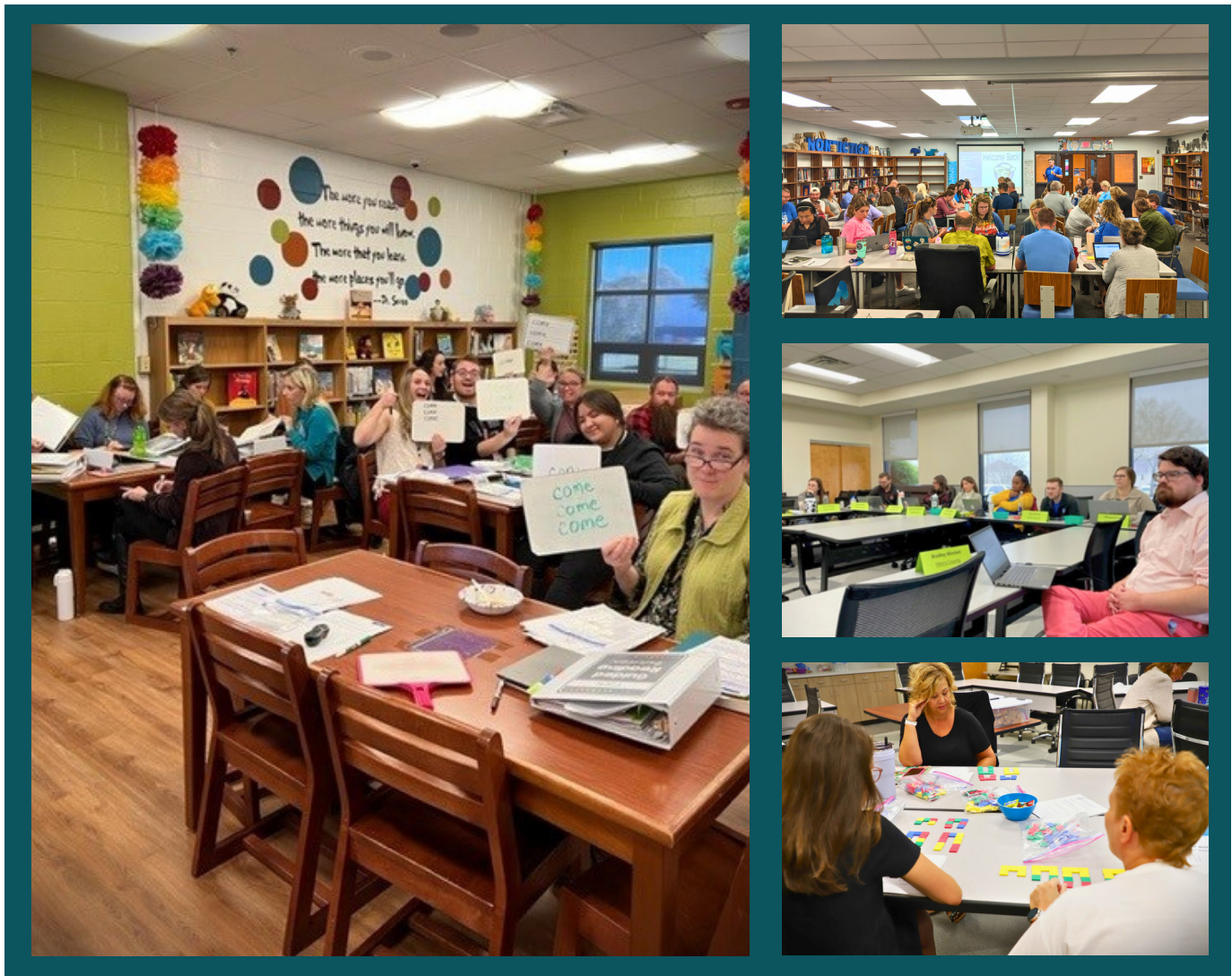


In addition to coaching new teachers, ECS staff continued their work of consulting with districts and schools. In Grant County, what began as a co-teaching training for one elementary school’s teachers blossomed into a full collaboration of support, with all ECS staff having the opportunity to provide consulting and follow-up help. The initial invitation was made to Chris Sweigart, behavior consultant, and Debbie Mays, who started with co-teaching training, observing their classrooms, and customizing Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) for their context. Debbie asked new staff member Tricia Kitzmiller to help with SDI and add more co-teaching consulting. Soon, Lynn Schwallie, Literacy Consultant; Cricket McClure, Math Consultant; and Mallory Vice, Low Incidence Consultant, jumped in to provide consultations and coaching with reading and math strategies and guidance on moderate-to-severe (MSD) and autism instructional strategies. Sweigart consulted with the district on student behavior, partnering with the district Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and compliance coordinator on a safety plan and proactive strategies for unsafe behaviors.

The next step for Grant County's upcoming school year is for Schwallie and the school instructional coach to train special education teachers on a new systematic and multi-sensory phonics program from the University of Florida Literacy Institute.

"The teachers in Grant County are amazing. They want to intentionally reach each student, but also understand that group work is a great way to advance all the students. Our staff and their staff worked together to find ways to reduce behavior concerns and accelerate student progress. There has been improvement all around, and I think OVEC's presence as an extra layer of support has been key. I'm so grateful that we can be there for any district who calls on us," explains Schwallie.

Grant County is just one of all 15 OVEC districts ECS Consultants served in some way this past school year.



Pre-Employment Transition Services 2022-23

How Do You Make an Ice Cream Float?

Imagine tasting an ice cream float for the first time in high school. You get to decide what flavor of ice cream and scoop it yourself, drizzle bubbly soda over it, then take a sip. When Kaylynn sipped her float—the first in her life—she told Carrie Stith-Webster, ECS College & Career Readiness Consultant, “This was the best day of my whole school year!”



Stith-Webster provides hands-on activities like making a float to students who qualify for Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) in five OVEC districts. The fun projects in the classroom help students develop job skills such as decision-making, listening, and following directions. Some of this year’s activities were making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, changing a light bulb, and playing interactive games. Stith-Webster also creates opportunities for students to teach their peers how to do something they are good at, building confidence and public speaking practice.

The goal of OVEC’s Pre-ETS, funded by the Kentucky Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, is to prepare students for gainful employment and/or continuing education activities after high school, which lead to employment. Pre-ETS uses a four-year curriculum that addresses the following areas:



- 1) Self-advocacy-Students learn to communicate about their disability and needs.
- 2) Job exploration-Students take interest inventories, visit with community members, and practice skills to identify what they might like to do for a career.
- 3) Counseling for post-secondary options-Students learn about possible job or volunteering opportunities, vocational schools, post-secondary schools (three colleges in Kentucky now have certifications for students with developmental disabilities), or post-high-school job training, such as the Carl Perkins Center.
- 4) Workplace readiness training-Students learn independent living skills such as financial literacy and hygiene routines, social skills, and self-awareness and professional practices.
- 5) Work-based learning experiences-Students participate in short- or long-term assignments or mentorships that help them develop skills and confidence.

Stith-Webster provides as many varied experiences as she can to meet these five targets—from Lite Brite® art to tying a tie. And, if you ask Kaylynn, she’s really thankful for the growth, development, and joy Pre-ETS brings!

Head Start 2022-23

Head Start Is Heart Work

Multiple challenges did not stop Amy Thornton from realizing the goal she set in 2019 when her older child was enrolled in Head Start (HS). With the support and advocacy of her family's HS community, her perseverance paid off in May 2023 when she received her bachelor's degree and walked across the stage as a first-generation college graduate.



When HS opened its doors in Pleasure Ridge Park (PRP) early in the school year, one of the moms shared that it was her goal to purchase a home. No one could have dreamed it would happen within the school year. But Lisa Sherrard, PRP Family Advocate, worked endlessly to help this mom secure resources, lenders, and realtors, and the mom achieved her dream of homeownership!



Sherrard attended this special moment and says, "Head Start is not just about educating young children. It is about the bigger picture of family support."

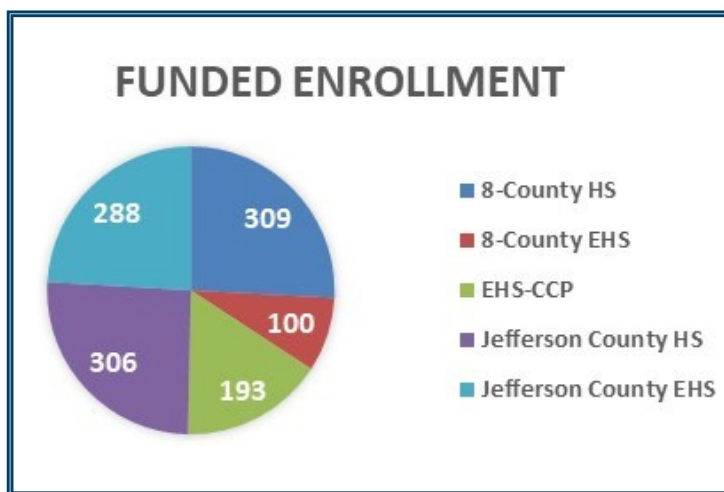
These are just two of many HS success stories this year. Students and families were exposed to authors, reading readiness practice, cooperation and communication coaching, dental and other hygiene skills, nutrition mentoring, and nurturing staff. Many HS/EHS sites also received new playground equipment for students to develop physical strength and practice gross motor skills. These opportunities truly transform lives and the educational experience for generations.

Although we said goodbye to the multitalented Kim Fithian, who faithfully served and led HS for 25 years and retired at the end of FY '22-23, OVEC Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS) is positioned to continue to grow and thrive with dedicated leaders and enthusiastic Family Advocates.

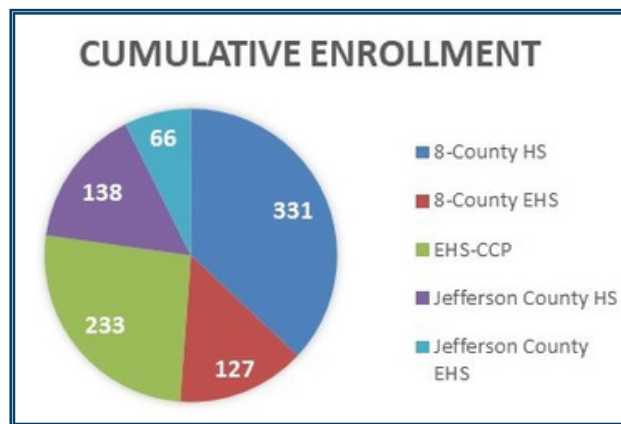


OVEC HS/EHS is our original Head Start grant which serves 8 counties: Bullitt, Gallatin, Henry, Oldham, Owen, Shelby, Spencer and Trimble. The annual grant for the 8-County OVEC Head Start/Early Head Start is \$5,666,634. During the 2014-15 school year, OVEC Head Start was chosen as one of the four Kentucky Early Head Start–Child Care Partnership (EHS–CCP) grant recipients. The annual grant for EHS-CCP is \$3,644,669. Two components of that grant are to focus on school readiness for children ages 0 to 3 and improve quality in the childcare facilities with whom we have chosen to work. We currently have childcare partners in Bullitt, Franklin, Jefferson, and Owen counties. We started a new Early Head Start–Child Care Partnership partner in October 2022 with Angel House, located at 9216 Blue Lick Road, Louisville, KY 40229.

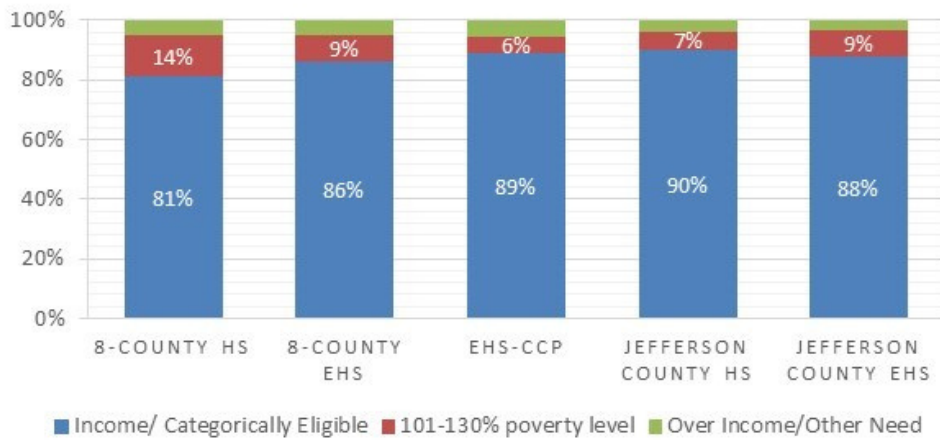
In September 2019, the Office of Head Start (OHS) notified the Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative (OVEC) of a grant to serve 594 children in Jefferson County through Head Start and Early Head Start programs. The annual grant for Jefferson County Head Start/Early Head Start is \$10,611,741. In addition, OVEC received \$7,562,540 in one-time start-up funding to provide classroom furniture and supplies and to support facility renovations at several sites.



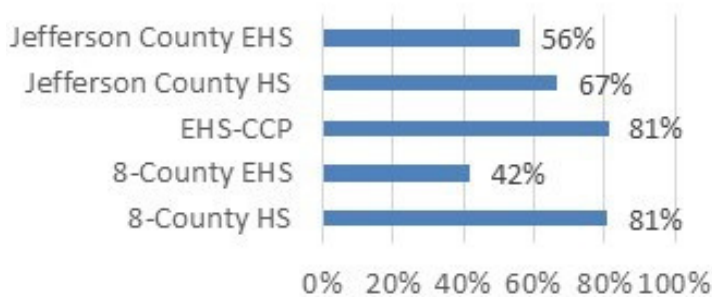
PRP Head Start/Early Head Start opened in October 2022. A grand opening was held on October 24, 2022. Guests included Representative Josie Raymond, Robbin Morrison Taylor, Mayor Bill Dieruf, and Craig Greenberg. Guests received tours of the building and met with some of the students. This site, located at 7304 Dixie Highway is home to 2 Head Start classrooms and 4 Early Head Start classrooms that are fully furnished by brand new toys and furniture from Lakeshore Learning Company. We are so excited to welcome children and families from the PRP neighborhood in Jefferson County!



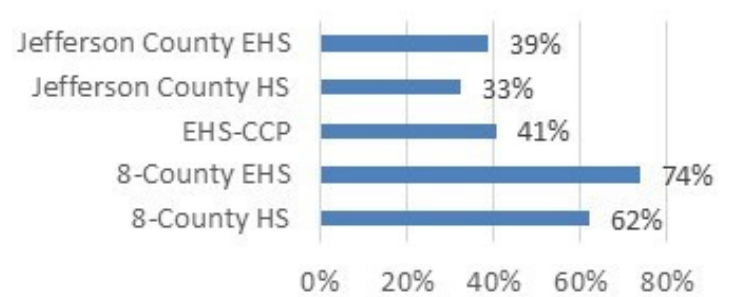
ENROLLMENT ELIGIBILITY



Medical Exams Completed

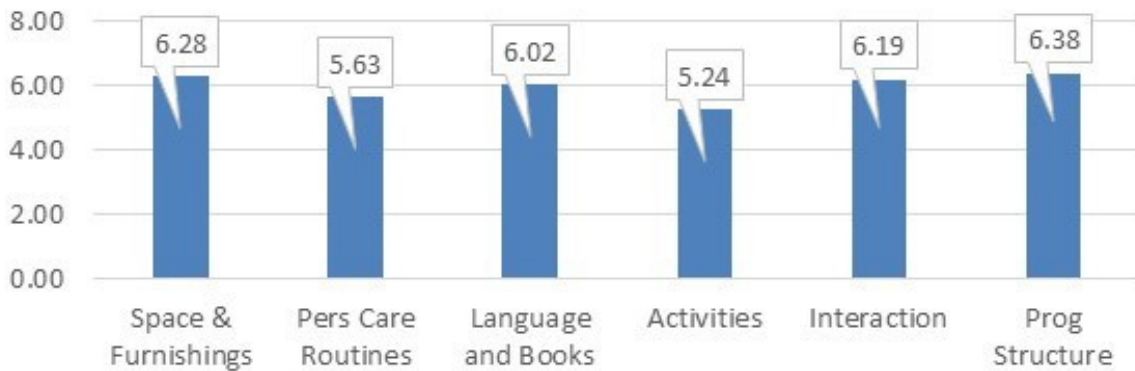


Dental Exams Completed



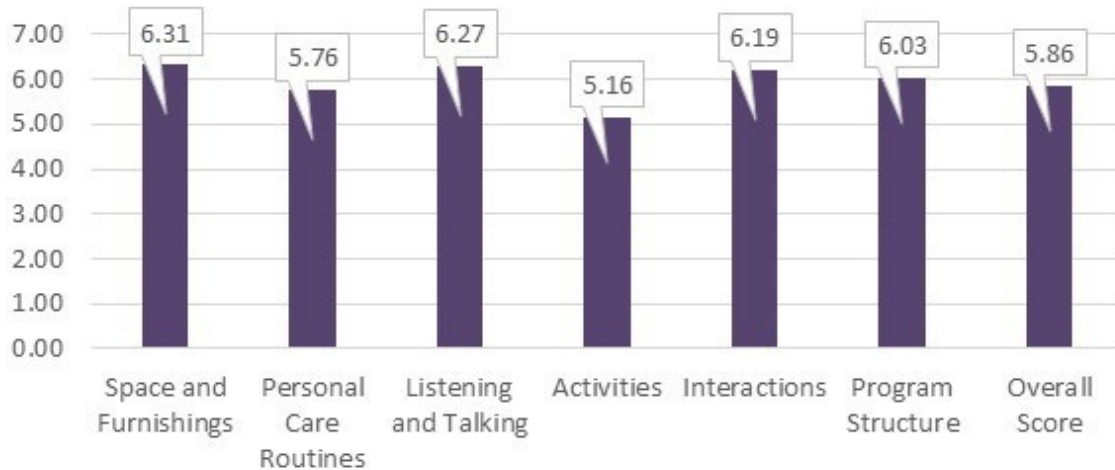
Since 2007, Head Start began to focus on school readiness issues for children ages birth to five. In recent years this focus has become much more intentional with the need for data to demonstrate progress being made by children enrolled in Head Start Programs. In 2012, OVEC Head Start established a School Readiness Leadership team comprised of administrators, teaching staff, and parents to develop these goals and to identify the data sources to be used to determine what progress was achieved. The OVEC Head Start/Early Head Start Program Planning Committee (formerly the School Readiness Committee) met 3 times during the past year. The members reviewed data for the 2022-2023 school year including attendance data, family engagement outcomes, self-assessment, In-kind parent involvement hours, and parent surveys. Data showing limited growth toward long-term program goals was presented and self-assessment action plans have already been put in place to spark future growth. The committee explored upcoming professional learning opportunities that will support both new and veteran staff to increase the progress of children toward the goals. The OVEC Head Start Program Planning Leadership Team reviewed and analyzed the most recent data Teaching Strategies GOLD child outcomes data to determine if their school readiness program goals were met for the year. It was determined that progress had been made and new school readiness goals for 23-24 were established.

OVEC Fall 2022 ITERS Scores



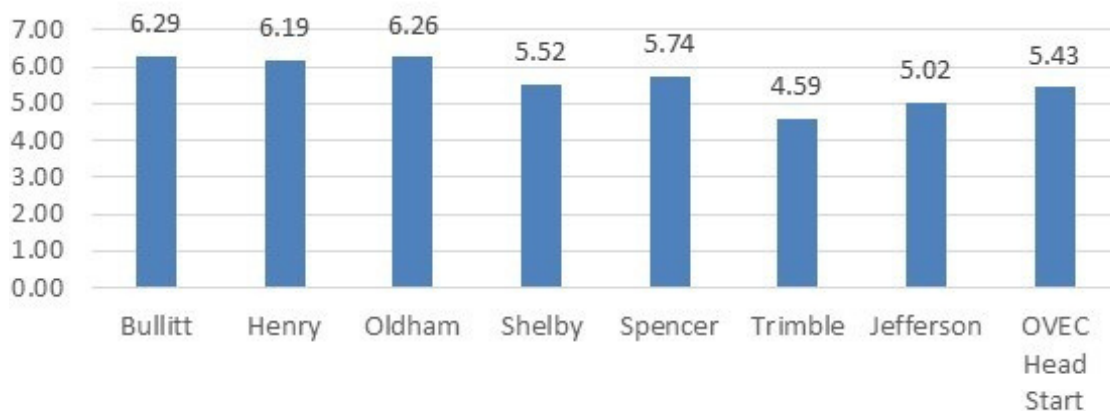
Using the ITERS-3 Observation Tools with a scale of 1-7 for evaluating classroom environments, our EHS classrooms all scored above the minimum threshold of 5 in all 6 areas.

CCP Fall 2022 ITERS Scores



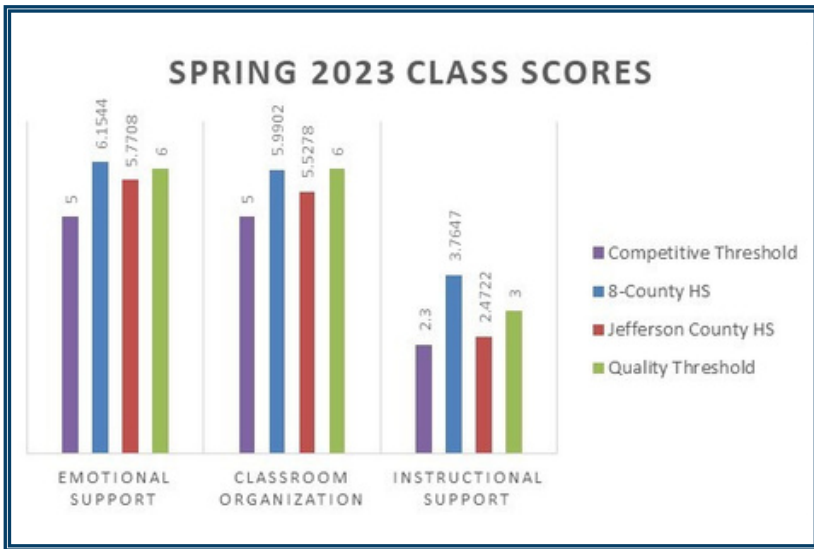
Using the ITERS-3 Observation Tools with a scale of 1-7 for evaluating classroom environments, ALL CCP sites had overall observation scores above the minimum threshold of 5. Quality Mentors work to provide solutions for issues identified through our observations.

OVEC Spring 2023 ECERS-3 Scores



The ECERS-3 was used to survey HS Classrooms this year. Shown below is the overall classroom average for 7 of the 10 counties served by OVEC Head Start as well as our overall average for all OVEC Head Start programs.

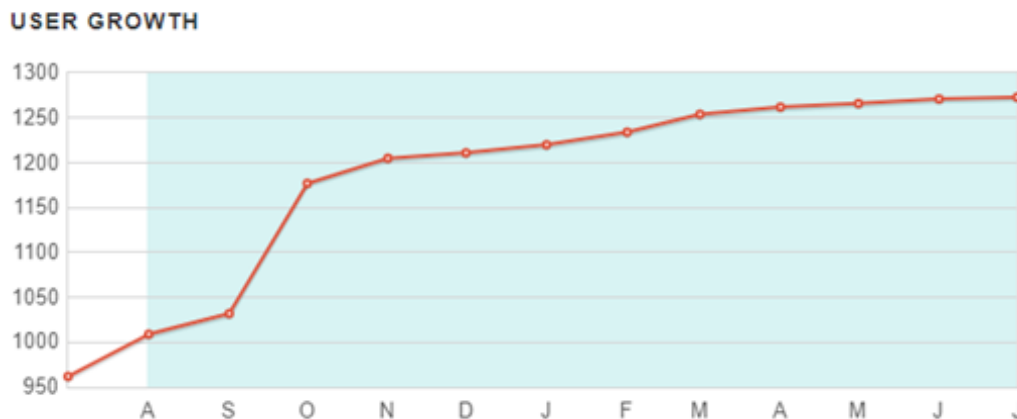
The classroom assessment scoring system (CLASS) is completed on ALL Head Start classrooms annually. The CLASS® tool has 10 dimensions of teacher-child interactions rated on a 7-point scale, from low to high. The 10 CLASS® dimensions are organized into three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support. OVEC Head Start was chosen to participate in the Office of Head Start’s CLASS Video Pilot project this year as part of its Focus Area 2 Monitoring Review. Video observations were completed between March 17 and May 1, 2023. See graph below for OVEC Head Start’s Spring 2023 CLASS Video Pilot scores.



Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is also a critical component to school readiness. A multitude of home-to-school activities are sent home each year by classroom teachers hoping to reinforce skills/concepts focused on during instructional time, as well as to bolster the belief that the parent is the child’s primary educator. Additionally, a minimum of three family involvement activities are conducted

each year and parent feedback on program quality and effectiveness is collected annually. All of these factors encourage and support positive communications /relationships with the families served. One of the long-term goals of the EHS/HS program was to, “Increase families’ understanding of the importance of School Readiness.” Building on the knowledge that parents are a child’s first and most important teachers, OVEC introduced ReadyRosie, an early education family engagement tool, to share school readiness activities with parents in enjoyable and meaningful ways. This online family engagement tool was instrumental in helping parents expand on the teachers’ Creative Curriculum lessons using short at-home parent-child activities. The graph below illustrates the increase in parents using ReadyRosie in the past year.



Head Start Highlights

- Healthy Eyes partnered with several Bullitt County sites to provide vision screenings for our enrolled children.
- Oldham County Head Start received their first mud kitchen.
- Journey Christian Church purchased coats for every HS/EHS child in Bullitt County.
- Family Literacy Nights were held in January and every child received a copy of the book *Brave* by Stacy McAnulty.
- Dental bags were distributed in February for Dental Month. Children received a toothbrush, a timer, a coloring book, and a brushing checklist.
- Krista Perry, Family and Consumer Science Extension Agent with Henry County Extension Office visited our Head Start Classrooms for nutrition month. Each student prepared and enjoyed their own healthy mini pizza while Mrs. Perry read a fun story about nutrition to the class.
- Arianna Hardeman, Newburg Head Start Family Advocate, and parent earned her bachelor's degree in criminal justice and graduated with honors.
- Lisa Pack, Brooks Head Start Family Advocate, and parent earned her associate degree in human services.



Grants Development

The chart below lists significant grants that OVEC has received since the last Annual Report, totaling \$28,241,850. The year of implementation for the funds received is shown in parentheses.

Project Title	Funding Source	Amount Rec'd
Jefferson County Head Start/Early Head Start (2023)	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	\$11,698,132
Eight-County Head Start/Early Head Start (2022-23)	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	\$5,817,894
School-Based Mental Health Initiative (2023-2027)	U.S. Department of Education	\$5,281,577
Early Head Start - Child Care Partnerships (2022-23)	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	\$3,932,544
Exceptional Children Services (2023-24)	Kentucky Department of Education	\$1,006,103
Community Early Childhood Regional Collaboratives (2022-24)	Kentucky Governor's Office of Early Childhood	\$330,600
iLEAD Academy Data Science Career Pathway (2023-2025)	R.C. Durr Foundation	\$150,000
Facility Repair Grants - Oldham County (2023)	Kentucky Division of Child Care	\$10,000
Facility Repair Grants - Cedar Grove (2023)	Kentucky Division of Child Care	\$10,000
Science Discovery for Head Start/Early Head Start (2022-23)	Ohio Valley United Charities	\$5,000



Ohio Valley Educational Foundation

Contributions from 46 individuals and organizations \$86,624.34
in additional support for OVEC programs

Special Events for 2022-23

Pleasure Ridge Park HS Grand Opening- October 2022

Trivia Night- May 2023

Successful Campaigns

- Give for Good Louisville
- National Disabilities Employment Awareness Month
- Kentucky Gives Day
- Scholarship Month

Improved Social Media Presence

- Professional photography
- Increases in post likes, shares and comments
- Audience reach is up 29.6% since July 2022
- Page visits are up 182.6% since July 2022