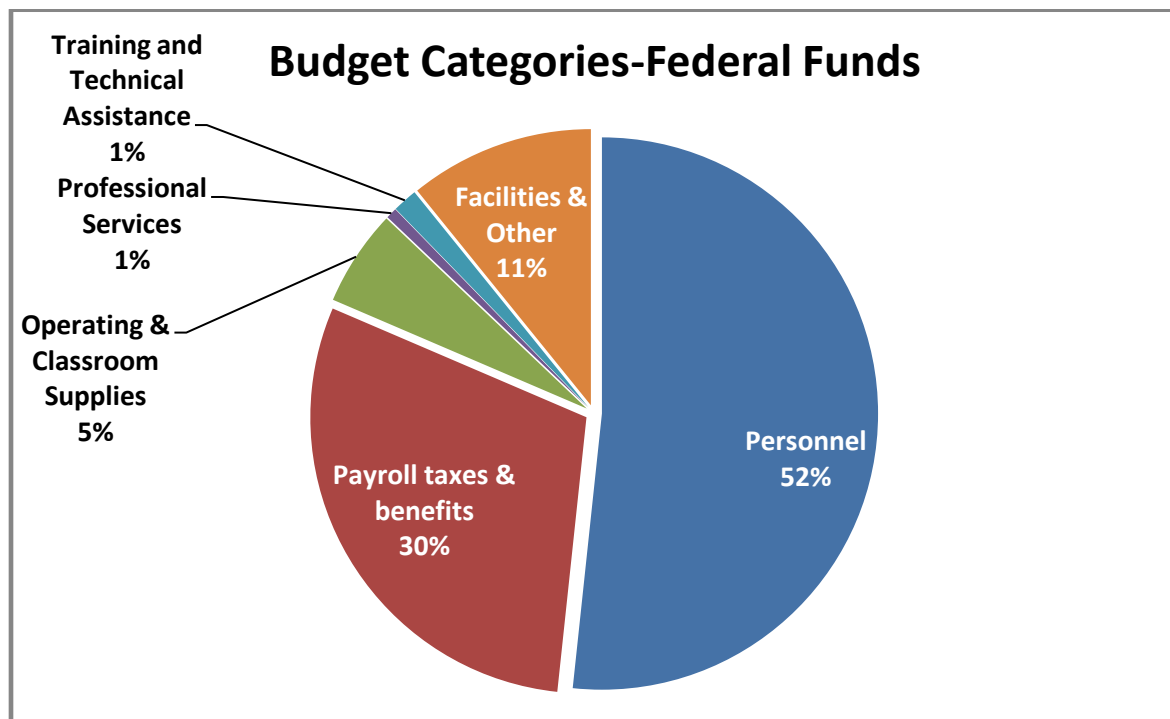


Rutland Community Programs, Inc.
(Rutland County Head Start)
Annual Report to the Public
2016

Pursuant to the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, Head Start grantees must make available to the public an annual report that discloses certain information. The following is the 2015-2016 program year report for Rutland Community Programs (Rutland County Head Start).

Funding: The federal grant period for Rutland County Head Start is January 1-December 31, however, the program year runs September through May. For calendar year 2016, Rutland Community Programs was awarded \$1,239,025 in Head Start grant funds from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This award included \$21,593 which is 1.8 percent cost of living adjustment (COLA) of the 2015 base funding level.

Budgeted expenditures grant (calendar) year 2016:



Total number of children and families served: For the 2015-2016 program year, Rutland County Head Start served 135 families and 151 children (includes families and children who left the program during the year). Federal funded child enrollment is 117.

Enrollment: Of the 135 families that were enrolled, 48 percent were two-parent families and 52 percent were single-parent families. At the time of registration, 45 children were from families with incomes below 100% of the federal poverty level and 79 were the recipients of public assistance such as TANF (Reach-Up) or SSI. Eight children were from over-income families.

There were 13 families that were homeless, with 16 children at some point during the program year; 8 families acquired more permanent housing during the 2014-2015 program year. There were 11 foster children.

Results of most recent Federal Review and Financial Audit: Rutland County Head Start underwent a triennial federal review in October 2013. A letter from the Administration for Children and Families dated November, 22, 2013 stated, “Based on the information gathered, no area of noncompliance was found during the course of the review. Accordingly, no corrective action is required at this time.” The fiscal year 2015 financial audit produced no findings.

Percentage of enrolled children that received medical and dental exams: At the end of the 2015-2016 program year, 96 percent of children were up-to-date on a schedule of age-appropriate preventive and primary health care according to Vermont’s EPSDT schedule for well child care; of these, 7 percent were diagnosed with a chronic condition requiring medical treatment. Eighty-seven (87) percent of children were determined by a health care professional to be up-to-date on all immunizations appropriate for their age, or met Vermont guidelines for an exemption from immunizations (opted not to have their child receive HEP A and/or influenza vaccines). By the end of the program year, 81 percent of all children had an ongoing source of continuous, accessible dental care provided by a dentist and 62 percent had received preventive dental care.

Information about family engagement activities: Families are provided with a variety of opportunities to be involved in their child’s preschool experience. Parents participate in a minimum of two teacher home visits, two parent/teacher conferences and three family services visits. Parents are provided with volunteer opportunities in the classroom, on field trips, on projects at home and participate on staff interviews. Parent Committee meetings are held at each site. The meetings provide parents with opportunities to give input into their classroom curriculum, plan field trips and to participate in parent trainings. Parents participate in a shared governance approach for the program through Policy Council meetings. Through a grant from the Vermont Child Development Division, RCHS has implemented the Strengthening Families Framework from the Center for the Study of Social Policy. Strengthening Families is a research-based, cost-effective strategy to increase family strengths, enhance child development and reduce child abuse and neglect. It focuses on building five Protective Factors that also promote healthy outcomes.

Quality Ratings: Rutland County Head Start was re-accredited for a period of five years (2013-2018) by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The program has been awarded 5 STARS (the highest level) by the Vermont Child Development Division through its SStep Ahead Recognition System, Vermont’s quality recognition system for childcare, preschool, and after-school programs.

The agency’s efforts to prepare children for kindergarten: Rutland County Head Start uses The Creative Curriculum as its focal curriculum. The Creative Curriculum addresses goals in the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Outcomes Framework and serves as a guide for staff in the provision of materials and activities to support children’s goals. The Creative Curriculum for Preschool meets all of the standards put forth for effective early childhood curricula by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education.

Rutland County Head Start's School Readiness Goals were developed by a team of Lead Teachers and administrators, with input from parents. The following resources were referenced in this development: Vermont Head Start Association School Readiness Goals; Vermont Early Learning Standards; Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Outcomes Framework; National Association for the Education of Young Children Standards and Criteria; Creative Curriculum for Preschool; and Teaching Strategies GOLD. Family Engagement goals have also been incorporated into the School Readiness goals.

The School Readiness Goals are:

- **Social-Emotional Development:** Children will develop the skills necessary to foster secure attachments with adults, maintain healthy relationships, regulate behavior and emotions, and develop a healthy concept of personal identity. Children will participate fully in learning experiences and form positive relationships with teachers and peers.
- **Approaches to Learning:** Children will develop: a sense of wonder, a willingness to participate, persistence in their efforts, and the ability to connect past learning to new situations.
- **Literacy-Language Development:** Children will increase their language and communication skills by engaging in meaningful experiences that require them to effectively express their ideas and feelings, listen and understand others. Children will understand basic concepts about books or other media, the alphabet, and letter-sound relationships.
- **Physical Health and Development:** Children will develop early health habits to support physical well-being, use of their bodies, muscle control, appropriate nutrition, exercise, hygiene and safety practices.
- **Cognitive/General Knowledge:** Children will develop mathematical thinking skills to logically solve problems and make connections in the world around them. Children will expand their curiosity and motivation to learn by asking questions, making observations and building on natural experiences.

Child Assessment System: The program uses Teaching Strategies GOLD as the assessment system. Children are assessed at three checkpoints during the program year. Ongoing assessment is integral for curriculum and instruction. Through data analysis and outcomes evaluation, program improvement plans are developed accordingly to achieve school readiness goals.

Key Findings from Child Assessment Data: The 2015-2016 school readiness summary report follows this section.

Rutland County Head Start utilizes an individualized observation and planning process for each child. In partnership, staff and families assess the child's development and identify areas for growth across all domains of learning. Information is obtained through interviews with parents,

observations of the child, and formal evaluative protocols (ESI-R[®]), Teaching Strategies GOLD and, if applicable, information from a child's Individualized Education Program. Information collected from these sources is then used to provide for individualized experiences and services for children and families.

Rutland County Head Start works with all seven school districts in Rutland County to enhance the transition procedure for children entering kindergarten. This includes coordinating visits to the child's new school accompanied by their preschool teacher, and visits by the school to the child's Head Start classroom. Head Start teachers meet with public school kindergarten teachers to exchange child portfolios and discuss the child's preschool experience. Rutland County Head Start gives each child going to kindergarten a book about kindergarten, and classrooms watch a video narrated by children in a kindergarten classroom.

For more information about Rutland County Head Start, visit www.rchscn.org.

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