



SCFO

Sierra Cascade Family Opportunities
Early Childhood Development Programs



ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR _____	1
LETTER FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT _____	2
ABOUT US _____	3
PROGRAM GOALS _____	4
PROGRESS ON PROGRAM GOALS _____	5
SCFO PROGRAM INFORMATION _____	7
ENROLLMENT _____	8
CHILD OUTCOMES _____	9
HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION SERVICES _____	11
HEALTH OUTCOMES _____	12
FAMILY ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES _____	13
FINANCIALS _____	14
SCFO LEADERSHIP _____	15
SCFO SITE LOCATIONS _____	16

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The 2023-2024 program year again brought challenges for Sierra Cascade Family Opportunities (SCFO)! Enrollment requirements by the Office of Head Start (OHS) resulted in SCFO being officially designated under-enrolled in May 2023. SCFO worked hard this year to reach and maintain full enrollment and by March 2024 we reached, and have since maintained, full enrollment. The Management Team developed an Action Plan to ensure full enrollment is maintained, until at least November 2024, so that SCFO will no longer be designated underenrolled. SCFO is required to be enrolled at a minimum of 97%.

A big challenge for SCFO this year has again been finding, hiring, and keeping staff and substitutes, especially in entry level positions. Classrooms were closed twenty times this year due to insufficient staffing - either due to staff turnover, staff illness, and lack of substitutes. However, through the commitment of SCFO staff all classrooms remained open and provided services, though one classroom's hours of operation had to be adjusted for a period of time.

SCFO is working hard to develop ways to recruit, hire and retain qualified staff, so we can keep our classrooms running. We have invested in creating a culture of staff wellness within the agency as a tool for retention. Due to one-time funding, staff received retention incentive stipends to increase their compensation, in our attempts to retain qualified staff. The Grow-Our-Own program was brought back this year. This program recruits interested Head Start & Early Head Start parents to become qualified substitutes in our classrooms. Three participants completed this program this year and two are actively substituting.

Even with all the challenges, SCFO has been able to continue to provide quality child development and family support services to the children and families enrolled in our programs. Thank you to the families we have served this year, for your flexibility, your understanding, your support, and most of all for entrusting your children to us as we help you prepare them for success throughout school and life.

I would like to express my gratitude to the SCFO staff from administration and managers to teaching staff, kitchen staff and family support staff who have shined through it all as the needs of children and families were at the forefront of every decision made and every service provided. A big thank you also to the Policy Council and the Board of Directors, without your direction, oversight, and dedication to SCFO we would not be able to do the work we do each day.

Many of the accomplishments and highlights of SCFO programs are outlined in this report for your information. Please take time to read the report and discover the difference we make in the lives of children and families. We are looking forward to the 2024-2025 program year!

Brenda Poteete, Executive Director

LETTER FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Sierra Cascade Family Opportunities' mission is to operate early childhood development programs that provide quality educational and support services to staff, children, and families.

Head Start provides a family-centered, whole-child approach to child development through a preschool curriculum that gets a child ready for kindergarten; a menu of comprehensive health services; and a program of partnering with and empowering parents, helping parents remove barriers to their children's success and deepen parents' ability to support their children. With these services, children are less likely to repeat a grade, more likely to complete high school and college, and have greater earning potential than children not able to participate in the program.

It is only because of the tireless efforts of our dedicated classroom staff, central office executive team, and all our parent volunteers that Head Start is able to set the standard for early childhood education and care. Thank you all.

Michael Butler, Board President

ABOUT US

It is Sierra Cascade Family Opportunities' (SCFO) goal to create a strong foundation for young children that is rich with experience and opportunity based on a child's individual need. This foundation is built in an environment that establishes trust and security for both the child and their parents and focuses on the skills and strengths of each child within a group setting. In our centers we utilize the High Scope approach and the Second Step social and emotional development curriculum. We believe that children should be involved actively with hands on materials and carrying out projects of their own choosing. The adults working with the children see themselves as facilitators or partners. Our approach encompasses all aspects of child development and involves teachers and parents in supporting and extending children's emotional, intellectual, social, and physical skills and abilities. This means learning is a process in which children discover, explore and create through direct experience with people, objects, events, and ideas. Head Start and Early Head Start are fully inclusive programs. All children are able to take advantage of the Head Start and Early Head Start environment, including children with mild to severe disabilities. In our learning environments, different areas of the classroom are age specific and designated for different activities, for example water play, reading, sand play, art, writing, dramatic play, etc. Children are able to access all facilities independently and take some responsibility for use of these areas. Children are provided with tools and opportunities to make real, meaningful decisions.

VISION

Our agency vision is that all children and families will achieve success throughout school and life.

MISSION

The mission of Sierra Cascade Family Opportunities, Inc., (SCFO) is to operate quality early child development programs which provide comprehensive opportunities for children and families that encourage growth, support positive relationships and foster health and well-being.

PROGRAM GOALS

The 2023-2024 program year was the fifth and final year of Sierra Cascade Family Opportunities (SCFO) current grant cycle. Based on Community Assessment, Self-Assessment and ongoing monitoring data, SCFO established two Program Goals to focus on during the five-year grant cycle related to child attendance and SCFO staffing.



Program Goal 1

SCFO will employ, compensate and retain qualified staff who have a passionate commitment for supporting young children and families.

Program Goal 2

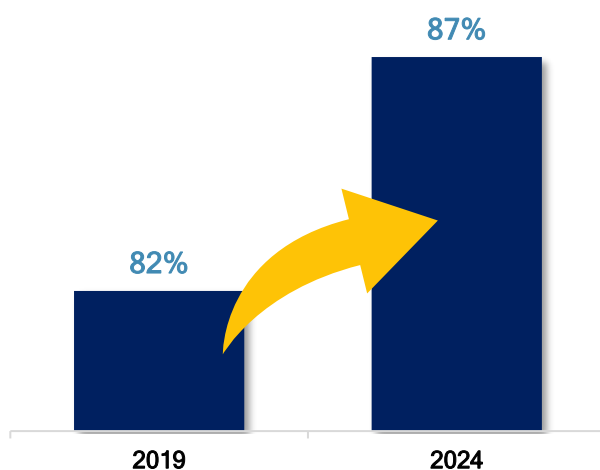
SCFO will establish a culture of regular attendance through strategies involving parents, staff and the community that will promote success throughout school and life.

PROGRESS ON PROGRAM GOALS

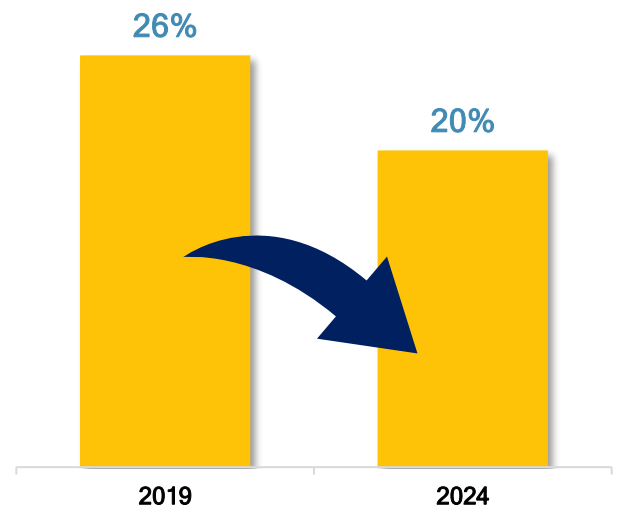
Program Goal #1

During the project period, SCFO succeeded in many efforts to strengthen staff recruitment including increased participation in job fair events, development of community partnerships, implementation of a Grow Our Own program and collaboration for a job shadow program. In addition, SCFO made progress in efforts for staff retention such as disbursement of staff stipends, increased staff wages and benefits contributions and implementation of staff wellness programs including establishment of a dedicated SCFO Wellness Team. Since the beginning of the grant cycle in 2019, SCFO's overall staff satisfaction rate has improved based on annual Staff Satisfaction Survey Results. In addition, SCFO's staff turnover rate has been reduced. SCFO is proud of the success made toward this program goal.

Overall Staff Satisfaction Rate

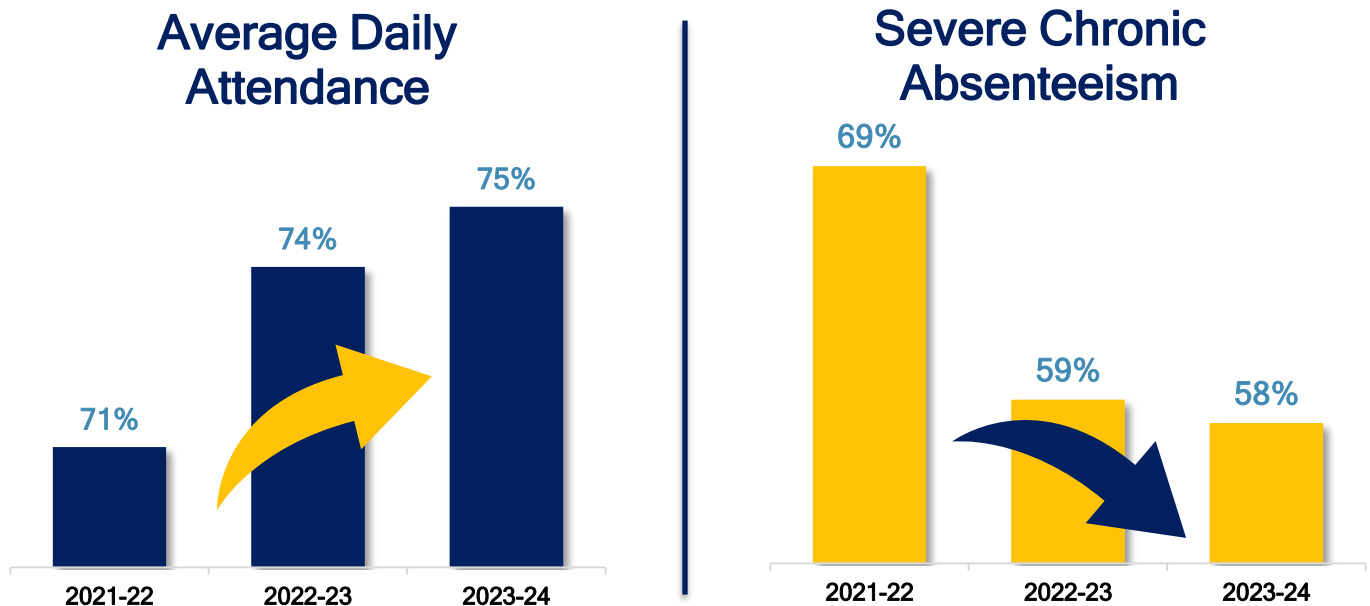


Staff Turnover Rate



Program Goal #2

SCFO has also made great strides over the past five years to accomplish the program goal focused on child attendance. Success includes enhanced attendance data collection, streamlined absence follow up systems, a focus on celebrating families with high attendance and the development of an attendance education campaign titled 'Every Day Matters'. Despite challenges to attendance during the COVID-19 pandemic, SCFO was still able to make progress toward objectives within the goal and improve average daily attendance and chronic absenteeism rates. The charts below demonstrate the progress made in the years since the COVID-19 pandemic.



SCFO PROGRAM INFORMATION



9 Child Development Centers

SCFO operates 7 Head Start/State Preschool classrooms, 1 Stand Alone Head Start Classroom, 2 Stand Alone State Preschool Classrooms and 3 Early Head Start classrooms.



185 Children

SCFO is funded to serve 185 children and their families. In the 2023-2024 program year, a cumulative total of 212 children were served.



76 Staff Members

In the 2023-2024 program year, SCFO had a total of 76 staff members. 40% of the staff members are former or current parents in the program.



3 Counties

SCFO provides services in Lassen, Modoc and Plumas counties.



10,840 Square Miles

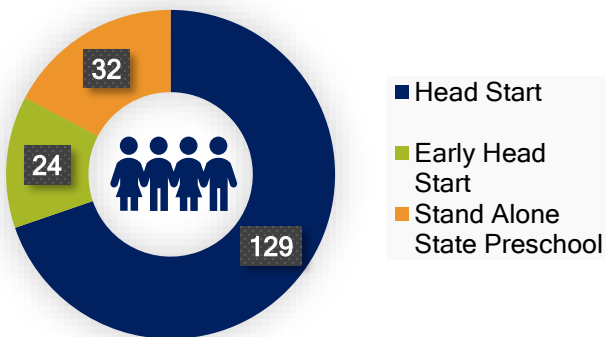
The SCFO service area covers a large geographical area in rural northeastern California communities. The three counties span a 10,840 square mile area that borders the State of Nevada on the east and the State of Oregon to the north. The area is very rural with small pockets of population interspersed throughout the vast geography.

ENROLLMENT

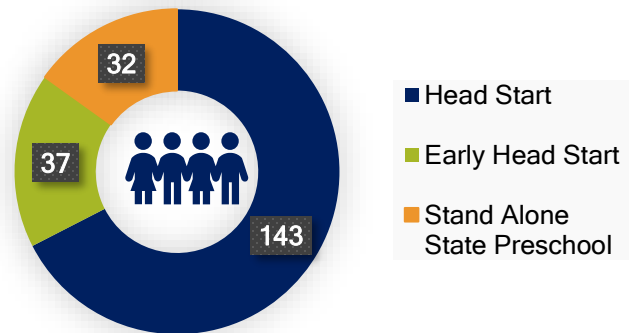
SCFO Enrollment

Sierra Cascade Family Opportunities enrolled a total of 212 children in the 2023-2024 program year between the Head Start, Early Head Start and State Preschool programs. SCFO was designated under enrolled for Head Start and Early Head Start programs in May 2023 and developed a plan to achieve full enrollment in collaboration with the Regional Office as part of the Head Start Full Enrollment Initiative. By March 2024, SCFO succeeded in reaching full enrollment for the Head Start and Early Head Start programs and maintained that for the remainder of the program year. Overall Average Monthly Enrollment for all three programs showed a significant increase from the previous program year.

Funded Enrollment



Total Enrollment



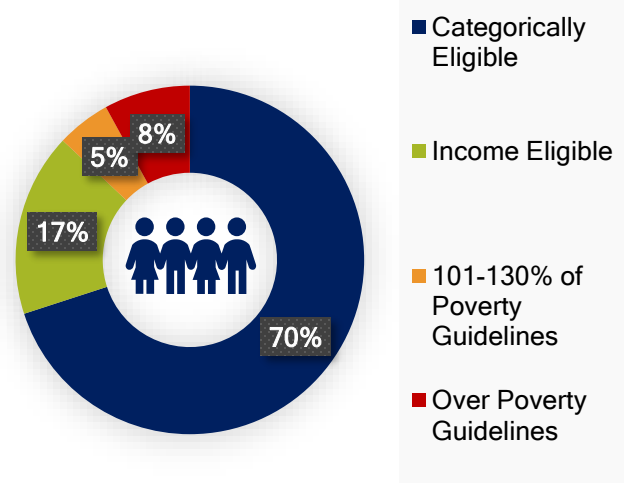
Average Monthly Enrollment

Head Start: **93%**

Early Head Start: **99 %**

Stand Alone State Preschool: **77%**

Eligible HS & EHS Families Served

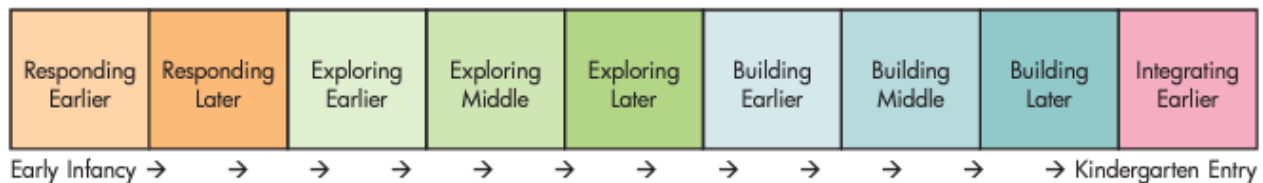


CHILD OUTCOMES

Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP)

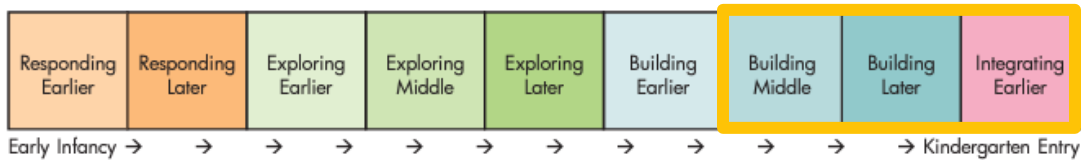
SCFO implements the Desired Results Development Profile (DRDP) which is an observation-based assessment system. Educators observe children as they engage in everyday routines, experiences and interactions. Three times per year for preschool children and four times per year for infants and toddlers, educators review the collected evidence and make ratings of children's progress for each DRDP measure along a continuum of developmental levels. Educators use this to plan for the individualization of each child's continued learning and development.

Below is a chart of the nine developmental levels of the DRDP starting with the levels associated with young infants and progressing through the levels associated with greater Kindergarten readiness.

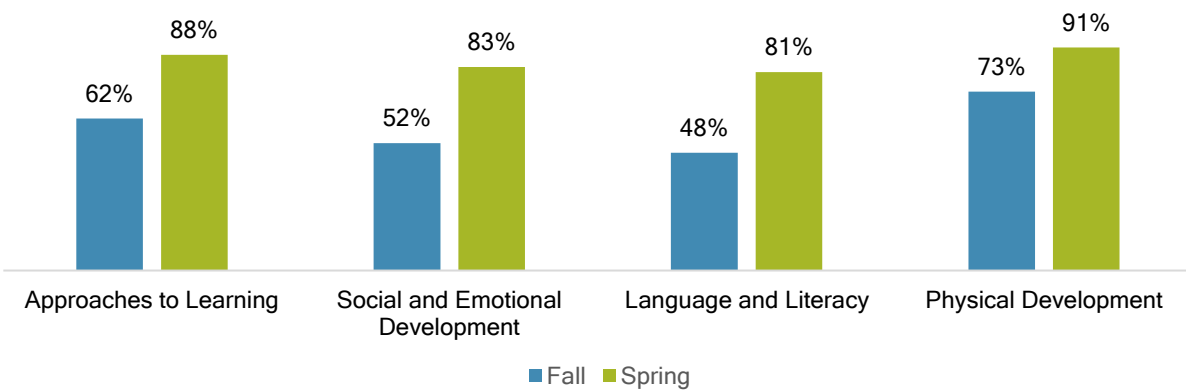


Preschool DRDP Data

The graph below shows growth in children from the fall 2023 rating period to the spring 2024 rating period. It represents the percentage of children in each period who were rated at the Building Middle level or later for the different developmental domains.

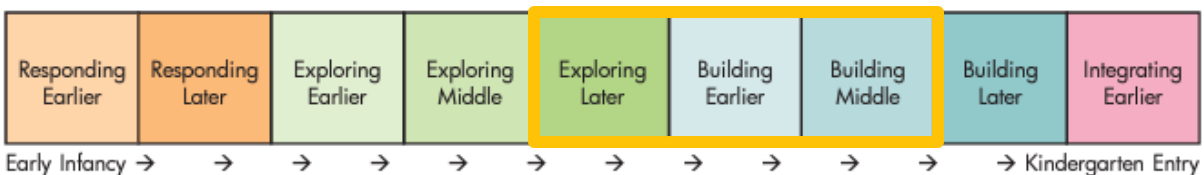


DRDP Preschool Ratings of Building Middle or Later

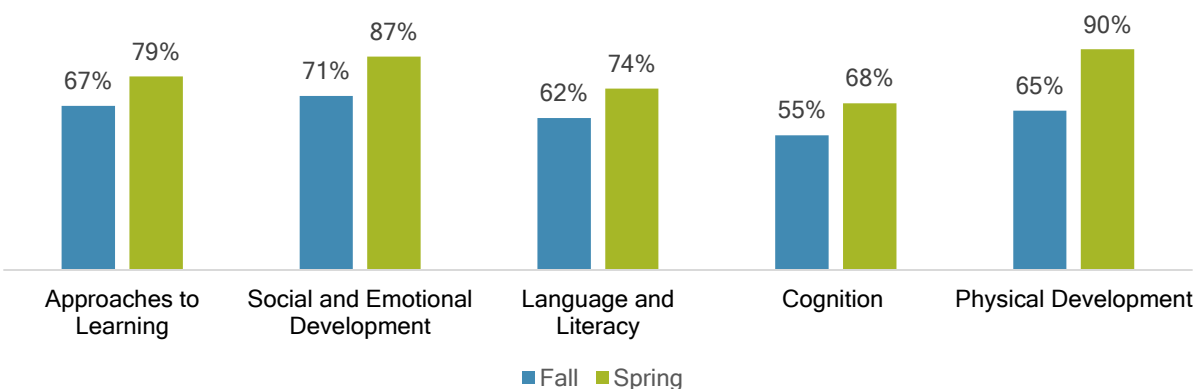


Infant & Toddler DRDP Data

The graph below shows growth in infants and toddlers from the fall 2023 rating period to the spring 2024 rating period. It represents the percentage of children who were rated at the Exploring Later level or later for the different developmental domains.



DRDP Infant/Toddler Ratings of Exploring Later or Later



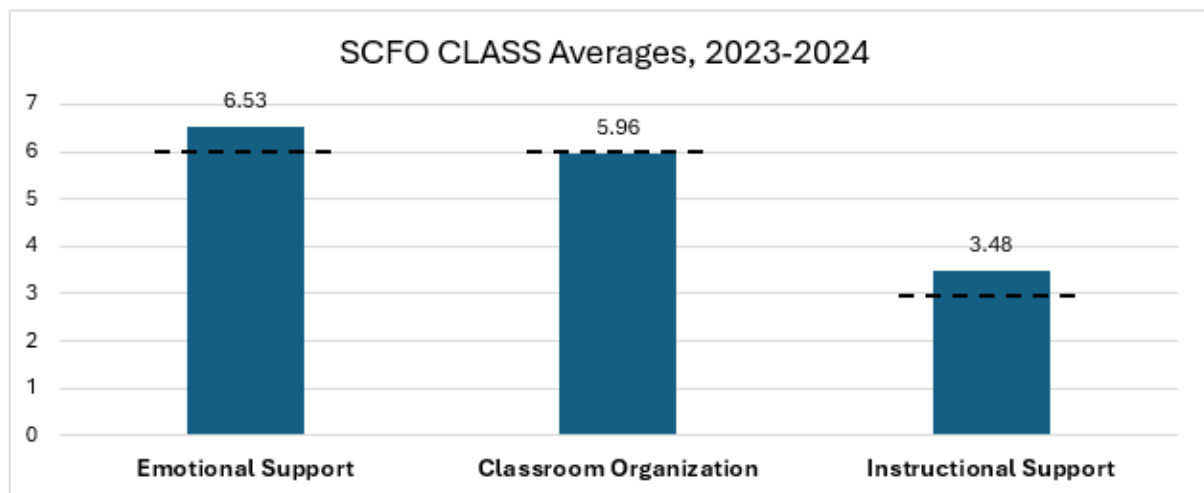
HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION SERVICES

Curriculum and Individualized Planning

The High Scope and Second Step curriculums provide children and parents with rich opportunities that support developmental milestones and positive outcomes through consistent daily routines, key developmental indicators, and supportive relationships. Individual child goals are created to support the unique learning style and development of each child enrolled in an SCFO program. Parents and educators work together in creating activities that are based on each child's individual level of development, interest, and cultural competencies.

SCFO CLASS Scores

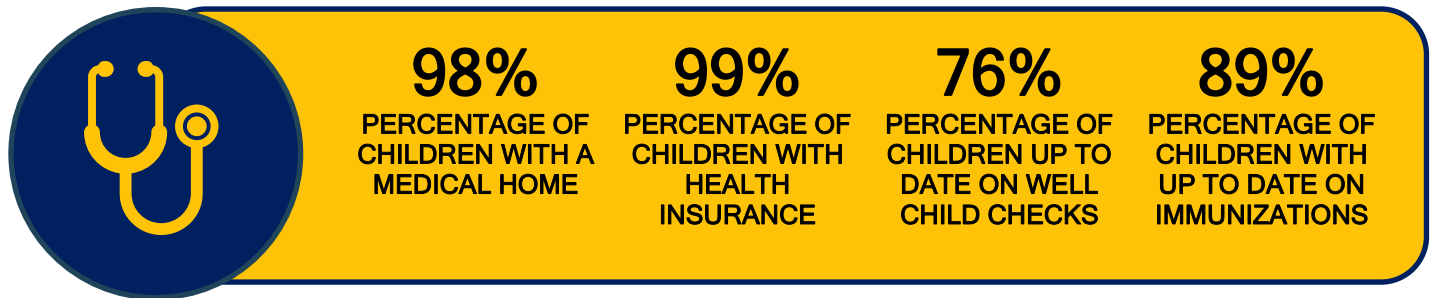
The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) is an observational tool that assesses quality interactions in center based preschool classrooms. Each year SCFO conducts CLASS observations on each preschool classroom, to ensure that the environments meet the performance standard requirements as well as to ensure that the children enrolled in an SCFO classroom are exposed to quality experiences and opportunities. In the 2023-2024 program year, SCFO performed two rounds of CLASS observation per classroom. The graph below represents the SCFO's average scores for the program year. Emotional Support and Instructional Support scores exceed the National Expectation while Classroom Organization almost meets it and will be a focus for staff development in the 2024-2025 program year.



HEALTH OUTCOMES

SCFO Health Services

SCFO has a high emphasis on health since children must be healthy and well-nourished to learn and develop. All enrolled children receive physical and dental exams along with health screenings that include hearing, vision, and nutrition. Staff work with families to ensure follow up services are received for any needs that are identified. SCFO provides a variety of nutrition services to families including nutrition screenings and referrals, nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and a high-quality food program. For infants and toddlers, health screenings and evaluations are done frequently to ensure ideal development for each child.



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

Parent Involvement

SCFO offers many opportunities for parent involvement. In 2023-2024 program year, SCFO parents contributed volunteer hours by being involved in program leadership, extending curriculum at home and much more.

Family Goal Setting

SCFO's Family Partnership Process includes supporting families to set and achieve goals that promote positive family outcomes. Staff work with families to utilize their strengths and skills to accomplish their goals.

SCFO families
contributed 23,771
volunteer hours

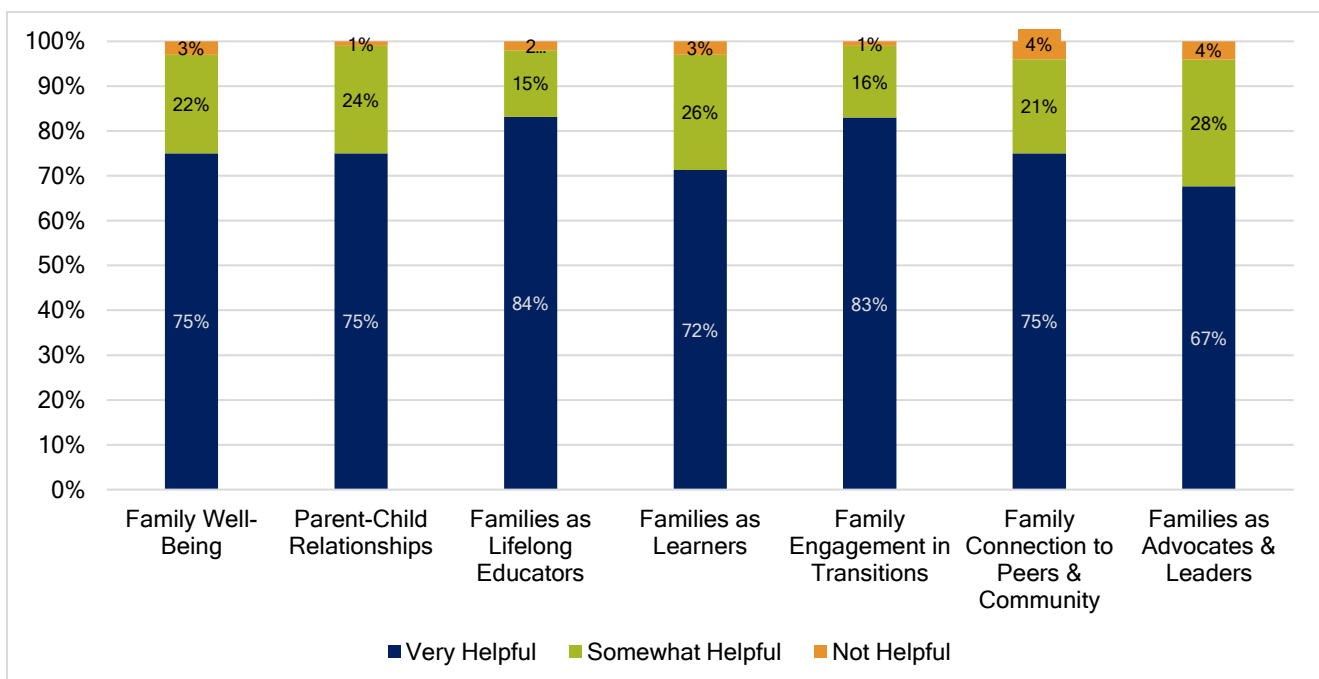


75% of families
completed their Family
Goals

Family Engagement Outcomes

All of SCFO's family partnership services promote positive family engagement outcomes. Results of the 2023-2024 Family Outcomes Survey, completed by parents enrolled in SCFO programs, demonstrated that the program was helpful to parents in all outcome areas. Overall, 93% of families responded that the program was "Very Helpful" for their child and 88% of families responded that the program was "Very Helpful" for their families.

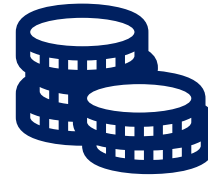
Program Helpfulness by Outcome Area, 2023-2024



FINANCIALS

SCFO Public Funds Received FY 2023-2024	
Head Start	\$2,465,267
Early Head Start	\$1,145,086
State Preschool	\$1,213,279
Child Care Food Program	\$1139,488
In-Kind	\$840,473
Other Grants	\$41,104
Total	\$5,844,697

The SCFO Fiscal Department provides monthly financial reporting to the Policy Council and Board of Directors. In planning and performing the most recent audit in of Sierra Cascade Family Opportunities, the CPS firm of Singleton-Auman did not identify any deficiencies, weaknesses or non-compliances and determined the financial statements were free of material misstatement.



SCFO Budget & Expenditures FY 2023-2024		
	Proposed Expenditures	Final Expenditures
Personnel	\$3,194,203	\$3,179,650
Fringe Benefits	\$829,299	\$784,169
Classroom Supplies	\$28,075	\$38,662
Facilities/ Construction	\$26,150	\$64,048
Other Operating	\$926,497	\$937,695
In-Kind	\$840,473	\$840,473
Total	\$5,844,697	\$5,844,697

SCFO LEADERSHIP

Board of Directors	Policy Council	Management Team
Mike Butler President, Advocacy	Nina Wolf Chairperson, Board Representative Alturas Center	Brenda Poteete Executive Director
Jennifer McQuarrie Attorney	Lorie Rondi Board Representative, Community Representative	Cindy Hogg Financial Administrative Officer
Doug Prouty Judge	Krystle Williams Greenville Center	Bethany Edholm Data & QI Director
Richard Belstock Financial Management	Aeris Elder Lassen Center	Katie Windle ERSEA Manager
Tina Venable Public Health Nurse	Taylor Clements Leavitt Lake	Jennifer McCulley Education Services Manager
Laura Greer Child Development	Genoveva Hernandez Portola Center	Maria Altamirano Education Services Manager
	Jessica Banks Quincy Center	Andrea Huggins Health Services Manager
	Shayla Catalfamo Union Center	Jessica Stading Family Engagement Manager
		Gina Wood Site Manager

SCFO SITE LOCATIONS

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES		
CENTRAL OFFICE 424 N. Mill Creek Rd Quincy, CA 95971 P: 530-283-1242 F: 530-283-1024	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE 65 N. Union St Susanville, CA 96130 P: 530-257-1206 F: 530-257-8227	JANESVILLE OFFICE P.O. Box 279/709-435 Pine St Janesville, CA 96114 P: 530-601-2114 F: 530-253-1043
CENTER BASED PROGRAMS		
ALTURAS CENTER 802 N. East, Ste. C Alturas, CA 96101 P: 530-233-4134 F: 530-233-7707	LASSEN CENTER 478-200 Highway 139 Susanville, CA P: 530-251-4050 F: 530-251-4052	LEAVITT LAKE CENTER 710-400 Willow Susanville, CA 96130 P: 530-257-7530 F: 530-257-9035
PORTOLA CENTER P.O. Box 1701 895 West Street Building #25 Portola, CA 96122 P: 530-832-1029 F: 530-832-4030	QUINCY CENTER 175 N. Mill Creek Rd Quincy, CA 95971 P: 530-283-0592 F: 530-283-3053	SUSANVILLE CENTER P.O. Box 603/195 Russell Ave Susanville, CA 96130 P: 530-257-2343 F: 530-251-5901
UNION CENTER 65 N Union St Susanville, CA 96130 P: 530-257-8220 F: 530-257-8227	CHESTER CENTER 158 Aspen St. Room 4 Chester, CA 96020 P: 530-258-3194 Ext: 1251 F: 530-258-3195	GREENVILLE CENTER 225 Grand St. Room 1 Greenville, CA 95947 P: 530-284-7195 Ext: 2711 F: 530-284-6720
<p>Website: www.headstart4u.org Facebook: Sierra Cascade Family Opportunities Phone: 1-800-404-1242</p>		



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