

EASTERN PANHANDLE INSTRUCTIONAL COOPERATIVE



ANNUAL REPORT
FISCAL YEAR 2024

*Eastern Panhandle
Instructional Cooperative*

EPIC

Serving the educational needs
of the entire community

EASTERN PANHANDLE INSTRUCTIONAL COOPERATIVE

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide high quality, cost effective, life-long education programs and services to students, schools, school systems, and communities

VISION STATEMENT

To serve the educational needs of the total community

REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL, 2023-2024

Berkeley County

Ron Stephens, Superintendent
Damon Wright, Board Member

Jefferson County

Dr. Chuck Bishop, Superintendent
Mark Osbourn, Council President

Grant County

Mitch Webster, Superintendent
Jared Amtower, Board Member

Mineral County

Troy Ravenscroft, Superintendent
Terry Puffinberger, Board Member

Hampshire County

Jeff Pancione, Superintendent
Bernard Hott, Board Member

Morgan County

Kristen Tuttle, Superintendent
Eric Lyda, Board Member

Hardy County

Sheena VanMeter, Superintendent
Melvin Shook, Board Member

Pendleton County

Charles Hedrick, Superintendent
Sonny O'Neil, Board Member

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Program Title: Adolescent Health

PURPOSE: To support community collaborative efforts designed to develop the assets youth need to thrive and become successful across the state of West Virginia. The program provides support to community initiatives and training to community members and / or professionals regarding adolescent health topics throughout the region.

FUNDING SOURCE: The Office of Maternal, Child, and Family Health

CONTACT PERSON: Leah Daniel
304-671-9200
ldaniel@k12.wv.us

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Provided the following training sessions to students across the region: Too Good for Drugs, Catch My Breath, Mindfulness and Positive Coping Skills, Positive Youth Development, and Social Media Safety.
- Created and maintained an Adolescent Health Region 8 Facebook page to share important information and document Adolescent Health program activities and events.
- Coordinated and collaborated with Berkeley County Schools on several OLWEUS Bullying Prevention Program events and trainings. Co-coordinated and co-hosted the *BCS Annual Bullying Prevention Program Community Wide Kick-Off Event* with over 1,000 people attending.
- Co-coordinated 21 Berkeley County Schools Safety Collaboration Presentation in 15 different elementary schools across Berkeley County for over 7,600 students that included local law enforcement and other agencies. These presentations presented information to kids on the importance of saying no to drugs, stranger danger, fire safety, see something say something, and other relevant safety topics.
- Received certification in Catch My Breath Train the Trainer in May 2024 and trained educators and professionals from all over the state in the program at the Adolescent Health Summer Institute in June 2024.

- Piloted and implemented the evidence based vaping prevention program Catch My Breath to all 6th graders at Springs Mills Middle School. Approximately 300 students completed the program.

SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC PLAN RESULTS:

The Adolescent Health Coordinator attended community meetings and work groups throughout the region and contributed by providing educational sessions and materials to community members. The Adolescent Health Coordinator visited several schools across the region teaching programs, doing positive youth development sessions, and educating and advocating on many Adolescent Health topics. The Adolescent Health Coordinator prepared and facilitated educational trainings for parents, community members, professional staff, and students throughout the region.

PERSONNEL SUPPORTED:

Adolescent Health Coordinator

Program Title: Adult Education

PURPOSE: Provide technical assistance, educational leadership and training, and monitoring and administration services for adult education and workforce development programs in the region.

FUNDING SOURCE: West Virginia Department of Education (state and federal grants)

CONTACT PERSON: John Holmes
304.596.2645
jjholmes@wvesc.org

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Provided technical assistance to local **Adult Education (AE)** programs, which served 1235 adult students during Fiscal Year 2024.
- 175 **AE** students earned a high school equivalency diploma.
- 204 **AE** students transitioned to postsecondary education.
- Administered the **SPOKES Career Readiness Program**, which enrolled 83 adult students referred by the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources during FY24. Seven (7) SPOKES students earned their High School Equivalency diploma, 9 transitioned to postsecondary education & training, and 20 gained unsubsidized employment. Sixteen (16) students earned a CPR/First Aid certification and 13 Customer Service certificates were earned during the fiscal year.
- Provided professional development to 24 EPIC and county funded staff members.
- Provided TABE Assessments to 85 DoHS clients.

SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC PLAN RESULTS: The Adult Education Director monitored the performance of local AE programs (15 class sites total), offering varying levels of technical assistance, as appropriate. The Adult Education Director monitored local AE instructors for compliance with state requirements for professional development and coordinated and/or presented local and regional training as warranted.

PERSONNEL SUPPORTED:

Adult Education Director (1)

Adult Education Administrative Assistant (.25)

F/T Adult Education, SPOKES and ESOL Instructors (13)

P/T Adult Education, SPOKES and ESOL Instructors (1)

P/T Adult Education Aides, ESOL (1)

Assessment Specialists (1)

Program Title: Early Head Start/Head Start/Pre-K

Berkeley, Jefferson, & Morgan Counties

Our program provides an end of the year survey to all our parents. The survey includes questions on topics ranging from understanding the enrollment process, family goal achievement, valuing parents, and providing leadership opportunities. The survey scale provided five responses per question:

Not Sure Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Results-tri-county Head Start Preschool programs. Of the 365 families enrolled, 94% or 343 responses were received.

An average of 98.7% agreed strongly that Head Start achieves the program goals developed to best serve our children and families.

Parents shared:

- “well beyond thankful for time in the program”
- “blessed child’s life”
- “had 4 kids in the program. I’ll see you when I have grandkids”
- “treated babies like their own”

Early Head Start

Results-tri-county Early Head Start programs. Of 144 families enrolled, 49% or 71 responses were received.

An average of 97.7% agreed/strongly agreed that Early Head Start achieves the program goals developed to best serve our children and families.

EHS parents shared:

- “most amazing and helpful program”
- “a very good resource in the community”
- “wished socializations and parent meetings held at different times to accommodate working parents”

Program Services

Disabilities – Children requiring additional supports/eligible for services under IDEA – Federal Performance Standards require 10% of total funded enrollment is filled by children eligible for additional services

HS

	Required at full enrollment		Actual # of children enrolled needing special services - IEPs	
Berkeley	16	(164)	36	
Jefferson	10	(102)	26	
Morgan	7	(73)	33	

HS – 95 children with IEPs represents 26% of our funded enrollment

EHS – 51 children with FISP/IEPs/38% of children served were supported through home visits

Employment

The program, prenatal to 5, employs 96 full-time staff. Of the 21 EHS staff, 4 or 19% are current or former EHS/HS parents. Of the 75 HS staff, 13 or 17% are current or former EHS/HS parents.

Health

Of the actual **Head Start** year-to-date enrollment of 365 children –

89% completed a dental exam/screening

98% had current physical screenings including being up to date with immunizations

* Challenges encountered – few dental health providers accept Medicaid and our Community Dental Program has changed their service provision area and frequency

Of the cumulative **Early Head Start** enrollment of 207 children –

98.5% were up to date on age-appropriate immunizations

100% completed oral health exams

****Lead/Hematocrit Testing** – In February of 2024, the Health and Safety Specialist became certified in administering lead and hematocrit testing. From March to June, 11 lead tests were completed – 2 were above normal limits and referred to a physician for follow-up.

HS Data – Parent activities/meetings – 80 were held in the 3 counties with attendance totaling 1,463 parents. 542 fathers participated in scheduled activities.

Transportation provided – 87% of enrolled Head Start students were transported by our 13 buses

EHS Data – 5,477 home visits were completed

Parents achieved 89 personal family goals – meeting 294 objectives

Collaborated with literacy volunteers to enroll 13 families in EHS ESL class

59 Wee Plays/socializations were conducted – 68 parent meetings were held – 307 total parents attended

Transported 88 participants to health care providers and 83 children by bus to Wee Plays

111 Post-Partum Screens completed, 22 follow ups, collaboration established with WVU

Medicine to provide follow up services for referrals (cumulative Expectant Mothers enrolled = 23)

Self-Assessment Summary

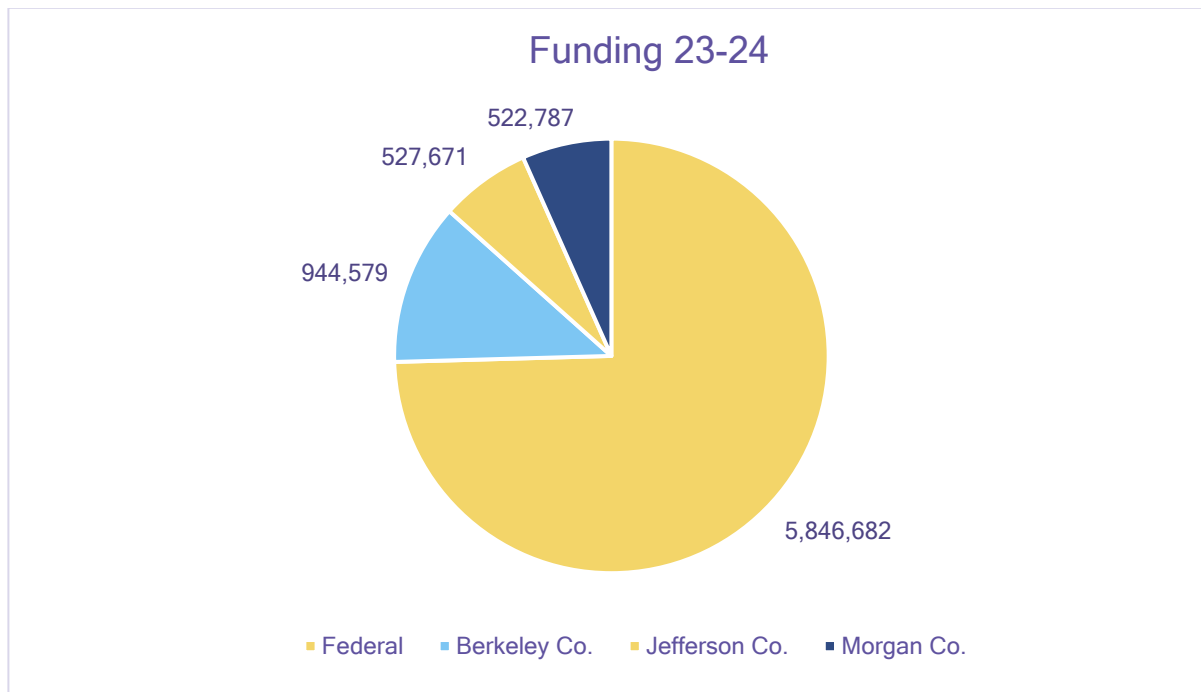
A self-assessment is completed annually by staff, Policy Council members, Community members and parents to determine strengths and areas of need in the Early Head Start/Head Start Program. Information is obtained through surveys, interviews, data from developmental assessments and screenings, monitoring forms, etc. are aggregated and analyzed by teams. Reports are written and reviewed with the committee, providing insights and recommendations that lead to an “improvement plan” for the program.

The three areas demonstrating the most impactful results were:

* **Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention of Staff** - Insights: Few applications to none, depending on position still exists everywhere. Improvement Plan: Increase public awareness of program through community events, participation, networking, revitalizing print media campaign. Develop incentives for staff.

* **Service provision gap from 3-4 year olds** – Insights: 3 year olds remain on waitlists for extended periods of time, lack of staff to open additional classrooms, contracts with counties prioritize 4 year olds. Improvement Plan: Creation of home-based 3 year old option as well as back to back 3 year old classroom, increasing occurrences of transition meetings between EHS and HS, address transition procedures at program leadership meeting. Develop plan to narrow “the gap” between EHS Home Visitors and HS classroom staff.

* **Provision and documentation of direct services** – Insights: direct services are not being counted accurately, parent reluctance to participate in goal setting narrowed services that could be provided, tracking of services was not prioritized effectively. Improvement Plan: Tracking will be monitored monthly on status report, start-up training will focus on goal setting and what direct services can be provided, development of materials that support parental understanding of goal setting. Monthly monitoring of goals and objectives.



Of the Federal amount, 80% is applied to staff salaries and fringe benefits.

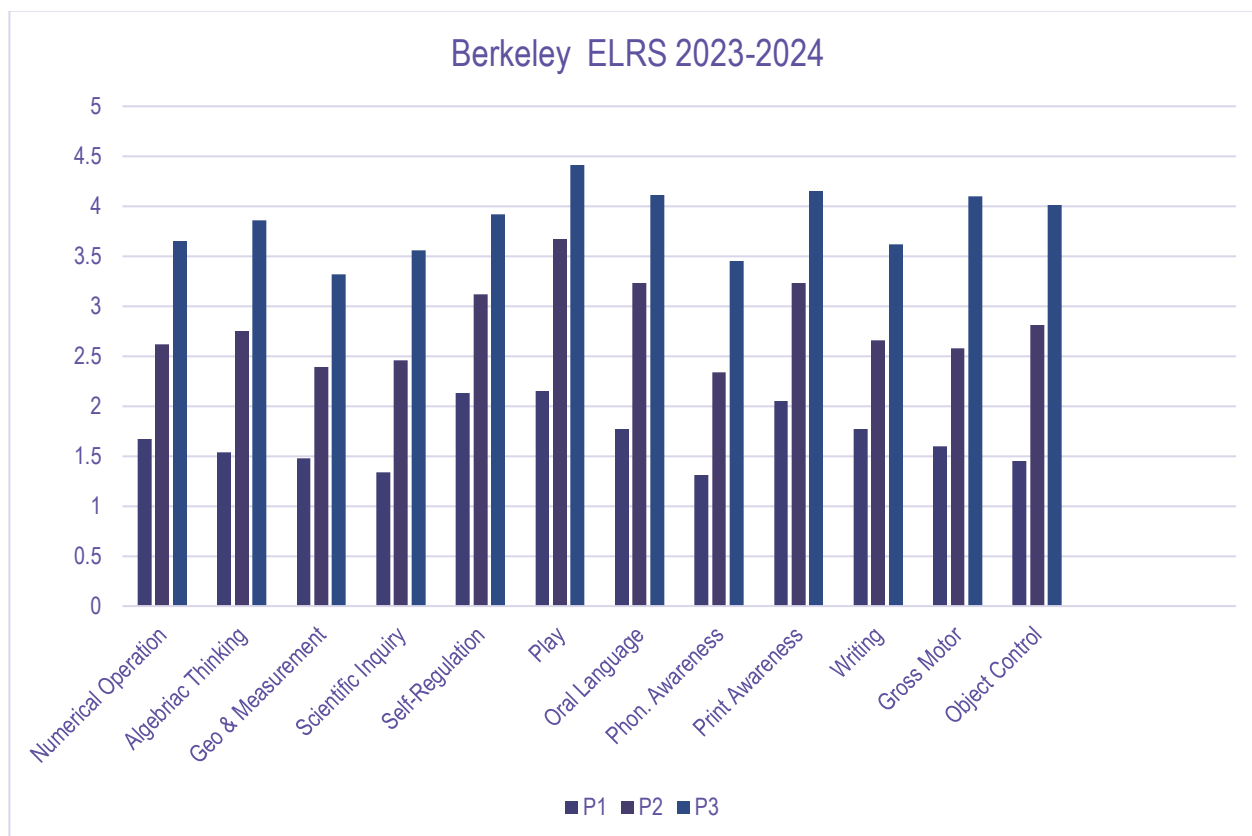
Average Monthly Head Start enrollment (% based on funded enrollment of 339)

Month	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May
Enrolled	293	285	279	287	300	319	329	334	335
Percentage	86%	84%	82%	84.7%	88.5%	94%	97%	98.5%	98.8%

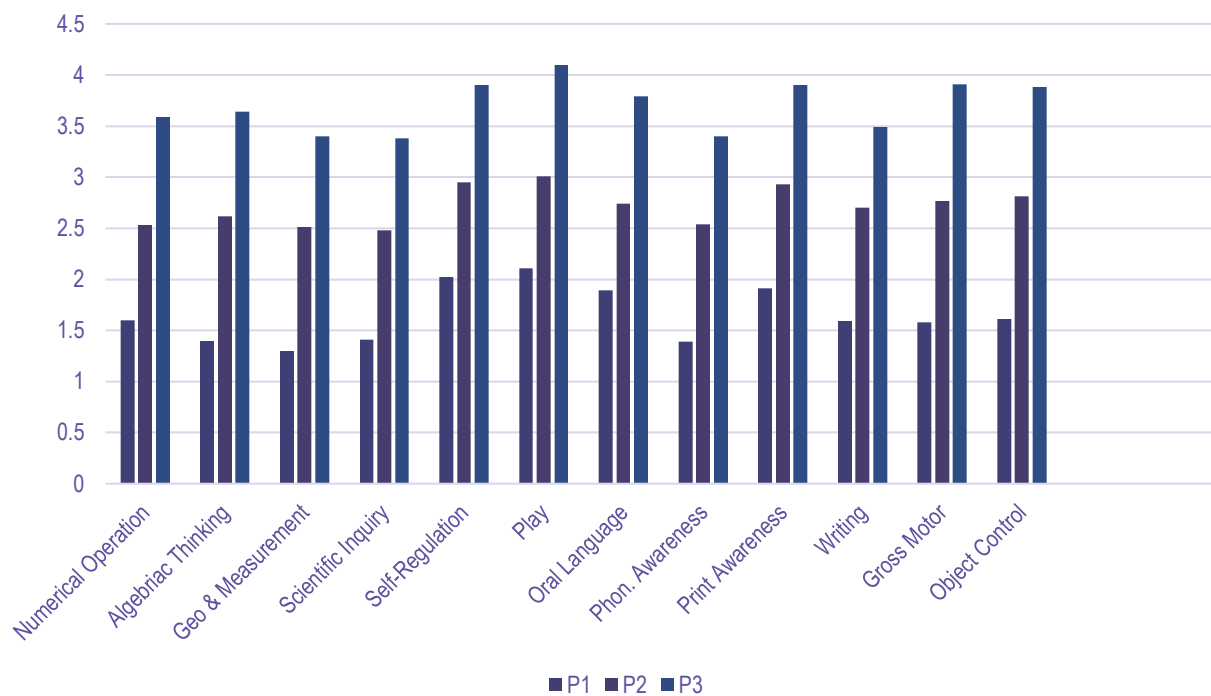
The program was placed on the Full Enrollment Initiative (FEI) by the Office of Head Start for operating with an actual enrollment that is less than full funded enrollment for at least four consecutive months. The program had 12 months beginning the 23-24 school year to achieve at least 97% enrollment. During the first quarter of the school year, two Jefferson County classrooms were closed due to lack of qualified staff. Those classrooms opened late January.

Student Assessment Results by County-

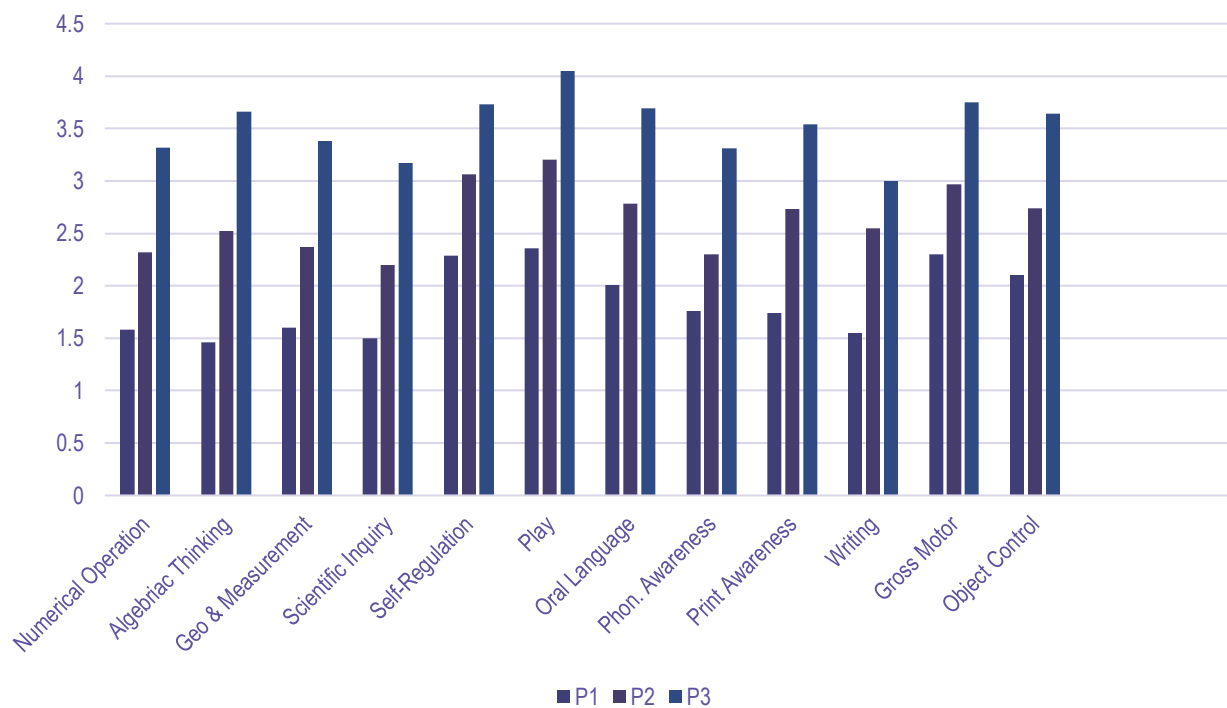
The developmental skills of each child are assessed three times per school year utilizing the state assessment ELRS (Early Learning Reporting System). The graphs below represent the increase from Period 1 (baseline) to Period 2 (completed by mid-February) and P3, the final assessment (completed by the end of May).



Jefferson ELRS 2023-2024



Morgan ELRS 2023-2024



A concerted effort is made by all staff (bus drivers, teachers, assistant teachers, family advocates) to support the skill development and school readiness of each child. Starting with bus pick-up, children are engaged in learning, whether learning vocabulary words from our vocabulary calendar, singing songs, I SPY activities, or listening to a story. At the beginning of each school year, school readiness goals are established with each family for their child. These goals are reviewed at parent/teacher conferences. Our “Read To Me” program provides each family/child with a journal to write or draw in. A bag of 5 books, selected by each child, goes home weekly for parents to read. Parents make a pledge to read to their child a certain number of minutes each month. There is an emphasis at the beginning and throughout the school year on social-emotional skill building. Home solution kits are provided to each of our families. In addition, our program provides activities and information through our tri-county newsletter, follow-up and support the up-to-date health and dental status of each child, participate in transition meetings for children with IEPs, facilitate meetings/communications with receiving school principals for children with unsafe/challenging behaviors, hold K-readiness meetings for parents and schedule specific activities for the children to experience kindergarten. Family Advocates also provide each parent with a packet of the documents they will need to register their child for kindergarten.

Program Title: IT Support

PURPOSE: To provide IT support services to the eight county school systems, the Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, and EPIC programs.

FUNDING SOURCE: EPIC

CONTACT PERSON: Jill A. Woolcock
304.596.2659
jwoolcock@wvesc.org

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Recorded 829 work orders
- 620 in-house work orders supporting Head Start, Adult Ed/SPOKES, Public Service Training, WV Birth to Three, Adolescent Health, and EPIC
- Imaged and installed new equipment for EPIC staff in the main office and satellite locations
- Kept network and computer equipment updated as standards evolved
- Kept all equipment inventoried, labeled, and recorded in One-to-One and WVEIS
- Replaced wireless systems in EPIC office and one Head Start location; planning on doing more for FY25
- Installed new Fortinet Firewall in EPIC Office
- Secured a state-wide purchasing contract for counties to use for technology goods
- Recycled old equipment that was no longer in service

SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC PLAN RESULTS:

The IT Support Program has an IT Manager who supports and maintains equipment for the EPIC office, counties, and Head Start/EHS/Pre-K and Adult Education /SPOKES satellite buildings and classrooms.

PERSONNEL SUPPORTED:

IT Manager (1)

Program Title: Medicaid Reimbursement Program

PURPOSE: WV Code 18-2-5b: Provide programmatic and technical assistance that results in the highest level of Medicaid reimbursement dollars while operating within the guidelines set forth by the Bureau of Medical Services, the State Board of Education and the Department of Health and Human Resources

FUNDING SOURCE: The current FFP (Federal Financing Participation) rate of 80.88% as effective January 1, 2024

CONTACT PERSON(s): Alaina Reilly
304-596-2646
alaina.reilly@k12.wv.us

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Worked directly with counties to provide all services required/requested in support of the Medicaid Reimbursement Program
- Provided ongoing support for the counties with the new Medicaid billing system, E-Docs
- Ongoing research of county Special Education Rosters to determine and notify the county of Medicaid eligibility
- Provided guidance and assistance in the acquisition of National Provider Identifiers for all newly hired or contracted providers
- Enrolled and/or re-enrolled 31 new and existing county providers based on movement of the provider and county hiring or contracting of personnel
- Yearly provision of all enrolled provider updated licensures, WVDE Certifications
- Managed Random Moment Time Study information and changes to keep counties updated when moments need addressed
- Performed quality control on all billing received to determine to the best of our ability if the billing is allowable
- Informed and assisted counties in the correction of student data to ensure a system match of eligibility and guarantee reimbursement
- Assisted each county with upcoming Audit, aiding with spreadsheets
- Worked directly with WV Medicaid Coordinator to ensure guidance is up-to-date or request clarification on specific areas when necessary

- Worked directly with regional and field representatives from Molina to prepare for work with each county on revalidation of all currently enrolled providers
- Assisted counties with notifications of reimbursements through weekly deposits

SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC PLAN RESULTS:

Based on goals established in the Strategic Plan the Medicaid Reimbursement Programs multiple level requirements, and ongoing county support continues to prove extensive and necessary. Continuous program changes and clarification of Chapter 538 requires daily individual provider and provider group updates. Implementing the program based on the guidelines set forth leaves us the ongoing task of increasing provider participation and acquiring parental consents for use of the Medicaid information.

PERSONNEL SUPPORTED:

Medicaid Billing Agent

Program Title: Public Service Training

PURPOSE: West Virginia Public Service Training, or WVPST, is the umbrella term for a group of programs related to maintaining the health, safety, and well-being of the general public including but not limited to – Firefighting, Technical Rescue, Hazardous Materials, Emergency Medical Services, and Law Enforcement. WVPST provides fire departments, EMS agencies, law enforcement, industry, and the general community with a wide variety of cost-effective training.

FUNDING SOURCE: WVDE Grants; Class Tuition

CONTACT PERSON: David Weller
304.596.2653 (office) or 304.671.8811 (cell)
djweller@wvesc.org

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- 6831 participants were enrolled in 660 classes totaling 77,836 clock hours of training
- Developed new and creative remote learning opportunities
- WVPST Martinsburg has lead role in maintaining WVPST documents
- WVPST Martinsburg has lead role in maintaining WVPST website
- WVPST Martinsburg has lead role in maintaining WVPST “PSTachio” database
- WVPST Martinsburg will be the lead agency for fire testing and test creation for WVPST state-wide
- WVPST will be the lead agency for IFSAC certification and accreditation for West Virginia.
- Conducted several Instructor Courses
- Assists with and provides registration services to the WVPST ESCAPe Conference
- Oversees and publishes WV State EMS protocols annually
- WVPST holds two (2) positions on the West Virginia EMS Advisory Council
- WVPS lead the IFSAC accreditation resulting in a perfect score during site evaluation. We added 12 levels to this national credential that we can offer stakeholders and are currently working on an additional 15 levels of technical rescue.

- Continued collaboration with other agencies to coordinate training and testing– WV Department of Education, WV State Fire Commission, WV Office of Emergency Medical Services, WV EMS Advisory Council, National Registry of EMTs, American Heart Association, WVU Fire Service Extension, James Rumsey Technical Institute, Mineral County Technical Center, Blue Ridge CTC, South Branch Career and Technical Center, Eastern CTC, WV Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Local Emergency Planning Committees, WV Adult Education Association, International Fire Service Accreditation Congress, WV Miners' Health, Safety & Training, West Virginia Professional Firefighters Apprenticeship Board

SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC PLAN RESULTS:

Benchmarks and student accountability have been a major focus to maintain program integrity. WVPST instructors were certified and recertified according to WVDE procedures and policy 5202. Firefighter I pass rates remain 88% which is well above the national average. EMS pass rates are declining across the state, but WVPST is serving on a taskforce to develop a mandatory statewide EMS orientation program which will directly impact overall pass rates.

PERSONNEL SUPPORTED:

Public Service Training Coordinator

Public Service Training Specialist

Administrative Assistant (.50)

Part Time Fire Service, EMS, and CPR Instructors

Program Title: EPIC WV Substitute Teacher Training

PURPOSE: EPIC provides WV Substitute Teacher Training for candidates who wish to substitute teach in WV and those who need to renew their current WV Substitute Teaching permits. Our training includes topics required by the WVDE including professional responsibilities, legal aspects of teaching, mandated reporting, classroom management, reading and literacy instruction, instructional strategies, trauma-informed best practices, lesson planning, and understanding the WV College and Career Readiness Standards. Additionally, our classes cover economic diversity, certification, job application, and technology.

Since October 2020, our training classes have been offered 100% online using the Google Classroom platform. New and renewal candidates can enroll at any time and complete coursework at their own pace in the comfort of their own homes on their own devices. EPIC has partnered with The Teaching Channel to provide more than 7 hours of observation videos showcasing best practices of more than 25 educators in a variety of settings, subjects, grade levels, and classroom structures as part of the online class.

EPIC's training classes are available to candidates in all 55 counties across WV.

FUNDING SOURCE: Our classes are participant-funded at \$150 each.

CONTACT PERSON: Shannon Johnson
304-596-2663
sdjohnson@wvdesc.org

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- In FY24, we trained 170 new and 36 renewal candidates.
- FY24 revenue of \$30,900
- Combined data from evaluations conducted at the end of each training earned an overall quality rating of 4.7 / 5.0
- Below are some “Additional Comments” left by participants:
 - “This course was obviously designed by someone who has spent a lot of actual time in the classroom. The advice was practical and helps me feel like I can apply suggested strategies on my own.”
 - “This training class provided insights and practical tools essential for navigating substitute teacher positions. The inclusion of real-world scenarios and additional resources from the West Virginia Department of Education enriches the learning experience and improved my knowledge. Thank you for the work you have done!”
 - “Thanks for a great class! Your teaching style was exactly what I needed. I hope EPIC’s renewal class even is half as good as the initial one and still around when I am ready to renew!”
 - “I expected this class to be somewhat of a slog initially and was pleasantly surprised at the amount of information that I didn’t think about in regard to being a substitute teacher!”
 - “Thank you so much for this extremely beneficial course. Will recommend to anyone who aspires to be a sub.”

SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC PLAN RESULTS:

Quality instruction and on-going updates to the class help maintain student, instructor, and program integrity. We continue to be approved by the WVDE as an option for new and renewal candidates seeking a WV Substitute Teaching Permit.

PERSONNEL SUPPORTED:

One Part-time Instructor – ongoing as needed

Program Title: West Virginia Birth to Three

PURPOSE: As defined by Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: to enhance the capacity of families with children, who either have or are at risk of having delays in their development, by providing services and supports in their natural environment.

FUNDING SOURCE: US Department of Education (IDEA, Part C); WV Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau for Public Health, Office of Maternal Child and Family Health

CONTACT PERSON: Lori Lawson
304.596.2655
llawson@wvesc.org

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Total number of children with an IFSP (total number served): 1189
- Total number of Primary referrals: 1204

SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC PLAN RESULTS:

The WV Birth to Three Regional Administrative Unit participates in community-based events to raise public awareness about early intervention services provided under Part C of IDEA, allowing us to identify children between the ages of birth through thirty-five months of age who have or may be at risk of having developmental delays. One hundred percent of all eligible children receive an evaluation. The Child Outcome Summary Form (COSF) is used at the initial IFSP, six-month review, and upon exit from the system to measure child progress.

PERSONNEL SUPPORTED:

Program Director (1)
Administrative Assistant (.75)
Interim Service Coordinator (4)
Parent Partner (.5)

Program Title: Systems Engineer

PURPOSE: To provide skilled systems engineer services to any county school system in West Virginia. Services include but are not limited to: server installation and troubleshooting, virtualizing infrastructure, migrating VMware to Microsoft Hyper-V, Advanced Active Directory support, Disaster Recovery planning and implementation, Microsoft System Center configuration and management.

FUNDING SOURCE: Contracted Services

CONTACT PERSON: Walt Corley 304-813-2739 walter.corley@wvesc.org

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Contracted with 10 school systems for services
- Over 1400 hours of hands-on support (troubleshooting, configuration, implementation)
- Provided training via Teams for county personnel to administer their VMware and Microsoft systems
- Independently researched and developed plans for counties to best implement solutions

SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC PLAN RESULTS:

The Systems Engineer Program began when counties reached out to EPIC for server and network services that were provided by other vendors. EPIC developed a “tiered” contract that accommodates all levels of support needed at a lower cost than the counties previously had to pay other vendors.

PERSONNEL SUPPORTED:

Systems Engineer (1)

Contact Information

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Sherry Barnett, Administrator

sbarnett@wvesc.org