



Explorers Academy

2017-2018 Annual Report

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FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On behalf of the staff, Policy Council and Board of Directors, it is my pleasure to present the Explorers Academy annual report to the public. The 2017-18 year represented a major turning point for our program. As we launched our new brand, expanded enrollment options to include state-funded pre-K and tuition, and opened a year-round child care facility, the Explorers Academy family simultaneously embarked on a strategic planning process for our next five years.



After a period of unprecedented growth in our agency's operations, the strategic focus for the next five years will be on excellence and responsiveness. We have launched a number of major initiatives, and our priority now is to deliver on the promise of each of those efforts. At the same time, we recognize the communities that we serve are facing mounting challenges, including substance abuse, child welfare, and public safety. As the largest voice for young children in the area, our goal is to join with partners and leaders to tackle these challenges head-on, ensuring the needs of children and families are at the forefront of the conversation.

The results of our Strategic Plan for the next five years are laid out in this annual report, along with our successes during the 2017-18 program year. We invite you to join us in our work on those critical priorities. Explorers Academy has always been, and will continue to be, a hub of connection for families and community organizations dedicated to the well-being of young children. Partnerships and collaborations are essential to sustainable progress, both for our program and the broader region we serve.

The 2017-2018 program year was also a personal turning point for me, as it will be my last full year as Executive Director. I will step aside in December 2018, turning the reins over to the next era of leadership that is focused on solidifying our gains and attaining the highest levels of quality. It has been an extraordinary pleasure to lead this special organization. I look forward to continuing my work and advocacy in the early childhood field, with all the confidence that the future of Explorers Academy is limitless.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer", written in a cursive style.

Welcome to Explorers Academy!

**WE SERVE YELLOWSTONE AND
CARBON COUNTIES BY
PROVIDING HIGH QUALITY
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
AND INTERGENERATIONAL
FAMILY SERVICES.**

At the beginning of the 2017 school year, our agency evolved from Head Start, Inc. to Explorers Academy. Why the change? Our program is growing as we serve more families in innovative ways. We expanded our program to open a new school in Billings and create paid tuition slots for over-income families. Although the Head Start mission of supporting vulnerable children will always be at the core of what we do, we are growing our program so that even more children and families in Yellowstone and Carbon counties can benefit from our evidence-based education and family services programs. When we became Explorers Academy, we created a brand that truly reflects who we are – a high quality, child-centered, play-based early learning center that engages and supports both children and families in their learning and growth .



MISSION

To provide comprehensive services for young children and their families to achieve school readiness and lifelong success.

VISION

Encourage, empower, and educate all children.

VALUES

Children First
Respect
Positivity
Empathy
Competence



Our New Logo

NEW NAME.
NEW BRAND.
SAME MISSION.

When we became Explorers Academy, we wanted to create a new logo that shows our foundations and how we serve families, children, and our community.

CREST AND COLORS

We styled our logo as a crest to represent the quality of our program and its enduring impact on your child's life. We believe that connecting children with their natural environment, indoors and out, through hands-on learning is vital to early development.

FAMILY SURROUNDING CHILDREN

The family in our logo represents how we work with families to provide services that wrap around each child, promoting and supporting their development, health, and education. We partner with parents every step of the way, supporting families in finding quality health care, developing critical reading skills at home, and strengthening parents' relationships with their children. New in 2017, we are excited to offer child care before and after preschool hours to better support working families in our community.

FINANCIAL STABILITY

The house in our logo is a symbol of our goal of supporting families in securing financial stability. As a Head Start program, Explorers Academy promotes well-being of the entire family by supporting parents in achieving goals such as education, housing and financial stability.

EXPLORATORY LEARNING

The book and compass in our logo represents exploratory learning, the core of our approach to education at Explorers Academy. We are a play-based program utilizing tools such as the Creative Curriculum for Preschool to encourage exploration and discovery in learning. Our ultimate goal is to build your child's readiness for school by incorporating social, emotional, and cognitive skill development into their education.

EXPLORERS ACADEMY IS COMMITTED TO WELCOMING ALL FAMILIES

At Explorers Academy, we do not simply care for young children—we intentionally build a foundation of skills and development to support their success in school and in life. We serve our community by meeting families where they are and offering the best quality early education available in Yellowstone and Carbon counties. We collaborate with families to ensure children demonstrate meaningful progress in the development of language and early literacy; cognition and general knowledge; social and emotional skills; approaches to learning; and physical health and development.

As a Head Start program, our focus is on serving the most vulnerable children and families in our community to give them a true head start and help them succeed. We begin enrollment by focusing on admitting as many children experiencing poverty as possible. Then, we offer slots to families who may not meet Head Start's strict income requirements but still want their children to benefit from our excellent curriculum and teaching environment. We also have two Montana state-funded STARS preschool classrooms whose income requirements allow us to meet the needs of the portion of our community who do not meet Head Start income requirements but struggle to afford privately paid preschool.

Creating opportunities for families of all socioeconomic experiences to join the Explorers Academy programs helps us enrich the lives of our students and bring to life our vision of encouraging, empowering, and educating all children.

FAMILY SERVICES

Explorers Academy's services do not start and end with children. With the belief that parents are a child's first and most important teacher, we work to help parents support their child's learning and strengthen family bonds for the greatest chance of success. Not only do we partner with other community agencies and refer families to community resources, we also offer a number of classes and workshops on various topics for our families to take advantage of. Family Advocates work with parents in the Head Start portion of our program to help parents identify goals and work toward them while receiving resources or referrals for any services which may support them. Resources that Head Start parents have access to through our program include:

- Emergency Assistance
- Educational Opportunities
- Nutrition and Cooking Workshops
- Employment Training
- Budgeting Classes
- Goal Setting w/Family Advocate
- Counseling / Mental Health
- Housing Assistance
- Trauma-Informed Care Training
- *Incredible Years* Parenting Classes



INCOME ELIGIBILITY

The vast majority of children admitted to our program qualify because the family's income is at or below the federal poverty line. Before over-income families can be accepted, we must offer available enrollment slots to income-eligible families.



EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Children of families experiencing homelessness are automatically eligible to be enrolled in our program. This year, 27% of families reporting homelessness at enrollment had secured housing by the end of the year.



CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Head Start programs reserve at least 10% of enrollment slots to serve children with disabilities. This year, we served 73 children with disabilities, or 20% of our total enrollment slots.



PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Children of families receiving or eligible for public assistance such as SNAP or TANF are automatically eligible for our program. Families also qualify if the absence of childcare would make them become eligible for such assistance.



FOSTER CHILDREN

Foster children are also automatically eligible for enrollment in our program, regardless of the foster family's income. We hope to add stability and consistent, caring adults to these children's lives.



STARS CLASSROOMS

Montana's legislature allocated money for a publicly funded preschool program beginning with the 2017-2018 school year. We were able to open two STARS classrooms this year, enabling us to serve 36 additional students.



PRIVATE PAY

In 2017, we began offering private-pay tuition slots for the first time. We opened 8 tuition slots this year. Demand for childcare in Yellowstone and Carbon counties is only growing. We are the largest public childcare provider in the community and proud to be able to offer our evidence-based curriculum and professional teaching to all families in our community at a competitive rate.

2017-2018 ENROLLMENT

36

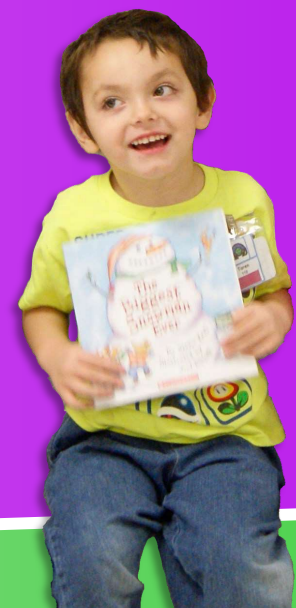
total children in Head Start
Private-pay enrollment slots

87%

average monthly enrollment

275

children enrolled whose family's
income was below 100% of the
federal poverty line



Head Start programs benefit from a unique governance structure in which parents have a strong voice in decision-making. This structure helps us ensure that Head Start programs truly meet the community's needs and that parents provide direction for program services. Program managers oversee day-to-day operations and incorporate guidance from both governing entities.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our Board of Directors is a dynamic team of community members who volunteer their time and expertise to develop quality early childhood education in our community. The Board of Directors meets monthly to discuss issues pertinent to the agency. According to Head Start Program Performance Standards, our Board must always include an experienced accountant or financial manager; a specialist in early childhood education and/or development; an attorney familiar with issues which impact the people we serve; members who have children currently or formerly enrolled in Head Start; and members with expertise in education, business administration, or community affairs.

We thank our 2017-2018 Board members for their service.

- Heidi Jensen, Chair
- Jennifer Stark, Treasurer
- Emily Jones
- Jessica Gaard
- Kent Dubeau
- Chase Brown
- Dr. Erin Allen
- Lynette Schwalbe



POLICY COUNCIL

Our Policy Council is a governing body made up of elected parent representatives from each classroom, as well as appointed community representatives. Policy Council assists in making important decisions regarding program direction including policies; hiring and termination of employees; curriculum; and budget decisions. Policy Council is also involved in decisions regarding parent involvement/engagement activities; program enrollment priorities, funding applications, budget planning, and more. Policy Council members are both the voice of the classroom parents at the monthly Policy Council meetings and the voice of Policy Council when reporting to their parent committees. Members play a critical role in building relationships between Explorers Academy and our community. We thank our 2017-2018 Policy Council members for their service.

- Jessica Esplin, Chair
- Starr Emery
- Charity Diamond
- Adam Tucker
- Rebecca Kittock
- Stephanie Adams
- Leigha McGarvey
- Anita Gonzalez
- Kendra Scilley
- Calea Madera
- Paul Law
- Amy Southgate
- Shannon Williams
- Kira Angel
- Lexie Morales
- Susan DeVries
- Ryen Thomsen

Community Reps

- Doug Anderson
- Daniel Brooks
- Jon Osier
- Barb Perzinski

Board Liaison

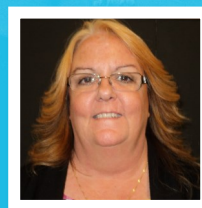
- Kent Dubeau

MANAGEMENT

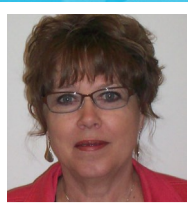
Our management staff work diligently to make sure our operations meet our very high standards, conduct self-assessment to ensure the program continues to improve, and ensure compliance with Head Start standards and applicable laws. An intrepid team of hard working, committed individuals who strive for excellence in all components of our program, our management staff are focused on creating a culture of excellence, innovation, and transparency.



Jennifer Owen
Executive Director



Traci Wimmer
Head Start Director



Dee Dee Kane
Human Resources
Director



Richard Geiger
Finance Director



Jennifer Thorson
ERSEA Director



Karin Fitzgerald
Education
Co-Director



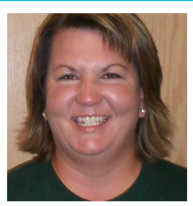
Lloyd Shangreux
Operations
Director



Megan Martin
Community
Relations
Director



Laura Zimmerman
Education
Co-Director



Janice King
Family and
Community
Partnerships
Director



Kathy Huck
Nutrition
Director



466 FAMILIES. 466 PARTNERSHIPS.

In the 2017-2018 school year, we served 378 families. The engagement of a family in their child's education is critical to a child's later success in school. Explorers Academy focuses on involving families in meaningful and productive ways as partners in their child's education and care. Parents are encouraged to volunteer in classrooms, join Parent Committees, or join Policy Council. Our Parent Committees plan special events for families to enjoy, such as this year's Spring Fling family dance. We partner with families to ensure each child has quality medical and dental care and receives the services they need in order to

grow and develop. Families in the Head Start program work with Family Advocates who support families in securing continuous, accessible health care and dental care and in establishing medical "homes" to ensure children receive regular care. Families are also encouraged to work with their Family Advocates to secure additional services which may address the family's needs, such as housing assistance, securing public assistance like SNAP benefits, or finding legal services.

KINDERGARTEN READINESS

Everything we do in the classroom and with families is to prepare both students and parents for kindergarten and school beyond. To prepare children socially, emotionally, and cognitively for school, we work with families to form a set of goals for each child unique to their particular needs and strengths. We check in with these goals multiple times throughout the year and conduct assessments at various points to ensure children are on the right track in these domains. If we discover a child needs extra support, such as speech therapy or specific disability supports, we partner with community service providers to ensure these children have the best chance of success. At the end of each school year, we work with local kindergartens to make sure these supports continue and invite parents to school tours so they can become familiar with facilities and staff before kindergarten begins. Parents are provided with a kindergarten transition booklet which discusses how to prepare students for

100% of enrolled children had health insurance at the end of the program year

100% of enrolled children had an ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care at the end of the program year

100% of enrolled children had an ongoing source of continuous, accessible dental care at the end of the program year

86%

of enrolled children completed required developmental, sensory, and behavioral screenings in the first 45 days

99%

of enrolled children determined to have a disability received special services for their disability

85%

of families received services to meet needs identified in collaboration with their Family Advocates

127

fathers involved in child's Head Start child development experiences

kindergarten. We support parents with information on how to register their students for school, establish new routines, and how to help their children understand the importance of school by modeling respectful interactions with teachers and engaging with the classroom when possible. The booklet also provides parents with a “Kindergarten Readiness Checklist” to help them look for signs that their child is ready, such as beginning to share with others, counting to ten, or understanding actions have both causes and effects.



FAMILY PROGRAMS IN 2017-2018

CULTURAL CELEBRATIONS

At Explorers Academy, respect for families and their unique experiences is a driving force behind every decision we make about our program. We are committed to creating an environment that welcomes people from different backgrounds and cultures. We love to recognize and celebrate our community’s diversity by holding cultural celebration events throughout the year. This year, we celebrated Native American, Latino, Asian, and Polynesian cultures. Our cultural celebrations are multifaceted events. Each event is rooted in a weeklong study of the focus culture in our classrooms in which our goal is to expose our students to the many different ways their friends eat, sing, dance, dress, and relate to their families. The highlight of each cultural week is a Celebration and Family Night where we host a get together for all of our families, serve dinner, offer entertainment, do activities, and have fun together.

WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

Two of our favorite engagement events are “Move with Me, Mommy!” and “Read to Me, Daddy!”. These are monthly events where parents engage in an activity with their children to help build their relationship while supporting their physical health and literacy skills. We also invite families in for nutrition workshops where they are invited to cook together and learn a new recipe. The workshop topics are influenced by common kitchen frustrations such as feeding picky eaters or cooking healthy meals for a family while on a budget.



PARENT EMPOWERMENT

We work hard to ensure parents feel empowered to tackle the challenges of raising children and interacting with education staff. Parent Committees at each site give parents an a chance to get involved in their children’s education through classroom activity and event planning. Policy Council membership offers parents an opportunity to learn and practice leadership skills that will serve them throughout their lives. Empowered parents have the confidence to speak up and ensure their children and their family have all the supports needed to succeed.

“Being part of Explorers Academy’s Policy Council and parent committee gave me the confidence to be part of my child’s PTA. It taught me that I have a say and I have a voice!” - Amy

Head Start Program Performance Standards require Head Start agencies to complete a comprehensive community assessment at least every five years or when a significant change in the community requires a new assessment. We completed a new assessment this year. Explorers Academy serves preschool-age children ages three and four. Our 360 Head Start slots plus state and fee-funded additional 42 slots are concentrated in the greater Billings metropolitan area with two sites in Billings, one in Laurel, and one in Lockwood.

TRENDS FOR HEAD START ELIGIBLE CHILDREN

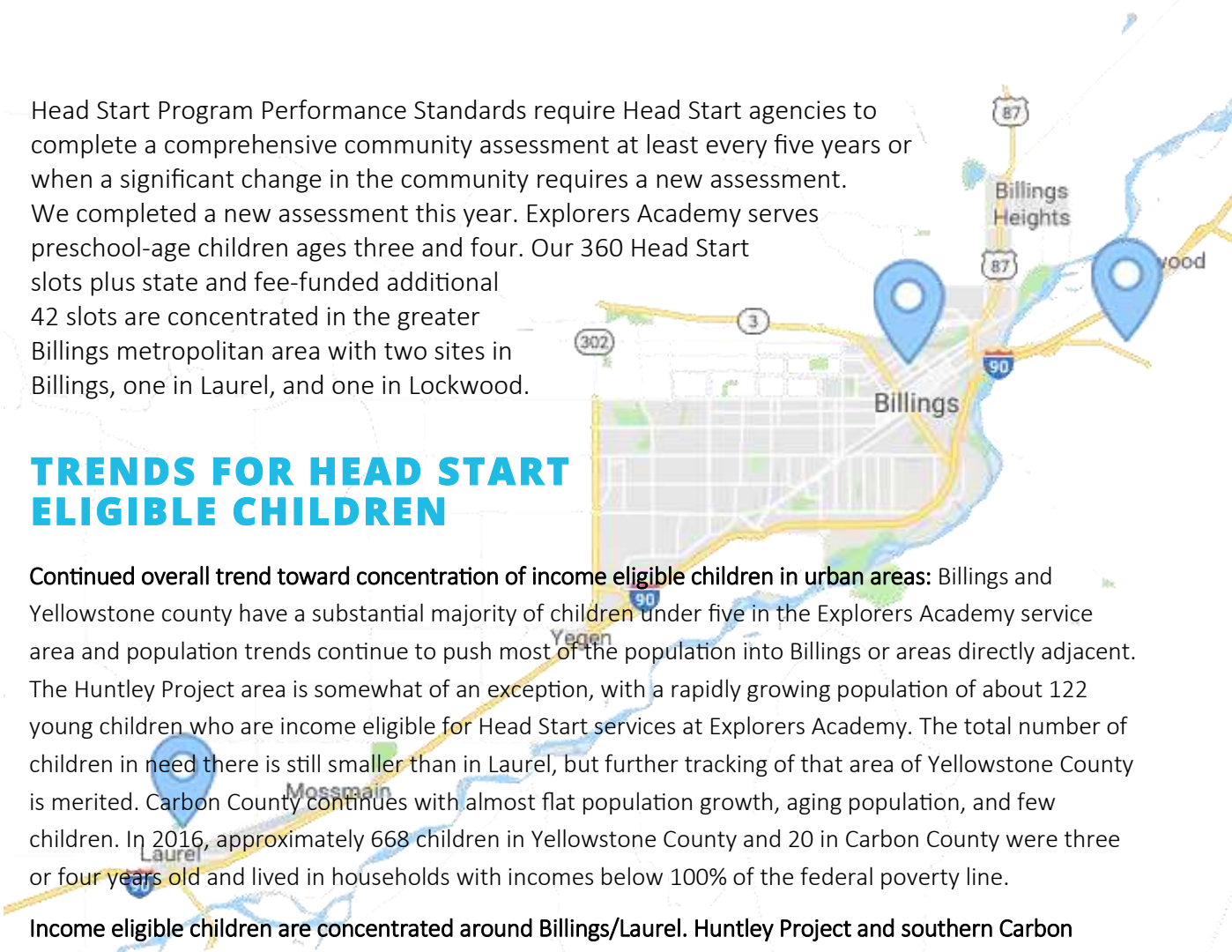
Continued overall trend toward concentration of income eligible children in urban areas: Billings and Yellowstone county have a substantial majority of children under five in the Explorers Academy service area and population trends continue to push most of the population into Billings or areas directly adjacent. The Huntley Project area is somewhat of an exception, with a rapidly growing population of about 122 young children who are income eligible for Head Start services at Explorers Academy. The total number of children in need there is still smaller than in Laurel, but further tracking of that area of Yellowstone County is merited. Carbon County continues with almost flat population growth, aging population, and few children. In 2016, approximately 668 children in Yellowstone County and 20 in Carbon County were three or four years old and lived in households with incomes below 100% of the federal poverty line.

Income eligible children are concentrated around Billings/Laurel. Huntley Project and southern Carbon County area have smaller concentrated pockets of need: Most children who are income eligible live in Billings, particularly in a handful of neighborhoods on the south, north, and west side. Laurel is the second largest feeder area, but the number of income eligible children there is about 150, just over 10% of the 1,339 children in poverty in Billings. Huntley Project has around 122 children that were income eligible and under five years old in 2016. Carbon County had roughly 52 children in poverty in 2016, almost half of what it was in 2015. Red Lodge and East Carbon CCD had the most children, but the numbers remain quite small and will probably remain so without major changes in population trends and economic conditions.

A greater proportion of Hispanic/Latino and American Indian children under 5 qualify for Head Start services than are present in the overall population: In Yellowstone County, 10% of income eligible children were Hispanic/Latino and 23% were American Indian/Alaska Native in 2016. In Carbon County, Hispanic/Latino children made up half the income eligible children in 2016. The Hispanic/Latino community is the most rapidly rising minority in the service area.

The number of young children in foster care is rising in Yellowstone County: In the last five years, the number of children in foster care in Yellowstone County has nearly doubled (77%), with 461 total children under five at some point in SFY2017. In Carbon County, the number of children in foster care annually has remained small. In this region, 76.6% of removed children had drugs or alcohol as an indicator. This is a higher proportion than for Montana.

Homelessness is a continuing concern, but significant gaps in characterizing young children remain: Experts on homelessness agree that Billings has the best data, but it is highly likely that data available are missing some young children. HUD point in time data concentrates around Billings and found 53 children under the age of five in 2017. The number of homeless kindergarteners in Yellowstone County public schools was 47 in SY2015-2016.





The number of children with special needs is growing: Mirroring the population as a whole, children ages three to five who are served through public schools or public school co-ops are largely concentrated in Yellowstone County. 293 students in this age range were served in Yellowstone County in SY016-2017. For these ages, Carbon County has the highest percentage of children identified at 8% of the age group population and significantly higher than in Yellowstone County (4.6%) and Montana (4.4%). The proportion of children identified with special needs in the three to five age group is lower than children in the overall three to twenty-one age group for both counties and Montana.

SERVICE NEEDS IN THE EXPLORERS ACADEMY AREA

Significant service needs exist within the Explorers Academy service area. Community services for Head Start eligible families are centered around Billings, Montana. Services are concentrated in Billings, and those without transportation and in rural areas can be isolated from services that require travel.

Child care and early education services: This area appears to be both a priority and asset and a challenge to provide within the service area. Yellowstone County has a far higher proportion of registered child care slots than Carbon County, compared to the number of children under five. The rural areas in both counties have few facilities in any location and are more negatively affected if a facility closes and is not replaced. In Carbon County, both Red Lodge and Joliet have been able to open new capacity after the Head Start sites closed in those locations. Ongoing challenges include availability, affordability of private facilities, hours offered, transportation, eligibility and awareness of scholarship opportunities.

Basic services to address poverty: Housing, food/nutrition, and transportation are areas that were identified most frequently as needs within this area. For housing and transportation, available service is limited in terms of capacity, services offered, eligibility and geographic reach. 22% of Head Start families surveyed did not use personal transportation to get to Explorers Academy sites; most of those relied on the bus. The Explorers Academy bus was also rated “very useful” by over 40% of respondents. Food and nutrition services had identified limits, but appeared to be somewhat more available across the service area. It appears that many families who would qualify for nutrition assistance services do not access those services. Lack of transportation also was noted to affect ability to access many other services, and closure of the Red Lodge Office of Public Assistance may further limit access to some services in Carbon County.

Medical/Health Services: Medical services are centered in Billings and have a broader range of services than in other areas of Montana. Carbon County and rural Yellowstone County are largely serviced by satellite services or by coming to Billings. Health coverage for children is high, though for adults with incomes below 200% FPL, 15% lack health insurance.

Mental Health Services: Mental health is a top community concern. There are services for both children and adults, but there are gaps in the available network and capacity to serve families with young children. A majority of Explorers Academy staff and community partners surveyed identified eligibility as a barrier to accessing children’s mental health. Among Head Start families that used mental health services, more had difficulty accessing services for adults than for children.

Substance abuse and addiction services: This was a top community priority. Programs to address this are available in the service region, but there were significant concerns about capacity, eligibility, and affordability.

Services for children with special needs: Services that exist and were specifically identified as useful in the surveys conducted for this assessment. However, it appears that more early identification and services to young children would be useful.

Further education and resources to help adults with young children parent more effectively and to become fully self-sufficient through job training, education, and employment was identified as areas that may need further capacity.

Community Partnerships, Networks, and Referrals: Collaboration and partnerships were identified as positive assets in both counties. However, there were far more questions and lack of knowledge expressed about the type, effectiveness, and amount of need for many services in Carbon County. Referrals and networking to help families access services was identified as an asset and a need. Head Start referrals to further services was rated “Very useful” by 76% of families that had used the service.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2023



Throughout this year, we have focused on growing our program, serving our community as a leader in early childhood education, and continually improving our staff, services, and facilities. Head Start programs are required to write new five-year strategic plans at the beginning of each new grant cycle. This requirement coincided beautifully with growth and change we have experienced this year, so we dove in looking at ways we could improve our services and better meet the needs of our community.

The community assessment on the previous pages informed the development of our strategic plan, as did surveys with staff and families aimed at identifying gaps in service or structure that we could work on. The plan was created by a cross-cutting committee of staff, board members, and parents. We are pleased to present our guiding plan for 2018-2023. We are eager to put our plans into action for regulatory compliance, trauma-informed services, continual quality improvement, and improved health and wellness for children, families, and staff.



DEMONSTRATE 100% COMPLIANCE WITH HEAD START PERFORMANCE STANDARDS



OUTCOMES: Program resources will be effectively and efficiently use due to increase in data-driven decision-making. Program quality will increase, improving student outcomes and family goal attainment. Turnover declines due to increase training and support.



ESTABLISH SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS THAT FIT THE NEEDS OF FAMILIES WE SERVE



OUTCOMES: Overall child health, safety, and development will improve with models that meet family needs. Parents will improve family self-sufficiency due to flexible child care options that support work and/or education needs.



IMPLEMENT A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH TO SERVICE DELIVERY TO BETTER MEET THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES DEALING WITH COMPLEX TRAUMA



OUTCOMES: Child outcomes will improve across the board. Parents will gain knowledge and skills to address trauma in the home. Effectiveness of teacher-child interactions will improve. Quality will improve due to reduced turnover and stress. Classroom environments will reflect a trauma-informed approach.



STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS RELATED TO SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT TO IMPROVE RESOURCES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN AND FAMILIES



OUTCOMES: Families dealing with substance abuse issues will receive comprehensive support to work towards a healthy home for their children. Children in families with substance abuse challenges will received appropriate classroom support and services. Staff will feel more confident in having crucial conversations with families, be more equipped to offer resources and referrals, and provide ongoing support to families.



IMPLEMENT PROACTIVE MEASURES TO DECREASE STAFF TURNOVER TO 15%



OUTCOMES: Child outcomes will improve due to more stable and well-trained staff. Program quality improvement will increase due to long-term commitment by stable staff. Agency ability to advocate in the community for children and families will increase.

FUNDING AND IN-KIND SUPPORT

While Head Start programs are primarily funded by a federal grant, programs are also required to generate significant match funding from the surrounding community. No more than 80% of our program's budget can come from federal funding, so the remaining 20% match funding must be generated from donations of financial resources or in-kind services. Thankfully, we have many supporters. We are fortunate to serve a kind and generous community full of big hearts and people who sincerely care about furthering our mission to support school readiness and lifelong success for young children and their families.

When community members invest their time, talents, resources, and materials in our program, they are investing in the well-being and education of their neighbors. Community support of our program also impacts our local economy—quality early childhood education has a \$7 return to the local economy for every \$1 invested. Our supporters range from local banks, corporations, and social clubs like Kiwanis to individuals who enjoy reading to our students, knitting winter gear to keep our students warm, and even cleaning our facilities to annihilate germs and keep our students and staff healthy. We would never be able to succeed in encouraging, empowering, and educating children without the generous support of our community. To all those who have donated their time and resources to our program in this past year, we thank you!



Central High students organizing library books at our Terry Park site



Over 300 books donated through Bookie Monster bins at VFCU branches.



Billings Police Chief Rich St. John visited to read with our students for Cat in the Hat Day!



A Kiwanis member readers to a student on one of their regular visits to our program.



The Yellowstone Art Museum holds a family reception featuring our students' artwork every year.

OUR 2017-2018 SUPPORTERS

Anytime Fitness	Bailey Garage Doors	Benedicts Affordable Cartridges
Billings Clinic Foundation	Billings Clinic Pediatrics	Billings Public Schools
Blankets and Bears	Boy Scouts of America	Brown Law Firm
Canvas Creek	Century 21	Early Childhood Intervention
Eastern Yellowstone Special Services Cooperative	Entre Technology Services	First Interstate Bank
Graphic Finesse	Inter Mountain Therapy Animals	John Murphy DDS
Jones Law Firm	Kings Ace Hardware	Matt the Painter
MSUB Jazz Band/Jon Roberts	Jon Roberts	MT Premier Entertainment
Netzer Law Firm	Oasis	Paul and Kathy Kelker
Pizza Ranch	Project Lunch	Qdoba
Radio Billings	Rimrock Pediatric Dentistry	St. Vincent Health Care
TenderNest	TOPZ Sandwich Co	Ultra Graphics
Valley Federal Credit Union	Western Security Bank	Yellowstone Art Museum
Yellowstone-West/Carbon County Special Services Cooperative	YourPie	ZooMT



Our friend Roz was our Volunteer of the Month in April 2018 and has volunteered with us for over 8 years!

Our students enjoyed planting seeds in flower pots donated by Kings Ace Hardware!



2017-2018 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash	\$ 321,114	\$ 290,918
Restricted cash	64,724	67,053
Investments	158,847	143,365
Accounts receivable, net	10,000	
Grant receivables	22,572	134,570
Prepaid expenses	17,603	27,899
Total current assets	<u>594,860</u>	<u>663,805</u>
Property and equipment, net of accumulated depreciation	<u>2,147,976</u>	<u>890,995</u>
Total assets	<u><u>\$ 2,742,836</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 1,554,800</u></u>
Liabilities and net assets		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$ 110,067	\$ 184,607
Accrued payroll and benefits	85,496	100,109
Advances from grantors	17,966	
Current portion of long-term debt	19,517	
Total current liabilities	<u>233,046</u>	<u>284,716</u>
Long-term liabilities		
Notes payable, net of current portion	<u>614,416</u>	<u></u>
Total liabilities	<u>847,462</u>	<u>284,716</u>
Net assets		
Unrestricted		
Operating	316,607	312,036
Property and equipment	1,514,043	890,995
Temporarily restricted	64,724	67,053
Total net assets	<u>1,895,374</u>	<u>1,270,084</u>
Total liabilities and net assets	<u><u>\$ 2,742,836</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 1,554,800</u></u>

SCHEDULE OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

	<u>Program</u> <u>Services</u>	<u>Management</u> <u>& General</u>	<u>Fundraising</u>	<u>Total</u>
Salaries and wages	\$ 1,966,842	\$ 496,913		\$ 2,463,755
Payroll taxes	320,550			320,550
Benefits	192,007	28,851		220,858
Staff development and recruiting	6,396			6,396
Total salaries and related expenses	2,485,795	525,764		3,011,559
Repairs and maintenance	74,332			74,332
Books and subscriptions	18,566	539	\$ 50	19,155
Travel	10,565	1,807		12,372
Training	52,971	8,349		61,320
Supplies and materials	354,783	1,602	(165)	356,220
Janitorial and laundry	38,092			38,092
Printing and copying	1,779	137	155	2,071
Utilities and telephone	93,659			93,659
Vehicle expense	24,997			24,997
Insurance	64,445			64,445
Penalties and fees	148	76		224
Rent	56,907			56,907
Contracted services	34,120	23,519		57,639
Professional fees	471,321		3,250	474,571
Postage	2,643	73		2,716
Technology	135,837	160		135,997
Food and beverage	170,586	46		170,632
Equipment rental	(903)		2,859	1,956
Advertising	81	1,254	4,094	5,429
Debt service - interest	25,138			25,138
Bad debt expense	2,000			2,000
Other	(213,484)	(24)	100	(213,408)
Total expenses before depreciation	3,904,378	563,302	10,343	4,478,023
Depreciation	112,428			112,428
Total expenses	\$ 4,016,806	\$ 563,302	\$ 10,343	\$ 4,590,451

Explorers Academy last received federal monitoring reviews in Spring 2016. During the reviews of both School Readiness as well as Governance & Leadership, the program was deemed to be in full compliance with all relevant Head Start Performance Standards.

The program also conducted an independent financial audit for program year 2017-2018, during which the auditors made findings related to internal controls, account reconciliation, and adequacy of documentation. The program submitted a corrective action plan to address the findings. The complete audit can be found at www.explorershs.org.

Explorers Academy
615 N. 19th St.
Billings, MT 59101
www.explorershs.org
(406) 245-7233

A HEAD START PROGRAM

