



CAROLE ROBERTSON CENTER
for Learning

Head Start Annual Report Addendum

FISCAL YEAR 2025

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FUNDING

FISCAL YEAR 2025 | JULY 1, 2024-JUNE 30, 2025

PUBLIC FUNDS		PRIVATE FUNDS	
Source	Amount	Source	Amount
City of Chicago (DFSS)	\$3,935,134	In-Kind	\$7,000
State of Illinois	\$6,635,672	Individuals/Foundations/Corporations	\$3,660,598
Office of Head Start	\$25,975,681	Family Co-pay	\$57,330
Cook County	\$251,902	Investment/Interest	\$332,160
		Miscellaneous Income	\$22,715
Total Public	\$36,798,389	Total Private	\$4,079,803
Total public and private funds received: \$40,878,192			

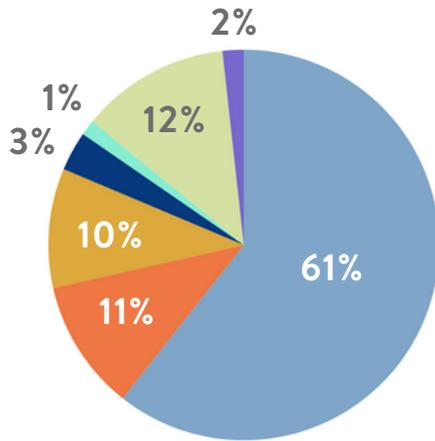


BUDGETED VS. ACTUAL EXPENDITURES

FISCAL YEAR 2025 | JULY 1, 2024-JUNE 30, 2025

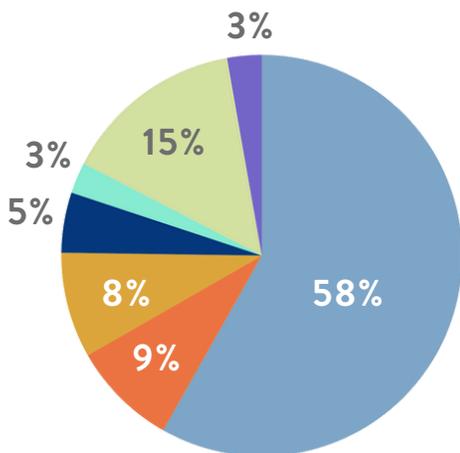


FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGETED EXPENDITURES



- Salaries/Benefits: \$23,329,860
- Program Expenses/Food: \$4,159,387
- Contractual Services & Provider Fees: \$3,808,443
- Occupancy: \$1,255,374
- Staff Development, Travel, and Meetings: \$488,961
- Pass Through (Subrecipients and Partners): \$4,757,548
- Other (Includes Depreciation and Other Expenses): \$673,232

FISCAL YEAR 2025 ACTUAL EXPENDITURES



- Salaries/Benefits: \$22,479,568
- Program Expenses/Food: \$3,300,979
- Contractual Services & Provider Fees: \$3,281,163
- Occupancy: \$1,875,573
- Staff Development, Travel, and Meetings: \$965,951
- Pass Through (Subrecipients and Partners): \$5,656,331
- Other (Includes Depreciation and Other Expenses): \$1,072,853

*Totals do not add to 100% due to rounding.

ENROLLMENT DATA

FISCAL YEAR 2025



Total Number of EHS/HS Families with Enrolled Children	1,620
Average Monthly Enrollment – EHS (as a Percentage of Funded Enrollment)	96%
Average Monthly Enrollment – HS (as a Percentage of Funded Enrollment)	96%
Average Monthly Enrollment – EHS Expansion (as a Percentage of Funded Enrollment)	99%
Funded Enrollment Slots – EHS	513
Funded Enrollment Slots – HS	666
Funded Enrollment Slots – EHS Expansion	185

PERCENTAGE OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SERVED

Note: Enrollment data is based on our Program Year 2024-2025 (August 30, 2024 – August 23, 2025).

Head Start (CH Grant)		
Type of Eligibility	Number	Percentage
Income Threshold	241	32%
Foster Children	8	1%
Homeless	73	10%
Over Income Threshold	17	2%
Public Aid	404	53%
Other	15	2%
TOTAL	758	100%

ENROLLMENT DATA (CONTINUED)

FISCAL YEAR 2025



Note: Enrollment data is based on our Program Year 2024-2025 (August 30, 2024 – August 23, 2025).

Early Head Start (CH Grant)		
Type of Eligibility	Number	Percentage
Income Threshold	272	42%
Foster Children	4	1%
Homeless	36	6%
Over Income Threshold	19	3%
Public Aid	314	49%
Other	2	0%
TOTAL	647	100%

Early Head Start Expansion (HP Grant)		
Type of Eligibility	Number	Percentage
Income Threshold	71	30%
Foster Children	5	2%
Homeless	8	3%
Over Income Threshold	6	3%
Public Aid	143	61%
Other	0	0%
TOTAL	233	100%

PARENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES



Across sites and program models, all families are supported by Family Support staff in individual goal attainment. Family Support Specialists (FSS) and Family Child Care Specialists (FCCS) collaborate with families to complete a Family Assessment and Family Partnership Agreement. When parents set up their individual goals, the Specialists provide support finding resources or services in support of families' goals and needs. Specialists provide support with a child's development; serve as a bridge to community resources and support, such as housing/food resources, health providers, employment opportunities, educational options, ESL classes; assist them in applying to various financial assistance programs; and more.

Specialists follow up with parents regularly to ensure that they are still working on achieving their goals. They also partner with families around the Parents as Teachers curriculum. It focuses on parent child interaction, development-centered parenting, and family well-being. Specialists provide, at minimum, monthly individualized engagement with families based on family input. The Specialist uses a combination of text messages, emails, Zoom, Facebook, and phone calls to communicate with families. To facilitate virtual engagement and minimize the digital divide, we are continuing to distribute laptops and hotspots to families in need.

Family Support partners closely with families around employment and leadership goals, assisting with resume writing, completing applications, preparing for job interviews, and exploring leadership opportunities. Additionally, the Center hosts workshops focused on mental health, child development, parenting practices, and community resources monthly. Examples include the SEL Development at Home, Caregiver Self-Care, Conscious Discipline, and Kindergarten School Choice Cafes.

To better support young learners with disabilities, in the 2024-25 program year the Carole Robertson Center participated in a Community-Based Services Pilot that connected community-based organizations (CBOs) receiving Head Start funding with Chicago Public Schools' special education services. Through this pilot, Carole Robertson Center and CPS teachers developed a collaborative relationship, coordinating data sharing and lesson planning to best support children with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). Furthermore, our Family Support team partnered with families to identify children with possible disabilities, advocate for timely evaluations, and ensure access to early intervention services.

At our partner sites, the family support component is maintained by providing a safe, responsive, and relationship centered environment for children and families through collaboration between the Specialists and the partner site liaison. This collaboration includes open communication systems that ensure families feel welcome, supported, and empowered as partners in their child's learning.

Specialists engage with parents and caregivers during drop off and dismissal times when they are on site, as well as through phone calls and virtual communication. These interactions offer daily opportunities to build relationships, share updates, identify family strengths and needs, and connect families to resources that support their overall well being.

The Carole Robertson Center engages parents directly in organizational governance through our Parent Policy Council and Parent Policy Committee. Our Parent Policy Council (PPC) provides the regular and direct participation of parents and community residents in the design and implementation of the Head Start program. In addition, the Chair and Vice Chair of the PPC serve as parent representatives on the Board of Directors, ensuring communication between governing bodies.

EFFORTS TO PREPARE CHILDREN FOR KINDERGARTEN



The Carole Robertson Center builds school readiness through a holistic approach to high-quality early education that promotes children’s cognitive, social-emotional, and physical growth in partnership with families. We focus on holistic development, encourage independence and autonomy, and recognize that nurturing each child’s potential means creating positive environments both in and outside the classroom for young learners to flourish. Working for, by, and with families, we take a whole-village approach to preparing rising kindergarteners for their first day of elementary school.

We’ve continued expanding our neighborhood presence through the Community Parenting Saturation Project “Ready for Kindergarten, Ready for Life,” a collaborative effort between organizations in North Lawndale that launched in 2021 and connects parents with supports for kindergarten readiness. This project is possible thanks to support and leadership from Illinois Action for Children and Greater Good Studio. Through text notifications, pop-up outreach to distribute books and home learning kits, the development of a neighborhood early learning recruitment network, and more, “Ready for Kindergarten, Ready for Life” is making tangible strides to alleviate resource deserts in North Lawndale, one young learner at a time.

This community saturation effort is laying the groundwork for the eventual community scaling of our in-house kindergarten readiness initiative, BASES-K—Bridging Academic and Social Emotional Supports in Kindergarten. BASES-K is an innovative, systems approach to ensuring kindergarten readiness and long-term success for all Carole Robertson Center children from infancy through preschool.

BASES-K is posited on the idea that there are three pillars supporting each child: the early learning and afterschool provider (the Center), the local school, and the family. With this understanding, our initiative seeks to build strong partnerships between families, teachers at the Center, kindergarten teachers, and school administrators in community schools in the following key ways:

- Breaking barriers by creating spaces for dialogue between schools, families, preschool, and kindergarten teachers. We create deeper and regular connections and relationships between elementary school leadership and staff in our service areas.
- Supporting teachers through ongoing learning, reflection, and coaching.
- Building the capacity of families to advocate for and support their children and each other, including working with families to select and apply to the best elementary school fit. We foster a continued partnership with the families about their child’s learning and development.

The Carole Robertson Center’s vision is that every child in our programs has consistent opportunities to become pre-Kindergarten graduates who are:

- Persistent Problem Solvers – Children actively participate and persist through challenging tasks and activities as they develop cognitively and academically.
- Resilient and Inclusive Community Builders – Children understand and value the importance of contributing to caring, collaborative, and equitable spaces with their peers.
- Self-Confident Advocates – Children see and advocate for themselves and their communities throughout their learning journeys.
- Proactive Explorers and Investigators – Children demonstrate genuine inquisitiveness and love of learning based on their growing knowledge of the world around them.

The Center’s school readiness goals are aligned with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (HSELOF). Progress on school readiness goals as measured by Teaching Strategies Gold, KIDS, DRDP, HOVRS, FCCERS, and CLASS data are captured in quarterly data reports, which are reported in bimonthly board reports and discussed at length in Program and Impact committee meetings and Parent Policy Committee and Council meetings.

These goals are further distilled into the core tenets and dispositions that we aim to develop in all children as they “graduate” pre-Kindergarten and matriculate to kindergarten. The result is a portrait of a Carole Robertson Center pre-K graduate, linked to Teaching Strategies GOLD, DRDP, and KIDS objectives, and mapped to the teacher practices, captured through the CLASS, HOVRS, and FCCERS assessments. The portrait speaks to our hopes and dreams and the values that staff must embody to support each child in our care. This portrait is backmapped to the professional learning system so that as we continue to evaluate our work, we can ground ourselves in the impact we want to see for children in a specific, measurable way.

RESULTS OF THE MOST RECENT AUDIT

The most recent financial audit of the Carole Robertson Center for Learning, covering Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025), has been completed and is summarized in this annual report. The auditors issued an unqualified opinion and there were no audit findings.





CAROLE ROBERTSON CENTER
for Learning

OUR MISSION

To educate, enrich and empower children and families.

FOR FAMILIES, BY FAMILIES, WITH FAMILIES

Carole Robertson Center for Learning pairs high-quality education and enrichment for children and youth with one-on-one support services to open opportunities for the whole family.

AN HONOR AND RESPONSIBILITY

Since its inception, the Center has worked to honor the life and memory of Carole Robertson who, together with her friends Addie Mae Collins, Cynthia Wesley, and Denise McNair, was killed in the 1963 bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama.



Carole Robertson



Addie Mae Collins



Cynthia Wesley



Denise McNair

Administrative Offices

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