



Introduction

The **Oklahoma Early Childhood Program** (OECP) was created in 2006 to improve the quality of early education and expand statewide capacity to serve children from birth through age three.

OECP provides the fiscal structure to align state and private resources to promote high-quality standards tied to minimum teacher qualifications, ongoing professional development, and caregiver supports designed to foster income-qualified families’ independence and economic success. Public funding for OECP flows through the Oklahoma State Department of Education as a match to private funds provided by philanthropists and corporations throughout the state.

During the 2024-2025 Program Year, OECP continued its expanded reach within the state of Oklahoma by retaining one Professional Development partner.

2024-2025 OECP Partner Slot Chart Overview				
Partner Type	Total Partners	Total Locations	Total Classrooms	Total Children
Traditional	8	35	277	2,852
Professional Development	1	17	65	760
Total	9	52	342	3,612

OECP partnered with nine agencies who have locations in both urban and rural Oklahoma. The nine partners have a total of 52 school locations and 342 classrooms, which served 3,612 children. Further, through an existing traditional partner, an additional three childcare centers and three family childcare homes were also included.

Program Requirements

- Provide quality early education services and serve income-qualified children ages birth through three
- Maintain licensing requirements as provided by the Oklahoma Human Services
- Offer care and education services forty-four (44) weeks of the year, operating at least eight (8) hours per day
- Meet specified program requirements (based on selected Early Head Start Performance Standards)
- Staff each classroom with a credentialed Lead and Assistant Teacher at all times
- Provide services of one credentialed Family Support Specialist or Advocate per 50 families
- Use OECP-approved technology systems for classroom curriculum, assessment, and data collection
- Participate in initial and annual trainings in infant and toddler development, curriculum, and caregiver education

Partner Overview

2024-2025 OECP Partner Slot Chart Overview: Traditional Partners							
Partner	Location	Slots	Classrooms	Total Slots	Total Classrooms	County	Rural
Community Action Project of Tulsa County, Inc.	Briarglen	155	16	1284	112	Tulsa	
	Disney	191	16				
	ECDC Reed	102	6				
	Eugene Field	98	10				
	Frost	139	14				
	McClure	190	17				
	Reed	96	12				
	Rosa Parks	48	6				
	Sand Springs	66	6				
	Skelly	99	9				
	Learning At Home	100	-				
Crossroads Youth & Family Services	Beginnings Academy	24	3	96	13	Comanche	
	Children's Chateau	32	4				
	Education Engine	24	4				
	Summit Ridge	16	2				
Crosstown Learning Center		37	3	37	3	Tulsa	
LIFT Community Action Agency	Antlers EHS/ELC	32	4	76	11	McCurran	X
	Broken Bow ELC	24	3			Choctaw	X
	Hugo EHS	8	2			Pushmataha	X
	Idabel EHS	12	2				X
Sunbeam Family Services	Edwards EEC	111	12	426	47	Oklahoma	
	OKC Educare	148	16				
	Pierce EEC	119	13				
	Tony Reyes	48	6				
Tulsa Educare, Inc.	Educare I	154	16	699	75	Tulsa	
	Educare II	154	16				
	Educare III	154	16				
	Educare IV	154	16				
	Jewel's Place	32	4				
	Children's Ark	6	1				
	Peppermint Pete's	8	1				
	Pine Premier	25	3				
	Toya for Tots	6	1				
	Tulsa Women/Children	6	1				
UPS Rosa Parks Early Childhood Education Center		190	10	190	10	Tulsa	
W.L. Hutcherson Family YMCA		44	6	44	6	Tulsa	
Traditional Partner Total				2,852	277		

Ongoing Quality Assessment

OECP developed an evaluation plan that represented all OECP traditional partners and included:

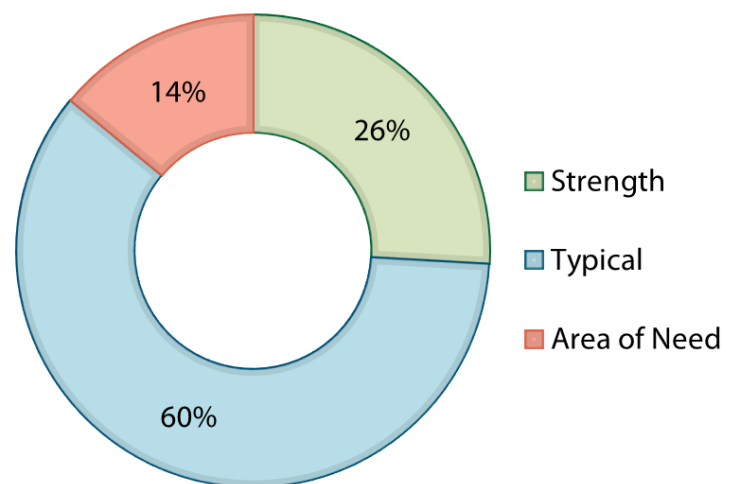
- A measure of child achievement via the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA)
 - DECA measures children’s resilience skills through the subscales of attachment/relationships, initiative, and self-regulation
 - Scores within these three subscales are combined, and children are categorized as having *age-typical* resilience, *strength* within resilience skills, or having a *need* within resilience skills
 - Children three-years-old and older are also rated on a behavior concerns screener; high scores on this screener indicate these children may need additional support in behavior development
 - DECA rates children on a five-point Likert scale
- A measure of classroom quality via the Quality Care for Infant and Toddlers (QCIT) in infant-toddler classrooms
 - The QCIT provides scores for three domains: support for social-emotional development, support for language and literacy development, and support for cognitive development
 - Four 10-minute observation cycles are conducted
 - Classrooms are scored on a seven-point Likert scale; scores of 6-7 denote *strong* quality of interactions, 3-5 denote *building* quality of interactions, and 1-2 denote *emerging* quality of interactions

Fall and spring child assessments were conducted in sampled classrooms, and classrooms were observed using the classroom quality measure in late fall or winter.

Spring child sample sizes by age included: 63 infant children, 233 toddler children, and 363 preschool children. The total spring sample size was 659 children.

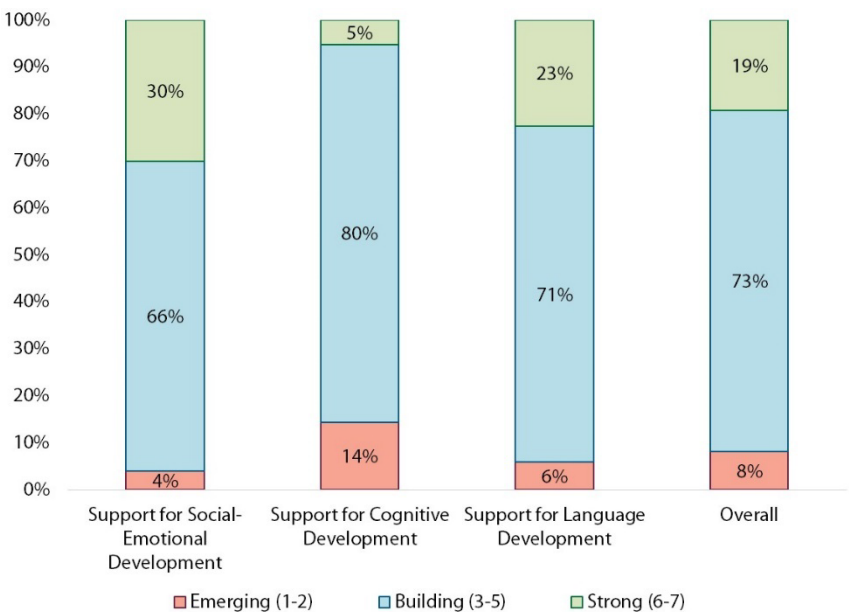
In spring, 86% of children were rated as having age-typical resilience or as possessing strength within resilience skills.

Devereux Early Childhood Assessment



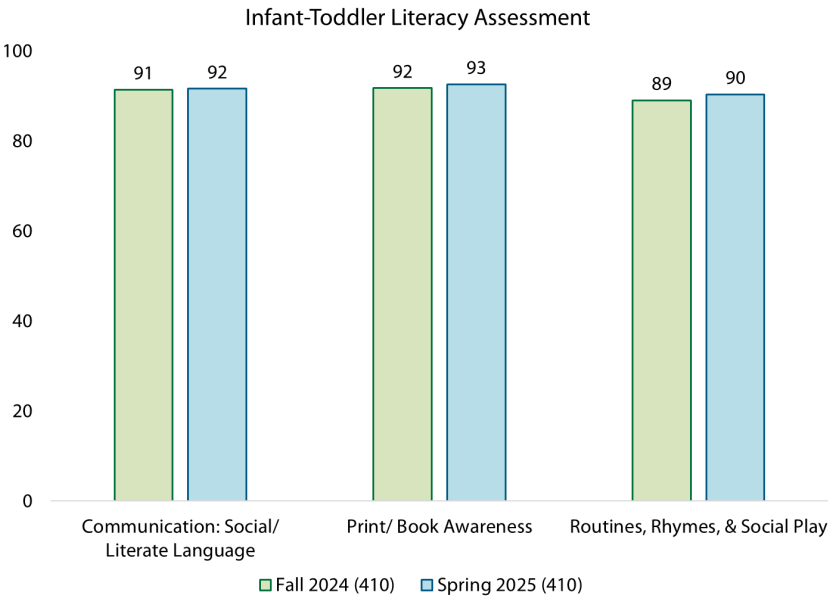
In addition to the child measure, OECP contracted with the University of Oklahoma Early Childhood Education Institute (OU-ECEI) to collect observations related to classroom quality. Fifty-three classrooms were included within this sample.

Overall, 19% of OECP classrooms had *strong* quality of interactions between the caregiver and child via the QCIT.



In addition to the collection of these data, the OECP evaluation included a child literacy assessment that is age appropriate for the children enrolled. Infant Toddler Literacy Assessment, ITLA, scores children within three domains, including: Communication, Print/Book Awareness, and Routines, Rhymes, & Social Play.

As noted in the chart to the right, age-typical growth was experienced from fall to spring within all domains.



Additionally, a teacher survey was conducted to gain their perspectives and experiences. The goal of this data collection included better understanding of teacher well-being and experiences within OECP-funded classrooms. Three hundred twenty-eight (328) teachers responded to the survey, and notable results include:

- Eighty-nine percent of teachers reported planning to remain in early childhood education for at least five more years, which is an indicator of OECP partners' promotion of teacher retention
 - Importantly, teachers noted that the impact they have on children and supporting families is the main reason they continue in this field
- Eighty-eight percent of teachers reported they would recommend their school as a great place to work
- Most teachers agree that they have the foundational supports needed at their school, like professional development opportunities, connections with other colleagues, and feeling appreciated by families
 - Importantly, teachers also report inadequate staffing to meet student needs, which indicates the continued need to prioritize quality in early childhood centers
- Most teachers report high levels of engagement; specifically, 99% of teachers reported that teaching gives them a feeling of accomplishment

"I love making a difference in young children's lives, especially providing early intervention and giving hope to families." —Teacher Respondent

Training and Technical Assistance

Early Learning Specialists collaborated with partners to identify strengths and needs throughout the program year. Because all partners have unique strengths and opportunities, this relationship-based approach allowed the team to work individually with each partner at appropriate levels and with a continuous focus on improving quality care.

The Early Learning Specialists also conducted on-site technical visits with each partner multiple times throughout the program year, seeking to promote instructional leadership. Technical support focused on:

- Identifying needs and offering suggestions that generated solutions
- Providing resources and materials
- Setting goals for instruction for teaching teams
- Connecting schools to other useful resources

This assistance provided a continuous focus on improving and maintaining teacher effectiveness and improving child outcomes.

Teaching and Learning Specialists also facilitated 80 hours of Program for Infant/Toddler Care (PITC) training throughout the program year. Additionally, OECP hosted partner leaders and family support staff to attend a leadership-oriented training in the fall. Together, these trainings equated to 496 early childhood leaders and teachers in attendance across the state of Oklahoma.

Training Satisfaction

Satisfaction surveys were conducted with all attendees at the completion of each training. Importantly, teachers noted high satisfaction with OECP trainings, specifically:

- Agreement that trainings are informative and helpful in expanding participants' professional knowledge
- Strong agreement that facilitators possessed the ability to respond to questions with relevant examples and possessed the knowledge necessary to enhance the training experience
- High agreement that teachers perceive they could apply principles learned during the training within their classroom
- Agreement that trainings are high quality and meeting teacher expectations

"The facilitators were able to intermingle teaching and activities that were appropriate and make it more meaningful." —**Teacher Participant**

Professional Development Partners

In 2024-2025, one agency also participated as a professional development partner. This professional development partner was retained as a fourth-year partner, with the goal of providing robust professional learning opportunities related to promoting child and family resilience with expert trainers of Conscious Discipline. To achieve this goal, expert trainers of Conscious Discipline facilitated two professional learning days with teachers. Together, this totaled 301 staff attending these trainings.

2024-2025 OECP Partner Slot Chart Overview: Professional Development					
Partner	Location	Slots	Classrooms	County	Rural
United Community Action Agency	Blackwell EHS/HS	33	3	Kay	X
	Bristow EHS/HS	49	5	Creek	X
	Cleveland EHS/HS	41	4	Pawnee	X
	Cushing EHS/HS	25	2	Payne	X
	Drumright EHS/HS	33	3	Creek	X
	Guthrie EHS	70	5	Logan	
	Henryetta EHS	33	3	Okmulgee	
	Hominy EHS	33	3	Osage	
	Okmulgee EHS	67	5	Okmulgee	
	Pawhuska EHS	33	3	Osage	
	Pawnee EHS	25	2	Pawnee	X
	Perry EHS	33	3	Noble	X
	Ponca City EHS	70	5	Kay	X
	Sapulpa EHS	32	4	Creek	
	Sapulpa 0-5	59	4		
	Stillwater EHS	40	5	Payne	X
	Stillwater 0-5	84	6		
Professional Development Partner Total		760	65		

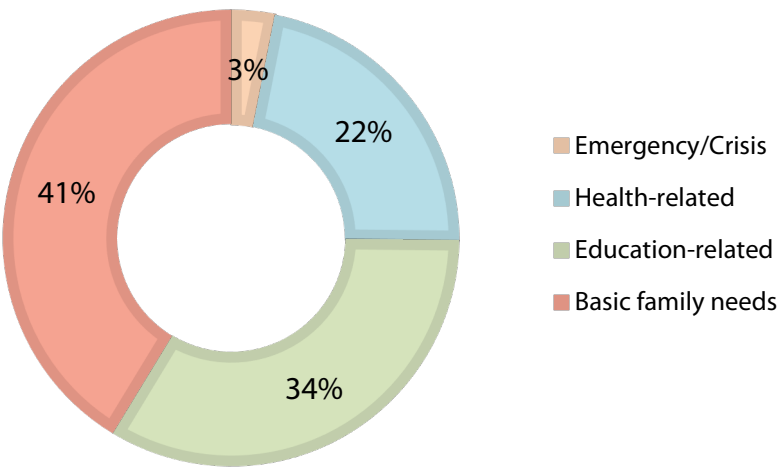
Family Support

A unique feature of OECP is the focus on Family Support through the provision of staff and critical wrap-around services for caregivers and caretakers. Family Support Specialists or Advocates ensure that enrolled families have access to community resources that meet their needs.

The partners work collaboratively with families to identify and assess services and resources that are responsive to each family’s needs and goals, including but not limited to:

- Emergency assistance in areas such as food, housing, clothing, and transportation
- Education and other appropriate interventions, including opportunities for caregivers to participate in counseling programs or to receive information about mental health issues that place families at risk, such as substance abuse, child abuse & neglect, and domestic violence
- Opportunities for continuing education, employment training, and other employment services through formal and informal networks within the community

Over the course of the 2024-2025 school year, 10,534 referrals were made by Family Support Specialists or Advocates throughout OECP partners. These referrals consisted of 22% health-related, 34% education-related, 41% meeting basic family needs, and 3% emergency/crisis-related.



Family Support Stories

Since relocating to Tulsa, a father needed support accessing Veterans Affairs (VA) medical benefits. The family support specialist contacted the local VA to learn more and was able to connect the father with a representative for support.

—Union Public Schools Rosa Parks

A family guardian sought support to establish communication and a relationship with the children's biological mother. The family support specialist referred the family to a mental health clinician to receive strategies for support.

—Sunbeam Family Services

A family was unsatisfied with their child's pediatrician who was not adequately supporting a referral needed for potential Autism Spectrum Disorder. The family support specialist identified and referred the family to a doctor within the family's medical network that supports children with Autism.

—Crosstown Learning Center

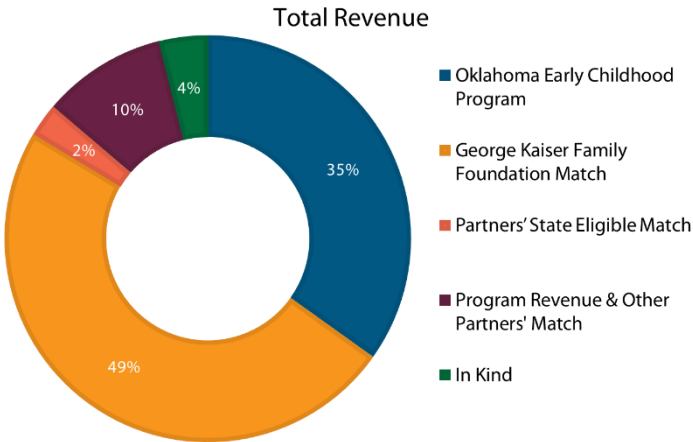
A parent shared that she had been notified by Oklahoma Human Services of a tuition co-pay. This caused the parent great stress, and she shared this worry with her family support specialist. The family support specialist conducted research and found that the wrong contract number was associated with the family's account. After correcting, the parent was notified that she no longer had a co-pay for childcare services.

— Crosstown Learning Center

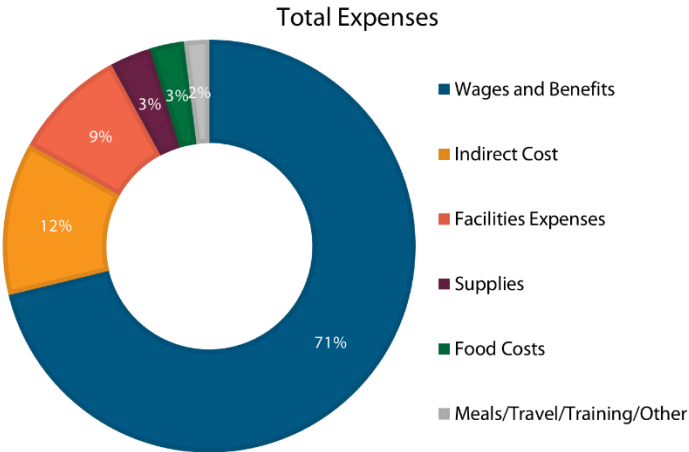
Funding and Budgets

Below are the revenue and expenditures for the 2024-2025 program year.

Revenue	
Oklahoma Early Childhood Program	14,000,000
George Kaiser Family Foundation Match	19,550,413
Partners' State Eligible Match	1,077,218
Program Revenue & Other Partners' Match	3,954,401
In Kind	1,561,498
Total Revenue	\$40,143,530



Expenditures	
Wages and Benefits	28,583,559
Indirect Cost	4,801,516
Facilities Expenses	3,600,123
Supplies	1,289,777
Food Costs	1,075,317
Miscellaneous	478,843
Meals/Travel/Training	215,464
Other Contracts	98,931
Total Expenditures	\$40,143,530



OECP Administrative Staff

Sarah Score, Senior Specialist, Project Management

Traditional Partner Leadership

Denise Stevens, Community Action Project of Tulsa County, Inc. (CAP Tulsa)

Wendy Swatek, Crossroads Youth & Family Services

Kristina Ellis, Crosstown Learning Center, Inc.

Darla Galyon, LIFT Community Action Agency, Inc.

Paula Gates, Sunbeam Family Services

Cindy Decker, Ph.D., Tulsa Educare

Alycia Pennington, Union Public Schools Rosa Parks Early Childhood Education Center

Diana Palacios, W.L. Hutcherson Family YMCA

For more information on the Oklahoma Early Childhood Program, Visit
the website: okecp.org

Contact OECP via email: ocpdepartment@captulsa.org