

Tanana Chiefs Conference Birth to Five Head Start Program Updates

Report to the Public

August 31, 2026

Enrollment:

Children Served: Funded Enrollment 180

Children Served:	80
Income Eligible Children Served	35%
Categorically Eligible Foster Children	9%
Categorically Eligible Public Assistance	22%
American Indian/Alaska Native children served	73%
Average Monthly Attendance	71%
Children up-to-date on immunizations	46%
Children receiving preventive dental care	49%
Children receiving well child checks	62%
Children with disabilities	4%

Families Served: 81

Services Provided:

Comprehensive early childhood education services were provided to children birth to age five, focused on the individual learning styles of children while incorporating Athabascan culture, creative arts, literacy, language development and communication, science, math, physical health and development, as well as social skill competence.

- Classroom educators use the *Creative Curriculum*™ for Infants Toddlers and Twos or Preschool, depending on the age of the children, and the home visitors use Parents as Teachers for birth to five home visiting. This is also supplemented with the Partners for a Healthy Baby curriculum in the home-based setting. Assessments on children's progress are conducted and aggregated three times each program year using Teaching Strategies Gold, which showed children had considerable growth in literacy and mathematics. Teachers plan individualized and group activities focused around the child's social/emotional and cognitive growth to prepare them for elementary school. We work with seven local education agencies throughout our region to ensure expectations are met for kindergarten and that transitions to elementary schools are seamless. Teachers, teacher aides and Family Visitors are actively working towards meeting the minimum requirements for their respective positions, which is an Associate degree in Early Childhood Education for teachers, or a Childhood Development Associates Certificate for teacher aides and Family Visitors. All staff receive a minimum of 15 hours of continuing education each year.

- Collaborative agreements exist with all local education agencies, as well as public health and Indian Health Service to assist the program in providing services in health, nutrition, dental, hearing & vision screenings, mental health, disabilities, training & technical assistance, parent groups, transition services from Head Start to the public schools, and family services. Health and dental screenings were higher this program year compared to the previous year in the pandemic.
- In a typical school year, parents participate in socializations, family fun nights, parent activity nights, Policy Council, and Parent Committee meetings. They provide volunteer hours in their communities to include volunteering in the classroom, hauling fuel for the Head Start buildings, and shoveling snow. Due to coming out of the pandemic, no socials or gathering during the regular school year was available. The summer program allowed for outdoor socials that was created specifically in each community. There were 7 classrooms open and 2 home visiting communities open this school year.
- The program has enrolled all children in monthly subscriptions for Hello Highlights (0-3), Highlights (3-5) and National Geographic for preschool children to increase types of print, to engage children in the joy of reading, and to provide fun ways parents and children to have enjoyable shared reading activities. All families are enrolled in Ready Rosie and will have opportunity to enroll into the North Start Imagination Library in the new school year. These services will continue as well as the implementation of Kick Start to Literacy to continue to work on literacy skills program wide. The program shared Ready Rosie in group socials/family fun nights and has plans to share in town hall meetings.
- The 2026 Community Assessment was sent to 8 Head Start villages and the program received 8 back. The assessments showed that if the enrollment reduction is approved to 90 funded slots, the program has enough children in these 8 communities: Nenana, Northway, Tok, Tetlin, Hulia, Nulato, McGrath, and Tanana,

Staffing:

- There remains to be about 4 vacancies in villages that the program is working with HR and villages to fill. These vacancies have no applicants at this time.

Financials:

EXPENSES:	\$2,614,758.14
Other:	\$76,907.48
Payroll Expense	\$882,036.65
Wage Related Taxes and Insurances	\$74,471.75
Fringe Benefits	\$859,800.20
Contractual	\$12,101
Travel	\$118,557.61
Equipment	\$3,496.48

Program Operating Costs	\$66,040.86
Utilities	\$22,696.06
Leases	\$97,352
Program Supplies	\$72,552.16
Indirect Expense	\$328,745.89

TOTAL:

SOA-Alaska Child and Adult Care Food Program costs (Included in supplies)	\$38,209.06
Non-federal match	\$0.00 Waiver
Procurement Card amounts (included above)	\$92,484.24

Grant Funding FY25-26

SOA – State of Alaska Head Start	\$645,008
DHHS-Office of Head Start	\$3,393,256

New Program Year:

For the upcoming 2025-2026 program year, the program is going to focus on the enrollment reduction from 180 slots to 90. This would be 30 Early Head Start and 60 Head Start slots. Classrooms have had increased challenging behaviors and Tok and Huslia will have three teachers in the class to help support the needs of the children in the class. This will also support staff from getting burnt out. The program is going to be implementing AI's Pals as a new social & emotional curriculum that aligns with the Creative Curriculum and flows better into lesson plans. As mentioned above, Kick Start to Literacy will also be used in place of Zoophonics to support increased literacy efforts. This too is supported by Creative Curriculum and will allow easier lesson planning.

Rural Vacancies:

- Nenana Cook
- Huslia Teacher Assistant
- McGrath Lead Teacher
- McGrath Teacher Assistant

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