



Item:

Head Start Summer Bridge – Evaluation Results (Bonnie Wagner)

Requested Action:

The Board is asked to receive information.

Background:

The Children's Trust began funding Head Start Summer Bridge in 2023 to keep preschool age children in continued care and learning during the summer when program sites would ordinarily not operate. Head Start Summer Bridge allows children to maintain consistent care routines and have learning opportunities over the summer to promote readiness for kindergarten and avoid summer slide. The program recently completed its third year.

In summer 2025, 94 children ages 3 to 5 years old were served in five program sites across Alachua County. Children were able to receive a variety of educational programming and learning experiences. Children attended an average of 25.5 days. Most parents planned for their child to attend all days offered. Relative to their anticipated attendance, on average, children attended 75% of expected days. Parents report high levels of satisfaction across program areas. In particular, parents noted they appreciate the teachers, educational and socialization opportunities the program afforded their children.

Parents acknowledge benefits derived from their child's program experience that include keeping their routine consistent, receiving quality educational experiences, and learning more because they were part of the program. The Teaching Strategies GOLD is an ongoing observational system for assessing skill development from birth to kindergarten and is used across all Head Start locations. Data from the Teaching Strategies GOLD demonstrated that Summer Bridge children on average made learning gains in all domains (i.e., literacy, math, cognitive, language, physical, and social-emotional). Head Start children who did not participate in Summer Bridge experienced less average score growth in the literacy domain compared to the Summer Bridge children and average learning losses in the other five domains in their spring to fall assessments.

Attachments:

Board Presentation – Head Start Summer Bridge – Evaluation Results on 12-8-2025

Programmatic Impact:

Head Start Summer Bridge supports the following Trust goal:

Goal 2: All children and youth learn what they need to be successful.

Fiscal Impact:

FY2025 Budget:

Head Start Summer Bridge – \$250,304.34

Recommendation:

Receive the information.