

SUMMIT PRE-K



A Summit County Strong Future Initiative
annual report for the 2020/2021 school year



Dear Friends and Partners,

Into our second year of full programming and the unimaginable happened, a worldwide pandemic hit. We learned things we never thought possible. I am extremely proud of our community for keeping our child care doors open and the children and staff as safe as possible.

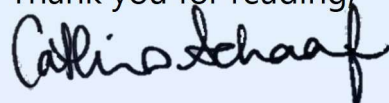
Our main goal in navigating through COVID-19 was to not lose any of the access and availability of the already hard-to-find child care that exists. The team at Early Childhood Options worked closely with the local Public Health team, Board of County Commissioners, and Child Care Directors to ensure that we were taking all the necessary steps to keep staff and children safe.

I am happy to report that we were able to do just that and a little more. Most opened their doors on June 1, with all recommendations from Public Health being followed. The hours were shortened, but we all learned to adjust to this new norm. When closures came, our funders were able to support families to seek care elsewhere. We were able to supplement with an extra \$30,000 directly to families' child care bills that continued to come despite closures in their child care classrooms.

Early Childhood Options kept up with all the demands of supply issues to the amended public health orders. With these new amendments to care, ECO was able to purchase OWL cameras so we were able to resume some remote coaching and consulting at our sites that requested support. These cameras also allowed us to explore new ways of performing our work, and we were able to get more authentic observations in a secure manner. Teachers who experienced this new way of coaching enjoyed the authenticity of their observation that provided a new way to reflect on their teaching practices.

In the summer months, we were able to have a bit of relief from the past year, resorting back to normal activities and allowing others to come by for visits, all on their own terms. We look forward to continuing to adapt and evolve along with all of you as we report out on our programming.

Thank you for reading,



Catherine Schaaf
Program Director, Early Childhood Options



PROGRAM DETAILS

The Summit Pre-K Program (SPK) helps to make high quality preschool possible for all Summit County 4-year olds in the year before they enter Kindergarten. Approved by voters in 2018, SPK is a Summit County taxpayer funded initiative. The local council, [Early Childhood Options](#) (ECO), serves as the managing agency. A community advisory board provides guidance and direction in the implementation of SPK.

To offset the high cost of quality preschool, SPK provides monthly tuition credits to families who meet the criteria below. Tuition credits are given to assist families with the cost of preschool and are paid directly to the participating preschool program, child care center or family child care provider on behalf of the eligible child(ren). Tuition credits are administered on a sliding scale.

Tuition credit funding levels are based on:

- Gross Family Income
- Number of total children aged 0-3 enrolled in childcare
- [Colorado Shines](#) quality rating (only programs Level 2 or higher are eligible to participate)
- Enrollment in other programs such as [CCCAP](#), [Head Start](#) and/or [Colorado Preschool Program](#)

SPK is funded by the County, the [Board of County Commissioners](#) (BOCC) is the oversight body. ECO manages the overall program. SPK funds a full-time Early Childhood Education Registrar position, housed at the [Summit School District](#) to coordinate data collection and reporting at the child, classroom and aggregate levels. ECO coordinates coaching and quality improvement support to teaching staff, in partnership with the Summit School District Preschool Coordinator. This robust partnership with the County, ECO and the School District was designed to ensure a high quality and accountable mixed delivery system.

SUMMIT COUNTY BY THE NUMBERS

\$1.3M per year

approximate amount Strong Futures Fund generates in tuition credits for families

over \$30,000

in COVID-19 relief dollars paid directly to families' child care bills during closures in their child's classrooms

\$740 per month or \$8,000

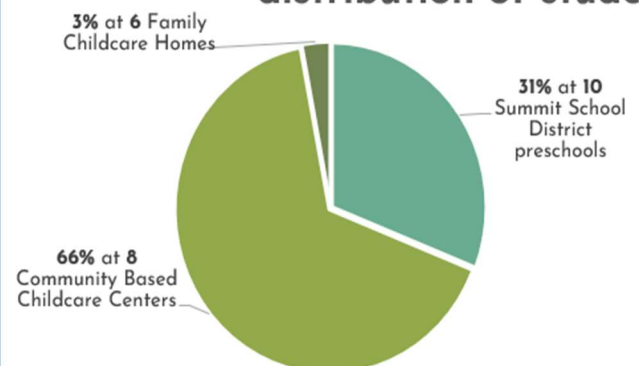
the average tuition credit per child, per year for full-time, year-round Pre-K

"In 2021 the Summit County Board of Commissioners approved a new SPK Teacher Compensation initiative. With an investment of more than **\$1.2M** in the next two years, child care programs participating in SPK will be able to raise staff wages and improve overall teacher compensation.

Early learning opportunities with a high-quality workforce lay the foundation for future success in school and in life. Retaining a well-trained and stable workforce is a top priority in Summit County."

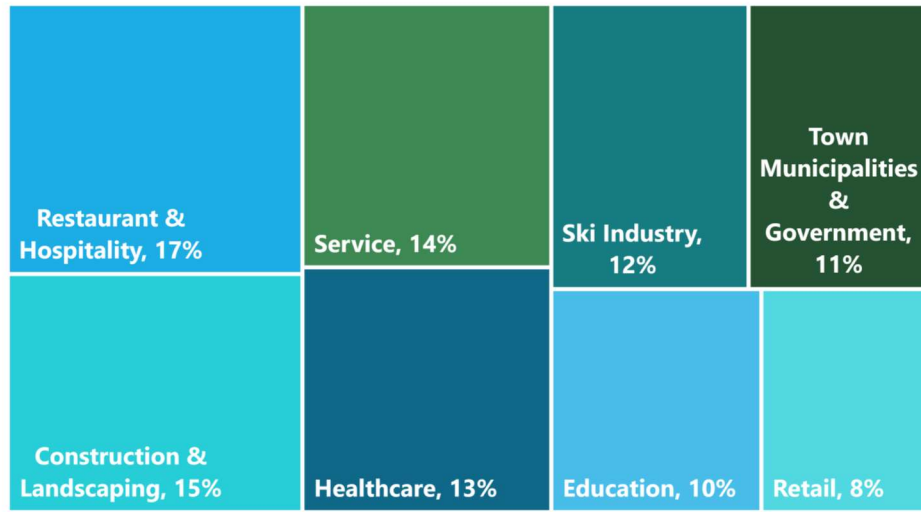
Lucinda Burns, Executive Director, Early Childhood Options

distribution of students

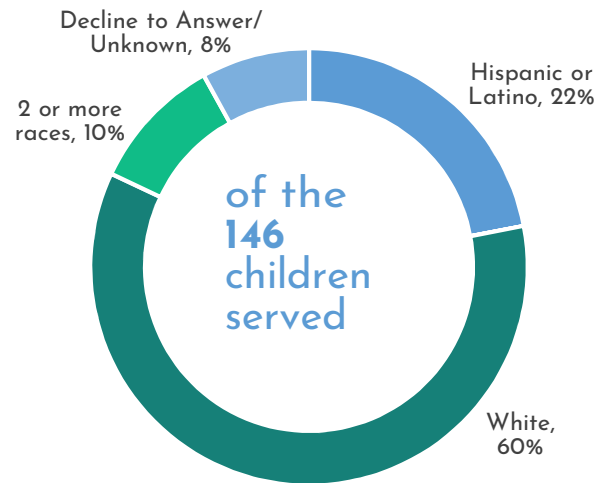


WHO WE SERVE

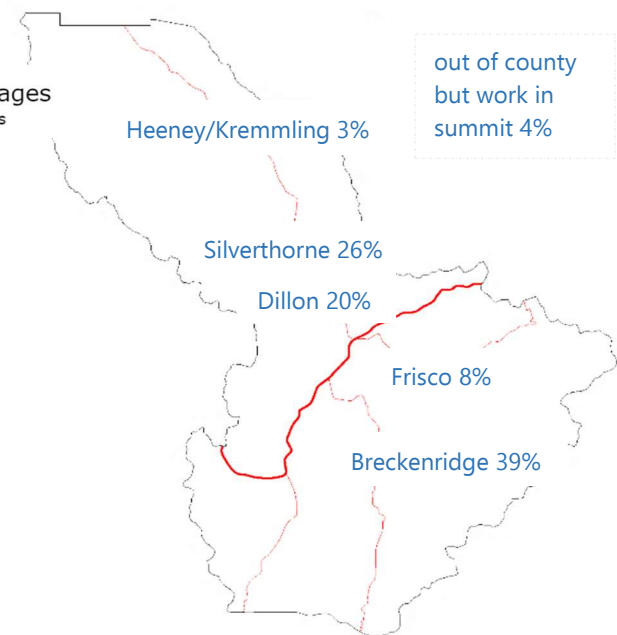
top industries for spk families



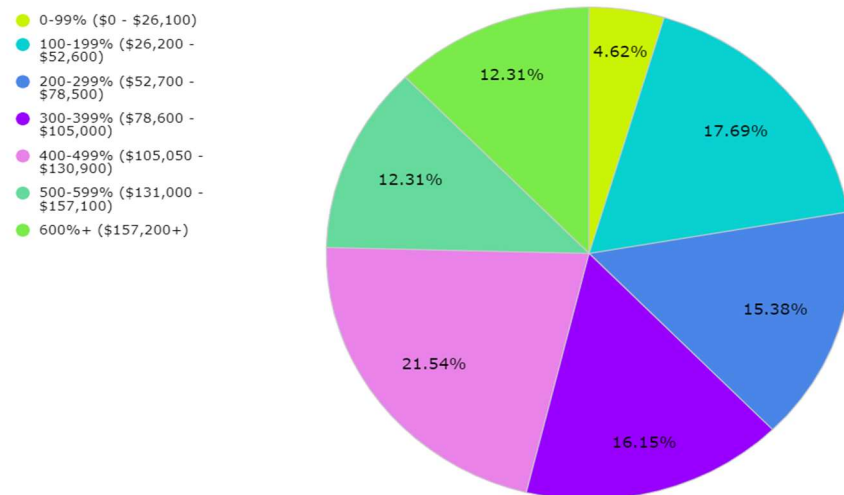
spk race & ethnicity



where our families live



SPK Families Annual Salary Range Based on Federal Poverty Level (FPL) Percentages
In 2020, the minimum sufficient income for a family of 4 was \$26,200 according to federal governmental standards



FAMILY SPOTLIGHT



Bruno Solis is a kindergartner at Silverthorne Elementary and former SPK tuition credit recipient. He attended Open Arms Childcare in Breckenridge for PreK and has been in care since he was a toddler. Because Bruno's family qualified for deed-restricted housing, childcare became the family's largest expense. This was compounded by the fact that Bruno's father lost his job during the pandemic and wasn't eligible for unemployment. SPK took the family's childcare costs from roughly \$1,200/month to \$300/month and worked with the family to provide more credits after his father became unemployed. Not only did SPK provide financial relief, it also helped "keep his schedule consistent and provided more structure for when he entered kindergarten" according to Bruno's mom Oyuki Munoz.

PROGRAM GOALS

- [CLASS®](#) assessments 2 times a year & [TS Gold assessments](#) 3 times a year in participating centers.
- Professional Development through [Colorado Shines Professional Development Information System](#) (PDIS). A one-stop online resource for training related to early care and learning. PDIS offers a broad array of e-learning courses addressing all aspects of child development, health and safety, and quality instruction. PDIS is designed to support a variety of early childhood professionals at all levels of experience and education.*
- Provide education of local programs to hard-to-reach populations.
- A new child care center to be built in partnership with the Town of Silverthorne and the Summit County Government in the north end of the County.

*FOR PROFESSIONALS; TOOLS TO ADVANCE YOUR KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND CAREER (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.coloradoshines.com/professionals>

SPOTLIGHT ON TeachingStrategies GOLD

TeachingStrategies GOLD was created so that teachers finally have an ongoing assessment tool that is user-friendly and inclusive of all children—one that enables teachers to increase the accuracy of their assessments while having more time to interact with children.

TeachingStrategies GOLD is a system developed by TeachingStrategies for assessing children from birth through kindergarten and is a fully bilingual tool. It can be used to support all types of learners, including children with special needs and children with advanced knowledge and skills. Grounded in 38 research-based objectives that include predictors of school success and are aligned with the Common Core State Standards, state early learning guidelines, and the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, Teaching Strategies GOLD truly helps teachers focus on what matters most for school readiness.

Teaching Strategies GOLD® Birth Through Kindergarten Touring Guide (n.d.) sourced from https://www.buffalo.edu/content/dam/www/ubccc/Documents/Teaching%20Strategies%20-%20GOLD-Touring-Guide_5-2013.pdf

TeachingStrategies Family Resource during Covid



Like TeachingStrategies GOLD, other programs are available through TeachingStrategies including the family engagement and early learning resource, **ReadyRosie!** ReadyRosie is an early education tool that helps families, schools, and communities across the nation deepen and scale their family engagement efforts. The tool leverages the power of video modeling, family workshops, professional development opportunities and mobile technology to build powerful partnerships between families and educators resulting in **Ready Families, Ready Educators, Ready Children**. The ReadyRosie program was secured through a generous grant from the **El Pomar Regional Council** to support families during Covid classrooms and school closures.

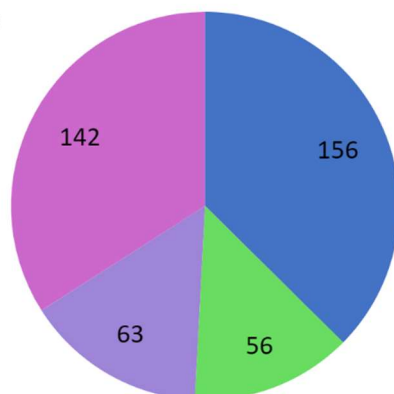
What is ReadyRosie?

- a computer platform or mobile application
- a resource for parents to explore 2-5 minute Modeled Moment Videos to model ways parents can support their child's growth and development related to what they are learning in school
- videos that align with School Readiness goals measured through Teaching Strategies Gold.
- handouts, flyers and step by step instruction for various family engagement events which Summit Head Start used for a Family Pajama Party Night!

94 Summit County families enrolled in ReadyRosie including families from Summit County Head Start and Early Head Start along with Summit Pre-K recipients. Since offering ReadyRosie, families have downloaded the following videos:

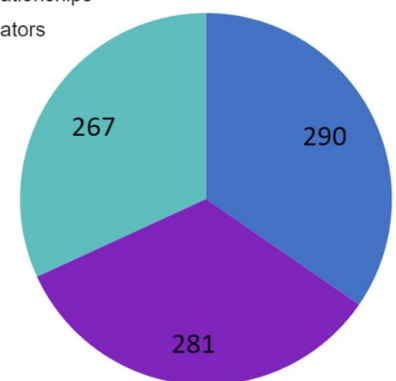
Learning Outcomes

- Language and Literacy
- Math
- Social and Emotional
- Health and Well-Being



Family Outcomes

- Positive Parent- Child Relationships
- Families as Lifelong Educators
- Families as Learners



INTERVIEW

with ECE COACH

Jessee Blumentritt

By Amber Carson, Systems Coordinator at Early Childhood Options



What is an ECE Coach and why do you view them as necessary?

An ECE coach is a resource for teachers to support in their quality improvement, perform assessments and support teachers in improving their interactions with children. A coach often times offers technical support with assessment platforms that sites use such as Teaching Strategies Gold. An ECE coach also serves as a resource to provide classroom visuals and research topics a teacher might be interested in but does not have the time to do so.

Did your role or the way you perform your role change with the pandemic

Yes my role during the pandemic shifted from providing in-person support to teachers in their classrooms to working completely from home and the office for 14 months. I offered more technical assistance and support to administration and home providers than ever before.

From your point of view, how did you see the ECE field adapt to the Covid 19 pandemic? How did our community adjust?

Teachers found creative ways to connect with parents and share what their children were doing during the day. Organizations found many ways to connect with educators and community member through technology.

Do you see any positives coming out of the Covid 19 pandemic? If so, what?

The use of technology has really been maximized. ECO and other agencies have offered more training opportunities via zoom which is making professional development more accessible for early childhood educators.

What did you find most challenging within your role during the pandemic?

Connecting with teachers through phone, e-mail or zoom was the most challenging. It was difficult for them to find the extra time to meet with me when previously I would just be coming in during the school day.

Tell us more about the use of the owl cameras. Were they a success? Did we receive any feedback from them? How did we obtain them?

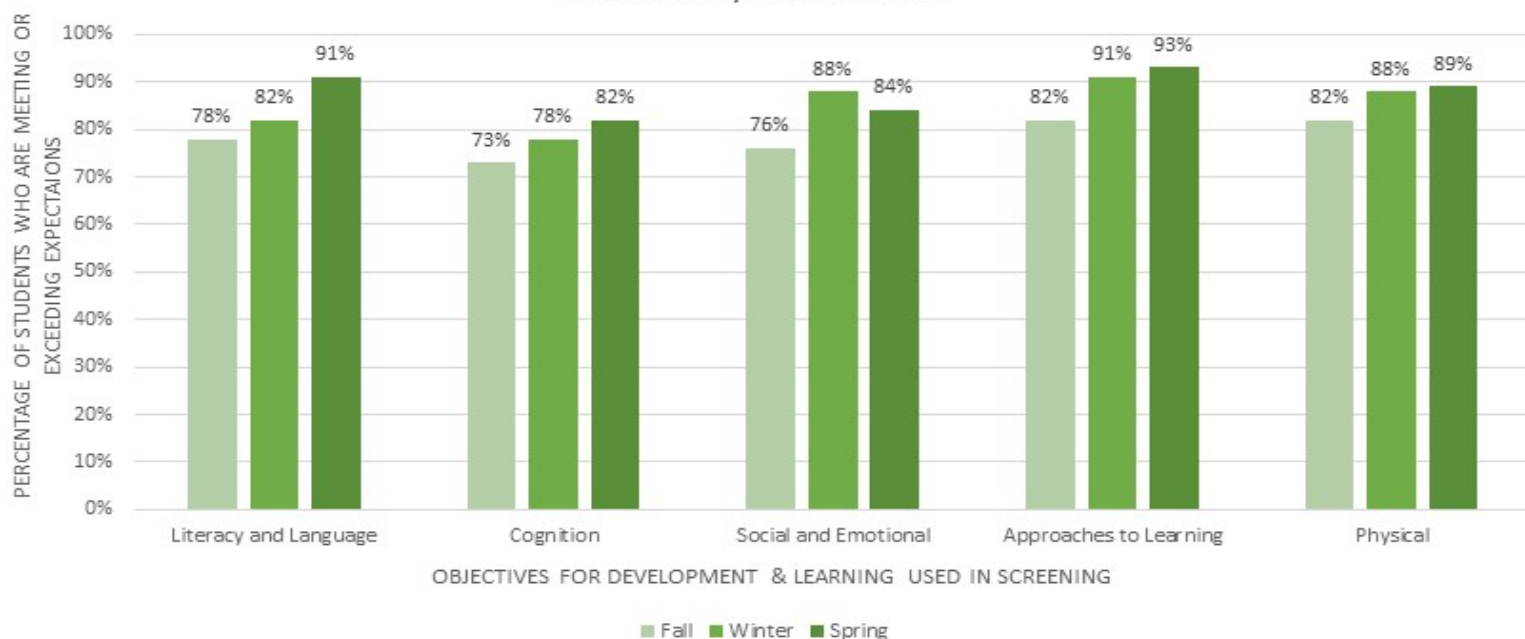
The [OWL cameras](#) have been a success for conducting remote CLASS observations, we have conducted four utilizing the OWLs. They have not been utilized for other observations/coaching as the consensus is that people prefer those visits in person. The feedback we have received has been very positive. It is less obtrusive when conducting a CLASS observation, the children are unaware that someone is observing which allows the teacher to go about their day. A few of the teachers that have been observed mentioned that they had even forgotten they were being observed. A few directors have remarked that it is a way to achieve a more accurate and authentic assessment. We purchased three OWLs using Head Start funds and two OWLs using Right Start/Council funds.

TS GOLD DATA

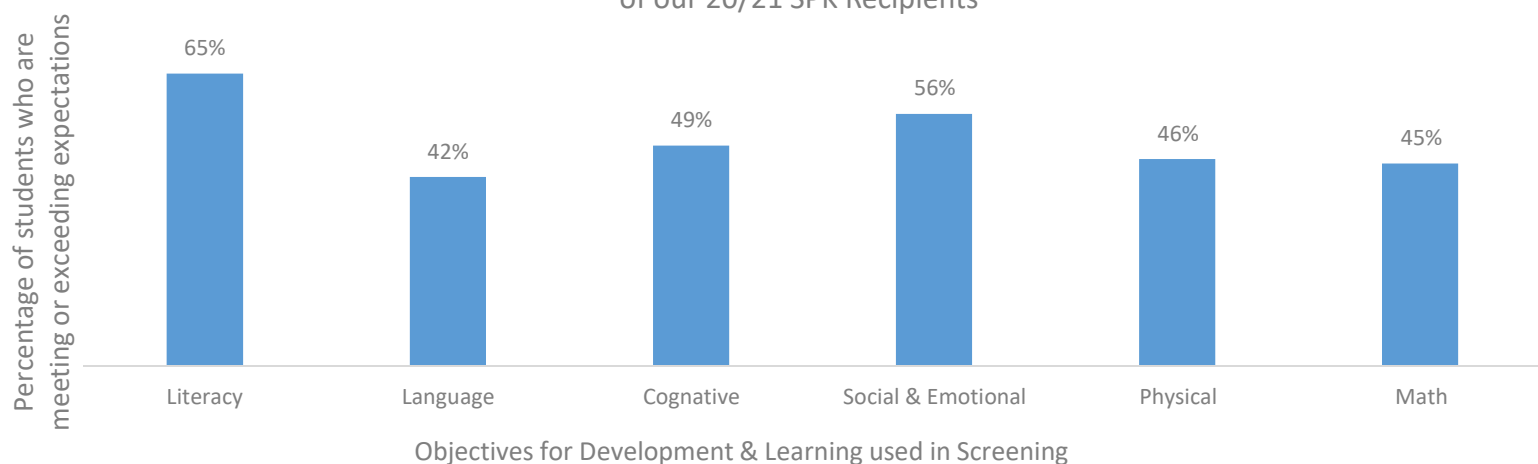
The assessment model used in GOLD follows widely held expectations for children from birth through third grade and enables a whole-child approach to assessment.*

*Understand Each Child's Needs Based on Developmentally Appropriate Milestones (n.d.) Retrieved from <https://teachingstrategies.com/product/gold/>

County Wide Percentage of SPK Pre-K Recipients Meeting Widely Held Expectations for TS GOLD 20/21 School Year



TS GOLD Kindergarten Entry Assessment Data for the 21/22 School Year of our 20/21 SPK Recipients



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The Summit Pre-K Team includes:

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