



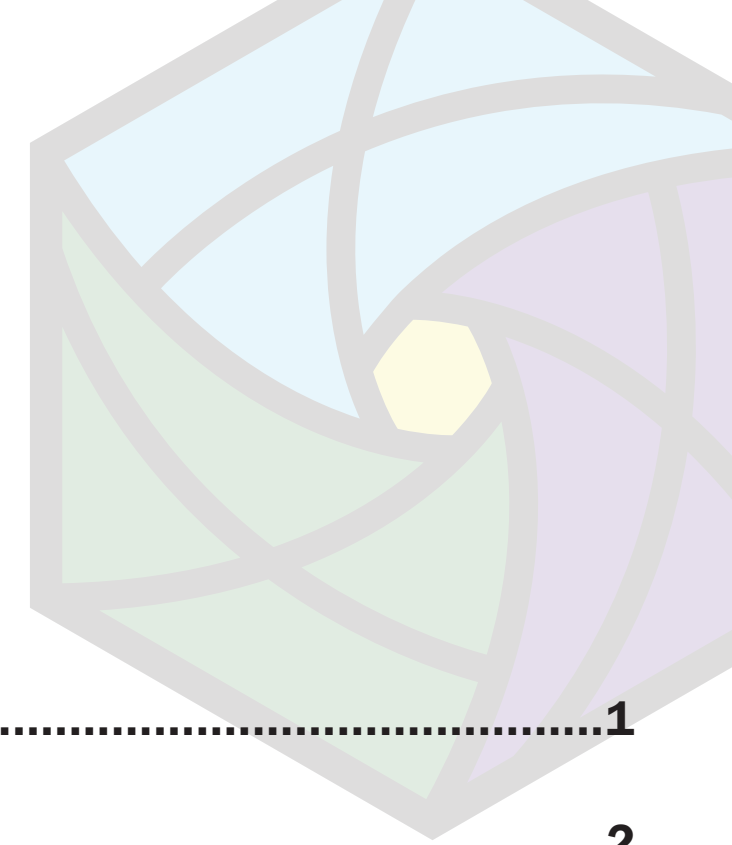
Alliance Center
for Education



2022-2023

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

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Alliance Center for Education

Our success is dependent on the many people who come together to ensure the best for the children and families we are privileged to serve. We thank each of our staff, families, volunteers, partners and members of our community who are committed to making the future brighter for children in our area. It is because of you that we are able to support these families and ensure students have what they need to be successful in school and life.

The 2022-23 school year was the first program year of normal service following the pandemic and we are exceptionally proud of our staff and families for their hard work and dedication in making it through one of the toughest periods in our recent history. On behalf of the entire leadership team and Board of Directors, thank you for your perseverance and resilience!

We hope you enjoy this recap of the 2022-23 program year, filled with information and highlights from our programs and activities.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to provide high quality education and support for children in need through partnership with their families.

ABOUT US

ALLIANCE CENTER FOR EDUCATION

Alliance Center for Education, affectionately known as AC4Ed, was formerly known as Bethlehem Center of Charlotte until a rebranding in 2020. Bethlehem Center was founded in 1940 by the United Methodist Women in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Charlotte to provide much-needed childcare and support to mothers during World War II.

This support was greatly needed and expanded over the next several years. In 1956, services expanded into the Southside, Brookhill, and Wilmore Communities, offering Charlotte's first free kindergarten programs, activities for school-age children and other family enrichment services. Today, AC4Ed operates in 12 Center locations across Charlotte, serving more than 800 families annually.

Our vision is to positively affect the future of children at risk by improving their economic mobility through education. Our individualized approach and focus on relationship-building with our children and their families has positively impacted thousands of children over the years.

We still treasure our strong, continued relationship with the United Methodist Church and the United Methodist Women, now known as the United Women in Faith. We are grateful for their dedication and passion for serving communities in need.

Additionally, we thank our supporters, community and families for trusting in us throughout these many years!



OUR PROGRAMS

AC4Ed is Charlotte's largest nonprofit provider of Early Childhood programming, and we utilize the Head Start approach offering education, comprehensive services, and home visitation resources for expectant mothers and children from birth to five, that promote early learning and development, health, and family well-being. Our afterschool programs focus on supporting curriculum and individual student progress through partnership between our staff, teachers, students, and families.

Early Head Start

(ages birth until 3 years old)

Our programs feature family-centered services for low-income families designed to support the development of children and help parents be their best and become self-sufficient.

This program is tailored to the needs of infants and toddlers, promoting physical, cognitive, social and emotional development. This early educational foundation sets these children up for continued growth and development, and success in school and life.

The model supports mothers and fathers in their roles as parents and teachers of their children. Programs help families meet their personal goals and find stability in the areas of housing, continued education and financial security through a wide array of services and community resources.

Head Start and Pre-Kindergarten

(ages 3 to 5 years old)

Our Head Start and Pre-Kindergarten programs actively engage parents in services that support early learning and development, health and family well-being.

Serving children from three to five years old in eligible families, our early childhood education programs are provided at no cost. The strengths of the program include building relationships, learning through creative play and structured lessons that build on each child's needs and abilities.

Comprehensive services are a cornerstone of our program and engage families in their child's education as well as helping fulfill their own goals. Our family case managers help create goals for the whole family and connect them to the needed community support and resources.

After School

(K-12 students)

Our programs promote positive youth development and support social, emotional, cognitive and academic development, with a focus on physical activity and life skills development.

Through supportive and engaging programming, students are encouraged to explore their interests, support their communities, and set goals for their futures. Programs are tailored to be age-appropriate and support the curriculum of students at all grade levels.

As with all of our programs, families are a crucial part of our team. Parents and students set goals and work with our staff to remove any barriers that may stand in the way, setting everyone up to succeed.



OUR LOCATIONS

AC4Ed is pleased to be in twelve locations across Charlotte. In addition to our own locations, we have entered into partnerships with many churches, recreation centers and Charter schools to serve a wide array of families.

Locations:

Brightwalk Community	1240 Badger Court, Charlotte, NC 28206
McAlpine Community	8310 McAlpine Park Drive, Charlotte, NC 28211
Mulberry Community	6450 Tuckaseegee Road, Charlotte, NC 28214
Oaklawn Community	1920 Stroud Park Court, Charlotte, NC 28206
Plaza Community	6015 Barrington Drive, Charlotte, NC 28215
Southside Community	2617 Baltimore Avenue Charlotte, NC 28203
Stephanie Jennings	3320 N Sharon Amity Road, Charlotte, NC 28205
Southview Rec Center	1720 Vilma Street, Charlotte, NC 28208
Avondale Presbyterian	2821 Park Road, Charlotte, NC 28209
Movement Eastland	5249 Central Avenue, Charlotte, NC 28212
Movement Freedom	2701 Freedom Drive, Charlotte, NC 28208
Movement Southwest	150 Osprey Point Drive, Charlotte, NC 28217



PROGRAM INFORMATION

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

As Mecklenburg County's largest non-profit provider of early childhood educational services, we are privileged to serve children and families from across the Charlotte area. Our early childhood programs include students in Early Head Start (birth to three), Head Start and Pre-Kindergarten (three to five).

Students Served

AC4Ed is the Head Start provider for Mecklenburg County and also operates additional classrooms funded by Meck Pre-K and NC Pre-K. Many of these classrooms are blended with Head Start students, however, some are solely-funded by Meck Pre-K.

- 57 Early Head Start
- 477 Head Start/Pre-K
- 54 Meck Pre-K (stand-alone)

Meals Served

AC4Ed participates in the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program, or CACFP, that provides nutritious meals and snacks to children and adults in approved programs. Over the course of a year of programming, breakfast, lunch and snacks are served daily to students in our programs.

Transportation

To help ensure access to quality early childhood education, AC4Ed operates seven buses to transport students to and from our center locations. The goal of transportation services is to reduce absenteeism, and provide safe and timely transport. During the 2022-23 program year, 100 students received transportation services from our transportation team.



Enrichment Activities

As part of our programming, we seek to provide enrichment activities for students and families to expose them to a wide variety of arts, literacy, and cultural experiences, as well as provide an opportunity for them to engage in creative play. During this program year, we were pleased to partner with many museums, companies and stores to enrich our student's education. Below are some of the highlights.

Head Start/Pre-K

- o Wing-Haven Foundation (Tree Study)
- o Nascar Hall of Fame (Wheels Study)
- o Joanne's Fabric and Crafts (Clothes Study)
- o KIPP Charter School (Getting Ready for Kindergarten)
- o Discovery Place Nature Museum (Insects Study)
- o Opera Carolina Music Story Time at AC4Ed-Oaklawn
- o Discovery Place Kids - Huntersville (End of Year Celebration)

Early Head Start/Home Visitation Socializations & Workshops

- o Music Time
- o Family Screening Day
- o Baby Storytime (ImgainOn Library)
- o Parent to Parent Discussion
- o Holiday Celebration
- o Safety & Health Awareness Workshop
- o Dental Awareness Workshop
- o Healthy Eating Workshop
- o Budgeting Workshop
- o Fatherhood Initiative Workshop
- o End-of-the-Year Celebration: Water Park!



Parent Engagement

One of the cornerstones of the Head Start model is parent and family engagement. Parents are highly encouraged to participate in their student's education by being present whenever possible through event participation and classroom volunteerism. We are pleased to have had such a great response from our parents and families.

Throughout the program year, a series of workshops aimed at promoting child and family success are held with a number of topics. This year, our families indicated a preference for workshops aimed at financial literacy. In response, we hosted a series of workshops in partnership with the Ballantyne Rotary Club and First Horizon Bank to promote and emphasize the importance of financial literacy as it relates to personal budgeting, proper use of credit, among others.

Additionally, our parents hold elections at the beginning of every program year to elect parents to serve on our Policy Council which provides input on critical decisions related to our structure and program design. We are grateful to each member of the policy council for their service, leadership, and dedication to the betterment of our programs for all the children at Alliance Center for Education.

Participation Impact

In the 2022-23 program year, our Head Start program provided 160 volunteers of which 127 are current or former AC4Ed parents. The Early Head Start program had 17 volunteers, of which 15 are current or former parents. These parents and volunteers served as assistance at events and in our centers assisting our classrooms and staff with lessons and activities. Their investment of time and talents are crucial to our success and we are beyond grateful for their participation.

Additionally, 237 Head Start families and 30 Early Head Start families participated in program services designed to promote improved family outcomes. This combined participation in our services and events goes a long way toward building AC4Ed an even stronger organization.



OUT OF SCHOOL TIME

For more than sixty years, AC4Ed has served school-age students with afterschool and summer camp programming. Additionally, full-day programming is offered when local schools are not in session, such as during spring break and teacher workdays. The core of the program is to support students with their school curriculum for success in school, provide arts and activities that support character development, and invest in their local community to promote good citizenship.



Students Served

AC4Ed hosts afterschool programs at three sites across Charlotte at Avondale Presbyterian Church, Mulberry Baptist Church and Southview Recreation Center.

During the 2022-2023 program year, we served 75 students ranging from kindergarten through 12th grade, ensuring age and grade-level appropriate programming and curriculum support to help each student perform at their best.

Meals Served

Students in the afterschool program are served a snack each day, and summer camp participants receive breakfast, lunch and snack each day that they participate in the program.

Transportation

We provide and arrange for transportation from our students' schools to our facilities. This past program year, we transported 27 students from two neighborhood schools, including Renaissance West Stem Academy and Charles H. Parker Academic Center. During our summer program, we transported students to weekly field trips and regional college tours throughout the summer.

Enrichment Activities

As part of our programming, we seek to provide enrichment activities for students and families to expose them to a wide variety of arts, literacy, and cultural experiences, as well as provide an opportunity for them to engage in activities that support their character development. During this program year, we were pleased to partner with many museums, companies and stores to enrich our student's education. This past year, we enjoyed trips to Opera Carolinas, Top Golf, Cane Creek Park and others.

Parent and Family Engagement

Parents are a vital part of our programming, and similarly to our early childhood education programs, we seek to engage parents in program leadership and design through our Very Important Parent, or VIP Council. This year, highlights include a Family Fun Night Paint Party, Monthly Speakers covering topics such as Website Safety with CMPD, Financial Literacy and Job Opportunities with Charlotte Area Fund and free training opportunities with Urban League of Central Carolinas. Additionally, our families participated in our Family Blessing Boxes at Thanksgiving in partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank and our Holiday Wish Party with Avondale Presbyterian Church.

Student Outcomes

At the end of this program year, 100% of students maintained attendance levels of 85% or higher, 100% were promoted to the next grade level, 85% maintained or improved their grades, 82% were reading at or above reading level and 75% demonstrated knowledge and comprehension skills in math. We are proud of all of our students for their academic, personal and character development achievements this year!



Summer Camp

This past summer, nearly 100 students participated in our seven-week full-day summer camp program offered at our three centers and included weekly enrichment activities, opportunities to participate in field trips to mini-golf, local and regional college tours, and guest speakers and programs from partner organizations such as 4H and Girl Scouts.

At the end of the six-week regular program, 50 students spent the last week of camp at a sleep away retreat center in Upstate South Carolina. Asbury Hills Retreat Center has hosted our summer camp for the past several years. Our children love spending time with nature, getting to experience new activities in a new environment.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Partnership with Charlotte Bilingual Preschool

2022 was the first year of our partnership with Charlotte Bilingual Preschool, and it was a major success! This first year, we served 42 dual-language students and families in our Southside community. Our plan for growth includes an additional classroom on the Westside of Charlotte where there is a growing population of Spanish-speaking families. Beyond that, our hopes include expanding this model into some of our current Pre-K classrooms in the near future. The model we've built is easily replicable; and with adequate staffing and available space and resources, we can move quickly to serve more Spanish-speaking children and families.

Our most impressive impact so far has included an 84.5% increase in English language acquisition, a 92.6% increase in English literacy, an 87.6% increase in Spanish language acquisition, and an 85% increase in Spanish literacy – all since the fall of 2022. With positive results such as these, we are confident that not only will our dual-language learners enter school with higher language and literacy skills, but they will also have a better foundation for academic success overall.



Volunteer Day with PNC

We are lucky to be a partner with PNC Bank and their Grow Up Great program. In April 2023, a group of volunteers helped with several projects at our Stephanie Jennings Center.

The Grow Up Great Program is PNC's early childhood initiative that works to prepare children for success in kindergarten and life. Since its inception in 2004, the initiative is dedicated to serving children from birth to age five, particularly underserved children, by empowering and supporting their caregivers and teachers.

During April, they host a GREAT Month where their staff engage directly with local early childhood providers to directly give back to the children and centers. We were happy to host a local group of Charlotte-based PNC Bank employees for volunteer activities in April 2023. They helped with necessary projects like our landscape improvements, they served in the classroom reading to our students and tackled many other needs from the staff and maintenance team.



Big thanks to PNC for being a partner and helping our children grow up great!

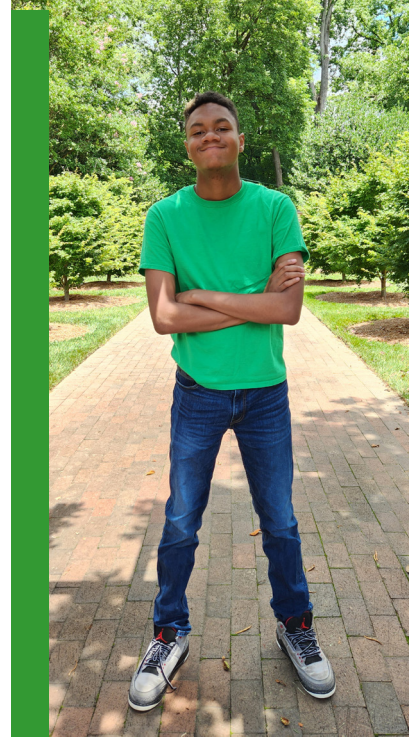


OUT OF SCHOOL TIME

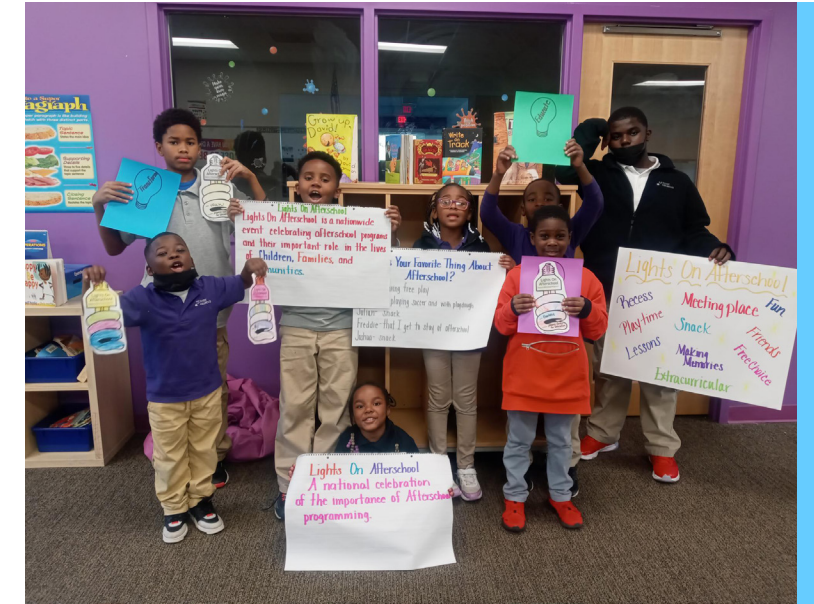
Summer Camp

This past summer, nearly 100 students participated in our seven-week full-day summer camp program. This full-day program was offered at our three centers and included weekly enrichment activities, opportunities to participate in field trips to mini-golf, local and regional college tours, and guest speakers and programs from partner organizations such as 4H and Girl Scouts.

At the end of the six-week regular program, 50 of our older students spent the last week of summer camp at a sleep away retreat center in Upstate South Carolina. Asbury Hills Retreat Center has hosted our summer camp for the past several years. Our children love spending time with nature, getting to experience new activities, such as archery, canoeing, and connecting with their peers during the overnight camp experience.

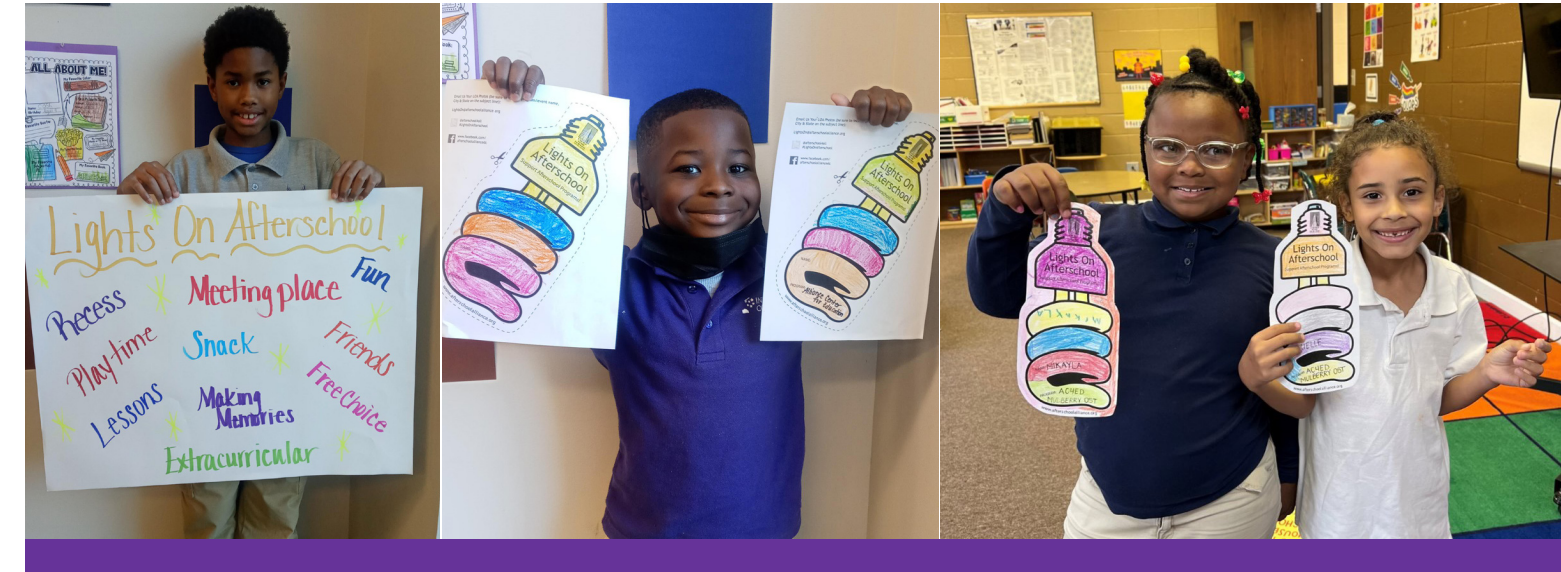


Lights on Afterschool



On October 20, 2022, our afterschool classrooms celebrated Lights on Afterschool! This annual day of awareness for the importance and impact of afterschool programs is hosted by the Afterschool Alliance since October of 2000. The event highlights that afterschool programs keep kids safe, help working families and inspire learning. They provide opportunities to help young people develop into successful adults.

This year, our students participated in events and activities in celebration of the Lights on Afterschool event, including sharing their favorite things about AC4Ed's afterschool program, as well as decorating light bulbs.



Our students and staff look forward to participating each year in Lights on Afterschool to help spread awareness for afterschool programs, highlight the impact they can have on student success and encourage communities to rally behind and support students and programs in their neighborhoods. As you can see they enjoy sharing their thoughts and telling the world what they love about AC4Ed!

AGENCY HIGHLIGHTS

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

2022 Financial Review

Alliance Center for Education receives funding from a variety of sources, including governments, grantors, foundations, corporations, faith-based partners, and individuals. We also rely on our partners and community to provide us with in-kind contributions, and have been blessed with donations of space in which to provide our services at below the market rate, gifts of diapers and needed supplies, and the gift of our volunteers and families' time and talents.

We are grateful for all of the many contributions and investments in our programs that help guide us towards the fulfillment of our mission and vision. We owe our success to the generosity of so many in our community,

Fiscal Year 2022 Statement of Activities

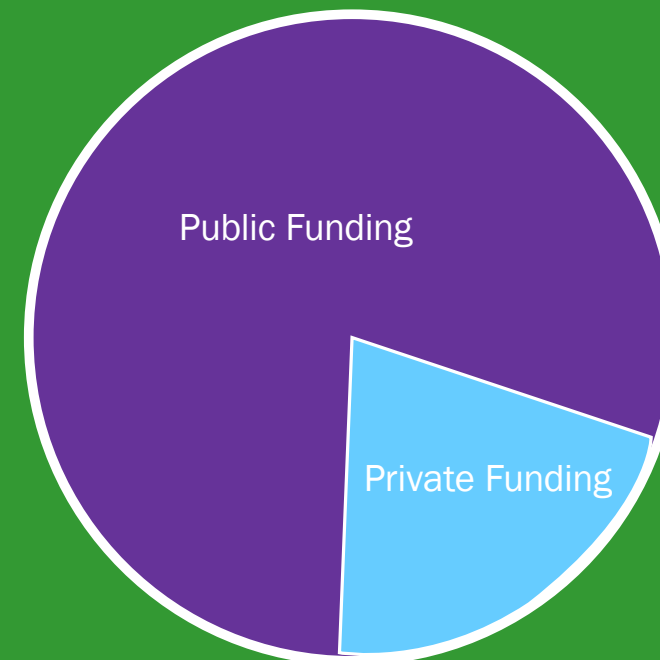
Revenues

	Public	Private	Total
US DHHS - Office of Head Start	\$7,887,247		\$7,887,247
Meck Pre-K	\$788,760		\$788,760
NC DHHS - USDA	\$306,784		\$306,784
Mecklenburg Co. - Behavioral Health Division	\$132,604		\$132,604
NC Pre-K	\$117,248		\$117,248
City of Charlotte	\$110,101		\$110,101
In-Kind Contributions		\$1,848,378	\$1,848,378
Faith-Based Support		\$24,995	\$24,995
Foundations		\$36,000	\$36,000
Individual & Corporate		\$71,656	\$71,656
Fundraising		\$87,235	\$87,235
Interest & Other Earned Revenue		\$22,943	\$22,943
Total Revenue	\$9,342,744	\$2,091,207	\$11,505,365

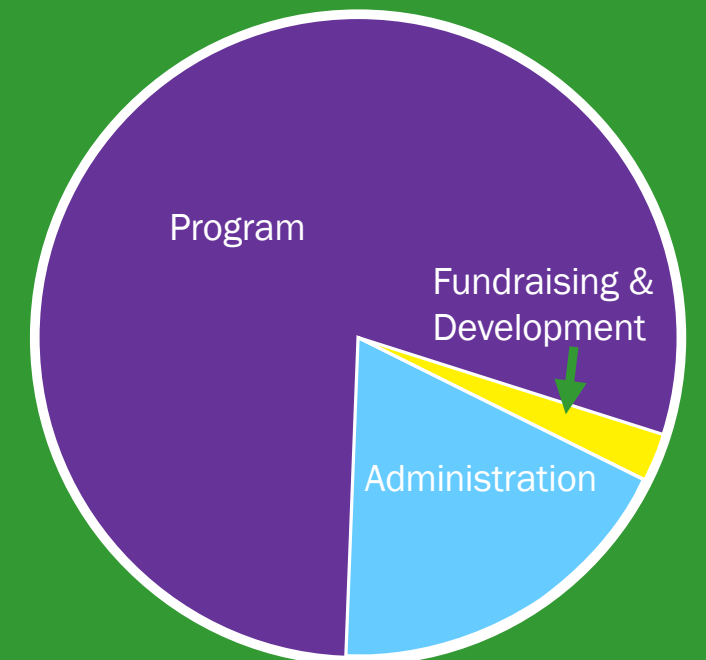
Expenses

	Total
Program	
Early Childhood Development	\$9,706,450
Out of School Time	\$359,980
Total Program Expenses	\$10,066,430
Administration	\$1,424,696
Fundraising & Development	\$136,134
Depreciation	\$162,388
Total Expenses	\$11,789,648
Total Gain in Net Assets	(\$284,283)
Net Asset Balance 12/31/2021	\$3,455,105
Net Asset Balance 12/31/2022	\$3,170,822

Revenues



Expenses



YEAR IN REVIEW

Program Highlights

The 2022-2023 school year has proven successful with our partnership with Charlotte Bilingual Preschool (CltBP). We merged both our curriculum and family services in three classrooms at one of our locations to create a Bilingual Head Start model. To better serve the growing Spanish-speaking population in the Charlotte area, this partnership allows us to bring our proven model into new areas and neighborhoods.



This partnership has been years in the making. A few years ago, this innovative idea was first developed where both AC4Ed and CltBP could reach more children in Spanish-speaking communities by joining forces and working together. It was sparked by the increase in Spanish-speaking children not being ready for kindergarten due to the language barrier. This was echoed by the information we received through our Community Needs Assessment. In 2021, we

discovered our program was struggling to maintain full participation of Dual-Language Learners and their families, and learning outcomes revealed a deficit in both English and Spanish language literacy. Presenting lessons in both Spanish and English, as well as working with families to help with their English comprehension, allows these students to be confident in their ability and the families can feel more prepared to support them with school readiness. Eighteen months ago, the project started gaining real traction and we just completed the first year of our partnership!

Starting as three bilingual classrooms in one center functioning in a complementary way to our other classrooms, but they have one teacher who teaches lessons in Spanish and one teacher that teaches lessons in English.

This partnership has been a natural fit from both AC4Ed's and CltBP's perspectives. Our missions, core strategies, and target populations align well. Joining forces allows us to provide a program that highlights the best of us both and serves our students and families with the overall goals of school readiness and family and community success.

The 2022-2023 school year also saw a service expansion with Alliance Center for Education serving as the Pre-K provider with Movement Schools, nonprofit tuition-free charter schools located throughout the Charlotte area. To help meet our shared goal of serving as many children in need in our area, we partnered with the Movement Schools to bring pre-kindergarten classrooms to each of three locations - Eastland, Freedom, and Southwest.

As the pre-kindergarten partner, Alliance Center for Education extended our Head Start model into the Movement Schools with three classrooms in each location. This past year has been a success and we are pleased to be working with the Movement team to bring pre-k education, along with our robust family engagement and comprehensive service model to students we would not otherwise be able to serve.



Looking to 2023-2024, we look forward to continuing the partnership and reaching students and families in neighborhoods in need. Partnerships like these allow us to expand our reach in the pursuit of our mission in a strategic manner.

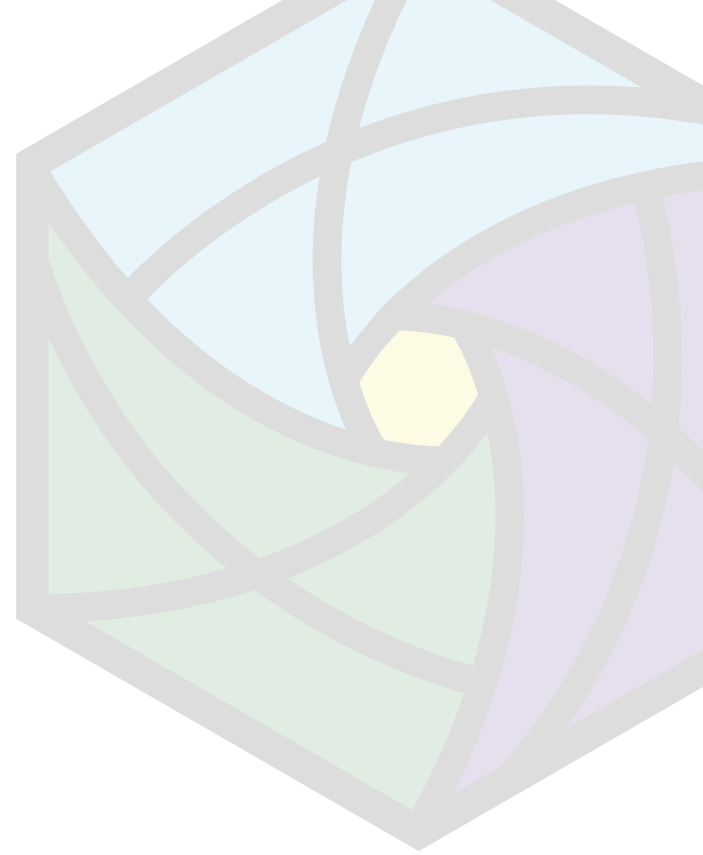
One of the highlights of our Out-of-School Time program is that we were the grateful recipient of additional funds through Mecklenburg County's Behavioral Health Division



that were used to help with mental health and wellbeing activities during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. This funding helped us secure counselors and partner programming to help students overcome setbacks and pervasive issues surrounding the time spent away from school and their peers in an effort to make up any deficits in social and emotional learning and leave them better prepared to navigate their new school environment.

We are grateful to our partners, funders, students and families who helped with this new opportunity to make it the best for our students. It was an unforeseen side effect of the past several years, and we are pleased to have such dedicated professionals join us as we help make our children's lives brighter.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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Director of Early Childhood	Elisha Wilson
Director of Out of School Time	Georgett Johnson



Alliance Center for Education

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