

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Honorable Chair and Members of the Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Joe Kerby, County Manager

RE: Head Start Division Enrollment Reduction – Head Start Division – Human Services Department

Date: 4/8/2025

Staff Recommendation: That the Board of County Commissioners authorizes (1) Jefferson County Head Start (JCHS) to request a reduction of 31 in the number of preschool aged children served, and (2) the Chairman to sign a statement indicating support and approval of the reduction request.

Resolution No: CC25-093

Background: Head Start regulations require governing body approval for all proposed reductions in the number of children served. JCHS is currently funded to serve 247 children and families; 215 of these enrollment slots are for preschool aged children, and 32 are for children ages 6 weeks-3 years. In February 2025, JCHS successfully completed an under-enrollment plan after a 12-month period of being part of the Full Enrollment Initiative (FEI), a corrective action plan due to many months of under-enrollment. The FEI requires an additional 6-month monitoring period during which we must maintain 97 percent enrollment, or risk being designated as chronically under-enrolled, which could include a reduction of our base grant. According to the Colorado Department of Early Childhood, Jefferson County has licensed childcare capacity for 124.9% of the preschool aged population. In the 2024-25 school year, in the cities most served by JCHS, there was a 28% increase from the previous year in the number of children that benefitted from Universal Preschool (UPK). With the supply exceeding demand and increasing access to UPK, there are many options for no cost full-day preschool, eliminating the need for half-day programming.

Fiscal Impact: yes no

BCC Briefing Presented on: 3/25/2025

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