



369 Bethlehem Road
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**Bourbon County
Preschool Head Start**
Melissa Hamilton, Principal

for the Love of Learning



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'To enhance school readiness for all young children in Bourbon County by ensuring quality services which are comprehensive, integrated and family focused.'

Carryover Request for FY 2025

Amount Requested: \$79,160.32

The Bourbon County Preschool Head Start program is requesting approval to carry over **\$79,160.32 in unspent personnel funds from the 2025 budget year into the 2026 budget year**. These funds were not expended during the 2025 budget period, primarily due to personnel-related factors that led to lower-than-anticipated salary expenditures. The available balance was the result of staffing vacancies, changes in employee experience and education levels, and the retirement and replacement of a veteran teacher.

During the 2025 budget year, the program experienced vacancies in paraprofessional positions. These vacancies resulted in personnel savings because positions remained open while the program worked to recruit and retain qualified candidates. In addition, a veteran teacher retired during the budget year and was subsequently replaced by a qualified teacher with fewer years of experience and a lower salary placement. Although the program successfully maintained classroom operations and continued to meet Head Start staffing requirements, these staffing changes resulted in salary expenditures that were lower than originally projected.

The program is requesting to retain these funds in the personnel category for 2026 in order to provide flexibility to address personnel costs that may fluctuate throughout the upcoming budget year. Personnel expenses are one of the largest and most essential components of the Head Start program, and maintaining adequate funding is critical to ensuring that the program can continue to recruit, hire, and retain qualified staff while maintaining appropriate classroom coverage and services to children and families.

The additional personnel funds may be used for several anticipated and unforeseen personnel-related expenses during the 2026 budget year, including:

- **Substitute staffing costs:** The program may experience an increased need for substitute teachers, paraprofessionals, and other classroom staff due to employee absences, vacancies, professional development, extended leave, or other staffing

needs. Carryover funds will provide a reserve to help maintain appropriate classroom staffing and continuity of services.

- **Employee salary and wage adjustments:** Additional funds may be needed to support salary adjustments, step increases, or other compensation changes necessary to remain competitive in recruiting and retaining qualified Head Start employees.
- **Health insurance and employee benefit increases:** The cost of employee benefits, including health insurance, may increase during the 2026 budget year. Because final benefit costs can be difficult to predict when the annual budget is initially developed, retaining personnel funds will provide the program with greater flexibility to absorb unexpected increases.
- **Temporary staffing needs related to vacancies:** If positions become vacant during the year, carryover funds may be used to support temporary staffing or other allowable personnel costs while recruitment and hiring are completed.
- **Overtime or additional staffing needs:** Family Services staff work **additional hours beyond their regular scheduled hours** when necessary to meet the individual needs of Head Start families. Family Services staff may need to conduct evening or after-hours home visits, participate in family nights and other family engagement activities, attend meetings or events outside of the normal workday, respond to urgent family needs, assist families with crises or referrals, and provide follow-up services when families are unable to meet during regular business hours. Additional hours may also be necessary for case management, documentation, community resource coordination, enrollment and recruitment activities, and other family support activities that require staff availability outside of the traditional work schedule. Retaining personnel carryover funds will provide the program with the flexibility to appropriately compensate staff for these allowable additional hours while ensuring that families receive timely and responsive services.
- **Professional development and staffing support:** Additional personnel resources may be needed to support staff training, onboarding, mentoring, or other allowable activities necessary to maintain a qualified and effective workforce.

The requested carryover will **not represent an expansion of the Head Start program or a change in the program's approved scope of services**. Rather, the funds will provide the program with the flexibility necessary to respond to actual personnel costs and staffing needs as they occur. Maintaining these funds within the personnel category will allow the program to address fluctuations in staffing and benefit expenses while protecting the program's ability to maintain qualified staff and provide consistent, high-quality services to enrolled children and families.

The Head Start program has exercised fiscal responsibility by monitoring expenditures throughout the 2025 budget year and identifying personnel savings resulting from circumstances outside of the program's direct control. Rather than returning these funds, the program is requesting approval to carry the **\$79,160.32** forward into the 2026 budget year so that the funds can continue to support allowable Head Start personnel expenses.

Approval of this carryover will strengthen the program's financial stability and allow it to respond proactively to staffing vacancies, substitute needs, compensation changes, employee benefit

increases, and other personnel-related expenses. The funds will be utilized in accordance with applicable Head Start and federal grant requirements and will support the program's continued ability to maintain adequate staffing and deliver high-quality services to children and families.



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On August 19, 2026, the Bourbon County Board of Education approved the Budget

Carryover for \$79,160.32 from the FY 2025 noncompeting grant to be carried forward to
the FY 2026 budget period.

Bradley Purcell

Board Chairperson

Date

