



OVEC INCREASES EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES AND OPENS HEAD START FACILITY IN HISTORIC SMOKETOWN NEIGHBORHOOD

CEO Jason Adkins leads efforts to increase childcare opportunities for Jefferson County families

LOUISVILLE, KY. (February 27, 2024) – The [Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative \(OVEC\)](#) is excited to announce the opening of their newest Head Start facility. Today, OVEC CEO Jason Adkins, Head Start Director Dr. Erika Nygard, Congressman Morgan McGarvey, and Head Start staff cut the ribbon to the more than 8,000 square foot facility.

“We are fortunate to serve this historic and enduring neighborhood. Partnering with Bates Memorial Baptist Church and Bates Community Development Corporation has allowed us to renovate a beautiful facility, find talented educators, and serve more children and families.” – CEO, Jason Adkins

The facility, located at 600 Lampton Street, Louisville, KY 40203, has a total capacity of 66 children. Program-wide, Head Start and Early Head Start serve 950 children annually. The \$2.1 million investment becomes the 20th Head Start facility working to close a serious childcare gap throughout a ten-county region.

OVEC’s Head Start and Early Head Start programs serve infants, toddlers, pre-k children, and prenatal women by providing comprehensive services in education, health, and family resources for some of the community’s families. A two-person household qualifying for Head Start has a household income of \$18,310 or less. Children with diagnosed disabilities, in foster care, and those who are homeless are also eligible for Head Start programs.

“We’re not just here for the children; we’re here for the whole family and it’s an honor, today, to join the Smoketown community in all the good work they are already doing.” – Director of Head Start, Dr. Erika Nygard

OVEC’s Head Start center in Smoketown is the fifth site OVEC has opened in Jefferson County. OVEC is in partnership with Bates CDC “Community Development Corporation” headquartered in Smoketown. In 2024, renovations will be completed at one more site in the Germantown neighborhood. OVEC will have created 348 new childcare “slots” for children from 6 weeks to four years old in Jefferson County. This significant increase in childcare opportunities will provide early childhood education and care to communities lacking childcare options and enable parents to participate in the workforce with the support they need to strengthen their families.

The new facility has open availability for student enrollment and is actively hiring additional staff. Head Start has employed 244 teachers, teacher assistants, and floaters throughout its 20 locations and 132 of those jobs are in Jefferson County. Available positions include teacher, teacher assistant, floater, and family advocates.

Head Start will pay full tuition and fees for any employee, in any position, to pursue a degree in education, social work, and nursing. For more information about enrollment and employment, visit oveheadstart.org.

About the Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative (OVEC)

The Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative (OVEC) is a consortium of 14 school districts serving over 155,000 students in North Central Kentucky. Established in 1976, the cooperative provides a vehicle for conducting regional planning, development, and implementation of educational programs continuously. OVEC offers programs that serve member school districts, their student populations, and families. For more information, visit oveheadstart.org.

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