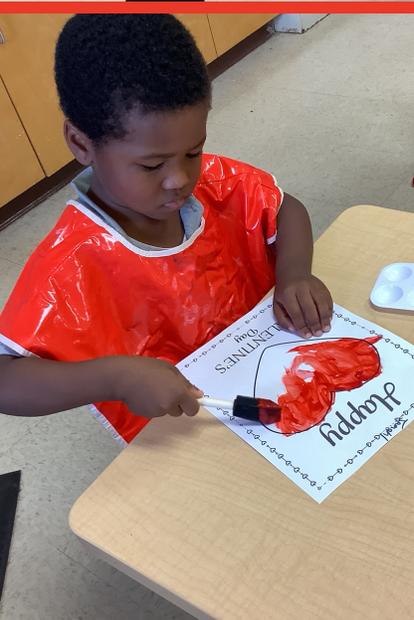




# 2026 MARCH NEWSLETTER

Picayune School District Early Childhood Programs



# FAMILY SERVICES

## Family Service Department FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

*Family Service department thrive to keep our families informed of upcoming events, important dates and resources that can support the child's development and enhance family engagement. It is my privilege to update you with our family accomplishments and upcoming events at Early Head Start / Head Start/ CCP.*

### SPOTLIGHT on Parents

We are proud to congratulate **Denielle Sistrunk** of Covington Dental Group on a remarkable professional achievement!



In September, Denielle successfully earned her **Local Anesthetics License**, further expanding her skills and expertise in patient care. This accomplishment allows her to administer local anesthesia safely and effectively, ensuring patients receive treatment with greater comfort and efficiency.

Denielle's dedication to continuing education and excellence reflects her commitment to providing the highest quality care possible. By enhancing her credentials, she is helping create a more positive and comfortable dental experience for every patient she serves.

Please join us in congratulating Denielle on this outstanding achievement and celebrating her continued growth in the dental field! ☐

### In-Kinds Per Site (January)

Site	Amount
Annie's	7,183.12
PRCC	870.75
EHS	14,059.88
NEHS	10,045.87
Picayune Head Start	18,884.58
Poplarville Head	2,261.59
Pre-K	5,446.46

### Monthly Parent Meetings

NEHS: March 3, 2026 4:p.m.  
 EHS: March 3, 2026 5:00 p.m.  
 PRCC March 4, 2026 3:30 p.m.  
 Poplarville Head Start March 4, 2026 4:30 p.m.  
 Picayune HS / Pre-K: March 5, 2026  
 Parent Curriculum: March 10, 2026 10:00 a.m.  
 Fatherhood Initiative Meeting 3/12 @ 4 p.m.  
 Transition Meeting 3/19 (EHS/CCP: 2p.m.) (Head Start/ Pre-K 3:30p.m.)

### Upcoming Events

- Dr. Seuss Week (March 2 – 6)
- Spring Fling (March 27, 2026) NEHS & EHS.
- Spring Break (March 30<sup>th</sup> – April 3<sup>rd</sup>)

### Reflection of 2026 Early Head Start Annual Mardi Gras Parade



# EDUCATION -EHS/CCP

We are "Marching" into spring and so excited about all of the learning and growing your children will experience over the final three months of the school year. March is a time of changing seasons, as plants and insects begin to wake up, and the weather changes from blustery cold winds to gentle breezes and warm sunshine. This is a wonderful time of discovery for young children, filled with opportunities to observe the changing season and all the new life that early spring brings.

This month, all children will enjoy cultural celebrations and educational activities associated with St. Patrick's Day and Eastertime, but there are many other observances which are great opportunities to help children learn. Did you know that March is Read Across America Month? Reading with your child is one of the very best ways to help him or her build world and worldly knowledge, imagine, develop advanced vocabulary, and experience the richness of our world through characters, time, and places near and far. You cannot read too much with your child, and when you make stories come to life with your little ones, you give them the gift of using their bright young minds to see themselves as heroes, explorers, and friends. For tips on how to inspire young readers of all ages, please visit:

<https://www.nea.org/professional-excellence/student-engagement/read-across-america/support-your-readers/reading-tips>

Our curriculum studies for this month continue to build on our children's existing knowledge and encourage creativity, language, and problem-solving. Early Head Start children will learn about Springtime, community helpers, and sea life. Head Start children will explore light, light sources, and how we use and engage with light from a variety of sources every day. Please talk with your child about these concepts and help him or her continue to learn and explore at home and all around our community.

Finally, please help us to give a "egg"stra special thank you to our wonderful March Teachers of the Month. We are grateful that these dedicated educators choose to share their talents at Picayune Head Start caring for and teaching our precious children.

- Picayune Head Start: Karlee Lilley and Zykeria Parker
- Poplarville Head Start: Kathy Smith
- EHS Rosa: Alysha Woodson & Patricia Parker
- CCP: Le'Ayza Newton at Ms. Annie's PreK
- EHS Nicholson: Courtney Duffy

The Education Team thanks each and every one of you for your continued support and partnership. Have a wonderful March and Spring Break with your children.  
Sincerely,

Jessica Stubbs, Education Director  
 Charlotte Nixon, EHS Education Manager  
 Robette Watts, CCP Education Manager  
 Ashley Veerkamp, Head Start Education Manager  
 LaKeshia Price, Head Start Mentor Coach  
 Dinah Thanars, Head Start Mentor Coach

## TEACHERS OF THE MONTH



**Courtney Duffy**  
EHS Nicholson Site

### SPRING FUNDRAISER

### CONGRATULATIONS

# STACY M.

WINNER OF THE  
50" FLATSCREEN TV



# MENTAL HEALTH

## Sleep and Emotional Regulation in Early Childhood

In March, The National Sleep Foundation recognizes Sleep Awareness

Sleep is essential for a child's **emotional growth and stability**. From infancy through age five, quality sleep helps young children understand, express, and manage their emotions. Healthy sleep habits:



Sleep deprivation in young children may appear as:

- ✓ Increased irritability
- ✓ difficulty sharing
- ✓ frequent tantrums
- ✓ trouble concentrating

It is recommended toddlers aged 1-2 years should get 11-14 hours of sleep per day including naps and Preschoolers aged 3-5 years should get 10-13 hours of sleep per day.

- ✓ maintain a consistent bedtime and wake up time
- ✓ create a calming bedtime routine (bath, book, quiet music)
- ✓ limit screen time before bed
- ✓ provide a quiet, dark, and comfortable sleep environment.



Healthy sleep habits built in early childhood lay the groundwork for lifelong emotional health. A well-rested child is better equipped to learn, connect, and thrive. Sleep is not a luxury in early childhood, it is a necessity.



# DISABILITY SERVICES

March, Focus: Early Identification & Spring Growth

March is a month of growth, renewal, and fresh starts! In the Disability Services Area, we continue focusing on early identification, intervention, and strong family partnerships to ensure every child receives the support they need to thrive.

Early intervention makes a lasting difference. If you ever have concerns about your child's development in speech, movement, learning, or behavior, please reach out. We are here to help!

### Developmental Milestones Matter

Children grow and develop at their own pace, but there are general milestones to look for:

#### Social & Emotional:

- Shows interest in playing with others
- Expresses emotions appropriately
- Follows simple routines

#### Speech & Language:

- Uses words to express wants/needs
- Follows simple directions
- Combines 2-3 words (Early Head Start age)

#### Fine & Gross Motor

- Uses crayons or utensils
- Jumps, runs, or climbs safely
- Stacks blocks or turns pages

If you notice your child struggling in any of these areas, please contact your teacher or the Disability Services Office.

### Spring Activities to Support Development at Home

Here are simple activities families can do together:

Plant a Seed Together—Talk about growth while practicing vocabulary and sequencing skills.

Sidewalk Chalk Fun—Draw shapes, letters, or hopscotch to build motor skills.

Read Daily (Even 10 Minutes!)—Ask open-ended questions:

- "What do you think will happen next?"
- "How does the character feel?"

Sing & Move—Songs with motions improve coordination and language development.

### Reminder: Screenings & Referrals

- 45-Day Developmental Screenings are ongoing
- Referral timelines are carefully monitored
- Service minutes and documentation are tracked to ensure compliance
- IFSP/IEP documents must be uploaded and current

Your partnership helps us maintain compliance with Head Start Performance Standards while ensuring your child receives appropriate services.

### A Message from the Disability Services Manager

Spring reminds us that growth takes time, patience, and nurturing. At Head Start and Early Head Start, we are committed to meeting each child where they are and helping them blossom.

Thank you for trusting us with your children.

Sonya Lather-Newkirk  
Disability Services Manager  
Picayune School District Head Start / Early Head Start  
Phone: 601-799-1716 | 601-795-1402  
Email: slather@pen.k12.ms.us

## March 2026 (Head Start / Early Head Start Center-Based Menu)

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
<p><b>2. French Toast, Applesauce, Milk, Water</b></p> <p><b>Lunch: Hamburger on Bun, Yam Patty, Strawberries, Milk, Water</b></p>	<p><b>3. Breakfast: Cheesy Grits, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b></p> <p><b>Lunch: Red Beans and Rice, Spinach, Fresh Baked Roll, Mandarin Oranges, Milk, Water</b></p>	<p><b>4. Breakfast: Chex Cinnamon Cereal, Diced Pineapple, Milk, Water</b></p> <p><b>Lunch: Spaghetti &amp; Meat Sauce, Steamed Carrots, Fresh Baked Roll, Blueberries, Milk, Water</b></p>	<p><b>5. Breakfast: Oatmeal, Mandarin Oranges, Milk, Water</b></p> <p><b>Lunch: Grilled Chicken on Bun, Baked Beans, Diced Pears, Milk, Water</b></p>	<p><b>6. Breakfast: Biscuit with Egg Patty, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b></p> <p><b>Lunch: Cheese Pizza, Sliced Baked Potatoes, Strawberries, Milk, Water</b></p>
<p><b>9. Breakfast: Oatmeal, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b></p> <p><b>Lunch: Spaghetti &amp; Meat Sauce, Spinach, Fresh Baked, Applesauce, Milk, Water</b></p>	<p><b>10. Breakfast: Biscuit with Egg Patty, Mandarin Oranges, Milk, Water</b></p> <p><b>Lunch: Hamburger Steak w/ Gravy, Fresh Baked Roll, Strawberries, Milk, Water</b></p>	<p><b>11. Breakfast: Rice Chex Cereal, Diced Pineapple, Milk, Water</b></p> <p><b>Lunch: Grilled Chicken on Bun, Broccoli, Diced Pears, Milk, Water</b></p>	<p><b>12. Breakfast: Grits, Applesauce, Milk, Water</b></p> <p><b>Lunch: Cheese Pizza, Steamed Carrots, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b></p>	<p><b>13. Breakfast: Waffle, Kiwi, Milk, Water</b></p> <p><b>Lunch: Hamburger on Bun, Sweet Potato Fries, Applesauce, Milk, Water</b></p>
<p><b>16. Breakfast: Cheese Toast, Apple Sauce, Milk, Water</b></p> <p><b>Lunch: Chili on Bun, Yam Patty, Strawberries, Milk, Water</b></p>	<p><b>17. Breakfast: Grits, Mandarin Oranges, Milk, Water</b></p> <p><b>Lunch: Cheesy Chicken w/Rice, Turnip Greens, Corn Bread, Diced Pears, Applesauce, Milk, Water</b></p>	<p><b>18. Breakfast: Oatmeal, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b></p> <p><b>Lunch: BBQ Chicken on Bun, Sliced Baked Potatoes, Diced Pineapple, Milk, Water</b></p>	<p><b>19. Breakfast: Biscuit with Egg Patty, Applesauce, Milk, Water</b></p> <p><b>Lunch: Hamburger on Bun, Broccoli, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b></p>	<p><b>20. Breakfast: Chex Cinnamon Cereal, Diced Pears, Milk, Water</b></p> <p><b>Lunch: Baked Chicken Tenders, Fresh Baked Roll, Steamed Carrots, Mandarin Oranges, Milk, Water</b></p>
<p><b>23. French Toast, Applesauce, Milk, Water</b></p> <p><b>Lunch: Hamburger on Bun, Yam Patty, Strawberries, Milk, Water</b></p>	<p><b>24. Breakfast: Cheesy Grits, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b></p> <p><b>Lunch: Red Beans and Rice, Spinach, Fresh Baked Roll, Mandarin Oranges, Milk, Water</b></p>	<p><b>25. Breakfast: Chex Cinnamon Cereal, Diced Pineapple, Milk, Water</b></p> <p><b>Lunch: Spaghetti &amp; Meat Sauce, Steamed Carrots, Fresh Baked Roll, Blueberries, Milk, Water</b></p>	<p><b>26. Breakfast: Oatmeal, Mandarin Oranges, Milk, Water</b></p> <p><b>Lunch: Grilled Chicken on Bun, Baked Beans, Diced Pears, Milk, Water</b></p>	<p><b>27. Breakfast: Biscuit with Egg Patty, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b></p> <p><b>Lunch: Cheese Pizza, Sliced Baked Potatoes, Strawberries, Milk, Water</b></p>
30	31	1	2	3
<h1>Spring Break</h1>				

Picayune School District Early Childhood Programs - (601) 799-4702

- Early Head Start - Rosa
- Early Head Start - Nicholson
- EHS CCP - Annie's Kindergarten & Daycare
- EHS CCP - Pearl River Community College Child Development Lab School
- PSD Pre-K Program
- PSD Head Start - Picayune
- PSD Head Start - Poplarville